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PREFACE

I am delighted to present the second volume of the Cincinnati Romance Review. The interest, help and encouragement of our graduate students, faculty and colleagues from our own and other colleges and universities throughout the United States and Canada have stimulated us to continue producing CRR with steadfast zeal.

The papers published in this number have been selected from about seventy that were read at the Second Annual Cincinnati Conference on Romance Literatures, held on the University of Cincinnati Campus, May 13-15, 1982. The warm reception accorded our Conferences confirms our original belief that an annual gathering of scholars to exchange ideas on various aspects of Romance literatures satisfies an urgent need. In May 1983, we expect to host over 150 active participants from the U.S. and Canada.

We appreciate your support of our Conferences and CRR. Please feel free to send us any suggestions for improvement of our young publication.

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The "Description de la Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse"
as a Microcosm of Georges de Scudéry's
Greater Lyrical Works

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Consisting of the first twelve sonnets of the Poésies diverses (1649), the "Fontaine de Vaucluse" sequence occupies an interesting place within the greater body of Georges de Scudéry's lyric poetry. Beginning in 1628 with an ode to Théophile and ending in 1665, the body of 567 poems produced over that span of 37 years shows a movement from a "personal emotionalism" which can be called "baroque" to an "intellectualized performance" which can be called "précieux," from the poetic drama of the Phaeton figure to the immobilized Apollonian "galant" of the salons. This is symbolized by a moving away from the pictorial toward a pure verbalism, from imagery to refinement of language. Upon examination, the twelve-sonnet sequence of the "Description de la Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse" shows precisely this same inclination. Overwhelmingly baroque at the beginning, the sonnets show a "précieux" tendency which becomes more and more apparent toward the end of the sequence.

The fountain sequence may be divided into two parts. Sonnets I-V (Part I) have nature (Vaucluse) as the dominant theme. Their function is to introduce the reader to the setting, to dazzle him or her with its splendor, and to integrate the reader into the scene. Sonnets VII-XII (Part II) tell the story of the love and sorrow of Laura and Petrarch. They seek to analyze the love between Laura and Petrarch, to captivate the reader with its passion and anguish, and to integrate the surrounding nature into their love. Sonnet VI serves as a transition sonnet, fulfilling the same function within the twelve-sonnet sequence that the sequence as a unit does within the entire body of Scudéry's lyrical works. In Sonnet VI, the three main characters of the sequence, Petrarch, Laura, and Vaucluse, come together as a kind of Trinity. As Vaucluse (nature) was the subject of Part I, Laura and Petrarch (love) retain the poet's fancy in Part II.

The dominant role of nature is one of several strong baroque elements found in Part I. Love is alluded to only once in the first five sonnets and that is in Sonnet I, whose function is to describe the panorama in general and to set the scene for what is to come. The brief mention of love is merely that: a mention, in general, as yet linked to no one in particular but already strongly tied to nature. Nature in its many guises is something that "l'amour amoureux n'abandonne jamais." (I, v. 4). But the fact that the sensual "volupté" of nature does evoke the idea of love in the poet's mind foreshadows the main theme of Part II and establishes the link between nature and love which will unify the sequence as a whole. As Antoine Adam has pointed out, Scudéry, like Théophile, "a orienté ses admirateurs vers une poésie où la passion se raconte, s'analyse, se cherche une expression pathétique."¹ Nature dominates literally in the first sonnet by the sheer grandeur of the scene before the poet: the mountains are so overwhelming and awe-inspiring as to be "affreux;" the treetops reach up to the heavens, mimicking the pointed arches of Gothic cathedrals, creating the vaguely uneasy feeling of being at the mercy of some greater, more powerful force. The sheer immensity of immortal nature serves to emphasize the smallness and insignificance of mortal man, and there is a certain air of mystery, a reverence created for a greater, more powerful order.

Another strong baroque tendency found in Part I is the poet's use of multiple-aspect imagery. The same object can be seen in an infinite number of ways --the only limitation being the poet's imagination. The most striking example of this is the treatment of the water in the fountain. In typically baroque fashion, things are in a constant state of metamorphosis, always changing, always becoming-never fixed or static. Through the first part of the fountain sequence, water is at various times "un liquide cristal," "un bel argent fondu," and "un grand miroir d'argent;" it is green, white, or blue, depending upon what is reflected; it is crystal clear or it is a mixture of all colors. It is as soft as foam, as fluffy as snow, as fluid as molten silver, or as hard as ice. The water takes the form of thousands of bubbles, twisting rivulets, angry torrents, a winding

serpent, or thousands of jewel-like drops, tiny prisms, breaking the sunlight into a spectrum of ever-changing colors as they flash and sputter in the air.

Scudéry's imagery is almost exclusively visual in Part I, making its appeal to the mind's eye and consequently to the reader's emotions. His evocative and detailed descriptions seem to follow the logical path the eye might take upon contemplating the scene spread out before it. Sonnet I treats the scene in general, as one's eye would move quickly over a vast panorama, taking everything in briefly before going back to look more closely and pick out details. Sonnet II begins with the one thing that would logically catch one's eye amid a serene landscape: moving water. Through Sonnet II and into Sonnet III Scudéry's eye follows the streams of water to their source. Once having noticed the fountain, the poet describes the ornamentation on the outside (Sonnet III) and quickly follows the streaming water away into a countryside populated by fanciful mythological beings, incarnations of the water (Sonnet IV) before looking more closely into the basin of the fountain itself (Sonnet V). The reader sees Vaucluse through the poet's eyes; we have become one with him as he will become one with Vaucluse.

The sonnets attempt to ensnare the reader, to captivate him or her in the same way the poet himself is "ravi" and "enchanté." Scudéry is enchanted and charmed in the literal sense--it is as though a spell has been cast over him, and we, too, find ourselves prisoners of Vaucluse. In the first part of the fountain sequence we are not made to think or analyze; what is presented to us are not ideas, concepts, or events. Rather we are made to feel, in the deepest sense of the word, the physical presence of the nature which surrounds us. Like Scudéry, we are overwhelmed, but savor the feeling and take utter delight in being engulfed. We, with the poet, are integrated into the surrounding nature and become a part of it. The stage has now been set for Part II, where Vaucluse will, through pathetic fallacy, mourn Petrarch and Laura and share the sorrow of their fate.

Sonnet VI is the transition sonnet, and Scudéry skillfully links Part I (Vaucluse) with Part II (Laura and Petrarch) by combining all elements. Still gazing deeply into the basin of the fountain, a reflection catches the poet's eye. In the first line of Sonnet VI he asks the question to which the rest of the poem will be the answer: "Quelles superbes Tours, se mirent dans ces eaux?" The towers of a castle, old and crumbling, come into sight. The walls are ancient, overgrown with ivy, almost to the point of being completely destroyed, yet nature has respected these ruins--they are precious, sacred. Is there really such a castle? Is it indeed Laura's castle as the poet claims, or has Scudéry been taken in by the illusory quality of life, a victim of his own active imagination? We do not know for sure, nor is it really important that we do. The course has been determined: the preceeding visual elements have provoked thoughts and ideas, specific actions and events in the poet's mind. Part II will deal with intellectualized concepts: Laura and Petrarch's love will be analyzed and their sorrowful fate recounted. Scudéry will no longer make use of multiple-aspect imagery, nor will the visual element be so strongly stressed. He will describe emotions and the psychology of love, often falling back on the usual conventions and images so dear to the "précieux." The visual imagery of Part I which made its direct appeal to the emotions of the reader will, to a large extent, be replaced by rhetorical conventions making their appeal to the mind.

The theme of love is probably the most conspicuous "précieux" element in Part II. In opposition to the baroque poet whose vision is turned outward toward God, man, the world and man's place in it, the "précieux" vision is turned inward.² Because "précieux" poetry looks inward to itself, nature has no real role to play. In the last six sonnets, nature has relinquished its dominant role, and throughout these sonnets it will appear only to mourn the unhappy fate of Laura and Petrarch and to echo the anguish of the two lovers: The wind learned how to sigh from Petrarch, and the waves learned to murmur softly by imitating Laura's voice. Nature repeats Petrarch and Laura's story, and the poet and his lady act out the same scenario in the poet's imagination. As nature is

eternal and will forever whisper the tale of Laura and Petrarch's great love, an infinite number of lovers will re-create the story again and again and again. The scene and situation are timeless, as is the flow of water from the fountain.

Laura is "cette chaste Beauté," (IX, v. 1), the essence of virtue, the Ideal Woman. She also is timeless, universal. She is worshipped from afar, untouched and untouchable. Scudéry's choice of Laura and Petrarch is consistent with the "précieux" view of love as cerebral and abstract, rather than physical and emotional. The declaration of this love is a public, intellectualized performance and not a sentimental, confidential secret of the heart. The fact that Scudéry is discussing someone else's feelings (as he imagines them to have been) rather than his own (as he knows them to be) moves Part II from the realm of the personal emotionalism found in Part I to a more detached intellectual interpretation and analysis which is typically "précieux."

Although plays on words are not completely absent from Part I of the fountain sequence, when found with the theme of love in Part II, they combine to create a "précieux" feeling for witticisms and an appeal to the intellect not readily apparent in the first five sonnets. For example, in Sonnet X Scudéry makes reference to a "cygne mourant," one of several places that he uses the symbol of the swan throughout his lyrical works. In this instance, it would seem as though he is making a clever use of the homonyms "cygne/signé," for the swan is indeed a sign, a symbol of the anguish of Petrarch, reflected in his "swan song" (v. 9). The image of whiteness mirrors the virtue of Laura as well as points to the sterility of life now that death has claimed her; it also recalls the white of the froth, foam, snow, and ice in the description of the fountain in Part I. In Part II the image of whiteness has become an intellectual concept rather than a visual description. Scudéry uses the same swan image to continue his verbal witticism in the final sonnet of the sequence. Playing with the sound-alikes "ce cygne" and "se signe," the poet suggests the approach of poetry to prayer, since the verb "se signer" refers to the religious practice of crossing oneself. The final

sonnet has been transformed into a celebration, a final, glorious culmination of all the sonnets which have preceded it. The word "puiss(ent)" is repeated in almost every line, further emphasizing the prayer-like aspect of the sonnet.

This final sonnet brings the sequence full circle, being effectively linked to Sonnet I in which the poet had created a feeling of religious mysticism. In the first line of Sonnet XII, Scudéry addresses nature directly as he did in the first line of Sonnet I. When he exclaims, "O Beaux lieux consacrez par la plume immortelle" (XII, l. 1) Scudéry is invoking a nature, created by God, which is immortal. Through the change of seasons, through the years, through the centuries, nature's physical presence is eternal. But Scudéry himself is also bestowing a second kind of immortality upon nature, an intellectual immortality, for nature will live forever in the lines of his poetry and through his poetry in the minds of all who read it. The poet himself has become a kind of God, shining brilliantly in the midst of his own creation. Scudéry certainly knows this, and although he makes an attempt at humility in the last line, he is well aware of his own ability as a poet in the salons and among his "précieux" friends:

Puissent de temps en temps cent fameux
Ecrivains,
Par les doctes labeurs de leurs scavantes
mains,
Chanter vostre Grandeur, et que je sois le
moindre.

(XII, vv. 12-14)

It is significant that Petrarch should be the figure invoked by Scudéry to symbolize love in Sonnets VII-XII of the "Description de la Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse." Petrarch's name has come to designate a certain kind of love poetry, and Scudéry himself becomes a poet of that tradition in his verse. The basic poetic form, the sonnet, is reminiscent of the Italian poet, as well as Scudéry's use of antitheses and metaphors. Consistent with "précieux" rhetoric, these antitheses and metaphors are completely predictable, centering around the theme of love and the

images of fire, light, flame, and burning. Laura is "l'adorable Objet" (XI, v. 4), "cet Astre brillant" (XI, v. 6), and "cette Nimphe adorable" (XI, v. 10). The central theme of love mirrors Petrarquism as well as does Scudéry's refined style.

Scudéry's first collection of lyric poetry not previously published separately is Le Cabinet de M. de Scudéry, which appeared in 1646. In imitation of the Italian poet Marino, Scudéry has assembled a gallery of paintings in verse. The Cabinet reflects the strong baroque tendencies which were prevalent during the first decades of the seventeenth century; in the "Description de la Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse," it is apparent that the baroque tendencies are still very strong, but that they are beginning to be slightly modified. The visual element is now sharing its dominant position with plays on words, witticisms, and general concern with poetic diction and intellectual performance that was missing from the Cabinet. The influence of the Petrarchian style in Sonnets VII-XII foreshadows the "culte des raffinements" which will significantly change the tone of the Poésies diverses. The Poésies diverses are more vague and abstract than those in either the Cabinet or the fountain sequence. Feelings and emotions become the subject of the poems, rather than the people, things, and actions on which the Cabinet and the fountain sequence are based. Because sentiments (most notably, love) are the subject of the poems of the Poésies diverses, the visual element is almost completely absent. The main appeal of this poetry is to the mind, and not to the mind's eye or to the emotions. Precisely the opposite is true for the Cabinet: Because the subject matter of the poems are paintings, the visual orientation is necessary and extremely strong. The "Description de la Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse" shares aspects of the Poésies diverses as well as the Cabinet: The evocation of nature is certainly a visual one, yet the subtle change to the theme of love in Sonnets VII-XII tends to diminish it somewhat. In the fountain sequence the abstract rendering of the theme of love co-exists with the direct appeal to the senses by means of the descriptions of nature. Nature evokes love, and love is mirrored by nature.

The theme of the Cabinet is a world in constant metamorphosis, changing, moving, becoming. The poems are represented by the figure of Phaëton, caught in a moment of turmoil, twisting, turning, constantly in motion. As he tumbles head over heels, he loses his perspective and the world around him becomes a blur of colors, sounds, and smells. For Phaëton, np becomes down, reality becomes illusion, his viewpoint is infinitely multiplied. Scudéry is Phaëton, caught in the midst of a whirl of fantasy, illusion, and a blending together of impressions so that the only contrasts distinguishable are those of an antithetical nature: light and dark, life and death, joy and sorrow. Phaëton does not make his appeal to our minds; rather he reaches out to our senses, seizes us, and holds us forever in his grasp.

This multiple viewpoint presented in the Cabinet is narrowed down in the Poésies diverses. The theme of nature, so prevalent in the Cabinet and the fountain sequence, is almost completely absent in the Poésies diverses. The image of nature presented in the Cabinet was a nature in flux: the colors, sounds, and spectacle of nature merged into a dazzling swirl of impressions and sensations. The fountain sequence continues this tradition with the description of the fountain itself in sonnets I-V. Yet moving into Part II, nature as a theme fades into the background. Nature is still present, but its function is to echo the love between Laura and Petrarch. The only movements and actions which take place in Sonnets VII-XII are the actions of nature which reflect love's joys and sorrows. The sparkling, sputtering, flowing water of the fountain has been transformed into a silent flow of tears.

Since the fountain sequence falls roughly at the middle of Scudéry's poetic career and at a time when the salons knew their greatest popularity and prestige and wielded their greatest influence over the French language and literature, it is not surprising that the baroque tendencies so much in evidence during the first decades of the seventeenth century have begun to wane. It is interesting that this development is so clearly mirrored in a sequence as small as a twelve-sonnet group. Because of this, the "Description de la

"Fameuse Fontaine de Vaucluse" may serve as a microcosm of Scudéry's greater lyrical works. The poet's strong baroque tendencies toward multiple-aspect imagery, evocative and detailed description, and an appeal to the emotions of the reader so evident in the early works give way to a preoccupation with the theme of love, a concern with poetic diction and intellectual performance, and an appeal to the intellect. The turbulently moving Pbaëton has become an immobile Apollo, shining brilliantly in the midst of "précieux" conventions.

NOTES

¹ Histoire de la littérature française au XVII^e siècle, Vol. II (Paris: del Duca, 1962), p. 330.

² Jean Rousset, La Littérature de l'âge baroque en France (Paris: Librairie Corti, 1963), p. 241.

The Dialectics of Nature and Grace
in Montherlant's Port Royal

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In an essay entitled Carnaval Sacré, Henry de Montherlant, the French novelist, essayist and playwright, expressed his belief that: "on ne peut parvenir à la vérité que par l'intelligence des contraires." (One can only arrive at truth by means of a logic of opposites.)¹ This idea, which provided the philosophical justification for his principle of Alternance, also colored Montherlant's perception of himself and the world around him, and profoundly affected his artistic creations.

For Montherlant, reality defines itself in terms of irreconcilable but equally valid contrasts or opposites which contradict each other and thus lend themselves to conflict. Montherlant experienced these conflicts in attempting to satisfy the opposing demands of his own nature. The appetites of the sensualist were constantly at odds with the rigorous discipline of the ascetic who thirsted after a form of transcendence. The French author sought to satisfy both exigencies by alternately giving free reign to the two sides of his nature. This solution appears in the final analysis to have been unsuccessful. In the later carnets and other personal writings, we are left with the image of a man profoundly divided against himself.

In a more general context, Montherlant's sense of life's inherent contradictions and ambiguities influenced his understanding of man's situation in the world. In the Avant-propos of the essay Service inutile, Montherlant sees the individual's duty toward the state and his duty towards himself as opposing demands which admit to no possible resolution: "Puis, en Afrique, je trouvais sans parvenir à les concilier le devoir envers la patrie et le devoir envers l'individu." (E., 592)

When an individual aligns himself with a particular cause, institution or doctrine, he is in effect fragmenting reality and setting a course of action which will inevitably lead to a collision with that truth which opposes his own. The result is, according to Montherlant, a "deformation" or reality which produces conflict and destruction. "Il y a la réalité, puis il y a le parti que les individus ou les clans veulent tirer de la réalité: la déformation, c'est-à-dire une blague. Tout finit par une blague. Même un cadavre. Même beaucoup de cadavres." (E., 1209)

Of all of Montherlant's works, perhaps none elucidates better these different levels of opposition and conflict than his dramatic masterpiece Port Royal. Here, the central conflict arises from the confrontation of the secular and the transcendent, terre et ciel, as Montherlant would say, or, to use the terminology of the Jansenists, nature et grâce. In the play, the united authorities of the Catholic church and the state represent the forces of nature. The convent of Port Royal, which defends transcendent and eternal truths, represents grâce. This conflict between nature and grâce manifests itself thematically in the nuns' conversations with each other and in their arguments with the archbishop Péréfixe and his entourage. It is present as well in image and metaphor and in the staging of the play.

The conflict arises as a result of the nuns' refusal to participate in the world and to accept the dictates of any form of secular authority. From the nuns' perspective, any compromise represents a compromise with evil. The political and religious leaders view the nuns' intransigence as being both a threat to the established order and as blasphemy. The issue at hand is the singing of the famous formulary condemning five propositions in the theologian Jansenius' Augustinus, but the ramifications of the struggle are of much greater consequence. At one point, Sister Gabrielle reminds the other nuns that: "the history of Port Royal is but one episode in the age old struggle between the divine Spirit and the Beast."²

In two episodes, the playwright carefully opposes the realms of nature and grâce. The first episode,

the opening scene of the play, depicts Sister Gabrielle's conversation with her father and the ensuing discussion between her and the other members of the convent. The grating through which she must communicate with her father emphasizes Port Royal's separation from the world. She tells him that she has come to Port Royal: "to keep silence with the world." (T., 854) and she prays to God: 'qu'il me purifie de tout ce que j'ai entendu venant du monde extérieur, et que je l'oublie." (T., 855) Gabrielle's father insists that his daughter sign the formulary, because obedience makes life easier for all concerned.

The conversation between the nuns which follows this exchange suggests that the Jansenists' voluntary isolation implies a condemnation of the world. Sister Hélène describes the manner in which the members of the convent are abused and insulted by those on the outside. She concludes: "Ce sont eux qui sont l'enfer. Mon Dieu! je peux dire à présent que j'ai vu l'enfer." (T., 857) Secular institutions, including the Church itself, are seen as prisons; "Quand je prononce les mots 'Rome,' ou 'Le Louvre,' c'est comme si je prononçais 'la Bastille': cela me donne le même frisson," (T., 861) Even the leaders of the Church, ostensibly the nuns' superiors in religious and spiritual matters, are associated with the world and with other men. They are thereby implicitly condemned. The archbishop Péréfixe's all-too-human character is suggested by the fact that he loves to drink (T., 859) and his comportment, for Sister Hélène at least, is better suited to a soldier than to an Archbishop. The Pope himself, although not attacked for any vices, is condemned as well because he is subject to human limitations. In a remark addressed to Sister Flavie, Gabrielle affirms that the Pope is capable of errors in judgement because: "Il est homme comme les autres." (T., 856)

The second episode begins with the arrival of the Archbishop Péréfixe and his entourage. Here, the nuns deny the world and its institutions in refusing to obey the demands of the secular authorities. The authorities condemn the nuns' rebelliousness and denigrate the Jansenists' attitudes and beliefs. This confrontation indicates a complete lack of communica-

tion arising from profound differences between the two groups. This philosophical divergence extends finally to a radical difference in ideas of the nature of Christianity and of God himself.

Montherlant underscores these differences in the stage directions which describe the arrival of Péréfixe and the civil authorities. Into the austerity of the convent enters a group of brightly dressed men (T., 887) whose colorful outfits stand in stark contrast to the white habits of the nuns. Montherlant stresses the fact that: "[a]vec leurs ors, leurs rouges, leurs noirs, ils semblent une assemblée de magnifiques et un peu monstrueux insectes." (T., 887) He emphasizes both their association with terrestrial existence and the menacing nature of their appearance when he calls them: "une assemblée d'insectes corruscants et effrayants." (T., 892) Their monstrousness and their force contrast sharply with the frailty of the nuns; they are: "enormous insects of the virgin forest who hypnotize a flock of frightened birds." (T., 892) To the extent that the image of the insect recalls the Beast, Péréfixe and the civil authorities are associated with the forces of evil. For Sister Angélique de Saint-Jean, as she affirmed in her Relation de captivité, they represented "une conspiration de tout l'Enfer."

The nuns themselves are aware of the threat of violence against them and understand full well that the earthly authorities will not hesitate to use force to achieve their ends. The prieure likens the situation of the Jansenists to that of Christ in the praetorium surrounded by Roman legions. Indeed, the convent has been surrounded by archers whose presence provides concrete proof of the threat of force. (T., 891) For the nuns moreover, the abuse of power by the authorities is indicative of their corruption. Just as they have been debased by their own power, so they use it as a tool in the corruption of others. Sister Flavie, for example, betrays the convent because the authorities have promised her that she will eventually become an abbess if she does so.

Because the authorities rule through the arbitrary use of power, their actions and attitudes are

characterized by a complete indifference to a sense of justice and especially Divine Justice. One of the members of the archbishop's entourage, the Official, reminds the nuns that between private citizens, one must have proofs in order to condemn others. A king, however, can condemn simply on the basis of suspicions. The authority of the Church itself is equated with the oppressive and unjust rule of the secular powers. After Péréfixe has delivered his pronouncement concerning the fate of the nuns of Port Royal, one of the sisters exclaims: "Aujourd'hui est le jour de l'homme. Demain viendra le jour de Dieu." (T., 891) Sister Françoise affirms that the injustice of the authorities is finally a sign of evil: "la religion a ses mystères. Le Mal lui aussi a les siens. L'un d'eux est le Mystère de l'injustice." (T., 899)

For the archbishop and the king's officers, the nuns' refusal to obey represents not only political rebelliousness but an overweening pride and self-righteousness that borders on heresy. The Lieutenant Civil informs the Prieure that: "le Roi ne veut point de Frondeuses. Le temps de la Fronde est fini." (T., 895) Péréfixe finds the nuns' self-righteousness to be indicative of a grand orgueil, and the Jansenists' association of their cause with that of the true Church and of true Christianity is clearly heretical. When Sister Françoise accuses the archbishop of violating the principles of Christianity, Péréfixe protests that the nuns have distorted the truth in accusing the authorities of heresy. Finally, Péréfixe affirms that ecclesiastical and civil disobedience are one and the same thing, in recalling to the nuns Richelieu's statement that: "all that which causes trouble in religious matters causes dissension in the state as well." (T., 908)

The confrontation finally culminates in a series of accusations and counter accusations which demonstrate that no form of communication is possible between the two groups. Even the possibility of co-existence is put in doubt. For Péréfixe, the Jansenists despise: "tout ce qui respire l'autorité." (T., 907) The nuns' suffering, their martyrdom is in vain because it is not sanctified by the Church. The archbishop concludes ominously: "The devil also has his martyrs." (T., 906)

The nuns believe that the Church has corrupted the principles of Christianity and compromised its claim to divine sanction by aligning itself with the political authorities. Françoise stresses that: "Christianity was perfect at its inception because it was divine." (T. 902) In altering its doctrines in order to please the king and other political leaders, the Church has undermined Christian truth. The absolute and eternal nature of the Christian Faith has been destroyed. As Françoise cautions: "C'est l'hérésie qui innove toujours." (T., 902)

Françoise's conviction that the truths of the Church are relative and contingent leads her to conclude that the Church's Christianity is not her own, and that the Church's God is not her God:

Il y a un autre Dieu que les dieux de la terre qui se sont établis pour juger, et pour n'être juges de personne. Il y a un autre juge dans le Ciel, qui nous rendra plus de justice. Il y a un autre monde où nous serons préservés de vous. (T., 903)

Sister Françoise's defiant affirmation confirms that the realms of nature and grâce are finally two distinct worlds which can never be reconciled.

The nuns' confrontation with the archbishop and his civilian allies furnishes the play with its dramatic force and movement. Port Royal's emotional intensity however derives from the spectacle of the sufferings of the play's protagonist, Sister Angélique de Saint-Jean. The internal crisis which ultimately undermines Angélique's faith in God is also conceived in terms of the struggle between nature and grâce, but here, the dimensions of the conflict are much more immediate and personal.

In defending Port Royal from its enemies, Angélique believes that she is serving God, that she is striving towards grace. Because of her intransigence, she has become a symbol of strength for the other nuns. In her attempt to overcome human attachments and to achieve communion with God, Angélique refuses to acknowledge her affection for others and

particularly for Françoise early in the play. She understands that: "[l]es créatures sont contagieuses d'elles-mêmes. Rien de tel qu'une affection humaine pour porter l'ombre sur le soleil de Dieu." (T. 873)

Angélique is nevertheless profoundly human. Like Montherlant himself, she is inevitably drawn toward the realm of nature through an intense sensual awareness. In some instances, Angélique remarks on the pleasures which her sensuality occasionally affords her. In her conversation with Mother Agnès, she expresses her longing for the arrival of the month of September, when: "au bout de nos jardins, on recommencera de sentir l'odeur des champs." (T., 879) In other situations, Angélique's sensitivity causes her anguish which far surpasses mere physical discomfort. Throughout the play, she suffers intensely from the heat and oppressiveness of August, which she ultimately sees as a proof of God's absence: "Il y a un silence et un abandon, en août, qui me figurent terriblement le silence et l'abandon de Dieu." (T., 878)

Angélique de Saint-Jean's spiritual crisis culminates in her loss of faith. That part of her being which belongs to nature overcomes her desire for transcendence. In the final scene, when she intimates to Françoise that she has loved her as she would her own child, Angélique is, in essence, admitting defeat. Towards the end of the play, Angélique is informed that she will be isolated from her sisters and sequestered in a cell in a convent run by her enemies. Angélique loses her faith when she understands the physical and emotional privations she will undergo. This is consistent with the form that the struggle within her between nature and grâce has taken throughout the play. The burden of Angélique's humanity has destroyed her spirituality.

The conflict between nature and grâce in Port Royal, in whatever guise it takes, clearly does not allow for the possibility of compromise. The clash of opposing beliefs, attitudes and values in the play entails the annihilation of the Order of Port Royal and the destruction of the soul of its leader

Angélique de Saint-Jean. On both social and personal levels, the consequences are profoundly tragic.

NOTES

¹ Essais. Paris: Gallimard, Edition de la Pléiade. 1963, p. 455. All subsequent references to the Essais will be given in the text with the letter E followed by the page number.

² Théâtre. Paris: Gallimard, Edition de la Pléiade. 1972, p. 869. All subsequent references to the Théâtre will be given in the text with the letter T followed by the page number.

Cyclical Time in Octavio Paz's "Piedra de Sol"

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Time and myths are important themes for Octavio Paz. In "Piedra de Sol," the Mexican poet deals with the theme of cyclical time based on the myth of the eternal return. In order to understand the development of this theme, it will be necessary to define the concept of time as it is understood by the majority of traditional societies¹ and to define the myth of the eternal return. This study will then demonstrate how both the structure and the content of the poem are used in order to expound the concept of cyclical time. The analysis of content will deal with Paz's concept of time as it is exemplified in this poem and with the degree to which his concept corresponds or does not correspond with the concepts of sacred time and the myth of the eternal return.

According to Mircea Eliade, almost all traditional societies maintain the concept that there are two types of time: sacred time and profane time. Sacred time "by its very nature...is reversible in the sense that, properly speaking it is a primordial mythical time made present. Every religious festival, any liturgical time, represents the reactualization of a sacred event that took place in a mythical past 'in the beginnings.' Religious participation in a festival implies emerging from ordinary temporal duration and reintegration of the mythical time reactualized by the festival itself. Hence sacred time is indefinitely recoverable, indefinitely repeatable...sacred time appears under the paradoxical aspect of circular time, reversible and recoverable, a sort of eternal mythical present that is periodically reintegrated by the means of rites."² On the other hand, Eliade uses profane time to refer to "all events without meaning, events, that is, with no archetypal models; 'history' is the remembrance of those events, of what can only really be called 'unmeanings' or even sins (as they are divergences from the archetypal norms)."³

Closely related to repeated sacred time is the myth of the eternal return. The basis of this myth is a "Belief in a time that is cyclic, in an eternal returning, in a periodic destruction of the world and mankind to be followed by a new world and a new, regenerated mankind--all these beliefs bear witness primarily to the desire and hope for a periodic regeneration of the time gone by, of history."⁴ This cycle begins with a creation, contains an existence or degeneration and a return to chaos. The cycle repeats itself continuously: creation, existence, chaos, ad infinitum. According to Eliade, "No event is unique, occurs once and for all, but it has occurred, occurs, and will occur, perpetually; the same individuals have appeared, appear and will reappear at every return of the cycle upon itself. Cosmic duration is repetition and anakuklosis, eternal return."⁵

Paz expresses the theme of cyclical time through the use of a cyclical structure in which the poem does not have a beginning nor an end, but flows continuously like a planet in orbit. Several devices are used to achieve this effect. There are no capital letters used to indicate the beginnings of sentences nor periods to indicate the ends of sentences. The poem consists of one extremely long phrase. The poem begins in the middle of a phrase, which suggests that it begins in the middle of a partially developed idea rather than with the beginning of an idea. The repetition of the same six lines at the beginning and the end of the poem implies that the work does not end, but rather returns to begin the cycle again. The sixth line has only half the number of syllables as the other lines. The first time that this line appears, the meter is completed by another half line "un camino tranquilo"⁶ that immediately follows it. In both places, this sixth line is followed by a colon. Since colons are used to indicate that the material following the colon is coordinated to the preceding material, the "last" line of the poem cannot be the end of the poem because some element has to follow the colon. Thus, these six lines together with the colon establish a link that the reader must mentally complete by returning to line seven. The number of lines also symbolically represents an uninterrupted cycle. If the six repeated lines are

counted only once, the poem contains 584 lines. The Aztecs knew that approximately every 584 days there would be a conjunction of Venus with the sun. In order to demonstrate the relationship of Venus with the sun, the Aztecs sculpted 584 symbols around the border of the Aztec calendar in order to represent the continuous cyclical revolutions of Venus. Thus, the poem is intended to continue ad infinitum like the celestial orbit of Venus and like the sculpted symbols on the Aztec calendar.

The title and the epigraph are also important in establishing the concept of cyclical time. The title alludes to the Aztec calendar or Piedra de Sol, a massive sculpted monolith that contains a circular representation of the Aztec year. This Sun Stone also records the Aztec myths of the creations and destructions of the world. While each year begins again at the end of a cycle, the human race, according to the Aztecs, was destroyed every fifty-two years in order to be recreated. Thus, in agreement with the myth of the eternal return, there was a continuous cycle of creation, existence, destruction, and chaos.

The epigraph also expresses the idea of cyclical time. In the first line of his sonnet, "Arthemis," Gérard de Nerval states that the thirteenth returns, and it is the first. On a clock, the thirteenth hour represents the return to the first hour. The second line reinforces the aspect of the myth of the eternal return. This is the belief that all moments are the same moment and the only moment. The queen in the third line is, without doubt, Artemis, the goddess of the moon. According to Eliade, the moon plays an important role for traditional man because it makes the periodic disappearance and reappearance, the eternal return, clear and obvious. Then, in response to Nerval's question, Are you the first or the last?, Artemis can answer that she is as much one as the other because the moon is the incarnation of all the forms through which the cycle will pass. For traditional societies, the continual return of the moon to its first stage and its unceasing cycle, make it "the heavenly body above all others concerned with the rhythms of life. It is not surprising, then, that it governs all those spheres of nature that fall under

the law of recurring cycles: water, rain, plant life, fertility."

The transition from the epigraph to the poem itself is very fluid and natural because the first images are based on two other elements with recurrent cycles: water and plants. Water or the river is a useful symbol because it possesses dual power. It has the ability to both give and take life. In the mythologies of traditional societies, water often destroys the old while it regenerates the new. In the sacred time of these societies, a destruction always precedes the re-creation. The plants selected by Paz are also symbolic of death and resurrection. Both the willow and poplar grew at the entrance to Hades.⁸ The willow is also considered to be sacred to the moon because of its connection to water. Thus, in the epigraph and the first few lines, Paz begins to suggest through his images and allusions that there is a constant regeneration or re-creation. He also takes advantage of the traditional mythologies by joining the archetypal and eternal time with the image of water. The idea that a re-creation springs forth out of a destruction continues through the poem. Another image with regenerative powers is the mirror. Although one reflection is destroyed, another takes its place and the cycle continues: "un reflejo me borra, nazco en otro" (p. 261).

Later in the poem, Paz suggests that there does not exist either a person or an event that is unique or that occurs only once. This concept is repeated several times in the work. When the speaker "forgets" the name of the woman in the poem, he calls her by several names: "Melusina, / Laura, Isabel, Persefona, María" (p. 263) because she is the archetype of woman: "tienes todos los rostros y ninguno, / eres todas las horas y ninguna," (p. 263). Since sacred time represents the re-actualization of an event, the person, place, time and event are always the same as can be seen in the following lines:

años fantasmas, días circulares
que dan al mismo patio, al mismo muro,
arde el instante y son un solo rostro

los sucesivos rostros de la llama,
 todos los nombres son un solo nombre,
 todos los rostros son un solo rostro,
 todos los siglos son un solo instante (p. 264)

In sacred-cyclical time, a single individual is not very important, as can be seen by the following lines:

no hay nadie, no eres nadie,
 un montón de ceniza y una escoba,
 un cuchillo mellado y un plumero,
 un pellejo colgado de unos huesos,
 un racimo ya seco, un hoyo negro
 y en el fondo del hoyo los dos ojos
 de una niña ahogada hace mil años,

miradas enterradas en un pozo,
 miradas que nos ven desde el principio, (p. 267)

That which modern man judges to be important and that which he calls "history" has little importance in this scheme. As individuals, the lives of specific mortals, cited in the poem, such as Agamemnon, Moctezuma, Robespierre, Lincoln, Trotsky and Madero are not worth anything.

¿no son nada los gritos de los hombres?,
 ¿no pasa nada cuando pasa el tiempo?

--no pasa nada, sólo un parpadeo
 del sol, un movimiento apenas, nada,
 no hay redención, no vuelve atrás el tiempo,
 los muertos están fijos en su muerte
 y no pueden morir de otra muerte,
 intocables, clavados en su gesto,
 desde su soledad, desde su muerte
 sin remedio nos miran sin mirarnos,
 su muerte ya es la estatua de su vida,
 un siempre estar ya nada para siempre
 cada minuto es nada para siempre, (pp. 274-275)

As historical figures these individuals are not important because they do not represent the re-actualization of archetypes. Paz combines the idea that an individual is not important with the concept that individually we are nothing. From this he draws the

conclusion that the importance of man's existence comes from his communion with others. In the following lines, Paz wonders whether we have dominion over our lives. He answers his own questions by stating that the fullness of his existence comes not out of his individual existence, but rather through the unity with others.

-- la vida,¿cuándo fue de veras nuestra?
 ¿cuándo somos de veras lo que somos?,
 bien mirado no somos, nunca somos
 a solas sino vértigo y vacío,
 muecas en el espejo, horror y vómito,
 nunca la vida es nuestra, es de los otros,
 la vida no es de nadie, todos somos
 la vida--pan de sol para los otros,
 los otros todos que nosotros somos--,
 soy otro cuando soy, los actos míos
 son más míos si son también de todos,
 para que pueda ser ha de ser otro,
 salir de mí, buscarme entre los otros,
 los otros que no son si yo no existo,
 los otros que me dan plena existencia,
 no soy, no hay yo, siempre somos nosotros,

(p. 275)

It is with this idea of communion that Paz's concept of the regeneration of time is distinct from the concept that traditional societies have. While these societies believe that the cause of this regeneration is the repetition of myths and the imitation of archetypes, Paz perceives love and communion with others as a means of transcending time. Through love, man is able to return to a mythical beginning and exist in an eternal present. When Paz writes that there is no longer time, he does not suggest the annihilation of time, but rather the rejection of modern lineal time and a return to the mythical present when everything is sacred and everything is transformed by a re-creation or regeneration. According to Paz, love is the cause of this transformation:

no hay tiempo ya, ni muro:-- ¡espacio, espacio,
 abre la mano, coge esta riqueza,
 corta los frutos, come de la vida,

tiéndete al pie del árbol, bebe el agua!,
 todo se transfigura y es sagrado,
 es el centro del mundo cada cuarto,
 es la primera noche, el primer día,
 el mundo nace cuando dos se besan (p. 270)

Since traditional societies understand man's temporal existence to be an infinite repetition of archetypes and exemplary gestures, traditional man is perceived as living in a constant present. For him, there is no past, nor future, only the present. Paz manipulates the idea that three times exist at the same time when he compares the time to a ground swell that appears to approach and recede at the same time. The simultaneity of the past and the present is accentuated when the poet declares that the past does not exist in the past, but exists now in the present.

oh vida por vivir y ya vivida,
 tiempo que vuelve en una marejada
 y se retira sin volver el rostro,
 lo que pasó no fue pero está siendo (p. 265)

"Piedra de Sol" by Octavio Paz is a poem that is not easy to understand. While many of the allusions and images appear to be very esoteric or personal, with a careful investigation, the reader realizes that these allusions and images have their foundation in the myths, philosophies, religions and literatures of many centuries. The references are made even more complicated when a person realizes that these sources are not limited to an Aztec background, but also include many other civilizations. A third complication appears when the reader begins to notice a correlation between the various myths and allusions.

The theme of time that has been analyzed here is only one of the several themes that are found in "Piedra de Sol". Although Paz employs the myth of the eternal return as a basis for the theme, he also introduces much of his own philosophy. The result is a poem that contains many images and ideas that the reader can contemplate.

NOTES

¹ Mircea Eliade uses the term "traditional societies" to refer to all societies up to modern twentieth century societies.

² Wendell C. Bean and William G. Doty, Myths, Rites, Symbols: A Mircea Eliade Reader (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), pp. 33-34.

³ Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religions (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1958), p. 401.

⁴ Eliade, Patterns, p. 407.

⁵ Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959), p. 110.

⁶ Octavio Paz, Poemas (1935-1975) (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, S. A., 1979), p. 260. All quotations from "Piedra de Sol", with page numbers in parentheses, are included in the text.

La treizième revient... c'est encor la première;
et c'est toujours la seule -ou c'est le seul
moment;
car es-tu reine, ô toi, la première ou dernière?
es-tu roi, toi le seul ou le dernier amant?

Gérard de Nerval, "Arthémis"

Un sauce de cristal, un chopo de agua,
un alto surtidor que el viento arquea,
un árbol bien plantado más danzante,
un caminar de río que se curva,

avanza, retrocede, da un rodeo
y llega siempre:

un caminar tranquilo (pp. 259-260)

⁷ Eliade, Patterns, p. 154.

⁸ Ad de Vries, Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery (London: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1974), p. 371 and p. 500.

The Mystification of Love and Lorca's
Female Image in El Público

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The ambivalent nature of Federico García Lorca's sexual drives is portrayed in El público through a plethora of juxtaposed images and in an apparently disjointed language. The blending of these two elements on the stage must certainly be quite striking, if difficult for the audience to understand, since Lorca has translated the theories of surrealism into theatre for the purpose of conveying a message which would obviously be extremely shocking to the average theatregoer. Thus, it is easy to conclude that what Lorca had primarily in mind did not concern itself exclusively with theatrical innovations on the stage, but had a lot to do with finding the proper vehicle to present a statement regarding the conflict of his nature versus society.

Understanding El público poses insurmountable difficulties from every angle, even to those familiar with the theories of surrealism and with Lorca himself. Rafael Martínez Nadal explains some of the conflicting opinions expressed after Lorca's first reading of the play to some of his friends:

Leyó con entusiasmo y maestría, utilizando todos los registros de su voz, matizando la entonación, perfecto el ritmo, pero al terminar se produjo un silencio que no lo motivaba honda impresión, sino desorientación o sorpresa. "Estupendo"--dijo alguien--,"pero irrepresentable." Y otro, más sincero: "Yo, la verdad, confieso que no he entendido nada."¹

What it is undeniable, though, is Lorca's enthusiasm and excitement regarding El público, judging by his own words:

Ya verás qué obra. Atrevidísima y con una técnica totalmente nueva. Es lo mejor que he escrito para el teatro.²

The few studies written concerning El público invariably refer to the problem of having to decipher an unfinished manuscript, which would lead us to believe that this is the major cause for the difficulty of understanding the play in its entirety. Unfortunate as it may be, the fact that the complete manuscript was lost should not be blamed for such difficulty, considering the inherent hermetic quality of all of Lorca's literary production. Based on this consideration, it is easy to conclude that the missing parts of the manuscript would throw little or no light at all on the play. Furthermore, El público represents the total negation of a conventional continuity of action, as it was understood in the thirties, and even now, precisely because of the ultra-surrealist elements which compose its structure.

Because of the aforementioned, an attempt at an analysis of El público from a conventional point of view will inevitably result in total failure. Studies have dealt with Lorca's theatrical innovations in this particular₃ play and the influence of Pirandello on its structure. However, it is my opinion that the most important element of the play is not its outer structure, but the statement or message intended, which motivated such innovative techniques.

Personally, I believe that in order to find the causal agent of the play, it is necessary to approach it from the point of view of its thematic structure, taking into consideration that, although action and thematic structure go hand in hand, they serve two entirely different purposes. The action would refer to the incidents of the plot, while the thematic structure would refer to the meaning of the said incidents.

Known is the fact that Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet was one of Lorca's favorite plays and, for Lorca, the tragic lovers seem to represent the ideal incarnation of love. They not only epitomize the ideal type of emotional relationship between two individuals, for a conventional society; but also symbolize an inevitable tragic end, as the tragic result of a mortal being daring to pursue happiness in an imperfect world ruled by alien forces; and in which,

the individual, in the long run, becomes nothing but a puppet at the mercy of the predeterministic laws of "the public" i.e. nature and the social environment. Thus, Lorca demythifies the traditional image of Romeo and Juliet created by society, in which love can only be conceived in terms of an emotional link between a man and a woman. Through Romeo and Juliet, Lorca is stating that love can manifest itself on different levels of intensity and through different natures. Love is not an emotion strictly reserved for the relationship between a man and a woman. For Lorca, love is an emotion free of all limitations imposed by mores, tradition and society, with regards to its manifestation.

In El público, it will be through Juliet, among other characters, that Lorca's female aspect of his own nature will be unveiled asserting his conviction that love has no gender, and that lingering over such considerations would certainly be irrelevant:

ESTUDIANTE 4. (Con asombro) ¿Pero no te has dado cuenta que la Julieta que estaba en el sepulcro era un joven disfrazado, un truco del Director de escena, y que la verdadera Julieta estaba amor-dazada debajo de los asientos?

ESTUDIANTE 5. (Rompiendo a reir.) ¡Pues me gusta! Parecía muy hermosa y si era un joven disfrazado no me importa nada; en cambio, no habría recogido el zapato de aquella muchacha llena de polvo que gemía como una gata debajo de las sillas.

ESTUDIANTE₄ 3. Y, sin embargo, por eso la han asesinado.

By killing Juliet, Lorca seems to be symbolically killing society's conventional concept of love, represented by her. Moreover, Lorca seems to go even beyond the aforementioned. In order to reinforce his statement, love appears as having innumerable dimensions. Love can manifest itself in any way, shape or form, and to limit the extension of its manifestation would be irrelevant:

HOMBRE 1. Romeo puede ser un ave y Julieta puede ser una piedra. Romeo puede ser un grano de sal y Julieta puede ser un mapa.

DIRECTOR. Pero nunca dejarán de ser Romeo y Julieta.

(p. 39)

Thus, the innermost nature of love and its right to exist are conveyed.

The second scene, Ruina romana, presents two characters, the Figura de Pámpanos and the Figura de Cascabeles in an atmosphere of overwhelming eroticism conveyed by symbolic elements such as the red grapes which cover Figura de Pámpanos, the flute, rattles, etc. They are, evidently, male characters in which the female image is understated: they both yearn for a man. The female image as the exact counterpart of the male image is an integral part of the homosexual nature and is overtly exposed in a dialectical dialogue not devoid of sado-masochistic innuendos:

FIGURA DE CASCABELES. ¿Y si yo me convirtiera en pez luna?

FIGURA DE PÁMPANOS. Yo me convertiría en cuchillo.

FIGURA DE CASCABELES. (Dejando de danzar.) Pero, ¿por qué? ¿Por qué me atormentas? ¿Cómo no vienes conmigo si me amas hasta donde yo te lleve? Si yo me convirtiera en pez luna tú te convertirías en ola de mar, o en alga, o si quieres algo muy lejano porque no desees besarme, tú te convertirías en luna llena, ¡pero en cuchillo! Te gozas en interrumpir mi danza y danzando es la única manera que tengo de amarte.

FIGURA DE PÁMPANOS. Cuando rondas el lecho y los objetos de la casa te sigo, pero no te sigo a los sitios a donde tú lleno de sagacidad, pretendes llevarme. Si tú te convirtieras en pez luna yo te abriría con un cuchillo, porque soy un hombre, porque no soy nada más que eso, un hombre, más hombre que Adán y quiero que tú seas aún más

hombre que yo. Tan hombre que no haya ruido en las ramas cuando tú pases. Pero tú no eres un hombre. Si yo no tuviera esta flauta te escaparías a la luna, a la luna cubierta de pañolitos de encaje y gotas de sangre de mujer.

(pp. 58-59)

This scene also exposes the male-female dichotomy in Lorca's personality through explicit sexual symbols such as the fish, the knife, the moon, etc.

The female image throughout the play constantly mutates in nature and intensity. It may manifest itself in an apparently heterosexual character, as a latent drive; it may be exposed as a stage device, as in the case of Juliet who ends up being a young man; it can be extremely romantic, as symbolized by the moon, or pathetic, as symbolized by a dead cow:

CABALLO BLANCO 1.

Amor. Amar. Amor.
de la luna con el cascarón,
de la yema con la luna
y la nube con el cascarón.

LOS TRES CABALLOS BLANCOS. (Golpeando el suelo con sus bastones.)

Amor. Amar. Amor.
De la boffiga con el sol,
del sol con la vaca muerta
y el escarabajo con el sol.

(p. 97)

Love and the female image, as conceived by Lorca seem to be the leitmotiv of El público. And, it appears as though these two elements will serve as unifying themes in close relationship. They appear and disappear; they mutate and desintegrate only to reappear once again, thus unfolding the action into different levels of reality, which convey different aspects of love. Among other images, the female image appears through most of the characters as an extension of Lorca himself, e.g. the Director seems to be a heterosexual at the beginning of the play; however, he will later demand a lipstick, an obvious phallic symbol:

"Te bordaré sobre la carne y me gustará verte dormir en el tejado. ¿Cuánto dinero tienes en el bolsillo? ¡Quémalo! (El Hombre 1 enciende un fosforo y quema los billetes). Nunca veo bien como desaparecen los dibujos en la llama. ¿No tienes más dinero? ¡Qué pobre eres, Gonzalo! ¿Y mi lapiz para los labios? ¿No tienes carmín? Es un fastidio."

(p. 47)

Surprisingly enough, El público is not shocking because of the "message" or "messages" intended in its thematic structure, which deal with different aspects of love--aspects which may range from the abstract, e.g., a stone, a feather, etc. to the basest levels of human aberrations through, among others, excremental visions:

FIGURA DE CASCABELES. ¿Si yo me convirtiera en nube?

FIGURA DE PÁMPANOS. Yo me convertiría en ojo.

FIGURA DE CASCABELES. ¿Si yo me convirtiera en caca?

FIGURA DE PÁMPANOS. Yo me convertiría en mosca.

(p. 55)

What might shock the spectator more readily is the surrealist elements on the stage, whose dismembered components bring about a nightmarish atmosphere of chaotic sequence.

The language used by Lorca in El público is undoubtedly quite strong, to say the least. However, Lorca's unquestionable lyricism redeems it.

El público is a play so extremely rich in lyrical themes that it would be impossible to explore all of them in one study. Suffice it to say that with El público, Lorca has put on the stage a manifesto regarding the defense of his nature before society. In order to achieve this hard task, he has to make use of the appropriate techniques so as not to betray his own sense of aesthetics:

El público es una exploración hacia el interior del poeta, donde lejos de copiarse la naturaleza, lejos de retratarse la realidad, siguiendo una línea idealista y subjetivista, se basa esa realidad en las estructuras de la mente o de la vida interior del hombre, y se pretende dar de un solo golpe una visión total y auténtica del ser humano. Ésta es una visión absurda en forma adecuadamente absurda.⁵

NOTES

¹ R. Martínez Nadal y M. Laffranque, El público y comedia sin título (Barcelo, Caracas, México: 1978), p. 22.

² Nadal, p. 2

³ Wilma Newberry, "Aesthetic Distance in García Lorca's El público: Pirandello and Ortega," Hispanic Review, 37, 1969, pp. 276-96.

⁴ Federico García Lorca, El público y comedia sin título, ed., R. Martínez Nadal y M. Laffranque (Barcelona, Caracas, México: 1978), p. 141. The page numbers referring to the play will be given, from now on, in the text proper, since they belong to the same edition.

⁵ José Monleón, "Estreno de El público de García Lorca," Triunfo, 867, 8th September, 1979, p. 47.

The Romantic Myth of the ángel consoladora
in Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera's Ala y abismo

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IN MEMORY OF BOYD G. CARTER

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera's volume of poetry entitled Ala y abismo¹ (1884-1887) can be read as a destruction of the Romantic myth of the ángel consoladora, for the work makes clear her existence upon a fantasy level exclusively. In the early poems of the collection we find multiple expressions of the ángel de amor: the fantasies of the perfect wife, of the muse, and of the remote, unattainable woman-goddess. The Romantics generally did not question the emotional basis of the idealized woman when they gave her expression in literature. Much more introspection and self-awareness, however, underlie Nájera's Modernist creation than underlie the Romantic visions of the remote Oedipal woman present in Don Juan Tenorio or Don Álvaro. In Don Juan Tenorio, for example, doña Inés is a character who functions, within the limits of a personality relatively lacking in complexity, as an integrated whole. Nájera, however, from the beginning of Ala y abismo, bares the psychological mechanism underlying his obsession with the idealized woman.

In "Ignota Dea," the opening poem of the collection, the woman is no more than a stimulus for the poet's fantasies; remote and unattainable, she is the "estrella que ninguno alcanza, / nieve de un cráter que ninguno pisa" (II, 11). Even the title, "Unknown Goddess," makes apparent the uncertainty of her identity; this remote, unreal being, however, acquires life ("cobra vida") in his dreams. His visions of her separate the poet from surrounding reality; he insists almost paranoidly upon his isolation. The poetry of the woman in "Ignota Dea," moreover, is unrelated to any sense of connectedness with another human being. Even literature is no longer a bridge of communication, for he muses that when she reads his poem she will wonder who the woman is. The verses are "llenos

de ella," (II, 13), an indication of Nájera's belief that poetry has the capacity to capture and contain the identity of the person. It is not primarily the woman, however, but the poet himself who is entrapped within this solitary world.

In "De vasallo" Nájera would return to the theme of himself as prisoner of his beloved: "Cuanto existe, señora, es prisionero: / la perla, de su concha nacarada: / de las nocturnas sombras el lucero; / la vida de la luz; yo de mi amada" (II, 57). Although he draws upon a commonplace of courtly poetry, it has deep significance in Ala y abismo, for Nájera becomes entangled in a nightmare web of fantasy about the woman. She is both the ala which he depends upon to lift him out of his depression, and when the fantasies of her disintegrate, a significant force in the psychological abyss into which he is plunged.

When he writes that the Unknown Goddess acquires life in his dreams, it is a projection of his own fantasies upon her; his poem does not ultimately portray the woman, but his existence within his own imagination. The Modernists' portraits of women were generally deeply narcissistic. This was a way of controlling the woman who was often perceived as threatening, for they stamped their own identity upon her, and made her into a reflection of themselves. This obviated their relating in any depth to another human being, and facilitated their flight into the recesses of their own minds. The poetry of the woman in Modernism, therefore, tends to be a mirror of the poet's isolation, his alienation from surrounding reality.³

Conflicting fantasies co-exist in "Ignota Dea," making the nature of the woman's existence in his reveries extremely confused. She is the Chaste Goddess whose "divine image" he worships; desire, however, continually threatens to break in on the dream. In his imagined idylls, there is a constant threat of fantasizing a full-blown sexual encounter: "Mi boca recorre tu cabello / y las azules venas de tu cuello / que hinchadas se estremecen con pasión" (II, 10-11). But in words permeated with sexual symbolism he describes his rejection of eroticism: "La Diosa permanece en el sagrario, / los cirios son aun de virgen

cera..." (II, 12). The illusion of the ángel consoladora is explicitly based on sexual repression.

This obsessive search for an ideal woman represents a regression to an infantile view in which the mother is seen as pure, remote and idealized. Najera's love, even as an adult, has to be seen as "spiritual," a continuation of the child's relationship with the mother. Eroticism is, as a result, perceived as destructive, because it represents the antithesis of this "spirituality." Because the woman excites his fantasies, she must be controlled, for she has the power to excite not only "good" visions of the chastely remote goddess, but erotic reveries which can destroy that illusion. The psychological roots of the clearly sadistic overtones of Modernist decadence have rarely been examined in Hispanic criticism. Turn-of-the-century sadism originates in the need to control not the woman so much as her power to excite fantasies which represent a threat to the illusory world the writer struggles to maintain. Power over the woman is in part achieved through the ritualization of the relationship with her. When love becomes a rite in which the poet worships at the woman-goddess's altar, it has the effect of depersonalizing the woman, for any female is interchangeable with any other who can stimulate his fantasies that she is simultaneously remote and desirable.

"Desconocida" further reveals the way in which the poet struggles to control the eroticism which threatens to break in upon his illusory world. The ambience of this second poem of Ala y abismo is even more unreal than that of the first, for, unlike the Ignota Dea, this woman has no basis in reality. In her, Najera recreates one of his most powerful fantasies: the woman who will bring him perfect domestic happiness. The vision of the woman is again based on sexual repression; sensuous elements are present, but they are explicitly rejected. The function of the perfect wife, like that of the woman-goddess, is to recapture for Najera the experiences of childhood; she is specifically expected to restore his lost childhood religious faith.

Destructive eroticism is controlled by Nájera through the fantasies of marriage and family life; this has roots in Hispanic Romanticism where domesticity was often exalted instead of passion outside of marriage.⁵ Nájera idealizes conventional, middle-class values at the expense of any recognition of the woman's emotional and sexual being. The poetic world of "Desconocida," moreover, is very unstable, for it is entirely illusory. Nájera himself concedes that this fantasized bride may be his own creation: *Si tu no existes en la vida / mi amor tiene la fuerza de crearte!*" (II, 16). The stable, even prosaic, values of domesticity and traditional Catholicism are inseparable from Nájera's ephemeral dream of the woman, for they are the cornerposts to which he attempts to anchor his tenuous artistic vision.

In "Musa blanca" we find still another incarnation of the idealized woman, the muse. In the poem, which is written as a relationship with a woman is ending, the poet is alone in his study; the room is filled with objects which evoke the memory of the woman, with whom he was involved as recently as the night before. In the midst of his pain and loss, he fantasizes the arrival of his muse. This poem again makes clear the isolation and alienation which underlie Nájera's artistic vision. The involvement with the woman, which offers the possibility of a poem capturing all the rich psychological nuances of an encounter between two people, leads only to a deeper retreat into fantasy. This withdrawal takes the place of poetry which would fully analyze the emotions of sorrow and loss experienced at the ending of a love affair. At the same time, the first poems of the woman in Ala y abismo reveal the way in which modern life is lived at a psychological level. Because the visions of the woman are fragmentary, shifting from one fantasy to another, modern life and identity are themselves perceived to be fragmented and unstable.

In the course of the development of the poetry of Ala y abismo, the dream of the Romantic ángel consoladora disintegrates. She was, from the beginning of the work, so illusory that she bore the seeds of her own destruction. The poet's fantasy of her, from "Ignota Dea" on, was so evanescent and delicate that

it ultimately had to shatter. In Nájera's treatment of this myth, moreover, it is apparent that Romanticism was coming to an end. In "Monólogo del incrédulo" at the end of Ala y abismo, the long-awaited novia is finally present, the ángel de amor with whom the poet can potentially live in the domestic bliss of which he has dreamed. Predictably, however, the woman in life does not conform to the perfect woman of his reveries. In the first place, she does not restore his lost childhood faith, for the poem was written at a time of deep religious crisis; the poet is the "incrédulo" of the title. In Modernism, as we have seen in "Ignota Dea," the woman is rarely valued except as a stimulus for fantasy. Since it is the fantasies of her that are sought, the woman herself is desirable only when she is unattainable, and therefore a source of imagined happiness. As a result, the poetry written when the previously unattainable novia is present is some of Nájera's most depressed and suicidal. He reverts to an obsession with the mother, furthermore, where the Oedipal fixation all began.

The poet denigrates the novia in life, in comparison with his exaltation of her in fantasy. He now finds her ignorant and unstimulating, for while he has learned that life is painful, in her youthful innocence she has not. Much of what Nájera sees in the woman is still a projection of his own emotional patterns upon her. He believes that her image of him is as deeply rooted in dream as is his of her, and is therefore, as unsubstantial and easily shattered. He contends that she was impressed by something as ephemeral as a line of his poetry, and as a result, believed herself to be in love with him. Because the portrait of the woman is so involved with Nájera's illusions of her, and with the failure of those illusions, we can grasp no realistic idea of what the woman's psychology may actually be.

With the disintegration of his illuaoory visions of novia, the poet begins to doubt seriously that love ever lasts. When his adolescent concept of love is shattered, there is no deeper, more grown-up affection to take its place. The mature love poetry of a Shakespeare is inconceivable in many nineteenth cen-

tury writers, including Nájera. He turns against the woman, depersonalizing her by identifying all women with the archetypal female who, because she brings forth life, is responsible for the unbroken chain of suffering: "¡Que la matriz eterna, / engendradora del linaje humano, / se torne estéril... que la vida pare!" (II, 89). One realizes how completely the earlier illusions have been shattered when this imprecation against the matriz eterna is compared with the exaltation of marriage, domesticity, and family life in poems like "Desconocida."

The fantasy of the ángel consoladora and the denigration of the real-life woman are not atypical of the attitudes of the Latin American society of the time. Literature does not negate social values; Becky Sharp in her determination to marry well or be damned, marched at the head of legions of Victorian women. In the Modernists' distorted portrayal of the woman we find the roots of attitudes which present-day feminists are still trying to combat. Nor does the collapse of the illusion of the perfect woman-goddess in Ala y abismo signal the end of Romantic illusion in Modernism. Long after the publication of this collection, Nájera and other Modernists continued to take refuge in the traditional securities of nineteenth century myth, which was a world much less threatening than the radical vision of modernity they glimpsed when they relinquished Romantic idealization.

NOTES

¹ Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Poesías completas, ed. Francisco González Guerrero, 2nd ed. (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1966), II. References to this second volume of Nájera's complete poetry will be cited within the text of this study as II, followed by page number.

² The term "Modernism" in this paper refers to the period as it was experienced in Latin American culture.

³ See "Julián del Casal's Portraits of Women," in The Analysis of Literary Texts: Current Trends in Methodology, ed. Randolph D. Pope (Ypsilanti, MI: Bilingual Press, 1980), pp. 78-88.

⁴ See Ruth Crego Benson, Women in Tolstoy (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), p. 14, for her discussion of Tolstoy's similar treatment of the erotic.

⁵ Emilio Carilla, El romanticismo en la América Hispánica (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1967), II, 24-25.

The Yankee Winter of Luis Cernuda

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Luis Cernuda left England for the U.S. in 1947. As he looked back on the years spent there was little, apart from his poetry, that he cared to remember:

Nada suyo guardaba aquella tierra
Donde existiera. Por el aire,
Como error, diez años de la vida
vió en un punto borrarse.

he says in 'La Partida'. The reality he left behind him had become gray and uneventful; ahead of him was a world suffused with desire and hope. And yet, before long, the new landscape would also become blurred, its first vigor deadened by an encroaching winter of the mind.

Nevertheless it was with renewed hope that he looked to his stay in the U.S. He was to take a position in Spanish at Mount Holyoke College--upon the earnest invitation of Concha de Albornoz. He would reside in South Hadley, Mass. until 1952 when he moved to Mexico. While at Mount Holyoke he completed Vivir sin estar viviendo and began Con las horas contadas.

This study will examine three poems from this period of Cernuda's work in which the poet moves from high expectation--"Otros aires"--through disillusionment--"Nocturno yanqui"--to bitterness--"Limbo." These poems are of particular interest not only because of their excellence--and they are among the poet's best--but because they trace with special clarity a typical emotional cycle in the poet. Consequently, when integrated within the broad development of his poetry, what might seem at first a negative view of the U.S. becomes mitigated.

Cernuda's departure from England represented also a poetic renewal, and it is as the double beckoning of a new landscape and a new voice that one must read "Otros aires." The poem's first line "Como serán los

árboles aquellos?" establishes this double significance immediately, while initiating a series of temporal, spatial and poetic echoes that find a climactic resolution in the final lines. The trees of the new land stand against a vast, uncluttered horizon:

¿Cómo serán los árboles aquellos?"
 Preguntaste. Ahí los tienes:
 Aun desnudos, ya hermosos,
 Bajo del cielo vasto, por el llano y colinas
 Que ves a la ventana,
 Amigos nuevos en espera
 De tu salida para andar contigo.

The implication is first that this new landscape will reorganize time in its own terms. Verb tenses criss-cross through the stanza: Future ("Cómo serán"), preterite ("Preguntaste"), present ("Ahí los tienes," "ves"); the trees themselves appear as representations of change ("Aun desnudos, ya hermosos"). The final verb of the strophe is an infinitive that contains within it all its potential transformations. It and the trees await the poet to reach semantic fullness. In this meditation--the question from the past--"¿Cómo serán los árboles aquellos?"--establishes the auto-diálogo--a frequent technique used by the poet when engaged in a reflection that may lead to some new awareness--on a foundation of language proper, suggesting that the poem's intent is at least double: to discover a landscape, true, but also to renew the poetic activity. After all, the very title has a double meaning: air, as we breathe, and air, as we sing. The poet first sees the trees "a la ventana," framed, as a living representation. This "window" is what Cernuda wants the poem to be, a transparent form containing and transmitting natural elements.

The landscape and its temporal setting acquire greater definition in the second stanza:

Allá, por el sendero
 A la orilla del lago, en una fila,
 Álamos, acres, abedules,
 Contra las nubes claras
 Y libres, pueblan un horizonte
 Acogedor desde el primer instante,
 En este fin de invierno hacia la primavera.

It is a landscape of beginnings, where single elements are sufficient: a path, a lake, a line of trees, the first moment. To remind us again that we are dealing with an origin in language, the trees named all begin with "a" and imply a possible continuing enumeration. Trees and clouds are twice inhabitants of self-mirroring worlds: land and sky. Reality and Desire are now not distant, this landscape may join them in a near future. The movement of the poem is one of close gathering and interiorization in terms of space, and in terms of time a drawing away from an uncertain past through a welcoming present and a renewal in spring. In the third stanza inner and outer landscape merge towards the knowledge of poetry "Luz nueva y soledad inspiradora." The last stanza resolves all questions and points decisively to a creative future. The question that came from the past "¿Cómo serán los árboles aquellos?" is replaced by a promise from the future "Una promesa oyes?" The poet's inner voice is harmonized to the murmur of the new leaves: "Acaso está soñando con las hojas nacientes,/Su existencia, como la tuya,/En música escondida y revelada." Drawn away from his confinement behind the window, behind the opening question, and shedding the burden of that past, out by the trees, the poet can see--the nascent leaves and hear their new voice which is also his own.

The discovery of this renovated poetic voice allows us to see in the poem an incipient "Ars poetica" that Cernuda wants to elaborate for his new home. A possible subtext for this piece would be Baudelaire's own "Art poétique," his famous "Correspondances." "Correspondances," however, is not a text that underpins the entire composition, rather one to which "Otros Aires" tends and whose proximity increases as the poem develops, as inner and outer landscapes grow closer together. The correlation is the closest at the end. Also one element of Baudelaire's sonnet is selected--albeit a crucial one: the poet echoing the secret voice of nature and recognizing its "familiar" tones.

This becomes clear if we trace quickly the growth of the new awareness:

Stanza 1: Amigos nuevos

Bajo del cielo vasto, por el llano y
colinas (comes before Amigos...?)

Stanza 2: Álamos... (names)

...
... un horizonte
Acogedor

Stanza 3: ...propicio

...familiar
...entre esos troncos
Hallas tu mundo fiel, ...
Confianza...
Luz nueva y soledad inspiradora.

Stanza 4: ...soñando con las hojas nacies, Su existencia, como la tuya, En música escondida y revelada.

Related ideas in Baudelaire's poem would be:

vivants piliers	vaste
forets de symboles	chairs d'enfants
regards familiers	chantent

The poem is structured as the increasingly complex and revealing answer to an apparently innocuous question: "¿Cómo?" The question, in retrospect, acquires unexpected meanings. The trees are an image of the poetic voice and appear, naked against the sky, as the pipes of nature's vast organ whose "música escondida y revelada" the poet can finally capture. He can do so only after he moves out among their trunks in answer to their friendly beckoning. From distance to proximity, from friendliness to familiarity to communion, from uncertainty to revelation, the gradations of awareness that answer it turn the question into the summary of an entire poetic past. Its answer is the poetic future enabled by the rebirth of the poet's voice together with the new music "escondida y revelada."

I have looked at some elements of this poem in detail because against its promise the retrenchment of

"Nocturno Yanquí" and the anger of "Limbo" become even more striking. In effect, these two poems represent the rejection of that promise in both senses, as the rejection of a landscape and of its possible poetry. "Nocturno Yanquí" from Con las horas contadas is an autumn poem. The poet now retreats behind the window, erases the world outside exchanging daylight for a lamp and then the darkness. The first stanza seems almost a systematic negation of the spaces opened up in the first poem:

La lámpara y la cortina
 Al pueblo en su sombra excluyen.
 Sueña ahora,
 Si puedes, si te contentas
 Con sueños, cuando te faltan
 Realidades.

The poet prepares himself for a lengthy hibernation and proceeds to the necessary examen de conscience. There is no movement towards the future here. The present rises like a wall in the way of any project and forces the mind back to its remotest sources. Here too the dialectic will lead to new knowledge, or perhaps simply a new awareness; but whereas the light of day, the clear and bracing expanses of "Otros Aires" elated the spirit outward in space and time, the very situation now is one of careful holding back. The poet alone with the light that is allowed him, a mere lamp, his own limited powers, undertakes the painful, laborious rendering of accounts: "Estás aquí, de regreso, / Del mundo..." Not now the trees, the wind, the slender lines of a new latent landscape, the morning of the day and of the year, rather:

Es la madera, que cruje;
 Es el radiador, que silba.
 Un bostezo.
 Pausa, Y el reloj consultas:
 Todavía temprano para
 Acostarte.

In all respects the movement of the poem seems the reverse of that in "Otros aires." There we had an expansion, here we have a contraction.

From the very first stanza, after the rapid strokes circumscribing the space of the action--strictly mental--the gaze turns within immediately. The opening lines describe both an illumination and a veiling that imply the work's central discovery: the final awareness is a self-appraisal involving the acceptance of a loss. At the same time, the double movement of the gaze without-within, concrete-mental, parallels that of the whole poem and is iterated by each stanza with slight modifications. The retraction of the gaze toward the inner world is markedly ironical as will be the gradual plumbing toward the center pursued by the poem to the end.

The poet is led to consider aspects of time in two main steps: (1) objective time--watch, seasons, time spent in reading; already with the thought of books enters that of memory and the new understanding of once-read texts; (2) personal duration a) as the filling of the present: "La vida en tiempo se vive,/ Tu eternidad es ahora" b) as the painful memory of the past. Time is then examined according to the necessity which absorbed most of it, teaching, an activity that is quickly dismissed: "Nadie enseña lo que importa,/Que eso ha de aprenderlo el hombre/Por sí solo.." The final stanzas proceed to values more central to the poet. His search for love appears an affirmation of the self, the crucible of his integrity, demanding special inner strength also because Cernuda's was a homosexual passion, socially stigmatized. This awareness allows him to say: "Y al que eras le has hallado." The truth of the self, through the pursuit of personal values, is the truth of the present containing all before it:

Quien eres, tu vida era;
 Uno sin otro no sois,
 Tú lo sabes.
 Y es fuerza seguir, entonces,
 Aun el miraje perdido,
 Hasta el día
 Que la historia se termine,
 Para ti al menos.

Y piensas

Que así vuelves
Donde estabas al comienzo
Del soliloquio: contigo
Y sin nadie.

Mata la luz, y a la cama.

All realities and attentions which had previously stood in the way of dispassionate appraisal have been dismissed; the poet remains with his own truth, though it brings little comfort. The deliberately prosaic conclusion returns to the equally objective beginning in a slightly ironic underplaying of the meditation by "lamplight," incidental, so to speak, to daily waking and sleep, and perhaps not particularly "illuminating."

It seems almost as if "Nocturno Yanqui" were a calculated rebuttal to "Otros aires." In almost every sense, it realizes conditions that contradict the earlier composition. And even in the matter of a sub-text, whereas "Otros aires" leads towards a possible reading in Baudelairean terms, "Nocturno Yanqui" first evokes Manrique's "Coplas" by its prosody and its apparent topic--reminiscence--but if it gains significance from this reference, it is in negative contrast. The flow of time in Manrique was ordained toward a positive, spiritual future; in "Nocturno Yanqui" a solitary, failed present gives past events a negative value.

At this moment of ironic detachment, the poet is still able to look upon his work as perhaps a failed but necessary exercise. In the poem "Limbo," however, not even that is allowed. If the autumn was merely solitary, in the midst of winter, silence also must prevail. The poem's title already states an absolute distance from reality--the no man's land of unrealized existence. "Limbo" is not only the threatened habitation of the poet, it is also the state into which the Yankee winter has relegated the landscape:

La plaza sola (gris el aire,
Negros los árboles, la tierra

Manchada por la nieve),
 Parecía, no realidad, mas copia
 Triste sin realidad. Entonces,
 Ante el umbral, dijiste:
 Viviendo aquí serías
 Fantasma de ti mismo.

The descriptionn of the "square" ("Plaza") is interrupted, separated from its appearance by a "layer" of language, a layer of other appearances. For these other elements are presented in the most "reductive" way possible, black trees, without even a contour, stained ground. These are flattened out images, a cheap postcard that does not pretend to fidelity. The winter snow muffles and hides all definition. Walking through it, the poet has a premonition of his fate: "Viviendo aquí serías/Fantasma de ti mismo." Inside the house where the reception is taking place, darkness reigns, punctuated by occasional 'objets d'art', though even colors are tamed and hidden "...el color se escondía/En un retablo español, en un lienzo/Francés, su brío amedrentado." This is a world of shadows, copies of copies, where light itself is its own copy. The host sits next to his own portrait, his being diminished, rather than increased by its reproduction. His guests, secure under their various masks, perform the social rites. Into this artificiality, the poet bears an off-handed remark:

Allí con sus iguales,
 Damas imperativas bajo sus afeites,
 Caballeros seguros de sí mismos,
 Rito social cumplía,
 Y entre el diálogo moroso,
 Tú oyendo alguien que dijo: "Me ofrecieron
 La primera edición de un poeta raro,
 Y la he comprado", tu emoción callaste.

The statement itself reveals the value placed on the poetry to be minimal, emphasizing the commercial aspect of the transaction--"ofrecieron," "primera edición," and "la he comprado." The writer "un poeta raro" is diminished, last in the exchange, together with his work. This is his final death, his poetry "...otro objeto vano,/Otro ornamento inútil." The ambiance, reduced copy of a landscape, has transformed

the speaker also, turned another poet into a diminished replica of himself--as he had guessed at the beginning--manifesting thus its inexorable power. He feels violated beyond the grave: "Mayor la destrucción, el fuego."

In this Yankee winter, Cernuda's early hopes, the jubilant affirmation of "otros aires," have been reduced to this bitter reproach. He reaches the nadir of his American experience and sees clearly for the first time not merely that the fate of his work is in the hands of others, but that these hands will inevitably debase it. Thus Cernuda's trajectory in New England begins in enthusiasm for a new poetics and would end here with the denial of poetry. This trajectory is not entirely a response to the difficulties of his American sojourn. It is rather the form taken by his creative and emotional history regardless of the background against which it unfolds. But it was also on the occasion of a trip back to the United States that Cernuda met someone who, for a moment, rekindled his will to believe in his fellowman. In "1936," the penultimate poem of Desolación de la quimera, his last collection of verse, a veteran of the Lincoln Brigade calls forth anew in the poet the faith in the struggle that sustained so many during the Civil War and to which he himself has subscribed. This also must be reckoned as part of Cernuda's experience in the United States.

Nerval's Revision of German Romanticism:
Aurélia and Novalis' Heinrich von Ofterdingen

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Claude Pichois has written that Gerard de Nerval, of all nineteenth century French poets, is "celui qui présente le plus de troublantes ressemblances avec Novalis,"¹ the German Romantic poet of the late eighteenth century (1772-1801) and forerunner of Symbolist esthetics. Pichois calls the parallels between the two poets "disurbing" because critics find it difficult to explain unambiguously the astounding similarities between their works.² While certain close parallels seem to suggest Nerval might have used Novalis as a literary model, this has been difficult to prove. Not only was Novalis ostensibly unknown in the first half of the nineteenth century France, but Nerval--despite his profound debt to other German writers such as Goethe, Jean Paul, and E. T. A. Hoffmann--never mentioned Novalis or his works. Pichois consequently concludes that similarities between Novalis and most of his French counterparts are not the result of influence, but rather are attributable to common sources and parallel literary impulses.

Still, as Pichois acknowledges, the affinities to Novalis in Nerval's writings are disturbing, and they remain so because of their very precision. In two other articles I have argued that contrary to the scholarly consensus, the writings of Novalis were in fact accessible to French writers of the early nineteenth century, and that there is sufficient circumstantial evidence to contend that Nerval very likely did know Novalis' major works.³ In this paper I shall suggest on the basis of textual comparisons that Nerval had significantly used Novalis' novel Heinrich von Ofterdingen (publ. 1802) in his own work, Aurélia (publ. 1855). This literary relationship is important not simply for its own sake but also for what it reveals to us about Aurélia and about the larger literary context. Specifically, an awareness of Nerval's allusions to Novalis contributes to our understanding of Aurélia's thematic structure, clarifies Nerval's

attitude to the idealism of German Romanticism, and helps better define the place of both Novalis and Nerval in the Romantic-Symbolist tradition.

The focus of this investigation is the theme of language--the quest for a poetic language--in Heinrich von Ofterdingen and Aurélia. That both works should depict a poet in search of language is not in itself remarkable, but it is a confirmation that both Novalis and Nerval, working in the European Romantic tradition, were centrally concerned with the Romantic desire to attain a language capable of giving form to the ineffable. In Heinrich von Ofterdingen it is the novel's hero who on the very first page begins to sense the ineffable essence of inner experience and of the ideal world veiled by nature. Stirred by his own inarticulate condition, Heinrich longs to understand the language of nature that was once comprehensible to men in primeval times, and to gain knowledge of the many words that he suddenly realizes are still unknown to him.⁴ Similarly, on the first page of Aurélia it is the narrator who claims that he intends to "try" to express the progress of the mysteries that occurred entirely within his soul--the path, perhaps, of illusion and madness on one hand, or of ultimate spiritual reality on the other.⁵ His verbal quest is an attempt, as he later explains, to recapture "la lettre perdue ou le signe effacé" or to recompose "la gamme dissonante" (OE, I, 387), which are all allusions to the perfect primordial language of the lost Golden Age. Thus would he gain access to "le monde des esprits." Within a common Romantic context, then, both works are quests for a perfect, lost language that can give the poet powers to express in finite form the ineffable and infinite.

However, despite this initial similarity there are distinct differences that emerge in the unfolding of these two quests, and these differences lay bare the diverging attitudes Novalis and Nerval had towards their Romantic literary ideals. Novalis' hero--despite a consciousness of his inarticulate being--unmistakably approaches his goal of perfect poetic utterance in an almost naive manner by moving towards the realization of love, which in Novalis' view constitutes the spirit of poetry. Nerval's narrator--

plagued by fear of sin, the threat of nihilism, and the loss of love--moves away from the superior language he seeks. These complementary patterns infuse both novels but can be seen most clearly if we focus on several important passages in each novel that seem to reflect each other. In these reflections we can discern the double edged relationship between the works.

During his spiritual journey towards poetry, Heinrich von Ofterdingen encounters various unknown languages that he desires to master, but one of the most crucial moments is his descent into the cave in Chapter Five of Part One. In this cave he meets a hermit standing before a stone table and discovers a strange book written in an unknown language. The book appears to relate Heinrich's own story, and it symbolizes not only his own destiny but also the perfect medium of poetry that he has yet to comprehend and articulate. The book, like Heinrich's own development, seems to be incomplete, but there is no question here that Heinrich will advance towards the hoped-for articulate condition. Learning of a mythological poetics from the old hermit prepares Heinrich for the climactic experience of his journey: the encounter with Klingsohr the poet and his daughter Mathilde, the spirit of love.

This encounter in Chapter Six of Part one, which nurtures Heinrich's powers of speech and gives him a more acute sense of his inarticulate condition (NS, I, 276), has its climax in the youth's dream of Mathilde's death. In this dream Heinrich experiences the death of his beloved and traverses a strange land where he is addressed by nature, hears the sound of bells in a small spring, and begins to overcome his alienation. Hearing a familiar song, he recognizes a voice as Mathilde's (278). Assuring Heinrich that they will remain together eternally, Mathilde touches her lips to his and speaks into his mouth "ein wunderbares geheimes Wort" that reverberates through his being (279). When Heinrich tries to repeat this magic word, however, he is awakened by his grandfather's call, and the word is lost. Yet despite this loss, in the next chapter Heinrich exhibits in his conversations with Klingsohr a subtle grasp of poetic language; and in Part Two of the novel, "The Fulfill-

ment," the poet in him is born and sings his first song. In the poetic realm of Part Two Heinrich not only displays new poetic powers, but when he hears the consoling voices of nature and of Mathilde he also overcomes the threat of nihilism caused by the loss of his beloved:

Aber die wilden Qualen der Einsamkeit, die herbe Pein eines unsäglichen Verlustes, die trübe, entsetzliche Leere, die irdische Ohnmacht war gewichen, und der Pi[l]grimm sah sich wieder in einer vollen, bedeutsamen Welt. (322)

In Aurélia the narrator's quest for language is in many ways parallel to Heinrich's, but it is also significantly different--enough so that the path of Nerval's narrator seems to be an ironic inversion of the poetic progress outlined in Novalis' novel. Aurélia's narrator repeatedly complains of his inability to convey his experience and emotions. Although he seems in the past to have experienced moments of higher communication and made use of superior languages, these moments were only temporary and the languages were lost to him again and again (see, for example, OE, I, 362-63 and 366). The reasons for the narrator's repeated failure to achieve permanent powers of understanding and expression can be discerned in three dreams that not only suggest the origins of Nerval's pessimism but also exhibit revealing parallels to the passages discussed in Heinrich von Ofterdingen.

In Part One, Chapter Five of Aurélia, the hero dreams that with a guide he descends steep slopes to an ancient city where he comes upon "une race heureuse," the inhabitants of "un paradis perdu" (OE, I, 370-71). When he finds himself in a huge room and observes an old man working before a table, we are reminded of Part One, Chapter Five of Heinrich von Ofterdingen, where Heinrich and his guide descend into a huge cavern and confront the old hermit who sits behind a stone slab reading a book (NS, I, 255). Unlike Heinrich, however, who is welcomed to this realm of history and initiated into its secrets, Nerval's hero is prevented from gaining a more intimate knowledge of his world. As he attempts to enter

the mysterious chamber where the old man works, he is threatened by another man holding a weapon. "Il semblait," he concludes, "qu'on eût voulu m'empêcher de pénétrer le mystère de ces retraites" (OE, I, 370). Whereas Heinrich's experience is a milestone in his progress towards language, the dream of Nerval's narrator is still another confirmation of his failure to understand life's mysteries. Reading this passage in Nerval as an ironic parallel to the similar scene in Novalis underlines the twist the narrator's Romantic quest has taken.

In the sixth chapter of Aurélia's first part there is another dream that sharpens the contrast between the two novels' parallel movements. According to the narrator, this dream foreshadows the death of Aurélia. It begins with the vision of three women whom the narrator takes to represent his female relatives, and who as a composite represent the changing forms of the eternal feminine, the beloved Aurélia. The "voix vibrante et mélodieuse" (OE, I, 373) of the oldest endows this figure with the language of purity and truth, which the narrator no longer comprehends as he seemed to in his youth.

While this beginning is similar to Dante's dream of Beatrice's death in Chapter Twenty-three of the Vita nuova,⁶ the rest of the vision recalls aspects of Heinrich's dream of Mathilde's death in the sixth chapter of Heinrich von Ofterdingen. In Aurélia's sixth chapter, however, the course of the dream is significantly reversed. Whereas Heinrich first helplessly watches Mathilde's almost willing drowning and symbolic absorption into nature, wanders full of Angst until he reaches a small spring flowing from a hill and sounding like bells, and is finally reunited with Mathilde, whose "bekannte Stimme" assures him that they will be together eternally "hey unsern Eltern" (NS, I, 278-79), Nerval's hero first wanders with one of the women through a garden until he reaches "une source d'eau vive, dont le clapotement harmonieux résonnait sur un bassin d'eau," and then watches in wonder and terror as the female is transformed into the garden itself (OE, I, 373-74). Feeling extreme alienation, he cries out to her disappearing form, "Oh, ne fuis pas!... car la nature meurt avec toi!"

Moreover, whereas Heinrich is brought at the end of his dream to the verge of uttering that wonderful word spoken by Mathilde, Nerval's hero--in a garden now become a graveyard--hears only the hopeless exclamation of anonymous voices: "L'Univers est dans la nuit!" Unlike Heinrich's nearness to divine utterance in Chapter Six, and unlike his salvation and meaningful perception of the universe brought on by the consoling voices of nature in Part Two, Nerval's loss of the beloved is also the loss of the consoling voice of divinity. For him universal harmony and meaning are replaced by threatening voices proclaiming the emptiness of the universe. In both physical and existential detail, then, the dream of Nerval's narrator exactly inverts--one might say perverts--the optimistic course of Heinrich's Romantic dream.

The inverted parallel goes even further. In Aurélia the hero's growing despair reaches its climax in the dream of Chapter Ten, where the themes of language, the loss of the beloved, and the sin of transgression join to bring Part One to its pessimistic conclusion. In this final dream sequence, Nerval's hero enters a room where people appear to be awaiting a wedding, and he immediately images that Aurélia is about to be wed to his double. He evidently associates this wedding with the secrets of the spirit world, for when the people try to calm him, he alludes to the man with the weapon who had prevented his access to the mysteries of the realm described in Chapter Five (OE, I, 384). At that point he is also threatened by a workman from a creative workshop he had just visited, while the crowd scoffs at his impotence. Given the intersection of these images, his impotence can be interpreted in creative (i.e., poetic) as well as sexual terms.

He begins to raise his arm in order to make a sign that seems to have "une puissance magique" (384), but before he can complete his gesture, he is awakened by a woman's cry: "Le cri d'une femme, distinct et vibrant, empreint d'une douleur déchirante, me réveilla en sursaut! Les syllabes d'un mot inconnu que j'allais prononcer expiraient sur mes lèvres." The cry that brings the dreamer back to reality and prevents his pronouncing the unknown, apparently talis-

manic word or his making the magic sign, he identifies as that of the dead Aurélia.

This dream vividly recalls in several ways the end of Heinrich's dream in Chapter Six of Heinrich von Ofterdingen; and like the preceding dreams discussed here, it also inverts the optimistic progression towards language described by Novalis. The impotence of Nerval's hero contrasts with Heinrich's inarticulateness, for Novalis' hero is always on the verge of expression and is carried towards poetic articulation by his experiences, even by his dream of Mathilde's death, which ultimately announces the advent of a higher existence realized in Part Two of the novel. Nerval's dreams, on the other hand, represent the progressive growth of despair and the constant frustration of creative verbal powers; and in this final chapter of Aurélia's first part the narrator's frustration and despair reach their climax. Thus, Part One of Aurélia ends on a note of despair and fear--very unlike that joyous proclamation of the reign of poetry and love at the end of the first part of Heinrich von Ofterdingen--sung, moreover, "mit lauter Stimme":

Gegründet ist das Reich der Ewigkeit,
In Lieb' und Frieden endigt sich der Streit,
Vorüber ging der lange Traum der Schmerzen,
Sophie ist ewig Priesterin der Herzen.

(NS, I, 315)

The loss of the beloved Nerval, which seems to have been brought about by the desire to know divine mysteries and by the transgression of divine laws (OE, I, 385), prevents the hero's gaining creative powers of language. The hero is forced here to face the truth, as foreshadowed in his earlier dream, that only the voice of death has meaning for him. The narrator comes to this realization again as he writes, for he ends this last chapter of Part One by admitting once more his inability to understand and define the relationship between natural and supernatural events.

This admission gives us little reason to suspect that he will ever achieve the language and love he has repeatedly lost, and Part Two of Aurélia bears this

out. Despite his claims, the narrator has not attained the esoteric language he had sought but is rather confronted with a vision of "le mot pardon" (OE, I, 410), which underlines the sinful nature of his verbal quest. What is more, the language with which he is left remains inadequate for his high purpose. Even the name of Aurélia becomes increasingly ineffable, or inadequate, and she comes to be signified by "A***" (390), and in the final scenes by "***" (410). And all that is left of his past and his former love for Aurélia in reality are the profane versions of the "magic alphabet" and "effaced sign"--his yellow scraps of notes and letters, significantly incomplete:

Dans des rouleaux mieux enveloppés que les autres, je retrouve des lettres arabes, des reliques du Claire et de Stamboul. O bonheur! ô tristesse mortelle! ces caractères jaunis, ces brouillons effacés, ces lettres à demi froissées, c'est le trésor de mon seul amour... Relisons ... Bien des lettres manquent, bien d'autres sont déchirées ou raturées. (406)

Indeed, the narrator's quest to put his experience into the words has been such a failure that at the end he finds himself ready to begin his story again, still in search of language.

The poetic failure of Nerval's fictional narrator, then, stands in sharp contrast to the poetic progress of Novalis' hero, which exemplifies the optimistic esthetic of early German Romanticism. While Novalis was confident in his search for a language founded in love and capable of expressing metaphysical truths, Nerval experienced a sense of sin and nihilism common to his age, which precluded his sharing the same unqualified view of poetic power as Novalis. Nerval's pessimistic treatment of the quest for language thus constitutes a significant questioning and revision of a basic Romantic theme.

If it is true, as I maintain on the basis of very close and otherwise very "disturbing" textual parallels it is, that Nerval modeled his quest for language partly on crucial scenes in Novalis' Heinrich von

Ofterdingen, then another dimension to this revision emerges that allows us to consider Aurélia from a new perspective. Aurélia is, after all, a work that consciously invokes other works of literature--both named and unnamed--as part of its own strategy and self-commentary. By adapting motifs from Heinrich von Ofterdingen and inverting the structure of certain scenes to imply subtly but distinctly both the similarities and the differences between his hero's ambivalent and despairing quest for language and Heinrich's innocent and uncomplicated progress, Nerval adds a dimension to his work and points silently to his own sad inability to reproduce the esthetics of German Romanticism, which had meant so much to him.¹⁰ Aurélia, in a historical context, becomes a conscious literary counterpart to Heinrich von Ofterdingen that prepares for the shift from Romantic to Symbolist poetics. In a literal sense Aurélia may be called an anti-Ofterdingen, Romanticism's last gasp in mid-nineteenth century France, the last aborted attempt to salvage the transcendent ideals of Romantic religion, which are ultimately transformed¹¹ into the self-contained esthetic ideals of Symbolism.

NOTES

1 Claude Pichois, "Surnaturalisme français et romantisme allemand," in Connaissance de l'étranger: Mélanges offerts à la mémoire de Jean-Marie Carré (Paris: Didier, 1964), p. 393.

2 The most useful analyses of the Novalis-Nerval relationship are: Charles Dédéyan, Gérard de Nerval et l'Allemagne, II (Paris: SEDES, 1957), pp. 583-614; Lilian R. Furst, "Novalis' Hymnen an die Nacht and Nerval's Aurélia," Comparative Literature, 21 (1969), 31-46; and Walter A. Strauss, Descent and Return: The Orphic Theme in Modern Literature (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1971).

3 See my "Romantic Facts and Critical Myths: Novalis' Early Reception in France." The Comparatist: Journal of the Southern Comparative Literature Association, 3 (1979), 23-31; and "Nerval's Knowledge of Novalis: A Reconsideration," Romance Notes, 22, No. 1 (1981), pp. 53-57.

⁴ Novalis, Schriften, ed. Paul Kluckhohn and Richard Samuel, I, 3rd ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1977), 195. Subsequent citations are given in the text with the notation NS, volume, page.

⁵ Gérard de Nerval, OEuvres, ed. Albert Béguin and Jean Richer, I, 5th ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 359. Subsequent citations are given in the text with the notation OE, volume, page.

⁶ See Gérard de Nerval, Aurélia, ou le rêve et la vie, ed. Jean Richer in collaboration with François Constans et al. (Paris: Minard, 1965), p. 35, note b.

⁷ Nerval, of course, draws on many literary models. The source of the wedding imagery to this point is probably Heinrich Heine's "Traumbilder" in his Buch der Lieder.

⁸ The relatively narrow sexual interpretation is advanced by the commentary in Nerval, Aurélia, ed. Jean Richer, p. 57, note A; and by L.H. Sebillotte, Le Secret de Gérard de Nerval (Paris: Corti, 1948).

⁹ See Strauss, Descent and Return, p. 50, where it is noted that differences between Novalis and Nerval can be attributed to "the transformations effected by history in the fifty years which separate the major creative movements of the two writers." One might also add to this the tragic personal experiences in Nerval's life.

¹⁰ For the impact of German Romanticism on Nerval's life and works, see: Louis Paul Betz, "Goethe und Gérard de Nerval: Eine vergleichende Studie aus der französischen Romantik," Goethe-Jahrbuch, 18 (1897), 197-217; Julia Cartier, Un Intermédiaire entre la France et l'Allemagne: Gérard de Nerval (Geneva: Société Générale d'Imprimerie, 1904); Otto Weise, Gérard de Nerval: Romantik und Symbolismus (Halle: Akademischer Verlag, 1936); Dédéyan, Gérard de Nerval et l'Allemagne, 3 vols. (1957-59); Marcel Brion, "Gérard de Nerval: Romantique allemand," Revue de Paris, 69, No. 8 (1962), 15-27; and Alfred DuBruck, Gérard de Nerval and the German Heritage (The Hague: Mouton, 1956).

11 While rejecting the conclusion that Novalis was a model for Nerval, Lilian R. Furst rightly observes that both poets open "broad gateways to symbolism" ("Novalis' Hymnen an die Nacht and Nerval's Aurélia," p. 45). However, to ascertain Novalis' actual historical relationship to the Symbolists, we must understand his relationship to Nerval, certainly one of the most important pre-Symbolist poets. If Nerval were himself influenced by Novalis, then this would change substantially the present view of Novalis' role in the development of both Romantic and Symbolist literature in France--especially as described by Werner Vordtriede, Novalis und die französischen Symbolisten (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1963); and Lilian R. Furst, Counterparts: The Dynamics of Franco-German Literary Relationships 1770-1895 (Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press, 1977). S. Braak, in his early essay on "Novalis et le symbolisme français," Neophilologus, 7 (1922), 258, touched on this when he suggested that poets such as Nerval were the missing links between the poetics of Novalis and the Symbolists. Underlining the importance of such considerations, Pichois states that asking whether Nerval had read the works of Novalis is to go "au cœur même de ce délicat problème: quel rapport le surnaturalisme français entretint-il avec le romantisme allemand?" ("Surnaturalisme français et romantisme allemand," p. 393).

WRITING, VIOLENCE AND MEMORY: MARGUERITE DURAS

Sanford S. Ames

The breathless adventure of the sixties began in films with Jean Seberg, vulnerable in Paris, selling the International Herald Tribune, Monica Vitti brooding in empty Roman leisure, and Emmanuelle Riva remembering love in Hiroshima.¹ I choose these three muses and their cities to preside over what follows, so that images of desire, of desiring, might accompany the strange voyage of language that underwrites them through sex, death, and the question of how we can model a world that will survive for future generations. What I am proposing here is to read Marguerite Duras as the poetics of a shift in metaphysical ballast in the good ship Humanities.

Born in Indochina in 1914, this Frenchwoman, novelist, playwright, film maker, is one of the most influential and productive writers alive in France today. She has been publishing since 1943. The middle sixties saw her radical blossoming in Le Ravissement de Lol V. Stein (1964) and Le Vice Consul (1966), sources of many subsequent texts and films.² For the last twenty years of her career, from the film Hiroshima mon amour of 1959, which she wrote for the director, Alain Renais, to Le Navire Night of 1979, her works dream about the edge of consciousness. For Duras, our bright waking hours are silently framed by the unthinkable, an invisible closure of ideological frontiers, or perhaps the growing capability of artificial intelligence and the threat of universal atomic destruction.³ Duras is fascinated by the moment when we speak or write. This is the instant of speaking or writing during which we fall outside, into language. Is it a completion remembered, regretted, or the postponement of an impossible present? We signal one another from a space we have never been. Words are signs; they cannot locate people outside of language. The secret self is dispersed in the real mystery that there is none. Our self-containment is scattered in a written night of language, an unconscious we do not inhabit, only borrow, which nonetheless thinks us.

The question that Duras invites us to ask on the occasion of this conference might well be, can the foreignness of language make the romance of literature a guide to new ethical and political orientations...in time? The experience of learning a foreign language abroad gives us clues, the feeling of being unsynchronized, of "seeing" conversational possibilities, writing suspended in the air, pulled into the mouth and recited. We like to think that speaking our mother tongue is different, that then the words come from our feelings, ultimately attached to a divine spark, an individual essence deep inside us. Yet we know that there is no one, no individual except as named in the system of words into which we are born, prematurely. By the time we learn the language we have learned a whole system of thought, our parts in the script. Language as a model of the world gives birth to the human. What is most precious to us, our designation as an individual, mortal entity, is an effect of language, of that which can be written, which is not biologically alive, existing as it does before and beyond us. Sanity as we have known it has depended on forgetting this troubling exile. Loss of self, radically experienced, is today an incarcerated body, a victim of amnesia. We need to learn to read what fictions float us as selves with our intensities, our fears, our mortality. This is the poetry of Marguerite Duras and the crux of her art. Duras writes in Le Navire Night, "The moment we write, the moment we call, we are already the same."⁴ One name, one pronoun is the same as another, people meet only in language. We have made ourselves into private entities through a collective public system. Duras insists on the cry that would connect, that implicates the other as language even if there is no one there, or no one paying attention. Our common humanity needs to be felt as never before. It can be seen. It is in writing as a figure of culture, in the arrangements of living that our collective linkage is inscribed. Writing makes our eventual death visible, writing can be read in our absence, it is the external memory of society, built into the survival of the species. We bet against collective extinction. But there is a cry, cri in French, in the written, the écrit. Violence subtends surrender of the secret, the private, and passage into what goes on without us. Emphasis is

on the exteriority of thought. Thought is a site of language as surface and figure preceding speech with a script that turns the spoken into recitation. This emphasis is an important effect of Duras' work. A primacy of the letter works against a private notion of life, splits the nuclear density of the individual with his fear of death and loss of identity.

Love has always appropriated ultimate and absolute metaphors of incandescence and erasure. Violent self-defense is exacted in the sovereignty of nations, individuals and couples. It is one of repulsion, exclusion, in which the flags or self-symbols of name or pronoun are lit up by threats of catastrophe, of "bombs bursting in air." We have not emerged from this always potentially lethal state of affairs. In the name of survival and out of fear of individual biological death, the end of culture and history, of our very species is in sight. Medical perception and public policy have blocked the imagination in an endless repertoire of frozen images of the end; the midnight glow of screens in drying up the ink in which we all swim. Marguerite Duras knows that prosperous intimacy depends on the nightmares that jeopardize it; adultery, madness, famine and annihilation. She works with this dependency, bursting the fatal charm of private bombs, caressed for years, in the cry of recognition that differences are a matter of location and relation, that absence and death are built into our language. Public and private Hiroshimas are invoked, of passion and desolation, to defend or lament individual nuclei, the nuts we hoarded, lost, the yolks of folks, their seeds, their genes. The absorption of the couple, excluding all others as if they were dead, the ideal flashpoint of unforgettable union melting into love, the blankness of absolute erasure, of total pleasure, coincides with the imperative to defend it, to remember it, to never forget or else.

Since Hiroshima, writing and living have taken on a new look, a new strangeness. Ever since the bomb seared that first city and left the trace of human forms burned black into stone, that shadow of absent flesh, of orthopedic unity, of the bodily envelope has haunted all signs, graphically illustrating their separation from the referent, the subject. The death of

a separate individual human being has no meaning without the survival of the species, our model of the world, the languages of culture. The pictogram trace of the body on stone, or in sand, or in ashes, signals as a possible embryonic first letter, but can carry no meaning without the system of letters, the chain of signification. For, like an ant, isolated, squashed away from the ant hill, the human being as scorched bug can only smudge and blot. The beginning smears of the graphic lead all the way to the programmed electrical impulses in the computer terminal and the puzzle of where and how beliefs are encoded, not to mention "Self" consciousness. We take consciousness on faith. We cannot be in somebody's head; consciousness is only the signs of language.

We wanted it special, unforgettable and private; it came out public, vulgar and pre-recorded. We forgot it, lost it in the trivial, the already-there played back, our imagination exhausted by sound-track-and-image proposing a vivid immediacy. Human intelligence and the reality it proposes seems increasingly unnatural, even artificial, language thinking through us, producing us as an effect of its circuitry. Grammar projects a past and a future without us. To write is to become anyone, no one. At high levels of symbolization, writing produced atomic physics, wrote the end of the human. The act of writing then is simultaneously a premonition of death, a loss of self, a faith in survival of the species and now, the means to erase all the tapes and programs.

To attempt to locate life in the completion proposed by the seeming immediacy of the vocal and the visual is to move towards a reductive idealism of heart and soul, a nucleus that glows eternally, in the timbre of the voice, behind shining eyes. In emphasizing writing in the broadest sense of the word we are proposing human existence as its effect. Our circulation as a specific subject demands minimal density of text grouped under a name. A basic stock of signs must be displayed: statistics, fictions, his-her stories. The minimal requirement for the human is such designation in symbolic orderings that make vital signs a text of data through which we are born, just as surely as through the womb. Failure to understand

this split leads to the illusion that life is not made up, not fiction.

When Duras asks the question, "mais comment, comment occuper la vie?"⁵ she is working with the same riddle of consciousness and where to locate it presently being asked by scientists and philosophers in the controversy surrounding thinking machines. There is a sense of language in Duras as a network that people could slip out of and yet still continue to circulate, listening, mute, like waiting animals, enigmatic stones--or women. For it is often women in the Duras corpus who experience a fall through this dubious safety net into madness and hear the writing in speech that circulates people as words for other words. Much is made of the difference at the "V" of we poor forked creatures, sexual difference, the binary one or nothing which layers up into intelligence and consciousness. Face to face, in front of one another or a computer terminal, we still insist on firm outlines of context, unit to unit communication. How was it for you? Can a machine think? What interrogation can establish consciousness, pleasure, and intention? We are left with answers, written up.

The imaginary thickness of the subject haunts personal encounter. The attempt to apprehend the knowing of pleasure leads to reading the face of the other as sign which carries meaning, even as it forgets in bliss. The lover experiences the self subtracted in pleasure. This is the not knowing condition for knowing, the "writing" of which the self is an effect, an effect whose momentary erasure is, precisely, pleasure. The discovery of radical alterity, otherness, through the other person, is the discovery that close-up physically we are still far out, the body is an effect of the foreign word, the tattoo of writing, physical crisis an encounter with sign.

For Marguerite Duras, the relation of sex to language and love, to writing and desire, is an obsessional palimpsest. Over and over she works with the violence, the masochism, the whole bêtise of phallogocentric love: master passions, betrayal, incendiary adultery--she plays all that old music. But it is as if the phonograph, an old windup Victrola perhaps, was

running down and the needle jumping grooves. The song stutters, is full of holes and fragments disconnected, forgetting their source. In a recent text, L'Homme assis dans le couloir (1980), Duras deploys a pornographic but hieroglyphic frieze of dominance, submission, chastisement and exhaustion. The violent pleasure/pain of the man and woman is shown in the splay of limbs as a picture writing of the flesh, the strokes of forgetting pleasure becoming the mute materiality of the sign. This is a familiar primal scene in Duras' work.⁶ The reader/voyeur merges with an excluded third party watching the window-page, the embracing ignoring couple who forget, "erase" the witness. The myth of France as teacher of exemplary consumption, culinary amorous, erotic, is used by Duras to promote a new awareness of the choreography itself, the system of notation that gives us the dance.

Language and literature meet at the "V," the mouth, the fork, the wound. They promote an understanding of translation as that ravishment which leaves the puzzle of what cannot be reduced to cheery equivalence or difference. This is what is left over when one dictionary is poured into another and doesn't fit. We are talking about excess, about residue, the leftover letters not pronounced. The silent differences unvoiced in homonyms give every student access to the graphic, which splits ideal equivalence, perfect translation and repetition. The letter cannot be transparent, the psyche and the memory are the stuff of writing. As close as we get to them, or to the present here and now, we are looking through letters trying to find meaning. There is always a contorted smudge, traction patch, the letter of so many imprints which cast the shadow of our death. The letter is a vulture always waiting, giving us time before it feeds. All language is legend, the captions under frozen tombstone images repeated at blinding speed in contemporary life, images moving so fast they give the illusion of a live broadcast, like Malraux's glow worm of human consciousness sparking in the dark. Images exhaust the imagination, writing promotes the visionary.

What is not present to consciousness can only wait in words. The dictionary tells us that the word "never" expresses the notion of continuity in absence, in inexistence, in negation, from a past moment to a present one, during the whole time or from the present into the future. Continuity in absence would be a serviceable definition of the unconscious, understood as that which is always missing for there to be the point of view of an individual conscious attention. Le Navire Night carries a curious and provocative title. It, has been translated into English as The Ship Nuit. Nuit can, of course, be read in French as uight, or as the third person singular of the verb nuire, to be hurtful, harmful. The effect of the English word "night" in the French title, or the French word nuit in the English translation, calls attention to the word as written material persisting in the transparent daylight which solicits an invisible, ideal translation. We might think of this ship named for night as a phantom one, carryng the echoing, dubbing, drubbing of language that makes all stories already told, ready to overtake us in its wake. This ship is a foretaste of death, thinking outside and beyond us, a Titanic in the night that can never be retrieved. We, as separate selves with stories, are floating smudges on the surface, the oil slick left by Icarus' fall.

The voyage of Le Navire Night was already underway when Duras wrote Hiroshima mon amour. Hiroshima is a very special place to make love. Forgetfulness there is the greatest scandal. People make pilgrimages there in order not to forget. A French actress in Hiroshima, making yet another film on the subject, and a Japanese architect, make love bathed in the mythical significance of the city as a place of absolute erasure and resensitizing of memory. For the first time, the Frenchwoman (Emmanuelle Riva) shares with someone the story of her first love, a German soldier killed during the liberation of Nevers, in France, at the end of the war. The war over, Riva's head is shaved and she is locked in the cellar to hide her family's shame that their daughter had loved a German during the occupation. One day, her hair grown out again, she emerges, goes to Paris to begin her life over again, on the very day the bomb is dropped

on Hiroshima. She gives her Japanese lover her secret: she did not die of love following the death of her soldier, her first lover in Nevers. She has survived, and in sharing this indelible wound as a story with another, it joins others to be forgotten, perhaps remembered. Stories wait, sources forgotten, to be rented, borrowed. We pay for them with our lives, carried along by present narration, forgotten by speech centers talking beyond our hearing. Voices lose us and find us again in others. We are emptied images, a thin film through which life/light passes, a sensitive envelope which does not contain us.

Armageddon is a distinct possibility. This is the revelation of Hiroshima which must never be forgotten. It is a turntable of language; the power of a thousand suns is that of the humblest pen. The French city of Nevers is linked with Hiroshima in the film as a place of personal devastation. The juxtaposition of the two cities, their disquieting syllable-by-syllable declamation on the sound track, produces a labial, lateral equality in spite of the seeming imbalance the two events would represent. The names can also be read as the proscription of the unthinkable: Never(s) Hiroshima (again). The French city, Nevers, is written like the English word "never" with an added "s", which is not pronounced. We might christen our metaphorical night ship, NEVAIRE, spelled n-e-v-a-i-r-e, a possible spelling of the English "never" pronounced with a French accent. The conflation of cities, Nevers and Hiroshima, variants of individual and collective death, produces NEVAIRE, the text as an underlining of "never," the word that signals treaties, bulwarks against transgression, yet which is at the same time an enabling act for the forbidden, which must be conceptualized in order to promise its impossibility. NEVAIRE is the memento mori of what must never happen again because it has happened. It is the preview of our own death which must be written by an other, if others survive, in that writing we had to borrow to speak, to live, to privatize our bright life, forgetting the shadow, as we must.

NEVAIRE, pronounced with a comic French accent, as in the saucy promise, "I weel nevaire leeve you, chérie," done with a wink and fingers crossed, pro-

tests too much, calls attention to the distinct possibility that what is being denied may well happen, might even be prescribed, evidence that a "French leave" (in French, to filer à l'anglaise), is already planned. NEVAIRE then mocks a perpetual resistance to infidelity or contamination. It hints at the existence of the improper other as a foreign adventure, a breakdown abroad, an accident at sea. From sexuality to language, love to war, forbidden excluded opposites play in the otherness of language. To translate is to transport, to ravish, to enrapture; but, most importantly, it alters, calls attention to what cannot be changed, to alterity itself. Imperfect copies circulate, smudged and singed, too much heat, too little ink. Ideal equivalents are cut by the graphic, haunted by the left-out scratched in the margin. To position oneself in and of the sign, in graphic detritus, is to refuse a delirium of depth or height, to turn away from ultimate moments of conception of conclusion when they are proposed by an imaginary which pushes aside writing. Our written culture bears the knowledge to bring about its destruction. This has made writing itself worth another look. It can make troubling appearances in intimate and public acts, from sexuality to patriotism, not to mention suicide, as a script no longer naturally recited from memory, but haltingly or eloquently read. We have read and written Marguerite Duras in light of this development.

Life is enmeshed in the improper, the trans-individual syntax we borrow to live our story, signs which can be used to lie, to protest or contest our identity. Life cannot be isolated in the body, it has already left to wait in what we forget and remember. Marguerite Duras sets sail beyond a finding of self in a dream where letters of desire drift on the other side of conscious attention, talking to themselves. So the letter "V", as in Lol V. Stein, or in naVire or NeVers, (the city), leads to the mutation, NEVAIRE, an ending proposed and refused, as is the conclusive itself, or the compression of a picture "worth a thousand words." This would reduce and collapse the deployment of a reading and writing in which we are suspended and remade like music in time, stories full of holes, deformed by distracted telling and the fallout of letters.

NOTES

¹ I am thinking of Jean-Luc Godard's A Bout de souffle (1959), Michelangelo Antonioni's L'Avventura (1960), and Alain Renais' Hiroshim mon amour (1959), titles we might gloss as the breathless adventure of self forgetting love and death.

² The middle sixties also saw the publication of such works as Jacques Lacan's Ecrits (1966), and Jacques Derrida's De la Grammatologie (1967), indispensable to an understanding of the metaphysical shift of which Duras is a part. It is an emphasis on seeing language, the graphic material itself, rather than transparent significance.

³ For the connection between writing, artificial intelligence and human extinction, see Jonathan Schell's The Fate of the Earth (Alfred A. Knopf: New York, 1982), and The Mind's I: Fantasies and Reflections on Self and Soul, composed and arranged by Douglas R. Hofstadter and Daniel C. Dennett, (Basic Books: New York, 1981).

⁴ Le Navire Night--Césarée--Les Mains négatives -- Aurélia Steiner--Aurélai Steiner-- Aurélia Steiner (Editions de Minuit: Paris, 1979), p. 12. "Lorsque nous écrivons, lorsque nous appelons, déjà nous sommes pareils."

⁵ Le Navire Night, p. 10.

⁶ See my "Cinderella's Slipper: Mallarmé's Letters in Duras," Visible Language, XII, No. 3 (Summer, 1978), 245-254.

⁷ The Ship "Nuit", translated by Susan Dwyer in Antaeus, 32 (Winter, 1979), 70-81.

⁸ See my "The Skin of Film, The Edge of Talk: Marguerite Duras," Cream City Review, VI, No. 1 (Fall, 1980), 27-31.

The Figure of Jezabel in Tirso's
La mujer que manda en casa

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Tirso's play, La mujer que manda en casa, is a dramatic treatment of the story of Jezabel told in the first and second book of Kings of the Bible. Like much of the other biblical drama of the Golden Age, this play has not received very much attention from the critics. Yet J.C.J. Metford ranks Tirso's biblical dramas high on the list of Tirso's best plays, and Blanca de los Ríos says of La mujer que manda en casa "...tiene esta olvidada tragicomedia valores tan altos como el carácter de Jezabel, una de las psicologías femeninas más complejas y mejor observadas que produjo Tirso, y que por sí sola merece un estudio..."¹

In this paper I would like to analyze Tirso's characterization of Jezabel, that is, the ways in which he embellished the biblical version of this famous woman. The playwright certainly had an interesting figure with which to work. The Bible tells us of Jezabel's husband Ahab, that he did more to provoke the Lord of God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him (I Kings 16:33) and that it was Jezabel who stirred him up (I Kings 21:25). By emphasizing certain aspects of the biblical version of her personality, and by filling in details, Tirso has created in his play a very interesting character, and one with strong archetypal overtones. We will briefly recount the biblical version and then examine the Jezabel of Tirso's play.

According to the Bible, Ahab was King in Israel several generations after the breakup of the House of Judah and the House of Israel and he reigned for twenty-two years. His wife Jezabel was the daughter of the king of Zidon and a worshiper of Baal. Due to her influence, Ahab, too, worshiped Baal and constructed an altar for this god in Samaria. The prophet Elijah warned Ahab against his evil ways and invoked a three-year drought on the kingdom. Elijah then was forced to go into hiding to save his life.

Sometime later, however, Elijah came out of hiding and demonstrated before the people of Israel that Baal was a false god. He then had all the prophets of Baal destroyed. This action made Jezabel furious and Elijah was forced to go into hiding again.

In the meantime, Ahab decided that he wanted the vineyard that belonged to his neighbor, Naboth. He offered to buy it but Naboth refused, citing a rule from Leviticus concerning inherited property. When Ahab told Jezabel what happened, she had Naboth stoned to death on false charges of blasphemy.

Elijah then warned Ahab that he would be punished by God: all of his family would be destroyed including Jezabel who would be eaten by dogs. Ahab humbled himself before God and was pardoned--but God's punishment was promised during the reign of Ahab's son, Joram. Ahab later died in battle. While Joram was reigning, Elijah anointed Jehu to be king instead. Jehu killed Joram and ordered Jezabel to be thrown from a palace window after which her body was, in fact, devoured by dogs.

From the information given to us in the Bible, we can certainly assume that Jezabel was a terrible character. Though the details are scarce, we do know that she influenced her husband to worship a false god, was responsible for the death of Naboth and for the persecution of Elijah and the prophets of God.

Metford has mentioned some of the changes that Tirso made in the Biblical version such as in the chronology to increase the sense of drama and minor changes in the story,² to better integrate the various strands of the plot. He remarks that most notable are the additions which Tirso makes to bring the play within the conventional formula of the comedia, for example, the addition of a subplot with shepherds. Robert N. Shervill mentions other changes along the same lines. He notes, for example, that the customs and manners portrayed in the court of Ahab and Jezabel are not those of the Old Testament era but rather they follow in detail the court procedures used in the reign of the Felipes in Spain.³ The critics have not, however, stressed the changes which Tirso makes in the

characterization of the biblical Jezabel. While not distorting the Old Testament version, Tirso certainly embellishes it. In the first scene of Tirso's play, we are introduced to an extremely arrogant Jezabel. As her husband returns from a war and she from the hunt, he greets her with praises and compliments and kisses her band. She responds:

Ni la mano (Rey) me pidas
 ni victorioso blasones
 conquistas de otras naciones
 a tus banderas rendidas,
 mientras en tu reino olvidas
 tu desacato y mis penas
 que en balde triunfos ordenas,
 cuando haces de hazañas copia,
 rebelde tu nación propia,
 y obedientes las ajenas.⁴

She gives a long speech denouncing the God of Israel and praising her god, Baal, who as she says, "satisfies her desires." She concludes that if Ahab wants to win her love, his people had better worship the pagan god:

Ten por cosa manifesta
 que entre tanto que a Baal
 con aplauso general,
 no reverencie Israel,
 no has de hallar en Jezabel
 agrado a tu amor igual. (587)

Jezabel completely dominates Ahab. Without hesitation the king puts his love for his wife before his love for his own God. He says:

Adore Jerusalén
 su Dios en su templo de oro.
 que yo a Jezabel adoro
 y al sacro Baal también. (588)

His subservient position to Jezabel is even obvious to the king's subjects. In scene II, Naboth and his wife Raquel discuss the queen's power over Ahab:

Tiéndelo loco y ciego
 rendido el amoroso y torpe fuego
 de esta mujer lasciva
 que idolatra, le postra y le cautiva. (589)

Raquel continues:

Será Sardanapalo,
 Rey que no se aconseja,
 y afeminado su gobierno deja
 a mujer, enemiga
 de la piadosa ley. (589)

As in the above quote, as if to underscore this dominance, Tirso again and again refers to Jezabel in masculine terms and to her husband Ahab in feminine terms. Another situation demonstrating the same is the scene portraying Ahab and Jezabel dining outside in the garden while two crows come and steal some of the food from their table. Ahab reacts superstitiously, seeing it as a warning from God. His words seem to be chosen to remind us of a typical Golden Age feminine reaction:

¡Tiemblo,
 dudo, desmayo, suspiro,
 abrásome vivo, y muero! (602)

Jezabel, on the other hand, reacts rationally, finding a logical explanation in that years of drought have caused the birds to be more bold. She says to him, "esto es cosa natural." Furthermore, she rebukes him, saying:

¡Qué afeminado temor
 desacredita el esfuerzo
 que un hombre, un Rey, un Monarca
 debe tener?

 ¿No te avergüenzas, siendo hombre,
 que te anime el vil sujeto
 de una mujer, que se burla
 de mentirosos agüeros? (602)

In the third jornada, the king wanted to buy Naboth's vineyard but was unsuccessful. Jezabel re-

bukes him again telling him that he is acting not even as a woman but as a little girl: "aun no como mujer, como una niña / lloras por el juguete de una viña." (611) She, on the other hand, is willing to take the initiative and force Naboth to hand over the land. While it is true to the Bible that it was Jezabel who actually was responsible for the plot to get rid of Naboth and overtake his land, Tirso adds touches to the incident. First of all, in the dialogue, the playwright emphasizes the dominance of the queen, who cuts off her husband's complaints with: "¡Basta, basta, no prosigas! / Vete y déjame hacer." (612) When Ahab tries to explain his actions she snaps, "Vete ya y otra cosa no me digas," which prompts him to repond, "Más valor que yo tienes." (612) When Jezabel finally acquired the vineyard at the cost of Naboth's life, her husband responded with admiration for her masculine traits:

¡Qué pecho tan varonil
te dió el Cielo! Cuantas medras
me vienen, son, cara esposa,
por tu causa. (616)

Another detail in Tirso's version and not in the Bible, is that Jezabel uses the situation to try to seduce Naboth. In the play, Jezabel is shown to be totally lascivious and the very incarnation of the pagan spirit. Naboth explains to his wife and to the audience:

No es solamente tema
la que enloquece a Jezabel blasfema,
sino la licenciosa
ley de Baal, al orbe escandalosa. (589)

Not only does she go against God by worshipping Baal, but she seems to have an insatiable appetite for all evil things:

con lasciva licencia
se mezele el apetito y la indolencia
de todos, detal modo
que privilegie el vicio, sexo todo. (589)

In fact, Jezabel explains that the main reason she follows Baal is that this cult "da a los gustos permisiones." It is interesting to note that Tirso presents her to us in the first scene dressed for the hunt, mounted on her horse, surrounded by the dogs. For Juan Eduardo Cirlot tells us that "La carrera y la caza enloquecen el corazón del hombre,...significando así que el enemigo es interior: el propio deseo."⁵

With the same aggressiveness and lust with which she pursues all of these pleasures, Jezabel also persecutes the prophets of God. She asks her servant in the first act:

¿Por qué piensas tú que he muerto
tanto profeta hablador
que contrarios de mi amor
engaños han descubierto? (591)

Exclamations such as the following show her to be truly bloodthirsty:

¡Mueran los ciegos profetas
que siguen al falso Elías!
.....
beber su sangre apetezco. (588)

At the end of act II we find an even more desperate Jezabel, for Elíjah has killed the prophets of Baal and caused the drought to end. The people are now calling out "¡viva Elías!", to which Jezabel, in a truly violent outburst, replies:

Viviré si yo no vivo.
.....
que he de lavarme las manos
en las corrientes sangrientas
del que mis dioses injuria
y sus ministros desprecia!
¡Yo le beberé la sangre!
¡Yo le pisaré su cabeza!
¡Loca estoy! (610)

It is interesting to note that Jezabel, in her savagery, bears some similarity to the goddesses of the Canaanite religion: Asherah, Anath and Ashtaroht.

Erich Neumann says of these, "all three of them are sinister goddesses of sex and war, whose bloodthirstiness rivals even that of Hathor and the Hindu Kali."⁶

Jezabel's masculinity is also prefigured in these goddesses. Neumann writes that in primitive religions, as was the Canaanite, in comparison to the religion of its neighbors, it is common to find androgyny in a deity. He says that "masculine traits of the female still coexist side by side with the feminine traits of the male. "In Canaan...we find all the features of the cannon which is determined by the uroboric figure of the Great Mother and by the incomplete differentiation of the masculine principle."⁷

Jezabel, like the Canaanite goddesses, represents part of what Neumann refers to as the uroboric figure of the Great Mother. Neumann explains that from the uroboric beginning the unconscious, which contains both the masculine and feminine principles, emerges the Great Mother archetype with her two sides: The wicked, devouring mother and the good mother lavishing affection. In the more primitive versions of this Great Mother archetype, the masculine and feminine principles are not completely differentiated--thus we see goddesses with aspects of both. Neumann writes that when the Great Mother assumes human form, the masculine part of the uroboros--the snakelike phallus--appears beside her as the residuum of the originally bisexual nature of the uroboros.⁸ Interestingly enough, Tirso has chosen to associate the snake with Jezabel. Naboth's wife Raquel, has a dream forewarning her of her husband's death in which she pictures Jezabel as a snake devouring her husband:

... en sangre se bañaba
una serpiente
que venenosa, inclemente,
en tus carnes se cebaba
.....
Jezabel el áspid fue
que lasciva,
mientras la lealtad te priva.
Circe nueva,
en tus entrañas se ceba (615)

Neumann also writes that the wicked side of this archetype, or the Terrible Mother, is an enchantress who confuses the senses and drives men out of their minds.⁹ In Tirso's play, Ahab perceives Jezabel in this way, referring to her face, for example, as "hechizo del alma mía." (587) Like Circe, mistress of wild beasts, the Terrible Mother is a sorceress who transforms men into animals. In the play, Elías comments that men and beasts seem to be changing places since, because of Jezabel, men pursue him while crows bring him food.

According to Neumann, the struggle of every ego against the primordial unconscious forces of the Terrible Mother and its eventual emancipation can also be seen on a phylogentic level.¹⁰ As the individual ego strives for liberation, primitive civilizations go through a similar struggle against the forces of darkness, such as against the pagan mentality which encourages sacrificial blood offerings to appease the Mother Goddess. God's prophets were sent to lead the people, precisely out of this mentality.

Perhaps we can apply the message of Tirso's play both to the level of the psyche and to the level of the civilization. In the warning against la mujer que manda en casa, casa can be taken to mean psyche. On this level we see the struggle of the ego (represented in the play by Ahab, Naboth and Jehu) against the Terrible Mother archetype (represented by Jezabel). After many setbacks the ego triumphs, at least temporarily. On the level of the civilization, Jezabel represents paganism itself. The play shows us the triumph, though not final, of God's chosen people against the primitive, idolatrous ways. Seen in this way, la mujer que manda en casa may be taken as a representation of the pagan drives, against which the people of Israel struggled for so many years.

Neumann writes that "the stronger the masculine ego consciousness becomes, the more it is aware of the emasculating, bewitching, deadly and stupefying nature of the Great Goddess."¹¹ In Tirso's play, Elías' warning to Ahab in the first act shows that he is aware of this emasculating nature of the goddess-Jezabel:

Afemina tu diadema

.....

pues indigno de ser hombre
te gobierna una mujer. (596)

Ahab did not have the sufficient ego strength to resist the powerful attraction of Jezabel. Yet two other key masculine figures in Tirso's play were able to do so: They were Jehu and Naboth. Like Elías, Jehu is aware early on in the play of the dangerous influence of the queen. His words "Esto y mucho más peligra reino en que manda mujer" (p. 597) end the first jornada. He will have an important role in the final destruction of Jezabel later in the play.

Tirso has greatly expanded the biblical role of Naboth and his relationship with the queen. In his first encounter with Jezabel, Naboth is both attracted by her beauty and repulsed by her cruelty:

¡Qué peregrina beldad!
¡Si menos crueldad tuvieras!
Más siempre son compañeras
la bellaza y la crueldad (592)

He acts as a loyal subject--making the three reverences and even kissing the queen's hand. However, when she orders him to love her, he firmly refuses--standing by his wife and his religion.

In the third act, Jezabel again tries to seduce him and fails. She offers him three plates, one with a crown and a rope, another with a sword and a whimple, and the third has stones and blood. The symbolism suggests that he can choose to love her and be king or to die by stoning. Unafraid of her threats, Naboth throws the crown to the floor and steps on it. Jezabel subsequently has him stoned to death.

The Terrible Mother has triumphed for the moment but the struggle continues. As the Lord had promised, King Ahab died in battle and his son Joram took the throne. A prophet of the Lord, however, annointed Jehu to be the next king of Israel. As Jehu is approaching the palace, Jezabel is getting dressed in

front of a mirror. She hears a strange song that predicts her demise:

caerá el águila atrevida,
siendo presa a los voraces
lebreles que la dividan. (623)

For the first time she becomes afraid. She then looks in the mirror and sees the bloody image of Naboth with a knife pointed at her throat. In a sense, he has come back for a final revenge. The scene seems to represent the splitting up of the archetype into its conscious and unconscious parts which is a necessary stage on the way to final destruction of the uroboros and the consolidation of ego consciousness. On one side of the mirror we see the beautiful woman and in the reflection we see represented the unconscious, masculine destructive side.

As the crowds outside call "viva Jehu!" Jezabel makes one more desperate attempt to maintain her power. Confident in her beauty, she will try to seduce Jehu. However, it is too late, for the magical attraction of the archetype is broken.

The spirit of Naboth is reborn in Jehu and Jehu becomes a hero. Neumann writes that the hero's fight is always concerned with the threat to the spiritual, masculine principle from the uroboric dragon and with the danger of being swallowed by the maternal unconscious.¹² The prophets and holy men like Naboth prepared the way for Jehu to slay the dragon (Jezabel). Neumann notes that the new light and the victory are symbolized by the illumination and transfiguration of the head, crowned and decked with an aureole.¹³ In Tirso's play, this illumination is emphasized as Raquel crowns Jehu, saying:

diadema que en paz poseas;
agora tus sienas ciffa
y despues por todo el orbe
los círculos del sol siga. (624)

Neumann notes further that the victory brings with it a new spiritual status, a new knowledge, and an alteration of consciousness.¹⁴ For Israel, the

destruction of Jezabel secured the spiritual status of Yaweh, as Jehu's final remarks demonstrate: "Alce Israel la cabeza / pues de Jezabel se libra," (625) Furthermore, he advises the audience (passing on the newly acquired knowledge):

... no permita
que su mujer le gobierne;
pues destruye honras y vidas
La mujer que manda en casa,
como este ejemplo lo afirma. (625)

In conclusion, in the Bible we see a Jezabel who is both strong-willed, as she convinced her husband to go against his religion, and cruel, seen in her persecution of the prophets of God--especially Elijah.

Tirso has stressed these two aspects of her character in his dramatization. He has also emphasized her masculine aggressiveness and lust--showing her to be a symbol of paganism itself, and a representation of the archetypal Terrible Mother.

Tirso's play clearly cautions us against la mujer que manda en casa. Perhaps to fully appreciate what he was saying by this, it helps to look at the work from an archetypal point of view. This is, perhaps, a warning against the negative aspects of the Great Mother archetype--which act as regressive forces both for society and for the individual. For the individual, these forces are destructive to the ego. On a broader level, these are the forces that attempt to pull a society back into primitive, pagan ways.

An interesting question for further study might be to what extent was Tirso himself a victim of the seductive power of the Terrible Mother.

NOTES

¹ J.C.J. Metford, "Tirso de Molina's Old Testament Plays." Bulletin of Hispanic Studies XXVII (1950), p. 149.

² Ibid., p. 154-55.

³ Robert N. Shervill, The Old Testament Drama of the Siglo de Oro (Doctoral Disseration, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1958).

⁴ Tirso de Molina, Obras dramáticas completas. Tomo I Edición Crítica por Blanca de los Ríos (Madrid: Aguilar, 1946), p. 587. All following quotes from La mujer que manda en casa were taken from this edition.

⁵ Juan Eduardo Cirlot, Diccionario de símbolos (Barcelona: Editorial labor, 1969), p. 130.

⁶ Erich Neumann, Origins and History of Consciousness (New York: Bolligen Foundation, Inc., 1954), p. 74.

⁷ Ibid., p. 75.

⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

⁹ Ibid., 61.

¹⁰ Newmann writes that since the archetypes have always been essential components of the psyche, they not only determine the structure of the psyche but also "mold the course of human history." He states that "the evolution of consciousness by stages is as much a collective human phenomenon as a particular individual phenomenon. Ontogenetic development may therefore be regarded as a modified recapitulation of phylogenetic development." (Origins, introduction pp. XX-XXI).

¹¹ Ibid., p. 63.

¹² Ibid., p. 160.

¹³ Ibid., p. 161.

¹⁴ Ibid.

The Tradition of Painting and Poetry in Juan Ramón Jiménez

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The French poet Baudelaire once remarked that a characteristic note of modern culture is the tendency for all of the arts, if not to act as a substitute for each other, at least to supplement each other, by lending each other new strength and new resources. Actually the tradition of aesthetic analogy has been a constant feature of western culture ever since Aristotle wrote his Poetics and the Greek ideals of humanism and idealism depicted in the bronze statues of Praxiteles found resonance in the love lyrics of Sappho. Contemporary aesthetic analogies have studied the relationships of painting to literature and have pointed out the structural similarities that exist between the novels of Proust and the paintings of Botticelli, or Dostoyevsky's The Idiot and the paintings of Hans Holbein.²

The Spanish poet Juan Ramón Jiménez is a contemporary writer whose poetry continues the traditional symbiosis of painting and poetry. One of his earlier poems, "Domingo de primavera," is a particularly striking example of the aesthetic analogy between his poetry and the late nineteenth century school of painting called Impressionism. In a paper entitled "The Relations Between Poetry and Painting," which the American poet Wallace Stevens read at the Museum of Modern Art in 1951, Stevens defined four main areas of influence of Impressionism on contemporary poetry; these are: sensibility, subject matter, technique, and aesthetics.³ Jiménez's poem verifies the painterly characteristics enunciated by Stevens. "Domingo de primavera," similar to Claude Monet's painting, Impression-Sunrise, reflects a sensibility to the flux and change of nature. The poem is a brief, intense lyrical contemplation of the brilliant color, radiant light, and resonant sounds of a sunny noonday Spanish plaza. The Impressionist painter, Monet, and Jiménez both concentrate on time--sunrise and noonday--and depict an acute sensitivity to the visible changes

caused by the conditions of light. Jiménez captures the flux and ambiguity of nature's own process of combining light, color, and sound with a brilliant array of sensations.

Impressionism is concerned above all with sensation.⁴ The paintings of Monet or Cezanne do not try to render reality as it stands, but rather the individual's sensations in the face of this reality. The artist is not so much concerned with the object itself as the atmosphere, with which that object is suffused. This atmosphere, this consciousness on the part of the painter of some space between him and the object of his painting, is filled with matter which may subtly distort the object at which we are looking. Dust particles, mist or raindrops may refract light rays and bring about a view of the object which is true for a particular moment in time,⁵ but which constantly changes its shape and substance.

The poem by Jiménez creates this Impressionist atmosphere:

Domingo de primavera

Un pájaro; en la lírica calma del mediodía,
canta bajo los mármoles del palacio sonoro;
sueña el sol vivos fuegos en la cristalería,
en la fuente abre el agua su cantinela de oro.

Es una fiesta clara con eco cristalino:
en el mármol, el pájaro; las rosas, en la fuente;
¡garganta fresca y dura; azul, dulce, argentino
temblar, sobre la flor satinada y reciente!

En un ensueño real, voy, colmado de gracia,
soñando, sonriendo, por las radiantes losas,
henchida el alma de la pura aristocracia
de la fuente, del pájaro, de la luz, de las
rosas...

La soledad sonora (1908)

A bird sings near a palace that stands facing a nameless fountain. Bird, palace, fountain have no distinguishing characteristics. Like the Impressionists, Jiménez is less concerned with the density and solidity of the world around him than with the constant

movement of surfaces and colors. This Impressionist technique is rooted in the innovative concepts of the functions of light and color.⁶ In Monet's painting, La Gare Saint-Lazare, the real object is not the engines and the carriages but the effects of the sunlight streaming through the glass roof of the station and mingling with the clouds of steam and the shadowy forms of objects and people looming confusingly out of the obscurity. In "Domingo de primavera" the poet's real object is the fusion of color, light, and sound. The bird's melody softens the marble palace walls so that the dense surface becomes a "palacio sonoro." The brittle palace windows are transformed by the light rays into myriad bursts of flaming red, "vivos fuegos en la cristaleria." The bubbling fountain entones a "cantinela de oro."

This fusion of light, color, and sound is expertly handled by Jiménez through the technique of synesthesia. We hear, not see, the palace. We see, not feel, the warmth of the sun. We hear, not taste, the fountain water. The poet's synesthesia is an imitation of the Impressionist dream-like atmosphere that links both Jiménez and Impressionism with another contemporary trend in modern literature and art, Symbolism. One of the innovators of Symbolism, Edgar Allan Poe, evolved the idea of correspondances, the deliberate confusion and intermingling of all sense impressions, a technique developed by the French poets Mallarmé and Baudelaire.

Wallace Fowlie writes that poetry is not composed by naming objects but by realizing a synthesis between silence and speech.⁸ The symbol, rather than describing the object, suggests it by creating a net of analogies and relationships. Impressionism, both in painting and poetry, calls upon the creative activity of the recipient to conceive the fullness of these analogies. The network of analogies and relationships that Fowlie defines come together in Jiménez's poem under the controlling symbol, "eco cristalino." The correspondances that unify disparate sensory data are radical and paradoxical: "pájaro-mármol," "rosa-fuente," "garganta fresca y dura," "azul, dulce, argentino temblar." The experience that Jiménez creates and invites the reader to share is not the

song of a bird, nor the architectural design of a palace, nor the setting of the fountain. The reality that the poem celebrates is the aesthetic experience that the impressionist symbols create--an "eco cristalino"--a complex network of sensations deliberately confused which yield a wholly new and fresh reality.

One art historian defines Impressionism precisely as a new way of seeing and feeling, a new mode of living crammed with light and open air. Impressionism allows us to capture the fleeting or the eternal moment in all its freshness. The reality in Jiménez's poem is an Impressionist world in which objects lose their immediate significance and serve merely as a pretext for the celebration of light, color, and sound that suffuse objects perceived. Impressionism, whether poetic or painterly, gives us a new way of looking at the world.

Another aesthetic analogy between Impressionism and the poetry of Jiménez consists in the fusion of consciousness with the external world. In "Domingo de primavera," the poet describes this fusion as "un ensueño real." Visual appearance and mental reality for a single aesthetic experience. The soul of the poet is constituted by the external world. Jiménez ecstatically exclaims that his soul is "henchida de la fuente, del pájaro, de la luz, de las rosas." The poet's contemplation of the external world is so intense and personal that his imagination refracts the perceived objects in the same related manner in which the palace walls echo the song of the bird and the windows glow with the sunlight. Fusion is both external and internal. Marble becomes song, glass becomes light, water becomes music, and the soul of the poet becomes the song, the light, the music. In a word, the supreme experience of Impressionist poetry is metamorphosis, an impulse towards transcendence. In the words of Stevens, it is a desire to be at the center of a diamond.¹⁰

As so often happens in poetry, the rhyme scheme reinforces the imaginative and symbolic content of the poem. In this lyric poem that evolves essentially through the synesthesia of sense impressions and the

fusion of the speaker's consciousness with sensory experience, the rhyme scheme appropriately corroborates this aesthetic experience with the rhymed words "mediodía-cristalería" (noonday light fuses with the windows); "sonoro-oro" (the palace absorbs and becomes light and sound); "fuente-reciente" (the fountain as though newly created with color and sound).

The major correspondance, in Symbolist terms, that brings about the metamorphosis of poet and reality is the metaphor "un ensueño real." As the sun in the opening stanza becomes the glass windows through the action of "soñar," so the poet's consciousness becomes the flux of paradoxical sensations through a similar activity of "soñar"--"voy soñando," he exclaims in the third stanza. The relationship between the sun and the palace through the action of "soñar" is imitated in the relationship of the poet to the entire sensorial experience because the poet describes his interaction with perceived reality as "ensueño." This "ensueño" elevates the poet to the state of "aristocracia," a symbol that links the poet's "ensueño" to the fusion of "sol" and "palacio." The linkage "palacio" and "aristocracia" establishes the correspondance between the fusion of entities within the external world and the fusion between the external world and the poet's consciousness.

The triple Impressionist process of "soñar"--"el sol sueña," "ensueño real," "voy soñando"--is a vivid, sensorial testimony that what counts most in poetry as in painting is the spiritual state that they are both able to create. The poem, like the painting, becomes for the artist a remarkable instrument of discovery of what is most secret in the artist.

It is a maxim of Impressionism that every landscape is a state of soul.¹¹ However, neither the Impressionist painter nor poet is any longer a reliable witness who accurately reflects objective reality. Both painter and poet covet their role as constructors of reality. They testify to the modern shift from a denotative to a constitutive response to the world. How the artist formulates the environment becomes the environment itself.¹²

Another look at "Domingo de primavera" illustrates this process clearly. Jiménez speaks of a "lírica calma" and a "palacio sonoro." Both metaphors are oxymorons, paradoxical impressions of observed external reality. "Lírica calma" and "palacio sonoro" express antithetical tensions: silence is not song; stone is not melodic. Just as the Impressionist eye transforms two colors into a single tone, so the poet transforms two incompatible realities into a new aesthetic reality that is the unique creation of his own imagination.

At a deeper level of meaning, what the Impressionist poet recognizes is the inability of nature to act any longer as the objective referent for the creation of aesthetic experience.¹³ Impressionism, as most of modern art, accepts ambiguity as a persistent dimension in human experience. The human experience in this lyric of Jiménez is a world of paradox, a "cantinela de oro."

Impressionism in painting and poetry becomes more than a source of beautiful shapes and colors. Art becomes a supreme fiction. For Monet and Jiménez, ambiguity bathes our experience, and the one-to-one relationship between the perceived act and the objective order is challenged. Impressionism, we recall, is a new way of living. No entity can be experienced in isolation. All reality must be encountered as a field of relations. The "pájaro" and the "palacio" are not experienced as two separate entities. The field of relations between them creates a new reality that is neither "pájaro" nor "palacio." The interaction between the two engenders a fresh, new reality, "garganta fresca y dura." The field of relations between "sol," "rosas," and "fuente" merges three diverse realities into a single new being, "azul, dulce, argentino temblar, sobre la flor satinada." The poet himself is caught up in a field of relations so that his own being is metamorphosized and the poet becomes at a deeper level an "eco cristalino." This dominant metaphor in the second stanza, "eco cristalino," encapsulates the relational activity of light, color, and sound. The poet is now aware of himself as the center of these felt relations and affirms that his being is wholly relational.

A final aesthetic analogy that assimilates the poetry of Jiménez to Impressionism is an indifference to the world of human affairs, an attitude which cultural historians define as the dehumanization of art. What human beings think and do historically is not the focus of attention in Impressionist painting and poetry. The emergence of relational activity is the real focus of meaning. Art is not a product but a process. Aesthetic experience is just that, a consciousness of relational activity. One more look at "Domingo de primavera" will verify this modern temperament.

In stanza one there are only three verbs--"canta," "sueña," "abre"--and all three indicate actions that initiate and develop a field of relations between the bird, sun, palace, fountain, and flowers. The focus is not on the objects but on their interactions. The poem's focus is indifferent--"calma--to everything except the process of becoming at this moment in time "palacio sonoro" and "cantinela de oro." In stanza two there is only one verb, "es," that affirms this field of relations. It is an "eco cristalino." In stanza three, a single verbal action, "voy soñando, sonriendo," together with the participles "colmado" and "henchida," indicate a state of grace, an ecstatic experience of nature's relational process. In the words of William James, this Impressionist process is a "halo of felt relations."¹⁴

Together the Impressionist painter and Jiménez seem to be saying that art is more than objects and forms. Art is process. As Henri Bergson describes Impressionism, "We are given a moving continuity in which everything changes but at the same time remains."¹⁵

NOTES

¹ Jeffrey Meyers, Painting and the Novel (Manchester University Press, 1975), p. 1.

² Meyers, p. 2.

³ Michel Benamou, "Wallace Stevens: Some Relations Between Poetry and Painting," Comparative Literature, XI (1959), p. 47.

⁴ Christopher Palmer, Impressionism in Music (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1973), p. 13.

⁵ Palmer, p. 13.

⁶ Palmer, p. 15.

⁷ Palmer, p. 16.

⁸ Wallace Fowlie, "Mallarmé and the Painters of His Age," The Southern Review, II (1966), p. 557.

⁹ Jean Tardieu, Introduction, Impressionism, by Jacques Lassaigue (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1969), p. 7.

¹⁰ Benamou, p. 49.

¹¹ Fowlie, p. 552.

¹² John J. McDermott, "To Be Human Is To Humanize," in American Philosophy and the Future, ed. Michael Novak (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), p. 23.

¹³ McDermott, p. 28.

¹⁴ William James, "The Stream of Thought," The Writings of William James, ed. John J. McDermott (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 45.

¹⁵ Quoted in Lassaigue, p. 8.

Los desarraigados: encrucijada entre dos mundos

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Los desarraigados¹ (1955), del mexicano Humberto Robles Arenas, es una obra singular dentro del reducido grupo de piezas que, con valor estético, plantean el capdente problema racial en el teatro hispanoamericano,² aunque la discriminación es sólo una fase del complejo temático de esta obra.

El autor maneja la trama con habilidad, sin tiradas retóricas ni panfletarias; sin rebuscamientos artificiosos ni oscuros símbolos. Refiriéndose al estilo de este dramaturgo sostuvo con razón Antonio Magana Esquivel a raíz del estreno de esta obra en México, que:

Los desarraigados muestra no sólo un asunto que afecta íntimamente a México, sino una habilidad y una fuerza de composición de buen dramaturgo; sin grandes alardes nacionalistas, sin caídas ni exaltación discursiva, Robles plantea el drama de la población mexicana que radica en las poblaciones del sur de los Estados Unidos, los desarraigados de México por diversas causas siempre lamentables que ni allí logran fundirse totalmente a un medio y a un temperamento extraños, ni aquí tratan de encontrar sus auténticas raíces. Son los "pochos", gente un poco al garete, desorientados, indecisos o indefinidos.

En línea dramática muy simple se desarrolla la historia de una familia mexicana integrada por Pancho y Aurelia que emigra por razones económicas a los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica y en este país nace toda la prole. El balance, al cabo de largos años de ardua lucha en un medio extraño y hostil, es triste y desolador: dos hijos caen en Guadalcanar y Corea cumpliendo un ineludible deber patriótico. De los tres sobrevivientes, Joe, el mayor, es víctima del alcoholismo, vicio adquirido en los años de servicio en la guerra, mientras Jimmy, apenas un imberbe, sufre prisión por tráfico de drogas y Alice, la menor, es

deshonrada por el "bolillo" Fred quien se niega a casarse con ella y termina abandonándola.

El espectador nunca sale del marco que ofrece el hogar de la familia Pacheco, en un lugar del Sur de Norteamérica, y gracias a esa concentración dramática se angustia mucho más y aquilata mejor la injusticia social, los peligros que amenazan destruir los lazos familiares y, lo que es peor, el dilema cultural en que se hallan esos infelices seres que luchan a brazo partido por sobrevivir entre dos mundos antagónicos en los que son igualmente incomprendidos.

Los desarraigados es una sangrante denuncia del dolor callado, mudo, de la familia "pocha" a la que México le niega, por desertora, sus auténticas raíces, mientras el país que le brinda asilo, los Estados Unidos, la rechaza también por el color de su piel, por su bajo nivel cultural y, en definitiva, por indeseable. Es la tragedia chicana, de la que tanto se habla y tan poco se comprende, del "pachuco," como despectivamente se le demonia, que vive desorientado, sin comprender a Juárez y sin entender a Lincoln porque al apoyar sus pies en países y culturas diferentes tratando de afincarse, se queda en el aire sin echar raíces en ninguno de ellos. Joe, uno de los más trágicos personajes de la pieza, tiene plena conciencia de esa ambivalencia que resume en parlamento admirable cuando dice: "Porque aquí nunca pasaremos de ser unos greasers!...y porque allá siempre seremos unos pochos..." (p. 133).

En ese momento nos percatamos de que la tragedia "pocha" es más compleja, y quizá por eso más dolorosa, que la del negro norteamericano quien, en su secular viacrucis discriminatorio, ha venido luchando por reivindicaciones económicas, sociales y políticas pero nunca por su identidad. Con razón Langston Hughes, en Mulato, se atreve a pronosticar:

Mañana
me sentaré a la mesa
cuando vengan invitados.
Nadie se atreverá entonces a decirme:
"Hala, come en la cocina."

Verán que soy hermoso,
Y se sentirán avergonzados.
Yo también soy América.⁴

El pocho difícilmente puede decir lo mismo porque él pertenece a un batallón perdido que, en esencia, busca sus auténticas raíces, es decir, identidad. Hallada ésta tendrá luego que enfrentarse a los mismos problemas que confronta cualquier otro grupo minoritario pero resolverá, con mayor o menor esfuerzo el silogismo a lo largo del devenir histórico porque partirá de una premisa general clara y firme.

La dicotomía es el nervio estructural que permite un desdoblamiento de dos mundos completamente diferentes tanto desde el punto de vista interno como externo. En el primero-el seno familiar-comprobamos la existencia de una zona integrada por Pancho y Aurelia, los progenitores, perfectamente homogénea pero nítidamente diferenciada de la que forman los tres hijos, Joe, Jimmy y Alice. Bastan los apelativos para notarlo. Esto conlleva un cierto perfil universal puesto que en esa contraposición se sedimentan los conflictos propios y conocidos de todo antagonismo generacional-- generation gap--de cualquier conglomerado humano pero en este tiene matices especiales por la aguda agravante cultural. Pancho y Aurelia son mexicanos, al menos así se consideran aunque no se percatan de lo permeable que han sido al transplante y de lo mucho que se van desdibujando en ellos las aristas nacionales de la patria lejana. Treinta años de desarraigo, de intenso bregar en el medio sajón, en contacto con un idioma gutural que jamás llegan a dominar y que deforma el propio de cadencia latina, producen un híbrido spanglish que provoca hilaridad en el oyente y establece de inmediato la primera distinción. Pancho y Aurelia viven en el pasado, en un mundo que se fue y al que jamás retornarán. Rememoran en sus más tiernos y románticos momentos--y con la hipérbole con que generalmente se evoca el pasado ("cualquier tiempo pasado fue mejor")--aquellos remotos momentos felices en la madre patria. Se aferran a esta, a la que le deben lealtad por legítima. En cambio, los hijos viven el país y el presente en que fueron procreados, que es lo propio; el suelo de los progenitores les resulta extraño. Lo contemplan, por

cierta lógica veneración paterna, como algo legendario pero que de ninguna manera pueden sentir, no obstante los ingentes esfuerzos de los padres por mantener viva en ellos la imagen de la tierra sagrada. Unos lacónicos parlamentos, adecuados a la idiosincracia de los personajes, ilustran a cabalidad estas aseveraciones. Pancho se aproxima a Jimmy tratando de hallar en él lo que la discola Alice le acaba de negar unos momentos antes:

PANCHO: Jimmy!... Jimmito!... Aguarda un poco, hijo... (Después de pausa en la que vacila) Tú sí eres mexicano, ¿verdad?

JIMMY: Anja.

PANCHO: ¿Y no te sientes orgulloso de serlo?

JIMMY: Yo creo que sí...¿Por qué?

PANCHO: Mira...esto no es cosa de creer... sino de sentirlo! Tú lo sientes..¿verdad?

JIMMY: Mju.

PANCHO: ¿No te gustaría haber nacido en México?

JIMMY: ¡Claro que sí!

PANCHO: ¿Por qué?

JIMMY: Pos...

PANCHO: ¡Dit...!Dilo!

JIMMY: Pos...por conocer Acapulco.

PANCHO: ¿No'más por eso?

JIMMY: Bueno, no...

PANCHO: Dime una cosa...¿Te gustaría irte a vivir alla... pa sempre?

JIMMY: ¿Pa'sempre?... (Pausa en la que vacila) Pos pa'sempre yo creo que no.

PANCHO: ¿Por qué?

JIMMY: ¡Pos porque aquí nací!

PANCHO: ¿Porque aquí nacites?...Sí...tal vez tengan razón. (Se dirige lentamente en dirección a la escalera.) Porque aquí nacites...porque nacieron...por conocer Acapulco... (Sale)

(pp. 41-42)

El conflicto generacional está crudamente planteado pero en él late mucho más que una opuesta perspectiva, por razones cronológicas, de dos generaciones ante el fenómeno vital. Aquí hay enfrentamiento de dos culturas disímiles, antitéticas por razones de raza, historia, economía, política, reli-

gión, hábitos, costumbres y cuantos otros elementos integran el concepto de civilización. Es el saldo negativo del violento choque del Norte contra el Sur; de la cultura sajona contra la latina. Al contemplar la obra desde esta perspectiva nos hemos desplazado, insensiblemente, de la zona interna familiar hacia una esfera exterior en la que el Tío Sam se enfrenta, cara a cara, con Moctezuma. En realidad, la dicotomía externa--Norte vs. Sur--la que en ningún momento el espectador tiene a la vista, es generadora de la interna en que se desdobra la familia pocha.

Esta misma dicotomía se detecta en el proceso caracterizador. Los personajes están muy bien trazados, perfectamente individualizados interna y externamente. Cada uno mantiene diferentes puntos de vista, ideas y sentimientos y se manifiestan en estilo propio. Aurelia, amistosa, caritativa, buena, simple, generosa. Conserva sus costumbres culinarias mexicanas. Su religiosidad descansa en el culto mariano. Sigue siendo mexicana por dentro pese a la influencia ambiental que denuncia su pintoresco lenguaje. El mismo fenómeno lingüístico, pero a la inversa, se observa en los hijos con la muy sutil y bien lograda variante de la edad: atenuado, en Joe, más acentuado en Jimmy y completamente agudizado en Alice. La caracterización lingüística se proyecta en forma de pirámide invertida. Don Pancho, recio, maduro, también generoso y hospitalario. Pero la estructura bipartita o dicótoma está presente también en la selección de los personajes.

La llegada accidental de Elena, la mexicana legítima que viene en busca de un mecánico a causa de la avería que ha sufrido su auto, sirve para mostrar la otra cara de la moneda, es decir, la diferencia ostensible entre esa familia chicana y la extracción social de la visitante. De inmediato Elena crea, con su natural pero bien elaborada dicción, un bello contraste lingüístico, el que no impide, en ningún momento, que se desarrolle una mutua corriente de simpatía entre la visitante y sus anfitriones. De inmediato entre ella y los progenitores, Pancho y Aurelia, quienes se ven en presencia del México soñado. Joe llega a enamorarse de Elena. Jimmy se deslunbra ante su provocativas formas y Alice, la más americana de

todos, termina por encontrar en ella refugio y comprensión ante su deshonra.

Es curioso que Elena haya escapado del hogar paterno por un problema familiar del mismo modo que Alice. Pero este paralelismo estructural sirve para evidenciar que el conflicto cultural está vivo en Alice, víctima del "bolillo" Fred mientras que en Elena sólo se concreta a una pasajera diferencia familiar a causa del nuevo matrimonio de su padre. Es más, la crisis de la familia pocha es tan honda y desgarrante que hace reflexionar a Elena sobre su frivolidad. Por eso recapacita y vuelve al seno hogareño. Como en las famosas décimas calderonianas Elena comprueba que alguien ha recogido las hierbas que ella arrojó.

El gran talento de este dramaturgo mexicano radica en saber refrenar los medios escénicos externos, reducirlos al mínimo, para que afloren nítidos y avasalladores los conflictos internos producto del desarraigo. Todo lo que se precisa es una sala humilde en una casa de madera, de esas que se construyen en serie, amueblada con gusto heterógeno y objetos decorativos baratos. En ese pobre medio habita la familia Pacheco, la representante de los cinco o diez millones de pochos que integran ese "batallón perdido" en los estados del sur. Elena representa el México joven, renovador, comprensivo que razona la tragedia hermana, que la sufre como suya porque es carne de su carne pero...para la que, desgraciadamente, no tiene solución. Por eso Elena no puede quedarse ni casarse con Joe, que no es su igual. Sólo se limita a aconsejar, a predicar y, en definitiva, hace mutis y regresa a los suyos. Por eso, en el fondo, Elena nos resulta tan sermoneadora. Confiesa que ha sido "una de esas snoobs que reniegan de sus propias costumbres" (p. 132) y declara que su "lugar está allá" (p. 132), es decir, en México. Pero, en el fondo, rechaza a Joe, que la ama ingenua y sinceramente en un amor a primera vista que el espectador es capaz de comprender. A Alice, por su parte, le aconseja que luche y que use de sus derechos pero ni precisa la naturaleza de la lucha ni aclara cuáles son esos derechos ni ante quién tiene que esgrimirlos. Lo único claro es que Elena no se mezcla y opta por el regreso.

El clímax se alcanza cuando don Pancho, el cabeza de familia, se desploma. Sufre prisión por causa de Jimmy cuando la policía lo cree cómplice del tráfico de drogas de su hijo. Invierte todos sus ahorros e hipoteca la casa para lograr la libertad de Jimmy y, a causa de todo esto, tiene que soportar la pérdida del soñado ascenso después de veinticinco años de trabajo honesto en el Harlington Hotel. Irónicamente un norteamericano cubre su puesto con mejor derecho porque fue al servicio militar. Su vida, su sacrificio y los hijos inmolados en servicio activo, esta vez no cuentan. El hogar destruido. La vida rota. Humillado, vejado, sin presente ni futuro, se refugia en el alcohol, como Joe, y resume la angustia y desesperación de "la Raza" cuando a la llamada imperiosa del hotel contesta:

I diles que si no les cuadra, que hagan lo que les dé la gana!...que nosotros tenemos toavía muchas cosas que celebrar. Ora que ya yo empecé desde que jui al hotel. Porque, sabe Elenita... jui a darles las gracias porque se han portao muy bien...y porque soy una persona correita y muy agracia, que nunca había faltao sin permiso ¡Nunca!...hasta el otro día que me agarraron por el lilo ese... Y sabe por qué se han portao bien? ...Porque hasta pusieron a uno en mi lugar pa'que no me apreocupara ¡Así como lo oye!...Pa que no me apreocupara y pudieran dejarlo de manejador general. ¡De manejador general del Harlington Hotel!...el mejor de la ciudad con ciento ochenta cuartos y aire acondicionado...No más por eso ¿Y sabe por qué lo hicieron manejador general? ¡Porque es americano y estuvo en el servicio! ¡Los hijos que di no cuenta!...Porque yo no jui al servicio...y porque no tengo la sofeciente experiencia...¡VEINTICINCO AÑOS, Elenita! ¡Veinticinco años no pueden dar esperencia a naiden! ¡Cómo van a darla si llevo más de treinta de vivir acá, y apenas me voy dando cuenta de que jui cobarde que no supo defender lo suyo, y juyo por eso! (Azotando el vaso) ¡POR COBARDE!... ¡Porque sólo un cobarde y un rajao se juye cuando otros mueren por defender su tierra! ¡Su propia tierra!...¡Qué experiencia voy a tener si sólo busqué mi seguridad! ¡Nuestra...seguridad!

El oportuno uso de un fondo musical en que se escuchan los tristes lamentos de la "Canción mixteca" acentúan la amargura del momento un tanto melodramático pero aceptable a pesar de que, desde un punto de vista estrictamente técnico el dramaturgo quizá se excede al recargar de elementos efectistas el final con lo que el problema central algo se debilita.

En este momento, cabe preguntarse cuáles son los verdaderos propósitos que informan la obra. No parece ser una mera preocupación piadosa, humanitaria en favor de un grupo étnico de origen común--"los pochos"--que anda al garete en el país vecino y al que Elenita, la mexicana auténtica, vuelve la espalda. Mucho menos cantar la tragedia del desterrado, sus dificultades y peligros en tierra extraña, aunque la lección le aproveche y el molde le quede bien. Nos parece que el mensaje en este caso es mucho más ambicioso y audaz. Se pretende--y de hecho se logró--producir un impacto en el pueblo mexicano encerrado en sus actuales fronteras--que México, después de cien años, acepta aún como provisionales--para que cambie de actitud hacia ese grupo que es menester rescatar para ganar la causa común aprovechando la circunstancia de que sigue sintiendo, en lo esencial, como mexicano. Al propio tiempo se estimula a la Raza a que revise su pasado y reconozca sus yerros y a que incremente su amor a la patria grande y común. El significativo diálogo entre Joe, "el pocho" que se queja del robo y desprecio de que ellos son víctimas en México, y Elena, la embajadora, que admite los defectos pero defiende el suelo patrio, así lo demuestra. Elena, además de mensajera, embajadora y misionera, es estudiante de sociología y por eso se esfuerza en provocar el encuentro y la amalgama. Por eso no se queda; por eso regresa a México dejando en Joe, el infeliz enamorado, un hálito de esperanza y un futuro aliento para que algún día vaya tras ella. Así como la nación judía existió durante siglos careciendo de un trozo de suelo, así también, y con más razón, puede prolongarse la nación mexicana porque, en fin de cuentas, el "pochos" reside en suelo mexicano. Si México un día tuvo que aceptar la masacre de los niños mártires de Chapultepec y que sus fronteras se redujeran a Río Grande, eso no significa que se haya resignado a admitirlo eternamente. Por ende, si el

pocho continúa sintiendo por México llegará el día, tal vez no lejano, en que serán vengados los inocentes cadetes de Chapultepec.

NOTAS

¹ Humberto Robles Arenas, Los desarraigados (México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1962). Todas las citas que se hagan sobre esta obra corresponderán a esta edición y aparecerá en la página correspondiente entre paréntesis.

² Entre las obras que plantean el problema racial en el teatro hispanoamericano moderno merecen destacarse: El mulato, del cubano Marcelo Salinas (Carlos Solórzano, El teatro latinoamericano en el siglo XX [México: Editorial Pormaca, S.A. de C.V., 1964], p. 40); Vejigantes, del puertorriqueño Francisco Arrivi (en Teatro hispanoamericano. Tres piezas, ed. Frank Dauster [New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965]); El color de nuestra piel, del mexicano Celestino Gorostiza (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966); Dientes blancos (en Trilogía ecuatoriana [México: Ediciones Andrés, 1959]) e Infierno negro (México: Ficción Universidad Veracruzana, 1967), del recientemente desaparecido dramaturgo ecuatoriano Demetrio Aguilera Malta; y La fiesta del mulato, de la mexicana Luisa Josefina Hernández (en Cuaderno de teatro Universidad Veracruzana, No. 17 [octubre-diciembre 1979], pp. 4-29). Sobre estas obras, incluyendo Los desarraigados, de Robles Arenas, prepara el autor de este artículo una Antología Teatral en la que se debate el tema de la discriminación racial en el teatro hispanoamericano.

³ Antonio Magana Esquivel, El Nacional, 6 septiembre 1965, citado en J. Humberto Robles Arenas, Los desarraigados (México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1962).

⁴ Langston Hughes, Mulato, versión libre española de Alfonso Sastre, Colección Teatro, No. 412-Extra (Madrid: Ediciones Alfíl, 1964).

EL PROBLEMA DE LA AUTORÍA DE LA SIBILA DEL ORIENTE,
DE CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA

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En su edición de La sibila del Oriente, Hartzenbusch se aventura a afirmar sobre esta obra que "es una refundición del auto sacramental titulado El árbol del mejor fruto. Lo que hay aquí del auto es de Calderón; lo demás no lo parece." Puesta en duda la autoría de esta obra por un conocedor del teatro español tan ilustre, la actitud crítica a partir de entonces se caracteriza, salvo contadas excepciones, por el silencio. La duda de Hartzenbusch--y sólo de una duda se trata--ha sido respetada.

Valbuena Prat, en su edición de El árbol del mejor fruto dice de este auto que "es el mismo asunto que el de La sibila del Oriente, comedia publicada entre las de Calderón en el tomo XIV de la Biblioteca de Autores Españoles. De esta obra dice Hartzenbusch:" y acto seguido se limita a copiar la consabida cita, sin mas comentario.² Ni niega ni asevera que La sibila del Oriente sea de Calderón, pero con sus palabras "entre las de Calderón" cautelosamente implica que no lo es, ateniéndose al juicio de Hartzenbusch, o sea, a las palabras "lo demás no lo parece," que por otra parte no tienen mayor validez crítica que la reputación de quien las dijo.

Valbuena Briones, en su edición de La sibila del Oriente³ no hace mención de la cita de Hartzenbusch, a pesar de que su edición se basa, por la mayor parte, en la de la Biblioteca de Autores Españoles. Ha decidido el crítico, pues, ignorar dicha cita. Y no le faltan razones para hacerlo, ya que no hay manera de probar concluyentemente que La sibila del Oriente sea de Calderón, o que no lo sea. Y es que el bueno de don Pedro no la incluyó en la lista de sus obras que le envió al Duque de Veragua en 1680. Sin embargo, en la carta con la cual Calderón acompañó su lista, se queja el insigne dramaturgo al Almirante Duque, de los libreros e impresores que han sacado "sin voluntad mía a luz mis mal limados yerros."⁴ Es

decir, que su lista incluye solamente obras que Calderón consideraba acabadas. Es posible, entonces, que Calderón nunca haya dado por acabada La sibila del Oriente, o que la completara, o redactara por completo, después de enviada la carta. Pero sólo de posibilidades se trata.

Robert N. Shervill se hace eco de lo dicho por Hartzenbusch: "Hartzenbusch suggests that the parts of El árbol del mejor fruto which do appear in La sibila del Oriente are authentically Calderón's, while the added material seems to be from the pen of some dramatist other than Calderón. In this statement we completely agree with Hartzenbusch." Un poco más adelante, sin embargo, se contradice: "Strangely enough, Calderón omits his favorite phrase 'vivo cadáver' in the auto, but manages to resurrect it for inclusion in the comedia!" Y por fin llega a una conclusión inconclusa: "we are convinced that La sibila del Oriente is basically Calderón's. Whether he or another dramatist added new materials to formulate the comedia from the auto is of little import."⁵

Glaser, en un acertado artículo, menciona que el crítico von der Malsburg declaró en la primera mitad del siglo pasado que La sibila del Oriente era una pieza maestra del teatro religioso, y agrega que otros críticos alemanes concordaron con la observación de Malsburg, hasta Wilhelm Meyer, que en la segunda mitad del mismo siglo negó que la comedia tuviera el valor que se le atribuía.⁶ En una nota, Glaser dice:

Meyer seems to follow Juan Hartzenbusch who, in the introduction to his edition of Calderón's Comedias, BAE, VII, xviii, described the Sibila del Oriente as a rifacimento of the auto El árbol del mejor fruto. Hartzenbusch went to the extreme of denying Calderón's autorship of the comedia.

Glaser, sin embargo, no considera la cuestión de la paternidad de la comedia, si bien acepta sin miramientos que fue escrita por Calderón.

La cuestión de la paternidad calderoniana de esta comedia es una de esas cuestiones que se prestan a

todo tipo de teorías y opiniones, que al fin y al cabo, no resuelven definitivamente nada. A continuación, sin embargo, intentaré ir un poco más allá; trataré de situar La sibila del Oriente en el contexto del teatro calderoniano; ver si se ajusta al proceso creativo de Calderón, y de ese modo llegar a una conclusión convincente.

En cuanto a su obra dramática en general, puede decirse que Calderón se distingue entre los dramaturgos españoles del siglo áureo por su afán de perfeccionamiento, por el esmero con que escribía y volvió a escribir sus comedias para conseguir una obra teatral cuidadosamente estructurada y acabada. Sloman ha demostrado como esa característica del dramaturgo se hace patente en el proceso creativo de sus comedias basadas ya en obras de otros dramaturgos, ya en obras escritas por el en colaboración con otros. Calderón usó ese material dramático en existencia como resorte para obras originales suyas. Lo que resalta en el dramaturgo es su instinto dramático, y el saber aprovechar la dramaturgia de su época, no porque le faltase imaginación, sino precisamente todo lo contrario. Pero Calderón, además de valerse de obras ajenas o sólo parcialmente suyas para la composición de nuevas obras originales (como ha probado Sloman), se valió de otras obras plenamente suyas durante la composición de nuevas comedias.

Esa adaptación de situaciones o escenas de sus propias comedias para nuevas creaciones dramáticas de su pluma no es una técnica muy notoria como parte del proceso creativo de Calderón. Sin embargo, no ha pasado desapercibida. Ramón Silva hace notar lo siguiente:

The correspondence between the final scenes of La vida es sueño and Los cabellos de Absalón is too obvious to be accidental. A certain similarity between the situation of Segismundo and Irene (Las cadenas del demonio) is also significant. Irene has been shut away by her father, "temeroso de los vaticinios de sus astrólogos." Her place of confinement is a lonely tower: "ignorada prisión."

También hace notar Silva la similaridad que existe entre escenas calderonianas en que se personifican actitudes psicológicas de un conflicto interno, tales como las siguientes:

El gran príncipe de Fez, I, iii:

Representando los dos
De su buen genio y mal genio
Exteriormente la lid
Que arde interior en su pecho...

Los dos amantes del cielo:

Sombras sin alma y sin cuerpo
(que) a un tiempo están batallando¹⁰
Dentro de mi mismo pecho.

Hesse, en su edición de El mayor monstruo los celos hace notar la técnica calderoniana que nos ocupa, al comparar pasajes de esta obra de Calderón con otras del mismo autor.¹¹

Asimismo Gwynne Edwards, en su edición de La hija del aire destaca imágenes que esta comedia tiene en común con otras de Calderón.¹²

Calderón, pues, se sirvió de su obra anterior durante la composición de nuevas comedias. Por lo tanto, la similitud de una obra suya con otra de autoría dudosa puede facilitar la identificación de esta última como auténtica de don Pedro. La comparación de La sibila con otras obras calderonianas, exceptuando, por razones obvias, el auto El árbol del mejor fruto, puede por ello servir para aclarar las dudas sobre la paternidad de esta comedia, problema acaso causado solamente por el comentario aventurado por Hartzzenbusch de que esta obra no parece ser de Calderón.

Hay, en efecto, una gran semejanza entre sendas escenas de El príncipe constante y La sibila del Oriente.¹³

En El príncipe conatante Don Alfonso, rey de Portugal, y Tarudante, rey de Marruecos, disputan al presentarse al mismo tiempo ante el rey de Fez sobre

quién de los dos ha de tener preferencia, tras intentar cada uno hablar primero. El rey le cede la palabra a Don Alfonso, a lo cual Tarudante expresa, aparte, su desacuerdo:

- TAR.- Generoso Rey de Fez...
 D.Alf.- Rey de Fez altivo y fuerte...
 TAR.- ...cuya fama...
 D.Alf.- ...cuya vida...
 TAR.- ...nunca muera...
 F.ALf.- ...viva siempre...
 TAR.- (A FÉNIX)
 Y tú, de aquel sol aurora...
 D.Alf.- Tú, de aquel ocaso oriente...
 TAR.- ...a pesar de siglos dures...
 D.ALf.- ...a pesar de tiempos reines...
 TAR.- ...porque tengas...
 D.ALf.- ...porque goces...
 TAR.- ...felicidades...
 D.ALf.- ...laureles...
 TAR.- ...altas dichas...
 D.ALf.- ...triumfos grandes...
 TAR.- ...pocos males...
 D.ALf.- ...muchos bienes...
 TAR.- ¿Cómo mientras hablo yo,
 tú, cristiano, a hablar te atreves?
 D.ALf.- porque nadie habla primero
 que yo, donde yo estuviere.
 TAR.- A mí, por ser de nación
 alarbe, el lugar me deben
 primero; que los extranos,
 donde no hay propios, no prefieren.
 D.ALf.- Donde saben cortesía,
 sí hacen; pues vemos siempre
 que dan en cualquiera parte
 el mayor lugar al huesped.
 REY.- Ya basta, y los dos ahora
 en mis estrados se sienten.
 Hable el portugués, que, en fin,
 por de otra ley, se le debe
 más honor.
 TAR.- (Ap.)

Corrido estoy. ¹⁵

En La sibila del Oriente Candaces, rey de Egipto, e Hirán, rey de Tiro, disputan al presentarse al mismo

tiempo ante Salomón, rey de Jerusalén, sobre quién de los dos ha de tener preferencia, tras intentar cada uno hablar primero. Salomón le cede la palabra a Candaces, a lo cual Hirán expresa, aparte, su ira:

- HIRÁN. Joven invicto, en cuya augusta frente
verde el laurel sin marchitarse viva...
- CAND. Grande hijo de David, cuyo oriente
ceda el laurel imperios a la oliva...
- HIRÁN. tú, cuyo nombre viva eternamente...
- CAND. tú, cuyo imperio eternamente viva...
- HIRÁN. ¡salve!, y reines del orbe obedecido...
- CAND. ¡salve!, y triunfes del tiempo y del
olvido...
- HIRÁN. Mientras Hirán, invicto rey de Tiro,
habla, ¡te atreves, bárbaro gitano,
a interrumpir su voz! Mucho me admiro
de tu arrogancia y presunción en vano.
- CAND. Candaces, rey de Egipto, soy, y aspiro
a lugar más supremo y soberano,
y tú que no me igualas ni prefieres,
pues yo soy rey donde vasallo eres.
.....
- SALOM. Basta, no más.
- LOS 2 Señor...
- SALOM. El rey de Egipto
hable.
- HIRÁN. Como extranjero me has tratado.
- SALOM. El tiro hará lo que le mande.
- HIRÁN. (Ap.) Ciego
de enojo, soy volcán de nieve y
fuego.

Esta escena de La sibila del Oriente, que tanto se parece a la de El príncipe constante, no aparece en El árbol del mejor fruto, anulando por lo tanto la ya precaria validez del comentario de Hartzenbusch citado al principio: "lo que hay aquí del auto es de Calderón; lo demás no lo parece."

Si Calderón se valió de la escena de El príncipe constante durante la redacción de La sibila del Oriente, o si fue al revés, no puede afirmarse con seguridad, por carecerse de la fecha de redacción de La sibila del Oriente. Pero al fin y al cabo, lo importante para lo que nos ocupa es que una escena im-

portante de nuestra comedia, que no aparece en el auto, tiene la huella indeleble de Calderón.

También en Los cabellos de Absalón hay ciertas partes que coinciden con otras de La sibila del Oriente que son ajenas al auto.

Semey y Joab son personajes que aparecen en las dos obras y que no constan en El árbol del mejor fruto. El tema de las afrentas de estos personajes contra el rey David y la pena que este les impone en su testamento se repite en ambas obras, desarrollándose de una a otra.

Hacia el final de Los cabellos de Absalón, Semey impreca a David por retirarse de la batalla: "¡Mal haya quien a padecer nos trujo!" El rey, sin embargo, no venga esta afrenta, y además promete no hacerlo mientras viva: "que palabra te doy de no vengarme/ en mi vida de ti y las iras tuyas."¹⁶

En nuestra comedia, poco después de encontrarse Saba con Joab, éste, en su relación, le explica a aquélla que el día de la batalla Semey,

... ciego y sañudo
de ver a su rey huyendo,
dijo a voces: "del Dios sumo
de Israel maldito sea
rey que a padecer nos trujo."
Oyolo David, y dijo:
"aunque de tu boca escucho
mi maldición, Semey, hoy
no has de pensar que procuro
mi venganza. Mientras viva
yo, tú vivirás seguro."¹⁷

En Los cabellos de Absalón, justo antes de atacar las tropas de David a las de su hijo Absalón, el rey le pide a su general Joab que vele por la vida de su rebelde hijo.¹⁸ Joab, sin embargo, al ver a Absalón pendiendo de una encina por los cabellos, hace caso omiso de las órdenes del rey David, y lo mata:

Desvanecido mancebo,
Muere, aunque el Rey me mandó
que no te matase.¹⁹

En La Sibila del Oriente Joab revive esta escena al relatársela a Saba:

De no matarle llevaba
orden yo, pero ¿quién tuvo
freno para la impaciencia²⁰
y rienda para el impulso?

Ya en los últimos versos de Los cabellos de Absalón David reitera su perdón a Semey, y asimismo decide no vengarse de Joab mientras viva. No obstante, con un par de esotéricos versos de David a Salomón, Calderón concluye la obra con la posibilidad de una continuación para resolver la cuestión, es decir, para que Salomón cumpla lo que su padre deje dicho en su testamento, sin que aquí se vislumbre a las claras la intención de David:

Terrible Joab,
muchas victorias te debo:
no te puedo ser ingrato
mientras viva te lo ofrezco.
Tú maldiciones y piedras (A SEMEI.)
contra mí animaste fiero;
palabra de no vengarme
en mi vida, te di es cierto,
y aunque tú arrojando lanzas, (A JOAB.)
y tú piedras esparciendo, (A SEMEI.)
los dos me habéis ofendido,
yo os perdono..., no me vengo.
Salomón, lo que has de hacer²¹
te dirá mi testamento...

En la sibila del Oriente Joab continúa su relato, haciendo eco de la promesa del rey David y además revelando el contenido de su testamento:

En mí quisiera vengarse,
mas como siempre me tuvo
tan grandes obligaciones
nunca a hacerlo se dispuso.

Vivido he, pero muriendo;
y en el testamento suyo
deja mandado que muera 22
por tan riguroso insulto.

El desarrollo y conclusión del tema de Joab y Semey en La sibila del Oriente no sigue el relato bíblico. Lo importante, sin embargo, es que Calderón, evidentemente, se valió de ese tema, que apareció inconcluso en su drama Los cabellos de Absalón, para la creación de varias partes de La sibila del Oriente.

Puede aquí agregarse que Calderón se sirvió de las jornadas primera y tercera de Los cabellos de Absalón--no de la segunda--para la creación de La sibila del Oriente. La jornada segunda ya era un préstamo, pues en esencia había sido la jornada tercera de La venganza de Tamar, de Tirso. La jornada tercera de Los cabellos de Absalón, jornada que era original e íntegra de Calderón, fue usada por el dramaturgo para la continuación del tema de Joab y Semey en La sibila del Oriente. Lo que tomó Calderón de la jornada primera de Los cabellos de Absalón, jornada que tiene sus fuentes en las jornadas primera y segunda de la obra del mercedario, fue de una escena que precisamente "is his only departure from the structure of Tirso's (second) act."²³ El hecho de que lo que hay en La sibila del Oriente que tiene sus raíces en Los cabellos de Absalón viene de las partes de esta comedia que son originales de Calderón, verifica la huella calderoniana en nuestra comedia.

Si La sibila del Oriente es o no es de Calderón de la Barca no podrá probarse con absoluta certeza a menos que se descubra el manuscrito autógrafo de la obra, o algún documento al efecto. Tras todo lo que precede, sin embargo, y en vista de que de los 2,437 versos de la ²⁴comedia solo 204 se repiten en el auto sacramental, bien puede aseverarse, parafraseando a Hartzenbusch, que "lo que hay aquí del auto es de Calderón; lo demás, también parece serlo." Por nuestra parte, no cabe duda de que La sibila del Oriente es de Calderón.

NOTAS

¹ Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch, ed., Comedias de Don Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1850; reimpr. Madrid: Hernando, 1926), IV (BAE, XIV), 199.

² Ángel Valbuena Prat, ed., Autos sacramentales, Vol. III de Obras completas de don Pedro Calderón de la Barca, 2a. ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1967), pag. 985. Antes en: "Los autos sacramentales de Calderón (clasificación y análisis), "Revue Hispanique, 61 (1924), 182-83.

³ Ángel Valbuena Briones, ed., Dramas, Vol. I de Obras completas de don Pedro Calderón de la Barca, 5a. ed. (1966; reimpr. Madrid: Aguilar, 1969), pág. 1153 y sigs.

⁴ Pedro Calderón de la Barca, Comedias, ed Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch (1848; reimpr. Madrid: Hernando 1918), I (BAE, VII), xl.

⁵ "The Old Testament Drama of the Siglo de Oro," Dis. Univ. of North Carolina 1958, págs. 276-77.

⁶ Edward Glaser, "Calderón de la Barca's La Sibila del Oriente y Gran Reina de Saba, "Romanische Forschungen, 72 (1960), 381-82.

⁷ Glaser, p. 382, n. 10.

⁸ Albert E. Sloman, The Dramatic Craftmanship of Calderón (Oxford: Dolphin, 1958).

⁹ Ramón Silva, "The Religious Dramas of Calderón," Bulletin of Spanish Studies, 15 (1938), pág. 186, n. 3.

¹⁰ Colva, p. 190, n. 4.

¹¹ Everett W. Hesse, ed., El mayor monstruo los celos (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1955).

¹² (London: Tamesis, 1970).

13 Esta similaridad ya había sido notada por Ramón Silva en su mencionado artículo, pág. 186, n. 5.

14 Obras completas, I, 270-71.

15 Obras completas, I, 1157.

16 Obras completas, I, 861.

17 Obras completas, I, 1168.

18 Obras completas, I, 862.

19 Obras completas, I, 863.

20 Obras completas, I, 1168.

21 Obras completas, I, 864.

22 Obras completas, I, 1168-69.

23 Sloman, pag. 104.

24 Fernando R. Jiménez, "Edición crítica y estudio de una comedia de Calderón: La sibila del Oriente y gran reyna de Saba," Dis. Univ. of Cincinnati 1982, pag. 194.

José Juan Tablada y su haiku:
aventura hacia la unidad.

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Al observar la poesía oriental y la occidental puede generalizarse que a los poetas occidentales les interesa más lo universal que lo particular, que los orientales prefieren presentar la esencia de los estados de ánimo y en cambio los occidentales muestran preferencia por los detalles. En el lenguaje, el oriental facilita el tipo de forma poética que adopta. La gramática china, por ejemplo, al faltar, no es arquitectónica como la occidental. El latín con sus declinaciones no es tan flexible que pueda fácilmente adoptar componentes nuevos. La palabra china al ser móvil va con otras unidades del lenguaje en flujo constante.

En parte esto explica que los poetas orientales puedan escribir con gran concisión y al mismo tiempo puedan lograr cualidades impersonales y universales. En su Arte de poesía china¹ J. Y. Liu dice que los chinos pueden presentar toda una experiencia, "todo un mundo en un grano de arena." Los occidentales, en cambio, siguen la estructura latina con un modelo sintáctico de verbos, sustantivos, adjetivos y un cierto orden. Este orden sugiere la presencia del mundo inteligible de Parménides predominantemente estático, fijo en el tiempo, el espacio y en el mundo de las ideas. El contraste se observa en los orientales con el mundo sensible de Heráclito.

José Juan Tablada, un poeta mexicano que vivió de 1871 a 1945 adoptó las estructuras orientales. Tablada floreció durante el modernismo pero exploró en las corrientes poéticas de oriente y occidente para tener sus mejores aventuras en el haiku² que introdujo en el verso hispánico. Con su haiku, Tablada se acercó y logró llegar a la unidad en la expresión liberando de tiempo y espacio a la imagen, al pensamiento y al sentimiento; aísla las imágenes de la rima y de la lógica del poema haciendo que su poesía empiece a ser un mundo en sí misma. Sus libros de

peomas Un día (1919) y El jarro de flores (1922) contienen haikus muy acertados que influyeron a otros escritores y poetas latinoamericanos que adoptaron esta forma oriental de poesía de gran poder de sugestión, entre ellos notablemente Octavio Paz.

A Tablada le llamó poderosamente la atención el haiku que ha sido una forma poética favorita de los japoneses. En 1900 estuvo en el Japón enviado por la Revista Moderna de México. El poeta quedó fascinado por esos versos en miniatura que evocan imágenes tan poderosas y agudas. Tablada se dió cuenta que para él las ideas poéticas encuentran su mejor forma de expresión en imágenes concretas y no en comentarios o descripciones.

Sus haikus aparecen por primera vez en el libro Un día con 37 de ellos. Tablada los llama poemas sintéticos o disociaciones líricas. En la forma y en el contenido siguen los tres versos del haikai del poeta japonés Bashō,³ pero a diferencia de los de Bashō, los de Tablada no siempre son de 17 sílabas.

En El jarro de flores con 61 haikus se aprecian estos poemas cortos que contienen dos opuestos o fuerzas aparentemente en conflicto--lo cotidiano y lo insólito--a través de los cuales se percibe la unidad; en "Vuelos," por ejemplo: "Juntos, en la tarde tranquila / vuelan notas de Angelus, / murciélagos y golondrinas."⁴ El poeta se concentra en la brevedad de la forma y el poder sugestivo de la imagen.

En este libro puede observarse la influencia de la filosofía de Bashō en el sentido de que todas las cosas de este mundo forman parte de la creación, enfatizando la unión del individuo y la naturaleza. En los haikus de Bashō y en los de Tablada la realidad es objetiva, expresada en imágenes concretas que poseen un realismo subjetivo. Por ejemplo: "Aunque jamás se muda, / a tumbos,"⁵ como carro de mudanzas, / va por la senda la tortuga."

En estas líneas y con la obra de Tablada se trata de enfocar sobre la imagen en el haiku y su acción liberadora en las categorías de tiempo y espacio. Con esto se intenta mostrar como al modificar estas cate-

gorías en su función tridimensional, la percepción de una nueva categoría, o sea la cuatridimensional permite acercarse a la unidad.

Antes de este intento conviene tocar algunos aspectos de la poesía oriental que influyen en el haiku y en Tablada.

El anti-intelectual budismo Zen⁶ fue de gran influencia en la poesía japonesa. El budismo Zen considera a la poesía en su forma más pura como lo cotidiano y lo que tiene sentido común. Zen y haiku comparten un énfasis en lo material y no en lo espiritual. El haiku habla de nieve, ratones, niños, curas roncando, ranas croando, como en "El burrito": "Mientras lo cargan / sueña el burrito amosquilado / en paraísos de esmeralda." (De El jarro de flores en Valdés, p. 57). La naturaleza japonesa no complicada por el autor, ha sido de influencia, también lo ha sido la simplicidad en la forma del verso y la sencillez de ideas. Una característica más de la poesía japonesa que influyó en el haiku y en Tablada es su poder de sugestión, de ahí que se espera que el poema sea completado por el lector: "Breve cortejo nupcial, / Las hormigas arrastran / Pétalos de azahar..." (De Un día en Ceide Echevarría, p. 36).

El haikai original es una forma poética que se desarrolló en Japón en los siglos XVI y XVII. Es un pequeño poema de tres versos de 5, 7 y 5 sílabas, 17 en total. Surgió como el verso que daba principio a una serie de versos encadenados. A diferencia de la poesía que le antecedió, ésta incorpora cosas humildes y de la vida cotidiana y carece de reglas formales. Fue la época en que vivió Bashō a quien se considera como el más grande poeta japonés. Él decía a sus discípulos que el principio de su escuela de poesía era el cambio con permanencia simultánea. Bashō gustaba de cosas tan insignificantes como el cuello de una luciérnaga, el granizo, o melones enlodados; gustaba del Zen en donde todo es directo, sin intermediarios y la comunicación entre Dios y el hombre es sin simbolismo. En el Zen ésta es la reintegración del hombre al universo. El más famoso de los haikai de Bashō expresa un hecho no simbólico y no alegórico: "La vieja charca / una rana salta / plop!"⁸ Este

haikai sugiere la pequeñez de la vida humana en comparación con el infinito.

A la forma contemporánea de haikai se le conoce como haiku, y éste, como su antecesor tiene que ver con el aquí y el ahora y con esa necesidad de captar la vida mientras fluye, como en Heráclito. "Las cosas no son nunca lo que son en el momento anterior y en el posterior porque las cosas están continuamente cambiando," o en palabras de Octavio Paz: "Somos imágenes en movimiento fijadas por el deseo": "Parece roer el reló / la medianoche y ser su eco / el minuterero del ratón" (De El jarro de Flores en Ceide Echevarría p. 45), donde el arte de Tablada se capta en perpetuo movimiento.

El haiku no tiene rima ni ritmo fijo, utiliza el lenguaje infiltrándole significados distintos mediante sugerencias y visiones que conducen a la transmisión de una emoción. Poseen un realismo subjetivo pero la realidad es objetiva, expresada en imágenes concretas. El haiku traza sólo líneas básicas del contorno, dejando para la imaginación del lector llenar los espacios con la armonía de todas las cosas.

Las imágenes de los haikus de Tablada son concretas y captan la esencia oriental de la naturaleza con imágenes frescas: "Del verano, roja y fría / carcajada, / rebanada / de sandía" (de El jarro de flores en Valdés, p. 58).

Otra cosa que esta poesía busca es dar el contorno de una obra con unas pocas palabras e imágenes agudas. En "Los sapos," por ejemplo: "Trozos de barro, / por la senda en penumbra / saltan los sapos...."

El haiku contiene por lo general dos elementos divididos por una palabra que los corta. El primero puede ser una condición general--el fin del invierno, el cielo al aclarar--y el otro una percepción momentánea. Éstos son los dos polos entre los que la chispa se hará para que el haiku sea efectivo. Por ejemplo la palabra "astillas" en "Peces voladores": "Al golpe del oro solar / estalla en astillas el vidrio del mar" (de El jarro de flores en Valdés, p.

57). Si el haiku es efectivo percibe la esencia de la naturaleza en los opuestos o fuerzas aparentemente en conflicto a través de las cuales se percibe la unidad como en "Hojas secas," "El jardín está lleno de hojas secas; / nunca vi tantas hojas en sus árboles, / verdes, en primavera..." (de Un día en Valdés, p. 53).

En su producción de haikus no tiene Tablada patrón fijo. Generalmente usa rima aconsonantada de los versos primero y tercero en poemas de tres versos que son los más representativos. En cuanto a la sintaxis, son las imágenes las que la dan. Con la sintaxis Tablada maneja correspondencias y analogías que dan a la poesía un carácter mágico: "El murciélago" "Los vuelos de la golondrina / ensaya en la noche el murciélago / para luego volar de día...." (de Un día en Valdés, p. 54).

Cuando Tablada usa los adjetivos, su función clave define la actitud del poeta porque hace que las descripciones realistas se hagan subjetivas y revelen al autor: "romántico sauz," "adiós irremediable," y "palma arquitectónica," como se ve en su haiku "Palma real": "erigió una columna / la palma arquitectónica y sus hojas / esbozan ya la cúpula" (de El jarro de flores en Valdés, p. 58).

En el haiku se condensa la expresión de los pensamientos. El valor de las palabras reside en el sentido que esconden. Se omiten palabras que gramaticalmente serían requeridas pero que no se necesitan para tener un sentido claro.

Cuando una frase está desprovista de verbos la asociación de dos imágenes funciona. Por ejemplo, en un haiku no publicado de Juan O. Valencia, que al prescindir por completo de verbo la imagen sugiere reducción de tiempo y espacio sin que el lector sienta violencias:⁹ "Silenciosos cuervos / nieve / jardín de obsidiana."

Según la escuela imaginista¹⁰ las ideas poéticas se expresan mejor en imágenes concretas que en comentarios; el haiku es un ejemplo. La imagen preserva la pluralidad de significados de la palabra sin quebrantar la unidad sintáctica de la frase o conjunto de

frases. Octavio Paz dice que cada imagen tiene muchos significados contrarios o dispares que abarca o reconcilia sin suprimirla. Dice también que la imagen reconcilia a los contrarios, pero que esta reconciliación no puede ser explicada por las palabras; mas bien las imágenes que expresan realidades contrarias producen una nueva realidad.¹¹

La base de la técnica de Tablada son las imágenes sensoriales sobre todo las visuales, y las auditivas aunque en menor grado. En "Tianguis" ambas se mezclan: "Guajolote, cólera absurda / Carcajada inoportuna, / Montón de plumas!" (de La feria en Ceide Echevarría, p. 53).

Con base en la técnica japonesa, Tablada concentra la imagen haciéndola intensa como en "La araña": "Recorriendo su tela / Esta luna clarísima / tiene a la araña en vela" (de Un día en Valdés, p. 54). Aquí la imagen de la luna se concentra sólo en la araña con la luna como fondo. La imagen capta la atención del lector, dejando que sea esa imagen y lo que evoca lo que transmite los pensamientos inexpressados del poeta.

Los conceptos de tiempo y espacio son básicos en la imagen del haiku porque ésta se libera de ellos y produce la unidad en última instancia; pero en el proceso hay ambivalencia. La ambivalencia del haiku es consecuencia de la naturaleza dual del poema. El conflicto, según Octavio Paz, está en la entraña del poema y consiste en el doble movimiento de la operación poética que está en la transmutación del tiempo histórico en tiempo arquetípico.¹² Otro conflicto más se presenta al tratar de controlar el tiempo, midiéndolo y dándole espacio. El haiku hace que ese conflicto desaparezca con la ayuda de la imagen que actúa a un nivel superior de impacto sobre el tiempo y el espacio. Se produce quietud en movimiento al hacer la imagen intemporal. Cada vez que un haiku da la sensación de quietud en movimiento libera al lector de tiempo y espacio. La humanidad ha escogido al sol y a la luna arbitrariamente para aprisionar al tiempo en un espacio de años, días y minutos terrestres, cuando en realidad la humanidad forma parte de un universo más amplio en que la mente podría captar el tiempo y algo más de otros cuerpos celestes. Es sabido que

algunos místicos y poetas han podido salirse del patrón tiempo superando los niveles tridimensionales, pudiendo captar el cuarto nivel o cuatridimensión. Alexis Carrel en La incógnita del hombre plantea la pregunta sobre cuál tiempo es más largo, el tiempo de la juventud o el de la vejez, haciendo así surgir otro tiempo, el interior y subjetivo. Otro caso de tiempo diferente es el que Jorge Luis Borges aborda en su cuento "El milagro secreto" entre el momento en que se da la orden de disparar en el fusilamiento de Jaromir Hladik y el momento en que las balas lo tocan. Hladik se sale del mundo de la cronología temporal con permiso de Dios, quien le otorga un año. Así, las limitaciones de que las personas están conscientes sólo les permiten llegar a la tercera dimensión por la estructura de la mente. Como el tiempo lineal--pasado, presente y futuro--es invención de la humanidad, entonces existe otra realidad o realidades que también se manifiestan en el lenguaje, haciéndolo diferente, con otro tiempo y otro espacio. Lo que tal vez haya que hacer, dice Paz, para llegar a la cuatridimensión y despojarse de la superestructura intelectual es regresar al origen. El intento del poeta por realizar esta hazaña puede observarse por ejemplo en el tiempo arquetípico--mundo completo en sí mismo con tiempo único donde todo es presente--que evocan los cuervos sobre nieve de Valencia. En ese poema no hay verbo que sugiera ser conjugado en algún tiempo. Como no se puede ubicar el poema en el tiempo por falta de verbo, entonces pasa a una categoría intemporal colocándose en el eterno presente. La ausencia de verbos crea un estado de quietud en movimiento como si los objetos se hubieran detenido en el tiempo y se hubieran congelado en una pose eterna. En el haikai de Valencia la nieve y el color negro de los cuervos son dos elementos distintos que se unen y que permiten captar intuitivamente una realidad diferente a la nieve y a los cuervos. Al quitarse el tiempo por la ausencia del verbo y haberse reducido el espacio con la economía de palabras, la intuición puede captar la nueva unidad al juntarse elementos sin relación esencial para crear una nueva realidad.

Con respecto al espacio, puede decirse que el hombre lleva en sí mismo lo que atribuye al espacio que lo rodea. La vivencia de un espacio superior

produce una transformación cualitativa en el sentimiento de lo que se es. Las ideas que se refieren al aspecto invisible de las cosas poseen un poder modificador como en el caso de la poesía. El poeta entra por la hendidura donde las fuerzas contrarias chocan y es ésta la posibilidad de que otros significados entren en la vida de cada uno. Con un nuevo sistema de ideas se entra a un estado superior, a un espacio que es sin tiempo. El siguiente paso sería intuir que se es parte de un todo del cual sólo se captan ciertas formas. Al ser parte del todo se es también, participe, no solamente observador. Se presentan entonces las analogías como un principio de acceso con las metáforas de las imágenes. El paso siguiente será atisbar, fijarse en las conexiones y en las perspectivas asomándose a las cosas por muchos lados para poder desprenderse de los hábitos automatizantes y poder liberar la mente del dogma. Éste sería un proceso por el cual podría captarse la unidad del haiku a través de la imagen. En el haiku los contrarios pueden trascenderse y superar las tensiones de los polos. En Octavio Paz, la teoría de los contrarios¹³ es importante para llegar a la unidad como se ve en "Identidad": "Lágrimas que virtió / la prostituta negra / blancas, como las mías!" (de El jarro de flores en Valdés, p. 58). Como es por medio de la intuición a través de la que se trascienden algunas visiones del mundo, para ampliar el panorama se puede decir que el uso de esa intuición funciona bien en el haiku porque esto ayuda a la percepción sensorial a ampliar la perspectiva.

El haiku no trata de dominar el medio ambiente, sino de percibir y de vivir en la naturaleza; es una forma de regresar a la naturaleza. Puede existir unidad en algo tan sencillo como cuando Bashō resuelve el misterio del universo en el "plop!" de la caída de la rana. Este estado de la mente es parecido al que se tiene cuando se hace el esfuerzo por obtener lo máximo de la vida cuando uno siente que está sintiendo.

En los haikus más logrados de Tablada, tanto cambio como permanencia tenían que estar presentes. Lo momentáneo se cruza con lo constante y eterno como en "Arte con tu aureo alfiler / Las mariposas del

instante / Quise clavar en un papel" (de Un día en Ceide Echevarría, p. 30).

La obra de Tablada es la alianza de la poesía oriental con la vanguardia europea. Su papel de innovador es importante. Sus haikus fueron los primeros en lengua española y no han sido superados. Según Octavio Paz "Tablada fue capaz de mostrar que la palabra puede reconciliar al hombre con las estrellas, los animales y las raíces."¹⁴ Sus haikus demuestran como se pueden modificar los conceptos de tiempo y espacio. Al cambiar el sistema occidental se abre la posibilidad de captar otra dimensión para ser parte de ese todo que la imagen liberada proyecta.

Tablada adoptó la misión del haiku de revelar la posibilidad de un todo, sin tiempo ni espacio. De mostrar que la armonía del universo es nuestra propia armonía. El poeta chino Kuan Yen lo expresa mejor.

Estar en éxtasis es no establecer nada con respecto a uno mismo. Dejar las cosas como son. Moverse como el agua. Estar tranquilo como un espejo y responder como un eco. Le permití a mi mente sin ninguna restricción pensar lo que se le antojase y a mi boca hablar de todo lo que quisiera y luego olvidé si esto y no esto era mío o de otro, si lo ganado o lo perdido era mío o de otro. Por dentro y por fuera estaba completamente transformado y entonces fue cuando el ojo vino a ser como la oreja y la oreja como la nariz y la nariz como la boca y no hubo nada que se quedara sin identificar. A medida que la mente se iba concentrando, las formas se disolvieron; los huesos y la carne se desparramaron y deshiciéron. No supe qué era lo que sostenía mi forma, ni dónde pisaban mis pies; solamente me movía junto con el viento hacia el este o el oeste como la hoja de árbol desprendida de su tallo. No tenía conciencia si iba yo sobre el viento o era el viento el que iba sobre mí.¹⁵

NOTAS

¹ James Y. Liu, El arte de la poesía china, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 46.

² Poema corto de generalmente tres líneas que contiene dos opuestos o fuerzas aparentemente en conflicto a través de las cuales se percibe la unidad. Mark Cramer, "José Juan Tablada and the Haiku Tradition," Romance Notes 16 (1975), p. 530.

³ En El Siglo XVII en la poesía japonesa aparece el padre del haiku, Matsuo Bashō (1644-1694). Su aportación es el énfasis en la observación de la realidad, aunque es simbólico en la descripción. Su filosofía dice que todas las cosas de este mundo forman parte de la creación. Bashō enfatiza la unión entre individuo y naturaleza. Gloria Ceide Echevarría, El haikai en la lírica mexicana, (México: Ediciones de Andrea, 1967), p. 9. Los haikus que se mencionan y que se encuentran en este libro se señalarán en el texto de este trabajo como en Ceide Echevarría y número de página.

⁴ En Los mejores poemas de José Juan Tablada, prólogo de José María Gonzales de Mendoza; presentación, edición y notas de Héctor Valdés, (México: UNAM, 1971) p. 56. Las citas de este libro mencionadas a continuación se referirán como en Valdés y número de página.

⁵ De Un día en Valdés, p. 53.

⁶ Secta que se estableció en Japón a través de la India y China en el siglo XII. Enseña una forma posible de lograr el estado Buda, principalmente a través de la meditación. H.E. Wedech, Dictionary of Pagan Religions, (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1971), p. 360.

⁷ R. H. Blyth, Zen in English Literature and Oriental Classics, (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1942), p. 217.

8 Donald Keene, Japanese Literature, (New York: Grove Press, 1955), p. 39.

9 Profesor de Lenguas Romances y Literaturas en la Universidad de Cincinnati; terapeuta por medio de la poesía; poeta. Entre sus libros de poesía se encuentran Espacios vacíos (Tegucigalpa, Honduras: Escuela Superior del Profesorado "Francisco Morazán," 1976); Signo y sentimiento. Concrete Poetry, (Cincinnati, Ohio: University of Cincinnati, 1976); Carmel, (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati, 1970).

10 Movimiento poético del siglo XX que defiende el verso libre y la expresión de ideas y emociones a través de imágenes claras y precisas. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, (Springfield, Mass: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1979).

11 "El poema no sólo proclama la coexistencia dinámica y necesaria de los contrarios, sino su final identidad. Desde Parménides nuestro mundo ha sido el de la distinción neta y tajante entre lo que es y lo que no es." Octavio Paz, El arco y la lira, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1979), p. 101.

12 "La ambivalencia del poema no proviene de la historia, entendida como una realidad unitaria y total que engloba todas las obras, sino que es consecuencia de la naturaleza dual del poema.... Ésta es una manera propia y paradójica de ser de la poesía." Paz, pp. 188-89.

13 En esta teoría el poema proclama la coexistencia dinámica y necesaria de los contrarios y su identidad final. La imagen reconcilia a los contrarios, más esta reconciliación no puede ser explicada por las palabras. Paz, pp. 101, 111.

14 Octavio Paz, "José Juan Tablada" en The Siren and the Seashell, (Austin, Texas: University Press, 1976), p. 64.

15 D. T. Suzuki, An Introduction to Zen Buddhism, (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1964), p. 131.