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SPANISH POETRY

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Part I : Postclassical Period

EPIC AND NARRATIVE POETRY

FECUNDITY, PERIODS OF COMPOSITION, AND SUBJECT MATTER OF THE EPIC

A. Fecundity

Whether Spanish literature began with epic or lyric poetry is a moot question. The *jarchas* of the eleventh century are the earliest examples of Spanish literature yet discovered. The *Cantar de Mio Cid*, an epic poem, dates from the middle of the twelfth century, but its relatively advanced style and language imply that it echoes earlier epics. Furthermore, the *jarchas* are but poetic fragments attached to Hebrew and Arabic poems, while the *Cantar de Mio Cid* is a complete literary work. In other nascent European literatures, epic songs preceded lyric poetry. The analogy may be meaningful.

The *Cantar de Mio Cid* is Spain's oldest preserved complete literary work. Portions of other epics have been found, such as the *Roncesvalles* fragment, one hundred lines dealing with the Charlemagne's defeat in the Pyrenees, and the *Rodrigo*, which recounts youthful exploits of the Cid.

It was natural that Spain's turbulent history, with nearly eight centuries of intermittent warfare against the Moors, should produce an abundant heroic literature. Despite the paucity of preserved epic poems, evidence of a rich epic literature is found in early histories. Lost poems have been reconstructed from allusions to them by writers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, from the later recasting's of them in erudite verse forms, and from the ballads, detached fragments of epic poems.

B. Periods of Composition

Menendez Pidal divides the period of the composition of Spanish epic poetry as follows: from the beginnings up to 1140, the date of the *Cantar de Mio Cid*; from 1140 to the middle of the thirteenth century; and the late thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, when primitive epic poetry degenerated, broke into fragments, was recast by learned poets, and finally ceased to be cultivated.

C. Subject Matter

Epic poems were composed about many heroes in addition to the Cid, including Bernardo del Carpio, the only fictitious warrior in the Spanish epic; Rodrigo, *el ultimo godo*, who supposedly lost Spain to the Moors; Los Infantes de Lara, seven brothers treacherously betrayed by their uncle; Fernan Gonzalez, who gained the independence of Castile from Leon; and Rey don Sancho II, murdered by the infamous Bellido Dolfos. *El Infante don Garcia* tells of the count of Castile who was murdered en route to his wedding; *La condesa traidora y el conde Sancho Garcia* is the tale of a wife's infidelity; and *Gesta del abad Juan de Monte mayor* tells the story of a miraculous victory over the Moors.

ORIGIN

A. The Theory of French Influence

Gaston Paris holds that Spanish epic poetry descended from French poems, which, he contends, were composed earlier and were greater in number. Arguments supporting Paris' theory are based on the fact that *cantare de gesta* seems to have been derived from *chanson de gesta*; similarities of meter and versification; the presence of French troubadours and many other Frenchmen in Spain in the eleventh century, called there to aid in the Reconquest; and the influence of the Benedictine order of Cluny, which organized pilgrimages to Compostela and sent soldiers to Spain. In later periods French influence was no doubt vigorous, but scarcity of proof precludes the certainty of the French theory of origin or of any other.

B. The Theory of Germanic Imitation

Menendez Pidal maintains that the Spanish epic originated in imitation of the heroic songs of the Goths, a Germanic tribe that invaded Spain in the early fifth century. He also denies that the French epic was earlier and richer in material, shows why Spain's epic poetry was destroyed, and proves the existence of an abundant Spanish epic literature. He reconstructed the poem *Los siete infantes de Lara* from early histories and propounded the theory of irregular versification to disprove the similarity of French and Spanish epic meter. The appearance of Gothic law, names, and customs in Spanish poems adds strength to the Germanic theory of origin.

C. The Theory of Monasterial Origin

Joseph Bedier maintains that French and Spanish epic poetry was written by monks in religious establishments along pilgrimage routes to entertain pilgrims. This provided the monks with a source of income, for travelers were naturally attracted to institutions offering some type of entertainment. If true, this theory suggests that the dominant influence on epic poetry was clerical. Priestly poets, like Nerceo, only a step away from the popular *juglares*, injected epic clichés into their learned poetry.

D. The Theory of Andalusian Origin

Julian Ribera postulated the existence of an Andalusian epic, references to which were found in Arabic histories. The close relationship between the Oriental peoples and the Roman Empire, the intimate association between Spaniards and Moors, and Arabic allusions in the Spanish epic songs led Ribera to assume that an early Arabic poetry of heroic nature existed and influenced the origin of the Spanish poetry. Convincing proof, however, is lacking, and the case for an Arabic origin remains largely hypothetical.

E. Conclusions

Menendez Pidal's arguments for Germanic origin are the most widely accepted and are rarely challenged. Modern criticism has adopted a moderate attitude, acknowledging that no theory should be excluded in *toto*. Thus, the Spanish epic could have originated in imitation of the Goths and fallen under Arabic influence shortly thereafter. Later, it could have assimilated many elements from the French; and the monks, the only copyists of the time, could have influenced these poems slightly.

METER AND VERSIFICATION

Spanish epic poetry shows a chaotic irregularity of meter and contains verses of from ten to twenty syllables. Menendez Pidal asserts that the Spanish epic meter was a sixteen-syllable line of two hemistich's. This theory is widely credited and is supported by the fact that the meter of the ballads detached fragments of epic poems, is the same.

RECONSTRUCTION OF LOST EPICS

Early Spanish historians accepted epic poems as bona fide historical sources and sometimes incorporated all or parts of them in their histories, occasionally not mothering to change the poetry to prose. From these sources complete epic poems have been reconstructed, the best known of which is Menendez Pidal's *Los*

siete infantes de Lara. The wealth of epic material in the histories like *La primera cronica general* and *La cronica de 1344* is weighty evidence of a rich Spanish epic poetry.

HISTORICITY AND REALISM

Of all primitive epic poetry, the Spanish is the most realistic. Except for Bernardo del Carpio, Spanish epic heroes were living human beings, an assertion proved by historical documentation, and the tales of their adventures are based largely on historical fact. Geography, place-names, laws, and customs have been verified. The supernatural, marvelous, and fantastic are almost totally absent, and the poetry is objective, sober, and terse. The realism and historicity of the Spanish epic are found nowhere else in primitive heroic poetry.

THE HEROIC TRADITION IN SPANISH LITERATURE

The virility, sobriety, generosity, dignity, honor, adventure, romance, nobility, hospitality, independence, faith, and all the other qualities that together represent the genuine Spanish spirit are found in Spain's epic poetry in pure form. Spaniards are fascinated by the heroic legends of their past, and writers in all ages have repeatedly turned to the glorious stories for inspiration and subject matter. This process of return is most clearly visible however, in the Golden Age and the Romantic period.

THE CANTAR DE MIO CID

A. Date of Composition

Menendez Pidal has set the date of the composition of the *Cantar de Mio Cid* in 1140. The Cid died in 1099. The original author of the poem is unknown. The only remaining manuscript copied in 1307 by Per Abbat (Pedro Abad) from a much earlier original. The poem was first published in 1779 by Tomas Antonio Sanchez.

B. Construction

The preserved portion of the poem contains 3,735 lines of verse. Approximately fifty lines lost at the beginning have been reconstructed from the *Cronica de veinte reyes*. The poem has been into three natural divisions by modern scholars: *Cantar del destierro*, *Cantar de las bodas*, and *Cantar de Corpes*.

C. Plot

The poem traces the story of the Cid's life from the moment of his exile from Castille to his return to grace at the king's court. The principal episodes are the following: the exile; the Cid's campaigns against the Moors; the conquest of Valencia, which marks the peak of the Cid's power and fame; the marriage of the Cid's daughters to the Infantes de Carrion; the beating of the Cid's daughters, who are left to die in the Robledo de Corpes; and the revenge of the Cid and the punishment of his enemies.

D. Artistic Qualities

Stylistically the poem is dry and sober, yet it has a stark laconic quality that describes little but suggests much. The long descriptions of battle are exciting, but there are also naivetes and understatements. Patches of dialogue add genuine dramatic qualities. The noble, serious poetry, as well as the sobriety, virile energy, realism, accurate detail, and terseness, makes the poem classic in style, restrained and dignified.

A social consciousness pervades the poem. The Cid, a nobleman but not of royal connection, conquered first the adversities of circumstance and then his enemies, the higher nobility. He triumphed by his own ability and courage and emerged a hero, while the hereditary nobleman was made to appear cowardly and ridiculous. An antifeudal, antiaristocratic spirit emanates from the poem, in keeping with the Spaniard's individualism and democracy, but national loyalties and love of king remain strong.

The poem is objective and realistic without the exaggerations of the French and German epics. The geography and the Cid's trips across Spain have been verified. A couple of incidents have a legendary ring to them, but the note of authenticity, the historical accuracy, and the directness of style give the poem a realistic air found in no other primitive epic poetry.

E. The Life Character and Personality of the Cid

The Cid Rodrigo Dia de Vivar, was a man of flesh and blood, endowed with great strength of character and all the virtues. He was born around 1043 in Vivar, near Burgos. He was descended from Lain Calvo, one of Castile's first judges after it gained its independence and from noble stock on his mother's side.

Rodrigo served King Sancho of Castile, who was treacherously murdered while attempting to conquer the city of Zamora, the stronghold of his sister, Urraca. Alfonso, Sancho's brother and king of Leon, was then declared king of Castile but with CID and others recognized him only after forcing him to swear three times that he had not conspired in Sancho's death a humiliating experience for Alfonso. A lingering desire for revenge may have influenced Alfonso's decision to exile Rodrigo.

After being exiled, Rodrigo served the king of Zaragoza. He fought against both Moors and Christians, and his prowess as a soldier and leader earned hi the title of the Cid and Arabic word meaning "lord." No instance has been recorded of his failure in battle, and in the end, he established himself as a virtual king after conquering the city of Valencia, where he died in 1099.

The Cid Campeador has become the national hero of Spain. According to the *Cantar de Mio Cid* and the ballads, he was full bearded-a ark of virility and dignity-vigorous, brave, and a natural leader. Yet he was tender and wept unashamedly when moved. He was a faithful and loving husband and a devoted father. He was an ideal vassal and was always loyal to his king despite the latter's hostility. He continually sought to reconcile himself with Alfonso, sending him valuable booty and acceding to his wish that the Infantes de Carrion marry his daughters, a union the Cid thought unwise. He never sought revenge on the unjust king, though he had the power to conquer him.

The Cid of literature believed in justice fairness, and equality and always shared his booty with his men. He had an abiding religious faith and consistently commended himself to God before a battle and took time to thank Him after a victory. He was generous to his captives but unrelenting in battle.

In short, the mature Cid of the poem embodies the spirit of Castile and possesses those admirable and enduring qualities that have been Spain's in her greatest moments.

The *Cronica de 1344*, the *Rodrigo*, and some ballads portray the man as a rash, impudent, insolent, petulant young nobleman quite different from the Cid of the *Cantar*. In a duel, he kills the father of dona Jimena, who then demands his hand in marriage as compensation. This episode, together with the meeting with a leper and a few other youthful exploits, are called the *mocedades*. The historical Cid is the mature, grave, and noble national hero of Spain.

The story of the Cid inspired later literary works, among them Guillen de *Castro's Las mocedades del Cid*, Jose Zorilla's *Laleyenda del Cid*, Eduardo Marquina's *Las hijas del Cid*, and Corneille's *Le Cid*. The foreigners Southey Hugo, Herder, and Lecomte de Lisle also borrowed from the theme.

THE DEGENERATION OF THE EPIC

The primitive epic, written in an uncultured, unrefined age, reflected the attitudes and sentiments of the time. In the late Middle Ages primitive art forms fell into disfavor. Popular minstrels were supplanted by erudite poets, and epic poetry passed out of the realm of true folk art and into that of the artificial and refined. Unable to identify with the poetry of the preceding age the learned poets lost their spontaneity and folk flavor.

The thirteenth and fourteenth centuries witnessed the degeneration and disappearance of true popular epic poetry. The old poems passed into the histories, were rewritten in learned form, and broke down into ballads.

MEDIEVAL NARRATIVE POETRY

Nonepic poetry of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was not clearly narrative or lyric but a combination of the two. Poets generally used Galician for their lyrical efforts; but as themes came in from outside national tradition as moral intent grew, and as Castilian increased in prestige. Lyric patches in that tongue began to appear in narrative poetry.

Angel Valbuena classified this narrative-lyric poetry into poetry in short verses of seven to nine syllables and long verse poetry written chiefly in the fourteen-syllable line of the *cuaderna via*. Themes included lives of saints, Biblical tales lives of heroes and borrowed foreign themes. The authors thought of themselves as erudite poets who counted syllables, were conscious of their didactic responsibilities, and prided themselves on their artistry characteristics that continued throughout the Middle Ages. Yet they were but a step away from the folk minstrels whose popular spirit they imbibed, directing their art to the masses.

A. Short Verse Narrative-Lyric Poetry

Religious themes dominated this type of poetry and the debate or dispute was a popular device. Closely akin to the drama, the debate lent itself to satire and moralizing. The dominant foreign influence was French, and Gallicisms appear in the language. At a time when Galician was used for lyric expression these poems, along with those of Gonzalo de Berceo, represent the first stirrings of lyrical expression, these poems along with those of Gonzales de Berceo represent the first stirrings of lyrical expressions in Castilian. Important poems, all from the thirteenth century include the following:

1. *Libre dels tres reys d'Orient* deals with the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt and the slaughter of the Innocents. It is anonymous.
2. *Vida de Santa Maria Egipcíaca*, author unknown, narrates in 1,4512 lines the life of one of history's most interesting saints.
3. *Disputa del alma y cuerpo* anonymous, is a thirty-seven-line fragment of a debate between the body and the soul of a deceased man.
4. *Denuestos del agua y el vino* is an anonymous poem in which water and wine debate their virtues. Joined to it is the first preserved lyric poem in Castilian. *Razon de amor*. Though probably composed separately the two poems are always mentioned together and are not entirely incompatible.
5. *Elena y Maria* anonymous is a forty-line fragment of a poem in which two girls debate the qualities of their lovers.

B. Narrative-Lyric Poetry in *Cuaderna Via*

Learned poets and clerics created a verse form called *mester de clerecia* based upon strict syllable count and arranged in quatrains of fourteen-syllable monorhymed verses. Used throughout the Middle Ages this fixed form was known as *cuaderna via*, a term first used in the *Libro de Aleixandre*.

The first Spanish poet whose name is known, Gonzalo de Berceo (1195? -1265) wrote narrative poems in *cuaderna via*, recounting principally the lives of saints and miracles of the Virgin. He is appreciated for the simple grace, humor, ingenuousness candor, naivete, sincerity, and occasional lyrical and dramatic qualities of his verse. The following are significant examples of medieval narrative poetry in *cuaderna via*: *Vida de Santo Domingo*, by Berceo; *Vida de Santa Oria* by Berceo; *Libro de Apolonio*, anonymous; *Poema de Fernan Gonzalez*, anonymous; *Libro de Aleixandre*, anonymous; and *Poema de Yusuf* anonymous.

C. Satiric ad Moral Poetry

Moralizing was incidental in some medieval poems but in others it was intentional as poets exalted some virtue or higher value conveyed some moral truth or attacked some abuse or vice.

Rabbi Sem Tob (1290? – 1369) was the first Jew to write in Spanish whose name has been recorded and also the first to write gnomic literature in Spanish. In his *Proverbios morales* he drew his maxims from the Bible, the Talmud, Oriental and Jewish sources and the wisdom of the ages. He wrote his 686 quatrains with great concision and often compressed a great moral lesson in a few lines. He influenced later poets, including the Marques de Santillana and Gomez Manrique.

The *Danza de la muerte* is the fifteenth-century Spanish treatment of a favorite medieval theme and is reputed to be the best extant specimen of its type. Death summons to his court all those who must pay him tribute, and thirty-three victims pass before him, ranging from an emperor and a pope down to representatives of the lowest classes. Each victim defends himself, but in the end the inevitable sentence is pronounced. All must die. *Coplas*, political satires appeared for the first time in the fifteenth century. The first was *Coplas de ¡Ay, panadera!* an anonymous poem that satirized cowardly nobles in the battle of Olmedo. In the vitriolic *Coplas del Provincial* the nobility is pummeled with the grossest invectives, and ladies and lords, represented as nuns and monks, have their names recited as they parade before the Superior (Provincial) of a convent to hear accusations against them and to be assigned penances. In *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* a shepherd named Mingo complains that the head shepherd (Enrique IV) has deserted his responsibilities that the four dogs, symbolizing Justice, Fortitude Prudence and Temperance have abandoned the flock, and that the wolves (the nobility) are devouring the poor sheep (the people). Gil Arribato listens to Mingo, who symbolizes the Spanish people, and reminds him that despite his lament he is not without guilt and that part of his misery is caused by his own sins. These *Coplas* far surpass the *Provincial*. While not insolent they shoot pointed barbs of satire at the leading personalities of the day. The fact that all the *Coplas* are anonymous points up the danger of criticizing authority.

Part II : LYRIC POETRY

LYRIC POETRY

THE MIDDLE AGES

A. Origin

Considerable evidence indicates a flourishing primitive Castilian lyric, but very few examples of such poetry have been preserved. Contrariwise, much early lyric poetry in the Galician language has been preserved, and Galician was, indeed, the preferred language for lyric expression during the Middle Ages even for Castilian poets. Consequently, Galician poetry dominated the peninsula from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. It was not until the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century that the Castilians began to use their own language to compose lyric poetry. The *Cancionero de Baena* (1445) represents the work of the first genuine Castilian school of lyric poets. Therefore, Spanish replaced Galician as the preferred language for lyric expression.

It is sometimes difficult to classify medieval poetry as a narrative, epic, or lyric, for in some poems elements of each can be found. Rigid categorization is therefore frequently unsatisfactory. The general types of medieval poetry are Galician-Portuguese, narrative-lyric, primitive Castilian, Spanish-Arabic, and epic.

B. Galician-Portuguese Lyric Poetry

The courtly love poetry of France, brought to Spain by French troubadours, strongly influenced those writing in the Galician-Portuguese tongue. (Galician and Portuguese were the same in the Middle Ages.). Though it has been traditional to regard Provence in southern France as the place of origin of most of the lyric poetry of Europe, new light has been thrown on a possibly more distant origin through

studies of Spanish-Arabic poetry. Nevertheless, if the Provençal poets did not invent this style of poetry, they at least refined it and disseminated it over Europe.

Provençal poetry was erudite, artificial, and highly refined. It showed a reversal of erotic values: the lover formerly adoring his lady now felt unworthy of her. The object of the lover's attention was a married woman, and the consummation of his love was viewed as altogether impossible, unsought, and undesirable. This agonizing situation led to a poetry of lament, melancholy, and complaint. It was brilliant and technically excellent, but also frequently tedious. The poet's sadness and frustration were not taken seriously, however, but were rather devices for exhibiting verbal virtuosity and technical skill. Love became a game, a kind of religion that was intended to have a chastening uplifting, civilizing effect. Provençal lyric ignored the sensual love one finds later in the Middle Ages in works of writers like Juan Ruiz.

As early as the twelfth century, Galician, Portuguese, and Catalan poets began to imitate the Provençal courtly lyric. In Galicia, however, where life was more primitive, it did not entirely supplant the native folk poetry. As a result, Galician poetry, strengthened by Provençal techniques and skills developed along two lines: the Provençal courtly love poetry and the native peasant poetry, represented by the *cassante* and the *danza prima*.

The Galicians preserved their poetry by means of *cancioneiros*. The principal ones are *Cancioneiro da Vaticana*, *Cancioneiro de Ajuda*, and *Cancioneiro Coloffi-Brancuti*. The principal types of poems written in the Galician tongue were *cantigas de escarnio*, satiric songs, frequently bawdy and obscene; *cantigas de amor*, amorous laments; and *cantigas de amigo*, love songs.

C. Primitive Castilian Lyric Poetry

The Castilian-speaking people composed lyric poems in the age when Galician poetry dominated the peninsula, but unfortunately, they did not collect and save the poems. Most have perished, as has almost all their epic poetry. Some early poems, such as the *serranillas*, the May songs, the watchman's songs, shepherds' songs, and songs for important occasions like Christmas, have been rescued from oblivion by later writers, such as Berceo, Juan Ruiz, the Marques de Santillana, and the playwrights of the Golden Age. The influence of these early lyrical efforts may also be found in the *coplas*, *villancicos*, and other folk poems that are composed by Spanish-speaking people today.

D. The *Jarchas*

When S.M. Stern was studying Hebrew *muwassahas* in a synagogue in Egypt, he found that a number of them ended with a few verses that were not in Hebrew but in *mozarabe*, a Romance dialect spoken in southern Spain as early as the tenth century and probably much earlier. Eventually Stern found some twenty of these charming little poems called *jarchas* (*jarchyas*, *kharjas*) and soon afterward discovered an Arabic *Muwassaha* with its *jarchas*. Following Stern's lead, Emilio Garcia Gomez discovered a similar number of *jarchas* attached to Arabic *muwassahas*. Later on, other students of primitive peninsular poetry increased the number, until today we have more than sixty of these poetic jewels. A number of other scholars have studied and are still studying the *jarchas*, which are fraught with problems owing to the fact, in part at least, that they are written in Hebrew and Arabic characters, without vowel signs, and the scribes often omitted diacritical marks that identified consonants. Some *jarchas* were written completely in Arabic or in Mozarabic, while in others Arabic words are mixed in with the Mozarabic or vice versa, making transcription even more difficult. Another problem is that the original copyists of these refrains were transcribing into Hebrew and Arabic characters a language that they did not know, and thus they were prone to make

errors. Since Stern's original discovery, a number of scholars have worked at correct readings of many *jarchas*, and as time goes by, they are getting closer to a satisfactory transcription of many of them into modern Spanish.

The discovery of this poetry created great excitement in the literary world and has been compared in importance with the deciphering of the Rosetta Stone, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, or the invention of the telescope by Galileo. These may seem like exaggerations to all but philologists and students of the primitive Castilian lyric and the origins of European lyric poetry; but Menendez Pidal seems to put it into context when he states that the discovery of the *jarchas* is doubtlessly one of the most important in the twentieth century, since they antedate by a century or more any examples of Spanish literature previously found and precede the Provençal courtly lyric by many years, making them the oldest lyric texts of Europe. Damaso Alonso concurs that it is now known that the Spanish *jarchas* precede all other European poetic texts by a century. All this destroys the theory that Spanish lyric poetry was late in appearing and lagged behind epic poetry. Linda Fish Compton holds that "although the *jarchas* are the oldest known secular lyrics in any Romance language and occupy a significant position within the mainstream of Western lyrical poetry, the exact relationship of these lyrics to the poetry of Europe and the Middle East has not been clearly determined."

The *muwassaha* (*muwashshah*), a very popular and widely used verse form, was invented in the tenth century. It is not yet clear who created this poetic form, but credit is usually given to Muqaddam de Cabra, a Mozarabic poet living in southern Spain, though none of his poems have been preserved. It was to the *muwassaha* that the *jarchas* were appended. The earliest *muwassahas* and *jarchas* yet discovered date back to the eleventh century. Another verse form of Hebrew and Arabic origin is the *zejel*, used by Spanish poets through the centuries. Evidence points to the popular origin of the *muwassaha*, and it is theorized that the *jarcha* (the word means "exit") is the quintessential expression of the sentiment of the main body of the poem and was taken from the primitive Spanish popular poetry, forming the metrical and thematic basis upon which the *muwassaha* was constructed. In other words, the poet began with *jarcha* as a theme and built his *muwassaha* upon it, attaching the original *jarchas* as the final verses. Critics do not unanimously support this theory, however, and some feel that the *jarchas* (also called *markaz*) was a thematic appendage to a *muwassaha*.

The *jarchas* usually run from two to four lines (thirty-two syllables) of verse and are almost without exception amorous in nature, spoken by a young girl who candidly and often quite ardently laments the absence of her lover while her mother or sisters listen or advise. These devices were common to the *cantigas de amigo* of the Galician-Portuguese poetry. Speaking of her intense feelings of love, the girl occasionally mentions the admirable attributes of her lover. In short, the *jarcha* with its accompanying *muwassaha* may have marked the beginnings of European lyric poetry. The Arabs had cultivated this genre centuries before invading Spain, and professional poets were retained at court by Arabic kings. The concept of platonic love as found in Provençal poetry was known to the Arabs, and as Brennan points out, the notion of love as obedience and suffering is of Arabic origin. As evidence gathers, we may eventually learn that European lyric poetry originated in Moslem Spain and not in Provence after all. Even now the evidence for such a conclusion is strong.

The Spanish Arabs also collected their poems into books, the best known of which is that of the *Cordovan poet Abencuzman* (Aben Guzman), whose poetry recounts his own experiences and is audacious in nature, anticipating the amorous adventures of Juan Ruiz and resembling much of the goliardic poetry of the European Middle Ages.

Alfonso *el Sabio* used the *zejel*, as did Juan Ruiz, and examples of it are found in the Galician-Portuguese collections, the *Cancionero de Baena*, other fifteenth-century Spanish collections, and even in works as late as those of Lope de Vega.

It is a verse type that may have affected all the poetry of Europe in one way or another and thus may form a link in the chain of popular choral dance songs dating back into forgotten time.

E. Conclusions Concerning Origins of Lyric Poetry

Much conjecture remains about the origin of Castilian lyric poetry. In the light of present evidence, however, the following conclusions seem valid. The people of southern Spain who spoke a dialect that eventually emerged as Spanish produced a lyric folk poetry dealing with their everyday cares and occupations, but they did not record it. Learned men declined to use the vernacular for their lyrical efforts, turning instead to Galician. Provençal poetry, possibly borrowing its philosophy of love and its concept of the professional poet from the Spanish Arabs, dominated peninsular poetry for two centuries. Spanish-Arabic and Hebrew popular poetry in the form of the *muwassaha* with its *jarchas* and the *zejel* provide the earliest preserved examples of literary Spanish and influenced Spanish poets for centuries in both spirit and manner.

F. Lyric Poems and Poets

1. *Razon de amor*, also known as *Razon feita de amor* and *Aventura amorosa*, a charming little anonymous piece in the Provençal style, is the oldest preserved complete lyric poem in Spanish. Written early in the thirteenth century, it is probably a descendant of the Galician *cantigas* and contains gentle talk of love between a *doncella* and her poet-lover, who remains disconsolate when she departs. It is pleasant, delicate poem, but as important as its intrinsic merit is the fact that it clearly reveals a connection between the Galician-Portuguese school and Castilian poetry. After the love colloquy of the *Razon de amor*, the poet continues with a burlesque medieval debate between water and wine entitled *Denuestos del argua y del vino*. The two portions are not too skillfully joined but are not entirely incompatible with one another.
2. *Alfonso el Sabio* (1221 – 1284), whose school of scholars produced enormous historical and legal works, was also a poet who wrote the best Marian poetry of the Middle Ages in his *Cantigas de Santa Maria*. The 430 poems of this collection are mostly narrative in nature and recount miracles, tales, and poems of praise concerning the Virgin Mary. The entire book, except for one poem in Castilian, is written in the Galician-Portuguese dialect, despite the fact that Alfonso was a Castilian monarch.
3. *Gonzalo de Berceo* (1198? – 1274?) was the earliest poet to write in Spanish whose name has been recorded. Fortunately, he preserved among his songs a sample of the primitive lyric of Castile, the watchman's song *Eya, valar*. Though often a plodder, he wrote at times with a sweetness, naivete, simplicity, and genuine lyrical feeling that has elicited praise from twentieth-century poets.

Bereco wrote for the people and thought of himself as a *juglar* and not an erudite poet, though he used the *cuaderna via* extensively. He declared that he would write in *romance paladin*, the common language of the people, and, perhaps jokingly, discounted the merit of his poetry, which in his view was worth at least a glass of good wine. He sprinkled the clichés of the juglares liberally throughout his poems. He was a learned man with a large vocabulary, but he employed rustic humor and viewed life in an uncomplicated way. From his, some 13,000 lines of verse emerges an accurate portrayal of the sentiments of the people of his day.

Bereco did not invent; he merely imitated. His poems, almost exclusively religious in nature, recite the lives of saints and the miracles of the Virgin, and his uncomplicated religious faith, childlike simplicity, candor, and truly popular

flavor have endeared him to many generations of Spaniards. His major works are *Vida de Santo Domingo*; *Milagros de nuestro Senora*, containing his best poetry; and *Vida de Santa Oria*. Especially attractive in the *Milagros* are the genuine lyricism of the opening lines, Bereo's love of nature and sympathy for the poor, oppressed, and unfortunate, and the realistic details and speech patterns.

4. *Juan Ruiz, Arcipreste de Hita* (1283? – 1350?) rose in the first half of the fourteenth century as a major star in Spain's poetic constellation. His volume of poetry, named by modern critics *El libro de buen amor*, is ranked by everyone as one of the major works of Spanish literature.

We know very little of the life of this man. If we judge him by portions of his writings, we find that he was a pleasure-loving priest who personified the morals and spirit of an age not noted for its morality. Though he apparently yielded to the temptations of the flesh, his religious poems exhibit a sincerity and devotion that cannot be denied. For unknown reasons, he was imprisoned for thirteen years, possibly because of wayward behavior or failure to comply with orders from his superiors. It is supposed that he composed parts of his masterpiece during that long, tedious time.

If we are to believe what Ruiz says, *El libro de buen amor* does not represent his entire literary output. He wrote, he says, so many poems that they could not be contained in *diez pliegos* (about 240 pages), but unfortunately this poetry has disappeared. Among them, however, were poems of all kinds: dancing and street songs for Jewish and Moorish girls, songs of jest and mockery, songs for night-prowling students, for blind men, for beggars, and for many others.

El libro de buen amor is a miscellany of poems probably written at different periods of the archpriest's life, with a great variety of themes. The poet's personality, liberally injected into his poems, unifies the haphazard collection, which proceeds without transitions. The volume opens on a very serious note with a prayer to be delivered from prison. Then follows the author's explanation of the true intention of his book. There are two kinds of love, he says: *loco amor*, the sinful, worldly love of the flesh, and *buen amor*, the love of God, which is much to be preferred over the former. His book will teach the dangers in *loco amor*. Since most mortals are sinners, however, those who wish to practice *loco amor* will find some interesting ways of doing so in his pages. His other stated purpose is to instruct those who wish to write verse, and he exhibits an uncommon variety of meters.

After this introduction, he plunges into the prime matter of his book, love, and relates in a frank way his own love affair in which he is far more often a failure than a success. Interspersed are encounters with don Amor, who advises him concerning his love interests; animal fables that have didactic intent; disquisitions on the mortal sins; a lengthy description of the battle between Lady Lent and Sir Flesh; devout religious hymns, and miscellaneous poems on a variety of themes.

In addition to the unique figure of the archpriest himself, other eternal characters emerge to become prototypes of Spanish literature: Trotaconventos, the ancestress of all go-betweens, and her replacement, don Furon, the original *picaro*. These and many minor characters pass before the reader's eyes, contributing what very well may be the most interesting part of the book, the portrait of the life and society of the time.

In the fourteenth century, morals had relaxed, faith had weakened, and a pagan spirit filled the air. Opinion varies concerning whether Ruiz had a moral purpose in mind or was serious in stating his preference for *buen amor*. Some have understood Ruiz to be an austere moralist who objected to the moral laxity of his day, a sincere reformer who offered himself as a scapegoat for the sins of his fellow men. Others portray him as a pagan sensualist interested in

glorifying only nature and passion. The truth probably lies somewhere in between. He was not obsessed with moralizing and at times was very much on the side of *loco amor*. In the next moment, however, he might show himself to be a repentant and devout man of God.

A keen satirist but at the same time a kind, understanding human being, he could see, understand, and accept people's weaknesses. He sympathized with sinners; he was more amused than offended by their vices, some of which he shared, and could generously forgive them. His satire, therefore, lacks the indignation and wrath of the strict moralist and shows love rather than condemnation. And with a sudden shift from human concerns, he could write a hymn to the Virgin with extraordinary spiritual fervor or compose a sincere learned disquisition on the evils of sin.

Stylistically Ruiz's unorganized collection of poems represents a great advance over preceding poetry and the culmination of the lyric writing of the Middle Ages. Unfettered by rules, Ruiz improvised with loquaciousness, verbosity, spontaneity, naturalness, and humor. He added new words to the language showed good adjectivization, musical quality and keen feelings for nature. He loved women, describing their movements, sounds, voices, and even the state of their souls, something new in the Middle Ages. His language ran the gamut from street words and popular utterances to the holiest expressions. He used hyperbole, free verse, and supervising metaphor, employing more than sixteen different meters and all the metrical combinations known at the time. Yet he preferred the *cuaderna via*, which he infused with throbbing pulse of life. His sources range from Church devotional literature to *Ovid's Art of Love* and the drama, from Pamphilus de amore to folklore and Aesop's fables. In short, he drew from the entire tapestry of the life of his time.

Juan Ruiz, an archpriest and yet a man of the people, towers above other writers of the Middle Ages. He represents the culmination of medieval life and foreshadows the coming Renaissance. He fused all the poetic elements of his time interjected picaresque elements and made use of allegory. His *jose de vivre* has indulgent attitude toward human weaknesses, and especially his poetic genius makes him one of Spain's greatest literary figures. He foreshadows coming generations, for in him lay the seeds of *La Celestina* and the picaresque novel.

5. *Pero Lopez de Zuala* (1332 – 1407), the outstanding figure in poetry in the second half of the fourteenth century, has been called Spain's first Humanist, for the Renaissance had touched him. He lived through the reigns of five kings in a very troubled era, wrote their history as an eyewitness, and regarded his task not merely as the recording of events and names but as a judgment. Though he supposedly wrote his masterpiece, the *Rimado de Palacio*, while in military prison, he probably composed it at different times in his life. Like *El libro de nuen amor*, it is a compilation of poems on miscellaneous themes that range from disquisitions on religious topics to bitter social satire.

No reader has ever been confused concerning the intention of the *Rimado de Palacio*, for Lopez de Ayala saw the abuses, vices, crimes, and dishonesty of his day and set out to expose them, criticize them, and, if possible, reform them. Not all his work is social satire, however. He opens with poems of a religious nature but then plunges into criticisms of life on all levels as he attacks the Church, the pope, the schism of Avignon, kings, government, nobility, Jews, shopkeepers, feudal barons, warfare, injustice, and all the vices-hypocrisy, vanity, dishonesty, bribery, misery, and corruption. He inveighs bitterly against them all, thus becoming the model of satiric style of the Middle Ages.

His personality was dramatically opposed to that of Juan Ruiz. The latter was cheerful, joyous, pagan at times in spirit, lighthearted, humorous, gay, and loving. He saw man's weaknesses, vices, and sins but was not shocked.

Rather he sympathized with and forgave his fellow men. Lopez de Ayala was disillusioned, formal, embittered, moralistic, dismayed and even angered by the meanness of human conduct and the evil in men's hearts. He denounced them indignantly. He was correct, noble, dignified, melancholy, and of sincere religious conviction, a man of the palace who could not share the epicurean tastes of Ruiz or tolerate human weakness.

Lopez de Ayala, a proto-Quevedo, stood in the middle of a sorry era of civil war, treacherous politics, and lax morals. He was of a sensitive nature and was tragically grieved and disillusioned by the vice and corruption he saw all around him. Having felt the breath of the Renaissance, he stood on the threshold of modernity. Significantly, he was the last important author to use the *cuaderna via*.

6. *Cancionero de Baena* was compiled around 1445 by Juan Alfonso de Baena for Juan II. The late fourteenth century and most of the fifteenth was truly a transition period in which the Galician-Portuguese that had long dominated lyric poetry and the love game of the Provençal poets was supplanted once and for all by the Castilian language and the innovations of the Italianate school of Dante and Petrarch.

Baena's *Cancionero* contains poems from several generations of poets, from the reigns of Pedro I through Juan II. As a whole the poets are at best mediocre and with rare exceptions, their poetry is insipid and lacking in real poetic feeling. Nevertheless, the collection shows the evolution of poetry from the Galician to the Italianate schools. There are nearly six hundred poems by more than fifty authors in the *Cancionero*. Included is work of Enrique de Aragon (1384 – 1434), better known as the Marques de Villena, who was one of the initiators of the poetic movement in Castile and the author of an *Arte de trobar* (1433). Later, Juan del Encina added to the increasing accumulation of literary criticism with his *Preceptiva*. This critical activity indicates that the poets were conscious of their responsibility and were genuinely interested in improving their art.

The efforts of Baena's poets to refine the language and adapt new verse forms made possible the superior verse of two major poets of the fifteenth century, the Marques de Santillana and Juan de Mena. The best-known of Baena's poets still writing in the Galician manner was Alfonso Alvarex de Villasandino (1350 – 1428), also called de Toledo and de Illescas, who dominated the *Cancionero* by sheer weight if not by talent. Francisco Imperial reacted against the frivolity of the love verse of the *escuela travadoresca* and sought his models in Dante and Petrarch. Though there were some traces of allegory before Imperial, he popularized it and is credited with having introduced the Italian hendecasyllable to Spain. The *Cancionero de Baena* was the first collection of Spanish poetry, and a few poetic treasures have been found in it over the years.

THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

A. General Considerations

By the turn of the fifteenth century Castilian had replaced Galician as the language for lyric poetry. The nearly sterile formulas and traditions of the troubadoursque love game, which had never really captivated the Castilians, fell into disuse. This plus the importation of new ideas from Italy produced two major poets in the first half of the fifteenth century, the Marques de Santillana and Juan de Mena.

In the second half of the century political unrest was terminated by Ferdinand and Isabel. The queen patronized Latin studies, foreign Humanists came to Spain, and Elio Antonio de Nebrija (1441? – 1522) wrote the first grammar of a modern language. Lyric poetry continued to flourish. The allegorical school followed the lead of Juan de Mena, and a refined and metaphorical courtly

poetry developed in a different direction. This period witnessed the rise of a third major poet, Jorge Manrique, and the satiric *Coplas del Provincial* and the *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* were written about this time. With the fifteenth-century poets, the Middle Ages ended, and Spain was prepared for Juan Boscan and Garcilaso de la Vega to usher in the Renaissance.

B. The Marques de Santillana (1398 – 1458)

Inigo Lopez de Mendoz, Marques de Santillana, the son of Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, also a poet, represented the height of literary culture and Humanism during the reign of Juan II. The *Proemio e carta al condestable de Portugal* (1449), in prose, was the first attempt at literary criticism in Spain. In this essay he gives his opinions about poetry. He asserted that poetry should be useful as well as beautiful and that poetry falls into three categories: sublime, or the poetry of Greek and Latin writers; mediocre, that written in “vulgar”; and infamous, or the disorderly folk poetry of the lower classes. His other important prose work, *Refranes que dicen las viejas tras el fuego*, indicates that the Marques de Santillana had a lively interest in folk literature and did not believe “disorderly folk poetry” was so infamous after all.

The poetry of don Inigo falls into two groups; that written in the manner of the Galician-Portuguese school, and that in the manner of the allegorical Dantesque school. Of the two, the first is the most appealing, for there one finds the *canciones*, *decires*, *villancios*, and *serranillas* whose folk feeling is ingeniously combined with refined delicateness and grace. Santillana’s simplicity and freshness, gentleness, and even exquisiteness of expression reach their peak in the *serranillas*, the best known of which is *La vaquero de la Finojosa*. His *Comedieta de Ponza* imitates Dante as it recounts naval battles in allegorical style, the manner also used in his *Infierno de los enamorados*. Most important are his forty-two *Sonetos fechos al italic modo*, reputed to be the first sonnets written in Spanish.

C. Juan de Mena (1411 – 1456)

Juan de Mena’s entire life was devoted to letters, and thus he became Spain’s first professional writer and scholar. A native of Cordoba, he studied at Salamanca and later went to Rome, where he imbibed the Renaissance spirit at its fountainhead. Upon Mena’s return to Spain, Juan II named him secretary of Latin letters and royal historian, an appointment that allowed him ample time to pursue his studies and writing.

Mena’s poetry falls into two groups: the light, short, frequently amorous verse distinguished for its musicality and perfection of form, possibly the produce of his youth, and the verse written in *arte mayor* style in imitation of the allegorical-Dantesque manner with the added feature of Cordovan *cultismo*. In his shorter poems he is not particularly serious, but in the Italian manner he is grave, profound, religious, and patriotic.

The *Laberinto de Fortuna* (1444), his masterwork, is sometimes called *Las trescientas* since it contains approximately 300 (actually only 297) strophes of *arte mayor*. This verse form is an eight-line strophe of twelve-syllable lines containing four marked rhythmic accents and divided in half by a caesura. The *Laberinto* is aptly named, since it leads the reader through a maze of allegorical experiences that are often tedious; nevertheless, it contains a few passages that have endured the test of time. The poem’s true merit lies in its fluent versification, descriptive force, and patriotic fervor, as Mena glorifies Spanish heroes who died in defense of the *patria*.

Borrowing from Latin, Mena initiated a renovation of poetic vocabulary that would influence the seventeenth century *gongoristas*. Mena is the first of the *culto* poets for several reasons: about 80 percent of Gongora’s *cultismos* are found in his work; he favored the rotund, ornate style; he addressed a cultural minority and scorned the *vulgo*; he introduced Latinisms in both vocabulary and syntax; and he sometimes intentionally obscured his writing, often using mythological references. Whether these characteristics are considered shortcomings or not, we must acknowledge that the Spanish language and poetic style were enriched through Mena’s efforts.

D. Jorge Manrique (1440? – 1479)

Jorge Manrique, born into an illustrious family that included the Marques de Santillana and Gomez Manrique, a dramatist, was first and foremost a soldier. He died a hero's death at the age of thirty-nine fighting for the Catholic Sovereigns in an assault on the stronghold of Garci-Munoz.

Jorge Manrique's poetic output is slight, and he would be forgotten were it not for his *Coplas*, an elegy written at the death of his father. But these forty strophes of *pie quebrado* verse (two eight-syllable lines followed by a four-syllable line) are probably the best-known verses in Spanish poetry. It is curious that an unknown poet with no special preparation and whose thoughts had been commonplace since Biblical times should write an immortal poem. But it was Manrique's fate to be shocked by his father's death into crystallizing and condensing into one poem all the important sentiments of the Middle Ages. Under the stress of emotion, he was able to say what everyone else was saying, but better.

The complete title of his poem is *Coplas a la muerte del Maestro don Rodrigo, su padre*. Its themes are meditation on the transitory nature of worldly things and nostalgic longing for the past; the *whi sunt* motif; and a eulogy of Manrique's father and an account of his death.

Jorge Manrique was the last poet of the Spanish Middle Ages. He was unaffected by poetic schools and nearly obsessed with the idea of death. He was a restless man, yet tranquility and repose are the keystones of his poetry. His *Coplas* have been imitated, translated (into English by Longfellow), and set to music.

They are still found in every anthology, for their basic ideas are commonplace: death is the great leveler, you can't take it with you, worldly things are fragile, virtue conquers time for it is forever remembered. Manrique lamented the death of his father in his *Coplas*, but he also lamented the passing of an age.

E. The Cancioneros: The Minor Poets

The late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries teemed with poets. Their poetry, for the most part justly condemned to oblivion, has been preserved in anthologies called *cancioneiros*. In addition to the *Cancionero de Baena* (1445) are the *Cancionero de Stuniga*, compiled for Alfonso V of Naples, the *Cancionero general*, compiled by Hernando del Castillo in 1511, and the *Cancionero de burlas provocantes a risa*, which appeared in 1519.

Minor poets of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are Pero Ferrus, the first to mention Amadis; Macias, called El Enamorado, whose tragic life story inspired works for Santillana, Lope, and Larra; Gomez Manrique, uncle of Jorge; Anton de Montoro, a Jew who wrote sharp, satiric verse; Pero Guillen de Segovia; Juan Alvarez Gato; Garci Sanchez de Badajoz; Rodrigo de Cota; Juan de Padilla; Fray Inigo de Mendoz, a favorite of Queen Isabel; and Fray Ambrosio Montesinos.

Part II : Early Modern Period

Part I : THE EPIC IN THE GOLDEN AGE

Golden Age poets, influenced by the Italians Ariosto and Tasso and desiring to create a heroic literature worthy of their great nation, composed many long, erudite epic poems that had nothing in common with the primitive type and are of scant interest today. They addressed a variety of themes, as seen in the following list.

Historical epics include *La dragonetea* (1598), by Lope de Vega, and *Bernardo, o Victoria de Roncesvalles* (1624), by Bernardo Balbuena.

Romantic epics include *Las Idgrimas de Angelica* (1586), by Luis Barahona de Soto, and *La hermosa de Angelica* (1598), by Lope de Vega.

Epics on American themes include *La Araucana*, in three parts (1569, 1578, 1589), by Alonso de Ercilla y Zuniga (1533-1594), judged by most to be the best epic of the Golden Age.

Epics were also written on Classical burlesque, satiric, and religious themes.

LYRIC POETRY

THE RENAISSANCE

A. General Considerations

Ordinarily we regard the sixteenth century in Spain as the Renaissance age, but rumblings of it had been heard along before in the works of Juan Ruiz, Juan de Mena, and others. The movement was well under way during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabel.

We must also observe that the sixteenth century embraced two quite different periods. The Early Renaissance characterized by the Humanistic, liberal Italian spirit, occurred during the first half of the century. The Late Renaissance, marked by the spirit of the Counter Reformation, orthodoxy, and a stifling of the pagan spirit, rationalism, and Protestantism, occurred during the second half. A free spirit and Boscan's and Garcilaso's Italianate poetry typified the first period. The second period showed the involution of the nation following the Counter Reformation and Felipe II's isolationist policy and was characterized by the poetry of the Mystics, Fray Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz.

The political chaos of the first two-thirds of the fifteenth century, which occasioned the satiric and libelous writings of the time (*Coplas del Provincial and Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*), ended with the political stability and strong central government created by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabel and the uniting of their kingdoms. This absolute monarchy set the nation on its way to its most glorious hour, as Spain became the dominant world power whose influence was felt in the remotest corners of the globe. It also brought linguistic unity to the nation, as Castilian became the national tongue.

The two major influences on Spanish literature of the Renaissance were Humanism and Italianism, both nurtured under Ferdinand and Isabel. Greek and Latin writers were emulated, and Italians were extensively imitated. Universities were founded, and the joyous spirit of the Renaissance abounded. Rationalism began to gain a foothold, and the teachings of Erasmus influenced learned circles. A hard core of objectors, however, opposed the new style and strove to reject the foreign imports and retain the traditional Spanish short verses and popular motives.

Italian influence was nothing new to Spain, but in the opening years of the sixteenth century it grew apace and dominated a school of poetry led by Boscan and Garcilaso, Neoplatonism was the philosophical fad and contributed to the growth of Mysticism in the second half of the century. The humdrum poetry of the fifteenth century *escuela trovadoresca* died, and poets now spoke of their innermost personal sentiments. Pastoral, bucolic poetry triumphed, and even though shadows of the courtly love poetry lingered, Spain was on the threshold of its greatest literary age.

The literature of the second half of the sixteenth century reflects a changed attitude in the Spanish people. When Charles I failed in his attempted reconciliation with the Protestants, he made Spain the champion of Roman Catholicism. After the advent of the Counter Reformation, Spain was closed off from the rest of Europe, turned in upon itself, and declined to join the march to modernity through the new Renaissance spirit but able to accept only those aspects of it compatible with a strict and rigid orthodox Catholic faith, Spaniards were left in an ambiguous situation that accounts largely for the retention of so much of the Middle Ages in Renaissance Spain and the great flowering of Mystic literature in the latter part of the sixteenth century.

The Italian Renaissance spirit was not to be denied, however, and it grew rapidly in the lyric as well as in the drama and the novel. From the Italians of the Spaniards learned new meters and themes and a whole new attitude toward life. The drab and monotonous became bright and colorful. The innovations in lyric poetry at this time marked a profound change in the genre and had an effect on its character and destiny noticeable down to the present day.

In summary, the major trends of the sixteenth century are as follows: Boscan and Garcilaso establish the Italianate school, which dominates until about the middle of the century. Castillejo and others react in favor of tradition, and poetry splits into two camps identified with regions of the country, namely Andalusia (Sevilla) and Castile (Salamanca). Hence, we find the Salamanca school of poetry, headed by Fray Luis de Leon, and the Sevillian school, headed by Fernando de Herrera. In addition, poetry takes a third direction, that of Mysticism, represented by Fray Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz.

B. The Italian School

1. *Juan Boscan Almogaver* (1493? – 1542), a Catalan who forsook his native tongue to write in Castilian, engaged in a variety of literary activities and was clearly more than a dilettante. One of his major contributions was his translation of Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*, which aided in educating the noble *cortesano* and in completing the process, begun under Ferdinand and Isabel, of transforming him from a rebellious country baron to a polished gentleman.

In 1526 the Venetian ambassador, Andrea Navagero, persuaded Boscan to try to adapt to Spanish the Italian meters and strophes, which he deemed superior. Unsuccessful at first, Boscan persevered, and sustained by his friend Garcilaso, he eventually naturalized to Spanish the iambic hendecasyllable (different from the hendecasyllable *de gaita gallega* used earlier by Spaniards), the sonnets and canzone of Petrarch, Dante's *terza rima*, and the octaves of Ariosto,

Boscan was of mediocre poetic talent, with little inventiveness or emotion and was often dry and prosaic. His contribution was rather in the field of stylistic innovation at a time when it was needed. The metrical changes he wrought in Spanish verse have brought him everlasting fame, for seldom has one man single handedly had such a great influence on the literature of his country. Though he was unable to write great poetry himself, he gave to others the tools to do so, especially to Garcilaso de la Vega, whom he influenced strongly.

2. *Garcilaso de la Vega* (1501? – 1536), the "perfect courtier" and the "faultless poet," has always been a favorite. He was the ideal courtier; handsome, intelligent, talented, and aristocratic, he knew Latin and Italian and was a favorite of the ladies. He served Carlos V as a soldier and was killed at the age of thirty-five leading his troops in an assault on a fortress in Southern France.

His great love, Isabel Freyre, who scorned him and married another, inspired some of his poetry, published in 1543. The matchmaker queen forced him to marry Elena Stuniga, but his love for Isabel remained. His total literary production is small; thirty-eight sonnets, three eclogues, two elegies, five *canciones*, one epistle, and a few other poems. With Boscan and especially with Garcilaso sobriety, grace, and elegance returned to poetry after a momentary flirtation with the *culto* style in Spanish poetry when the Italians first became known in Spain. Garcilaso was an expert craftsman and balanced his language skillfully between the popular and the pedantic and artificial.

The universal admiration of Garcilaso, which continues today, was not awakened by any originality of ideas. He freely and frankly borrowed from Italian and Classical masters. His originality lies in his expressing for the first-time universal poetic themes that were not typically Spanish. What charmed his readers, however, was his fluent, facile manipulation of the language and verse. He created linguistic harmonies unsurpassed to this day. His harmony and technical perfection together with an elegance and extraordinary sweetness were unknown up to his time and have seldom been found since. A reverence has been granted to Garcilaso that few men have known.

His principal themes are love and nature. His prevailing mood is nostalgic melancholy, to which he adds a tenderness and gentleness that belie his adventurous life as a soldier. His best work is *Egloga primera*, occasioned by news of the death of Isabel Freyre. The autobiographical nature of this poem in which the characters represent Garcilaso and Isabel makes the poem more attractive to those who find Garcilaso lacking in substance.

The second eclogue narrates the history of the house of Alba, and the third describes the nymphs of the Tagus along with two shepherds named Alcino and Tirreno. Neither compares in quality with the *Egloga primera*, but the verse is strikingly cadenced. Garcilaso's sonnets surpassed any that preceded them, for no one before him and few since could compete with Garcilaso's virtuosity and uncanny ability with the language. Had he not devoted himself to the pastoral manner and to foreign concepts and ideas, turning instead to native Spanish themes with his miraculous power of expression and control of rhythm and harmony, he would seldom if ever have been equaled.

3. *Gutierre de Cetina* (1520? – 1557?), an apt pupil of Garcilaso's, was also fond of poetizing, soldiering, and making love. Born into a noble family, he became the friend of many notables of his day, including Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Jorge de Montemayor. In 1547 he went to Mexico. Ten years later he was seriously wounded and possibly died in a duel.

His one poetic theme was love. He was a fluent, melodic versifier, capable of Sweetness, freshness, and beautiful thoughts reminiscent of Garcilaso, but he had a touch of sobriety and humor not found in the latter. He was also influenced by Ausias March and especially Petarch.

He wrote 244 Sonnets, 11 *canciones*, 5 madrigals, and one of the first Spanish anacreontics. His madrigals comprise his best work, and he is especially remembered for the one that begins "Ojos claros, serenos."

Other followers of Garcilaso's are Hernando de Acuna (1520? – 1580?), known for characterizing Felipe II as "un monarca un imperio, y una espada," and Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (1503 – 1575), immensely important in local and international politics and as an eclectic poet combining Italianism with traditionalism. Gregorio Silvestre (1520 – 1569), a musician, began by speaking ill of the Italian style but eventually accepted it.

4. *Francisco de Figueroa* (1536 – 1617) nearly achieved the *vida retirada* that Fray Luis yearned for, when he retired to his native city while still young. As a young man in Italy, he devoted himself enthusiastically to Italian letters and language to the point that he was able to compose poetry in that language. He also composed poems with alternating lines of Spanish and Italian. He was renowned for his amatory and bucolic verse in Garcilaso's manner and earned the epithet *divino* from his contemporaries. He was dominated by the Italian school and devoted to Garcilaso, but before he had finished, the pastoral theme had faded in popularity. One of his best accomplishments was his use of the *verso sueltos*, which he managed as well as any of his contemporaries. Typical of his work is *Los amores de Damon y Galatea* and sonnet *A los ojos de Fili*.

C. The Traditionalists

Cristóbal de Castillejo (1490? – 1550?), the most persistent in resisting the Italian manner, is in some ways reminiscent of Juan Ruiz. At the age of forty, ordained in the priesthood, he fell in love with Ana Schaumburg, who did not share his passion. The impossibility and frustrations of this love coupled with ill health and homesickness inspired much of his poetry.

Despite his cloth, Castillejo was liberal in his thought. His poetry, filled with feminine names and amorous sighs, was banned by the Inquisition until 1573, when an expurgated selection saw the light of the day. Through his poetry runs a mischievous, merry note, at times bittersweet, at other times erotic, reminiscent of his spiritual kinsman the Arcipreste de Hita. *El borracho convertido en mosquito* illustrates this lighter side.

Though a fair poet, he is best remembered for having led the Traditionalists, who objected to the importation of foreign models for fear that Spanish poetry might lose its distinctive character. His best-known poem is *Contra los que dejan los metros castellanos y siguen los italianos*. His crusade was ineffectual, for the Italian manner triumphed by the end of the sixteenth century, but the victory was not easy or ever complete. Cervantes and Lope at one time supported the native Spanish manner, and some of its medieval verse forms lived on, notably the *quintilla*, the *decima*, and the *romance*. With Lope, Quevedo, and Gongora in the seventeenth century, the two manners are fused, and the struggle is over.

THE LATE RENAISSANCE: SALAMANCAN AND SEVILLIAN SCHOOLS OF POETRY

A. General Considerations

The second half of the sixteenth century saw several schools of poetry, each centered around some outstanding poet. The southern poets, residing mostly in Seville, followed Fernando de Herrera and formed the Sevillian, or Andalusian, school. The northern poets

looked to Fray Luis de Leon of Salamanca for leadership and created the Salamancan school. A third group, also guided by Fray Luis, wrote Mystic poetry.

The Salamancan school is noted for its sobriety, concise language, unadorned expression, and the insistence of matter over form. It produced dignified, serious, and restrained poetry concerned more with ideas than the manner of expressing them.

The Sevillian school reflects the exuberance, the wealth, the gaiety, and the lack of restraint of its native city. Its poetry exhibits an abundance of adjectives – especially those of color attention to form over matter, and the use of neologisms and syntactical innovations. The poems are rhetorical, sensual, often passionate, and ornate. These poets wanted to create a language for poetry different from that used for prose, thus continuing the trend established by Juan de Mena and forming a link between him and *cultistas* of the seventeenth century.

B. The Salamancan School

1. *Fray Luis de Leon* (1527 – 1591) is undoubtedly one of the most impressive Spanish writers of all ages and clearly a lyric poet of the highest order. He joined the Augustinian Order in 1544 and was graduated with a degree in sacred theology from the University of Salamanca. Those against whom he competed for a professorship there, which he won, denounced him to the Inquisition for having questioned the accuracy of the Vulgate translations of the Bible and having translated the Song of Songs into Spanish. They also expressed doubts regarding his orthodoxy, with references to the fact that his great-grandmother had been a Jewess. Fray Luis was arrested and spent almost five years in prison, but he was finally released with a judgment of not guilty.

He admired Horace, who had found peace and solace, and Fray Luis longed for the same in the hope of escaping the turmoil envy, competitiveness, intrigues, and competition among the professors at the university. His longing for a peaceful existence is reflected in his famous poem that opens with the lines “Que descansada vida / La del que huye el mandanal ruido!” Called the Christian Horace, he sought refuge in nature, where he found peace in God’s greatness and the beauties any mysteries of the universe. This facet of his work illustrates the Mystic strain in his personality, though his Mysticism did not ascend to the heights of that of San Juan de la Cruz.

Fray Luis did not regard his poetry highly and did not intend to publish it, but it was saved from oblivion by Quevedo in 1631. Fray Luis thought his prose writings to be of far more importance, but they are greater only in bulk. Among them are *De los nombres de Cristo* (1583) and *La perfecta casada* (1583). His fame rests primarily on his poetry.

The deep seriousness, quiet sobriety, gravity, and freedom from artifice are the most appealing features of Fray Luis’ poetry. His language is simple and unadorned; his poetry is intellectual, not passionate, and reveals his desire for spiritual elevation and escape from reality through nature, a feeling he conveys to his reader. He sought in solitude and communion with nature the harmony of the universe.

His poetic output amounts to about forty poems, which in clear, direct, unaffected style reveal a masterful combination of perfect form with depth of thought, a rare combination among Spanish poets. He recommended “plain living and high thinking.” Three of his best-loved poems are *Vida retirada*, *Noche serena*, and *A Francisco Salinas*. The latter is dedicated to an organist in whose music Fray Luis felt his forgetful soul might rediscover its divine origins. He demonstrates eternal values in all his works, which have lasted through the centuries and are still favorites in the twentieth.

2. *Pedro Malon de Chaide* (1530? – 1589) joined the Augustinian Order and was a disciple of Fray Luis’. His major contribution was his very highly rated prose work, *La conversion de la Magdalena*. Of special interest in the student of literature is its prologue, in which the author assails the novel of chivalry and worldly books of poetry, condemning even Boscan and Garcilaso. He also offers an excellent defense of the

Spanish language, which he considered second to none. His few poems are sprinkled throughout his *Conversion* as a relief from the prose. Most of them deal with Biblical themes, often paraphrases of Psalms. They show him to be a poet of talent of whom his model did not need to be ashamed.

3. *Benito Arias Montano* (1527 – 1589) was one of the great cultural figures of the Renaissance. Because Arias knew nine languages, including Hebrew, Chaldean, and Sanskrit, Felipe II appointed him professor of Oriental languages at El Escorial. He was learned in all-important fields of study and accompanied Martin Perez de Ayala, Bishop of Segovia, to the Council of Trent, where he impressed many with his learning and intelligence. Felipe II asked him to direct the edition of the *Biblia Regia de Ambres*, which he concluded in eight volumes 1569 to 1572. His poetry won for him the reputation of being one of the principal imitators of Fray Luis, and like the master, he also attempted his own version of the Song of Songs, *Parafraſis sobre el Cantar de los Cantares*.
4. Francisco de la torre is a shadowy figure, for less is known of his life than of that of any other Spanish writer. Lope de Vega attested to his existence, as did a few others, but documentary evidence is totally lacking.

Quevedo published his poetry in 1631 but confused him with Alfonso de la Torre. Luis Josef Velazquez reprinted his poems in the eighteenth century but ascribed them to Quevedo under the pseudonym Francisco de la Torre. Others have surmised that he was a Portuguese named Almeida.

There is no such confusion concerning the merit of his poetry. He was one of the best writers of the Salamancan school and left excellent samples in many sonnets, *canciones*, odes, *endechas*, and eclogues. His principal traits are simplicity of expression, good taste, elegance, gentleness, peasant imagination, and a melancholy reminiscent of Garcilaso. In matters of technique he leaves little to be desired.

5. *Soneto a Cristo crucificado*, an anthology favorite that has been translated into the major European tongues, has been attributed to many persons of the sixteenth century, including Santa Teresa, San Juan de la Cruz, San Francisco Javier, and even San Ignacio de Loyola, but no convincing proof of its authorship has as yet been adduced.

C. The Sevillian School

1. *Fernando de Herrera* (1534 – 1597), a Sevillian, was the leader of the Andalusian school and so highly regarded that he was called *el divino* by his contemporaries. He devoted himself exclusively to a life of study and letters but did take minor orders as a convenience. He took part in the first-known *tertulias* at the home of Alvaro Colon y Portugal and there fell passionately in love with Leonor de Milan, Condesa de Gelves. This unrequited love, the source of most of his amorous verse, never got beyond the poem-writing stage but provided the needed spark for his inspiration.

Herrera's other theme was patriotism. His *Cancion por la Victoria de Lepanto* and others like it are better suited to his fiery poems. His patriotic poems are passionate, exuberant, full of sound and fury, fancy rhetoric, strong images, and surging rhythms. We see the true spirit of the Sevillian school in this heroic, epiclike poetry. Herrera used neologisms and hyperbaton and sought the unexpected metaphor and the colorful adjective. By imitating the Bible, he achieved a striking effect in the Lepanto poem, probably the most majestic in Spanish literature. Herrera, grandiloquent, a lover of pomp, and a true Sevillian, nearly completed the task begun by Juan de Mena of creating a vocabulary peculiar to poetry. His mission was to improve, uplift, and ennoble Spanish poetry. He symbolizes strength and rugged power, and his patriotic fervor, though sometimes verging on bathos, is noble and touching. He presages the seventeenth century with his ornate style and attention to form and is doubtlessly one of the major influences in the rise of Gongorism. But he also saw merit in the Italianate trend set by Boscan and Garcilaso, and he edited the latter's poetry in *Anotaciones a las obras de Garcilaso de la Vega* (1580).

2. *Juan de Mal Lara* (1524 – 1571), though not a poet, influenced the birth of the Sevillian school since some of its better-known members, including Herrera, attended his school of “Gramatica y Humanidades.” He inclined his students to the *estilo ampuloso* of the Sevillian school. Aside from this influence on his students, his greatest contribution to letters is his collection of Spanish proverbs, *Filosofia vulgar* (1568), which he studied with great erudition and illustrated with stories, apologues, and tales of his own invention. This work illustrates once again the popular note running throughout Spanish literature.
3. *Baltasar del Alcazar* (1530 – 1606) ranks as the best Spanish poet of light verse that is gay, convivial, and amatory. He is also one of Spain’s nest epigrammatists. After successful years of study, he took up arms and served in the navy. Later in life he held important governmental posts. After the death of his wife, he became so entangled in love affairs that he had to flee. In 1590 he withdrew to his home in San Juan de la Palma, his health failing and his fortune dwindling. Yet at the age of seventy he wrote a sprightly poem to Isabel.

As a poet he disdained fame and glory and used his poetry only for delight and recreation. His forte was the festive style, but he tried the amatory and religious also. At his nest, he displays a pleasant epicureanism with an attractive underlay of humor. His *Cena jocosa* is his best-known piece. Also typical is his *Secreto para conciliar y saudir el sueno* as is the poem with the intriguing title *A una vieja que se hallo un pedazo de Espejo en un muladar y lo quebro*. He was a master at the language, perfect in writing *redondillas*, and his *joie de vivre* shines through his work, making the most mournful smile.

D. Mysticism

Mysticism was late in reaching Spain, having flourished elsewhere in Europe in the medieval period. Adapting the symbols of the Italian and popular tradition, Mysticism reached its peak in Spain in the second half of the sixteenth century, surfacing later from time to time in varying degree. Most Mystic literature is in prose. The Mystic poets include Fray Luis de Leon, Pedro Malon deChaide, Benito Arias Montano – all of the Salamancan school – San Juan de la Cruz, and Santa Teresa de Jesus.

No single theory can explain the origin of Spanish Mysticism, although it can be traced as far back as the thirteenth century, when Raimundo Lulio (Lull in Majorcan), working as a missionary among the Spanish Moors, acquainted himself with the complicated conceits and rich imagery of Arabic poetry and used concepts and sentences that parallel those of San Juan de la Cruz, Spain’s most ardent Mystic. The likeliest explanation, however, of the rise of Mysticism in Spain is that it provided an outlet for Spanish energy, intellectuality, and spirituality within the framework of orthodoxy after the Counter Reformation had cut Spain off from the developing rationalism of Europe. All foreign heretical ideas were forbidden, and under Felipe II’s censorship and control of thought, men forsook the experimental scientific method and again, as in the Middle Ages, concerned themselves with immorality, reward, punishment after death, scorn for worldly things, and especially longing for spiritual union with God. Interpretations independent of the Church were stifled, and Renaissance paganism and Exasmism disappeared.

The Mystic writers were members of religious orders, but much of what they wrote was concerned with mere asceticism, that is, fasting, meditation, penance, prayer, and the like, which were intended to purify the body and soul so that union with God might be possible. Not all ascetics, however, achieved the lofty Mystical goal of union with the Divine and spiritual marriage with God. If this goal was reached, the Mystic then attempted to describe his feelings in poetry, but it was difficult to communicate, concretely, ineffable experiences. It is here, however, that the Spanish Mystic differs, for he manages to maintain a balance between idealism and realism, and the rapture experienced during the union with God is tempered by the strong feeling of reality and practical immediacy that the Spaniard never loses. Thus, the Spanish Mystics come closer than anyone else to communicating the total Mystical experience.

1. *San Juan de la Cruz* (1542 – 1591) was the last great figure of Mysticism in Spain and represents its highest flights. His poetry is the most intense and metaphysical, the most abstract and pure, of all Mystic poets. He joined the Carmelite order, and inspired by Santa Teresa's reforms, he attempted to carry them out in his own branch of the order. Other members disagreed, kidnapped him, and threw him into a prison in Toledo where he languished for nine months, half - starved and ill - treated. In a vision, the Virgin directed his escape by means of a rope made from a blanket. Brennan believes that the immense joy San Juan felt as he escaped from the dark prison into the Andalusian countryside prompted the poet's best verse, all written within a few months after his escape.
 His poetic production is extremely small, consisting chiefly of three major poems: *Noche oscura del alma*, *Canciones entre el alma y el esposo* and *Llama de amor viva*. San Juan takes off where others stop and reaches higher levels of ardor, lyricism, and Mystical experience than any other Spanish poet. In him is an inner fire, a metaphysical tension that we glimpse but that his words cannot express, making him difficult sometimes to understand. The ineffability of his experiences caused him to erupt in numerous exclamations and to use symbols and comparisons to try to express his sentiments. Recognizing the reader's difficulties, he wrote long prose treatises in which he explained phrase by phrase what he meant, a rare if not unique occurrence among poets.
2. *Santa Teresa de Jesus* (1515 – 1582) made her chief contribution in prose, but she left a few poems that have much merit. Perhaps her contribution to Mystical poetry lies more in the inspiration she gave to Fray Luis de Leon and San Juan de la Cruz than in her poetic writings. In 1982 some lost poetry of this famous woman was found.

THE BAROQUE AGE: THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

A. General Considerations

The Baroque literary style dominated Spain in the seventeenth century and was felt also throughout Europe. Whereas the sixteenth century conceived spatial beauty in terms of geometrical balance, the seventeenth emphasized broken, uneven masses. The sixteenth century strove for clarity, the seventeenth sought embellishment, obscurity and ornamentation.

The Baroque style, called Gongorism in Spain, had been present in Spanish poetry from the days of the Galician-Portuguese school through Juan de Mena and Herrera, growing steadily in complexity and reaching its peak with Gongora in the seventeenth century. Many theories have been advanced concerning its origins: critics assert that it resulted, variously, from the exaggerated use of metaphors by the Cordovan Moors, the efforts of grammarians to enhance the language, the repressive effect of the Church, Felipe II's censorship, and the reaction of the sensitive, artistic types to the incipient decadence of the nation. Whatever the origins may have been, the Baroque period conveys a melancholy tone, a pessimism, and a feeling that life is an unreal dream. Old themes – war, love, fame, religion – were sterile, and no new ones arose to replace them. For lack of ideas, poets turned to complicating the language and style of their poetry, avoiding the simple and natural and gradually adding greater stylistic complexity, ornamentation, and obscurity. Gongora's *Soledades* have astonishingly little substance but incredible embellishment and linguistic complexity.

In Spain the Baroque style consisted of two different but not incompatible manners, *culteranismo* and *conceptismo*. When Gongora published his controversial poetry in 1612, the literary world split into two camps, and struggle between *culteranistas* and *conceptistas* began.

B. *Culteranismo*

Culteranismo is a deliberate obscuring of style. Specifically, the *cultistas* wanted to create a poetic vocabulary different from ordinary language. To do this they borrowed and invented neologisms from Latin and Greek; distorted syntax, separating words that go together by logic, agreement, or custom, a practice called hyperbaton; used other devices, such as the suppression of the definite article, the use of hyperbole, ellipsis and all the rhetorical figures of Latin poetry; invented audacious metaphors and epithets and made it a practice not to call things by their names but to give them others; and made abundant references to Classical mythology, exotic geography, and anything else that might make a strange impression.

The *cultistas* aimed to dazzle the reader and to shine by a display of verbal technique and fireworks. Some regarded their products as tasteless, absurd, and contrived and were horrified by some of the words they invented or borrowed. It is to their credit, however, that through their high artistic standards they enriched both language and diction.

C. *Conceptismo*

Culteranismo is an aesthetic, sensory manifestation. *Conceptistas*, giving greater significance to meaning, insisted that the manner in which something is said is not so important as what is said. They sought out brilliant thoughts, turns of phrase, striking comparisons, unexpected associations of words, and extraordinary subtleties of thought. This tendency can be traced back to the Provençal poets and still affects Spanish literature.

Whereas the *cultistas* heaped words and images upon one another, the *conceptistas* avoided too many words. In order to express their brilliant mental concepts, they employed cleverly turned metaphors, antitheses, puns, paradoxes, and conceits. The latter, which became the identifying mark of the manner since it is so perfectly characterized what they were trying to do, is a fanciful or extravagant notion clothed in metaphorical guise. *Culteranismo*, which developed into a school, was basically a manner of writing. *Conceptismo* was a mode of thought rather than a style and did not form a school. Both tendencies together compose the Baroque style of Spain.

D. Luis Carrillo y Sotomayor (1583 – 1610)

At one time it was thought that the Cordovan poet Carrillo was a great influence on Gongora, but Damaso Alonso has shown that the latter was already infected with the Baroque virus and did not need Carrillo's example. The latter summed up nicely, however, much of the doctrine of *culteranismo* in *El libro de la erudition poetica* (1611). He disdained the ordinary reader and pleaded for the poet to direct himself to a select, enlightened few. He urged changes in the forms and meanings of words and demanded that the poet not concern himself with common or base things. He also wrote some good poetry, and Gracian considered him to be the first *Cultista* of Spain. His death at twenty-seven years of age cut short his career, and one can only speculate about what he might have done had he lived longer.

E. Minor Poets Between Herrera and Gongora

Herrera and the Sevillian poets had added color, ornamentation, and inflation to their Renaissance heritage. By the time Gongora had fully developed the *culto* style, he had refined and altered significantly Herrera's legacy. Between these two giants appeared lesser poets. Pedro Espinosa's anthology, *Flores de poetas ilustres de Espana* (1605), contains works from Antequeran or Antequeran-Granadine school. Pedro Soto de Rojas was another noteworthy poet of the day. The Aragonese school, eclectic in nature but more inclined to the Renaissance manner, included the Argensola brothers, Lupericio and Bartolome, and Esteban Manuel de Villegas.

F. Luis de Gongora y Argote (1561 – 1627)

Gongora had a charming, attractive, and sometimes mischievous personality that made him a popular figure. He took minor orders and was commissioned to travel all over Spain. In 1617 he was ordained and appointed chaplain of honor to Felipe III. But already in 1609 symptoms of the disease arteriosclerosis had appeared, and a stroke caused his death in 1627.

Until Damasco Alonso proved otherwise, it was thought that Gongora's poetic production consisted of two distinct styles, a simple, direct manner, popular in flavor, and the *culto* style of the *Soledades*. Up to 1612 (some say 1610) the popular style dominated and was characterized by short poems, *letrillas*, romances, and sonnets. Then supposedly the poet made an about-face, changed his manner completely, and wrote the highly obscure, Gongoristic verse of the *Soledades* and the *Polifemo*. Damasco Alonso has shown, however, that Gongora was a *culteranista* from the time he began to write and that his altered style merely contained such profusion of *culto* ingredients that it only appeared different from his earlier manner. The two periods, therefore, are different only on a quantitative basis, not on a qualitative one.

The Gongora of the first period has always been popular, and some of his early poems were "hits" in their day and still are. The more difficult works of his later years were often called "literary insanity" up to the time of Damasco Alonso's studies, but opinion has now changed. Gongora's star has been in the ascendancy in the twentieth century, for the Spanish poets of the 1920s who appreciated his poetic wizardry have resurrected him as one of the greatest Spanish poetic talents of all time.

Gongora invented nothing new in the *Soledades*. He simply massed the elements of the *culto* style together in such profusion that he achieved a density unequalled by any other poet. The cramming of obscure elements into his poetry makes it difficult to read, but when it is deciphered one finds Gongora's astounding imagination, expressiveness, and genius truly amazing.

Gongora's detractors attacked him for what they considered to be poor taste and excesses. They decried his use of new names for common things: hair became *oro*; anything white became *alabastro*, *nieve*, *nacar*, *plata*; a bird became a *citara volante*; a piece of a wrecked ship was a *pino*; water became *crystal*, and the grass *esmeralda*. By this process of substitution, the poet moved away from reality and stylized nature as *marfil*, *clavels*, *plata*, *rosas*, *lirios*, *crystal*, *fulgores*, *miel*, *nieve*, and so on. Thus, he nearly accomplished the dream of Spanish poets since Juan de Mena, for by expressing the distinctive quality of a thing rather than using its common name he created in effect a poetic language. Also, he discovered the subtle or unexpected relationships between things and then devised metaphors to describe them.

The use of hyperbaton also makes Gongora difficult to read. Consider the following example from *Angelica y Medoro*: "y la que major se halla / en las selvas que en la corte / simple bondad, al pio ruego / cortesmente corresponde." Unscrambled, these lines read "y la simple bondad, que se halla major en las selvas que en la corte, corresponde cortesmente al pio ruego."

His rich and unusual metaphors, chromatic effects, decorative, lush imagery, and extraordinarily uncommon thoughts and comparisons leave the reader amazed if not perplexed. He employed other complicating devices, such as antithesis, chiasmus, oxymoron, litotes, and allusions to unfamiliar geography and Classical mythology.

His *Soledades*, finished about 1613, constitute his masterpiece in the *culto* manner. He apparently intended to write four parts to the *Soledades* but completed only one and most of another. They are in the pastoral style with a trivial plot; but the poet embroiders them extensively and clothes them in two thousand lines of verse. Gongora's artificial *culteranista* world contains no part of nature that is ugly, evil, or distasteful. The *Soledades* come close to being pure poetry, but one can still discern the brilliance of the poet's metaphors, the ingenuity of his thought, the abundance of color, and the musicality of his verse.

Other works in the *culto* manner are the *Fabula de Polifemo* (ca. 1613), his *Panegirico al Duque de Lerma* (1609) and the *Fabula de Piramo y Tishe* (1618). Absorbed with embellishment and unconcerned with the great emotions of love, hate, war, and religion the second Gongora holds little appeal for readers seeking content, philosophy, emotion, or at least some new contribution to man's understanding of life. Some reassessment of this occurred, however, in 1961, four hundred years after Gongora's birth. Others find the greatest possible expression of beauty through words in his verse and ask for nothing more. He was an extraordinary genius before whom few readers can remain neutral.

G. Minor *Cultistas*. Followers of Gongora

Gongora's highly affected poetry split the poets of the nation into two camps. Humanists denounced his "licentious metaphors." The *cultistas* were called "swans," and their opponents called themselves "geese." A host of poets followed Gongora's example. Since the *culto* poetry was directed to the cultured literary elite, not to acclaim it might stigmatize one as a dolt or a cultural beggar. Some poets, whose reputations were already secure, objected to the style, but a few adopted it themselves.

Among the noteworthy poets writing in the *culto* manner were Rodrigo Caro (1573 – 1647), Juan de Tassis y Peralta, Conde de Villamediana (1582 – 1622), Hortensio Felix Paravicino y Arteaga (1580 – 1633), Juan de Jauregui (1583 – 1641), Pedro Soto de Rojas (1585 – 1658), Francisco de Rioja (1583 – 1659), and Gabriel Bocangel Unzueta (1608 – 1658). The *Epistola moral a Fabio*, considered by some to have been written by Andres Fernandez de Andrada, was extravagantly praised as the best poem of the seventeenth century.

H. Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580 – 1645)

Quevedo's chief literary contributions were in prose, but he attempted other genres as well. His poetry runs the gamut from love poems to some of the funniest burlesques ever written. He also left serious poems on moral and philosophical problems revealing his deep reaction to the spirit of his times.

Quevedo's poetry shows him to be a clever wit opposed to the *culteranista* style. He hated the fancy words and inventions of the *cultistas* and campaigned for clarity and moderation in language.

To provide good models for aspiring poets, he published the poetry of Fray Luis de Leon and Francisco de la Torre. Yet Quevedo was unable to avoid some of the excesses of the style he criticized and sinned on the side of *conceptismo* and involved ideas. His satire was sharp, sometimes bitter, often funny; but even in his most comical moments one can discern his characteristic melancholy and disillusionment.

In *Aguja de navegar cultos*, Quevedo pokes fun at the *cultista* manner and the less-gifted "perverters of good taste," but to think of Quevedo as simply a witty opponent of Gongorism is to see only one side of the coin. He was a deeply philosophical poet who showed the melancholy and disillusionment of the Baroque period. His suffering and tragic life are apparent in his bitterness and satire. He deplored the political failures and decadence of his nation and criticized the softening of the Spanish spirit, the degeneration of the monarchy, and the abuse of power by the *privados*. He pessimistically lamented these things but had no solutions to offer. Hence his hopelessness and frustration were but a reflection of his nation. He felt that man was essentially depraved with little hope for salvation. His sonnet *Mire los muros de la patria mia* expresses some of these ideas.

Quevedo was an ascetic and a stoic and viewed the vanities of life as one might expect. He shared the view that life is a dream and expressed in these lines from one of his sonnets: "Fue sueno ayer: manana sera tierra! / Poco antes nada; y poco despues, humo!" Typical of his political satire is his poem *Epistola satirica y censorial* directed against the Conde-Duque de Olivars. He wrote love poems directed to a

certain Lusiad religious poems, and burlesque-satiric poems such as *Poderosos Caballeros don Dinero*.

Quevedo had a brilliant intellect and felt more strongly than any other writer of his time except perhaps Gracian, the need to write something startling, to express some rare thought or extraordinary idea. He caricatured reality with his hyperboles but was a writer of great depth and strength, rated by some as the best in the language. His knowledge was vast. A formidable enemy and a demolishing satirist, he never shrank from hard words or unpoetical, even indecent, expressions; yet few would accuse him of bad taste or crudeness. He embodies as nearly as any man can the spirit of the Baroque age.

I. Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562 – 1635)

Lope so dominated the drama of his time that we forget he is one of Spain's greatest lyric poets as well. With the exception of Gongora, Lope managed better than anyone else to synthesize the Renaissance spirit with the Baroque style. He declared himself an enemy of *culteranismo* but could not escape it. He combined the popular spirit with learned poetry and produced poetic miracles. *His romances, Letras para cantar, and villancicos* are the most attractive part of his lyric poetry. The romances, especially express his personal feelings, loves, hates, and passions, all displayed with extraordinary verbal magic. His sonnets, too, are often autobiographical and range in theme from worldly to divine love.

His poetic production is scattered throughout his works. There is scarcely a drama without a sonnet, and everywhere one finds lyric jewels in the popular vein embedded in his writings. He was the voice of Spain, embodying the popular spirit and possessing the real *duende* that few Spaniards have. With spontaneity, grace, and movement, he could be witty, tender, brilliant, festive, sincere, pious, satiric, humble, or anything else. There was no end to his inventiveness and sorcery with words.

Lope wrote longer poems, such as *La Dragontea* (1598), *Jerusalen conquistada* (1609), and *La Gatomaquia* (1634). He also wrote eclogues and epistles that reveal sincere and deep feeling; a poem on the occasion of his son's death, *Cancion a la muerte de Carlos Felix*; and a didactic poem on how to write dramas, *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* (1609). He remains unchallenged as one of Spain's greatest lyric geniuses. People said in his time: "Creoen Lope todopoderoso, poeta del cielo ya de la tierra," a remarkable tribute to one whose name is still spoken with admiration and respect.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: NEOCLASSICISM

A. General Considerations

Lyric poetry, like other literary forms, deteriorated in the eighteenth century. The *culto* style was unmanageable, except in the case of a very few poets, such as Gabriel Alvarez de Toledo and Eugenio Gerardo Lobo. Good taste, restraint, and artistic feeling perished. As a consequence, no lyric poet of stature appeared until the latter decades of the eighteenth century, when a fresh wind began to blow across the poetic landscape.

As a corrective, Ignacio de Luzan (1702 – 1754) wrote his *Poetica* (1737), a sort of Neoclassic manifesto, in which he pleaded for moral purpose and didactic intent in literature and insisted that literature must edify as well as entertain. He admitted, however, that lyric poetry might be written solely as a delight. He abhorred the excesses of Gongorism and recommended clarity and common sense, curbing the imagination, verisimilitude, and the imitation of nature. Feijoo also believed in rules and precepts as the cure for disorderly writings, but like Luzan he recognized a certain indefinable *no se que* about a good poem that makes it appealing in spite of rules or lack of them. Other *preceptistas* also felt that the disorderliness,

culteranismo, and *conceptismo*, with their turgidity, obscurity, and staleness, would have to be reformed by the imitation of Classical models. Consequently, they proposed to purge undesirable elements through the imposition of Neoclassicism, characterized by imitation of French and Classical models; moderation, common sense, avoidance of excesses, dominance of reason; and clarity of style and expression. The poetry that resulted from these correctives was very correct but cold, prosaic, unpopular and uninspired.

In the second half of the century, poets of merit began to appear, and in accord with the custom of times, they organized themselves into academies and *tertulias*, the most important of which were the *Arcadia Agustiniana* in Salamanca, the *Academia del Buen Gusto* and *tertulia* at the Fonda de San Sebastian in Madrid, and the *Academia de Buenas Letras* and the *tertulia* of don Pablo de Olavide in Seville. From these academies grew two schools of poetry; the eighteenth-century Salamanca school, inspired by the work of Fray Luis de Leon, and the Sevillian school, inspired by Herrera and others. In addition, two authors cultivated the fable, and Moratin and Cadalso did not really belong to any of the schools. Toward the end of this era evidence of nineteenth-century romanticism began to appear.

B. The Fabulists

In an age when one of the prime functions of poetry was instruction, it was natural that the fable should have been cultivated. Tomas de Iriarte and Felix Maria Samaniego were two who did this.

1. *Tomas de Iriarte* (1750 – 1791) was in many ways a product of the Neoclassic age, for he loved and admired culture, was a renowned polemicist, and believed in the didactic mission of art. In 1782 he published his *Fabulas literarias*, well-written fables in many different meters, with the express purpose of exhibiting the author's notions concerning the defect of the literature of his time his only target. He refers more or less covertly to known authors, asserting his ideas regarding the function of literature and the responsibilities of writers as well as the rules for writing well. Typical of his fables is an all-time favorite, *El burro flautista*.

These fables touched off an immediate reaction, notably from Juan Pablo Forner and Felix Maria Samaniego. Literary polemics were very much the style at this time, and good talent was spent on unrewarding arguments. Iriarte wasted much energy and time in such pursuits. In addition to his fables, Iriarte wrote a long didactic poem, *La musica* (1779), and two excellent comedies of manners, *La seniority malcriada* (1788) and *El seniorito mimado* (1788).

2. *Felix Maria Samaniego* (1745 – 1801) wrote his *Fabulas morales* (1781 and 1784) at the request of his uncle for the education of students at the Seminary of Vergara. His intention was to impart moral lessons, and he modeled his fables after Aesop and La Fontaine. In a way they recall those of another fabulist of former years, Juan Ruiz.

C. The Madrid Poets

1. *Nicolas Fernandez de Moratin* (1737 – 1780), an important Neoclassicist, failed with his drama. In lyric poetry, however, he could not resist the charm of Spanish tradition and paradoxically, considering his negative attitude toward the theater of Lope and Calderon, wrote poetry in the Golden Age manner, producing what some have called the best poem of the eighteenth century, *Fiesta de toros en Madrid*.
2. *Jose Cadalso y Vazquez de Andrade* (1741 – 1782), sometimes listed among the poets of the Salamanca school, wrote his poetry in the Neoclassic manner – anacreontics, eclogues, and bucolics. He traveled through Europe and

became acquainted with foreign literatures and languages. Upon his return to Spain he followed the profession of arms and became a colonel in the cavalry. At the same time, he was writing for the stage, but his tragedy *Sancho Garcia* (1771) was a failure. He went to Salamanca, where he met Melendez and other poets. His poetry was published in 1773 in the volume *Ocios de mi juventud* under the name Jose Vazquez. He is better remembered for his prose writings than for his efforts as a poet.

D. The eighteenth-Century Salamanca School

1. *Fray Diego Tadeo Gonzalez* (1733 – 1794), an Augustinian monk, idolized Fray Luis de Leon and established the eighteenth-century Salamanca school of poets. His group was called *Arcadia Agustiniana*, and its members adopted pastoral pseudonyms. Their poetry in the pastoral mode resurrected a jaded and out-moded manner, but Fray Diego's intention to restore poetry is to be admired. His enthusiasm for Fray Luis must have affected the only real poet of the lot, Melendez Valdes, a plus for Fray Diego's work. Strangely, the best-known poem of Gonzalez is *El murcielagos alevoso*, which has been criticized, perhaps unjustly, for its alleged display of sadism and cruelty.
2. *Jose Iglesias de la Casa* (1748 – 1791) was a better priest than a poet, though he did manage to write some memorable *letrillas* reminiscent of Gongora and Quevedo. He was at his best when writing about the customs and manners of his time, as was his contemporary Ramon de la Cruz.
3. *Juan Melendez Valdes* (1754 – 1817), a member of the *Arcadia Agustiniana*, was influenced by Cadalso and Jovellanos. As a Francophile, he fled to France when the French regime in Spain collapsed, and he died there, of hunger, his doctor said.

Melendez began writing poetry in the pastoral manner but contrived with his superior artistry to make it pleasing, to the senses, exhibiting great sensibility with light, happy verses. He used Garcilaso and Fray Luis as models and showed spontaneity, grace, and fluidity, embellishing his poetry with a thinness and delicateness that make it appear almost fragile at times. He wrote a play, *Las bodas de Camacho* (1784), and a didactic ode, *La gloria de las artes* (1781).

In later life, Melendez turned philosophical, and a melancholy note coupled with a sensitivity to pain, deception, and sorrow and a Romantic sentimentalism crept into his poetry. He tried odes like those of Jovellanos but could not match him. His greatest talents were undoubtedly his descriptive power and genuine poetic sensibility, which outweigh his defects of monotony and shallowness. He represented the varied currents of the eighteenth century and foreshadowed the rise of Romanticism.

4. *Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos* (1744 – 1811) is important not for his poetry but for his role as a statesman, social scientist, educator, and patriot. His important writings are in prose.

As a poet, Jovellanos, known as Jovino to his friends in the Salamanca school, wrote in the typical manner of that group, composing anacreontics, idylls, and the like, which seem a little incongruous with his sober personality. In his epistle *A mis amigos de Salamanca*, he urged his friends to forsake the shallow pastoral, amorous themes in favor of philosophical and moral ones. His own *Epistola de Fabio a Anfriso* (1779) strikes a melancholy, pessimistic note that would recur later in Romantic poetry. In the end, he showed that he was largely interested in poetry as an educational tool.

E. The Later Salamanca Poets

French Neoclassicism produced a very correct but cold lyric poetry in Spain. Poets soon reacted, however, against its emptiness and formalism and showed definite signs of a pre-Romantic style that included sentimentalism, emotionalism, and a more florid and rhetorical language. They became interested in exotic themes and were attracted to solitude, suffering, nocturnal scenes, intimate feelings, and violent, vehement, passionate, exclamatory modes of expression. In short, the Salamanca poets of the last few years of the eighteenth century helped usher in Romanticism.

1. *Nicasio Alvarez Cienfuegos* (1764 – 1809) exhibited many of the characteristics of the pre-Romantic poet. He abandoned Neoclassicism and gave expression to melancholy and sentimentalism in an inflated style. The titles of some of his poems reveal his Romantic disposition: *Mi paseo solitario*, *A un amigo en la muerte de un hermano*, *La escuela del sepulcro*.
2. *Manuel Jose Quintana* (1772 – 1857), a very important political figure, belongs chronologically to the nineteenth century, but temperamentally and ideologically to the eighteenth. He passed through the storms of Romanticism without taking sides and became the tutor of Queen Isabel II, who later crowned him poet laureate.

Though Quintana wrote drama and prose sketches of famous Spaniards, posterity remembers him for his poetry. Like Luzan, he believed literature should serve some useful end, and his main themes were liberty and progress. He remained loyal to his patria when the French invaded, and his patriotism, expressed in his actions as well as in his poetry, has endeared him to his countrymen. His odes *Al combate de Trafalgar* (1805) and *A Espana despues de la revolucion de marzo* (1808) passionately expressed love for his country with a virility and fire reminiscent of Herrera. Other poems were devoted to progress – to printing, for example, and to medical advances. He was Classical in every respect, except in moderation and restraint. He reacted with emotion, not with the intellect, and in this sense can be regarded as a forerunner of Romanticism.

3. *Juan Nicasio Gallego* (1777 – 1853), a priest of liberal politics, conformed largely to the Neoclassic manner but surmounted its coldness and intellectuality in his best poem, *Al dos de mayo*, in which he preserved in bold imagery and high rhetoric the same day that Goya immortalized on canvas. Gallego's poetry, enthusiastic and occasionally emotional, contains a foretaste of Romanticism.

F. The Sevillian School

The Sevillian school emerged from the *Academia de Letras humanas*. Though its adherents ostensibly adhered to the Neoclassic code, they felt that beautiful poetry did not necessarily have to conform, and that genius could not be bound by rules. This and their belief and that the poet could express his own personality are clear signs of the coming Romanticism.

1. *Alberto Lista y Aragon* (1775 – 1848) is better remembered as a great teacher than as a poet. A man of vast culture, he stood halfway between Neoclassicism and Romanticism, admired the moderation and good taste of Fray Luis, and attempted to draw his young Romantic pupils, like Espronceda, a way from the excesses of Romanticism. Yet his own poetry's vague sentimentality and melancholy allied him with that movement.
2. *Jose Maria Blanco y Crespo* (1775 – 1841) forsook his priesthood, went to England, and changed his name to Blanco White. He is the only Spanish poet to write well English, a fact proven by his sonnet *Mysterious Night*. He also wrote in Spanish, of course.
3. *Minor poets* of the Sevillian school are Felix Jose Reinoso (1777 – 1841), Jose Marchena (1768 – 1821), and Manuel Maria Arjona (1771 – 1820).

Part III : 19th Century

NARRATIVE POETRY

THE EPIC IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Romanticism reawakened an interest in the Middle Ages. Surfeited by the ancient topics of eighteenth-century Neoclassicism, nineteenth-century Romantic poets eagerly returned to national, heroic, exotic, themes of the past, especially those dealing with the Moors, and invented a new poetic form, the *leyenda*, with which to express them. The *leyenda* was a form of narrative, semi epic poetry in which traditional themes were developed with vague realism and little historical accuracy, overlaid with an imaginative and colorful lyricism. The Romantic poets had a special evocative power with which to revive legendary figures of the past and to re-create the atmosphere of chivalry.

A. Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas (1791-1865)

The Duque de Rivas' best poetry was narrative rather than lyric. After attempting two narrative poems, *El paso honroso* (1812) and *Florinda* (1826), concerning Florinda's relationship with Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king, Rivas wrote a Romantic legend, *El moro expósito o Cordoba y Burgos en el siglo decimo* (1834).

The poem, in twelve cantos, relates the medieval legend of the Infantes de Lara. Although it has been called a *romance historico*, it is more a *leyenda* or *fantasia novelesca*. Pastor Diaz considered it to be "la mas bella Poesia romantica de la epoca," and Valera felt that it had no precedent. It was greeted as something fresh and new in its revival of the national past. Rivas added characters to the legend and changed Mudarra into a Romantic hero.

Romance historicos (1841) was inspired by the *romancero* and the ancient *crónicas* and exhibits a genuine patriotic note. Rivas attempted to revive some of the great moments and heroes of a bygone age. In addition to themes from the Middle Ages, he included as subject matter the discovery and conquest of the New World, the court of the Hapsburgs, and independence. In these *romances*, as in his less successful longer *leyendas*, published in 1854, Rivas at times included a note of mystery and occasional horror, and his descriptive power overshadows his storytelling ability.

B. Jose de Espronceda y Delgado (1808 – 1842)

Primarily a lyric poet, Espronceda also wrote *leyendas*, the best of which is *El estudiante de Salamanca* (1840), a Romantic revival of the don Juan theme. He recounts the libertinage of Felix de Montemar, who in a vision witnesses his own funeral and is given the kiss of death by a skeleton. This poem and Espronceda's philosophical masterpiece, *El diablo mundo* (1841), which also contains narrative patches, are essentially compelling lyric poetry.

C. Jose Zorilla y Moral (1817 – 1893)

Zorilla had a true descriptive and narrative poetic talent, and this, combined with his facile skill as a versifier and genius for evoking Spain's chivalrous and romantic past, made him the nest of the *leyenda* writers. He wrote many poems, frequently retelling in his own colorful manner an oft-used tale from legend and tradition.

One looks in vain for ideas in his works, but despite irregularities the reader is carried along by sheer descriptive charm, overlooking the poet's improvised manner and sometimes careless craftsmanship. His best-known *leyendas* are *A buen juez, mayor testigo*, which recounts the story of the *Cristo de la Vega* in which a statue miraculously serves as a witness; and *Margarita la tornera*, the tender story of the Virgin's intercession in a nun's troubles. *Granada* (1852), in nine books, though never finished, is probably Zorilla's best combination of history and legend and is remarkable for its color and musicality.

THE ROMANCERO

A. General Characteristics

One of the most original and enduring monuments of Spanish literature and the richest collection of popular poetry anywhere is the Spanish *romancero* the word means three things: the immense Spanish ballad literature dating from the Middle Ages; a collection of ballads; and a series of ballads dealing with one theme.

The ballad, called *romance* in Spanish, is a short epico-lyric poem written in sixteen-syllable lines divided into two equal hemistiches' by a caesura, with the final word of each line assonating. Some collections print the ballad in eight-syllable lines with the even lines assonating.

The ballads reflect the traditional national spirit and mentality better than any other form of literature. Episodic in nature and related in origin to the primitive epic, they begin and end abruptly without exposition, implying an entire situation or identifying some hero with a few deft stokes. As the repository of genuine national spirit, they have had a profound effect of Spanish literature and have consistently inspired writers of all ages.

B. The Juglar and the Mester de Juglaria

The *juglar*, the public entertainer of the Middle Ages, amused his audiences with recitations, music, acrobatics, and sleight of hand. More important, he was the reciter of *cantares de gesta*, a professional who earned his living acting and singing before the public whether in a place or a marketplace. *Mester de Juglaria* means the type of poetry recited, sung, and composed by the *juglares*, principally ballads and epics.

C. The Fragmentation Theory of Ballad Origin

Some nineteenth-century critics believed in the *cantilena* theory to the effect that ballads strung together formed epic poetry, but Menendez Pida rightly asserted that the ballads descended originally from the epics. Representing the fragments of these poems preserved by the *juglares* when the epic was in its degenerative stages. The minstrels selected short portions from an epic to sing to a street-corner audience or were asked to repeat a particularly popular passage. These brief excerpts, remembered by the listeners and recited later at home, were passed orally from generation to generation down to the twentieth century. Written collections began to appear however in the sixteenth century, and new ones are still being collected from the people of Spain and the New World.

The phenomenal oral existence of Spain's ballad literature over a period of some eight centuries is unique in the world of art. Through the communal transmission and development, several versions of the same ballad have been found, and they have all absorbed through this process the true spirit of the people. The ballad thus mirrors the Spanish soul more faithfully than all other genres.

The original ballads were fragments of epic poems. Later, known poets wrote ballads and used the ballad meter in the drama and in poems on varied themes. Even twentieth-century poets have used the ballad meter.

D. Classification

There are several thousand ballads of such variety that classification is difficult. We can, however, note a few important types; *Romances historicos* or *viejos tradicionales* are derived from the medieval epics and histories. *Romances juglarescos* are longer and treat subjects from the degenerate period. *Romances fronterizos* relate the heroics and amours of Christian and Moorish knights of the fifteenth century. *Romances novelescos sueltos* are tales of adventure but are not necessarily epic. *Romances eruditos* were written on old themes by erudite poets. *Romances liricos* or *artisticos* treat any theme and were written by recognized artists. *Romances vulgares* treat a great variety of themes and were written by street-corner poets.

E. Collections

Two important early ballad collections are *Cancionero sin ano*, published in the middle of the sixteenth century by Martin Nuncio, and *Silva de varios romances*, published by Esteban G. de Nagera in 1550 and 1551. Modern collections include *Romancero general* (1828 – 1832, 1849), by Agustin Duran; *Primavera y flor de romances* (1856), by Ferdinand Joseph Wolf and Konrad Hofmann; *Antologia de poetas liricos castellanos* (1944 – 1945), by Marelino Menendex y Pelayo, and *Flor nueva de romance viejos* (1933), by Ramon Menendez Pidal.

Part II : LYRIC POETRY

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A. Romanticism

The many attempts to define Romanticism confirm the difficulty of doing so. Sainz de Robles defines it as an artistic revolution against what he termed the rigidity, the coldness, the regulations, the antinationalism, the cerebralism, the pagan aestheticism, the religious incredulity, the preponderance of the objective over the subjective, the declamatory emphasis, and the artistic impersonality of Neoclassicism. He lists Romanticism's characteristics as contemplation of nature, intimacies of natural life, revival of the Middle Ages, the cult of the individual, rejection of the rules of Boileau and Luzan, the national against the foreign, subjective lyricism against epic objectivity, anarchy of inventiveness and procedure, the intimate connection between art and life, and absolute emancipation of the *yo*.

Victor Hugo put it much more succinctly in the preface to *Hernani*, where he stated that Romanticism was simply "liberalism in literature."

As we have seen, the eighteenth century witnessed the return of Romanticism in Melendez Valdes' nature sentiments. Although dates cannot be firmly fixed for its triumph as the dominant literary taste, we can conclude that the nation was prepared well in advance of the outburst that occurred in 1833 with the return of the *emigrados*.

Spanish liberals had had to leave Spain under the despotic reign of Fernando VII, during which time a rigid censorship had succeeded in holding the nascent Romanticism in check. The expression of liberal ideas and the rebelliousness and individuality that characterized Romanticism were dangerous under Fernando's oppressive, absolute monarchy. On Fernando's death, however, the scene changed. Maria Cristina, the Queen Mother, called back the exiled liberals, or *emigrados*, for she needed their support to hold the throne against Carlos, Fernando's brother.

Many of the Romantic poets and dramatists, who as liberals had been obliged to leave Spain, breathed abroad the Romantic atmosphere of England and France, where the movement was already fully grown. When they returned after the 1833 amnesty, they brought the new literary rage with them. Romanticism was nothing new to Spain, however, for it had always been an undercurrent in Spanish literature. The nineteenth century revived what was typically Spanish rather than creating something new. The battle that raged in other European countries between Classicists and the Romantic revolutionaries was neither fierce nor prolonged in Spain. The public was happy to revive a characteristic feature of their tradition and was not interested in literary quarrels. What the nineteenth century witnessed was the intensification and concentration of the elements of Romanticism to such a degree that other traditional characteristics of Spanish literature were subdued momentarily and suppressed. The undercurrent. Ow became a flood on the surface and swept everything before it.

The moderation and restraint of Neoclassicism were gone. Rules and precepts ceased to exist for the poet, who recognized no authority and no codes of behavior. Poets demanded absolute freedom and believed their primary function was to be expressive, not necessarily beautiful. Their poetry was often one of dreams in which they lost sight of reality. A melancholy, pessimistic, sometimes despairing note pervaded their poems, as they observed that the reality that surrounded them did not conform to their dream world. Poets became interested in exotic themes, such as Oriental potentates and their courts, and in the noble Moor, idealized in somewhat the same fashion as Rousseau had idealized the American Indian. Fatally attracted

to the sepulchral, the mysterious, the funereal, tempestuous seas, rugged mountains, yawning abysses, ruins, nocturnal scenes, and landscapes, poets revealed through their vocabulary their interests and feelings, and used an abundance of terms such as *sordido, funebre, horrido, gemido, tetrico, lugubre, melancolico, espectro, tremendo, Ay!, sombras, historico, languidez, duda, suspiro, and lagrimas*. Poets were impassioned, unrestrained, and pessimistic, and emotionalism replaced reason in their poetry.

The poets of Romanticism, with few exceptions, were dramatic or narrative poets and did their best work in the *leyenda* and the drama. The Romantic fervor lasted only a short time in Spain. As the lingering scent of Romanticism weakened, writers interested themselves in more serious questions, and a group of so-called philosophical poets appeared, headed by Campoamor and Nunez de Arce. A third direction that poetry took in the second half of the century was that represented by Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, who, although perhaps classified temperamentally with the Romanticists, actually represented a movement of transition to the modern schools of poetry. Finally, the *costumbrista* poets of the last years of the century brought the experimental period to a close as the age of Modernism approached.

1. *Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas* (1791 – 1865) won his acclaim primarily in the drama. As a poet his genius lay in narrative style rather than in the lyrical vein, as exemplified in *El moro exposito* and the *Romances historicos*. In his earlier work, Rivas tried the Neoclassic manner and dedicated a series of poems to beautiful shepherdesses. Although he has some interesting descriptions of nature, his most sincere poetry is that dedicated to Olimpia, a girl he fell in love with in 1819, that reveals the poet's nostalgia and the pain and pleasure of a lost love. His own rules for Romanticism at best can be termed mild: quicken the reader's interest in the narrative; suite style to argument; adapt style to the person speaking; make use of color; use historical customs; use clear expressions; and versify well.

In addition to his love themes and nature, which could be either pastoral or tempestuous (in *El faro de Malta*, for example), Rivas concentrated on religious and nationalistic and patriotic themes. His love of Spain, intensified by the homesickness and sorrow of exile, is one of the truly admirable traits in his lyric poetry. He also has some moral poems and uses the theme of the stylized noble Moor in some of his *romances*. Most of his poetry after 1835 is less noteworthy as part of his total production.

2. *Jose de Espronceda y Delgado* (1808 – 1842) enjoys the reputation of having been Spain's greatest Romantic lyric poet. Everything about this man was Romantic except his manner of dying. At the age of fifteen he joined a group of young conspirators called Los Numantinos. Arrested and later, in 1827, exiled, he met Teresa Mancha in Lisbon, fell in love with her, and induced her to abandon her husband in London and live with him. His life with Teresa was a tempestuous one. Meanwhile, between 1829 and 1835 he became involved in a series of military uprisings, both in France and Spain.

It would be convenient to classify Espronceda's poetry into two types: lyric and narrative. To the first type belong the shorter poems, such as *Cancion del pirate*, and to the latter belong *El estudiante de Salamanca* and *El diablo mundo*. Such a classification, however, is not altogether valid, for there is much in the longer poems that is lyric – the *Canto a Teresa*, for example – and something of the epic in the shorter ones.

Espronceda personifies in his life and work what we might term the "Romantic frenzy." He was vehement and passionate, a born rebel who wanted to convert his dreams to reality. He was outraged by restraints and could tolerate them neither in his art nor in society, an attitude fully revealed in his *Cancion del pirate*. There, in a moment of exaltation, he dreams of being a pirate, a rebel outside the law and society, who is his own law, feared by all, and who laughs at dangers and his enemies. Here one finds revolution and anarchy, scorn for the established order, and a plea for individualism and liberty.

Neither reality nor women nor anything else conformed to what the poet expected or wanted, and from a moment of exaltation, as in the *Cancion del pirate*, we see the pendulum swing to the opposite pole, where the poet confesses that his desire is eternal and insatiable and that he believes only in the peace of the sepulcher. As Bonilla so well put it, the four principles of Espronceda's philosophy are doubt, the first principle of thought;

pain, the positive reality of life; pleasure, the world's illusion; and death, the solution to every problem. Combined with these are skepticism, irony, and sorrow.

Although Espronceda has been labeled "the Spanish Byron," and although the Spanish poet knew English and admired Byron, there are few direct influences of the one on the other. Both were skeptical, liberal, and pessimistic regarding life, which they found to be largely an illusion. Espronceda had much more of a social conscience and was patriotic. In any event, Espronceda's poetic sensibilities were far too great for him to be a servile imitator.

After an early series of poems written in the Neoclassic vein between 1828 and 1833, including some dedicated to friends and others involving themes of exile, politics, country, and freedom, he wrote his best-known poems, all included in the 1840 edition of his poetry. In addition to the *Cancion del pirata*, the consummate expression of individual liberty, he wrote *El mendigo* another cynical vision of the world; *El reo de muerte* (he was opposed to capital punishment); and *El verdugo*. In these poems, dedicated to the disillusion of the passing years, Espronceda combines realism with idealism and shows his sympathy for the outcast, the unfortunate, and the misunderstood. Perhaps the most pessimistic of these lyric poems is *A Jarifa en una orgia*, in which he identifies himself with the prostitute as a social outcast.

El estudiante de Salamanca, a kind of *leyenda* that handles the don Juan theme in a new way, synthesizes all the tendencies in Espronceda's works up to that time. His don Felix, unlike the other don Juan prototypes, is a disillusioned materialist who discovers that life is a fantasy and death is the only reality. The poem uses a great number of poetic meters and chiaroscuro to good effect.

El diablo mundo, his longest poem (never completed), can be considered his masterpiece. It was conceived as an epic of mankind, a vast undertaking to show man's struggles, deceptions, triumphs, and longings; but the poem is quite uneven, rising to great poetic heights at times but falling lamentably at others. Its *mal du siècle* tendencies are combined with a jumble of ideas, but the salient thought seems to be that life is senseless, after all, if all it has to offer is one deception after another. The plot relates how the protagonist, Adam, is miraculously restored to youth and, with the mind of a child, unspoiled by experience, goes through one disillusionment after another. Despite its standard Romantic philosophy, however, the poem has some exceptionally well-conceived and well-executed passages, for if Espronceda was not a philosopher, he was a great versifier. The introductory scene of *El diablo mundo* has been compared in majesty with the opening scene of Faust. It and the second canto written to the memory of Teresa are masterpieces of Romantic poetry. The *Canto II; A Teresa; Descansa en paz* has no connection with the rest of the poem and was intercalated by the poet with the typical Romantic comment: "Este canto es un desahogo de mi corazon; saltelo el que no quiera leerlo sin escrupulo, pues no esta ligado de manera alguna con el poema." He expresses the typical Espronceda themes of delirium, despair, lament for lost youth, and the pleasure of dreams of glory. *El diablo mundo* also emphasizes that man becomes spiritually old quickly and looks forward to death; the hero's idea of life bears no similarity to that of the masses; a young dreaming soul is easily deceived and abandons real love for deceptive illusion; man indulges in blind and purposeless dreaming for an unattainable ideal; and dismal grief is man's lot, and the world will not grieve over one more corpse.

In his Romantic poetry, Espronceda served as the catalytic agent to fuse a large number of poetic tendencies awaiting expression, much as Ruben Dario did later. Rivas was the national, historical Romantic, but Espronceda represents the highly personal, subjective, revolutionary poet. In a sense, whether one doubts his sincerity or not, he carried on the humanitarian and libertarian spirit of the eighteenth-century French philosophers, conveyed to Spain by Hugo and others, but he was restless and undisciplined, original in his experimentation with meter and lines, if not in his themes. His characteristic note in doubt, almost desperation. When a bit of life and radiance creeps in, as in *El sol*, he fears that his happiness will be temporary and that the dark night will soon cover the radiant life. Despite the unevenness in his poetic output, Espronceda was the best poet of the century down to Becquer.

3. *Jose Zorrilla y Moral* (1817 – 1893) often liked to refer to himself as a troubadour; “Yo soy el trovador que vaga errante.” This sobriquet suits him in many respects, for like the troubadours of old, he had a native faculty for versifying and a gift with words that made writing poetry effortless for him. In Madrid in 1837 he became famous overnight when he stepped forward at Larra’s funeral and read some of his verses written for the occasion.

Zorrilla’s works are not intimate or personal. Sometimes called the Lope de Vega of the nineteenth century for his facility, he was more plebeian and less cultured than either Rivas or Espronceda. His basic inspiration seems to have been national, with a spirit more authentic, indeed, than that of Rivas. He conveyed emotion and a feeling of beauty but was overly fond of sensational imagery and even vulgarity. His characteristics are those of Romantic poetry in general: love of the medieval and national tradition and religion, as well as all the other trappings of the movement, such as boisterous nature, nocturnal scenes, tempests, exotic castles, shadowy figures, and ruins.

In the tradition of the troubadour, Zorrilla’s poetic talent was more narrative and descriptive than it was lyric. He could describe what he saw or imagined much better than what he felt. He was a great storyteller, and his evocative power is not to be denied. Consequently, his best Romantic poetic work is in the longer narrative poems called *leyendas*. Even in his shorter poems he was not concerned with themes that produce lyric poetry. His verses often have a vagueness, a sentimentality, a melancholy and diffuseness that are typical of the emotional atmosphere of the Romantic lyric poetry; but atmosphere was about all that interested Zorrilla. The total result is that Zorrilla has little depth. In style he was so fluent and wrote so easily that he sins, on the side of verbosity.

But in spite of his defects, he was a master versifier and developed wonderful music with words that please the ear. Typical of his short poems are his *Orientales*, and among these are *Duena de la negra toca*, *Corriendo van por la vega*, and *Manana voy nazarena*. Zorrilla is still a favorite with the general public, forever captivated by his troubadouresque style, the music of his lines, and his rhythms.

4. *Juan Arolas* (1805 – 1849) became a priest over his parents’ protests but had no true calling. His frustrations and unfulfilled longings made his life unhappy, and he died insane at the early age of forty-four.

His poetry, which is largely a reflection of the state of his mind, is conveniently divided into four thematic groups: religious, amatory, chivalresque, and Oriental. Significantly, the poems on religious themes are the least attractive of all in spite of their undeniable sincerity. His chivalresque poems revive great heroes of the past with all their splendor and color. His sensual love poems are somewhat autobiographical, for Arolas’ love was not a game, as played by poets of earlier ages, but something very personal. His *Orientales*, showing influences of Victor Hugo, are acclaimed as his best lyric effort and are perfectly in keeping with the Romantic tradition. Here we find sultans and pirates, Oriental courts, rich color, voluptuousness, mellowness, and languidness. His Orientalism, based on his imagination, is exotic, sensuous, colorful, and imaginative and soars far above that of Zorrilla and at times even that of Espronceda. His poetry was published in two collections: *Poesias caballerescas y orientales* (1840) and *Poesias religiosas, orientales, caballerescas y amatorias* (1860).

5. *Gertudis Gomez de Avellaneda* (1814 – 1873) was born in Cuba of a Spanish father and a Cuban mother, but she came to Spain when she was twenty-two. She was highly regarded by poets of her day. She admired the Romanticists, especially George Sand, and was a personal friend of all the Spanish poets. Her life was one of suffering, disappointment, and anguish, all reflected in her poetry.

She left an extensive work of half a dozen huge volumes, including dramas, novels, and lyric poetry, some of which she wrote under the pseudonym Tula. She is best remembered for her poetry, in which she was eloquent and passionate, as well as sincere. Her two principal themes were love, both divine and human, and religion, although she did write some poems on nature. Typical poems on these topics are *A la cruz*, *A el*, and *Al sol*. She wrote a poem on Niagara, *A vista del Niagara*, as did her fellow Cuban Heredia, the Venezuelan Perez Bonalde, and the North American William Cullen Bryant. Her cadenced verses forecast the coming of the moderns.

Her best poetry contains Byronic desperation of a love scorned. Her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her frustrated love, is quite orthodox. Though she shows deep and sincere feeling nonetheless she has little concern for humanity except as an expression of Christian charity on her part.

Among her many novels are *Esptolino* (1844), *Guatimozin* (1846), and *Sab* (1841). Her legends include *La montana maldita* and *El qura blanca*. *Alfonso Munio* (1844), her best play tells of a love triangle in Toledo in 1142. Avellaneda later changed its title to *Munio Alfonso*. Other plays are *El Principe de Viana* (1844) and the Biblical dramas *Saul* (1849) and *Baltasar* (1858). The robustness of her versification and the gravity of her thought prompted Nicasio Gallego to say of her: "Es much hombre esa mujer," but nevertheless the Spanish Academy in a stormy session refused to seat a woman.

6. *Carolina Coronado* (1820 – 1911) wrote tenderly idealistic, intensely sentimental poetry with delicateness, sweetness, and Romantic melancholy. She did not use the inflated rhetoric or sonority of so much Romantic poetry. In the beginning she was content to write about small wonders of nature, like flowers and butterflies, but later in more profound fashion she expressed her own feelings at once amorous and mystical. She attempted the novel without success. Her best-known poem is *El amor de los amores*, inspired by the Song of Songs.
7. *Nicomedes Pastor Diaz* (1811 – 1863) wrote poetry that is melancholy and gently pessimistic in tone, with a dreamy vagueness that is in keeping with the poetic tradition of his native Galicia. Typical poems are *A la luna* and *La mariposa negra*. He was affected by the Romanticist's interest in the macabre and could contemplate as well as any other his dead sweetheart and hopelessness of his fate. He posed as an austere ascetic who felt society could be redeemed. He thought the poet's mission was to be a social and religious high priest and refused to separate the poet from the politician.
8. *Other poets* of Romanticism are Gabriel Garcia Tassara (1817 – 1875); Patricio de la Escosura (1807 – 1878), who also wrote Romantic novels; Antonio Ros de Olano (1808 – 1886), born in Venezuela, who was a close friend of Espronveda's and wrote the prologue for his *El diablo mundo*; Enrique Gil y Carrasco (1815 – 1846), author of the most famous Romantic novel, *El senor de Bembibre*, who also wrote a number of excellent nature poems, among them *La gota de rocio* and *La violeta*; and *Juan Martinez Villergas* (1816 – 1894), author of mordant, satiric verses, who also attempted the novel and the drama.

B. The Transition: Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The term post-Romantic has often been applied to the poetry that appeared after the Romantic movement had spent itself and was no longer the dominant force in literature. This designation, however, is not fully applicable to the period that dates roughly from 1850 to Ruben Dario's *Azul*, which appeared in 1888, for many of the poets classified as Romanticists lived and wrote Romantic poetry long after 1850. Two of the greatest poets of the century, Gustavo Adolfo Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, are sometimes so designated, but because they are more than Romanticists and form the link between Romanticism and Modernism, we shall include them here as transitional poets. Although the Romantic transition extended into the second half of the century, no definite trend developed in lyric poetry until the advent of Modernism in the last years. In addition to the Romantic note that continued, trends toward philosophy, skepticism, religiousness, and *costumbrismo* appear in the works of Campoamor, Nunez de Arce Medina, and Gabriel y Galan. The age, one of experimentation, found poets reacting against the excesses of Romantic imagination and exuberance with the evident intent of bringing poetry back to earth and making something useful of it. This eclectic period closed when Ruben Dario descended upon the peninsula and carried everything before him.

1. The *philosophical poets* include the following:
 - a. *Ramon de Campoamor* (1817 – 1901), known as the Spanish Homer, enjoyed a tremendous vogue in the nineteenth century. His popularity with the people gave him a ranking out of proportion with his true merit. In Campoamor's time the middle class and the general public believed that they had inherited the role of connoisseur formerly

enjoyed by the aristocrats. With every man a literary critic, standards of culture and good taste degenerated. Campoamor was able to give the public the kind of poetry they wanted, a homespun philosophy with ironic, sometimes sarcastic comments on life, easily memorized. He reacted against Romanticism and adopted as his guide "el arte por la idea" in his *Poética* (1883). Humor abounds in his poetry, but it is often piquant and cynical.

He prided himself on having invented new poetic forms to which he gave the names *dolora*, *humorada*, and *pequeno poema*. The *humorada* is a very brief composition, usually of two lines, sometimes four, with philosophical intention and characterized by irony and skepticism. Campoamor's were collected in *Humoradas* (1886) and have been called "sculptured, chiseled expressions of thought." The *dolora* (*Fabulas morales y doloras* (1846) is a dramatized *humorada*, combining concision with philosophy, a kind of tiny drama with ideas, reflecting the mediocre and commonplace. The *pequeno poema* is an amplification of a *dolora*.

Opinions on Campoamor's work have been highly contradictory. Some have seen him as highly original, and others find nothing but platitudes in his poetry. Some consider his verse attractive, and others have called it doggerel. A fair judgment would not condemn him too harshly or praise him too highly, recognizing his ability as a versifier and his ingenuity in crystalizing thought, often in a delightful way, but at the same time admitting his lack of creative ability and failure to reach the stature of a truly great poet. His most famous poem, *Quien supiera escribir*, is a three-part dialogue in which an illiterate girl attempts to dictate to an obtuse priest a letter intended for her distant lover.

- b. *Gaspar Nunez de Arce* (1832 – 1903), like Campoamor, reacted away from the emotion of Romanticism and wrote ideological poetry. There are two strings to his harp, namely philosophy and politics. He summed up his poetic creed himself when he wrote: "La Poesia debe pensar y sentir, reflejar las ideas y las pasiones, los dolores y los gozos sociedad...No debe limitarse a cantar como el pajarito." In line with this serious purpose, Nunez de Arce deals with the philosophical and moral problems of his times and reflects better than any other poet of his day the nineteenth-century struggle between religious faith and science. To illustrate his philosophical reflections, he composed poems on great intellectuals of the past who were either confronted by similar situations or were considered nonconformists and original thinkers. *La vision de Fray Martin* (1880) deals with Martin Luther. Other poems deal with Raimundo Lulio, Dante and Lord Byron.

This poet yearned for the orthodox religious faith, but the discoveries of a rationalistic science would not allow him to justify it. From this conflict grew a sort of pessimism quite different from the Romantic kind. He also studied the problems of philosophical doubt. He is perhaps best loved today for his political poems in a declamatory style reminiscent of Quintana. *Gritos de combate* (1875) reveals his attitudes as a statesman and politician and reflects his disillusionment in the people's abuse of democracy, his hope for the future, and his belief in progress and political and religious freedom.

- c. *Minor philosophical poets* include Ventura Ruiz Aguilera (1820 – 1881), whose *Ecos nacionales* (two volumes; 1849 and 1854 illustrate his concern with social and political questions; and Manuel del Palacio (1832 -1906), good at the epigram and much like Campoamor in his ability to wrap up a clever thought in a few words. He claimed to be the first to write the so-called *sonetos filosoficos*, serious at the beginning but with a humorous twist at the end.

2. *The transition poets* include the following:

- a. *Gustavo Adolfo Becquer* (1836 -1870) authored poetry that has risen in popularity and esteem with twentieth-century poets and critics, in contrast with that of Campoamor and Nunez de Arce, which has suffered. Many now feel that Becquer's poetry, although slight in quantity, is the greatest poetry of the century, principally because of his ability to foresee and to predict, in a sense, the modern schools of poetry. He is perhaps the purest Romanticist of all Spanish poets, for unlike Espronceda, he reveals

no pose or showmanship in his sadness. But there is more than Romanticism in Becquer, as we will be pointed out.

Christened Gustavo Adolfo Dominguez Bastida, Becquer was orphaned at an early age, and he was left in the care of his godmother. At eighteen he went to Madrid in search of literary fame but did not find it. He took a number of jobs, married unhappily, and left three children at his death. Because of a serious illness, Becquer retired to Veruela with Valeriano, his favorite brother, to recuperate. They spent a year there, and Becquer wrote several works. Becquer died at the age of thirty-four, exhausted by tuberculosis. He never knew the acclaim of the public as Espronceda, Campoamor, or Zorrilla did, and his poetry reflects his sad, impoverished, sick life. Luis Gonzalez Bravo, Isabel II's minister who had promised to publish Becquer's *Rimas*, was deposed by the revolution in 1868, and the manuscript was lost. Becquer rewrote the *Rimas*, and it was published posthumously in 1871. Some variation of number and order exists, but the standard order in most editions is that of Becquer's friend, Narciso Campillo.

Becquer's fame rests on this one small volume. These love poems constitute what one might consider a spiritual autobiography of the poet. At the outset we see an almost ecstatic yearning for poetry. He sees his love in nature and in his imaginary muse in the form of a woman. He finally meets his woman of flesh and blood and becomes desperately enamored of her. At first, she is cool to his love, but he manages to win her affection. His rapture ends with the hint of a bitter quarrel and his dismissal as she refuses to recognize him. His love continues, however, as he tries in vain to win her once more, and he consoles himself with the thought of approaching death. The *Rimas* close with meditations on death and nature, together with an expression of fears and desires. Some critics have felt that the *Rimas* are a running true commentary on the poet's love for Julia Espin y Guillen, the daughter of a music professor, who later married an influential politician.

Throughout the seventy-six little poems (some say seventy-nine or eighty, for no authentic edition exists), the poet is deeply subjective and sentimental. He represents a kind of purification of the exaggerations of Romanticism. The style is effortless and natural; the keynote is simplicity. He avoids altogether the rhetoric and inflation of Nunez de Arce and all other preceding poets and makes use of suggestiveness that the Symbolist poets did not discover until the end of the century. The simplicity of style, the musicality of the verses, the theme of love, and the appeal of Becquer's sentimentality and melancholy have made him a great favorite.

In his poetry as in his prose legends, Becquer's world is one of half shadows, uncertain shapes, suggestions of feelings and sentiments. There is nothing solid, but the poet carries the reader with him as he combines music with delicate and fugitive words and almost intangible, unutterable feelings. His poetry is full of sighs, dry leaves, smoke, gilded threads of spider webs, and wispy fog. There is a total effect of immense sadness, almost desperation, and above all resignation and tenderness. His poetry exhales suffering. As one critic has said; "He has caught the subtle vibrations of an ethereal music."

Aside from their intrinsic merit, Becquer's poems have had a great influence on the development of modern poets. Damaso Alonso has said that Becquer is the "punto de arranque," the starting point, of all contemporary Spanish poetry. "Cualquier poeta de hoy," he says, "se siente mucho mas cerca de Becquer (y en parte, de Rosalia de Castro) que de Zorrilla, de Nunez de Arce o de Ruben Dario." This closeness in spirit to Becquer is due in large part to the fact that Becquer was really the first to see the difference between the traditional, pompous, rhetorical Spanish poetry that had been written up to his time and the new style of short, unadorned, simple poetry. Becquer himself made very clear the distinction between the two types.

In the second type, his own, which he called "the poetry of poets," he points out the direction that modern Spanish poetry will take, showing the coming generations how to write poetry that insinuates and suggests, that brushes lightly against you and then departs. Becquer attempted to convey the interrelationship of reality and dream, and

in his poetry, pure affect related to sight and touch, he tried to define his inspiration, the “children of his fantasy.”

Jorge Guillen feels that had Becquer lived as long as Zorrilla or Nunez de Arce, he would have been Spain’s greatest lyric poet of the nineteenth century. Juan Ramon Jimenez, Ruben Dario, and others truly appreciated him, and modern critics agree that he is the principal precursor of Modernism. To understand Becquer’s poetry is to understand more about our contemporaries. This poet could indeed be called the prophet of twentieth-century Spanish poetry.

Becquer’s best prose work, *Leyendas* (1860 – 1864), is a group of delicate, rhythmic, Romantic legends in the style of Hoffmann and Poe. Almost all are set in a medieval atmosphere of ruins, monasteries, and churches. The supernatural, a magical sense, and fantasy were his strong points. Among his well-known legends are *Maese Perez, organista; los ojos verdes; and La ajorca de oro. Desde mi celda*, a collection of literary letters written from the Monastery of Veruela in 1864, describes the countryside and the persons he met. This, too, is touched with the subjective magic and poignant message of all his work.

- b. *Rosalía de Castro* (1837 – 1885) had a life that, like Becquer’s, was sorrowful and unhappy. Like Becquer she was disillusioned and melancholy, and like him she died a victim of a terrible sickness. Like Becquer she made poetry a personal, unashamed outpouring of sentiment and tried to express with words what cannot be uttered but only suggested. The musicality of her verse, the tenderness the vagueness, the symbolism and imagery, and the suggestiveness and intuition have endeared her to twentieth century poets, who have found in her, as in Becquer, pure poetry – simple, unrhymed, interpreting an atmosphere and reflecting a state of soul but never describing in the traditional manner. Her fame, which was slight in her own lifetime, has increased steadily since her death. Brennan judges that she would be the greatest poetess of modern times had she written all her poetry in Spanish.

Born out of wedlock (her father was a priest), Rosalia was raised until her ninth year by a peasant woman. From her peasant relationships as a child she absorbed the spirit of Galician folk song that she used so beautifully later. At nineteen she went to Madrid to live. There she met the poets and writers of her day and began to write herself. City life however, had little attraction for her, and she grew immensely homesick for her native soil. She could find no beauties in the Castilian landscape, which augmented her *soidade* (“homesickness”). Perhaps because of this she became interested in a young Galician writer living in Madrid, Manuel Martinez Murguía, whom she later married. Her husband mistreated her, and her health failed as she struggled constantly against poverty to rear and educate her five children. Her emotional conflicts, occasioned by shame over the irregularity of her birth and the disfiguring effects of her disease, cancer, caused her finally to withdraw from the world and to see no one during the last years of her life. She died in her beloved native land at the relatively young age of forty - eight.

Rosalía de Castro wrote many novels, among them *La hija del mar* (1859) and *El caballero de las botas azules* (1867), but she is essentially a great poetess. Much of her poetry was written in Galician, not used for poetry for many centuries, but she knew the folk song that had preserved the vagueness, melancholy, and suggestiveness of Galician poetry. Her Galician volumes, *Cantares Gallegos* (1863), intensely personal, and *Folhas novas* (1880), filled with deep despair and melancholy, prepared the way for her last volume, in Spanish, *En las orillas del Sar* (1884), a collection of poetry written over many years, some shortly before her death. Slow and painful cancer caused her concern, and the poems reveal her longing for the relief of the life beyond death as well as a love and yearning for her native land. We see the past days that will never return as she expresses her deep failing for Galicia, its nature, customs, and the miseries and suffering of the poor. The poems reflect the counterpoint, through nature, of hope and despair, approaching spring and fatal winter. She reflects both an inner and outer reality, the autumn light, night and pain, a desire for happiness, and a

kind of mystical union with the universe. Tormented, feeling unloved, and experiencing the shadow of impalpable desires, she awaited an approaching death.

The poetess experimented with meter, harmonies, assonance, and varied lines of poetry. Her poetry, completely personal, is modern in its nostalgic poetry she repeatedly drifts in dreams back to her native land where shapes are indecisive, and the essences of things are intangible. Along with Becquer's, her poetry is the purest of the transition period that stretched from Romanticism to Modernism.

3. *The costumbrista poets* include the following:

- a. *Jose Maria Gabriel y Galan* (1870 – 1905), schoolteacher and farmer, represents a direction that is altogether different from that taken by other poets of the transition period. In him we find an expression of regionalism and *costumbrismo* as he describes life in his isolated little archaic town in Extremadura. He had a sincere, deep feeling for the country life and Spanish catholic tradition preserved by the Castilian peasants. He anticipated the coming Generation of 1898 with his appreciation and glorification of the Castilian landscape but fell short of their artistic tastes and standards. He was fond of the rustic sayings of the people, extolled the simplicity of rural life, used dialect in some of his poems, and optimistically bore sorrows and burdens. His best side is the descriptive one. His best-known poems are *El ama*, for which he became famous overnight, and *El cristu benditu*. Among his collections are *Castellanas* (1902) and *Religiosas* (1906).
- b. *Vicente Medina y Tomas* (1866 – 1936), journalist, soldier, schoolteacher, and poet, who hailed from Miurcia, is another regionalist. His first book of poetry, *Aires murcianos* (1898), was edited by Azorin and was well received by known literary figures, among them Unamuno and Clarin. Medina had but one style – a regionalistic, rustic type of poetry expressed in simple language flavored with frequent use of dialect. His chief defect, consequently, is monotony, for he could only repeat himself rather than give new dimensions to his muse. He created, however, a different kind of regional poetry, which Federico de Onis feels close to that of the Modernists; by concentrating on the popular soul and spirit in their primitive, elemental aspects rather than on the picturesque, local color or physical appearance of his region as his predecessors had done, he produced poems of a simple but human impact. This type of *costumbrismo*, regional only in a limited sense, was an original contribution of Medina and had a widespread influence among local and regional Spanish and Spanish-American poets. Other collections characteristic of his manner is *Alma del pueblo* (1900) and *La cancion de la huerta* (1905).

Part III : 19th Century

Part I : NARRATIVE POETRY

THE EPIC IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Romanticism reawakened an interest in the Middle Ages. Surfeited by the ancient topics of eighteenth-century Neoclassicism, nineteenth-century Romantic poets eagerly returned to national, heroic, exotic, themes of the past, especially those dealing with the Moors, and invented a new poetic form, the *leyenda*, with which to express them. The *leyenda* was a form of narrative, semi epic poetry in which traditional themes were developed with vague realism and little historical accuracy, overlaid with an imaginative and colorful lyricism. The Romantic poets had a special evocative power with which to revive legendary figures of the past and to re-create the atmosphere of chivalry.

D. Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas (1791-1865)

The Duque de Rivas' best poetry was narrative rather than lyric. After attempting two narrative poems, *El paso honroso* (1812) and *Florinda* *1826), concerning Florinda's relationship with Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king, Rivas wrote a Romantic legend, *El moro exposito o Cordoba y Burgos en el siglo decimo* (1834).

The poem, in twelve cantos, relates the medieval legend of the Infantes de Lara. Although it has been called a *romance historico*, it is more a *leyenda* or *fantasia novelesca*. Pastor Diaz considered it to be "la mas bella Poesia romantica de la epoca," and Valera felt that it had no precedent. It was greeted as something fresh and new in its revival of the national past. Rivas added characters to the legend and changed Mudarra into a Romantic hero.

Romance historicos (1841) was inspired by the *romancero* and the ancient *cronicas* and exhibits a genuine patriotic note. Rivas attempted to revive some of the great moments and heroes of a bygone age. In addition to themes from the Middle Ages, he included as subject matter the discovery and conquest of the New World, the court of the Hapsburgs, and independence. In these *romances*, as in his less successful longer *leyendas*, published in 1854, Rivas at times included a note of mystery and occasional horror, and his descriptive power overshadows his storytelling ability.

E. Jose de Espronceda y Delgado (1808 – 1842)

Primarily a lyric poet, Espronceda also wrote *leyendas*, the best of which is *El estudiante de Salamanca* (1840), a Romantic revival of the don Juan theme. He recounts the libertinage of Felix de Montemar, who in a vision witnesses his own funeral and is given the kiss of death by a skeleton. This poem and Espronceda's philosophical masterpiece, *El diablo mundo* (1841), which also contains narrative patches, are essentially compelling lyric poetry.

F. Jose Zorilla y Moral (1817 – 1893)

Zorilla had a true descriptive and narrative poetic talent, and this, combined with his facile skill as a versifier and genius for evoking Spain's chivalrous and romantic past, made him the nest of the *leyenda* writers. He wrote many poems, frequently retelling in his own colorful manner an oft-used tale from legend and tradition.

One looks in vain for ideas in his works, but despite irregularities the reader is carried along by sheer descriptive charm, overlooking the poet's improvised manner and sometimes careless craftsmanship. His best-known *leyendas* are *A buen juez, major testigo*, which recounts the story of the *Cristo de la Vega* in which a statue miraculously serves as a witness; and *Margarita la tornera*, the tender story of the Virgin's intercession in a nun's troubles. *Granada* (1852), in nine books, though never finished, is probably Zorilla's best combination of history and legend and is remarkable for its color and musicality.

THE ROMANCERO

F. General Characteristics

One of the most original and enduring monuments of Spanish literature and the richest collection of popular poetry anywhere is the Spanish *romancero* the word means three things: the immense Spanish ballad literature dating from the Middle Ages; a collection of ballads; and a series of ballads dealing with one theme.

The ballad, called *romance* in Spanish, is a short epico-lyric poem written in sixteen-syllable lines divided into two equal hemistiches' by a caesura, with the final word of each line assonating. Some collections print the ballad in eight-syllable lines with the even lines assonating.

The ballads reflect the traditional national spirit and mentality better than any other form of literature. Episodic in nature and related in origin to the primitive epic, they begin and end abruptly without exposition, implying an entire situation or identifying some hero with a few deft stokes. As the repository of genuine national spirit, they have had a profound effect of Spanish literature and have consistently inspired writers of all ages.

G. The *Juglar* and the *Mester de Juglaria*

The *juglar*, the public entertainer of the Middle Ages, amused his audiences with recitations, music, acrobatics, and sleight of hand. More important, he was the reciter of *cantares de gesta*, a professional who earned his living acting and singing before the public whether in a place or a marketplace. *Mester de Juglaria* means the type of poetry recited, sung, and composed by the *juglares*, principally ballads and epics.

H. The Fragmentation Theory of Ballad Origin

Some nineteenth-century critics believed in the *cantilena* theory to the effect that ballads strung together formed epic poetry, but Menendez Pida rightly asserted that the ballads descended originally from the epics. Representing the fragments of these poems preserved by the *juglares* when the epic was in its degenerative stages. The minstrels selected short portions from an epic to sing to a street-corner audience or were asked to repeat a particularly popular passage. These brief excerpts, remembered by the listeners and recited later at home, were passed orally from generation to generation down to the twentieth century. Written collections began to appear however in the sixteenth century, and new ones are still being collected from the people of Spain and the New World.

The phenomenal oral existence of Spain's ballad literature over a period of some eight centuries is unique in the world of art. Through the communal transmission and development, several versions of the same ballad have been found, and they have all absorbed through this process the true spirit of the people. The ballad thus mirrors the Spanish soul more faithfully than all other genres.

The original ballads were fragments of epic poems. Later, known poets wrote ballads and used the ballad meter in the drama and in poems on varied themes. Even twentieth-century poets have used the ballad meter.

I. Classification

There are several thousand ballads of such variety that classification is difficult. We can, however, note a few important types; *Romances historicos* or *viejos tradicionales* are derived from the medieval epics and histories. *Romances juglarescos* are longer and treat subjects from the degenerate period. *Romances fronterizos* relate the heroics and amours of Christian and Moorish knights of the fifteenth century. *Romances novelescos sueltos* are tales of adventure but are not necessarily epic. *Romances eruditos* were written on old themes by erudite poets. *Romances liricos* or *artisticos* treat any theme and were written by recognized artists. *Romances vulgares* treat a great variety of themes and were written by street-corner poets.

J. Collections

Two important early ballad collections are *Cancionero sin ano*, published in the middle of the sixteenth century by Martin Nuncio, and *Silva de varios romances*, published by Esteban G. de Nagera in 1550 and 1551.

Modern collections include *Romancero general* (1828 – 1832, 1849), by Agustin Duran; *Primavera y flor de romances* (1856), by Ferdinand Joseph Wolf and Konrad Hofmann; *Antologia de poetas liricos castellanos* (1944 – 1945), by Marelino Menendex y Pelayo, and *Flor nueva de romance viejos* (1933), by Ramon Menendez Pidal.

LYRIC POETRY

C. Romanticism

The many attempts to define Romanticism confirm the difficulty of doing so. Sainz de Robles defines it as an artistic revolution against what he termed the rigidity, the coldness, the regulations, the antinationalism, the cerebralism, the pagan aestheticism, the religious incredulity, the preponderance of the objective over the subjective, the declamatory emphasis, and the artistic impersonality of Neoclassicism. He lists Romanticism's characteristics as contemplation of nature, intimacies of natural life, revival of the Middle Ages, the cult of the

individual, rejection of the rules of Boileau and Luzan, the national against the foreign, subjective lyricism against epic objectivity, anarchy of inventiveness and procedure, the intimate connection between art and life, and absolute emancipation of the *yo*.

Victor Hugo put it much more succinctly in the preface to *Hernani*, where he stated that Romanticism was simply "liberalism in literature."

As we have seen, the eighteenth century witnessed the return of Romanticism in Melendez Valdes' nature sentiments. Although dates cannot be firmly fixed for its triumph as the dominant literary taste, we can conclude that the nation was prepared well in advance of the outburst that occurred in 1833 with the return of the *emigrados*.

Spanish liberals had had to leave Spain under the despotic reign of Fernando VII, during which time a rigid censorship had succeeded in holding the nascent Romanticism in check. The expression of liberal ideas and the rebelliousness and individuality that characterized Romanticism were dangerous under Fernando's oppressive, absolute monarchy. On Fernando's death, however, the scene changed. Maria Cristina, the Queen Mother, called back the exiled liberals, or *emigrados*, for she needed their support to hold the throne against Carlos, Fernando's brother.

Many of the Romantic poets and dramatists, who as liberals had been obliged to leave Spain, breathed abroad the Romantic atmosphere of England and France, where the movement was already fully grown. When they returned after the 1833 amnesty, they brought the new literary rage with them. Romanticism was nothing new to Spain, however, for it had always been an undercurrent in Spanish literature. The nineteenth century revived what was typically Spanish rather than creating something new. The battle that raged in other European countries between Classicists and the Romantic revolutionaries was neither fierce nor prolonged in Spain. The public was happy to revive a characteristic feature of their tradition and was not interested in literary quarrels. What the nineteenth century witnessed was the intensification and concentration of the elements of Romanticism to such a degree that other traditional characteristics of Spanish literature were subdued momentarily and suppressed. The undercurrent. Ow became a flood on the surface and swept everything before it.

The moderation and restraint of Neoclassicism were gone. Rules and precepts ceased to exist for the poet, who recognized no authority and no codes of behavior. Poets demanded absolute freedom and believed their primary function was to be expressive, not necessarily beautiful. Their poetry was often one of dreams in which they lost sight of reality. A melancholy, pessimistic, sometimes despairing note pervaded their poems, as they observed that the reality that surrounded them did not conform to their dream world. Poets became interested in exotic themes, such as Oriental potentates and their courts, and in the noble Moor, idealized in somewhat the same fashion as Rousseau had idealized the American Indian. Fatally attracted to the sepulchral, the mysterious, the funereal, tempestuous seas, rugged mountains, yawning abysses, ruins, nocturnal scenes, and landscapes, poets revealed through their vocabulary their interests and feelings, and used an abundance of terms such as *sordido, funebre, horrido, gemido, tetrico, lugubre, melancolico, espectro, tremendo, Ay!, sombras, historico, languidez, duda, suspiro, and lagrimas*. Poets were impassioned, unrestrained, and pessimistic, and emotionalism replaced reason in their poetry.

The poets of Romanticism, with few exceptions, were dramatic or narrative poets and did their best work in the *leyenda* and the drama. The Romantic fervor lasted only a short time in Spain. As the lingering scent of Romanticism weakened, writers interested themselves in more serious questions, and a group of so-called philosophical poets appeared, headed by Campoamor and Nunez de Arce. A third direction that poetry took in the second half of the century was that represented by Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, who, although perhaps classified temperamentally with the Romanticists, actually represented a movement of transition to the modern schools of poetry. Finally, the *costumbrista* poets of the last years of the century brought the experimental period to a close as the age of Modernism approached.

9. *Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas* (1791 – 1865) won his acclaim primarily in the drama.

As a poet his genius lay in narrative style rather than in the lyrical vein, as exemplified in *El moro exposito* and the *Romances historicos*. In his earlier work, Rivas tried the Neoclassic manner and dedicated a series of poems to beautiful shepherdesses. Although he has some interesting descriptions of nature, his most sincere poetry is that dedicated to

Olimpia, a girl he fell in love with in 1819, that reveals the poet's nostalgia and the pain and pleasure of a lost love. His own rules for Romanticism at best can be termed mild: quicken the reader's interest in the narrative; suite style to argument; adapt style to the person speaking; make use of color; use historical customs; use clear expressions; and versify well.

In addition to his love themes and nature, which could be either pastoral or tempestuous (in *El faro de Malta*, for example), Rivas concentrated on religious and nationalistic and patriotic themes. His love of Spain, intensified by the homesickness and sorrow of exile, is one of the truly admirable traits in his lyric poetry. He also has some moral poems and uses the theme of the stylized noble Moor in some of his *romances*. Most of his poetry after 1835 is less noteworthy as part of his total production.

10. *Jose de Espronceda y Delgado* (1808 – 1842) enjoys the reputation of having been Spain's greatest Romantic lyric poet. Everything about this man was Romantic except his manner of dying. At the age of fifteen he joined a group of young conspirators called Los Numantinos. Arrested and later, in 1827, exiled, he met Teresa Mancha in Lisbon, fell in love with her, and induced her to abandon her husband in London and live with him. His life with Teresa was a tempestuous one. Meanwhile, between 1829 and 1835 he became involved in a series of military uprisings, both in France and Spain.

It would be convenient to classify Espronceda's poetry into two types: lyric and narrative. To the first type belong the shorter poems, such as *Cancion del pirate*, and to the latter belong *El estudiante de Salamanca* and *El diablo mundo*. Such a classification, however, is not altogether valid, for there is much in the longer poems that is lyric – the *Canto a Teresa*, for example – and something of the epic in the shorter ones.

Espronceda personifies in his life and work what we might term the "Romantic frenzy." He was vehement and passionate, a born rebel who wanted to convert his dreams to reality. He was outraged by restraints and could tolerate them neither in his art nor in society, an attitude fully revealed in his *Cancion del pirate*. There, in a moment of exaltation, he dreams of being a pirate, a rebel outside the law and society, who is his own law, feared by all, and who laughs at dangers and his enemies. Here one finds revolution and anarchy, scorn for the established order, and a plea for individualism and liberty.

Neither reality nor women nor anything else conformed to what the poet expected or wanted, and from a moment of exaltation, as in the *Cancion del pirate*, we see the pendulum swing to the opposite pole, where the poet confesses that his desire is eternal and insatiable and that he believes only in the peace of the sepulcher. As Bonilla so well put it, the four principles of Espronceda's philosophy are doubt, the first principle of thought; pain, the positive reality of life; pleasure, the world's illusion; and death, the solution to every problem. Combined with these are skepticism, irony, and sorrow.

Although Espronceda has been labeled "the Spanish Byron," and although the Spanish poet knew English and admired Byron, there are few direct influences of the one on the other. Both were skeptical, liberal, and pessimistic regarding life, which they found to be largely an illusion. Espronceda had much more of a social conscience and was patriotic. In any event, Espronceda's poetic sensibilities were far too great for him to be a servile imitator.

After an early series of poems written in the Neoclassic vein between 1828 and 1833, including some dedicated to friends and others involving themes of exile, politics, country, and freedom, he wrote his best-known poems, all included in the 1840 edition of his poetry. In addition to the *Cancion del pirata*, the consummate expression of individual liberty, he wrote *El mendigos* another cynical vision of the world; *El reo de muerte* (he was opposed to capital punishment); and *El verdugo*. In these poems, dedicated to the disillusion of the passing years, Espronceda combines realism with idealism and shows his sympathy for the outcast, the unfortunate, and the misunderstood. Perhaps the most pessimistic of these lyric poems is *A Jarifa en una orgia*, in which he identifies himself with the prostitute as a social outcast.

El estudiante de Salamanca, a kind of *leyenda* that handles the don Juan theme in a new way, synthesizes all the tendencies in Espronceda's works up to that time. His don Felix, unlike the other don Juan prototypes, is a disillusioned materialist who discovers that

life is a fantasy and death is the only reality. The poem uses a great number of poetic meters and chiaroscuro to good effect.

El diablo mundo, his longest poem (never completed), can be considered his masterpiece. It was conceived as an epic of mankind, a vast undertaking to show man's struggles, deceptions, triumphs, and longings; but the poem is quite uneven, rising to great poetic heights at times but falling lamentably at others. Its *mal du siècle* tendencies are combined with a jumble of ideas, but the salient thought seems to be that life is senseless, after all, if all it has to offer is one deception after another. The plot relates how the protagonist, Adam, is miraculously restored to youth and, with the mind of a child, unspoiled by experience, goes through one disillusionment after another. Despite its standard Romantic philosophy, however, the poem has some exceptionally well-conceived and well-executed passages, for if Espronceda was not a philosopher, he was a great versifier. The introductory scene of *El diablo mundo* has been compared in majesty with the opening scene of Faust. It and the second canto written to the memory of Teresa are masterpieces of Romantic poetry. The *Canto II; A Teresa; Descansa en paz* has no connection with the rest of the poem and was intercalated by the poet with the typical Romantic comment: "Este canto es un desahogo de mi corazon; saltelo el que no quiera leerlo sin escrupulo, pues no esta ligado de manera alguna con el poema." He expresses the typical Espronceda themes of delirium, despair, lament for lost youth, and the pleasure of dreams of glory. *El diablo mundo* also emphasizes that man becomes spiritually old quickly and looks forward to death; the hero's idea of life bears no similarity to that of the masses; a young dreaming soul is easily deceived and abandons real love for deceptive illusion; man indulges in blind and purposeless dreaming for an unattainable ideal; and dismal grief is man's lot, and the world will not grieve over one more corpse.

In his Romantic poetry, Espronceda served as the catalytic agent to fuse a large number of poetic tendencies awaiting expression, much as Ruben Dario did later. Rivas was the national, historical Romantic, but Espronceda represents the highly personal, subjective, revolutionary poet. In a sense, whether one doubts his sincerity or not, he carried on the humanitarian and libertarian spirit of the eighteenth-century French philosophers, conveyed to Spain by Hugo and others, but he was restless and undisciplined, original in his experimentation with meter and lines, if not in his themes. His characteristic note in doubt, almost desperation. When a bit of life and radiance creeps in, as in *El sol*, he fears that his happiness will be temporary and that the dark night will soon cover the radiant life. Despite the unevenness in his poetic output, Espronceda was the best poet of the century down to Becquer.

11. *Jose Zorrilla y Moral* (1817 – 1893) often liked to refer to himself as a troubadour; "Yo soy el trovador que vaga errante." This sobriquet suits him in many respects, for like the troubadours of old, he had a native faculty for versifying and a gift with words that made writing poetry effortless for him. In Madrid in 1837 he became famous overnight when he stepped forward at Larra's funeral and read some of his verses written for the occasion.

Zorrilla's works are not intimate or personal. Sometimes called the Lope de Vega of the nineteenth century for his facility, he was more plebeian and less cultured than either Rivas or Espronceda. His basic inspiration seems to have been national, with a spirit more authentic, indeed, than that of Rivas. He conveyed emotion and a feeling of beauty but was overly fond of sensational imagery and even vulgarity. His characteristics are those of Romantic poetry in general: love of the medieval and national tradition and religion, as well as all the other trappings of the movement, such as boisterous nature, nocturnal scenes, tempests, exotic castles, shadowy figures, and ruins.

In the tradition of the troubadour, Zorrilla's poetic talent was more narrative and descriptive than it was lyric. He could describe what he saw or imagined much better than what he felt. He was a great storyteller, and his evocative power is not to be denied. Consequently, his best Romantic poetic work is in the longer narrative poems called *leyendas*. Even in his shorter poems he was not concerned with themes that produce lyric poetry. His verses often have a vagueness, a sentimentality, a melancholy and diffuseness that are typical of the emotional atmosphere of the Romantic lyric poetry; but atmosphere

was about all that interested Zorrilla. The total result is that Zorrilla has little depth. In style he was so fluent and wrote so easily that he sins, on the side of verbosity.

But in spite of his defects, he was a master versifier and developed wonderful music with words that please the ear. Typical of his short poems are his *Orientales*, and among these are *Duena de la negra toca*, *Corriendo van por la vega*, and *Manana voy nazarena*. Zorrilla is still a favorite with the general public, forever captivated by his troubadouresque style, the music of his lines, and his rhythms.

12. *Juan Arolas* (1805 – 1849) became a priest over his parents' protests but had no true calling. His frustrations and unfulfilled longings made his life unhappy, and he died insane at the early age of forty-four.

His poetry, which is largely a reflection of the state of his mind, is conveniently divided into four thematic groups: religious, amatory, chivalresque, and Oriental. Significantly, the poems on religious themes are the least attractive of all in spite of their undeniable sincerity. His chivalresque poems revive great heroes of the past with all their splendor and color. His sensual love poems are somewhat autobiographical, for Arolas' love was not a game, as played by poets of earlier ages, but something very personal. His *Orientales*, showing influences of Victor Hugo, are acclaimed as his best lyric effort and are perfectly in keeping with the Romantic tradition. Here we find sultans and pirates, Oriental courts, rich color, voluptuousness, mellowness, and languidness. His Orientalism, based on his imagination, is exotic, sensuous, colorful, and imaginative and soars far above that of Zorrilla and at times even that of Espronceda. His poetry was published in two collections: *Poesias caballerescas y orientales* (1840) and *Poesias religiosas, orientales, caballerescas y amatorias* (1860).

13. *Gertudis Gomez de Avellaneda* (1814 – 1873) was born in Cuba of a Spanish father and a Cuban mother, but she came to Spain when she was twenty-two. She was highly regarded by poets of her day. She admired the Romantics, especially George Sand, and was a personal friend of all the Spanish poets. Her life was one of suffering, disappointment, and anguish, all reflected in her poetry.

She left an extensive work of half a dozen huge volumes, including dramas, novels, and lyric poetry, some of which she wrote under the pseudonym Tula. She is best remembered for her poetry, in which she was eloquent and passionate, as well as sincere. Her two principal themes were love, both divine and human, and religion, although she did write some poems on nature. Typical poems on these topics are *A la cruz*, *A el*, and *Al sol*. She wrote a poem on Niagara, *A vista del Niagara*, as did her fellow Cuban Heredia, the Venezuelan Perez Bonalde, and the North American William Cullen Bryant. Her cadenced verses forecast the coming of the moderns.

Her best poetry contains Byronic desperation of a love scorned. Her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her frustrated love, is quite orthodox. Though she shows deep and sincere feeling nonetheless she has little concern for humanity except as an expression of Christian charity on her part.

Among her many novels are *Esptolino* (1844), *Guatimozin* (1846), and *Sab* (1841). Her legends include *La montana maldita* and *El qura blanca*. *Alfonso Munio* (1844), her best play tells of a love triangle in Toledo in 1142. Avellaneda later changed its title to *Munio Alfonso*. Other plays are *El Principe de Viana* (1844) and the Biblical dramas *Saul* (1849) and *Baltasar* (1858). The robustness of her versification and the gravity of her thought prompted Nicasio Gallego to say of her: "Es much hombre esa mujer," but nevertheless the Spanish Academy in a stormy session refused to seat a woman.

14. *Carolina Coronado* (1820 – 1911) wrote tenderly idealistic, intensely sentimental poetry with delicateness, sweetness, and Romantic melancholy. She did not use the inflated rhetoric or sonority of so much Romantic poetry. In the beginning she was content to write about small wonders of nature, like flowers and butterflies, but later in more profound fashion she expressed her own feelings at once amorous and mystical. She attempted the novel without success. Her best-known poem is *El amor de los amores*, inspired by the Song of Songs.

15. *Nicomedes Pastor Diaz* (1811 – 1863) wrote poetry that is melancholy and gently pessimistic in tone, with a dreamy vagueness that is in keeping with the poetic tradition of his native Galicia. Typical poems are *A la luna* and *La mariposa negra*. He was affected by the Romanticist's interest in the macabre and could contemplate as well as any other his dead sweetheart and hopelessness of his fate. He posed as an austere ascetic who felt society could be redeemed. He thought the poet's mission was to be a social and religious high priest and refused to separate the poet from the politician.
16. *Other poets* of Romanticism are Gabriel Garcia Tassara (1817 – 1875); Patricio de la Escosura (1807 – 1878), who also wrote Romantic novels; Antonio Ros de Olano (1808 – 1886), born in Venezuela, who was a close friend of Espronveda's and wrote the prologue for his *El diablo mundo*; Enrique Gil y Carrasco (1815 – 1846), author of the most famous Romantic novel, *El señor de Bembibre*, who also wrote a number of excellent nature poems, among them *La gota de rocío* and *La violeta*; and *Juan Martínez Villergas* (1816 – 1894), author of mordant, satiric verses, who also attempted the novel and the drama.

D. The Transition: Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The term post-Romantic has often been applied to the poetry that appeared after the Romantic movement had spent itself and was no longer the dominant force in literature. This designation, however, is not fully applicable to the period that dates roughly from 1850 to Ruben Dario's *Azul*, which appeared in 1888, for many of the poets classified as Romanticists lived and wrote Romantic poetry long after 1850. Two of the greatest poets of the century, Gustavo Adolfo Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, are sometimes so designated, but because they are more than Romanticists and form the link between Romanticism and Modernism, we shall include them here as transitional poets. Although the Romantic transition extended into the second half of the century, no definite trend developed in lyric poetry until the advent of Modernism in the last years. In addition to the Romantic note that continued, trends toward philosophy, skepticism, religiousness, and *costumbrismo* appear in the works of Campoamor, Nunez de Arce Medina, and Gabriel y Galan. The age, one of experimentation, found poets reacting against the excesses of Romantic imagination and exuberance with the evident intent of bringing poetry back to earth and making something useful of it. This eclectic period closed when Ruben Dario descended upon the peninsula and carried everything before him.

2. The *philosophical poets* include the following:

- d. *Ramon de Campoamor* (1817 – 1901), known as the Spanish Homer, enjoyed a tremendous vogue in the nineteenth century. His popularity with the people gave him a ranking out of proportion with his true merit. In Campoamor's time the middle class and the general public believed that they had inherited the role of connoisseur formerly enjoyed by the aristocrats. With every man a literary critic, standards of culture and good taste degenerated. Campoamor was able to give the public the kind of poetry they wanted, a homespun philosophy with ironic, sometimes sarcastic comments on life, easily memorized. He reacted against Romanticism and adopted as his guide "el arte por la idea" in his *Poetica* (1883). Humor abounds in his poetry, but it is often piquant and cynical.

He prided himself on having invented new poetic forms to which he gave the names *dolora*, *humorada*, and *pequeno poema*. The *humorada* is a very brief composition, usually of two lines, sometimes four, with philosophical intention and characterized by irony and skepticism. Campoamor's were collected in *Humoradas* (1886) and have been called "sculptured, chiseled expressions of thought." The *dolora* (*Fabulas morales y doloras* (1846) is a dramatized *humorada*, combining concision with philosophy, a kind of tiny drama with ideas, reflecting the mediocre and commonplace. The *pequeno poema* is an amplification of a *dolora*.

Opinions on Campoamor's work have been highly contradictory. Some have seen him as highly original, and others find nothing but platitudes in his poetry. Some consider his verse attractive, and others have called it doggerel. A fair judgment would not condemn him too harshly or praise him too highly, recognizing his ability as a versifier and his ingenuity in crystalizing thought, often in a delightful way, but at the

same time admitting his lack of creative ability and failure to reach the stature of a truly great poet. His most famous poem, *Quien supiera escribir*, is a three-part dialogue in which an illiterate girl attempts to dictate to an obtuse priest a letter intended for her distant lover.

- e. *Gaspar Nunez de Arce* (1832 – 1903), like Campoamor, reacted away from the emotion of Romanticism and wrote ideological poetry. There are two strings to his harp, namely philosophy and politics. He summed up his poetic creed himself when he wrote: “La Poesia debe pensar y sentir, reflejar las ideas y las pasiones, los dolores y los gozos sociedad...No debe limitarse a cantar como el pajarito.” In line with this serious purpose, Nunez de Arce deals with the philosophical and moral problems of his times and reflects better than any other poet of his day the nineteenth-century struggle between religious faith and science. To illustrate his philosophical reflections, he composed poems on great intellectuals of the past who were either confronted by similar situations or were considered nonconformists and original thinkers. *La vision de Fray Martin* (1880) deals with Martin Luther. Other poems deal with Raimundo Lulio, Dante and Lord Byron.

This poet yearned for the orthodox religious faith, but the discoveries of a rationalistic science would not allow him to justify it. From this conflict grew a sort of pessimism quite different from the Romantic kind. He also studied the problems of philosophical doubt. He is perhaps best loved today for his political poems in a declamatory style reminiscent of Quintana. *Gritos de combate* (1875) reveals his attitudes as a statesman and politician and reflects his disillusionment in the people's abuse of democracy, his hope for the future, and his belief in progress and political and religious freedom.

- f. *Minor philosophical poets* include Ventura Ruiz Aguilera (1820 – 1881), whose *Ecoss nacionales* (two volumes; 1849 and 1854 illustrate his concern with social and political questions; and Manuel del Palacio (1832 -1906), good at the epigram and much like Campoamor in his ability to wrap up a clever thought in a few words. He claimed to be the first to write the so-called *sonetos filosoficos*, serious at the beginning but with a humorous twist at the end.

2. *The transition poets* include the following:

- c. *Gustavo Adolfo Becquer* (1836 -1870) authored poetry that has risen in popularity and esteem with twentieth-century poets and critics, in contrast with that of Campoamor and Nunez de Arce, which has suffered. Many now feel that Becquer's poetry, although slight in quantity, is the greatest poetry of the century, principally because of his ability to foresee and to predict, in a sense, the modern schools of poetry. He is perhaps the purest Romanticist of all Spanish poets, for unlike Espronceda, he reveals no pose or showmanship in his sadness. But there is more than Romanticism in Becquer, as we will be pointed out.

Christened Gustavo Adolfo Dominguez Bastida, Becquer was orphaned at an early age, and he was left in the care of his godmother. At eighteen he went to Madrid in search of literary fame but did not find it. He took a number of jobs, married unhappily, and left three children at his death. Because of a serious illness, Becquer retired to Veruela with Valeriano, his favorite brother, to recuperate. They spent a year there, and Becquer wrote several works. Becquer died at the age of thirty-four, exhausted by tuberculosis. He never knew the acclaim of the public as Espronceda, Campoamor, or Zorrilla did, and his poetry reflects his sad, impoverished, sick life. Luis Gonzalez Bravo, Isabel II's minister who had promised to publish Becquer's *Rimas*, was deposed by the revolution in 1868, and the manuscript was lost. Becquer rewrote the *Rimas*, and it was published posthumously in 1871. Some variation of number and order exists, but the standard order in most editions is that of Becquer's friend, Narciso Campillo.

Becquer's fame rests on this one small volume. These love poems constitute what one might consider a spiritual autobiography of the poet. At the outset we see an almost ecstatic yearning for poetry. He sees his love in nature and in his imaginary muse in the form of a woman. He finally meets his woman of flesh and blood and

becomes desperately enamored of her. At first, she is cool to his love, but he manages to win her affection. His rapture ends with the hint of a bitter quarrel and his dismissal as she refuses to recognize him. His love continues, however, as he tries in vain to win her once more, and he consoles himself with the thought of approaching death. The *Rimas* close with meditations on death and nature, together with an expression of fears and desires. Some critics have felt that the *Rimas* are a running true commentary on the poet's love for Julia Espin y Guillen, the daughter of a music professor, who later married an influential politician.

Throughout the seventy-six little poems (some say seventy-nine or eighty, for no authentic edition exists), the poet is deeply subjective and sentimental. He represents a kind of purification of the exaggerations of Romanticism. The style is effortless and natural; the keynote is simplicity. He avoids altogether the rhetoric and inflation of Nunez de Arce and all other preceding poets and makes use of suggestiveness that the Symbolist poets did not discover until the end of the century. The simplicity of style, the musicality of the verses, the theme of love, and the appeal of Becquer's sentimentality and melancholy have made him a great favorite.

In his poetry as in his prose legends, Becquer's world is one of half shadows, uncertain shapes, suggestions of feelings and sentiments. There is nothing solid, but the poet carries the reader with him as he combines music with delicate and fugitive words and almost intangible, unutterable feelings. His poetry is full of sighs, dry leaves, smoke, gilded threads of spider webs, and wispy fog. There is a total effect of immense sadness, almost desperation, and above all resignation and tenderness. His poetry exhales suffering. As one critic has said; "He has caught the subtle vibrations of an ethereal music."

Aside from their intrinsic merit, Becquer's poems have had a great influence on the development of modern poets. Damaso Alonso has said that Becquer is the "punto de arranque," the starting point, of all contemporary Spanish poetry. "Cualquier poeta de hoy," he says, "se siente mucho mas cerca de Becquer (y en parte, de Rosalia de Castro) que de Zorrilla, de Nunez de Arce o de Ruben Dario." This closeness in spirit to Becquer is due in large part to the fact that Becquer was really the first to see the difference between the traditional, pompous, rhetorical Spanish poetry that had been written up to his time and the new style of short, unadorned, simple poetry. Becquer himself made very clear the distinction between the two types.

In the second type, his own, which he called "the poetry of poets," he points out the direction that modern Spanish poetry will take, showing the coming generations how to write poetry that insinuates and suggests, that brushes lightly against you and then departs. Becquer attempted to convey the interrelationship of reality and dream, and in his poetry, pure affect related to sight and touch, he tried to define his inspiration, the "children of his fantasy."

Jorge Guillen feels that had Becquer lived as long as Zorrilla or Nunez de Arce, he would have been Spain's greatest lyric poet of the nineteenth century. Juan Ramon Jimenez, Ruben Dario, and others truly appreciated him, and modern critics agree that he is the principal precursor of Modernism. To understand Becquer's poetry is to understand more about our contemporaries. This poet could indeed be called the prophet of twentieth-century Spanish poetry.

Becquer's best prose work, *Leyendas* (1860 – 1864), is a group of delicate, rhythmic, Romantic legends in the style of Hoffmann and Poe. Almost all are set in a medieval atmosphere of ruins, monasteries, and churches. The supernatural, a magical sense, and fantasy were his strong points. Among his well-known legends are *Maese Perez, organista; los ojos verdes; and La ajorca de oro*. *Desde mi celda*, a collection of literary letters written from the Monastery of Veruela in 1864, describes the countryside and the persons he met. This, too, is touched with the subjective magic and poignant message of all his work.

- d. *Rosalía de Castro* (1837 – 1885) had a life that, like Becquer's, was sorrowful and unhappy. Like Becquer she was disillusioned and melancholy, and like him she died a victim of a terrible sickness. Like Becquer she made poetry a personal, unashamed

outpouring of sentiment and tried to express with words what cannot be uttered but only suggested. The musicality of her verse, the tenderness the vagueness, the symbolism and imagery, and the suggestiveness and intuition have endeared her to twentieth century poets, who have found in her, as in Becquer, pure poetry – simple, unrhetical, interpreting an atmosphere and reflecting a state of soul but never describing in the traditional manner. Her fame, which was slight in her own lifetime, has increased steadily since her death. Brennan judges that she would be the greatest poetess of modern times had she written all her poetry in Spanish.

Born out of wedlock (her father was a priest), Rosalia was raised until her ninth year by a peasant woman. From her peasant relationships as a child she absorbed the spirit of Galician folk song that she used so beautifully later. At nineteen she went to Madrid to live. There she met the poets and writers of her day and began to write herself. City life however, had little attraction for her, and she grew immensely homesick for her native soil. She could find no beauties in the Castilian landscape, which augmented her *soidade* (“homesickness”). Perhaps because of this she became interested in a young Galician writer living in Madrid, Manuel Martinez Murguia, whom she later married. Her husband mistreated her, and her health failed as she struggled constantly against poverty to rear and educate her five children. Her emotional conflicts, occasioned by shame over the irregularity of her birth and the disfiguring effects of her disease, cancer, caused her finally to withdraw from the world and to see no one during the last years of her life. She died in her beloved native land at the relatively young age of forty - eight.

Rosalia de Castro wrote many novels, among them *La hija del mar* (1859) and *El caballero de las botas azules* (1867), but she is essentially a great poetess. Much of her poetry was written in Galician, not used for poetry for many centuries, but she knew the folk song that had preserved the vagueness, melancholy, and suggestiveness of Galician poetry. Her Galician volumes, *Cantares Gallegos* (1863), intensely personal, and *Folhas novas* (1880), filled with deep despair and melancholy, prepared the way for her last volume, in Spanish, *En las orillas del Sar* (1884), a collection of poetry written over many years, some shortly before her death. Slow and painful cancer caused her concern, and the poems reveal her longing for the relief of the life beyond death as well as a love and yearning for her native land. We see the past days that will never return as she expresses her deep failing for Galicia, its nature, customs, and the miseries and suffering of the poor. The poems reflect the counterpoint, through nature, of hope and despair, approaching spring and fatal winter. She reflects both an inner and outer reality, the autumn light, night and pain, a desire for happiness, and a kind of mystical union with the universe. Tormented, feeling unloved, and experiencing the shadow of impalpable desires, she awaited an approaching death.

The poetess experimented with meter, harmonies, assonance, and varied lines of poetry. Her poetry, completely personal, is modern in its nostalgic poetry she repeatedly drifts in dreams back to her native land where shapes are indecisive, and the essences of things are intangible. Along with Becquer's, her poetry is the purest of the transition period that stretched from Romanticism to Modernism.

3. *The costumbrista poets* include the following:

- c. *Jose Maria Gabriel y Galan* (1870 – 1905), schoolteacher and farmer, represents a direction that is altogether different from that taken by other poets of the transition period. In him we find an expression of regionalism and *costumbrismo* as he describes life in his isolated little archaic town in Extremadura. He had a sincere, deep feeling for the country life and Spanish catholic tradition preserved by the Castilian peasants. He anticipated the coming Generation of 1898 with his appreciation and glorification of the Castilian landscape but fell short of their artistic tastes and standards. He was fond of the rustic sayings of the people, extolled the simplicity of rural life, used dialect in some of his poems, and optimistically bore sorrows and burdens. His best side is the descriptive one. His best-known poems are *El ama*, for which he became famous overnight, and *El cristu benditu*. Among his collections are *Castellanas* (1902) and *Religiosas* (1906).

- d. *Vicente Medina y Tomas* (1866 – 1936), journalist, soldier, schoolteacher, and poet, who hailed from Murcia, is another regionalist. His first book of poetry, *Aires murcianos* (1898), was edited by Azorin and was well received by known literary figures, among them Unamuno and Clarin. Medina had but one style – a regionalistic, rustic type of poetry expressed in simple language flavored with frequent use of dialect. His chief defect, consequently, is monotony, for he could only repeat himself rather than give new dimensions to his muse. He created, however, a different kind of regional poetry, which Federico de Onis feels close to that of the Modernists; by concentrating on the popular soul and spirit in their primitive, elemental aspects rather than on the picturesque, local color or physical appearance of his region as his predecessors had done, he produced poems of a simple but human impact. This type of *costumbrismo*, regional only in a limited sense, was an original contribution of Medina and had a widespread influence among local and regional Spanish and Spanish-American poets. Other collections characteristic of his manner is *Alma del pueblo* (1900) and *La cancion de la huerta* (1905).

Part IV : 20th Century

A. General Considerations

The twentieth century in Spain, reflecting the increased tempo of modern life, produced a series of brilliant poetic generations. The first important group of poets, searching for ideal beauty and form, the Modernists, though developing separately from the better-known Latin American form, succumbed to the poetic leadership of the Nicaraguan Ruben Dario. At the same time another important twentieth-century poetic current, the Generation of 1898, continued to emphasize the human, Existential, and metaphysical aspects of life. These writers, primarily Unamuno and Antonio Machado, stressed eternal spiritual values. They wrote in an almost colloquial manner, and their themes, beyond Modernist aestheticism, continued to influence younger generations. Between Modernism and the important poets of the Generation of 1927, a group of transition poets appeared, who in some cases anticipated the next generations, while still bordering on the Modernist manner. In any event, poets like Leon Felipe have a significance not clearly generational. Juan Ramon Jimenez, who like Machado was at first influenced briefly by Modernism, broke away to a purer, less ornamental, though still aesthetic poetry that strove for beauty.

The Generation of 1927 was also influenced by a number of avant-garde movements, among them the *ultraista* movement, which around 1918 attempted to redefine poetry as metaphor in a complete rupture with Modernism and its lack of adornment. Equally important was *creacionismo*, whose principal proponents were the Chilean Vicente Huidobro and Gerardo Diego, a member of the Generation of 1927. In their initial stages, the young poets wrote, for the most part, dehumanized or depersonalized poetry, often quite hermetic. They searched for purity and elimination of the sentimental, though from the beginning Lorca was warm, vibrant, and passionate. The intuitive Salinas, the precise and pure Guillen, and the passionate and sensual Lorca heeded, in a later phase, the call of humanity and its social and Existential needs. The dehumanized writing fused into a neo-Romantic poetry of greater intensity with the work of Aleixandre and Alberti. In their works the generation showed the influence of Surrealism or Surrealistic force. They used Freudian symbols, free association, and associative imagery of an irrational nature. They experimented with pure poetry (as defined by Valery and Bremond), worked toward the revitalization of Luis dd Gongora, and avoided the anecdotal. Later, Lorca substituted the poor black of New York for his colorful Andalusian gypsy. Guillen wrote of human preoccupations and not just the joy of life, and Salinas substituted a political and social conscience for a refined intellectualism.

In the 1930s and 1940s a Classical and religious revival took place. Poets like Luis Rosales, German Bleiberg, and Luis Felipe Vivanco produced graceful poetry, often with a note of religious devotion and chose Garcilaso rather than Gongora as their guide. Poets like Miguel Hernandez suffered traumatic events of the Spanish Civil War that affected their creative activities. The generational date of 1935 is sometimes used, because in that year Rosales and Ridruejo produced

key poetic works, the former, *Abril*, and the latter, *Plural*. Acknowledging the four hundredth anniversary of Garcilaso's death in 1536, this group is often called the Generation of 1936. Although many began as disciples of the previous generation, they rejected the intellectual emphasis for simpler, more intimate, and more human poetry. Some of the more conservative poets, because of their connection with the *Escorial* review, became known as the Escorial group. Others preferred the label "Generation of '39" for those who, like Jose Garcia Nieto, wrote of God and family as well as of love in Neoclassic form. In 1943 Nieto helped start the review *Garcilaso*, and the young writers, who called themselves *la juventud creadora*, after a journal entitled *Juventud*, reflected spiritual dejection in their serene and elegant poetry. Poets opposing the Neoclassic Garcilasistas and what for them was escapist poetry supported the ideas of *Espandana*, a review founded by Victoriano Cremer Alonso, which went to the other extreme and promoted *tremendista* and social poetry about the common man.

The generation had disparate voices. Jose Luis Hidalgo (1919 – 1947) preferred amore Romantic tone. Major poets like Blas de Otero and Gabriel Celya stressed religious, social, and political themes. Younger poets like Jose Hierro and Carlos Bousoño, whom some would classify as members of the first postwar generation, produced Existentialist poetry.

In 1943 the Adonais Prize did for poetry what the Nadal Prize had achieved for the novel. In 1944 Damaso Alonso published *Hijos de la ira*, a landmark collection of protest and Existential anguish. Around 1945 Carlos Edmundo d'Ory (b. 1923), among others, experimented with *Postismo*, stressing imagination, the power of the poetic word, and a kind of Surrealism. Around 1947 the *Cantico* group, that proved influential among poets of the 1970s, appeared.

The poets of the second postwar generation, influenced by the Peruvian Cesar Vallejo and others, is sometimes called the Generation of 1950, although some critics prefer other terms, such as the Generation of 1956-1971. Jose Angel Valente, Angel Gonzalez, and others saw poetry as an act of discovery and stressed the poetic word beyond theme or message. They insisted on the authenticity of poetic expression, though notes of Existential anguish, religious preoccupations, and social and political elements continued. Essentially, they sought to discover poetic and human authenticity, even though the poets differ in their rhetorical emphasis, humor, pessimism, or attempts to involve reader participation in the poetic expression. In seeking knowledge of ultimate mysteries, they conceived of poetry as self-revelatory.

In the 1960s and the 1970s some poets experimented with poetry as reading rather than as listing experiences, conceiving of poetry as a kind of visual art with words and typographical experimentation. A new generation appeared, diversely called the third postwar generation, the Generation of 1968, or the *Generacion marginada*. Major poets like Pedro Gimferrer and Guillermo Carnero together with others attempted to develop a new poetic language. They emphasized intertextuality, painting, music and literature. They emphasize intertextuality, painting, music, and literature. Because of their fondness for cultural references and their love of certain cultural elements, terms like *culturalismo*, *Grecidad*, *neobarroquismo*, *Cavafianismo*, and *Cernudismo* have been used to describe their poetry. They, as had the previous generation, insisted on the value of the poetic word and the poem as an auto sufficient and independent object, beyond their own reality, that is, the autonomy of art as an end in itself. They combined these elements with apparently antithetical concepts involving movies, television, mass media, advertisements, and "pop" themes.

Younger poets of the group, like Luis Antonio de Villena and Luis Alberto de Cuenca, continued to reject conventional clothes, language, and lifestyle and to stress metapoetry. They were even more Byzantine, pagan, and Neobaroque. Some poets glorified the body and homosexual themes. Others used ironic humor, demythification, and the historical process in a new way. Still others showed traces of a new kind of Romanticism reflecting self-destructive tendencies in a world of sex and drugs.

B. Modernism

Modernism was a reaction against the prosaism of Campoamor, the effervescence of Romanticism, and what the poets called "bourgeois poetry." The Modernists wanted to reject the nineteenth century, but they discovered new beauties in Berceo, Juan Ruiz, and Santillana. In spite of their

reaction against Romanticism, Modernist poets in a sense seemed Romantic in their rebelliousness and demands for absolute artistic liberty.

The Modernists, trying to play all the notes of which the poetic orchestra was capable, emphasized words, acoustical elements, sensations, neologisms, and striking metaphors. The French Parnassians, interested in perfection of form, and French Symbolists like Paul Verlaine, who wanted to have music before all else, influenced the new poets. In Modernist poetry we find the rare or mysterious, the vague and melancholy, elegance, synesthesia, various mythologies, cosmopolitanism, individualism, pessimism, and skepticism.

Modernism had a greater development in Latin America through poets like the Mexican Manuel Gutierrez Najera, the Cuban Jose Marti (perhaps the first Modernist), the Colombian Jose Asuncion Silva, and the Nicaraguan Ruben Dario, who became the leading Modernist voice. For the first time Spanish letters were greatly affected by currents emanating from Spain's former colonies, and Spanish authors became aware of the importance of their cultural brothers across the sea. Nonetheless, Modernism existed independently in Spain, though Ruben Dario became its acknowledged leader on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. Interpretation of Modernism went through several phases, at first stressing the new sensibility and stylistic renovation, then the aesthetic and evasive aspects, and still later, while accepting the formal renovation, recognizing also the spiritual aspects and preoccupations about life and death in Modernist works after the turn of the century.

Though Modernism and the Generation of 1898 are sometimes confused with one another the terms are not synonymous. The former represents a revolution in technique and the latter a revolution in ideology, although for some Modernism is also an attempt at exploring the roots of Spanish spiritual life. The terms are not mutually exclusive, and one and the same writer, if affected by both, can be classified as a Modernist and also a member of the Generation of 1898. The Generation of 1898 emphasized moral and national trends; Modernism stressed aesthetic and cosmopolitan aspects. The Generation of 1898 stressed truth, Modernists beauty. Yet is sometimes difficult to separate patriotic preoccupations and human elements from the desire to create a new style, and Modernists and the Generation of 1898 resembled each other in their love of old villages, the countryside, and the nation, the Modernists through a recall of medieval poets and the writers of the Generation of 1898 through their attempts to discover and define the Spanish soul. Thus, Machado and Unamuno, poets of this era, have little connection with Modernism, though Machado very briefly followed Dario's lead, and Juan Ramon Jimenez, the most attuned to Modernism of the three, abandoned it for a purer form of poetry.

1. *Salvador Rueda Santos* (1857 – 1933), a great poet who wrote too much bad poetry, was the most important name in the pre-Modernist period, and much of his poetry is purely Modernist in its poetic facility, sonority, polychromatics, versatility, and metrical renovations. He may have been the true creator of Spanish Modernism, since for a time in the last years of the nineteenth century he dominated Spanish poetry, and he introduced Dario to Madrid. Representing the Spanish version of what Dario brought to Spain, he influenced Villaespesa, Juan Ramon Jimenez, and perhaps even Dario. He published poetry as early as 1883, but his first important collection was *En tropel* (1892), with a prologue by Dario. Among his more than thirty collections are *Fuente de salud* (1906), *Lenguas de fuego* (1908), and *Cantando por ambos mundos* (1914). His *Antologia Poetica* appeared in 1962. Rueda experimented freely with metrical forms and musical rhythms. His boldness in this regard at times obscures his masterful use of Andalusian shadow and sunshine. He is spontaneous poet of light, color, erotic imagery, a nature filled with plants and animals, and a special version of the Dance of Death.

Of great renown in his day because of his exuberance and lyrical passion that obscured the defects of his poetry, he was over-powered by Dario's genius, as was the Spanish poetic world of the time.

2. *Ruben Dario* (1867 – 1916), though he was a Nicaraguan, is included here because of his unique significance in Spanish poetry and because he gave form and definite meaning to Modernist poetry. In 1898 *La Nacion*, a newspaper of Buenos Aires, sent him to Spain to report on conditions after Spain's defeat in the War of 1898. Adored by the younger poets, he influenced them all, though Machado and Jimenez only briefly. One reason some Spaniards reacted away from Dario was their feeling that although his poetry was exquisite and nearly perfect formally, it had little substance and was not concerned with life. When they first knew

him, Dario created beautiful poetry, ornate and decorative. He loved elegant things and filled his poems with marble, lace, silk, gold, velvet, swans, palaces, and minuets. He was voluptuous and sensual in his poetry and to a certain extent in his private life.

His first important collection, *Azul* (1888), prose and poetry combined, was greeted by Juan Valera as "original en un sentido que nadie hasta entonces habia tenido." *Prosas profanas* (1896), the peak of Modernist style, contains princesses, Parnassian imagery, and a search for beauty beyond beauty as well as a love of the exotic and refined expression. *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (1905), whose first poem, *Yo soy aquel*, rejects pyrotechnics for sincerity and profundity, abandons marble palaces, "the blue verse and profane songs." Among his many famous poems in this collection, *Cancion de otono en primavera* sings of the illusion of love and the passage of time, and *Lo fatal* of Existential anguish. Some of the other themes involve doubt and despair, Christian faith, and a love for Spain. Other works of note are *El canto errante* (1907), *Poema del otono y otros poemas* (1910), and *Canto a la Argentina y otros poemas* (1910).

Dario's great contribution to Spanish poetry was the revolution he accomplished in meters, rhythms, and poetic techniques. He broke the bonds of traditional Spanish meters, in spite of their variety, changed the accent on the alexandrine, came very close to free verse, juggled the rhythms and stresses of his lines, varied the number of syllables, and exalted the evocative power of words. To this he added a musicality and rhythmic beats unheard up to that time in Spanish verse. Nor did he neglect the old Spanish masters as he invested the traditional Spanish meters of medieval days with his modern spirit.

Dario was a paradoxical man. He was timid and yet bold, Catholic and pagan, noble and abject. He treated of the artificial and exotic and experimented with occult themes, but he also used themes of eternal human values and experienced an omnipresent death. He was melancholy, sensual, emotional, sentimental, passionate, musical, superstitious, hedonistic, and epicurean. Most critics viewed him only as a poet of beauty, but he also wrote, with metaphysical overtones, original and spiritually elevated poetry of the human condition.

3. *Antonio Machado y Ruiz* (1875 – 1939) was born in Seville. When his family moved to Madrid, he studied at the Institucion Libre de Ensenanza, cradle of so many writers of the modern age. In 1907 he took a position in a secondary school in Soria, in Old Castile, where he fell in love and married. When his wife, Leonor, died in 1912, he was transferred to Baeza in Upper Andalusia, but he retained a genuine nostalgia for what had become his adopted homeland, Castile. Later, in Segovia, Pilar Valderrama, the Guimar of his poetry, afforded him a source of happiness.

His important collections include *Soledades, galerias y otros poemas* (1907), an expansion of an earlier text, *Soledades* (1903). He deals with solitude, illusions, love, reverie and childhood, as he searches for God through time, symbolized by the fountain or flowing water. He fuses inner and outer realities in a poetry reflecting a deep palpitation of the spirit. Though sober and unadorned, it is deeply felt, emotional poetry. His masterpiece, *Campos de Castilla* (1912), dealing lovingly but objectively with Castile, has been called "the poetic breviary of the Generation of '98." Augmented in a 1917 edition of *Poesias completas*, it sums up the spirit of the Generation of 1898 with its tragic appraisal of Castile. Machado combines historical realism with a constant idealism. On the one hand, he writes, "Castilla miserable, ayer dominadora, envuelta an sus andrajos desprecio cuanto ignora," but on the other, "Tras el vivir y el sonar, esta lo que mas importa: despertar!" *Campos de Castilla* not only reflects the somber and barren landscape and Spanish lethargy but also includes a ballad, *La tierra de Alvargonzale*, inspired, Machado said, by the *pueblo*, about greed, patricide, and vengeance. The ballad is also filled with dream, mystery, and a brooding terror. *Campos de Castilla* reflects Machado's *palabra en el tiempo*." Machado writes of nature and religion, and of a Spain that was great and may be again if he can rouse his countrymen from their complacency. Machado identified the states of his own soul with the sobriety, austerity, and expanse of the Castilian landscape and associated its moods with his own feelings. Everywhere one finds an air of mystery, melancholy, and solitude as he continues with an Existential preoccupation, symbolized by the road and the sea.

His third important collection, *Nuevas canciones* (1924), continues the style of *Campos de Castilla* but with added satiric notes and epigrams. This collection seems more sensual and

colorful in its expansion of the series of proverbs and songs published in the 1917 edition of *Campos de Castilla*. Machado muses on popular tradition, dream and reality, as well as on the road from life to death.

Several other works should be mentioned. *Juan de Mairena, sentencias, donaires, apures y recuerdos de un profesor apocrifo* (1936) presents Mairena, the critic, Machado's alter ego, who, aside from irony and paradox, gives us Machado's self-description as "the poet of time." *Los complementarios*, notes and poetry written between 1912 and 1925, published in part later and then in a definitive edition in 1972, affords us insight into Machado's poetic creed, which stresses the intuitive and human over the Baroque and dehumanized. *La guerra* (1938) contains some of his last poems.

Machado, a simple and humble man, admired sincerity, honesty, and kindness. Although he mourned his wife, was traumatized by the Spanish Civil War, and longed for happier days, he maintained his solid moral values always. Mystery and clarity, gravity and irony, thought and emotion are all aspects of his sober and pure poetry. A telluric poet, whose description of the countryside was both spiritual and metaphysical to match his universal themes of God, dreams, time, and Existential despair, he explored the hidden secrets in the human soul. As he wrote of solitude, memory, time, and death, he yearned for immortality, but he could never achieve the faith for which he longed.

4. *Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo* (1864 – 1936) brought a very personal, highly lyrical, and poetic tone to literature. He was an essayist, dramatist, novelist, and poet. His reputation was made primarily in the field of the essay, but Unamuno the poet today ranks in stature with Antonio Machado. "Un poeta," said Unamuno, "es el que desnuda on el lenguaje ritmico su alma." His poetry cannot be classified as belonging completely to any school. He wrote philosophical and religious poems, poetry of the Castilian landscapes, ballads, and sonnets. In many of his works he resembles Machado in his emphasis on passing time and his evocation of the countryside. The supreme poetic individual, he wrote abstract and intellectual poetry and also some that is human, warm, and personal. As with his prose works, his poetry contains many contradictions, but his basic concern is religion and the immortality of the soul.

His first collection, *Poesias de Miguel de Unamuno*, was published in 1907. It contains, together with philosophical and religious poetry, his famous *Salamanca*. Other volumes of his poetry are the pessimistic *Rosario de Sonetos liricos* (1911); *Rimas de dentro* (1923); *De Fuerteventura a Paris* (1925), verse and prose mixed, which concentrated on the political, the island, and the sea; *Teresa* (1924), love poems; and the emotional *Romancero del destierro* (1928). Most critics consider his poetic masterpiece to be *El Cristo de Velazquez* (1920), inspired by the famous painting in the Museo del Prado. A symbolic poem in free verse, filled with mystical serenity, Baroque imagery, and with multiple Biblical citations, it offers a series of meditations on death and resurrection with Jesus as the guarantor of immortality. In depicting his own struggle to believe, Unamuno pictures an intensely personal Christ. The poem contains a series of arresting chiaroscuro elements.

In 1953 an edition of *Cancionero, Diario poetico*, a collection of poems written from 1928 on, was published, and an edition in a more definitive form was issued in 1984. Though he wrote on family, nature, love of the land and of country, Unamuno also focused on passing time, dreams, death, and his continuing thirst for immortality.

Unamuno, a disturbing, virile, and difficult poet, shakes the reader with his anguish. He sought answers to universal and fundamental questions about faith and human destiny. He refused to live resigned to any doctrine or dogma, and most of his poems reflect ambivalence and paradox. He rejected the refined verse of the Modernists, though he used imaginative innovations. He stressed the power of words and had much to say about definitions of poetry. Some refuse to grant him the resources of expression needed for great poetry and find his to be harsh, dry, and rough-hewn. Nonetheless, his poetry is far more musical than most critics have acknowledged, and it rarely fails to impress by its sincerity and sheer force, as a representation of the purest form of the Spanish spirit.

5. *Minor Modernist poets* include:
 - a. *Manuel Machado* (1874 – 1947), a poet and dramatist like his more famous brother, published his first important collection of poetry, *Alma*, in 1902. Melancholy and decadent, he provides elegant tributes to painting and experiments with various meters. He was

influenced by the Parnassians, by Verlaine, and by Ruben Dario. Among his other poetic collections are *El mal poeta* (1909), perhaps his most original, which he himself labeled “detestable,” though he writes of love, hope, and deception; *Arsmoriendi* (1921), about the sensual pleasures of life and the equivalent seduction of death; and *Cadencia de cadencias* (1943). Manuel Machado wrote poetry that was pleasant to the ear, light, buoyant, graceful, and elegant. Touched by the Andalusian spirit, his poetry has an attractive freshness, simplicity, and popular flavor. He was the most skilled of the poets in his fusion of French Symbolism and Spanish popular forms. Beyond his Impressionism or occasional decadence, he also wrote sincere religious poetry as well as poems on art, history, Spain, love, and death.

- b. *Francisco Villaespesa* (1877 – 1936), for some the real innovator of Spanish Modernism and the author of a hundred volumes, fifty of them poetry was a good improviser. His is a poetry of musicality and dense adjectivization. Andalusian in origin and spirit, he wrote much on Moorish Spain, for example, *Los nocturnos del Generalife* (1915). Villaespesa, who defined literature as “exquisite enfermedad de vagos,” filled his poetry with Moorish culture and the city of Granada, princesses, old castles, and Oriental melancholy. His earliest poetry was influenced by Salvador Rueda. His *La copa del Rey de Thule* (1900) was in its time more popular than the early works of Juan Ramon Jimenez. It stresses form and musicality and shows the influence of Verlaine. In later poetry Villaespesa wrote of more eternal themes such as love, time, and death. Among his other volumes of poetry are *Las canciones del camino* (1906), *El jardin de las qumeras* (1909), and *Torre de marfil* (1911). His Poesias completas appeared in 1955.
- c. *Eduardo Marquina* (1879 – 1946), a dramatist like Villaespesa, wrote some declamatory odes, published as *Odas* (1900). *Eglogas* (1902) pleads for universal love for all created things. *Vendimion* (1909) reveals the poet’s love of nature, and *Canciones del momento* (1910), his political and social ideas. Excessively rhetorical at times, he is sincere in his attempt to re-create the spirit of the past and to use it to form a new future.
- d. *Ramon del Valle-Inclan* (1866 – 1936), a novelist and essayist, wrote three volumes of lyric poetry, *Aromas de leyenda* (1907), *La pipa de kif* (1919), and *El pasajero* (1920). The first volume, in song and ballads, evokes the Galician countryside and its people’s dreams, religion, traditions, and legends. The second volume, his best known, has beautiful descriptions and is filled with color though it is melodramatic, ironic, and grotesque. It reflects the author’s *esperpento* period. In *El pasajero*, Valle-Inclan uses more autobiographical elements. His Baroque and symbolic imagery involves the beautiful rose but also inevitable death. This collection also reflects some of the violence of his *esperpento* phase. Only his first collection can be called Modernist, though all his poetry is musical, and he employs some Modernist techniques such as synesthesia.

C. Transitional Poets

Between Modernism and the Generation of 1927, a number of transitional poets, especially Juan Ramon Jimenez, accepted Modernism for a time but also anticipated the poetry of the succeeding generation.

1. *Enrique Diez-Canedo* (1879 – 1944), primarily known as a literary critic, produced numerous translations of Italian, French, English, and German works. He personified culture, good taste, and exquisite sensibility, and while he was famous as a theater critic, he was also one of the best analysts of Modernist poetry.

Diez-Canedo stressed the correspondence of history and art.

Diez-Canedo’s early poetry was influenced by the French Symbolists, Juan Ramon Jimenez, and especially Ruben Dario. His *Versos de las horas* (1906) contains the inevitable swans of Modernism, but even this early work reveals a sobriety and force not common to Modernist poetry. In other volumes, human and democratic, he wrote about commonplace things such as clocks, dogs, or an old chair. In *La vista del sol* (1907), *La sombra del ensueno* (1910), *Algunos versos* (1924), and other poetry, *Diez-Canedo* writes on a variety of themes, both stressing and rejecting the traditional. One finds in his poetry reminiscences of Machado’s passing time, melancholy, and preoccupation with death. In other poetry Diez-Canedo displays

the more intimate style of Juan Ramon Jimenez. His last collection of poetry, *Jardinillos de navidad yu ano nuevo*, was published in 1944.

2. *Ramon Perez de Ayala* (1880 – 1962) was primarily famous as a novelist, though he also wrote perceptive essays. His first collection of poetry, *La paz del sendero* (1903), deals with childhood memories, the passage of time, and a desire for inner tranquility and is filled with a sensual melancholy and a feeling for the beauty of the universe. *El sendero innumerable* (1916), which according to Salvador de Madariaga contains some of the most moving poetry of the twentieth century, concentrates on the sea, symbolic of life and death. His final volume of poetry, *El sendero andante* (1921), again concentrates on passing of time and symbolizes life as a flowing river. Ruben Dario and Unamuno influenced him, and it may be said that his first poetry reflects Modernist ideas, though he differs in his intellectual emphasis and his desire to make his poetry meaningful as well as beautiful. Although his poetry is filled with taste and colors, it also stresses man's path through life.
3. *Juan Ramon Jimenez* (1881 – 1958), like Antonio Machado one of the major poetic voices of the twentieth century, wrote more than forty volumes of poetry. His work shows the difficulty of trying to classify poets by generations. Although his early poetry was Modernist, his later work directly influenced the poets of the following generation. During the Spanish Civil War, he left Spain for America. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1956.

Active in the early Modernist revolution, Jimenez fell under Ruben Dario's spell, but he soon evolved away from the sonorities of the Darian manner toward his own "interior music." Nonetheless, the evolutionary process for Jimenez was never complete, and he kept purifying his techniques and refining his poetry to achieve an absolute beauty and purity and to express his interior reality. As he said, "un poema no se acaba, sino se abandona... Yo me paso la vida reviviendo, poetizando."

From the beginning the poet expressed his belief that poetic form and ideas had to be vague and intangible in an effort to discover the essence of poetry. His first works, *Almas de violeta* and *Ninfeas*, both of 1900, are filled with fleeting expressions of nature, melancholy, and lyrical beauty together with a continuing experimentation. *Rimas* (1902), whose title indicates Becquer's influence, shared the delicacy melancholy, and intimacy of the works of that nineteenth-century poet. This collection, aside from its search for beauty, also involves a preoccupation with death and a struggle between the flesh and the spirit. *Arias tristes* (1903), musical, subtle, and melancholy, expresses the anguish of the poet who seeks the spiritual significance of life and nature. Other early collections, such as *Jardines lejanos* (1904), are musical and mysterious, but the more Baroque productions after about 1912 emphasized also the sensual and a continuing preoccupation with death. *Platero y yo* (1914), prose poems, symbolize purity and innocence, joy and delicacy, as the poet immortalizes Moguer, his hometown – its children and landscape in his discussion of the life and earth of his little donkey, Platero.

His total break with Modernist tendencies can be seen in the free verse of *Diario de un poeta recién casado* (1917), a record of his wedding rip away from and back to Spain. Jimenez revised this volume and republished it as *Diario de poeta y mar* in 1948 and in a definitive edition in 1955. Aside from a view of the poet's soul enmeshed in love and the sea, the volume also contains daring imagery. *Eternidades* (1918) is less colorful and musical. *Piedra y cielo* (1919) treats of love, dream, memory, and reality in a new way. *Poesia* (1923) abandons the sentimental and pictorial for the pure and conceptualization of inner soul states. *Belleza* (1923) reflects a growing subjectivity and a continuation of a more elemental, simpler, and naked poetry. These volumes from 1918 on all explore the poetic process and the attempt to verbalize the ineffable.

Various anthologies reveal the total poet from his early Symbolism to his role as "the mystic of nature" and its pantheistic evocation. Jimenez himself divided his poetry into three periods, "ecstasy of love" to 1909, "avidity for eternity" to 1921, and "search for inner consciousness" after 1921. In *La Estacion total*, composed between 1923 and 1936 but not published until 1946, Jimenez fuses his intimate soul states with an exterior beauty that he now possesses more fully. In 1949 he published *Animal de fondo*, about his belief in a universal consciousness, and he again sings of joy and mystical union. This collection appears later in *Tercera Antologia poetica* (1957) as the first part of *Dios deseado y deseante*, perhaps his

most profound poetry. The poet engages in a dialogue with God, a loving consciousness, and attempts symbolically to approximate the absolute. Reprinted in 1964, it marks with *Poesías últimas escogidas* (1982) the major metaphysical and moral preoccupations of the poet's last years, as he acknowledges man, nature's changing character, the passing of time, eternity, and an apprehension of God through emotion. Other collections that have appeared posthumously are *Leyenda* (1978) and *Tiempo. Espacio* (1986).

Jimenez, concerned with somehow expressing an unutterable experience, created gossamer like poetry of delicate shades, filled with color, flowers, and representatives of the natural world. A master of chiaroscuro, in melancholy fashion he also treats of tragedy, solitude, and suffering. Beauty and purity and a zeal for perfection and a perfect love describe the poetry of this ineffable poet who longed for eternity and wrote of the transcendental connection between love and death, God and light. Since Jimenez' poetic images were often an extension of himself and not related to external circumstances, he transmitted his search for a newer, purer model of expression and the poetic essence to the next generation. Indeed, in his later poetry he explored the relative process itself in a manner that anticipates not only the next generation but also those beyond.

4. *Leon Felipe Camino y Galicia* (1884 – 1968), a man of many professions, like Valle-Inclán led a life of legend and mystery. A restless spirit, disillusioned by the Spanish Civil War, he went abroad to continue his career, primarily in Mexico. *Versos y oraciones del caminante* (1920), his first volume of poetry, avoids the intellectual to concentrate on the moral and religious, often in mystical tones. He is more concerned with what he can say about life than the form his poem takes. His early poetry sometimes has a nostalgic and almost painful tone. At other times it is ironic. Although his poetry is almost unique, one can see overtones of Unamuno, Machado, Cervantes, and the Bible. At times his poetry resembles that of Walt Whitman, whose poems he translated. In 1929 he published *Versos y oraciones del Caminante, Libro II*. Other volumes are *Drop a Star* (1933), which marked the end of acceptance and the beginning of poetic protest; *La insignia* (1937); *El payaso de las bofetadas y el pescador de cana* (1938), another tragic poem about the Spanish Civil War; *El hacha* (1939); *Espanol del exodo y del Llanto* (1939), about Spain and humanity; *El gran responsable* (1940), in which he stresses the poet's political, moral, and ethical responsibility to man and society and sees the poet, bishop, and politician as the symbolic figures of modern society; *Llamadme publicano* (1950), a metaphorical vision in which a symboli wind impels Felipe to leave Spain; *El ciervo y otros poemas* (1958), about purity, innocence, and love defeated by the world's evil and a tired poet lamenting to a deaf God and waiting for death and purification by fire and wind; *Oh, este viejo y roto violin* (1965), an updated version of *Antologiarota* (1947), which renews the broken poetic song and verse written by the wind as the poet comments on old age, life, time, and death; *Rocinante* (1969), about alienation from Spain, the passage of time, Guernica, and a sleepless poet; and *Puesto ya el pie en el estribo* (1983), which despairingly reflects his Existential pessimism.

Leon Felipe emphasizes the social and human aspects of the Christian message over salvation. He suffers for a humanity abandoned by God in a world sorely needing the idealism of don Quijote and Jesus. A human poet, he depicts human sorrows and society's evils, but he also deals with dreams, reality, time, and history. His later works are belligerent, almost declamatory, but filled with both epic and lyric force, as the poet views a dead and deserted Spain. He is a severe poet who matches his bare words with what he hopes is a naked rhythm, though some of his poetry has Surrealistic overtones. A spiritual child of the Generation of 1898, he also anticipated the Generation of 1927.

5. *Jose Moreno Villa* (1887 – 1955) in his autobiography, *Vida en claro* (1944), cites the importance of his sojourn in Germany together with his Andalusian roots. In Spain he published several studies on the history of art and Spanish painting – he himself was a painter – and he lived in exile in Mexico from 1937 on. In his early poetry Moreno Villa reflects both Modernism and the Generation of 1898. In a second phase he might well be considered a member of the Generation of 1927.

Garba (1913), a book of poetry filled with amorous tensions, recalls the poetry of Unamuno and Machado while the gypsies and Andalusian scenes foreshadow Lorca's themes. In 1914 *El pasajero*, which includes historical themes, elicited from Ortega y Gasset the opinion that

Moreno Villa was one of those “que traen un nuevo estilo, que son un estilo.” Although it contains elements of poetic anguish and spiritual searching, it is essentially “dehumanized” poetry. *Luchas de pena y alegría* (1915), a mixture of prose and verse, and *Evoluciones* (1918) mark the end of his first period. In 1929 he published *Jacinta, La pelirroja*, based on an affair the poet had with the lady of the title. In this volume illustrated with his own drawings, she becomes the center of his reality. The collection, a poetry of experience and one of the best Spanish examples of erotic poetry, is also Surrealistic. *Carambas* (1931), Impressionistic and Cubist, reflects the dissolution of old literary forms. In *salon sin muros* (1936), the poet seeks the essence of things and an internal reality and recapitulates his life and literary styles. His poetry from Mexico *Puerta severa* (1941) and *La noche del verbo* (1942), is filled with human and religious themes and an acknowledgment of passing time. *Voz en vuelo a su cuna* (1961) reveals his anguish, solitude, and nostalgia, but at the same time a stoic recognition of his life as an exile.

Moreno Villa as a transitional poet, partakes both of Modernism and later “isms.” He wrote under popular inspiration as well as artistic and cultural influences. His poetry, in part, is intellectual and Surrealistic, but it is also sad, human, and moving. In his later poetry he stressed more a metaphysical anguish and a preoccupation with the beyond.

6. *Other transitional poets* include Enrique de Mesa (1879 – 1929), Emilio Carrere (1880 – 1947), Fernando Villalon (1881 – 1930), Evaristo Carriego (1883 – 1912), Tomas Morales (1885 – 1921), and Ramon de Bastera (1887 – 1928).

D. The Generation of 1927

The poets of this generation were born between 1891 and 1905. As already noted, to a greater or lesser extent they used *ultraismo* and *Creacionismo*, Surrealism, and the Freudian world of dreams and unconscious associations. Some practiced a Neobaroque revival of Gongora to celebrate the three hundredth anniversary of his death. Nonetheless, each poet defined poetry in his own way, whatever the unusual imagery, metaphorical ambiguities, exuberant happiness, or destroyed illusions. After their intellectual, formalistic, and aesthetic poetry of exterior perfection ran its course, these poets demonstrated also a passionate concern for passage of time and the problems of love, life, and death. Far from rebelling against previous generations they were indebted in many ways to their poetic elders. They differed among themselves, the intuitive irregular meters of Salinas contrasting with the precise arrangements of Guillen, the primary proponent of pure poetry in the Generation of 1927. Alberti and Lorca, more instinctive and imaginative, fused popular and cultural elements and with others like Cernuda attempted Surrealistic experimentation to match Gerardo Diego’s continuing interest in *ultraismo*. Lorca’s passionate human poetry, popular spirit, and unique imagery transcended the formal preoccupations of the group, which in its second phase anticipated and blended with the Neoromanticism and humanization of the next generation. As a whole, the Generation of 1927 emphasized metaphor as primary in the search for artistic perfection and beauty and promoted both the national and the cosmopolitan.

1. *Pedro Salinas* (1891 – 1951) was a guiding light for younger poets like Luis Cernuda, one of his students. Salinas wrote poetry, dramas, novels, short stories, and essays and edited many classic literary works. He was one of the most perceptive literary critics of his generation. His novel, *La bomba increíble* (1951), stresses his belief in love as the hope for a grossly materialistic and destructive world. Love, as a matter of fact, is the unifying theme in his poetry, and the poet seeks its essence behind apparent reality. Salinas, influenced by Juan Ramon Jimenez, soon developed his own style. His poetry, often subtle and intellectual, was more spiritual than that of Jimenez. He chose his words very carefully to convey their conceptual values. Especially concerned with the interior reality of the poet, Salinas characterized his poetry as “un aventura hacia lo absoluto.”

Presagios (1923), his first volume of poetry, meditates on nature. Although some of the poems are Baroque and intellectual, the dominant note is that of love and dominance of interior reality over reality itself. *Presagios* emphasizes the joy of youth and reflects an ongoing intellectual irony. *Seguro azar* (1929), seeking the truth behind the truth, tests the exterior reality Salinas denied in his first volume as he explores the lights, the beaches, the movies, and the Far West. He struggles for faith in the future and, as he plays with words and concepts,

implies that art is a game. *Fabula y signo* (1931) contrasts the poetic reality (*fabula*) with ordinary certainty (*signo*). In his masterpiece *La voz a ti debida* (1933), the first volume of a poetic trilogy, the poet falls in love with love itself. Reacting against the tangible world that loses its meaning, he seeks the mysterious and the ineffable. The poems muse on the genesis of love, the beloved one's reality, the search for that reality and the struggle against the void. As he praises his beloved and wonders at her beauty, Salinas seems at times mystical, at others sensual, and at still others a platonic idealist. Salinas, existing outside time and space sees love as both a metaphysical and a human reality. A paean to his beloved and a half-glimpsed paradise of perfect love, maintained largely through memory, *La voz a ti debida* reveals the poet's attempt, through love's power, to construct a stable inner reality. *Razon de amor* (1936), the second part, finds that the world is one of anguish and little joy and that the invisible reality the poet seeks may be only a magical dream world. Yet love is creative and offers salvation and a temporal feeling of eternity. The third volume, *Largo lamento*, published posthumously as part of Salinas' complete works in various editions from 1971 on, contains poems written before 1938 and continues his dream of love in both its carnal and spiritual aspects and implies hope in spite of a continuing repressed pain.

El contemplado (1946) is a colloquy with the sea of Puerto Rico that he loves and that fascinates him. Almost mystical in tone, it reveals the poet's fusion with nature, a recognition of nature's creativity, and a vision of the perfect sea as part of the permanent beauty of the cosmos. *Todo mas claro* (1949), the most anguished of his works, concerns the horrors of twentieth-century materialism and the senseless and frenetic activity that leads only to nothingness and oblivion. The poet fears the potential of total destruction of all the works of man by the atom bomb, but at the same time he seeks the Divine Presence as a counterweight to destructive technology. Furthermore, poetry, a clarity in the darkness, may help man in a loveless world as he seeks through ruins "for the rubble of time undone." *Confianza* (1955) shows more faith in life and the world. *Vivir en los pronombres* (1974), whose title comes from *La voz a ti debida*, is an anthology of his love poems.

Although Salinas was a refined, subtle, cultured and intelligent poet whose search for a hidden reality implied a rejection of human elements, he was sincere in his evocation of love and his yearnings, often anguished and feverish, are those of humanity. For him poetry meant liberty and discovery, regardless of his multiple labels as Neoplatonic, Mystical, pantheistic, or metaphysical. He played with the concepts of inner and outer reality, light and darkness, pursuing the meaning of reality in a modern materialistic world.

2. *Jorge Guillen* (1893 – 1984) reveals many influences in his work, among them Valery in his conceptual abstractions and Gongora in his complex intellectual metaphors. His name is also closely associated with the term *pure poetry*, although he acknowledged the impossibility of completely attaining it. Like Juan Ramon Jimenez, Guillen constantly polished, corrected, and changed his poetry in order to achieve perfect control over a variety of meters. To some his poetry seemed intellectual and impersonal, although his austerity was deceptive. From Becquer he learned about simplicity as well as the use of dream and reverie. His Classical forms are enlivened by his tremendous mastery of words, his harmonious and beautiful imagery, his metaphors and stylistic devices. He utilized abstract imagery, but he attempted to make his abstractions concrete images that moved and lived in his conversion of reality into poetry.

The work *Cantico*, which Salinas called "unique...in significance and transcendence," was published in various editions between 1928 and 1950, with each new edition augmented and with later additions including colloquial language, human themes, and ethical concerns. The central theme, that life is the supreme happiness, reflects Guillen's joy in his experience of daily reality as he glorifies the light, the dawn, and the wonder of life in a harmonious universe where external and internal reality become one. Life was an affirmation of being for the poet, and existence the greatest pleasure. Guillen eternalized his momentary experiences and joy of being.

Clamor, subtitled *Tiempo de historia*, allowed the noise of the world to enter, decrying through multiple speakers its materialism, destruction and death. *Clamor* continued to deal with life, harmony, time, and creation. The first of the collection's three volumes, *Maremagnum* (1957), confronted the noise and confusion, the insecurity and terror of a corrosive and

deforming world. The second, *Que van a dar a la mar* (1960), whose title came from Jorge Manrique, and the third, *A la altura de las circunstancias* (1963), taken from Antonio Machado, viewed life and love in a more temporal fashion. Historical events such as the Spanish Civil War and conditions involving a world of ever-present death and a future destined to succumb to time's onslaught made the poet realize that the clamor of the world could not be shut out.

In 1968 *Aire Nuestro*, a trilogy including not only *Cantico* and *Clamor* but also *Homenaje* (1967), appeared. *Homenaje* explored the themes of the previous volumes but in a new way including testimonies from and homages to fellow poets, verse portraits, imitations, and philosophical meditations. In 1973 *Y otros poemas*, published in a slightly different version in 1979 alternated between optimism and despair as it dealt with life and death. It also commented on the nature of poetry itself. *Final* (1981) became a part of the complete *Aire nuestro*. In Guillen's later poems, he includes a variety of themes – Bible, love, death, alienation and harmony good and evil violence and peace, Existential hope, and the contradictions explicit in existence. In a continuing attempt to create order out of absurdity, the poet wrote on time and history, changes in nature, youth, old age, death, and eternity.

3. *Gerardo Diego* (1896 – 1987), like so many of his contemporaries, showed an interest in more than one art form. In his case music was a factor in his poetry. Diego was the poet of his generation most directly connected with *Creacionismo* and *ultraismo*, and he was active in the editing and critical aspects of poetic creation of the times, becoming especially well known for his series of poetic anthologies. In his poetry one can find aspects of many poetic schools including a duality of the cultured and the simple, pure poetry, and human poetry.

If one includes his anthologies, Diego produced approximately fifteen collections of poetry. Among his works of the 1920s, *Romancero de la novia* (1920) reprinted in 1943, conveyed the impression of youthful delicacy and tenderness. *Imagen* (1922), with peculiar typographical arrangements and twisted syntax, together with *Manuel de espumas* (1924) and *Limbo* (1951), represent his *ultraista* and *creacionista* phase, though many other collections contain such elements. *Soria* (1923), augmented in 1948 and again in 1980 as *Soria sucedida*, combines the chromatic with the luminous in its treatment of memories, impressions of the Castilian countryside, real and imagined, and meditations in the later edition an old age, memories of youth, friendship, and a city that was and is. *Manuel de espumas* contains musical, auditive, and visual imagery as well as daring and Cubist metaphors. It treats of love and dreams. *Versos humanos* (1925), more traditional and human, won for Diego a share of the National Prize for literature. He combines a kind of intellectual humor with the anecdotal and autobiographical. Indeed, in most of his early poetry and to an extent even in later works, Diego combines the illogical with the permanent, the irrational with the traditional and popular.

In the following decades Diego wrote many kinds of poetry. *Via crucis* (1931) is his first serious attempt at religious poetry. *Fabula de Equis y Zeda* (1932) uses Neobaroque games and tricks. *Angeles de Compostela* (1940), republished in more complete form in 1960 and again, together with *Vuelta del peregrino*, in 1976, may be his most ambitious collection of religious poetry. It involves dogma and theological concepts such as the resurrection of the flesh but also exhibits an occasional magical quality. His most popular collection may well be *Alondra de verdad* (1941), containing sonnets filled with emotion and musicality that deal with love, religion, a trip to the Philippine Islands, and a series of musicians. Still other collections are *Buigrafia incompleta* (1953 and 1967); *Paisaje con figuras* (1956), which won the National Prize for Literature; *La suerte o la muerte* (1963), containing aesthetic evocations of bullfighting, one of the poet's favorite topics; *Versos divinos* (1971), announced as early as 1925, recalling passing time and Biblical themes; *Cementerio civil* (1972), about dreams, old age, religion, and death; and *Carmen jubilar* (1975), about bullfighting, passing time, and the poet's life.

Gerardo Diego was one of the most versatile poets of his generation. There was an apparent dichotomy in his works. Some were complicated and filled with irrational imagery. Others revealed his continuing love for the traditional as well as the new, though he never abandoned the idea of art as a unifying principle. He deals with cities like Santander and Soria, the countryside, Spain, bullfighting, love, longevity, friendship, death, and as an orthodox Catholic, religion. To the end his poetry revealed an enormous thematic and stylistic variety.

4. *Federico Garcia Lorca* (1898 – 1936), probably the purest Spanish lyrical voice since Lope de Vega, was also a painter and musician, and one finds influences of both arts in his writings. In

Lorca's poetry we are never sure of reality. He presents us with a double view of two realities, for example, the moon in the sky and its reflection in the water. In his poetry we find melancholy, silence, earth, and lonely cities full of old coaches lost in the night or towers from which Death watches the approach of a lonely horseman. Aside from a religious note and the eternal themes of sex, life, blood, and death, his work contains real human beings, but they are humans with dark stains – the gypsy, the Arab, peasants and nobleman, religious and pagan – driven by love, sex, frustration, violence, and beauty. His poetic world is full of subtle shades, presentiments, and melancholy at the passing of the human hour. Lorca used the ballad and traditional poetry of Spain, but he also wrote odes and elegies and used many other meters and new stylistic devices. Harmony and counterpoint and the folk rhythm of his native Andalusia, too, were notes in his poetry.

Libro de poemas (1921), filled with tenderness and youthfulness, treats of nature symbols, dream, frustrated love, innocence lost, and death, as well as Lorca's religious doubts. At times he uses the dialogue form in the style of the Middle Ages. The poet can be both sentimental and metaphysical as he contrasts youthful innocence with an adult imagination. *Canciones* (1927) contains songs for children, sensual poetry and popular, musical, and naïve verses, as he evokes his native city, thinks of death and sex in both ironically playful and profound tones, and unveils the dramatic note so obvious in his masterpiece, *Romancero gitano* (1928), one of the most influential texts in the development of Spanish poetry. Lorca used the gypsy as a symbol of Spanish life in *Romancero gitano*, but as with his other poetry the principal preoccupations are death, sex, blood, pride, and religion. We see sequined saints and brutal Civil Guards. We suffer "black pain" along with Soledad Montoya, feel Preciosa's terror, and sympathize with the gypsy nuns solitude. Each little poem seems almost a dramatic scene with dialogue, characterization, conflict, and tension. This collection is full of beautiful images colors, folklore, and varied symbolism. Among Lorca's striking images are "The picks of the roosters dig looking for dawn"; "When he bows his head on his chest of jasper, the night looks for a plain to kneel and worship"; "When all the roof-tops are nothing but furrows on the earth, dawn shrugs her shoulders in a vast profile of stone." Lorca used Arabic – Andalusian folklore material, other historical Spanish cultural concepts, fantasy, mystery, rhythm, color, and an intense personal emotion that makes this poetry the highest of its type. Also, in 1928 two of his odes appeared. *Oda a Salvador Dalí* reveals Lorca's understanding of an intellectual consciousness and new dehumanized art forms in its examination of a world in crisis. *Oda al Santísimo Sacramento* invokes God and hopes for the poet's troubled soul.

In 1929 Lorca, who had been undergoing a deep emotional, spiritual, and mental crisis spent some time in New York and in Vermont. From his experience there came the *Poeta en Nueva York*, not published until 1940 though written in 1929 and 1930. Polemics have arisen over the authenticity of different editions. Adapting certain aspects of Surrealism, Lorca used new metaphors and symbols reflecting his personal anguish, emptiness, and pain as he wrote of abandoned children, sleepless men, and unhappy black people, victims and yet projecting a primitive innocence of original man. Lorca spent some time with farmers and other ordinary people and knew them on their peaceful earth. On the other hand, he found New York to be that "babilonica, cruel y violenta ciudad." Lorca attempted to recover the original love and truth of his poetic voice temporarily lost in the horrors of civilization. As he viewed the mysterious forces driving human beings, he attempted to find a spiritual tranquility that dehumanized city dweller lacked. This struggle between civilization and nature is a central thesis of this collection. Although an occasional lyrical note of peaceful, sleeping clouds intrudes over his earth populated with all manner of plants and animals who suffer and die, all too often the "saliva swords" of the grass reflect the death that awaits. Lorca understood and sympathized with the miseries of the *pueblo* prisoners in the "river of oil," but the social message seems incidental to his work.

In 1931 Lorca published *Poema del cante jondo*, poem of the deep song, full of graceful rhythms and the essence of Andalusian folklore. Although he continued an ancient tradition, he expressed his own poetic and tellurid themes as a reflection of his Andalusian soul. Inexorable death waits while the gypsies sing to guitar accompaniment, and the image of the Virgin and Christ pass by in the Holy Week celebration.

Llanto por Ignacio Sanchez Mejias (1935), the greatest elegy in modern Spanish literature, laments the death of Lorca's friend, a famous bullfighter killed in the bull ring in 1934. In the four parts Lorca goes from the specific death of his friend to its meaning and fatality in general. Death, as usual, is accompanied by blood that the poet does not wish to see as it flows upon the sand.

Other Lorca poetry includes *Seis poemas galegos* (1935), and *Divan del Taarit* (1940), published in a partial edition in 1936, imitating Arabic *qasidas* and *gacelas*, short rhymed fixed verses focusing on death and sensual love. Posthumous publications continue to appear, among them eleven sonnets in 1984, reflecting sacrifice, life, death, and a loving mysticism and resembling the Classical notes of the Generation of 1936. The latest edition of his *Obras completas* appeared in 1986.

Garcia Lorca wrote complex poetry involving solitude, tenderness and agonies of the spirit. His primitive and childlike directness contrasts with a strange sophistication, and the poet also manages to create a delicate balance between the traditional and the modern. His popular rhythms, his rich metaphors, his strong emotions, his Arabic-Andalusian heritage, and his unique magical use of words have earned him a place as one of the truly great Spanish poets of all time.

5. *Vicente Aleixandre* (1898 – 1984) won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1977. A long illness and his discovery of Freud and to a degree Surrealistic poetry influenced some of his work, although it may be argued that his poetry is more irrational than Surrealistic, a label Aleixandre himself did not always accept. His poetry of many labels, among them Existential, Mystical, pantheistic, and Neoromantic. *Eros* and *Thanatos*, in opposition and fusion, serve as one of his major leitmotifs together with human and cosmic love. In earlier works man took a subordinate role to the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, but later works stress the spiritual heritage of mankind. Even so, Aleixandre always had a unitary vision of the universe.

Ambito (1928), almost Classical re-creations filled with transitions between night and day and continuous chiaroscuro involving the archetypal sea, love, and nature, sets the stage for the battle between *eros* and *Thanatos*. Aleixandre attempts to overcome exterior and self-imposed limits, and a repressed sexuality and despair to achieve an affirmation of light, love, and life. The prose poems of *Pasion de la tierra* written in 1928 – 1929 but not published until 1946, portray light and shadow, the conscious and subconscious, as the poet discovers that love cannot ensure his escape from destiny. This collection is Aleixandre's closest approach to Surrealism in its subconscious associations, dream sequences, incoherence, and Freudian implications involving death and sexuality. *Espadas como labios* (1932), again about life, death, and love, contrasts erotic lips and deadly swords as the poet struggles against Existential limitations and, in an erotic interplay with death, strives for light over darkness and the possibility of cosmic fusion.

Aleixandre's masterpiece, *La destruccion o el amor* (1935), which won the National Prize for literature, concentrates in a continuing ambiguity, on the relationship between man and the elemental forces of nature, a world of mystery and darkness, constantly evolving, a universe of unchained telluric forces in which death and love are synonymous. The poetry, filled with an almost mystical pantheism, portrays a cosmos of nature destroyed and reborn. The poet, seeking an eternal communion, longs for a final, total love, as death becomes transfigured into love itself.

Other works continue his cosmic, personal, and human themes. *Mundo a solas*, written in 1934 but not published until 1950, portrays a virginal world of light and purity (yet erotic and physical), in opposition to one of darkness and destruction. *Sombra del paraiso* (1944), for some critics his finest collection, reveals contemporary man's view of cosmic harmony and destruction. Aleixandre portrays a prehuman world of dawn, light, innocence, and serenity, though purity implies also a less-innocent reality, and personal loss. Paradise, seen by the poet only in shadowy outline, is a world from which man, expelled, can experience impending death but also the hope of a possible spiritual redemption. *Nacimiento ultimo* (1953) is again a contrast between life and death and human fatality as a final birth. *Historia del corazon* (1954), temporal and Existential, shows us history reflected in the individual and the importance of human solidarity. *En un vasto dominio* (1962) recalls youth and the passage of time in a universe where man and nature join as parts of a larger integrated totality.

Aleixandre's final two collections, a summation of previous works and dealing with time, death, and memory are *Poemas de la consumacion* (1968) and *Dialogos del conocimiento* (1974). In the first volume the poet acknowledges the ravages of time and examines the interrelationship of wisdom and knowledge, life and death, youth and old age, as old men wait for death but dream of life and love. In the second volume we have a confrontational series of dialogues contrasting the reflective and sensual, the old and the young. One speaks always of hope and struggle, the other of fatality and renunciation. Here the poet combines Existential awareness, transcendental intuition, and the eternity of the moment to create a unity of perception that, nonetheless, shows the multiplicity of the universe. In 1987 *Nuevos poemas varios* completed the publication of Aleixandre's works. His latest poems concentrate on a metaphysical preoccupation with life and destiny, what one critic calls a trajectory of "communion, communication, and knowledge."

Throughout his poetry one sees confrontation between light and darkness, life and death. It is a biological poetry of breasts and lips, of a nature of sea, sun, and moon, of cosmic forces and cosmic love. In the final instance the poet shows us a universe of devastating beauty and human illumination, a universe of light and hope. The Apollonian and Dionysian, good and evil, light and darkness, life and death, become part of man's metaphysical union with nature. Although love serves as a metaphor for self - destruction, Aleixandre writes also of the moral and psychological aspects of humanity in a unitary universe.

6. *Rafael Alberti* (b. 1902) has been publishing poetry for over sixty years. Born near Cadiz, he has incorporated the sea as an important part of his poetry. He left Spain in 1939 and did not return until 1977. Alberti wrote, in addition to his poetry, a number of dramas. He has at one time or another utilized all the twentieth-century movements – Surrealism, *ultraismo*, Neogongorism, pure poetry, which often depends on *culto* sources. His poetry can be cold, polished, frothy, emotional, fiery, or passionate.

His first famous work, *Marienero en tierra* (1925), shared the National Prize for Literature with Gerardo Diego's *Versos humanos*. These appealing poems, musical, tender, and poignant, reveal a poet who yearns for the far-off adventure of the imagination. The pictorial imagery recalls the sea and the poet's nostalgia for it is a prisoner of the land. The seam symbolizing past innocence, freedom, and a magical world, helps the poet rediscover the boy who wanted to be a sailor, though he soon realizes that the sailor suit has been locked away forever. Written mainly in *cancion* form, the collection portrays a paradise lost and yet paradoxically conveys the land as a projection of the sea.

Among other works of the 1920s, aside from his masterpiece, *Sobre los angeles* (1929), one should mention *El alba del alheli* (1927), short poems on a variety of themes, including the bullfight usually light and playful in tone but also with a suggestion of melancholy and dark shadows; and *Cal y canto* (1929), a Neobaroque exercise filled with erotic vocabulary of unreal beauty, whose hermetic form cannot hide the anguished poet's search for love and order.

Sobre los angeles, more abstract and profound, provides us with a Surrealistic treatment of angels bad, vengeful, ugly, and angry, and cruel, exiled from their heavenly abode, much as the existence amid the ruins of his life desiring salvation but finding only desolation and despair that ultimately give way to a determination to make the most of his life. Deeply personal, the poem, through the angels represents his emotions and passions, and the work, in spite of its incoherence, conveys mystical feelings as well as an almost apocalyptic vision of Existential mortality. In the conflict between light and darkness one can see the contrast between the natural world and a dehumanized society.

In the 1930s Alberti wrote a great number of works, including political and revolutionary poetry, some of it quite agitated and doctrinaire. Representative of his half-dozen volumes of such poetry is *El poeta en la calle*, originally written between 1931 and 1936 but expanded in a series of editions, the last of which appeared in 1978. Alberti also published *Verte y no verte* (1935), an elegy to Ignacio Sanchez Mejias, which lacks the immediacy of Lorca's poem but echoes its anguished theme.

In America after 1939 he was unable to forget Spain. In *Entre el clavel y la espada* (1941), the sword represents death and struggle in Spain through the mythical bull and bloody soldier, while the carnation, the poetic imagination of love, represents liberty, life, and hope for the future. Other collections in America include *Pleamar* (1944), a song of Argentina and the sea

and a comparison of the actual landscape with a remembered one of his youth; *A la pintura* (1945), expanded in later editions, which speaks of elements of painting praises many painters, including Picasso, and their exaltation of form; and *Retornos de lo vivo lejano* (1952), involving a recollection of a personal past and nostalgia for Spain, as the poet recalls childhood music, love, and friendships and expresses the longing of an exile for his homeland.

Other volumes of his poetry include *Roma, peligro para caminantes* (1968), which contrasts ancient grandeur and modern debris, the past and the present, and reaffirms a bitter exile; *Canciones del alto valle del Aniene* (1972), about passing time, Picasso and fellow artists, and a reprise of previous poetry along with some prose meditations; *Fustigada luz* (1980), an affirmation of hope in a world of violence and darkness; *Versos sueltos de cada día* (1982), a kind of poetic diary expressing sadness and solitude; *Todo el mar* (1985) a compendium of poems on the sea, symbolic both of a joyous youth and an approaching death; and *Los hijos del drago y otros poemas* (1986). Alberti's *Obras completas* appeared in 1988.

Alberti, a master of poetic technique and form, has written poems of great verbal beauty and striking imagery. He represents a combination of intellect and emotion the lyrical and the contemplative, reality and illusion, in a complex world of innocence and Existential longing.

7. *Luis Cernuda* (1902 – 1963), expatriated in 1938 as a result of the Spanish Civil War, died in Mexico. He wrote a number of works of criticism and *Ocnos* (1942), whose latest edition appeared in 1977, a semilyrical commentary on contemporary poetry together with autobiographical reminiscences. In his early poetry one notices the structured grace of Jorge Guillen and a great attention to form. *Perfil del aire* (1927), stylized, melancholy, and Impressionistic, deals with love and nature and a world of happiness beyond the poet's reach. *Un río, un amor* (1929) Surrealistic poetry, begins his recognition of the conflict between reality and desire. In addition to contrasts between light and shadow and the sea as a cosmic elemental force, this volume shows us a poet who flees from the reality of love, viewed as a kind of death.

In the 1930s Cernuda wrote many of his most important collections of poetry. *Los placeres prohibidos* (1931) is a continuing reaction against the inhibitions imposed by society and an intensification of the erotic as part of his disillusioned attack. The poems are in parts Surrealistic and oneiric visions. *Donde habite el olvido* (1934) resembles the poetry of Alixandre in its sensual identification with the cosmos. Cernuda laments the failure of a potential heterosexual love and the wounding and painful experience, the cold despair over that missed love that might have given meaning to his life. Both the elemental forces of nature and death provide a possible escape. *Egloga, elegia, oda* (1936), almost ecstatic and tinged with neo-Garcilasismo, nonetheless emphasizes the poet's growing sense of sadness in the view of the fleeting present and the uncertain future. The title of his masterpiece, *La realidad y el deseo* (1936), ultimately became the generic title for eleven volumes of his poetry. His complete poetry was published in 1977. The work is both an affirmation of his homosexual solitude and a spiritual autobiography. Cernuda explores the relationship of reality and the poetic consciousness as well as the difference between reality, governed by rules, and desire, almost without limits. The artist's interior world involves an erotic drive as part of his opposition to reality. Even though in the struggle between soul and body he combines the sensual and religious, he cannot resolve his torment completely.

Later volumes include *Las nubes* (1943), published as part of another work in 1940, harmonious poetry in spite of the subject matter of war, destruction, and death. The poet also recalls his adolescence and views man's relationship with God somewhat pessimistically, although in some of his religious poems he bridges the gap between an earlier paganism and Christianity. Another work of this period, *Como quien espera el alba* (1944), again stresses the dichotomy between man and society. Aside from some exotic geography, these poems treat of dreams and desire, the inspiration of love and poetry as self-affirmation, a theme Cernuda was to continue in later volumes. *Diptico español* (1961) and *Desolacion de la Quimera* (1962), about homosexual passion, literature music, and the problems of Spain show other facets of his publications.

Cernuda wrote intellectual poetry that involved other arts. He wrote with lightness and grace, and his nature, often a mythical pagan setting of beauty and harmony, symbolized a half-glimpsed paradise he could never visit. He suffered greatly as he contrasted dream and

reality and sought refuge in the memory of his Andalusian childhood. In his poetry he always included the perpetual struggle between self and the world at times with strange combinations of dream, Platonism, and Existential reality. His later poetry became more and more bitter, and his poetic and sexual desires unassuaged, he thought in nihilistic terms of the solution as an Existential nothingness.

8. *Other poets* of the Generation of 1927 include the following:
 - a. *Damaso Alonso* (1898 – 1990), the author of numerous volumes on Spanish philology and literature, in his early poetry about Madrid city life and spiritual and erotic frustrations contrasted beauty with a stark reality. *Oscuro noticia* (1944), containing poems written over a period of twenty years, stressed the pain, sorrow, and anguish of being human in a world of love time, and death. The poet as in much of his later poetry, here searched for God to give meaning to his life. His masterpiece, *Hijos de la ira* (1944) rejected the current intellectual poetry, stressing social aspects of injustice and the violence to be found in a barbaric world in spite of the ever-present tenderness of maternal love. Alonso wrote about anguish, pain, cruelty, and ugliness; he wrote of Existential preoccupations with death along with sincere religious and metaphysical poems. *Gozos de la vista* (1981), a collection of his previously published poetry, and *Duda y amor del Ser Supremo* (1985) including an anthology of his poetry, real with a variety of themes, the latter primarily with the relationship of God and man and the struggle between cynicism and belief from the perspective of old age.
 - b. *Emilio Prados* (1899 – 1962), who died in exile in Mexico, wrote more than twenty volumes of poetry. In *Tiempo* (1925), he concentrates on sea imagery. *Vuelta* (1927), more hermetic, replaces some of the Andalusian joy of life with introspection about more weighty and profound themes. *Destino fiel* (1937) contained much of his prize-winning war poetry. Among volumes written in Mexico, *Minima muerte* (1944) stresses the paradoxical quality of life, as the poet analyzes his spiritual crisis and solitude; *Jardin cerrado* (1946), later republished as *El dormido en la yerba* (1953), deals again with solitude, dream, and a spiritual evocation of God and country as well as death; *La piedra escrita* (1961) reveals the creative poetic process; and *Signos del ser* (1962) and *Poesias completas* (1975) represent his later poetry.

Almost all Prados' poetry involves the union of opposites and the victory over limits. He views nature as pure in contrast with man's anguish and destruction. He utilizes myth in his poetry as he deals with birth, life, death, and the conflict between inner and outer reality of which his poetry itself is so much a part.
 - c. *Manuel Altolaguirre* (1905 – 1959) wrote prize winning drama and a biography of Garcilaso that gave more insight into Altolaguirre than into Garcilaso. *Las islas invitadas* (1936), combining the melancholy and the joyous, emphasized what was to be for him a lifelong love of water and the sea. The book with some variations and in expanded form appeared as *Nuevos poemas de las islas invitadas* (1946) and in an edition in 1972. Among other titles are *Fin de un amor* (1949) about nature and the struggle between spiritual and passionate love, and *Poemas en America* (1955), which exudes mystical pantheism and at the same time deals with religious experience. Altolaguirre wrote about solitude, forgetfulness, the passage of time and the pleasures of the flesh. Some of his poetry was idealistic, some Romantic in tone. He could write popular poetry and also in the Surrealist, *ultraista*, or Neobaroque manner. He emphasized the world of nature, often with delicate and strange imagery, but he also concerned himself with solitude, love, life and death. His *obras completas* appeared in 1986.
 - d. Other poets among the many belonging to this generation, include Juan Larrea (1895 – 1980) Mauridio Bacarisse (1895 – 1931), Juan Jose Domenchina (1898 – 1959) Juan Chabas (1900 – 1954), several women poets, among them Angela Figuera Aymerich (1902 – 1984), usually included in the following generation because of her themes, and Ernestina de Champourcin (b. 1895).

E. The Generation of 1936 and the First Postwar Generation

In addition to their early light and joyful poetry, some of these poets became interested in social and then Existential problems. As part of their reaction to their reality they emphasized formal beauty contemplation of nature tranquility, harmony and religious faith. Highly personal, their poetry gives intimate and nostalgic memories of their infancy their friends and love as well as their yearning for God. After the end of the Civil War, whose beginning together with the celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of Garcilaso de la Vega's death gave rise to the generation's name, a rehumanizing influence, a part of which may be seen in the important journal *Cruz y Raya* (1933 – 1936), appeared more and more in the poetry. Though he journals *Garcilaso* and *Escorial* had emphasized the Renaissance lyrical classic tradition *Espadana* concentrated on the social and Existential. These poets, more and more Existential, contrasted the idealized past with the miserable present, stressing the inextricable relationship between the temporal and poetry, and also acknowledging their own mortality. Each poet, however, emphasized different elements. Celaya could never forget the Civil War and its political consequences. Panero stressed the Catholic religious point of view. Hernandez, perhaps the most gifted poet of the group, was the poet of the Spanish Civil War. Blas de Otero stressed sociopolitical commitment as well as religious themes, and Carlos Bousoño and Jose Hierro emphasized passing time and ensuing Existential anguish. Many would limit the generation under discussion to those born before 1917, although no easy classification is possible. We have expanded the Generation of 1936 to include poets, though not strictly of 1936, who belong to the first post-Civil War generation.

1. *Leopoldo Panero* (1909 – 1962) wrote some early Surrealistic poetry, but his first important book publication was *La estancia vacia* (1944), an intimate view of nature, a recall of his native hearth and his mother's arms, but primarily a discussion of man, for whom only God provides a refuge and an existence as part of Him. Man, along in his estancia vacia must face his daily living, the reality of things, but he searches always for his God and as part of that search returns to childhood to recover him.

Panero suffered deeply the loss of his brother Juan Panero (1908 – 1937), also a poet, who the year before his death had published *Cantos del ofrecimiento*, filled with human love, especially as a reflection of divine love and immortality. This same deeply religious note as characteristic of almost all of Leopoldo Panero's poetry. His *Escrito a cada instante* (1949) shows how God's name is revealed and yet removed from him "a cada instante." Indeed, the creation of poetry reflects this ebbing and flowing in the life of the poet as he receives or fails to receive his inspiration from the divine vision. Here too the poet stresses his love for the earth, especially that of Astorga, his birthplace. He suffers a sorrowful nostalgia as he thinks of his native hearth and sings to his wife children, and God. In tones both passionate and tender he evokes God's presence in the countryside and his faith to help carry him through a family loss and his fear of the beyond.

In 1953 Panero wrote *Canto personal; Carta perdida a Pablo Neruda*. Neruda had known Panero and had collaborated with him in a review. In 1950 Neruda wrote *Canto general*, protesting, among other things, certain aspect of the Spanish Civil War, in a strong leftist political statement. Panero's reply, while defending the Nationalist position, interprets Lorca's death as the accidental result of a popular uprising. But even here in addition to the social emphasis, Panero deals with family, a search for love, and his relationship with God.

A volume dealing in nostalgic, serene, and pure tones with a youthful love, the earth, and the countryside, *Versos del Guadarrama*, written in the thirties but not published in book form until 1963; also reveals a continuing religious fervor as well as Existential preoccupations. The poet contrasts the transitory quality of human passion with the eternal aspects of nature. *Romances y Canciones* (1960) is another title. Panero's collected poetry appeared in 1963 and his *Obra completa* in 1973.

Panero was highly praised by his contemporaries as one of the most skilled poetic voices of his time. In his emphasis on the land he extols the beautiful elements of nature in lyrical and meditative tones. Although the countryside with its light and color meant a great deal to the poet his feeling for the earth and his political convictions were secondary to his religious beliefs. Although he represents a new kind of Humanism, associating with the anxiety of the individual, he acknowledges the mystical and sublime and sees man as a religious animal whose sorrowful life can be alleviated only through the search and love for an omnipresent God. Other elements in his poetry involve solitude, family, memory time, and his country.

2. *Luis Rosales Camacho* (b. 1910) wrote some literary criticism but is famous as a poet. His first collection *Abril* (1935), written in clean, harmonious, and classic lines, marked an important step toward Garcilaso and away from Gongora. April, lost, may be reborn in a loving fusion with the cosmic. His love poems, though directed to a loved one, see human love as an aspect of divine love, and God's love as a substitute for sensual yearnings. In 1972 Rosales wrote *Segundo abril*, poems composed between 1938 and 1940. It is a sad a beautiful history of the pain and disillusion involved in love lost. *Retablo sacro del Nacimiento del Señor* (1940) stresses simple faith in God as a refuge. Augmented in a 1964 edition, this volume combines Existential and religious preoccupations and an examination of the beauty of the cosmos ruled by God.

One of Rosales' major works, *La casa encendida* (1949), published in amplified form in 1967 and again in 1979, explores the transmutation of time and contains the usual autobiographical emphasis. The poet recalls a loved woman his mother his father and Juan Panero all united in his memory in the lighted house that offers a key to his hopes and dreams and to his daily simple existence. The major thrust of his interplay of dream and reality and poems of the human heart is that memory serves as the enemy of forgetfulness and death and that in spite of loneliness one may yet achieve salvation through love.

Another major collection, *Rimas* (1951), with augmented editions in 1971 and 1979, emphasizes once more memories, human emotion and religious convictions. In a variety of verse forms Rosales recalls once more in intimate fashion friends like Panero and gives us a view of poetry as introspective, spiritual, and religious, something that can provide order in a time of chaos.

Although Rosales has many other volumes of poetry, among his later publications probably *Diario de una resurreccion* (1979) and *La carta entera*, in three volumes, are his best known. The first named, dealing with a personal death, stresses the usual themes of dream and life, lost time, and memory as a bridge between life and death and man's struggle to live up to an ideal. Rebirth through love and resurrection provides joy and escape from a vacuous existence. *La almadra* (1980), the first part *La carta entera* uses a colloquial tone to convey a mixture of the oneiric and the real and an autobiographical search for identity in life's labyrinth. The second volume, *Un rostro en cada ola* (1982), in sometimes grotesque tones, evokes infancy and adolescence; and the third volume, *Oigo el silencio universal del miedo* (1984), examines the poetic process itself but also again deals with memory, hope, and death. One finds violence, degeneration, and disillusion in his latest poetry, but man, lost in the contemporary world, strives for light and memories of youth. In essence Rosales confronts the shadows of experience with his poetic life and painfully seeks a personal salvation through a loving God.

3. *Miguel Hernandez* (1910 – 1942), born into a poor peasant family, worked as a goatherd in his youth and experienced nature in all its reality. Having fought for the Republican side in the Spanish Civil War, he was imprisoned and died in jail. Although he wrote dramatic works, he is primarily famous for his poetry.

His first collection, *Perito en lunas* (1933), written in *octavas reales*, at times appears hermetic, artificial, and Neobaroque, but as he treats of ordinary, everyday objects of nature and the moon that governs them, whatever the metaphorical transformations involved, he is talking of a concrete reality. The poet acknowledges nature's ambivalent role as both endangering and destructive. This first volume also contains some religious overtones.

Between this volume and *El rayo que no cesa* (1936), Hernandez wrote *El silbo vulnerado*, sad, rustic, and pastoral, published as part of *El rayo que no cesa* and *Imagen de tu huella*, included in his complete works. His 1936 collection of poetry, filled with anger and rebellion, reveals the poet's self-discovery, erotic needs, love as pain, and ensuing despair. In addition to being sensual, however, it is autochthonous, and part of the poet's Existential despair stems from his lost contact with the earth and telluric forces symbolized by the mythic bull.

His next two volumes spoke to a world of hard realities, *Viento del pueblo* (1937), which shared the National Prize for Literature, stresses fraternity and solidarity, often in tones tormented, tender, angry, and patriotic in turn as it tells of the Spanish Civil War. Poverty and sorrow, says the poet, may clear the path for a future freedom, and he insists that it the little man who offers the hope for that possibility. Along with the patriotic struggles and descriptions

of the sober Castilian landscape are depictions of the exuberant fertility of beautiful Alicante. *El hombre acecha*, written in 1939 could not be published in Spain until after Franco's death, and it appears as part of Hernandez' *Obra poetica completa* (1977). The volume deals with the desolation and carnage caused by the Spanish Civil War, and the poet worries over Spain's tragic destiny.

Cancionero y romancero de ausencias, written between 1938 and 1941 and published in various editions of his *Obras completas*, is Hernandez' most personally moving poetry in its love for his family, his belief in the brotherhood of man, and his denunciation of war. He muses also on temporal existence and as always emphasizes nature and the telluric in symbols such as sun, wheat, and earth. His archetypal symbols reflect a real world of light and shadow, wind and trees, but in terms of the earth he knew and had cultivated, the physical and the real.

Hernandez fused the two eternal currents of Spanish literature, the *culto* and the popular. Although one finds Andalusian elegance as well as baroque spontaneity in his poetry, it exploded with overwhelming power, passion, and tragedy. Some of his poetry deals with the Existential and the temporal. A deep and tragic poet of liberty, spiritual and sexual love, he knew all too well the unstable quality of life in a cruel and violent world, and he sang about humanity in many tones passionate, tender angry and compassionate. He was a poetry of tragic beauty, and as Aleixandre said of him: "No se le apago nunca no, esa luz que por encima de todo tragicamente le hizo morir con los ojos abiertos."

4. *Gabriel Celaya* (b. 1911), whose real name is Rafael Mugica but who also has written under the pseudonym Juan de Leceta, in addition to critical works has published some sixty collections of poetry. Celaya is best known for his use of poetry as an instrument of social protest. He eschews what he calls aesthetic adornments in favor of a colloquial language as part of his belief that a poet cannot isolate himself from the world and has to participate personally in social and ethical matters. Celaya has divided his poetry into several periods; from 1945 to 1954, Existential poetry; from 1954 to 1962, social poetry; and after 1962, poetry on a variety of themes including the absurd. But these categories do not exclude other themes. In his early poetry he evokes sexual happiness and communion with nature, and in most of his poetry he writes of love, joy, anguish, and doubt.

In his first book of poetry, *Marea de silencio* (1935), he uses dreams and irrational imagery but his first major success came with *Tranquilamente hablando* (1947), which in both intellectual and emotive tones deals with the work, pain, exploitation, and death of human beings and, he claimed, things as they really are. The pain and anguish continue in an expanded version of the work in 1961. *Las cartas boca abajo* (1954) treats of the Civil War, hunger, and human rather than poetic affirmation. *Lo demas es silencio* (1954) again rejects introspective for public poetry about suffering humanity and social injustice. *Cantos iberos* (1955) again is about Spain and its *pueblo*, social commitment, solidarity with the proletariat, and the possibility of a brighter tomorrow. Later collections include *Funcion de uno, equism ene* (1973), *ene* being the collective, *uno* the individual and *equis* unknown fate or God; *Buenos dias, buenas noches* (1976); *Poemas orficos* (1978) in which Celaya tries to discover the essence of things and his own reality; *Penultimos poemas* (1982), which seeks again to define poetry, this time as trying to pierce the ego's limits, and depicts the confrontation of youth and old age, erotic passion, and Existential anguish; and *El mundo abierto* (1986).

Much of Celaya's poetry has an ironic tone although he thinks of himself as the voice of the people. He uses nature often as a background for his meditations and as a contrast with the reality of life. He tries always to communicate with his readers, and though he acknowledges he power of human love, in general he stresses that the here and now is all we have.

5. *Blas de Otero* (1916 – 1979) published his first important collection. *Angel fieramente humano*, in 1950. In occasionally militant tones he searches for God but believes that He has abandoned man to solitude and death. This leads the poet to accentuate human love over the divine and, given the world's danger, the brotherhood of man. *Redoable de conciencia* (1951) portrays a suffering Spain in search of liberty. The poet is again willing to abandon his dreams for human solidarity. His most famous work, *Pido la paz y la palabra* (1955), exalts peace over even the poetry that supports it in a suffering Spain without justice or freedom. As he searches still for God and love, he hopes that his country will have a future. In *Ancia* (1958), whose title is an

anagram of *Angel fieramente humano* and *Redoble de conciencia*, although he continues historical, political, and social themes, he seems more compassionate in his hunger for justice.

Among his many other collections are *En castellano* (1960), the second part of *Pido la paz y la palabra*; *Que trata de Espana* (1964), the third part, whose title also served as a general title for his collected works; *Esto no es un libro* (1963), whose affirmation and denial form the material of both life and literature; and *Expresion y reunion; A modo de Antologia*, whose latest version appeared in 1981.

Blas de Otero believed in the nobility of man, and he wrote always about his concern for humanity as well as of his feelings toward God. In his poetry, a combination of the clear and the hermetic, the passionate and tender, he tried to express humanity's and his own feelings about nature, the cosmos, sexuality, love, social justice, patriotism, religion, and death. As he contemplated a world of chaos and anguish, ruins and solitude, attacked by dark forces, he sought always for order, light, and peace. Whatever his Existential suffering, he wrote for the "immense majority" and felt a commitment to human beings, men of flesh and blood whose oppression and suffering he shared.

6. *Gloria Fuertes* (b. 1918), often included by critics as a member of the Generation of 1950 because of her themes and techniques, flirted briefly with *postismo*. She herself claimed that she could not define her poetry as social, mystical, or anything else, and she has called herself an *anti-poeta*.

All her poetry is autobiographical. In *Isla ignorada* (1950), feeling isolated and ignored she writes of objects, history, dreams, fantasy, and love. *Cancionero para niños* (1952), as the title indicates, is about the world of children. Her first collection to receive critical acclaim was *Que estas en la tierra* (1962). Other works include *Ni tiro, ni venemo, ni navaja* (1965), about love, death, God, and the sterility of modern life; *Poeta de guardia* (1968), filled with colloquial plays on words, jokes, and neologisms but also showing Fuertes' pain and rage at human suffering and her criticism of a Church that ignores human problems; *Como atar los bigotes al tigre* (1969), about the old whom even death ignores and yet, despite the serious theme, filled with playful verses about a lady termite and her literary tastes; *Historia de Gloria* (1980), about fleeting love, solitude, solidarity with her people and her city, and a plea for justice for the workers and the poor; and *Obras incompletas* (1983). In the 1980s Fuertes concentrated largely on children's literature and published a number of volumes.

Fuertes is original, spontaneous, and popular. She has an affection for beggars, cats, and buildings and writes of objects and simple things. One has the impression at times that her poetry provides her with a disguise or shield against the world. She also writes of love and its absence, communication, and the foolishness of war. She chastises the rich who take advantage of the workers and rails against God's indifference, but her social and religious themes serve as part of a complex, creative process. Her language, although colloquial is ingenious and she handles jokes, puns, slang, and advertisements ironically. Her humor makes us laugh at ourselves, but behind her self-mockery lies a material tenderness. Her poetry is also filled with intertextual references.

7. *Jose Hierro* (b. 1922) deals in *Tierra sin nosotros* (1947) with the sea and youth, time and memory, especially of imprisonment as a living death. In spite of alienation and pain he learns to accept what fate has in store. *Alegria* (1947), which won the Adonais Prize, views of life as a struggle and a search for authenticity in a world where man is destined to die. The poet strives to create an identity through his poetry, to seek the truth behind apparent truth, and to sustain happiness in the face of an Existential reality. This Existential anguish continues in *Con las piedras, con el viento* (1950) though he places more emphasis on love as an unattainable ideal and memory as a destroyer of dreams. *Quinta del 42* (1953) again is about love, dreams, memory, human solidarity, and passing time, but he also writes about music and poetry. More colloquial in his poetry of documentation, he recalls family and views sadly his Spain and her cities and emphasizes the difficulty of communicating through rational means when faced with encroaching time and spiritual death. *Cuanto se de mi* (1957), whose title he later used for his complete poetic works published in 1974, is another restatement of his Existential anguish and desolate confrontation with death, but he also engages in self-colloquy about meaning of his poetry and the poetic art. Spain and its problems still preoccupy him. Finally, *Libro de las alucinaciones* (1964) joins rational clarity with mysterious shadow. In a

world of absurd fate and anticipated death, the poet has illusion and reality exchange roles and time surrenders and present and future fuse. It is a collection of fire, wind, and sea, as well as time and experience, but the poet still denounces human injustice. Dreaming of what might have been, after a self-analysis as man and poet, he decides to write no ore. He also foreshadows in this volume some of the ideas of Valente on poetry as experience and self-revelation.

Hierro defined his poetry as sincere precise, dry, and opposed to formal beauty in the exploration of ephemeral, Existential man. Yet his language, conventional but imaginative, has a potent emotional charge. He seeks fixed values in a universe without them. He talks of the ravages of time, of love, sadness and despair at the thought of death man's fate but he also shows his love for his country. Although he seeks justice for humanity, Hierro also reveals his own soul in his poetry, and in spite of his own definition of his poetic dryness, he writes with color, light, and exquisite sensibility.

8. *Carlos Bousoño* (b. 1923) began to write at a very early age. He wrote what to date is the best critical study on Vicente Aleixandre as well as a number of other well-known critical texts. In his early works the poet suffered from religious doubts and sought salvation, a human God, and continuing innocence, though Spain and death were also preoccupations. Many of the poems in *Subida al amor* (1945) and *Primavera de la muerte* (1946) seem almost desperate, in spite of Bousoño's attempt to define poetry as an objective contemplation of form. Yet from time to time Bousoño includes a note of happiness, even though he knows that spring gives way to inevitable winter and death. In *Subida al amor*, Bousoño sees nature as a pantheistic experience. In *Primavera de la muerte*, he contrasts joy and beauty with a world of deceptions and the absence of God. He reveals an almost frantic love of life because of his knowledge of impending nothingness. *Hacia otra luz* (1952), continuing the first two collections plus *En vez de sueño* is continuing expression of his Existential doubt.

In *Noche del sentido* (1957), the poet struggles to believe in spite of his skepticism. As the title suggests, the poet has to rely on trustworthy emotions in his involvement with the world. His poetry, nonetheless, is a reaffirmation of tenderness and love. *Invasión de la realidad* (1962) suggests that in the absence of God the poet must cling to the concrete world. In attempting a metaphysical penetration of reality, all that man has to guide him, whatever the injustice and disorder of the world, Bousoño decides that reality, aside from irrational aspects of the poetic word, matters.

Bousoño started a new and more complex style in *Oda en la ceniza* (1967). He fuses the rational and irrational as he peruses personal and human suffering and seeks love and self-understanding in the face of death. In spite of his Existential anguish, he sees life as a search for truth and love as a possible salvation. Still other poetry collections are *La busqueda* (1971), an eternalization of each moment; *Al mismo tiempo que la noche* (1971); and *Las monedas contra la losa* (1973), in which the poet spends his coin (the days of his life) on the way to death. In 1980 he published *Selección de mis versos. Metafora del desafiado*, which appeared in 1988 continues Bousoño's ideas of the antithetical nature of man's being: life is change but also existence.

Bousoño often contrasts the ethereal, beauty, and youth with nature and the eternal. His religious security, assuaged at first, soon ceded to a disbelieving anguish at the prospect of death. Yet Bousoño's poetry seems always an affirmation of life. The poet, then, is many things erotic religious, Mystical, Romantic, and Existential. He debates constantly with life and death, hope and despair, seeing behind each shadow the possibility of light. In his later more aesthetic poetry, he stresses form and intellectual content over sentiment, but he continues to believe that life, however transitory is a gift to be cherished.

9. *Other poets* of the Generation of 1936 include the following:
 - a. *Juan Gil-Albert* (b. 1906) earned his greatest success after his return from exile. He is especially influential on the young poets of the 1970s and 1980s. Some critics place him in the Generation 1927. He has written more than twenty volumes of prose and a dozen or so of verse. Some of his poetry has Baroque elements, and his themes include Spain, homosexuality art, time life, love, nature, and death. Like the younger poets, he emphasizes cultural references and intertextuality. Among his works are *Las ilusiones* (1945) reprinted as *Las ilusiones con los poemas del convaleciente* (1975); *Concertar es*

amor (1951); *Variaciones sobre un tema inextinguible* (1981); and *Obra poetica copleta* (1981).

- b. *Carmen Conde* (b. 1907), who in 1979 became the first woman ever elected to the Spanish Royal Academy has written more than thirty volumes of poetry. In much of her early poetry, the constant notes were of personification, the harmony of the forces of nature, revelation, and transfiguration. Among her many works *Ansia de la gracia* (1945) reveals her sensuality love of life a mysterious and solitary countryside and in spite of the erotic themes the constant presence of God. *Mujer sin Eden* (1947), her most famous collection rejects the traditional culpability assigned to woman as a descendant of Eve and a sinful sexuality, as the poet explores the Biblical role of women and their ambivalent relationship to God and man and identifies with love maternity, and faith. *Illuminada tierra* (1951) combines paganism, passion, and God, as Conde emphasis purification through suffering. Among later volumes one can cite *El tiempo es un rio lentissimo de fuego* (1978).
- Carmen Conde longs for youth, despairs at old age, loves life, and seeks perfection, although for her light always triumphs over darkness. She has a positive view of nature, as she consistently rejects the negative aspects of life. She emphasizes both the erotic and metaphysical as she searches for the absolute, and her poetry, she says, is what gives meaning to her life. She has been called “la mujer-poeta mas importante del siglo veinte.”
- c. *Luis Felipe Vivanco* (1907 -1975) always affirmed God and love in his poetry and said that he wrote “como hombre como cristiano, y como enamorado.” Aside from critical works, his poetry collections include *Cantos de primavera* (1936), a contemplation of the countryside with religious devotion; *Tiempo de dolor* (1940); and *Los caminos* (1974), a compilation of light, idealism, and deeply religious poetry that extols the virtue of life family and countryside. Vivanco’s many themes include love of nature, the hearth, the family, the role of memory and above all religious warmth.
- d. *Victoriano Cremer* (b. 1908) has written more than twenty volumes of poetry. Opposed from the beginning to the Neoclassic vein and pure poetry, he started the review *Espadana*. His is a poetry of despair, sadness, and rebellion. Some have called his poetry *tremendista*, but essentially, he stresses the warmth and human over the cold and beautiful. Other themes in his poetry are love, country, justice, liberty, God, and death. From time to time his poetry has an ironic almost sarcastic tone. His collections include *Tacto sonoro* (1944) *Las horas perdidas* (1949), *Nuevos cantos de vida y esperanza* (1952), *Lejos de esta lluvia tan amarga* (1971), and *Poesia* (1984).
- e. *Dionisio Ridruejo* (1912 -1975), although he fought for the Franco forces, later broke his ties with the Falangists to fight for democracy. He published his first work, *Plural*, in 1935. In his complete poetic works, published in 1976, some of his collections have titles somewhat different from those of the original publications. Among his many works are *Primer libro de amor* (1935 – 1949), sonnets about love and its eventual consummation, nostalgic recall vanished youth, and identification with the universe; *Sonetos a la piedra* (1934 – 1942), a vision of existence through the contemplation of inanimate objects with an intellectual perception and controlled emotion; *Cuadernos de Rusia* (1941 – 1942), about the Blue Division on the Russian front and a reality of desolation, cold, and the wounded and the dead; and *Poesia* (1976). Ridruejo’s early poetry was to some extent Baroque, but his later works, recalling those of Antonio Machado, reject Formalist poetry for more Existential themes and show Ridruejo’s mastery at combining, with perfect technique, modern and Classical trends.
- f. *Jose Garcia Nieto* (b. 1914), founder of the review *Garcilaso*, has written, aside from prose works, approximately thirty collections of poetry. He began as the most representative *Garcilasista*, and much of his later poetry is a reaffirmation that poetry of the 1940s. In his poetry he stresses clarity harmony love, family, landscape, and God. Among his titles are *Vispera hacia ti* (1940); *La red* (1947), about a mystical search for God; *Tregua* (1951), which exalts the human over the beautiful; *Los cristales fingidas* (1978); and *Piedra y cielo de Roma* (1984).
- g. *German Bleiberg* (b. 1915), writes light and graceful verse in the *Garcilaso* manner. *Sonetos amorosas* (1936) was reprinted in 1947 as *Mas alla de ruinas*. Other collections are *El poeta ausente* (1948) and *Seleccion de poemas* (1974). Love, Arcadian landscapes,

solitude, the world of childhood, and an affirmation of existence, in spite of Existential anguish intensified by a jail experience, are his principal themes. Bleiberg expresses love through a spiritual fusion of his soul with nature and continues to believe that after the shadows of the night comes a new dawn for the heart.

- h. *Vicente Gaos* (1919 – 1980) fills his poetry with a spiritual experience of nature, the meaning of existence, and a search for God. Though tormented, he attempted to remain true to his Catholic orthodoxy and his belief in eternal life but in his later poetry alternated between doubt and faith. His volumes include *Arcangel de mi noche* (1944); *Luz desde el sueño* (1947); *Concierto en mi y en vosotros* (1965) part of his complete poetry published in 1982; and *Un montón de sombras y otros poemas* (1971).
- i. Other well - known poets of this generation are Jose Antonio Muñoz Rojas (b. 1909) Ildefonso Manuel Gil (b. 1912), Jose Luis Cano (b. 1912), Ramon de Garciasol (b. 1913) Concha Zardoya (b. 1914), Concha Lagos (b. 1916), Susana March (b. 1918), Leopoldo Luis (b. 1918), Jose Luis Hidalgo (1919 – 1947), Rafael Montesinos (b. 1920), and Eugenio Garcia Gonzalez de Nora (b. 1923).

F. The Generation of 1950

This group of poets, sometimes alluded to as the group of the 1960s or *promoción desheredada*, added to the social themes promoted by Otero and Celaya and the Existential and poetic testimony of Hierro the idea of self-revelation through poetry. Instead of the following Alexandre's idea of poetry as communication, poets like Valente and Gonzalez used it as a vehicle for self-knowledge and sensations beyond immediate experience. Meta-poetry, they hoped, would provide an honest reflection of their perception of experience. Valente thought of poetry as an ontological search for its own meaning, and Gonzalez believed that only the writing of the poem revealed the poet but that words alone might not be able to convey the poetic experience. Although they did not deny, as would later poets, the ability of poetry to convey to some extent a knowledge of reality, they showed a special concern for the nature of language and linguistic truth. Nonetheless, for the most part they used a colloquial language.

These poets, nevertheless, could not forget Spain and humanity, whatever their feelings about poetry as message or self - revelation and self - definition. They sing of historical man and his circumstances and see him as victimized by time in the face of death, although Valente once stated: "Pasado no tuvimos, aun lo hemos de hacer."

1. *Angel Gonzalez* (b. 1925) more than others of his generation seems to support and exploit social themes although in an ironic and parodic rather than popular fashion. In *Aspero mundo* (1956), Existential, metaphysical, and religious, the poems are both sentimental and beautiful as they alternate between positive values of love and illusion as a harsh reality. *Sin esperanza, con convencimiento* (1961) denounces injustices and recalls the Spanish Civil War symbolically, allegorically, and ironically. For the most part bitter and pessimistic, Gonzalez is occasionally joyful in his view of nature. *Grado elemental* (1962) is an attempt by Gonzalez to demythify society's established values, and he experiments with caricature and irony in seeking a new vocabulary for a new reality. *Palabra sobre palabra* (1965), whose title he used later for his complete works and ever-expanding editions in 1968, 1972, and 1977, still ironic, seems more positive about nature, man, and country. The poet searches *urbanismo* for identity and for an understanding of a deceptive reality. Finally, *Tratado de* (1967) ends what some have called Gonzalez' first poetic stage. Again, he satirizes the values of the middle class, trivializes man's pursuits, recalls his infancy and demythifies death. As he focuses on man's present, he is frustrated with a social order that inhibits the human spirit, but he uses a colloquial language to reflect experiences apparently shared in common with other members of society.

Breves acotaciones para una biografía (1969) starts the poet's second state of poetic creation, a kind of antipoetry involving the repetition of words that the poet rejects as essentially useless. *Procedimientos narrativos* (1972), a self-parody, again concerns the failure of words and metaphorical associations. *Muestra corregida y aumentada de algunos procedimientos narrativos y de las actitudes sentimentales que habitualmente comportan* (1977), filled with historical, literary, and musical allusions, comments on the nature of

poetry itself and metapoetry. *Prosemas o menos* (1985) reiterates the poet's belief in the failure of the poetic word to transform reality but he feels that poetry, nevertheless, in its precision and beauty, provides a personally rewarding aesthetic experience.

Although Gonzalez writes what might be considered social poetry, at times with a humor that obfuscates an underlying grief, he is more interested in the meaning than the subject matter involved. He uses a variety of themes in his poetry – nostalgia, solidarity, the passage of time, and hopelessness of absolute truth. His apparent disarming candor makes his poetry deceptive. He employs everyday language to create a complex experience and literature about literature, as well as poetry on several semiotic levels, as he comments on the art of poetry itself and through his intellectuality and metapoetry often misdirects the reader.

2. *Jose Angel Valente* (b. 1929), an intellectual, almost austere poet, can be devastatingly sarcastic in his analysis of daily living and modern politics. Yet at the same time Valente has been interested in the poetic experience as self-sustaining. He became more and more conceptual in his poetry after 1967, as he inter-related life and the poetic act and defined poetry in its continuing life and the poetic act and defined and negation.

A modo de esperanza (1955), winner of the Adonais Prize and a human testament of a poetized reality, treats, in Existential fashion man's life and death, solitude, and desolation. *Poemas a Lazaro* (1960) deals with man reborn, mother love, earth, and the mystery of creation and resurrection. The poet examines the creative process as a search for self and as a knowledge of existence love of life, and fear of death. In *Sobre el lugar del canto* (1963), Valente despairs at the injustice he sees but postulates also the possibility of hope and God.

One of Valente's greatest works, *La memoria y los signos* (1966), about deceptive memory, suffering, and love, evokes adolescence and childhood innocence as a contrast with adult knowledge. The present, something we should cherish because it is all we have, represents a metaphysical hope if one loves and believes. Yet Valente cannot forge the Spanish Civil War and other historical and political realities, but he includes historical, Existential, metaphysical, and poetic elements as part of the exploration of the difference between present human collective memory and a metaphysical one. In this process he is able to use only the language of poetry and not the language of the experience that motivates it, and the result is a constant interplay of clarity, mystery, world, and symbol.

Siete representaciones (1967), replete with Biblical references and man's destructive response to injustice, deals with the seven deadly sins. The poems of *Breve son* (1968) are more hermetic, ironic, and experimental. Valente tries to penetrate semantic values to find linguistic liberty, but at the same time he writes about misery and injustice. *El inocente* (1970) a discovery of the poetic word, expresses his solitude and his disillusion with humanity and the hypocrisy of the world. He seeks consolation in happier memories and meaningful literature.

Valente's later works include *Material memoria* (1979), about love's recognition of the material world, memory, a search for reality, and poetry as silence; *Tres lecciones de tinieblas* (1980), concerning the Kabbalah and involving a metaphor of thought as light produced in twilight; *Mandorla* (1982), which deals with time and history but especially the poetic world that involves the erotic as an ontological investigation; and *El fulgor* (1984), a poetry of knowledge and writing as a form of thinking including self-containing hermetic poems, conceptual, paradoxical, and philosophical, and symbols of day night, life, and death. Other titles are *Punto cero* (1972 and 1980), a collection of Valente's complete works; *Interior con figuras* (1976); *Estancia* (1980); and *99 poemas* (1981).

Valente has concerned himself constantly with poetry and the meaning of the poetic word. He believes poetry to be an adventure of self-discovery a complex of memories, including erotic ones. Time for Valente is a psychological phenomenon produced by relationships rather than linear progression. The mind, aware of being finite, transforms experiences into poetic symbols. Valente seeks light in a world or darkness, tied in part to an evocation of infancy, adolescence, and a knowledge of a future death. Yet the present may be more meaningful than deceptive memory. Poetry for Valente means purification, struggle, exploration of his inner being, and a view of exterior reality as secondary to that search for self-understanding.

3. *Jaime Gil de Biedma* (1929 – 1990) critic translator, and poet anticipated many of the poets of the next generation in his *culturalista* tendencies and emphasis of literature on literature.

Nonetheless, his poetry is quite autobiographical and social, though with ironic undertones and commentary on apparently real experiences. After what the poet called a “poetic apprenticeship” in *Segun sentencia del tiempo* (1953), he published *Companeros de viaje* (1959), about nature, a confrontation with daily life the sweetness of love, passing time, and a nostalgic view of childhood, past realities converted into present illusions. *En favor de Venus* (1965) is an anthology of love poems at times frankly erotic and sensual but also Romantic idealistic, and tender. *Morlidades* (1966), autobiographical but yet deliberately imitative and intertextual, is an almost cynical poetry that objectifies his personal feelings about illusion in our lives. Gil de Biedma, a caring human being with a social conscience in spite of his critical cynicism, evokes the past and the Spanish Civil War, but as a disillusioned child with an adult perception. The poet finally realizes that existence is a bitter experience involving pathetic failure and that love and life itself may have little value. *Poemas postumos* (1969), a debate between the young and the old, conscience and sexual pleasure is skeptical, pessimistic and self – critical. An adult poet confronts his younger persona in a series of dialogues contrasting a conventional reality and a poetic subconscious, the latter of which in the end seems more real. He combines themes such as passing time with life as art, artistic creativity, reality and illusion. *Las personas del verbo* (1975 and 1982) contains his complete poetic works.

In his earlier poetry Gil de Biedma treated nature, at times with a joyous - affirmation of life. He also wrote about the moral and political rejection of power. He wrote of passing time, the self, man’s desire for liberty, and the subjective and illusory. At times it is difficult to penetrate his ambivalence about the amorous and the temporal, to penetrate his ironic view of reality and dream, although his autobiographical and melancholy evocation of childhood helps define his view of the tragic present. Essentially, he is an erotic poet who plays with illusion and reality and his own moral and intellectual positions regarding life and death. Concerned with ethical and social issues, he also stresses the relationship of reality to the illusory and oneiric. The poet uses direct language and colloquial style, often ironic and self-mocking but occasionally confessional. He thinks of poetry more as conversation than communion and the poem always, as its own reality.

4. *Francisco Brines* (b. 1932) in *Las brasas* (1960), which won the Adonais Prize, deals with abandoned gardens and mysterious stars, the light of day, and nature exalted over man. In spite of his resigned contemplation, he is keenly aware of the passing of time. After some narrative poems, published in *El santo inocente y la muerte de Socrates* (1965), he wrote *Palabras a la oscuridad* (1966), again about nature and the beauty of the world menaced by time. The poet exalts desire and human life in spite of his generally negative view regarding the human condition and time’s ravages.

Aun no (1971), his first collection of the 1970s, acknowledges the loss of innocence and the poet parodies the age in which he lives, historical events, and human vanity. He emphasizes philosophy and literature and his perpetual themes of love, solitude and old age. Brines also attempts to include his reader here in the poetic process, for him more than an individual experience, *Insistencias en Luzbel* (1977) is Brines’ most Existential work. The poet believes that the immortality afforded by youth must cede before the forces of nothingness, and his communication of human experience now includes questions about the nature of being and human destiny. Lucifer compares himself with modern man and rebels against an absurd reality of which death is a part, but man, in his anguish, can only seek to affirm his authenticity through love, sex, and poetry, in this case both Baroque and colloquial in which the poet seeks his own poetic purpose.

Brines’ poetry of the 1980s includes *Poemas excluidos* (1985), *Antologia poetica* (1986) and *El otono de las rosas* (1986). The last volume stresses his joy at having existed, the affirmation of a future existence in spite of his acceptance of personal mortality, and his ability to delay time in its passage to the nothingness that awaits only through a creative art that does not include personal salvation.

In his poetry Brines looks at youth from an adult perspective. He believes that reviewing the past gives knowledge and perhaps solace for the solitude of old age. He writes philosophical and metaphysical poetry that includes his anguished Existential concept of time, desolation and nothingness. Nonetheless the poet feels the material world as a

sensuous present he wants to possess before time robs him of youth and physical existence. He hopes that through the poetic process he can discover the meaning of a concrete personal experience. As a temporal poet, inexorably tied to a historical present, he faces a paradoxical world of love and life in spite of an awaiting death.

5. *Claudio Rodríguez* (b. 1934) intensifies the poetry of intuition and the profess of textual creation. He often uses contradictory syntax and negation as assertion, combining metaphorical innovation with simple colloquial language to create ambiguities and an open text for the reader to complete. Yet for Rodríguez poetry reveals that which is human in man, both his joy of existence and religious anguish. Poetry implies a participation in life and at the same time the poetic experience thereof, a mysterious gift from heaven.

In *Don de ebriedad* (1953), which won the Adonais Prize, he dwells on both concrete and abstract surroundings and his enjoyment of nature, involving an active participation and not simply contemplation. Rodríguez wants to experience reality in soul and spirit, to seize the ineffable moment, to amplify and eternalize it. He thus discovers his path in life through the creative act. *Alianza y condena* (1965) again sings of life's beauty, but more and more the poet encounters the pain and sadness of the world. Allied to life and with a love for humanity he nevertheless rejects materialism, condemning the hypocrisy he finds in his daily search for the truth. In spite of life's unpleasant aspects, he continues to find joy in both erotic and spiritual exaltation, an identification with nature and the simple and beautiful aspects of life, which for him include a recalled adolescence and the play of light and shadows, *El vuelo de la celebracion* (1976) again praises life and seeks knowledge about human destiny, metaphysical truth, and salvation. Rodríguez writes about the magical qualities of a tear or a glance as he engages in an emotional rather than intellectual communion with the world. Man may, indeed, have lost his innocence through separation from the natural world, but the carnal experience enables him to appreciate the elemental aspects of the universe and through love to escape the corrupting influences of time. Other titles are *Calle sin nombre* (1983) and *Desde mis poemas* (1983), the latter of which is a compilation of his poetry that helped him win the National Prize for Poetry.

Rodríguez tries always to synthesize being and existence in relationship to the vegetable, mineral, and animal world. As part of his desire for communion, poetry, a kind of controlled adventure, symbolizes a possible salvation as well as the possession of the moment. Although he recognizes the disorder of the world, he speaks of joy, existence, human solidarity, faith in humanity, religion and existence.

6. *Other poets* of the Generation of 1950 include the following:
 - a. *Jose Maria Valverde* (b. 1926) temperamentally belongs to the previous generation. In his poetry he uses memory to recall a pleasant past. In *Hombre de Dios* (1945), this Catholic poet searches for God in a well-ordered and beautiful world. He feels occasional terror and anguish at future nothingness but relies on the Divine Will to save him. *La espera* (1949) won the National Prize for Poetry. Here the poet still looks at the world with child-like eyes. Other collections are *Ensenanzas de la edad* (1961), *Ser de palabra* (1976), and *Antología de sus versos* (1980).
 - b. *Eladio Cananero* (b. 1930) is a popular singer of love, youth, and his *pueblo*, although he also treats rebellion and social issues. Almost all his poetry is autobiographical. His collections include *Desde el sol y la anchura* (1956), an emotional reaction to the land, personified nature, and dehumanized man; *Una senal de amor* (1958), about love, solitude and injustice but also family and countryside; *Marisa Sabia y otros poemas* (1963), which won the National Prize for Literature and deals lovingly with La Mancha and its people; and *Poesia* (1971).
 - c. *Felix Grande* (b. 1937), whom some would place in the following generation, is a prize-winning novelist, essayist, and short story writer. His second book of poetry, *Las piedras* (1964), won the Adonais Prize. It discusses immortality, life, and death in somewhat melancholy fashion. *Musica amenazada* (1966) is about Grande's love for music. *Blanca Spirituals* (1967), autobiographical in part and also filled with intertextuality, contains denunciatory poems about deception sorrow, hate, and love and the poet's view of the misery and injustice of the world. *Taranto* (1971), an *homenaje* to Cesar Vallejo; and *Las rubaiyatas de Horacio Martin* (1978), which won the National

Prize for Poetry, are other collections. Horacio Martín, the poet's alter ego expresses himself on language, love, and death and glorifies the female body. The poet himself then becomes the translator and reader of the text about love, friendship, sadness and memory.

- d. *Carlos Sahagun* (b. 1938) evokes past experience and commentary as part of the poetic process. He has published a number of poetry collections, including *Hombre naciente* (1955); *Profecias del agua* (1958), an Adonais prize-winner involving time as a flowing river youth, water as a symbol of purity and liberty, and the ruinous effects of the Spanish Civil War; *Como si hubiera muerto un niño* (1961), about youth and love but also about a hungry and sordid childhood; *Estar contigo* (1973), a contrast between youth and old age and substitute through poetry for the poet's loss of faith in God; and *Primer y último Oficio* (1979). Sahagun, in turn sad, satiric, and biting, dwells on infancy as a part of the process of confronting one's own existence in a society without liberty.
- e. Alfonso Costafreda (1926 – 1974), Ángel Crespo (b. 1926), José Manuel Caballero Bonald (b. 1926), Carlos Barral (b. 1928), José Agustín Goytisolo (b. 1928), Manuel Mantero (b. 1930), and Aquilino Duque (b. 1931) are also poets of the Generation of 1950.

G. The Generation of 1968 and Beyond

This group of poets, born between 1939 and 1953 belong, according to Carlos Bousoño, to a *generación marginada*. They assign an absolute and independent value to their poetry. Many overload their poetry with cultural references to music, painting geography – especially that of Greece, Italy and the Nordic countries – and literature. Neobaroque and, depending on the poet stressing *Cernudismo*, *Cavafianismo*, *Grecidad* or intertextuality they show also the influence of mass media especially newspapers and television rock and roll, and “pop” culture. They also create their own myths and mythology and a specially syncopated language, quite often artificial, exotic and extrarational. Still others try collage, a Freudian emphasis on the neurotic, the decadent and the glorification of the body. These poets for the most part, rebel against their own culture in an effort to underline their artistic autonomy which in some cases gives their poetry an elitist cast. Many have their own special version of poetry as poetic text and a reflection of itself.

In the 1980s many of the poets continued the previously mentioned techniques and elements such as *culturalismo*. Some added a new kind of Orientalism. Some poets used the poem as a biographical reconstruction related to a mythical and epic recreation. The emphasis on linguistics and the metapoetic critique of the poetic act in the process of creation continued to be emphasized. Yet at the same time, the eighties have seen, beyond dexterous combinations of imagery and expression, a more personal poetry, and some of the poets have attempted to reintroduce themes of time, memory and even the quotidian in reaction to the Neobaroque mentality. Some have returned to a more tender, emotional, Romantic poetry. Whatever their techniques, these poets seem comfortable with the older but eternal themes of love, time, and death.

1. *Manuel Vázquez Montalbán* (b. 1939), even better known as a novelist and short story writer, writes amorous, erotic, autobiographical poetry. In *Una educación sentimental* (1967), he uses mass culture and many cultural references. His hermetic poetry seems deceptively prosaic, as he paints a Neoromantic picture of his family his disillusion and frustration, and a nostalgia for youth and love, which he also views cynically. *Movimientos sin éxito* (1969) utilizes slogans, free association, humor, irony, and commercials to show the impossibility of joy in a repugnant world. *A la sombra de las muchachas sin flor* (1973) contains poems of terror and erotic love. *Coplas a la muerte de mi tía Daniela* (1973) tries to condition the reader to an irrational interpretation of such timeless poetic subjects as death. *Praga* (1982) deals with different cities, politics, and a daily reality lived emotionally. *Me memoria y deseo* (1986) is an anthology of Vázquez' poetic work. Vázquez attacks consumerism by using its own language and warns against a complacent reality, but he also cautions readers about the deceitfulness of myth.
2. *Pere (Pedro) Gimferrer* (b. 1945) has written several poetry collections in Catalan as well as some in Spanish. *El mensaje del tetrarca* (1963) reveals a Baroque fascination with ancient myths and views of reality as but a figment of the imagination. *Arde el mar* (1966), dedicated to Vicente Aleixandre is one of the most important collections of the Generation of 1968.

Almost automatic writing according to the author and definitely within the *culturalista* camp, *Arde el mar* recalls tragic times, through imagination, to create a life where dream and imagination combine to forge a present and a future with an imaginary past. Thus, the author writes about a pleasant, though fictitious, infancy. *La muerte en Beverly Hills* (1968) again brings into being a special ironic reality of masks, mirrors, and movies. The poet sees youth as a poetic configuration confronting the shadows of eternity but sadly also longs for love. *De extrana fruta y otros poemas* (1968) deals with the relationship between television commercials and a lifelike reality made of love, time, and fear of the unknown. Concerned with its own reality, the poetry is filled with literary and exotic references and irrational associations. Other works include *Fuego ciego* (1972 – 1973), included in *Poesia* (1978); and *Apariciones y otros poemas* (1982).

In general, Gimferrer, though he provides us with fragmentary visions of reality such as Barcelona and the sea, for the most part writes Baroque, metaphysical poetry in which the exotic is set within the framework of the ordinary.

3. *Antonio Colinas* (b. 1946), novelist, essayist, and translator as well as poet, won the National Prize for Literature in 1982 for his *Obra poetica completa*. Colinas, a strong proponent of meta-poetry, combines Classical themes with Neoromantic connotations, linguistics, graphics, and concrete visual aspects of poetry. He is one of the more elite *culturalista* poets, and he writes about music Venice, Greece, Ezra Pound, and German Romantics like Holderlin. *Preludios a una noche total* (1969) deals with nature, love, and the night, in somewhat Romantic terms, and invokes Holderlin's spirit. Filled with an amorous pantheism, the poems concern love, its birth, death, and cosmic symbolism from a joyful autumn to a solitary winter. *Truenos y flautas en un templo* (1972) is filled with cultural references and what some call *Poesia del lenguaje*. *Sepulcro en Tarquinia* (1975) is based in part on the four years Colinas lived in Italy. Colinas deals with the world of art, beauty, and medieval themes in a search for origins. He continues his linguistic experimentation and his cultural obsessions but also talks of time and love. *Astrolabio* (1979) creates a poetic space where sentiments and experience of real authenticity can be lived, a space that recalls mythological dreams. Through literature the poet examines the problems of human love, fatality, and death and a world represented by nature through signs and symbols that also reveal man's inferiority before the infinite. *Noche mas alla de la noche* (1983) contemplates the starry night and nature's open spaces and sings to Venice and the Greek Parthenon. Ruins, earth, and nature serve as Colinas' fount of inspiration. *Jardin de Orfeo* (1988) again concentrates on the poet's interior reality.

Despite the hermetic nature of most of his poetry, Colinas draws the reader into his antinomies and dichotomies of light/shadow life/death, dream/reality. He seeks the reality beneath the reality, and he is aware of love, pain, and death regardless of the verbal beauty of his poetry or the experimental nature of his language. He acknowledges the possibility of an integration of man and nature. More than almost any other poet he insists on overloading his work with cultural references, but he is also sincere and authentic in rejecting those members of his generation who in relying on the cultural, turn their backs on the experience of life.

4. *Guillermo Carnero* (b. 1947) also an excellent literary critic, like so many of his generation rejects traditional language and views poetry as a symbol of experience and reality rather than an expression thereof. He chooses the reality of language over reality itself, the construction rather than the experience and thus creates his own brand of metapoetry.

Carnero's *Dibujo de la muerte* (1967) and *Gimferrer's Arde el mar* are the two most important works of the generation. Carnero deals with the impossibility of existence in a codified manner, because love is a reminder of death, and power can be confronted only through masks. In Baroque poetry he contends the reality, or its experience remains only as a projection of a literary aesthetic. The world, then, is an absurd place, false and temporary and beauty and death are only a part of that tragic vision. His is a disconsolate and cheerless poetry of passing time and desolation.

In the 1970s Carnero continued to write about the relationship of language and experience. In *El sueno de Escipion* (1971), he is unable to apprehend concrete reality through reason or conventional language, but he can discuss the art of writing the poems being written. Frustrated by what people call reality, he turns to the literary experience and in the process constructs a reality that is the result of the poetic process itself. *Variaciones y figuras sobre un*

tema de la Bruyere (1974) treats of time and poetry and a method for reading it. The poet continues a self-mocking analysis of the futility and inability of language to define an evanescent reality. *El azar objetivo* (1975) uses deliberately prosaic terminology to attack the rational. A Surrealistic creation, it confronts the irrational nature of poetic language in the creative process. Carnero's collected poetry appeared in 1977 as *Ensayo de una teoría de la vision*.

Carnero replaces real objects with their poetic representations because a poem, he says cannot speak of any reality but its own, which is more interesting than objective reality. In spite of misgivings about the nature of language, he writes in exotic, decorative, colorful imagery about literature, art, and music rather than life, because reality is unknowable and experience inexpressible. Yet in writing about the world of art, literature, painting, and music and by insisting on the difficulty of using ordinary language, he employs that very language to criticize the normal linguistic codes.

5. *Luis Antonio de Villena* (b. 1951), a novelist and essayist and a heavy user of cultural citations, writes about hedonism, paganism, the body, and homosexual love. In addition to his cultural references and lavish situations he uses more autobiographical elements than most members of his generation.

Sublime solarium (1971) presents culture as a mask in a poetry of decadent and Surrealistic tones. *El Viaje a Bizancio* (1978), filled with Baroque sensuality, tells of a city symbolizing for the poet eternal youth the joy of love and carnal pleasure, and perfect beauty. *Hymnica* (1979) involves a biographical but yet poetic reconstruction and exaltation of beauty and its temporary possession. *Huir del invierno* (1981) combines the mystical, sensual, and pagan with cultural and geographical references to Greece and Islam. *La muerte unicamente* (1984), whose title is based on a line from Cernuda, again concentrates on absolute beauty, self-affirmation, carnality, and death. The poet utilizes platonic tradition in elevating homosexual love to a metaphysical plane.

6. *Other poets.* Luis Alberto de Cuenca (b. 1950), one of the culturally fixated poets, has written, among several collections, *Schola* (1975), Jaime Siles (b. 1951), religious, mystical, and metaphysical, writes conceptual poetry filled with linguistic paradox. *Alegoria* (1977) and *Columnae* (1986), the latter of which explores life as a support against a collapse into meaninglessness, are among his works. Still other poets are Felix de Azua (b. 1944), Jose Gutierrez (b. 1955), and Blanca Andreu (b. 1959).

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Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, LA