

Gerardo Andrade González:

Obras selectas

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Gerardo Andrade González. JOSE MARIA OBANDO. OBRAS SELECTAS. ESCRITOS CIVILES Y MILITARES. Cámara de Representantes: "Pensadores Políticos. Colombianos" Colección "Fundadores." (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional, 1982) 385 p. Gerardo Andrade González. PROSA DE JULIO ARBOLEDA. JURÍDICA, POLÍTICA. HETERODOXA Y LITERARIA (Bogotá: Talleres Gráficos del Banco de la República, 1984). 434 p.

Gerardo Andrade González, a native of Pasto, teaches literature and history at the Universidad Central del Cauca in Popayán. Besides the two volumes under review, he has also prepared *La nueva narrativa colombiana-tendencia modernista: crítica y antología* (Popayán: Universidad del Cauca, 1984).

If the label caudillo fits anyone in nineteenth-century Colombian history comfortably, it is General José María Obando (1795-1861). Born on the wrong side of the blanket to a mother who was also illegitimate, he was, as an infant, adopted by a prominent *pastuso* landowner and given his name. Raised in Popayán, and educated in its Seminario until 1810, Obando spent his youth helping to manage his paternal estates in forging therefrom the numerous patron-client relationships which he would exploit, first as a cacique, then as a caudillo, in the region south of Popayán down to Pasto.

Between 1819 and 1822, Obando became a formidable royalist guerrilla leader. Brought over in grade as a Lieutenant Colonel to the republican side, Obando was appointed to command Pasto province in 1825. This was decisive. Assuming his stepfather's previous role among the local gentry, he reinforced it by his judicious mixture of tact and force. Inevitably, Colonel

Obando became the leading figure in Pasto, its caudillo and spokesman. He would retain such local preeminence until the early 1840s, and it would see some revival in the early 1850s and again in the final years of his life, 1860-61.

Just as he was widely acclaimed by the masses of southern Colombia, Obando was deeply feared and hated by the region's upper classes. Unable to translate his popular support into real political power in the highly exclusivistic and stratified Popayán political culture, Obando led populist rebellions in 1828, 1831, and 1840/41. Defeated in 1842, he fled for his life through the Amazon Basin to Peru, where (and in Chile) he would spend the next seven years.

The General returned in 1849 as a hero figure to the Liberal youth of the day, and served the José Hilario López regime in various capacities. He was elected to the Presidency in 1853. Once in power, the caudillo found himself thwarted by the doctrinaire Liberals in Congress an hamstrung in his political options by the highly libertarian and decentralized Constitution of 1853. Habits die hard, and those acquired as a caudillo soon dominated his new polish as a chief executive. Obando winked approvingly at the Melo Revolt of 1854, was impeached and removed in 1855 in disgrace. The virulence of the tensions between his old enemy, Gen. Tomás C. de Mosquera, and President Mariano Ospina Rodríguez brought on the Federal War, 1859-1862. Obando's support was a decisive factor in its launching. Himself a victim of a Conservative ambush, Obando died, not far from Bogotá, on April 29, 1861.

As many readers can appreciate by now, José María Obando's life had a novelesque quality. He himself tried to capitalize on the sympathy he aroused as a man falsely accused after years of allegations that he had a part in ordering the assassination of Marshall Antonio José de Sucre in 1830. A man of strong personal charisma and blessed with a notably attractive personality, Obando was also a gifted user of Spanish prose. A collection of his writings, such as this one, makes for considerable good reading and also furnishes useful historical data.

The collection consists of eighth groups of documents, dating from 1825 to 1861. Except for three sets which contain Obando writings from his periods in Bogotá, the bulk relate to his stints as governor, military commander, Supremo, and caudillo in southern Colombia (present day Departments of Cauca and Nariño). While some have seen publication earlier, the majority have not. Most have been winnowed from the Gen. Tomás C. de Mosquera Archive and other *fondos* of the Archivo Central del Cauca in Popayán.

Taken with the various other tomes of Obando correspondence previously published by the Academia Colombiana de Historia, they form an important corpus of materials. Without them, the public career of José María Obando would continue to remain obscured by controversy.

Julio Arboleda (1817-1862) was born a generation later. Scion of the immensely powerful Arboleda Family of Popayán, young Julio was brought to England to study with the Jesuits at Stonyhurst College (Lancs.) (18-31-36). Headstrong and short-tempered, the young magnate then studied law at the University of the Cauca in Popayán, before taking up part of his legacy. The War of the Supremos (1839-1842), in which Obando played so major a role, became the political initiation of Arboleda. His family estates were looted, his cattle consumed, his slaves conscripted and dispersed, and he himself became a junior officer. He served in the armies led by his first cousin's husband, Gen. Pedro A. Herrán, and by his uncle, Gen. Tomás C. de Mosquera.

Arboleda, schooled in an elitist England and heir to an aristocratic tradition, was a talented writer. His well-known poetry was collected first by Miguel Antonio Caro (*Poesías de Julio Arboleda* (New York, 1883)) and includes the surviving fragments of his epic, "Gonzalo de Oyón." He was also an orator of note, a consummate and feared political polemicist and Conservative pamphleteer.

Thanks to Professor Andrade González, many of Julio Arboleda's most notable political writings are made available again. The compilation is divided into four broad categories. The first, Arboleda's writings on Constitutionalism, includes articles on constitutional reform, taxation and territorial division. The second contains his few surviving speeches (not many were recorded), which, while rhetorically fluid, when read today, appear stilted and overly florid. The third category, Arboleda's political writings, some nine of them, dating from 1843 to 1851, are perhaps the most interesting part of this book. They range from his pamphlet rejecting his uncle, Gen. Mosquera, as a Presidential candidate in 1844, through an anti-Jesuit polemic and a lyrical description of Gen. Mosquera's post-presidential visit to Popayán in January, 1850, to his virulent attack on the Gen. José Hilario López regime for its alleged arbitrariness in 1851 and his imprecations against populist Liberalism in South America. The last category contains Arboleda's visceral biographical sketch of Gen. Obando, an essay on education, and a fragment of an historical description of the Di-

vision of the North in the Campaign against the Melo Revolt, 1854.

Certainly all scholars of the Colombian South will wish to consult both these compilations: the Obando one for its new materials on its protagonist's long career as a man of the sword and populist politico, and the Arboleda one for its presentation of Don Julio's long-forgotten, but still vibrant, political prose.

Ana María Cano, Entrevistas

Bogotá:
Fundación Simón y Lola Guberek,
1985

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Ana María Cano Posada, nacida en Medellín en 1956, nos ofrece una colección antológica de los artículos publicados hasta 1983 en el diario *El Mundo* de su ciudad natal. En ellos el lector accede a la realidad antioqueña y colombiana, y a la del continente latinoamericano, a través del diálogo que la autora mantiene con personalidades de diferentes ámbitos profesionales y artísticos, diálogo que, bien sea transcripción directa del magnetófono y del contexto, bien una reelaboración subjetiva ceñida más al orden temático que a la linealidad temporal, pone siempre de relieve a la persona, ajena en gran medida al tópico que su figura pueda acarrear como personaje público.

Serán entre otros, el poeta Alvaro Mutis y su necesidad de salirse del "ser" colombiano para encontrarse como escritor, el pintor Horacio Longas con la riqueza de sus años, Teresa Gómez, la pianista a punto de salir al escenario, la escritora Marta Traba, el cómico Guillermo Zuluaga y sus Montecristos los que, sobre el breve boceto de la periodista, compongan su propio retrato, informándonos de su trabajo y de sus estudios, de su postura ante la vida, ante Colombia y Latinoamérica, del largo camino hace años emprendido que les llevó a ser lo que hoy son.