*The House of the Spirits,* by Isabel Allende

Points of Discussion, July 18, 2023

1. Historical Backgound: Spanish “conquest” 1541; the encomienda system;

*House of the Spirits*: 1920’s to 1975; military coup in Chile, 9/11/1973

1. *The House of the Spirits:*  Elements of Fiction
2. Characters:

Women: Del Valle women; the Mora sisters; Tránsito Sota

Men: Esteban Trueba, the Candidate/President (Salvador Allende),

the Poet (Pablo Neruda), his poem that serves as epigraph

Class structure: poor/privilege/power (the Garcías, Nana, Férula)

The importance of lineage (a family line)

1. Plot: family/politics: parallel movement on a downward spiral

Actors: Causes and effects of their actions

Allegory: Why are the President and the Poet not named?

Why is Chile not named?

1. Setting: Chile (and other possible places), the house on the corner,

Tres Marías, the dog house

1. Narrative technique: who narrates? to whom (implied audience)? why?

Is the story told in chronological order?

1. Style: sentences, paragraphs, images, metaphors, etc.
2. Theme: what is the novel *about*? Theme is made up of all of the moving parts above. Does it succeed in what you think it (the author) has set out to communicate?
3. Magical Realism
   1. ethnographic
   2. ontological

Next week: Isabel Allende and Remedios Varo (Spanish/Mexican Surrealist painter)