



## ROMA AND THE COTIDIANITY

By María del Rosario Lara

Ortega y Gasset said that each one is creating his own novel. Our circumstances, emotions, decisions and actions give shape

to the argument that is our own life. I remembered this idea of the Spanish thinker when a friend commented on *Roma*, the film by Alfonso Cuarón. My friend said that the movie lacked argument. And it was precisely that comment that pushed me to see *Roma* that same afternoon without further delay. I watched the movie with the desire to refute the idea of my friend; and for that, I relied on two philosophers: José Ortega y Gasset and Miguel de Unamuno.

The conscious life, that is, the life of men and women, always has a plot whose main character is us (Ortega y Gasset). And each of these plots intersect and give rise to larger stories in time and space that refer to social groups, communities and nations. The world of "ordinary" men and women is relegated from these great stories, since only the life and deeds of "extraordinary" men and women are recorded. Traditionally, historiography has not paid attention to the universe of everyday life until very recently through what is known as "history of mentalities." And the everyday is the primary material that makes up all stories of any kind. It is what Unamuno called the "intrahistory" when referring to the daily work of men and women; that routine doing of the small people and that against the great historical stories loses its importance.

But how is the plot of a life constructed? Through artistic expression. The literary and cinematographic narratives organize and structure the material of everyday life. That is, they tell us a story, and when they tell it, they allow us to establish relationships between the different events recorded in the story in order to find a meaning, not only to the "small" story, but also to our existence. Telling our story transforms us into authors and characters of it because it makes us aware of our

existence and the possible reasons that led us to the moment in which we tell our life. And, that's what Cuarón does in his movie *Roma*.

*Roma* is, then, the expression of how everyday life, embodied in a petty-bourgeois Mexican family of the 1970s, lived and experienced certain national facts and worldviews (such as state violence against young university students, social denigration and of women and children), and how life was resolved within a very specific cultural framework.



To conclude, we will say that in *Roma* we can see an example of the intrahistory that Unamuno talked about as well as the different ways in which the decisions and actions of the powerful affect each of us differently, according to our very particular circumstances.