

ANTONIO MACHADO AND HIS SOCIO-HUMAN EPISTEMOLOGY IN

*JUAN DE MAIRENA*

by

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## Abstract

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The emergence of modernization at the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century in the form of integration of technology into our every day lives brought a profound change in every aspect of human experience and reality. While Heidegger saw as a consequence of that “the objectivization (*Verge-genständlichung*) of our ordinary lived experience” as expounded in *Sein und Zeit*, Antonio Machado through *Juan de Mairena* finds the root of scientific modernity in materialism (*Five Portraits* 70). This is not just materialism in the economic sense of quantifying values and services but scientific in the sense that it converts minerals, nature and even living organisms into mathematical and scientific data. Juan de Mairena considers Descartes the initiator of this approach in modernity, which in a way had its influence from the pre-Socratics: Democritus of Abdera in association with the Milesian School and Ionian School. Juan de Mairena’s main concern about modernization was the effects technological society would bring to human affairs and the human value system.

To understand Juan de Mairena’s concern about the human’s place in modernization, I analyze in chapter one passages in *Juan de Mairena* in relation to various literary and philosophical works such as Kafka’s *The Castle*, Sartre’s *Nausea*, Heidegger’s concept of ‘Dasein,’ Gadamer’s analysis of ‘Erlebnis’ and other related concepts and compositions (all of which deal with the topic of humans coping in a systematized life under modern administration).

In chapter two, I distinguish, through the textual analysis of *Juan de Mairena*, the difference between the way objects and humans are in phenomena, and explain the reason why Juan de Mairena thinks that the Cartesian scientific method is inappropriate for learning about human beings. Following that, I expose the tenets of Cartesian scientific modernity and finish the chapter with a preliminary description of what is entailed by “socio-human epistemology”

In chapter three, I trace the historical roots of Cartesian scientific modernity and explain briefly the transition between its theoretical conceptions and its materialization in phenomena through applied science and engineering. In addition, I convey the meaning of ‘socio-human epistemology’ within Juan de Mairena’s conception of human experience and reality.

Through this research I have learned that inside an apparently simple and minor collection of fragments there is a complex network of ideas and concerns about humans, nature and reality. I think Antonio Machado’s *Juan de Mairena* is an invaluable book as a counter balance to scientific approach in order to re-think the best way to understand and appreciate life and humanity.

To my mother Sun, Vanessa and Lerner

## Preface

A few years ago I published an article titled “Amor, solipsismo y comunicación en *Juan de Mairena*.” While researching to gather information for the paper, I learned that Antonio Machado was not accepted, or denied at face value, as a philosopher by almost all of his critics. I realized that, in a way, such an evaluation was based on a narrow definition of the practice tied to the presumption that philosophy is an expository art in which analytic use of language and logical coherence in the composition of ideas were necessary components. This conjecture only considers philosophy from a technical modern academic standard point of view based strictly on the writing form and not on the themes brought to light for discussion, in a way disregarding wholly that early philosophers were poets in the broadest sense of the term whose philosophy was written in verses as well as it was spoken. In this sense *Juan de Mairena* is associated in the formal aspect and in terms of topics discussed with ancient philosophers in the context of classical writings, having a similar purpose as they do, of communicating directly with people or the reader about evaluative aspects of life and reality in order to serve them as a guide in achieving some sort of meaning in life. What was originally conceived as an attempt to show Antonio Machado as a misfit poet-philosopher in the tradition of Plato and pre-Socratic philosophers became an endeavor to connect his philosophical views and concerns in association with his personal convictions in relation to his understanding of the human being in the context of modernization. The present dissertation is the result of that endeavour.

## Acknowledgement

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## Part One -

## Chapter 1

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**Preliminary note**

Most studies concerning Antonio Machado, in one way or another, put him under scrutiny in connection with the particular socio-political and historical circumstances in which he lived. Moreover, critics analyze his works with either political or social ends. While such studies are important in order to understand Antonio Machado's social and public involvement and his artistic character and influence, they do not reveal his contemplative insights or theoretical outlook in relation to his personal convictions about life's fundamental questions. His thoughts about life, identity, reality, the self, and the other are found throughout his writings, but they are more abundantly displayed in his prose, *Juan de Mairena*, *Prosas Dispersas* and *Los Complementarios*. In *Juan de Mairena* these themes are intricately woven and reveal his philosophical insight, which is always about human beings, human life and human reality. For these reasons the present study will avoid, whenever possible, making any reference to his biographical data or his actual political involvement, but rather will concentrate on Antonio Machado's general and specific ideas concerning his viewpoint on human beings and reality as the most important aspects of life.

**Methodology**

*Juan de Mairena* can be read in two ways- as leisure reading (there are 608 short and long paragraphs in all) or with intellectual scrutiny. A systematic undertaking of the fragments can be overwhelming, especially because the fragments lack a uniform structure and sustained development of topics. Due to its aphoristic nature of writing, *Juan de Mairena* is particularly challenging to readers who want to discover in the work more than what it reveals on the surface, since it is not written in expository form but rather in a miscellaneous form, merging and combining multiple disciplines and genres such as philosophy, literature, natural and physical

science, social science, prose, poetry, narrative, short dramatic composition and so on in an aphoristic and experimental way. But every fragment can be and should be read in the context of what the author had intended to convey, namely to be an example of how to view and evaluate life from socio-human reality for the emerging generation in the development of a humanistic culture confronted with the deterioration through materialistic and pragmatic *modus operandi* of western societies.

## **Introduction**

While Antonio Machado is mainly known for his poetry, he had written several innovative, miscellaneous and experimental prose works, in which he reflects his preoccupation with the place of the human in a world that was rapidly becoming modernized, in the sense that materialistic values were being adopted in society by the integration of technology into daily lives.

He was preoccupied with the human condition in a technologically modernized world and the deterioration of human values in it in the sense that people living in a technologically advanced society would eventually become configured by it. This anticipated configuration is what Michel Foucault later referred to as the workings of ideology in the context of the relation of power from the late nineteenth century on, in which the subject thinks that to comply with the mandates of society is “the natural thing to do and thus a free, autonomous decision” (Bertens 179). Although the institutional intent goes far back to many empires and their projects, not all situate their expansion in the obsession of control of human reality in the sense of limiting belief, thought, speech and overt behavior of its subjects in every conceivable space through prescribing and defining places and concepts, but rather to profit in taxes from their conquest, a successful model being the Roman administration. This omnipresent idea of human control may have

existed earlier in theory and in terms of strategic institutional organization, but its actualization would have been impossible except through modern technological means.

In novelistic fiction, there are many significant works that explore the inclusion of technology and the possible negative outcome of its misuse in human society; the term ‘dystopia’ was first used by John Stuart Mill in one of his speeches in the House of Commons in 1868 (*Collins English Dictionary*), denouncing non-implementable land guidelines in Ireland. Stuart Mill thought that ‘utopia’ would have been inappropriate to refer to such a disastrous policy, the former being the title of one of Thomas More’s novels, in which the phrase in the title “*noua insula Vtopia*” refers in a positive way to the materialization of Plato’s city state in *The Republic*. The author intentionally places the island called Utopia in the new continent, away from the corrupted old world, according to the customary expectation and conception of the new world at that time. Opposed to the fictitious literary creation of More’s *Utopia*, Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, according to Nussbaum, is used as the model for the establishment of the modern state (embodied in the administration of Louis XIV and of Frederick William, the Great Elector) and its promotion and exercise of absolute power and control over its subject states. Among the most notable of ‘dystopian’ novels in the twentieth century are H. G. Wells’s *Men Like Gods* (1923), Aldous Huxley’s *Brave New World* (1932), Yevgeny Zamyatin’s *We* (1924) and similar works. However, Antonio Machado is not interested in engaging in relating the effects of technology in the transformation of phenomena in the sense of how technology would actually play out in society in the way Sasaki refers to “outer garment” (*Descartes’s Mathematical Thought* 201). Rather he is more concerned with forming a framework of mind in the reader that can distinguish and prioritize human beings over any natural or manmade objects. He believes that human internal need to care and give care are the essential motivations of every human

interaction and association, and that only through such bilateral exchange can humans find meaning in existence. One of Antonio Machado's main purposes and interests in *Juan de Mairena* was to instill a form of "cultivated consciousness." He thought a founded awareness of the human place in phenomena was crucial in order for humans to give priority to internal needs in a world in which materialism and pragmatism were gaining control over human reality. To this end, he would challenge, always with an ironic twist, the theoretical discourses of materialism in order to instill awareness of its historical roots. His other concern was how we can maintain human autonomy and dignity in a life surrounded by objects that claim to be more important than some humans because people have given them such significance. Antonio Machado thought the categorization of phenomena embedded in Juan de Mairena's dialogues with his students would, in a way, instill seminally a proper order of value system in which improving the condition of human reality to accommodate human inner need first would create an aura from which the choices that an individual makes in life can be justified according to his or her expectation on life's outlook. In association with this, Juan de Mairena says the following:

Pero nosotros queremos ser sofistas, en el mejor sentido de la palabra, o, digámoslo más modestamente, en uno de los buenos sentidos de la palabra: queremos ser librepensadores. No os estrepitéis. Nosotros no hemos de pretender que se nos consienta decir todo lo malo que pensamos del monarca, de los Gobiernos, de los obispos, del Parlamento, etc. La libre emisión del pensamiento es un problema importante, pero secundario, y supeditado al nuestro, que es el de la libertad del pensamiento mismo. Por de pronto, nosotros nos preguntamos si el pensamiento, nuestro pensamiento, el de cada uno de nosotros, puede producirse con entera libertad, independientemente de que, luego, se nos permita o no

emitirlo. Digámoslo retóricamente: ¿De qué nos serviría la libre emisión de un pensamiento esclavo? De aquí nuestros ejercicios de clase, que unos parecen de lógica y otros de sofística, en el mal sentido de la palabra, pero que, en el fondo son siempre Retórica, y de la buena, Retórica de sofistas o catecúmenos del libre pensamiento. Nosotros pretendemos fortalecer y agilizar nuestro pensar para aprender de él mismo cuales son sus posibilidades, cuales sus limitaciones; hasta qué punto se produce de un modo libre, original, con propia iniciativa, y hasta qué punto nos aparece limitados por normas rígidas, por hábitos mentales inmodificables, por *imposibilidades* de pensar de otro modo. ¡Ojo a esto, que es muy grave!... (*Juan de Mairena I* 209-210)

Within this context, in *Juan de Mairena* the essential human values are linked with the idea of culture in the sense that Hans-Georg Gadamer explains in *Truth and Method*. Gadamer defines *bildung* (German word for culture) as “the properly human way of developing one’s natural talents and capacities” (*Truth and Method* xii). According to Joel Weinsheimer and Donald Marshall:

Gadamer notes that within *bildung* is the root word *bild*, ‘form,’ ‘image,’ and more particularly, ‘picture.’ Cultivation is a process of ‘forming’ the self in accordance with the ideal “image” of the human. Art, as a general capacity to form ‘images’ or representations of experience, played an important role in the conception of *bildung* (*Truth and Method* xii).

What Gadamer is pointing out with the word *bildung* in relation to an individual’s development is that through training the mind to see things in a certain way based on a system of values, a person can acquire what he calls a ‘cultivated consciousness’ (*Truth and Method* 16). This

‘cultivated consciousness,’ unlike the perceptual consciousness, is not restricted to a particular space and time. As Gadamer affirms, this consciousness “is active in all directions,” in the sense that it acts in conjunction with other faculties, like instinct and memory, in order to simultaneously be aware of, evaluate and discriminate a particular circumstance (16). Hence, *bildung* presupposes two prior states of practical knowledge, (*phronesis*): first a period of mind training that forges a particular way of thinking and second, the application of this particular way of looking at a situation through ‘common sense.’

Although the acquisition of *bildung* requires following certain procedures, its practice is not just a resulting behavior of a process but “what has come into being.” This is to say “[i]t is not enough to observe...study a tradition more thoroughly, if there is not already receptivity to the ‘otherness.’ To distance oneself from oneself and from one’s private purposes means to look at these in the way that others see them” (*Truth and Method* 15). Thus, according to Gadamer, cultivation is not carried out in an autonomous situation and in isolation of others; to the contrary, as he suggests, the subject needs to distance itself from being the center of everything and everyone else in order to create the incorporative space and cooperative intention to attune to the rest of the people. In relation to this Juan de Mairena says:

Pero nosotros nos inclinamos más bien en creer en la dignidad del hombre, y a pensar que es lo más noble en él el más íntimo y potente resorte de su conducta. Porque esta misma desconfianza de su propio destino y esta incertidumbre de su pensamiento, de que carecen acaso otros animales, van en el hombre unidas a una voluntad de vivir que no es un deseo de perseverar en su propio ser, sino más bien de mejorarlo. El hombre es el único animal que quiere salvarse, sin confiar para ello en el curso de la Naturaleza. Todas las potencias de

su espíritu tienden a ello, se enderezan a este fin. El hombre quiere ser otro. He aquí lo específicamente humano. Aunque su propia lógica y natural sofística lo encierre en la más estrecha concepción solipsística, su mónada solitaria no es nunca pensada como autosuficiente, sino como nostalgia de lo otro, paciente de una incurable alteridad. Si lográsemos reconstruir la metafísica de un chimpancé o de algún otro más elevado antropoide, ayudándole cariñosamente a formularla, nos encontraríamos con que era esto lo que le faltaba para igualar al hombre: una esencial disconformidad consigo mismo que lo impulse a desear ser otro del que es, aunque, de acuerdo con el hombre, aspire a mejorar la condición de su propia vida: alimento, habitación más o menos arbórea, etc. Reparad en que, como decía mi maestro, sólo el pensamiento del hombre, a juzgar por su misma conducta, ha alcanzado esa categoría supralógica del deber ser o *tener que ser lo que no se es*, o esa idea del bien que el divino Platón encarama sobre la del ser mismo y de la cual afirma con profunda verdad que no hay copia en este bajo mundo. En todo lo demás no parece que haya en el hombre nada esencial que lo diferencie de los otros primates. (*Juan de Mairena I 323-24*)

This is why Gadamer states conditionally that if “there is not already receptivity to the ‘otherness’ ” the achievement of *bildung* would not be possible. In this way, individuals indirectly help themselves and contribute, through inter-subjective relations, to the production of human culture and reality.

In *De nostri temporis studiorum ratione*, the XVII Century humanist Giovanni Batista Vico indicates the reasons why the new science (Descartes’s new epistemic conception aimed at controlling space and time) is not appropriate for guiding human beings. He recognizes the

merits of Cartesian method “but shows its limits,” in that human experience is not a result of a mathematical equation. Unlike objective scientific method, common sense “is not nourished on the true, but rather on the probable, the verisimilar” (*Truth and Method* 18). Juan de Mairena, the heteronym that represents, in a way, Antonio Machado, advocates again and again the need to cast doubt on certainty precisely because he feels that human life is not a result of calculation; human life does not behave, as in science, in terms of cause and effect but rather evolves in a community with other people. This is why Vico says:

What gives the human will its direction is not the abstract universality of reason but the concrete universality represented by the community of a group, a people, a nation, or the whole human race. Hence, the development of this communal sense is of decisive importance for living” (*Truth and Method* 19).

According to Gadamer, Baltasar Gracián (a Spanish philosopher and thinker of the XVII Century) “stands at the beginning of this history” (31). He says:

Gracián starts from the view that the sense of taste, this most animal and inward of our senses, still contains the beginning of the intellectual differentiation we make when judging things. Thus the sensory differentiation of taste, which accepts or rejects in the most immediate way, is in fact not merely an instinct, but strikes a balance between sensory instinct and intellectual freedom. The sense of taste is able to gain the distance necessary for choosing and judging what is the most urgent necessity of life. Thus Gracián already sees in taste a ‘spiritualization of animality’ and rightly points out that there is cultivation (*cultura*) not only of the mind (*ingenio*) but also of taste (*gusto*) (*Truth and Method* 31).

Emmanuel Kant's concept of 'taste' in *Critique of Judgment* is a refined derivation of this 'sensus communis' but with its root in sensibility conducive to morality. This phenomenal derivation in relation to human perception's 'gusto' is what, in a way, represents a 'common sense' form of reality configured by aesthetics. But this common sense reality is not permanent and universal. Every community has their particular way of looking at things and relating themselves to their surroundings. Juan de Mairena thinks that under the phenomenal condition of time everything varies, in that the perception of the individual sense of reality continually attunes to and synchronizes with the reality that people have jointly created. The only things that are constant according to Juan de Mairena are the essences that belong to human characteristics that are inner longings in life, such as love, justice, happiness, peace etc. Likewise, human vices such as greed, pride, envy and so forth can activate in a person's character during human interaction as a consequence of existing under oppressed and exploited conditions of reality.

### **1. Why a systematic approach to reading the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* is needed**

Much of Antonio Machado's philosophical ideas about life, death, reality, the other, and so on are expressed in his poetry; his prose is no exception, and the difference is that in his prose Antonio Machado expresses his thoughts with clear personal convictions and historical references in the sense of making specific allusions to a period, whereas in his poetry the same views are expressed using figurative and metaphorical language. In *Juan de Mairena* these ideas are scattered (perhaps intentionally, trying to mirror the turmoil found in reality during the first decades of the twentieth century) without a formal order. A systematic approach to reading the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* is needed because the 608 sections in *Juan de Mairena*, though each can be read as a standalone paragraph, exist under a network of relationships that establish a system of value in relation to Antonio Machado's basic beliefs about life and reality; some are

main paragraphs that many subsequent ones support, in that they explain, expand and elaborate the theme discussed. Classifying the system of value in *Juan de Mairena* will sort out to an extent Antonio Machado's system of beliefs, which, I think, is key to figuring out and understanding his philosophy. One example is the paragraph on page 82 in *Juan de Mairena I*, which plays the role of a main paragraph. Other paragraphs in *Juan de Mairena, Los Complementarios* and some of his poems will help expound upon and support what is entailed by the paragraph. It begins with "Nunca, nada, nadie" (never, nothing, no one); with these three negative words Juan de Mairena has summarized in a theoretical hierarchical framework the conditions of the external world that can be evaluated in relation to human life and knowledge. According to this passage, the metaphysical and the epistemological conceptions in *Juan de Mairena* are interdependent and they are grounded in ontology in the sense that every object in space and time acquires its ontological status and value through a relationship with human beings, and not vice versa. What this means in *Juan de Mairena's* epistemological system is that, not only is the human being the center of value in the objective world, but also human beings are what bring and give worth to the whole empirical fact and experience. The ideas expressed in *Juan de Mairena* do not work in a mechanical way; they operate in the way human society functions, by the individual's cooperation with the whole and by means of interrelation. In this sense the thoughts gradually progress in identifying and pondering upon various human problems, in a way much like what Gilles Deleuze suggests in *La Philosophie Critique de Kant*, referring to the way Kant's three critiques work. According to Deleuze, Kant's three critiques were never meant to be treated as an independent opus (though each *Critique* can be studied analytically and academically independently). This is because, as is Antonio Machado's aim in *Juan de Mairena*, Kant's ultimate intent was not to answer and explain academic disciplines in

themselves but to develop a comprehensive explanation that addresses ultimately human problems that are questions surrounding human existence and its search for meaning in life. It is precisely for this aspect of validating human reality through individual subjectivity (as Antonio Machado does in *Juan de Mairena*) that Unamuno, in *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida*, praises Kant's ability to doubt and reconsider his earlier systematic and rational ideas exceptionally exposed in the first critique in favor of a more morally guided thought in the second critique, *Critique of Practical Reason*:

Hay en la filosofía de este hombre Kant, hombre de corazón y cabeza, es decir, hombre, un significativo salto, como habría dicho Kierkegaard, otro hombre -¡y tan hombre!- el salto de la Crítica de la razón pura a la Crítica de la razón práctica (28).

Unamuno's acclaim of Kant is made for Kant's prioritizing of subjectivity and morality over objectivity and rationality. Within this prospect, for Deleuze, each *Critique* tackled a particular problem in order to create a system in which all philosophical problems, which are human problems, may be looked at comprehensibly through the collaboration of the faculties of the mind<sup>1</sup>; hence, Deleuze's insistence that Kant's third critique, *Critique of Judgment* plays a crucial role in establishing Kant's philosophical system because it deals with aesthetics. It is in this sense that epistemology in *Juan de Mairena* is dependent on the ontological condition which, in turn, is associated with aesthetics and attains justification through morality.

This is precisely the reason why the exposure of Antonio Machado's system of beliefs based on a category of values is important, for it will facilitate the understanding of the synthesis

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<sup>1</sup> Faculties of the mind are the mind's processing capabilities such as understanding, judging, reasoning, speculating and so on.

of his thoughts in his writings in relation to how he views life and reality. This is what the present work proposes to do, namely to sort out Antonio Machado's system of beliefs as exposed in his prose, chiefly focusing on *Juan de Mairena* as a way to uncover the unity of thoughts and hence his personal convictions about reality and life.

## 2. A proposal for a systematic approach to reading the fragments in *Juan de Mairena*

The idea of system in western intellectual history can be assessed back to the ancient Greek thinkers (astronomers, physicists, and geometers). Mathematicians like Euclid, who collected and perfected many theorems and axiomatic proofs that were put together in his book *Elements*, were profoundly influential throughout ancient and medieval times. But particularly it was significant for early modern science from Nicolaus Copernicus, Johannes Kepler, Galileo Galilei to Sir Isaac Newton. Moreover, “[m]odern philosophers of all tendencies — Descartes and Hobbes, Spinoza and Locke, Hume and Kant — had regarded Euclidean geometry as a paradigm of epistemic certainty”<sup>2</sup>. However, with the advancement and rapid progress of mathematics as the basis of scientific discoveries in the nineteenth century<sup>3</sup>, especially the new discoveries in physics that relied on mathematical proofs, Euclid's *Elements* no longer had a direct impact on the new findings though it still remained influential in education. Nevertheless, the idea of system as a collaboration of entities working towards a single goal received a notable influence from Euclid's *Elements* in the development of rational trend in western thought.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/geometry-19th/> 6 27 2011

<sup>3</sup> In the early twentieth century even language is intended to have its basis in mathematics, particularly in the work of Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead in *Principia Mathematica* which was published in three volumes during 1910-1913. Their purpose was to represent in logical notation all the possible quantitative expressions in the English language, which they called Symbolic Logic. (<http://www.math.uwaterloo.ca/~snburris/htdocs/scav/principia/principia.html> 6 27 2011)

System as the collaborative association of different parts working under a single purpose in phenomena can be found on three levels (I use the term phenomena here to mean tangible worlds or sensible universe that can be measured in terms of space and time): First, there is the planetary system like the solar system. Second, within the atmosphere, we have nature. Third, a system can also be found in the organic body in that all of its parts work in connection with the whole to maintain vitality. While the solar system has structural order, and functions automatically under gravitational attraction based on that arrangement, nature and the organic body do not show any order. Yet both nature and the organic body sustain life assisted by all of the parts of their organisms. That is to say, each part has a different role but works under a single purpose to sustain life.

On the other hand, in the abstract and intangible realm, that is, on the level of ideas as models in the arrangement of human reality, Plato's dialogues made a significant contribution in providing a rational and structured method of analysis that developed into various branches of knowledge such as ontology, morality, and epistemology. It is worth noting that the ideological domain, as opposed to the external world of perception, subsists only as a conceptual reference, and the meaning of a statement is derived through interpretation. Before Plato, Heraclitus, Parmenides and Pythagoras are noted for the use of the *logos*, the exercise of sustained logical reasoning in their arguments. But it is with Aristotle, through his keen observation and methodical writing form, that the application of the *logos* is established in a systematic way in the various branches of knowledge such as politics, ethics, and logic.

The prose of *Juan de Mairena* does not have any structural order. The proposal, here, for a systematic reading of the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* is that, on the phenomenal level, the stand alone paragraphs are interrelated in the way nature and the organic body have all their

members connected together. On the abstract level, while there is a lack of structural order that determines each part's function, the fragments collaborate toward a single vision and can be systematically interpreted. And it is in this collaborative sense that the ideas work in association with Antonio Machado's basic beliefs about life, art, nature, God and death. If Juan de Mairena's criticism of Aristotle is taken into consideration in thinking about the structural organization of the book, then it is no surprise that the paragraphs are not arranged nor organized. Only when Juan de Mairena's affirmation and acknowledgment that human reality operates in the way poetry comports are taken into account can we comprehend that the structure itself has meaning and plays a crucial part in disclosing his beliefs about human reality. It is in this sense that the systematic reading of the fragments is suggested.

Books and articles published thus far on *Juan de Mairena* do not examine the over 650 fragments in a cohesive way. The best synthesis of the topics is found under the heading 'pensamiento' or 'claves' like Pablo Cobos's *El pensamiento de Antonio Machado en Juan de Mairena* and Antonio Sánchez Barbudo's "El pensamiento de Abel Martín y Juan de Mairena y su relación con la poesía de Antonio Machado," or *Claves de Antonio Machado* by Bernard Sesé. While such studies explain in the broadest sense the topics analyzed, such as love, the others, identity, solipsism, communication, philosophical thoughts on metaphysics and so forth fail to classify the topics into categories and branches of knowledge from which the other fragments that were not included in the analysis could be explained as part of an overall 'vision;' I use the word vision, here, in the sense that Julián Marías uses the word as orientation in his article "Antonio Machado y el pensamiento II."

### 3. The miscellaneous genre and the organizational structure in *Juan de Mairena* as a reflection of socio-political reality in the period of *fin de siècle*

Given that the fragments collaborate with each other in representing Juan de Mairena's system of beliefs in relation to his conception of reality, how do the fragments relate to each other in the integrated sense of totality? Broadly speaking, while the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* have the form and function of aphorisms, that is, according to John Gross, a stand-alone maxim or a short statement that holds some general truth about recurrent aspects of life, the content exhibits two things in relation to the purpose Antonio Machado had for writing them (*The Oxford Book of Aphorisms* vii-viii).

First, in terms of substance, the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* disclose Antonio Machado's system of beliefs in a hierarchical order (not reflected in its structural organization) about human life, the world and what influences reality. Second, in reaction to the new emerging mode of modernized life in the platform of the modern city and the slow crumbling of traditional values, he wants to create a critical culture by establishing a form of 'critical consciousness' through persuasive dialogues (based more on *pathos* than on *logos*), upholding essential human values against a social system that primarily promotes material progress. This is, in a way, what Antonio Machado highlighted in the projected discourse that was never presented for his acceptance as a member of the *Real Academia Española*, describing his impressions of the first decades of the twentieth century:

“período revolucionario” en el que se produce una honda transformación en la conciencia del hombre: Por todas partes las cosas parecen bruscamente cambiar, como si el árbol total se renovase por sus ocultas raíces. Fuerzas poderosas militan hoy contra los que suponíamos más firmes y más altos objetivos; los

postulados de la ciencia, del arte, de la moral, aparecen inopinadamente removidos por nuevas concepciones del espacio, de la materia, de la economía, del Estado, de la familia.... Cabe pensar que...caminamos hacia una nueva iluminación... (*El Pensamiento Religioso y Filosófico de AM* 9)

Though the last statement seems optimistic, the overall tone suggests that human beings during this transitional period will undergo hardship. This is what Juan de Mairena says in regard to the near future:

Para los tiempos que vienen hay que estar seguros de algo. Porque han de ser tiempos de lucha, y habréis de tomar partido.... Tomar partido es no sólo renunciar a las razones de vuestros adversarios, sino también a la vuestra; abolir el diálogo, renunciar, en suma, a la razón humana. Si lo miráis despacio, comprenderéis el arduo problema de vuestro porvenir; habéis de retroceder a la barbarie, cargados de razón. (106)

According to Armand Baker, Antonio Machado was one of the first intellectuals to conceive what Karl Jasper called “the new consciousness of the world,” which realizes the need to increase, enrich and deepen the internal human experience as the world of phenomena develops, expands and modifies the way humans live through applied science (10).

The fact that there has been no attempt to systematically interpret the fragments in Juan de Mairena is due in part to the very nature of the work itself, which brings together an assortment of subjects and forms with no apparent structural order. But the structure in *Juan de Mairena*, rather than being random or intentionally without order, reflects the condition of reality from the rapidly shifting transitional phase of cultural values in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century to the muddled socio-political reality of the first decades of the twentieth

century. Many critics have interpreted the absence of structural order in *Juan de Mairena* as the author's following trends such as irrationalism, exceptionalism and surrealism. While the precepts of these trends such as instinct, uniqueness of individual human life, awareness as reality, emotion, spirit, people (in the sense of Fichte and Herder's German Volk) are indeed what Juan de Mairena defends and promotes, nevertheless these precepts are not what guides his 'vision.' Other critics, like Antonio Fernández Ferrer, attribute the influence of key writers such as Nietzsche upon *Juan de Mairena*. In his introduction to *Juan de Mairena I*, Ferrer says, the single most important influence from a foreign thinker came from Nietzsche:

Sin duda el filósofo más influyente en la prosa machadiana es, en muchos sentidos, Friedrich Nietzsche. En primer lugar buena parte del discurso aforístico y sentencioso del profesor apócrifo hinca sus raíces en la máxima nietzscheana...de obras como *Más allá del bien y del mal*, *Aurora*, *Humano, demasiado humano*, *El crepúsculo de los ídolos* o la *Gaya ciencia*...(*Juan de Mairena I* 39)

Continuing this Ferrer says: "Nietzsche es el indudable maestro en el filosofar discontinuo, ajeno al tratado sistemático y globalizador" (*Juan de Mairena I* 40). Ferrer's evaluation of Nietzsche's influence upon Antonio Machado does not seem to distinguish content from form, which is crucial in evaluating Antonio Machado's system of thought in *Juan de Mairena*. Besides this, when looking at Nietzsche's approach to writing, one should consider that though Nietzsche's writing form is fragmented, his views in most of them reveal a consistent unity of thoughts. One of the reasons why Nietzsche wrote in aphoristic form is because of its direct impact on the reader. On the other hand, aphorisms stand on their own; they are self-sufficient in that each aphorism can afford to deliver a message independently of an overall context, the context of each

being embedded within the context of the message. Antonio Machado noticed this in Nietzschean aesthetics, and in a way adopts it as the format of writing in *Juan de Mairena* precisely because *Juan de Mairena* is a reaction to the ongoing reality of the contemporary world, as was Nietzsche's writing, and not a prescriptive meditation about the world, which is characteristic of the previous eighteenth century writing mode.

Although descriptively Nietzsche's prose style is fragmented, his intentions and ideological reactions against the prescriptive and normative world are clear. He was against universals, and they can be systematically constructed from his earlier writings to some of his late-period writings. Nietzsche was against restrictive moral teaching, in particular the Socratic and Christian doctrines, which do not differentiate between the ruling class and the common people. In opposition to this, for Antonio Machado, Socratic reasoning, and especially the Christian promotion of the concept of love, are what can bring humanity to a harmonious state:

Grande hazaña fue el platonismo...pero no basta la razón, el invento socrático, para crear la convivencia humana; ésta precisa también la comunión cordial, una convergencia de corazones en un mismo objeto de amor. Tal fue la hazaña del Cristo... (*Juan de Mairena I* 153)

While stylistically and structurally speaking, one can ostensibly find Nietzsche's influence in Antonio Machado's prose, Nietzsche and Antonio Machado have substantial differences in their system of values and beliefs. Hence Nietzsche's influence is limited to the style of Antonio Machado's prose. This is what Gonzalo Sobejano affirms when evaluating Nietzsche's influence in Antonio Machado's writings in his *Nietzsche en España*: "Si existe alguna influencia de éste en la obra de Machado, aquí está: en lo formal, en lo literario." (423). Sobejano bases his opinion

precisely on the quote under the heading “Nietzsche and Schopenhauer” chapter XLVI in *Juan de Mairena* which says:

Nietzsche no tuvo el talento ni la inventiva metafísica de Schopenhauer; ni la gracia, ni siquiera el buen humor, del gran pesimista. Su lectura es mucho menos divertida que la de Schopenhauer, aunque éste es todavía un filósofo sistemático, y Nietzsche, casi un poeta. Sin embargo, aquella su invención de la *Vuelta eterna*, en pleno siglo de Carnot, su tono tan patético y tan seguro ante cosas tan improbables tiene su grandeza.... (*Juan de Mairena I 337-338*)

On the other hand, the way the human mind processes thought without an order, jumping from one idea to another without any conclusion, mirrors the non-linear structure of writing form in *Juan de Mairena*. This non structured form of the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* has precisely the same concern and intention Plato had when he chose the dialogue to be the writing format to represent his thoughts; Plato’s aim was to imitate natural speaking because for Plato spontaneity in verbal exchange with an interlocutor was the best way to approach the truth of any subject matter. Juan de Mairena also chose this format because he could express what he had to say better in a dialogue arrangement, though there is little direct dialogue and more monologue.

Cada día, señores, la literatura, es más escrita y menos hablada. La consecuencia es que cada día se escriba peor, en una prosa fría, sin gracia, aunque no exenta de correcciones, y que la oratoria sea un refrito de la palabra escrita, donde antes se había enterrado la palabra hablada. En todo orador de nuestros días hay siempre un periodista chapucero... (*Juan de Mairena I 76*)

The reason why Juan de Mairena chose the dialogue format is because he wanted to focus on human reality, emphasizing human society and its cultural orientation. In this regard, Abel

Martín tends to speak about topics in which he develops his ideas in an expository style. The fragments in *Juan de Mairena* are concerned, in one way or another, whether it is Juan de Mairena speaking directly to his pupil or in a soliloquy, with the other as his interlocutor.

#### **4. The literary metamorphosis of *Juan de Mairena*- from newspaper articles to book form**

*Juan de Mairena* was published in book form in August 1936 by Espasa-Calpe with the title *Juan de Mairena. Sentencias, donaires, apuntes y recuerdos de un profesor apócrifo* (Ferrer, 18). Before they took a book form, the fragments appeared irregularly as bi-weekly and tri-weekly columns in the widely circulated newspaper *Diario de Madrid* from November 5th, 1934 to October 24th 1935 with the title “Apuntes y recuerdos de Juan de Mairena” and then in *El Sol* from November 17th, 1935 until June 28th, 1936 (Ferrer, 16-18). These correspond to Cátedra vol. 1 of Antonio Fernández Ferrer’s edition, which has 50 chapters with 422 fragments (Cobos, 7). Volume 2 of Ferrer’s edition contains the fragments published from 1937 to 1938 in *Hora de España, Madrid, Cuadernos de Casa de Cultura, Servicio Español de Información* and *La Vanguardia* (Ferrer, 9), and it has 36 chapters with 231 fragments.

*Juan de Mairena. Sentencias, donaires, apuntes y recuerdos de un profesor apócrifo* as the initial title suggests, when it appeared in *Diario de Madrid*, is a collection of mixed composition. It brings together short experimental genres from lyrical to dramatic, such as humoristic dialogues, skits, monologues, aphorisms, free, blank, closed or received forms of lyrical verses in which Juan de Mairena asks, points out, reflects, reasons, comments, explains, and evaluates a variety of themes and topics ranging from aesthetics, ontology, metaphysics, literature, politics, current events and even popular culture.

#### **5. Juan de Mairena- a philosopher based on a supermarket of ideas**

A closer analysis of the philosophical selections found in *Juan de Mairena* reveals that Juan de Mairena does not subscribe to any particular system of ideas or philosophers. His philosophy does not consist of inventing concepts and constructing systems to explain the various topics he discusses related to human life and reality. Rather, his philosophical discussion is based on a selection, evaluation and promotion of ideas that can be put into practice in order to improve human reality as well as to guide thoughts and actions in individual human beings in their endeavor to be a conscientious person. In this sense, philosophy for Antonio Machado is not just a verbal skill, that is, to speak well for the sake of speaking, nor a contemplating activity in order to formulate metaphysical notions as found in Plato's and other philosophers' writings. This is why he says:

Para decir bien hay que pensar bien, y para pensar bien conviene elegir temas muy esenciales, que logren por sí mismos captar nuestra atención, estimular nuestros esfuerzos, conmovernos, apasionarnos y hasta sorprendernos. (*Juan de Mairena I* 123)

Philosophy for Juan de Mairena is practical, conceptual and empirical, in the sense that it must serve human beings in this life, providing assistance in the process of shaping their thoughts and actions in the exercise of care for the self and the other. This is why even Plato and Kant, who he admires more than any other thinker, are not to be taken dogmatically since Juan de Mairena believes in discovery and disclosure of the present as historical process in time.

Fue Kant el último filósofo de gran estilo. Para encontrarle su igual es preciso recordar a Platón... No nos asusten los grandes nombres de estos gigantes. Ni uno ni otro vinieron al mundo a poner fin a las disputas filosóficas, sino a enseñarnos a filosofar (*Los Complementarios* 129).

The word ‘filosofar,’ above, is not used in a technical sense but in practical sense, and it entails personal effort for knowing oneself and figuring out life’s meaning in the interaction with other human beings under the condition of phenomena<sup>4</sup>. In this sense, his admiration for a particular philosopher, in general, is limited to the usefulness of the ideas each thinker can provide for such a purpose. However, Juan de Mairena shows deep reverence when philosophy is accompanied by personal convictions and followed by action. In this respect, he shows reverence to two figures: Socrates and Jesus. The unity of self, belief, thought, speech and action, all in harmony, is what Alexander Nehamas referred as the “art of living.” Precisely, Nehamas takes as example Socrates in his analysis of the ‘art’ which he thinks hardly any contemporary philosophers strive to achieve (*Five Portraits* 62).

This is the reason why while Henri Bergson may be influential in Antonio Machado’s thought, Machado did not admire him personally; this is evident in the following passage in *Los Complementarios*:

Henri Bergson es el filósofo definitivo del siglo XIX...

Durante el curso de 1910 a 1911 asistí a las lecciones de Henri Bergson.

El aula donde daba su clase era la mayor del Colegio de Francia y estaba siempre rebosante de oyentes. Bergson es un hombre frío, de ojos muy vivos. Su cráneo es muy bello. Su palabra es perfecta, pero no añade a su obra escrita... (117).

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<sup>4</sup> The condition of phenomena is ironic in the sense of incongruity, particularly the way human expectation tends to deviate away from facts even as humans have a good theoretical and empirical knowledge of how the physical world works. Unlike Nietzsche, who argued that no interpretation is needed for the organic world but only for the human world, the organic world also needs to be interpreted, not to the degree and frequency required for the human world but from time to time both awareness and intentionality work based on certain expectations of the environs which do not correspond with what happens in reality. This is because expectation and intentionality tend to adjust to the habitualness of the environment, and they can’t catch up sometimes with the changes it goes through. So expectation and the formulation of intentionality struggle continually to readjust to their environs, making them engage from time to time in interpretational process to readjust to the reality of their surroundings.

The last sentence is a form of criticism of Bergson because it entails that, while Bergson's rhetorical skill is admirable, by repeating the content of his writings exactly as they are he is not putting into practice the tenets expounded in two of his key works: an article, "Introduction to Metaphysics" (1903), later published in book form with the title *The Creative Mind* (1934), and *Creative Evolution* (1907). Antonio Machado must have been familiar with the article and the book that was published in 1907.

#### **6. Antonio Machado's essential human realist position in *Juan de Mairena***

A careful analysis of the fragments in *Juan de Mairena* reveals that for Juan de Mairena reality does not consist of objects of perception. In this sense, for Juan de Mairena, reality has little to do with what is palpable in itself but the meaning such an object acquires in relation to human understanding. This is because for Juan de Mairena, for human beings more than any other agents and entities, reality is founded in the working of the mind in the sense that culture, system of values, and even our personal beliefs, through which humans organize their thought, speech, and action, are all processed through the various faculties of the mind. For the very reason that meaning is produced and managed internally in relation to a range of semantic fields, it is fundamental for Juan de Mairena that a human be able to distinguish between knowledge that pertains to human culture and knowledge about the external world. His socio-human epistemology presupposes this basic difference, and its value system is put together upon such a source of distinction. This is the reason why he avoids as much as possible the idealization of the human, the nature, the external or even the transcendental world because he is not interested in imagining or projecting them before he actually grasps essentially what they are by the way each object and entity are in their own right.

In this sense Juan de Mairena's epistemology is divided into two semantic hemispheres. On the one hand, there are objects of faith, and on the other there are objects of reason. In this, the objects of faith, for Juan de Mairena, cannot be rationalized because the component of object of faith cannot be broken down into analysis by rational means<sup>5</sup>. In either case, for Juan de Mairena, the binary semantic fields of faith and reason do not serve as powers to control objects or entities; rather, for him objects of faith or objects of knowledge are to be relied on by means of a form of trust in them. In this sense, Juan de Mairena trusts in God, in the other, in death, in love through faith, blindly while he trusts in nature, in animals and plants, in minerals, in the sea, in the mountain, in the external world through reason, by trying to acquaint and understand them empirically and rationally, excluding human beings because, as Ortega and Gasset states in *Europa y la idea de la nación*, they have no substance and therefore are not univocally definable like other tangible entities in phenomena.

In this epistemological dichotomy what Juan de Mairena considers most important and valuable are human beings, regardless of his or her social status because of their capacity to create meaning and influence reality through various modes of relationship with each other and the world. In this sense, for Juan de Mairena, the external world by itself has no meaning and value. It has value only in relationship with human input. It is because of this emphasis on the external world's dependency on humans that Juan de Mairena is considered an essential human realist.

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<sup>5</sup> An example of the type of object or situation that resists rational analysis based on the modus operandi of the external reality can be found in John 1:1 in the *New Testament*. It follows formally after the creation passage in Genesis 1:1, but rather than describing the physical creation, it steps back to an earlier moment, before the creation of heaven and earth. If we were to read the passage with the conventional grammar that respects the sequence of events in time, the "Word" would precede "God" as entity who created heaven and earth, for it says it was the "Word" first. However, a chronological reading would be inappropriate here given that the context is not in material time; the whole process, more likely, implies simultaneous apparitions, since the pattern by which "Word" and "God" are interposed follows a classification formula. Hence, we can suppose what the instances of "Word>God" "Word with God" and "Word equal God" highlight are unity and identity. This is to say, given the context, "Word" and "God" are essentially united and they are identical though they are represented as two different entities.

He should be vividly aware of himself, of others and of the social reality (and what other reality is there...) He must act with full realization of himself, of society and its sub-groups... We are talking no longer in terms of law. We are talking of men and groups since it is they, society, and their sentiments that are in action all the time. (Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*. W.W. Norton and Company, 1967, 67-68)

The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato. (Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, Free Press, 1979, 39)

Nosotros hemos soñado el mundo. Lo hemos soñado resistente, misterioso, visible, ubicuo en el espacio y firme en el tiempo; pero hemos consentido en su arquitectura tenues y eternos intersticios de sinrazón para saber que es falso. (Jorge Luis Borges, "Discusión," *Obra completa JLB Vol. I* 258)

## Part One -

### Chapter 1

-Establishing the literary and philosophical framework for differentiating the human way of being in phenomena from objective reality based on Juan de Mairena's criticism of the deterioration of human values through the adoption of materialist orientation grounded on pragmatism in ongoing social reality in the *Fin de siècle* and the first decades of twentieth century

#### 1.1 The metaphysical, ontological, epistemological and ethical aspects of "Nunca, nada, nadie"

Nunca, nada, nadie:

Nunca, nada, nadie. Tres palabras terribles; sobre todo la última. (Nadie es la personificación de la nada.) El hombre, sin embargo, se encara con ellas y acaba

perdiéndoles el miedo... ¡Don Nadie! ¡Don José María Nadie! ¡El excelentísimo señor don Nadie! Conviene que os habituéis -habla Juan de Mairena a sus discípulos- a pensar en él y a imaginarlo. Como ejercicio poético no se me ocurre nada mejor. Hasta mañana. (*Juan de Mairena I 82*)

### **I. The metaphysical and ontological aspects**

“Nunca, nada, nadie” in the paragraph above are negative words that underline the condition of human reality more than describe any definite state of objective reality; the use of these words for existential claims are derivative<sup>1</sup> and are limited to express subjective assertions or incomplete empirical propositions which lack an unconditional proof; within this boundary “nadie” makes reference to the context of human degradation, and specifically it refers to the lack of human dignity and existential value. Likewise, the negative human condition Juan de Mairena highlights with “¡Don Nadie! ¡Don José María Nadie! ¡El excelentísimo señor don Nadie!” is in reference to the human condition as a species itself rather than a representation of a social class conflict or a political clash amongst different groups, since the common denominator ‘Nadie’ refers to all of them regardless of the social stratification to which each belongs. For instance, it makes allusion to a Don without a proper name denoting anybody (a common or working class); then, it refers to a Don with proper first and second names denoting somebody (a middle class); lastly, it states a Don with a superlative title preceded by a definite article denoting (the main leader) either the incumbent President or the ruling King. As a result, the kind of

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<sup>1</sup> Derivative in the sense of resulting from the faculty of understanding within the limits that Kant sets with the twelve pure concepts of understanding divided into four classes of three, which in part stems from Aristotelian Categories of Realism (however, for Aristotle objective reality was real and not just a face of reality). See *Critique of Pure Reason* (A70-B95) for the full chart. Since for Kant only what are in phenomena are objects of possible cognition, “Nunca, nada, nadie” are not part of objective reality or reality as in itself, but their meaning is derived from the faculty of understanding in relation to subjective experience in phenomena. Wilhelm Dilthey refers to external reality as raw material from which, he gathers, humans construct and arrive, through translation and interpretation (*interpretatione naturae*) an understanding as a form of information (*The Hermeneutic Tradition* 101-102).

inquiry and evaluation Juan de Mairena wants to instigate about the state of human condition goes beyond the social norm. This is precisely delineated in the beginning of *Juan de Mairena I* where we read:

La verdad es la verdad, dígala Agamenón o su porquero.

Agamenón –Conforme.

El porquero –No me convence (*Juan de Mairena I* 75).

As in the paragraph of “Nunca, nada, nadie” the social hierarchical positions, though in place, have been annulled through the inclusive disjunction in “dígala Agamenón o su porquero,” where the rhetorical question about truth is an attempt to affirm the objectivity of truth. The two characters standing in extreme opposition in the social ladder (King Agamemnon and the swineherd) find themselves stripped of any social decoration in their bare human selves; in part, their social hierarchy is reduced to the context of essentially human discursive nature precisely because they are having a metaphysical inquiry, but more so because a human, however outstanding, cannot surpass his own species. Precisely this is what Juan de Mairena says in reference to a Castilian proverb:

Recordad el proverbio de Castilla: “Nadie es más que nadie”. Esto quiere decir cuánto es difícil aventajarse a todos, porque, por mucho que un hombre valga, nunca tendrá valor más alto que el de ser hombre. (*Juan de Mairena I* 103)

What is more, there is a reversal in the expected response<sup>2</sup> in that the character who should be conforming affirmatively to the rhetorical question (the swineherd) is first to disagree. But the swineherd’s dissent is not merely a complaint about the unconditional quality of the objective

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<sup>2</sup> Evaluating the dialogue between Agamemnon and his swineherd from the social vantage point of view, it would have been convenient for the swineherd to agree that the objectivity of the truth voids in a way the difference in their social hierarchical standing and places him equal to the king Agamemnon.

truth, no matter who articulates it. His disagreement is a negation that such a notion as objective truth exists at all, and this is stressed by the fact that the one who objects is the least among people in terms of social standing but still equally valid because he is, as anyone else, part of the human species. And like Kant's main thesis in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, his concluding query indirectly limits and brings the epistemology of metaphysical knowledge to the level of opinion, a subjective view that rests on empirical experience and life's outlook. Juan de Mairena does this strategically, not so much to reaffirm Kant's claim in the *CPR*, but to revise reality's value system and support that any human as an entity, regardless of his or her social status, is above any human speculation and construction; this is to say, the city, the rules, the tools and whatever humans create through imagination, art and skill in phenomena should serve the human race as a whole and they should be made available if those can bring benefit in terms of instilling and providing the necessary thinking tools to sort out priorities in life for the self and for making intelligent choices that affect positively others and the environment in which humans live for now and for generations to come. This is because for Juan de Mairena humans are not merely means to the project of modernization, where such a project can benefit only a minority within the species; for him every human being is a care giver for himself and herself by means of a bilateral relationship with the other in response to an internal necessity to provide care, not so much to obtain a tangible reward or gratification but to gain some form of insight and discovery of the meaning of being a human in phenomena.

Precisely the negative human appraisal in relation to his standing in reality in the paragraph of "Nunca, nada, nadie" points to the inconformity of the human condition in phenomena that goes beyond the social arrangement set in the paragraph of "Agamenón o su porquero" that dissents on the validity of objective truth. What Juan de Mairena addresses in the

paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie” falls under metaphysics, ontology, epistemology and ethics with focus on ontology because it criticizes humans not living up to their expectation as human beings. The paragraph aims to deal with two things: on the one hand, to shock the reader by juxtaposing two essentially different beings as equals, and on the other, to criticize the depreciation of human value and dignity in relation to other beings and things through ontological categorization. In a way, Juan de Mairena takes the opposite approach to Husserlian descriptivism in the excerpt “Nunca, nada, nadie” in order to highlight the difference by comparing the essences of two different entities as the same based on their actual significance in human reality. But fundamentally Juan de Mairena’s approach and Husserlian descriptivism have the same purpose in that they both seek to discriminate one entity from the other based on categories of meaning<sup>3</sup>. And this Juan de Mairena does concisely and to the point in the metaphorical phrase “Nadie es la personificación de la nada.” That is to say, human ontological status is equated to the ontological status of an object in order to show the gravity of ongoing reality, precisely because he wants to categorically separate them and assign a clear hierarchical distinction between them; that is why he indignantly compares the two when, by essence, humans and objects are different and have a fundamentally distinct teleological role and design. Indeed, Juan de Mairena’s preoccupation rests in the materialization of human reality through technological modernization fundamentally based on Cartesian modernity and its positivistic attitude that considers a commendable achievement only what results in material accomplishment and success.

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<sup>3</sup> “Categories of meaning” are the shared basic essences of two like objects or beings of the same category. “Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations.” Susann M. Laverty. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* Volume 2, Number 3, September 2003. [http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2\\_3final/pdf/laverty.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/2_3final/pdf/laverty.pdf) Aug. 31<sup>st</sup> 2011

In effect, in a world whose value system rests on materialism and functional efficacy, objects could be at an advantage (I am referring here to human made objects and also the raw material) when humans and objects are in the same category because unlike humans, objects are predictable, replaceable, and they can last longer and need almost no instruction but a unilateral programming. For these reasons presenting humans and objects as the same really means humans stand below objects, even though humans have greater capability in terms of skills and intelligence; hence, the equation of “nadie” with “nada” here is not done in the existential sense of “no hay nada” but in the sense of value or worth of “no vale nada”. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says: “El hombre, sin embargo, se encara con ellas y acaba perdiéndoles el miedo....” This is to say, people become accustomed to a degrading condition of life when they shouldn’t, not demeaning in the sense of lacking food or shelter, but from the stance of being considered without dignity and respect (which for Juan de Mairena are indispensable in any human dealings), which calls for an evaluation and a reconfiguration of socio-human reality. When Juan de Mairena says “[c]omo ejercicio poético no se me ocurre nada mejor” he is not limiting poetry to a form of literary genre; as will be analyzed in chapter 3, poetry in this sentence refers to human reality<sup>4</sup> based on the way it operates internally in conjunction with the faculties of imagination, sentiment, understanding and judgment mediated by principles of value from which life’s meaning is deduced and derived.

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<sup>4</sup> The phrase “ejercicio poético” is used here to address, promote, endorse and situate the modus operandi of human reality as opposed to the way inert objects comport strictly determined by physical laws. What is entailed by “poético” is not just a literary genre but way beyond that, as the way reality operates for humans; this will be explained further on pages 9 to 11 in relation to Heidegger’s claims and contentions about the state of human reality in technological modernity in *Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker*.

Precisely the absence or lack of the human persona<sup>5</sup> is shown for the characters portrayed, in an interesting way, in chapter IX (through a short play in three acts) in *Juan de Mairena*, where, with a similar intent as in the paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie”, he depicts, the helpless (in the sense of not being able to exercise the human being’s most fundamental essence, which are autonomy and will, in order to effectuate a conference, an act of communication in a straightforward manner) and dehumanized state of individuals trapped under the bureaucracy of the modern system:

## IX

(«Don Nadie en la corte»)

[boceto de una comedia en tres actos].)

Acto Primero

Escena Única

Un señor importante. Claudio (su criado)

S.I.- Dime, Claudio, ¿quién estuvo aquí esta mañana?

C.- Uno que preguntaba por usted.

S.I.- Pero ¿quién era?

C.- Uno.

S.I.- ¿No dijo cómo se llamaba?

C.- ¡Qué memoria tengo! Me dio esta tarjeta.

S.I.- (leyendo.) «José María Nadie. Del comercio.» (A Claudio.) Si vuelve, que pase.

Telón

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<sup>5</sup> For Juan de Mairena, a person cannot have an indefinite identity and pass by someone or an unknown person; for him a person should always be identified with a proper name. The criticism on indefinite identity will recur again later, specifically when he talks about the rhetoric of the Unknown Soldier.

Acto Segundo

Escena Única

Señor importante. Claudio

S.I.- ¿No ha vuelto don José María Nadie?

C.- No, que yo sepa.

S.I.- ¿Nadie más ha preguntado por mí?

C.- Nadie.

S.I.- ¿Nadie?

C.- Nadie.

Telón

Acto Tercero

Escena Única

Señor importante. Claudio. Un espejo de tocador, que hace cuanto indica el diálogo

S.I.- Dime, Claudio, ¿qué le pasa a este espejo?

C.- ¿Qué le pasa?

S.I.- Cuando voy a mirarme en él da una vuelta de campana- ¿ves?-, y me presenta su revés de madera.

C.- Es verdad. Pues, ¡es gracioso!

S.I.- Luego- míralo- vuelve a su posición normal, sin que nadie le toque. Prueba tú a mirarte.

C.- ¡Quieto! Conmigo no se mueve, señor. Pruebe usted ahora.

S.I.- ¡Quieto! ¡Otra vez! (Furioso.) ¡Juro a Dios!

C.- ¡Tiene gracia!

S.I.- ¡Maldita! (Con voz ronca) Claudio, ¿quién estuvo aquí esta mañana?

C.- Esta mañana estuvo aquí don José María Nadie. Se marchó, cansado de esperarle, y dijo que no volvía más.

Telón. (*Juan de Mairena I 119-121*)

The setting in the play should be assessed in the context of a modern administrative system that humans, although they are its creators, are unable to master<sup>6</sup> (*Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker 56*). The assertion is based on Heidegger's contention that what modern technological culture has done is to displace human beings from their traditional way of existence on earth<sup>7</sup> because, although there is an appearance of social prosperity "[a]ll our relationships have become merely technical ones"; he says "it is no longer upon earth that man lives today" (56). By relationships being "merely technical" he is articulating that under the new platform of modernization human relations are no longer capable of being genuine and authentic to the moment; rather, the encounters are basically procedural in that they fulfill a specific purpose within the designated role set in the system. This in a way reflects a comparable situation in regard to the powerlessness of humans in a mechanized society where an individual is deprived of the ability to exercise his or her essential privileges as in the paragraph "Nunca, nada, nadie." Likewise, what is being emphasized and described in this short play in a humorous but satirical way is the demeaned human state under the guise of a positive modern socioeconomic legal system in which everyone, regardless of his or her social class, becomes an instrument of process

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<sup>6</sup> Martin Heidegger says in "The Spiegel Interview" that "technicity," referring to modern culture, "is something that man does not master by his own power" (*Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker 56*).

In "The Spiegel Interview" Martin Heidegger says that "technicity increasingly dislodges man and uproots him from the earth" in the sense that it interferes and progressively distances humans away from tradition embedded in earthly activities such as agriculture and farming (*Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker 56*).

for the existence and aggrandizement of the system itself. What Juan de Mairena is pointing out with “nadie es la personificación de la nada” within the setting of “Nunca, nada, nadie” is that under the modern materialized system of society, function becomes the substance and an end in itself in all human activities, that is, everyone must keep playing his or her prescribed role for the sole purpose of keeping the system alive and stirring rather than fulfill any individual hope or expectation within an open ended life<sup>8</sup> that is not measured by a prescribed success or failure but by the satisfaction of understanding and achieving certain values and meaning in life. This is precisely the reason why in the play the characters are unable to fulfill an authentic relationship because the relationships portrayed in them are not in the context of validating the other but are merely procedural, including the liaison between el Señor Importante and Claudio because their relationship subsists under a hierarchical context. Nevertheless, Claudio is the only one who tries and is able to interact with both El Señor Importante and Don Nadie; and even the mirror, which here is used as a truth revealing prop, acknowledges Claudio because he does not represent a prescribed character attached to the system nor someone who represents the mass, but himself, a household servant (in the sense of being an intercessor) who attempts to connect people. Claudio’s role, though not successful, reflects in a way Heidegger’s assumption of “the inner truth of human activity,” agreeing in a way with René Char<sup>9</sup>, that to be human is to engage in the activities of “thinking and poetizing” (56) in the sense of exercising the human being’s rational

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<sup>8</sup> It is ironic that modernity starts with the humanistic influence and the search for individual liberty sought through the practice of “liberal arts” in both moral and political sense in the late renaissance; in this endeavor the discovery of a continent in 1492 becomes a real possibility of a new beginning in a new territory beyond the persecution and the suppressed European socio-political and religious reality which was dominated at the time by reformation and the political struggle of various states for hegemony.

<sup>9</sup> René Char (1907 - 1988) was a French poet and resistance fighter who, during 20s and early 30s, was active in the surrealist movement (*Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker* 56). “His most important early book of verse, was *Le Marteau sans maître* (1934; “The Hammer Without a Master”). His later works reveal “his humanism, his belief in man’s high calling and his anger at the brutality of the war” (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/106213/Rene-Char> 3/09/2012)

capacity (organizational and analytic intelligence) and imagination (the human being's inner reflective realm) for the benefit of making fit human reality. In a way Juan de Mairena's last sentence in "Nunca, nada, nadie" where he says "[c]omo ejercicio poético no se me ocurre nada mejor" concurs with René Char's conception of the human realm as being intrinsically poetical in the sense that the human's inner reality does not operate in correspondence to physics but through cultural and traditional activities which reflect ideas, values and relational arrangements which are not found in nature but produced and adopted, interacting with nature for a prolonged period from ancient times passed through traditions and from generations to generations. Hence "ejercicio poético" for Juan de Mairena denotes refashioning human reality according to the human inner experience, necessities, predisposition, and life. This is, in a way, what Heidegger means by "the inner truth of human activity," in that reality (what we consider most valid) for us must be based on our experience in phenomena (without considering humans as part of phenomena) and reflect the human basic social values such as justice, respect, honesty, tolerance, loyalty and so forth which every culture considers to be positive and to be the guiding horizon for human civilization and prosperity.

**i. "Don Nadie" play's coincidence and concurrence with other prior and subsequent literary works**

**a. Coincidence of plot and the situation depicted with Franz Kafka's *The Castle***

The aura, the names given to each character and the situation depicted in the "Don Nadie" play is Kafkaesque<sup>10</sup> and illustrates, in a sardonic way, how despondent humans have

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<sup>10</sup> The reason why I bring in Kafka as a reference and comparison point to the play's analysis is because Reza Banakar --who has meticulously analyzed the importance the principle of legality plays in Kafka's fictional writings-- treats Kafka's fiction as a writing born out of the tension in the search for *Heimat* (home), which for Kafka, according to Banakar, it stood between the *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gessellschaft* (association) in the process of modification and replacement from the traditional society into the modernized form of life (4).

become within the system they have created (“la corte” represented here as “court” in Kafka’s *The Trial* or “the village” in *The Castle*), and that even the most seemingly influential person within the system has become absorbed by the process and has lost the ability to communicate and deal in a straightforward manner with the other; in the play, the exception is Claudio who, by representing himself, becomes the only possibility to a normal human existence, precisely because of his intermediary position in relation to the other two characters,<sup>11</sup> and his lack of official function within the court places him in the position within the court as a semi-outsider. This is the reason why Claudio is the only person in the play who has a personal name; the rest are generic titles with qualifying adjectives—Señor Importante—or are referred to with an indefinite adjective like “Uno,” or are given a last name also with an indefinite pronoun: “José María Nadie” which is equivalent to John Doe in the U.S. legal system to denote one’s lack of personal identity as an individual human being.

The situation given in the play above depicts, in reverse order, in the most elemental sense, the plot in Kafka’s *The Castle*, where the protagonist K., a summoned Land Surveyor, attempts, by all means, to meet Klamm, the high official of the Castle, but fails. As Reza Banakar notes in his analysis of the concept of law in Kafka’s *The Castle*, what impedes and prevents the meeting to take place, besides the bureaucratic maze, is the intrinsic contradictions within modern society and the modern legal system, “specifically, the German and Austrian legal systems” (“In search of Heimat” 22), in this case, which allow the “parallel existence of a dual law” (“In search of Heimat” 20), in the sense that they allow civil law, canon law and traditional natural law to coexist with the state law, especially because two of the legal system’s emphases in Kafka’s writings are the “inaccessibility of justice and the obscurity of the source of legal

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<sup>11</sup> In fact, the mirror that turns around and refuses to provide a likeness of el Señor Importante, giving him the wooden reverse when he tries to look on it, can be treated as the fourth character.

authority,” on the one hand, and the indeterminacy of the outcomes of the case, on the other, which reflect an internal contradiction between the law’s conception as a protective system (its theoretical outlook) and the implementation of justice (its empirical and practical function):

This is a paradox that lies at the heart of the relationship between modern law, which strives toward ‘generality’ and ‘universality,’ and justice, which requires the recognition of ‘singularity’ and ‘specificity.’ (“In Search of Heimat” 22)

This is to say that modern law<sup>12</sup>, on the one hand, strives to create a homogenized and impartial system that disregards the value system embedded in the custom of the community (such as Gramsci’s concept of hegemony in regard to the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized) to which an individual human being belongs. On the other hand, in order to exercise justice, such a system must confront each case that resists a homogenized and abstracted code of law. As a result, in both the play (Señor Importante and Don Jose Maria Nadie) and in *The Castle* (K. and Klamm) the meeting never occurs.

**b. The allegorical coincidence of the “Don Nadie” play with Adelbert Von Chamisso’s *Peter Schlemihl***

The “Don Nadie” play allegorically overlaps in two aspects with *Peter Schlemihl*’s story<sup>13</sup> based on the most essential attributes without going into details of what is embedded in

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<sup>12</sup> Modern legal system assumes and, in a way, incorporates theological authority (it treats even Canon Law under its jurisdiction and authority) responsibility in the sense of going beyond the present to a historical period and, to an extent, having the ability to incorporate past space beyond its present jurisdiction: this assumption applies to civil law, common law and martial law regardless of the political organization under which a particular legal system is in function. In the city jurisdiction this assumption is evident in the legal codification of Torts Law which deal with injuries and damages caused by negligence whether be from a person to person or from an institution to a person or persons (including the city and the state). In national and international level, such terms and policy as restitution, retribution and similar codes that encompass reparation on a past wrongful action are established under these assumptions.

<sup>13</sup> *Peter Schlemihl* is a German folk story published circa 1813.

the plot<sup>14</sup>; first, like el Señor Importante's inability to obtain a reflection from the mirror, Peter Schlemihl lacks a shadow. Second, Peter Schlemihl, like el Señor Importante, is unable to embark on a personal relationship. As will be analyzed, Peter Schlemihl's lack of shadow represents the absence of the personal self reflected on the other, necessary to embark on any interpersonal relation with the other; and this is precisely what el Señor Importante did not have and led to his failure to convene with Don Nadie.

Antonio Machado's economy of drama in "Don Nadie" is remarkable; with a few strokes he has given the play the essential elements of a derivation and variation of the Faustian legend without the religious overtones but situated at the center of the modern bureaucratic system (similar to the way *Doctor Faustus* by Thomas Mann was set in the first half of twentieth-century Germany) as what devalues and ultimately reduces a human life to worthlessness. Peter Schlemihl, like el Señor Importante, who is rejected by the mirror, is a shadowless person; they both lack reflection. This leads to a portrayal of a life in a vacuum without the possibility to relate to anyone. However, this does not refer to an existential solipsism which, as we will see in chapter 3, Juan de Mairena rejects as a possible reality while he considers epistemological solipsism an inevitable human condition, emphasized in Abel Martín's aphorism "la esencial heterogeneidad del ser." For Juan de Mairena existential solipsism is a hypothetical illusion which is only possible in the realm of linguistic discourse<sup>15</sup>. In this sense, el Señor Importante

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<sup>14</sup> In part the stylistic difference of the language used is due to the periodic difference: *Peter Schlemihl* belonging to the Romantic era and *Don Nadie* play to modernism but more towards Avant-garde.

<sup>15</sup> In fact, Descartes who is well known for his argument on solipsism in his *Meditation on First Philosophy* -- specifically in his "Second Meditations," where he arrives at the conclusion on the subject of "Dubito" and says everything can be doubted but not the doubting thing and hence his reassuring remark "Cogito"-- had never taken solipsism as part of his personal conviction. While the argument is ingeniously constructed, Descartes seemed not to have taken existential solipsism seriously enough to be part of his belief system about the world nor for such a thing to be really possible; this is to say, in *Meditation on First Philosophy* he uses existential solipsism strategically as a verbal and hypothetical possibility in order to arrive at a mathematical certainty that even if everything the senses

and Peter Schlemihl's lack of reflection points not to an existential solipsism but to their inability to relate themselves as humans to others. This inability to connect with the other becomes evident in *Peter Schlemihl* first through self-confinement and then self-concealment and non-disclosure; and in this context the lack of reflection also relates to the spatial notion of not being available physically for any relationship with the other; hence, not having a reflection in the story leads to hiding in the sense of imposing a voluntary seclusion either from people or from the rest of the world. Likewise, the lack of reflection also associates with the mental dimension and it points to an absence of indirect reflective consciousness in relation to the other; for Peter Schlemihl as well as for el Señor Importante all reflective thoughts are self-consciousness and, as was mentioned before, the voluntary isolation would seem to point to an existential solipsism when indeed it is a disassociation from the other and the neglect of the self through the self-created false conception of self-aggrandizement.

The ways the reflection refuses each character vary but both coincide in the loss of their light reflected images as a consequence of their ambitions. While el Señor Importante is rejected by the mirror for suppressing the self to accommodate the self-important character, Peter Schlemihl gives his shadow up in exchange for a fortune-bag that can make him the wealthiest man. Given these two accounts, what is the correlation between being at the summit of one's ambition and not being able to produce a reflection? In the case of Peter Schlemihl the loss of his shadow brings him into a deep despair in spite of the fact that he is admired and envied by many

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reveal is false and thus it does not rise to the level of existence at least the mind that considers this dilemma must be real. In this sense his argument for solipsism was more a discursive and intellectual manipulation in order to arrive at a preconceived conclusion rather than the argument being realistically sound. Descartes's more personal beliefs can be found in *Discourse on the Method* and *Objections and Replies*, and even there the reader should be cautious not to take his hypothetical views as his personal convictions. According to *Discourse on the Method*, Descartes was an epistemological solipsist in that he was absolutely sure that no one could continue his line of thoughts but himself. For Descartes the mental content of an individual can never be replicated in the other mind though certain ideas can be agreed upon between two people, especially when these ideas have an objective reference that can be grasped by the senses and agreed upon.

for his resourcefulness as long as people don't discover his lack of shadow. In a way Peter Schlemihl, like el Señor Importante, is desperate to come into contact with the other, in this case, due to his romantic tendency, with two ladies, Fanny and Mina, with whom he falls in love at different occasions. These two attempts are important because they highlight his personal misery at the expense of social and public grandeur. Both stories reveal that the loss of personal self has an adverse effect beyond repair and that nothing in the world can replace what they have lost. In a way, both stories respond to a passage in the *New Testament*, where one reads "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). However, the "soul" as mentioned in Mark 8:36 is not represented in both stories as duality of spirit and body but as self-identity that is able to relate to other human beings by virtue of considering oneself as part of the race. The fact that no one would accept Peter Schlemihl once they find out he has no shadow or in the case of el Señor Importante his inability to communicate with the other point to their exclusion from the race by their own initiative through a form of voluntary exile or seclusion either by considering themselves different or more than the other; the exceptions are Bendel and Claudio respectively, who knowing their masters' conditions still persist by their side. But as will be seen, even then the exception is conditional and merely fulfills a procedure without rising to the level of authenticity.

Unlike Faust, Peter Schlemihl's loss of shadow is not equivalent to the loss of the soul (as in the German folk story Faust<sup>16</sup>, where the protagonist exchanges his soul with Mephistopheles

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<sup>16</sup> Regardless of which version of the Faust legend one reads, one event remains constant in all the versions (orally transmitted or literary), the exchange of his soul with the devil for earthly knowledge and pleasure (the devil in the twentieth century literature, like that of Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, lacks a real personal character; rather the devil takes the human form as a projection from madness motivated by a destructive ambition). The various versions, the earliest dating back to late sixteenth century, vary in the ending of the story: the pre-romantic versions tend to condemn Faust for the exchange (including Christopher Marlowe's version *The Tragicall History of D. Faustus* [1604]) while in those produced during the romantic period, such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust: Eine Tragödie* (published in 1833), Faust is saved by grace because of his constant striving in recognition of his fault and Gretchen's persistent pleading to God for Faust's salvation (<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/faust.html>)

for earthly knowledge and pleasure). Peter Schlemihl's loss of shadow, like el Señor Importante's inability to produce a reflection on the mirror, correspond more to the loss of their personal selves because the man with the grey coat, –with whom, in the case of *Peter Schlemihl*, the protagonist exchanged his shadow for the fortune-bag,– returns in an opportune moment to offer him another bargain, a contract to give back his shadow provided Peter Schlemihl agree to surrender his soul “after its natural separation from the body” (26); Peter Schlemihl refuses. As is disclosed throughout the story, Peter Schlemihl is unable to establish an authentic personal relationship with anyone (the exception could be Bendel, but even their relationship is not personal because it exists under the rubric of master and servant liaison); all of his relationships are transactional in nature, related to his role as the rich count Peter (a self-designated title). Likewise, el Señor Importante's inability to produce a reflection on the mirror (the mirror being a truth telling prop<sup>17</sup>) points to his lack of personal self; this is the reason why the mirror refuses to reflect and gives the wooden reverse because under the title “Señor Importante” there is nothing to reflect; the term is used here as an adjective to represent a quality and hence an idea that lacks a substantive body itself. Having no self but only a prescribed role, both of them are unable to produce a form of their image as shadow or as a reflection of their bodies.

In these qualitative and transactional contexts, the lack of shadow and the inability to produce a reflection in the mirror are interpreted as analogous to not having a “reflective consciousness” in the sense that Mark H. Bickhard explains in “Consciousness and Reflective Consciousness.” According to Bickhard, the way the mind (which he calls “apperceptive organism”) represents the world is through a form of engagement with the environment, in which

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2/14/2012. The modern version of Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1950) also condemns, but rather than paying the consequence in the life after death, Adrian Leverkühn, who represents Faust, suffers brain disease and lives in almost total isolation for ten years before he dies.

<sup>17</sup> This echoes in a way the truth revealing portrait in *The Picture of Dorian Grey* (1890) by Oscar Wilde.

correspondence certain expectations and selections about the environment are realized (208); the apperceptive organism categorizes “in terms of the organism’s interactive potentialities,” and during interactiveness the mind and the environment are “embodied” in the sense that the apperceptive organism becomes, by internal assumptions part of the environment. According to Bickhard, the apperceptive organism must necessarily be embodied because “disembodiment renders interaction impossible” (208). Precisely el Señor Importante and Peter Schlemihl lack this incorporative awareness about the other people and the society to which each is supposed to belong, and they see themselves separate from the community in which they live; in their flow of thought, specifically in their reflective consciousness, el Señor Importante and Peter Schlemihl regard themselves apart and different from the environment<sup>18</sup> (including other humans). This exclusive outlook, when construed from the context, is self imposed and not a coincidence; it is the result of having made a series of logically and rationally consistent decisions which created the state and the context in which such a state functions effectively. For Bickhard, a human being lacking this internal relationship and acceptance of the world in which s/he lives creates the possibility of “creatures that are functionally or molecularly identical” to humans and yet they are not (212). This in a way supposes that humans must have certain internal characteristics and values, whether they be emotional or intellectual, that define them. One of these characteristics for Juan de Mairena is the bilateral nature of humans, which are expressed in various modes, one of them being to acknowledge the other and care for the environment.

Within this line of thought, el Señor Importante’s lack of personal self is shown in his inability, as in Peter Schlemihl’s case, to have a personal relationship with the other. Again, as

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<sup>18</sup> In Don Nadie play el Señor Importante does not leave his house and all actions take place in the house; this can be interpreted as a form of seclusion, while in *Peter Schlemihl* the protagonist either seeks self hiding or live in the woods, away from any human community or as a matter of fact any being with perception that can notice his lack of shadow.

with Peter Schlemihl, all his relationships are transactional and are devoid of personal element and lack personal dimension. In fact, in light of this inability to have an authentic human to human encounter, the entire oeuvre of *Juan de Mairena* represents a counter model (in the sense of what not to do) to the *Peter Schlemihl* story where even the hierarchical relationship between Juan de Mairena and his students is reduced to the purely human (almost soul to soul) relationship in which the only interest is to establish through examples and advice an intuitive standard of value for fair life with dignity as humans. As will be analyzed in chapter 2, this private individual (an individual that has an internally unique personal self) is related to what Juan de Mairena refers to as “yo hondo<sup>19</sup>.”

**c. The formal and the interactive dialogic coincidence with a later published play, *Waiting for Godot***

With regard to the formal aspect, the similarity between this short play and Samuel Beckett’s tragicomedy *Waiting for Godot*, which established the absurdist theater published some sixteen years later in 1952, is striking, especially, in act two, when Vladimir asks the boy about Mr. Godot<sup>20</sup>. Obviously, in *Waiting for Godot* the nature of the problem is existential and

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<sup>19</sup> The reference to “yo hondo” is both a separate private entity, detached (through awareness between the social play in the role of public persona and the condition of the human soul in phenomena) from the social mascara and is, in a way, both what Socrates refers to as the inner voice in the *Apology* and the character who, not being completely absorbed by the social reality, is the recipient of that advising voice. In Antonio Machado’s prose, this is the self that assumes the artistic roles displayed through the various heteronyms. As explained in the introduction, Antonio Machado’s heteronyms exist under internal unity and are not just invented characters but respond to the author’s need to express in various ways a set of ideas that are within the principle of life and value that he believes in.

<sup>20</sup> Vladimir: It wasn’t you came yesterday.

Boy: No Sir.

Vladimir: This is your first time.

Boy: Yes Sir.

*Silence.*

Vladimir: You have a message from Mr. Godot.

Boy: Yes Sir.

deistic, and points to the interest in (especially from Godot's part) and the failure to establish a contact and put things in order. Although *Waiting for Godot* portrays the distressed human relationship and the desolate human condition of life due to Godot's neglect and abandonment, nonetheless like *Juan de Mairena's* Don Nadie play, it reveals Vladimir's hopelessness to meet Godot and thereby his negative expectancy for a better condition of life; it portrays the fragmented and unfulfilled relationship between two beings. Those are precisely the reasons why in both plays the meetings between the interested parties are unsuccessful and never occur.

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Vladimir: He won't come this evening.  
 Boy: No Sir.  
 Vladimir: But he'll come tomorrow.  
 Boy: Yes Sir.  
 Vladimir: Without fail.  
 Boy: Yes Sir.  
*Silence.*  
 Vladimir: Did you meet anyone?  
 Boy: No Sir.  
 Vladimir: Two other...(he hesitates)...men?  
 Boy: I didn't see anyone, Sir.  
 Vladimir: What does he do, Mr. Godot? (*Silence*) Do you hear me?  
 Boy: Yes Sir.  
 Vladimir: Well?  
 Boy: He does nothing, Sir. *Silence.*  
 Vladimir: How is your brother?  
 Boy: He is sick, Sir.  
*Silence.*  
 Vladimir: Perhaps it was he came yesterday.  
 Boy: I don't know, Sir.  
*Silence...*  
 Boy: What am I to tell Mr. Godot, Sir?  
 Vladimir: Tell him...(he hesitates)...tell him you saw me and that...(he hesitates)...that you saw me...(Waiting for Godot 58-59).

Contrary to Don Nadie's play, where Claudio is the only person who has a proper name, in *Waiting for Godot* the boy, who plays the messenger between Vladimir and Godot, is the only person without a proper name. Moreover, as in the Don Nadie play, the meeting between Mr. Godot and Vladimir never occurs, leaving the boy to confirm and validate Vladimir's existence through his visual testimony: that he saw Vladimir. For Juan de Mairena, a human being with an indefinite identity is not a person at all; Juan de Mairena also finds problematic the fact that a person is replaceable<sup>21</sup> for the post or function in the modern system. In fact, for him a human being lacking a personal identity and considered worthy only on the basis of fulfilling and carrying out a function within an organization is missing the essential part of being a human. In part, being a human for Juan de Mairena means to exist in a community, involved with the people in it, in a way as it was described in Plato's *Republic* but living in a context of friends and family, not so much to defend the territory and the city as is, to an extent, the case in the *Republic*, but to safeguard a set of beliefs and values that promote humanity against certain ideological orientations such as materialism, pragmatism and functionalism because these are systems that intend to convert what is human into a dependent being, into a being who is stripped of its autonomy and so unable to respond to the internal need to care for itself and the other and undergo the basic human experiences which are the most authentic and valuable of actual events in human reality. This is precisely why Juan de Mairena shows alarm and utter indignation when he refers to the oratorical phrase "homenaje al soldado desconocido":

Nunca debéis incurrir en esa monstruosa ironía del homenaje al soldado desconocido, a ese pobre héroe anónimo por definición, muerto en el campo de batalla, y que si por milagro levantara la cabeza para decirnos: "Yo me llamaba

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<sup>21</sup> Juan de Mairena's conviction that a human cannot be replaced in any form or shape is, in part, based on his belief that humans are as monads, autonomous and unique in essence and identity.

Pérez”, tendríamos que enterrarle otra vez, gritándole: “torna a la huesa, ¡oh Pérez infeliz!, porque nada de esto va contigo. (*Juan de Mairena I* 104)

What is being emphasized here is the fact that a person with an indefinite feature is an ideological and verbal creation and not a real human being who existed along with a family and friends in a community before missing in action. The phrase is a rhetorical device, a convenient pragmatic and bureaucratic recourse and resort that responds to a closure in a costly or even an impossible search. In this aspect, the phrase “homage to the unknown soldier” rather than bring some form of comfort, reveals the atrocity and brutality of modern weaponry and war. According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, the first use of the phrase “unknown soldier” dates back to 1923. This is to say, the phrase comes after the First World War, which, according to many war critics, was perhaps the worst form of display of human massacre in history as a consequence of unresolved international conflict. In effect, this was due to industrialization and the technological development of military equipment (which was already in production several decades before 1914) and the traditional way of organizing combatants in the battlefield and the trench which paved the way for modern military equipment and for mass and effective killing targets. For Juan de Mairena a human being with indefinite features and without a proper name corresponds to the concluding remark he referred to in the paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie”: “Nadie es la personificación de la nada.”

It is interesting to note that of the four literary works compared in this section (“Don Nadie play,” *The Castle*, *Peter Schlemihl* and *Waiting for Godot*) Antonio Machado’s Don Nadie play is the only work in which a socially high standing protagonist, from the start, seeks to come into contact with another human beyond the transactional level of business. In the other works the protagonists are from lower or middle social stratum, even Peter Schlemihl who starts as a

commoner and only later becomes rich with the exchange of his shadow for the fortune bag. One of the reasons Antonio Machado does this, as was mentioned before, is to set the problem alluded to in the paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie” past the social structure, in a way dismissing Karl Marx’s main claim in *Das Kapital* (1867) that the human problem is the modern economic problem embedded in the struggle of the classes between the proprietors, who control the system, and the workers who produce the wealth for the bourgeoisie. At the same time in lieu of the context in “Nunca, nada, nadie,” Juan de Mairena wants to point out that in the new modernized platform every human is replaceable<sup>22</sup>, irrespective of his or her social standing, because in it humans merely fulfill a function within the system which wants only to keep active its operation in the practical sense of continuing to function because the system’s life is dependent on its continued operation; the moment it stops, it collapses. Within this pragmatic and functional context, for Juan de Mairena, one of the main problems of human reality is that material objects have become too important in human reality, to the extent that humans suppress their inner reality in order to accommodate phenomena’s modus operandi; for Juan de Mairena, one way to overcome this problem is to categorically distinguish the way humans are in the world and the way objects are in phenomena, which was one of Heidegger’s undertakings in *Being and Time*. Given this intent to redirect human orientation in the modernized platform of “technicity,” what Antonio Machado is attempting to do in *Juan de Mairena* is precisely to inculcate in the reader this particular way of looking at life’s content through a form of inclusive consciousness in which the observer is part of the observation with the purpose of creating a distinguishing

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<sup>22</sup> Within the context of “Nunca, nada, nadie” every human regardless of their social standing is replaceable precisely because everybody exists as a part of the structure, playing a role within the system, performing an established function; in this circumstance, the particular individual difference between John and Peter is annulled on the basis that John as a waiter is sick today and Peter will work instead of him. Likewise Presidents and Kings continue their role through election or as heir to the throne. For example, President Nixon resigned and Vice President Gerald Ford took over the presidency until the term ended and a new president was elected. This is the reason why in the paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie” the Señor Importante did not have a proper name and was left with an indefinite identity because, in part, the position was made for someone to fill in as an incumbent.

perspective of what is material and what is human through a form of higher consciousness by means of dialectic pedagogy. This is why for Juan de Mairena the concept of “the other” is so important and vital, because only through the other is the self validated and redeemed.

## **II. The epistemological and ethical aspects:**

Given Juan de Mairena’s take on the ontological conditions in the paragraph “Nunca, nada, nadie,” which are not existential in the sense of the way an object subsists in phenomena but categorical, epistemic and bilateral based on a system of values, the reason why Juan de Mairena does not directly engage in a metaphysical debate about the pure conditions<sup>23</sup> of external reality but rather poetically creates a framework from which he can highlight the most important aspects of reality (which for him are human life and human experience) is because they are more valuable than the various external components that make up reality. This is the reason why he goes through a negative portrayal of the human condition because from the meta-prose point of view, the synthetic and poetic approach themselves that engage an emotional experience speak for and privilege the human experience above objective reality.

On the pedagogical side, what Juan de Mairena was aiming at by the negative statements in the passage “Nunca, nada, nadie” was precisely to bring out the feeling of conditional horror and alarm in his students in order to instill a feeling of appreciation and respect towards human life. According to Kant this feeling of respect can only arise for humans:

Respect always applies to persons [i.e. beings determinable by the moral law] only, never to things. The latter can awaken inclinations and even love if they are animals...or fear, as do the sea, a volcano, or a beast of prey; but they never arouse respect. Something which approaches this feeling is

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<sup>23</sup> Space and time are usually referred to as the pure conditions of reality. Space and time will be discussed in chapter 3 in the context of Cartesian modernity.

admiration, and this, as an effect (astonishment) can also refer to things, lofty mountains, the magnitude, numbers, and distance of the heavenly bodies, the strength and swiftness of many animals. All of this, however, is not respect.

*(Critique of Practical Reason 184)*

Throughout the fragments, Juan de Mairena praises Kant for his practical reasoning<sup>24</sup>, in particular because Kant reflected in his thoughts a preoccupation to establish a categorical position for prioritizing humans in the order of beings precisely for their capacity to show respect for the other, not out of convenience but out of necessity under the awareness of the supreme moral law that Kant called the categorical imperative. Juan de Mairena refers to this ‘respect’ in his rhetorical classes with the Spanish word ‘cordial,’ which he thinks is a necessary attitude in any human relationship that involves two people.

What Juan de Mairena sets out to do is understand the meaning of life and value it from the point of view of being alive. The reason why he uses negative words instead of positive indefinite forms (siempre, algo, alguien) is, precisely, because he wants to do more than simply describe them as abstract ideas; he wants to experience the negative concepts with a terrifying ontological effect from the standpoint of being alive: terrifying because they are the negation of life. Through the negative words and their hierarchical placement in reverse order<sup>25</sup>, he validates human experience and the contemplatively produced affective aspect<sup>26</sup> as source and evidence of

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<sup>24</sup> For Kant, practical reasoning is moral command; Juan de Mairena’s praise for Kant’s practical reasoning is precisely in reference to the thoughts that translate into actions in relation to the other.

<sup>25</sup> He says “Tres palabras terribles” because they represent the negation of life, and though their word order goes from left to right in the negation (nunca > nada > nadie), if positive, that is in the affirmation of life, they would proceed from right to left (alguien < algo < siempre), that is “alguien” precedes “algo” in order of hierarchy of existence. This is to say human experience begins with humans first and within that experience objects are perceived and known. But the emphasis here is not on chronological time, but rather on the importance in the order of cognition as what validates existence.

life above the objective world, including flora, fauna and material things, in the sense that their validity depends on the meaning they acquire in human reality. This places humans in an exclusive stance that separates them from the rest of the objects based on their mental, moral and emotional capacities. Specifically, Juan de Mairena wants to bring up and draw attention to the human propensity to generate feelings formed from within through intellectual reflection as a distinctive and superior mark of the species that stand above any nominal object in the external world and beyond the definition of Aristotle's rational animal. The eighteenth century revival and reconsideration of the aesthetic concept "sublime" as exposed in Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* helps to reveal Juan de Mairena's aim in the quote above:

If the pain or terror are so modified as not to be actually noxious; if the pain is not carried to violence, and the terror is not conversant about the present destruction of the person, as these emotions clear the parts of a troublesome encumbrance, they are capable of producing delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror; a sort of tranquility tinged with our instinct for self-preservation. (Crowther 136).

As we will see in chapter 3, for Juan de Mairena human reality in actual practice evolves in a manner and in a realm more like the way poetry comports or how poetic language allows spatial and temporal juxtapositions and transpositions in that it does not adhere strictly to how objects

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<sup>26</sup> The emotional reaction that Juan de Mairena is referring to here is not an overreacting or outpouring of feeling that is associated with sentimentalism (often pejoratively linked with *el costumbrismo* and many of the literature produced during the "romanticismo español"). He is referring to a type of feeling that is associated and produced as a result of putting into effect our capacity to hypothetically overview the negative condition of existence. This produces a feeling of sublime as Edmund Burke explains in *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, viewing the future terror from the present position of safety (Crowther 8). In this sense though the projection of the negation of life is hypothetical, the feeling of sublime that arises from it is genuine and real because the projected conditions are real for the person. Moreover, it attests to human superiority through our capacity to reflect in the order of beings.

behave in conformity to the law of physics; this is because its substance is intangible: they are reactions in the mind in relation to phenomena based on values, tradition and culture to which a human subscribes. The substance of human reality can move freely without conforming to physical laws because they are memories, reflections and expectations created from interactions with other humans in phenomena. Given this particular way of existence in phenomena, the following excerpt from *Juan de Mairena I* illustrates the horror if a backward hierarchical placement were to be implemented on the ontological categories of beings:

Imaginad un mundo en el cual las piedras pudieran elegir su manera de caer y los hombres no pudieran enmendar, de ningún modo, su camino, obligados a circular sobre rieles. Sería la zona infernal que el Dante habría destinado a los deterministas. Políticamente, sin embargo, no habría problema. En ese mundo todos los hombres serían liberales; y las piedras... seguirían siendo conservadoras. (129)

The excerpt above while political in nature can be analyzed on various levels: dramatically, ontologically, morally and metaphysically. The first paragraph can be read either dramatically and ontologically or politically. On the dramatic and ontological level, Juan de Mairena shows the outrageous situation if the humans' and stones' essential characteristics<sup>27</sup> were to be reversed. While the hypothesis is horrifying (in a way reflecting the context alluded in the paragraph "Nunca, nada, nadie"), it sets nonetheless as evidence the primacy of human capacity because it portrays a human engaging in a conditional reflection in which the subject is, in essence, part of the observation, thereby ensuring categorically that a human is ontologically and categorically superior to any immobile stone. On the political level, Juan de Mairena sarcastically describes

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<sup>27</sup>Two essential characteristics of humans are volition and movement, and two basic characteristics of the stones are hardness and stillness. However, it is interesting that in political reality there are more conservatives that don't want change than liberals who want change.

(and punishes by bringing Dante's inferno into the context) ongoing reality in politics, which is what directly affects humans; he describes an oppressed political reality where the traditionalists and conservatives (representing them metaphorically here as stones) force and dictate a homogeneous and univocal way of life when indeed humans are by token individuals and heterogeneous by their way of being in phenomena.

The second paragraph ironically starts with the adverb "Políticamente" when in fact, given what it implies, that is the only level to which it cannot be applied, although political terms are used to describe the situation. This in a way plays as a warning and prediction that whatever suppresses human reality against its natural way of being in phenomena will not last; as in the physical laws, the pre-established order will return and subsist. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena concludes by saying "todos los hombres serían liberales" and "las piedras... seguirían siendo conservadoras," suggesting in a way that no matter how harsh the political suppression can be through ideological construction against the human will, things and beings will continue to exist and function according to their capacity and the way they naturally are in phenomena. Humans, by their genetic makeup, are liberal both physically (in the sense that a person is mobile and thus not bound to remain in the same place) and in terms of intention (the exercise of a will to act). Stones, on the other hand, resist change by nature and they remain still. Nonetheless, this distinction clearly points to the fact that although humans and stones exist under the same conditions of phenomena, ultimately human reality is not ruled by physics but by politics, by morality, by economics, by tradition and culture and by religion, in short, by values that groups of people create, accept and practice. Answering to this distinction, Juan de Mairena speaks radically about two types of changes: one that is physical (pertaining to objects) and one that is internal (pertaining to humans, in a way making reference to Quevedo's *El Buscón*):

...todo cuanto se mueve es inmutable, es decir, que no se puede afirmarse de ello otro cambio que el cambio de lugar; que el movimiento corrobora la identidad del móvil en todos los puntos de su trayectoria. Sea lo que sea aquello que se mueve no puede cambiarse, por el mismo hecho de moverse... Los cambios cualitativos, si son meras apariencias que sólo contienen cambios de lugar o movimiento, están en el caso que ya hemos analizado; si son otra cosa, escapan al movimiento y son, necesariamente inmóviles. Siempre vendremos a parar a lo mismo: el movimiento es inmutable, y el cambio es inmóvil.

Sin embargo –añadía Mairena–, reparad en esto: es muy difícil dudar del cambio, de un cambio ajeno al movimiento, que nos parece una realidad inmediata, y no menos difícil dudar de la realidad del movimiento. (*Juan de Mairena I* 181-182)

Besides distinguishing the relationships between movements, change, and identity, in a way negating movement as what brings alteration to an entity based on identity, Juan de Mairena recognizes and differentiates perceptual reality from conceptual analysis and the problem of causation in the sequence of two external events. In a way what he proposes to do is to bring in the argument stated in the “Second Analogy<sup>28</sup>” from Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, not so

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<sup>28</sup> The phrase “que el movimiento corrobora la identidad del móvil en todos los puntos de su trayectoria” refers to the example Kant sets in *CPR*’s “Second Analogy.” It makes reference precisely to the sailing ship moving further away to the horizon which we identify as the same ship in different stages of representation in space and time:

[T]he perception A cannot follow upon B but only precede it. For instance, I see a ship move down stream. My perception of its lower position follows upon the perception of its position higher up in the stream, and it is impossible that in the apprehension of this appearance the ship should first be perceived lower down in the stream and afterwards higher up. The order in which the perceptions succeed one another in apprehension is in this instance determined, and to this order apprehension is bound down.... But in the perception of an event there is always a rule that makes the order in which the perceptions follow upon one another a necessary order. (*CPR* 221)

much to enter into a debate about the nature of causal link in two events and how perception relates to them as to stress the fact that the whole conception derives from human epistemology and that change inevitably depends on a conceptual mind, an internal state with reference to identity, though movement appears to be an external factor; through highlighting the difference and discerning this internal and external disconnection between movement (as an external factor) and change (as an internal state and an initiative of the will), Juan de Mairena, in a way, recalling the deductive Buddhist cyclical analogy<sup>29</sup>, emphasizes that in the external world there is no change but constant movement that generates a continuous and steady binary variation of subsistence and extinction (“el movimiento es inmutable, y el cambio es inmóvil), and hence change which belongs to the human realm is metaphysical and can only be achieved by an internal initiative through awareness and cognizance. This is to say, although humans and stones abide under gravity, humans live and operate in a different semantic reality. In fact, some objects gain meaning within the human domain because humans have given them certain value and worth through unilateral incorporation. This is precisely what Borges refers to in the poem “Las cosas” in *Elogio de la sombra*:

El bastón, las monedas, el llavero,  
 la dócil cerradura, las tardías  
 notas que no leerán los pocos días  
 que me quedan, los naipes y el tablero,

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Kant’s argument was in response to Hume’s skepticism that there is not a necessary causal link between two events in phenomena. Through this and other examples in the “Second Analogy” Kant wanted to show that there is a necessary *a priori* causal link that an event presupposes and is determined by the preceding event in accord to a causal law. Many critics still think that Kant’s argument does not rise to the level of proof to refute Hume’s contention that there is not a necessary causal determination from one event to the next.

<sup>29</sup> By the claim that there is no change in the external movement, it makes reference also to eternal recurrence of Arthur Schopenhauer who thought, influenced from Buddhist ideology, that physical matter did not undergo any alteration but essentially remained the same through a form of recycling by recurrence.

un libro y en sus páginas la ajada  
violeta, monumento de una tarde  
sin duda inolvidable y ya olvidada,  
el rojo espejo occidental en que arde  
una ilusoria aurora. ¡Cuántas cosas,  
limas, umbrales, atlas, copas, clavos,  
nos sirven como tácitos esclavos,  
ciegas y extrañamente sigilosas!  
Durarán más allá de nuestro olvido;  
No sabrá nunca que nos hemos ido. (39)

In the above poem not only have the personal objects gained certain value for the poet, but they have become attached to him in the sense that they have turned into an intimate part of his subjective reality; but this is not because personal objects have attained certain meaning by themselves but because they have been humanized by their owner. The last two lines attest to the actual and factual reality of inert objects that no matter what value we give them ultimately the personal objects survive their owner without ever learning that their erstwhile possessor has long departed them. Not only does Borges concur nostalgically in the above poem with Juan de Mairena's take that both humans and objects, being of a corporeal substance, have different ways of comporting in phenomena, but he also holds that the value and meaning of the inert objects are not self-designated or autonomous but are validated by humans and incorporated into human reality in the form of extension.

This way of integrating what surrounds us and what we possess into our reality by setting qualitative and emotional values to them is an unusual human tendency, especially when

such disposition is viewed in light of other living or non-living organisms and entities on earth. But even more thought-provoking and categorically separating between an object and a person is what is insinuated in the word “enmendar” with clear moral and epistemological connotations. The *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española (RAE)* defines “enmendar” as: 1- arreglar, quitar defectos, 2- Resarcir, subsanar los daños, 3-Variar el rumbo o el fondeadero según las necesidades. But “enmendar” is not just fixing past errors; if it were, the concept would presuppose a temporal impossibility in phenomena since the ongoing present, being the only real time in phenomena, would not allow a retrospective revision and even more so an adjustment of a past error. Moreover, “enmendar” does not refer to the kind of error committed in an exercise or performance. It is not a type of mathematical, quantitative or qualitative misstep. Although, it is widely used in legal contexts here it has a clear moral ramification to bring an amendment of one’s wrong-doings or actions that affected negatively from the present assessment of the self or the other person. In this sense “enmendar” presupposes improvement or to take a chance to right a past action; in the context of improvement it is self-assessed through a form of struggle with the particular social reality and the guiding principle. On the other hand, in a bilateral context where there is involvement of more than one party, amending would depend on the form of asking and forgiving. In this aspect “enmendar” refers to a set of actions whether it be in the form of decisions or physically overt that one wants to revise and improve in accordance with a principle of life or set of personal convictions. In fact, based on the way Juan de Mairena suggests how a person arrives at the idea of “enmendar,” morality and epistemology in practice don’t work separately: if epistemology is a form by which a person grasps understanding about the self and the world, then morality is a goal, a guiding principle in that process; morality is what provides direction to an accumulation of experience and learning. In the next passage in

*Juan de Mairna I*, he makes himself an example to convey the process of internal evolution as a human.

No es fácil que pueda yo enseñaros a hablar, ni a escribir, ni a pensar correctamente porque yo soy la incorrección misma, un alma siempre en borrador, llena de tachones, de vacilaciones y de arrepentimientos...(105).

As we will see in the last paragraph of 1.2 and later in chapter 3, for Juan de Mairena, human actions, whether mental or overt, are not performed at random; they follow a certain orientation based on certain notions of finality such as justice, love, happiness and so on.

## **1.2 The metaphysical, epistemological, ontological and ethical analysis and criticism of the context alluded to in “Nunca, nada, nadie” in relation to other philosophical and literary works**

These outlooks on the human ontological and moral condition in society, in the sense of having lost its importance, is very much in line with the ‘nothingness’ found in Jean Paul Sartre’s magnum opus *Being and Nothingness*, where ‘nothingness’ has a double meaning; on the one hand, it indicates that people are not things. On the other hand, it points to the lack of worth or degradation humans have come to be self-aware of the world they have constructed due to the misguided effort of modernity’s promise<sup>30</sup>. What Juan de Mairena is bringing attention to and criticizing here is the neglected cultivation of human science and the enormous effort put

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<sup>30</sup> Modernity promised a better world, a perfect world in the material sense of perfection where there will be continued comfort and security; it was supposed to be founded on infallible knowledge, and hence a world in total control of the environment it creates and influences.

forth for the advancement of creating a manmade and man-controlled world, especially from early modernity<sup>31</sup>.

Juan de Mairena thinks that it is this one-sided and misguided course of human pursuits in history (one-sided in the sense that Descartes's modernity project steadily maintained progress without real competition despite romanticism in the nineteenth century) that leads to the degrading human circumstance, namely that human reality is being interpreted only in terms of quantification based on outward actions, overt evidence and events that promote primarily material progress. Precisely, poem XVI in *Campo de Castilla* (the XVI here seems to refer to the sixteenth century as the beginning of modernity in the political sense of territorial expansion embodied in the form of empire) criticizes this self-aggrandizement expressed in the form of material accumulation, elaboration and embellishment, which result at the end in nothing, echoing in a way the Preacher's first verses in the Ecclesiastes of the *Old Testament* "...vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (Chap. 1, v. 2):

El hombre es por natura la bestia paradójica,  
un animal absurdo que necesita lógica.  
Creó de nada un mundo y, su obra terminada,  
"Ya estoy en el secreto –se dijo- todo es nada." (*Poesía Completa* 237)

According to the context of the poem, *nadie* would result as a consequence of being in the world of *nada*, which in the poem is the manmade world. The poem equates "Creó de nada un mundo" that is, the origin of the world with the product he has come to construct and what became of it; thus, we have the sequence: 'nada' (the origin in the sense of being conceived as an architectural

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<sup>31</sup> Modernity's endeavor and development from its discursive conception in the XVII century to the beginning of modernization through applied science at the end of XIX century will be discussed in detail in Chap. 3

idea), 'mundo' (the product, the tangible manmade world), 'nada' (what resulted of it). The topic of 'insubstantiality,' here, in reference to the manmade world as illusion which will disappear eventually, is reminiscent of Prospero's speech in *The Tempest*:

You do look, my son, in a mov'd sort,  
As if you were dismay'd. Be cheerful, sir.  
Our revels now are ended. These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits and  
Are melted into air, into thin air;  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep. [Act IV (I), *Elizabethan Drama* 448-449]

It is remarkable how this epilogue, which Shakespeare scholars interpret as the author's closing reflection of his career as a dramatist, addresses, apart from the allusion to the nature of the theater and the play, fundamental metaphysical and ontological questions on the human condition and the existence of the physical world, anticipating negatively in a way John Donne's metaphysical poetry (in part his "An Anatomy of the World," which advocated for modernity positive input on reality) but even more so the treatment of the subject matter in Calderón de la

Barca's *La vida es sueño*. And Shakespeare chose the name of the character who discloses this artifice, 'Prospero,' precisely to indicate, as Machado does in the poem, that our material success and progress, that is, what we consider 'prosperity' at the end, will vanish and become nothing. This is exactly what Borges points out in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter in "Discusión," (*Obra completa JLB Vol. I*, 258), but he even goes a step further from Shakespeare and injects a dose of irony when he adds "para saber que es falso." That is to say, the motivation behind unraveling the intricate reality of phenomena was to confirm a hypothesis, which, in an intuitive way, had foreseen the outcome but without proof. This shows then that the whole venture of material aggrandizement was aroused by intellectual pride, taking us back to the verses in Ecclesiastes (Chap. 1, v. 2) and basing on 'vanity' the inducement of this undertaking, which resulted in the neglect of the advancement of human science. In literature, an example of this type of intellectual pride is markedly displayed by Basilio in Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño*, specifically when he confines Segismundo (rather than let him be or execute him), based on his ill-fated destiny as the heir to the throne, in order to confirm his prediction grounded on the reading of astrological signs.

On the other hand, the use of 'todo' in poem XVI under "Proverbios y Cantares" in *Campos de Castilla* should be contrasted with the use of 'todo' in the following verse in *Juan de Mairena* "'L'individualité enveloppe l'infini.'" - El individuo es todo" (78-79). Whereas in the poem above 'todo' refers to the physical world, specifically to the manmade world, in the verse that appears in *Juan de Mairena* 'todo' refers to the totality of worth, that is the significance, value and meaning of something in relation to everything else. In chapter 3, I will draw a conclusion concerning Juan de Mairena's ontological categorization by interconnecting dialectically the various fragments in Bakhtin's dialogic or dialectical sense. Given this

background, the words “Nunca, nada, nadie” in the above paragraph enclose two purposes; one that pertains to external relationship and the other that involves internal process and association. First, “Nunca, nada, nadie” outlines the spatiotemporal conditions for any existence in the sense of setting up the common stage for objects, nature, animals and human beings. Second, by representing them in a negative form (that is, in antithesis to their positive form –“siempre, algo, alguien”– something that only human beings can engage in through hypothetical imaginings), Juan de Mairena makes the conception of reality contingent on human approval and validation; this is done specifically by the rhetorical use of the verbal terms that can negate existence and reality in order to bring attention to the state of crisis of our experience. While Juan de Mairena expresses and warns us of the dangers of self-destruction based on the ongoing state of human reality during the first decades of the twentieth century, he reminds us that for human beings in particular the world is not what we find it to be but what we make it out to be; this places responsibility on our actions, specifically on our exercising of choice, thus positing on human will, freedom<sup>32</sup> and our capacity to understand the optimum condition of reality for humans and other organic life forms the possibility of uplifting life’s vigor and the construction of a better condition of reality (better in the sense of accommodating human internal and external essential needs where these necessities are met and cared for first). But a historical analysis reveals that what the modern administration has focused on since its inception is in prioritizing the aggrandizement and elaboration of the manmade world through selective inclusion<sup>33</sup>. The

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<sup>32</sup> Freedom is not meant here just in the political sense but also as part of practical reasoning, as Kant suggests in *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, as a predisposition to will, so that a mental act is not considered determined by spatiotemporal conditions, that is by physical laws, but formed with the idea of it being free of any external causes.

<sup>33</sup> By “selective inclusion” I refer to the non-discriminated institutional inclusion of people regardless of their ethnic, religious background or sexual orientation; the inclusion is selective based on accredited education, technical skills, financial ability, linguistic skills and so forth.

Cartesian idealization of perfecting reality<sup>34</sup> through “mathesis universalis<sup>35</sup>” has taken every external form of enhancement and embellishment typified by Louis XIV’s administration in the second half of the seventeenth century and again in a more systematic and scientific way by the British Empire in the second half of the nineteenth century. Both were based on objective potentials and an artificially construed triumphant image of man that rises above the condition of space and time and becomes the master of his own destiny<sup>36</sup>. As will be shown later in chapter 3,

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<sup>34</sup> Modernity’s purpose of perfecting reality should be thought in dual sense of prior and consequent relations which reflect a complementing state from internal to external. The prior idea of control can only be realized in an environment made precisely for that purpose, namely to control where its variables are subject to manipulation.

<sup>35</sup> “Mathesis universalis,” a composite phrase of Latinized Greek (μάθησεως) and Latin (*universalis*), deals with a mathematical type of notation that can be represented univocally knowledge without suffering change and has various interpretations as to what the phrase exactly means depending on the philosopher and the period to which the thinker belongs. Its use can be traced all the way to the pre-Socratics, specifically to Pythagoras but its rational treatment starts with Plato. The modern use of the phrase, particularly from seventeenth century on has main reference to Leibniz, Descartes, John Wilkins and John Wallis who attempted to make mathematics the language of science. According to Sasaki, Descartes provided the theoretical foundation for the project which later developed into various branches of applied science and engineering; the latter are the basis of modernization, the external transformation and the implementation of idealized condition in phenomena. One of the earliest books that treat applied science is *Elementa matheseos* published by Christian Wolff around 1715.

“...Descartes ‘mathesis universalis’ was a very significant concept which functioned as a central model for the universal method. It meant above all a reformed algebra applicable first of all to arithmetic and geometry and then the other mathematical sciences... Certainly it was important for Descartes’s program of the reform of learning to establish mathematical physics... There existed a large volume entitled *Elementa matheseos universae*...by Christian Wolff. Its most extensive version published in 1730-41 in 5 volumes was an encyclopedic writing of the mathematical sciences...various fields of pure mathematics such as arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, finite and infinite analysis, and to ‘mixed mathematics’ such as mechanics, statics, hydrostatics, optics, catoptrics, dioptrics, astronomy, geography, hydrogeography, chronology, and even military and civil architecture...Descartes’s was a project, whereas Wolff’s was a fruit of it (*Descartes’s Mathematical Thought* 200-202).

Such reductive attempt to create a notation which could objectify knowledge based on mathematical foundation continued through twentieth century but with the focus in language rather than phenomena by means of formal logical symbols. A notable outcome is *Principia Mathematica* by Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell “published in three volumes in 1910, 1912 and 1913” (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/principia-mathematica/>). While applied science and engineering want to control phenomena, formal logic wants to determine meaning in the quantitative use of language (both *langue* and *parole*).

<sup>36</sup> The construction of the image of man surpassing its condition by maneuvering space and time is more propagandistic in nature than it is a feasible possibility, especially during the time when Descartes conceived it, and is closely linked with how a travel and real state commercials portray an idyllic external state to represent the internal state of happiness. In a similar way, food commercials depict the featured item, whether be a chocolate or a

Louis XIV and Duke of Brandenburg (the Great Elector) have directly applied Cartesian methodology and ideology in the social and political sphere (*The Triumph of Science and Reason 1660-1685* 107-109). These can be evinced by the way they managed and operated their administration by creating an absolute control over their dependent states. This endeavor of imposing an idealized condition for the purpose of having an utter control is linked with the idea of projection of reality and its construction, and hence tied to the idea of orientation. However, reliant on orientation, construction --an inevitable activity that the human being performs upon its surroundings due to the rich human imagination-- could go either way, to improve or worsen the condition of human reality. It is precisely this openness in the making of reality through construction in which Juan de Mairena sees an opportunity to input his support to humanity. Within this context the term construction in *Juan de Mairena* is used in the intangible sense of creating cultures and practices which lead to setting up values and customs. These in turn will influence the design of living surroundings and arts that represent cultural values which prioritize human essential needs. Juan de Mairena's main concern then is with the setting up of the hierarchical structure of cultural values and practices through critical evaluation of a variety of instances in contemporary Spanish life, recent history and literary situations, and they are intended for teaching youth how to hierarchically and categorically organize ideas to defend humanity against the domain of material progress.

The concept 'orientation' in Antonio Machado is essential for human beings and in human reality; and it is inextricably linked with the way human lives exist, both in external (spatiotemporal) and internal (in emotion, imagination and intentionality) forms. Even if a human being does not move physically, he or she is always engaged in some form of heading

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soft drink, to be the cause of internal joy and satisfaction when indeed what they do is to condition the sense of taste and want.

towards somewhere (not necessarily geographically). As will be analyzed later, within this context, Juan de Mairena thinks human existence in time is very much like sailing or, as his well-known poem XXIX from “Proverbios y Cantares” in *Campo de Castilla* indicates, ‘walking,’ in the sense of moving in a continuous going-somewhere; “orientation” in a way is this continuous traveling (in the spatial sense, going from one point to another, in the intellectual sense, moving from one topic to another and in the moral sense, self-revising in order to act in accord to a practical moral law); ‘orientation’ is especially used against the notion of ‘lost’ and not at random, which suggests that randomness does not rule in human actions. Human actions always strive to create a unity. As in a musical composition, a note seems irrelevant and without purpose by itself to the rest of the piece, but each note is there in a progression and in contribution to the piece’s totality, whose segments are divided into creating or resolving a conflict. This suggests that human actions, while striving to achieve a goal, do not always rely upon a logical sequence that strictly adheres to a pragmatic efficient result assessed from a set of external conditions. But human actions strive towards completing an aspiration (not necessarily a tangible project) based on a form of inspiration, which in turn is dependent upon an unstable, fluctuating and reorganizing set of priorities, whatever those may be. Hence, unlike just moving at random in any direction, orientation is going-somewhere, heading towards an intended destination but stopping here and there to take care of other minor objectives (not necessarily in the most pragmatically efficient way). The configuration of human orientation will be further discussed in chapter 3 when human reality is analyzed in relation to emotion and the realm of poetry.

**I. The negative characterization of “Nunca, nada, nadie” coincides with Heidegger’s *Dasein*’s tendencies to ‘self-concealment’ and ‘discloseness’**

This negative characterization of hierarchy between human beings and objects as a pedagogical training in order to bring insight to the underlying condition of reality reflects in a way ‘Dasein’s’ (‘Being-there in the sense of the manner in which human beings are in the world’) internal process of finding its authentic mode of ‘Existenz’ (Existenz here to be taken in a dynamic, active, future oriented sense) as opposed to an inert object mode of existence that just occupies a given space. Heidegger explains this in Division One, Chapter 5 of *Being and Time* through the description of how ‘Dasein’ deals with the tendency of ‘self-concealment’ in the world in order then to reach out to itself through ‘discloseness’ by uncovering the transcendental structures of the human being for the authentic mode of Existenz; that is to say, making negative characterization of ‘Dasein’ in order to affirm the positive by making the positive come forth: “the negative distinction between ‘state-of-mind’ and the reflective apprehending of something ‘within’” leads to a positive insight into their character of ‘disclosure’. In sum, “‘Dasein’ has a tendency to ‘explain itself’ in terms of what is not” (*Being and Time* 176).

This mode of presenting the negative first in order to validate the positive last is an old characterization of human fate in literature found mainly in the tradition of epic poems, such as in *The Odyssey* (when Odysseus returns to Ithaca and initially remains a beggar only to avenge all the suitors and reclaim his royal status). Likewise religious apocalyptic prophecies portray the negative in the context of a process of fulfilling prophecy, first by making the evil succeed initially only to let the good triumph last such as in Christianity or Zoroastrianism. In Christianity, Christ’s death is an instance of this initial negative portrayal, but also another example is found in the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany in the Gospel of St. John where Jesus brings Lazarus back to life after four days of being dead.

Heidegger's internal process of finding the authentic mode of oneself rests partly on his categorical distinction on ontic levels between a human being and an object in the world in *Being and Time*. In Division One, Chapter 3, Heidegger makes this distinction between the modes of existence in the world of objects (equipment in-order-to) and human beings ('Dasein') explicit. In a way this helps to clarify Juan de Mairena's ontological configuration in the sense of distinguishing them categorically: Heidegger says,

The Greeks had an appropriate term for 'Things': πράγματα- that is to say, that which one has to do with in one's concerned dealings (αραξίς). But ontologically, the 'pragmatic' character of the πράγματα is just what the Greeks left in obscurity; they thought of these 'proximally' as 'mere Things'. We shall call those entities which we encounter in concern 'equipment'. In our dealings we come across equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement... Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to...' [*etwas um-zu...*]. A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of 'in-order-to' such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability. (*Being and Time* 98)

What Heidegger has done here when he interprets and equates the coined term 'equipment' with the prepositional phrase 'something in order to' is to put in concrete everyday terms, without the moral implication, what Kant has already referred to as 'means to an end'<sup>37</sup>, in *The Groundwork of Metaphysics of Morals*, unequivocally distinguishing between things that can be used in order

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<sup>37</sup> The idea contained in the phrase "means to an end" is derived in part from the [Greek τέλος](#) – *telos* in the sense of its asking 'what is it for,' the purpose something is for. In this sense teleology (the study of purpose of something or of final causes) is a consequent pragmatic branch of ontology in that it asks about the 'use of something' rather than 'what is there?' Plato, Aristotle, medieval scholastics such as St. Anselm, St. Thomas Aquinas and rationalist philosophers such as Emmanuel Kant have engaged in teleological arguments concerning biology, nature, cosmogony, theology, morality, aesthetics and so on.

to deal with any human endeavor and the human being itself as an end that ought not be treated as a means for advancing any human enterprise.

## II. The relevance of Jean Paul Sartre's experience of 'nothingness' in the negative characterization of "Nunca, nada, nadie"

The purpose of negative characterization in the paragraph *Nunca, nada, nadie* in *Juan de Mairena* also coincides with Jean Paul Sartre's vision, in *Being and Nothingness*, of negation as part of his explanation of 'nothingness' as a result of human expectation and conscious intentionality, but without the existential commitment<sup>38</sup>. Especially, when Juan de Mairena says "Nadie es la personificación de la nada" he is not just equating theoretically a human being and an object in their negative form, in the sense of playing with these notions purely in speculative terms; by projecting the human condition in its state of destruction (given the progressive materialization of reality<sup>39</sup>), he is really experiencing its state of categorical annihilation through the mind's eye (that is through imagination) in the context of an intentionally conscious

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<sup>38</sup>As will be shown in chapter 1 and later in chapter 3, Antonio Machado thinks in line with Jean Paul Sartre on certain hypotheses as part of real experience, but when it comes to life's transcendental beliefs, Machado has an explicit moral commitment with the teaching of Christ as it appears in the *New Testament*, especially with regard to the concepts of 'love' and 'hope' as what make possible the transcendence of human conditions of solipsism and death.

<sup>39</sup>The progressive materialization of reality in the form of modernization can be evaluated in two aspects, within the socio-economic context and within the social-relationship context concerning an individual. In the first, in a modernized society, human beings compete with machines in the context of task force; machines' continual improvement and their accuracy in handling tasks, their easy maintenance, their easy replacement and unilateral order taking condition on command make them increasingly more attractive to employers than humans. On the other hand, the increased population of personal gadgets fragments and interrupts a bilateral human relationship in every aspect of social life, including but not limited to coworker, school, family, marriage, etc. This is to say, human beings, rather than dealing with nature, animal and other human beings directly, instead interact increasingly with machines in the form of giving unilateral commands. In a way, human crisis in the modernized world arises out of a clash between human increased reliance and dependency on machines which in turn deprive the opportunity for humans to acquire skills to deal directly with the object of the task. Besides this dependency that creates human skill deficiency, less expertise is increasingly found among the people who run the machines.

expectation. The following analysis of Jean Paul Sartre's concept of 'nothingness' by Christian J. Onof illustrates its relevance to *Juan de Mairena's* paragraph above:

One of the most original contributions of Sartre's metaphysics lies in his analysis of the notion of 'nothingness' and the claim that it plays a central role at the heart of being. Sartre discusses the example of entering a café to meet Pierre and discovering his absence from his usual place (*BN*, 9-10). Sartre talks of this absence as 'haunting' the café. Importantly, this is not just a psychological state, because a 'nothingness' is really experienced. The nothingness in question is also not simply the result of applying a logical operator, negation, to a proposition. For it is not the same to say that there is no rhinoceros in the café, and to say that Pierre is not there. The first is a purely logical construction that reveals nothing about the world, while the second does. Sartre says it points to an objective fact. However, this objective fact is not simply given independently of human beings. Rather, it is produced by consciousness. Thus Sartre considers the phenomenon of destruction (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/sartre-ex> 27 of Sept. 2010)

The experience of Pierre not being in the café as 'haunting' is derived from the expectation of Sartre's anticipating Pierre's presence there where Pierre usually is, but it is not merely his absence that produces the experience of 'haunting'; it is rather the idea that something might have happened to Pierre and hence his absence which haunts Sartre. What's 'haunting' is not triggered only by the factual reality the moment reveals, for Sartre's expectation contains the background of the relationship between Sartre and Pierre; and this is indeed what gives Sartre's experience a 'haunting' reality concerning Pierre's absence.

Precisely the hypothetical situation that Juan de Mairena is pointing out when he says: “Tres palabras terribles; sobre todo la última. (Nadie es la personificación de la nada),” creates the kind of personal experience that Sartre is referring to as ‘haunting,’ in this case not because a personal friend is missing from the place where he usually is, but due to a reference to a culture that accepts its demoralized condition; what is horrifying for Juan de Mairena is the state of human ontological<sup>40</sup> status equated to that of an object<sup>41</sup> in its negative form, specifically because, in its negative representation, one’s ability as a human being to affirm and acknowledge life is voided. The acknowledgement here is simply the intentional act of a human recognizing itself as a being distinct from what is outside of itself in the world but in an essentially ongoing relationship with ‘the other’<sup>42</sup> human beings; this is to say, the affirmation is the agreement to participate in the ongoing network of human relationships in the form of being connected with

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<sup>40</sup> The term ontology can mean different things depending on the period and according to how each philosopher uses it. However, ontology is most generally accepted as a branch of Metaphysics that deals with existence in the sense of distinguishing and categorizing objects, beings and even space and time found in the realm of existence or as part of what can be considered to exist whether independently or as dependent on other causation.

<sup>41</sup> In *Nausea* Antoine Roquentin’s constant effort to validate life leads him to ponder on many aspects of it; he finds objects to be the most different compared to human life, especially stones in regard to their potentiality which is their “passive resistance”; he says: “I have already scrutinized innumerable objects, with deep uneasiness. I had already tried-vainly-to think something about them: and I had already felt their cold, inert qualities elude me, slip through my fingers.” (130). Hence he thinks “objects are not meant to be touched. It is better to slip between them, avoiding them as much as possible.” (122). Here the verb “touch” is synonymous to a relationship; he wants to avoid objects because relationships with objects are unilateral in nature in that there is no response in return, especially in the affective sense. Antoine Roquentin wants to stay away from objects because what he is searching for is a human connection in the sense of a bilateral relationship; this is why he feels the need to avoid inert objects. Sartre’s extremism towards objects can be contrasted to Borges’ nostalgic treatment of personal objects earlier. While their approach is different, their conclusions concur in that Sartre as much as Borges acknowledges the lifelessness and the static nature of objects and their radically different survival ability, made almost of non corrosive composition that continues to belong after their possessor is gone.

<sup>42</sup> Having an ‘essentially ongoing relationship’ in the sense that one is always (whether it is in an active or passive state) in a relationship with the other presupposes a certain underlying structure that motivates its drive. This underlying structure that motivates the search for the other is expressed in *Juan de Mairena* as “la sed metafísica de lo esencialmente otro.” For Heidegger this very idea is expressed in the description of the nature of the human being (structurally unitary) which is displayed under the idea of ‘Care’ (*Sorge*): being-alongside-entities and caring-for-others which is “the fundamental structure that underlies each and every particular human existence (<http://caae.phil.cmu.edu/Cavalier/80254/Heidegger/SZHomePage.html> 24 Aug. 2010).

the rest of people. As we shall see, this is a central theme in *Juan de Mairena*, which is repeated and emphasized throughout the book.

### **III. The implication of Hans-Georg Gadamer's analysis of the word 'Erlebnis' in the negative characterization of "Nunca, nada, nadie"**

With the intent of distinguishing humans from objects but in the context of a diachronic evolution of a concept, Gadamer analyzes the notion 'Erlebnis' in "Transcending the Aesthetic Dimension" in *Truth and Method*. The noun 'Erlebnis' (experience- in the sense of "to be alive when something happens"), derived from the verb 'erleben' (to experience) appears in the 1870's biographical writings. For Gadamer, 'Erlebnis' contains this idea of experience, suggesting "the immediacy with which something real is grasped" (*Truth and Method* 53); in particular, Dilthey's biographical essay on Goethe, "Das Erlebnis und die," succinctly formulates the association" (*Truth and Method* 54). "The unit of experience" in this context "is not understood as a piece of actual flow of experience of an "-I-"" but as an intentional relation" (*Truth and Method* 57). This is to say, a personal experience is not transcribed in a series of propositional linguistic forms of 'I feel this and/or that and I experience this and/or that' in the thought process, but, unlike this outline of logical formulation, "in the epistemology of human sciences we find a concept of life that restricts the mechanistic model" (*Truth and Method* 57). That is to say, in 'Erlebnis' "something becomes an 'experience' not only in so far as it is experienced, but in so far as its being experienced makes a special impression that gives it a lasting importance" (*Truth and Method* 53). This deductive analysis on 'Erlebnis' relies on the fact that only a few things are indeed remembered in one's life of all the experiences that one goes through, the lasting impression being exactly a special kind of experience that still lingers on in our memory. However, we should not confuse "lasting impression" with other types of experiences that are

indeed remembered or abide long after the event in our psychological life, in our subconscious, like Freud's 'trauma,' as explained in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, or a painful experience and suffering, as indicated by Schopenhauer in Vol. I, third book of his *The World as Will and Representation (Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung)*. While Freud's trauma is caused by a deep violation against our expectation of life's outlook, Schopenhauer's view of life as suffering is based on his aesthetic value, which takes as ultimate consideration the human condition. This is not what is meant by 'Erlebnis.' The kind of experience 'Erlebnis' refers to involves a situation in which a seamless unity is achieved between a necessitated expectation of a moment and reality. That is to say, 'Erlebnis' is achieved when an object of spiritual longing, a care-free moment and a prospect in phenomena converge into an experiential subjective reality. To take an example, Jean Paul Sartre calls this type of experience 'adventure' in his first novel, *Nausea*<sup>43</sup>, which he describes as an outstanding experience in the literal sense that such an experience is outside of everyday routine. Similarly, Anny, Roquentin's past lover in *Nausea*, refers to an equivalent experience as 'perfect moments' in her analysis of past experiences. 'Perfect moments' are a brief period during an experience when consciousness fully holds an instant, which then becomes memorable. And it indicates what is 'authentic' in the sense that the subject fully participates in the moment of the experience without holding anything back. But the kind of routine Sartre is referring to here is not just a habitual action of someone who exists under natural settings; rather, he refers specifically to the set of habits acquired under the phenomenon of the modern city, which is predictable and determined by a set of rules and institutional prescriptions. Thus by singling out a trivial and almost pointless instance in the course of a

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<sup>43</sup>*Nausea* was published in 1939, about three years later than the first apparitions of *Juan de Mairena* in the newspapers in Madrid. Although they are two different works in the sense of genre, structure, form, purpose, ideological orientation and so on, they share a few common themes, especially in the aspects of cultural criticism and disapproval of the system of values.

typical day but which moment has as its author (in the sense of being able to weave an undetermined and unexpected experience) and sole actor the subject itself, Sartre is criticizing on the one hand the mechanistic model of existence created by the modernized form of life and, on the other hand, contrasting it with what is alive and living in the present moment, unaffected by any ideological prescriptions, as a free and open possibility, which he thinks are still one of the main bases and force that motivate life's continuity.

And then suddenly you think: "Something has happened." No matter what: a slight rustling in the shadow, a thin silhouette crossing the street. But the paltry event is not like the others: suddenly you see that it is the beginning of a great shape whose outlines are lost in mist and you tell yourself, "Something is beginning." ...All of a sudden something breaks off sharply. The adventure is over; time resumes its daily routine. (*Nausea* 37-38)

#### **IV. Concluding Remarks**

The relevance of these philosophers and their specific ideas with respect to the criticism Juan de Mairena makes in relation to the condition of reality in the clause "Nunca, nada, nadie" points to concerns that go back to humanistic debates in the eighteenth Century; the most clear articulation of these is found in *On the New Method in Contemporary Fields of Study* by Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), where Vico expresses the inappropriateness of the Cartesian method for understanding human affairs. Then the interest was more about showing discursively why it was inappropriate and arguing for the orientation human science should take within the academic curriculum. However, as mentioned at the beginning of chapter 1 regarding the materialization of scientific modernity through applied science, from Husserl on, in particular

towards the end of the nineteenth century and through the first decade of the twentieth century, this disagreement was no longer a matter of academic debate. The projected form of mathematical epistemology advocated and spelled out in Descartes's philosophy was materialized in every aspect of reality facilitated by applied science and engineering. Modernization would significantly alter the way ordinary people go about their regular lives; it affected the way people went about their daily lives, requiring them to adopt a set of new habits and skills in conformity to the 'modernized world'<sup>44</sup> as a means of survival, maintenance, and interaction in the new concretized epistemological arena.

The common ground which Juan de Mairena and Vico and some subsequent thinkers of humanistic tradition share, especially those coming from phenomenology and existentialism, apart from disclosing and uncovering the state of reality, is the intent to reconfigure the system of values in human reality-- that is, the re-formation of culture in the sense of re-codifying values in defense of the human inner need and expectation of life in the rapidly transforming technological society in order to maintain essential human values and human dignity. What Juan de Mairena and these thinkers propose is an approach to the study of human sciences that differs from the study of natural sciences; they promote the study of human sciences in their various ramifications-- morality, politics, history, economics, sociology, aesthetics, education, culture, anthropology etc. --, taking into consideration the affective nature and spiritual need human beings have in relation to other human beings under the condition of phenomena. Their literary

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<sup>44</sup> 'Modernized world' should be distinguished from the ancient and medieval urban cities for three reasons. First, in the 'modernized city' from the late XIX century on, to every raw material there is a human intervention and design involved; even what seems natural (vegetation), landscapes like parks and gardens, were thought out in terms of arrangement where each tree and pond should be. Second, in the modern state, though mention of God is common in its rhetorical declarations in its constitution, still it sees itself as separate from any divinity in its administrative rules. Third, with the invention of electricity and the light bulb, human activity period breaks away and extends itself from the natural division of daylight and night time. These new phenomena don't only create external forms of space arrangement but they influence the way people move, behave, think, expect and act in accordance to these new preconceived environment in that they were all clearly thought out from their inception.

effort, then, is to distinguish the difference between material progress and human progress, human progress falling behind from the inception of modernity in the seventeenth century (this will be shown in chapter 3), especially when Cartesian modernity becomes the model for socio-economic organizations. By the end of the nineteenth century, modernity was no longer just a speculation or theory. It was palpable. The steady progress of natural science (physical science including biology) assisted by applied science and engineering had transformed human reality from the traditional way of life with nature into a life based and reliant on technology. Likewise society was also altered, converting the traditional form of human life into a series of prescribed roles. The integration of technology into city life and the subsequent changes that affected the traditional way of life was most notable during Fin de Siècle and the first decades of the twentieth century. Juan de Mairena saw through materialism that technological modernity would influence every aspect of society and that it would affect every human being, not just those who are engaged in its development and implementation. However, he was not against all science or scientific endeavor. What he was against is to create an environment in which humans serve scientific endeavors, rather than science serving human beings as a race in its entirety. This is to say, he was against the idea that humans are subordinate to scientific knowledge and development. Juan de Mairena is also against the idea that science (reduced to economic level) should thrive for the benefit of a few people's comfort and material ambition; that is, for those who can afford it. For material progress applied to society in the long run would only bring the ever widening gap in the human condition of life. Categorically, the human species is the only organism that, belonging to the same genus, has such a disparate condition of existence.

Thus, for Juan de Mairena “to be is to be in the world<sup>45</sup> and be acknowledged by and related to the other” (socio-human relationalism), which can be distinguished clearly from the Cartesian “*Cogito ergo, sum*” --I think; therefore I am (solipsism and dualism)-- and Berkeleyan formulas “*esse est percipi*”-- to be is to be perceived (idealism, empiricism and perspectivism). -- Furthermore, in what follows, he criticizes our conformity with and passivity towards the process that objectifies, systematizes and reduces reality in accordance with materialism and functionalism under the guide of pragmatism. This is the reason why he says: “El hombre, sin embargo, se encara con ellas y acaba perdiéndoles el miedo... ¡Don Nadie! ¡Don José María Nadie! ¡El excelentísimo señor don Nadie!” Eventually, no one is excluded in the categorization of ‘nadie,’ (that is, human beings categorized as objects), not even the very best: ¡El excelentísimo señor don Nadie!

As will be shown in chapter 3 the ontological condition, in turn, is associated with aesthetics and attains justification through morality. To this end, Juan de Mairena avoids the simple description of space, time and everything that is in them, but by evoking them negatively “Nunca, nada, nadie,” he has made the ontological statuses of time, space and what are in them depend on human cognition and will, not in the Berkeleyan sense of Subjective Idealism but in the epistemological and moral sense of assigning values and worth to the objects of possible cognition in phenomena. This in a way sharply differentiates humans from other beings and inert objects, and validates and distinguishes at the same time our legislative and prescriptive

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<sup>45</sup> Heidegger distinguishes in chap. 2 of *Being and Time* that human being in the world is different from an object existing in the world. He says, “[b]y this ‘in’ we mean the relationship of beings which two entities extended in space have to each other with regard to their location in that space. Both water and glass, garment and cupboard are ‘in’ space and ‘at’ a location...All entities whose being ‘in’ one another can thus be described...as things occurring ‘within’ the world” (*Being and Time* 79). This object relationship in space he calls “Being-present-at-hand.” In contrast, a human being does not just occupy a given space as an object does; human beings dwell together with the world in the sense of residing, being accustomed to or being familiar with; hence, for Heidegger “I am” has the significance of “I reside” or “I dwell alongside” the world (*Being and Time* 80).

capacities as marks of the species. As we shall see, besides these two capacities, the capacity to experience sublimity capturing reality through imagination and the capacity to self-correct in agreement to a moral principle are what make humans stand above all things with the competence to legislate the objective world; legislate in the sense of having the competence to guide and shape reality. In this regard, these three words represent a super compressed structure of reality where ‘nunca’<sup>46</sup> refers negatively to time, ‘nada’ refers negatively both to object and space and ‘nadie’ refers negatively to the human being, exclusively.

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Nunca’ does not entail an absence of chronological time, that is, a time in which present becomes past. It refers to non-consummation of time in relation to action; that is, an action that has never taken place in time. Hence, ‘nunca’ is absence of action in time. In this sense, it is a negation of will, specifically individual human will that according to Kant is the causality in the chain of events in a determined physical world.

## Chapter 2

-Delineating human reality through basic social human experiences towards defining what is entailed by socio-human epistemology in *Juan de Mairena*

### 2.1 The metaphysical, epistemological and ontological purpose behind “Nunca, nada, nadie”

What Juan de Mairena is proposing to do, when he summarizes with “Nunca, nada, nadie” the conditions of reality, is not an attempt to understand the mechanics of experience: how experience is produced, or to dissect external reality like John Locke did through discriminating sense data by means of primary and secondary qualities. Nor is he a strategic skeptic like David Hume, who by validating inductive reasoning alone wants to question the legitimacy of metaphysical knowledge, thereby negating the authenticity of human tendency to believe in something transcendental, or like Rene Descartes who systematically inquires whether the external world exists in order to introduce a new epistemological method based on mathematical foundation<sup>1</sup>, thereby raising the standard of what can be considered knowledge beyond ordinary perception. Contrary to Descartes’s project of quantifying reality through mathematical basis, Juan de Mairena wants to assert the collective human experience that makes up reality based on relationships<sup>2</sup> with other human beings and nature and generate an ontological categorization of what is found in the external world; that is to say, Juan de Mairena

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<sup>1</sup> It is ironic that number being an abstract concept that is not tangible at all is the basis of materialism through equation, especially the way Descartes treats *mathesis universalis* in his *Regulae*.

<sup>2</sup> By relationship here is meant an inter-subjective relationship of individuals and bilateral relationship between humans and nature. Human beings are born into already existing relationships as sons and daughters without much choice, and from there develop into a more complex and selective relationship as they grow older. One of the common factors in human to human and human to nature relationship is its bilateral character. It is always the case that in their relationship, whether in an active or passive state, there is always something given or taken: not just the exchange of objects, favors, labor or delivery but values, care, reliance, customs, beliefs and most importantly expectations are constantly sources of influence and motivation.

is concerned with the configuration of the categories of value and how these are set within the cultural epistemological framework so that human beings always become a priority in society.

Indeed, for Juan de Mairena the ontological validation of the external world is an aggregate and the result of socio-human epistemology, in that for Juan de Mairena space and time don't have any meaning outside the boundaries of the network of the relationship created among life forms in the world, and hence if humans and nature (in particular living organisms) did not exist, there would be no significance whether space and time existed at all. This is to say, the meaning of existence cannot be derived from a universe without a receptive mind that can hold an evaluative idea in relation to objective reality; for existence without a mind that can weigh meaning and attach value to objects, there can be no such thing as value. This does not mean the external world does not exist for Juan de Mairena. What it means is that in practical or applied sense, the external world -- that is, on a phenomenal level -- is just a facilitator that provides a common platform upon which humans and other living entities can enter into a relationship. The full account of space and time and Juan de Mairena's position concerning the objectivity of the external world will be discussed in chapter 3 under "Antonio Machado's perspective on the notions of space and time in *Los Complementarios* and in *Juan de Mairena*."

## **2.2 Reversing the context alluded to "Nunca, nada, nadie" in the categorization of the human reality as distinct from phenomena**

Precisely the following fragment delineates in a syllogistic form Juan de Mairena's ontological categorization based on his socio-human epistemology, highlighting only the essential reality:

“L’individualité enveloppe l’infini.”-- El individuo es todo. ¿Y qué es, entonces, la sociedad? Una mera suma de individuos. (Pruébese lo superfluo de la suma y de la sociedad). (*Juan de Mairena I 78-79*)

It should be noted that in this ontological fragment there is a complete absence of space, extended substance and temporality. In a way, this mode of dismissing the historical metaphysical and ontological account of space and time and validating only humans and specifically human reality based on human experience would seem inappropriate and, indeed, a trivial way of considering a philosophical matter. But in order to fully appreciate his perspective on the categorical configuration of ontology, we need to first understand his reasons, that is, his strategies behind this apparent reduction of space and time. The explanation of the above statements will disclose, in a way, his intentions.

Juan de Mairena wants to point three things out with the above fragment. First, his consideration of the individual as everything reflects in a way Leibniz’s monad: “Leibniz states that every monad mirrors the whole of the universe in that it expresses every other monad, but no monad has a window through which it could actually receive or supply causal influences”<sup>3</sup>. Besides that, the fact that he focuses only on the human being has the ontological purpose of validating the individual human being above the material object. Second, through individual validation, what is being highlighted is individual experience in contrast to a systematic project, especially when this is linked with material progress. Third, by using syllogistic formulation he is, on the one hand, parodying abstract medieval logic practice and, on the other hand, he is criticizing the categorization of theoretical conceptual formulation as proof of what the human

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<sup>3</sup> Quoted from the *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* under Leibniz’s Metaphysics: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/leib-met/#shH7b> 1 25 2011

being is by definition. In this context, the validation of time is limited to the interactive phenomena whose purpose is knowledge of the self through the various inter-subjective and inter-objective experiences with the other and nature. As will be discussed shortly with respect to the metaphysical influence, ‘todo’ in the syllogistic fragment above does include all phenomena while humans are active in life, but it does not include the metaphysical or eschatological dimensions. This is to say, the individual signifying ‘todo’ does not incorporate God, beyond life or what future holds for humanity. Rather, by the term ‘todo’ in the above syllogism Juan de Mairena is representing the totality of value in phenomena, in that in it the single most important thing is an individual human being.

In its formal aspect, Juan de Mairena’s ontological fragment above imitates syllogistic propositions reminiscent of Aristotelian-scholastic categorical arguments in which Juan de Mairena points out, with a twist, that the structure of human reality is essentially collective, intangible and non-utilitarian. On the semantic aspect, as was explained earlier, it refers by ‘all’ to the totality of value in phenomena based on human categorization of value, although in its formal aspect it emulates pantheism’s motto “one is all” (in pantheism ‘one’ refers to God and ‘all’ refers to nature or the universe). By challenging the idea of ‘superfluous’ in either the equation of the individual as everything or society as the tallying up of individuals, Juan de Mairena is underlining the essential elements in human reality, namely the dependency every person has on each other in order to create human reality. This inter-subjective<sup>4</sup> dependency of individuals as necessitating each other, which by their very involvement creates the structure of human reality as society, is laid out in the above syllogism. The assumption about life here is that

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Scheff defines inter-subjectivity as "the sharing of subjective states by two or more individuals" (*Goffman Unbound! A New Paradigm for Social Science* 41). According to Scheff, there are three stages in which inter-subjectivity can occur at least between two individuals: First, when people make verbal agreement; second, when people share information of “common sense” situations; third, when people partially share divergent meaning like in a situation when a joke or lying is told and there can be two different definitions of the situation (41-43).

one cannot fulfill life on one's own because life is not about survival, but it is about knowing what life is in terms of uncovering slowly its meaning by confronting it through the relationship of the self with the world, by means of relationship with other human beings. This is to say, the self cannot be reached directly but only by way of interacting with other human beings: the spatiotemporal, linguistic and indirect conditions of the perceptions that restrict the self to access directly itself leads to the only option the self has to learn about oneself, through the other.

The learning about the self is not an objective type of knowledge in which the information about something reveals the consistent true nature of a substance in phenomena in the way water is defined in chemical terms as H<sub>2</sub>O. Neither is learning about the self a type of guideline, which, when followed step by step a goal is reached without committing a mistake. Rather, the learning of the self is about confronting life as it discloses itself by the moment, with all the chances of a situation going right as well as going wrong. In this sense life is much like surfing, a form of balancing act in which a fall is not a permanently recorded error but, in positive light, a mere slip-up that can help improve the balancing skill and assist to reinforce confidence in oneself in the mastery of surfing. As was seen in “ii The Epistemological and Ethical aspects” in chapter 1, Juan de Mairena makes a categorical differentiation between a stone and a human being in reversed order based on their natural aptitude in order to highlight that making mistakes is part of making decisions as much as making decisions is part of being a human because humans can improve themselves through mistakes. This reflects the radical difference between human reality and physics, not so much in terms of their composition but the way each is under the platform of phenomena.

The parodying of the medieval syllogism begins with the conclusion in which the minor term ‘el individuo’ is equated to the major term ‘todo.’ Then, the first premise is given in the

form of a query in which the middle term 'la sociedad' is questioned. In the second premise, the plural form of the minor term 'suma de individuos' is equated with the middle term 'la sociedad.' Logically the categorical argument is invalid, but only when the categories are taken as stand-alone terms; that is, terms which are independent and have comparative hierarchy assigned to them in relation to the other terms. However, what Juan de Mairena is pointing out and emphasizing here is not so much the underlining of individual categories, their independent validity and their unyielding classification to the rule of subordination between the minor and the major terms, but the circularity, reciprocity, connectedness and interdependency of the terms to each other; that is, the complementary nature of the three categorical terms in such a way that no one of them is superior to the rest and any one of them in isolation could not function effectively.

In effect by negating the addition of people, Juan de Mairena points out in the following fragment each individual's distinctive and irreplaceable validity in society:

Por muchas vueltas que le doy –decía Mairena– no hallo manera de sumar individuos. (*Juan de Mairena I 79*)

The reason why Juan de Mairena cannot seem to be able to add individuals here is because for him each individual, like a 'monad,' is unique and cannot be quantified; this assumption of the qualitative uniqueness of the individual was suggested earlier in the equation between the minor term 'el individuo' and the major term 'todo.' This in a way reflects, in a nutshell, on the one hand, the structure of human reality in *Juan de Mairena*, which in part is taken from Kant's moral categorical system, namely that there is no inferiority or superiority within the human race, only duties each individual has in his or her conscience to perform toward the self and other human beings and derivatively to nature, while on the other hand, it points to his conception of

the human being as essentially irreplaceable, in a way refuting the utilitarian quantificational formulas on human lives that were so conveniently propagated in the pro expansionist discourse of empires, foreign invasions and preemptive attacks on foreign countries. Thus, from a simple medieval academic exercise in logic, Juan de Mairena has constructed an authentic model of functional reality, grounded on unified synthesis and interdependence of the three terms used in the syllogism.

**I. Juan de Mairena's Ontological and Epistemological categorization in part reflects Kant's Ontological and Epistemological classifications**

Beside the Leibniz's particular influences on space and time in Juan de Mairena's thoughts and the parodying of formal syllogism, the fragment "L'individualité enveloppe l'infini." reflects Kant's ontological categorization in the famous quote from the *Critique of Practical Reason* that highlights the individual and his experience as encompassing the whole of universe and reality:

Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe... the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. (*CPR* 161-162)

The common element in this passage that relates to Juan de Mairena's fragment of 'L'individualité...' is that both passages involve an individual human response in relation to an affirmation of a common reality in phenomena (the society or the starry heavens) and how that reality corresponds to the inner conception (the idea of an individual or moral feeling) as the ground that identifies and legitimizes the validity of the other. Juan de Mairena, like Kant, will try to establish empirical instances as the factual basis of knowledge of both the inner and outer recognitions, while deductively he will use theoretical arguments to explain the need of the other

to accomplish this elevated awareness. Thus what is being validated for both of them is the individual human experience representing in a way the collective as a consequence of reflection on the categories of value. This is very much in line with Kant's position on epistemology:

There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience.

(*CPR* 41)

Second, though 'the starry heavens' are extended substances they have to be viewed from the standpoint of a divine creation and an admiration Kant has towards them corresponding to his inner moral sentiment. This is because for Kant, according to the *Critique of Judgment*, the idea of beauty is associated with and dependent on morality. That is to say, Kant's allusion to the 'starry heavens' has specific aesthetic reference to 'beauty,' and both the moral sentiment and the beholding of a beautiful sight become an expression of amazement and a positive testament to God's relation to the human and to nature. Furthermore, the fact that Kant equates the immensity of the universe, (whose experience goes beyond the immediate perception of a physical reality but rather imagination and understanding, working together, conceive and appreciate the vastness and limitlessness presented), with a moral sentiment suggests that what is real for him lies beyond what is tangible, the tangible being merely the effect and not the cause of the perspective which is capable of admiring and positing the synthetic idea of beauty on a sight. Besides that, the appreciation is created by a perspective which needs to have a certain distance from the objects in order to achieve it. Hence what cause the wonder are not the objects themselves but the aesthetic capacity to value and appreciate the sight because at close up they are just stones and dust.

### **2.3 The metaphysical and ontological ramifications of “Nunca, nada, nadie” in relation to phenomena, nature, God and death in the fragment “L’individualité...”**

On the metaphysical level, the fragment ‘L’individualité...’ also remits to an altered version of the philosophy of ‘Panentheism,’ that nature is in God, promulgated by Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781-1832). While the post-Kantian philosophy of Krause had little success and was in the stage of fading out in Germany during the second half of the XIX century, Krause’s philosophy of ‘Panentheism,’ brought by Julián Sanz del Río, was particularly well received in Spain. On the Anglo-transatlantic side, Krause’s theory of universal harmony influenced the New England transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 –1882), who, though a predecessor of Machado, had a great deal of similarity with the author of *Juan de Mairena*, specifically with regard to the fact that he did not espouse one particular vision of philosophical doctrine or a particular philosopher as the main guide to his ideological orientation, his preoccupation centering on the human spiritual wellbeing in its relationship with nature and God; besides these similarities, Emerson also had in common with Antonio Machado his defense and belief in individuality and freedom. One of the main reasons that Krausismo had a great reception in Spain during the end of the nineteenth century is because it filled the gap of major social institutions such as the Catholic church, school system and the monarchy; these social institutions had until then strongly influenced people to hope for a better future and have a positive outlook in life. By the end of the nineteenth century they lost their credibility and respect, and people no longer showed the unquestionable reverence they once displayed to them. Apart from the founder Julián Sanz del Río and Fernando de Castro, the most enthusiastic followers of Krausismo were Francisco Giner de los Ríos, Nicolás Salmerón, Gumersindo de

Azcárate, Rafael María de Labra and Segismundo Moret. As the *Encyclopedia de la Cultura Española* notes:

El krausismo español no fue una escuela estrictamente filosófica, sino un complejo movimiento intelectual, religioso y político que agrupó a la izquierda burguesa liberal y propugnó la racionalización de la cultura española. Sus partidarios cultivaron con especialidad los temas de ética, derecho, sociología y pedagogía, y promovieron un vasto movimiento de educación popular que cuajó en la Institución Libre de Enseñanza (v.). Más que una filosofía fue el krausismo español un estilo de vida que sustituyó los supuestos tradicionales de la religiosidad española por una moral austera, el cultivo de la ciencia y una religión semi-secularizada... Las obras fundamentales de Sanz del Río, manuales del krausismo español, son el *Ideal de la humanidad para la vida*, *la Metafísica: Análisis y Síntesis*, y el *Análisis del pensamiento racional*, refundiciones y reelaboraciones muy libres de textos de Krause. (Tomo III, 825-826)

While Antonio Machado attended the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (from 1883 to 1893), which was founded on Krause's philosophy, he did not subscribe fully or devotedly to 'Krausismo.' David R. Wearing and Pablos A. Cobos have a clashing view on the issue of how much, or if at all, the Krausist philosophy had influenced Antonio Machado's thoughts. David R. Wearing says that Antonio Machado did not adopt Krausist metaphysics at all though Wearing admits that "there are Krausist echoes in his treatment of Time and Death" (2). On the other hand, for Pablo A. Cobos, the Krausist influence is everywhere in Antonio Machado's works. While Wearing's conclusion is more academically sound because it is the result of an extensive analysis of Abel Martín's poetical metaphysics "De un Cancionero Apócrifo," he fails to notice

that Abel Martín does not faithfully represent Antonio Machado's personal views on various issues. As mentioned in the introduction under "Unraveling the heteronyms's voices in *Juan de Mairena*" Abel Martín is for Antonio Machado a pseudo philosopher, representing the philosopher-poet in his artistic creation constructed from his philosophical readings. In this sense, Abel Martín is first a philosopher and then a poet. Among Antonio Machado's heteronyms, the closest that comes to capture Antonio Machado's thoughts, on a personal level, is Juan de Mairena. There are many reasons for this, but the most fundamental one is the fact that Juan de Mairena is first a poet and then a philosopher. Besides that, Antonio Machado's tendency to mix and reinterpret philosophical ideologies guided and influenced by his purpose of instructing the younger generation is fundamental and characterizes the way he sees the world. As was explained in the introduction under section 5, "Juan de Mairena- a philosopher based on a supermarket of ideas," Antonio Machado never accepts or subscribes to any one philosopher or adopts any one system of ideas in its totality; his aim in philosophy is not to worship a particular philosopher and his ideas and make a religion out of them. For Antonio Machado, philosophy as well as religion are not contemplated and worshipped for their own sake, but they must serve to help humans find an inclusive orientation in life and assist to better the condition of human reality. Hence, for Antonio Machado every philosophical explanation is open for revision and interpretation. This stance is not founded solely in his personality, but is based on his outlook about life and belief that everything changes, even our culture and values; in a way this approach to consider anew and not take literally or for granted what has been suggested is based on his belief that there is a pressing need for every generation to re-examine and adopt in its own way the best of what philosophy has to offer in relation to establishing a human reality and intuiting the path humans must choose to take in the course of their destiny. This is precisely what Juan de

Mairena refers to in the following paragraph, where he says that neither Kant nor Plato came to conclude the various issues stemming from philosophy in relation to reality and life.

Fue Kant el último filósofo de gran estilo. Para encontrarle su igual es preciso recordar a Platón... No nos asuste los grandes nombres de estos gigantes. Ni uno ni otro vinieron al mundo a poner fin a las disputas filosóficas, sino a enseñarnos a filosofar (*Juan de Mairena I* 129).

Coincidentally, Heidegger essentially says the same thing in *Being and Time* when he utters the following:

...human beings must negotiate in an ongoing series of local choices and judgments, without an overarching permanent hierarchy to which one can always appeal for a resolution. (*Five Portraits* 74)

This is why in *Juan de Mairena* ‘Panentheism’ is not taken literally but undergoes a transformation as nature being an extension of the human being in the sense that the ontological validation of phenomena is authenticated through human beings. Given this background, ‘Panentheism’ should not be confused with “Pantheism.” While ‘Panentheism’ explains that nature is in God, in the sense that it is a property of God, ‘Pantheism’ equates nature with God. The latter is associated with the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza, who himself did not use the term. However, neither of them portrayed God as personal and anthropomorphic but rather as a driving force or as pure substance in the form of the totality of the extended universe. This is precisely what Juan de Mairena refers to when he says:

Aunque sea cierto que nosotros no podemos ser sin los átomos, puesto que al fin estamos de ellos compuestos, no es menos cierto que ellos tampoco pueden

ser sin nosotros, puesto que, al cabo, ellos aparecen en nuestra conciencia; nuestra conciencia los engloba, junto con los colores de iris y las pintadas plumas de los pavos reales. (*Juan de Mairena I* 131)

In the above quote, Juan de Mairena takes an almost Berkeleyan idealist position of *esse est percipi* and validates external reality based on the conscious input in which the object's ontological status depends on human perception. But such stance does not represent Juan de Mairena's overall view of the ontological status of the external world (we will see this explained in the 'space and time' section of chapter 3); Juan de Mairena, here, has taken merely an extreme position in order to defend and protect human ontological status as opposed to the materialist conception of Epistemology, particularly that of Democritus of Abdera, who considered what is real and permanent only the basic building blocks or raw materials of the object, specifically atoms and the void in which they exist. Juan de Mairena's comprehensive view of the external world undergoes a modification from the traditional 'Pantheist' belief that nature is in God to nature becoming part of God through human corroboration. That is to say, for Juan de Mairena nature, rather than being directly part of God, first becomes validated through humans. Hence, 'Pantheism' is interpreted more in terms of nature becoming part of the human being through the relational exchange of humans dealing with nature in terms of care. This incorporation is not a unilateral projection imposed from the human to nature. But under the idea of appropriate care, nature yields itself voluntarily to human dominion with a mutually beneficial outcome. This relationship is very much like the relationship between a gardener and the plants and flowers in his garden. Though the gardener is in charge of the plants and flowers, the gardener must know each flower's character and needs in order to provide the proper care, or else they will not blossom and will eventually perish. Humans, being in a position of dominance over nature, still

conform to the needs of nature and nature gives back as a result of having received its proper care. It is in this sense that in Juan de Mairena nature becomes an extension of the human being, namely through the position of influence over nature and the complementary bilateral relationship of care. This is what is suggested in a way in Unamuno's novel *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*, but in a more spiritual sense, precisely when the natural surroundings in which San Manuel lives, 'Valverde de Lucerna,' are considered by the narrator to become an extension of San Manuel Bueno's being:

Ya toda ella era Don Manuel; Don Manuel con el lago y con la montaña.  
Llegué ansiosa de conocerle, de ponerme bajo su protección, de que él me  
marcara el sendero de mi vida. (*San Manuel Bueno, mártir* 2)

In *San Manuel Bueno, mártir* this extension is not only physical; different parts of the natural environment also reflect particular aspects of San Manuel's internal reliance upon life in symbolic representations. In Unamuno's work the vision of natural sceneries as an extension of the protagonist is created when the townspeople represented by the narrator's viewpoint perceive San Manuel's caring spirit as gradually permeating 'Valverde de Lucerna' and its environs. In Juan de Mairena, nature as an extension of the human being actualizes through collaboration between the human and nature, and the fact that both of them ultimately will transpire in God. This is to say that rather than accepting that nature is in God, Juan de Mairena categorically assigns a mutually supportive relational hierarchy between nature and the human being and maintains that in due course they culminate in God, characterizing in this way 'Panentheism' as subservient to Christian moral teaching<sup>5</sup>, specifically under the creed "thou shalt love thy

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<sup>5</sup> Christianity for Juan de Mairena is simply Jesus's teaching through the gospels in the *New Testament*, and it specifically deals with moral commandments in relation to the duty one has to other human beings, independently from the church or institutionally made doctrines like the catechism.

neighbor as thyself”<sup>6</sup> which is the basis of the Kantian formulation of the Categorical Imperative. It is under this moral imperative that the self becomes an echo of the other and the other a mirror of the self as an affective and intentional being. Only through this unified state of humans, based on the intersubjective understanding of each other’s dependency, is nature an object of human extension, and not an object of exploitation.

One of the reasons why Juan de Mairena gives priority to moral practice over cosmogonic beliefs and realms is because first, human beings actualize in phenomena by participation through deeds which create and affect the state of reality, and second, because we as humans are bound by phenomena, and our knowledge of the transcendental realm is based on intuition and revelation on the one hand, exclusively for a few chosen, and on the other through myths, descriptions and allegories presented in religious books and literature. The culmination of nature and the human being in God, in particular that of the human being, should not be understood as a disintegration in which the individual loses its identity. First, for Juan de Mairena, the human fusion in God is not physical in nature but spiritual or psychical. Second, the joining of the human being and God emerges as a result of concession on the basis of intention and transcendental understanding, not based on verbal persuasion or resolution. It is in this aspect that the joining occurs, in which process, the self, rather than losing its identity, becomes liberated from phenomenal concerns and transforms into a selfless<sup>7</sup> being as a consequence of having conjoined voluntarily to God’s knowledge and wisdom. For Juan de Mairena, God is,

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<sup>6</sup> *King James Version*, Mark.12:31

<sup>7</sup> Selfless in the sense that the language of thought of the subject no longer separates the ‘I’ from ‘you’ and ‘he’ and their respective plural forms but every nominative pronoun becomes first person plural ‘we’ or the first person plural object pronoun ‘us,’ without the opposing ‘you’ or ‘them’ in the all-encompassing sense of inclusiveness whose state of awareness comprehends the nature and destiny of the totality of all beings.

then, a state of higher consciousness that encompasses and embraces all living essence and from whom life and harmony emanates.

Armand Baker, in his book *El pensamiento religioso y filosófico de Antonio Machado*, under the sub-chapter “El nirvana búdico,” provides a similar analysis of Antonio Machado’s notion of death in relation to the loss of individual identity, contrary to Dámaso Alonso, who interprets Machado’s conception of death and individual identity based on the final verses of the poem “La muerte de Abel Martín.” For Dámaso Alonso, individual identity is lost at the moment of death when the loss of consciousness occurs and all mental aptitude transforms into ‘nada’:

Para Dámaso Alonso, el fin del poema quiere decir que Machado “parece anhelar precipitarse en el total vacío, la ‘sombra’ quimérica pura, de la Nada.” O sea, que ya no cree en la posibilidad de conservar su individualidad, porque piensa que su conciencia va a anularse en la nada. (*El pensamiento religioso y filosófico de Antonio Machado* 81)

However, Baker interprets otherwise and thinks that Dámaso Alonso and others who saw Machado’s conception of death as a total oblivion have, in part, misinterpreted the notion of ‘nada’ in relation to nirvana and what is referred to as ‘vacío’ in the Buddhist terminology. According to Baker, “el Vacío, o la Nada” in the Buddhist system of beliefs do not entail absence of life; rather they are states of being in which the self is detached from organic obligations and through a form of transcendental understanding concerning the meaning of existence rise above the circularity of nature and exit the condition of reintegration in the form of rebirth:

El nirvana es el Vacío, o la Nada, solamente desde el punto de vista de la mente racional. Es un aspecto del ser que no puede ser captado intelectualmente, porque trasciende el intelecto; puede ser experimentado pero no puede ser descrito ni definido. (Compárese esto con lo que dice Abel Martín: “Quien piensa el ser puro, el ser como no es, piensa, en efecto, la pura nada” (OPP, 333). Para la persona cuya conciencia logra traspasar los límites del reino de los fenómenos transitorios (sangsara), lo que el intelecto define como Vacío es revelado como un estado de Plenitud Absoluta, o como lo describe el gran orientalista W.Y. Evans-Wentz: “La plenitud Trascendente del Vacío” (The Transcendent Fullness of the Emptiness)... (El pensamiento religioso y filosófico de Antonio Machado 81)

A possible solution lies in the correct interpretation in each case of the use of the word ‘nada’ in Antonio Machado’s writings. Antonio Machado uses the word ‘nada’ in various ways and contexts, and in each case, charged with irony; the use of the word ‘nada’ in a given situation can have a totally different meaning from another use of the word, as was shown on pages 2 and 3 earlier in the ‘Background context to Chapter 1;’ similarly, in the analysis earlier on page 4 of the poem from *Campo de Castilla*, the concept ‘nada’ makes reference to what is physically intangible in reference to human mental projection in the sense of the design and the architectural blueprint prior to the creation of a product, in this case the implementation of modernization in phenomena:

Creó de nada un mundo y, su obra terminada,

Ya estoy en el secreto –se dijo- todo es nada. (A. Machado *Poesía Completa* 237)

In the above quote, ‘Nada’ in the first instance is characterized from physical laws. Hence, ‘nada’ from “Creó de nada un mundo” refers to the imaginative origin of human civilization in terms of buildings and other material constructions, that is, the architectural designs of human creations in phenomena are insubstantial and originally materially empty since they were envisioned from the mind. Conversely ‘nada’ in “su obra terminada... –se dijo- todo es nada” refers, on the one hand, to human construction within phenomena, and, on the other, to the phenomena themselves whose values are temporal and conditional since, for Juan de Mairena, the material world has meaning only when it partakes in the semantic universe as an attachment to and extension of human reality. As mentioned earlier, Juan de Mairena validates phenomena on human ontological and epistemological grounds, thus characterizing ‘nada’ as based on a human temporal and ontological value system.

In the question above regarding death in relation to individual identity and immortality, it is my opinion that, Baker, though he relates to Buddhism, has given a more credible interpretation in relation to how Antonio Machado projects the notion of death and identity throughout his writings. The topic of death will be further explored in 2.3 “The Metaphysical and Ontological ramifications of *Nunca, nada, nadie* in relation to the human life and the objects in phenomena and the soul’s continuity hereafter,” and 2.7 “The function and meaning of death for humans in relation to the context exposed in *Nunca, nada, nadie*.”

#### **2.4 The epistemological significance of ‘folklore,’ ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ and ‘la cultura viva’ in revising the context alluded to in “Nunca, nada, nadie”**

For Juan de Mairena, human interaction under the awareness of human primacy and showing care to oneself and to others and taking nature as the primary phenomenal stage for interacting with them is what he refers to as ‘folklore’ or ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’:

Mairena tenía una idea del folklore que no era la de los folkloristas de nuestros días. Para él no era el folklore un estudio de las reminiscencias de viejas culturas, de elementos muertos que arrastra inconscientemente el alma del pueblo en su lengua, en sus prácticas, en sus costumbres, etcétera... “...Es muy posible, que entre nosotros, el saber Universitario no pueda competir con el folklore, con el saber popular. El pueblo sabe más, y sobre todo, mejor que nosotros. (*Juan de Mairena I* 133-134)

In this framework, ‘folklore’ and ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ are derivative practical and collective custom and predisposition based on Kant’s categorical imperative. However, ‘folklore’ and ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ are not the same. For Juan de Mairena ‘Folklore’ is the by product or what has been formed as a consequence of ‘la sabiduría del pueblo.’ Hence, ‘Folklore’ is the collective oriented practice of incorporative actions towards other humans and nature. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says, referring to ‘Folklore’ as ‘la cultura viva,’ that it is not a contemplative idea but a collective practice in the literal sense of an array of individuals oriented by the idea of preservation of life acting under the awareness of and in response to the human internal necessity of being validated based on care and respect. For Juan de Mairena, in ‘la cultura viva,’ people’s actions naturally promote life and wellbeing based on care and respect, these being the source of attraction from which a group of people gather and live together under a system of beliefs and values. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says that ‘Folklore’ is

what generates a common practice, in the sense of people acting under a unified agreement of promoting what benefits people and their community.

Pensaba Mairena que el Folklore era cultura viva y creadora de un pueblo de quien había mucho que aprender, para poder luego enseñar bien a las clases adineradas. (*Juan de Mairena I* 134)

It should be taken into consideration that Juan de Mairena adds “para poder luego enseñar bien a las clases adineradas” not so much on sociological or economic grounds in order to contrast the rich and the poor, but specifically in reference to the moral character and the predisposition of the *bourgeois* class, whose actions are dominated by self-centered and materially oriented intentions through the exploitation of others (in the sense of taking advantage for making profit of every situation in which other human beings are involved). As will be noted in the analysis of Juan de Mairena’s socio-human epistemology in chapter 3, such an attitude towards life is not only incongruous with ‘Folklore’ and ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ but it leads exactly to the degraded and devalued condition that was previously observed in the fragment *Nunca, nada, nadie*, where humans compete with material products and ultimately the objects are in a better categorical position than humans even within the configurations of human reality.

Given the antecedent and consequent relationship of the two, what Juan de Mairena means by ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ is precisely the predisposition and readiness to accept willingly what is entailed by ‘Folklore.’ In this context, ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ does not refer to any abstract, intellectual, objective, methodical or discursive knowledge. Rather ‘la sabiduría del pueblo’ points to a predisposition of will towards human beings and nature in which every individual’s action is performed under the idea or awareness of a collective benefit and

convenience that take into account the human's dual temporality in relation to its existence in phenomena: the temporal or the terminal (the individual) and the perpetual human existence (not eternal, but the prolongation of human life through uninterrupted generational continuity). It assumes that tradition is favorable and beneficial for human beings in the prospect of the arrival and continuity of future generations; within this protective prospect "la sabiduría del pueblo" wants to prevent what René Char in the second half of the twentieth century perceived and envisioned about modern culture's damaging power, that "unless thinking and poetizing once again regain [their] nonviolent power" "the uprooting of man that is now taking place is the end [of everything human]" (*Heidegger: The Man and the Thinker* 56). The effect in society of 'la sabiduría del pueblo,' then, is this collective general action that affects positively human beings and their environment in that they create a state of hopeful<sup>8</sup> outlook on life. It is within this context that Juan de Mairena says "El pueblo sabe más, y sobre todo, mejor que nosotros." However, the adverb 'más' here does not refer to quantity but to quality and variety in the sense that everyone has something positive of their own to contribute to human reality, and quality in terms of being savvy, of knowing what is convenient and appropriate for all humans; indeed, according to the socio-human structure in *Juan de Mairena*, the idea of an individual acting for the benefit of the self is not only self-centered, narcissistic and egotistic in terms of evaluation of a person's moral character, but it is illusory and an ontological oxymoron. For Juan de Mairena, the term 'benefit' only works in the plural sense of affecting the whole of humanity; this is so because the idea of 'benefit' is not conceived in isolated, artificial, inconsistent and fluctuating circumstances created by man and regulated by him through various socio-economic and

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<sup>8</sup> The term 'hopeful' here refers to the possibility of a positive projection in the mind of the future based on the projected conditions of the environment and phenomenal reality.

political maneuvers in the framework of contest,<sup>9</sup> in which there is the classification of winner and loser; in other words, a society framed in a structure in which depending on the various circumstances, a few fare well and others are degraded and left behind. For Juan de Mairena the term ‘benefit’ can only be valid in the pluralistic sense of applying to the entire human race; in this sense, ‘benefit’ is weighed on the cultural advance manifested in the healthy relationship of the people in the community and among communities in the exercise of care and readiness as a species to deal with and improve the basic human conditions in phenomena. Hence ‘más’ in the phrase above does not stand for the bulk or volume of knowledge, nor its exactness or accuracy because “sabe más” is not in reference to an exact science; nor does it refer to an objective knowledge in phenomena that can be investigated and controlled but rather points to the cultural practice of ‘knowing better’ what is beneficial for human beings as a whole and its environs; “sabe más” in this sense is a practical knowledge that operates and responds in accordance with a set of values that understands and has high regard concerning the interrelatedness of life forms; that is why he immediately adds “sobre todo, mejor que nosotros,”<sup>10</sup> criticizing in a way the academic failure to address critical human science issues that directly affect the existential condition of human beings and consequently all life forms in nature.

## **2.5 The intentional dimensions of man-made objects in relation to the soul’s capacity to influence and internalize phenomena**

Besides nature becoming an extension of the human being through the collaborative effort of care, humans have the tendency to internalize space and the layouts of the extended

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<sup>9</sup> Juan de Mairena’s idea of ‘benefit’ will be analyzed in chapter 3 against the political control through administrative innovations brought and implemented by Frederick William, The Great Elector of Brandenburg, 1640-1688, which, according to Nussbaum, embodies the portrayal of power and control of the state over its subjects advocated and envisioned in Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan*.

<sup>10</sup> The object pronoun ‘nosotros’ refers to university trained scholars or academics.

object while acquiring skill in a specific task, and thus maneuver from within the particular setting and the mechanisms of the object (sometimes connecting and transferring to the equipment or instrument the affective state of the soul). This is especially true with skills that require the coordination of hands and sight, like typewriting and also the playing of musical instruments. I use the term ‘object’ here in the sense of man-made product or inert instruments in the Heideggerian sense of the term ‘equipment.’ Here the relationship between the subject and the object is unilateral and it goes one way from the subject to the object. But for Juan de Mairena, even in the mastering of a craft in order to produce an external outcome that can be shared and used by other individuals, the intention has to be that of collaboration and service for the people in the community rather than making a product for the sole sake of making profit:

...artesanos que saben su oficio y para quienes el hacer bien las cosas es, como para el artista, mucho más importante que el hacerlas... El hombre que sabe hacer algo de un modo perfecto –un zapato, un sombrero, una guitarra, un ladrillo– no es nunca un trabajador inconsciente, que ajusta su labor a viejas fórmulas y recetas, sino un artista que pone toda su alma en cada momento de su trabajo. A este hombre no es fácil engañarle con cosas mal sabidas o hechas a desgana.

*(Juan de Mairena I 133-134)*

The artisan’s goods Juan de Mairena declares “–un zapato, un sombrero, una guitarra, un ladrillo–” have a sharing or contributive intentionality already incorporated in the design of the products, and they become legitimized even more when the maker of these products applies the utmost dedication in their manufacturing encouraged by the thought that the person who will use them will benefit from their use. The phrase “pone toda su alma en cada momento de su

trabajo”<sup>11</sup> points precisely to this intentional consideration behind the design of the product and the care put into its manufacturing<sup>12</sup> for the intended recipient; here ‘intended recipient’ being the indefinite other. Borges in “El puñal” states precisely that in man-made and man-designed objects the intended aim lives within the object, just waiting for someone to carry it out. He says:

Es más que una estructura hecha de metales; los hombres lo pensaron y lo formaron para un fin muy preciso; (*Obras Completas II 327*)

Of course, in Borges’s story the dagger is anthropomorphized and, being inanimate, waits for a person and his hand to execute its intended purpose. In *Juan de Mairena*, the man-made and designed object does not have this human dimension. Nonetheless, the intention behind the design of the object triggers in the recipient ideas and, in case of a dagger, a certain sense of power. It is in this sense that in *Juan de Mairena* the object carries the intentionality of the designer and the maker.

Besides the depositing of intentions in the design and making of an object, for *Juan de Mairena*, the only thing that a human being really owns and can give is his time expressed in

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<sup>11</sup> Even now in the XXI Century when almost everything is made by machines, still the final stages of a product and its quality approval, in most cases, have to be directly checked and approved by human expertise. Moreover, those products which are considered art and high end products like clothing, pottery, jewelry, cutlery, musical instruments and furniture are still made by the artist’s hands, in many cases employing electronic tools. This is because a human’s motor skills, even if he or she is considered only in the mechanistic sense are far more advanced than any existing operational ability of a machine. A well trained human talent like that of an artist could not be imitated by any machine.

<sup>12</sup> ‘Manufacturing’ here should be understood as handmade product, as the very etymology of the word indicates, and it should be distinguished from the machine assembled goods. For *Juan de Mairena*, the difference between handmade and machine-made goods lies not so much in the basis of the quality of the product or its finish but on the care and dedication given to manufacturing the good for its use by another human being. In this sense the handmade goods become an intermediary relational direct object which serves to establish a sharing human relationship in society; by the way, it is this type of indirect relationship situations which diminish the crude conception of solipsism in the philosophical search for truth. Given this indirect context in which an object can contain, besides its design, an intentional factor of the maker, a handmade product has more than just a quantitative value in a market but provides an opportunity for appreciation of what a human being is able to do for the other within human relations.

terms of care, effort and dedication. He considers any material ownership a consequence of social, political, economic and legal conventions; ownership in this sense is just a temporary holding of something which must be passed on for others to do the same. In essence, this is the view that is contained in the last verses of his poem “Retrato” in *Campos de Castilla*, when he says: “me encontraréis a bordo ligero de equipaje/ casi desnudo, como los hijos de la mar” (*Poesía Completa* 151). It is in this context of sharing and contributing what he really has (time and intentions) that Juan de Mairena thinks the acquisition of a skill and the many hours spent in perfecting a craft is justified, and it is in this context that Antonio Machado says he does not owe anything to society for he feels he has dedicated himself to his duty as a poet and still devotes himself to it. This is precisely the purpose behind the verses where he says:

Y al cabo, nada os debo;  
me debéis cuanto escribo  
a mi trabajo acudo, (*Poesía Completa* 151).

## **2.6 The Metaphysical, Epistemological and Ontological ramifications of *Nunca, nada, nadie* in relation to Leibniz ‘monad’ as the soul and their relation to phenomena**

Similar to the earlier description of how humans acquire a skill with regard to an external object, the way the monads mirror the world, in the applied sense, operates in an analogous way to how human skill internalizes the external layouts of an object. In other words, a monad mirrors and actualizes its internally preconditioned aptitude (but in a metaphysical sense), being an indivisible and non-material substance, by way of unfolding a universe within (in terms of having the blueprint) that reflects the external universe of phenomena. That is to say, a monad,

not being spatial, can influence from within what is outside by expanding<sup>13</sup> internally in the sense that it can take control over a given physical space and also know ahead in the sense of intuiting what is coming according to the pre-established theory of harmony; however the foresight is limited to “only what is there represented distinctly... [i]t cannot all at once open up all its folds, because they extend to infinity” (*Discourse on Metaphysics* 265). This is the reason why Leibniz distinguishes two different laws governing separately the body and the soul while they work together:

78...The soul follows its own laws, and the body has its laws. They are fitted to each other in virtue of the pre-established harmony between all substances, since they are all representations of one and the same universe.

79. Souls act in accordance with the laws of final causes through their desires, purposes and means. Bodies act in accordance with the laws of efficient causes or of motion. The two realms, that of efficient causes and that of final causes, are in harmony, each with the other. (*Discourse on Metaphysics* 269)

Juan de Mairena, while accepting Leibniz’s two realms, one for the soul and one for the body, is not convinced that they collaborate in equal terms, especially when we take into consideration our own involvement in the making and promoting of materialized reality through modernization. Indeed, the equitable collaboration between the soul and the body in their needs and wants would be what Aristotle referred to as the golden mean in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in that the equilibrium of every extreme tendency in any bipartisan relationship or binominal coexistence promotes stability when a balance is achieved. But for Juan de Mairena this is not

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<sup>13</sup> I use the term “expand” in regard to the monad interchangeably in both senses: the disclosing of future happenings in terms of foreknowledge, and also physically taking control over a particular space. Leibniz uses the term “unfolding” in the sense of opening up and the events actualizing in phenomena.

sufficient; for him the soul should always have priority in the relationship between the soul and the body because that is where the state of human wellbeing is regulated, through the idea of care. Indeed, it is in the soul where meaning and value are conceived and operate. In light of this disproportion, Juan de Mairena feels the need to distinguish each realm distinctly, and by differentiating them categorically, reconfigure the value system where the human as a soul and affective being is always prioritized over objects in the materially oriented world. In an attempt to do this, he evokes the early Greek natural philosopher Democritus of Abdera, an atomist and “a younger contemporary of Socrates” who believed that the natural world was composed of unchanging and indivisible stuff: atoms and void<sup>14</sup>, and not Descartes, in order to go back to its roots and show that the tradition of materialism is not a modern event but was already regarded in antiquity in its theoretical imaginings. His recalling Democritus and the atomists from the standpoint of modernized reality of the early twentieth century serves as a motive to revise the diminished human ontological status pointed out in the fragment of *Nunca, nada, nadie*, going back to its historical roots when materialism was first conceived in western civilization.

Según Demócrito, el antiguo filósofo griego, “lo dulce y lo amargo, lo caliente y lo frío, lo amarillo y lo verde, etc., no son más que opiniones; sólo los átomos y el vacío son verdaderos. Para Demócrito, opinión era un conocimiento obscuro, sin la menor garantía de realidad. Claro está que todo esto, señores, es una opinión de Demócrito, que nadie nos obliga a aceptar. Sin embargo la ciencia ha ido formando, a través de los siglos, una forma del Universo puramente mecánica, que lleva implícita la opinión de Demócrito, la cual *mutatis mutandi*, ha llegado hasta nosotros, pobres diablos que estudiamos la Física, con algunos

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<sup>14</sup> Quoted from the Stanford University online Encyclopedia, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/democritus/> 4 21 2011

lustros de rezago, en las postrimerías del siglo XIX. No es fácil, pues, que podamos reírnos de Demócrito, sin aparentar, vanamente, una ignorancia mayor que la nuestra, que ya es, de suyo, bastante considerable. Y yo os pregunto: si aceptamos la opinión de Demócrito, con todas sus consecuencias, ¿qué somos nosotros, meros aprendices de poetas, enamorados de lo dulce y lo amargo, lo caliente y lo frío, lo verde y lo azul, y de todo lo demás –sin excluir lo bueno y lo malo – que en nada se parece a los átomos, ni al vacío en que estos se mueven? Seríamos el vacío del vacío en que ni siquiera se mueven los átomos. Meditad en lo trágico de nuestra situación.... (*Juan de Mairena I* 130-131)

Democritus's materialist epistemological viewpoint of what is real is further developed, expanded and theorized in the seventeenth century by John Locke in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in order to set the limits of human understanding to what reason can explain based on the differentiation between sense experience and scientific objectivity. Locke distinguishes in his *magnum opus* what he calls the primary and the secondary qualities<sup>15</sup> in order to theoretically frame Democritus's discrimination between the sense input of color, taste and the sensation of hot and cold as sense experience, and the basic object's nature as atoms, thus distinguishing sense data (the scientific information obtained from the objects themselves) from sense perception (the effect produced in us as a result of the interaction between the object and the senses).

As we will see, Juan de Mairena, while not opposed to such an epistemological distinction, resists and dissents from the types of epistemological categorization and ontological

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<sup>15</sup> According to John Locke in his *magnum opus* *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) primary qualities of the bodies are Size, Figure and Motion and these are inseparable from the body; whereas the secondary qualities are Color, Taste, and Sound which are not meant to be part of the body itself but are produced as sensations in us through the interaction between the senses and the object of perception. (134-135)

devaluation of human experience in which the condition (having an organic body and senses) and the output (the sense experience of the soul in phenomena) are considered an obstacle, deceptive, erroneous and illusive in cartesian scientific modernity's effort to acquire knowledge that is infallible<sup>16</sup>. The romantic tendency to radically counter cartesian scientific rationalism was already shown by some of the british empiricists like Hume, Berkely and Thomas Reid, whose epistemological and ontological views validated only inductive reasoning, subjective perceptions and common sense. Likewise such continental philosophers as Blaise Pascal (considered to be the precursor of Kierkegaard's existentialism) radically opposed cartesian method and turned to spiritualism. This is the reason why the Heideggerian type of categorical distinction and analysis between the way objects are in the world and the way human beings exist in space and time are elucidating in light of the different accomodations humans need as opposed to an inert object's requirements<sup>17</sup>. Likewise, the way Sartre problematizes human internal necessity and the soul's distressing undergoings in a rutinized and mechanized way of life points to the inappropriateness of human existence in materially categorized and oriented reality.

## **2.7 The metaphysical and ontological ramifications of “Nunca, nada, nadie” in relation to human life and death, the object's existence in phenomena and the soul's continuity hereafter**

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<sup>16</sup> Rene Descartes is considered to be the father of Modern philosophy precisely because he promoted an epistemological break with antiquity based on a new standard of knowledge with the criteria “clear and distinct” in his *Discourse on the Method*. The goal of this new episteme was to subdue knowledge that was based on sense data and attain and validate infallible knowledge founded on mathematical science. According to Calinescu the modern and the ancient debate, in terms of who was better, was initiated during the early Middle Ages and it continued until the Renaissance. But then these debates were discursive in nature and they relied more on syllogistic formulations and the linguistic (*parole*) ability of the speaker to persuade the exclusive intellectual audience. Until the XVI Century the term modern was considered with pejorative connotation. (*Five Faces of Modernity* 14-15)

<sup>17</sup> Nature appropriately placed each kind of composition of matter and organisms to the place where each is fit to develop complacently. Most toxic minerals are either in the mountain or underneath the earth hidden away from the surface because if exposed to oxygen they will corrode and develop rust. On the other hand, organic entities exist where there is air because they depend on it for survival and in their continued subsistence in phenomena.

The sentence “Seríamos el vacío del vacío en que ni siquiera se mueven los átomos” in the earlier fragment of “Según Demócrito, el antiguo filósofo griego” resonates Shakespeare’s treatment of human existence in phenomena in “We are such stuff/ As dreams are made on” in the *Tempest*. As Heidegger noted in *Being and Time*, what is being highlighted in both cases is the fact that the way human beings exist in the world is essentially different from the way material objects are in the world, even though phenomenally they are both under the law of physics. Analogous to Shakespeare’s comparison of human existence to the brevity and insubstantiality of dreams that arise in the mind and disappear without a trace, what Juan de Mairena is underlining in “Seríamos el vacío del vacío...” is that if we were to measure human life in terms of an object’s existence, which, according to Democritus, persists endlessly through transformation (disintegration and synthesis through molecular restructuring) in space and time, humans would not even come close to the object’s potentiality to endure in phenomena, given that when a human being dies it perishes altogether, with the exception that its momentary presence may be prolonged within the human realm in the form of identity along with a name through remembrance. But even in this selective, fragmented and incomplete recollection, the individual reminisced has little resemblance to the actual person that was. Precisely, touching on this point, Juan de Mairena quotes his teacher Abel Martín and says that a beloved person is better remembered by a form of forgetting first and then re-constructing the memory of the person based only on the beloved’s essential character, subtracting all the minor occurrences of life.

Pensaba mi maestro... que el amor empieza con el recuerdo, y que mal se podía recordar lo que antes no se había olvidado. Tal pensamiento expresaba mi maestro muy claramente en estos versos:

Sé que habrás de llorarme cuando muera

para olvidarme y, luego,

poderme recordar, limpios los ojos

que miran en el tiempo.

Más allá de tus lágrimas y de

tu olvido, en tu recuerdo,

me siento ir por una senda clara,

por un <<Adiós, Guiomar>> enjuto y serio.

...Merced al olvido puede el poeta...arrancar las raíces de su espíritu, enterradas en el suelo de lo anecdótico y trivial, para amarrarlas, más hondas, en el subsuelo o roca viva del sentimiento, el cual no es ya evocador, sino...alumbrador de formas nuevas. (*Juan de Mairena I 117*)

It is worth noting how Juan de Mairena, through Abel Martín's poem, recapitulates some of his own beliefs that human memory is selective, fragmented, and characterizes the person based on a precedent or from the very last moment of existence. Likewise, memory for Juan de Mairena does not proceed sequentially or logically, along a linear progressive timeline, but rather tends to distinguish from what the person did or said or s/he intended to do; this is exhibited in the way he attaches conceptual memory to the character and separates it from phenomenal recollection. Through the action of the word 'llorarme,' which has the potential to carry away objects with its current, Abel Martín asks Juan de Mairena to flush down and cast away the sensible images, the empirical recollection of him ["para olvidarme"]. Then the poem suggests reconstruction of the identity of his teacher, Abel Martín, from the conceptual memory alone ["luego,/ recordar,

limpios los ojos”] based on the ideas and beliefs Abel Martín verbally imparted as a teacher. Thus what Abel Martín is requesting in the poem to his pupil is to suppress his phenomenal person, that is, the empirical or sensible traces and habitual nuances Juan de Mairena has come to accumulate in his memory of his teacher (having known him personally). By limiting himself to this intellectual reconstruction, Abel Martín is making the case that Juan de Mairena treat him as a classic author because that is precisely the way a reader comes to know a classic literary figure, namely through his or her work, not so much on the basis of his or her biography (though sometimes anecdotes can enhance the author’s character) but by the ideas the thinker has imparted in his or her *oeuvre*. This is the reason why, in the expectancy of Juan de Mairena’s exhibition of his mentor Abel Martín as a poet, the poem says “en tu recuerdo,/ me siento ir por una senda clara,/ por un <<Adiós, Guiomar>> enjuto y serio.” That is, Abel Martín relies on the fact that Juan de Mairena’s filtered representation of him will do a better job of revealing him as a poet<sup>18</sup>. In a way, this anticipatory remark evokes the archetypal relationship maintained between Socrates and Plato, which became the most positive, efficient and prolific collaboration between a mentor and pupil in the history of western literature.

Given this consideration, human death is different from the object’s disintegration in phenomena in that human physical composition exists along and together with a unique identity that was formed in human society, not so much for the individual actions a person performed throughout his existence in society but for the meaning and intentionality such a person exhibited in life in relation to other human beings, not in a lineal and successive way but in a synthetic or a collective way. Apart from this external identity, for Juan de Mairena, two identities exist: the

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<sup>18</sup> Abel Martín in a way responds to the late-romantic or pre-modern *Ars Poetica* of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer who in his *Rhymes* sought for things impossible to attain. On the other hand, in this poem Juan de Mairena points out the problematic nature of the construction of an individual’s identity, which is not just the recollection of what people remember of a person, but what and how they remember a person and in what process of synthesis of the memories an individual identity is finally brought to light within consciousness.

self-created social ‘máscara’ and what that he calls ‘yo hondo.’ According to him the ‘yo hondo’ is the one that persists in the form of a selfless state of awareness after death. So when a person dies, the identity that went along with the body ceases to exist in phenomena, though parts of the individual’s social identity will persist temporarily in the memory of those who knew the person, while the ‘yo hondo,’ the person within, for some<sup>19</sup>, will continue to be in a higher state of awareness without the phenomenal attachment of the body:

En el gris muro,  
 cárcel y aposento,  
 y en un paisaje futuro  
 con sólo tu voz y el viento;  
 (*Juan de Mairena I 118*).

In this poem ‘cárcel’ is referred to as the sensible world, but it is not just a prison that restricts bodily movements. On the contrary, the body can move as much as it wants in unoccupied space, but still, for the soul such movement would not constitute freedom. This is the reason the poet sets the stage in the future,<sup>20</sup> where the soul is no longer restricted by corporeal limitations and is free to be. Freedom, which is essentially volitional, is described in the last phrase, “sólo tu voz y el viento,” again subtracting the presence of the physical body precisely to differentiate and illustrate the open state of the human spirit without an origin or trace like the wind.

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<sup>19</sup> Juan de Mairena thinks that certain exemplary people will attain a higher state of selfless consciousness after they die.

<sup>20</sup> The term future can refer to two distinct times (one inclusive and the other exclusive). Inclusively it refers to the coming time or time not yet spent as a temporal being. Exclusively it refers to what is beyond temporality in the sense that time will no longer affect the state of its being. In the poem, ‘future’ refers to the exclusive time.

According to Juan de Mairena, the molecular reformation of human remains cannot regain an individual's identity because this unique identity which existed alongside the physical persona can never be replaced or re-formed in space and time. Even in the context of extreme Buddhist contemplation of rebirth, which treats the human body on equal terms as objects in their transformational capacity, what incarnation entails is not a mere reforming of molecules into a human image. Rather the idea of returning is done through the form of a becoming 'bhava,' or a being born into the world as an individual 'jāti'<sup>21</sup>. One of the reasons an individual can never be replaced is because a human being is born in phenomena, but it is not simply born in the world. A human has an identity as a consequence of birth because it is born into an existing condition and culture; this is not merely an occurrence of a simple restructuring of molecules; even in the mechanical sense, living entities are not simply bodies like stones but organisms that are structured and function along a system of values that govern their inner semantic world. This is why he sarcastically says, referring to those who always claim to return in all things:

Los hombres que siempre están de vuelta en todas las cosas son los que no han ido nunca a ninguna parte. Porque ya es mucho ir, ¡nadie ha vuelto! (*Juan de Mairena I* 103)

The first part of the sentence looks at claims in relation to a project left unfinished and that people return to in order to continue working on it, and hence "están de vuelta" here refers to a restart of an unfinished project, which Juan de Mairena atypically links with physically 'going somewhere' (in the spatial sense) in the second part of the sentence, accusing them of never

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<sup>21</sup> Quoted from the online glossary of Pali and Buddhist terms edited by John Bullitt, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/glossary.html> 5/12/2011

having left: “no han ido nunca a ninguna parte.” The second sentence, as a continuation of the first, provides the reason why those that claim to return in all things have never left, because the only true departure is leaving this life to the eschatological realm, and that is not a regular event: “ya es mucho ir.” What Juan de Mairena is essentially pointing out here is that for humans, though they exist in space, the substance with which they deal is not outside but is in the mind; hence, moving from one place to another does not constitute change of space because space is indivisible. This in a way replicates the structure found in the famous saying in *El Buscón* by Quevedo: “Nunca mejora su estado quien muda solamente de lugar y no de vida y costumbres,” without the moral implications. What Juan de Mairena is fundamentally pointing out here is that although a person exists in space as a being in phenomena, a human is essentially a temporal being whose semantic substance does not lie outside but rather within his mind. In a way, this claim is a derivation based on Kant’s epistemological categorization of space and time as intuitions of the mind in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Lastly, the phrase enclosed in the exclamation mark points to a going that cannot be reversed nor returned to reinitiate, like the unfinished project that was mentioned in the first part of the first sentence. What Juan de Mairena has created here is a paradox between mental state, space and time, the last two being inextricably interwoven in phenomena, and the eschatological realm as the ultimate place to which a human being goes as a final and only departure from his/her brief existence in terminal space and time. Hence his claim that “¡nadie ha vuelto!” does not refer to coming from an eschatological spatial realm back to phenomena; rather the phrase points to traveling back to time from a realm where there is no time. The phrase “¡nadie ha vuelto!” in and out of itself and depending on the tone that one may give, could be read as if there were no life form after death. However, the phrase should not be interpreted independently of the context suggested in the

paragraph. To arrive at a correct interpretation, the phrase should be interpreted in relation to Juan de Mairena's belief in the intimate and unchanging identity of "yo hondo". Given this consideration, the phrase "¡nadie ha vuelto!" takes the meaning 'nadie ha regresado a contarnos' in the expectancy of death as a transitory event in the continued existence of the soul.

As noted earlier, some critics, like Armand Baker, find Buddhist influence in Antonio Machado's thought on the hereafter; however, as was noted above, if the identity factor is taken into consideration, specifically the "yo hondo," then the concept of incarnation, for example, could not be included as part of Antonio Machado's belief system on the hereafter, at least not in the strict sense of Buddhist beliefs. While there are certain tendencies in Antonio Machado's thoughts that link with Buddhists' beliefs, especially concerning a few selected people's spiritual state after death<sup>22</sup> and the concept of nirvana, he does not believe in reincarnation in the sense that a human being can transform into various life forms after death determined by a system of retribution and compensation by the way a person lived this life according to the traditional Buddhist ten realms of being. Rather, Antonio Machado's belief in life after death, which he thinks is a special human characteristic and an essential continuation of the person's identity, is linked, in part, with the idea of justice in the sense of fairness. And although Juan de Mairena trusts there will be a certain justice system in the sense of reward and punishment after death, his belief in the hereafter does not reflect the strict Manichaeic way early Christianity was influenced in their eschatological imaginings by a combination of the Ancient Greek, Etruscans, Roman and Zoroastrian views of the afterlife. While Juan de Mairena refrains from describing any context, if indeed the life hereafter would be anything like the phenomena and the social aspects of the life with which we have become familiar, seeming to lean towards agnosticism, he

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<sup>22</sup> Abel Martín would be one of the people selected.

believes that an individual in the form of “yo hondo” will continue to exist, after death, in some form of awareness. The phrase “¡nadie ha vuelto!” negates the traditional Ancient Greek conception of return crossing and drinking the water from the river Lethe in Hades to forget the previous life and start a new life as expounded by Hesiod and Homer in Greek mythology. Rather the continuation of the person’s identity and its definite and final departure is linked in meaning with the passage in Plato’s *Apology* where Socrates hypothesizes death as a journey to converse with “Orpheus and Musaeus, Hesiod and Homer...” (*Plato: The Collected Dialogues* 25).

Although Antonio Machado reiterates the theme of death throughout his poetical and fragmental *oeuvre*, he speaks about death not because he finds life in phenomena trivial and worthless, as was the opinion about earthly life in medieval times<sup>23</sup>. On the contrary, Juan de Mairena thinks an individual must fare well under the conditions of phenomena in the sense of responding to life’s requisites in accord with the life principles that one believes in for oneself and for others in the form of intentionality and overt action directed to the other. But in order to understand the other, one must understand oneself through a kind of experience that puts to the test the unity and reliability of the phenomenal self in relation to the inner self that holds beliefs

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<sup>23</sup> Because the concern in medieval times was not the sensible or the transient world but the transcendental realm in the sense of the eternal coming world, the dominant outlook of medieval thought and interest was on the eschatological realm; every effort was made to measure up their actions to a moral prescription by disciplining both mind and body. Due to these tendencies, there was a suppression of the self and phenomena as something mundane. According to A. Wolf:

Medieval lack of interest in natural phenomena and disregard of individual judgment had their roots in the domination of a supernatural outlook, an other-worldly mentality. The earth was of little interest in comparison with Heaven, the present life was at best but a preparation for the life hereafter. And the Church claimed absolute authority for truths revealed by the light of grace in comparison with which the light of reason was of no consequence. True, Thomas Aquinas and his followers recognized the light of reason as a source of knowledge beside the light of grace; but even they left no doubt whatever about the subordination of natural knowledge to revelation. (*A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy* 2)

beyond phenomena. This is not an intellectual or verbal conception of oneself but a realistic disclosure of oneself as a soul under dire but most real phenomenal conditions. Real phenomenal conditions for humans are experiences defined by the basic needs in life. Juan de Mairena finds that down to earth experiences help the soul attune itself to the rest of humanity by subjecting the mind to view and measure the phenomenal self from the basic conditions of life. This is because basic conditions of life bring community together, just as in a situation of tragedy and death people overlook about differences and collaborate under the common characteristic of humanity. This is why Juan de Mairena advises his students not to fly high and lose contact with the ground.

Huid de escenarios, púlpitos, plataformas y pedestales. Nunca perdáis contacto con el suelo; porque sólo así tendréis una idea aproximada de vuestra estatura. (*Juan de Mairena I* 103-104)

The phrase “vuestra estatura” in the quote above does not refer to the actual height of each student under Juan de Mairena’s care; it assesses human life from limited and temporal human phenomenal conditions. In this sense, he is advising his students to refrain from idealizing themselves to be larger than life because, after all, being a human means to comply with the basic conditions of life whether one is the king or the swineherd (as was analyzed in chapter 1), the basic human phenomenal condition being the dependency one has on nourishment and shelter and his or her transient status as temporal being. This is the reason why for Juan de Mairena undergoing a justified physical hardship can enhance humanity and even bring one back to reality from an idealized state.

The physical throb can also help trigger a new evaluative perspective within the faculty of judgment, it is not the only way that one can activate the revision process which annuls by

critically viewing previously accepted categories of values made up from expectations of conventional value system; physical distress is just one of the ways that can help break up a previously accepted semantic reliance for categorizing the world through a process of interpretation in the conception of reality. In western literature, from the Bible to Greco-Roman texts and from medieval up to many sixteenth century literatures (with the exception of modern novels like *Lazarrillo de Tormes*, *Don Quijote*, *El Buscón*, *Guzman de Alfarache* and so on), all seems to attach a moral lesson, “moraleja,” to a story in which one of the most persuasive and time resisting ones is about a fallen hero revising or reaffirming life’s values and goals from the lesson learned and overcoming adversity. Unlike animals whose sole life activity and effort is survival by nourishment, for humans, a naturally arrived short exposure to hunger, thirst and other basic needs can produce effects that can hold beyond physical suffering and reveal and deepen one’s understanding of life in the inclusive and incorporative sense of recognizing in oneself a fragile being, capable of suffering among other such beings. In a way, such experiences can also help develop empathic capacity and activate incorporative understanding of the other as a reflection of the self. Precisely, the following paragraph in *Juan de Mairena* shows the positive effects that can result from naturally arrived physical hardship in the becoming of a socio-moral human being.

Pero además del hambre, señores –habla Mairena a sus discípulos–, tenemos el apetito. Yo os deseo que no os falten nunca. Porque se ha dicho muchas veces –y siempre, a mi juicio, con acierto– que sin ellos tampoco se realizan las grandes obras del espíritu.

\* \* \*

El hombre, para ser hombre,  
necesita haber vivido,  
haber dormido en la calle  
y, a veces, no haber comido.

Así canta Enrique Paradas, poeta que florece –si esto es florecer– en nuestros días finiseculares. (Habla Mairena hacia el año 95.) Yo no sé si esto es poesía, ni me importa saberlo en este caso. La copla –un documento sincero del alma española– me encanta por su ingenuidad. En ella se define la hombría por la experiencia de la vida, la cual, a su vez, se revela por una indigencia que implica el riesgo de perderla. Y este *a veces*, tan desvergonzadamente prosaico, me parece la perla de la copla. Por él injerta por el poeta –¡con cuánta modestia!– su experiencia individual en la canción, lo que algún día llamaremos –horripilantemente– la vivencia del hambre, sin la cual la copla no se hubiera escrito. (*Juan de Mairena I* 265-266)

Juan de Mairena analyzes the above quote for two reasons. First, he wants to bring to the attention of his students, undermining in a way physical anthropology, the fact that human beings (as socio-moral beings) are not defined by physical traits alone but by the relationship s/he has to the rest of the community. In this sense, the first term ‘hombre’ nominally refers to the genera, the phenomenal specie that is the *Homo sapiens* which, according to physical anthropology, is classified based on certain physical traits. In the case of the second, ‘hombre,’ as Juan de Mairena notes, “se define la hombría por la experiencia” refers to a being that has become a human (in the socio-moral sense) as a consequence of the experiences faced in life, in this case

having gone through temporal hardship; he thinks humans are born with the capacity to be humans, but it is by merit that humans become human through recognition of themselves under the condition of phenomena without any protecting intermediary agency; in this regard 'hombre' is not simply a physical body with specific skeletal features, but a being who fully evaluates his own self through experiences in life and understands his own condition in phenomena as a terminal being. This is why he says "se define la hombría por la experiencia de la vida, la cual, a su vez, se revela por una indigencia que implica el riesgo de perderla." However, what Juan de Mairena wants to highlight is not so much the hardship itself but to link the experience of hardship as a kind of experience that can reveal more clearly the truth of our condition in phenomena and through such understanding of life distinguish what is really important in it, thereby deepening our humanity in relation to the other.

In a way, this recalls the parable of the "Prodigal Son" in the Gospel of Luke, where the younger son comes to realize all the good things he had only when he reaches the lowest point of his life, when circumstances force him to take the job as swine-keeper (Luke 15:11-32, 894-895). The kind of transformation that the poem and Juan de Mairena are referring to here is an internal conversion, which is physically not noticeable; exactly, it refers to a change in attitude and point of view about life, people and things in the sense that there is reparation in the configuration of values, the person remaining the same externally and identity wise. Moreover, it links with Stoicism and Buddhism for two reasons. First, the quote takes up epistemological lessons and ontological categorization from life itself and not just from abstract or descriptive physical definition. Secondly, they both seek the truth about life and strive to attain inner control and enlightenment through the sacrifice of external comfort for the sake of attaining a higher state of spirituality. This is the reason why he distinguishes 'el hambre' from 'el apetito,' the former

being a physical effect and the latter, the way Juan de Mairena uses it here, a form of cultural and spiritual yearning in relation to endeavors that can uplift humanity. This is precisely what he means when he says that ‘apetito’ is needed to do “las grandes obras del espíritu”; he is referring by this not only to the capacity to respond in an empathetic manner towards the other but the readiness to sacrifice one’s time and talent towards promoting humanity and human progress. As mentioned earlier, for Juan de Mairena, the only real possession that humans as mortals and temporal beings have, are time and talent, even these in the form of privilege in the sense of holding them temporarily; all other material proprietorships are derivations of conventions and customs, and they are valid while the agreement is in place. The terminal life is, then, for Juan de Mairena, an opportunity to discover oneself as a human being and enrich the experience of being alive and living through interaction with and acknowledgement of the other.

Within this context, Juan de Mairena sees natural death as a relief from phenomenal constraints, especially in the cases of those individuals who have responded affirmatively to their lives’ duty by offering their service to human society through promoting, both directly (living an exemplary life by providing oneself and the other the appropriate care) and indirectly (verbally promoting a way of life based on exchange of care) the well-being and advancement of human progress. As we will see in the following chapter, it is in this sense that Antonio Machado admires and reveres such philosophical and moral figures as Socrates<sup>24</sup>, Plato, Kant, Jesus, and Gautama Buddha (according to Baker) because their philosophical ideas and moral teachings go beyond setting themselves as examples of their philosophy, in particular Jesus (according to Juan

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<sup>24</sup> As Alexander Nehamas points out in his book *The Art of Living*, Socrates was a living model for many philosophers from the classical period to the contemporary, and even those who disagreed with Socrates, like Nietzsche and Foucault, kept “returning to him as a model for their own work” (98).

de Mairena) whose moral ideas with regard to the other, encapsulated in the word ‘love,’ became the hope and salvation of humanity:

Pero no basta la razón, el invento socrático, para crear la convivencia humana; ésta precisa también la comunión cordial, una convergencia de corazones en un mismo objeto de amor. Tal fue la hazaña de Cristo...

Si eliminamos de los Evangelios cuanto en ellos se contiene de escoria mosaica, aparece clara la enseñanza de Cristo: “Sólo hay un Padre, padre de todos, que está en los cielos.” He aquí el objeto erótico trascendente, la idea cordial que funda, para siempre, la fraternidad humana. ¿Deberes filiales? Uno y no más: el amor de radio infinito hacia el padre de todos, cuya impronta, más o menos borrosa, llevamos todo en el alma. Por lo demás, sólo hay virtudes deberes fraternos. El Cristo por el hecho de nacer, otorga el canuto, licencia, para siempre, al bíblico semental judaico. Y como triunfa Sócrates de la sofística protagórica, alumbrando el camino que conduce a la idea, a una obligada comunión intelectual entre los hombres, triunfa el Cristo de una sofística erótica, que fatiga las almas del mundo pagano, descubriendo otra suerte de universalidad: la del amor. Ellos son los dos grandes maestros de dialéctica, que saben preguntar y aguardar las respuestas... Pero la dialéctica del Cristo es muy otra que la socrática, y mucho más sutil y luminosa. (*Juan de Mairena I* 153-154)

## **2.8 The function and meaning of death for humans in relation to the context exposed in “Nunca, nada, nadie”**

Many critics have described Antonio Machado as being the poet of the Generation of 98 who speaks most about death in his writings. Pablo A. Cobos, in his book entitled *Sobre la muerte en Antonio Machado*, has shown exhaustively not only that death is one of the major topics, along with the topic of time, in Antonio Machado's works but also that the thought of death permeates the artistic sphere of Machado as well as in his personal life relations. Among the people whose passing away he had written about we find Leonor 1912, Francisco Giner de los Ríos 1915, Ruben Dario 1916, Julián María Otero 1930, Manuel Bartolomé Cossío 1935, Valle-Inclán 1936, Lorca 1936, Emilio Barral 1936, Unamuno 1936, Blas José Zambrano 1938, and so forth, also predicting his own death to take place in 1939, and even about the death of his heteronym Abel Martín. In most of these cases Antonio Machado talks about them as if they were still alive. It is worth mentioning as an illustration Antonio Machado's comment on the passing of Francisco Giner de los Ríos:

Y hace unos días se nos marchó, no sabemos adónde. Yo pienso que se fue hacia la luz. Jamás creeré en su muerte. Sólo pasan para siempre los muertos y las sombras, los que no vivían la propia vida.

The last sentence resonates in a way the treatment of life and death as they appear in John 2:16-21, and interprets the dichotomy based on personal ethical grounds rather than on biological determination. For Cobos Antonio Machado's refusal to believe that many of those he knew and admired have departed is based on his wishful viewpoint about their death and not that he really believed they are still alive. This assessment would be true if Antonio Machado took the reality and that there is no hereafter. However, we find that Antonio Machado believed among other things that human reality is different from phenomena and that after passing through phenomena the soul continues to be in some form of awareness. Precisely when he says "...lo

específicamente humano es creer en la muerte,” he indicates that death is not negative; it is not the ultimate end of human life because to believe in death has the overtone that death is a positive phenomenon that will bring justice, comfort, freedom, higher awareness and hope.

In *Juan de Mairena*, the function and meaning of death are intertwined and serve as a reminder that a human being in phenomena subsists as a temporal being bound to pass away at one point in time. In this sense, death is the ultimate equalizer for all human beings, based on their essential status as temporal beings, in that however far a person has ascended in society or however low a person has descended in life, s/he must face death one day. Death being an inevitable foreseeable event, its ultimate function is to serve as a reference point that encourages humans to set their priority in accordance with fundamental inner needs and fulfill the highest values within the configuration of human life. This is the reason why for Juan de Mairena death is not an ideal topic but real, and it is intimately linked with human experience and life. Because death is not an undetermined topic of contemplation but rather a thought which is actually lived and pervades within everyday experience, he says the topic of death does not belong to rhetoric but to poetics<sup>25</sup>. By ‘real’ Juan de Mairena is referring to human reality, in which death is not merely an event among others but the culmination of an individual’s existence in phenomena; this can be contrasted with what happens in the objective reality of phenomena by themselves; in phenomena, understood as Physics, there is no death but continuous change (integration and disintegration of matter). Given this context, there is a clear distinction between human reality and phenomena. By human experience with regard to death, Juan de Mairena is specifically referring to the human experience of living with the foreknowledge of death and what effect this has in the human conception of life.

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<sup>25</sup> The rationale behind Juan de Mairena’s treatment of poetry as equivalent to human reality, putting them both in the same sphere, will be explored in chapter 3.

The fact that human experience evolves upon the laws of phenomena does not mean that it has to adjust and assimilate to the way phenomena operate. Nevertheless, for Juan de Mairena, the platform of nature is the legitimate relational ground that serves for both the subject and the object in their ontological search for self-knowledge. This is because phenomena have the general feature of providing indiscriminately the consistent and common terrain for all living organisms for interaction, and this is the reason why Juan de Mairena undermines poets who dedicate themselves to searching for material for poetry in dreams:

Sólo en sus momentos perezosos puede un poeta dedicarse a interpretar los sueños y a rebuscar en ellos elementos que utilizar en sus poemas. La oniroscopia no ha producido hasta la fecha nada importante. Los poemas de nuestra vigilia, aun los menos logrados, son más originales y más bellos y, a las veces, más disparatados que los de nuestros sueños. Os lo dice quien pasó muchos años de su vida pensando lo contrario. Pero de sabios es mudar de consejo.

Hay que tener los ojos muy abiertos para ver las cosas como son; aún más abiertos para verlas otras de lo que son. Yo os aconsejo la visión vigilante, porque vuestra misión es ver e imaginar despierto, y que no pidáis al sueño sino reposo.

*(Juan de Mairena I 144)*

One of the reasons why Juan de Mairena finds dreams inappropriate for poetry is because dreams as a platform for inter-subjective relations are not real, in the sense that the only real participant is the person who dreams. And though the subjective experience in dreams may seem authentic for the person who is having the experience during the dream, it is cancelled out when the same subject awakes and returns to the normal and consistent condition of phenomena. Besides, each

dream is different at every moment and every day even if the dreamer is the same person. Moreover, a dream is specific to the individual who experiences the dream in the exclusive sense that a dream cannot be shared by two individuals; two people who exist in phenomena cannot participate in the same dream. Though we all dream at one point or another, a dream is unique to the person who is dreaming at that particular moment. Furthermore, dreams have no consistency of conditions like the physical laws of space and time which are able to provide a uniform arena for all objects and subjects in them.

Given this distinction between the dream world and phenomena, Juan de Mairena associates human reality with poetry based on their essential characteristic, which is emotion; he considers affective nature the basis of their internal configuration, and not rationality or logic. Besides the sharing of this common quality between poetry and human reality, in Mairena's point of view, poetics essentially deals with human life, specifically the way humans undertake life from the reality of death.

Nunca os he hablado de la muerte –decía Mairena a sus discípulos– porque, si bien es cierto que con este tema se ha hecho enorme gasto de la retórica, el tema mismo es, a mi juicio, esencialmente antirretórico. La retórica nos enseña a hablar para los demás, y es arte que se relaciona con otros de índole semejante: la lógica, la sofística, la poética, etc. Pero la muerte es un tema de la mónada humana, de la autosuficiente e inalienable intimidad del hombre. Es tema que se vive más que se piensa; mejor diremos que apenas hay modo de pensarlo sin desvivirlo. Es tema de poesía, o más bien de poetas. (*Juan de Mairena I 199*)

The key phrase in the above quote that indicates that death is a topic of poetry and not of rhetoric is enclosed in “la muerte...[e]s tema que se vive más que se piensa.” That is to say, humans, in particular, live life under the awareness of their mortality, and, given this veracity, fear can be a dominant factor in an individual’s life. And more so for poets who, for Juan de Mairena, have a greater sensitivity to human reality. This is why for him Epicurus’ syllogism on death is not really convincing, nor comforting, especially in light of the historical human conflict (regional, national and international) which caused so much untimely human death in the first decades of the Twentieth Century<sup>26</sup>.

De la muerte decía Epicuro que es algo que no debemos temer, porque mientras somos, la muerte no es, y cuando la muerte es, nosotros no somos. Con este razonamiento verdaderamente aplastante –decía Mairena– pensamos saltarnos la muerte a la torera, con helénica agilidad del pensamiento. Sin embargo –el ‘sin embargo’ de Mairena era siempre la nota del bordón de la guitarra de sus reflexiones– eso de saltarse la muerte a la torera no es tan fácil como parece, ni aun con la ayuda de Epicuro, porque en todo salto propiamente dicho la muerte salta con nosotros. Y esto lo saben los toreros mejor que nadie. (*Juan de Mairena I* 199)

Epicurus’ tautological argument above treats human life and death merely on the mechanistic grounds of a physical body simply performing organic functions; this rules out the emotional side of a human in relation to one’s self-awareness as a being that is bound to die, in this case fear as an unjustified human reaction to death. But for Juan de Mairena, death, rather

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<sup>26</sup> I am referring here to the political (regionalism, nationalism, imperialism, militarism, and the formation of the various international and intercontinental alliances), religious (different groups of Protestantism, Catholicism, etc.) and ethnic conflicts in Europe and Asia which were developing towards the end of the second half of the nineteenth century which escalated to world level and started WWI in 1914.

than being a fact that we accept just before we die, always accompanies life as a shadow to a body. In this sense death in human reality, for Juan de Mairena, exists alongside life, and they are together. This is why Juan de Mairena says above that “eso de saltarse la muerte a la torera no es tan fácil...la muerte salta con nosotros... esto lo saben los toreros mejor que nadie,” in the sense that it is not so easy to avoid and ignore death both physically as a determined event that will take place at some point in the future and as conscious awareness. Juan de Mairena uses the bull fighter’s context and language precisely because they serve him best to illustrate his point of view that in reality life subsists closer to death than we would wish it to be; and in this the bull fighter knows best by the activity he or she is engaged in, namely by the danger that a bullfighter runs in every bull fight; during a fight, death could result in a split second. This is the reason why Epicurus’s syllogistic tautological argument for Juan de Mairena does not resolve the human experience of death while alive (more so in the context of modernization where death can occur in many unexpected ways<sup>27</sup>) because humans anticipate death while they are alive to the point that metaphorically humans live in death in the sense that both chance and temporality<sup>28</sup> run human existence into death. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena finds dualism appropriate to bring into the discussion of the subject of death because for him it is the only way a human being can accept complacently death as a natural companion and the one that will not bring total darkness but relief from phenomenal conditions of life:

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<sup>27</sup> Unexpected ways here refers to the ways a person can die caused by so many possible accidents living in a modernized urban city. The quantity of death caused by natural disaster and disease can be greater living under the platform of nature without the assistance of medical science, but the importance here is not about quantity but the mode of death or the way people die; this open and intensifying expectancy that turns into a form of anxiety with the escalating statistics of the many unexpected ways people die can have a significant impact and influence in the configuration of human reality.

<sup>28</sup> Two of the major works of philosophy in the Twentieth Century link human existence with death: one with reference to temporality, *Being and Time* by Martin Heidegger, and the other *Being and Nothingness* by Jean Paul Sartre, with reference to temporality and life in modernized phenomena as a form of death of the spirit.

Aunque nuestro pensamiento pueda saltar de Cádiz al Puerto y de Puerto a Singapur, es evidente de toda evidencia que nadie que viva en Chiclana puede morir en Chipiona. De esto que os digo estoy completamente seguro. Y no creáis que abundan las verdades de este calibre. La muerte va con nosotros, nos acompaña en vida; ella es, por de pronto cosa de nuestro cuerpo. Y no está mal que la imaginemos como nuestra *notomía* o esqueleto que llevamos dentro, siempre que comprendamos el valor simbólico de esta representación. Y aunque creamos – ¿por qué no? – en la dualidad de sustancias, no hemos de negar por eso nuestro trato con Ella mientras vivimos –como hace Epicuro, si mi cita no es equivocada–, ni el respeto que debe inspirarnos tal fiel compañera. Nuestro don Jorge Manrique la hizo hablar con las palabras más graves de nuestra lengua, en aquellos sus versos inmortales:

...Buen caballero,  
dejad el mundo afanoso  
y su halago;  
muestre su esfuerzo famoso  
vuestro corazón de acero  
en este trago.

Y antes que hablemos de la inmortalidad –tema ya más de retórico– medita en los que llevan dentro estas palabras de don Jorge, y en cuán lejos estamos con ella del manido silogismo de las escuelas, y de las chufas dialécticas de los epicúreos. (*Juan de Mairena I* 200)

By accepting dualism, Juan de Mairena does not jeopardize his validation of factual reality in his search for the truth in life. As he says in the quote, he acknowledges that the body really exists<sup>29</sup> as the external temporal housing of the soul in phenomena. He even recognizes the obligation to treat and give the body<sup>30</sup> proper care for its needs. On rational grounds, Juan de Mairena admits that there is no guarantee of any kind for the continued existence of ‘yo’ after death; moreover, he accepts Kant’s proposition in the *Critique of Pure Reason* that human knowledge cannot transcend phenomena. This is the reason why he links the topic of immortality with rhetoric, specifically because any such argument will fall short of proof measured by rational standards. In this regard, Juan de Mairena conforms to the realm of phenomena and the realm of the soul according to the structure and arrangement of each; this is why, while he acknowledges and adheres to the standards of phenomena, he also acknowledges and adheres to the soul’s tendencies and needs. Hence, given the lack of certainty in rational terms about the soul’s continued existence after death, he quotes Jorge Manrique’s verses precisely because they resort to faith and urge the showing of courage before death. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says that for humans, in particular, death is a matter of ‘belief,’ grounding the outcome of death on faith and not on rationality: “...lo específicamente humano es creer en la muerte” (*Juan de Mairena I 77*).

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<sup>29</sup> Though Juan de Mairena starts the claims of the body as an external casing with the phrase “Y no está mal que la imaginemos...,” his belief in conditional dualism makes clear that what he considers real is where his essential personality (yo hondo) is. This in a way explains that his skepticism, if there is any tendency to it, is not the traditional scientific rationalist’s skepticism which considers everything that exists in the external world, including other human beings, as fiction of the mind.

<sup>30</sup> As distinguished in the introduction under the topic of ‘system’ Juan de Mairena here takes notice that while the body functions automatically, health is administered from the intellect. Given the level of scrutiny for each domain, Juan de Mairena’s strict conforming to each sphere’s needs (in his careful use of language to assess and consider each sphere) and his adherence to what are phenomenal, rational, spiritual and affective standards, suggest that his ontological categorization is not to validate one thing and dismiss the other but to respond appropriately and give the proper care according to each sphere’s needs.

In categorical and ontological terms, apart from the fear factor, one of the reasons the topic of death is important for Juan de Mairena is because the contemplation of death is one of the distinguishing features that differentiate humans among living beings; but more significantly, the expectation humans have of death and its foreseeability as an unavoidable occurrence in the future from the present standpoint makes humans a unique being among living organisms that can project themselves as objects in imaginary hypothetical<sup>31</sup> time and self-define themselves as a temporal being within the configuration of phenomena. This prognosis about death and its belief is actualized in our understanding by the acceptance of the fact of human mortality but with the postulates of the eternity of the absolute concepts that govern and motivate our expectancy, thus making an individual a being that is temporal but with the capacity to hold and question unconditional notions and its realms beyond phenomena. Conceptually assessing, it is in this context of the dual notions of phenomenal temporal manifestations and the faculty of understanding's capacity to withhold unconditional concepts and beliefs not found in phenomena that create the incongruity in our conception that, after all, death may not be the final event in a human's life. Stemming from this, Juan de Mairena uses the term 'creer' rather than 'saber' to talk about death. His belief in death, then, has the meaning that is closely associated with the word 'esperar'<sup>32</sup>. Hence for Juan de Mairena every eschatological statement is a 'synthetic a priori'<sup>33</sup> in that physical death does not determine that there is no life after death. According to Juan de Mairena, the inner thirst to believe in something absolute is part of the essential

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<sup>31</sup> The projection of future in the strict scientific sense can only be a result of imagination since future time is not guaranteed. The expectation of the possibility of future in the human mind is based on analogy, specifically on nature's habitualness and the circularity of the birth-death-and-rebirth sequence.

<sup>32</sup> The word 'esperar' will occur in other passages and it will have a positive meaning there, precisely in connection with the transcendental realm: the object of the waiting being 'salvation.'

<sup>33</sup> According to Kant, 'synthetic a priori' statements are statements that cannot be proven to be true or false by factual confirmation. This is because, unlike 'synthetic a posteriori' statements, whose predicate can only be confirmed by fact, in the 'synthetic a priori' statements the empirical events do not determine the outcome.

characteristic of humans, and it is in this context of absolute expectation that ‘faith’ and ‘hope’ play a decisive and meaningful role in human life. And as we will see in chapter 3, ultimately hope and love are what will carry the soul through from inevitable phenomenal destruction; it is in this manner that for Juan de Mairena, faith, in the form of belief will facilitate the transition of the soul from phenomena to the eschatological realm. Furthermore, for Juan de Mairena, faith, being an antidote for death for humans living under the condition of phenomena, will provide comfort to the soul before the overpowering rational certainty of death.

## **2.9 The proper ontological categorization of humans and objects in phenomena in relation to the context appraised in “Nunca, nada, nadie”**

Given the way materialistic ideas permeate and forge human cultures and traditions by our own acceptance and imposition through adopting and valuing more quantifiable human activities which are measured in terms of maximizing pragmatic efficiencies of cost, time, and quality for the production of goods and services the differentiation between human beings and passive objects with unilateral functions like any raw material or any “equipment” in the Heideggerian sense is not merely superficial but central and crucial in *Juan de Mairena* in order to prioritize human values according to the way humans are essentially in the world in the reconfiguration of values in human reality. For Juan de Mairena, each entity’s genetic makeup and the proper environment in which to develop its potential are vital for two reasons. First the genetic and the environmental correspondence creates less distraction in the search for self-knowledge. On the other hand, the development in the natural environment secures and promotes the prolongation of generational continuity. It should be noted that by material world, for Juan de Mairena, part of nature is included, such as minerals and human manufactured goods, but living entities in nature, though they are also part of the phenomena, are not included because they have

a special kind of existence in that they can enter into a bilateral relationship with other living entities; the categories of living entities are established from the interaction among them. Hence, living beings as part of nature are excluded from what is referred to as the material world. In order to reconfigure the human oriented ontological categorization, Juan de Mairena proposes to adopt a process of deconstruction, in a way echoing procedurally the Cartesian method but semantically reversing and parodying it; rather than doubting with regard to sense data and proposing a new way to arrive at clear and distinct knowledge, Juan de Mairena begins by doubting the foundation of the physical world, the atom, and suggests that it be redefined with certain reservation, in conformity with human values:

Preciso es que tomemos posición, como dicen los filósofos: posición defensiva, digo yo, de gatos panza arriba ante esta vieja concepción del gran filósofo de Tracia. El escepticismo, que, lejos de ser, como muchos creen, un afán de negarlo todo, es por el contrario, el único medio de defender algunas cosas, vendrá en nuestro auxilio. Vamos a empezar dudando de la existencia de los átomos. Vamos, después, a aceptarla; pero con ciertas restricciones. (*Juan de Mairena I* 131)

He thinks that the soul exists in a domain in which it has not clearly negotiated its legitimacy and validity. Because the external world's influence on the soul is compelling due to the organism's constant need to consume and the cumulative and encompassing memory of perceptions in our mental disposition, our natural tendency is to think that what is real exists outside of us. Also, according to Juan de Mairena, we acquire tendencies to conceive as real what is practical and convenient and so we respond according to the various conventional demands: economic, social and political adjustments and demands of a given period:

Lo corriente en el hombre es la tendencia a creer verdadero cuanto le reporta alguna utilidad. Por eso hay tantos hombres capaces de comulgar con ruedas de molino. Os hago esta advertencia pensando en algunos de vosotros que habrán de consagrarse a la política... No penséis que vuestro deber de retóricos es engañar al hombre con sus propios deseos; porque el hombre ama la verdad hasta tal punto que acepta, anticipadamente, la más amarga de todas. (*Juan de Mairena I 77*)

This is the reason why Juan de Mairena thinks that materialism (in the sense that reality is phenomena) is the persisting and prevailing condition that keeps coming back again and again even after a long lapse. A long lapse is referred to the medieval period: from the fourth to fourteenth centuries.

A última hora, siempre habrá un alguien enfrente de un algo que no parece necesitar a nadie. (*Juan de Mairena I 353*)

This sentence that appears by itself without any other context towards the end of *Juan de Mairena I*, in a way, points to the modern man's tendency to disregard the other because he exists under the provision and aura of modernization. In this sense, the future imperfect and indefinite claim "Siempre habrá un alguien" does not refer to an exception but rather to a homogeneous contemporary city crowd who, being accustomed to living surrounded by modernized artifacts that perform tasks for them, presume that there is no need of the other.

## Conclusion

For Juan de Mairena, to understand and to acknowledge both inner and phenomenal human conditions is fundamental. It is not simply the case of the physical body housing an insubstantial spirit as defined by dualism; each has its own needs, but for Juan de Mairena the

external need must accommodate the internal need and not vice versa. One of the goals of the inner need is to acknowledge the other because it is through the other that the self is found. The drive to look for the self is an unavoidable inner tendency. But under Cartesian materialism the other becomes voided through the formula of ‘cogito.’ The ‘I’ of ‘cogito’ is essentially intransitive. This is the reason why one of the main topics in Juan de Mairena is the other; according to Juan de Mairena modernity through homogenization of reality wants to abolish the other, but just as certain scientifically accurate facts cannot obliterate certain verbal uses that rely on perception such as ‘sunrise’ and ‘sunset,’ the other resists. Juan de Mairena thus says:

*De lo uno a lo otro es el gran tema de la metafísica. Todo el trabajo de la razón humana tiende a la eliminación del segundo término. Lo otro no existe: tal es la fe racional, la incurable creencia de la razón humana. Identidad = realidad, como si, a fin de cuentas, todo hubiera de ser, absoluta y necesariamente, uno y lo mismo. Pero lo otro no se deja eliminar; subsiste, persiste; es el hueso duro de roer en que la razón se deja los dientes. Abel Martín, con fe poética, no menos humana que la fe racional, creía en lo otro, en <<La esencial Heterogeneidad del ser>>, como si dijéramos en la incurable otredad que padece lo uno. (Juan de Mairena I 85)*

By “el trabajo de la razón humana” he is specifically referring here to Cartesian scientific rationalism and his successor John Locke, and their subsequent ideological influence in the shaping of human reality: socially, through Positivism of August Comte in the nineteenth century and linguistically, through Vienna Circle and Logical Positivism formed and spearhead by Russell, Wittgenstein and Frege<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Vienna Circle was a group of early twentieth century mathematical philosophers and logicians primarily formed to refute any *a priori* formulation such as the notion of synthetic *a priori* that Kant claims to be necessarily true in

El racionalismo cartesiano tuvo, en las postrimerías del siglo XVII, su conversión popular al absurdo en el culto de la Diosa Razón. Esta guerra europea es el fruto maduro de la superstición ochocentista. El siglo XIX, sus dos modos ideológicos: romanticismo y positivismo, ha sido esencialmente un siglo activista, pragmático. La razón se hace mística o agnóstica, todo menos racional, y ya no vuelve a levantar cabeza. El culto de la acción crece como un gran río hasta salirse de madre. Goethe formuló, con la anticipación propia del genio, la fe de nuestros días: en el principio era la acción. El homúnculo activo, salido de la redoma de Wagner, el estudiantón, es el soldado de esta guerra grande, un creyente en la Diosa Acción y en la radical acefalía del mundo.

Algunos pretendidos filósofos se jactan hoy de novecentistas, y pretenden haber superado el ochocientos, profesando esta filosofía de mercaderes que llaman pragmatismo. Pero el pragmatismo es lo que llevaba en el vientre el siglo XIX, lo específicamente ochocentista. Schopenhauer y Nietzsche, filósofos del siglo XIX. Leibniz, filósofo del porvenir. (*Los Complementarios* 126)

This was evinced in his repeated criticism of Cartesian modernity and how it transformed the external world towards the end of nineteenth century, thereby influencing prescriptively from

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the *Critique of Pure Reason* in that certain propositional justifications are not dependent on experience but are known innately as part of *a priori* forms of knowledge based on the categories of judgment. *A priori* claims can be divided into concepts and sentences. For example, the concept 'pure' 'perfect' are considered *a priori* concepts. Likewise, an addition of numbers in the form of sentence such as  $3+8=11$ , or tautological claims such as 'All bachelors are unmarried' would be synthetic *a priori* propositions. They "sought to re-conceptualize empiricism by means of their interpretation of then, recent advances in the physical and formal sciences. Their radically anti-metaphysical stance was supported by empiricist criterion of meaning and, broadly, logicist conception of mathematics. They denied that any principle or claim was synthetic *a priori*. Moreover, they sought to account for the presuppositions of scientific theories by regimenting such theories within a logical framework so that the important role played by conventions, either in the form of definitions or of other analytical framework principles, became evident. The Vienna Circle's theories were constantly changing. In spite (or perhaps because) of this, they helped to provide the blueprint for analytical philosophy of science as meta-theory—a "second-order" reflection of "first-order" sciences. The Vienna Circle's early form of logical empiricism (or logical positivism or neo-positivism: these labels will be used interchangeably here) no longer represents an active research program..."

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/vienna-circle/> 2 27 2011

there on the way humans comport in phenomena in accord to each specific place and object. A common denominator of Materialism, Cartesian modernity, Scientific Rationalism, Positivism and Logical Positivism is that they believe in objective and independent truth. Juan de Mairena, on the other hand, thinks truth must be found within human epistemology and reality, even if such truth is not realizable in phenomena but exists within the faculty of understanding as a guiding principle for orientation. In this sense Juan de Mairena agrees in part with Heidegger when Heidegger says:

Human beings do not discover a truth existing independently outside them: they live within an interpretative horizon —different in each epoch – in which the world is given a certain shape, meaning and terminology. (*Five Portraits: Modernity and the Imagination in the Twentieth-Century German Writing* 74)

As Michael André Bernstein says referring to Heidegger's magnum opus *Sein und Zeit*:

Being and Time contains a critique of the objectivization (*Vergegenständlichung*) of our ordinary lived experience that is unparalleled in any other philosopher of the twentieth century.” (70)

Within the context in the quote “*De lo uno a lo otro*,” ‘razón humana’ is equivalent to materialism and its subdivision pragmatism; and materialism for Juan de Mairena is a reversal of priority, precisely because it makes the inner need comply with the idealized projection of reality based on objectification of the self and self-aggrandizement. Such a state of reality will want to abolish human conflict once and for all through the permanent rejection and elimination of the other. This is why Juan de Mairena advises his students with the following example that sets the limits of human conflict:

*(Sobre los modos de decir y pensar.)*

Se miente más que se engaña;

Y se gasta más saliva

De la necesaria... .

Si nuestros políticos comprendieran bien la intención de esta sentencia de mi maestro, ahorrarían las dos terceras partes, por lo menos, de su llamada actividad política.

Cuando dos gitanos hablan

ya es la mentira inocente:

se mienten y no se engañan.

La sentencia es la misma; pero dicha de modo más perverso, que parece implicar una cierta afición a la gitanería.

El deber de la mentira

es embaucar papanatas;

y no es buena la piadosa,

sino la que engaña.

Aquí la lógica se ha comido a la ética. Es la manera urgente y cínica de expresar la misma sentencia. Algunas mujeres, los cazadores con reclamo, y, sobre todo, los toreros cuando se abren de capa ante el toro, la piensan así. Acaso también los filósofos pragmatistas.

Reparad en que hay muchas maneras de pensar lo mismo, que no son lo mismo. Cuidad vuestro folklore y ahondad en él cuando podáis. (*Juan de Mairena I 133*)

Two things are stressed in the above excerpt. First, Juan de Mairena urges his students to expand knowledge on human affairs embedded in the term ‘folklore’; this way, they will save themselves from entering into a conflict due to interpreting everything literally without considering the cultural values that govern overt action and speech. Second, humans interpret every input; so there are variations of understanding the same object of perception and thought. This is the reason why he says there are many ways of thinking the same thing, “hay muchas maneras de pensar lo mismo.” This leads to the suggestion that human communication is not definite and so should never be taken to the extreme where irrevocable action against the other occurs.

To prevent humans from becoming victims of their own invention and devices, Juan de Mairena thinks that humans should not forget their conditional status in phenomena, of which death is the most real and definite. This is the reason why Antonio Machado reiterates the topic of death throughout his *oeuvre*, whether it be lyrical or prose, not because he wants to remind himself and the recipient of the ephemeral nature of human life on earth, as was the conception in medieval times, but rather because he finds in the theme of death a source of strength to look for in life for what is authentic and true based on human reality as opposed to physical reality. This is the case for humans because, unlike other organisms and entities, humans will and act in accord to a set of personal beliefs and convictions in connection with a general expectation of life and not just for the purpose of survival in phenomena. Accordingly, humans, though subject to phenomena, don’t subsist as objects do; humans organize their life from within, propelled by a set of cultural values and social practices. This is why Juan de Mairena sees the proper configuration of human reality as fundamental at a period when materialism, pragmatism and functionalism are the dominant influences and stimuli in society.

## Part two –

### Chapter 3

-Tracing the epistemological origins of Cartesian modernity, exposing its early conceptions in pre-Socratic thought and following modernity's advance, first through the discovery and development of mathematical principles and then through the inventions of scientific instruments during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; these discoveries and inventions closed the gap between theoretical conception of modernity and its materialization through technological development and advance from the second half of nineteenth century into twentieth century.

#### 3.1 The epistemological background of modernity in reference to the historical ontological reflection in relation to the categorical distinction alluded to in “Nunca, nada, nadie”

Según Demócrito, el antiguo filósofo griego, “lo dulce y lo amargo, lo caliente y lo frío, lo amarillo y lo verde, etc., no son más que opiniones; sólo los átomos y el vacío son verdaderos. Para Demócrito, opinión era un conocimiento obscuro, sin la menor garantía de realidad. Claro está que todo esto, señores, es una opinión de Demócrito, que nadie nos obliga a aceptar. Sin embargo la ciencia ha ido formando, a través de los siglos, una forma del Universo puramente mecánica, que lleva implícita la opinión de Demócrito, la cual *mutatis mutandi*, ha llegado hasta nosotros, pobres diablos que estudiamos la Física, con algunos lustros de rezago, en las postrimerías del siglo XIX. (Juan de Mairena I 130-131)

Juan de Mairena's purpose for bringing up and commenting on Democritus of Abdera's viewpoint about epistemology and reality in the above passage is twofold; first and foremost he

wants to distinguish that human knowledge is not determined by material knowledge. Material knowledge for Juan de Mairena is just one type of knowledge which is needed in order for biological beings to function within phenomena and it can be distinguished from cultural, traditional and customary knowledge, which for Juan de Mairena boils down to folklore, especially because of the context and the way knowledge is transmitted<sup>1</sup>; the latter types of knowledge together with a set of beliefs are what are real for human experience and which influence directly in everyday human affairs. Anthropology distinguishes this plainly by setting a division within the discipline into physical and cultural anthropology, and as a branch of the latter, ethnology. Second, as is stated in the above passage, Juan de Mairena wants to epistemologically devalue physical knowledge from the way atomists present it as being a higher

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<sup>1</sup> For Juan de Mairena the type of knowledge that is most useful in and associated with human reality is to know how to weave honest and trustworthy relations with other people in a community which is not learned in the traditional school setting but transmitted in the informal form within the care of the older to younger people in a community. This reflects in a way his early formation in the Institución de Libre Enseñanza, which according to David Richard Wearing spans from 1883 to 1893 (*Antonio Machado, The Institución de Libre Enseñanza and Spanish Krausism* 6). By traditionally transmitted I don't mean "traditional values" in the sense of adopting without questioning a previous or imposed system of values but the way a child learns naturally through observation and hands-on by interacting with his or her surroundings; by the same token, a child learns also by watching how people comport during interaction with other people. It is precisely the mature culture and custom of a community which is built over many generations and passed down that he refers to in part throughout *Juan de Mairena* as knowledge of folklore. A particular characteristic of the practice of folklore is that it gives priority to values set in human interactions and relations, and instills an appreciation of nature;

Si lográsemos, en cambio, despertar en el niño el amor a la naturaleza, que se deleita en contemplarla, o la curiosidad por ella, que se empeña en observarla, tendríamos más tarde hombres maduros y ancianos venerables... (*Juan de Mairena I* 142)

and most importantly folklore inspires a kind of trust in the other and respect for the natural environment in which s/he exists because, though not always free of calamity, it is analogically consistent as the physical laws.

Si estudiaseis el folklore religioso de nuestra tierra, os encontraréis con que la observación del orden imposible de la Naturaleza hace creyentes a muchos de nuestros paisanos, y descreídos a otros muchos. Y es que en esto, como en todo, hay derechas e izquierdas. “*Siento que no haiga Dios* –oí decir una vez–, porque eso de que todo en este mundo se tenga de *caé* siempre *dárriba a abajo*...” Y otra vez: “¡Bendito sea Dios, que hace que el sol *sarga* siempre por el Levante!” (*Juan de Mairena I* 291)

This is an interesting paragraph because what it claims is that people who live under the platform of nature (and who rely on their senses as ground of their experience), even if they have different political and religious views possess a speech that still reflects a form of reverence towards God even if they declare verbally to be atheists.

knowledge because of the fact that it is based on objective criteria rather than providing conditional information derived from the senses which, depending on the subject, can vary. Indeed, the more variety of opinion there are the richer human knowledge becomes. The reason is because each person's opinion can reveal a new perspective on the same object as well as it can disclose new objects or places that the other had not been exposed to before. This is what actually happens to some extent in linguistics and in anthropology; while to some measure the former tries to recover human knowledge contained in disappearing or dying languages due to modern life's homogenization and the prestige of a colonizer's language such as English, the latter searches for new species and studies the ethnic cultures of tribes and small indigenous groups that are still living in their own habitat but rapidly becoming extinct. Precisely in the following passage Juan de Mairena points out that human knowledge, in the sense that a particular form of knowledge is held by each individual or a group of people, is not homogeneous but is fecund in variety. In fact, from the point of view of experience, each individual's content of knowledge is unique<sup>2</sup> based on one's experience in life.

Cuando el saber se especializa, crece el volumen total de la cultura. Esta es la ilusión y el consuelo de los especialistas. ¡Lo que sabemos entre todos! ¡Oh, eso es lo que no sabe nadie! (*Juan de Mairena I 79*)

Jorge Luis Borges's short story "El Etnógrafo" specifically treats the topic of knowledge of the lost art of living against the background of a society whose culture has adopted an objective and

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<sup>2</sup> Uniqueness is defined here in the most scientific and literal way, in that what each person undergoes in life (sees something, meets and speaks to someone in a particular moment and place) can neither be re-enacted in exactly the same way nor can they be truly shared with someone of the actual experience. In the strictest sense it is intransitive. However, it can be communicated verbally and be shared that way: by analogy based on one's own experiences. Given this, Juan de Mairena seems to be referring by the phrase "¡Lo que sabemos entre todos!" to the variety of perspectives each can offer of similar or different things to human knowledge; in a way, this is precisely what literature and human science are about, to bring insight to various human events, practices, beliefs and perspectives from the same or different cultures, places and historical times for the present and future human generations to consider.

materialistic sense of perfection and progress as a model for people to follow. This story relates particularly to *Juan de Mairena's* paragraph on Democritus because in the story Borges draws a contrast between objective knowledge and the knowledge of the art of living which is particular and different for every individual<sup>3</sup>; the reversed comparison of Democritus's assertion on true knowledge is enclosed in the phrase the protagonist Fred Murdock speaks to his Adviser: "...el secreto es precioso y que ahora la ciencia, nuestra ciencia, me parece una mera frivolidad" (*Elogio de la sombra* 35). Borges ironically and abstrusely calls such knowledge "secreto." But he does this precisely because verbal explanation cannot reveal the experience itself of living life, which according to Juan de Mairena's earlier paragraph on "enmendar el camino..." is open, and errors are an essential part of the development of human. This is the reason why Fred Murdock describe thus about the "secreto," - "Lo que me enseñaron sus hombres vale para cualquier lugar y para cualquier circunstancia..." The story ends by informing the reader that Fred's knowledg about the "secreto" had nothing to do with living an ideally perfect life.

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<sup>3</sup> "El Etnógrafo" is a story of a cultural anthropology researcher, Fred Murdock, who lives among the indigenous people of the western tribes in order to absorb and document knowledge of their way of living. After he discovers their secret, he returns to the city only to tell the institution that sponsored him that he will no longer write the proposal though he has discovered their secret. He says:

...Ahora que poseo el secreto, podría enunciarlo de cien modos distintos y aun contradictorios. No sé muy bien cómo decirle que el secreto es precioso y que ahora la ciencia, nuestra ciencia, me parece una mera frivolidad.  
 Agregó al cabo de una pausa:  
 -El secreto, por lo demás, no vale lo que valen los caminos que me condujeron a él. Esos caminos hay que andarlos.  
 El profesor le dijo con frialdad:  
 -Comunicaré su decisión al Consejo. ¿Usted piensa vivir entre los indios?  
 Murdock le contestó:  
 -No. Tal vez no vuelva a la pradera. Lo que me enseñaron sus hombres vale para cualquier lugar y para cualquier circunstancia.  
 Tal fue en esencia el diálogo.  
 Fred se casó, se divorció y ahora es uno de los bibliotecarios de Yale.  
 (*Elogio de la sombra* 35)

On the other hand, Juan de Mairena cites precisely a pre-Socratic and specifically Democritus, a pupil of Leucippus (an early atomist), as the precursor of Cartesian modernity in the theoretical imaginings and their treatment of the material world as the only reality (we are reminded, here, of the Milesian school<sup>4</sup>, Pythagoreans and Euclid and his *Elements* among other ancient Greek thinkers) and not the period immediately preceding, the Renaissance or the Middle Ages, for three reasons.

First, Juan de Mairena wants to let his students know that human knowledge (in the sense of knowledge leading to understanding of one's condition in phenomena) is neither lineal nor progressive<sup>5</sup> toward perfect, infallible and permanent knowledge. Even scientific knowledge, evaluated from its actual working status, is not what has been projected in its theoretical

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<sup>4</sup> The major philosophers of the Milesian School are Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes and by association to the Ionian School Heraclitus and Anaxagoras, whose views of how nature was generated and in what form it existed were different from the customary beliefs at the time which attributed the origin of the universe to the anthropomorphized mythological gods. The school was founded around 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC in the town of Miletus in the region of Ionia. Each philosopher said that nature was dominated by an element, except Anaximander, whose views are closer to modern science, especially by the way he approached the enquiry. We know of their views through others like Diogenes Laërtius, but mainly through Aristotle who often quotes them in his writings in order to analyze, evaluate and criticize their views. Thales thought the universe was made of water. Anaximander in contrast thought 'apeiron,' an imperishable matter was the basis of all material things that continually renewed itself. Anaximenes thought that the air was the foundation of everything in phenomena. For further reading consult the *Early Greek Philosophy* by John Burnet. In addition, according to A. Wolf "modernism was essentially a revival of antiquity...and modern science, in its early stages, was helped more specifically by astronomical, mathematical and biological treatises transmitted from the ancient times..." (2). In this sense, though renaissance which precedes modernity and, in some cases (depending on the author such as Leonardo Da Vinci), seems to overlap with modernity, it is sharply divided, especially when we consider the topics each studied and examined. Renaissance was the revival of the interest in shaping human reality in the context of bilateral human to human dealings and in seeking for principle of life as initiated by Plato and subsequent Greek and Roman philosophers, poets, sophists, orators, rhetoricians, politicians and law makers. In this sense, Aristotle, in terms of the subject matter he studied, was more like the pre-Socratics in that he was a biologist and zoologist investigating phenomena.

<sup>5</sup> A more or less lineal progress of a major discipline such as mathematics and physics can be detected over several periods in terms of expansion and specialization through branching out into many sub-disciplines, especially in the development of exact science and technology in the latter three hundred years of modernity, mainly because there was a standard practice established by Galileo Galilei: experimental scientific method based on observation, formulation of the scientific enquiry and experimentation. Moreover the establishment of scientific academies such as the Accademia del Cemento of Florence founded in 1657, the Royal Society in London around 1645 and the Académie des Sciences in Paris around 1666 among others (universities up to the early eighteenth century were more allied with the church, which held scholastic values) facilitated the sharing of knowledge among affiliated and independent scholars such as Kepler, Descartes, Newton and so forth. But this is not the way human knowledge should evolve because disciplines in the humanities are not improved by quantity but rather by careful analysis of inner and outer relations in lieu of the expectation and outlook of life, in another words, based on the consideration of human needs (accommodation of the external to the internal necessity and not vice versa).

conception from early modernity; scientific knowledge is merely cumulative in the sense of amassing records towards achieving conditional accuracy<sup>6</sup>, which depends more on a precise form of transmission that relies on the availability of both a defined system of signs and the material upon which to record data. A. Wolf attributes the lack of progress of objective knowledge due to the transmission of technical art which was learnt mostly hands on and through oral tradition because art and technology were not separate; the transmission became more literary later towards the eleventh and twelfth centuries and “after the invention of the printing...books played a part in the development of the objective attitude of modern science” (*A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy* 8). But that is just the technical and practical side and description of the transmission of technical knowledge. Historically the orientation of knowledge, including science, was more based on social and political trends in the sense that it was restricted by them; hence the switching of an intellectual orientation is partly due to the fact that knowledge as well as politics is tied to the ongoing cultural practices and beliefs of people and their expectation of life and beyond, and due to these the direction of knowledge tends to accommodate and take seriously the cultural climate. Besides, scientific knowledge without the guidance and orientation of human science and ethics can only achieve the material knowledge epitomized in the system of the human body. As was mentioned in the introduction under “A proposal for a systematic approach to reading the fragments in *Juan de Mairena*,” there are various types of systems we can detect in the objective world, the most complex being the human body. A close look at modernization reveals that the way schematics of city, the way

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<sup>6</sup> Scientific knowledge is accurate only conditionally, that is, provided that there are no new discoveries or findings that contest or bring a new insight to a subject matter. Also it is accurate in a contained environment where the variables are under control. However, in the open environment there are too many factors that can affect the outcome and so accuracy is undefined. Moreover, new discoveries in scientific research are not only a possibility but expected and a part of scientific knowledge. Hence science, though more accurate in functional terms in a controlled environment, is nevertheless a conditional and indefinite knowledge.

government structurally organize themselves, how architects arrange houses and buildings and how hardware are organized and put together, in one way or another, they all reflect in part the architectonic intelligent design of the human body; this is to say, in a way they all try to mimic the efficient system under which human body operate perfunctorily. In fact, modernization is an attempt to assimilate, emulate and simulate the efficient functional capacity of the human body but with modification and recombination of matter and design to make it more attractive and convenient of what is already available in nature; this can be seen across various cultural practices within society, especially those occupations that deal with constructing, crafting and fashioning such as the textile, clothing and fashion industry, culinary art, architecture, medical science, engineering of every type, in short most applied sciences. This is to say, as far as applied science and engineering are concerned, without considering the theoretical aspect of science, which is more speculation than fact, the most they can hope to achieve is to reproduce mechanistically the precision of the human body which is, by the same token, the most complex of all tangible systems. Antonio Machado says the following in *Los Complementarios* in relation to the utmost applied science can reach:

El sujeto consciente, inteligente, no intuitivo, sería la maravilla por explicar, el gran problema. (*Los Complementarios* 120)

According to this passage the most scientific knowledge can achieve is to unlock the mechanical side of phenomena; that is, answer the question: how does it work? For Juan de Mairena this by itself is neither adequate nor sufficient for understanding human nature and consequently does not assure that human condition will be improved. Scientific knowledge, to be beneficial to earth and living organisms ought to adhere to human science and ethics, and not, as it actually

happens, serve commercialization, the improvement of war weapons, and assist in superfluous and grandiose projects that only benefit a few.

Second, he wants to let his students realize that depending on what is in vogue within the scholarly and scientific horizon (which themselves depend on society's cultural orientation and political influence) the tertiary orientation among the objective realm, the human realm and the eschatological realm alternate without any order or a fixed interval or duration as a source of orientation in human reality. In *Los Complementarios*, Machado evaluates the alternating trends in the adoption of orientation in the last two centuries in Europe:

Lo mejor de la obra de Bergson es la crítica de la psicofísica. Lo característico de su obra es su anti-eleatismo, el motivo heraclitano de su pensamiento péndulo del pensamiento filosófico marca a Bergson la extrema posición heraclitana. Así termina, en filosofía, el siglo XIX, que ha sido, todo él, una reacción ante el eleatismo cartesiano.

Ser y pensar son una y la misma cosa- Parménides ob.

Cogito, ergo sum.....- Descartes Sub.

El ser pensante se trueca en ser sensible, volente, activo.

No románticos} Rousseau; Schopenhauer.

} Nietzsche, James.

} Bergson.

Cogito, ergo non sum (siglo XIX).

Siglo XX. Vuelve el péndulo filosófico a Parménides de

Elea. (*Los Complementarios* 118)

As we will see next Machado anticipates that towards the twenty first century the ‘pendulum’ will be divided into two different currents: Christianity (as a moral and personal spiritual creed) and science.

[FRAGMENTO DE PESADILLA. LA ESPAÑA  
EN UN FUTURO PRÓXIMO]...

-Una voz: ¡Viva la ciencia!

-Otra voz: ¡Viva Cristo!...

*(Los Complementarios 80)*

Third, by bringing down the atomists’ claim about reality to the level of opinion Juan de Mairena in a way dismisses its embedded contention that the world has no purpose instilled, that there is no intrinsic teleological design in its form, and hence no need for orientation, inclusive of humans who are part of it. This is why Juan de Mairena relates the following to his students, predicting in a way (given the rapid technological advance and its dominance in human reality) that in the near future there will come a time when the dual cultural and intellectual inheritance (the Greco-Latin in the sense of what it has become through scientific rationalism and Judeo-Christian but literally the Christian doctrine) will no longer be compatible as the basis of western civilization:

La concepción del alma humana como entelequia o como mónada cerrada y autosuficiente, ese fruto maduro y tardío de la sofística griega, y la fe solipsista que la acompaña, se encontrarán un día en pugna con la terrible revelación del Cristo: “El alma del hombre no es una entelequia, porque su fin, su *telos*, no está en sí misma. Su origen, tampoco. [”] Como mónada filial y fraterna se nos muestra en intuición compleja el yo cristiano, incapaz de bastarse a sí mismo, rico de alteridad absoluta; como revelación muy honda de la incurable “otredad de lo

uno”, o, según expresión de mi maestro, “de la esencial heterogeneidad del ser”.

*(Juan de Mairena I 288-299)*

The state of “pugna” Juan de Mairena is referring to in the above passage seems to be more than just social and political in nature in terms of institutional contention; he is also referring to the state of conflict within the individual’s internal constitution in relation to choosing the core principle as a guiding force in one’s life. He takes himself as an example, and here we see an instance where, for Juan de Mairena, his personal convictions, which are founded in part in Christianity, supersede his admiration for the clear and mature development of ancient Greek thought<sup>7</sup>, (especially the way it has become through scientific rationalism under the tutelage of Descartes) because for him, rational explanation is not enough to remedy his inner yearning for communion with the other.

Grande hazaña fue el platonismo –sigue hablando Mairena--, pero no suficiente para curar la soledad del hombre. Quien dialoga, ciertamente afirma a su vecino, al otro yo; todo manejo de razones –verdades o supuestos—implica convención entre sujetos, o visión común de un objeto ideal. Pero no basta la razón, el invento socrático, para crear la convivencia humana; ésta precisa también la comunión cordial, una convergencia de corazones en un mismo objeto de amor. (*Juan de Mairena I 153*)

Juan de Mairena refers to this inner state as “la sed metafísica de lo esencialmente otro.” Pablo de A. Cobos sees the inner yearning for the other equivalent to love: “el amor es...sed metafísica de lo esencialmente otro” (70). As will be clarified later, for Juan de Mairena ‘love’ is not only a

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<sup>7</sup> Juan de Mairena says “ese fruto maduro y tardío de la sofística griega” in reference to Plato, and “fe solipsista que la acompaña” in reference to Aristotle and his Logic and the influence his thought had on subsequent generations of thinkers, but especially from the second half of sixteenth century, when rational scientific standard takes precedence in intellectual circles and where the reflexive “I” through Cartesian ‘cogito’ becomes the new self and the intransitive object of both ontology and epistemology.

bilateral engagement between two human beings, but it is what can rescue humanity from ever dueling in an inescapable labyrinth of self-imposed predicament and isolation. However, his prioritizing in terms of selecting a principle as a guiding light in life's developing path does not mean one must choose one over the other in the sense of taking an extreme position by accepting one thing and repudiating the other. His contention rests in giving priority to human science and ethics (Juan de Mairena considers Jesus' teaching an ethical instruction than a religious dogma) over an objective natural science under the Cartesian guidance because the way Cartesian modernity has developed through modernization it will not provide for humans to come to terms with themselves but rather ultimately self-destruct. Thus he says:

Para los tiempos que vienen hay que estar seguros de algo. Porque han de ser tiempos de lucha, y habréis de tomar partido.... Tomar partido es no sólo renunciar a las razones de vuestros adversarios, sino también a la vuestra; abolir el diálogo, renunciar, en suma, a la razón humana. Si lo miráis despacio, comprenderéis el arduo problema de vuestro porvenir; habéis de retroceder a la barbarie, cargados de razón (*Juan de Mairena I* 106).

The last sentence says it all; human beings with excessively developed rational power over phenomena without ethical respect for the other and nature will end up being a great destructive force. Juan de Mairena's anticipation of the future state of social reality is not specific with respect to time and space; in this sense, he is not making a prediction about a particular event in the future. Rather his conjecture and assessment is in reference to a developing condition of human reality against a hostile ideologically and artificially constructed background and regulation that suppress human basic (internal and external) needs and natural tendencies to develop as a biological being in a phenomena in the setting of a community. In this sense the

above observation is derived from understanding the nature of the object in question, which is the human being, more than rely on intuitive prediction. This is why he insists on reiterating the topic about the condition of human reality:

Vivimos en una época de honda crisis. Los corazones están desorientados; lo que quiere decir que buscan otro oriente. (*Los Complementarios* 137)

This is the reason why for Juan de Mairena orientation is particularly important in human existence because unlike objects and other biological entities, humans are not defined and determined teleologically by their genetic make-up. For other entities the internal design corresponds to the outward mode of being in phenomena. Human beings, on the other hand, are not programmed this way because humans act based on will. Human will is not like the will of other animated biological entities whose mental organization cannot step beyond the limits of survival instinct; hence their will is pragmatically oriented. Human will, in contrast, besides showing pragmatic tendencies, directs thoughts and actions in relation to prospects of life and expectation<sup>8</sup>, including the self as part of that vision and outreach beyond the vanishing present; in fact, for Juan de Mairena human action hardly happens in isolation; usually it tends to conform to some sort of internal or external arrangement and goal. Accordingly, in Juan de Mairena human orientation operates under two levels, one major and the other minor. For him the major orientation deals with an absolute ideal such as love, justice, liberty and so forth which cannot be fully realized in phenomena; precisely, that is the reason why they serve as orientation, as intangible objects to be approached as closely as possible. One of them is to unite with the other which in turn leads one to be in harmony with God. On the other hand, the minor orientation deals with coordinating human everyday affairs which struggle to be in accord with

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<sup>8</sup> In life's outlook and expectation is included such concerns pertaining to family members, friends, the environment and the future prospect of life. These are not just a mental conception but they are real as far as the person who is experiencing them.

the major orientation. Although the paragraphs in *Juan de Mairena* are written in the form of aphorism, for the most part they deal with themes that relate to the major orientation because they are suggestive and instructive of what one should look for and how one should approach and appreciate the different facets of culture and life in general. However, if human actions lack orientation of some form and tend to operate based only on physical demand, then such a state is an indication that the human spirit has deteriorated. Another sign of decline of the state of human spirit is when a person's actions follow only in accord to a prescribed role and show response only to process and functionality without engaging personally with the individual involved, as was the case with the 'Señor Importante' in *Juan de Mairena's* short play in chapter 1.

**I. Modernity's theoretical inception and the invention and improvement of scientific instruments and the standardization of the mathematical tools such as calculus as what closed the gap in the transition from theoretical scientific discourse to the materialization and implementation of the project of Cartesian modernity through applied science and engineering**

According to A. Wolf, the Scientific Modernity of the seventeenth century goes back to antiquity for three reasons: One, because of its fascination with phenomena; two, in search of an objective mode of inquiry (rather than the teleological inquiry which presupposes a maker and looks for the final causes of things); and three for inspiration:

...modernism was essentially a revival of antiquity. And modern science, in its early stages, was helped more specifically by the astronomical, mathematical, and biological treatises from the ancient times, and most of all perhaps by the

mechanical treatises of Archimedes and the technological works of Hero of Alexandria and Vitruvius. (*A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries 2*)

It should be noted that A. Wolf uses the term “modernism” interchangeably with “modernity” usually referring to the period following the Renaissance. By “antiquity” he refers to the pre-Socratics, and not the classics such as Plato, Seneca, Cicero, etc. Aristotle is a special case who, belonging to the classical period, sides more with the pre-Socratics in terms of the subject matter he was investigating but whose formal method of enquiry, which is based on his logic, would be adopted in almost all fields including theology in the next two millennia. The moderns continue with the type of inquiry the pre-Socratics were interested in, namely phenomena. The classics, on the other hand, placed focus on human affairs and society. The tension and ambivalence between the pre-Socratic and the Classic intellectual orientations will recur again in the elongated intersection between the Renaissance and early modernity (a period roughly around 1500-1600 depending on the thinker). Juan de Mairena’s use of the phrase ‘fe en la razón’ or ‘fe platónica’ refers precisely to Plato’s intent to bring rationality to human reality with a transcendental outlook through theory of the Forms. Aristotle, on the other hand, applies rationality and logic to phenomena (humans being considered part of it) in order to discern categorically and systematically their structure and composition. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says:

La fe platónica en las ideas trascendentales salvó a Grecia del *solus ipse* en que la hubiera encerrado la sofística. La razón humana es pensamiento genérico. Quien razona afirma la existencia de un prójimo, la necesidad del diálogo, la posible comunión mental entre los hombres. Conviene creer en las ideas platónicas, sin desvirtuar demasiado la interpretación tradicional del

platonismo. Sin la absoluta trascendencia de las ideas, iguales para todos, intuibles e indeformables por el pensamiento individual, la razón, como estructura común a una pluralidad de espíritus, no existiría, no tendría razón de existir. Dejemos a los filósofos que discutan el verdadero sentido del pensamiento platónico. Para nosotros lo esencial del platonismo es una fe en la realidad metafísica de la idea, que los siglos no han logrado destruir. (*Juan de Mairena I*, 152-153)

According to this passage ‘sofística,’ a product of Aristotle’s approach to philosophy, which is based solely in phenomena, would not have been able to avoid the inevitable conclusion that rationality alone would reach as the end result of its endeavor in phenomena<sup>9</sup>, namely *solus ipse*. This is because any object measured in real space and time is unique. Hence, deducing from a platform of reality that does not allow the union of two beings, any bilateral notions such as communication, love, agreement, understanding and so forth would be neither realizable and nor possible. It is in this sense that Juan de Mairena says that faith in Plato’s metaphysics has derivatively protected society from disassembling and disappearing in western civilization. Given this context, when Juan de Mairena says “Quien razona afirma la existencia de un prójimo,” ‘razona’ here is not the Aristotelian phenomenal realist way of processing thought but the transcendental realist way of thinking characteristic of Plato’s dialogic approach to reasoning that acknowledges the possibility of the other (hence Juan de Mairena’s use of the term ‘fe’ to designate the process) by considering that human reality is not determined by phenomena.

According to Wolf, modernity --being essentially “a revival of antiquity” in the sense of reiterating its interest in phenomena-- would gradually develop into modern science through key

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<sup>9</sup> Nietzsche’s key concept phrase ‘eternal return’ is, in a way, based on this assumption that after all the possible material combinations, nature must regress to its original form. If the human being is considered as part of nature, then its original state would be that of *solus ipse*.

thinkers such as Nicolaus Copernicus, Johannes Kepler, and Galileo Galilei in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While both focus on phenomena, the difference between antiquity and modern science, then, lies in the way each period conducted their research, antiquity relying mostly on predictions and abstract calculations whereas modern science establishes its standard based on Galileo's model of research, experimentation, demonstrability and mathematical proof. What made it possible to meet this higher standard was the development of scientific instruments<sup>10</sup>, and standardized methodology. However, the early scientific rationalists such as the ones mentioned above had an outlook about phenomena in general terms similar to that of Leibniz: namely that the universe was a result of creation, and their goal was not to contradict certain passages in the Bible (for example in Joshua where the Sun stood still<sup>11</sup>...) but to understand in a rational way how the planetary system and the universe functioned. This was especially true in the case of Kepler, who relentlessly tried to figure out through observation Mars and other planets and satellites in order to learn the technological secrets God implanted in the architectonical and perfect workings of the universe:

From the time of his earliest researches Kepler was inspired by the belief that God had created the world in accordance to some preexistent harmony, certain manifestations of which might be traced in the number and sizes of the planetary orbits, and in the motions of the planets therein. (*A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries* 133)

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<sup>10</sup> Among the earliest modern scientific instruments, we have the telescope, the microscope, compass, and pendulum. In terms of methodology and standards, Descartes set the course in his *First Philosophy* by disassociating the new knowledge with the past episteme and the establishment of a new standard in *Discourse on the method* with the criterion "clear and distinct." And lastly, the developments of the mathematical calculator or tools like "Calculus" of Newton and Leibniz was decisive for science to continue to develop and expand.

<sup>11</sup> "And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." (Joshua 10:13 King James Bible)

For Juan de Mairena, the founders of modernity did not speak to people in the sense of relating to human reality; they were addressing themselves to specialists in phenomena who engaged in unilateral invention and production.

El libro de la Naturaleza –habla Galileo—está escrito en lengua matemática. Como si dijéramos: el latín de Virgilio está escrito en esperanto. Que no os escandalicen mis palabras. El paisano sabía muy bien lo que decía. Él hablaba a los astrónomos, a los geómetras, a los inventores de máquinas. Nosotros, que hablamos al hombre, también sabemos lo que decimos. (*Juan de Mairena I 333*)

This is why Juan de Mairena thinks the way modernity is guiding humanity and shaping civilization is inappropriate because their knowledge is limited to phenomena. Such task should be led by humanists who are engaged in human science and chart the course of development adhering to their guidance.

But in modernity the classical revival will be quickly succeeded by the scientific rationalism in which the legacy that would flourish is that of Descartes. In short, the two key figures and their writings who would establish modernity's foundation through scientific rationalism and modern science are Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton.

First, the most fundamental theoretical formulation of modernity is found in Descartes's *Discours de la méthode pour bien conduire sa raison, et chercher la vérité dans les sciences*. The kind of knowledge that Descartes sought after is not only *scientia* in the sense of permanent knowledge, but also knowledge of the material world, that is of objects in space and time, based on mathematical equation with the intent to have complete control over the variables. Not only did Descartes's formulation permeate the academic circle but, it was also adopted by social and

political organizations<sup>12</sup> together with the theory of Thomas Hobbes as portrayed in *Leviathan*. They sought after a form of conceptual and social reality that mirrored each other and that provided an infallible system and environment in which the sovereign had absolute power to control and protect his subjects. For Hobbes, such an isolated and artificially manipulated dueling place was the commonwealth. This can be contrasted with his view of the natural environment which he thought was violent and untamed. Of course, Hobbes's ideals were founded much like the way Machiavelli was motivated to write *The Prince*, against a background of social unrest and civil war and conflict in the struggle for power and hegemony.

On the other hand, the publishing of *Principia Mathematica* (1687) by Isaac Newton, where he exposed the theory of gravity together with the invention of the mathematical tool calculus<sup>13</sup> gave a firm ground for theoretical and experimental science to advance the course of its development.

For his own succeeding generations, Newton converted the world into formulas of measurement. It became a world in which the physical and the mathematical appeared as the two essential and complementary aspects of reality. The empirically observed and the mathematically deduced were given a factitious identity. (*The Triumph of Science and Reason* 26)

Though in *Principia* gravity was never defined verbally, Newton showed mathematically that there was a uniform force governing all bodies in space. This, of course, is an oversimplification

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<sup>12</sup> According to Nussbaum, Louis XIV and Frederick William, The Great Elector and Duke of Brandenburg adopted the combination of Descartes's absolutism and Hobbes's model of political organization into their administration in order to have absolute control over their subsidiaries.

<sup>13</sup> Modern research attributes the invention of Calculus to Newton as the first to conceive it and second to Leibniz for the actual standard notation, which is still used today with a slight modification from the original. According to the historical documents, Newton and Leibniz each arrived at calculus independently. For a full account see William Dunham's book *The Calculus Gallery: Masterpieces from Newton to Lebesgue* and Jason S. Bardi's book *The Calculus Wars: Newton, Leibniz, and the Greatest Mathematical Clash of All Time*.

because there were many other important intellectuals who contributed to the formation of modernity, but without a methodology like the one Descartes proposed, the development of calculus and the exposition of the physical theories revealed in Newton's *Principia*, modernity would not have disposed of a firm foundation to continue to develop. Furthermore without the discovery and improvements of scientific instruments such as "microscope, telescope, thermometer, barometer, air-pump and pendulum clock" it is unlikely modernity could have taken a course of expansion and progress the way it did as to give rise to modern science: its offspring the applied science in eighteenth century and engineering in nineteenth century, from which modernization of phenomena emerged (*A History of Science, Technology and Philosophy in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries* 9). Juan de Mairena captures the essence of modernity's development and intent in the following passage, and while he evaluates and criticizes it for its destructive force and lack of human truth, he marvels at its terrific strength and the human mind's capacity to penetrate into the invisible realm beneath the surface of the sensible in order to capture and manipulate their internal structure.

*(Mairena empieza a exponer la poética  
de su maestro Abel Martín)*

Es evidente, decía mi maestro --cuando mi maestro decía es evidente, o no estaba seguro de lo que decía, o sospechaba que alguien pudiera estarlo de la tesis contraria a la que él proponía-- que la razón humana milita toda ella contra la riqueza y variedad del mundo; que busca ansiosamente un principio unitario, un algo que lo explique todo, para quedarse con este algo y aligerarse del peso y confusión de todo lo demás. Y así tenemos, de un lado, la fe racional en lo que nunca es nada de cuanto se aparece, la fe en lo nunca visto, llámese el ser, la

esencia, la substancia, la materia originaria, etc.; y de otro, la gran banasta de los papeles pintados, en donde va cayendo el mundo de las apariencias, y en él el mismo corazón del hombre. Y aunque el imán que explica el ímpetu de esta fe racional sea la pura nada, y la razón no acierte, ni por casualidad, con verdad alguna a que pueda aferrarse, es un portento digno de asombro esta fuerza de aniquilación, este poder desrealizante... Maravilla cuán milagrosa es la virtud de nuestro pensamiento para penetrar en la enmarañada selva de lo sensible, como si no hubiese tal selva, y pensar el hueco y lugar que esta selva ocupa. Porque descubriendo el intelecto humano de una manera impresionante, como un hacha que se abre paso a través de un bosque, no se dice su virtud milagrosa, pues no hay tal hacha ni semejante tala, sino que la arboleda subsiste intacta, y allí donde ella está se piensa otra cosa. Incumbe al poeta admirarse del hecho ingente que es el pensar, ora lleno, ora vacío, como si dijéramos, en un abrir y cerrar de ojos.

*(Juan de Mairena I 239-240)*

Juan de Mairena, in the above quote, refers to two types of abstraction and reduction of both tangible and intangible objects and entities. First, the mind reduces characteristics and features of objects and entities into abstract concepts through rationalization. Second, the rational faculty wants to convert the perceptual world into abstract information. The latter is in reference to Cartesian method of homogenization and objectivization of perceptual reality to mathematical definition<sup>14</sup> which consists precisely, as Juan de Mairena points out, in reducing sensible objects

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<sup>14</sup> The Cartesian endeavor, though discursive and theoretical in nature, was not just seeking to codify sense experience of objects into numerical data in any way possible; it was looking for a universal formula through equation to covert perception into mathematical notation. The term “method” in Descartes’s philosophy, apart from rejecting and dismissing the entire knowledge accumulated in the past, is advocating for the new type of knowledge based on mathematics.

to scientific formula. While he refers to this as a negative outcome for human reality because the richness and variety of life become just data, he highlights the human capacity to engage in such a wondrous and unprecedented endeavor precisely with the intent to validate the human being based on his or her potential to influence both phenomena and human reality in a positive way and not on what he or she does against life.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, through the development of various disciplines in applied science and engineering, we see how the Cartesian “method” becomes a formula which seeks to replicate results in experimentation. But in such an undertaking the only end is results which are to be broken down for further experimentation; by themselves there is no beneficial end for humans or for earth because both will be subject to continuous experimentation with the vision of an ideal horizon of human prosperity and civilization. Without a realistic realizable goal, there is no final objective to be reached. This, in a way, reflects the situation depicted in Zeno’s “dichotomy paradox” and what was entailed in Borges’s short story “La perpetua carrera de Aquiles y la Tortuga,” adapted from Zeno’s “Achilles and Tortoise” paradox. Indeed, applied science’s way of penetrating infinitesimally into an object through continual fragmentation with the application of calculus in order to obtain data suggests that scientific effort will not advance beyond material knowledge of phenomena. Precisely in the following passage Antonio Machado questions the final merit of such knowledge of phenomena in relation to understanding the human being and its state of existence in phenomena.

Mas si llegáramos a familiarizarnos con una forma de conciencia que  
penetra en el objeto, que lo ilumina, que lo alcanza por dentro, que lo vive,  
entonces tendríamos que guardar todo nuestro asombro para esa otra forma de

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conciencia que todo lo convierte en superficie, que queda siempre fuera de las cosas que mira -¿dónde?- siempre de lejos a todo, al universo entero. El sujeto consciente, inteligente, no intuitivo, sería la maravilla por explicar, el gran problema. (*Los Complementarios* 120)

For Antonio Machado natural science as a study of physical substance and entity does not provide a solution to human struggle and conflict. Hunger and thirst, being physical needs, which Juan de Mairena thinks are the most real of human physical experiences and most critical and urgent of human condition in phenomena, are part of human struggle and trouble on earth; they are not the whole problem. Speaking of basic needs he says:

Decía mi maestro...que él había pasado tres días sin comer...al cabo de los cuales se dijo: “Esto de morir de hambre es más fácil de lo que yo creía.”...  
...también es usted de lo que piensan que conviene engañar el hambre del pueblo con ideales, promesas, ilusiones...  
—De ningún modo --exclamó mi maestro--. Porque el hambre no se engaña más que comiendo. Y esto lo sabían los anacoretas de la Tebaida lo mismo que Carlos Marx. (*Juan de Mairena I* 264-265)

Indeed, evaluating from the way human reality operates, most problems are internal in the sense that they exist in the mind and social troubles are derived from cultural misunderstandings and maladjustment of values from a community to an individual or from community to community. With such a pursuit even though our understanding of the objective world expands and becomes accurate in terms of securing predictability, this will not guarantee absolute knowledge, though it may help to create an objective world. What is more, as Juan de Mairena says, it would only make the human realm become more like the world of objects, which is homogeneous,

determined, immutable, and predictable. This is the reason why he says that along the way to becoming experts in knowledge of phenomena humans have forgotten about themselves.

Pero, ¿y el *nosce te ipsum*, la sentencia delfica? A qué puede obligarnos ya ese imperativo? He aquí lo verdaderamente grave del problema. Si la ciencia del conocimiento de sí mismo, que Sócrates reputaba única digna del hombre, pasa a saber de especialista, estamos perdidos. Dicho en otra forma: ¿cómo podrás saber algo de ti mismo, si de esa materia, como de todas las demás, es siempre otro el que sabe? (*Juan de Mairena I 228*)

In the next passage Juan de Mairena envisages the kind of problem the specialization of material knowledge will create in human reality.

Una cosa terrible, contra muchas ventajas, tiene el aumento de la cultura por especialización de la ciencia: que nadie sabe ya lo que sabe, aunque sepamos todos que de todo hay quien sepa. La conciencia de esto nos obliga al silencio o nos convierte en pedantes, en hombres que hablan, sin saber lo que dicen, de lo que otros saben. Así, la suma de saberes, aunque no sea en totalidad poseída por nadie, aumenta en todo y en cada uno, abrumadoramente, el volumen de la conciencia de la propia ignorancia. Y váyase lo uno --como decía el otro-- por lo otro. Os confieso, además, que no acierto a imaginar cuál sería la posición de un Sócrates moderno, ni en qué pudiera consistir su ironía, ni cómo podría aprovecharnos su mayéutica. (*Juan de Mairena I 227-228*)

In other words, what Juan de Mairena is indicating here is that while there is an advance in our knowledge of the physical world through a contribution by specialists, people in general, who do not possess such knowledge, will end up reverberating things they do not know: "...aumenta en

todo y en cada uno, abrumadoramente, el volumen de la conciencia de la propia ignorancia” (*Juan de Mairena I 227-228*). The most adverse effect of such human state is people’s reduced confidence in themselves and disorientation on the question how to live life.

Juan de Mairena thinks that physical education evolved in a way parallel to specialization of material knowledge, physical education not in the nutritional sense in search of health but the outward enhancement and training of the body for quantitative performance. He says:

(*Contra la educación física*)

Siempre he sido --habla Mairena a sus alumnos de Retórica-- enemigo de lo que hoy llamamos, con expresión tan ambiciosa como absurda, *educación física*. Dejemos a un lado a los antiguos griegos, de cuyo gimnasio hablaremos otro día. Vengamos a lo de hoy. *No hay que educar físicamente a nadie*. Os lo dice un profesor de Gimnasia. Sabido es que Juan de Mairena era, oficialmente, profesor de Gimnasia, y que sus clases de Retórica, gratuitas y voluntarias, se daban al margen del programa oficial del instituto en que prestaban sus servicios.

Para crear hábitos saludables --añadía--, que nos acompañen toda la vida, no hay peor camino que el de la gimnasia y los deportes, que son ejercicios mecanizados, en cierto sentido abstractos, desintegrados, tanto de la vida animal como el de la ciudadana. Aun suponiendo que estos ejercicios sean saludables --y es de mucho suponer--, nunca han de sernos de gran provecho, porque no es fácil que nos acompañen sino durante algunos años de nuestra efímera existencia. Si lográsemos, en cambio, despertar en el niño el amor a la naturaleza, que se deleita en contemplarla, o la curiosidad por ella, que se empeña en observarla, tendríamos más tarde hombres maduros y ancianos venerables, capaces de

atravesar al sierra de Guadarrama en los días más crudos del invierno, ya por deseo de recrearse en el espectáculo de los pinos y de los montes, ya por el afán científico de estudiar la estructuras y composiciones de las piedras o de encontrar una nueva especie de lagartijas.

Todo deporte, en cambio, es trabajo estéril, cuando no juego estúpido.

(*Juan de Mairena I* 141-142).

And afterward he says:

La gimnástica, como espectáculo, tiene entontecido a medio mundo, y acabará por entontecer al otro medio... (*Juan de Mairena I* 275).

In the following passage Juan de Mairena affirm his duty:

Porque se avecinan los tiempos duros, y los hombres se aperciben a luchar --pueblos contra pueblos, clases contra clases, razas contra razas--, mal año para los sofistas, los escépticos, los desocupados, y los charlatanes. Se recrudescerá el pensamiento pragmatista, quiero decir el pensar consagrado a reforzar los resortes de la acción. ¡Hay que vivir! Es el grito de bandera, siempre que los hombres se deciden a matarse. Y la chufra de Voltaire: *Je n'en voir pas la nécessité* no hará reír, ni, mucho menos, convencerá a nadie. Y esta cátedra mía --la de Retórica, no la Gimnástica-- será suprimida de real orden, si es que no se me persigue y condena por corruptor de juventud. (*Juan de Mairena I* 201)

In conclusion, what Juan de Mairena is pointing out as a result of modernity's materialization of phenomena is the increasing impoverishment of human cultures and the

continuous decline and deterioration of each individual's ability to engage in life with his or her community and nature.

### **3.2 Antonio Machado's perspective on the notions of space and time in relation to his socio-human epistemology in *Juan de Mairena* and *Los Complementarios***

In order to understand Juan de Mairena's concern with the value system that influences us in our everyday dealings with people, nature and objects in the world, we need to know the basis of Antonio Machado's notions of space and time in the two texts<sup>15</sup> mentioned above. Does Antonio Machado consider space and time to be mind-independent entities that exist objectively, as Isaac Newton's took them to be, or does Antonio Machado take space and time to be part of the human mind in relation to other minds as Leibniz thought, or as Kant thought them to be, as part of an individual's mind, following in a way Leibniz's version but giving more autonomy to each individual mind, in his transcendental idealist stance? The exposition of Antonio Machado's ontological position in regard to space and time and their function within human epistemology will show in turn two underlying aspects and tendencies in *Juan de Mairena*: amalgamation of philosophical ideas concerning his epistemology and metaphysics. First, as stated in the introduction, Antonio Machado does not commit to any philosopher or philosophical school completely, but selects carefully ideas from each philosopher and school and promotes them only if he sees that humans will benefit from such ideas. Hence, political, social, legal, moral and aesthetic aspects of his thought are all subordinate to this social commitment to promoting values for the prosperity (in the sense of human progress and not material progress) and the wellbeing of humans as beings dependent on an inter-subjective relation that endorses mutual respect.

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<sup>15</sup>*Juan de Mairena* and *Los Complementarios*

Mas yo quisiera dejar en vuestras almas sembrado el propósito de una Escuela Popular de Sabiduría. Y reparad bien en que lo superior no sería la escuela, sino la sabiduría que en ella se alcanzase. Conviene distinguir. Porque nosotros no decimos: <<Buena es para el pueblo la sabiduría>>, como dicen: <<Buena es para el pueblo la religión>> los que no creen ya en ella. Estos, al fin, dan lo que desprecian, y nosotros daríamos lo que más veneramos; un saber de primera calidad. (Juan de Mairena I 268)

The crucial distinction in the above passage rests on the cautionary sentence: “reparad bien en que lo superior no sería la escuela, sino la sabiduría que en ella se alcanzase.” This is to say, Juan de Mairena is not interested in founding an institution or an organization for its own sake; if a school is established, people who come for learning must be the ones who seize the educational benefit it offers.

Second, as a consequence of this, Antonio Machado always favors human experience and reality more than speculation for its own sake, since humans as finite beings in space and time can only exist through interacting in and with the world of phenomena. For Juan de Mairena speculative ideas do not have value by themselves; they must have functional purpose and be useful to orient and synthesize the three human output modes: thought, speech and action. As stated earlier, for Juan de Mairena human actions are not randomly carried out or akin to animals, whose actions have only a single purpose, that of survival. Unlike animals, human actions are oriented. In this sense human actions follow an ideological purpose within a cultural norm, or a moral principal as to what provides a direction to human endeavors. Besides these, human actions are not independent and isolated from each other but rather follow or rebel against something or abstain from a tendency in a coordinated pattern in relation to its epistemological

essentiality<sup>16</sup>. Human tendency to believe in ideals and project the upcoming bypass and forget the temporal openness and uncertainty of the future with an overview of death as the culmination of phenomenal existence, which is always marked by a subjective interpretation but ultimately unknown as to when and how it will occur to each individual.

En nuestra lógica --habla Mairena a sus alumnos-- no se trata de poner el pensamiento de acuerdo consigo mismo, lo que para nosotros, carece de sentido; pero sí de ponerlo en contacto o en relación con todo lo demás. (*Juan de Mairena I 206*)

As will be analyzed in chapter 3.3, human reality is closer to the poetical sphere in its modus operandi than to the way events take place within the laws of phenomena; this is to say, human reality being essentially in the mind, imagination and intuition project themselves from past experiences and future plans and weave the present on expectations based on the conception and mastery of the environment in which a person exists. This being a natural human tendency in phenomena, the essential human characteristics together with epistemological essentiality are what create the familiarity in general terms between two distant cultures and generations for communication, understanding and possible appreciation. This is the reason why Antonio Machado writes in *Los Complementarios*:

La intuición bergsoniana, derivada del instinto, no será nunca un instrumento de libertad, por ella seríamos esclavos de la ciega corriente vital. Sólo la inteligencia teórica es un principio de libertad (de libertad y dominio).

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<sup>16</sup> By 'epistemological essentiality' I mean human tendency to believe in ideals which are not fully or permanently realizable in phenomena such as love, justice, peace, harmony and so forth, which serve as ideological references to create unity in the three output modes of human activity: thought, speech and bodily behavior under the auspice of intentionality.

Libertad y dominio son las dos caras de una misma moneda.

Sólo conociendo intelectualmente, creando el objeto, se afirma la independencia del sujeto, el que nunca es cosa, vidente de la cosa (122).

The last phrase plainly distinguishes that a human being is not inclusive of phenomena. S/he excludes himself/herself from the objective world, precisely so as to not to fall into the confusion of the self with objects, as s/he is not a thing but a conscious<sup>17</sup> agent who classifies, categorizes and identifies them in phenomena. In the phrase “Libertad y dominio son las dos caras de una misma moneda” Juan de Mairena is not associating freedom in the political sense, or even in the context of Darwinian inference of physical survival, where only the surviving or conquering agent can claim to be free. To the contrary, what Juan de Mairena is suggesting by liberty is that it cannot be enjoyed unless the phenomenal self conforms to the inner constitution. To act in accordance to inner tendencies and thus influence the phenomenal self is for Juan de Mairena ‘libertad<sup>18</sup>.’ This is so because for Juan de Mairena freedom, which is essentially a conception of the mind, attached to will, can only be had and be of benefit when the will makes decisions that comply with the inner natural tendencies. That is why he says “La libertad, señores (habla

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<sup>17</sup> The consciousness or awareness that Juan de Mairena refers to incorporates more than the definition of consciousness of modern psychology and its exclusive link with the brain. Besides being what grasps the most attention of reality through intuition it also remits to the idea of spirit, especially in reference to Leibniz’s monads. According to Nicholas Rescher, Leibniz distinguishes various degrees of monads depending on the hierarchical circle each belongs to: men, animal, plants, inert objects. Rescher explains:

In inert objects and at the lower end of the biological scale we find bare monads, but in plants and animals we have overriding dominance by a single all-predominant monad. In animals the dominant monad may be called a soul (âme) and is capable of, by way of psychological capabilities, sensation, consciousness, and memory. In man, and in the higher intelligences of whose existence in nature Leibniz feels assured, the dominant monad is a spirit (esprit), and is capable of reason, including the practical reason essential to moral agency. For Leibniz, the psychological capabilities and reason itself are functions that come into play at the higher level of complexity in monadic organizations.” (*G.W. Leibniz’s Monadology* 118)

The definition of monads (one of the most elaborated concepts in modern philosophy) is given in *Monadology*, where Leibniz explains in detail its structure, organization and constitution.

<sup>18</sup> For Juan de Mairena there is no such thing as unrestricted freedom; anything that exists under phenomena is restricted by the law of physics. According to Kant, everything that exists under space and time is determined.

Mairena a sus alumnos), es un problema metafísico.” (*Juan de Mairena I* 87). For Juan de Mairena, physical independence alone without autonomy of the mind cannot be considered freedom because then the body would act only upon its needs; this is why he says at the beginning of the excerpt “La intuición bergsoniana, derivada del instinto, no será nunca un instrumento de libertad, por ella seríamos esclavos de la ciega corriente vital.” For him the inner natural tendencies are implied in ‘la esencial heterogeneidad del ser,’ that is, to acknowledge the other and come to know oneself through the other. In this context, freedom is not equivalent to do doing whatever one wants to do (which reflects more irresponsibility than freedom) but, as Milton portrays ‘freedom’ in *Paradise Lost*, it is conditional. For Milton positive freedom for humans and angels was actualized when humans and angels followed the mandates of their teleological makeup expressed in a God given rule for each of them; choosing not to follow God’s preconceived set of rules and rebel against them meant for Milton that humans as well as angels would alienate themselves from being free first because disobedience would always remain in consciousness as a mark of deviation and second because disobedient actions are self-destructive. In *Paradise Lost*, the effect and consequence of this can be seen after Adam’s and Lucifer’s first disobedience,<sup>19</sup> their progressive deteriorating state from thereon, and their drastic transformation into base and wicked creatures, especially in the case of Satan, the name that was given to Lucifer after his failed attempt to overthrow God from his throne. In this sense for Juan de Mairena the nature of the human inner constitution is the practice of the mandates of epistemological essentiality that seeks to integrate speech, act and thought in

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<sup>19</sup> Milton begins Book I of *Paradise Lost* indicating the cause of the fall:  
 Of Man’s first disobedience, and the fruit  
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
 With the lost of Eden...

(*Paradise Lost* 3)

conformity to the final ideals of life which for him is unity with the self through the other, which in turn becomes unity with God. That is why Juan de Mairena says “Dios puede ser la *alteridad trascendente* a que todos miramos.” (*Juan de Mairena I* 253). As will be analyzed in 3.3, this can be achieved only through ‘love.’ This is the reason why he says:

-¿Qué podrían decir contra las jaulas los amigos del vuelo libre, o los amigos de los pájaros, o los pájaros mismos? Hay un vuelo libre anterior a las jaulas, vuelo inocente como el desnudo paradisíaco, que en nada las jaulas perjudican, coartan, limitan; hay un vuelo coetáneo de las jaulas, un vuelo enjaulado, digámoslo así, pero libre, no obstante, para volar dentro de su jaula, hacia los cuatro puntos cardinales.

Que este vuelo ha perdido inocencia, nadie puede negarlo. Pero ha ganado, en cambio, la noble aspiración a volar fuera de su jaula. ¿Que para el logro de esta aspiración la jaula es un obstáculo? Sin duda. Pero es también *conditio sine qua non* para el caso de que esta aspiración se cumpla. Porque, ¿Cómo volará un pájaro fuera de su jaula, si esta jaula no existe? (*Juan de Mairena I* 213)

The reference to ‘jaula’ is dual and reflects internal and external conditions. As external state it refers to modernized platform in space and time, and as internal condition it refers to human lack of orientation in life, the latter because it forces humans to act as creatures of nature based on their instinct and desire alone. On the other hand, by ‘aspiración’ Juan de Mairena refers to modernity’s project. By “Hay un vuelo libre anterior... que en nada las jaulas perjudican, coartan, limitan;” Juan de Mairena is indicating not only the human condition before civilization but the state of concordance between the inner self and the self in phenomena. According to Juan de Mairena this is the state of being to which humans should struggle to return, not in the

historical temporal sense of literally going back to the beginning, which is impossible,<sup>20</sup> but through conscious realization, the present, of their own fragile and brief condition in phenomena in order to find the real and worthy priorities in which the inner and the physical self can come into accord. This is why he says the following in *Los Complementarios*:

¿Por qué hemos renunciado --yo primero-- durante tanto tiempo a esta suprema dignidad? Todo cambia, pasa, fluye, se trueca y confunde, incluso lo que llamamos nuestra personalidad; todos, menos ese lejano espectador, que es el yo hondo, el único, el que ve y nunca es visto.

Este hondo espectador, que retrocede ante todas las cosas para nunca confundirse con ellas, crea a imagen y semejanza suya el mundo eleático, el de las normas inmutables, el de las ideas platónicas, y esta creación es la prueba de su poder, de su imperio. Sin embargo...

Baeza, 20 de septiembre, 1917

This inner self which is in space and time while not being part of phenomena can only be explained under Leibniz's monadological system. Juan de Mairena considers this inner self to be like a monad in many aspects. The following summary by Michael J. Futch illustrates well the nature of "monads" of which Leibniz gives a full account in his *Monadology*:

Leibniz's mature metaphysics takes as its guiding assumption the thesis that "there is nothing in things except simple substances, and in them perception and appetite"... These simple substances are characterized as non-extended, soul-like entities, and, more notoriously, as entities without "windows through which

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<sup>20</sup> Juan de Mairena adheres strictly to the principle of empirical time when he says "Cierto que lo pasado es, como tal pasado, inmodificable; quiero decir que si he nacido en viernes, ya es imposible de toda imposibilidad que haya venido al mundo en cualquier otro día de la semana." (*Juan de Mairena I* 221-222).

something can enter or leave” (Mon. 7). Moreover, simple substances are not in space and time, and consequently are not in themselves temporally or spatially ordered with respect to other simple substances: “For in themselves monads have no situation with respect to each other...Each is, as it were, a separate world”...Bereft of windows and not directly spatially, temporally, or casually ordered each substance is like a world apart, independent of all other things, except for God (DM 14). Yet, at the same time, within every possible world “all things are connected” and “‘all things conspire,’ as Hippocrates say” (*Leibniz’s Metaphysics of Time and Space* 143)

Just like the monads, Juan de Mairena thinks that each human’s soul or inner self is a universe in itself, independent and separate in its own way of being from the rest but essentially dependent<sup>21</sup> on the other to fully realize its potential as a human being. Indeed, for Juan de Mairena to realize, one’s potential in phenomena in relation to its inner constitution is to find and become one again with the inner self. However, paradoxically, human realization of its inner potential cannot be achieved alone; it has to be done through the other, that is, by means of interacting with the other because the search is reflexive: one finds one’s inner self, what is closest to one, through the other, that is to say, taking the other as the self. In this sense the other is a necessary being which reflects a mirror image of the soul and through whom the search for finding oneself is achieved. The search reflects in a way the ironical situation a person encounters in phenomena, namely that one cannot see and hear oneself directly. A reflected image on the mirror is not the same as a reflected image of the self in the other. But by

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<sup>21</sup> Essentially dependent refers to the way passive potentials can be activated. The monads by themselves cannot activate the potential it possesses; the only way its potential can flourish is through coming into contact and interacting with the other.

interacting with the other one discovers oneself. In this sense, life for Juan de Mairena is the search for the self through the other and nature. This is the reason why he says in a separate note in *Los Complementarios*:

Nota

¿Pintar de memoria? Desatino. Ningún pintor lo ha hecho. ¿Pintar del natural? Menos aún. El modelo es necesario. ¿Para copiarlo? No; para pensar en él. (*Los Complementarios* 153)

The inner self actualizes in phenomena through the other, without whom the self would be no more than an incomplete being. In this sense the other becomes a complementary being of the self and vice versa. This is what Abel Martín is basically stating in the following lines:

Este *al fin*, comenta Juan de Mairena, revela el pensamiento un tanto gedeónico de mi maestro: “Para ver del derecho hay que haber visto antes del revés.” O viceversa. (*Juan de Mairena I* 93)

As will be explored in 3.3 I, Hegel’s analysis of self-consciousness and the other in *Phenomenology of Spirit* cannot be applied to the bi-lateral relationship that Antonio Machado purports in *Juan de Mairena* because for Hegel the self and the other are not in equal terms; the Hegelian “struggle of recognition” exists under a context of domination in the struggle for power. In this sense, the Hegelian self and the other are not metaphysical entities comparable to monads but they are socio-political agents.

This is clearly the case why Antonio Machado partly adheres to Leibniz's<sup>22</sup> conception of space and time rather than Kant's<sup>23</sup> or Newton's<sup>24</sup>. For Antonio Machado space and time are not a priori concepts, or notions that can be separated from actual experiences, though discursively they could be analyzed independently. This is the reason why while Abel Martín, in his analytical monologue in *Los Complementarios*, shows admiration towards Kant, he rejects, based on his reading of Transcendental Aesthetics, Kant's views on space and time due to empirical impossibility, in that Kant's views separate objects independently from space. Under the heading *Heterogeneidad del Ser: Apuntes para una nueva teoría del conocimiento; espacio y tiempo*, Abel Martín says:

El espacio, considerado como medio vacío, homogéneo, en el cual se dan las cosas, es una pseudo-representación. Si suprimiéramos de nuestra representación todas las imágenes y todos los recuerdos de objetos exteriores, suprimiríamos al par el espacio. Es falsa la suposición de un espacio sin cuerpos...Kant se equivoca cuando en su Estética trascendental sostiene que podemos representarnos un espacio sin objetos...

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<sup>22</sup> Leibniz is considered, in respect to space and time, a relationalist. There are two relationalisms: first, realist relationalism thinks that "space is the order of possible relations among objects, and that relations are mind-independent." Second, idealist relationalism thinks that "space is the order of possible relations among objects, and that relations are mind-dependent." According to Leibniz-Clarke correspondence, Leibniz's claims about space and time were directed against absolutists, stressing the fact that space could not be object-independent. However, in his last letter to Clarke Leibniz explicitly indicates that "relations are 'ideal' because they are neither substances nor accidents, and are therefore not elements of reality." This is to say, for Leibniz space and time by themselves do not exist; they are merely "an order of the existence of things observed in their simultaneity" that in order for them to have meaning depend on mind. (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-spacetime/>, 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Kant is considered a transcendental idealist with respect to his view on space and time. This means that for Kant space and time, as humans experience them, are part of the mind's a priori forms (which he calls intuitions) that allow the possibility of perception through the senses of what is out there.

<sup>24</sup> Newton is considered absolutist in respect to his outlook on space and time in the sense that for Newton space and time exist in their own right, this is to say, they are mind independent and also object independent.

Un tiempo sin hechos, sin acontecimientos, sin historia es inconcebible. Sin sucesión de movimiento, sin vicisitudes, casos, sucesos, no hubiéramos nunca podido hablar de tiempo. Ni el tiempo ni el espacio son nociones que puedan formarse apriorísticamente. Desde el punto de vista psicológico el propio Kant no lo hubiera sostenido nunca. Creemos que aun desde el punto de vista lógico es también insostenible...

Pero estas dos nociones negativas, pseudo-representaciones tiempo y espacio son propias (necesarias) del mecanismo de nuestro pensar. Tiempo y espacio, como medios vacíos de cuerpo o de acontecimientos tienen valor negativo o, como veremos, limitativo y proviene de la radical heterogeneidad del ser. Siendo el ser vario (no uno), cualitativamente distinto, requiere del sujeto para ser pensado un frecuente desplazamiento de la atención, y una interrupción brusca del trabajo que supone la formación de otro...

Mediante la pseudo-representación espacio-homogénea podemos inhibirnos de la intuición externa, suprimiendo los objetos corpóreos. Mediante la pseudo-representación tiempo homogéneo reposa nuestra vida psíquica de su devenir, suprimiendo el continuo acaecer...

Tiempo y espacio son dos instrumentos de objetividad. ¿En qué sentido? Entendemos por objetividad los puntos de coincidencia del pensar individual (del múltiple pensar individual) que forman el pensar genérico, la racionalidad. La objetividad supone una constante desobjetivación, porque las ciencias individuales no pueden coincidir con

el ser, esencialmente vario, si no en el no ser. Llamamos no ser al mundo de las formas, de los límites, de las ideas genéricas y de los conceptos vaciados de su núcleo intuitivo, al mundo cuantitativo, limpio de toda cualidad...

Baeza, 4 diciembre, 1915

(*Los Complementarios*, 127-129)

This passage reveals the analytic way through which Abel Martín attempts to fit metaphysical notions into common sense understanding. At the same time, he distinguishes the features associated with the concept “ser” and “no ser.” He relates “ser” with the essential world of human beings, whereas he relates “no ser” with material world or with the objectified world. However, the highlight of this paragraph is not so much that he disagrees in part with Kant’s ontological view of space and time but that Abel Martín’s view coincides to a certain extent with Leibniz’s relationalist view of them. Where Abel Martín seems to have most trouble with Kant’s view of space and time<sup>25</sup> is when asked to accept that space and time are pre-empirical

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<sup>25</sup> For Emmanuel Kant, the conceptual division of space and time was a result of dissecting phenomena verbally into two separate entities which are not separated in actual experience. In fact, empirically they are inseparable because perception without space and time cannot be conceived. Hence, for Kant we can never know the external world independently from our senses; they operate together to produce sense data. By stating this, Kant presupposes that there are space and time by themselves which humans would not be able to access as to what they are. Precisely his transcendental idealist position supports the contention that we are unable to know the originals of appearances due to our phenomenal conditions. This view can be contrasted with Plato’s transcendental realist position which thinks that the original (the idea of a chair) which is in the realm of the Forms resembles the copy (a chair in phenomena). Kant’s view can also be contrasted with Descartes dualism which treats mind as being independent from the external world, not as they are in themselves but the way we know them; Heidegger points out in *Being and Time* that this is a deceptive distinction because for him we are already part of the external world. But for Kant space and time as they appear to our senses are dependent on our perception. That is the reason why Kant says in the *Transcendental Aesthetics*, in the first part of the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

[i]f the subject... be removed, the whole constitution and all the relations of the objects in space and time, nay space and time themselves, would vanish. As appearances, they cannot exist in themselves, but only in us.” (82).

conditions of the mind: “Ni el tiempo ni el espacio son nociones que puedan formarse apriorísticamente.” Though Abel Martín does not mention explicitly Leibniz’s relationalism when he says “Entendemos por objetividad los puntos de coincidencia del pensar individual (del múltiple pensar individual) que forman el pensar genérico,” in part, Leibniz’s relationalist view is already embedded in his outlook on space and time because he presupposes space and time to be the result of inter-subjective conceptions and not independent from them. The ontological conditions of space and time Abel Martín takes note of above work as an initial draft for Juan de Mairena’s socio-human epistemology in that it delineates the limits in which they can be validated. That is to say, it outlines the limits for understanding the notions of space and time in relation to extended objects and beings in them. This is because Abel Martín’s monologue falls short of the main ingredient for validating space and time, namely the relationship of living entities in the world, specifically of humans. In this aspect, the monologue is an abstract speculation. But if we take Abel Martín’s monologue in connection with Juan de Mairena’s dialogue that appears in *Juan de Mairena* (I, 166), in which Juan de Mairena explicitly states his preference for experience over theory alone, we can interpret that Antonio Machado’s partial preference for Leibniz’s relationalist position is in order to validate human relations and human nominative capacity in order to give identity and value to objects in phenomena rather than to engage solely in speculatively analysis of space and time for their own sake. Moreover, by partially agreeing with Leibniz’s relationalist view of space and time, Antonio Machado is also

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But this is how space and time would operate for Kant within experience. However, Kant’s view is not limited to experience. He wants to delve into prior states of perceptual experience that may explain the condition of space and time as part of our mind. He calls them subjective containers of the mind because for Kant space and time are embedded in the mind as a priori conditions (pure intuitions: that is, without the object) that facilitate our experience of the world through the senses. In a way, Abel Martín’s claim on Kant’s view does not reflect Kant’s position on space. Abel Martín thinks that space and time can not be a priori conditions but rather a “pseudo-representation of a homogeneous space,” in the sense that only through such a process we can arrive at some basic agreements about the external condition of phenomena. As Abel Martín goes on to explain later, for Kant these were negative assumptions, which are mental or conceptual suppositions in order to explain in theory how the mind is able conceive phenomena.

accepting, with reservations, three key notions that Leibniz incorporates into his relationalist system that are relevant to Juan de Mairena's socio-human epistemology. They are the principle of sufficient reason,<sup>26</sup> the identity of indiscernibles<sup>27</sup> and pre-established harmony<sup>28</sup>.

First, the principle of sufficient reason relates to Juan de Mairena's conception that all objects and entities in phenomena have a certain purpose built into their essences and designs. Second, Juan de Mairena does not believe that there are in reality such notions as opposites or two objects that are the same or even repetition as a matter of fact. In this sense, his epistemological configuration in a way relates to Leibniz's theory of identity of the indiscernibles. The following quote is directly linked to the notion of identity of the indiscernibles:

Nada puede ser –decía mi maestro—lo contrario de lo que es.

Nada que *sea* puede tener su contrario en ninguna parte.

Hay una *esencia rosa*, de que todas las rosas participan, y otra *esencia pepino*, y otra *comadreja*, etc., etc., con idéntica virtud. Dicho de otro modo: todas las rosas son *rosa*, todos los pepinos son *pepino*, etc., etc. Pero ¿dónde encontraréis –ni esencial ni existencialmente—lo contrario de una rosa? El ser carece de contrario, aunque otra cosa os digan. Porque la Nada, su negación,

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<sup>26</sup> The principle of sufficient reason is a philosophical principle that states that “everything must have a reason or cause” <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/sufficient-reason/> (20<sup>th</sup> July, 2012). It is linked in part with the notion of teleology and pre-established harmony in that it presupposes an intelligent design in objects and entities as well as the structure and fabric on which they exist.

<sup>27</sup> The identity of indiscernibles is “a principle of analytic ontology explicitly formulated by Leibniz in his *Discourse on Metaphysics*...It states that no two distinct things exactly resemble each other.” <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-indiscernible/> (20<sup>th</sup> July, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Pre-established harmony is Leibniz's postulate to explain the monad's autonomous state without being affected by any external causality. However, “when a change occurs within a monad, every other monad spontaneously reflects inasmuch as God, in a single creative act at the beginning of time, synchronized the universe by establishing once and for all a harmony between all monads.” (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/474606/preestablished-harmony> (25<sup>th</sup> July, 2012).

necesitaría para ser su contrario comenzar por ser algo. Y estaría en el mismo caso de la rosa, del pepino, de la comadreja. (*Juan de Mairena I* 163)

The last claim in the passage above reflects also Parmenides's assertion *ex nihilo nihil fit*, that is nothing comes from nothing, which in the case of Parmenides, he used to claim that change was not possible in phenomena. This in a way presupposes some form of origin in the formation of being. Third, pre-established harmony relates to Juan de Mairena's epistemological configuration in that for him, the order of nature has been prearranged as well as human essential constitution has been designed from its inception. For Juan de Mairena this is especially the case because he thinks that humans are like monads that do not have a window through which they can communicate with other monads.

El alma de cada hombre –cuenta Mairena que decía su maestro—pudiera ser una pura intimidad, una mónada sin puertas ni ventanas, dicho líricamente una melodía que se canta y escucha a sí misma, sorda e indiferente a otras posibles melodías --¿iguales?, ¿distintas?-- que produzcan otras almas. Se comprende lo inútil de una batuta directora. Habría que acudir a la genial hipótesis leibnitziana de la armonía preestablecida. Y habría que suponer una gran oreja interesada en escuchar una gran sinfonía. ¿Y por qué no una gran algarabía? (*Juan de Mairena I* 79-80)

Given this, Juan de Mairena thinks that such a postulate as pre-established harmony that incorporates a state before the beginning cannot be explained empirically based on logic. As with eschatological assumptions, it is better left for faith to either believe or reject, but not doubt because doubt is a rational conjecture and has no place in such an assumption.

The following passage in a way reflects the failure of the type of inquiry that deals with concepts that step beyond human experience.

La serie par es la mitad de la serie total de los números. La serie impar es la otra mitad.

Pero la serie par y la serie impar son --ambas-- infinitas.

La serie total de los números es también infinita. ¿Será entonces doblemente infinita que la serie par y que la serie impar?

No parece aceptable, en buena lógica que lo infinito pueda suplicarse, como, tampoco, que pueda partirse en mitades.

Luego la serie par y la serie impar son ambas, y cada una, iguales a la serie total de los números.

No es tan claro, pues, como vosotros pensáis, que el todo sea mayor que la parte.

Meditad con ahínco, hasta hallar en qué consiste lo sofisticado de este razonamiento.

Cuando os hiervan los sesos avisad. (*Juan de Mairena I 93*)

While Juan de Mairena says the last phrase “Cuando os hiervan los sesos avisad” to caution that there is no solution to this logic-mathematical puzzle, he is not really interested in his students’ pondering the numerical query itself. Rather, what he is really trying to make his students notice is the fact that the terms ‘whole’ and ‘part’ cannot be applied to human beings whereas they can be applied to material things. In this sense, similar to the way numbers are employed, for counting and sorting objects having no real substance, space and time may perform as processing channels in the continuous amalgamation of phenomena than being real autonomous entities by

themselves. As Erwin Schrödinger indicated through his study about ‘quantum entanglement,’ space could be reduced to non existence in pure communication between two entangled particles. While such a proposition was just a philosophical speculation in 1935 (Albert Einstein calling it spooky theory) in the twenty-first century, with particle measuring equipment that can separate these electrons and observe, it is no longer a theory; it has been experimentally confirmed that space can be bypassed when entangled particles instantaneously react to each other, according to their pre-established setting without any communicating device attached to them, no matter how distant they are from each other.

I think it is important to make a distinction here in terms of concerns Kant and Antonio Machado had in configuring space and time the way they did. Kant’s concern was to attach space and time dependent on and as part of the structures of human perception, whereas Juan de Mairena’s concern was to validate and attach space and time as part of human interactive experience in phenomena. And finally, though Abel Martín’s view does not represent Juan de Mairena’s view exactly, his observation complements Juan de Mairena’s position regarding space and time. In the following passage Juan de Mairena ironically ponders several possibilities from which the mind can perceive the external world:

Ya demostramos --o pretendemos demostrar-- cuán intacto queda el problema de la percepción del mundo externo, si consideramos la conciencia como un espejo que copia, reproduce o representa imágenes, mientras no se pruebe que los espejos ven las imágenes que en ellos se forman, o que una imagen en la conciencia es la conciencia de una imagen.

Todavía más gedeónico --por no decir más absurdo-- me parece el pensar que nuestra conciencia traduce a su propia lengua un mundo escrito en otra;

porque si esta otra lengua le es desconocida, mal puede traducir, y si la conoce, ¿para qué traduce? Mejor diríamos: ¿para quién? Porque, en verdad, nadie traduce para sí mismo, sino para quienes desconocen la lengua en que el original está escrito y a condición de que el traductor conozca la suya y la ajena. El truco o *tour de passe, passe*, que pretende disfrazar la tautología en el verbo *traducir*, como era antes el verbo *representar*.

Más inaceptable es todavía la concepción pragmatista de la conciencia como actividad utilitaria, que elige cuanto a la vida interesa, y el mundo externo como producto de esta selección. Porque el acto de elegir supone una previa conciencia de lo que se toma y de lo que se deja. La conciencia como criba o cernaguero de lo real, es la más zurda y zapatera de todas las concepciones de la conciencia.

Hemos de volver --añadía Mairena-- a pensar la conciencia como una luz que avanza en las tinieblas, iluminando lo otro, siempre lo otro... Pero esta concepción tan luminosa de la conciencia, la más poética y la más antigua y acreditada de todas, es también la más oscura, mientras que no se pruebe que hay una luz capaz de ver lo que ella misma ilumina. Y era esto, acaso, lo que pensaba mi maestro, sin intentar la prueba, cuando aludía a la conciencia divina o la divinización de la conciencia humana tras la muerte, en aquello sus versos inmortales:

Antes que llegue, si me llega, el Día,  
La Luz que ve, increada... (*Juan de Mairena I* 196-197).

Juan de Mairena's view that complements Abel Martín's position in regard to his outlook on space and time precisely occurs in the first lines of paragraph 4 where one reads "Hemos de volver --añadía Mairena-- a pensar la conciencia como una luz que avanza en las tinieblas, iluminando lo otro, siempre lo otro..."

Furthermore, the exclusivity Kant places on human predisposition and the object's receptivity to intuition in order to produce external reality is taken a step further in chapter XVIII in *Juan de Mairena*. There he discusses ironically with a student the complementary nature of theory (represented here as concept) and experience (represented here as intuition), in order to have knowledge<sup>29</sup> (conocimiento), only to conclude that our knowledge of the external world is subjective and derived, and therefore, not absolute:

(en clase)

-¿Recuerda usted, señor Rodríguez, lo que dijimos de las intuiciones y de los conceptos?

R.- Que son vacíos los conceptos sin intuiciones, y ciegas las intuiciones sin los conceptos. Es decir, no hay manera de llenar un concepto sin la intuición, ni de poner ojos a la intuición sin encajarla en el concepto. Pero unidas las intuiciones a los conceptos tenemos el conocimiento: una oscuridad llena que es, al mismo tiempo, una ceguera vidente.

M.- ¿Y usted ve claro eso que dice?

R.- Con una claridad perfectamente tenebrosa, querido maestro. (*Juan de Mairena I* 166).

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<sup>29</sup> Juan de Mairena uses "conocimiento" deliberately with two things in mind. First, to designate knowledge as empirical, pertaining to experience in phenomena, and second to limit our knowledge to "persuasio" (discursive, fallible, changing and without future certainty) and not "scientia" in the sense that it is objective, permanent, certain and infallible.

Juan de Mairena's wit here in juxtaposing a double oxymoron in the sentence "una oquedad llena que es, al mismo tiempo, una ceguedad vidente," is ingeniously constructed for two reasons. First, he represents "los conceptos" as an abstract idea, an offspring of the faculty of understanding and "la intuición"<sup>30</sup> as experience of the senses of the external world, which is in reference to Kant's Transcendental Aesthetics in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Second, Kantian Transcendental Aesthetics is represented metaphorically by "oquedad llena" (referring to the people in the cave) and "ceguedad vidente" (referring to the second class nature of their knowledge [conocimiento] for considering shadows as real). By "una claridad perfectamente tenebrosa") Rodriguez is parodying Descartes epistemological standard of proof<sup>31</sup> in which Juan de Mairena assigns Kantian and Platonic epistemology to be superior to that of Descartes's.

Because our knowledge is not, as Descartes claims, to be asserted infallibly, Juan de Mairena concedes anybody's opinion to be valid. He says:

Nadie debe asustarse de lo que piensa, aunque su pensar aparezca en pugna con las leyes más elementales de la lógica. Porque todo ha de ser pensado

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<sup>30</sup> In this passage Juan de Mairena uses the term "intuition" according to how Kant explains it in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and not as Descartes refers to it in the *Regulae* where he says: "By intuition I understand, not the fluctuating testimony of the senses, nor the misleading judgment that proceeds from the blundering constructions of imagination, but the conception which an unclouded and attentive mind gives us so readily and distinctly that we are wholly freed from doubt about that which we understand." According to this passage, for Descartes "intuition" is a result of rationally and willed process of thought whereas for Kant "intuition" is a given a priori predisposition through which humans have subjective experience in space and time.

<sup>31</sup> According to Ron Lombardi, Descartes uses the phrase "clear and distinct" for the following purposes:

(a) To individuate objects; (b) to explain error; (c) to describe cognition; (d) to establish standards of evidence; and (e) to generalize the logical status of axioms in deductive systems. (Rule III, ¶5). In the *Principles*, Descartes explicitly defines and distinguishes clear and distinct ideas as follows: "I call 'clear' that perception which is present and manifest to an attentive mind: just as we say that we clearly see those things which are present to our intent eye and act upon it sufficiently strongly and manifestly. On the other hand, I call 'distinct', that perception which, while clear, is so separated and delineated from all others that it contains absolutely nothing except what is clear" (I, 45)." In the *Meditations*, the notion of clear and distinct ideas plays an additional role (besides providing an account of error): to provide standards of evidence which permit the application of rationalist epistemology/method to metaphysics.

(<http://frank.mtsu.edu/~rbombard/RB/Spinoza/cnd.html> 5/11/2009)

por alguien, y el mayor desatino puede ser un punto de vista de lo real. Que dos y dos sean necesariamente cuatro, es una opinión que muchos compartimos. Pero si alguien sinceramente piensa otra cosa, que lo diga. Aquí no nos asombramos de nada. Ni siquiera hemos de exigirle la prueba de su aserto, porque ello equivaldría a obligarle a aceptar las normas de nuestro pensamiento, en las cuales habrían de fundarse los argumentos que nos convencieran. Pero estas normas y estos argumentos sólo pueden probar nuestra tesis; de ningún modo la suya. Cuando se llega a una profunda disparidad de pareceres, el *onus probando* no incumbe realmente a nadie. (Juan de Mairena I 235).

The interchange between Juan de Mairena and Rodriguez is a good example of how Juan de Mairena approaches philosophy creatively. Rather than disclosing a new thought and painstakingly developing an idea into an expository analytic account, Juan de Mairena skillfully assembles and plays with an array of well known key philosophical notions like Kant's space and time in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Plato's Allegory of the Cave in *The Republic* and Descartes's famous phrase, "clear and distinct," in order to say that our knowledge (hence our reality) is not ultimate. According to Rodriguez's summary of the lesson learnt from concept and intuition, the most we can strive for, under the assumption that we cannot attain ultimate knowledge, is to put in practice principle and ideas we believe in life ("no hay manera de llenar un concepto sin la intuición"), then try to arrange and guide our actions through a set of principles that sort out priorities of what is most important and necessary in life: "ni de poner ojos a la intuición sin encajarla en el concepto."<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> This formula is a paraphrase from the earlier principle stated by Rodriguez: "[q]ue son vacíos los conceptos sin intuiciones, y ciegas las intuiciones sin los conceptos," which is almost a literal translation of the phrase that appears in the introduction to chapter II of Kant's "Transcendental Doctrine of Elements" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where Kant says:

Precisely, Juan de Mairena thinks such is the ultimate aim of his discursive activity:

Es cierto --decía proféticamente mi maestro-- que se avecinan guerras terribles, revoluciones cruentísimas, entre cuyas causas más hondas pudiéramos señalar, acaso, la discordancia entre la acción y sus postulados ideales, y una gran pugna entre la elementalidad y la cultura que anegue el mundo en una ingente ola de cinismo. Estamos abocados en una catástrofe moral de proporciones gigantescas, en la cual sólo queden en pie las virtudes cínicas. Los políticos tendrán que aferrarse a ellas. Nuestra misión es adelantarnos por nuestra inteligencia a devolver su dignidad de hombre al animal humano. He aquí el aspecto más profundamente didáctico de nuestra *Escuela Popular de Sabiduría Superior*. (Juan de Mairena I 272)

In the next section, Juan de Mairena's conception of space and time will play an important part in explaining his insistence that human reality is almost more parallel to the way

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Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind. (93)

The above sentences were given as a concluding remark of an explanation on intuition and understanding that says:

Our nature is so constituted that our intuition can never be other than sensible... The faculty, on the other hand, which enables us to think the object of sensible intuition, is the understanding. To neither of these powers may a preference be given over the other. Without sensibility no object would be given to us, without understanding no object would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind. (93)

Kant's explicit objection, here, to giving any "preference" to one over the other, namely, sensibility over conceptual understanding, and vice versa, is based on two motives, I gather, rather than a part of his philosophical explanation. First by not giving preference to any one of them he wants to stay neutral in the ongoing intellectual debate among radical schools of thought, of the eighteenth century, such as the empiricist, the idealist and the rationalist respectively, represented by Hume, Berkeley and Descartes. Second, by staying neutral he is indirectly accentuating his objective method of analysis, namely his critical and synthetic approach: Hence his three critiques. As Gilles Deleuze points out in his brief but concise study of Kant's three critiques in *La Philosophie Critique de Kant*, Kant himself considers understanding the only faculty that legislates in the mind (10). However, whether a preference is given or not in the actual mental process of cognition in the human mind, that is, in their *modus operandi*, one cannot exist without the other. Moreover, the effectiveness of each does not depend on preference; I mean by this that each operates in a different manner: whereas intuition as a form of sensibility is given and, thus, one cannot avoid sensing something when seeing and hearing, etc, for the faculty of the understanding to be effectual it must direct the will to see the point. In this sense, intuition has no merit whereas understanding has to a certain extent.

the poetical realm operates than to how events assimilate quantitative, sequential and logical behavior of objects in phenomena.

### **3.3 The relevance of “Nunca, nada, nadie” in relation to Juan de Mairena’s purpose in consolidating human reality and poetics in the same sphere based on their *modus operandi***

By placing human reality and poetics in the same sphere, Juan de Mairena is basically articulating that phenomenal reality is different from human reality, especially in light of the way each comports and operates. This is based on two attributes. First, there is the difference between human reality’s being internal (in the mind) and phenomena’s being external (spatiotemporal). Second, this being so, we can deduce from it that they are structurally distinct. Indeed, human reality comports according to various faculties of the mind, such as faculty of judgment, understanding, memory, imagination (analytic or rational), and their active attributes, consciousness, intentionality, will and so forth, whereas phenomena behave according to physical laws. Human reality grows by strengthening and maturing in character, being neither mechanistic nor lineally progressive; in the process of growth forgetfulness is essential. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena reminds his students of his teacher Abel Martín’s concept of forgetfulness. He says:

Mi maestro exaltaba el valor poético del olvido, fiel a su metafísica. En ella --conviene recordarlo-- era el olvido uno de los <<siete reversos, aspectos de la nada o formas del gran Cero>>. Merced al olvido puede el poeta --pensaba mi maestro-- arrancar las raíces de su espíritu, enterradas en el suelo de lo anecdótico y trivial, para amarrarlas, más ondas, en el subsuelo o roca viva del sentimiento, el

cual no es ya evocador, sino --en apariencia, al menos-- alumbrador de formas nuevas. Porque sólo la creación apasionada triunfa el olvido... (*Juan de Mairena I 117*).

It should be noted that ‘gran Cero’ in contrast to ‘nadie’ refers to human beings in a positive sense due to its qualitative essentiality. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says that what God has created, referring to the creation of man in Genesis, is ‘Nada’:

Dios no podía ser el creador del mundo, puesto que el mundo es un aspecto de la misma divinidad; que la verdadera creación divina fue la Nada, como ya había enseñado en otra ocasión... <<Dios no se tomó el trabajo de hacer nada, porque nada tenía que hacer antes de su creación definitiva. Lo que pasó, sencillamente, fue que Dios vio el caos, lo encontró bien y dijo: “Te llamaremos Mundo. “Esto fue todo.>>

La verdad es que el caos --decía mi maestro-- no existe más que en nuestra cabeza. Allí lo hemos hecho nosotros --bien trabajosamente-- por nuestro afán inmoderado, propio de viejos dómines --¿Qué otra cosa somos?--, de ordenar antes de traducir. (*Juan de Mairena I 333*).

For Juan de Mairena the elaboration of phenomena through modernity, like Borges’s quote from “Discusión” at the beginning of chapter 1, is really the creation of chaos, in the sense that we have produced something that we cannot control.

Juan de Mairena’s reckoning that human reality essentially corresponds with poetry is fundamental for understanding his socio-human epistemology. In the following passage Juan de Mairena considers and distinguishes the problematic nature that the mind, having a modus operandi different from phenomena, has to adapt and conform to the sequential and

chronological process of phenomena. This is to say, while in phenomena there are a set of laws that cannot be contradicted such as the past date and place, in human reality, which operates from the mind, the past constantly influences the present and also the expectation one has about the future. In this sense, in human reality the past is not separated from the present but corroborated with the present with a view of the future which does not yet exist. Precisely it is this flexible aspect of human reality, its possibility to transcend the barriers of time and space and the ability to entertain and juxtapose even incongruity and absurdity in imagination, expectation and memory that leads Juan de Mairena to consider that poetry and human reality share a common ground.

Cierto que lo pasado es, como tal pasado, inmodificable; quiero decir que si he nacido en viernes, ya es imposible de toda imposibilidad que haya venido al mundo en cualquier otro día de la semana. Pero esto es una verdad estéril de pur[a] lógica, aunque nos sirva para hombearnos con los dioses, los cuales fracasarían como nosotros si intentasen cambiar la fecha de nuestro natalicio. ¿Algo más? Que siempre es interesante averiguar lo que fue. Conformes. Mas, para nosotros, lo pasado es lo que vive en la memoria de alguien, y en cuanto actúa en una conciencia, por ende incorporado a un presente, y en constante función de porvenir. Visto así --y no es ningún absurdo que así lo veamos--, lo pasado es materia de infinita plasticidad, apta para recibir las más variadas formas. Por eso yo no me limito a disuadiros de un *snobismo* de papanatas que aguarda la novedad caída del cielo, la cual sería una abrumadora vejez cósmica, sino que os aconsejo una incursión en vuestro pasado vivo, que por sí mismo se modifica, y que vosotros debéis, con plena conciencia, corregir, aumentar,

depurar, someter a nueva estructura, hasta convertirlo en una verdadera creación vuestra. A este pasado llamo yo *apócrifo*, para distinguirlo del otro, del pasado irreparable que investiga la historia y que sería el auténtico: el pasado que pasó o pasado propiamente dicho. Mas si vosotros pensáis que un apócrifo que se declara deja de ser tal, puesto que nada oculta, para convertirse en puro juego o mera ficción, llamadle ficticio, fantástico, hipotético, como queráis; no hemos de discutir por palabras. (*Juan de Mairena I 221-222*)

The very last casual phrase “no hemos de discutir por palabras” is in fact a critical statement that speaks against a developing philosophical school, namely the Vienna Circle and subsequently the Logical Positivists. Specifically the phrase stands against the embedded intention in *Principia Mathematica*<sup>33</sup> written by Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell. In a way, *Principia* follows Descartes’s and Newton’s footsteps in that it wanted to create a quantitative foundation for language through logical mathematics. One of the consequences of this is the objectification of language. What this entails in a way is to give language autonomy, which means language can exist as a system of signs independently from humans. As was quoted earlier, to distinguish scientific language from socio-human derived language, Juan de Mairena in the present analysis parodies ‘esperanto’<sup>34</sup>, an artificially created language, with political correctness in mind, calling upon Virgil’s Latin to do so:

El libro de la Naturaleza –habla Galileo—está escrito en lengua  
matemática. Como si dijéramos: el latín de Virgilio está escrito en esperanto. Que  
no os escandalicen mis palabras. (*Juan de Mairena I 333*)

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<sup>33</sup> *Principia Mathematica* was first published in three volumes in 1910, 1912 and 1913.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Esperanto’ is an artificial language put together by the Polish oculist L.L. Zamenhof in 1887. It was created to function as a neutral international language. In his *Fundamento de Esperanto* published in 1905 he shows its “basic principles of language structure and formation.” <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/192713/Esperanto> August 5th, 2012

Objecting to this Juan de Mairena plainly says:

El que no habla a un hombre, no habla al hombre; el que no habla al hombre, no habla a nadie. (*Juan de Mairena I 353*)

The pseudo syllogism above emphasizes subtly two things, aside from the fact that it attaches more importance to *parole* than *langue*. First, by saying “if you do not speak to a particular human being, you are not speaking to the man and if you are not speaking to the man then you are speaking to no one,” he is stressing that language is a tool for human interaction. Second, by saying so, he is underlining that language is a derivation of collective human reality, which is composed of individual human beings, and not something that can be devised by any one person<sup>35</sup> for the rest of humanity. In a way, the reference to “al hombre” goes beyond the various forms of the term ‘hombre’ as it will appear in the next passage, “al hombre *in genere* y al hombre individual, al hombre esencial y al hombre empíricamente....” But it also refers, in a way, to the Son of Man with reference to Jesus in the *New Testament*. This is the reason why he says the following, especially the last phrase:

Para decir bien hay que pensar bien, y para pensar bien conviene elegir temas muy esenciales, que logren por sí mismos captar nuestra atención, estimular nuestros esfuerzos, conmovernos, apasionarnos y hasta sorprendernos. Conviene, además no distinguir demasiado entre la Retórica y la Sofística y el pensar reflexivo, a propósito de lo humano y de lo divino. (*Juan de Mairena I 123*)

By saying “Conviene...no distinguir demasiado entre...lo humano y de lo divino” in the verbalization of fine thought through language, Juan de Mairena is, in a way, articulating that language, especially moral language, is not a phenomenal product but derives from God. In this

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<sup>35</sup> See ‘Esperanto’ in footnote on page 165.

sense, Juan de Mairena is implying in part that Spanish as a language is an outcome of its culture, which besides being Greco-roman is also Christian. This is the reason why he says to his students, quoting his teacher Abel Martín:

Dios revelado o desvelado en el corazón del hombre es una otredad muy otra, una otredad inmanente, algo terrible como el ver demasiado cerca la cara de Dios. Porque es allí en el corazón del hombre, donde se toca y se padece otra otredad divina, donde Dios se revela al descubrirse, simplemente al mirarnos, como un *tú de todos*, objeto de comunión amorosa, que de ningún modo puede ser un *alter ego* --la superfluidad no es pensable como atributo divino--, sino un *Tú que es Él*. (*Juan de Mairena I 253*)

Emphasizing the fact that there is no objective human being but only particular individual human beings, Juan de Mairena says:

Nosotros no pretendemos nunca educar a las masas. A las masas que las parta un rayo. Nos dirigimos al hombre, que es lo único que nos interesa; al hombre en todos los sentidos de la palabra: al hombre *in genere* y al hombre individual, al hombre esencial y al hombre empíricamente dado en circunstancias de lugar y tiempo, sin excluir al animal humano en sus relaciones con la naturaleza. Pero el hombre masa no existe para nosotros. Aunque el concepto masa pueda aplicarse adecuadamente a cuanto alcanza volumen y materia, no sirve para ayudarnos a definir al hombre, porque esa noción fisicomatemática no contiene un átomo de humanidad... (*Juan de Mairena I 273*)

The placing of poetry and human reality in the same sphere entails, in a way, that rationality and logic are not essentially part of human reality, but are sorting and organizing mental devices which are useful for going about phenomena; this is to say, as mentioned earlier, the mind takes in the *modus operandi* of the external world and assimilates functionally the way events occur and objects behave according to the laws that govern their structure. The reason rationality and logic have obtained such a prominent position within human reality and have become a second nature to human thought process is because, as Heidegger indicates in the “The Spiegel Interview,” humans no longer live in nature but upon the platform of ‘technology.’ By the latter Heidegger means that human reality adjusts its *modus operandi* according to the way modern city is organized and operate by assimilation. Hence in such a reality, humans’s *modus vivendi* inevitably reflects the *modus operandi* of the modern city.<sup>36</sup> Likewise human *modus vivendi* would reflect nature’s *modus operandi* if they were to interact with the natural environment.<sup>37</sup> This is the reason why Juan de Mairena thinks that modern reality is conceived ideally and projected rationally unto phenomena:

Vivimos en un mundo esencialmente apócrifo, en un cosmos o poemas de nuestro pensar, ordenado o construido todo él sobre supuestos indemostrables, postulados de nuestra razón, que llaman principios de la lógica, los cuales, reducidos al principio de identidad que los resume y reasume a todos, constituyen un solo magnífico supuesto: el que afirma que todas las cosas, por el mero hecho de ser pensadas, permanecen inmutables, ancladas, por decirlo así, en el río de

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<sup>36</sup> Though the modern city was conceived in imagination, as pointed out earlier, it has structural assimilation to the mechanics or workings of the human body.

<sup>37</sup> Nature’s *modus operandi* is based on habitualness and circularity and there is no strict logical reason for the way it is or the way it operates.

Heráclito. Lo apócrifo de nuestro mundo se prueba por la existencia de la lógica, por la necesidad de poner el pensamiento de acuerdo consigo mismo, de forzarlo, en cierto modo, a que sólo vea lo supuesto o puesto por él, con exclusión de todo lo demás. Y el hecho --digámoslo de pasada-- de que nuestro mundo esté todo él cimentado sobre un supuesto que pudiera ser falso, es algo terrible, o consolador.

Según se mire... (*Juan de Mairena I* 195-196)

By placing human reality and poetry in the same sphere Juan de Mairena goes beyond Hume's contention against all forms of rationalism that rationality is merely a calculating instrument for thought. It is worth remembering here the problem faced by Wittgenstein<sup>38</sup> in the *Tractatus Logicus Philosophicus* where he claimed that language (therefore the configuration of mind) encompassed the same logical structure as phenomena. The later Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations* would reject this and recognize that linguistic logical structure and the objects in space and time behave differently, especially in the case of human reality. When rationality is adopted as criteria for reality, the human spirit forcefully adjusts to the way phenomena work; that is, once the faculty of rationality is given the authority to determine what

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<sup>38</sup> In the post *Tractatus* thoughts of Ludwig Wittgenstein (where he attempts to analyze the ordinary use of language) though he rejects the positivist approach of *Tractatus* he still does not distinguish between people and objects when it comes to designating with numbers. For example he says there are two ways to define words: verbally and ostensibly. However for some intangible words such as numbers, he says, that we use in everyday life, it seems particularly cumbersome when asked what they mean. Wittgenstein thinks that the meaning of even such an abstract concept has to be found in the use of the word. He says in the *Blue Book* "someone is sent to the grocer with a slip of paper with the words 'five apples' written on it. The use of the word *in practice* is its meaning." (69). According to this example, if the person brings five apples back from the grocer, the meaning of "five" would have been achieved. Wittgenstein doesn't discriminate against using numbers between people or things as long as numbers indicate the intended quantity. However, for Juan de Mairena numbers are restricted, in the prescriptive sense, to objects since he does not believe in quantification, equation and homogeneity in humans. For Juan de Mairena numbers can only be used descriptively and strictly as adjective when dealing with people, to describe them, for example. And as such, for Juan de Mairena a particular person whose name is a Pedro cannot be referred to as "uno" or "un hombre" in the generic form because it would be placing a person in the same category as inanimate objects. For Juan de Mairena, a person, is distinct and unique within the variety of its specie, but contains potentially in essence (like a formula of circle has all the circles) all of humankind. Hence a person cannot be exchanged or treated as a means to an end.

is real, it is expected that lineal, progressive and logical sequence of thought rule out all other forms as a corruption. Borges, in accord with Juan de Mairena, parodies in *Ficciones* the rational orientation of modernity's modus operandi in "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," which means third planet, referring to Earth in the Solar System, in order to distinguish people's reality versus phenomena:

La percepción de una humareda en el horizonte y después del campo incendiado y después del cigarro a medio apagar que produjo la quemazón es considerada un ejemplo de asociación de ideas.

Este monismo o idealismo total invalida la ciencia. Explicar (o juzgar) un hecho es unirlo a otro; esa vinculación en Tlön, es un estado posterior del sujeto, que no puede afectar o iluminar el estado anterior. Todo estado mental es irreductible: el mero hecho de nombrarlo --*id est*, de clasificarlo—importa un falseo. De ello cabría deducir que no hay ciencia en Tlön ni siquiera razonamiento. (*Ficciones* 21-23)

For Juan de Mairena a human being that can distinguish him/herself from phenomenal reality is able to recognize him/herself as a being that is volitional and exists in a form of intensity of emotion.

Cuando un hombre algo reflexivo--decía mi maestro-- se mira por dentro, comprende la absoluta imposibilidad de ser juzgado con mediano acierto por quienes lo miran por fuera, que son todos los demás, y la imposibilidad en que él se encuentra de decir cosa de provecho cuando pretende juzgar a su vecino. Y lo terrible es que las palabras se han hecho para juzgarnos unos a otros. (*Juan de Mairena I* 226)

The last sentence “las palabras se han hecho para juzgarnos unos a otros” refers in a general sense to language’s tendency to claim or assert something objectively in its function to distinguish, identify, declare and allege. But the specific reference of ‘palabras’ in the sentence is in the use of the verb as the nucleus of the predicate, linking the subject and predicate to be able to make a propositional claim. This is the reason why, according to Juan de Mairena, Abel Martín had a habit of disregarding and not stressing the verb:

Por cierto, que el autógrafo de mi maestro está escrito *vee*, del verbo arcaico *veer*. El cajista debió corregirlo, y mi maestro respetó la corrección, como era su costumbre, renunciando al propósito de llamar la atención sobre el verbo. (*Juan de Mairena I* 196-197)

Again, Borges creates a similar verbal play in “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius.” He says:

El mundo para ellos no es un concurso de objetos en el espacio; es una serie heterogénea de actos independientes. Es sucesivo, temporal, no espacial. No hay sustantivos en la conjetural *Ursprache* de Tlön, de las que proceden de idiomas <<actuales>> y los dialectos: hay verbos impersonales, calificados por sufijos (o prefijos) monosilábicos de valor adverbial... (*Ficciones* 21)

In the following fragment Antonio Machado shows that the problem is precisely the fact that we have become obsessed with controlling what is outside of us, especially people, and as a result created material reality and subjected the soul to its rule and scrutiny; and by prioritizing material progress, we have invested all our attention and effort to its promotion, expansion, elaboration and precision neglecting, the basic needs of the soul, which is fundamentally a relationship with other living beings and a bi-lateral exchange of care (giving and receiving attention and good will, not necessarily corresponding to the same person). Juan de Mairena

thinks there is no benefit for humans and nature from such endeavor in itself without thinking about bringing benefit to humanity because the most we can achieve from it is to figure out the mechanical side of human existence, which is not what the human is about nor would humans benefit from such accomplishment. This is why he says:

El hombre es el único animal que quiere salvarse, sin confiar para ello en el curso de la Naturaleza. Todas las potencias de su espíritu tienden a ello, se enderezan a este fin. El hombre quiere ser otro. He aquí lo específicamente humano. Aunque su propia lógica y natural sofística lo encierren en la más estrecha concepción solipsística, su mónada solitaria no es nunca pensada por autosuficiente, sino como nostalgia de lo otro, paciente de una incurable alteridad.  
*(Juan de Mairena I 323)*

This tendency of the external world mirroring internally (the internal universe not being spatial), not only in the sense of perceptual input but in terms of coexistence, seemed to have been not so strange for Saint Ambrose, for whom human souls have hands: “The soul has hands which know how to touch – *manus animæ quæ bene tangunt* – as it appears in *Expositio psalmi CXVIII*, one of the most polished of his writings<sup>39</sup>. Saint Ambrose’s “soul’s hands” are not abstract or symbolic but, to an extent, literal in the sense that they can reach out to beings in the external world through internal maneuvers that is, through intentions expressed in the form of action and words toward any human recipient. But these “soul’s hands” like monads, are not physical hands but spiritual, and like monads they can oversee events in space and time.

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<sup>39</sup> Quoted from <http://www.stceciliabbe.org.uk/site.php?menuaccess=5> and also on <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.iii.vi.html> July 19th, 2011

Given that for Juan de Mairena the external world is just a common ground that is there in order to accommodate object's and entity's relations, what is essentially real for Juan de Mairena resides in the experience of the relationship with the self and with other living entities, whether in the moment when the meeting occurs or as an ongoing *liaison* in the background of consciousness<sup>40</sup>. In part, this is due to the consideration that, on the formal level, Juan de Mairena agrees in part with Leibniz in that the most essential part of the human being does not manifest itself physically but, like a 'monad,' is not tangible and does not comport in accord with any physical laws, not being made out of any material substance. However, for Juan de Mairena, the essence of the inner self is more than those features characteristic of monads; for Juan de Mairena, the inner self is essentially an affective being that necessitates the other and is always looking to connect with the other due to a preconditioned internal yearning that Heidegger refers to as 'sorge'<sup>41</sup> in his *Sein und Zeit*; for Heidegger, however, 'sorge' is not a preconditioned internal characteristic. Rather, for him 'sorge' is a 'disclosure' that relates to the inner worry about reality and the future state that can affect the individual.

One of the reasons why Juan de Mairena compares the inner self with the soul-like substance "monad" is because he thinks there is a more intimate self who distinguishes the social and metaphysical within each individual. "Monads should not be confused with atoms" because a 'monad' is not physically verifiable like an atom; moreover, "monads are not part of the bodies in the way that atoms are parts of the bodies" (*Leibniz's Metaphysics of Space and Time* 153-154). Hence, according to Leibniz, the laws of the physical world don't control monads. A

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<sup>40</sup> As it was explained in the introduction to Chapter 1, specifically as contained in Sartre's term "experience of nothingness."

<sup>41</sup> 'Sorge' means "care, concern, solicitude."  
[http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9780631190950\\_chunk\\_g97806311909506\\_ss1-1](http://www.blackwellreference.com/public/tocnode?id=g9780631190950_chunk_g97806311909506_ss1-1)  
August 1st, 2012.

‘monad’ is a simple, non-extended substance which has no part or window, and it is also indivisible in the sense that it is not at all tangible. Besides the inner self, there are various social and personal profiles assumed, constructed and attributed to oneself, which he calls ‘máscara’, underneath the bare self.

Procurad, sin embargo, los que vais para políticos, que vuestra máscara sea, en lo posible, obra vuestra; hacéosla vosotros mismos, para evitar que os la pongan- que os la impongan- vuestros enemigos o vuestros correligionarios; y no la hagáis tan rígida, tan impositiva e impenetrable que os sofoque el rostro, porque, más tarde o más temprano, hay que dar la cara. (A. Machado “Juan de Mairena I” 92)

This inner self that Antonio Machado calls ‘yo hondo’ is like Socrates’s inner voice<sup>42</sup> or Kant’s ‘noumena’ or thing-in-itself, and it cannot be pin pointed or defined since it has only a conceptual position without a phenomenal reference, and so it is not subject to observation or analysis, though he shies away from comparing his ‘yo hondo’ directly with Socrates’s inner voice:

Llevo conmigo un diablo – no el demonio de Sócrates –, sino un diablejo que me tacha a veces lo que escribo, para escribir encima lo contrario de lo tachado; que a veces habla por mí y otras yo por él, cuando no hablamos los dos a par, para decir en coro cosas distintas. (105)

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<sup>42</sup> Some critics have compared Socrates’ inner voice with the Holy Spirit in the sense of being a messenger, guiding Socrates into the right path according to his moral beliefs. This comparison, though can be useful synchronically in creating an analogic reference and making some sense, becomes problematic theologically, especially in light of Holy Spirit’s anachronism, since it was first mentioned in the Gospels four Centuries after Socrates. For our purposes, we will refer to the “inner voice” as an unaffected conscious voice that does not think or calculate about the self as *ego* based on the convenience of convention in phenomena but thinks in relation to principles and duty, especially in response to moral principles. In this synchronic sense, but each sharing a common purpose of persuading to conform to a moral principle, ‘yo hondo,’ ‘inner voice’ and ‘noumena’ can be interchangeably referred to as the inner self.

The reason Juan de Mairena denies his voice being equal to Socrates's inner voice is because Juan de Mairena's voice can interrupt when he is writing as opposed to Socrates's voice, which can interrupt when Socrates is speaking. However, it is present with the self and always tries to influence the will according to its inner constitution. This inner self exists together with the phenomenally constructed self that has a body and a social identity but is less affected by the normative or prescriptive world, and it always looks for the essential truth in everything:

Este hondo espectador, que retrocede ante todas las cosas para nunca confundirse con ellas, crea a imagen y semejanza suya el mundo eleático, el de las normas inmutables, el de las ideas platónicas... (*Los Complementarios* 122)

This inner self often speaks out and assumes and leads the poetic voice in Machado's lyrical creation. In fact, throughout *Juan de Mairena* the inner voice comes and goes, and it would not be an exaggeration to say that Antonio Machado's entire *oeuvre* is dominated by this 'yo hondo' which always looks for authenticity and truth in every aspect of human life and reality.

In conclusion, Juan de Mairena thinks the framework of human reality, that is the process, derives from human experience, but the value system that guides human dealings and gives meaning to the process has been conceived ideally. Juan de Mairena does not attach the existence of the physical world to human perception as Berkeley does, nor does he agree with Newton, who thinks that space and time exist independently either from the perceiver or objects. Nor does Juan de Mairena agree with Kant that space and time are a priori intuitions belonging to the form of the mind. Rather Juan de Mairena thinks that the physical world exists in relation to space and time but not as part of perception<sup>43</sup> but as part of a posteriori network of

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<sup>43</sup> Antonio Machado does not agree with the Kantian notions of space and time in that for Machado the epistemological grounds of the objective world, that is the perception we have of the external world as we know it,

relationships with the other. However, what gives significance to reality is not just sense data, that is, the supposed objective scientific information of the physical world. He thinks that the core of human existence lays in the practice of the human value system. This is the reason why he says:

En nuestra lógica –habla Mairena a sus alumnos—no se trata de poner el pensamiento de acuerdo consigo mismo, lo que para nosotros, carece de sentido; pero sí de ponerlo en contacto o en relación con todo lo demás. No sabemos, en verdad, cual sea, en nuestra lógica, la significación del principio de identidad, por cuanto no podemos probar que nada permanezca idéntico a sí mismo, ni siquiera nuestro pensamiento, puesto que no hay manera de pensar una cosa igual a sí misma sin perderla dos veces, y , por ende, como dos cosas distintas, numéricamente al menos.

En nuestra lógica carece de sentido afirmar que el todo sea mayor que la parte, como ya demostramos o pretendimos demostrar. Porque nuestro pensar pretende ser pensar de lo infinito, y lo infinito, o no tiene partes, o, si las tiene, son también infinitas, y no puede haber un infinito mayor que otro. Esto de ningún modo... (*Juan de Mairena I 206*)

This is to say, though human beings exist corporeally like other sensible beings and hard objects that are subject to the same spatiotemporal condition, human experience is particular to its own contextual manifestation and culture. And because of these internal and fundamental differences

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does not depend on our structural cognitive capacity, whereas for Kant the notions of space and time when we perceive the external world are given or provided from the perceptual form the mind has in relation to cognition and the external world.

between what are in the external world and human beings, Juan de Mairena thinks that human reality and poetry share the same realm.

### **I. The meaning of socio-human epistemology in *Juan de Mairena***

Juan de Mairena does not object to Abel Martín position on the characterization of the human race as “la radical heterogeneidad del ser.” Consequently, Juan de Mairena thinks that every human being is unique and different.<sup>44</sup> He thinks that by his/her very variation each person contributes just by his or her existence alone to the possibility of human reality; for this possibility to actualize into human reality there must be human interaction because for Juan de Mairena human reality ontologically and epistemologically is no other than the context created by the interaction of two individuals. A person alone then cannot create human reality because human reality is nothing but the socialization of two human beings. In relation to this idea, Michael Holquist notes in the introductory note in *Speech, Genres and Other Late Essays* that for Bakhtin “[o]ur very status as the subjects of our lives depends on the necessary presence of other subjects” (xix). But for Juan de Mairena, presence alone of the other does not create human reality. In order to have human reality there has to be a kind of ‘meeting of beings’ actualized in space and time. It is only through interaction with other human beings in phenomena that human reality is born. Human being as an autonomous agent in the sense of self-legislative and self-reliant rests only in respect to moral principle in an administrative capacity of the self to comply or not with moral imperatives through the use of will. In this sense, the duty to self is a derivative aspect of moral outlook in that morality presupposes a context of human reality in which there is

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<sup>44</sup> Unique and different in each person in “la radical heterogeneidad del ser” refers to each person’s physical appearance, individual personality and also the essence of each individual being in the sense that there cannot be two exactly equal things in phenomena, the last by default because we cannot provide an empirical proof of the state of each essence. This in part is based on the assumption laid out in Leibniz’s principle of identity of indiscernibles that no two distinct things exactly resemble each other in phenomena.

interaction of at least two people since moral action cannot be achieved without an indirect object.

One of the main features of human interaction with each other is its bilateral disposition: “meeting of beings” precisely refers to the bilateral exchange of experience, emotion and concern which can go back and forth, independently of correspondence. Antonio Machado most likely gave the title *Los Complementarios* to his personal notebook, which was later published in book form, precisely to stress the fact that an individual by itself is an incomplete human being and consequently to highlight the indispensable need to keep in touch with the other. This is the reason why for Juan de Mairena the other becomes not only a necessary being in order to create human reality but also a collaborator in the possible achievement of culture and the setting of a value system whether it has a positive or negative outcome as an indispensable complementary condition to human reality. This is the reason why he quotes the Latin comedic playwright Terencio:

Nada humano es ajeno a mí<sup>45</sup> (*Juan de Mairena I* 198)

Juan de Mairena thinks that within this socio-human context a human oriented culture has to be devised so that each individual can direct his or her self in a form that can enrich human reality.

La cultura debe ser para los más, debe llegar a todos; antes de propagarla será preciso hacerla. (134)

Juan de Mairena thinks that such is the task of poets, namely to create and motivate humanity to be of service to itself by creating a culture with a value system that grounds its priorities for

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<sup>45</sup> Ferrer cites in the footnote Terencio’s original writing in Latin from which Juan de Mairena gives a paraphrased version: <<Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto.>> (“Soy hombre; nada de lo que es humano lo considero ajeno a mí.”) Terencio, *Heautontimorumenos*, acto I, escena I, v. 77. (*Juan de Mairena I* 198).

improving the condition of life in compliance to human reality and nature. In this sense, poetry and philosophy are not only complementary but they are inseparable, although conceptually and under academic specialization they can be analyzed independently. Hence for Juan de Mairena a poet or philosopher is either a poet-philosopher or philosopher-poet. He says:

La filosofía, vista desde la razón ingenua, es, como decía Hegel, el mundo al revés. La poesía, en cambio --añadía mi maestro Abel Martín-- es el reverso de la filosofía, el mundo visto, al fin, del derecho. Este *al fin*, comenta Juan de Mairena, revela el pensamiento un tanto gedeónico de mi maestro: <<Para ver del derecho hay que haber visto antes de revés.>> O vice versa. (*Juan de Mairena I 93*)

What Juan de Mairena is indicating here is that while philosophy and poetry each have different approaches they both have the same purpose, namely to explain the meaning of life and reality, which are inseparable, just as epistemology and ontology cannot be separated in their modus operandi in the mind's constitution. Following are some of the characteristic tendencies of each discipline:

Characteristic tendencies:

**Philosophy:** Analytical, deductive, demonstrative, exegetical, systematic, theoretical, expository, logical, prescriptive, orderly, methodical, rational, metaphysical, objective, general, distant, explicative, explicit, discursive, denotative, investigative, informative, declarative, illustrative...

**Poetry:** Synthetic, inductive, concrete, lyrical, interpretative, figurative, rhetorical, metaphorical, passionate, descriptive, emotional, existential, subjective, personal,

involved, implicit, revealing, evolving, unfolding, connotative, allegorical, graphic, interpretive...

Juan de Mairena is a hybrid of the two disciplines above but more inclined to the poetic side, and so he is a poet-philosopher (70/30). Plato, who he considered to be the model, on the other hand, is philosopher-poet (70/30) and plus and minus depending on the particular text, except the *Laws*<sup>46</sup> which are supposed to be his last work and the least poetic. As can be noted above, every one of the features of the disciplines is means to an end. However, by poet, Juan de Mairena is not referring to any type of poet. For him, as stated above, poetry has the same objective as philosophy, and because of this any artist with a poet's tendency who does not engage in the practice of language in the manner which the use of words leads to this fruition is an unapt poet. In this sense, Juan de Mairena, in a way, concurs partially with Plato's criticism of poets in *The Republic* where Plato disapproves of their negligence in bestowing negative human characteristics to the ancient Greek gods, who by virtue of being superior were supposed to show attributes that can positively influence humans to become better as human beings. For Juan de Mairena, poets who do not contribute by speaking the truth about life, human condition and reality are not suitable as constructive contributors to the making of 'culture' that can shed light on humanity. Among his contemporaries, he has a specific author in mind: Vicente Huidobro and his Creacionismo. He says:

Bajo la abigarrada imaginaria de los poetas novísimos se adivina un juego arbitrario de conceptos, no de intuiciones. Todo eso será muy nuevo (si lo es) y muy ingenioso, pero no es lírica. El más absurdo fetichismo en que puede incurrir un poeta, es el culto de las metáforas.

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<sup>46</sup> Some scholars think that *Laws* was not written by Plato.

Vicente Huidobro:  
 Horizon carré (Leida)  
 Ecuatorial (id)  
 Poemas artísticos (pedir a Pueyo).  
 (*Los Complementarios* 172)

The phrase “un juego arbitrario de conceptos” in the above passage does not only imply theoretical play of words; it also involves the use of language which has no correspondence to human reality. And it is precisely in this aspect that Antonio Machado criticizes the *nouveau* poetic tendency of Creacionismo. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says:

...soy un profesor de Retórica, cuya misión no es formar oradores, sino, por el contrario, hombres que hablen bien siempre que tengan algo bueno que decir, de ningún modo he de enseñaros a decorar la vaciedad de vuestros pensamientos.  
 (*Juan de Mairena I* 310)

Continuing with the topic of human reality, for Juan de Mairena an individual cannot fully become a human being by himself because an individual needs the other in order to realize his or her full potential in life. This is to say, for Juan de Mairena, the other becomes the source of discovery and understanding of the self as a human being in whose finding the meaning of life opens, or ‘discloses’ in Heideggerian terminology; that is to say, the other becomes a reference for feedback for both aesthetics and morality. But whereas in Heidegger ‘disclosure’ is the result of interaction with the world in which the other is simply a part, in Juan de Mairena the other is the whole world. Moreover, Hegel’s relationship of the self-consciousness and the other in the recognition process, as it appears in chapter 4 in *Phenomenology of Spirit*, cannot be applied to Juan de Mairena’s ontological and epistemological socio-human configuration for the very

reason that for Hegel the self and the other are in a form of struggle for power; this is to say, they are not on equal terms; although a form of dependency is there, it exists in a context of stronger and weaker relationship in which struggle the self concedes or gains leadership over the other. In this framework Hegel's self and the other relationship subsists in a form of Darwinian survival, not of life and death but in a relationship of affiliation between dependent and sovereign which Hegel calls "master and slave" attachment. Besides the difference of Hegel's consideration of the human being essentially as a political and historical animal, Hegel's analysis of process of the self-recognition is problematic because it takes linguistic analysis as containing full empirical epistemology of the self posited in the 'I' –when it turns to itself for knowledge. This can be contrasted with Juan de Mairena's 'I,' who recognizes that there is no knowledge of the 'I,' before coming to contact with the other. For Juan de Mairena, evaluating empirically the linguistic 'I' by him/herself, that is the mind, would exist completely at physical wants and desire's disposition: like he said before referring to Bergson's intuitions "seríamos esclavos de la ciega corriente vital" (*Los Complementarios* 122). Because of the realization of incompleteness of oneself by him/herself, one seeks in the other knowledge of the self, not directly, but as consequence of interaction with the other. Hence, human reality for Juan de Mairena is no other than society (without personal, institutional or even spatial dependency) in the sense of a collective unit of humans that play the role of practitioner of values set in culture in their interaction with each other. In this aspect, the word 'socio' of the composite term 'socio-human' in the dissertation title does not have root in the word 'society' in the sense of organized community, institution or nation but rather in the Latin word *socius* in the sense of 'fellow' as a noun and 'sharing' as a transitive verb, not of any external object but of their humanity. The word 'socio' in Spanish is little troublesome to refer to as 'socius' because, according to the way

it is used, it supposes a relationship of complicity against something or someone because it links closeness of relationship based on some mutual interest. This reliance on the other in order for a person to become complete as a human being is not based on an option of will but is due to an internal necessity. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena uses the term “sed<sup>47</sup>” to designate the dire need in “la sed metafísica de lo esencialmente otro.” As noted before, this internal necessity which creates the opportunity for gaining access to oneself through the other is linked with the idea of ‘care’ in a way Heidegger denotes the term ‘sorge’ in *Being and Time*. As will be shown when ‘amor’ and ‘esperar’ are analyzed next, Heidegger’s ‘sorge,’ though relevant as positive input in human reality, is contained within phenomenal condition and cannot transcend death as a final culmination of life. This is because Heidegger’s epistemology is limited to phenomena and takes the present circumstance in which the subject exists as the sole reality. Concerning human neglect of the self since the inception of modernity he says:

Pero a nosotros nos falló la fe protagórica en el hombre como medida universal, y no pusimos, hasta la fecha, nuestro robusto ingenio a su servicio. Era una fe demasiado inteligente, que no se recomendaba por el gesto y el talante. Nos apartamos de ella a *medio desdén*, como dice Lope:

Puesta la mano en la espada

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<sup>47</sup> Of the four basic needs to sustain life: food, shelter, water, and oxygen what can terminate life in the shortest period after oxygen is water. Antonio Machado’s use of thirst is used not with the emphasis of what is most immediately needed to live, but rather with the idea of creating a context in which the need for survival is based on the search. Hence, the emphasis is on the search and not on the physical survival. Moreover, the objective of the search is gaining insight to the meaning of life through the other.

o en el crucifijo, que dicen otros. El ademán garboso nos ha perdido. Yo os aconsejo que habléis siempre con las manos en el bolsillo. (*Juan de Mairena I* 229)

## **II. Juan de Mairena's socio-human epistemology in relation to action and orientation in phenomena and analysis of the concepts 'esperar' and 'velad' based on faith as what can create hope beyond the terminal phenomenal condition**

In the following passage of *Los Complementarios*, Antonio Machado weighs pragmatic actions that conform to survival in phenomena or that will follow a moral law in relation to human orientation in life.

Con la intuición bergsoniana se sigue rindiendo culto a las potencias tenebrosas y místicas del siglo XIX. De ella se pretende extraer la luz que alumbra lo esencial.

A mi juicio, el gran pecado de la filosofía moderna consiste en que nadie se atreve a ser escéptico.

Es cierto que la inteligencia no puede alcanzar la última realidad; mas no es cierto que haya otro medio de llegar a ella.

(*Los Complementarios* 120)

“Intuición” in the above passage refers to actions that are practical for survival in phenomena whereas “culto a las potencias tenebrosas y místicas”<sup>48</sup> have reference to modernization. The theoretical thinking here is not the idealization of the world. That is exactly what he is opposing

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<sup>48</sup> Antonio Machado's criticism of modernization here should be understood in the context of technology having the same goal as magic in that both strive to control what is outside of themselves. This is the reason behind his use of the terms “tenebrosas y místicas.”

in modernization. By theoretical thinking he is referring to a way of life in conformity to a moral principle. Moreover, Juan de Mairena's epistemological position about knowledge of the external world presupposes two stages, an antecedent and a consequent, beside the assumption that certain conceptual notions are a priori. First, he thinks that we begin to acquire knowledge of the external world inductively through experience, but the lessons learned by experience can only teach us what is practical for living. That is to say, whereas for all other animals what they learn through experience would have been enough to maintain and uphold life, Antonio Machado sees experience alone as insufficient as a guide in human life. Empirical knowledge cannot satisfy the essential ontological searches of life's inner longings for love, justice, honor, knowledge, liberty, and so on. This is the reason why Juan de Mairena says:

El siglo XIX es esencialmente peleón. Se ha tomado demasiado en serio el *struggle –for-life* darwiniano. Es lo que pasa siempre: se señala un hecho; después se le acepta como una fatalidad; al fin se convierte en bandera. Si un día se descubre que el hecho no era completamente cierto, o que era totalmente falso, la bandera más o menos descolorida, no deja de ondear. (*Juan de Mairena* I 88)

In relation to essential inner yearning Antonio Machado states in *Los Complementarios*:

Cierto que las inmutables estrellas que orientan el alma humana: amor, justicia, conocimiento, libertad, no han desaparecido. Se pregunta no más por la validez de las cartas marinas que el hombre había trazado para su propio navegar, bajo el impasible esplendor de esas inasequibles constelaciones. (135)

Two things are clear for Antonio Machado according to the above passage: First, the inner longings for the realization of love, justice, liberty, etc. do not subside from human volition, in that they abide in us in the sense that human determination to rationalize them cannot suppress their emerging in our hearts, and therefore, they are real to every human being in his or her experience. Second, these ideas cannot be realized fully in a life under the conditions of phenomena and the mind in a physical body that is determined by physical laws, which limit our transcendental capacity to bring into reality our ideals like justice, love, and so on, implicit in the last part of his statement: “esas inasequibles constelaciones.” For Antonio Machado these ideals are not realizable fully in the spatiotemporal world; rather they are like guiding principles of life that should be approached as close as possible because they show the fair course of life to the inner self and for the collective well-being. This limitation to the metaphysical realm also discloses the essential state of our knowledge in phenomena, that of discursive status. What is in doubt and, therefore, questionable, for Antonio Machado, is the method and scheme by which this attempt is carried out, clearly stated in the sentence: “Se pregunta no más por la validez de las cartas marinas que el hombre había trazado para su propio navegar...” Here the very act of questioning the validity of the method poses as a critical stand against such an endeavor. He is referring here to Cartesian scientific modernity, materialized through applied science and engineering in the nineteenth century. In addition, his use of a nautical setting and card game vocabulary to lay out the human life’s condition is carefully laid down given that life, like sailing, needs guidance, and the outcome of life, like that of card games, cannot be guaranteed. However, the center of all this weighs on the phrase “...el hombre había trazado para su propio navegar...” because it relates to modernity’s project of quantifying space and time as an open-ended field to draw freely the course of its own destiny and not conform to any previously

conceived ideals of human fate such as the New Testament's predestination, or a revolution literally as conceived by Renaissance humanists like Francesco Petrarca and the philosophers of antiquity, in the sense of considering the beginning a model of the purest and most perfect state of reality. Antonio Machado, here, sees a turning point in human history in which, for the first time in any period or cultural beliefs, humans take their fate in their own hands by charting the course of their own open ended future, not predicated or dependent on any divine or natural powers, but on mathematics as its foundation of knowledge (*scientia*). Emphasizing this, Juan de Mairena says:

El hombre es un animal extraño que necesita --según él-- justificar su existencia con la posesión de alguna verdad absoluta (*Juan de Mairena I* 164).

“Verdad absoluta” in the above sentence refers to a mathematical type of proof of reality. However, an important aspect of this sentence should be noted. From the formal point of view, Juan de Mairena, here, asserts an existential claim about the human being with the use of the verb “to be” (*ser*) in the present tense indicative. However, the added words “-según él-” are intentionally and specifically inserted at the end of the subject phrase in the sentence to make the predicate become conditional, where without them it would be a universal claim. This is significant in the epistemological conception in Juan de Mairena because the very placing of them there affirms, on the one hand, the peculiarity of the human being and, hence, its special existential accommodations needed, explicit in the subject phrase. On the other hand, by making the predicate conditional rather than universal and necessary, Juan de Mairena casts doubt about the validity of what the subject phrase claims in the predicate, namely, “justificar su existencia con la posesión de alguna verdad absoluta.” The word he opposes and because of which he intentionally made the sentence conditional is “absoluta.” Had the predicate been less

pretentious in its claim, for example, “saber o creer en alguna verdad” rather than the demanding, legal and unconditional expression “justificar...la posesión...absoluta” he probably would not have interrupted the sentence with the hyphenated phrase “-según él-.” This speculation is based on the consistent emphasis Juan de Mairena makes about the benefit of doubt throughout *Juan de Mairena* (however, doubt about the claims of certainty and not as negation of faith). Again, he does this in order to refer to and criticize Descartes’ project of scientific modernity.

For Juan de Mairena, although we can postulate the realm of pure reason, independently of the proof of whether it exists or not, we are not able to attain it. For Juan de Mairena our knowledge cannot transcend “*persuasio*.” Besides the limitation noted above, humans also obtain knowledge of the world through the senses and not directly in a continually evolving world, which makes it impossible for our minds to grasp something entirely and absolutely and provide a permanent definition of something. As attempted by Descartes in *Meditations*, even though the mind can voluntarily and strategically forget it has a physical body, in the sense that a person internalizes life and reduces it to thought, that is, at the level of consciousness and reflection, a human being cannot disregard the definitive condition under which he or she exists, that of time. Thus Juan de Mairena says:

En cuanto nuestra vida coincide con nuestra conciencia, es el tiempo la realidad última, rebelde al conjuro de la lógica, irreductible, inevitable, fatal. Vivir es devorar tiempo: esperar; y por muy trascendente que quiera ser nuestra espera, siempre será espera de seguir esperando. (*Juan de Mairena I 110*)

For Juan de Mairena, life under the condition of phenomena is immersed in a determined time, and human will and intellectual effort cannot control or manipulate the existing phenomenal condition; this can be contrasted to the human will in relation to its inner desires and formation.

In regard to the inner constitution, the will is autonomous and self-legislative in the sense that it can control its constituents. In this sense the relationship between time and will is close to what Bergson's *élan vital* accentuated, that ultimately the positive actuality of will is not in time but with time. Therefore while material unity falls apart eventually, the concept remains. The will, not being subject to time, is not determined by its laws. In relation to life in phenomena, Juan de Mairena considers time determining it in the form of a countdown of the terminal fuel that will one day end. This is why he even equates living to the sole activity of consuming time, inclusive of its passive and active states: "Vivir es devorar tiempo."

However, in the passage above, Juan de Mairena creates hope by faith in the inevitable phenomenal terminal situation. This he does first, by accentuating the inevitable human fate of mortality in the first sentence; only to bring hope and link death to life again by using a grammatical punctuation, namely a colon, to clarify the terrifying existential sentence "Vivir es devorar tiempo" with the concept of waiting. Subsequently, Juan de Mairena reiterates the concept of waiting in three different verbal forms with two semantic registers in relation to earthly death and transcendental life through "esperar, espera, esperando."

Hence the concept of waiting has the connotation of "velar" in the sense of vigilance or watchfulness, in the context of the *New Testament* as it appears in the account of 'Gethsemane' in Mark 14:33-34, where Jesus advises Peter, James and John to watch before he goes off to pray the night of his capture<sup>49</sup>. This 'vigilance' in the context of Juan de Mairena's socio-human epistemology takes the form of supervision over oneself of one's thoughts, actions and speech in the interaction with the other. Moreover, 'velar' is linked to the idea of hope "esperanza," which,

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<sup>49</sup> This passage is based on the Gospel of Mark 14 where he describes: "<sup>33</sup>And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; <sup>34</sup>And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch." (King James version).

incidentally, in Spanish etymology, derives from the verb “esperar.” Given this background, the indefinite form “esperar,” here, indicates the unknown length of time for the waiting period, while the progressive form “esperando” points to the constancy and perseverance required to successfully confront the undisclosed final moment. Both of them, “esperar” and “esperando,” though they are indefinite forms, exist within the time frame of this life whereas the noun form “espera” transcends the present life and looks to what is subsequent to this life. The atmosphere of the sentence somehow shows a mixture of hesitation and frustration: “y por muy trascendente que quiera ser nuestra espera, siempre será espera de seguir esperando.” This is not due to the indefinite wait expressed by the two verb forms mentioned above: “esperar” and “esperando.” Rather, the hint of frailty is provoked for the unknown world that lies behind the certainty of death. What is beyond death is never disclosed; the passage in *Juan de Mairena* only hints that there is the subject’s continuity after life, and this he does by the exercise of belief rather than by any type of knowledge, since he relies on hope. The hesitancy was there precisely because Juan de Mairena was looking for a rational answer through subjecting such metaphysical questions to phenomenal consciousness: “En cuanto nuestra vida coincide con nuestra conciencia.” But looking at life from the inside he finds a form of consolation:

En realidad, cuando meditamos sobre el pasado, para enterarnos de lo que llevamos dentro., es fácil que encontremos en él un cúmulo de esperanza -no logradas, pero tampoco fallidas--, un futuro en suma, objeto legítimo de profecía... (*Juan de Mairena I* 204)

A reassuring Antonio Machado is found on the same topic in *Campos de Castilla* under “Proverbios y Cantares” poem XXXIV:

Yo amo a Jesús, que nos dijo:

Cielo y tierra pasarán.  
 Cuando cielo y tierra pasen  
 Mi palabra quedará.  
 ¿Cuál fue, Jesús, tu palabra?  
 ¿Amor? ¿Perdón? ¿Caridad?  
 Todas tus palabras fueron  
 Una palabra: Velad<sup>50</sup>. (*Campos de Castilla* 241)

Unlike the earlier paragraph in *Juan de Mairena* here there is no phenomenal consciousness. The mood of certainty and the secure voice of the poet are dominated by blind faith. Furthermore, the word ‘velad’ appears here again but in a moral command form which is never passive. To the contrary, as an abstract command, it urges constitutive practical actions expressed in the verbs “amar, perdonar, ayudar” from self towards the other and vice versa. In fact, ‘velad’ commands to be awake in the sense of to be alert and be cautious. It is in this context of intersubjective relations and profound humanity that Antonio Machado admires and commends Jesus, and not as a figure representing a religious institution.

In conclusion, the quote below summarizes effectively Juan de Mairena’s position with regard to his intellectual orientation which is not pursued for its own sake but in response to his personal convictions and life’s relentless search for meaning in conformity to his inner inclination to discover the self through the other. Juan de Mairena considers a life spent seeking

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<sup>50</sup> Manuel Alvar provides a different version of this poem that appeared in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of *Poesías Completas*, which is closer in context to the original text in the *New Testament*:

Como no sabéis la hora  
 En que os han de despertar,  
 Os despertarán dormidos,  
 Si no veláis; despertad. (*Poesías Completas* 241)

for the self through the other<sup>51</sup> a sober and a lifelong endeavor, more important than any other activity because only through knowledge of the self can one access disclosure of the meaning of life.

Para alcanzarlas se siguen muchos senderos descaminantes y desorientados, por desdén de la amplia vía de la razón, que es camino de todos, aunque no todos, sino muy pocos, sepan adónde conduce. El gran pecado de nuestro tiempo --decía Mairena a sus alumnos--, en que muchos se buscan y casi nadie se encuentra a sí mismo, es el apartamiento de las calzadas imperiales, y la constante búsqueda de los falsos atajos y de las sendas caprichosas, que no llevan a ninguna parte. Con fútiles pretextos, hemos abandonado la metafísica, el pensar metafísico que es el específicamente humano, abierto a la espontaneidad intelectual y a los cuestionarios infantiles, para seguir las líneas tortuosas de dandysmo delicuescente, o de una madurez embrutecida por la fatiga y el alcohol.

¡Bah! ¿Renunciaríamos a navegar, que es caminar entre las estrellas, porque las estrellas no pueden cogerse con las manos?

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¡Oh fe del meditabundo!

¡Oh fe, después del pensar!

Sólo si viene un corazón al mundo

rebosa el vaso humano, se hincha el mar<sup>52</sup>.

(*Juan de Mairena II* 118-119)

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<sup>51</sup> For Juan de Mairena, one can only find the self through the other because the human condition denies direct access to the self except through the other.

<sup>52</sup> Ferrer notes in the footnote, and indeed so, that these verses belong to the poem xxxii of “Proverbios y cantares” in *Campo de Castilla*.

And lastly, Juan de Mairena declares in the following sentence his misión statement of his gratuitous instructional activity with students:

Nuestra misión es adelantarnos por la inteligencia a devolver su dignidad de hombre al animal humano. (*Juan de Mairena I 272*)

In the quote above, the phrase “adelantarnos por nuestra inteligencia” exactly refers to the need of and reliance on a form of ‘cultured consciouness.’ In short, the socio-human epistemology in *Juan de Mairena*, besides distinguishing from and validating human reality above the material world, attempts to instill in the reader, through a form of ‘cultured consciouness,’ a system of values that prioritizes human inner necessities.

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