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THE IDEA OF HAPPINESS IN THE POETRY
OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

by

ROBERT MC CORMICK

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INTRODUCTION

Unfortunately, until fairly recently, there existed a biased preconceived notion of eighteenth century Spanish literature in general, forged mainly, though not exclusively by the pen of Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo. In both the Historia de las ideas estéticas en España and Historia de los heterodoxos españoles, the bibliophile scathingly reduces Spain's Enlightenment to pseudo-philosophical speculation: "No hubo siglo que más tuviera en boca el nombre de filosofía, ni otro más ayuno de ella. Desde los cartesianos hasta Condillac, el descenso es espantoso."¹ Nothing and no one was immune to his rather pointed criticism. Beginning with the encyclopedic "movement" in France, he bitterly censures such leading intellectuals as Diderot and D'Alembert: "Diderot fue en su siglo lo que hoy diríamos un periodista. De él viven más el nombre y la triste influencia que las obras. Unido con el eximio matemático D'Alembert, y poseidas uno y otro de la manía generalizadora propia de la época, emprendieron reducir a inventario y registro la suma de

¹Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de los heterodoxos españoles, (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 1967), 2nd ed., vol. II, p. 328.

los conocimientos humanos en aquella famosa Enciclopedia..."²
His bombast is only surpassed by his acute short-sightedness
when he relinquishes the Encyclopedia to literary ignominy.
"...la Enciclopedia yace en el olvido y no se levantará."³
As if this were not enough, he reduces the literature of
the eighteenth century to almost pure sociological inquiry:
"...era eficacísimo elemento de desorganización la poesía
y la amena literatura, que en el siglo XVIII tienen poco
valor estético, pero mucho interés social."⁴ Such respected
and highly esteemed poets of the Enlightenment as Meléndez
Valdés and Quintana are severely chastized for their appar-
ent afrancesamiento.⁵ In fact, throughout the chapter
entitled "Enciclopedismo español," the literati are often
a pretext to condemn the real enemy of orthodoxy, namely
France. It is France who has corrupted the minds of the
Spanish intelligentsia, it is France who has undermined
the literary traditions of Spain founded upon unfaltering
devotion to the Church.

El viento de Francia se nos había calado
hasta los huesos; y el prosaismo endeble, la
timidez elegante, la etiqueta de salón, la

²Ibid., p. 329.

³Ibid., p. 329.

⁴Ibid., p. 530.

⁵See Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de los hetero-
doxos españoles, pp. 530-572.

ligereza de buen tono, el esprit enteco y aquella coquetería o sutileza de ingenio que llamaban mignardise lo iban secando todo. Ni paraba aquí el daño, porque los libros franceses, que eran entonces insano alimento de nuestra juventud universitaria, tras de difundir un sentimentalismo de mala ley, enfermizo y pedestre, nos traían todo género de utopías sociales, de bestiales regodeos materialistas y de burlas y sarcasmos contra todo lo que por acá venerábamos.⁶

Whether it be France or Spain's orthodoxy, the eighteenth century was often considered a literary wasteland. Critics, while realizing certain attempts toward an Enlightenment (the name of Feijóo is frequently a convenient symbolic example) nonetheless condemned the Siglo de las luces rather harshly. According to Diego Marín, the Ilustración produced "unas obras académicas y frías que no reflejan nada del alma nacional y que, por lo mismo, no logran hacerse populares."⁷ Even the more traditional line of Spanish literature namely those writers who based their reputations upon imitating the great writers of the Siglo de Oro, "produce nada genial."⁸ Thus owing in part to the efforts of such critics as Hermosilla and Menéndez Pelayo, Spain's eighteenth century suffers from what

⁶Ibid., p. 530.

⁷Diego Marín, La civilización española, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 173.

⁸Ibid., p. 173.

may be called "mala prensa." "La consideración del siglo XVIII con valor puramente negativo en todo el ámbito de la cultura, se ha convertido ya en un tópico. Tanto literaria como artísticamente, el XVIII se nos quiere presentar como una época de esterilidad y de retroceso."⁹ Perhaps one of the earliest critics to reverse this trend was Angel del Río. The noted literary historian, while aware of Spain's artistic decadence during the early years of the eighteenth century, envisioned the Enlightenment as an ascent, an evolution toward an important intellectual movement replete with writers of considerable repute. "El siglo XVIII, pasados los primeros años de completa esterilidad, será un siglo de esforzada ascensión, desde el punto más bajo de la decadencia."¹⁰ From this decadence as manifest in the plethora of third class imitators of Góngora--Zamora, Canizares, Alvarez de Toledo--del Río discerns an Enlightenment imbued with new ideas and fresh literary possibilities: "Fue, por tanto, el siglo XVIII una época eminentemente crítica, de lucha ideológica, encaminada a la transformación de ideas, instituciones y creencias."¹¹ Unfortunately however,

⁹Emiliano Díez-Echarri and José María Roca Franquesa, Historia general de la literatura española e hispano-americana, (Madrid: Aguilar, 1972), p. 615.

¹⁰Angel del Río, Historia de la literatura española, vol. II, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1948), p. 1.

¹¹Ibid., p. 1.

the second half of the eighteenth century had been, until fairly recently, scrutinized only in relation to its ideological importance. With the possible exception of Meléndez Valdés' poetry the most important writers studied by literary critics appear to be the essayists-- Feijóo, Jovellanos, the Cadalso of Cartas marruecas. Even the aforementioned Angel del Río relegates poetry to a second place in the literary history of the eighteenth century. "...es evidente que la poesía del siglo XVIII no logra conovernos y ocupa un lugar secundario en la historia de la lírica española. Constituye, a lo sumo, un paréntesis interesante entre la gran lírica del barroco y el renacer de la honda sensibilidad poética en Bécquer y Rosalía Castro."¹² And yet with even the most superficial glance at the Spanish Enlightenment, though certainly in terms of quality never a period to be confused with the Siglo de Oro, it is nonetheless never a mere "paréntesis interesante" for this implies an isolated, self-contained literary period with little or no transcendency. One only has to recall the indebtedness felt by Espronceda to his teacher and mentor the neoclassical poet Alberto Lista to realize that the Spanish poetry of the Enlightenment is indeed part of a Spanish literary tradition. There can be no doubt, for example, that the first half of the eighteenth century saw a continued

¹²Ibid., p. 54.

interest in the works of Góngora and the Baroque esthetic in general, though somewhat more intensely felt in Andalucía. "En la primera mitad de la centuria. . . se le (Góngora) admiró e imitó ampliamente, si bien persistían contra su obra las mismas actitudes críticas que en el siglo XVIII. Naturalmente, los autores andaluces sintieron una fuerte atracción hacia la obra total de su coterráneo. En efecto, en esta región de la península, el gusto barroco se manifestaba con pujanza en todas las artes."¹³

One of the early and better known continuators of the Baroque style during the first half of the eighteenth century was the Sevillian poet Alvarez de Toledo (1662-1714). In such works as "A mi pensamiento" the "desengaño barroco," so reminiscent of Góngora and Quevedo is apparent throughout the poem:

Sueño de los despiertos
Son sus necios fantasmas,
Cuya falaz ventura
En el punto se pierde que se alcanza.
Aun la verdad que dicen,
Mentira es disfrazada
Pues viene a desmentirla
El instante que dura el pronunciarla.¹⁴

So à la mode was the Baroque esthetic during the

¹³Nigel Glendinning, Historia de la literatura española: el siglo XVIII, (Barcelona, Editorial Ariel, 1973), p. 101.

¹⁴Don Gabriel Alvarez de Toledo, "A mi pensamiento," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1952), p. 15.

early part of the century that Góngora's reputation was indeed enjoying a rather important place among the literati of the day: he is even referred to by Gerardo Lobo (1679-1750) as "el Horacio cordobés."¹⁵ Such well-known writers and important literary figures as the Conde de Torrepalma (1706-1767) also known as "El Difícil" due to his rather intricate Gongorine style and José Antonio Porcel (1715-1794) both born in Granada, endeavored to imitate Góngora well into the eighteenth century. And yet, as is frequently the result with well-intentioned imitators, their poetry is indeed inferior to that of their master:

La diferencia fundamental entre estos epígonos de Góngora y su maestro del siglo anterior reside, al parecer, en la pobreza de su invención (Muchas de sus metáforas, en efecto, son tomadas directamente de las obras de Góngora), su carencia de sentido musical, y su falta de habilidad en general, con poquísimas excepciones, para sostener el estilo heroico y preservar la unidad del sentimiento con el éxito con que Góngora mismo lo había logrado.¹⁶

However, as early as the second decade of the eighteenth century a certain reaction against the works

¹⁵Gerardo Lobo, "Remitiendo a un amigo los pocos borradores con que se hallaba de sus obras el autor," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 23.

¹⁶Nigel Glendinning, op. cit., p. 102.

of Góngora, and the Baroque style in general, had become prevalent. Writers such as Gregorio Mayáns and Pedro Nolasco had bitterly censured the Andalusian poet.¹⁷ Yet perhaps one of the most vociferous and indeed most important attacks against Góngora was to be found in Ignacio de Luzán's Poética, published in 1737. While recognizing certain important concepts in his poetry, Luzán criticizes Góngora's style which tends to obfuscate the meaning of these concepts:

"En las Soledades, de Góngora, habrá sin duda muchas verdades o muchos conceptos verdaderos que tendrán todas esas circunstancias, pero ¿quién podrá desem-
boscar de tan enmarañadas cláusulas alguna verdad o algún concepto que llene la curiosidad concebida?"¹⁸

Thus the Spanish literary world soon became polarized in a series of polemics involving Góngora's poetry.

In the Academia del Buen Gusto in Madrid, for example, "en la década de los cincuenta, Luzán, el marqués de Valdeflores y Montiano se declaraban antigongorinos; Porcel y José de Villarroel, por el contrario, se definían en pro de Góngora."¹⁹ This Academia which convened regularly during the period 1749-1751 was

¹⁷Ibid., p. 112.

¹⁸Ignacio de Luzán, La Poética, (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 1974), p. 145.

¹⁹Nigel Glendinning, op. cit., p. 113.

indeed a heterogenous literary salon in which the Gongorine adherents often came into conflict with the "precursors" of the neoclassical esthetic.

La misma discordia que se observa en los procedimientos se nota en las teorías, puesto que, por un lado, vemos a Montiano leer en aquella Academia su primer discurso sobre las tragedias españoles y su Virginia; a Luzán dar a conocer las novedades dramaturgicas de la Chaussée; a Velázquez (el marqués de Valdeflores) condenar ásperamente las tragicomedias españolas; y, al propio tiempo, sin ofensa de nadie, en la misma culta y amistosa reunión de que Montiano era secretario, levantar su voz el granadino Porcel en una especie de vejamen o juicio lunático, como él dice, de los escritos de sus compañeros, para combatir de frente a Boileau, y sentar sin rebozo alguno teorías tan adversas a la Poética clásica como las del P. Peijóo. . .²⁰

Thus the Academia del Buen Gusto became a literary forum in which contrasting ideas were discussed and debated. This is perhaps its most important contribution to the Spanish Enlightenment since it was here that change fomented in minds of the literati--a change which would be realized during the reign of Carlos III:

No es justo, por consiguiente, mirar la Academia del Buen Gusto como una ciudadela

²⁰Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de las ideas estéticas en España, vol. III, siglo XVI, 3^{ra} ed., (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1962), p. 262.

impenetrable del gusto galo--clásico. Precisamente su gloria consiste en la tolerancia que aunó allí las voluntades, el roce, preparando para los días de Carlos III el advenimiento de una poesía que en ciertas obras selectas de determinados autores (D. Nicolás Moratín, Meléndez, el maestro González, etc.) fue a un tiempo nacional y correcta, española y no gongorina, racional y no afrancesada.

La Academia de la Marquesa de Sarría es, sin duda, el fenómeno literario más notable del reinado de Fernando VI.²¹

Thus the first half of the eighteenth century often considered a low point of Spanish literary activity²² was in effect a period of intense artistic achievement-- a period in which salons and Academias thrived.

La vida cultural del siglo XVIII está caracterizada por una serie de instituciones que le dan un perfil muy particular y definen en múltiples aspectos los rasgos esenciales de la época. Todas ellas podría decirse que coinciden en la tendencia . . . de cultura dirigida; una minoría se considera poseedora de una ilustración superior y trata, desde

²¹Ibid., p. 263.

²²See especially Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Ibid., p. 104.

la plataforma en que se instala --academia, tertulia, periódico o sociedad--, de regir o encauzar las corrientes de opinión.²³

Various important Academies and Institutions were founded during the first half of the century: La Real Academia Española (1714), La Academia de la Historia (1735) and La Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona (1700), including the establishment in 1712 by Felipe V of the Biblioteca Nacional. And yet even more effective than these Academies was the flourishing of important literary newspapers--the most notable being the Diario de los Literatos de España modeled after the French Journal des Savants:

De un modo mucho más directo y eficaz que las Academias contribuyó en el siglo pasado a excitar y remover el espíritu crítico en diversos sentidos la aparición de varios papeles periódicos, desde el reinado de Felipe V en adelante. Hay uno, sobre todo, tan importante y de tan gloriosa historia, que por sí solo marca una fecha en nuestra historia literaria. . . . Tal fue el famoso Diario de los Literatos de España, revista trimestral que comenzó a salir de molde el día 10 de 1737, con título y objeto evidentemente análogos a los del Journal des Savants, de París, proponiéndose. . . hacer largos extractos, análisis y juicios, a un tiempo mesurados y severos, de todas las obras dignas de atención que fuesen

²³Juan Luis Alborg, Historia de la literatura española: el siglo XVIII, (Madrid: Gredos, 1972), p. 22.

apareciendo.²⁴

This journal not only published articles concerning literature and the arts but more importantly devoted itself to a further understanding of scientific and philosophical indagations:

. . .el Diario de los Literatos fue una revista académica, una revista sabia. Extractaba menudamente las obras sometidas a su juicio, y las más de las veces, en vez de formularle directamente, dejaba que el lector le infiriese por sí de los datos que en la misma exposición se le facilitaban. Más atentos los diaristas a las obras científicas y filosóficas que a las de recreación y amena literatura, y forzados por la índole enciclopédica de su trabajo a discurrir en breve espacio sobre las materias más disímiles, no acometieron de frente la cuestión literaria, sino en el análisis de la Poética de Luzán, manifestando en los demás artículos más bien tendencias generales de buen gusto. . .²⁵

Throughout the first half of the century literary journals flourished. "El más importante vehículo para la divulgación de las nuevas ideas e inquietudes que se agitan en el panorama español del Setecientos lo representa el periodismo."²⁶ Besides the aforementioned Diario, the famous Gaceta de Madrid, the Mercurio

²⁴Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

²⁵Ibid., p. 204.

²⁶Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 46.

histórico y político and El Duende crítico and later El Pensador and El Censor all served to propagate important literary, political and scientific ideas of the Enlightenment.²⁷

Poetry too was undergoing increased activity and change. Whereas Gerardo Lobo had proudly exclaimed, "Yo llego a engongorizarme,"²⁸ José Antonio de Porcel, his contemporary already represents according to de Cueto, an "era de transformación literaria."²⁹ The Granadine poet and friend of the Conde de Torrepalma, "puede situarse en el momento de paso de la grandiosidad técnica barroca a la ligereza rítmica del rococó."³⁰ El Adonis, written around the mid-point of the century and published posthumously, represents a change in direction of Spanish poetry. The gongorismo of the first half of the eighteenth century laden with hyperbaton conceits and exaggerated metaphors, is replaced or rather tempered with a slowly evolving rococó style.³¹ And yet the change effectuated in poetry was not merely a

²⁷For a detailed study of their importance see especially Ibid., pp. 46-63 and Richard Herr, España y la revolución del siglo XVIII, (Jerez de la Frontera: Aguilar, 1964), pp. 151-166.

²⁸Quoted by Leopoldo de Cueto in Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. XLII.

²⁹Ibid., p. LXXI.

³⁰Joaquín Arce, "Rococó, neoclasicismo y prerromanticismo en la poesía española del siglo XVIII," El padre Feijóo y su siglo: Cuadernos de la Cátedra Feijóo, no. 18, vol. II, p. 456.

³¹See especially Joaquín Arce, Ibid., pp. 456ff.

stylistic one. The political and ideological situation, which was indeed to influence poetic themes, found itself in turmoil--a turmoil causing constant anxiety, fear and near chaos.

La sociedad española del momento estaba pasando, de hecho, por un período de auto-crítica y de reajuste. Se hallaban entonces en debate los derechos del pueblo y las formas de gobierno, y se adelantaba en el conocimiento de las ideas que se abrían paso por doquier en Europa. La situación económica era tan incierta todavía que una cosecha malograda o un alza producida en el precio del pan, por ejemplo, podían acarrear conflictos en muchas zonas del país.³²

One poet who perhaps best exemplifies this transition in Spanish literary taste in poetry is Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (1737-1780). Although many of his compositions reflect a staunch traditionalist viewpoint, certain works such as "La Diana" appear to prefigure the ideological changes of the Enlightenment. The poem, written in 1766 and dedicated to the Infante don Luis, sings the praises of a society ruled by a forceful yet prudent king. The six cantos, through the symbolic use of the hunt, penetrate various aspects of society. Yet one perceives a much broader theme, one which extends itself beyond the confines of bucolic metaphors. We are specifically thinking of Canto VI in which Moratín exalts the progress that

³²Nigel Glendinning, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

science has made due in great part to the work of Feijóo:

Madrid, la gran Madrid me alimentaba
En tiempo tan dichoso, y fue aplaudido
Sin méritos mi canto; aquí empezaba
La ciencia a abrir su alcázar escondido.
Ve en él los Malebranches, y Bacones,
Los Lokes, los Leibnitzes, y Neutones.

Feijóo, mi gran Feijóo, las pirineas
Cumbres pasar los hizo, y ha mostrado
El rumbo a solidísimas ideas;
La física a ahuyentar ha comenzado
El falso pundonor caballeresco
De la nación, y el genio quijotesco.³³

The anacreontics of Moratín, along with his various imitations of the classics, also differ quite radically from those of his predecessors. In his introduction to his Anacreónticas he underscores the importance that the real world of the court was to play in his classical reality:

Dime: ¿dónde caminas
Tan solo y confiado,
Sin protector alguno,
Librillo desdichado?
¿En qué elegancia fías
Tu aprecio y tu despacho?
¿Qué crítico piadoso
Te aseguró el aplauso?
Cuando en ti contuvieses
Los versos que cantaron
Con sonoras liras
El Píndaro y Horacio,

³³Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, "Poema didáctico," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. II, p. 65.

De Mevios y de Zoilos
 No pudieras librarlos,
 Pues aun al propio Homero
 Se le atrevió Aristarco.
 Siendo esto así, no temas
 El verte censurado,
 Que no es toda censura
 Prueba de que eres malo;
 Y mas en este tiempo,
 Que en la corte de Carlos
 Son muchos los que juzgan,
 Mas los que aciertan raros.³⁴

Moratín appears more concerned with the Court than with the pastoral world. Glendinning also observes this peculiarity in relation to Cadalso's poetry in all his attempts at depicting the "classical" world.

. . .la imitación de los clásicos por parte de Moratín y Cadalso, por ejemplo, difiere mucho de la de la primera generación representada por Porcel y Luzán. Estos se limitaron a aceptar las fórmulas clásicas y el aparato exterior, mientras que Moratín y Cadalso, en el mejor de los casos, vivieron ya completamente, al parecer, la manera clásica, aceptando tanto los valores como las formas de esta cultura. En las anacreónticas de ambos, la alabanza de la vida retirada, del vino y del amor como un modo de vida moralmente mejor que la guerra o la ambición constituyen, al parecer, auténticos objetos de experiencia en compañía de "Dorisa," "Pilis," y sus amigos, y no meras fantasías. La atmósfera pastoril de todos estos poemas no es, en verdad, tanto la de la Arcadia

³⁴Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, "A mi libro," op. cit., p. 1.

como la de Madrid mismo."³⁵ In another of Moratín's Anacreónticas the theme of antiquity is replaced by a profound moral concern for the citizenry of Madrid; a verse form once epitomizing the pagan world of Bacchus and baccanales now seriously reflects upon virtue and vice:

Mas si aspirar pretendes [the poet]
A empresas más heroicas,
Limpia a Madrid del vicio,
Cual Juvenal a Roma.
Con satírico verso,
Que al suyo contrapongas,
Ridiculiza el vicio,
Y haz la virtud famosa.
Destierra el ocio infame,
Y estravagancias todas,
A que por su capricho
Los hombres se abandonan.
Solo así serás digno
Del cristal de Beocia,
Y así solo en Parnaso
Se adquiere la corona.³⁶

By "falsifying" the classical world, Moratín embellished his poetry with his own vivencia. Thus his poems, at times, especially the Anacreónticas are in fact more personal in tone. The change in poetry, or at least its more intimate quality, begins to appear in Spain precisely during Moratín's generation. Indeed, we are now confronted with another

³⁵Nigel Glendinning, op. cit., p. 119.

³⁶Nicolás Fernández de Moratín, op. cit., p. 1.

group of poets chronologically between the late Baroque poets of the early half of the eighteenth century (Gerardo Lobo, Alvarez de Toledo, etc.) and the later Sevillian and Salamancan "school poets" such as Meléndez Valdés, Fray Diego González: ". . .los poetas de la generación de Moratín (García de la Huerta, Cadalso, Tomás de Iriarte) elevaron sus poemas a una inusitada intensidad emocional que, a pesar de todos los elementos retóricos que puedan contener, resulta mucho más directa, por ejemplo, que la conseguida por Alvarez de Toledo, Torrepalma y los restantes miembros de las Academias privadas de la primera parte del XVIII."³⁷

This change in tone toward a more personal, almost hermetic type of poetry can be seen in the work of José Cadalso (1711-1782). In a well-known poem which serves both as an introduction to and a justification of his poetry Cadalso is aware that his work does differ from his illustrious antecedents:

Caro lector, cualquiera que tú seas,
Que éstos mis ocios juveniles veas,
No pienses encontrar en su lectura
La majestad, la fuerza y la dulzura
Que llevan los raudales del Parnaso,
Mena, Boscán, Ercilla, Garcilaso,
Castro, Espinel, León, Lope y Quevedo:
No ofrezco asuntos que cumplir no puedo.³⁸

³⁷Nigel Glendinning, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

³⁸José Cadalso, "Refiere el autor los motivos que tuvo para aplicarse a la poesía, y la calidad de los asuntos que tratará en sus versos," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 248.

The last verse would also seem to indicate that Cadalso's poetry would reflect the condition humaine, namely the poet's own vivencia. While underscoring a certain classical influence, he reaffirms the fact that his poetry is neither profound nor altisonant:

Llegué a la sacra falda del Parnaso,
Y como en sueños, vi que me llamaban
Desde la sacra cumbre, y me alentaban,
Ovidio y Taso, a cuyo docto influjo
Mi numen estos versos me produjo:
Todos de risa son, gustos y amores.
No tocaré materias superiores;
De los supremos dioses y los reyes
La oscura voz y las secretas leyes;
Los arcanos, enigmas y misterios,
No digo con osados versos serios;
Antes con más sencillo y bajo tono
Celebro la cabana y dejo el trono.³⁹

This personalization in Cadalso's poetry is further reinforced in the "Suplemento" to his Los eruditos a la violeta in which he states that "la poesía. . . será siempre el remedio de mis melancolías."⁴⁰ The idea that poetry offers man a place to "desahogarse," to free oneself from melancholia--a common malaise of the century--radically opposes Luzán's concept of poetry as expressed in the Poética (1737). According to the theoretician,

³⁹Ibid., p. 248.

⁴⁰José Cadalso, Los eruditos a la violeta, (Madrid: Anaya, 1967), p. 166.

paraphrasing the Italian critic Ludovico Antonio Muratori's Della perfetta poesia, everyone and everything is divided into three spheres or "mundos"--the celestial, the human and the material. Each part contains the materia prima of poetry. "Estos tres mundos o reinos de la naturaleza contienen un número infinito de varias verdades, que todos son, o pueden ser, objeto de la poesía."⁴¹ And yet Luzán specifically condemns the emphasis given by certain poets (this can also apply to Cadalso) to the "mundo humano"--an emphasis which distorts the essence of poetry: "Con que el conceder a la poesía por objeto solamente las acciones humanas, como algunos en su definición han dado a entender, es usurparla injustamente dos reinos que, de derecho, le pertenecen."⁴² Cadalso too had become cognizant of this. Poetry, especially love poetry, lacks transcendency and therefore the poet must frequently abandon this theme (love):

Llegóse a mí con el semblante adusto,
Con estirada ceja y cuello erguido
(Capaz de dar un peligroso susto
Al tierno pecho del rapaz Cupido),
Un animal de los que llaman sabios,
Y de este modo abrió sus secos labios:

"No cantes más de amor. Desde este día
Has de olvidar hasta su necio nombre. . ."⁴³

⁴¹Ignacio de Luzán, op. cit., p. 100.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 100-101.

⁴³José Cadalso, "Sobre ser la poesía un estudio frívolo y convenirme aplicarme a otros más serios," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 250.

Again we notice a change in the poetic sensibility of the eighteenth century. "Hacia mediados del siglo XVIII, y coincidiendo casi exactamente con el advenimiento de Carlos III, el nuevo gusto literario inspirado sobre la pauta de las doctrinas neoclásicas está lo suficientemente afirmado para dar sus primeros frutos."⁴⁴ The poetry which first appears during the last third of the eighteenth century can be classified as "neoclassical" and indeed is not limited thematically nor stylistically to one esthetic; this poetry, "en su conjunto, es la expresión de una distinta sensibilidad y de una nueva postura frente a la vida, basadas en conceptos filosóficos, en ideas políticas y sociales, en la vigencia de nuevos criterios morales, en la distinta apreciación de la razón humana, en la nueva valoración del escritor y su quehacer literario, en la preocupación reformista que afecta a los campos más diversos, en el concepto del progreso y en la fe en la eficacia de la dirección racional y del Estado sobre las actividades particulares."⁴⁵ And yet the poetry of the Enlightenment is in no way limited to neoclassical verse. On the contrary, the poetry of the second half of the eighteenth century is indeed a compendium of various esthetics. According to Joaquín Arce Fernández, "entre 1770 y 1790 conviven o coinciden todas las corrientes o actitudes poéticas que caracterizan al siglo XVIII."⁴⁶

⁴⁴Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 381.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 381.

⁴⁶Joaquín Arce Fernández, "Rococó, neoclasicismo y prerromanticismo en la poesía española del siglo XVIII," op. cit., p. 448.

These trends may be summarized thusly: (1) Poesía de la Ilustración "que expresa su admiración ante la ciencia, las instituciones o los ideales contemporáneos."⁴⁷ (2) Neoclassicism: a movement in poetry which appears during the last quarter of the eighteenth century and flourishes into the first quarter of the nineteenth century.⁴⁸ (3) Pre-Romanticism: a movement which more or less coincides with the appearance of Neoclassicism but "se agota apenas avanzado el siglo XIX por el carácter transitorio y de subordinación que se da al vocablo prerromanticismo."⁴⁹ (4) Rococó: seen throughout the century, characterized fundamentally by its lack of transcendency, its "gusto detallista"⁵⁰ and its predilection for, often exaggerated yet colorful and ornate descriptions, sensual ambience and frivolous themes. These tendencies do not exclude each other; on the

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 450.

⁴⁸Contrary to the opinions of the literary critics of the nineteenth century, Neoclassicism, according to Arce is not synonymous with all poetry of the Enlightenment but is rather a very limited tendency within the century: "Fue creo, la historiografía literaria española de fines del Ochocientos la que empezó a englobar, bajo el equívoco nombre de Neoclasicismo, a todas las corrientes clasicistas del siglo XVIII. Sin embargo, los contemporáneos o los inmediatamente posteriores tuvieron clara conciencia de la diversidad de tendencias." Joaquín Arce Fernández, op. cit., p. 451.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 476.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 465.

contrary, one may often find a Neoclassical poet who writes verse quite rococó in style.⁵¹ Moreover, all these tendencies tend to fuse and are indeed apparent in the various poetic schools of the second half of the eighteenth century.

Chronologically the first poetic "school" to appear in Spain during the eighteenth century, and perhaps the most important, is the famous escuela salmantina:

Hacia mediados de la centuria y como consecuencia del proceso cultural que se va desarrollando lentamente bajo el influjo de la europeización, la Universidad de Salamanca comienza a recuperarse de su prolongado letargo, acuden a sus aulas gentes estimuladas por las inquietudes de la época y así se hace posible la constitución y madurez del grupo de escritores que forman la llamada escuela salmantina.⁵²

Though the poets who comprise this school will be studied in greater detail in subsequent chapters, it is important that we briefly analyze the significance of this generation of poets along with their basic esthetics.

The sixteenth century poet who best exemplified the esthetic concerns of the Salamancan School and indeed was emulated by most of this group was, of course, Fray Luis

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Meléndez Valdés immediately comes to mind as an excellent example. His Odas filosóficas which indeed express the ideals of the Ilustración contrast quite interestingly with his less serious poems found in Los besos de amor.

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Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 435.

de León.⁵³ Though it is not the purpose of this "Introduction" to offer a study of Fray Luis's poetry in relation to other poets of the escuela salmantina, a general idea of his influence along with certain similarities between this group and Fray Luis can be grasped in César Real's description of the school itself:

De abolengo claramente universitario ofrece esta poesía características hondas y duraderas: un buen gusto para la elección de modelos, una intensa preocupación por la pureza, dignidad y exactitud del lenguaje, un acertado sentido de la proporción y del equilibrio entre el fondo y la forma, el pensamiento y la sensibilidad, una marcada afición por los temas bucólicos y campestres. Proviene estas cualidades, principalmente, del íntimo contacto que a través de la Universidad se mantenía con las literaturas griega y latina y con la buena tradición patria, y también de otras circunstancias más vagas e imprecisas, que pudiéramos referir al medio en que nace esta poesía, a determinadas condiciones de ambiente, no sólo espiritual, sino también físico y natural.⁵⁴

Although it is almost impossible to ascertain who began the regular meetings of the poets--who included Fray Diego González, Padre Juan Fernández Rojas, Fray

⁵³ For a further study of Fray Luis de León's influence on the Spanish poetry of the eighteenth century, see W. Atkinson, "Luis de León in Eighteenth Century Poetry," Revue Hispanique, 1931, vol. LXXXI part II, pp. 363-376.

⁵⁴ César Real, "La escuela poética salmantina del siglo XVIII," Boletín de la biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo, oct.-dic., 1948, num. 4, pp. 327-328.

Andrés del Corral, Meléndez Valdés and Forner--Cadalso, no longer considered the initiator of the group, can still be regarded a catalyst insofar as his mere presence affected the poetry of these men:⁵⁵ "Cadalso que sólo residió en Salamanca por la movilidad continua de la vida marcial, alentó en gran manera,...con su entusiasmo y con su ejemplo, el cultivo de la poesía en aquella ciudad esclarecida; pero no fue, ni pudo ser, el iniciador exclusivo de la efervescencia intelectual, tan gloriosa como afortunada, que llegó a decorarse con el nombre un tanto pomposo de escuela salmantina."⁵⁶ In fact, even after Cadalso's departure from Salamanca in 1774, his friends continued to meet under the directive of Fray Diego González at the convent of San Agustín. Indeed, the group of poets convened at regular intervals until 1780.⁵⁷

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, another group of poets were convening, united in their admiration for Herrera and de Rioja and various literary ideas of the Renaissance. Alborg cites the year 1793 (the year in which the Academia Particular de Letras Humanas was founded) as the beginning of the escuela sevillana.⁵⁸ This

⁵⁵See Leopoldo de Cueto, op. cit., pp. CVIIff.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. CVII.

⁵⁷Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., pp. 437-438

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 490.

Academia--although many of its members belonged to the clergy--was comprised of an interesting heterogenous group of literary figures located ideologically between the "Establishment" and the encyclopedic movement: Forner (though strictly speaking never a "member", exerted a strong influence on these poets⁵⁹), Reinoso and Arjona on the one hand, el abate Marchena, Blanco-White and Lista on the other. And yet, at least initially, theological subjects were frequently discussed at these meetings:

Era una sociedad [Academia Particular de Letras Humanas] que en sus comienzos también se componía mayormente de teólogos, pues, teólogos eran sus dos fundadores (Reinoso y Roldán), teólogos sus protectores y teólogos los jóvenes que acudían a las reuniones para ampliar sus estudios. Desde el principio preponderó, ciertamente, el cultivo de la poesía, mas en las discusiones teóricas el elemento teológico imprimía su sello a las juntas, y los temas versaban con preferencia sobre historia eclesiástica y elocuencia sagrada, utilizándose, por lo general, el latín para adquirir mayor facilidad en el empleo del idioma.⁶⁰

The interest in religious themes can be seen in Lista's

⁵⁹Hans Juretschke, Vida, obra y pensamiento de Alberto Lista, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1951), p. 24ff.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 19-20.

Poesías sagradas,⁶¹ Reinoso's Odas⁶² and in many other works by almost all the poets of this school.⁶³ And yet the escuela sevillana was important for other types of poetry--anacreontics, elegies, and a plethora of epistles dedicated to close friends and colleagues. In general, the poetry is more personal, thematically concerned with human emotions and feelings--which often prompts critics to consider this school as a link between the socially conscious poetry of the Enlightenment and the subjective, hermetic poetry of the Romantic period. "La última promoción de la escuela sevillana desempeña. . . un papel muy destacado como puente de tránsito entre las dos riberas neoclásica y romántica. No diremos que hubo entrega total, por parte de los representantes del grupo, al movimiento romántico; pero, a poco que se raspe, se descubrirá una capa de insoslayables simpatías."⁶⁴

The end of the eighteenth century also saw a rebirth of the escuela salmantina. Although many critics deny the existence of a "segunda época de la escuela

⁶¹Alberto Lista, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, pp. 273-284.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 213-216.

⁶³Other religious poems of interest are Blanco's "Oda a la Inmaculada Concepción," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 654 and Marchena's "A Cristo Crucificado," ibid., p. 621.

⁶⁴Emiliano Díez-Echarri and José María Roca Franquesa, op. cit., p. 672.

salmantina,"⁶⁵ there are certain inherent characteristics which link this school with its predecessor:

Aunque en rigor no puede hablarse de una "segunda escuela salmantina," hay varios poetas de fines del siglo XVIII y principios del XIX cuyo punto de partida cabe situar en la producción de Meléndez Valdés. El énfasis retórico de sus concepciones poéticas impiden relacionarlos con el gran lírico salmantino del siglo XVI, pero la mayor brillantez y colorido de la escuela sevillana hace que aparezcan a nuestros ojos como dotados de una sobriedad expresiva de acuerdo con la tradición de Salamanca.⁶⁶

The most important poets of this school-- whose poetry will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent chapters-- are Juan Nicasio Gallego (1773-1853), Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos (1764-1809) and perhaps the most important of this group, Manuel José Quintana (1172-1857), later crowned poet laureate by Isabel II. Along with such tópicos as personal liberty, patriotism and the beatus ille, his poems concerning social progress and the importance of science carried the norms of the Enlightenment well into the nineteenth century.

Two other poets merit mention here: namely the fabulistas Tomás de Iriarte and Felix María de Samaniego. The fable

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For a detailed discussion of this polemic, see Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 467ff.

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J. García López, Historia de la literatura española, (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens, 1964), pp. 412-413.

with its appeal to the didactic sense of the eighteenth century, especially in Iriarte's Fábulas literarias, undergoes a radical metamorphosis. Whereas Samaniego imitates the models of antiquity, Aesop and Phaedrus and hence has more "popular" appeal since these are fables with which the public is familiarized, his contemporary, Iriarte, converts the genre into a literary platform in which he attempts to defend certain classical precepts: "Las fábulas [Iriarte's] ...están inspiradas por firmes principios clásicos y de hecho constituyen una defensa de las reglas."⁶⁷ Thus while Iriarte in his attempt to maintain buen gusto and moderation in literature in effect creates a new type of fable, Samaniego remains faithful to the classical concept of the genre:

A diferencia de Iriarte, que pretende ser original cultivando las fábulas literarias fuera de la habitual tradición del género, Samaniego se atiene a ella casi por entero renunciando a la originalidad en los asuntos y buscándola tan sólo en el modo de contarlos o en los diversos accidentes que añade o modifica.⁶⁸

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As we have seen, eighteenth century Spanish poetry is a conglommeration of many movements, ideologies and schools. It is not simply a Neoclassical period. Indeed, the later Baroque poetry flourishes until approximately

⁶⁷Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 524.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 532-533.

the mid-point of the century and, of course, romantic effusions are already visible before the dawning of the nineteenth century in the pre-Romantic verse of Cienfuegos and others. And yet within these disparate esthetics there is one theme that is constant; one preoccupation that concerns all poets (in varying degrees) in all generations: happiness. From the Gongorine verse of Alvarez de Toledo to the early nineteenth century works of Quintana, man aspires to this end. Each "generation" of poets searches for happiness in different ways: often the neoclassical poet would seek refuge in the bucolic world, the more socially oriented ilustrado in harmony with mankind through an almost utopian convivencia, the pre-Romantic, deceived by the mutability of love, in the warmth and comfort of friendship. In an era which expounded the ideals of liberty, fraternity and equality and yet was besieged by civil strife, foreign wars and economic and social injustices, happiness symbolized a panacea, a cure-all for a man yearning for peace and tranquility:

Sobre las cuerdas de mi lira vuela
El cántico del bien, ora que tiende
La dulce paz sus blancos pabellones,
Y de la adusta frente los guerreros
El yelmo ensangrentado desenlazan.
Héroes de maldición, el hierro impío
Y el tronante cañón dejad; la tierra,
Ya saciada de sangre y de ruinas,
Dichosa ser sin vuestra espada anhela.

Y tú felicidad, del alto cielo
El más precioso don, mi acento mueve;
Enseña por mi voz a los mortales
El arte de gozar. ⁶⁹

⁶⁹Alberto Lista, "La felicidad pública," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 311.

CHAPTER I: HAPPINESS AND PHILOSOPHY

"Le bonheur est une idée neuve en Europe."¹ It is with this sententious statement that the twenty six year old theoretician and president of the Convention, Saint-Just, himself an archetype of the period known historically as the Reign of Terror, reflects one of the ideologies of the philosophes. Yet if we consider that happiness is perhaps the father of all ideas, how do we explain such a remark? For the eighteenth century homme de lettres, the concept of happiness provided more than simply an intellectual stimulus. The Sophistic approach to philosophy, with its self-contained syllogisms, its endless postulates and corollaries, did not satisfy the practical or rather empirical criteria demanded by the thinkers of the Enlightenment. Nor did the seventeenth century systematizing philosophers--Descartes, Spinoza, Hobbes--appeal to the more unique conceptual bent of the Aufklärung. And although Cassirer insists that "there is no real chasm anywhere separating the two periods,"² he nonetheless admits to

¹Emmanuel Aegerter, La vie de Saint-Just, (Paris: Gallimard, 1929), p. 167.

²Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 22.

a "shifting of emphasis." It is imperative, therefore, to determine (1) how this movement in emphasis effected a new definition of philosophical inquiry and investigation in Spain and (2) how this approach changed the old idea and formulated a new concept ("idée neuve") of happiness in the eighteenth century.

* * * * *

It is not the purpose of this study to present a panoramic view of the various philosophical schools of the period. Yet the eighteenth century was indeed a mélange of many ideologies--a crossbreeding of such diverse thinkers as Locke and his studies on psychological phenomena, Leibnitz's dynamic philosophy coupled with his widely diffused "chain of being" theory, Newton's discovery of the laws of gravity and his authorship of several theological works. These men, chronologically more a part of the seventeenth century since they did not survive to the third decade of the eighteenth, "lived on" through the literature of the philosophers, the minoría selecta who were responsible for the diffusion of many philosophical principles. It is this curious combination of literature and philosophy, the symbiosis of the imaginative and the rigorous, that characterizes much of the Enlightenment.³ Many literary

³For Sartre's idea on engagement, see especially Jean Paul Sartre, Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p. 76ff.

men saw their mission as enseñar deleitando, to expound wisdom in an attractive manner, to seduce, as Ortega was later to say, the people into thinking. Even the philosophes, who best reflected this fusion of science and esthetics, tended to destructuralize philosophy, changing rigid systematized thought to more "vitalized" and perhaps more practical statements of the concepts involved, for they felt that systems often obfuscated the clarté demanded by the neoclassical literary, and by extension, philosophical norms. Condillac, in his famous Traité des systémes (1759) urges that the "great metaphysical edifices of the seventeenth century be banished"⁴ and replaced by "simple observation of phenomena and clear designation of their empirical connection."⁵ The foremost Spanish proponent of this empirical method is the Benedictine Benito Jerónimo Feijóo (1676-1764). The Father Master not only extolled this new approach to scientific investigation but also censured any system--including that of his contemporary Newton--which impeded man's quest for knowledge: "Es totalmente inútil a este intento la filosofía sistemática o teórica, que sea la aristotélica, que la platónica, cartesiana, newtoniana, etc. Sólo el conocimiento de la

⁴Ernst Cassirer, op. cit., p. 53.

⁵Ibid., p. 54.

experimental es quien manifiesta (sic) la fuerza y esfera de actividad de los agentes naturales."⁶

This reaction in favor of a more asystematical approach to inquiry and investigation tended to deformalize and even plebianize philosophical thought. The eighteenth century had little use for intricate metaphysical abstraction.⁷ Along with natural law and natural religion the hombre de bien⁸ gravitated toward a philosophism, in which experience replaced rigor as the ultimate criterion of all serious indagation. Since experience is obviously less exigent with respect to mental proclivity and scientific inclination "philosophy became the password of the day and practically all the intellectuals of the time were eager to be called philosophers."⁹ Unfortunately, and perhaps quite ironically,

⁶Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, Cartas eruditas y curiosas, (Madrid: Imprenta de los Herederos de Francisco de Hierro, 1745), p. 144.

⁷"Me parece que estoy viendo perplejos en punto de Filosofía. Os espanta su nombre, que es griego; os admira su antigüedad; os detiene la vista de tantos sistemas diferentes, seguidos cada uno por hombres a la verdad insignes, y no sabéis no sólo a quien dar la preferencia pero ni siquiera por dónde entrar en este laberinto." José Cadalso, Los eruditos a la violeta, (Madrid: Biblioteca Anaya, 1967), p. 74.

⁸For an interesting albeit somewhat exaggerated poetic definition of the hombre de bien see Francisco Gregorio de Salas, "Retrato de un hombre de bien y amigo del autor," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol., LKVII, ed. by Leopoldo de Cueto, (Madrid: Atlas, 1952), p. 531.

⁹Sister Mary Fidelia Laughrin, Juan Pablo Forner as a Critic, (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1943), p. 33.

the discovery of l'honnête homme that he too was entitled to philosophize was "granted" to him by his more erudite adversaries: "En el siglo XVIII ciertas minorías descubrieron que todo individuo humano, por el mero hecho de nacer y sin necesidad de cualificación especial alguna, poseía ciertos derechos. . . y que en rigor, estos derechos comunes a todos son los únicos existentes."¹⁰ This expanded philosophical Weltanschauung, this tendency to broaden the spectrum of philosophy brought about an ideological schism that characterizes most Spanish literature of the period. For such pseudo-philosophical propensities not only propagated a new type of intellectual--the erudito a la violeta--but also created a new type of philosophy based firmly, and at times almost exclusively on the "extravagancias desenfrenadas del entendimiento."¹¹ However, it was precisely through this flexibility in learning that a more liberal and hence a more "enlightened" century flourished. Philosophy was no longer limited to monastic celibates and social isolation. And if the "philosophers of the Ilustración were not philosophers"¹² they nonetheless had a "philosophical message to

¹⁰Juan Pablo Forner, Exequias de la lengua castellana, (Madrid: La Lectura, 1925), p. 187.

¹¹Ibid., p. 189.

¹²Carl L. Becker, The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932), p. 34.

deliver."¹³ Thus philosophy and philosophical speculation had reached the masses: "In the eighteenth century we are still in the time when some knowledge of philosophical ideas was regarded as a cultural requirement and when philosophy had not become an academic preserve."¹⁴ Even the more "serious" thinkers were involved in other careers: Hume, besides a philosopher, was also an historian; Voltaire wrote plays and poetry; Maupertuis went on a trip to the Arctic with the intention of determining the shape of the earth at its extremities; D'Alembert was a mathematician; La Mettrie was a doctor.¹⁵ Thus the "philosophical message" was not necessarily philosophical in nature and many serious thinkers often attacked the very foundation of philosophy.

* * * * *

The first part of the "message" took the form of a war against abstraction. Abstract, conceptual knowledge, philosophical realism--enemies of the Enlightenment--could no longer fulfill the needs of a society based on dynamic principles, for such ideas were elitist, exclusionist in nature and tended to polarize segments of the intellectual community. The key word of le siècle des lumières is harmony and it is to this goal that

¹³Ibid., p. 36.

¹⁴Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, vol. 6 Part I, (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1964), p. 18.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 18.

philosophy now turns.

Again we must confront the encyclopedic work of Feijóo. As early as 1730, the Benedictine was attempting to replace abstract reasoning with more sensation oriented criteria. The fact that man is incapable of comprehending certain phenomena and that at times external reality is elusive to the point of defying concretization, only adds to its encanto:

En muchas producciones, no sólo de la naturaleza mas aun del arte, encuentran los hombres fuera de aquellas perfecciones sujetas a su comprensión, otro género de primor misterioso que cuando lisonjea el gusto, atormenta el entendimiento: que palpa el sentido y no puede descifrar la razón; y así al querer explicarle, no encontrando voces ni conceptos que satisfagan la idea, se dejan caer desalentados en el rudo informe de que tal cosa tiene un no sé qué, que agrada, que enamora, que hechiza, y no hay que pedirles revelación más clara de este natural misterio.¹⁶

Feijóo realized the futility of rational, abstract thinking and endless speculation. The foremost criterion of all philosophy should be experience for it is only through man's direct involvement with the external world that he learns about himself. In one of his

¹⁶Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "El no sé qué," Discursos y cartas, (Zaragoza: Editorial Ebro, 1972), p. 62.

well-known Cartas eruditas entitled "Causas del atraso que se padece en España en orden a las ciencias naturales," Feijóo illustrates the superiority of experience over philosophical conjecture:

Trajo en una ocasión a mi celda don Juan d'Elgar, excelente anatómico francés, que hoy vive en esta ciudad, el corazón de un carnero para que todos los maestros de este colegio nos enterásemos de aquella admirable fábrica. Con prolijidad inevitable nos fue mostrando, parte por parte, todas las visibles que componen aquel todo, explicando juntamente sus usos. Puedo asegurar con verdad que no sólo fue admiración, fue estupor el que produjo en todos nosotros el conocimiento que logramos de tan prodigiosa contextura. ¡Cuánta variedad de instrumentos! ¡Qué delicados algunos, y juntamente qué valientes! ¡Cuánta variedad de ministerios, conspirantes todos al mismo fin! ¡Qué armonía! ¡Qué combinación tan artificiosa entre todas las partes y los usos de ellas! La muestra de Londres más delicada y de más multiforme estructura es una fábrica groserísima en comparación de esta noble entraña. Al fin, todos convini- mos en que no habíamos jamás visto, o contemplado, cosa que nos diese idea tan clara, tan sensible, tan viva y eficaz, del poder y sabiduría del supremo Artífice.

Este y otros objetos semejantes hacen el estudio de los modernos; mientras nosotros, los que nos llamamos aristotélicos,

nos quebramos las cabezas y hundimos a gritos las aulas sobre si el ente es unívoco o análogo; si trasciende las diferencias; si la relación se distingue del fundamento, etc.¹⁷

Feijóo also attempted to end the growing polarization between philosophy and religion. Many, according to the Father Master, considered "la nueva filosofía" (that is, beginning with the works of Descartes) a threat to the teachings of the Church. According to Feijóo this is impossible for (1) the Inquisition would indeed prevent such an occurrence and (2) the limitations of philosophy and theology are so diverse and dissimilar that these two disciplines could not be brought into conflict with one another. Although Feijóo realizes that isolating Spain would prevent even any slight discord he considers this more a temporary remedy rather than a permanent cure:

Doy que sea un remedio precautorio contra el error nocivo cerrar la puerta a toda doctrina nueva. Pero es un remedio, sobre no necesario, muy violento. Es poner el alma en una durísima esclavitud. Es atar la razón humana con una cadena muy corta. Es poner en estrecha cárcel a un entendimiento inocente, sólo

¹⁷Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Causas del atraso que se padece en España en orden a las ciencias naturales," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol., LVI, p.85.

por evitar una contingencia remota de que cometa algunas travesuras en adelante.¹⁸

In another essay from his Teatro Crítico Universal, Feijóo reinforces this idea:

No es dudable que puede haber opiniones filosóficas de que se tiren consecuencias contra las doctrinas reveladas; y así, se debe corregir la temeraria presunción de aquellos que, con el título de estar el objeto de la filosofía sujeto al imperio de la razón, pretenden una libertad sin límites en filosofar; pero el empeño en que todos se ponen de que la filosofía que impugnan está mal avenida con lo que dicta la fe, muestra que en éstos se procede con el mismo motivo de algunos príncipes que siempre que hallan escotadura para ello, hacen en sus manifiestos la guerra que emprenden causa de religión.¹⁹

Thus we see the first obvious change in the definition of philosophy--namely that theology is no longer, at least according to Feijóo, an intrinsic part of philosophy and that philosophy must be asystematized in favor of a more empirical and hence, less abstract approach to knowledge.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁹ Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Guerras filosóficas," Teatro Crítico Universal, Tomo II Discurso I, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1923), p. 8.

Yet perhaps the greatest contribution of Feijóo to the thought of the Enlightenment--one that encompasses all others--was his intense intellectual curiosity. Having been born in a century in which any novedad was considered suspect and often times heresy by the Inquisition, the Father Master seems to have miraculously transcended certain sacrosanct prejudices of his times. Within the Spanish historical context he is an anomaly--a first generation thinker so to speak--one who owes more to Boyle and Newton than to Suárez and Vives. The list of his sources and influences is encyclopedic in its diversity and profundity: Bacon, Boileau, Descartes, Fenelon, Gassendi, Pascal, Rousseau, Erasmus, Leibnitz, Metastasio, to name a few.²⁰ Feijóo's contribution to the Enlightenment, however, was not limited to cultivating his own intellect; it was he who disseminated their names--and more importantly their ideas--throughout Spain, thus popularizing many philosophical principles in reasonably simple Spanish; a contribution that cannot be underestimated: "L'originalité capitale de Feijóo, dans une Espagne où le latin était encore exclusif, fut de traiter toutes les questions en espagnol, au mépris des traditions, des scandales et des risques:

²⁰For a further study on those who have influenced this great thinker, see I. L. McClelland, Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969), pp. 31-40.

L'Inquisition etait plus rigoureuse pour les opinions exprimées en langue vulgaire."²¹ In his prologue to the Teatro Crítico Universal, Feijóo attempts to justify his use of Spanish instead of Latin:

Harásme también cargo porque, habiendo de tocar muchas cosas facultativas, escribo en el idioma castellano. Bastaríame por respuesta el que para escribir en el idioma nativo no se ha menester más razón que no tener alguna para hacer lo contrario. No niego que hay verdades que deben ocultarse al vulgo: cuya flaqueza más peligra tal vez en la noticia que en la ignorancia; pero éstas ni en latín deben salir al público, pues harto vulgo hay entre los que entienden este idioma; fácilmente pasan de éstos a los que no saben más que el castellano.²²

In an age characterized by baroque pretentiousness and intellectual games, Feijóo was bold enough to criticize a much-admired style, an entire mentality and endeavored to replace vacuous rhetoric and twisted metaphors with simplicity of style and clarity of expression. It was his feeling that the language of the Baroque, so elitist in nature, had alienated man from philosophy; to counteract the identification of serious

²¹G. Delpy, L'Espagne et l'esprit européen: l'oeuvre de Feijóo, (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1936), p. 25.

²²Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Prólogo," Teatro Crítico Universal, vol. I, ed. Agustín Millares Carlo, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1968), pp. 81-82.

thinking with self-contained scholasticism Feijóo was perhaps the first in Spain to write essays for a larger cross-section of the populace and with a broader spectrum of themes: "Il est le vulgarisateur par excellence, par vocation; sa plus grande joie est d'être compris du grand public. Il voudrait, sans trop abaisser la matière exposée, rendre tout intelligible."²³ And Feijóo himself describes this method quite accurately in one of his Cartas eruditas: "He dado al argumento de V. mrd. otra forma distinta de la que tiene en su carta, porque aunque V. mrd. la propone con buen método (sic) no está muy intelligible (sic) para los de corta inteligencia (sic), pero pienso, que no se quejará (sic) V. mrd. de que mi explicación quite ver toda su fuerza."²⁴ This use of a more "popular" and hence more comprehensible style helped to make Feijóo one of the most widely read authors of the eighteenth century:

El número de ediciones de sus obras atestigua su popularidad. En el término de seis años el primer volumen de su Teatro crítico se había reimpresso cuatro veces. Las primeras ediciones de los tomos quinto y sexto fueron de tres mil ejemplares, una tirada sorprendente en aquellos días en España. Antes de 1786, quince ediciones

²³G. Delpy, op. cit., p. 26.

²⁴Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, Cartas eruditas II, p. 215.

del Teatro crítico y de las Cartas eruditas vieron la luz, en una época en que era extraordinario incluso que se reimprimiese un libro. Sólo hubo una obra que revalorizase en popularidad con la del Feijóo: el inmortal Quijote.²⁵

Thus through his clear and straightforward style he helped to disseminate the ideas of the beginning of a new age in Spain: the Enlightenment. Perhaps his contribution to the eighteenth century is best summarized by Sempere y Guarinos: "Las obras de este sabio produxieron (sic) una fermentación útil; hicieron empezar a dudar; dieron a conocer otros libros muy distintos de los que había en el país; excitaron la curiosidad; y en fin abrieron la puerta a la razón, que antes habían cerrado la indolencia y la falsa sabiduría."²⁶

* * * * *

The work of Feijóo was continued and heightened by the Aragonese Doctor-Philosopher Andrés Piquer y Arrufat (1711-1772). Highly praised by Menéndez Pelayo,²⁷

²⁵Richard Herr, España y la revolución del siglo XVIII, trans. Elena Fernández Mel, (Jerez de la Frontera: Aguilar, 1964), p. 33.

²⁶Juan Sempere y Guarinos, Ensayo de una biblioteca española de los mejores escritores del reinado de Carlos III, vol. III, ed. facsimil, (Madrid: Gredos, 1969), p. 24.

²⁷M. Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de las ideas estéticas en España, vol. III, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1962), p. 130ff.

he has been called "le plus éminent penseur de la deuxième partie du XVIII^e siècle espagnol."²⁸

The philosophical contribution of Piquer so thoroughly studied by Sarrailh²⁹ is an extremely important although little analyzed chapter in the intellectual history of Spain in the eighteenth century. Considered by some of his contemporaries as one of the world's greatest doctors³⁰ one of his finest contributions to the Enlightenment can be found in his Lógica moderna, published in 1747:

En su Lógica, que es sin disputa la mejor, la más razonable y más docta del siglo XVIII, se distingue por el bien encaminado propósito de incorporar a la antigua dialéctica aristotélica, que él sinceramente admiraba, todo el fruto de la labor de los modernos, especialmente sobre las cuestiones de metodología y sobre las fuentes de los errores.³¹

He attempted to scientifically and philosophically europeanize Spain and like his Benedictine predecessor, he attacked systematization at its most vulnerable point: abstraction. Concepts, according to Piquer, lead to universals, but man must be considered as unique:

²⁸Alain Guy, Les philosophes espagnols d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, (Toulouse: Privat, 1956), p. 107.

²⁹Jean Sarrailh, La España ilustrada de la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII, trans. Antonio Alatorre, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), pp. 423-434; 493-495.

³⁰Juan Sempere y Guarinos, op. cit., p. 204.

³¹Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, op. cit., p. 130.

En la realidad no hay naturaleza humana que no esté contraída a determinado individuo, con que yerran los que hacen reales los universales, o como dicen en las Escuelas, los que juzgan que están a parte rei. Y no hay que dudar, que si hace reflexión en lo que sucede cuando el entendimiento abstrae de todos los hombres la razón común hombre, se hallará que esta razón sólo está en el entendimiento o en el modo de conseguir, porque a parte rei o realmente no hay naturaleza humana que no será particular.³²

Thus Piquer expounds upon the eighteenth century view of man as an individual--an anthropocentric view to be sure; one that will have, as we shall see in the succeeding chapters, interesting repercussions in the poetry of the time. If man, however, is so important, so vital, if, in effect the "enlightened" view of man is more an anthropocentric rather than a theocentric one, then man must be scrutinized in accordance with this ethical concern. Steadily man was "replacing" God as a primary concern of philosophical inquiry. In the rest of Europe especially, the proofs for the existence of God so à la mode in previous philosophical studies, acquire a decisively more mundane orientation as reflected in a random cross-section of titles:

³²Andrés Piquer, Lógica moderna in Les philosophes espagnols d'hier et d'aujourd'hui, ed. Alain Guy, op. cit., p. 63.

Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Locke); A Treatise Concerning The Principles of Human Knowledge (Berkeley); Letter on Toleration (Locke); Philosophical Essay Concerning Human Understanding (Hume); Principles of Morals (Hume); Social Contract (Rousseau). Such works postulate man's uniqueness or quasi-autonomy as they investigate his conduct. And if man's behavior is to be analyzed, and if abstraction and systematization are largely discredited, what is to be the role of philosophy in man's quest for self-definition? Is philosophy, at least in Spain where it was still permeated with vestiges of scholasticism, indeed a hindrance to happiness?³³ These seem to be some of the leading questions posed during the second half of the eighteenth century, most of which were left unanswered or discussed ad nauseum well beyond the point of clarté.

Perhaps the two most obvious solutions to the aforementioned queries lie in the only solutions available to the intellectually polarized mind of the Enlightenment: God and man. The writers of the period are

³³Sempere y Guarinos quotes the Abad de Vayrac, a French visitor to "enlightened" Spain, who expresses his own cynicism on Spain's reluctance to accept philosophical modernity: "Porque en lo que toca a la Filosofía, son de tal suerte esclavos de las opiniones de los antiguos, que nada es capaz de hacerles abrazar las de los modernos." Op. cit., vol. I, p. 4.

staunchly divided between the concepts of natural law and supernatural law, natural religion and supernatural religion and as a consequence happiness too is a victim of this dichotomy. But in an attempt to approach some reconciliation or at least to assuage the philosophical struggle, it was generally admitted that the pursuit of happiness called for certain prerequisites, the first of which was knowledge.

José María Vaca de Guzmán y Manrique, author of such well-known poetic compositions as "Las naves de Cortés destruidas" (1778) and "Granada rendida" (1779) both awarded prizes by the Spanish Academy, in a poem appropriately entitled "La felicidad" inextricably links happiness to knowledge:

Sabed que así la sociedad se ilustra,
Sabed que así Granada logra aplausos,
Sabed que España así se inmortaliza,
Se sirve así al angusto Soberano;
Sabed que del honor ésta es la puerta,
Sabed son éstos del favor los grados;
Finalmente, sabed, pues vienen juntos
Todos los bienes con la ciencia al sabio,
Para el sabio los premios se destinan,
Del sabio son los triunfos y los lauros,
Al sabio rendirá frutos la tierra,
El sabio, en fin, dominará los astros.³⁴

³⁴José María Vaca de Guzmán y Manrique, "La felicidad," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 291.

Vaca de Guzmán felt, and this view is not uncommon, that the reign of Carlos III afforded man the "proper time" to be happy. Man, says the poet, was on the threshold of a new Golden Age and all the arts must pay tribute to this great monarch:

Gózate, Apeles, que llegó ya el tiempo
De celebrar la edad de un soberano
Con coloridos, tablas y pinceles,
Que él premia, tú autorizas y yo ensalzo.

Formen, oh Praxiteles, tus alumnos
Medallones y bultos animados;
Mis lenguas les daré, porque publiquen
Del Monarca las glorias que yo callo.

Señalad, arquitectos, este día
Con blanca piedra, y sigan tu dechado,
Oh Dédalo, en su honor, siendo su ingenio
Quien los remonte al apolineo carro.

Con su felicidad y su abundancia
Le obsequien los ilíberos gallardos,
Y en colores, relieves y medidas
Vuestras artes le capten los agrados.³⁵

Although the poet underscores the function of the arts and more importantly the role of the philosopher ("El sabio. . . dominará los astros") his concept of happiness is often obfuscated and indeed camouflaged by poetic verbosity and intellectual diatribe. Certain crucial questions remain unanswered: What can man know? and how can man know happiness? These questions, which

³⁵Ibid., p. 291.

indirectly concerned Piquer in such works as his Lógica moderna (1747) and his Filosofía moral (1755),³⁶ were later echoed by his grand-nephew, the great polemicist of the eighteenth century, Juan Pablo Forner. In his famous Oración apologética, he attempts to free the definition of true knowledge from mere opinion and idle speculation: "No es el saber, el saber opiniones, o el inventar sueños abstractos para sujetar a un capricho las leyes de ambas naturalezas, física y espiritual, en lugar de observar las de una y otra en sus efectos según los designios del Omnipotente."³⁷ Philosophy or knowledge, used interchangeably by Forner, is more than conjecture. Using a premise considered by Feijóo in his well-known essay "Voz del pueblo," the Spanish thinker condemns the pseudo-philosopher--one who grants himself the "title" of philosopher without the proper intellectual background. Unfortunately, according to Forner, it is a malady which affects the entire century: "Infelizmente hemos nacido en una edad que, dándose a sí misma el magnífico título de filosófica apenas conoce la rectitud en los modos de pensar y juzgar. Vivimos en el siglo de los oráculos."³⁸ Like the donkey in the

³⁶Juan Sempere y Guarinos, op. cit., vol. IV, pp. 200-201.

³⁷Juan Pablo Forner, Oración apologética por la España y su mérito literario in La polémica de la ciencia española, Ernesto and Enrique García Camarero, eds., (Madrid: Alianza, 1970), p. 85.

³⁸Ibid., p. 87.

Iriarte fable³⁹ who quite accidentally creates a resoplido by inadvertently sniffing a flute, the thinkers of the eighteenth century, equipped with sophistic nebulosity and abstract reasoning create their own música asnal:

La oportuna erudición y el conocimiento debido de las doctrinas que ha trasladado a nosotros la antigüedad industriosamente descubridora, o se desprecian, o se gustan en sucintos e infieles diccionarios, donde dislocadas, si no trastornadas las noticias, se pierden o rompen las conexiones de los sistemas. En cada libro hallamos un oráculo, en cada escrito un censor inexorable de los hombres, de las opiniones, de las costumbres, de las naciones, de los estados, del universo. Tal es hoy lo que se llama Filosofía; imperios, leyes, estatutos, religiones, ritos, dogmas, doctrinas, usos, estilos, que la dignidad o la santidad ofrecen como venerables y como destinados al ejercicio o a la consagración, son atropellados inicuaamente en las sofísticas declamaciones de una turba, a quien con descrédito de lo respetable del nombre se aplica el de filósofos, y se debiera en el mismo sentido con que a los charlantes dio Pitágoras en otro tiempo el de sofistas.⁴⁰

³⁹ Tomás de Iriarte, "El burro flautista," Poesías, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1963), p. 15.

⁴⁰ Juan Pablo Forner, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

For Forner, this "philosophy" (attained por casualidad and not through rigorous application) can function only in relation to an All-Powerful God.⁴¹ Yet this does not seem to be the dominant approach to philosophy in the eighteenth century. As stated previously, Feijóo was perhaps the first in Spain to expound the empirical method in philosophy and it was precisely this method which thrived during the Spanish Enlightenment although never unopposed by more conservative criteria and more rigid approaches.

* * * * *

Empiricism seems the only logical outcome of a philosophy which had been desystematized and for which abstraction had become an anathema. Man, having lost faith in conceptual knowledge, turns to himself for the answer. Thus what man does and what man experiences now becomes the focal point of philosophy. "The proper study of mankind is Man"⁴² says Alexander Pope thus establishing a new directive for philosophers and redirecting philosophical thinking. The term philosophe, broader in scope than its English cognate, suggests not only a penseur but an homme de lettres whose primary concern is

⁴¹Ibid., p. 24n.

⁴²Alexander Pope, "Essay on Man," The Selected Poetry of Pope, ed. by Martin Price, (Chicago: New American Library, 1970), p. 133.

an intellectual curiosity unparalleled in modern history. Man attempts to understand the complexities of the universe in order to live in harmony with mankind. Happiness through collectivity, as opposed to the more "romantic" view of isolation and alienation which can be seen in the pre-Romantic poetry of the eighteenth century, becomes a fundamental ideal for the enlightened man. Man is inextricably linked to man. This idea was apparent quite early in the century as seen in the poetry of the late Baroque poet Eugenio Gerardo Lobo:

Si tú te alegras, me río;
Si tú te entristeces, me enluto;
Si te regalas, me ensebo;
Y si no comes me enjugo.
Si te enfadas, me envinagro;
Si te suavizas, me endulzo;
Y si riñes, amartillo
En cada dedo un trabuco.
Si te esperezas, me estiro;
Si te frunces, me repulgo;
Y si bostezas, enseñó
La canal de los mendrugos.
Si vas deprisa, soy ave;
Si despacio, soy testudo;
Si te duermes, soy lirón;
Y si velas, soy lechuzo.⁴³

⁴³Eugenio Gerardo Lobo, "Carta que escribió el autor a una parienta suya, oidora en Barcelona, en respuesta de otra que ella escribió, quejándose de su descuido en escribirla," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 36.

Thus, for the enlightened, the collective experience must complement man's knowledge of himself. It is through this empirical method--a method which presupposes an understanding of this collective experience that philosophy now becomes an almost intellectual password and the concept of happiness, vital to man's experience, becomes a prime concern of most empiricists.

* * * * *

Empiricism has generally been linked to one word: experience. And yet the word and the concept are indeed ambiguous if not misleading. According to Locke, all our ideas are ultimately derived from sensation and reflection and these two factors make up experience. If we apply this view to eighteenth century poetry in Spain, we immediately realize the indebtedness on the part of the ilustrado to this great English thinker. Locke not only influenced Feijóo⁴⁴ but is mentioned frequently by Jovellanos in his Diarios,⁴⁵ especially during the years 1794 and 1795.⁴⁶ As early

⁴⁴I. L. Mc Clelland, op. cit., p. 39.

⁴⁵Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Diarios, Julián Marías, ed., (Madrid: Alianza, 1967), pp. 80-140.

⁴⁶Richard Herr, op. cit., pp. 310-312.

as 1780, Locke was being taught in Seville⁴⁷ and in Meléndez Valdés' personal library we find two French translations of Locke: De l'éducation des enfants and of course the famous Essai philosophique concernant l'entendement humain.⁴⁸ Batilo, in a letter to Jovellanos, recognizes the English thinker's influence: "Al Ensayo sobre el entendimiento humano debo y deberé toda mi vida lo poco que sepa discurrir."⁴⁹

Thus Locke's division of experience into sensation and reflection are the two broad categories into which Spanish poetry of the eighteenth century can be classified. The idyllic, abúlico poseur who exalts the pleasures of country life and the self-interested materialist are indeed the two extreme tendencies which can be traced in varying degrees and in various contexts throughout the Siglo de las luces, thus offering man two "roads" to happiness. However, Spanish orthodoxy, always a hindrance to any materialistic inclination, tended to minimize mundane indulgence in favor of a more spiritual or rather moral disposition. The poets of the eighteenth century Spain believed that

⁴⁷Hans Juretschke, Vida, obra y pensamiento de Alberto Lista, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1951), p. 13.

⁴⁸George Demerson, Don Juan Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, trans. by Angel Guillen, vol. I, (Madrid: Taurus, 1971), p. 131.

⁴⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Cartas inéditas a Jovellanos," Aug. 3, 1776, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 73.

materialism was indeed an antonym for God and that la vida retirada was perhaps the first step towards virtue.⁵⁰ Yet before we examine the effect of the religious proclivity on the concept of happiness, it is essential to define both sensation and reflection in Lockean terms.

According to Locke, ". . .our senses conversant about particular sensible objects, do convey into the mind several distinct perceptions of things, according to the ways wherein those objects do affect them. . . when I say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external objects convey into the mind what produces there these perceptions."⁵¹ Thus sensation becomes the focal point, indeed the point of departure for man's knowledge of man: "Elle [sensation] annonce à l'homme l'existence du monde extérieur, en même temps que la sienne propre, car la conscience que l'homme prend de lui-même passe nécessairement par le monde."⁵² Sensation was held to be so important Bernardin de Saint-Pierre actually went so far as to suggest a change in the Cartesian cogito to "je sens donc j'existe." Sensation also had an adverse affect on man's sociability.

⁵⁰This idea will be further discussed in Chapter 3, "Happiness and Virtue."

⁵¹John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding in The Age of the Enlightenment, ed. Isaiah Berlin, (New York: New American Library, 1956), p. 41.

⁵²Robert Mauzi, L'idée du bonheur au XVIII^e siècle, (Paris: Armand Colin, 1969), p. 314.

It represented self-indulgence; it was personal. Man was living for himself. Thus in a poem written by Alberto Lista to Felix José Reinoso, the Sevillian poet urges his friend to forsake his rather stoic (at least according to Lista) way of life and to gratify his own senses:

Goza, Fileno; si el error austero
Templó en su nieve tus fogosos años,
Las raras canas que en tus sienas brillan,
Cubre de rosas.

Harto ya hiciste por los hombres; vive
Algún momento para ti.⁵³

This poem, later rebuffed by Reinoso, serves to illustrate the extreme to which the concept of sensation had evolved. Sensation became not merely the use of the senses, but rather their overuse; not merely a perception or a means to knowledge, but rather an ethic, a way of life. As clearly illustrated in the foregoing poem, man cannot fulfill his social obligations and yet gratify his own wants and needs: Lista even reminds Reinoso, "Gozar no es crimen."⁵⁴ Thus a polarization arises between man and society. If man desires to help man he must do so to the exclusion of any personal gratification he may receive through social

⁵³Alberto Lista, "A Fileno: Debe gozarse del placer," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 314.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 314.

interaction. Thus it would seem that Lista, in urging Reinoso "vive / Algún momento para ti," is in favor of an almost Epicurean approach to happiness, one based on personal wants and needs.

And yet if we examine Lista's point of view carefully we find that this "philosophical principle" of sensation is very similar indeed to the more poetic notion of self-love--a concept which perhaps had more resonance in France⁵⁵ than in the country of its "originator," Alexander Pope. In his Essay on Man, he gives us a rather succinct definition of this idea:

Self love and reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire.⁵⁶

Locke, too, shares this idea of self-love as expressed in his ethic theories.⁵⁷ Lista had also read Locke and Pope--volumes of their works could be found in his library⁵⁸--and expressed this idea as seen in the already quoted poem. Yet, as with much of the poetry of the Ilustración, universal concepts of philosophical principles often appear camouflaged, that is, the poet utilizes these ideas, often labeled as

⁵⁵Robert Mauzi, op. cit., pp. 233-236.

⁵⁶Alexander Pope, op. cit., p. 136.

⁵⁷See especially A History of Philosophy, Frederick Copleston, ed., Vol. 5 Part I, pp. 133-152.

⁵⁸Hans Juretschke, op. cit., p. 48.

heterodox, within a less dangerous context and must change or rather adapt these transpirenaic thoughts to Spain. Thus Lockean philosophy is at best diluted, and related precepts such as self-love undergo drastic changes. For Pope, and many of his contemporaries, amour de soi, or self-gratification was directly related to pleasure and by extension, happiness. On the other hand, the Spanish poet truncated this concept, finding in self-love the epitome of egoism:

Aquel dulce amor propio, aquel deseo
De la vida, salud e independencia
De la tranquilidad y conveniencia,
Del corporal y espiritual recreo;
El ansia de la gloria y del buen nombre,
El egoismo, poderoso agente,
Nace vive y fallece con el hombre.⁵⁹

Thus Iriarte, in a poem appropriately entitled "El egoismo," accentuates the negative side of self-love, (a side absent in the works of Pope) emphasizing its self-interest. For the Spanish poet, amor propio is too close to egoism and shorn of that dimension which could make the concept acceptable to him--namely, collectivity:

¿No reconocen uno y otro polo
Por verdad inmutable y manifiesta
Que el hombre no nació para sí solo;

⁵⁹ Tomás de Iriarte, "El egoismo," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 40.

Que se distingue de los viles brutos
 Porque pasa la vida
 En sociedad, regida
 Por útiles y cuerdos estatutos?
 Pues si en tal sociedad los racionales
 No se sirven y ayudan mutuamente,
 Si sólo anhela cada cual o siente
 Sus propias dichas o sus propios males,
 ¿Dónde está la honradez y la justicia?
 ¿Dónde la unión y lealtad patricia?⁶⁰

Even if they accepted the notion of self-love, most Spanish poets altered the concept by "Christianizing" it. Is it not the Bible which preaches, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" and "Love thy neighbor as thyself"? Since the Church teaches that our treatment of others should be based on our treatment of ourselves, it is within this context that self-love is explained in the Spanish poetry of the Enlightenment. Amor propio, devoid of the self-gratification principle inherent in Pope's writings, is "acceptable" only insofar as it benefits others: man strives toward happiness in order to make others happy.

Venturas, felicidades
 Mi cariño te desea;
 Pero quien hace dichosos
 Es preciso que los tenga.⁶¹

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 41.

⁶¹Diego de Torres y Villarroel, "Respuesta a la señora doña María Joaquina, mandándole esta señora que le dé los días en verso," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 64.

If the Spanish poets of the eighteenth century altered beyond recognition the first important tenet of Locke's empiricism, the second, reflection, was taken more seriously by the writers of the time. And although, according to the English thinker, "these two (sensation and reflection) make up experience,"⁶² reflection, far more adaptable to certain Spanish ideologies such as senequismo was easily the more popular of the Lockean principles. Even Goya whose reputation rests on a more dynamic approach to painting technique--"El dos de mayo," "Los Caprichos, etc.-- illustrates this idea of reflection in such works as "El parasol" and "La familia del duque de Osuna," Spanish counterparts perhaps to the well-known "conversation pieces" in English painting of the eighteenth century.

These two subdivisions of Locke's empirical philosophy--sensation and reflection--relate to even broader schools of thought. If we extend and perhaps simplify the notion of sensation, we come to perceive the existence of a certain relationship between this principle and Epicureanism, while a similar relationship exists between reflection and Stoicism. The philosophies of Epicureanism and Stoicism, which in theory,

⁶² John Locke, op. cit., p. 42.

at least, are in opposition during the eighteenth century, nevertheless work out to be extensions of the aforementioned principles insofar as the concept of happiness is concerned.⁶³

When we speak of Epicureanism and Stoicism in Spain during the Siglo de las Luces we cannot refer to two systematized schools of thought. Indeed, intellectual rigor, even in the most "enlightened" part of the century, remains an exception. It is extremely difficult, perhaps even impossible, to label a poet as either stoic or epicurean since many poems were actually a mélange of ideas "borrowed" from both philosophies. The poet himself tended to fluctuate from one to another, often appearing rather libertine in one work and then affirming his reticence toward worldly pleasure in another. We have already noted the rather mundane attitude of Alberto Lista in a poem⁶⁴ written to Reinoso as he urged him to abandon his austere way of life. Yet it is Lista who in a sonnet, "La esperanza," rejects precisely this attitude seeking refuge in hope, friendship and inner tranquility:

⁶³We do not mean to imply that those who held Epicurean or Stoic viewpoints in the eighteenth century were Empiricists. We only suggest that, keeping in mind the definitions of these schools of thought during the Enlightenment, there exists a similarity between them and Locke's concepts of sensation and reflection.

⁶⁴See p. 58.

Dulce esperanza, del prestigio amado
Pródiga siempre, que el mortal adora,
Ven, disipa piadosa y bienhechora
Las penas de mi pecho acongojado.

Vuelve a mi mano el plectro ya olvidado,
Y al seno la amistad consoladora;
Y tu voz, oh divina encantadora,
Mitigue o venza la crueldad del hado.

¡Mas ay! no me presentes lisonjera
Aquellas flores que cogiste en Guido,
Cuyo jugo es mortal, aunque es sabroso.

Pasó el delirio de la edad primera,
Y ya temo el placer, y cauto pido,
No la felicidad, sino el reposo.⁶⁵

Thus it is not uncommon for pleasure and indifference to alternate within the trajectory of a poet's work. Yet we must not oversimplify. Pleasure is not to Epicureanism what indifference is to Stoicism and if Epicurus does affirm pleasure as "the way of life"⁶⁶ for his disciples to follow, it is virtue that the Greek thinker encourages and not sexual promiscuity:

When, therefore, we maintain that pleasure is the end, we do not mean the pleasure of profligates and those that consist in sensuality, as is supposed by some who are either ignorant or disagree with us or do not

⁶⁵Alberto Lista, "La esperanza," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 317.

⁶⁶George A. Panichos, Epicurus, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967), p. 101.

understand, but freedom from pain in the body and from trouble in the mind. For it is not continuous drinkings and re-vellings, nor the satisfaction of lusts, nor the enjoyment of fish and other luxuries of the wealthy table, which produce a pleasant life, but sober reasoning, searching out the motives for all choice and avoidance, and banishing mere opinions, to which are due the greatest disturbance of the spirit.⁶⁷

Restraint, not indulgence, is the keystone to Epicurean philosophy⁶⁸ and all his precepts seem to reflect this appeal to "sober reasoning." Yet unlike the Stoics, the Epicureans stress moderation of desire and not their extirpation. And although Epicurus calls pleasure "the beginning and end of the blessed life,"⁶⁹ we must not confuse this with hedonism, for Epicurus is indeed aware that pain is an integral part of the human condition:

And since pleasure is the first good

⁶⁷Epicurus, "Letter to Menoeceus," The Stoic and Epicurean Philosophers, Whitney J. Oates, ed., (New York: Random House, 1940), p. 32.

⁶⁸Epicurean philosophy virtually disappeared after it was banned when the government accepted Christianity in 313 A. D. Lucretius' De rerum natura is considered the main source of this philosophy until its revindication by Gassendi in De vita et moribus Epicuri libri octo (1647). See George A. Panichos, op. cit., p. 34.

⁶⁹Epicurus, "Letter to Menoeceus," op. cit., p. 32.

and natural to us, for this very reason we do not choose every pleasure, but sometimes we pass over many pleasures, when greater discomfort accrues to us as the result of them: and similarly we think many pains better than pleasures, since a greater pleasure comes to us when we have endured pains for a long time."⁷⁰

Thus pleasure is the cessation of pain and not an end in itself. It is this concept of change--pleasure to pain, pain to pleasure--(a foreshadowing of the romantic notion of mutability) which plays an important role in the poetry of the Enlightenment and which becomes one of the main obstacles in the pursuit of happiness:

¡Oh inconsistencia vil y deleznable
Del teatro del mundo y ser humano
Más de las ondas de la mar inestable
Mudable más que el viento y polvo vano!
Nada conserva el ser, todo es variable,
Indicios del imperio soberano,
Si árbitro de variar la suerte a todo
Principio universal del mismo modo.⁷¹

¡Qué poco el gozo dura!
¡Qué subita mudanza!⁷²

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 32.

⁷¹Vicente García de la Huerta, "Endimión," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, pp. 206-209.

⁷²José Cadalso, "Mudanzas de la suerte," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 257.

¡Oh humana suerte, de inconstancias llena!⁷³

Es el universo entero
una inconstancia perpetua:
se muda todo; no hay nada
que firme y estable sea.⁷⁴

Thus in a cross-section of poetry--one truly indicative of an even broader tendency--the "enlightened" mind is truly sensitive to his almost see-saw type of existence. Life itself is often defined within this context:

Siempre vi sucederse
Las penas y el contento
Alternados la tela
De mis años tejiendo.⁷⁵

Hence man's choices with respect to happiness are limited since according to Epicurus, pleasure and pain are the cornerstones of life, and because both of these are unacceptable as ends, man has recourse to indifference: not stoical abnegation, but rather an inner tranquility (ataraxia as Epicurus called it), a quasi nirvana-like peace which is attained through a meditative and contemplative life style. As Epicurus states,

⁷³José Iglesias de la Casa, "Oda IV," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 468.

⁷⁴Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, Poesías, ed. José Luis Cano, (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), p. 64.

⁷⁵Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda L: Las penas y los gustos forman, mezcladas, la tela de la vida," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 105.

"The man who is serene causes no disturbance to himself or to another."⁷⁶ It is this serenity which enables man to contend with and perhaps avoid mutability. Man withdraws from life, ponders existence and enjoys nature. It is ironic that in a century which preached fraternity among men, happiness--as reflected in the poetry of the century--is often to be found not in interrelationships but rather in a self-imposed isolation.

Could this be the reason why so many critics consider the eighteenth century poetry so "irrelevant" today--a time in which one feels compelled to be involved, a time in which the socially imposed scarlet "A" no longer stands for adultery but rather apathy? Many critics even of other European literatures tend to gloss over the poetry of the entire century. Even the widely accepted eighteenth century French hegemony is subject to such reservations as "le XVIII^e siècle est, sans contredit, la période la moins riche en poésie de toute notre histoire littéraire."⁷⁷ Yet we must remember that relevancy is not an esthetic aim of poetry and in a "philosophical" age such as the Enlightenment, guided by literary precepts and

⁷⁶Epicurus, "Fragments: LXXIX," op. cit., p. 44.

⁷⁷M. Allem, "Introduction," Anthologie poétique française: XVIII^e siècle, (Paris: Garnier, 1966), p. 5.

conventions, the poet often alienated himself from his public. Indeed, the Ilustración reflects "una cultura dirigida" in which the homme de lettres becomes a literary juguete more concerned with pleasing his colleagues than satisfying a less erudite public. Poetry in general becomes more elitist in nature, more intellectual. Most poetry either circulated in manuscripts destined for other more established poets or were read in literary salons before a smattering of nobility and various members of the intelligentsia. Thus the poet, almost like the medieval juglar, had to adapt his work to a minoría selecta. And although topics such as ambition, court life, the reign of Carlos III, etc., may not seem too "relevant" today, they were certainly puntos de partida for discussions at the many tertulias of the period.

* * * * *

As previously mentioned, interpretations of Epicureanism often led man to isolate himself from others in a nirvana-like existence. This Epicurean isolation reflects a metaphysical insecurity experienced throughout the second half of the century in both prose and poetry. Though it is man who willingly chose to live apart, he now feels--not unlike the psychological

concept of projection--that man and God have abandoned him:

¿Por qué? ¿por que me dejas?
Señor, Dios mío Padre, vuelve y mira.⁷⁸

Yet this self-imposed loneliness does have its positive aspect: it leads man not only to a closer communion with nature (which will be subsequently studied in Chapter IV) but it also induces man to "discover" the world about him--a world he reveals and poeticizes in great detail. Man's vision does not become more limited but rather more intense as if he were scrutinizing reality through a magnifying glass. Hence, the baroque gives way to the rococó, and preciosismo, rather than grandeur, establishes itself as an accepted poetic norm. Poems such as "Del caer de las hojas,"⁷⁹ "El abanico,"⁸⁰ and "La tortolilla"⁸¹ reflect man's growing concern for lo anodino which finds its philosophical support in Lucretius himself who condemns material gain ("Ad summas emergere rerumque potiri.")⁸²

⁷⁸Juan Meléndez Valdés, "La tribulación," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 227.

⁷⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Del caer de las hojas," op. cit., p. 99.

⁸⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "El abanico," op. cit., p. 103.

⁸¹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "La tortolilla," op. cit., p. 98.

⁸²Lucretius, De rerum natura, (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1974), p. 6.

and underscores the beauty of nature and its subsequent effect on man:

. . . Stretched out on the soft grass
Beside a quiet stream, beneath the branches
of some tall tree, without expansive trappings,
Men do their bodies a most pleasant justice
at no great cost--especially at times
when the weather smiles and year's fair
season spreads wild flowers about the emer-
ald grass.⁸³

Though oftentimes an attempt to ascertain a direct influence of one writer on another merely results in interesting conjecture, it is however, a fact that Meléndez Valdés read Lucretius' De rerum natura⁸⁴ (itself an extraordinary synthesis of philosophy and poetry) and that a significant number of his poems are in agreement with the philosopher's writings.⁸⁵ Thus the philosophical impact on poetry and by extension on its central theme, happiness, cannot be denied. Meléndez's library, for example, not to mention other libraries to which he had access, was filled with such diverse thinkers and philosophers as Aristotle, Bacon, Bossuet, Helvetius, Hume,

⁸³Ibid., p. 46.

⁸⁴A 1754 edition of De rerum natura was found in Meléndez Valdés' personal library. For a complete listing of his library, see George Demerson, Don Juan Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, (Madrid: Taurus, 1971), pp. 131-139.

⁸⁵See Meléndez Valdés, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, especially "Oda XII", p. 226; "Oda XXI," p. 233; and "Oda XXXI," p. 242.

Leibnitz, Malebranche, Rousseau. Although no personal copy of Epicurus' work was found in Meléndez' collection--unlike the opera omnia of Seneca in a 1640 five volume Latin edition--Demerson does mention Horace as an indirect source of Epicureanism.⁸⁶ Even the prestigious literary journal Décade philosophique littéraire et politique (año VI, 3) underscores the philosophical context of Batilo's poetry: "Las poesías de Meléndez Valdés son las primeras en las que se ha intentado hacer hablar a la filosofía el lenguaje de la poesía española; y este ensayo ha sido acertado."⁸⁷ Thus philosophy, albeit for a rather brief period of time, becomes a protagonist in Spanish poetry, a protagonist whose obligation is to search for a deeper understanding of mankind. When St. Thomas Aquinas says, "There is no one who denies that happiness is the ultimate end of all human acts",⁸⁸ we must include in these "acts" most philosophical systems and suggest that philosophically oriented poetry of the eighteenth century tends to reaffirm this adage. Happiness, primordial theme and goal of philosophy, is now the focal point of all "serious" poetry.

⁸⁶ Georges Demerson, op. cit., p. 233.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 297.

⁸⁸ Saint Thomas Aquinas, "Monastics," Thomistic Philosophy, vol. IV, ed. Rev. Henri Grenier, (Charlottetown, Canada: St. Dunstan's University, 1950), p. 35.

Most critics agree that Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos is indeed the catalyst responsible for the philosophical taste in poetry. The role of this truly enlightened mind can be seen principally in two famous epistles, one written to his friends in Salamanca (1776) and another written two years later to "sus amigos en Sevilla." In these two poems he envisions himself as a guide, a literary oracle who has come to rescue poetry from its mediocre existence.

Y pues que no me es dado que presuma
alcanzar por mis versos alto nombre,
dejadme al menos en tan noble empeño
la gloria de guiar por la ardua senda
que va a la eterna fama, vuestros pasos.⁸⁹

And he assigns a specific type of poetry to be cultivated by each poet. To Meléndez Valdés, he delegates the epic poem, to Fray Diego González, the theme of moral philosophy and to Fray Juan Fernández the psychological, patriotic and historical drama. Jovellanos' intention was to elevate Spanish poetry beyond the anacreontic form, then in vogue with such poets as Meléndez and Iglesias de la Casa. This idyllic love poem, according to the literary mentor, was not worthy of poetry:

⁸⁹Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Carta de Jovino a sus amigos salmantinos," Poesías, ed. José Caso González, (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1961), p. 125.

. . . ¿Siempre, siempre
dará el amor materia a nuestros cantos?
¡De cuántas dignas obras, ay, privamos
a la futura edad por una dulce
pasajera ilusión, por una gloria
frágil y deleznable, que nos roba
de otra gloria inmortal el alto premio!
No, amigos, no; guiados por la suerte
a más nobles objetos, recorramos
en el afán poético materias
dignas de una memoria perdurable.⁹⁰

Thus certain themes are to be eliminated or at best subdued and Jovellanos endeavors to awaken poets who, "adormecidos en blando amor,"⁹¹ succumbed to a frivolous esthetic dominated by rococó affectation and preciousness. Poetry itself had become the object of scorn and ridicule: "El Parnaso produce flores que no deben cultivarse sino por manos de jóvenes."⁹² Cadalso reiterates this idea in a poem entitled "Sobre ser la poesía un estudio frívolo. . ." in which he is urged to abandon capricious love poetry in favor of more serious topics:

Llegóse a mí con el semblante adusto,
Con estirada ceja y cuello erguido
(Capaz de dar un peligroso susto
Al tierno pecho del rapaz Cupido),

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 124.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 121.

⁹² José Cadalso, Cartas marruecas, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1935), p. 35.

Un animal de los que llaman sabios,
Y de este modo abrió sus secos labios:
"No cantes más de amor. Desde este día
Has de olvidar hasta su necio nombre;
Aplicáte a la gran filosofía;
Sea tu libro el corazón del hombre."⁹³

Even Meléndez apologizes to Jovellanos for his obvious lack of philosophical rigor:

La materia de ellos [Poems he had sent to Jovellanos] es de amor, por las mismas causas que V. S. me insinúa en su última carta. El ejemplo de nuestros poetas, la blandura y delicadeza de sentimientos, la facilidad en expresarlos, mi edad y otras mil cosas, me hicieron seguir este rumbo, y si a V. S. le pareciese menos grave o digno de una tal persona, perdoneme y discúlpeme mi buen afecto.⁹⁴

Philosophy now becomes a direct source of poetic inspiration: "Sírvasse V. S. decirme los libros que más pueden aprovecharme, tanto poetas como de buena filosofía, derecho natural y política pues en estos ramos de literatura he hecho y deseo hacer una buena

⁹³José Cadalso, "Sobre ser la poesía un estudio frívolo, y convenirme aplicarme a otros más serios," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 250.

⁹⁴Juan Meléndez Valdés, Cartas inéditas, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 73.

parte de mi estudio."⁹⁵ Meléndez even considered his poetry inferior to that of Pope simply because the work of his English contemporary was didactic and not merely capricious outbursts of love. "Pope en este verano me ha llenado de deseos de imitarle, y me ha puesto casi a punto de quemar todas mis poesías; he visto en él lo que tantas veces V. S. [Jovellanos] me ha predicado sobre el estilo amoroso: más valen cuatro versos suyos del Ensayo sobre el hombre, más enseñan, y más alabanzas merecen, que todas mis composiciones: conózcolo, confiésolo, me duelo de ello, y así paula majori canamus."⁹⁶ In his philosophical odes, Meléndez Valdés often refers to Locke and Leibnitz, especially the latter's chain of being theory which is not unrelated to Lucretius' atomist philosophy, itself derived from Epicurus and the Greek atomists. The odes reflect a philosophical approach to life: a serious study of mankind--a study in which happiness plays a foremost part.

El [Meléndez Valdés] pertenecía a esa clase de hombres respetables que esperan del adelantamiento de la razón la mejora de la especie humana, y no desconfían de que llegue una época en que la civilización, o lo que es lo mismo, el imperio del entendimiento extendido por la tierra dé a los hombres aquel

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 73.

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 83.

grado de perfección y felicidad que es compatible con sus facultades y con la limitación de la existencia de cada individuo. Pensaba en este punto como Turgot, como Jovellanos, como Condorcet, y como tantos otros que no han desesperado jamás del género humano. Sus versos filosóficos lo manifiestan, y con sus talentos y trabajos procuró ayudar por su parte cuanto pudo a esta grande obra.⁹⁷

Philosophy in the Odas filosóficas y sagradas is considered the key to human understanding and by extension a means of attaining happiness:

Tu rayo, celestial filosofía,
Me alumbre en el abismo misterioso
De maravilla tanta:
Muéstrame la armonía
De este gran todo, y en su orden milagroso,
Y plácido en tus alas me levanta
Do estática se encanta
La inquieta vista en el inmenso cielo:
Allí en su luz clarísima embriagado,
Hallaré el bien que en el lloroso suelo
Busqué, ciego, de sombras fascinado.⁹⁸

Although Meléndez was not the only ilustrado of his time to exhibit an acute philosophical awareness, most other poets attempted to reconcile philosophy to orthodoxy:

⁹⁷ Manuel José Quintana, Obras completas, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. XIX, p. 120.

⁹⁸ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda II," op. cit., p. 217.

man must think, they asserted, but only within the confines of the teachings of the Church:

¿Para qué fin Licino,
El Hacedor supremo,
Arbitro de él, al hombre
En este mundo ha puesto?
Para que piense solo;
Para que el pensamiento
Conforme únicamente
A su sabio precepto.⁹⁹

Yet philosophy was not always taken so seriously. In the already cited Los eruditos a la violeta, Cadalso offers a rather precise caricature of the filósofo a la violeta--a caricature which unfortunately was considered by many to be a quite accurate portrayal. If one is to be a "true" philosopher one is to behave thusly:

Unos habéis de estar, por ejemplo, siempre distraídos; habéis de entrar en alguna botillería preguntando si tienen botas inglesas, o en alguna librería, preguntando si alquilan coches para el sitio. Otros, aunque tengáis los ojos muy buenos y hermosos, habéis de llevar un sempiterno antejo en conversación con la nariz. Otros habéis de comer precisamente a tal o tal hora, y que sea extravagante, como si dijéramos a las nueve de la mañana o a la seis de tarde; y si los estómagos tuviesen hambre a otras horas, que tengan paciencia y se

⁹⁹Manuel María de Arjona, "Al pensamiento del hombre," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 531.

vayan a filosofando. Otros habéis de correr, como volantes, por esas calles de Dios, atropellando a cuanto chiquillo salga de las puertas, en hora menguada para él y su triste madre. Otros habéis de tener aprensiones de enfermedades, y si alguno os pregunta el estado de vuestra importante salud, quejaos de todos los males a que está expuesta la frágil máquina del cuerpo humano; y aunque tengáis más fuerza que un Hércules y más colores que un Baco, ensartad lo de tísico, hético, asmático, paralítico, escorbútico, etc., etc., etc., etc.,.100

Although, of course, Cadalso is criticizing the pseudo-philosopher, the true sabio was likewise often impugned. Even the shepherd--the epitome of the unassuming and unintellectual man--is depicted as knowing far more than the philosopher. In a well-known fable by Samaniego, "El pastor y el filósofo," the latter asks his less erudite counterpart:

. . .Dime, ¿en qué escuela
Te hiciste sabio? ¿Acaso te ocupaste
Largas noches leyendo a la candela?
¿A Grecia y Roma sabias observaste?
¿Sócrates refinó tu entendimiento?
La ciencia de Platón has tú medido.
¿O pesaste de Tulio el gran talento,
O tal vez, como Ulises, has corrido
Por ignorados pueblos y confusos

100 José Cadalso, Los eruditos a la violeta, p. 84.

Observando costumbres, leyes y usos?¹⁰¹

The philosopher refuses to accept a more practical form of knowledge exemplified by the shepherd: thought must be systematized--certainly one can learn little from tending sheep. Yet the shepherd's retort is an example (quite common in the eighteenth century) of the ingenuous "pastor" who indeed learns from nature:

Ni las letras seguí, ni como Ulises
(Humildemente respondió el anciano).
Discurrí por incógnitos países.
Sé que el género humano
En la escuela del mundo lisonjero
Se instruye en el doblez y la patraña.
Con la ciencia que engaña
¿Quién podrá hacerse sabio verdadero?¹⁰²

Though the fable seems to be another illustration of the beatus ille, it is more an endictment of the philosopher than praise of pastoral existence. Indeed, it is the philosopher, who conscious of his error, ends the fable with a rather strong condemnation of intellectual rigor:

Tu virtud acredita, buen anciano
(El filósofo exclama),
Tu ciencia verdadera y justa fama.
Vierte el género humano

¹⁰¹Félix María de Samaniego, Fábulas, ed. Ernesto Jareño, (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), p. 156.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 157.

En sus libros y escuelas sus errores;
En preceptos mejores
Nos da naturaleza su doctrina.¹⁰³

The poetic combination of the erudite philosopher and the less sophisticated peasant is of course not exclusive to the eighteenth century: on the contrary, it is a tópico utilized by most of the fabulistas from Phaedrus to Iriarte. Even Meléndez Valdés in an epistle entitled "El filósofo en el campo," attempts to dissuade the mundane and rather abstruse philosopher from "ese bullicio / Ese continuo discurrir"¹⁰⁴ where verbosity and rhetoric dominate learning. True knowledge, however, is to be found in the campo. Again, we are not confronted by the "typical" beatus ille eclogue nor the recurrent theme of menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea. On the contrary, the portrayal of the shepherd's life is quite bleak if not overly critical and negative as often seen in the poems of Meléndez Valdés:

Miro y contemplo los trabajos duros
Del triste labrador su suerte esquivá
Su miseria, sus lástimas. . .¹⁰⁵

A brief glimpse of perhaps the foremost Renaissance

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 158.

¹⁰⁴Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola VI: El filósofo en el campo," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 205.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 205.

example of the beatus ille theme will illustrate the contrast:

Que descansada vida
la del que huye el mundanal ruido
y sigue la escondida
senda por donde han ido
los pocos sabios que en el mundo han sido.¹⁰⁶

Thus poetic convention is disregarded in favor of a new, perhaps overly didactic connotation more suitable for the Enlightenment. The refuge urged by Renaissance writers from the outside world of materialistic corruption, courtly intrigues and vices are now transformed into the more socially oriented view of the eighteenth century. The bucolic world is compelled to acquiesce to a more enlightened mind. The pastoral poem thus adds a new dimension: transcendency.¹⁰⁷ The idyllic ambience often becomes a pretext for more vital, "relevant" ideas: cosmos ásketos as opposed to cosmos noétos. Many of these bucolic poems seem to ignore the pastoral setting altogether; often they are a pretense for criticizing various aspects of society including the philosophe himself:

¹⁰⁶Fray Luis de Leon, "Vida retirada," Poesías, ed. Alejandro Díez Blanco, (Valladolid: Miñón, n.d.), p. 337.

¹⁰⁷We do not mean to imply that there was no "true" beatus ille tradition in the eighteenth century. However, alongside this more classical expression of the pastoral world (which will be discussed in Chapter III) there existed another, less rigid convention in which the shepherds became almost satirical juquetes in the hands of the poet.

Y mientras charlan corrompidos sabios,
De ti, Señor, para ultrajarte, o necios,
Tu inescrutable ser definir osan
En aulas vocingleras. . .¹⁰⁸

This philosopher is looked upon with contempt and scorn: his is presumptuous, proud and arrogant. As a result any novedad is also censured--the poet begins to criticize modernization:

¿Qué valen tantas raras invenciones
De nuestro insano orgullo, comparadas
Con el montón de sazonadas mieses
Que crió el labrador?¹⁰⁹

* * * * *

Due in part to the French Revolution and more importantly to the execution of the King and Queen of France, French ideas in Spain became immediately suspect. In much the same way that the intellectual was considered a converso during Spain's Golden Age, the Spanish philosophe was by extension an afrancesado. The reactionary movement in Spain was swift and complete. Shortly after the execution of Louis XVI on January 21, 1793 (the news arrived in Spain on January 30) a Royal Decree prohibited the publication of any

¹⁰⁸Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola VI: El filósofo en el campo," op. cit., p. 206.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 207.

"noticias algunas favorables o adversas de las cosas pertenecientes al Reyno de Francia."¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, support for the Spanish government, praise for the Royal Family and for the monarchic system--though forbidden by the above decree--became the theme of most newspapers and literary journals.¹¹¹ Even Forner wrote several poems in the support of the Spanish government and others condemning the New Regime in France including a widely read sonnet, "A la muerte de Luis XVI."¹¹² Indeed there was even a movement to have the French king canonized.¹¹³ And yet the French

¹¹⁰"Real orden del 12 de feb. de 1794" quoted by Richard Herr, op. cit., p. 259.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 249-256.

¹¹²Al corte infame de cruel cuchilla
Cae la cabeza que a las leyes santas
Organo fue supremo, y veces tantas
Las dio a la tierra en prepotente silla.

La de Occidente augusta maravilla
Ludibrio yace de rebeldes plantas;
Estremece el ejemplo altas gargantas,
Y un tanto el ceño del poder se humilla.
Pueblo que la adoró, sin llanto ahora,
Yerta la mira derramando en hilos
Desde mano soez sangre inocente.

Así el que sirve al que le manda adora;
Contra el débil señor vibra los filos;
Si éste los vibra, sirve reverente.

Juan Pablo Forner, "A la muerte de Luis XVI,"
Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 318.

¹¹³See Richard Herr, op. cit., p. 253.

Revolution did have an adverse effect on Spanish letters. Spain declared war against France on March 27, 1793 and French literature and thought, which had so efficiently nourished the Spanish Enlightenment, could not penetrate the Pyrennes.¹¹⁴ Throughout Spain, French citizens and sympathizers were persecuted; women in Madrid who combed their hair a la francesa were forced in view of all to change their coiffure.¹¹⁵ The Spanish minister, the Conde de Floridablanca was forced to close Spain's common border with France.¹¹⁶ Although many of these reactions to the French Revolution was short lived, they nonetheless brought about a change in Spanish poetry. Whereas the relatively peaceful reign of Carlos III afforded the poets the luxury of idle philosophical speculation, the exigencies of war and economic strife oriented poetry to more practical themes. Man is forced to face an unpleasant reality and finds that philosophy is useless: "Inútil es mi entendimiento"¹¹⁷ says Forner thus expressing the frustration of an entire generation--a generation

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 249ff.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 257.

¹¹⁶See A. Rumeu de Armas, Historia de España moderna, vol. I, (Madrid: Anaya, 1968), p. 285.

¹¹⁷Juan Pablo Forner, "Discurso IV," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 366.

whose hope for happiness had been built upon philosophical inquiry. If the French Revolution did not completely terminate the Spanish Enlightenment, it did indeed interrupt a growing philosophical tradition begun with Feijóo and Piquer and continued throughout the century in serious, philosophically oriented poetry by Jovellanos, Forner, Meléndez Valdés. Philosophy--once a panacea for the ills of mankind--had brought about man's demise; freedom and happiness promised in "the best of all possible worlds" remained unfulfilled abstract ideas:

Infausta ciencia, que del vulgo necio
Distingue sólo al que la sigue y busca,
Porque más necio su ignorancia encubre
En huecas voces, que con aire grave
Pronuncia como oráculo infalible.

¿Qué es ser sabio sino una estéril pompa,
Que hace dañoso al que mejor pudiera
Ser útil a los hombres?¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ José María Blanco y Crespo, "A Don Juan Pablo Forner," (1796), Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 661.

CHAPTER II: HAPPINESS AND KNOWLEDGE

As we have seen in the preceding chapter, a primary aim of philosophy was to define happiness and to direct man's steps towards that goal. Yet in their pedantic approach to the question, it became apparent that philosophy was too broad, too abstract, and thinkers needed a tool--a philosophical one to be sure--less obtuse, more relevant to man.

The cosmological speculations of the Ionians did little to orient man in his quest for happiness; Thales and Anaximenes had sought answers by reducing life to one basic element--namely water and air respectively--which tended to alienate man from the mainstream of philosophical inquiry. It was not until what is now called Pre-Socratic philosophy that man assumed a certain preeminence in the scheme of the universe. Although the pre-Socratics also concentrated mainly on the cosmos, the external reality, they took great account of man in relation to the external world. If Aristotle's concept of the human being as a "rational animal" is still quite remote,

the Pre-Socratics nonetheless were the first to underscore the importance of the intricate relationship between sense experience and reason. Thus we may speak of the first philosophical "school":

" . . .it [Pre-Socratic philosophy] is not a self-contained unit, shut off from succeeding philosophic thought in a watertight compartment; rather it is preparatory to the succeeding period, for in it we see problems raised which were to occupy the greatest of Greek philosophers."¹

It is with Socrates that man truly becomes the focal point of philosophical inquiry. In the Socratic view, knowledge and virtue are one: he who knows what is right will do what is right, and knowledge is sought as a means to ethical action. That action is right which serves man's true utility, that is, insofar as it is conducive to true happiness. Far from being a hedonist, Socrates believed that "true pleasure and lasting happiness attend the moral rather than the immoral man, and that happiness does not consist in having a great abundance of external goods."² Hence what Copleston calls the "ethical intellectualism"³ can be directly related to the eighteenth century

¹Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy: Greece and Rome, Part I, (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962), p. 97.

²Ibid., p. 131.

³Ibid., p. 130.

philosophical approach to happiness.

What the Enlightenment found particularly instructive in Socrates, was his attempt to categorize and thus universalize man's nature: "Human nature is constant and so ethical values are constant, and it is Socrates' undying fame that he realized the constancy of these values and sought to fix them in universal definitions which could be taken as a guide and norm in human conduct."⁴ Socrates in his last conversations with Phaedo of Elis speaks of moral values, pleasure, knowledge, and in general ethical conduct for all men to follow.⁵ The ideas appealed greatly to the philosophe who although proud to affirm his individuality, regarded man primarily as a social being linked inextricably to man. Even if the individual functions independently, it is for the benefit of a broader, more encompassing purpose, namely mankind, and man's reason is intimately linked to the Universal Reason or Mind of the world. When the philosophe concentrates on the individual, he is aiming at a much broader spectrum--namely a deeper understanding of mankind.

Plato, too, enjoyed a certain popularity in the

⁴Ibid., p. 132.

⁵Plato, The Last Days of Socrates: Phaedo, ed. Hugh Tredennick, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969), pp. 103ff.

eighteenth century while Aristotle, staunchly defended by the more traditional element in the Church, was often criticized "como fundamento de la mayor parte de las herejías de su tiempo."⁶ Nevertheless, Meléndez Valdés' library boasted not only a 1752 edition of Plato's Dialogues but also a 1551 edition of his complete works.⁷ However, it was Plato's Republic which seemed more alluring than any other of his works to the mind of the Enlightenment. It even penetrates the area of esthetics. Luzán's Poética, on the surface far removed from the political realm of the Republic, nonetheless reflects Plato's influence: "Even had Plato not already been mentioned, Luzán's statement that all art should be subordinate to the state political, and therefore the public good, would have shown that the principles of the Republic loomed large at the back of his thought."⁸ Indeed, Plato is mentioned eleven times in Luzán's work.⁹

⁶Jean Sarrailh, La España ilustrada de la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), p. 433.

⁷Georges Demerson, Don Juan Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, vol. I, (Madrid: Taurus, 1971), p. 134.

⁸I. L. McClelland, Ignacio de Luzán, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1973), p. 104.

⁹Russell P. Sebold, "Análisis estadístico de las ideas poéticas de Luzán: sus orígenes y su naturaleza," El rapto de la mente, (Madrid: Prensa Española, 1970), p. 73.

Yet it is Plato's epistemological theories which concern us here, best illustrated by the celebrated allegory of the Cave in the seventh book of the Republic where he describes the ascent of the human mind from the world of shadows (darkness) to the real world (light). Plato regarded this process as a series of conversions from a less adequate to a more adequate cognitive state to which man ascends through mental discipline and perseverance. Thus education assumes a foremost role in life for it is through education, knowledge, that man can understand eternal truths and values. Obviously Plato was referring to the politician and to the ultimate good of the state, yet the message to the eighteenth century was clear: knowledge is a prerequisite toward achieving the truly good human life and true knowledge brings true happiness. The eighteenth century philosophes, whether in France, England or Spain subscribes to this equation.

The age of d'Alembert feels itself impelled by a mighty movement, but it refuses to abandon itself to this force. It wants to know the whence and whither, the origin and the goal, of its impulsion. For this age, knowledge of its own activity, intellectual self-examination, and foresight are the proper function and essential task of thought. Thought not only seeks

new, hitherto unknown goals but it wants to know where it is going and to determine for itself the direction of its journey. It encounters the world with joy and the courage of discovery, daily expecting new revelations. Yet its thirst for knowledge and intellectual curiosity are directed not only toward the external world; the thought of this age is even more passionately impelled by that other question of the nature and potentiality of thought itself. Time and again thought returns to its point of departure from its various journeys of exploration intended to broaden the horizon of objective reality. . . . Perhaps no other century is so completely permeated by the idea of intellectual progress as that of the Enlightenment.¹⁰

However, it was Aristotle who had the great impact on the poetry of the Enlightenment. Although viciously attacked by such intellectuals as Feijóo, Piquer and Forner,¹¹ as being the "only" source of knowledge (as opposed to the more experimental sciences) his indelible mark on the esthetics of the time cannot be denied--for it is Aristotle and not Boileau who is the direct source of inspiration

¹⁰Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, trans. Fritz C. A. Koelln and James P. Pettegrove, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 4-5.

¹¹Jean Sarrailh, op. cit., pp. 431-435ff.

for Ignacio de Luzán's Poética:

Aristóteles le suministró a Luzán la mayor parte de las ideas sobre la tragedia y sobre la comedia, una gran parte de las ideas acerca del poema épico y muchas acerca de la imitación. Se puede afirmar que el libro tercero, que trata de la tragedia y de la comedia, es un buen comentario de la Poética de Aristóteles.¹²

Indeed in the 1737 edition of the Poética, Aristotle is mentioned 173 times: far more than any other writer throughout the work.¹³ And yet other works of Aristotle also attracted the interest of the ilustrado. In a century so concerned with ethical behavior and buen gusto, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics was widely read and even taught in certain universities in Spain.¹⁴

The underlying theme of the Ethics, and that which certainly had the greatest appeal to the eighteenth century, was Aristotle's theory of knowledge. His epistemological approach to

¹²Juan Luis Alborg, Historia de la literatura española: el siglo XVIII, vol. III, (Madrid: Gredos, 1972), p. 237.

¹³Russell P. Sebold, op. cit., p. 70.

¹⁴Richard Herr, España y la revolución del siglo XVIII, (Jerez de la Frontera: Aguilar, 1964), p. 138.

understanding is one based on a careful and direct study of phenomena: "For it is the mark of an educated man to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the subject admits."¹⁵ All knowledge, according to Aristotle, "aims at some good,"¹⁶ and this good is achieved through the use of reason or the "rational principle," the criterion for all happiness. It is indeed the fundamental, primordial principal: "As sight is in the body, so is reason in the soul."¹⁷ And yet in a century which prided itself in a more sincretic and hence liberal approach to philosophy, Aristotle, too, suffered from his many critics and detractors. Even Feijóo, (himself greatly indebted to the Greek philosopher) although he had acknowledged his importance, tended to favor a more direct "system" for understanding phenomena:

No pretendo yo que no se lea en las Escuelas la doctrina que Aristóteles enseñó en los ocho mencionados libros, sino que esa doctrina se dé purgada de tantas inútiles cuestiones, en quienes se consume buena porción de tiempo, el cual

¹⁵Aristotle, Ethics, (Chicago, Henry Regnery Company, 1970), p. 6.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 14.

fuera más justo emplear en explorar
más de cerca la naturaleza.¹⁸

Even though he realized the importance of observation, an idea Alborg reminds us directly influenced by Fontenelle,¹⁹ Feijóo, in the true spirit of the Enlightenment cannot but help mention the primacy of reason--itself an acceptable guide in the attainment of knowledge: "Así yo, ciudadano libre de la República Literaria, ni esclavo de Aristóteles ni aliado de sus enemigos, escucharé siempre con preferencia a toda autoridad privada lo que me dictaren la experiencia y la razón."²⁰ Thus Plato's famous adage that to know what happiness means, is to be happy, is altered to: to know the formula of happiness is to be happy. And reason, according to many poets of the eighteenth century, is the key to this formula, a panacea for the human condition. Beginning with Feijóo, the writers of the Enlightenment sought to redefine reason, to substitute a new concept of reason far removed from the old worn-out syllogistic one. The use of reason took many forms: for example, reason often became a tool to combat ignorance. Feijóo in

¹⁸ Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Lo que sobra y falta de la física," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. CXLII, p. 246.

¹⁹ Juan Luis Alborg, op. cit., p. 168.

²⁰ Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, op. cit., p. 460.

the introduction to his monumental work, the Teatro Crítico Universal states the purpose of his endeavor as being the search for truth--a rational truth, one devoid of opinion, superstition and sophistic argument:

Aunque mi intento es proponer la verdad, posible es que en algunos asuntos me falte penetración para conocerla, y en lo más, fuerza para persuadirla. Lo que puedo asegurarte es que nada escribo que no sea conforme a lo que siento. Proponer y probar opiniones singulares sólo por ostentar ingenio, téngolo por prurito pueril y falsedad indigna de todo hombre de bien. En una conversación se puede tolerar por pasatiempo; en un escrito es engañar al público. La grandeza del discurso está en penetrar y persuadir las verdades; la habilidad más baja del ingenio es enredar a otros con sofisterías. Las arañas, que aun entre los brutos son viles, fabrican telas delicadas, pero sutiles: sutiles y firmes, aun entre los hombres, no las hacen sino los artífices excelentes. En aquéllas se figuran los discursos agudos, pero sofisticos; en éstas los ingeniosos y sólidos.²¹

True knowledge, according to Feijóo, is obtained through careful observation and not idle speculation. In his

²¹Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, Teatro crítico universal, ed. Agustín Millares Carlo, vol. I, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1968), p. 82.

well-known essay, "Voz del pueblo," he further expounds upon this point. The intellectual community, and thus all knowledge emanating from the intelligentsia, is a limited community. Feijóo quotes Cicero's adage, "Non consilium in vulgo, non ratio, non discrimen, non diligentia,"²² as a means of proving his argument that the intellectual is indeed an hombre selecto while common opinion is often an expression of mass ignorance:

El valor de las opiniones se ha de computar por el peso, no por el número de las almas. Los ignorantes, por ser muchos, no dejan de ser ignorantes. ¿Qué acierto, pues, se puede esperar de sus resoluciones? Antes es de creer que la multitud añadirá estorbosa la verdad, creciendo los sufragios al error. . . Siempre alcanzará más un discreto solo que una gran turba de necios; como verá mejor al sol un águila que ejército de luchuzas.²³

This same theme is reflected in the famous eighteenth century novel, surpassed only by the Quijote, Fray Gerundio de Campazas written by Padre Isla. The protagonist, a self-professed preacher, earns a living and more importantly, a reputation by impressing people with his "erudition." This

²²Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Voz del pueblo," Teatro crítico universal, vol. I, p. 86.

²³Ibid., pp. 85-86.

knowledge takes many forms: a smattering of Latin words (never properly used), a change in his tone of voice, a comical title for his sermon, etc. Yet the masses adhere steadfastly to Fray Gerundio and his profound teachings. In a humorous episode from the novel, the ignorance of the masses is manifest in their blind acceptance of Fray Gerundio's sermon; the reaction is grotesque and indeed illustrates an expression of the "voz del pueblo" mentality criticized earlier by Feijóo:

. . . no pudo contener el auditorio sin prorrumpir de contado, primero en un muy alegre y bullicioso murmullo, muy parecido a aquél que hacen las abejas alrededor de la colmena; después en aclamaciones y vítores descubiertos, arrojando hasta la bóveda o artesonado de la iglesia, no sólo las monteras y sombreros, sino que no faltaba quien decía se vieron revolotear algunos botines. . . . En fin, la algazara y gritería fue tal, que en más de medio cuarto de hora no fue posible a Fray Gerundio proseguir su panegírico; y aunque el sacristán hacía pedazos el esquilón del altar para que se sosegase la bulla, no lo pudo conseguir hasta que de bueno a bueno se fueron todos aquietando.²⁴

²⁴José Francisco de Isla, Fray Gerundio de Campazas, vol. III, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1964), pp. 84-85.

If this were not enough Fray Gerundio was carried bodily through the streets and led throughout the town by his loyal parishoners who acclaimed him as "la inmortal gloria de su siglo."²⁵

Man's quest for knowledge, however, was not limited to satirical contexts. The man of letters, according to Iriarte, must also assume a new role, a role which demands a deeper understanding of the world around him. In one of his well-known Fábulas literarias, "El ruiñeñor y el gorrión," he underscores the importance of knowledge for the hombre de letras.

Siguiendo el son del organillo un día,
Tomaba el ruiñeñor lección de canto,
Y a la jaula llegándose entre tanto
El Gorrión parlero, así decía:

"¡Cuánto me maravillo
De ver que de ese modo
Un pájaro tan diestro
A un discípulo tiene por maestro!
Porque al fin lo que sabe el organillo
A ti lo debe todo.--
A pesar de eso (el Ruiñeñor replica),
Si él aprendió de mí, yo de él aprendo.
A imitar mis caprichos él se aplica:
Yo los voy corrigiendo
Con arreglarme al arte que él enseña;
Y así pronto verás lo que adelanta
Un Ruiñeñor que con escuela canta."

²⁵Ibid., p. 88.

¿De aprender se desdeña
El literato grave?
Pues más debe estudiar el que más sabe.²⁶

Thus Iriarte upholds the eighteenth century belief of the exigency of acquiring knowledge. In a letter written to Cadalso in November of 1774 the fabulista criticizes the "intellectual" ambience of the Court:

Oh mi Dalmiro, el lamentable estado
De la sabiduría en esta corte,
Dos siglos ha maestra de las ciencias,
Y en el nuestro aprendiz de las del Norte.²⁷

He proceeds to scrutinize this lack of knowledge attempting to find a cause--one of which may be the inferior educational system which tends to perpetuate this ignorance:

La mala educación echó raíces.
Los niños que de escuela carecieron
En sus primeros años infelices,
Ya son hombres idiotas, que subieron
A ocupar los empleos de importancia,
En que es leve defecto la ignorancia.²⁸

These "hombres idiotas" do not develop their minds. On the contrary, their banal existence is characterized almost exclusively by pointless tasks and games:

²⁶Tomás de Iriarte, "El Ruiseñor y el Gorrion," Fábulas literarias, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 16.

²⁷Tomás de Iriarte, "Epístola primera," op. cit., p. 23.

²⁸Ibid., p. 23.

¡Quién te ha dicho que aquí [Madrid] desacredita
A un racional el ver que no ejercita
La parte intelectual de su individuo?
Comen, duermen, se adornan, se pasean,
Y del día el residuo
En total ocio u en el juego emplean.²⁹

The day is highlighted by trite conversation, which according to Iriarte, reflects the extent of their knowledge:

--¿Con que, se casa Julia?
--Y si Lisardo muere, ¿quién le hereda?
--Muy pobre estuvo anoche la tertulia.
--¡Bonito frac! ¿Es algodón o seda?
--¿Qué has perdido? --Diez onzas de un envite.
--Aquel hombre riñó con la Fulana.
--¿Han mudado comedia? Si el convite
No se acaba muy tarde, iré mañana.--
Estos son sus discursos, sus ideas,
Sus artes y científicas tareas.³⁰

Iriarte is particularly critical of the decadence in Spanish letters caused by a lack of erudite pursuits:

. . .cual me lamento
De nuestra erudición y su ruina,
Sabe, pues, que el estudio indispensable
De la noble y matriz lengua latina,
Confiado a una secta inexpugnable
De adustos preceptores
.
Víctima es hoy de acérrimos partidos,

²⁹ Ibid., p. 23.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

Padeciendo el bien público entre tanto.³¹

Echoing Feijóo's criticism of the vulgo in his essay "Voz del pueblo," Iriarte comments on the plight of the writer, who conceals his work from the public, fearful of the inane opinions of the necio.

¡Bien haya el erudito que, si escribe,
Da por prisión a su obra el cartapacio,
De donde no la saca mientras vive,
Por no exponerla al triste menosprecio
En que no incurre acaso la de un necio!³²

* * * * *

Many poets felt that reason could be a guide in man's search for knowledge: indeed, reason was often considered a panacea for the human condition. In an extensive didactic poem entitled, "Las Edades," Fray Diego González, one of the leading exponents of the Salamanca School, not only exalts the importance of reason, but links reason--as Aristotle had done--to virtue. A rational man is by definition a virtuous one:

Mas ¿quién podrá explicar el abundoso
Dote con que fue el alma enriquecida
Para este desposorio? En don precioso
La original justicia fue añadida,
Que el orden y armonía conservaba,
Y con doradas riendas sujetaba
La inferior turba de apetitos varios,

³¹Ibid., p. 24.

³²Ibid., p. 24.

Para que ni rebeldes ni contrarios,
Del racional deseo desdijesen,
Y siempre a la razón obedeciesen;
A la razón, que a todo presidía,
Cual sol en claro cielo, y procedía
Ilustrada con ciencia suficiente
Para poder vivir virtuosamente. . .³³

Thus, reason restores order and harmony and leads man to virtue. Reason is considered primarily as a structure, as a guide to restore fijeza in a world of constant mutability. Fray Diego González believes that the proper use of reason can bring about "orden y proporción."³⁴ He considers knowledge a divine gift which brings man closer to God since ignorance has alienated him from his Creator:

¡Oh dignación! ¡Oh amable providencia!
¡Oh divino consejo, eterno y sabio!
¡Oh poder! ¡Oh bondad! del alto cielo
Envía la sagrada inteligencia,
Que purifique el torpe, inmundo labio
Con fuego de tu altar, para que pruebe
Decir tus obras santas y desvelo
Paternal hacia el hombre. . .³⁵

Delio, in praising man's phenomenal industrial and scientific progress, underscores the role of reason: a role which has guided man to happiness by adherence to laws:

³³Fray Diego González, "Las Edades," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXXI, p. 200.

³⁴Ibid., p. 199.

³⁵Ibid., p. 199.

Y luego aspiró el hombre a la abundancia,
Y puso móvil puente al mar undoso,
Corriendo sin fatiga la distancia
Inmensa que separa las regiones,
Que nunca alcanzó a ver el carnicero
Buitre subido al cielo; y peregrinas
Especies mil tomó del extranjero,
Dándole lo sobrado. Y las divinas
Artes advirtió en sí, con que levanta
A un nuevo y alto ser el ser primero;
Y trasladando a un lienzo la natura,
Instruye la razón, la vista encanta,
Y fija a un ser la fugitiva historia;
Y cediendo al cincel la piedra dura,
O en moldes los metales desatados,
De sus héroes conserva la memoria;
Y del suelo se aleja, y la vacía
Región huella seguro y en dorados
Techos habita, y junta en sociedades
Los hombres, que con sabias leyes guía
A su felicidad; . . .³⁶

* * * * *

Yet reason played still another role in the poetry of the eighteenth century. In an age in which moderation was a generally accepted norm, reason often served as a restraint for man's passions. If man deviated too severely from the justo medio, that is, a certain equilibrium achieved through the harmonious coexistence of the intellect and the heart, reason was considered an important guide in helping man to refrain

³⁶Ibid., p. 201.

from an over indulgence of the senses. This can be seen quite frequently in Meléndez Valdés's poetry. In his "Elegía primera" subtitled "El deleite y la virtud," Batilo envisions reason as an almost infallible guide to man. Pleasure calls the poet; yet reason in vain attempts to dissuade him.

. . . Allí me llama,
Allí el deleite plácido riendo.
Sus vinos, cebo al paladar, derrama,
En transparentes copas, con su fuego
El ya movido corazón me inflama.
 ¿A quién no arrastrarán el blando ruego,
La música y balsámicos olores,
Y de tanto amador la trisca y juego?
 Toda es gala la tierra y lindas flores,
Del céfiro adormece el manso aliento,
Los trinos de las aves son amores.
 Irme mal grado yo tras ellas siento;
La razón me detiene; el apetito
Aguija, y corre más veloz que el viento.³⁷

And yet ultimately it is reason, by illuminating man's intellect, that guides man away from exacerbated passion and towards virtue:

Mas luego la razón, que a su luz pura
Del ánimo la niebla desvanece,
De la virtud me muestra la hermosura.
Ella, dolida de mi error, me ofrece

³⁷Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Elegía primera," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 249.

Su diestra celestial, y la gloriosa
Palma me ostenta que jamás parece.³⁸

In the ensuing dialogue reason is personified and convincingly attempts to discourage man in his pursuit for self-gratification. Reason speaks fo the fugacity of all pleasure.

Que los placeres son, con amorosa
Boca me acusa, y el fugaz contento,
Sino, envuelta en espinas, frágil rosa.³⁹

Although reason finally succeeds in assuaging man's passion, it is not without reluctance that the poet abandons his feelings in favor of a more virtuous existence:

Y la razón con su favor deshace
El ciego ardor que el corazón destruye.
Y yo, como el enfermo a quien desplace
En fiebre ardiente amarga medicina,
Y odioso el que la sirve se le hace,
Así de la razón la luz divina
No puedo resistir, mirar no osando
La virtud en su alteza peregrina;
Y en encendidas lágrimas bañando
Las pálidas mejillas, aun suspiro
Por el mentido bien que voy dejando:
¡Tan dulce es la prisión en que me miro!⁴⁰

In a "Discurso" entitled "El hombre fue criado para la virtud, y sólo halla su felicidad en practicarla", Meléndez

³⁸Ibid., p. 249.

³⁹Ibid., p. 249.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 249.

Valdés again expounds upon the polarization between the heart and the intellect, between feeling and reason. However, to avoid what Batilo calls "el placer indecente," man must utilize his reason if he is to be truly happy:

Si de verdad anhelas ser dichoso
De la razón al grito repetido,
Y sus avisos sigue religioso.⁴¹

According to Meléndez, reason is perhaps God's greatest gift to man--what he refers to as "la razón divina"-- a gift man is to cultivate if he is to be virtuous:

Cultiva, pues, esta razón, si anhelas
Al verdadero bien; a su luz pura
Solícito nivela tus acciones
Y la ardua senda de la virtud emprende.⁴²

Despite the fact that many poets adhered to the supremacy of reason, the rational approach to happiness was not without its detractors. Juan Pablo Forner, in his famous Discursos filosóficos expounds upon the impotence of reason:

Nacido al mundo racional criatura
Entre corpóreo, y de los entes todos
Arbitro y dueño en mi obediente suelo,
¿A qué fin vivo? ¿Inútil en el mundo
Será de mi razón el ejercicio?
Graves sofistas, que gritáis que el hombre,
Materia sólo organizada mueve
Sus miembros y potencias, cual sus giros
La máquina constante que del tiempo
Los espacios divide y los señala;

⁴¹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Discurso II", op. cit., p. 259.

⁴²Ibid., p. 259.

.
¿Con qué designio un ente todo sabio
Puso el entendimiento en los mortales?
Si muere el hombre cuando el cuerpo muere,
¿Para qué la razón?⁴³

And yet Forner must be studied as an anomaly in the literary history of Spain. He does not condemn reason but rather man's over-reliance on reason, in defiance perhaps, to the encyclopedic movement. While in favor of what may be called theological reason, he bitterly condemns materialism, deism and other beliefs considered by the philosophes to be the logical convictions of a rational mind. Although he is not against reason per se, he is against the corruption of the rational mind:

Los desencantados aumentos filosóficos de nuestros días lo han sido realmente en el aumento de los númenes: no se ha entibiado aún la furia de inventar dioses y predicar cultos con hacer más de veintecuatro siglos que principió. ¿Pretenderán estos ilustres genios y los que por la excelencia de sus doctrinas pesan el mérito literario de las naciones, que cada uno de los hombres crea y siga los dogmas de todos ellos? Se burlan de los cultos establecidos porque ven no sé qué sombras de inverosimilitud en las revelaciones y haciéndose nuevos apóstoles de dogmas

⁴³Juan Pablo Forner, "Discurso IV," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 366.

repugnantes y contradictorios, llaman hallazgos de la razón a los que son extravíos de ella, racional conocimiento de la Divinidad a lo que es una manifiesta corrupción de aquel instinto, un tiempo puro, ya hoy oscurecido y rodeado de incertidumbre, que inspira en el hombre las primitivas ideas de religión.⁴⁴

It is quite clear that throughout the Oración apologética that Forner's criticism is directed toward the encyclopedistes--men whose work was filled with pseudo-intellectual conjecture based on tenuous non-philosophical principles--and not reason:

Infelizmente hemos nacido en una edad que, dándose a sí misma el magnífico título de filosófica, apenas conoce la rectitud en los modos de pensar y juzgar. Vivimos en el siglo de los oráculos. La audaz y vana verbosidad de una tropa de sofistas ultramontanos, que han introducido el nuevo y cómodo arte de hablar de todo por su capricho, de tal suerte ha ganado la inclinación del servil rebaño de los escritores comunes, que apenas se ven ya sino infelices remedadores de aquella despótica resolución con que poco doctos en lo íntimo de las ciencias hablaron de todas antojadizamente los Rousseaus, los Voltaires y los Helvicios.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Juan Pablo Forner, "Oración apologética por la España y su mérito literario," La polémica de la ciencia española, Ernesto and Enrique García Camarero, eds., (Madrid: Editorial Alianza, 1970), p. 101.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 87.

This reactionary and almost xenophobic point of view was praised by Menéndez Pelayo in his Historia de las ideas estéticas. The Spanish critic sees Forner as the perfect antithesis of the enlightened man:

Forner fue, como filósofo, el adversario más acérrimo de las ideas del siglo XVIII, que él no se harta de llamar siglo de ensayos, siglo de diccionarios, siglo de diarios, siglo de impiedad, siglo hablador, siglo charlatán, siglo ostentador; en vez de los pomposos títulos de "siglo de la razón, siglo de las luces y siglo de la filosofía" con que le decoraban sus más entusiastas hijos.⁴⁶

Forner, the personification of traditional thinking, must be considered an anachronism in the Siglo de las luces:

Es un gladiador literario de otros tiempos, extraviado en una sociedad de petimetres y de abates; un lógico de las antiguas aulas, recio de voz, de pulmones y de brazo, intemperante y procaz, propenso a abusar de su fuerza, como quien tiene excesiva confianza en ella, y capaz de defender de sol a sol tesis y conclusiones públicas contra todo el que se le ponga delante.⁴⁷

There can be no doubt that "en Forner se encarnó la

⁴⁶Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de las ideas estéticas en España, vol. III, (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1962), p. 331.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 331.

reacción más inteligente y más violenta contra el enciclopedismo."⁴⁸ However, this point of view often led Forner to rather extreme ideas concerning not only reason, but knowledge itself. In the third of his philosophical discourses subtitled "Corrupción del hombre," the poet, initially at least, places his trust and hope in reason, and by extension, the philosopher whose role Forner limits to that of a guide to mankind:

¡Oh vosotros, espíritus agudos,
De atinada razón y juicio entero,
Profetas enviados a la tierra
Para enseñarla y reformarla en todo!
Vuestro iniciado soy, catequizadme.
He aquí ya desechados los despojos
De mi primera educación: al templo
De la razón me acojo, suspendiendo,
Con voto a la verdad, en su columnas
Sentencias y opiniones adquiridas
En el falso comercio de los hombres.⁴⁹

This confidence in reason soon passes when Forner realizes that man is inclined to vice and that reason (now referred to as "miserable razón"⁵⁰) is helpless in man's struggle for virtue. He criticizes Newton, Descartes and indeed all knowledge

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 332.

⁴⁹Juan Pablo Forner, "Discurso III," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 362.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 362.

which leads us to stray from the Divine Will:

¡Execrable saber, horrible ciencia,
Que ella por sí la corrupción humana,
Que pretende salvar, muestra y descubre!⁵¹

According to Forner, reason too must submit to God and it is only through God and religion that man's reason can function:

Dios pide un culto; y la razón, dudosa,
Si el mismo Dios no le revela, nunca
Sabrá por sí cuál le será más grato.
Integro el hombre, sin tropiezo o áuda
Conocía su Dios y sus deberes.
Pues fuera entonces una sobre el pueblo
La religión, por la razón dictada:
Arguye de esto que, corrupto el hombre,
La religión también debe ser una,
Y que, impotente la razón, Dios solo
Puede dictar lo que ella ya no dicta.⁵²

Throughout the poem, Forner subjugates reason, and indeed man's entire existence, to the will of God.

Yo debo el ser a otro poder, y debo
Sujetarme a las leyes que convienen
Al orden que me dio la excelsa mano.⁵³

Thus while recognizing the importance of reason, he also underscores the superiority of God's divine order. Reason--unlike God--can err since man is not infallible, and therefore reason must ultimately direct itself

⁵¹Ibid., p. 365.

⁵²Ibid., p. 366.

⁵³Ibid., p. 362.

(and be subservient) to some higher form of knowledge, one which will enable man to search for "la verdad entre tinieblas."⁵⁴

While in the first four discourses Forner attempts to direct reason toward a higher order--namely God--the fifth and last of his Discursos Filosóficos is a bitter attack upon the concept itself and the philosopher's systematic approach to knowledge. In this almost lyrical poem--praised for its style by Sempere y Guarinos⁵⁵--reason has been reduced to a vacuous word, an abstraction devoid of all transcendency:

¿Qué hallarás en el hombre,
Si hombre se llama el racional? El nombre
No ya la esencia humana
Consiste en la razón.⁵⁶

In the footnotes to the poem, which Forner himself had written, he blames reason for alienating man from virtue and leading him to vice: "La razón, no sólo asiente a los vicios, sino que hace pasar por virtudes los más perjudiciales."⁵⁷ Besides criticizing reason, he scathingly censures the sophist: "En ninguna cosa se conoce más corrupción

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 363.

⁵⁵Juan Sempere y Guarinos, Ensayo de una biblioteca española de los mejores escritores del reinado de Carlos III, vol. III, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1969), p. 93.

⁵⁶Juan Pablo Forner, "Discurso V," op. cit., p. 370.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 370n.

y ridiculez de la razón no bien dirigida que en los sistemas de los sofistas."⁵⁸ It is this approach to knowledge which is the target for Forner's most pointed and detailed scrutiny:

Y en fin, ¿qué excelsos bienes nos promete
La parlera doctrina
Del jactancioso sabio? Aquí declina
La virtud en mil pechos, generosos
Quizá si, menos simples, despreciarán
Discursos engañosos.
Allí brutales al vivir preparan
Desusados caminos,
Por vivir en su patria peregrinos.
Autorizada la razón viciosa,
Oráculo servil de las pasiones,
Todo lo emprende y osa.

.
. . . Mas permite,
Permite a su poder la gran reforma:
Encomienda a un sofista el universo;
Tú le verás en todo más perverso.⁵⁹

As strongly as Forner felt against man's mismanagement and corruption of reason, he was not alone. Among the followers of this "anti-rational" ideology is the Sevillian poet Alberto Lista (1775-1848). One of the most famous and most respected poets of his day--Larra has been quoted as saying "Discípula suya

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 371n.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 371.

es casi toda la juventud del día."⁶⁰ Lista was even more vociferous than Forner in his distrust of reason. In a sonnet entitled "La razón inútil," he considers reason as totally helpless against the passions and frivolities of youth; it is only when we are too old and love no longer excites the heart that we begin to rationalize, but by then it is useless:

Así va; los humanos corazones
Sufren en la verdad y en el engaño;
Y sin gozar de sí ni un solo día,
Venden la juventud a las pasiones,
La edad madura al triste desengaño,
Y la vejez a la razón tardía.⁶¹

Though his sonnets are filled with philosophical conjecture, the essence of Lista's thought is contained in his twenty-two Poesías filosóficas. A brief, panoramic review of a cross-section of titles from this collection indicate Lista's "enlightened" interest in society: "La beneficencia," "La bondad es natural al hombre," "La amistad," "A la sabiduría." All of these poems reflect the tópicos of the Ilustración. However, although he presents a rather philosophical view of the human condition within a broad spectrum of themes, nowhere does Lista offer reason as a valid or practical

⁶⁰Mariano José Larra, "Ateneo científico y literario de Madrid," Artículos completos, Melchor de Almagro San Martín, ed., (Madrid: Aguilar, 1961), p. 1442.

⁶¹Alberto Lista, "La razón inútil," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 317.

solution to the ills of society. It is indeed ironic that in a literary and philosophical period commonly judged as rational, in a grouping of twenty-two philosophically oriented poems not one composition has as its central or even peripheral theme, reason.⁶²

* * * * *

If a rational approach to understanding the universe was not acceptable to certain writers, sentimentality was often recognized as a viable alternative. In France, for example, reason and sentiment were considered as polarized ideologies: on the one hand the feeling man, on the other, the thinking, rational intellectual. The moralists, of course, preferred the former ideology:

Si les passions étaient considérées comme légitimes en soi et nécessaires, si nulle vie morale ne semblait possible sans elles, c'est que les moralistes de la nouvelle génération préféraient aux évidences rationnelles et aux méditations de la conscience réfléchie les mouvements spontanés de notre nature. A la raison, ils préféraient le sentiment.⁶³

Adam insists that "les maximes de la raison ont la

⁶² These Poesías filosóficas, extremely important in understanding the poetry of the Spanish Enlightenment, will be studied in Chapters Three and Four.

⁶³ Antoine Adam, Le mouvement philosophique dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, (Paris: Société D'Enseignement Supérieur, 1967), p. 97.

prétention d'être des vérités générales, et que le sentiment parle à chacun de nous un langage qui ne s'adresse qu'à nous."⁶⁴ In Spain, however, this was not necessarily the case. As we had seen earlier, Meléndez Valdés' Poesías filosóficas attempted to find a rational answer to epistemological questions. If man wanted to know, reason was indeed an indispensable tool. Yet in other poems which we shall analyze, sentiment is seen as a fundamental instrument in the acquisition of knowledge since man comes into closer contact with society through universal feelings. This interaction brings about a deeper communication and understanding between men. Thus as we shall see in Meléndez Valdés' poetry--what we believe to be a microcosmic example of an even broader, macrocosmic trend--the thinking man and the feeling man coexisted.

The two approaches to knowledge--the rational and the sentimental--often reflect two literary esthetics which coexisted during the second half of the eighteenth century: namely, neoclassicism and pre-Romanticism. These two movements, according to Arce Fernández, must not be considered antagonistic and should be studied accordingly; not as opposites but rather as two parallel trends which coincided during the Enlightenment:

El neoclasicismo, es decir, la culminación

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 98.

de toda la tendencia clasicista y racionalista que ha caracterizado la centuria coincide en su aparición con el auge prerromántico.⁶⁵

* * * * *

Though sentimentality has always existed in Spanish poetry from the early jarchas to the pastoral églogas of Garcilaso, feeling in poetry was extremely important to the poet of the eighteenth century. The sentimental man--unlike his "rational" counterpart--is more sensitive to his environment and he empathizes more with the plight of his fellow man. He finds happiness in his emotional involvement with the human condition.

One of the chief exponents of this "sentimental" poetry is Meléndez Valdés. In his Odas one perceives a particular delight in the most seemingly (at least to the "rational" man) nonessential occurrences. Poems such as "Del caer de las hojas," "La Tortolilla," and "A las abejas," clearly illustrate his interest in the quotidian.⁶⁶

Thus Batilo's involvement with mankind is often on an emotional rather than philosophical level. His concern and even fascination with almost trivial

⁶⁵Joaquín Arce Fernández, "Rococó, neoclasicismo y prerromanticismo en la poesía española del siglo XVIII," El padre Feijóo y su siglo: Cuadernos de la cátedra Feijóo, no. 18, vol. II, p. 472.

⁶⁶Juan Meléndez Valdés, op. cit., pp. 98-100.

occurrences is depicted with profound feeling and sentiment. Even the coming of spring is cause for jubilation:

La blanda primavera
Derramando aparece
Sus tesoros y galas
Por prados y vergeles.

Despejado el cielo
De nubes inclementes,
Con luz cándida y pura
Ríe a la tierra alegre.

El alba de azucenas
Y de rosas las sienas
Se presenta ceñidas,
Sin que el cierzo las hiele.

* * *

Ea, pues a las copas
Y en grato banquete
Celebremos la vuelta
Del abril floreciente.⁶⁷

In his Odas anacreónticas, Meléndez Valdés, besides the conventional themes of "wine, women and song", exhibits a certain mistrust of serious, philosophical indagation. He states quite clearly, in a poem entitled "De las ciencias", his doubts concerning science and his belief that the philosopher is incapable of finding true happiness:

Apliquéme a las ciencias
Creyendo en sus verdades
Hallar fácil alivio

⁶⁷ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda V: De la primavera", op. cit., p. 94.

Para todos mis males.
¡Oh qué engaño tan necio!
¡Oh cuán caro me sale!
A mis versos me torno
Y a mis juegos y bailes
 Por cierto que la vida
Tiene pocos afanes
Para darle otros nuevos
Y añadirle pesares.
 Aténgome a mi Baco,
Que es risueño y afable;
Pues los sabios, Dorila,
Ser felices no saben.⁶⁸

In an extremely pessimistic poem entitled "El fanatismo," Meléndez Valdés depicts an almost apocalyptic view of the world--a view in which reason is helpless to confront the problems of an unreasonable world:

El monstruo [el fanatismo] cae, y llama
Al celo y al error, sopla en su seno,
Y a ambos al punto en bárbaros furores
Su torpe aliento inflama,
La tierra, ardiendo en ira,
Se agita a sus clamores,
Iluso el hombre, y de su peste lleno,
Guerra y sangre respira,
Y envuelta en una nube tenebrosa,
O no habla la razón o habla medrosa.⁶⁹

⁶⁸Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXVII: De las ciencias," op. cit., p. 99.

⁶⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXIII: El fanatismo," op. cit., p. 235.

Thus the search for knowledge through a rational, systematized approach is not a viable alternative for the poet. The sabio who expounds philosophical precepts is not, according to Batilo, the bearer of true happiness. Happiness is a feeling of universal sharing, echoing, as Colford notes, Young's concept of "I mourn for millions":⁷⁰

Hoy por doquier que miro
En eterna amargura
Hallo al mortal gemir; de mi ternura
Mi llanto nace, y por su mal suspiro;
Que un dulce sentimiento
Uniéndome a sus penas,
Me veda ya el mirarlas como ajenas
Y hombre, los males de los hombres siento.⁷¹

This universal suffering, an integral part of the human condition, also has its positive aspect in that it helps man to forget his own troubles:

El daño universal mi propia pena
Me hizo, luna, olvidar: miro a mi hermano,
Al hombre miro en infeliz cadena,
Y aunque grave mi mal, ya me es liviano.⁷²

Quite frequently, however, this suffering was viewed

⁷⁰ William E. Colford, Juan Meléndez Valdés: A Study in the Transition from Neo-Classicism to Romanticism in Spanish Poetry. (New York: Lancaster Press, 1942) p. 222.

⁷¹ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXXIII: Que no son flaqueza la ternura y el llanto", op. cit., p. 198.

⁷² Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Elegía IV: De las miserias humanas", op. cit., p. 252.

almost from the Petrarchean concept of "pleasurable pain." In his ode "Que no son flaqueza la ternura y el llanto," he describes his face "de lágrimas cubierto"⁷³ and makes reference to "el placer delicioso / de llorar".⁷⁴ Crying is an emotional catharsis, pleasurable in itself, which brings about a nirvana-like tranquility:

El llanto mismo, el llanto
En que en llagado pecho
Prorrumpe a veces, ¡oh dolor! deshecho,
Aun tiene su placer, y es un encanto.

El alma que oprimida
Siente ahogarse en su pena,
Con sus lágrimas dulces se serena,
Y entre ellas torna a recobrar la vida.⁷⁵

This sentimental poetry, based almost exclusively on a feeling for man, a commiseration predicated by common wants and needs, is often pessimistic in tone. If the "rational" poet with his exaggerated faith in science and man's perfectability proliferated the idea of a Golden Age exemplified by the reign of Carlos III, the "sentimental" poet, who often distrusted serious thinking, can be considered the prefiguration of the romantic man. Russell Sebold in an article, "El incesto, el suicidio y el primer romanticismo español," refutes the contention of those who consider Cadalso a "romantic

⁷³Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXXIII: Que no son flaqueza la ternura y el llanto," op. cit., p. 198.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 198.

⁷⁵Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXXII: Que la felicidad está en nosotros mismos," op. cit., p. 198.

anomaly," an interesting parenthesis in the basically neoclassical literature of the Enlightenment, and traces the feelings of melancholy, pessimism and despair to an entire generation of poets in which Dalmiro figures prominently not as a precursor but rather a one representative among many:

No se trata en la década de 1770 ni de uno ni de dos ni de varios casos aislados de un romanticismo accidental o fortuito, sino del principio de una corriente importante que se había de prolongar con bastante unidad por tres decenios. Los experimentos de 1773-1774⁷⁶ representan, en una palabra, el arranque del primer romanticismo español. Cadalso, por ende, no es, como se ha solido decir, un "romántico antes del romanticismo," sino sólo uno de los manifestantes y practicantes del primer romanticismo español.⁷⁷

Even Jovellanos, who in his well-known existles to his friends in Seville and Salamanca urges that poets abandon frivolous themes such as love for more substantial poetic material such as philosophy and knowledge, reflects this "romantic" orientation in several of his works. In "A Bermudo, sobre los vanos deseos y estudios de los hombres," Jovellanos realizes that man's reason is

⁷⁶These "experimentos" to which Sebald refers are works of a clearly romantic nature such as Cadalso's Noches lúgubres, his poem "A la muerte de Filis" and Jovellanos's El delincuente honrado.

⁷⁷Russell P. Sebald, "El incesto, el suicidio y el primer romanticismo español," Hispanic Review, 41 (1973), p. 683.

powerless to control his "vanos deseos":

...¿Quieres como el vulgo idiota,
de la felicidad y la fortuna
los nombres confundir, o por los vanos
bienes y gustos con que astuta brinda
el verdadero bien medir? ¡Oh engaño
de la humana razón! Di, ¿qué promete
digno de un ser, que a tan excelsa dicha
destinado nació? Pesa sus dones
de tu razón en la balanza, y mira
cuánta es su liviandad! ⁷⁸

Man's attempt to know mankind is frustrated through the lack of effectiveness of his reason; it is simply inadequate:

...¿sin más lumbre
que su razón, un átomo podría
lo incomprendible comprender? ¿Linderos
en lo inmenso encontrar? ¿Y en lo infinito
principio, medio o fin? ¡Oh Ser eterno!
¿Has dado al hombre parte en sus consejos?
¿O en el santuario, a su razón cerrado,
le admites ya? ⁷⁹

In his well known poem "A Clori" written, according to Caso González in 1768, the sentimental, romantic overtones are quite apparent. Feeling, passion, pain and unrequited love are integral themes of this sonnet:

Sentir de una pasión viva y ardiente
todo el afán, zozobra y agonía;
vivir sin premio un día y otro día;

⁷⁸Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Poesías. José Caso González, ed. (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1961). p. 319

⁷⁹Ibid., p.326.

dudar, sufrir, llorar eternamente;

Amar a quien no ama, a quien no siente
a quien no corresponde ni desvía.⁸⁰

This angst, very similar in tone to the romantic despair of the nineteenth century, is reinforced throughout his sonnets. He refers to his "enfermo corazón"⁸¹ and his state of mind can only be compared to the mal du siècle of the next generation of poets:

¿Cuál, Clori, de los dos, pues la inclemencia
del mal sentimos ambos de consuno,
cuál, dime, sufrirá mayor martirio:
tú, en quien se ceba la cruel dolencia,
o yo, que todo el mal siento importuno
de tu misma dolencia y mi delirio?⁸²

And yet what Jovellanos decries in his poem to Belisa is not the anguish and torments of love but rather his inability to perceive his lover's deception:

No lloro tus rigores,
ni siento haber perdido
correspondencias falsas,
favores fementidos;
de mi ceguera sólo
y mis engaños gimo.⁸³

Jovellanos, having bitterly learned through experience the desengaños de la vida, is, if not happy, at least content. He has achieved an inner tranquility

⁸⁰Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Soneto primero: A Clori," op. cit., p. 99.

⁸¹Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Soneto segundo: A Clori," op. cit., p. 100.

⁸²Ibid., p. 100.

⁸³Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Idilio primero: Anfriso a Belisa," op. cit., p. 103.

through the "knowledge" he has acquired by a sentimental indulgence in the world around him. He no longer feels emotionally vulnerable to Belisa:

Ya. . .

Belisa, estoy contento;
ya está mi rostro alegre,
mis ojos ya están secos.

Aquel cuitado Anfriso,
que en el pasado tiempo
en pos de tus encantos
corría sin sosiego;
aquél que en tu semblante
buscaba iluso y necio
delicias engañosas,
mentidos pasatiempos
aquél que en tus dos ojos
hallaba dos luceros,
mil perlas en tu boca,
mil flores en tu seno;
ya sin amor, sin susto,
sin ansias ni deseos,
lejos de ti o contigo
tranquilo está y sereno.⁸⁴

A fundamental difference can be discerned in this poem between reason and sentiment. Whereas the eighteenth century concept of reason, a legacy perhaps of Cartesian thought insists "that if we can discover the basic, rational motive for human behavior, the explanation of

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 104

individual psychology is a mere matter of deduction"⁸⁵, the sentimental man tends to generalize his feelings based on what he has learned on a very limited and intimate level or as previously noted: "le sentiment parle à chacun de nous un langage qui ne s'adresse qu'à nous."⁸⁶ Thus what Jovellanos has learned by his relationship with Clori better prepares him at least emotionally for others. His despair and melancholia have disappeared. Indeed, he contemplates "otros bellos ojos":

Sus [Jovellanos] ojos deslumbrados,
que antes el dios pequeño
cerró con tierna mano
del mundo a los objetos,
dejándolos ¡oh cruda!
para ti sola abiertos,
hoy llenos de alegría,
vivaces y traviosos,
siguen el dulce hechizo
de mil semblantes bellos,
y de otros bellos ojos
beben el dulce incendio:
que ni los turba el llanto,
ni ofuscan los desvelos.⁸⁷

Thus sentiment, by bringing the poet into closer

⁸⁵Frederick C. Green, Literary Ideas in the 18th Century France and England, (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1966), p. 193.

⁸⁶Antoine Adam, op. cit., p. 98.

⁸⁷Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, op. cit., p. 104.

contact with others, also helps him to better understand people. This knowledge, propagated through personal experience, is a direct source of happiness for Jovellanos as seen in the above poem.

In another sonnet, "A Enarda," the poet restates this concept. Declaring Enarda his first love, he proceeds to describe her inconstancy:

Tu primer amor, y tú, inconstante,
de tu fee me ofreciste el don mentido,
don que después la ausencia y el olvido
volvieron a llevarse en un instante.

Medió largo intervalo, volví a verte,
volviste tú a jurarme amor eterno;
mas diste luego a otro tu albedrío;
a otro que, ausente yo, fingió quererte.⁸⁸

Though the poet obviously laments his lover's infidelity, Jovellanos ends the poem by affirming what he has learned as a result of this engaño: "¡Mal haya si otra vez de ti me fío!"⁸⁹

Again what is important is that Jovellanos will no longer succumb to this type of inconstancy. The feeling man has learned (albeit through a negative experience) not through reason, not through abstract thinking, but rather by expressing his sentiment, his love for another. He appears to affirm this knowledge by this

⁸⁸Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Soneto sexto: A Enarda," ob. cit., pp. 192-193.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 193.

last line of the sonnet which is clearly didactic in tone and meaning.

* * * * *

Alongside this pre-Romantic effusion of sentimentality, there existed another type of sentimental poetry, more serious in tone, more socially oriented, a humanitarismo sentimental as José Luis Cano⁹⁰ describes it, derived mainly, though not exclusively, from the works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.⁹¹ Perhaps the chief exponent of this type of poetry is the madrileño Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos seen especially in "su amor a las reformas, y su deseo de que la sociedad se rigiese por la igualdad social y por la fraternidad entre los hombres."⁹² In a poem written in 1795 to commemorate the Treaty of Basilea⁹³ brought about by Godoy and which later gave him the title of "Príncipe de la Paz," Cienfuegos

⁹⁰José Luis Cano, "Introducción" to Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, Poesías, (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), p. 37.

⁹¹Jefferson Rea Spell, Rousseau in the Spanish World Before 1833, (New York: Gordian Press, 1969), pp. 13-37.

⁹²José Luis Cano, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

⁹³José Luis Cano notes that the eagerly awaited peace between France and Spain initiated a plethora of poems written to commemorate the final signing of the treaty on July 22, 1795: "La Paz de Basilea. . . provocó una verdadera oleada de Odas a la Paz en los periódicos españoles. Raro fue el poeta que no rindió tributo en aquella ocasión al sentimiento pacifista dominante: Meléndez, el conde de Noroña, Forner, Francisco Gregorio de Salas y otros muchos. El tema llegó a convertirse en ejercicio obligado de concursos." Ibid., p. 99n.

implores the shepherd to return to his now peaceful land; brotherhood now reigns supreme and all mankind at last is united in one family:

¿Do estáis, pastores, que el silencio amado
de los montes dejasteis al ardiente
estruendo del cañón? Volved tranquilos
a sus antiguos reinos el ganado;
señoread las selvas do inocente
a las plácidas sombras de los tilos
el amor sus misterios os confía.
Desechad el temor: del alto cielo,
yo lo vi, yo lo vi, que en raudo vuelo
alma paz descendía
de espigas coronada,
de genios y de musas rodeada.
Saludadla, cantad, hijos de Apolo.
¡Salve, decidla, madre bienhechora
del linaje mortal, cándida hermana
de la santa virtud! ¡De polo a polo
rija un día tu mano vencedora!
¡Salve mil veces, y a la gente humana
no abandones jamás! ¡Pueda contigo
comenzar el imperio afortunado
de la fraternidad, en que el malvado
es el solo enemigo,
y la tierra piadosa
una sola familia virtuosa!⁹⁴

This fraternity is also seen in the love shared
between two friends:⁹⁵

⁹⁴Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, Poesías, pp. 102-3.

⁹⁵For a further study of the theme of friendship in Cienfuegos' poetry see Chapter 4.

¡Ay, perezca, perezca, dulce amigo,
quien resiste al amor! Sin él ¿qué fuera
cuanto siente, cuánto es? Natura entera
del caos en el tórulo yacía
cuando sonó una voz, que, "amor," decía,
"amor; yo soy unión, la unión es vida,
la desunión es caos, muerte, nada;
sea, sea la unión."⁹⁶

For the pre-Romantic Cienfuegos, the idea of mutability was a very real one. Friendship, a sentimental, platonic love afforded him the security, the fijeza which he frantically sought. It is universal brotherhood which he extols and it is this feeling, so reminiscent of Rousseau, which he envisions for all:

. . .en el arado
nació la sociedad. Allí, abrazado
del hombre el hombre, por la vez primera
toda la humanidad sintió en su pecho,
toda, toda su esencia, su alma entera,
hombre fue el hombre. Al sexual cariño
el brutal apetito rindió el cetro,
y dio principio a la piedad paterna,
al afecto filial, a la fraterna
caridad, y al deseo generoso
de amarse amondo. El personal odioso
en interés común ya convertido
era un padre del joven cada anciano,
el joven de los jóvenes hermano;
por dondequiera el inocente niño
huérfano hallaba maternal cariño,

⁹⁶Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "A un amigo que dudaba de mi amistad porque había tardado en contestarle," op. cit., pp. 123-124.

y era un amigo cada semejante.⁹⁷

In the midst of any personal sorrow it is this type of universal love which comforts the poet. It is indeed this sentimental feeling for mankind which brings happiness:

. . . ¡oh amigos bienhechores!
¡Oh Nicasio feliz! ¡eternamente
me hará vuestro cariño venturoso!
que la pobreza, el deshonor odioso,
cruel dolor, ignominiosa muerte
me acometan; en medio del tormento
bendeciré con lágrimas mi suerte;
soy feliz, soy feliz, diré contento,
amé, me amaron, me amarán por siempre.⁹⁸

In another well-known poem, "En alabanza de un carpintero llamado Alfonso," which Cano considers "el poema más revolucionario de Cienfuegos,"⁹⁹ the "humanitarianismo sentimental" is again apparent in his virulent condemnation of the nobility:

Nobles magnates, que la humana esencia
osasteis despreciar por un dorado
yugo servil que ennobleció un Tiberio,
mi lira desoid. Vuestra ascendencia
generación del crimen laureado,
vuestro pomposo funeral imperio,
vuestro honor arrogante,

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 125-126.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 126-127.

⁹⁹ José Luis Cano, op. cit., p. 160n.

yo los destesto, iniquidad los cante.¹⁰⁰

The arrogance of the Spanish nobleman is captured in his disdain for the lower classes:

. . . la nobleza,
del ocioso poder la frente alzando,
dijo al pobre: soy más; a los sudores
el cielo te crió: tú en la pobreza,
yo en rico poderío,
tu destino es servir, mandar el mío.¹⁰¹

His bitter criticism of the upper classes is without equal in eighteenth century Spanish poetry.

¡Nobles serán los locos pensamientos
de un ser que innatural huella inferiores
a sus hermanos, y que audaz procura
en sobrehumana esfera
divinizar su corrupción grosera?¹⁰²

.
Disipad, destruid, oh colosales
monstruos de la fortuna las riquezas
en la perversidad y torpe olvido
de la santa razón: criad, brutales
en nueva iniquidad, nuevas grandezas
y nueva destrucción; y el duro oído
a la piedad negando,
que Alfonso expire, en hambre desmayando.

¿Esto es ser noble? vuestro honor sangriento
en la muerte de Alfonso: ¡ay, ay, que expira!
Pesadumbres huid; cesad siquiera

¹⁰⁰Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "En alabanza de un carpintero llamado Alfonso," op. cit., pp. 160-161.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 161.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 162.

de atormentar su postrimer aliento.¹⁰³

His commiseration with the human condition, his almost total identification with the plight of the poor-- in this case, Alfonso, the carpenter--exemplifies the sincere humanitarian feelings nurtured by Cienfuegos for his fellow man. Indeed, it is the virtuous life of this humble carpenter which he chooses to emulate:

¡Oh sepulcro que guardas el reposo
de tan justo mortal! hasta la muerte
has de ser mi lección. Tú la inocencia
me enseñarás: lo honesto y virtuoso
leeré en tu oscuridad: harás que fuerte
sepa amar el afán y la indigencia;
y que allí atrincherado
huelle el poder del crimen entronado.¹⁰⁴

* * * * *

Manuel José Quintana, himself a disciple of Cienfuegos (he dedicated an 1813 edition of his poetry to him¹⁰⁵ along with another poem written in 1797¹⁰⁶), shared the latter's humanitarian viewpoints on freedom and brotherly love. His sentimentality is seen in his well-known "A una negrita protegida por la duquesa de Alba," which commemorates the duchesses' recent

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 166.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 167-168.

¹⁰⁵See "Prólogo a Cienfuegos en las poesías de 1813," Manuel José Quintana, Poesías completas, Alberto Derozier, ed., (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), p. 334.

¹⁰⁶See "A Cienfuegos," Quintana, op. cit., p. 187.

adoption of a black orphan. This action among the socially enlightened minds of the Ilustración became a cause célèbre, and even Goya contributed a drawing commemorating the event entitled "La Duquesa de Alba con la negrita María de la Luz en brazos".¹⁰⁷ Quintana's sentimental involvement is poignantly reflected in the orphan's declaration of freedom and her tenderness toward the duchess:

Esclava fui; ya soy libre;
la mano que me sustenta
miró con horror mi ultraje
y quebrantó mis cadenas;
la misma que tantas almas
esclavizó a su la duquesa/belleza
y cuyos ojos, si miran
no hay corazón que no venzan.
Patria, familia y cariños
me robó la suerte adversa;
cariños, familia y patria
todo lo he encontrado en ella.
Mira el maternal esmero
con que ampara mi flaqueza,
y la incansable ternura
con que mi ventura anhela.
Cuando risueña me llama,
cuando consigo me lleva,
cuando en su falda me halaga,
cuando amorosa me besa,
tal hay que trocara entonces
por mi humildad su soberbia,

¹⁰⁷ For a reproduction of this work, see Manuel José Quintana, op. cit., p. 241a

y por mi atezada sombra
sus bellos colores diera.¹⁰⁸

The love between the two--duchess and former slave--
exemplifies the social equality envisioned by Rousseau
and propogated in Spain in the poems of Meléndez Valdés,
Cienfuegos and Quintana. Liberty, fraternity and
equality, the ideals of the "sentimental" man, are
indeed the main themes of Quintana's poetry. Even his
well known poem "A la invención de la imprenta" is
merely a pretext for his exaltation of man's freedom;
Guttenberg's invention, according to the poet, seems
to liberate man from geographical boundaries:

..!EL HOMBRE ES LIBRE"

Y esta sagrada aclamación saliendo,
no en los estrechos límites hundida
se vio de una región: el eco grande
que inventó GUTTENBERG la alza en sus alas;
y en ellas conducida
se mira en un momento
salvar los montes, recorrer los mares,
ocupar la extensión del vago viento;
y sin que el trono o su furor la asombre,
por todas partes el valiente grito
sonar de la razón: "LIBRE ES EL HOMBRE." ¹⁰⁹

Moreover, the inventing of the printing press, according
to Quintana, encouraged universal communication which

¹⁰⁸ Manuel José Quintana, "A una negrita protegida
por la Duquesa de Alba", op. cit., pp. 240-241.

¹⁰⁹ Manuel José Quintana, "A la invención de la
imprenta", op. cit., pp. 265-266.

in turn fostered a new concept of equality:

Los hombres todos su igualdad sintieron,
y a recobrarla las valientes manos
al fin con fuerza indómita movieron.
No hay ya, ¡qué gloria!, esclavos ni tiranos;
que amor y paz el universo llenan,
amor y paz por dondequier respiran,
amor y paz sus ámbitos resuena.¹¹⁰

Although in this poem, man's emotional and social involvement with mankind is a direct source of happiness for the poet, sentimentality can also lead to despair. If the rational approach to knowledge is often frustrated by abstract thought and useless syllogisms, the knowledge that the sentimental poet encounters in his commitment to his fellow man makes him overly sensitive to the human condition:

¡Oh qué don tan funesto
Es, Fabio mío, un corazón sensible,
Cual débil muro puesto
De un mar airado al ímpetu terrible...¹¹¹

In the same way that man's happiness can be shared, sorrow too most arouse the more "sympathetic" poet:

Cuantos objetos mira,
Tantos le llevan desvelado el pecho,
Y por todos suspira

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 266.

¹¹¹ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXXI: A un amigo don Manuel María Cambonero, por su sensibilidad y su amor a la patria", op. cit., p. 197.

Y anhela y tiembla, en lágrimas deshecho.¹¹²

Thus neither sentimental nor rational approaches to knowledge bring man happiness:

Amé, y hallé dolor; volví el deseo
A las ciencias, creyendo que serían
Al alma enferma saludable empleo;
Las ciencias me burlaron, me ofrecían
Remedios que nos llagas irritaban,
Y a la hiérgalga razón grillos ponían.¹¹³

The moderation (justo medio) often desired by the poet of the Enlightenment is unattainable; the heart (sentiment) and the mind (reason) are indeed polarized:

Nadie se rige por razón, ni sabe
Qué codicia, qué teme, qué desea,
Cuál cosa vitupere y cuál alabe.
Así el hombre infelice devanea,
Sin que jamás el justo medio acierte;
Y el mal de todos lados le rodea,
Hasta que da por término en la muerte.¹¹⁴

The only alternative is for man to perfect his reason and his feelings--a "perfection" attainable perhaps through the pursuit of virtue in harmony with nature:

¿Saber pretendes? Franca está la senda:
perfecciona tu ser y serás sabio;
ilustra tu razón, para que se alce

¹¹²Ibid., p. 197.

¹¹³Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Elegía III: De mi vida," op. cit., p. 251.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 251.

a la verdad eterna y purifica
tu corazón, para que la ame y siga.¹¹⁵
The poet now directs himself to this goal...

¹¹⁵ Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola X: A Bermudo sobre los vanos deseos y estudios de los hombres", op. cit., p. 326.

CHAPTER III: HAPPINESS AND VIRTUE

From time immemorial, philosophers and poets have attempted to show how happiness derives from or is coexistent with virtue, but the definition of virtue has proved the great stumbling-block. What are its most likely roots? Does it come from knowledge of self, or scientific knowledge, self-abnegation, the bending of the personal will to the Divine Will? Is it the forgetfulness of the self in asceticism or forgetfulness of self in devotion to others? Is it retreat from worldly distractions or commitment to solving the world's problems? One of the most widely accepted beliefs is that close association with nature represents a defense of the best instincts, or a force that cleanses away the worst.

To present a single or even an approximate definition of virtue would be presumptuous since virtue is many things to many people and perhaps in this idea lies its main attraction. Given the multiplicity of attitudes it is perhaps best to interpret within the context of a given period,

to analyze which of its constants dominate and which recede.

In the Spanish poetry of the Middle Ages, certain themes deeply affected the concept of virtue. Throughout the "Coplas por la muerte de su padre," Jorge Manrique expounds upon the idea of tempus fugit:

Pues si vemos lo presente
cómo en un punto se es ido
y acabado,
si juzgamos sabiamente,
daremos lo no venido
por pasado.

No se engañe nadie, no,
pensando que ha de durar
lo que espera
mas que duró lo que vio,
pues que todo ha de pasar
por tal manera.¹

The fact that life passes so fleetingly only underscores its lack of importance:

Ved de cuán poco valor
son las cosas tras que andamos
y corremos,
que, en este mundo traidor,
aun primero que muramos
las perdemos.²

Man, through his awareness of the temporality of life, directs himself to more eternal horizons;

¹Jorge Manrique, "Coplas por la muerte de su padre," Obra completa, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1966), pp. 115-116.

²Ibid., p. 118.

his vision, in a sense, becomes more cosmic, even spiritual, and decidedly less materialistic:

pues se va la vida apriciosa
como sueño;
y los deleites de acá
son, en que nos deleitamos,
temporales,
y los tormentos de allá,
que por ellos esperamos,
eternales.³

It is this polarization between man's transitory existence on earth and his awareness of the eternal world to follow which characterizes the medieval mentality: "In the Middle Ages, the choice lay, in principle, only between God and the world, between contempt or eager acceptance, at the peril of one's soul, of all that makes up the beauty and the charm of earthly life."⁴ This conflict can be seen in Manrique's poem in the dialogue between Death and the poet's father. Death rejects materialism as the prime source of sin and offers man two alternatives in his search for eternal happiness.

El vivir que es perdurable
no se gana con estados
mundanales,
ni con vida delectable
donde moran los pecados

³Ibid., p. 120.

⁴J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, (New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1954), p. 40.

infernales;

mas los buenos religiosos
gánanlo con oraciones
y con lloros;
los caballeros famosos,
con trabajos y aflicciones
contra moros.⁵

Thus the will of God is made known to the poet's father through the personification of death. Ironically, his eternal reward is attained through killing:

Y pues vos, claro varón,
tanta sangre derranasteis
de paganos,
esperad el galardón
que en este mundo ganasteis
por las manos;
y con esta confianza,
y con la fe tan entera
que tenéis,
partid con buena esperanza,
que esta otra vida tercera
ganaréis.⁶

Manrique's father attains happiness through compliance with the Divine Will:

No tengamos tiempo ya
en esta vida mezquina
por tal modo,
que mi voluntad está
conforme con la divina.

⁵Jorge Manrique, op. cit., p. 133.

⁶Ibid., pp. 133-134.

para todo;

y consiento en mi morir
con voluntad placentera,
clara y pura,
que querer hombre vivir
cuando Dios quiere que muera,
es locura.⁷

Thus man is happy and indeed rewarded by God,
when his will is sublimated to please his Creator.
The materialistic world is of no value since the happiness derived from external goods is short lived:

. . .in the fifteenth century, as
in the epoch of romanticism, it was, so
to say, bad form to praise the world and
life openly. It was fashionable to see
only its suffering and misery, to discover
everywhere signs of decadence and
of the near end--in short, to condemn the
times or to despise them.⁸

This view is echoed in another of Manrique's poem
in which man's existence on earth is pessimistically
portrayed:

Es tu comienzo lloroso,
tu salida siempre amarga
y nunca buena,
lo de en medio trabajoso,
y a quien das vida más larga
le das pena.

⁷Ibid., p. 134.

⁸J. Huizinga, op. cit., p. 31.

Así los bienes --auriando
y con sudor --se procuran
y los das;
los males vienen corriendo;
después de venidos, duran
mucho más.⁹

In "discovering," the pessimistic aspect of the human condition, the medieval man becomes cognizant of his foremost enemy--Fortune. The vicissitudes of destiny coupled with the awareness of his ephemeral existence, forces man to a constant struggle in which he attempts to "liberate" himself, through a series of choices which lead him to God from the omnipresent hand of Fate. Life becomes an ethical battlefield so to speak in which man's pursuit of virtue determines his ultimate victory or demise:

Desde aquí te desafío
a fuego, sangre y a hierro,
en esta guerra;
pues en tus bienes no fío,
no quiero esperar más yerro
de quien yerra:
que quien tantas veces miente,
aunque ya diga verdad,
no es de creer;
pues airado ni placiente,
tu gesto mi voluntad
no quiere ver.¹⁰

⁹Jorge Manrique, "¡Oh, mundo! Pues que nos matas...",
op. cit., pp. 136-137.

¹⁰Jorge Manrique, "A la fortuna," op. cit., p. 37.

The Renaissance poet, unlike his predecessor, considered virtue in more "peaceful" terms. The beatus ille motif, derivative of Horace's poetry, flourishes in an aura of idyllic, peaceful and harmonious country life. In his well-known Egloga primera, Garcilaso de la Vega depicts the typical locus amoenus as found in Spanish pastoral poetry of the Renaissance.

Corrientes aguas, puras, cristalinas;
árboles que os estáis mirando en ellas,
verde prado de fresca sombra lleno,
aves que aquí sembráis vuestras querellas,
hiedra que por los árboles caminas,
torciendo el paso por su verde seno.¹¹

This natural setting, however, is more than picturesque ornamentation for it is in close harmony with nature that man survives the deceptions of life. Nature often shares man's sorrow:

Con mi llorar las piedras enternecen
su natural dureza y la quebrantan;
los árboles parece que se inclinan;
las aves que me escuchan, cuando cantan,
con diferente voz se condolecen,
y mi morir cantando me adivinan.
Las fieras que reclinan
su cuerpo fatigado
dejan el sosegado
sueño por escuchar mi llanto triste.¹²

¹¹Garcilaso de la Vega, "Egloga primera," Poesía, Consuelo Burell Mata, ed., (Madrid: Anaya, 1971), p. 39.

¹²Ibid., p. 37.

This concept of nature as a refuge from the tribulations of man's existence is further reinforced if one considers the ascetic and mystical poetry of the sixteenth century. For Fray Luis de León, the tranquility of the bucolic world offers man an inner peace and happiness, a happiness brought about by a negation of materialism:

¡Qué descansada vida
la del que huye el mundanal ruido,
y sigue la escondida
senda, por donde han ido
los pocos sabios que en el mundo han sido!
Que no le enturbia el pecho
de los soberbios grandes el estado,
ni del dorado techo
se admira, fabricado
del sabio Moro, en jaspe sustentado.¹³

It is in this harmonious existence that the poet-- free from "mortal cuidado"¹⁴--contemplates man's condition and that which God has given to him. He learns to live with himself--an idea which we shall see reflected in the poetry of the eighteenth century--and indeed isolates himself from worldly temptations and sin: a truly virtuous and happy existence.

¡Oh monte! ¡Oh fuente! ¡Oh río!

¹³Fray Luis de León, "Oda I: Vida retirada," *Poesías*, Alejandro Díez Blanco, ed., (Valladolid: Minón, nd), p. 337.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 337.

¡Oh secreto seguro, deleitoso!
Roto casi el navío,
a vuestro almo reposo
huyo de aqueste mar tempestuoso.

Un no rompido sueño,
un día puro, alegre, libre quiero;
no quiero ver el ceño
vanamente severo
de a quien la sangre ensalza o el dinero.

Despiértente las aves
con su cantar sabroso, no aprendido;
no los cuidados graves
de que es siempre seguido
el que al ajeno arbitrio está atenido.

Vivir quiero contigo,
gozar quiero del bien que debo al cielo,
a solas, sin testigo,
libre de amor, de celo,
de odio, de esperanzas, de recelo.¹⁵

The idea of "vivir quiero conmigo" which, according to Fray Luis, is vital to man's existence, is conceptualized by San Juan de la Cruz. Whereas the locus amoenus affords the former a respite from the ruido mundanal; the latter prefers a total withdrawal from the "real" world. All of our "actions"--unlike the heroic and virtuous deeds of Jorge Manrique's father--must be realized in secret:

Mayor agrado tiene Dios en una suerte
de obras, por pequeñas que sean, hechas en

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 337-338.

secreto y retiro, sin deseo de que aparezcan a los hombres, que no millares de otras grandes emprendidas con la intención de que las vean los hombres.¹⁶

Whereas the medieval man considered his fame an intrinsic part of virtue--indeed an outward manifestation of it--San Juan believes in an ensimismamiento, a withdrawal into the self, a complete negation of the materialistic world:

Si deseas hallar la paz y consuelo de tu alma y servir a Dios de veras, no te contentes con eso que has dejado, porque por ventura te estás en lo que de nuevo andas tan impedido o más que antes, mas deja todas esas cosas que te quedan.¹⁷

According to San Juan this denial "es el total y la raíz de las virtudes."¹⁸

Yet we must not generalize this mystical conception of virtue. If San Juan preferred the isolation of a monastic cell, Santa Teresa chose a more active form of virtuous living. Although both believe in the total submission of man to the Divine Will--as Santa Teresa states in Las moradas: "Esta es la unión que

¹⁶San Juan de la Cruz, Obras escogidas, Ignacio B. Anzoátegui, ed., (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1964), p. 111.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 119.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 119.

toda mi vida ha deseado; ésta es la que pido siempre a Nuestro Señor,"¹⁹ The approach to virtuous living was fundamentally different. In the same way that San Ignacio Loyola speaks of man as a soldier of Christ, Santa Teresa compares the relationship of man to God to that of a King and his vassals in order to underscore the importance of his actions. "Entrad, entrad, hijas mías, en lo interior; pasa adelante con vuestras obrillas, que por ser cristianas debéis todo eso y mucho más, y os basta que seáis vasallas de Dios."²⁰ In her autobiography she criticizes those who believe that monastic life represents an escape from the temptations of the world. On the contrary, often the reverse is true; the solitariness of a convent frequently incubates sin:

¡Oh grandísimo mal! Grandísimo mal de religiosos (no digo ahora más mujeres que hombres), a donde no se guarda religión; a donde en un monasterio hay dos caminos de virtud y religión y falta de religión, y todos casi se andan por igual. . . . Y más cautela y disimulación ha de tener para hablar en la amistad que desea de tener con Dios, que en otras amistades y voluntades que el demonio ordena en los monasterios. Y no sé de que nos espantamos haya tantos males en la Iglesia;

¹⁹Santa Teresa de Jesús, Las moradas, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1964), p. 79.

²⁰Ibid., p. 37.

pues los que habían de ser los decaídos para que todos sacasen virtudes, tienen tan borrada la labor, que el espíritu de los Santos pasados dejaron en las religiones. Plegue a la divina Majestad ponga remedio en ello, como ve que es menester.²¹

Thus a withdrawal from the world does not necessarily offer man a more virtuous way of life. Santa Teresa relates an episode in which Christ himself had directed her to a more "active" life: "Esto me dijo el Señor un día: ¡Piensas, hija, que está el merecer en gozar? No está sino en obrar y en padecer y en amar. . . . Cree, hija, que a quien mi Padre más ama da mayores trabajos, y a estos responde el amor."²² These "trabajos" took the form of founding convents throughout Spain--indeed an arduous task in the sixteenth century. However, Santa Teresa is often filled with self-doubt, questioning the importance of action over contemplation; yet Christ reassures her:

Estando un día pensando, si tenían razón los que les parecía mal que yo saliese a fundar, y que estaría yo mejor empleándome siempre en oración, entendí: Mientras se vive no está la ganancia en procurarse más, sino en hacer mi voluntad.

²¹ Santa Teresa de Jesús, *Su vida*, (México, D. F.: Editorial Novaro-Mexico, 1957), pp. 51-52.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 372-373.

Parecióme a mí, que pues San Pablo dice del encerramiento de las mujeres, que me lo han dicho poco ha y aun antes lo había oído, que esto sería la voluntad de Dios, y díjome: Díles que no se sigan por sola una parte de la Escritura, que mire[n] otras. . .²³

In her instructions to her Carmelites, given to her by Christ in a mystical ecstasy, she reiterates the importance of an active life--a life in conformity with God's will:

En este gran recogimiento entendí de Nuestro Señor lo que ahora diré: que dijese a estos Padres descalzos de su parte, que procurasen guardar cuatro cosas, y que mientras las guardasen, siempre iría en más crecimiento esta religión, y cuando en ellas faltasen, entendiesen que iban menoscabando de su principio. La primera, que las cabezas estuviesen conformes; la segunda, que aunque tuviesen muchas casas, en cada una hubiese pocos frailes; la tercera, que tratasen poco con seglares, y esto para bien de sus almas; la cuarta, que enseñasen más con obras que con palabras.²⁴

Baroque poetry, imbued with the Post-Tridentine psychology, offers a rather bleak portrait of the

²³Ibid., pp. 379-380.

²⁴Ibid., p. 382.

human condition. Quevedo's Poemas metafísicos and his Poemas morales reflect this pessimism in his bitter condemnation of money, power, glory, fame and pride. Almost all aspects of life are censured since, as the rivers in the Manrique poem which "dan a la mar," so too, is man's existence but a brief and often meaningless "jornada."

Vivir es caminar breve jornada,
y muerte viva es, Lico, nuestra vida.²⁵

Unlike the mystics and ascetics of the sixteenth century who considered this life important insofar as man's action complied with God's will, Quevedo almost totally disregards the significance of this life:

Fue sueño ayer; ¡mañana será tierra!
Poco antes, nada; y poco después, ¡humo!²⁶

Indeed the thought of death dominates the mind of the poet and life passes with a velocity typical of Baroque poetry into the eternal abyss.

Ya no es ayer; mañana no ha llegado;
hoy pasa, y es, y fue, con movimiento
que a la muerte me lleva despeñado.²⁷

²⁵Francisco de Quevedo, "Descuido de divertido a quien la muerte llega impensada," Poesía original, José Manuel Blecua, ed., (Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1963), p. 11.

²⁶Francisco de Quevedo, "Significase la propia brevedad de la vida, sin pensar, y con padecer, salteada de la muerte," op. cit., p. 5.

²⁷Ibid., p. 5.

This point of view, one which offers little, if any hope for man, is not strictly in adherence to orthodoxy. Although as seen previously, both San Juan and Santa Teresa urged a withdrawal from the materialistic world while imploring man to search for a higher system of values whether within oneself (San Juan) or in a more active way of life (Santa Teresa). They nonetheless considered this life extremely important even if only as a means of man proving his gratitude to God through prayer and good works. Quevedo's hostility towards life, as Américo Castro notes, places him in disagreement with the teachings of the Church:

El ascético sabe que esta vida es un mero camino para Dios, y habla mal de ella en cuanto es preciso convencer al hombre de que su atractivo y apariencia son falaces; no es algo esencial y definitivo, sino mera contingencia, pendiente de la voluntad suprema. El ascético no aspira a que la vida sea de otra forma que como es; sus deficiencias provienen de permitir Dios que así sea, para poner a prueba la voluntad humana y su posibilidad de amor divino. El ascético siente desapego hacia la vida y la naturaleza, mas no la odia ni duda de su realidad. Quevedo hace ambas cosas, ninguna de las cuales está muy en armonía con una actitud religiosa clara y transparente.²⁸

²⁸Américo Castro, "Escepticismo y contradicción en Quevedo," Semblanzas y estudios españoles, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), p. 391.

Since the Baroque poet frequently manifested a deeply felt contempt for the world, the idea of a life based on virtue was often considered futile:

Todo cuanto el mundo alcanza
cosas tan frágiles son,
que su mayor posesión
es engañar la esperanza.²⁹

And yet despite the overwhelming pessimism reflected in the poetry of the seventeenth century, there remained one hope: God. In speaking of worldly pursuits, Lope reminds us that these are meaningless without Divine guidance:

Su delcote y su grandeza
todo es engaño sin vos,
porque quien no tiene a Dios,
no puede tener riqueza.

Vos me ayudaréis también,
que como el bien de vos viene,
sólo es dichoso el que tiene
de vuestras manos el bien.³⁰

The futility of this life and man's hope in God is also reflected in the Neo-Baroque poetry of the eighteenth century. The pessimism of the preceding century is often fanatically expressed; man searches in vain for self-definition and orientation in a world

²⁹Lope de Vega, "Introducción a los Soliloquios," Poesía lírica, ed. José Manuel Blecua, (Zaragoza: Ebro, 1969), p. 89.

³⁰Ibid., p. 89.

filled with deception:

Quando el bien cierto sigues
En apariencias falsas,
El vuelo en que le buscas,
Es el conato con que dél te apartas.
¡Quién eres y a quién buscas?
¡Oh Providencia sabia,
Que ilustrará, sabida,
La verdad que me alumbra aun ignorada!³¹

Thus Alvarez de Toledo, a leading exponent of the Gongorine style during the first half of the eighteenth century, underscores man's desperation caused, in part, by his vain attempts to understand the mysteries of his own existence:

¡Qué dicha es ésta cielos,
De condición tan rara,
Que ni puedo adquirirla,
Ni cabe en mi poder el no buscarla?
Si eres bien, ¿cómo afliges?
Si eres mal, ¿como arrastras?
¡Oh misterio, que mudo,
Explicas mas allá de lo que calla!³²

Only through God, insists the poet, is happiness attained: "Dios es el bien que buscas."³³

This theocentric view is often refuted by the

³¹Gabriel Alvarez de Toledo, "A mi pensamiento," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 15.

³²Ibid., p. 15.

³³Ibid., p. 16.

poets of the Enlightenment. Unlike their predecessors, the poets of the second half of the century established new criteria based not upon theological arguments but rather upon more anthropocentric concerns, one of which is sociability. "Nous sommes organisés pour vivre en société comme les perdrix pour vivre en compagnie."³⁴ Virtue, in direct contrast to the solitude envisioned by San Juan is now considered within a broader social spectrum. Man strives towards acceptance and approval by his fellow man and this is attained by pleasing him. Since as Aristotle states "virtuous actions must be in themselves pleasant"³⁵ virtue in itself becomes pleasurable and by extension a source of happiness.³⁶

* * * * *

Before we analyze the connection of sociability and virtue, it is necessary first to understand the various angles from which virtue is considered. Because of its conservative ideological heritage, virtue continued to be primarily linked to God:

³⁴Saint-Lambert, Les Saisons, (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo Roma, 1961), p. XXXII.

³⁵Aristotle, Ethics, (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1970), p. 3.

³⁶This Aristotelian view of virtue was widely accepted throughout the eighteenth century. See especially Jean Sarrailh, La España ilustrada de la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), pp. 145-147, 431-435, 440-442.

Sólo la virtud, bella
hija de aquel padre [God] en cuya mente
De todo bien la perfección se encierra.³⁷

Tú virtud, sola eres
La puente perenal de sus [man's] placeres
¡Hija del cielo!³⁸

Thus virtue is considered a Divine gift--a gift which man carries within himself, and not, as we shall see later, in conjunction with mankind:

Traigo conmigo a la cansada vida
La persuasión de la virtud impresa
En las íntimas tónicas del alma.³⁹

This was the more traditionally held viewpoint, a viewpoint which considered virtue in a quasi-religious context. Man is virtuous if he follows God's "plan"; as soon as he deviates from his will he is no longer happy:

Yo debo el ser a otro poder, y debo
Sujetarme a las leyes que convienen
Al orden que me dio la excelsa mano.⁴⁰

This concept of virtue as an almost Divine legacy

³⁷Ignacio de Luzán, "Canción III," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXL, p. 117.

³⁸Alberto Lista, "A Fileno," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXXII, p. 310.

³⁹Juan Pablo Forner, "Discurso III," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXXIII, p. 362.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 362.

to man did not remain unchallenged during the Enlightenment. A main reason for this is the influence in Spain of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. If the author of the Confessions sought the virtuous life in close communion with nature--similar in a sense to the Spanish exponents of the beatus ille--he most certainly believed that once man is "rejuvenated," he is indeed better prepared to confront society and live a "social existence." Even love, states Rousseau in the rather "romantic" pages of his Discours sur l'origine de l'inégalité, is awakened through communal living:

Les premiers développements du cœur furent l'effet d'une situation nouvelle que réunissait dans une habitation commune les maris et les femmes, les pères et les enfants. L'habitude de vivre ensemble fit naître les plus doux sentiments qui soient connus des hommes, l'amour conjugal et l'amour paternel.⁴¹

This point of view, one which accentuates the sociable aspects of man, contributed greatly to Rousseau's popularity in Spain even after his entire work was prohibited in 1764. As early as 1752 Feijóo had written a refutation of his work,⁴² in 1762 José

⁴¹Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes, (Paris: Editions sociales, 1971), p. 113.

⁴²Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, "Carta XVIII," Cartas cruiditas y curiosas, (Madrid: Imprenta de los Herederos de Francisco del Hierro, 1745), pp. 241-258.

Clavijo y Fajardo was drawing upon the Genevan's Emile and Discours sur l'inégalité for material in his periodical El Pensador⁴³ and in 1782 (almost twenty years after the Spanish ban on Rousseau's writings) an edition of his complete works could be found in the library of Meléndez Valdés.⁴⁴

The interest and subsequent polemics concerning Rousseau's work in Spain was generated primarily, though not exclusively by his concept of the bon sauvage. In a century where faith in reason had reached its zenith, the Spanish intelligentsia were not able and perhaps not willing to reconcile themselves to an irrational man able to save society from corruption. Perhaps the most outspoken critic of this idea is Juan Pablo Forner whose satirical, bitter witticisms far outstripped Feijóo's rejection of Rousseau's concept as vacuous rhetoric.⁴⁵ Never a staunch supporter of rigorous scientific approaches to solving the ills of the world, Forner bitterly attacked Rousseau's idea of man's happiness in his primitive state--a state which according to the Spanish polemicist was far from a golden age:

⁴³See Jefferson Rea Spell, op. cit., p. 30.

⁴⁴Georges Demerson, Don Juan Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, (Madrid: Taurus Ediciones, 1971), p. 136.

⁴⁵See Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, Historia de los heterodoxos españoles, vol. II, p. 384.

Allá en la edad que recibió del oro
El título halagueño en tiempo cuando
Fue más escudriñado su tesoro;

En aquel bello siglo, en que matando
Los hombres a los hombres que podían
Con libre imperio y voluntario mando,

Sus leyes naturales mantenían
(Según Hobbes lo vio), y en robo y muertes,
Estado entonces natural, vivían.⁴⁶

This bon sauvage is described as an ignorant
brute, incapable of reason:

Cuando privilegiaba a los más fuertes
La corrupta después naturaleza,
Y en la rapiña colocó sus suertes;

O cuando manteniendo la entereza
Que a un racional compete, conservaba
De bruto la ignorancia y la fiereza;

Y siendo racional no razonaba,
Y con entendimiento no entendía,
Que así su ser el hombre ejercitaba.⁴⁷

To complete his attack on Rousseau, Forner sar-
castically invokes his name as "support" for his
critical views on man's primitive state:

(Rousseau lo afirma, que lo vio, a fe mía,
Y trató a dos salvajes que le hablaron,
Aunque él dice que nadie hablar sabía).⁴⁸

⁴⁶Juan Pablo Forner, "Fragmento primero," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 341.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 341.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 341.

In his "Discurso IV," Forner continues his censure of Rousseau's work, criticizing the Genevan's idea that virtue can be found only in man's natural state. His description is as exaggerated as it is caustic:

Fue un tiempo (dicen) cuando el hombre, falto
De entendimiento y locución⁴⁹, vivía
Dichosamente en cavernosos montes,
Cual viven ora los rapaces lobos.⁵⁰

Man is depicted as a savage roaming the earth,
an earth in total chaos:

No entre los hombres amistad, no el lazo
De saludables leyes. Vagabundos,
Huéspedes rudos de confusos bosques,
Al sol, al aire, a la inclemencia expuestos,
Sin más razón que el natural instinto,
Y con fuerza robusta, siendo fieras,
Al ser de racionales no aspiraban.⁵¹

Forner again rejects the notion that the bon sauvage exemplifies a virtuous life style:

De la razón que en su vigor se fía,
Tales son las groseras invenciones.
Hacernos brutos para hacernos buenos,
Y reducir el hombre a que posea
Sin uso la que engendra sus virtudes,
Dueño de un alma inútil; ¡con qué labio
Osa dar la impudencia a los delirios

⁴⁹In a footnote, Forner links this idea to Rousseau's "sistema extravagante," "Discurso IV," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 366n.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 366.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 366.

The idea of the buen salvaje, however, went beyond the importance of a "new" theme in Spanish poetry. At first glance the notion of man's natural goodness appears harmless. And yet a closer scrutiny will demonstrate that Rousseau, by proclaiming man to be inherently good (and later "corrupted" by society) is denying the doctrine of original sin. The Church, in direct opposition to Rousseau, teaches us that man is born into sin, that this sin (original sin) is absolved only through Baptism and that only through a series of "purgings"--the sacraments, indulgences, grace--can man ever hope to conquer his seemingly everlasting lapses into sin and evil. Thus, it is not society which corrupts man but man himself as he affirms his will through a series of acts which alienate him from God.

This conflict with Church dogma did not diminish Rousseau's influence since other works such as Emile which according to Spell stimulated educational reform⁵³ in Spain provided the groundwork for a more popular and hence, less dangerous appeal to the homme de lettres. One of the earliest and most important adherents to Rousseau's ideas and of the philosophes

⁵²Ibid., p. 367.

⁵³Jefferson Rea Spell, op. cit., p. 261.

in general is Don José Marchena Ruiz de Cueto, also known as the abate Marchena. Born in Utrera in 1768, he began his ecclesiastical studies in Seville where he learned "maravillosamente la lengua latina, y luego se dedicó al francés, leyendo la mayor parte de los libros impíos que en tan número abortó aquel siglo."⁵⁴ The first Spanish translator of Lucretius' De rerum natura, Marchena, as a result of his outspoken support for the French Revolution, was forced to flee to Gibraltar and then to France where he collaborated with Marat on the revolutionary journal L'ami du peuple. Besides translating leading works of what Menéndez Pelayo calls "la escuela enciclopédica"⁵⁵ (including a widely read translation of Rousseau's Emile and La nouvelle Eloise) Marchena "inundó literalmente a España de engendros volterianos."⁵⁶ Thus his poetry, and more importantly his concepts of virtue and nature, reflect the French impact upon "la flamante escuela sevillana."⁵⁷ Even Marchena's well-known Cartas de Abelardo y Eloísa,⁵⁸ published in 1796 and prohibited three years later by the Inquisition, reflect a more "enlightened" view of virtue.

⁵⁴Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, op. cit., p. 634.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 650.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 650.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 634.

⁵⁸El abate José Marchena, "Eloísa a Abelardo" and "Abelardo a Eloísa," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, pp. 624-630.

These two rather extensive epistles, only sections of which have been edited in the edition of the Biblioteca de autores españoles,⁵⁹ are, according to Menéndez Pelayo, "para nocivo solaz de mancebos y doncellas, que veían allí canonizados los impulsos eróticos, reprobadas las austeridades monacales y enaltecido sobre el matrimonio el amor desinteresado y libre."⁶⁰ The poem is diametrically opposed to the conservative point of view, exemplified in the poetry of Forner, that virtue is achieved only in compliance with God's will. Here we are confronted with the opposite extreme: Eloísa in her "letter" to Abelardo is nothing short of a pleasure-seeking hedonist who cares little for God or her fellow man. Happiness is attained only through sensuous love-making and the more "traditional" concept of virtue is conspicuously absent. Nowhere in the poetry of the period, not even in the rather licentious Besos de amor by Meléndez Valdés, do we encounter such overt exaltation of pleasure:

⁵⁹"La presente epístola y la anterior estuvieron prohibidas durante mucho tiempo en España. Se imprimieron al cabo, pero sirviendo de texto copias muy imperfectas. Al darlas ahora de nuevo a la estampa, hemos confrontado los impresos con antiguos manuscritos; adoptando, de estos, las correcciones y supresiones que hemos juzgado convenientes." Leopoldo de Cueto, ed., Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 628.

⁶⁰Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, op. cit., p. 657.

¡Qué dulce es el amor! ¡Qué lisonjero
 El ver correspondido un fiel cariño!
 ¿Quién más feliz que dos tiernos amantes,
 Que en recíproca llama consumidos,
 Un mismo pensamiento los anima?
 En dulce arrobamiento sumergidos,
 Sola una voluntad sus pasos guía
 Por los senderos del amor benigno;
 La risa y el placer los acompaña,
 Y del constante amor el noble instinto
 Nuevo placer les muestra y nueva gloria.
 Jamás su corazón se ve vacío
 De la dulce ilusión de lo que adoran:
 Ella preside a su placer continuo,
 Y con seguridades mil ofrece
 De males y disgustos el olvido.
 ¡Dichoso aquél que ama, y más dichoso
 Aquél que ve su amor correspondido!
 ¡Dichoso a quien amor nunca abandona!
 Que a sólo amor es dado y concedido
 El bien de hacer felices a los hombres.
 Sacrifiquemos al amor propicio,
 Si buscamos el bien, que el amor sólo
 De la humana ventura es el camino.⁶¹

This poem goes far beyond the "encyclopedismo sentimental" which, according to Arce Fernández,⁶² characterizes the poetry of the last third of the eighteenth century. El abate Marchena, using as a pretext the well-known story of the two medieval lovers, presents his own idea of happiness--a happiness based

⁶¹El abate don José Marchena, "Eloísa a Abelardo," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXXVII, p. 626.

⁶²Joaquín Arce Fernández, "Rococó, neoclasicismo y prerromanticismo en la poesía española del siglo XVIII," op. cit., p. 449.

almost exclusively on self-gratification. Only the virtue of love (la virtud de amor), according to the poet, and the love of virtue is man's main motivating force in life:

De amor es cuanto vive; cuanto alienta
Por la virtud de amor siente y respira;
Amor es todo, sin amor no hay nada,
Todo al imperio de amor se humilla.⁶³

* * * * *

Thus we have seen two conflicting and rather exaggerated ideas concerning virtue as exemplified in the poetry of Forner and Marchena. There were, however, many poets who rebuked both points of view as extreme, and tended to assimilate the works of Rousseau and other philosophes in a less "dangerous" way. An outstanding example of one such writer was Meléndez Valdés. Perhaps no other Spanish poet of the Enlightenment was so directly preoccupied with virtue, and at the same time, so imbued with the works and ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.⁶⁴ The concept of the buen salvaje made a deep impression on him and in his epistle to his friend Don Gaspar

⁶³El abate don José Marchena, "Abelarda a Eloísa," op. cit., p. 630.

⁶⁴In a Carta inédita to Jovellanos dated April 27, 1779, he anxiously awaits the arrival of Rousseau's Emile: "Ya tenemos el tratado de educación de Locke y acaso bien presto el Emilio..." Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 88.

González de Candamo, he exclaims:

Dichoso tú. . .
. . . entre inocentes
Semibárbaros hombres las virtudes
Hallarás abrigadas, que llorosas,
De este suelo fatal allá volaron.
Disfruta, amigo, sus sencillos pechos,
Bendice, alienta su bondad selvaje,
Preciosa mucho más que la cultura
Infausta, que corrompe nuestros climas
Con brillo y apariencias seductoras.
¡Oh, quién pudiera sepultarse entre ellos!⁶⁵

It is society which ruins man and it is civilization
which is directly responsible for man's decadence:

La sociedad, fecunda engendradora
De culpas, de su mano nos recibe,
Y el veneno mortífero nos dora
Con ilustres ejemplos.
En trono de oro al vicio nos presenta,
Que jactancioso sus victorias cuenta
De la inocencia o la virtud mofada;
Consagra el interés; erige templos
Al placer indecente;
Y por ley el delito nos prescribe
Con firme voz de miles aclamada.⁶⁶

As a direct reflection of Rousseau in Discours
sur l'inégalité, he states that all men are equal:

⁶⁵Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola V," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

⁶⁶Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Discurso II," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 258.

Todos tus hijos somos;
El tártaro, el lapón, el indio rudo,
El tostado africano
Es un hombre, es tu [God's] imagen y es mi hermano.⁶⁷

Here we see the Spanish assimilation of a foreign idea. The stanza seems to echo the cry of fraternité as reflected in the works of Rousseau. However, a closer scrutiny will show that the above verses do indeed conform to the teachings of the Church for in saying "tu imagen," Meléndez Valdés, as Forner had done previously, advocates fraternal love merely as a reflection of Divine love. Thus the Rousseauian and anthropocentric view of self-love is adapted to orthodoxy.

* * * * *

José Somosa, in a poem entitled "Sobre la felicidad," indicates that virtue is within reach of all men. Unlike truth and self-knowledge which are the domain of the philosopher, virtue is attainable:

Dado es al sabio un placer
De más estima, nobleza
Y calidad:
El estudio de su ser,
El de la naturaleza

⁶⁷Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda IV," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 218.

Y la verdad.

.

Y aunque no a todo mortal
Dado sea conseguir
Tal beatitud,
Existe un bien sin igual,
No imposible de adquirir,
Que es la virtud.⁶⁸

The idea of the accessibility of virtue along with man's desire to be virtuous often led to a series of conflicts--conflicts which reflected an even broader polarization, namely that which exists between the material and the spiritual world. In an elegy entitled "Mis combates," Meléndez Valdés describes precisely this type of struggle:

Una parte de mí se encumbra al cielo,
Otra entre crudos hierros gime, atada
Al triste, oscuro, malhadado suelo.⁶⁹

According to Batilo, God gives man all that is necessary to achieve happiness:

Rico en sublimes dones,
Del Padre soberano
La omnipotencia sabia
Te dio a la común luz, cuanto debiera
Para hacerte feliz. . .⁷⁰

⁶⁸José Somoza, "Sobre la felicidad," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 470.

⁶⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Mis combates," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVIII, p. 252.

⁷⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Discurso II: El hombre fue criado para la virtud y sólo halla su felicidad en practicarla," op. cit., p. 259.

Yet the poet can only "encourage" others to choose virtue:

Cultiva, pues, esta razón, si anhelas
Al verdadero bien; a su luz pura
Solícito nivela tus acciones
Y la ardua senda de virtud emprende.⁷¹

The struggle for a virtuous existence is often a cause of anguish for the poet of the Enlightenment. This malaise, often interpreted as prerromanticismo,⁷² is fundamentally the manifestation of the insecurity and disillusionment of a generation of basically neoclassical poets, who, after the "failure" of the spirit of reform and change following the death of Carlos III (1788), had lost all faith in reason and the establishment. Man's life had lost direction and was in dire need of orientation:

Dulce esperanza, ¡oh! ven a consolarme.
¡Quién sabe si es la muerte mejor vida?
Quien me dio el ser, ¿no puede conservarme
Más allá de la tumba? ¿Está ceñida
A este bajo planeta su potencia?
¡El inmenso poder hay quien le mida?
¿Qué es el alma? ¿Conozco yo su esencia?
Yo existo, ¿Dónde iré? ¿De dó he venido?⁷³

⁷¹Ibid., p. 259.

⁷²See especially José Luis Cano's "Introduction" to Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, Poesías, (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), pp. 31-34; Joaquín Arce, op. cit., p. 449ff; and Russell Sebold, "El incesto, el suicidio y el primer romanticismo español," Hispanic Review, 41, (1973), pp. 669-692.

⁷³José Marchena, "Epístola a Don José Lanz," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 622.

This poem, also quoted by Menéndez Pelayo, who praises Marchena as "primer cantor español de la duda,"⁷⁴ is obviously a cry of despair and reflects the almost existential angst so integral a part of the poetry of the last third of the eighteenth century. In a well-known poem by Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, more reminiscent in tone of Quevedo than the soon to appear "romantic generation" of the duque de Rivas and Martinez de la Rosa, happiness gives way to the desengaño of the entire generation:

. . . ¡Ah! los placeres
cual humo pasan, y recuerdos vanos
dejan en su lugar. ¿Veis cuál fallece
la alegría otoñal? Ya palidece
el hojoso verdor, y el claro cielo
llora cubierto en nebuloso velo.⁷⁵

Conscious of the fact that he has been deluded by ideas of happiness within society, man now looks within himself. Man isolates himself and finds if not happiness, at least tranquility, but only in solitude:

yo. . .
busco la soledad y, en su silencio,
sin esperanza mi dolor exhalo.⁷⁶

⁷⁴Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, op. cit., p. 656.

⁷⁵Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "El otoño," Poesías, ed. José Luis Cano, (Madrid: Clásicos Castalia, 1969), p. 113.

⁷⁶Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "Mi paseo solitario de primavera," op. cit., p. 117.

The more "sociable" man of the Enlightenment is chastised for his excessive pride and presumptuousness, for his vain attempts to rule the universe:

¡Vivificante ley! el hombre insano,
el hombre solo en su razón perdido
olvida tu dulzor, y es infelice.
El ignorante en su orgullosa mente
quiso regir el universo entero,
y acomodarle a sí. Soberbio reptil,
polvo invisible en el inmenso todo
debió dejar al general impulso
que le arrastrara, y en silencio humilde
obedecer las inmutables leyes.⁷⁷

The poet realizes that everything he touches is subject to change, mutability:

¡Quién al hombre no advierte,
En su humilde supuesto,
Ser juguete inconstante de fortuna?
¡Cuán inestable es su suerte,
Siempre en mudanza puesto,
Viejo en el ataúd, niño en la cuna!⁷⁸

Iglesias de la Casa summarizes perfectly this "new" outlook of man: "Todo es un poco más o un poco menos."⁷⁹ And yet, despite this overwhelming pessimism, there was indeed one final alternative: nature. Jovellanos describes the joys of the natural setting and the

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 118.

⁷⁸José Iglesias de la Casa, "La vanidad terrena," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 464.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 464.

happiness man can derive from it in a letter to a friend:

Un campo fértil y bien cultivado, donde cada uno reposaba contento a la sombra de su parra y de su higuera; los viejos sentados en la plaza, hablando de los negocios del común; los mozos corriendo alegres y vestidos de gala a sus fiestas y ceremonias públicas. Tal es la pintura de la felicidad del pueblo de Dios, cuyas peregrinaciones, solemnidades y convites eran siempre a los templos y en los templos. Dichoso el pueblo cuyas sencillas costumbres representan todavía al mundo corrompido una imagen de esta envidiable y primitiva felicidad que ha desaparecido casi de su superficie.⁸⁰

Unlike the more lugubrious descriptions of the romantic period,⁸¹ nature was usually depicted as a tranquil, static resting place where, left to himself, man could ponder his own existence:

⁸⁰ Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Cartas a Ponz: Carta VIII," Obras en prosa, ed. José Caso González, (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1969), p. 155.

⁸¹ Thus we have the famous and rather uninviting description of Salamanca by Espronceda:

El cielo estaba sombrío,
No vislumbraba una estrella,
Silbaba lúgubre el viento
Y allá en el aire, cual negras
Fantasmas se dibujaban
Las torres de las iglesias.

José de Espronceda, "El estudiante de Salamanca," ed. J. Moreno Villa, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1968), p. 190.

¡Ah! ¿dónde estás, dulcísimo Batilo,
que no la vienes a gozar conmigo
en esta soledad? Ven en su busca,
dó sin afán probemos de consuno
tan suaves delicias; corre, vuela,
y si la sed de más saber te inflama,
no creas que entre gritos y contiendas
la saciarás.⁸²

It is in this natural setting that man, imbued
with self-pity, pours fourth his agonies and begins to
feel fraternal love for a nature that bears witness to
his sorrow:

Ya que he quedado en donde
Podré escucharme solo
El profundo silencio
De estos bosques umbrosos.
Y donde son testigos
De dos males que lloro
Solamente los sauces,
Las aves, los arroyos.⁸³

Nature comes to form a perfect backdrop for man's
sorrow, since in nature man encounters peace of mind,
surcease. Self-forgetfulness or the surrender of the
ego to nature supercedes pleasure and repose is
preferred to happiness:

⁸²Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "A Batilo," Poesías,
ed. José Caso González, (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios
Asturianos, 1961), pp. 195-196.

⁸³Vicente García de la Huerta, "Idilio pastoral,"
Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 235.

Pasó el delirio de la edad primera,
y ya temo el placer, y cauto pido,
No la felicidad, sino el reposo.⁸⁴

Solitude is a purifying force, a means of combating corruption and vice:

De los bellos placeres el más puro
De todos los consuelos el más grato,
No para el corazón perverso y duro,
Mas para el dulce y de inocente trato,
Eres tú, ¡oh soledad!⁸⁵

Yet we must not think of the "solitary life" as always devoid of all pleasures. On the contrary, el reposo, and the pursuit of virtue inherent in such a life style, could be a pleasant, indeed happy existence: Man can join nature not only to reject worldly pleasures but to replace them with natural ones.

Que yo la paz únicamente quiero.
Quiero en la soledad más escondida
Gozar los dulces bienes del reposo,
Y pasará mi silenciosa vida
Ignorada del noble y poderoso.⁸⁶

The echoes of the beatus ille, such a pervasive theme in the poetry of Garcilaso, in Fray Luis, Herrera and others, are all too evident, but the eighteenth

⁸⁴Alberto Lista, "La esperanza," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 317.

⁸⁵Juan Bautista Arriaza, "La cavilación solitaria," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 106.

⁸⁶Tomás de Iriarte, "Epístola VI," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 32.

century poet could be almost hedonistic in his "natural" setting:

¡Fresca arboleda del jardín sombrío
Clara fuente; sonoras avecillas,
Verde prado, que esmaltas las orillas
Del celebrado y anchuroso río!

¡Grata aurora, que viertes el rocío
Por entre nubes rojas y amarillas,
Bello horizonte de lejanas villas,
Aura blanda, que templas el estío!

¡Oh soledad! quien puede te posea;
Que yo gozara en tu apacible seno,
El placer que otros ánimos recrea.⁸⁷

This poem differs considerably from the "Vida retirada" of Fray Luis de León:

¡Oh monte, oh fuente, oh río,
Oh secreto seguro, deleitoso!
Roto casi el navío,
a vuestro almo reposo
huyo de aqueste mar tempestuoso.

Un no rompió sueño,
un día puro, alegre, libre quiero;
no quiero ver el cenó
vanamente severo
de quien la sangre ensalza o el dinero.⁸⁸

Although both poets seek a refuge in nature away from the vicissitudes and corruption of society, the

⁸⁷Tomás de Iriarte, "Soneto," op. cit., p. 50.

⁸⁸Fray Luis de León, "Vida retirada," Poesías, ed. Antonio Diez Blanco, (Valladolid: Minon, n.d.), pp. 337-338.

difference comes in the absence (in the Iriarte poem) of a supernatural ascensional tone. The ecstasy is gone; the belief that worldly concerns bar man from a closer union with God, a glimpse of beatitude, has also disappeared. The style of the pastoral poem has also changed. The Leonine concision with its succinct imagery gives way to the neo-baroque ambulosidad. Nature's decorative adornment is emphasized and ave-cillas and other rococó embellishments are quite common. Yet the impact of Garcilaso and Fray Luis is still present, since the fundamental tenets of their poetry--harmony and moderation--are indeed basic to the bucolic poetry of the Enlightenment:

Vivir quiero conmigo,
gozar quiero del bien que debo al cielo
a solas, sin testigo;
libre de amor, de celo
de odio, de esperanzas, de recelo.⁸⁹

In Fray Luis, however, amor, celo are forces that anchor us in the ego and therefore, in the world. All demands of the body and of pride are diversions away from the Summum Bonum. To the neo-classical poet, these distraction lead us away from the Nosce te ipsum and in an "enlightened" age the search for self-knowledge is the Greatest Good:

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 338.

. . . contempla, indaga
la esencia de tu ser y alto destino.
Conócete a ti mismo. . .⁹⁰

* * * * *

The ideal of withdrawal into a more authentic existence, closer to the roots of nature and thus to one's own roots can be seen in the menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea motif most notably treated by Antonio de Guevara. Court life with its intrigues, fanaticism and scandal, especially under Carlos III and to an even greater degree his successor Carlos IV, provided ample reason for such an attitude. In one of Meléndez Valdés's epistles entitled "El filósofo en el campo," the poet bitterly reproves the opulence and vice of life at court:

Insensibles nos hace la opulencia,
Insensibles nos hace. Ese bullicio,
Ese continuo discurrir veloces
Mil doradas carrozas, paseando
Los vicios todos por las anchas calles;
.
Esos palacios y preciosos muebles,
.
Ese anhelo pueril por los más viles
Despreciables objetos. . .⁹¹

⁹⁰Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "A Batilo," op. cit., p. 196.

⁹¹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "El filósofo en el campo," op. cit., p. 205.

Such superficiality and ambition only serve to point up the virtue to be found in harmony with nature:

No, Fabio amado, no; por estos campos
La corte olvida; ven y aprende en ellos,
Aprende la virtud. Aquí, en su augusta
Amable sencillez, entre las pajas,
Entre el pellico y el honroso arado
Se ha escogido un asilo, compañera
De la sublime soledad.⁹²

Solitude, isolation, meditation: these ideals seem to run counter to many of the norms of an Enlightenment that embraced an empirical philosophy encouraging man to take a more active part in his existence, a time in which philosophical abstraction was being criticized, an era of "social" interaction and learning. Even Cadalso censures country life since it neither benefits man nor his country. In the Cartas marruecas, Nuño answers Gazel's letter in which the latter had related his experiences with some country workers:

Pero, Gazel, volviendo a tu huésped y otros de su carácter, que no faltan en las provincias, y de los cuales conozco no pequeño número, ¿no te parece lastimosa para el estado la pérdida de unos hombres de talento y mérito que se apartan de las carreras útiles a la república? ¿No crees que todo individuo está obligado o contribuir al bien de su patria con

⁹²Ibid., p. 205.

todo esmero? Apártense del bullicio los inútiles y décrepitos; son de más estorbo que servicio; pero tu huésped y sus semejantes están en la edad de servir, y deben buscar las ocasiones de ello aun a costa de toda especie de disgustos. No basta ser buenos para sí y para otros pocos; es preciso serlo o procurar serlo para el total de la nación.⁹³

However, one must study the purpose behind the attraction of self-imposed exile, aside from its category as a locus classicus. In a general sense, this bucolic poetry forms a part of what is known as literatura escapist, even though we should not interpret this as a literature of complete evasion. The poetry is clearly not social and yet at the same time man remains the focal point of every poem, a centrifugal force, so to speak, around which nature evolves. Unlike certain romantic paintings⁹⁴ where man is dwarfed to show nature's omnipotence (or his own inferiority to nature) the eighteenth century view of nature is often relegated to diminutive suffixes: "arroyuelo,"

⁹³José Cadalso, "Carta LXX," Cartas marruecas, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1967), pp. 175-176.

⁹⁴This is especially true in such painters as John Martin ("Sadak in Search of the Waters of Oblivion"), and Grome ("Porring Land Oak").

"avecillo," or at best a modified form of her (nature's) powers, "céfiro." It is this anthropocentric view--man at the center of the natural setting--which best serves the intent of empiricism since man often considered nature an important source of knowledge. In fact, the study of nature could be tantamount to the study of virtue:

. . . ven, y estudia dócil
Conmigo las virtudes de estos hombres
No conocidos en la corte. Admira,
Admira su bondad. . .
. . .Mira su humanidad.⁹⁵

Man not only "retreated" into nature in order to escape corruption, but also to learn. Life in close contact with nature was an experience by which the eighteenth century man--so imbued with empiricism--could profit. Even more, the hombre de bien penetrated not only the secrets of the universe but more importantly he confronted himself:

It is characteristic of eighteenth century thought that the problem of nature and the problem of knowledge are very closely connected with, indeed inseparably linked to, one another. Thought cannot turn toward the world of external objects without at the same time reverting to itself; in the same act it attempts to

⁹⁵Juan Meléndez Valdés, "El filósofo en el campo," op. cit., p. 206.

ascertain the truth of nature and its
own truth.⁹⁶

Since knowledge was almost a compulsion for the Ilustrado, he required a place, a locus amoenus, where he could be free of the daily concerns of a materialistic society. Ideally, that place was nature:

Dicesme que te parece
Cosa imposible decir:
¡Vi un dichoso!
Mas es porque le oscurece
Su retirado vivir
Silencioso;
Mientras que los descontentos
De su suerte en inquietud
Continua están.
Su afán en sus movimientos
Y ruidosa multitud
Diciendo van;
Y juzgan falso y forzado
Y aparente aquel sosiego
Envidiable
Del sabio que no es llevado
En un torbellino ciego
Y mar mudable. . .
. . . La felicidad no habita
En alma que estas pasiones
Aposenta.
Limpia mansión necesita

⁹⁶Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of the Enlightenment, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 93.

Y que de preocupaciones
Esté exenta.⁹⁷

Though this vida retirada appears to avoid the mundanal ruido, it is not as Mauzi contends (or as Cadalso had implied in his Cartas marruecas) a state of vegetation⁹⁸ but rather a source of knowledge.

We must recall that in addition to the classical sources of bucolic poetry (Horace, Theocritus, Virgil) in Spain there were more immediate precursors such as the great mystics and ascetics of the Renaissance which we had discussed previously--San Juan de la Cruz, Santa Teresa, Fray Luis de León. Spanish mysticism as opposed to other manifestations on the continent (this will perhaps explain Mauzi's statement), did not exclusively connote a total withdrawal from reality. Thus the pastoral poetry of the eighteenth century--as the mystic poetry before it--"aspira a fluir en la educación moral del pueblo."⁹⁹ The beatus ille, divinized by San Juan de la Cruz, is again secularized in the Siglo de las luces. Nature does not help man avoid the problems of his materialistic society but rather

⁹⁷José Somoza, "Epístola II: Sobre la felicidad," op. cit., pp. 469-470.

⁹⁸"L'homme de la nature n'était ni heureux, ni malheureux: il végétait..." Robert Mauzi, L'idée du bonheur au XVIII^e siècle. (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1969), p. 597.

⁹⁹Pedro Jains Rodríguez, Introducción a la historia de la literatura mística en España, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1927), p. 283.

rejuvenates him and better prepares him to face these problems:

Cuando a mi pobre aldea
Feliz escapar puedo,
Las penas y el bullicio
De la ciudad huyendo,
Alegre me parece
Que soy un hombre nuevo. . .100

Thus we are able to discern two "schools" of thought in relation to Nature's role in the poetry of the eighteenth century: (1) a static "classical" view of nature, that is, nature as a decorative device and not as a way of life conducive to the moral improvement of man and (2) a more dynamic, vital picture of nature, a lifestyle in which man is purged of corruption and imbued with virtue.

The first point of view, if not "classical" in the context of Voltaire's work, was nonetheless of concern to him. In an essay entitled "Nature" (1771), Voltaire clearly manifests the dichotomy which exists between the philosopher frustrated at every attempt to understand the universe, and nature, the eternal enigma. After several questions asked in vain by the philosophe, nature finally reveals her "secret": "Mon pauvre enfant [le philosophe] , veux-tu que je te dise la vérité? C'est qu'on m'a donné un nom qui ne me convient

¹⁰⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XL: De mi vida en la aldea," op. cit., p. 103.

pas; on m'appelle nature, et je suis tout art."¹⁰¹
The philosopher, incredulous to nature's statement,
seeks reassurance.

Le philosophe: Ce mot dérange toutes mes
idées. Quoi! la nature
ne serait que l'art?
La nature: Oui, sans doute.¹⁰²

If nature is art, then art, whether consciously or
unconsciously imitates nature. We can see how this
concept--not far removed from the Aristotelian idea of
mimesis or poetry as imitation--is germane to the
lyricism of the eighteenth century. Since the poet
frequently assumes the role of interpreter of nature,
a poem becomes a type of cuadro in which a certain
aspect of nature is depicted and poeticized. This
preciosismo, greatly in vogue during the Enlightenment,
pervades the bucolic poetry of the time. According to
Arce Fernández the esthetic reflected in these pastoral
poems is rococó.¹³

Rococó, perhaps adequately described as an
empequeñecimiento of the Baroque style was an esthetic
not indigenous to Spain; it probably originated in

¹⁰¹Voltaire, "Nature," Dictionnaire philosophique,
(Paris: Classique Larousse, 1934), p. 99.

¹⁰²Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁰³Joaquín Arce Fernández, "Rococó, neoclasicismo
y prerromanticismo en la poesía española del siglo XVIII,"
op. cit., p. 476.

Italy earlier in the century where it was known as Barocchetto or little Baroque. Rococó poetry, on the whole, was ideologically of little significance, self-contained and characterized "por su refinamiento sensual, la despreocupada alegría del vivir, su mitología menor y su ámbito recortado."¹⁰⁴ Against a bucolic background, so different from the tempestuous, cosmic settings favored by the pre-romantic and romantic poetry, the poet found happiness in his admiration of the beauties of an anodyne nature. The most seemingly insignificant "event" becomes worthy of the highly refined rococó stylization as the poet "eternalizes" various aspects of nature. And unlike the romantic paintings mentioned earlier in which man is dwarfed to accentuate the grandeur and force of nature, it is now man who is brought to the fore to artistically embellish (not analyze) nature with rich and varied images imbued with color and artificiality.¹⁰⁵

La blanda primavera
Derramando aparece

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 460.

¹⁰⁵As was often the case, nature, along with many other artistic subjects, were frequently a pretext to elaborate and embellish a given reality to the point of falsifying it. Michael Levey underscores the fact that rococó art was "artificial and unnatural" and a painting was many times an artistic attempt to surpass nature. Michael Levey, Rococó to Revolution: Major Trends in Eighteenth Century Painting, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1966), p. 9ff.

Sus tesoros y galas
Por prados y vergeles.
Despejado ya el cielo
De nubes inclementes,
Con luz cándida y pura
Ríe a la tierra alegre.

El alba de azucenas,
Y de rosa las sienes
Se presenta ceñidas,
Sin que el cierzo las hiele.

De esplendores más rico
Descuella por oriente
En triunfo el sol, y a darle
La vida al mundo vuelve.

Medrosos de sus rayos,
Los vientos enmudecen,
Y el vago cefirillo
Bullendo les sucede;

El céfiro de aromas
Empapado, que mueven
En la nariz y el seno
Mil llamas y deleites.¹⁰⁶

Such a poem is lacking in any intellectual thrust simply because this is not its purpose: a rococó poem aims at giving pleasure, it fits into what Arce Fernández refers to as "el hedonismo dieciochesco."¹⁰⁷ Irrelevant, frivolous, capricious themes and the use of the diminutive reinforces the microcosmic quality of rococó poetry

¹⁰⁶Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda V: De la primavera," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 94.

¹⁰⁷Joaquín Arce Fernández, op. cit., p. 467.

in general. If it says anything, rococó verse suggests that men should be content with appreciating nature for what it is and not as a mirror for a better comprehension of humanity. Hence, it is no mere coincidence that the anacreontic, with its emphasis on wine, women and song, flourishes in the eighteenth century and adapts itself to the rococó esthetic:

Muchacho soy, y quiero
Decir más apacibles
Querellas, y gozarme
Con danzas y convites.
En ellos coronado
De rosas y alhelíes,
Entre risas y versos
Menudeo los brindis.
En coros las muchachas
Se juntan por oírme,
Y al punto mis cantares
Con nuevo ardor repiten;
Pues Baco y el de Venus
Me dieron que felice
Celebre en dulces himnos
Sus glorias y festines.¹⁰⁸

In this more classical view of nature--the theme dates back to the Greek lyric poet Anacreon (560-478 B.C.)--the trees, birds, flowers, form a beautiful mise-en-scène in which the poet sings the praises of nature:

¹⁰⁸Juan Meléndez Valdés, "A mis lectores," op. cit., p. 93.

Ya que he quedado en donde
 Podrá escucharme solo
 El profundo silencio
 De estos bosques umbrosos,
 Y donde son testigos
 De los males que lloro
 Solamente los sauces,
 Las aves, los arroyos;
 En tanto que de Lauso
 Al dulce cuello logro
 Ser, por fin de mis penas,
 Lo que la hiedra al olmo;
 Salgan al aire quejas
 Que mi pecho amoroso
 Ocultas ha tenido
 Tan largo tiempo a todos.¹⁰⁹

The pleasant, sublimated nature, on occasion man's confidant, is so much a retreat from worldly concerns, that it peoples the poet's dreams:

Soñaba yo que en un ameno prado
 Andabas tú con prisa
 Tejiendo de las flores que brotaba
 Una guirnalda. . .¹¹⁰

And in these dreams, he sees the fulfillment of his desires, and would have the dream go on forever:

Estas dichas soñaba
 En una misma noche. . .

¹⁰⁹Vicente García de la Huerta, "Idilio pastoral," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 235.

¹¹⁰Fray Diego González, "A Melisa," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 187.

. . .y aunque el bien fingido era,
Ansioso deseaba
Que, ya que sólo el sueño fue mi vida,
Mi vida un continuado sueño fuera.
¡Oh si siempre durmiera!¹¹¹

It is with nature that the poet can give unabashed vent
to his feelings; it is indeed a safe place to hide:

En la más retirada, más sombría
Mansión de esa enlazada selva umbrosa,
Do nunca penetrara el rayo ardiente. . .
Allí me escondo y lloro largamente.¹¹²

In Cadalso's well-known "Carta a Augusta," the trees
provide protection from the burning sun--symbol of the
tumult in the poet's heart--and the music of the breezes
and chirping of the birds, lay his cares to rest:

Los árboles, cargados
De flores olorosas, hacen techo
Con ramos enlazados,
Con que el furor del sol queda deshecho
Mil pájaros, gozando la frescura,
Se burlan de su ardor en la espesura.

.
De tantos cefirillos,
De tantas aguas claras y ligeras,
De aquellos arbolillos,
De las aves sonoras placenteras
Los trinos, el ruido y el marmullo

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 188.

¹¹²Fray Diego González, "Llanto de Delio y profecía
de Manzanares," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol.
LXI, p. 181.

Te servirán de lisonjero arrullo.¹¹³

Years later Espronceda will also make use of the sounds of nature which are capable of soothing man's plight:

"Son mi música mejor
Aquilones;
El estrépito y temblor
De los cables sacudidos,
Del negro mar los bramidos
Y el rugir de mis cañones.
"Y del trueno
Al son violento,
Y del viento
Al rebramar,
Yo me duermo
Sosegado,
Arrullado
Por el mar."¹¹⁴

The languor of the neo-classical atmosphere contrasts with the shock of the "aquilones," ("cefirillos" in the eighteenth century poem), "estrépito," "temblor," "rugir." The difference is also noted in the structure of the poems: **the** longer line is more sensuous; in "Canción del pirata" the series of short, staccato lines make for the effect of uneasiness. In Cadalso's poem, the natural setting is one of softness, abandonment,

¹¹³José Cadalso, "Carta a Augusta," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, pp. 259-260.

¹¹⁴José de Espronceda, "Canción del pirata," Poesías, (Madrid: Clásicos Castellanos, 1968), p. 79.

for Espronceda, inquietud, the expression of the will of the poet, dominates his vision of nature. The Neo-classical poet may feel totally exhilarated over love or friendship or he may seek refuge in nature from the corruption of the society around him; yet the imagery remains constant: the flora and fauna are simply there. To the romantic poet, nature appears to take a more active part in man's existence. Since the protagonist of the Espronceda poem is a man filled with passion, energy and fury, nature is made to correspond in a fitting manner. Whereas the neo-classical poet speaks to a passive nature, the romantic man interacts with her. Even more, as man realizes his own mutability and loses faith in reason, he looks to nature for fijeza.

As we have seen previously,¹¹⁵ Cienfuegos, in his well-known poem, "Mi paseo solitario de primavera," with its pessimistic tone and bleak imagery, ("soberbio reptil," "hombre insano," "polvo invisible") manifests this tendency toward a more "romantic" reality. We should keep in mind, therefore, that the neoclassical and the pre-romantic esthetics coincided in the eighteenth century: "Lo que coincide casi, en el último cuarto de ese siglo, son las corrientes

¹¹⁵See page 173.

prerromántica y neoclásica."¹¹⁶ In fact, Sebald has even suggested an earlier date for the manifestation of the romantic spirit in Spain: ". . . se ha hecho posible fechar entre 1768 y 1773 la composición de los primeros poemas prerrománticos o románticos en español."¹¹⁷

Unlike the neoclassic writer, the pre-romantic poet does not postulate a well-ordered, symmetrical and rational reality; his is an exacerbated view of life: "Lo típico del prerromanticismo, al menos del nuestro, es su virulencia y su énfasis, sus excesos incontroladores."¹¹⁸ The preromantic who provides the link between the social concerns of the Enlightenment and the later emphasis on the personal imperative, appears to combine some features of both worlds in his poetry. While deeply concerned over his fellow man, the preromantic poet is yet more subjective and solipsistic: "El prerromanticismo supone una forma poética abierta, una lengua personal y una temática ligada a los ideales humanitarios, sociales, políticos y hasta jurídicos de entonces."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶Joaquín Arce Fernández, op. cit., p. 476.

¹¹⁷Russell P. Sebald, "El incesto, el suicidio y el primer romanticismo español," op. cit., p. 679.

¹¹⁸Joaquín Arce Fernández, op. cit., p. 476.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 475.

Perhaps nowhere can the difference between these two esthetics be better appreciated than in the treatment of nature. As we have noted alongside the more classical notion of nature, there existed a more dynamic concept, the idea of a nature with more than just beautiful fields and other accoutrements, one imbued with greater meanings than the static, more harmonious classical world. The framework has been altered only slightly, what has changed, and often quite radically, is the estado de ánimo of the poet which affects his concept of nature. Unlike the previously discussed nature poems where the setting remains essentially unchanged from one composition to another, "preromantic nature" is filled with "saddened trees" or "happy skies" reflecting the specific mood of the poet.

The contrast can be best exemplified by two poems: "Al otoño" by Meléndez Valdés and "El fin de otoño" by his disciple Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos. For Batilo, the Fall season is a symbol of joy--a joy intensified by nature's beauty:

Fugaz otoño, tente
Que embriagada en placer el alma mía
Con tu favor se siente.¹²⁰

The tempus fugit motif used so frequently by the preromantic in a more pessimistic context is here utilized

¹²⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Al otoño," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 195.

as support for the "dulce alegría" which the season brings. And so the poet places us in the typical locus amoenus of classical poetry:

Arrebolado el cielo,
La atmósfera tranquila, manso el río,
Del viento el leve vuelo,
y el soto verde umbrío
Saltar hacen el gozo al pecho mío.¹²¹

In this serene, bucolic setting, such rococó images as "la paloma sazónada," "las aves lisonjeras," and "la sencilla rapaza" complement the classical vision of the poet. To add to this pastoral scene, Meléndez invokes the name of Bacchus and the poem ends in the tradition of the Anacreontic ode:

Ven pues, ¡oh Dios del vino!
Ven, que todos te llaman calurosos
Con tu licor divino
y rige sus dudosos
Pasos y sus cantares silenciosos.¹²²

If we compare this work to Cienfuegos's poem we immediately notice a radical change of esthetic: the autumn, a time of rejoicing and pleasure for Meléndez Valdés, becomes intertwined with the personal feelings of the madrileño and undergoes a pessimistic metamorphosis.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 151.

¹²²Ibid., p. 152.

Following the medieval theme of ubi sunt? (not infrequently treated by the preromantics) Cienfuegos begins the poem with a panoramic view of nature:

¡Adónde rápidos fueron,
benéfica primavera
tus cariñosos verdores
y tus auras placenteras?
¡Do están los amables días
cuando, a la aurora risueña,
de tus cálices rosados
tributabas mil esencias?
¡Dó, los pomposos follajes
que oyeron las cantilenas
del ruiseñor, en las noches,
Llenando de amor las selvas?
¡Dó estás, juventud del año?¹²³

Instead of the rococó imagery of Meléndez's poem we have a series of "escarchadas cavernas"¹²⁴ and "borrascosas tormentas."¹²⁵ In the first poem the carpe diem is an admonition to enjoy the lovely season as completely as possible; in Cienfuegos' poem its role is to emphasize the tempus fugit and even the fact that love itself brings no pleasure since it too is transitory:

¹²³Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "El fin del otoño," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 11.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 11.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 11.

. . . ¡Ay triste!
A nuestros días ¡qué resta?
En ellos ya desde lejos
Asoma, de canas llena,
La ancianidad dolorosa,
El desamor y tristeza.
Amemos, amemos, Filis;
Mira que rápidos llegan,
Que ya este otoño es memoria
Y el tiempo destruye y vuela.¹²⁶

The differences between these two poems have been neatly summarized by one critic:

Para el neoclásico Meléndez Valdés, el otoño significaba la estación de la recolección de la abundancia y regalo de la vida, en la que corre el espumoso vino; para Cienfuegos es el símbolo de la tristeza universal, pues viendo los árboles deshojados y los cielos encajados, siente más que nunca su propia soledad.¹²⁷

Even the basic feature of most bucolic poetry, i. e., that the country life is one of peace and tranquility and that such social isolation is almost a divine blessing, disappears. Nature is reduced to a mere reflection of man's turmoil; each season serves to accentuate man's pain:

Doquier publicará naturaleza
Mi destierro. Vendrá el Abril florido

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 12.

¹²⁷Emilio González López, Historia de la literatura española: Edad moderna, (New York: Las Américas, 1965), p. 131.

Ya sin mi juventud, sin las delicias
De un ya distante amor, de una belleza,
Polvo, sueño fugaz. Saldrá encendido
Agosto, recordando las primicias
De mi Apolo; ¡oh dolor! murió su canto
Para siempre. De invierno entre el espanto
Oíré que de su helado monumento
Mudo me llama el paternal acento.¹²⁸

The classical harmony of the countryside is gone: only
loneliness and alienation remain:

¡Oh soledad, oh bárbara amargura
De un ser aislado!¹²⁹

Yet despite this bleak picture of the solitude and
social isolation experienced by the poet, we should keep
in mind that it is Cienfuegos' projection of his emotional
turmoil which alters the normally idyllic setting.

In addition to the obvious differences in the mood
of the poets, their motivation in turning to nature was
also not identical. Whereas the preromantic poet sought
an alleviation from personal anguish or turmoil, the
neoclassical poet often believed that nature brought us
into closer contact with God. In a well-known poem by
Iriarte, "La felicidad de la vida del campo," he under-
scores the importance of life in communion with nature

¹²⁸ Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "El otoño," Biblio-
teca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 18.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 18.

as a means of "elevating" man to a more direct communication with the Almighty: ". . . en ninguna parte mejor que en el campo puede elevarse a la contemplación de las maravillas de la Omnipotencia."¹³⁰ This idea is also echoed by Jovellanos in the "Epístola cuarta: de Jovino a Anfriso, escrito desde el Paular." In this highly praised poem,¹³¹ Jovellanos suggests that through a deep appreciation for the beauty of nature man can find happiness:

. . . ¡Una y mil veces
dichoso el solitario penitente,
que, triunfando del mundo y de sí mismo
vive en la sociedad libre y contento!
Unido a Dios por medio de la santa
contemplación, le goza ya en la tierra,
y retirado en su tranquilo albergue,
observa reflexivo los milagros
de la naturaleza, sin que nunca
turben el susto ni el dolor su pecho.¹³²

The natural setting, according to Jovellanos, is where virtue, and by extension, happiness is to be found.

¡Oh suerte venturosa, a los amigos

¹³⁰Tomás de Iriarte, "La felicidad de la vida del campo," op. cit., p. 44.

¹³¹For a summary of various critical appraisals of this poem see, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, op. cit., pp. 460-461.

¹³²Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola cuarta: de Jovino escrita desde el Paular," op. cit., p. 185.

de la virtud guardada! ¡Oh dicha, nunca
de los tristes mundanos conocida!
¡Oh monte impenetrable! ¡Oh bosque umbrío!
¡Oh valle deleitoso! ¡Oh solitaria
taciturna mansión!¹³³

Thus Jovellanos links virtue and nature to happiness. It is nature which offers man a life free from the corruption and vice of the world; it is nature which extends to man an inner tranquility and peace of mind and spirit; it is nature which inspires man to contemplate God. In short, it is nature which indeed inspires a virtuous life--a life which in turn brings happiness:

Verdes campos, florida y ancha vega,
donde Bernesga pródigo reparte
su onda cristalina; alegres prados,
antiguos y altos chopos, que su orilla
bordáis en torno. ¡Ah, cuánto gozo, cuánto
a vuestra vista siente el alma mía!
¡Cuán alegres mis ojos se derraman
sobre tanta hermosura!¹³⁴

According to Jovellanos, only **virtue** can make us happy and nowhere is this happiness more apparent than in man's closeness to nature.

Entonces sí que de naturaleza

¹³³Ibid., pp. 185-186.

¹³⁴Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola quinta: A Batilo," op. cit., pp. 194-195.

gozaría el espectáculo, subiendo
desde él a contemplar el sumo Artífice,
que con benigna omnipotente mano
tantas lumbreras encendió en el cielo
para aumentar su gloria, y en la tierra
tanta belleza y tantos ricos dones
en bien del hombre derramó piadoso.
¡Ah!, desdichado el que a tan alta dicha
y inefable consuelo abrir no puede
su duro corazón, y no conoce
que no hay desdicha en la virtud, y sólo
la virtud santa puede hacer dichosos.¹³⁵

¹³⁵ Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola novena:
Jovino a Posidonio," op. cit., p. 317.

CHAPTER IV: HAPPINESS AND FRIENDSHIP

Since ancient times, friendship has been an important topic of speculation for both the trained mind of the philosopher and his less erudite counterpart, the concerned layman. The theme appears to have flourished as early as the fourth century B. C. among Hellenic thinkers. Indeed, friendships have always formed an integral part of both Greek history and legend: Achilles and Patroclus, Ajax and Teucer, Orestes and Pylades, Socrates and Alcibiades, Epiminondas and Pelopidas. Even the word for friendship philia is itself derived from the verb philo, to love. Although several Greek philosophers had previously undertaken a close scrutiny of friendship--notably Pythagoras as early as the sixth century B. C.¹--it was Aristotle, almost two centuries later, who made this theme a central part of the Nicomachean Ethics. In fact, it is the only singular topic which occupies two complete books of this

¹See George A. Panichos, Epicurus. (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1967), p. 13.

treatise--namely books eight and nine-- and this fact alone has stimulated much critical speculation: "Surprise has often been expressed that so large a portion of a treatise on ethics should be devoted to the subject of friendship, and reasons have been sought to account for this. But we may be content to reflect that without this discussion of Philia the Ethics would have nothing to say on the subject of love, and that would indeed appear a surprising omission."² And yet the number of pages devoted to friendship can only hint at its importance. Friendship, according to Aristotle, is a necessity of human nature, a necessity considered a fundamental virtue and a practical assistance for man:

After what we have said³, a discussion of friendship would naturally follow, since it is a virtue or implies virtue, and it is besides most necessary with a view to living. For without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods; even rich men and those in possession of office and of dominative power are thought to need

² Aristotle, The Ethics of Aristotle, Trans. by A.K. Thomson, (London: Penguin Books, 1974), p. 227.

³ Aristotle had just completed his discussion of continence and incontinence, pleasure and pain in Book VII. He begins Book VIII with the quoted text.

friends most of all; for what is the use of such prosperity without the opportunity of beneficence, which is exercised chiefly and in its most laudable form towards friends? Or how can prosperity be guarded and preserved without friends?⁴

Throughout Book VIII Aristotle cites many examples of various types of friendships--those involving the rich, the poor, equals, unequals, the old, the young. In Book IX, he concentrates more on the pleasure man can derive from the different forms of friendship. A basic topic of discussion is whether friends are a prerequisite for happiness. Is happiness sufficient unto itself or are friends still a vital part of man? Aristotle is obviously in sympathy with the latter point of view:

It is also disputed whether the happy man will need friends or not. It is said that those who are supremely happy and self-sufficient have no need of friends; for they have the things that are good, and therefore being self-sufficient they need nothing further, while a friend, being another self, furnishes what a man cannot provide by his own effort;...but it seems strange, when one assigns all good things

⁴ Aristotle, "Ethica Nicomachea", The Works of Aristotle, vol. IX, trans. by W.D. Ross, (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 1152.

to the happy man, not to assign friends who are thought the greatest of external goods.⁵

Written by a philosopher who is not often given to the use of superlatives, these words are indeed quite overwhelming. According to Aristotle, man by nature is a social being--an idea we have seen echoed in the poetry of the eighteenth century--and even the happiest of men need friends:

Surely it is strange, too, to make the supremely happy man a solitary; for no one would choose the whole world on the condition of being alone, since man is a political creature and one whose nature is to live with others. Therefore even the happy man lives with others; for he has the things that are by nature good. And plainly it is better to spend his days with friends and good men than with strangers or any chance persons. Therefore the happy man needs friends.⁶

Man according to Aristotle needs friends in order to survive; it is indeed a fallacy to think of the happy man as one isolated from society. Not only do friends afford man the pleasure of company, but they in turn guide man to virtue. Friends lead man to a

⁵Ibid., p. 1169.

⁶Ibid., p. 1169.

more active life which subsequently conditions the "good" man to choose virtue: that is, if man selects the "company of the good":

Further, men think that the happy man ought to live pleasantly. Now if he were a solitary, life would be hard for him; for by oneself it is not easy to be continuously active; but with others and towards others it is easier. With others therefore his activity will be more continuous, and it is in itself pleasant, as it ought to be for the man who is supremely happy; for a good man qua good delights in virtuous actions and is vexed at vicious ones, as a musical man enjoys beautiful tunes but is pained at bad ones. A certain training in virtue arises also from the company of the good...⁷

Hence, Aristotle speaks frequently of the "activity of friendship"⁸ and designates friendship as an almost sacred bond between two people. Friendship is social interaction: a friend besides giving pleasure must teach, instruct, guide--a perfect illustration of the dulci et utile concept.⁹ This theme is reflected in the eighteenth century in the substantial number of epistles

⁷ Ibid., p. 1169b

⁸ Ibid., p. 1157a.

⁹ For Aristotle's exposition of this theme, see "Ethica Nicomachea", op. cit., p. 1155ff.

written which often appear overly didactic and quite pedantic.¹⁰ Aristotle even condones "self-love" (a prefiguration of the eighteenth century idea of amour-de-soi) insofar as it benefits others. As long as man acts "nobly" he can indeed profit from this type of love since it is all for the common good:

Whence it follows that he is most truly a lover of self, of another type than that which is a matter of reproach, and as different from that as living according to a rational principle is from living as passion dictates, and desiring what is noble from desiring what seems advantageous. Those, then, who busy themselves in an exceptional degree with noble actions all men approve and praise; and if all were to strive towards what is noble and strain every nerve to do the noblest deeds, everything would be for the common weal, and everyone would secure for himself the goods that are greatest, since virtue is the greatest of goods. Therefore the good man should be a lover of self (for he will both himself profit by doing noble acts, and will benefit his fellows) but the wicked man should not.¹¹

Unlike Aristotelian philosophy which extolled the

¹⁰ These letters will be studied in the forthcoming pages.

¹¹

Aristotle, op. cit., p. 1169a.

importance of friendships based upon virtue between good men, the Epicureans accentuated a more practical or rather selfish approach to friendship. Although Epicurus, as is constantly being misconstrued, was not a hedonist in the strict sense, neither, as we shall see, did he favor abnegation or denial as a way of life. And even those who attempt to underscore the importance that Epicurus attached to virtue (which according to him is ataraxia or tranquility of the soul) must recall that its (virtue) ultimate value is estimated by the philosopher "according to its power of producing pleasure."¹² Thus it may appear quite strange that such a philosophy, predicated strongly if not exclusively on the importance of pleasure, should consider friendship an essential part of its thought: "Of all the things which wisdom provides for the happiness of the whole life, by far the most important is the acquisition of friendship."¹³ This discrepancy is easily explained. Epicurus's concept of friendship is filled with egoistic considerations "namely that without friendship a man cannot live a secure and tranquil life, while on the other hand friendship gives pleasure.

¹²Frederick Copleston, A History of Philosophy, vol. I, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Inc., 1962), p. 153.

¹³Ibid., p. 154.

Friendship rests, therefore, on an egoistic basic, the thought of personal advantage."¹⁴ Thus the concept of virtue, inextricably linked to true friendship by Aristotle, is almost totally eclipsed by self-interest and although this egoism was later modified by the "Epicurean doctrine that an unselfish affection arises in the course of the friendship and that in a friendship a wise man loves the friend as he does himself,"¹⁵ nonetheless, any activity which disturbs man's personal tranquility (ataraxia) is in itself harmful and in no way condoned by the Epicureans.

Perhaps no other group of philosophers attached such vital importance to friendship as the Stoic thinkers, and indeed no other philosopher appears to be as imbued in Stoic thought as Seneca. According to this great Roman theorist, man does not live solely for himself but rather for others: "Alteri vivas oportet, si vis tibi viveri."¹⁶ Seneca also expounds upon a principle which he calls sensus communis by which man displays almost instinctive

¹⁴Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 154.

¹⁶Seneca, Epistolae Morales ad Lucilium, vol. II, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 138.

dedication to sharing and progressing with his fellow man. Friendship is total devotion and loyalty to another, and as the Spartan thinkers centuries before him, he insists on the primacy of friendship to all else--including death: "For what reason do I seek a friend? To have someone to die for, someone to follow into exile, someone for whom I would risk my very life."¹⁷ Senecan philosophy, concentrated fundamentally on ethical concerns, was quick to recognize that man needs friends--though not in the utilitarian and egoistic sense of the Epicureans: "No one is strong enough to emerge from folly by himself; someone must lend him a hand, someone must lead him out."¹⁸

* * * * *

Until modern times very little had been added concerning the basic notion of friendship. The Classical philosophers seemed to have set the stage for the eighteenth century definition and propagation of this "ancient" topic. One other writer, however, himself greatly influenced by the Greek philosophers, is worthy of note, namely the sixteenth century essayist, Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592). Though perhaps contributing nothing new to what has been said about friendship, he

¹⁷Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 53.

did however, "revive" the topic so to speak and did indeed alter its perspective. Unlike his classical ancestors whose theories on friendship oftentimes resulted in puerile idealizations, Montaigne concentrates on more human and hence, real dimensions of the topic. A friend is not only one who would risk his life in time of need, but rather one who can listen attentively to his fellow man's problems, a confidant of sorts. Friendship loses its almost superhuman definitions imposed by the classical preceptors in favor of a more humanist concept which is able to respond to the vital exigences demanded by a less abstract ideology. For Montaigne, involvement was the cornerstone of friendship. We can clearly see how this concept differs quite radically from the classical notion. W. W. Tarn, in his widely known study, Hellenistic Civilisation, notes how the Epicurean concept of friendship stressed a withdrawal from society rather than an active commitment. He describes Epicurus's followers as forming "little isles of quietude apart, bound together by the friendship he so stressed; except that they lived among their fellows and enjoyed family life, one might call them, spiritually, the first monks."¹⁹

Although Montaigne's concept of friendship was indeed one which emphasized performance as opposed to

¹⁹W. W. Tarn, Hellenistic Civilisation, (London: E. Arnold and Co., 1927), p. 234.

isolation, one cannot help but note the rather exclusionist basis of his ideas: women for example, according to the French thinker, are not suited for friendship:

Joint qu'à dire vray la suffisance ordinaire des femmes n'est pas pour répondre à cette conference et communication, nourrisse de cette sainte couture; ny leur ame ne semble assez ferme pour soustenir l'estreinte d'un neud si pressé et si durable. Et certes, sans cela, s'il se pouvoit dresser une telle accointance, libre et volontaire, où, non seulement les ames eussent cette entiere jouyssance, mais encores où les corps eussent part à l'alliance, où l'homme fust engagé tout entier: il est certain que l'amitié en seroit plus pleine et plus comble. Mais ce sexe par nul exemple n'y est encore peu arriver, et par le commun consentement des escholes anciennes en est rejetté.²⁰

Friendship, according to Montaigne, is a viable alternative to marriage--an institution which he severely criticizes for its outside intanglements and faithlessness to the two people involved:

Quant aux mariages, outre ce que c'est un marche que n'a que l'entrée libre (sa durée estant contrainte et forcée, dependant d'ailleurs que de nostre vouloir), et marché

²⁰Michel de Montaigne, "De l'amitié," Essais de Michel de Montaigne, Pierre Villey, ed., (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), pp. 186-187.

qui ordinairement se fait à autres fins, il y survient mille fusées estrangeres à desmeler parmy, suffisantes à rompre le fil et troubler le cours d'une vive affection; la où, en l'amitié, il n'y a affaire ny commerce, que d'elle mesme.²¹

Not only is marriage censured but love for a woman is regarded as a mere whimsical fancy; after citing several examples of the feeling of friendship, Montaigne attempts in vain, to compare this to love:

D'y comparer l'affection envers les femmes, quoy qu'elle naisse de nostre choix, on ne peut, ny la loger en ce rolle. Son feu, je le confesse, est plus actif, plus cuisant et plus aspre. Mais c'est un feu temeraire et volage, ondoyant et divers, feu de fiebvre, sujet à accez et remises, et qui ne nous tient qu'à un coing. En l'amitié, c'est une chaleur generale et universelle, temperée au demeurant et égale, une chaleur constante et rassize, toute douceur et pollissure, qui n'a rien d'aspre et de poignant.²²

It is ironic perhaps that it is Montaigne's concept of friendship--predicated upon constancy, harmony and temperance (mesura) which appeals most directly to the poet of the Enlightenment. Indeed, his influence in the eighteenth century cannot be denied and such

²¹Ibid., p. 186.

²²Ibid., pp. 185-186.

diverse thinkers and writers as Feijóo,²³ Piquer²⁴ and Meléndez Valdés²⁵ (a 1754 London edition of the Essai is among the books listed in his famous library cataloguing), are indebted to him. As we shall see, all the basic tenets of Montaigne's concept of friendship and all its peripheral nuances from misogyny to universal brotherhood are to be found in the Spanish poetry of the Enlightenment.

* * * * *

It is no mere coincidence that the subject of friendship was indeed an important exigency in the eighteenth century. The most immediate cause can perhaps be attributed to what Carmen Martín Gaité calls the "desprestigio del matrimonio."²⁶ Marriage through a series of subtle yet constant social changes had undergone a severe metamorphosis. The more idealistic reasons usually attributed to this union gave way to the more economical and practical demands of the individuals involved: "El matrimonio. . . vemos

²³See I. L. McClelland, Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969), p. 32.

²⁴See Jean Sarrailh, La España ilustrada de la 2ª mitad del siglo XVIII, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1957), p. 425.

²⁵See Georges Demerson, Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, (Madrid: Taurus, 1971), p. 133.

²⁶Carmen Martín Gaité, Usos amorosos del dieciocho en España, (Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1972), p. 116ff.

concebido abiertamente como un negocio."²⁷ Even "el dulce Batilo" fell victim to this type of sham upon his marriage to Doña María Andrea del Cocco.²⁸ Matrimony was often a strictly financial agreement rather than a spiritual or love relationship. The woman's desires became totally sublimated to the often whimsical fancies of her husband and as Carmen Martín Gaité notes, "no les ofrecían más alternativa que la de aburrirse o pecar."²⁹ Even the cortejo, perhaps a reflexive social defense mechanism to combat this boredom "imported" from Italy around the mid-point of the eighteenth century, had degenerated, oftentimes under the guise of a more accepted platonic friendship, into a mere sexual relationship between a married woman and her suitor: "A finales del siglo quedaba bastante claro para todo el mundo que el cortejo pertenecía más bien al mundo de la carne."³⁰ Thus what had originated as an alternative to a hackneyed existence of an "ama de casa" contributed greatly to the even further decadence of the matrimonial system: "A fin de siglo. . . el adulterio reinaba impunemente en todas partes y la separación o discordia de los

²⁷Ibid., p. 130.

²⁸See Georges Demerson, op. cit., vol. I, p. 183ff.

²⁹Carmen Martín Gaité, op. cit., p. 22.

³⁰Ibid., p. 124.

matrimonios eran los males que acompañaban a tanto vicio."³¹ Even such reknown figures as the Conde de Cabarrús were proposing divorce as a viable alternative to the strife caused by the loss of confidence in marriage.³²

In addition to the faltering prestige of the matrimony in the eighteenth century, women were also severely chastized. Echoing what Montaigne had said two centuries earlier, the noted French chronicler and traveler Jean François Bourgoing was also quick to realize that the Spanish woman was incapable of friendship.³³ Even the more cultured woman of the century often fell victim to her own vanity: "¿Tenían acaso la culpa las mujeres de no saber ver en otra mujer más que una posible rival y en un hombre más que un posible adorador?"³⁴ Thus the literary tertulia, presided over by women and so successful in France and Italy, was often a mere pretext in Spain to lucirse: "En realidad, las tertulias dieciochescas presididas por mujeres no tenían contenido intelectual alguno."³⁵

³¹Ibid., p. 127.

³²Ibid., pp. 128ff.

³³Ibid., p. 200.

³⁴Ibid., p. 201.

³⁵Ibid., p. 200.

Hence the rather despretigious role of marriage and women left the ilustrado with two alternatives: tacitly approve the by now rather licentious social system of the cortejo or seek refuge in a more platonic, less libertine atmosphere. Although the first "solution" was not without its adherents, the intelligentsia of the Enlightenment was more inclined toward the latter alternative. Is it a mere coincidence that social societies (economical, historical, literary) flourished throughout the eighteenth century?³⁶ And is it also a mere coincidence that while men gathered together to discuss collectively all topics of common concern the number of marriages had declined quite considerably from 1,825 in 1750 to 1,548 in 1776?³⁷ These numerous sociedades formed throughout Spain and the enormous correspondence resulting from endless meetings, illustrates how the Spanish literato had indeed developed an entire life style outside the home. Thus, friendship had offered man an alternative beyond the confines of physical love.

* * * * *

The idea of friendship as a higher manifestation of love is not a new one. Even the Old Testament records an example in David's lament over the death of

³⁶See Alborg, Historia de la literatura española, vol. III, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, S.A., 1970), pp. 22-136.

³⁷Carmen Martín Gaité, op. cit., p. 129.

Jonathan: "I am distressed for thee, my brother
Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me:
thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of
women."³⁸ As the eighteenth century approached, it
was precisely this "love of women" which was criti-
cized on many sides. The great seventeenth century
English essayist Francis Bacon, in a well-known essay,
"Of Marriage and Single Life," considered the married
life an obstacle to virtue and economic prosperity.
"He that hath wife and children hath given hostages
to fortune; for they are impediments to great enter-
prizes, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the
best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have
proceeded from the unmarried or childless men which
both in affection and means have married and endowed
the public."³⁹ Love and marriage seem to interfere
with the ordinary business of man's daily living.
Called a "child of folly,"⁴⁰ Bacon "banished" love
from any serious consideration: "They do best who,
if they cannot but admit love, yet make it keep quarter,
and sever it wholly from their serious affairs and

³⁸"The Second Book of Samuel," The Holy Bible,
(Philadelphia: The National Bible Press, 1957), p. 360.

³⁹Francis Bacon, "Of Marriage and Single Life,"
Essays, R. F. Jones, ed., (New York: Odyssey Press,
1950), p. 318.

⁴⁰Bacon, "Of Love," op. cit., p. 319.

actions of life. For if it checks once with business, it troubleth men's fortunes, and maketh men that they can nowise be true to their own ends."⁴¹ Condemning licentious, lustful love and yet recognizing the importance of marital love, he nonetheless acknowledges friendship as its most perfect manifestation: "Nuptual love maketh mankind, friendly love perfecteth it, but wonton love corrupteth and embaseth it."⁴² Although Bacon's influence was considerable in the eighteenth century--let us simply note here his influence on Feijóo⁴³ and Meléndez Valdés⁴⁴ --we must remember that the English writer was nevertheless writing well within the literary and ideological tradition of the seventeenth century--a tradition which boasted misogyny in all fields of literature and in all countries: Shakespeare, Molière, Quevedo. However, there is perhaps one aspect of Bacon's work which is indeed mirrored and intensified in the Siglo de las luces. If the seventeenth century considered the woman an object of scorn, a creature

⁴¹Ibid., p. 319.

⁴²Ibid., p. 319.

⁴³I. L. McClelland, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

⁴⁴Besides a copy of Bacon's work found in Meléndez's library--De augmentes scientionum--another study concerning Bacon (perhaps indicating a further interest in his writings on the part of the Spanish poet) entitled Analyze de la philosophie du chancelier Bacon, was also among the tomes in his personal library. Meléndez mentions Bacon by name in several poems including the "Epistola IX" in which he refers to the "gran Bacon" as an "antorcha luminosa." See Demerson, Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, vol. I, p. 120.

of frivolity, one incapable of anything serious and hence not to be taken seriously, Bacon, in a more erudite and somber tone, (as Robert M. Adams notes: his essays are more solemn and resolute than those of Montaigne,⁴⁵) scrutinizes and analyzes certain peripheral topics related to the woman (namely love and friendship) which will undoubtedly have greater resonance in the following century. Curiously these two words, as we will see, are almost antonyms in the Enlightenment: that is, a distinction is drawn between love of a woman and love of a friend. Beginning with Feijóo we will examine how the study of love often aroused scandal among the moralists and how the theme of friendship slowly "replaced" that of love, especially in the more sentimental poetry of the last third of the eighteenth century. We will also examine how these two concepts became polarized, that is love was considered the result of exacerbated passions, the almost irrational use of man's nature (thus Feijóo writes an essay entitled "Remedios del amor"⁴⁶) while Meléndez Valdés and others including Cadalso and Cienfuegos saw in friendship the antithetical life

⁴⁵See Robert M. Adams, The Norton Anthology of English Verse, vol. I, ed. M. H. Abrams, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1962), p. 1037.

⁴⁶Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, Teatro crítico universal, Tomo VII, Discurso XVI, ed. Agustón Millares Carlo, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1966), p. 137.

style to love--one imbued with virtue and feeling, always well within the confines of reason and good taste. Thus it is friendship which epitomizes the more "enlightened" part of the Ilustración, for it is friendship--devoid of the perils of physical love--which stresses moderation and harmony among men. Indeed, the considerable appeal of friendship as a poetic theme and as a vivencia or life style, is due in part to the rather exaggerated notions concerning love.

* * * * *

Again it is Benito Jerónimo Feijóo to whom we must turn for the earliest definitions and hypothesis concerning love. In his well-known essay "Causas de amor," he discusses not only the causes but also the effects of love. Love, he maintains, is simply unbridled passion, the primordial mover of all other passions and perhaps the prime motivating force of the human condition.

Un afecto [love], que es el primer móvil de todas las acciones humanas, príncipe de todas las pasiones, monarca cuyo vasto imperio no reconoce en la tierra algunos límites, máquina con que se revuelven y trastornan reinos enteros, ídolo que en todas las religiones tiene adoradores; en fin, astro fatal, de cuya influencia pende la fortuna de todos, pues según

sus varios aspectos. . . a unos hace eternamente dichosos, a otros eternamente infelices.⁴⁷

Although Feijóo's concept of love seemingly allows man to be "eternamente dichosos," his true concept of love deviates considerably from the above definition--a definition which in effect emphasizes mankind as "eternamente infelices." Feijóo categorizes love into three types: "apetito puro, amor intelectual puro, y amor patético;"⁴⁸ yet in spite of his tacit "approval" of "amor intelectual puro" which he refutes as "mero ejercicio del alma racional,"⁴⁹ he vehemently condemns the others since each rely exclusively on the senses and human passions for nourishment. In his rather sophomoric analysis of each type of love, Feijóo bases his opinion on philosophical speculation. His approach is often puerile, overflowing with vague generalizations. Each definition itself varies, according to Feijóo, depending upon the situation, the person and other persons involved whose feelings are never clearly defined. Even the "amor patético," the love which becomes the central theme of the essay and the love most bitterly attacked by Feijóo, is often misunderstood through

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 137.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 163.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 163.

rhetorical diatribe in which the concept itself experiences a series of changes: ". . .y según los varios objetos que mira, ya es divino, ya humano, ya celeste, ya terreno, ya santo, ya perverso, ya torpe, ya puro, ya ángel, ya demonio."⁵⁰ If at times, the significance of certain types of love is obscured by verbal conjecture, the main message is clear: love is a destructive force in man's life, one which can only be cured through reason and moderation. This idea is clearly seen in another essay of the Teatro crítico, "Remedios del amor," in which Feijóo attempts to alleviate this "illness" by offering a series of remedies: "Habiendo explicado en el discurso pasado la enfermedad, conviene que en éste tratemos del remedio."⁵¹ Once the person realizes his sickness, Feijóo proposes a rather simplistic and impractical cure. Since, according to the Father Master, it is the imagination which originates our misfortune, since it is the imagination which creates and nurtures our passions, it is here that the cure must be initiated. The remedy is based on a series of substitutions conceived by our imagination in which man replaces the passionate imagery occasioned by love with other thoughts which captivate his mind, thus smothering the uncontrollable

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 163-164.

⁵¹Feijóo, "Remedios del amor," op. cit., p. 175.

love:

Quiero, pues, que la imaginación de un objeto haga con la imaginación de otro objeto lo que hace la presencia de uno con la presencia de otro; esto es, que la imaginación de un objeto, o terrible, o irritante, o melancólico, temple o extinga la impresión que hace en el sujeto apasionado el objeto amable.⁵²

Through a series of "consciousness raising" efforts in which man becomes aware of love in relationship to this "new object" and by utilizing an almost Pavlovian technique of conditioned responses, the "victim" is literally trained to associate love with something disagreeable⁵³ which will eventually lead him to a "cure."

Lo que ha de hacer, pues el enfermo de amor que quiere curarse es, lo primero, elegir un objeto, o terrible, o lastimoso, o de otra especie; aquel que ha experimentado más apto a conmover su ánimo o que más altamente la conmueve. Lo segundo, ejercitarse algo en enlazar la idea de éste con

⁵²Ibid., p. 199.

⁵³This same idea, under the title of Esthetic Realism, is being practiced at Johns Hopkins University in the readjustment of certain sexual responses. Through a series of pictorial images, the patient learns to condition his responses to various external stimuli. Though the mechanics of such a technique were, of course, beyond the possible scope of Peijóo's investigations, the basic idea of conditioning man's emotional responses is the same.

la del objeto amado, lo cual se hace llevando algunas veces el pensamiento de aquel a este; y esto hará a su arbitrio siempre que quiera. No será menester repetir mucho este ejercicio. Con diez o doce veces que lo haga, acaso con tres o cuatro, y aun es posible que con una sola, se liguén, respecto de su mente, las dos ideas, de modo que ya le sea imposible jamás en el objeto amado sin que al momento ocurra a su imaginación el lastimoso o terrible.⁵⁴

What is clear from Feijóo's essay is (1) that love sustained by passion is an illness and (2) love is something to be cured if the individual is to function properly in society. Also Feijóo makes no attempt to distinguish between various types of love: love for a friend, love for a wife, etc.; for even friendship when not bound by the limits of buen gusto can also cause man despair. To support his argument, he reminds us of St. Augustine's Confessions:

Vense en el libro IV de sus [St. Augustine's] Confesiones las angustias y lamentos que le costó la muerte de un amigo. Apenas en alguno de los más ponderativos poetas se leen expresiones más vivas del dolor en la pérdida del objeto amado. Dice, entre otras cosas, que aborrecía su propia vida porque

⁵⁴Feijóo, "Remedios del amor," op. cit., pp. 201-202.

le faltaba la mitad del alma, y que,
con todo, temía la muerte sólo porque
en él no acabase de morir el amigo.⁵⁵

* * * * *

As Carmen Martín Gaité observes, love, as seen in its eighteenth century context was a "sinónimo de inseguridad, de desvelo, de riesgo."⁵⁶ This was precisely the concept of love which had been seen in the Comedia of the Siglo de Oro and was being propagated in the Siglo de las luces by such writers as Ramón de la Cruz.⁵⁷ Love was considered within a broad spectrum; it transcended limits imposed upon it by society. It was no longer seen as an integral and perhaps exclusive property of marriage. In fact, the two ideas were believed to be antagonistic:

Uno [love] era el campo de la pasión, de la mentira, de la tempestad; el otro [matrimony] el de la templanza y la virtud. El matrimonio se lo podían hacer ver a una mujer como santo y provechoso, y ella elegirlo sin vacilar. Pero lo que no cabía era confundir ese campo con el otro; eran irreconciliables. El amor era deseo de libertad, de salir, de quemarse; el matrimonio sumisión, medida, virtud. El amor, en una palabra, se oponía a la

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 176.

⁵⁶Carmen Martín Gaité, op. cit., p. 149.

⁵⁷Ibid., see pp. 156-157.

virtud.⁵⁸

The fact that in society love was seen as antagonistic to virtue had a considerable effect on the poetry of the eighteenth century. In an era in which an important emphasis was placed on man's moderate behavior in accordance with the norms of good taste and reason, a concept which seems to exemplify passion, liberty and nonconformity would certainly not be well received by many writers of the Enlightenment.

Perhaps one of the best examples of this disapprobation of love as a poetic theme can be seen in the works of Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos. In the dedication of his verses to his brother Don Francisco de Paula, written in 1779, he criticizes his own love poetry as unworthy of the serious poet: "Pero vuelvo a decir, sin embargo, que la poesía amorosa me parece poco digna de un hombre serio; y aunque yo por mis años pudiera resistir todavía este título, no pudiera por mi profesión, que me ha sujetado desde una edad temprana a las más graves y delicadas obligaciones."⁵⁹ Not only is Jovellanos apologetic for his amatory verses, but he also fears that having written such poetry may have

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 155.

⁵⁹Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Poesías, José Caso González, ed., (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1961), p. 90.

been injurious to his profession: "Y ve aquí la razón que me ha obligado a ocultar cuidadosamente mis versos, conociendo que pues al componerlos había seguido el impulso de los años y las pasiones, no debía hacer una doble injuria a mi profesión con la flaqueza de publicarlos."⁶⁰ Jovellanos, preoccupied with the opinions of el qué dirán, realizes that this poetry reveals an aspect of him, which, for professional reasons, must always remain hidden, for according to the eighteenth century ethic man's private life is also exposed to scrutiny and criticism. Love, passion, intense feeling therefore are simply unacceptable in poetry since they are "unacceptable" in one's personal life.

Estas razones, que me obligaron a entregar al fuego la mayor parte de mis versos y a sepultar en el olvido esos pocos, que por no sé qué casualidad se libraron de él, deben obligarte a ti también a ser muy circunspecto en el uso de esta confianza. Mis versos contienen una pequeña historia de mis amores y flaquezas. . . . Por lo común a cualquiera de estas composiciones sigue un pronto arrepentimiento de haberlas hecho. Y apenas se desvanece el entusiasmo con que se escribieron, cuando empieza a mirarlas

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 90-91.

con desprecio el mismo que las produjo. Por eso, si después de haberlos leído quisieres quemarlos, podrás hacerlo a tu salvo, pues nunca estarán más secretos que cuando se hayan reducido a ceniza.⁶¹

What prompts Jovellanos to this decision is not only an exaggerated poetic awareness of the theme of love but the realization that this type of conduct is unacceptable to a man of his high position:

Dirás acaso que en esto he pensado con demasiada delicadeza, y lo mismo que he dicho en favor del uso de la poesía ligera en los primeros años, te inclinará tal vez a desaprobársela. Pero debes considerar, que aunque las obligaciones del hombre en la vida privada son iguales en todos los estados, su pública conducta debe variar según ellos. Los hombres se revisten de tales personalidades hacia el público por su profesión y sus destinos, que lo que es en unos una amable galantería, pasa justamente en otros por una liviandad reprehensible. Entre todos son los magistrados los que están más obligados a guardar unas costumbres austeras, porque el público tiene un derecho a ser gobernado por hombres buenos, y por lo mismo quiere que los

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 91-92.

que mandan lo parezcan; exige de nosotros un porte juicioso y una conducta irrepreensible; quiere que le dirijamos con nuestra doctrina, y que le edifiquemos con nuestro ejemplo.⁶²

Love simply did not afford man "una conducta irrepreensible." This repressive attitude of Jovellanos did not restrict itself to this prologue. His famous and praiseworthy "Epístola del Paular,"⁶³ known only in its second version until 1960, is a formidable example of Jovellanos's almost paranoid attitude toward love. The poem, written in 1779, is precisely the type of poetry that the writer had criticized in his dedication to his brother. Jovellanos, in the midst of a spiritual crisis precipitated by Enardi's (this poetic name is never clarified and her identity remains a mystery) infidelities, contemplates the quietude of the monastery in which he hopes to find the inner tranquility he so desperately needs. He rejects the outside world and the pain and anguish caused by love:

Conozco bien que fuera de este asilo
sólo me guarda el hado sinrazones,
crudos desdenes, fieros desengaños,

⁶²Ibid., p. 91.

⁶³For a brief summation and critical appraisal of the poem by such writers as Azorín and Gerardo Diego, see Jovellanos, op. cit., p. 461.

susto y dolor; empero todavía
a estar en él no puedo resolverme.
No puedo resolverme, y despechado,
sigo el impulso del fatal destino,
que a tanta ruina y tanto mal arrastra.
Sigo su fiero impulso, y llevo siempre
por todas partes fija en mi memoria
la imagen enemiga, y en mi pecho
del crudo amor la flecha atravesada.
De amor y angustia el alma malherida,
pido a la muda soledad consuelo
y con dolientes quejas la importuno.
Salgo al ameno valle, subo al monte,
sigo del claro río las corrientes,
busco la fresca y deleitosa sombra,
corro por todas partes, y no encuentro
en parte alguna la quietud perdida.⁶⁴

The poem, which mirrors a more romantic appraisal of human desperation, is a song of inquietude. The monastery, itself a refuge from the world, a place whose tranquility Jovellanos wishes to emulate, affords the poet little comfort. The night, whose darkness obliterates the physical setting, does little to ease the pain. On the contrary, the darkness serves as a lugubrious setting in which Jovellanos is reminded that geographical isolation is not enough. He must rid himself of the "mundanal ruido"—a "ruido" which even

⁶⁴Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola Cuarta: De Jovino a Anfriso, escrita desde el Paular," op. cit., pp. 176-177.

penetrates the thickness of the walls of the monastery of Paular:

Llega en tanto la noche, y con su manto
cobija el ancho mundo. Entonces vuelvo
a los medrosos claustros. De una escasa
luz el distante y pálido reflejo
guía por ellos mis inciertos pasos.
¡Oh fuerza del ejemplo milagrosa!,
en medio del horror y del silencio
mi corazón palpita, en mi cabeza
se erizan los cabellos, se estremecen
mis carnes, y discurre por los miembros
un súbito temor que los embarga.

Parece que oigo que del centro oscuro
sale una voz medrosa, y que rompiendo
el eterno silencio, así me dice:
"Huye de aquí, profano, tú que llevas
"de ideas mundanales lleno el pecho,
"huye de esta mansión, santo refugio
"do la virtud contrita y penitente
"vive escondida; huye y no profanes
"con tu planta sacrílega este asilo".⁶⁵

Again we have an illustration of love as an antonym for virtue. Jovellanos no longer feels welcome at the monastery since he is too imbued with the passions of love ("ideas mundanales"). The virtuous examples of the monks offer him no consolation; while his mind is filled with thoughts of love, rest is impossible.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 180.

. . .voy cruzando
los silenciosos tránsitos, y llego
por fin a mi morada, donde ni hallo
el ansiado reposo, ni recobran
la suspirada calma mis sentidos.
Lleno de congojosos pensamientos
paso la triste y perezosa noche
en molesta vigilia, sin que cierre
mis párpados el sueño, ni mitiguen
sus regalados bálsamos mi pena.
Vuelve por fin con la risueña aurora
la luz aborrecida, y en pos de ella
el claro día a publicar mi llanto
y dar nueva materia al dolor mio.⁶⁶

In the second version of the "Epístola del Paular," published in 1781, Jovellanos eliminated all references to Enarda and love. Entire poetic phrases were altered in accordance with this revision.

Donde se leía "pecho esclavo del amor" se lee ahora "los parciales del placer"; donde se hablaba de "amor" se habla de "afán", y la "flecha del crudo amor" es simplemente "la ansiada libertad"; al bosque iba antes a "llorar tibiezas de una ingrata" y ahora a "pensar en su cruel destino". . . . Ahora el poeta que se adentra en el bosque umbrío no lo hace para entregarse a solas, en un rapto de melancolía romántica, al pensamiento de sus desgracias amorosas,

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 180-181.

sino para sentir más de cerca, también románticamente, los males de la vida azarosa del mundo; el hombre que experimenta en su cuerpo el horror del claustro silencioso no es el amante despreciado, sino el que ansioso de paz quisiera encontrarla en aquel retiro, y no puede, porque le llaman la gloria, la dicha y el aplauso.⁶⁷

The fact that there was indeed a second version, one in which all traces of love had been carefully removed, further explains the already quoted letter written by Jovellanos to his brother. Whether for professional or literary reasons, the poet felt very strongly about expressing or expounding upon love in his poetry. One might be tempted to think that this is perhaps in adherence to the eighteenth century norms of good taste and moderation. Yet, Jovellanos's poetry is far from dispassionate. In a famous elegy entitled, "A la ausencia de Marina" written circa 1770, Jovellanos again elaborates upon the feelings of the despairing lover; passion dominates the entire poem:

¡Ah! ¡Si pudiera en este aciago instante,
sobre las alas del amor llevado,
alcanzarte, Marina, en el camino!
¡Ay! ¡Si le fuera dado acompañarte

⁶⁷ José Caso González in Jovellanos, op. cit., p. 31.

por los áridos campos de la Mancha,
siguiendo el coche en su veloz carrera!

.
¡Ah! ¡Cuán ansioso alguna vez llegara,
envuelto en polvo, hasta tu mismo lado,
y subiendo al estribo te pidiera
que con tu blanca mano mitigases
el ardor de mi frente, o con tus labios
dieses algún recreo a mis fatigas!⁶⁸

In this poem love is nothing short of an obsession.
In his sonnets to "Enarda," he begs her to tell no one
of his passion.

Quiero que mi pasión ¡oh Enarda! sea,
menos de ti, de todos ignorada;
que ande en silencio y sombra sepultada,
y ningún necio mofador la vea.⁶⁹

Love is a mysterious bond to be shared--in secret--
by the lovers.

Amor es un afecto misterioso
que nace entre secretas confianzas,
y muere al filo de mordaz censura;
y sólo aquel que logra, ni envidioso
ni envidiado, cumplir sus esperanzas,
es quien colma su gozo y su ventura.⁷⁰

Ironically both the "Epístola del Paular" and the
sonnet "A Enarda"⁷¹ were written three years after the

⁶⁸Jovellanos, "La ausencia de Marina," op. cit., p. 107.

⁶⁹Jovellanos, "Soneto IV: A Enarda," op. cit., p. 161.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 161.

⁷¹According to Caso González, "A Enarda" 'se redactó a finales de 1778 o en los primeros meses de 1779.'
Ibid., p. 161.

famous "Carta de Jovino a sus amigos salmantinos" (1776) in which he censured precisely this type of poetry. Love is not worthy of poetry and poets must look elsewhere for inspiration.

. . . ¡Siempre, siempre
dará el amor materia a nuestros cantos?
¡De cuántas dignas obras, ay, privamos
a la futura edad por una dulce
pasajera ilusión, por una gloria
frágil y deleznable, que nos roba
de otra gloria inmortal el alto premio!
No, amigos, no; guiados por la suerte
a más nobles objetos, recorramos
en el afán poético materias
dignas de una memoria perdurable.⁷²

As we shall see, Jovellanos was not the only one who deviated from this advice. Meléndez Valdés, who in the same letter was told to forsake his amatory verse in favor of the epic genre, according to the dates of his poems published by Demerson, never really abandoned this theme in his poetry.⁷³ In fact, several poems, perhaps considered too licentious for publication circulated in manuscript form and were never published during the poets lifetime.⁷⁴

⁷²Jovellanos, "Carta de Jovino a sus amigos salmantinos," op. cit., p. 124.

⁷³Georges Demerson, Meléndez Valdés y su tiempo, vol. II, (Madrid: Taurus, 1971), pp. 372-383.

⁷⁴We are referring to Los Besos de amor published for the first time in 1894 by R. Foulché-Delbosc in the Revue Hispanique I, pp. 73-83.

Although the theme of love never actually lost in intensity, the concept often became sublimated in the poetry of the eighteenth century under the guise of friendship. While love was being censured and reproved by Feijóo and Jovellanos, friendship was being exalted as the epitome of virtuous living. And unlike many love poems set in the pastoral world of irreality lacking all transcendency, friendship, as reflected in the hundreds of epistles written during the Enlightenment was considered a vivencia, a way of life, an ethic. More importantly, it was a viable alternative to the desperation and moral corruption of love. Indeed, it was conducive to virtuous living:

. . . vive, amigo
 Al bien, a la virtud; la amistad santa
 Reine por siempre en tu sensible pecho.
 Mas ¡oh! nunca el amor, dulce Jovino,
 Con sus arpones ásperos lo hiera.⁷⁵

Friendship offered man something denied him by passionate love: namely a peaceful, happy existence. In a letter to Iglesias de la Casa, Cadalso describes precisely this way of life--a country setting, good conversation, cherished friends. He situates himself

⁷⁵Alberto Lista, "Epístola a Jovino, elevado a una magistratura," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 314.

"en una aldea saludable y tranquila, con buenos libros y un criado o dos fieles, en la vecindad de los amigos verdaderos a quienes visitaré en su casa o recibiré en la mía; siempre alegres, sociables, comunicándonos todas las especies que nos ocurran o bien de invención propia o bien del trato con los muertos: creciendo en edad ¡qué viejos seremos tan amables y tan buenos!⁷⁶

Cadalso, as well as Meléndez Valdés, Cienfuegos and Alberto Lista considered friendship synonymous with virtue. It was the true road to happiness. This idea is even apparent in Noches lúgubres when Tediato answers Lorenzo's question if it is a friend he is looking for: "¡Amigos! ¡Amistad! Esa virtud sola haría feliz a todo el género humano. Desdichados son los hombres desde el día que la desterraron o que ella los abandonó. Su falta es el origen de todas las turbulencias de la sociedad."⁷⁷ Thus Cadalso underscores the importance of friendship in the attainment of happiness while the lack of this feeling is conducive to social chaos: friendship is a vital force in maintaining social equilibrium.

⁷⁶"Las quince cartas inéditas de Cadalso" in Cadalso: Vida y muerte de un poeta soldado, Felipe Ximenez de Sandoval (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1967), p. 353.

⁷⁷José Cadalso, Noches lúgubres, (Madrid: Anaya, 1970), p. 50.

In Cadalso's poetry we discern perhaps the main function of a friend: he maintains (or at times he helps to regain) the social and even mental equilibrium of the poet often distraught over love. A friend becomes a confidant, a conscience personified in which Cadalso is shown the path of buen gusto through his sincere advice and guidance. In his well-known eglogue entitled "Desdenes de Filis," Dalmiro (Cadalso) laments the absence of his lover:

Así en un bosque el infeliz Dalmiro
Sus quejas amorosas daba al viento,
De verse de su ninfa abandonado.
Lejos de su ganado,
De su cabaña ausente,
En su dolor demente,
De todos y de todas se ausentaba.
Lloraba y sus sollozos duplicaba;
Sólo la soledad apetecía,
Porque ella le imitaba
Con tanta natural melancolía.⁷⁸

Dalmiro is inconsolable ("morirse se veía"⁷⁹) and yet in the midst of his despair, Ortelio, a neighboring shepherd arrives to give comfort to his friend:

Ortelio, por los aires conducido,
Al triste objeto que en los aires daba

⁷⁸José Cadalso, "Desdenes de Filis," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 254.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 254.

Llegó, miró, y prorrumpió en lamentos.
Por su antigua amistad enternecido,
Su pecho al de su amigo ya acercaba;
Ya le daba sabrosos alimentos,
Ya varios condimentos
De yerbas y de flores,
Por sí con sus odores
Sacarle del letargo conseguía;
En vano con dulzura socorría
En sus brazos al triste moribundo;
Morir con el quería;
¡Ya no hay tales amigos en el mundo!⁸⁰

Besides literally comforting the poet with food, flowers, etc., Ortelio is even willing to die for him. Ortelio begs Dalmiro to tell him the cause of his hardship:

¡Oh tierno amigo de este pecho mío!
¡Oh Dalmiro el mejor de los pastores!
Dime la causa de tus graves males.⁸¹

In the dialogue which ensues between the two shepherds--reminiscent of the discourses between el Conde Lucanor and Patronio--Dalmiro speaks of Filis's abandonment. All nature obeys immutable laws--only Filis's heart is mutable:

Ni el río retrocede,
Ni ha mudado la aurora
Su antiguo curso y hora

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 254.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 254.

Ni del ciprés se acaba la tristeza,
Ni en las ciudades fraude y sutileza.
El orden de las cosas no ha variado
En la naturaleza,
Y Filis, sola Filis, se ha mudado.⁸²

Thus love is indeed fleeting, capricious, inconstant. This is the cause of the poet's pain. And yet Ortelio is the symbol of constancy--the eternal listener--one who comforts through the tempered love of friendship:

En todo el mundo no hay consuelo tanto
Como contar a su leal amigo
El motivo del llanto,
Sin arte, sin respeto, sin testigo.⁸³

According to Cadalso, friendship is a virtue only attained by the hombre de bien. As Ben-Beley writes to Nuño in Cadalso's Cartas marruecas:

Cada día me agrada más la noticia
de la continuación de tu amistad con
Gazel mi discípulo. De ella infiero
que ambos sois hombres de bien. Los
malvados no pueden ser amigos. En
vano se juran mil veces mutua amistad
y estrecha unión; en vano trabajan
unidos algún objeto común; nunca
creeré que se quieren.⁸⁴

⁸²Ibid., pp. 254-255.

⁸³Ibid., p. 254.

⁸⁴José Cadalso, Cartas marruecas, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1967), p. 121.

The entire letter (Letter XLVI) is in effect, an essay on friendship in which Cadalso insists the moral rectitude of amity ". . .entre dos corazones rectos la amistad crece con el trato. El recíproco conocimiento de las bellas prendas, que por días se van descubriendo, aumenta la mutua estimación. El consuelo que el hombre bueno recibe viendo crecer el fruto de la bondad de su amigo, le estimula a cultivar más y más la suya propia. Este gozo, que tanto eleva al virtuoso, jamás puede llegar a gozarle, ni aun a conocerle, el malvado."⁸⁵ In accordance with the Enlightenment's affinity for empirical thought, Cadalso insists that his views on friendship are based not only on idle speculation but on first hand experience. "Este es mi dictamen sobre la amistad de los buenos y malos; y no lo fundo sólo en esta especulación, que me parece justa, sino en repetidos ejemplares que abundan en el mundo."⁸⁶ Thus friendship, according to Cadalso, has a two fold purpose: (1) it is an exemplary life style (one more prevalent among the hombres de bien) and (2) it is indeed a virtuous way of life, an ethic to be emulated by all.

These ideas will have particular importance in the

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 122.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 122.

poems of Cadalso's friend and disciple, Juan Meléndez Valdés. This is indeed one literary friendship which cannot be disputed. As Batilo wrote to don Salvador de Mena in 1782:

Sin él, yo no sería hoy nada. Mi gusto, mi afición a los buenos libros, mi talento poético, mi tal cual literatura, todo es suyo. El me cogió en el segundo año de mis estudios, me abrió los ojos, me enseñó, me inspiró este noble entusiasmo de la amistad y de lo bueno, me formó el juicio; hizo conmigo todos los oficios que un buen padre con su hijo más querido.⁸⁷

Meléndez appears to have adequately assimilated his mentor's concept of friendship. Batilo, as Cadalso had done previously, insists on the moral nobility of friendship--it's power to discern good from evil. While acknowledging his literary indebtedness to Dalmiro, he also insists on the protective aspects of friendship: a friend must guide and comfort.

With the possible exception of Alberto Lista, no other major Spanish poet of the eighteenth century dealt so completely with the theme of friendship as Meléndez Valdés: certainly no other poet praised this inextricable

⁸⁷"Carta de Juan Meléndez Valdés a don Salvador de Mena," Salamanca, March 16, 1782 quoted by Valmar in Bosquejo histórico-crítico de la poesía castellana en el siglo XVIII, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. CVIIn.

bond between men as highly and as often as Batilo. From his less serious verse forms such as the letrilla to his Odas filosóficas y sagradas, his praise of friendship remains constant. In many of these poems literary echoes of Dalmiro are quite apparent. In an epistle to Jovino dated November, 1797, entitled "Al excelentísimo señor don Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, en su feliz elevación al ministerio universal de gracia y justicia," what begins as a congratulatory letter often changes to an exposé on the glories of friendship:

¡Gloria! ¡Felicidad! Jovino amado,
Dulce amigo, mitad del alma mía.⁸⁸

Throughout the first half of the poem, Meléndez accentuates the happiness he feels upon hearing of Jovellanos's political success. Yet the focus of the poem promptly changes and Batilo himself is now the central theme. Again he expounds upon the feeling of friendship, his indebtedness to Jovellanos, and in words reminiscent of Cadalso, insists that a friend is one who exemplifies a virtuous existence, an existence which Meléndez had learned from Jovino:

. . . clamaré, inflamado
De un fuego celestial, fuego en que arden

⁸⁸ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Al excelentísimo señor don Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, en su feliz elevación al ministerio universal de gracia y justicia," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 209.

Nuestros dos pechos, inmortal ejemplo
De fino amor y fraternal ternura:
"Este es mi amigo, y me crió, y su labio
Me enseñó la virtud, y al lado suyo
A ser bueno aprendí, y amar los hombres.
El en mi seno el delicioso anhelo
Prendió y la sed del bien. . ."89

In an elegy to Jovellanos, entitled "El melancólico, a Jovino,"⁹⁰ Meléndez Valdés exhibits a more sentimental and at times desperate need for friendship. Although written three years earlier (1794)⁹¹ than the previously discussed poem, the work is indeed more romantic in tone. The lugubrious quality of the first stanza prefigures the entire mood of the poem:

Cuando la sombra fúnebre y el luto
De la lóbrega noche el mundo envuelven
En silencio y horror; cuando en tranquilo
Reposo los mortales las delicias
Gustan de un blando saludable sueño;
Tu amigo solo, en lágrimas bañado,
Vela, Jovino, y al áudoso brillo
De una cansada luz, en tristes ayes,
Contigo alivia su dolor profundo.⁹²

⁸⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, op. cit., pp. 209-210.

⁹⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "El melancólico, a Jovino," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 250.

⁹¹Demerson in an attempt to date the poem, believes that it was written in 1794, no later than June. Georges Demerson, op. cit., p. 380.

⁹²Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Elegía II: "El melancólico, a Jovino, op. cit., p. 250.

Meléndez is indeed anguished and seeks solace from his friend:.

. . . ¡Ay Jovino!
¡Ay amigo! ¡ay de mí! Tú solo a un triste
Leal confidente en su miseria extrema,
Eres salud y suspirado puerto.
En tu fiel seno, de bondad dechado,
Mis infelices lágrimas se vierten,
Y mis querellas sin temor piadoso
Las oye, y mezcla con mi llanto el tuyo.
Ten lastima de mí: tú solo existes,
Tú solo para mí en el universo.⁹³

Again Batilo reiterates the idea of friendship as a comforting force in man's life. And yet in this poem, Meléndez Valdés develops this thought one step further. Not only is Jovino a guide to the poet but more importantly his total salvation. It is through virtue--the virtue of true friendship--that Meléndez can be reorientated to a life of moderation and reason--a life in which he will have the strength to tame his "rebelde razón":

¡Ay! ¡si pudieses ver... el devaneo
De mi ciega razón, tantos combates,
Tanto caer, y levantarme tanto:
Temer, dudar, y de mi vil flaqueza
Indignarme afrentado, en vivas llamas
Ardiendo el corazón al tiempo mismo!

.
Ven, dulce amigo,
Consolador y amparo; ven y alienta

⁹³Ibid., p. 250.

A este infeliz, que tu favor implora.
Extiende a mí la compasiva mano,
Y tu alto imperio a domeñar me enseñe
La rebelde razón; en mis austeros
Deberes me asegura en la escabrosa
Difícil senda que temblando sigo.
La virtud celestial y la inocencia
Llorando huyeran de mi pecho triste,
Y en pos de ellas la paz; tú conciliarme
Con ellas puedes, y salvarme puedes.⁹⁴

Although as previously seen, Jovellanos had considerably expounded the joys of friendship, it was Meléndez Valdés who idealized the concept almost beyond the point of human understanding. Friendship was not only true feeling or affection for another, nor was friendship solely a guide to virtuous living. He refers to friendship as "la amistad sacrosanta,"⁹⁵ an almost divine union sanctioned by God. In the dedication to Jovellanos of his first collection of poems, Meléndez reiterates this idea:

¡Indulgente amistad, placer divino,
Remedo acá en la tierra de la pura
Felicidad de los celestes coros,
Fuente de todo bien, apoyo firme
De la santa virtud!⁹⁶

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 250.

⁹⁵Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda I: Las penas y los gustos forman, mezcladas, la tela de la vida," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 105.

⁹⁶Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola II: Al excelentísimo señor don Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, en su feliz elevación al ministerio universal de gracia y justicia," op. cit., p. 201.

With true friendship we participate in divine pleasure. And yet, at least on the literary level, friendship has still another purpose: Meléndez insists that it was their friendship that is responsible for his verse--poetry which will stand as an eternal monument to the inextricable bond between Jovino and Batilo:

. . .tú [friendship] sola puedes
Amable hacer la vida, y deliciosa
Nuestra existencia triste; ven, inflama
A Batilo y su amigo, y que los hombres
De ti tomen ejemplo en ellos solos.
Tú mis versos dictaste, tú me inspiras,
Y hoy al dulce Jovino los ofreces;
Tú los conserva favorable y guarda
A los lejanos siglos, porque sean
Muestra de tu poder, y a los mortales
Nuestros nombres y amor eternos digan.⁹⁷

Meléndez, in this epistle, adds an important dimension to the concept of friendship--namely, transcendency. Unlike love, which is often depicted as the personification of inconstancy,⁹⁸ friendship epitomizes the late eighteenth century desire for order and permanence. Love, on the other hand, is hardship, pain,

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 201.

⁹⁸We have in mind such poems as "El amor mariposa," in which Meléndez Valdés compares the inconstancy of love to the flight of a butterfly who "Llega, hiere, y de un pecho / A herir otro se pasa." "Oda II: El amor mariposa," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 98.

desengaño. In his own poetic definition of love entitled "De lo que es el amor," Meléndez Valdés traces his own awareness of love:

Pensaba, cuando niño,
Que era tener amores
Vivir en mil delicias,
Morar entre los dioses;
Mas luego, rapazuelo,
Dorila cautivóme,
Muchacha de mis años,
Envidia de Dione,
Que inocente y sencilla
Como yo lo era entonces,
Fue a mis ruegos la nieve
Del verano a los soles.
Pero cuando aguardaba
No hallar ansias ni voces
Que a la gloria alcanzasen
De una unión tan conforme,
Cual de dos tortolitas
Que en sus ciegos hervores
Con sus ansias y arrullos
Ensordecen el bosque,
Probé, desengañado,
Que amor todo es traiciones,
Y guerras y martirios,
Y penas y dolores.⁹⁹

Love, therefore, does not bring happiness. Moreover, it unstabilizes man's equilibrium, while its "penas y dolores" challenge the eighteenth century tenet of

⁹⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda VII: De lo que es el amor," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 95.

mesura. Friendship, seen in this perspective, is almost an antonym for love since it is indeed a stabilizing force in man's life, one which guides man to virtue.

Although Meléndez's feelings concerning friendship at times border on the romantic, that is, they are laden with oversentimentality, tenderness and tears, one idea remains constant: nowhere is friendship criticized or rebuked in any way. While love is demythified, friendship is idealized and exalted almost to the realm of the divine. In a letter to Jovellanos, shortly after the death of Meléndez Valdés's brother, Esteban, on June 4, 1777, Batilo writes to Jovino gratefully acknowledging his indebtedness to him. In short, he feels himself unworthy of such a friend:

Mi Jovino y muy señor mío: Las dos últimas cartas de V. S., que recibí ya en esta ciudad y en la misma noche del lunes pasado, que llegué a ella de Segovia, al paso que me consolaron, me costaron infinitas lágrimas; pero lágrimas de amistad y nacidas de la ternura de mi corazón a las expresiones de V. S. ¿Quién soy yo para que V. S. se interese tanto por mí y me ofrezca tanto como me ofrece? Yo me lleno de confusión al mirarme, y si los infelices títulos de huérfano, solo y desvalido no me sirven de recomendación y mérito, nada hallo en mí que pueda mover a V. S. a tanto, tanto, si no es su buen natural

y la ternura de su pecho; yo no sé cómo ni con qué términos dar a V. S. las gracias, y sólo quisiera estar a su lado para besarle mil veces las manos, para abrazarle mil veces y llorar junto a mi amigo, y verter en su seno lágrimas de reconocimiento y amor.¹⁰⁰

Although these emotional effusions reflect an almost literary convention, a tópico in vogue during the second half of the eighteenth century, the letter nonetheless is a sincere estimation of his love for Jovellanos, his mentor and friend. In his darkest hour (following the death of his brother) Meléndez appeals to his friends for comfort. Above all, he implores Jovino, in this moving and sincere epistle, to be his brother: "Ahora más que nunca necesito de mis amigos, y de V. S. sobre todo. Tenga V. S. la molestia de dirigirme como cosa propia y como si fuera mi hermano mismo."¹⁰¹

* * * * *

There can be little doubt that Alberto Lista is perhaps the major Spanish poet most dedicated to friendship in both his personal and literary life. His

¹⁰⁰Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Cartas inéditas de Meléndez Valdés: Carta III," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 75.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 75.

correspondance alone numbers in the thousands.¹⁰² Of this number, approximately one hundred are extant. In the collection of his poetry published by De Cueto in the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, over twenty works are written to his friends, among them, Blanco-White, Jovellanos, Reinoso, Quintana--including a dedication of his poems to Albino (Blanco-White).

No other poet, however, appears to be as controversial as Lista with respect to the theme of friendship. As we shall see, the poet vacillates from the extreme ecstasy of "friendly" love to the darkest despair of love's desengaño. We shall begin with his poems directly concerned with friendship and compare these to his love poetry with a special emphasis on what can be labeled his "anti-love" poems.

Perhaps his most serious treatment of friendship is to be found in his philosophical poem entitled "La amistad." The work, in effect, consists of two poems; the second one simply enumerated and subtitled "Al mismo asunto." The work begins with an established literary tópico--a poetic convention we have seen earlier in the poetry of Meléndez Valdés--namely an invocation of the

¹⁰²For a listing of the extant letters of Alberto Lista, see Hans Juretschke, Vida, obra, y pensamiento de Alberto Lista, (Madrid: Escuela de Historia Moderna, 1951), pp. 500-503.

sanctity of friendship and its role in poetic inspiration:

El himno santo de amistad rebosa
De mi inspirado seno:
Tú, celestial virtud, mi numen eres.¹⁰³

Again as we have previously observed, friendship is considered a total sharing. Even the beauty of nature is enhanced if it is partaken with a friend:

Para el amigo pecho reservastes,
Benéfica natura,
Tu inexhausta belleza. ¡Qué es el canto
De las pitadas aves, si mi Eutimio
Conmigo no lo oirá? ¡Qué es la verdura
Del fresco valle, el nácar de la aurora,
Ni el Austro enamorado,
Que halaga el blando seno de las flores,
Si a gozarlos sin ti soy condenado?¹⁰⁴

Lista's penchant for describing this feeling of love is illustrated in the tenderness and sincerity with which he poeticizes this sentiment of friendship.

Brilló hermosa la tierra, brilló el cielo
Al feliz hombre, cuando
Trasmitir pudo su emoción suave
En otro corazón. La pura fuente,
Que por floridas márgenes resbala,
La blanda luz de la argentada luna,
Los astros, que salieron

¹⁰³Alberto Lista, "La amistad," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 303.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 303.

Bajo su imperio a embellecer la esfera,
Emblemas del amor entonces fueron.¹⁰⁵

Lista also reiterates the tópico of friendship as a comforting force in man's life. In a moving example, a friend is depicted as consoling another who has recently experienced the mutability of love. It is friendship which provides the fijeza lacking in love and it is friendship which rejuvenates man's existence. Indeed, friendship is defined in almost superhuman terms:

Y la mujer divina, cual descuella
La rosa nacarada
Entre las hijas del Abril florido,
Las tiernas gracias y el pudor mostrando,
De la beldad se coronó por reina.
Arde el hombre a su vista, y de su seno
Viva llama desprende;
Llama fugaz, que muere dando vida,
Y que de nuevo la amistad enciende.

¡Quién consuela, infelice moribundo,
Tus últimos instantes?
El caro amigo, en cuyo seno espiras.
¡Quién el pecho ulcerado, que lamenta
La ingratitud y la perfidia, vuelve
Al amor de los hombres? El amigo,
Que le guardó constante
Su corazón, y ni el sañudo hierro,
Ni del tirano el cetro fulminante
Aterró su lealtad: sube animoso

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 303.

Al fiero cadahalso,
Y con su muerte ilustre lo ennoblece:
Rompe muros, escuadras atropella,
Arrostra el golfo y su indomable furia,
Audaz se entrega a la sangrienta saña
Del bárbaro enemigo,
Denodado acomete al mismo averno,
Por dar la vida a su adorado amigo.¹⁰⁶

Thus friendship is nothing short of a cure-all, a panacea for the personal hardships of man: without friendship, man loses his raison d'être. Therefore, as Lista states in the last stanza of the poem, man must open his heart to his friend for life is meaningless when deprived of friendship:

Hijos de la amistad, almas queridas,
Abrid los tiernos brazos
Y el blando seno al amoroso vate.
Vosotros sois mi bien y mi tesoro:
¿Qué es sin vosotros el vivir? Si un día
Perderos debe el desgraciado Anfriso,
Entonces, Parca impía,
Su existencia, ya inútil y enojosa,
Lanza al abismo de la tumba fría.¹⁰⁷

Although there can be little doubt that friendship was a main theme of Lista's poetry, like many of his contemporaries, amorous verse also played a role in his work. Yet in many of his poems, Anfriso exhibits

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 303-304.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 304.

a fear of love--or rather the excesses of love. As stated earlier, and as we have seen in several examples, friendship and love were polarized: friendship was equated with moderation, harmony and constancy; love with indulgence, emotional dissonance and mutability. These exaggerated views concerning love can be seen in Lista's poetry. In one of his Idilios entitled "La felicidad," Anfriso is fearful of his lover's feelings and implores her to be more "moderate":

Modera, dueño mío,
Mi dicha y tus caricias. Ya en mi pecho
No cabe el alborozo: ya fallece
En amantes desmayos
Al peso del placer correspondido.
Sí, dulce bien: conserva
Esta vida feliz, que te consagro,
Y no en el fuego ardiente de tus ojos,
O en tus blandas palabras o en la risa
De tu amorosa boca la consumas;
Que a un tierno corazón enamorado
Y de tu amor sediento
El exceso del gozo es un tormento.¹⁰⁸

Throughout these poems, Lista expounds upon this idea: love is exacerbated passion that is conducive to deceit and sorrow. Ultimately man realizes the fugacity of love, its futility and mutability: man turns to

¹⁰⁸ Alberto Lista, "La felicidad," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 353.

friendship as a viable alternative. In an Idilio entitled "El escarmiento," Lista clearly illustrates this point. The poem begins as an extolment of his personal freedom--a freedom created by the absence of love:

Amor, ya libre respiro
De tu piélago espantoso:
Ya en el seguro reposo
De las orillas me miro.
Si aun suspiro,
No es de amante, es de cansado;
Que quien en el trance airado
Con vida escapó de Marte,
Aun sueña que sigue el fiero estandarte,
Y tiembla el peligro después de pasado.¹⁰⁹

Though still feeling the after effects of a painful and futile love, Lista--free at last--is cognizant of his former enslavement broken only by the poet's awareness of her insincerity:

La hermosura encantadora
Que aprisionó mi albedrío,
De mi ciego desvarío
Se burla ingrata y traidora,
Fue señora
De mi amor, y aun lo sería,
Si tan necia como impía,
Creyendo eterno su imperio,
No hubiese rompido del vil cautiverio
Los vínculos fuertes su indigna falsía.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹Alberto Lista, "El escarmiento," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 362.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 362.

In no uncertain terms, Lista vehemently censures love for all the pain it has caused him.

¡Dichosos los desconusuelos
Que tu rigor me ha costado!
¡Dichoso el llanto, el cuidado,
La agitación, los desvelos,
Y aun los celos!¹¹¹

This negative view of love, however, is counter-balanced by a more agreeable and viable alternative: friendship. Lista bids love farewell forever and welcomes friendship--a non-volatile love which offers him the tranquility which passionate love cannot.

Y tú, flechero vendido,
Que un tierno pecho engañaste,
Adios para siempre: basta
Los años que me has robado.
Su sagrado
La amistad me brinda abierto;
Ya ocupo tranquilo el puerto:
Filis y Euterpe me ofrecen
Los sacros laureles, que siempre florecen,
Y el puro cariño, que nunca es incierto.¹¹²

Thus friendship affords man the fijeza which the capriciousness of love avoids. It is friendship which is the true, certain love: all other feelings are deceitful and self-serving. In a continuation to this poem which Lista had simply entitled "Al mismo asunto,"

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 362.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 362.

the poet reinforces this idea. He, too, had loved; he, too, had been deceived by the external attraction and the false, cosmetic surface of love:

Yo vi, peregrino, la senda perdida,
En fiera avenida crecido el torrente,
Cubrir dique y puente, y el campo inundado
De yerto ganado.

De violas y rosas el prado florido
Gocé divertido; cogí las más bellas,
Y un áspid entre ellas vertió por mi seno
Su ardiente veneno.¹¹³

This attitude is perhaps best summarized in the last Idilio published in this collection entitled "El desengaño." Having experienced love, Lista realizes it can offer him nothing; as the ultimate disillusionment the poet understands that life is better off without it:

Para gozar del mundo
Los rápidos placeres,
No esperaré que Elisa
Los goce o los apruebe;
Y si mi vida aflige
La adversidad perenne,
No buscaré en su pecho
Consuelos que atormenten.
Soy libre ya, soy mío:
Amor su imperio pierde:
De la ilusión mentida
Rompí la venda aleve.
Gracias te doy, Elisa,

¹¹³Alberto Lista, "Al mismo asunto," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 362.

Que falsa e insolente
Mi perniciosa herida
Sanaste para siempre.
No más amor: la vida
Asaz de males tiene,
Sin que el falaz prestigio
Los doble o los aumente.¹¹⁴

Thus Lista's poetry represents a continuation of the theme of friendship as seen previously in the works of Cadalso, Jovellanos, and Meléndez Valdés. His poems are thoroughly neoclassical: he condemns love for its lack of moderation while praising friendship for its stabilizing effect on man's life. Friendship offered the eighteenth century man a release for his feelings of love--a release which was acceptable to the ilustrado: a love imbued with self-sacrifice and good taste.

* * * * *

Although chronologically Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos precedes Alberto Lista--he was eleven years Lista's senior--ideologically the madrileño prefigures a later literary period, namely Romanticism. In the 1798 edition of his poetry, unlike the more common convention of dedicating one's work to an individual, Cienfuegos devotes the entire collection to his friends.

¹¹⁴Alberto Lista, "El desengaño," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 367.

The essay is both a summary of the eighteenth century concept of friendship and a prelude to the more sentimental and emotional notion maintained by the pre-romantics:

"¿Qué protección implorarán estos humildes versos, frutos queridos de mi alma y fiel expresión de su sensibilidad, de su ternura y de su melancolía? Sin otra pasión que la de amar, sin otra ambición que la de ser amado, aquellos solos serán mis Mecenas que puedan darme en cariño la única recompensa que deseo. ¿Quiénes serán estos, sino los cariñosos compañeros de mi vida, los dueños absolutos de mi corazón, los que, sabedores de mis pensamientos, de mis inclinaciones, de mis afectos, de mis flaquezas y aun de mis vicios, me franquean recíprocamente sus almas para que lea yo en ellas su amistad y sus virtudes? ¡Oh descanso de mis penas, consuelo de mis aflicciones, remedio de mis necesidades, númenes tutelares de la felicidad de mi vida! ¡Oh amigos míos! ¿podría yo no daros un testimonio público de mi amor y de mi agradecimiento, cuando si alguna belleza moral hay en mis poesías, toda entera la he copiado de vuestros hermosos corazones? Su comercio íntimo me ha enseñado la indulgencia, la oficiosidad, la compasión, la franqueza, la veracidad, la ternura, la generosidad, el desprendimiento de sí mismo y tantas y tan preciosas virtudes como resplandecen eminentemente en vosotros, y que, incapaz de

imitarlas, me contento con publicarlas con todo el entusiasmo de la admiración y del reconocimiento. Recibid, pues, oh idolatrados amigos, en este pequeño tributo, el desahogo de un corazón hondamente penetrado de vuestra amistad; y más glorioso con ella que los Césares y los Alejandro con el imperio del mundo, me consideraré muy laureado si la posteridad dice algún día: Fue buen amigo.¹¹⁵

Friendship, according to the poet, is a total emotional, social and spiritual commitment. Cienfuegos, however, did extend the limits of friendship in his poetry:

" . . .Cienfuegos, para quien la amistad era un sentimiento tan intenso y puro como el del amor, gustaba también de cultivar amistades femeninas. Una de sus mejores amigas fue la marquesa de Fuerte-Hijar, doña María Lorenza de los Ríos. . . ."¹¹⁶ This was indeed a new dimension in the eighteenth century poetry curiously absent from the poems we have analyzed: namely, female friendship. In "tonos de encendido afecto"¹¹⁷ he dedicated to her his tragedy La Condesa de Castilla and a poem entitled "La escuela del sepulcro." The latter was written upon the death of the Marquesa de las Mercedes,

¹¹⁵Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "A mis amigos," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 7.

¹¹⁶Cienfuegos, Poesías, José Luis Cano, ed., (Madrid: Castalia, 1969), p. 16.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 16.

a friend of María Lorenza. The poem is itself rather lugubrious, bordering on the macarbe, reminiscent of the Graveyard School of poetry and quite similar in tone to Las noches lúgubres. At the end of the work, the Marquesa de las Mercedes appears and speaks to her friend. Recalling pleasant moments together, the Marquesa bequeaths to her the ultimate consolation of her eternal friendship:

¡Oh Lorenza, Lorenza! ¡Oh tierna amiga!
¡Adiós, adiós! Desde el dichoso instante
Que allá, en Pisuerga, te juré mi pecho
Una eterna amistad, ¡falté, por suerte,
Falté, responde, a tu veraz cariño?
Siempre has vivido en mi memoria; siempre
Ardió por ti mi corazón sincero;
Siempre mis labios te dijeron finas
Palabras de amistad, y eternamente
Con mis consejos te probé y mis obras
La verdad de mi amor. Bajé al sepulcro,
Y él conmigo también: aquí a tu Quero,
Si es que un recuerdo para mí te queda,
Por siempre encontrarás; de noche y día
Y en todas partes te hablarán mis labios,
Te hablarán la verdad. ¡Oh, nunca apartes
Tu oído de mi voz! Adiós, amiga,
Adiós, adiós; la eternidad te espera.¹¹⁸

Thus friendship even transcends death and the love and communication shared by two people in life can also

¹¹⁸Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "La escuela del sepulcro," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 31.

be shared in death.

Oftentimes friendship becomes a fixation in Cienfuegos's poetry. Even in casual walks his poems frequently reflect this obsession. In "Mi paseo solitario de primavera" after having imagined a beautiful, idyllic universe imbued with love and harmony, he realizes the futility of such a dream. Only friendship can cure the perennial idealist and make life more bearable.

¿Adónde está, qué fué mi imaginada
Felicidad? De la encantada magia
De mi país de amor, vuelvo a esta tierra
De soledad, de desamor y llanto.
Mi querido Ramón, vos mis amigos,
Cuantos partís mi corazón amante,
Vosotros solos habitáis los yermos
De mi país de amor. Imagen santa
De este mundo ideal de la inocencia.
¡Ay, ay! fuera de vos no hay universo
Para este amigo, que por vos respira.
Tal vez un día la amistad Augusta
Por la ancha tierra estrechará las almas
Con lazo fraternal.¹¹⁹

And yet, Cienfuegos fully aware of the reality of this world, realizes the impossibility of such an existence. Only his friends can bring comfort and happiness in a world devoid of ideals:

¹¹⁹Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "Mi paseo solitario de primavera," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 19.

. . . ¡Ay! no: mis ojos,
Adormecidos en la eterna noche,
No verán tanto bien; pero entre tanto
Amadme, oh amigos, que mi tierno pecho
Pagará vuestro amor, y hasta el sepulcro
En vuestras almas buscaré mi dicha.¹²⁰

As previously stated, Cienfuegos' treatment of the theme of friendship is often characterized by certain romantic characteristics. This is clearly illustrated in his nostalgia for the past. Friendship is not only a consolation for the tribulations of the present but also, and at times, more importantly, an almost romantic desire to relive the past. In "El recuerdo de mi adolescencia," Cienfuegos's friendship for Meléndez Valdés is manifested not through a current episode or recent occurrence, but rather through a series of remembrances, often quite remote and seemingly idealized:

Caro Batilo, ¿para qué despiertas
En mi memoria los dormidos días
Que en las calladas sombras del Otea
A tu lado gocé? ¡días amables!¹²¹

As he evokes the past, Cienfuegos is saddened upon the realization that these moments will never return.

¿Cuándo jamás en tu tranquilo lecho
Turbulenta ambición alzando el trono,

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 19.

¹²¹ Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "A don Juan Meléndez Valdés," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 21.

Los sueños ahuyentó para dictarte
Rencor, deshermandad, crimen y muerte?
¿Cuándo avaricia entre inmortal pobreza
Clavó en tu corazón tímido y solo
La insaciabilidad del oro insomne?
Dulce igualdad en fraternal cariño,
Penas comunes y comunes gozos
En fortuna común; almas exentas
De los pesares y el temor funesto
Que aislan al mortal.... ¡yo vi aquel tiempo,
Yo le vi, le gocé, y eternamente
Su presta fuga llorarán mis ojos!¹²²

The romantic exposition of ubi sunt? coupled with his obsession for the past dominates his concept of friendship:

¿Adónde estáis, amados compañeros
De mi primera juventud? ¿adónde
Os seguiré, que con vosotros halle
La sencilla amistad, el gozo antiguo
Y la risueña virtuosa calma?
Fue, fue, responden, y en la torva frente
Entronizada la inquietud rugosa,
Tristes y solos, arrastrados giran
De la fortuna en la insociable rueda,
Que entre abismos de mal injusto muere.¹²³

Echoing Rousseau's idea of the corruptibility of man, Cienfuegos insists that man is indeed contaminated by self-interest; man is incapable of resisting this corruption:

¹²²Ibid., p. 21.

¹²³Ibid., p. 21.

Presto será que el pestilente soplo
Del ejemplo mortal de un mundo infecto,
Arideciendo el alma infructuosa,
Sin esperanza la semilla ahogue
Que natura plantó. ¿Dónde está el fuerte
Que, íntegra su virtud, resista inmóvil
El choque atroz de las voraces ondas
Que, en inflamado mar de hirviente lava,
Entre montes de sombras humeantes,
Ese volcán fulminador arroja,
Estremeciendo el vacilante suelo?¹²⁴

Cienfuegos "solution" is an evasive one. If only
he could flee with Batilo to the beloved Tormes and
relive the beautiful moments they shared:

¡Oh! ¿quién me diese el atrasar el tiempo
Hasta arrancarle mi verdor marchito,
O siquiera volar con mi Batilo
A buscarle del Tormes en la orilla?
Le encontrara, allí está; por siempre inmóvil
Entre sus ondas deleznales yace
Mi adolescencia; por doquier mis ojos
Hallaran restos de sus frescas flores.¹²⁵

The poet finds happiness only in the evocation of
the past--a monument of love shared by two friends:

¡Oh inefable placer! ¡oh hermosas tardes
De mi felicidad!... Fueron, Batilo,
Para siempre jamás; ¡pueda a lo menos
Vivir siempre inmortal nuestro cariño,

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 22.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 22.

único resto de tan bellos días.¹²⁶

As clearly illustrated in the above poems, Cienfuegos considered friendship more than social interaction. It is an omnipotent union between two people--a union powerful enough to transcend even death.

Manuel José Quintana, perhaps Cienfuegos most ardent follower, echoes the feelings of his mentor in the dedication to the 1813 edition of his poetry:

Ven, dulce amigo mío, a honrar con tu respetable nombre la edición de unos versos que si algún precio tienen, es debido en gran parte a tu inspiración y a tu ejemplo. Nada importa que el mármol del sepulcro te tenga ya separado de la región de los vivientes. ¿Desata acaso la muerte los lazos de amor y de estimación que unen entre sí a los hombres? No, caro Cienfuegos: la muerte los estrecha de un modo indisoluble; ella los defiende de la inconstancia y de la inconsecuencia; ella los asegura contra los vaivenes de la fortuna; ella, en fin, los pone a cubierto del frenesí de las pasiones....

Acabó para mí, y no volverá jamás, aquel tiempo de dulces ilusiones, de gratos y apacibles estudios. Fuerza ha sido abandonarlos para acudir el peligro común y servir a la causa pública en tareas y afanes harto diferentes. Otros contarán después el

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 22.

triunfo, cuando serenada la agitación y restablecido el orden, la voz dulce de las musas vuelva a resonar en España. Entonces tus vigorosos versos, dignos precursores de libertad y de virtudes, serán aplaudidos con igual admiración que gratitud. Entonces, si por dicha llegan hasta allá los míos, el autor unirá su aplauso al de la posteridad; y el alto aprecio y amistad afectuosa que en vida sintió por ti, prolongándose más allá del sepulcro. . .¹²⁷

Above all Cienfuegos considered friendship a direct source of happiness--happiness based exclusively on fraternal love:

"Soy feliz, soy feliz, diré contento; Amé, me amaron, me amarán por siempre."¹²⁸

¹²⁷Manuel José Quintana, Obras Completas, Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. XIX, (Madrid: Ediciones Atlas, 1946), pp. 1-2.

¹²⁸Nicasio Alvarez de Cienfuegos, "A un amigo que dudaba de mi amistad porque había tardado en contestarle," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXVII, p. 21.

CONCLUSION

Man's attempt to find happiness is a vital, integral part of the poetry of the eighteenth century. Yet before the reign of Carlos III the poet often felt happiness to be an illusive, abstract idea. The century itself was frequently criticized. Fray Diego González refers to the "siglo corrompido,"¹ a century "de desorden lleno."² The poetry reflected a profound pessimism inherent in the Neo-baroque verse of the first half of the century: happiness was simply beyond the reach of man.

¿Qué dicha es ésta, cielos,
De condición tan rara,
Que ni puedo adquirirla,
Ni cabe en mi poder el no buscarla?
Si eres bien, ¿cómo afliges?
Si eres mal, ¿cómo arrastras?
¡Oh misterio, que mudo,
Explicas más allá de lo que callas!³

In spite of man's frustrated attempts, the impulse to be happy was indeed a strong motivating force:

¹Fray Diego González, "A las nobles artes," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 185.

²Fray Diego González, "Oda," op. cit., p. 191.

³Gabriel Alvarez de Toledo, "A mi pensamiento," op. cit., p. 15.

¿Cómo será esta dicha,
Que ni puedo saberla, ni ignorarla?⁴

However, only a year after the accession of Carlos III the poet feels new hope and optimism for the future. In his "Egloga piscatoria," written in 1760, García de la Huerta describes the arrival of the Spanish monarch from Italy. Praising the beauty of nature he compares the splendor of the setting to the landing of the king:

De bienes semejantes
Colmó a España de Carlos la presencia,
Cuando en naves triunfantes,
Contrastando del mar la resistencia,
Emulo de la luz que el orbe baña,
Tranquilizó la tempestad de España.

Así, piadoso el cielo,
Hizo que el bien al daño se siguiese,
Y que en tanto desvelo,
Dulce sosiego, dulce paz naciese.
Nuevo ser logró España y nueva vida:
Tan dulce fue de Carlos la venida.⁵

The advent of the reign of Carlos III convinced the poet of the dawning of a new age, an age without parallel in the history of civilization:

Por el orbe aplaudidas
Serán del grande Carlos las memorias,
Y de ellas excedidas
Cuantas épocas tienen las historias,

⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

⁵ Vicente García de la Huerta, "Egloga piscatoria," Biblioteca de autores españoles, Vol.LXI, p. 213.

Y cronista será de sus renombres
La admiración y pasmo de los hombres.
Con Carlos solamente
Cualquiera mal el cielo ha compensado
A España, cuya frente
Perpetuo ceñirá laurel sagrado,
Porque la admiren todas las edades
Como dechado de felicidades.⁶

In his well-known essay "Elogio de Carlos III," Jovellanos enumerates the glorious contributions of the Spanish monarch to the field of knowledge. His enthusiasm is equalled only by his sincere belief that Carlos is indeed a panacea for the ills facing Spain:

Sí, españoles, ved aquí el mayor de todos los beneficios que derramó sobre vosotros Carlos III. Sembró en la nación las semillas de luz que han de ilustraros, y os desembarazó los senderos de la sabiduría. Las inspiraciones del vigilante ministro, que encargado de la pública instrucción, sabe promover con tan noble y constante afán las artes y las ciencias, y a quien nada distinguirá tanto en la posteridad como esta gloria, lograron al fin establecer el imperio de la verdad. En ninguna época ha sido tan libre su circulación, en ninguna tan firmes sus defensores, en ninguna tan bien sostenidos sus derechos. Apenas hay ya estorbos que detengan sus pasos; y entre tanto que los baluartes levantados contra el error se fortifican y respetan, el santo idioma de la verdad se oye

⁶ Ibid., p. 213.

en nuestras asambleas, se lee en nuestros escritos y se imprime tranquilamente en nuestros corazones. Su luz se recoge de todos los ángulos de la tierra, se reúne, se extiende, y muy presto bañará todo nuestro horizonte... ¡Oh vosotros, amigos de la patria a quienes está encargada la mayor parte de esta feliz revolución!⁷

Though this discourse may appear to be an exaggerated estimation of the Spanish king, it cannot be denied that the reign of Carlos III was considered by many intellectuals as the dawning of a new age. José María Vaca de Guzmán y Manrique in a poem entitled "La felicidad" read before the Real Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País in 1781 urges the artists to commemorate this glorious moment in Spain's history:

Gózate, Apeles, que llegó ya el tiempo
De celebrar la edad de un soberano
Con coloridos, tablas y pinceles...⁸

This faith in the monarchy contrasts radically with the distrust felt by French citizens for their king, an attitude prevalent since the publication of Montesquieu's Lettres persanes. Spanish patriotism often encouraged a total and at times almost blind loyalty to both Church and State. Indeed, the high regard for Carlos III

⁷Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Elogio de Carlos III," Discursos, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1969), pp. 88-89.

⁸José María Vaca de Guzmán y Manrique, "La felicidad," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXI, p. 291.

encouraged a respect for the status quo, a respect which at times stifled new or progressive ideas. The poets of the Enlightenment always encouraged working within the system in order to preserve law and order. Even the more socially conscious poets advocated reforms within the framework of the existing government. In a letter to Godoy, Meléndez Valdés underscores the plight of the peasants. He describes their poverty, squalor and suffering; and yet, they too are willing to offer their lives to their king:

. . .En miserables pajas
Sumida yace la virtud; fallece
El padre de familias, que al Estado
Enriqueció con un enjambre de hijos;
Gime entre andrajos la inocente virgen;
Por su indigna nudez culpando al cielo;
O el infante infeliz transido pende
Del seno exhausto de la triste madre.
Las lágrimas, los ayes desvalidos
Calmad, humano, en la infeliz familia;
Y vedla en su indigencia aun celebrando
A su buen rey, en su defensa alegre
Ansia verter su sangre generosa.⁹

Even when Meléndez hints that these people may throw off the chains that bind them, the almost feudal oppression of centuries of misery and pain, the poet

⁹Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola VII," Biblioteca de autores españoles, vol. LXIII, p. 207.

urges Godoy to liberate them so that he would be the recipient of their gratitude and loyalty; this would of course encourage respect for the "system":

¿Qué sería, señor, si al cielo alzara
La frente más holgado? ¿si sobre ella
La palidez, el escualor, el triste
Tímido abatimiento no afeasen
Indignos su virtud? ¿qué si arrastrando,
Cual siervo fiel, de la pobreza amarga
No llevase doquier los rudos grillos?
Rompedlos vos, y le veréis qué alegre
Corre a la esteva y al afán; qué tierno
La mano besa que su bien procura.¹⁰

According to Colford, "Meléndez views the legal code not as a restraint upon man's freedom, but as the logical means for achieving liberty through orderly progress; the law, therefore, is to be the instrument for working the changes he advocates so earnestly."¹¹

In a letter to Jovellanos upon his elevation to the Ministerio Universal de Gracia y Justicia, Meléndez reiterates the idea of law as tantamount to freedom:

...tú así en el mundo
afables ordenarás; verán los hombres
Que no es yugo la ley; que es dulce nudo

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 207.

¹¹ William E. Colford, Juan Meléndez Valdés: A Study in the Transition from Neo-Classicism to Romanticism in Spanish Poetry (New York: Lancaster Press, 1942), p. 253.

De feliz libertad y paz y holganza.¹²

Thus we notice a dimension missing in the Spanish poetry of the eighteenth century. If the poet uses poetry as a social instrument it is not to preach economic revolution or political anarchy but rather to sing the glories of patriotism and reform within the system. There is indeed an obvious reason for the reticence of the intelligentsia to propagate radical programs in order to promote progress and growth in Spain - namely, the Inquisition. Although the Inquisition was not seriously feared during the early part of the reign of Carlos III - he himself when asked why he had not abolished the institution, supposedly retorted: "Los españoles la quieren, y a mí no me molesta,"¹³ the arrest of Pablo de Olavide was to inject new strength and vitality into this symbol of intellectual repression. Born in Perú in 1752, Olavide occupied several positions of importance in the Spanish government after having lived in France for several years, settling ultimately in Seville. He read almost exclusively in French and was detained by the Inquisition in 1776, the latter having discovered that "en su alojamiento de Madrid sólo había dos libros españoles en su

¹² Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Epístola VIII," Biblioteca de autores españoles, Vol. LXIII, p. 209.

¹³ Quoted by Henry Kamen, La Inquisición española, trans. Enrique de Obregón. (Madrid: Alianza, 1973), p. 270.

biblioteca."¹⁴ Olavide was eventually exiled and confined to a monastery for eight years. The repercussions of this persecution were far-reaching and if the literati of the Enlightenment were ever inclined to revolution, such feelings were immediately suffocated:

Olavide fue seleccionado para ser perseguido, simplemente para ponerlo de ejemplo a los otros, y no porque fuera el peor de los que delinquieron. Era más conocido que otros situados más alto que él, era amigo de los filósofos franceses y había leído sus libros. Olavide era una advertencia, y la lección no pasó desapercibida. Por toda España e incluso en el resto de Europa el ruido de su condena despertó temores de que la Inquisición hubiera vuelto a gozar del poder de antes.¹⁵

If the Inquisition stifled the social and political awareness of the poet by discouraging free expression, it did not change his desire for happiness; on the contrary, it may have strengthened it. The poet begins to internalize his search for happiness. Economic reform and philosophical speculation are "dangerous" themes for poetry since these topics could conflict with the teachings of the Church and/or State. In an ode entitled "Que la felicidad está en nosotros mismos" Meléndez Valdés states that only the fool complains about his misery

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 272.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 273.

since it is he who is responsible for his own unhappiness:

No, pues, necio, te exhales
En quejas ominosas;
Que nosotros labramos, no las cosas,
Si bien lo estimas, nuestros crudos males.¹⁶

The poet's search for happiness, as we have seen, leads him to nature in search of a virtuous way of life. Believing the Socratic adage Nosce te ipsum, the poet, in the tranquil harmony of the natural setting, attempts to understand himself, a comprehension which he hopes will insure happiness:

¿Saber pretendes? Franca está la senda:
perfecciona tu ser y serás sabio;
ilustra tu razón, para que se alce
a la verdad eterna, y purifica
tu corazón, para que la ame y siga.
Estúdiate a ti mismo, pero busca
la luz en tu Hacedor. Allí la fuente
de alta sabiduría, allí tu origen
verás escrito, allí el lugar que ocupas
en su obra magnífica, allí tu alto
destino, y la corona perdurable
de tu ser, sólo a la virtud guardada.¹⁷

Whether the poet sought happiness in nature's bosom or through the comfort of friends - as reflected in the poetry of Cienfuegos and Lista - the message of the

¹⁶ Juan Meléndez Valdés, "Oda XXXII: Que la felicidad está en nosotros mismos," Biblioteca de autores españoles, Vol. LXIII, p. 198.

¹⁷ Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Epístola X: A Bermudo sobre los vanos deseos y estudios de los hombres," Poesías, ed. José Caso González (Oviedo: Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 1961), pp. 326-327.

Enlightenment is quite clear: the poets of the Ilustración firmly believe that happiness is possible. Though this notion was at times frustrated either through a personal desengaño or the temptations of a materialistic and oppressive society, the basic optimism of the poet remained unchanged.

This idea was almost completely discarded by the romantic poets. They considered happiness an impossibility or at best, an illusive dream.

Sueños son los deleites, los amores,
La juventud, la gloria y la hermosura
Sueños las dichas son, sueños las flores,
La esperanza, el dolor, la desventura.¹⁸

Not only is happiness impossible but misery is now an integral part of the human condition:

Nosotros, ¡ah!, los que al nacer lloramos,
Que paso a paso a la razón seguimos,
Que una impresión tras otra recibimos,
Que ora a la infancia, a la niñez llegamos,
Luego a la juventud, ¡ah!, no alcanzamos
A imaginar la dicha y la limpieza
Del alma en su pureza.
¡Quién no lleva escondido
Un rayo de dolor dentro del pecho?
¡Por cuál dichoso rostro no han corrido
lágrimas de amargura y de despecho?
¡Quién no lleva en su alma,

¹⁸ José de Espronceda, "Canto I," El Diablo mundo. (Madrid: Alianza, 1966), p. 175.

¡Ah!, por muy joven y feliz que sea,
Un penoso recuerdo, alguna idea,
Que nublando su luz turba su calma!¹⁹

This pessimistic Weltanschauung was curiously absent from the poetry of the Enlightenment; the pre-romantic effusion of Cienfuegos cannot compare with the fatalistic attitude of Espronceda. Even if the romantic poet was happy, his awareness that all is subject to mutability only increased his anguish. It is this realization that Espronceda laments in his famous "Canto a Teresa":

¡Quién pensara jamás, Teresa mía,
Que fuera eterno manantial de llanto
Tanto inocente amor, tanta alegría,
Tantas delicias y delirio tanto?
¡Quién pensara jamás llegase un día
En que, perdido el celestial encanto
Y caída la venda de los ojos,
Cuanto diera placer causara enojos?²⁰

Although the poet of the Enlightenment is indeed aware of change and inconstancy, his faith in God, in the established political order and in his fellow man inspire and even strengthen his belief that man can be happy

¹⁹ Jose de Espronceda, "Canto III," op. cit., p. 200.

²⁰ Jose de Espronceda, "Canto II," op. cit., p. 187

and that

. . . con prudencia canta,
Desde el mal que te [man] sobra
Pasarás a la dicha que te falta.²¹

²¹Gabriel Alvarez de Toledo, "A mi pensamiento,"
op. cit., p. 15.

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