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# SPANISH LITERATURE – Early Modern period

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## Part I : POETRY

### 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 hermosura 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.

## Part II : 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 characterizes 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 ventral 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 mandado ruido!" Called the Christian Horace, he sought refuge in nature, where he found peace in God's greatness and the beauties and 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 Salamanca 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 (Llull 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 *Llana 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 Provencal 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 later 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 Damaso 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 hjalla 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 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 Lisi 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 Agustiniiana* 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 Salamancan 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 Salamancan School

1. *Fray Diego Tadeo Gonzalez* (1733 – 1794), an Augustinian monk, idolized Fray Luis de Leon and established the eighteenth-century Salamancan 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 Salamancan 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 Salamancan 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 Salamancan 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 II : DRAMA

### THE EARLY RENAISSANCE

#### A. General Considerations

The early Renaissance contains but one important dramatist, Juan del Encina. Many others wrote drama, some with moderate success, considering the retarded state of the genre and the general cultural level. Toward the end of the period, however, plays appeared that gave evidence of real dramatic qualities, the Renaissance spirit, and signs of future potential.

#### B. Gomez Manrique (1412? – 1490)

With his play *Representacion del Nacimiento de nuestro Senor*, Gomez Manrique broke the silence of the three empty centuries following the *Auto de los reyes magos*. The genuine dramatic qualities of this play show great refinement compared with the *Auto*, testimony of growth in the drama during the silent centuries. Gomez Manrique also wrote *Lamentaciones fechas para semana santa* and a considerable number of other works of various kinds.

#### C. Rodrigo d Costa (1405? – 1470)

To this author have been attributed a variety of works, including the *Coplas del Provincial*, *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*, and the first act of *La Celestina*, but only work undoubtedly known to be his is a poem in debate style entitled *Dialogo entre el amor y un Viejo*. Though it is a poem, Menendez y Pelayo considers it a

milestone in the history of the Spanish theater because of the artistry of its plot, dialogue, emotions, contrast, and dramatic techniques.

#### D. Juan del Encina (1468? – 1529?)

Juan del Encina, who studied under Nebrija at the University of Salamanca and took religious orders early, is considered to be the father of the Spanish drama, for it is with him that the true Spanish drama begins.

Encina took the drama into the castles and palaces of the nobility and composed nearly all his 170 works before the age of thirty. In him are combined three literary currents: Latin poetry, the Classical theater, and the liturgical drama. One also finds in his works a realistic and popular element, inherited perhaps from the *tetro profano*.

In his early works, Eglogas written in imitation of Virgil's Eclogues, he achieved a comic effect through shepherds who speak an amusing gibberish called *sayagues*, a dialect that became a conventional comic device. His early themes were religious, and he combined elements of Classical poetry with the liturgical.

The increasing refinement and sophistication of his later manner are the result of his trips to Rome. A musician and composer of music, he anticipated the *zarzuela* of his later poster of music, anticipated the *zarzuela* of later centuries and injected music and dance liberally into his theater, a pattern followed in the Golden Age.

His chief works are *Egloga de Placida y Vitoriano*, in which Placida commits suicide because of her lover's scorn; *Egloga de Cristino y Febea*, a clear statement of the Renaissance spirit, which relates how Cristino is drawn from his hermit's retirement by Cupid to enjoy falling in love with Febea; and *Aucto del repelon*, a farce dramatizing a scuffle between Salamancan students and shepherds.

Encina's reputation as a dramatist has obscured his contributions in the fields of poetry and music. His most interesting poems are those on profane themes, though he wrote religious poems as well. Sixty-eight of his many musical compositions have been preserved in Francisco Asenjo Barbieri's *Cancionero musical* and have been recorded in modern times.

#### E. *La Celestina*

This famous work was never intended to be acted. It will therefore be treated in Part 4.

## THE RENAISSANCE: PRECURSORS OF LOPE DE VEGA

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Spain, the Renaissance, in evidence from the last part of the fifteenth century, in the drama may be said to cover the period from 1517 the date of Torres Naharro's *Propaladia*, to 1616, the date of Cervantes' death. There is an obvious overlapping between this period and the Golden Age, as there is between the early Renaissance and the High Renaissance. Nevertheless, dramatists of the sixteenth century may conveniently be designated as precursors of Lope de Vega and the drama of the Golden Age.

Renaissance drama was characterized by experimentation and growth. Spaniards knew foreign drama but changed, adapted, refused, and in some cases accepted it according to their own tastes, clear evidence of *espanolismo* and the Spaniard's individuality and love of freedom.

Not an age of dramatic triumphs, the sixteenth century refined the drama, enriched verification, broadened subject matter, invented new techniques, improved characterization and plot handling and made the drama respectable. It remained for Lope to crystallize it into a system.

#### BARTOLOME DE TORRES NAHARRO (1476? – 1531?)

Torres, Like Encina, has been called the father of the Spanish drama, since he was the first to create truly Spanish characters and the first to establish rules for dramatic composition. He was the most important dramatist of his time.

Little is known of his life. He was a good student and a soldier in his youth and became a priest and later a favorite at the papal court of Leo X in Rome. We do not know whether he ever returned to Spain.



His principal publication *Propaladia* (meaning "First Fruits"), was published in Rome in 1517 and contains a prologue and six plays. Two more were added later. Though performed in Rome, these plays were banned in Spain until 1545, when they appeared in mutilated form. In the prologue Torres set forth his rules for writing dramas, as follows: Plays should consist of five acts; comedy and tragedy should be separated; the number of characters should be limited to between six and twelve; plays are divided into two types-*comedias a fantasia*, based on fictional incidents that have the air of reality, and *comedias a noticia* based on observed events (this points up once again two recurrent trends in Spanish literature the idealistic and realistic); and decorum, verisimilitude, and appropriateness of dialogue to the character should be observed.

Torres imitated Juan del Encina but soon surpassed him. With his sure dramatic instinct Torres fixed the drama in the direction of the Golden Age. He was the first Spaniard to write comedy of intrigue and even hinted at the comedy of manners. He was the first dramatic satirist. He anticipated the *loa* by insisting upon an *introito*, a comic and burlesque poem recited by a rustic as a prologue, and upon an *argumento*, a versified plot summary spoken by an actor before the play began.

Torres emphasized plot more than character, an emphasis that was later a weakness of the Golden Age theater, and used the honor theme, writing the first "cape and sword" play. He wrote for educated audiences and scorned the vulgar. His continued doubt on his influence among Spaniards. His important plays are as follows:

1. *Comedias a noticia*. *Comedia soldadesca* portrays army life based on Torres' own experiences. *Comedia tinelaria*, the first play of satire, reveals the intrigue, thievery, and corruption in a cardinal's palace. Shocked by what he saw in Rome, Torres revealed in this play his Erasmian attitude toward the Church and the *curia*.
2. *Comedias a fantasia*. *Comedia himenea*, considered to be Torres' masterpiece is the first "cape and sword" play and recounts a love affair, a point of honor and an escape from tragedy. *Comedia Seraphina* relates a triangle love affair that ends happily.

GIL VICENTE (1469? - 1536?)

Gil Vicente was the first of the bilingual dramatists and one of the outstanding European writers of his era. He wrote forty-four dramatic pieces in all, eleven in Spanish, sixteen in Portuguese, and seventeen in mixed Portuguese and Spanish. Like his predecessors, he shunned the general public and wrote for the court.

Though he imitated Encina at first, he soon surpassed his model, and his later works show marked originality and breadth. Though he borrowed from many, he imitated nobody, assimilating his borrowings completely. The most original portion of his work is his farces, *Farsa dos fisicos* and *O velho da horta*, which reflected the ancient *juegos de escarnio*. In his complex artistic personality, he represented a union of the sacred traditions of the Middle Ages with the new freedoms of the Renaissance. As an Erasmist, he was critical of the Church. His sources and these were varied: The Bible the Church fathers and saints, eclogues, Torres Naharro's drama French *mysteres*, Spanish ballads, novels of chivalry, dances of death fairy tales, and hymns and liturgies of the Church.

He was a musician and usually inserted a song in every drama. His rich and graceful is of fundamental importance. He eclipsed Encina and overshadowed Torres Naharro, exceeding all in spirituality and inspiration. Dramatists of the Golden Age took lessons from him. His *Amdis de Gaula* (1533) and *Don Duardos* (1525) are the first plays based on novels of chivalry. *Barca de la Gloria* (1519) the third of an allegorical trilogy combines the Dance of Death theme with Erasmian comments and criticisms on social vices and customs. The first two parts of the trilogy are in Portuguese, *Comedia del viudo* (1514), one of Vicente's best works, tells with strong comic force, irony, and charming lyricism the story of the marriage of two brothers to a widower's daughters. *La comedia de Rubena* (1521), the first play of magic, presents the *bobo*, a descendant of the pastor and predecessor of the *gracioso*, along with fairies, witches, and much folklore.

Lope de Rueda (1510? – 1565)

Lope de Rueda's uncommon talents in things dramatic led him to become a professional actor-manager-playwright who toured Spain with his troupe, performing in theaters and palaces and on street corners.

One of his greatest contributions was that he democratized the drama, making it a popular institution no longer the exclusive property of the aristocracy.

Though he composed longer dramas in imitation of the Italian theater and what he termed *coloquios pastoriles* modeled after Encina, Rueda found his true forte in the farce. To his come forty short, farcical compositions he gave the name *pasos*. These were very brief, one-act skits with a negligible plot, depicting everyday scenes in a realistic and comical manner with the sole intention to entertain. Perhaps they were intended to be used as prologues or between acts of longer plays, but a series of them could easily have been presented as an afternoon's entertainment. The *pasos* reflect real life and exhibit acute insights gay, wit, inventiveness, resourcefulness, and an always strong comic force. The language is realistic, picturesque, spicy and sprinkled with the proverbs, phrases, and superstitions of the people. The characters, almost all taken from the lower classes, are stereotypes: the gypsy, the Negress the matchmaker, the Biscayan, and the *bobo*. Rueda was the first to use prose in the drama, but few followed his lead. He was influenced by Boccaccio, Juan Manuel, and very likely the Italian *commedia dell'arte* a totally improvised skit known in Spain at the time. He created the realistic comedy of manners popularized the drama and gave a strong impetus to the short dramatic skit.

*Paso de las aceitunas* judged by some to be the best one-act play of the sixteenth century, is an adaptation of the "dreaming milk-maid" story relating a quarrel of a wife and a husband over the price of olives that they will not reap until years later. Other titles of Rueda's plays are *Cornudo y contento*, *El convidado*, *El rufian cobarde* and *Los criados*. Among his longer plays influenced by the Italian theater *Eufemi* is the best.

#### E. Juan de la Cueva (1550? – 1610)

At first, Juan de la Cueva took his dramatic themes from Classical antiquity. As his concept of the drama matured, he urged his countrymen to abjure Classical sources and write on national themes though some of his own plays are based on Ovid and Virgil. He was the first to write drama based upon the epic traditions and legends of the *crónicas* and *romances*. In his *Exemplar poetico* (1606) he set forth his dramatic doctrines improving over Torres Naharro and filling the gap between Torres Naharro and Lope de Vega. His rules include the following: disregard of the unities; reduction of the number of acts to four; use of varied verse forms; use of national themes; introduction of royalty to the stage; use of the fantastic and supernatural; and mingling of comedy and tragedy.

He was not a skillful dramatist for he was careless and an improviser sometimes allowing his pots to back him into a corner from which he could extricate himself only by recourse to the supernatural murder and the like. Since he was neither highly cultured nor artistic his merit lies largely in his role as an innovator. Despite his faults, he was one of the outstanding predecessors of Lope de Vega lacking dignity and common sense perhaps but showing good dramatic instinct. Fourteen of his plays remain extant.

*Los siete infantes de Lara* (1579), *Bernardo del Carpio* (1579), and *La muerte del rey don Sancho y reto de Zamora por don Diego Ordóñez* are obvious dramatic reworkings of epic narrations preserved in the histories. *El infamador* (1581) was formerly considered a forerunner of Tirso's *El Burlador de Sevilla*, but the hero Leucino is not a true don Juan type.

#### F. MIGUEL DE CERVANTES SAAVEDRA (1547 – 1616)

Cervantes yearned to be a dramatist but could not compete with Lope de Vega. Though the two men were contemporaries, Cervantes inclined toward the Classical conception of the drama and is best listed among Lope's predecessors. In this light, he had nothing of which to be ashamed as a dramatist and was in most respects the equal and perhaps the superior of others who preceded Lope.

He fell short in the long drama, with the one exception of *Comedia del cerco de Numancia*, hailed by some as the most inspired play in the Classical tradition ever produced in Europe. It was revived in the Romantic period played in 1809 during the siege of Zaragoza and played again during the Civil War of the twentieth century to instill courage and patriotism in the hearts of the people. After Lope's advent, Cervantes ceased writing for the stage and in 1615 published *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses nunca representados*. He noted in his work *Viaje al Parnaso* that he had written twenty or thirty comedias, but only ten of them survive.

His dramatic forte was the *entremes* with which he succeeded admirably. The word *entremes* has several meanings, but in the theater, it refers to a one-act piece, generally realistic and often satirical, played between the acts of a long drama. Cervantes' *entremeses* constitute the truly great part of his theater, and

among them are the best of their kind ever written. In Cervantes' *entremeses* one finds a procession of lower-class types painted in master strokes. The dialogue is racy, spirited, and juicy. Here Cervantes reveals his kindness and love of humanity, his indulgent and never-bitter satire, and the same double vision of life, the conflict between idealism and realism, found in his masterpiece, *Don Quijote*. Plots are unimportant, but character delineation is masterful, and customs are faithfully reflected. In this style, Cervantes is not surpassed and has few equals. A few of his popular *entremeses* are *El retablo de las maravillas*, *La Cueva de Salamanca*, *El Viejo celoso*, and *La guarda cuidadosa*.

## THE GOLDEN AGE

### A. General Considerations

The progress achieved by Spain's sixteenth-century dramatists paved the way for the advent of the *comedia nueva* of Lope de Vega. Lope de Rueda's crude stages gave way to two great theaters in Madrid, the Teatro del Principe and the Corral de la Cruz, and to others elsewhere. There was a public demand for theater, actors had gained respectability, and the time was right for a strong hand to synthesize all preceding elements into a cogent whole. That strong hand belonged to Lope de Vega, the prolific author and undisputed master of the theater who created the national drama that remained virtually unchanged for a century. He called his type of drama the *comedia nueva*.

The Golden Age of the drama, which stretched from 1592 with the advent of Lope as a dramatist to 1681, the date of Calderon's death, saw Spanish drama reach its peak. Thousands of plays were composed. The public consumed dramas at an amazing rate, and many an author's work went before an audience unrehearsed. A play was intended to be viewed one, and frenzied actors did not have time to learn their lines. It was a time of excitement, of incessant and urgent theatrical productions, of keen rivalries among authors, of prodigies of wit and ingenuity and near miracles of energy and enthusiasm. An author who wrote fewer than one hundred plays was thought to be either lazy or lacking in inventiveness. It was a time when genius was common, a fact attested by the four great stars of the theater – Lope, Tirso, Alarcon and Calderon – and a host of writers in other genres.

### B. Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562 – 1635)

Lope de Vega, called the Phoenix of the Spanish stage, was an amazing genius whose accomplishments have become legendary. His unique fame rests not only upon the fact that he created a national drama for Spain, as Shakespeare did for England, but also upon the incredible bulk of his writing. Though no exact count can be made, his disciple, Juan Perez de Montalban summed up the staggering total of 1,800 three-act plays and 400 autos. In addition, Lope wrote novels, short stories, lyric poetry, eclogues, epistles, and epic poems. Five hundred of his plays remain extant. He wrote three times more than the most prolific writers, such as Galdos, Balzac, Dickens, and Tolstoy.

Lope also found time for an adventurous life. He sailed with the Invincible Armada and during idle hours composed eleven thousand lines of verse, which he published in 1602 as an erudite epic under the title *La Hermosura de Angelica*. His talent for amorous adventure is almost as astonishing as his literary fecundity, for his life was a series of love affairs and scandals. He married twice had a number of mistresses and fathered some fourteen children. In 1614, however, he took religious vows and pursued his priestly profession seriously. Yet he devoted one final great love affair to a married woman thirty years his junior, dona Marta de Nevares. Her blindness, the death of his son, the elopement of his only remaining daughter, and the poor reception accorded his last plays embittered his final days. He died in 1635 at the age of seventy-three. Four words sum up his life: writing, adventure, love, and religion.

Lope, taking the elements he needed from the inchoate drama of his time, substituted for it the child of his own cunning mind, the quick-moving, romantic, popular *comedia nueva*. His best themes came from national history and contemporary life, and with them he established a national drama with Spanish subject matter, independent of all rules and theories but his own. His personal Doctrines, more defense than theory, appeared in a poem. *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo* (1609). There he established the need for artistic freedom and confessed that he wrote his plays not according to any precepts or canons but as the public liked them. The following are the formal aspects of Lope's theater taken from the *Arte nuevo*:

1. The play should have three acts. In the first act, it should have exposition in the second, plot complication, and in the third, a sudden climax.
2. The unities are abandoned. Some pretense of unity of action is proposed even though Lope regularly violated it.
3. Comedy and tragedy could be mingled
4. Noble and base characters could be mixed.
5. Lope recommended varied and appropriate verse forms, such as *redondillas* for love scenes, sonnets for soliloquies, *liras* for heroic declamations, romance for exposition, etc.
6. Puns, disguises, mistaken identities, etc., are used as devices to facilitate plot handling.
7. All themes – national, foreign, religious, heroic, pastoral, historical, and contemporary – could be used.
8. Fixed types are used, such as the *galan*, the *viejo* and the *gracioso*, Lope's invention inherited in part from the pastor, *bobo* and *parvo* of former dramatists. The *gracioso* so was a nobleman's servant and in Lope's drama served as the antithesis of his master for comic relief, parodying his master on a lower level. In Alarcon he is the confidant and advisor; in Tirso he combines comedy and advice; in Calderon he spouts philosophy and puns.

Lope did not change the drama greatly in form, borrowed heavily from his predecessors, and disobeyed even his own rules. His eminence derived from the fact that he breathed the essence of national life into his drama, identified totally with the popular mind adapted folk poetry to the stage, dramatized ballads, and wrote what the audience wanted. He was the voice of the people and the echo of a dynamic, proud, vigorous, active nation.

He had an immense range and variety, unequaled eloquence, and an astonishing facility for versification. Aiming at creating emotion, he contrived plot with ingenuity and amazing freshness, always persuasive and in good taste. He banished the ugly, base, and sordid from his work. His favorite themes were honor, monarchy, faith, and love. When he used other themes, he gave them a Spanish flavor, identifying them with the national soul. He had charm, grace, eloquence, lightness of touch, and infallible tact, and his plays are brisk, clever, full of action and intrigue, animated, and above all entertaining. He had an uncanny instinct for the drama, unlimited energy, and a boundless imagination.

His success with the historical play, in which he was the protector of the people, the scourge of the oppressive nobleman, and the defender of the king, endeared him to the common folk. He handled the "cape and sword" play with ease and made it the truly national drama to remain unchanged forever.

Yet Lope was an improviser, perhaps by nature or in answer to the demands of an adulatory public. Since he wrote rapidly, he was never able to condense all his talents into one play. His plots are ingenious, and one marvels at their freshness and variety. But plot is not enough. His characters are sometimes shallow, and none competes with don Quijote or Hamlet. Yet on occasion he created great characters, especially female types. He dazzled with his versatility and cleverness, but one looks in vain for philosophical import or moral intent. He viewed his dramas as "pot boilers," regulated by his own infallible instinct and by audience reaction.

Despite these faults which seem minor compared with his merits, Lope has inspired writers of all succeeding generations at home and sometimes abroad. His undeveloped ideas have often found fuller expression in the drama of others. A few deny him any lasting values; others enthrone him as a demigod. He was a unique figure, surpassed in ways by some of his followers but bowing to none in sheer spontaneity, brilliance, and creative power. Two of his better-known works are *El major alcalde, el rey*, a historical play in which a man of the lower class, oppressed by a nobleman, is avenged by the king himself; and *Peribabaz y el commendador de Ocana*, another historical drama, stressing the Spaniard's inherent dignity and resistance to oppression. The nobleman is again the villain, and the king, the commoner's defender. Other famous plays are *Fuenteovejuna* and *El caballero de Olmedo*.

After his death, Lope was obscured by the brilliance of Pedro Calderon de la Barca, and he did not emerge from the shadows until German Romanticists of the nineteenth century rediscovered him. Yet he was still ranked the inferior of Calderon. In the twentieth century he has been generally regarded as Spain's foremost dramatic genius.

### C. Tirso de Molina (1583 – 1648)

Tirso de Molina is the pseudonym of a Mercenarian friar, Gabriel Tellez, who devoted much time and energy to his order and finished his life as prelate of the monastery at Soria. He may have been the illegitimate

son of the Duque de Osuna, a fact that, if true, would explain his complaints about his lack of social position and the injustices of certain social conventions. Tirso was a disciple of Lope de Vega's and agreed with him on the principles of dramatic composition, which he expressed in *Los cigarrales de Toledo* (1624). Had he devoted his entire life to the theater, he might have outshone Lope, for he had all the assets to become the greatest of playwrights. He was a master of the language, had a resourceful imagination, was ironic at times and sly at others, and had a clever way of introducing risqué situations. He was skillful in plot technique and unsurpassed in comic force, but he fell short of Lope's grace, facility, and lightness of touch. He surpassed Lope in character creation and showed a predilection for strange, extreme, or unusual types. His don Juan is the only Spanish dramatic personality to attain the worldwide renown of Hamlet, Othello, Romeo, and Faust. He was particularly skilled in creating spirited, bold female characters who are particularly adept at compromising themselves and intrepid in pursuit of their lovers. He directed sharp satire at the hypocrisy of women, as in *Marta la piadosa*, but at the same time painted virtuous, noble women who relentlessly pursued their goals, generally the restoration of their honor. His men, on the contrary, are often weak, timid, and irresolute, lukewarm in love, and in the end cornered by frank, daring women. His plots frequently are battles of wits between women, one of whom conquers in the end by being cleverer more daring and more ardent than her rivals.

Tirso's comic sense, always strong is particularly evident in his *graciosos* and is irrepressible even in the most solemn moments, such as the final terrifying scenes of *El burlador de Sevilla*. His language is incisive, his satire frequent. He had a salacious spirit, at times a little streak of malice, and a fondness for daring themes, treating, for example, the question of incest in *La venganza de tamar*. Consequently, as in the case of Juan Ruiz, the question has been asked whether he was a stern moralist in a seemingly quite permissive age or an indulgent monk. Whatever the case may have been, he was rebuked in 1625 by the Council of Castile for alleged obscenities and the portrayal of vices in his plays. This forced him to cease writing for the theater; some believe he never wrote again, others that he stopped for about ten years. He probably returned to his pastime sooner than suspected, however, for it seems improbable that he produced the four hundred plays ascribed to him between 1606 and 1625, given the demands of his vocation; and he wrote no plays in the last ten years of his life. He was the second most prolific dramatist of the Golden Age, but only about eighty-five of his four hundred works are known today.

Tirso's background as a priest enabled him to write the best religious plays of his time, but also because of his vocation, his genius never found its fullest expression. Yet nothing can obscure his admirable talents and the beauties of his works. After his death he was forgotten for nearly two hundred years until Dionisio Solís rediscovered him.

1. *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de Piedra* (1630), rated by some as the best Spanish play ever written, introduced the famed don Juan Tenorio to the world. The theme already existed in folklore before Tirso's day, but it was Tirso's distinction to treat don Juan artistically for the first time. Tirso's version of the don Juan legend is basically religious showing that divine mercy is not infinite and that the unrepentant libertine is punished. Don Juan has fascinated the Spanish mind since his first appearance in this drama, in which bravery is his outstanding virtue and he has become a world-renowned personality. This famous character has made the rounds of world literature, and his name has become a household word. Unfortunately, Tirso's name has been forgotten in don Juan literature, and don Juan has been curiously distorted in the hands of others.
2. *El condenado por desconfiado* (1635) is hailed as Spain's best religious drama. A sinner is saved by repentance, and a religious man is condemned for too little faith.

Other well-known plays by Tirso are *El vergonzoso en palacio* (1621) and *La prudencia en la mujer* (1633).

#### D. Juan Rui de Alarcon (1581? – 1639)

Born in Mexico, Juan Ruiz de Alarcon y Mendoza returned to Spain at about the age of twenty to attend the University of Salamanca. Five years later he went back to Mexico and was graduated from the National University. He then returned to Spain where he remained and began to compose for the theater.

His twenty-four plays, most of which were published in 1628 and 1634, make him the least productive of the four leading dramatists of the Golden Age. He followed Lope's tradition but deviated from it perhaps more than any writer of his time. Not an improviser he carefully planned and wrote his plays. By insisting upon nearly Classical perfection of form, ethical significance, logic and reason, and the didactic function of the drama, he anticipated eighteenth-century Neoclassicism. He was concerned with human values and

relationships and extolled courtesy, sincerity, honesty, chivalry, loyalty, discretion, and truthfulness as virtues to be admired, condemning odious types such as liars and slanderers. Alarcon's verse is not the equal of Lope's, but it has a dry, sober dignity that reflects that author's personality and his careful craftsmanship, which avoided the Gongoristic excesses of his day.

Alarcon was a hunchback, and his contemporaries cruelly taunted him about his deformity. He also had a knack for alienating people and had few friends. Embittered by all this he turned to composing comedies of manners in which he defended virtuous conduct, partly to defend himself and partly to humiliate his detractors. By depicting human vices through character portrayal, he developed a technique of characterization that, along with his formula for writing comedies of manners, was copied by Corneille in *La menteur*, adapted from *La verdad sospechosa*, and also by Moliere.

Despite his personal suffering, little bitterness or cynicism carried over into his plays, and Alarcon exhibited a reflective, reasoned attitude toward life, a longing for the triumph of virtue and a hope for cordiality in human relations. Unlike Lope, Alarcon did not write to please the public. He wrote for gain and fame and also because he had a message for the world. *La verdad sospechosa*, Alarcon's best drama, attacks the vice of lying. *Las paredes oyen*, another comedy of manners, shows the odiousness of slander. Other plays are *La prueba de las promesas* and *Mudarse por mejorarse*.

#### E. Pedro Calderon de la Barca (1600 – 1681)

Like Lope, Calderon wrote his first play as a boy and served in the military, but there the similarities of the two men cease. Calderon studied at Alcala and Salamanca, won prizes for his poetry, and adventurously youthful, engaged in several duels. His military service was more extensive than Lope's, and he was reputedly wounded in the hand.

Upon Lope's death, the nation recognized Calderon as the poet best fitted to carry on the master's work and Felipe IV appointed him court poet. He never married but had at least one love affair. His son passed as his nephew until Calderon took orders, at which time he recognized him as his son. In 1656 Calderon was ordained a priest and withdrew from the world, although he continued to write one or two religious *autos* each year and mythological *comedias* for the entertainment of the court. His life, compared with Lope's tempestuous one, was quiet and assured. His last thirty years were spent in solitude, reading, and reflection.

He wrote much less than Lope, some 200 lyric poems, 120 *comedias*, 80 *autos*, and 20 shorter dramatic pieces. His plays can be roughly divided into two groups: the secular, and the religious and philosophical. He followed Lope's models and in fact, recast some of Lope's plays and improved them.

His honor tragedies and his "cape and sword" plays are of greatest interest among his secular production. Though Lope had used the theme of the conflict between love and honor, Calderon showed the honor theme in its most abhorrent aspects. One must understand the point of honor (*pundonor*) and resulting social complications to comprehend Calderon's theater as well as the Golden Age drama in general. As a court poet Calderon understood the intricacies of the honor code and apparently condoned it despite its extremes.

Calderon's "cape and sword" plays represent the perfection of this type of drama, which was introduced by Torres Naharro and improved by Lope. Incredibly complicated plots, lovers' intrigues, honor dilemmas, sudden appearances, and many other tricks and devices to complicate and then disentangle the plot typify these plays. Calderon, the most profoundly Spanish poet of his era, speaks intimately to the Spaniard.

Calderon was king of the stage from Lope's death until his own in 1681. He lacked the spontaneity and variety of the Phoenix, but he frequently equaled and at times surpassed him in the sheer beauty and rapturous heights of his poetry. He was an aristocratic poet, did not cater to the public, and was more profound and philosophical than Lope. Lope was the improviser, Calderon was the planner. He was a formal and Baroque writer, susceptible to the exaggerations, distortions, and rotund style of *cultismo*, and he was the chief exponent of *conceptismo* in the theater. He brought to his work a fine power of reasoning, an intellectual outlook, a keen dramatic instinct, a delicate imagination, and a lyrical power unsurpassed in his day. His theater was more calculated, more elegant, and more refined than that of any other. Both his life and his drama show a steadily growing predilection for the allegorical, mythological, and metaphysical, and he finally withdrew from the human scene preoccupied, perhaps, with the deeper concerns of life and dissatisfied with what the world had to offer, succumbing finally to the illusion that life is a dream.

As a writer of *autos sacramentales*, Calderon is supreme. The *auto*, cultivated in Spain since the time of Gil Vicente, is a one-act play, generally allegorical, that at some point or other treats the miracle of

transubstantiation. Some believe that these short pieces represent the best of the Calderonian theater, for in them his fertile imagination had free rein and his sincere religious motives and faith found their purest expression.

Both Calderon and Lope fell into disfavor with the Neoclassicists of the eighteenth century, but Calderon was rediscovered by the German Romanticists of the nineteenth century, who worshiped him and pronounced him the equal of Shakespeare. This recognition of Calderon and lack of it for Lope has been ascribed to the easy accessibility of Calderon's works and the relative rarity of Lope's editions. Whatever his rating may be, all acknowledge Calderon's rare gifts. With him the drama gained in precision and power, grandeur and profundity of conception.

1. *La Vida es sueno* (1635), Calderon's masterpiece symbolizes the struggle between free will and fate. It is deservedly famous and ranks among the foremost Spanish dramas of all time.
2. *El alcalde de Zalamea*, his best historical play and second only to *La vida es sueno*, was inspired by a drama of the same theme by Lope de Vega. It recounts the story of Pedro Crespo, a commoner with a high sense of personal honor and justice, who, elected mayor of Zalamea, orders the execution of any army captain who had kidnapped and raped his daughter. The mayor's action was later upheld by the king.
3. *El magico prodigioso*, Calderon's best religious play, tells the story of a man who makes a Pact with the devil to gain a woman's love.
4. *El medico de su honra*, his most horrifying honor tragedy, recounts how a husband, suspicious of his wife's infidelity, forces a physician to bleed her to death washing away his dishonor in her blood.

Other plays include *La cena de Baltasar*, his best *auto*; *El principe constante*; and *La devocion del la cruz* all examples of his religiophilosophical bent.

#### F. Guillen de Castro (1569 – 1630)

The fact that Guillen de Castro claimed to be a descendant of the Cid's ancestor, Lain Calvo, may have prompted him to write his great popular success, *Las mocedades del Cid* (1618), the first drama to deal with the Cid's exploits. Castro's Cid is the impetuous young man found in the *Rodrigo*, far removed from the sober, dignified national hero of the *Cantar de Mio Cid*. This play depicts the struggle in Jimena's heart between love and honor, the theme used by Corneille in *Le Cid*.

Castro was an admirer and imitator of Lope and composed a total of fifty plays. He was praised by Lope and other major writers of the *Siglo de Oro*. His success was due to his skillful use of themes from the ballads and folk legends of Spain and to his ability to transfer much of their heroic spirit to the stage.

#### G. Antonio Mira de Amescua (1577 – 1644)

Mira de Amescua was the illegitimate son of Melchr de Amescua y Mira, a fact that rankled him somewhat and may have accounted for his irascibility. He became a priest but did not take his profession seriously until his later years and spent most of his time writing for the stage. He followed Lope's lead but avoided Gongoristic tendencies.

His sixty dramas show a variety of types, and he is best remembered for *El esclavo del demonio* (1612), the story of a man's pact with the devil. This play may have influenced Tirso's *El burlador de Sevilla*, Calderon's *El magico prodigioso*, and Moreto's *Caer para levantar* (1662).

#### H. Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla (1607 – 1648)

Rojas Zorrilla's success as a playwright began in 1636m when a number of his plays were presented. In 1637 Felipe IV called on him to write for the lavish entertainments held in honor of the visit to Madrid of Maria de Borbon princess of Carignan.

Plagued by financial difficulties, Rojas ceased writing *comedias* in 1641 for the more lucrative work of composing *autos sacramentales*. Before his untimely death at the age of forty-one, Rojas had completed approximately one hundred plays seventy of which were *comedias*, a large output considering the few years he lived.

Rojas is best remembered for *Del rey abajo, ninguno* (1750), known also as *Garcia del Castanar*, a play that still has a great appeal for Spaniards, probably because it expresses so well their inherent love of freedom, equality, and dignity. Highly respected among his peers, Rojas collaborated in writing plays with

Mira de Amescua and Calderon. He mitigated the excesses of the later's treatment of honor, objecting to the king's omnipotence and championing women's right. The immense popularity of *Del rey abajo, ninguno* overshadowed the obvious merits of Rojas' other works; his *comedias de graciosos* are especially good. French imitators, among the Corneille and Scarron, borrowed from him abundantly. Other titles are *Donde hay agravios no hay celos* (1637); *Entre bobos anda el juego* (1638); and *Cada cual lo que le toca*, which presents an unusual approach to feminine honor

#### I. Agustin Moreto (1618 – 1669)

Moreto took minor orders in 1639 but had already gained a measure of success in Madrid's literary circles. He too wrote for the gala entertainments of Felipe IV's court. From 1657 until his death, however Moreto was busy with religious affairs and withdrew from Madrid, although he continued writing for the stage up to his death. His correct, quiet calm personality and his ordered and peaceful life account for the tranquility in his writing.

Moreto was not resourceful or inventive, but he was skilled in borrowing from his fellow dramatists, often improving on their work, and exceeding the all-in stagecraft and in delicacy of touch, humor and tact. This plagiarizing technique was practiced by all dramatists of the time and was not considered in any way dishonorable or criminal. In all, Moreto wrote over a hundred plays.

*El desden con el desden* (1654) improves in almost every detail on its model. Lope's *Milagros del desprecio* and was imitated by Moliere with little success in *Princesse d'Elide*. *El lindo don Diego ticiro* (1657) is based on the legend of *Pedro el Cruel*.

#### J. Lesser Dramatists of the Golden Age

1. *Juan Perez de Montalban* (1602 – 1638) is better known as Lope's biographer than as a writer although there is some injustice in this. In the fifteen years of his literary activity, he wrote fifty-eight dramas, mostly on historical themes. Criticized for his slavish imitation of Lope, Montalban was acknowledged even by his most vociferous critics to be popular with the public, a distinction that lasted well into the nineteenth century. Representative of his plays is *Despreciar lo que se quiere*.
2. *Luis Veliz de Guevara* (1579 – 1644), also a novelist, preferred historical themes and regal personages for his theater.  
Two of his plays are *Mas pesa el rey que la sangre*, based on an episode from the life of *Guzman el Bueno* and *Reinar despues de morir*, a dramatization of the tragic life of *dona Ines de Castro*.
3. *Luis Quinones de Benavente* (1589? – 1651) made his reputation with short dramatic pieces. He wrote hundreds of *entremeses*, *loas*, and *Jacaras*. Next to Cervantes, he is Spain's best writer of *entremeses*.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

#### A. General Considerations

Following Calderon's death in 1681, Spanish intellectual life deteriorated. The last Hapsburg kings were inept, and political and economic stagnation and hopelessness were reflected in intellectual and literary life. The nation was exhausted from its immense efforts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and its spiritual and physical resources were drained.

Dramatists continued the Golden Age tradition of Lope and Calderon but produced nothing significant. More progressive writers tried to refashion the drama in imitation of the Classical qualities of the French literature of the age, but the attempt failed. The result was that, except for the work of Leandro Fernandez de Moratin and Ramon de I Cruz, no successful drama was produced I Spain for 150 years.

The Neoclassic system failed in Spain, where art has always been free and national. Fettered and inhibited by foreign rules and regulations, Spanish writers could not create. They tried to write in the French manner, but the results were cold, graceless, and tasteless correct imitations that failed to please the public or the critics. Neoclassic doctrinaires and critics could legislate art but could not create it. Neoclassicism did have the positive effect, however, of restoring some order, common sense, and decorum to the degenerate national drama.

#### B. Ignacio Luzan (1702 – 1754)



Luzan's sojourns in Italy and France gave him a cosmopolitan point of view that is reflected in his writings and doctrines. His *Poetica o reglas de la Poesia en general y de sus principales especies* (1737), corrected and modified in 1789, is based largely on the theories of Aristotle and Horace as reflected in the critical works of Boileau and Muratori and is the Spanish manifesto of Neoclassicism. Together with the efforts of the Academia del Buen Gusto, founded in 1749, it furthered the introduction of Neoclassicism in Spain. Luzan condemned Spain's Golden Age drama and proposed to transform literary taste and production by imposing upon them rules imported from abroad. His efforts failed in the end, but they set off a half century of polemics between the Classical devotees and the traditionalists.

Luzan did find something good in the drama of Lope and Calderon, but he rightly concluded that something went awry toward the turn of the seventeenth century, when language became obscured and turgid through the excesses of Gongorism, and good taste, common sense, and decorum disappeared. Blas Antonio Nasarre and Agustin Montiano Luzan's disciples carried his critical attitude toward the Golden Age to the extreme.

In drama, Luzan insisted that some virtue be exalted, or some vice condemned and pleaded for a return to common sense, reason, morality, and simplicity. His work aroused Spaniards and stimulated an intellectual activity where little had existed before. Though unable to produce the literature they desired, Luzan and his disciples possessed a solid erudition and helped Spain emerge from one of her least productive eras.

Luzan's reforms in the drama include the following observance of the three unities; limitation of the number of characters; variation of Golden Age stereotypes; strict observance of decorum, verisimilitude, and good taste; condemnation of loose imagination; use of blank verse instead of thyme; insistence upon utilitarian justification; attention to costume; simplicity and clarity of style and avoidance of the excesses of Gongorism; and humor not found solely in the *gracioso*.

### C. Ramon de la Cruz Cano y Olmedilla (1731 – 1794)

Ramon de la Cruz, the only dramatic author to run contrary to the Neoclassic current during the eighteenth century wrote his first *decima* at the age of thirteen and at fifteen produced a *dialogo comico*. He attempted unsuccessfully to write some tragedies in the Neoclassic fashion. The first Spaniard to translate *Hamlet*, he also reworked some dramas by Calderon. Finally deserting the sterile forms of Neoclassicism, he turned to realism and naturalness with gratifying success.

With the failure of Neoclassicism, the public was ready for something new by the middle of the century. Much-needed social reforms instituted by the Bourbon monarchs made life more tolerable for Spaniards, who more satisfied and relaxed, wanted to enjoy themselves. In response to the public resistance to Neoclassic theater and the resurgence of popular national spirit, classic theater and the resurgence of popular national feeling and realism back to the stage. Through his *sainetes*, he gave the public what it wanted – realistic theater based on observed customs, permeated with the spirit of Spain. He was scorned by the *afrancesados* but idolized by the public.

The *sainete* is a descendant of dramatic forms dating back to mimes of Roman times. In Spain, the one-act farce began with the medieval *juegos de escarnio*. It was later cultivated by Juan del Encina (*Aucto del repelon*), Lope de Rueda (*pasos*) and Cervantes and Quinones de Benavente (*entremeses*). In the Golden Age, the *entremes* was played between the first and second acts of a longer play, and the *sainete* between the second and third. These types declined like everything else, but Ramon de la Cruz revived, renovated, and popularized the *sainete*. In his hands it became a one-act play in verse, about twenty minutes in length, with a negligible plot in which the comic element dominated.

The *sainete*, still used in the eighteenth century between acts, became a realistic portrayal of picturesque lower – and middle - class types of Madrid society and of Madrid life. The merit of Ramon de la Cruz's *sainetes* lies not in their short verse poetry, which was ordinary in quality but in their documentary accuracy and portrayal of popular classes and interesting types of the day, such as *castaneras*, *majas*, *manolos*, *petimetres*, and many others. Typical scenes that he re-created were dances, picnics, the marketplace *tertulias* and street quarrels. He satirized his contemporaries and ridiculed the *afrancesados* and their Neoclassic theater. He humorously mocked social abuses and vices in his trifling plots but always with vivid, accurate descriptions of Madrid life. He transferred to the stage without change what his eyes saw, and his ears heard, for his creed was "Yo escribo y la verdad me dicta."

He inserted song and dance in his plays; used natural, colorful, idiomatic language; strove always to entertain; helped in the triumph of popular speech over the stilted artificial language of Neoclassicism; and

achieved lasting renown with a dramatic form that at best is a minor one. Some of his better-known *sainetes* are *La pradera de San Isidro*, *La casa de Tocame Roque*, *El Rastro por la mañana*, *Manolok* and *El Prade por la noche*.

#### D. Leandro Fernandez de Moratin (1760 – 1828)

After the death of his father, Moratin turned to writing and won two prizes from the Spanish Academy. Gaspar Meldhor de Jovellanos secured him the position of secretary in the Spanish embassy in Paris. While there, Moratin frequented the salons and libraries, met Goldoni, translated two plays of his idol, Moliere, and studied the French theater firsthand. Upon his return to Spain, he was patronized by Godoy and produced his first play in 1790, *El viejo y la niña*. *La comedia nueva o el afe* in 1792 attacked the inanities in the theater at the turn of the century and ridiculed the hack writer Comella.

Though Moratin was timid and reserved, his sober and noble concept of the drama permitted him to satirize weaknesses and foibles. He believed that the drama should be a portrayal in dialogue of an event with realistic development of characters and speech and that it should exalt some virtue or truth or condemn some social evil. His masterpiece, *El sí de las niñas* (1806), reveals these principles and as the first modern thesis play condemns parental meddling in children's marriages. He followed Neoclassic principles in this play, although he used prose instead of verse and reduced the number of acts from five to three. Here, as in his plays in verse, *El viejo y la niña* (1790), *El barón* (1803) and *La mojigata* (1804), Moratin showed a special interest in the relations of youth and old age.

Having accepted from Joseph Bonaparte the position of director of the Royal Library, he felt his fellow Spaniards looked upon him as an *afrancesados*, and after withdrawing with the French when they fell from power, he eventually escaped to France, where he died in 1828.

Moratin's literary production is scant. His letters written during his extended travels in Europe are classed as the best in Spain excepting those of Santa Teresa. He wrote only five original dramas. One regrets that his fears dried up his creative talents and splendid literary gifts, for he was the only Spaniard to combine successfully Neoclassicism and the Spanish spirit. Unlike Golden Age drama, Moratin's plays had simple plots, observed the unities, and were restrained.

Other works include a prose satire against literary affection, quite humorous at times, *La derrota de los pedants* (1789). In 1830 his *Origenes del teatro español*, a study of the early Spanish drama, was published.

#### E. Minor Dramatists of the Eighteenth Century

1. *Nicolas Fernandez de Moratin* (1737 – 1780), father of the more famous Leandro, was a vociferous critic of Calderon and Lope and a frequenter of all the literary academics and *tertulias*. He became the discussion leader at the Fonda de San Sebastian, a leading Neoclassic center in Madrid. Among his works are *La petimetra* (1762), which was the first Spanish Neoclassic attempt at comedy, though it was never performed; and three tragedies; *Lucrecia* (1763), *Guzman el Bueno* (1777), and his best known though equally unimpressive play *Hormesinda* (1770). Although highly rated by the intellectuals, *Hormesinda* was a failure in the eyes of the public. Despite his efforts to imitate Neoclassic models, his nest literary effort was a panegyric poem on bullfighting. *Fiesta de Toros en Madrid*, which succeeded because of its true national spirit.

2. *Agustin Montino y Luyando* (1697 – 1765), one of the founders of the Academia del Buen Gusto, attempted unsuccessfully to put into practice his Neoclassic theories in two tragedies, *Virginia* (1750), which he hoped would serve as a Neoclassic model, and *Ataulfo* (1753). Lacking originality and creative ability, he insisted not only upon the three traditional unities of time place, and action but also on a fourth that he called "unity of character."

3. *Vicente Garcia de la Huertra* (1734 – 1787), though a Neoclassicist, somehow was able to surmount the coldness of the Neoclassic form and breathe a genuine Spanish flavor into his play. *Raquel* (1778). This drama written in strict conformity with Neoclassic rules adhered to the three instead of five acts. According to Menendez y Pelayo, it was "the great theatrical event in the reign of Carlos III." Although its exterior was Neoclassic basically it was national in spirit, for it exemplified honor, bravery, gallantry, and an ardent Spanish nationalism, related in spirit to the Golden Age tradition. Its theme, which Juan Diamante, Lope de Vega and Mira de Amescua had used before, concerns the love of Alfonso VIII for the Jewess of Toledo Raquel.

4. *Tomas de Iriarte* (1750 – 1791), better known as a fabulist is important in the Neoclassic theater for his two comedies, *El señorito mimado* and *La señorita malcriada*, the first about a dissipated youth and the second about a spoiled daughter and an indulgent father. Both appeared in 1788. His *Hacer que hacemos* (1770) was a failure, and his *El don de gentes* appeared posthumously.

A number of eighteenth-century authors, not primarily known as dramatists, tried their hand at this literary form. Their dramas include *El delincuente honrado* (1774), by Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744 – 1811); *Sancho Garcia* (1771), by Jose Cadalso (1741 – 1782); *Las bodas de Camacho* (1784), by Juan Melendez Valdes (1754 – 1817); *El duque de Viseo* (1801) and *Pelayo* (1805), by Manuel Jose Quintana (1772 – 1857); and *Zoraida* (1798), by Nicasio Alvarez Cienfuegos (17674 – 1809). Some authors among them Candido Maria Trigueros (1736 – 1801) and Dionisio Solis (1774 – 1834), made revisions (*refundiciones*) of Golden Age plays.

Part III : FICTION

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THE RENAISSANCE

#### A. Novels of Chivalry

Although the Renaissance ushered in the modern age, old traditions continued to live. An example of this is the spread of the novel of chivalry in which medieval heroes were transformed into knight-courtiers with the manners and ideals of Renaissance gentlemen. Novels of chivalry became the most popular and widely disseminated form of fiction in Spain in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Although they existed earlier in their countries. Spain gave them permanence produced the best-known knight, Amadis, and then brought the genre to an end. The Inquisition disapproved of them, scholars condemned them, and critics assailed their style and bad taste; but still all society devoured them. Their unprecedented popularity, some said, was due to an escapist urge in the Spanish people or to the nations craving for adventure, which was in part being fed by the marvelous adventures in the New World. Others felt that the novels had an enervating effect on the people and wanted to ban them. In addition to the Carolingian and Arthurian cycles, the two important peninsular cycles were those of Amadis de Gaula and Palmerin. The vogue of the novel of chivalry lasted until realism returned with *Lazarillo de Tormes* in 1554. Don Quijote sounded their death knell when he laughed them completely out of existence in 1605. No novel of chivalry was written after that date.

Almost all the heroes of the chivalric novels are of illegitimate birth. The knight must sally forth to right wrongs and slay dragons to win the favor of his lady. At times he is aided by magic; at other times magic harms him. After many adventures he returns to be rewarded by his lady's smile. Often in the end he is recognized as the son of a king or nobleman, and he usually marries his lady.

Renaissance fiction was of loose construction, and novels ended either in a mystery or in such a way that the author or someone else could write a sequel. Thus, cycles of chivalric novels were born. Amadis, for example, had a son and a series of grandsons, and with them the adventures continued through a dozen volumes. The priest in the *Quijote* burns most of the worthless sequels, but he saved Amadis from the flames.

Chivalric novels are filled with absurdities, magic enchantments, the hero's inevitable victory, and improbable incidents that have little attraction for modern readers, although most are acquainted with the gallant knight-errant and the charm of the Tristan and Iseult type of story. Yet all was not bad in the novels of chivalry, for they taught modesty, bravery, sacrifice constancy in love protection of the weak and oppressed, and fair play.

1. *Amadis de Gaula*. Whether this novel is of French, Portuguese, or Spanish origin has never been settled. The earliest allusion to Amadis, however, was by a Spanish poet, Pero Ferrus (Ferrandes), and Lopez de Ayala's *Rimo de Palacio* testifies to a three-volume edition of his exploits circulating in Spain before 1350. The best redaction of the Amadis legend was made by a Spaniard, Garci Rodriguez de Montalvo (also known as Garci Ordonez de Montalvo). All this makes a good case for a Spanish origin. Though the ultimate source of Amadis material is in the Arthurian legend, no

one believes today that the Spanish version was a translation from the French. Unfortunately, no medieval Spanish version was preserved, and the earliest known version did not appear until 1508 when Rodriguez de Montalvo gave us *Los cuatro libros del virtuoso caballero Amadis de Gaula*. This is the version that has lasted through the ages. In its portrayal of the perfect knight it served as a code for good manners and virtuous conduct, thus greatly influencing the society of the time. It was translated into English by Southey and into French by Herberay and had an immense effect on the European novel. It adds to its fanciful wars against giants a bit of eroticism that differs from the emphasis of the more feudal English novels.

Rodriguez de Montalvo's *Amadis de Gaula* is Spain's best and most important novel of chivalry, and its renown has reechoed down through the ages. Spaniards, Italians, Frenchmen, Germans, and Englishmen used it freely as literary source material. Bernal Dia del Castillo could only describe the incredible marvels of Mexico City in terms of the *Amadis*. This great novel went through many editions, represents the best Renaissance Spanish prose, and ranks as one of Spain's great contributions to the age.

2. *The Amadis cycle*. The first sequel to the *Amadis* was *Las sergas de Esplandian*, also written by Rodriguez de Montalvo. Esplandian was Amadis' son. Foulche-Delbosc explained that *sergas* refers to the paintings of knight-errantry that decorated the walls of the palaces of the day and is therefore synonymous with "adventures." Spaniards gave California its name because it reminded them of an island of that name described in *Las sergas*.

Feliciano de Silva, considered by Cervantes to be the best author of chivalric novels, was probably the most popular. He turned out a large number of "pot boilers," most of which are prolix and tiresome. Nevertheless, his success at home and abroad was enormous and attracted many imitators, including Shakespeare and Spenser. His contributions to the *Amadis* cycle are *Amadis de Grecia*.

Juan Diaz committed the indiscretion of causing Amadis to die of old age and his beloved Oriana to enter a convent; but the adoring public would not countenance such treachery, and Amadis was promptly revived. As an immortal patriarch, he watched his offspring fight their way through an interminable series of adventures.

Scarcely anyone reads the *Amadis* today. But if the book has not been readable in all ages, it has the distinction of having engendered Spain's greatest novel, for without the *Amadis*, *Don Quijote* would very likely not have been possible.

3. *The Palmerin cycle* concerns the character whom next to Amadis, is the most important knight of the Renaissance. The first book in this cycle was the anonymous *Palmerin de Oliva* (1511), a poor imitation of *Amadis de Gaula*. The second in the cycle, *Primaleon* (1512), also anonymous, recounts, among other things, the adventures of Prince Edward of England (don Duardos), later dramatized by Gil Vicente.

Cervantes criticized chivalric novels harshly but praised the best of the *Palmerin* cycle, *Palmerin de Inglaterra* (1547), written by the Portuguese author Francisco de Moraes (1500 – 1572) in 1544 but not published until 1567. The original was translated into Spanish and published by Hurtado de Toledo (d. 1590) before the Portuguese original appeared. Avidly read in Europe, *Palmerin* has a unity lacking in most of the other chivalric novels, beautiful passages, and detailed battle scenes. It influenced John Keats, among others.

4. *Tirant lo Blanch*, which recounts the adventures of a knight by the same name, was begun about 1460 and published in Catalan in 1490. The first three parts are by Johanot Martorell, the fourth by Marti Johan de Galba. It was translated into Spanish in 1511. Unlike other chivalric novels, it avoids the supernatural and emphasizes realistic and even obscene elements.

## B. The Sentimental Novel

The sentimental novels treat the theme of love in an idealistic and sentimental manner and seem to be based on the personal lives of the authors. Their heroes are knights, and important element is love, but surprisingly one finds discussions on the rights of women. These are among the earliest works to use letters to develop plot and show a fusion of tradition and progress, of authority and liberty, typical of the Spanish Renaissance.

1. *El siervo linre de amor* (ca. 1440) is a somewhat allegorical, romantic autobiography by Juan Rodriguez de la Camara (d. ca. 1450), also called Juan Rodriguez del Padron. He championed women's rights and refuted *El corbacho*.
2. *Carcel de amor* (1492) had extraordinary success, despite protests of the Inquisition and moralists like Luis Vives, and influenced two of Spain's greatest literary works, *La Celestina* and *Don Quijote*. Little is known of its author, Diego de San Pedro, except that he was probably Jewish and was in the service of don Pedro Giron. His famous novel had some twenty-five editions in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and over twenty foreign translations. Its influences at home and abroad was significant.
3. *Grimalte y Gradisa*, by Juan de Flores, an obvious continuation of the *Fiammetta*, was published in 1495. Flores' other famous novel is *Historia de Grisel y Mirabella*, written between 1480 and 1485. His novels were very popular, influenced Lope de Vega and Fletcher, and represent the culmination of the sentimental type.
4. *Cuestion de amor de dos enamorados* (ca. 1513) mixes prose and verse to recount the intrigues of the Spanish court at Naples and is sentimental, psychological, and historical at the same time. It is a *roman a clef*, and almost all its characters have been identified.

### C. *La Celestina*

Known in its earlier editions as *Comedia de Calisto y Melibea* and *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*, it is now simply called *La Celestina*. Its author, Fernando de Rojas, was converted Jewish lawyer who died in 1541. Some critics believe the dialogued novel to be a veiled attack by a *converso* on the discriminatory society of his day. Though there still is some controversy concerning *La Celestina's* authorship especially the five interpolated acts, it is now widely believed that Rojas authored all twenty-one acts.

The earliest known edition published in 1499 contained sixteen acts. A 1501 edition adds a letter that claims that the author, on vacation, discovered the first act already written and added an act a day for fifteen days. The 1502 edition contains five additional acts. Rojas claimed to have written all but the first act, but modern consensus gives him the nod for all twenty-one.

Although the work is in the form of a drama in prose, it was never intended for the stage and is more novel than drama.

The chief sources of *La Celestina* are the works of Juan Ruiz growth of Ruiz's Trotaconventos, and the language and atmosphere owe much to *El corbacho*. Many other literary figures, ranging from Ovid to Diego de San Pedro, probably influenced Rojas. In turn, *La Celestina's* impact on European literature was tremendous. More than sixty-three editions appeared in sixteenth-century Spain alone, and translations were made into Italian German, French, and English. It has been said that Shakespeare borrowed elements from it in writing *Romeo and Juliet*. In short, the importance of *La Celestina* on the modern novel can hardly be overestimated.

The plot is simple, Calisto, in love with Melibea, employs the service of an old crone, Celestina, and through her help enjoys the favors of the young lady. Sempronio and Parmeno, Calisto's servants who are in league with Celestina fall out with her over the profits and kill her. In turn they too are killed. After a midnight tryst with Melibea, Calisto falls from a ladder he used to scale her garden wall and dies from head wounds. Grief-stricken, Melibea hurls herself from a tower to join her lover in death. More important than the plot are the warm and human characterizations, the language, the picaresque elements, the proverbs and folklore, the human passion, the tremendous realism, the richness and variety of the prose, and the originality of the form.

Celestina is a character of such magnitude that she dominates the entire work. A woman of many professions, she is a witch, a procuress in league with Satan, a former prostitute, a manufacturer of love potions, and a mender of broken virginities. She is quite wicked and greedy, but she does not envy or hate, and her one consistent philosophy is that life must be enjoyed. Though she seems to be evil incarnate there is something likeable about her attitudes toward life and her love for others. Sempronio and Parmeno are believable creations also, as are other minor characters.

*La Celestina's* language is remarkable, full of realistic dialogue, popular speech, and lively conversation. Each person speaks in a different manner, which gives a hitherto unknown flexibility to the work. Two levels of language are obvious, the cultured Renaissance speech of Calisto and Melibea and the common and popular language of the others. This duality once more illustrates the interplay between the ideal and the real in Spanish literature.

In style the work is again a two-level fusion of idealism and realism. Calisto's passion evokes the carnal realism of Celestina and the others. Melibea the poetic creation, contrasts with the earthy Celestina. The romantic love of Calisto and Melibea, despite its carnal aspects, contrasts with the purely physical passion of Parmeno and Areusa. A lofty scene is followed by one of low life. The polished language of Calisto sets off the barbarisms of Celestina. To some extent the characters are symbolic also. Parmeno at first speaks as the voice of the Middle Ages, and Elicia is the voice of the Renaissance.

Rojas reveals his characters' human weaknesses of greed and passion. He tries to be objective but makes his moral sympathies clear when at the beginning of Act 1 he states that he composed the work "en reprehension de los locos enamorados... en aviso de los engannos de las alcahuetas y malos y lisonjeros sirgientes." Despite the allegations of obscenity and immorality laid against it, *La Celestina* is an intensely moral book.

Despite its Classical references, overabundant for modern tastes, the work excels in its new psychological realism and its true portraits of human passion.

## THE GOLDEN AGE

### A. The Pastoral Novel

The pastoral novel developed in Spain in the second half of the sixteenth century. This type of fiction originated in Italy and was an artificial form of fiction intended for the aristocratic reader who had tired of knights-errant. Boccaccio's *Ameto* and *Ninfale Fiesolano* and Jacopo Sannazarro's *Arcadia* (1504) were the most famous early European pastoral novels. Pastoral literature attempted to re-create idyllic beauty with unreal rustic landscapes, false pictures of manners, courtly gallantry, and idealistic love. The majority are "key novels," and the shepherds represent real people, nobles in disguise who wander about the countryside pouring out their love. The happenings are improbable, country life is idealized, and the noels are conventional, artificial, and lacking in verisimilitude as well as true emotion. They borrowed from the chivalric novels in the use of gallantry, magic, and chivalric love. The pastoral writers mingled poetry with their prose, and Classical eclogues, like those of Garcilaso, became a conventional part of later novels.

Italy did not provide the sole influence, for antecedents of the bucolic manner existed in Spain, namely in Galician-Portuguese lyric poetry, Berceo, the *cantigas de serrana* of Juan Ruiz, the *serranillas* of the Marques de Santillana, and the *eglogas* of Juan del Encina.

*Los siete libros de la Diana* (ca. 1559), the first and best Spanish pastoral novel, was composed by Jorge de Montemayor (a. 1520 – 1561), a Portuguese Jew whose interesting life ended in a duel over a question of love. It ran through seventeen printings in the sixteenth century alone and influenced not only pastoral works of Lope de Vega and Cervantes but also Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1590), Honore d'Urfe's *Astree* (1610 – 1619), and Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1595). The *Diana's* tedious plot is filled with frustrated loves, nymphs who come to the aid of lovers magical love potions, and, of course, many tears. The novel is an elegant prose interspersed with pleasant lyrics. The story of Abindarraez y Jarifa was inserted into the fourth chapter, probably after Montemayor's death.

The *Diana* has the merit of brevity, and it captivated European readers. Its defects are its wearisome plot, cloying sentimentality, lachrymosity, and effeminate tone. Interestingly Montemayor was probably the first to disguise women in men's clothing, a device that became popular later.

There were many imitations of the *Diana*, among them *Diana enamorada* (1564), by Gaspar Gil Polo, and Alonso Perez's *Segunda parte de la Diana* (1564). Lope wrote *Arcadia* (1598), and Cervantes produced *La Galatea* (1585), both in the pastoral manner.

The pastoral vogue lasted about a century, but by 1600 the public had tired of these unrealistic and artificial works and turned elsewhere for reading entertainment.

## B. The Moorish or Historical Novel

These novels accentuate the Oriental effect, and although most are naïve, they are more readable than the pastoral or chivalric works. The “noble” Moor is idealized, although the Moors at this time were not generally admired or respected.

1. *Historia del Abencerraje y de la hermosa Jarifa*, an anonymous *novela morisca*, is the first of its kind and precursor of the modern historical novel. Many consider it to be the outstanding short fictional work of the sixteenth century. The story has come down to us principally in three versions, of which that of Antonio de Villegas in 1565 is considered the best. No agreement has been reached regarding its authorship or date. At any rate it constitutes the earliest European didactic short story and shows a remarkable emotional and psychological penetration. It influenced many, including Cervantes, Lope, Chateaubriand, Hugo, Alarcon, and Washington Irving. The plot tells of the capture and imprisonment of the courageous knight Abindarraez. He is released for three days to marry his beloved Jarifa. Upon returning to his captor, the latter is so impressed with his worth that he gives him his freedom.
2. *Historia de los bandos de los Zegries y Abencerrajes*, usually called *Guerra's civiles de Granada* (first part, 1595; second part, 1604), was written by Gines Perez de Hita (1544 – 1619). The first part, more novel than history than novel, deals with the war against the Alpujarra Moors. The idealized portrait of the Moors as gallant knights was accepted as authentic by the Moors as gallant knights was accepted as authentic by the rest of Europe, and it had a strong impact on other writers, among them Lope, Pedro Antonio de Alarcon Washington Irving, Mile, de Scudery, Chateaubriand, Cervantes, Calderon, Martinez de la rosa, and Mme. De La Fayette.

Much of Perez de Hita's material came from the Moorish frontier ballads, some of which are interspersed throughout the book. The first volume tells of the kings of Granada, rivalries among the Moors, and the constant infighting between two factions, the Abencerrajes and the Zegries. Perez de Hita gave free rein to his fantasy and described the romantic legends and splendor of the Moorish capital in its last days. Although much is false and exaggerated, the feasts and other events seem quite realistic. Not a witness of the events he described, the author cleverly wove fact and fantasy, truth and legend, together so that they are quite often indistinguishable. This created a false impression of Moorish life that proved difficult to eradicate in later years.

## C. The Picaresque Novel

The *pícaros*, upon whom the picaresque novel is based, were usually errand boys, porters, or factotums and were pictured as crafty, sly, tattered, hungry, unscrupulous petty thieves. They stole to escape starvation and were likable despite their defects.

The picaresque novel, a reaction against the absurd unrealities, and idealism of the pastoral, sentimental, and chivalric novels, represents the beginning of modern Realism. It juxtaposed the basic drives of hunger, cruelty, and mistrust and the honorable, glorious, idyllic life of knights and shepherds. Hunger replaced love as a theme, and poverty replaced wealth.

Early picaresque novels were both idealistic and realistic, tragic and comic, and the authors attacked political religious, and military matters. Some authors were sincere reformers, while others conveniently set off their sermons so they might be easily avoided. They reflected the poverty and unsound economic conditions of late sixteenth-century Spain. Spaniards were living in a dream world after the glories of the conquest of the New World. They flocked to the cities, the upper classes refusing work with their hands, cultivate the land, or engage in business or commerce, all of which were viewed as degrading. Poor knights starved with the beggars. Thus, though comic elements are omnipresent, the sentiment is tragic – tragedy of a Spain that was outwardly the most powerful nation in the

world but inwardly on the path to decline and ruin. The picaresque genre faithfully portrays these tragic conditions.

The picaresque novel is autobiographical and episodic in nature, as the *picaro* recounts his adventures in the service of one master after another. These novels rarely came to a conclusive end and were sometimes continued in later volumes. They inherited a long tradition of satire and bourgeois humor dating as far back as first-century Roman novels. Foreign influences include Dance of Death poetry, the French *fabliaux*, Italian novels and short stories, and German collections. Antecedents in Spain are found in *El Caballero Cifar*, *El corbacho*, *El libro de buen amor*, and *La Celestina*. Spanish writers gave the picaresque genre an intensity and urgency, however, that was previously lacking and made their picaresque tales one of the landmarks of European Realism.

Usually the *picaro* is the lower classes. Forced into a life of servitude by the severity of the times, he drifts into a life of petty time and deceitfulness in his struggle for survival. The tone of the novel is hard, cynical, skeptical, often bitter, and it often portrays the corrupt and ugly. Humor abounds, but it is only a step removed from tears, and what appears to be funny is tragic in a different light.

The *picaros* ordinarily write of their old age about their experiences as idealistic youths. Yet they do not present the whole picture. In its emphasis on the seamier side of life, the picaresque novel twists and deforms reality. The *picaro* lives by his wits and steals and lies just to stay alive. His many employers give the author the opportunity to satirize various social classes and to paint a portrait of a period full of living, brawling human beings.

1. *Retrato de la lozana andaluza* (1528), by Francisco Delicado, is the earliest preserved picaresque novel, but it does little justice to the genre as it paints a sordid picture of the corruption, licentiousness, and dissoluteness of Rome during the Renaissance.
2. *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes y de sus fortunas y adversidades* (1554), known simply as *Lazarillo de Tormes*, is the first important picaresque novel. The question of authorship has not been divided, and most regard the work as anonymous. Its triumph was immediate and universal, and many native and foreign authors owe it a great debt. The inquisition banned it in 1559, probably because of its bitter attacks on clerics. Since editions were being smuggled in from abroad, however, Felipe II ordered it purged of features that denigrated the clergy.

*Lazarillo de Tormes* has seven chapters in which the little anti-hero serves a blind man, a priest, a *hidalgo*, a friar, a seller of indulgences, a chaplain, and a constable before he settles down to a respectable position as town crier in Toledo. Each master contributes to the social commentary and to the realistic education of Lazarillo. The blind man opens his eyes to the cruelties of the world, the priest shows him miserliness and hypocrisy, and the others convince him of the essential depravity of man. The important third chapter reveals a starving *hidalgo* symbolic of Spain, too proud to accept employment because of his noble blood and because work would be degrading. Yet he was willing to eat food begged by Lazarillo and thus became a parasite of a parasite. Lazarillo cannot afford this false pride, for he is a human animal who must search for something to eat in a world always against him and other underdogs who must survive by their wits.

*Lazarillo's* language, simple and rapid, is not vulgar and eschews crudities. Even when the humor is crude, the words are inoffensive. Antitheses, augmentatives, and personifications abound, along with an intimate tone in the constant use of possessive adjectives, as in expressions such as "Abro mi Puerta, bajo mi escalera, subo por mi calle," Expressions such as "El bueno de mi padre" and "el bueno de mi ciego" add charm to the work.

Today it is difficult to visualize the revolutionary quality and temerity of *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Under Felipe II the risk of portraying Spain as it really was great indeed. Imitations of the social satire of *Lazarillo de Tormes* did not appear until after the king's death. Most later writers of picaresque novels spoke more bitterly of life but added social studies, local color and *cuadros de costumbres* to make their works more complete. As Spain became more decadent, the *picaro* was perverted from a suffering



human being into one who enjoyed crime for itself. As the seventeenth century wore on, crime, not hunger, became the *picaro's* chief guide.

3. Mateo Aleman (1547? – 1614) composed the second most important picaresque novel, *Guzman de Alfarache*, in two parts, published in 1599 and 1604. A proposed third part never materialized.

The *picaro* in this novel leads a complete life from youth to old age and is portrayed more thoroughly as a character than Lazarillo. The social background is broader, albeit seamier, as parasites, criminals, and injustice are found everywhere. Cynicism, pessimism, and a profound conviction of the essential depravity of man permeate *Guzman de Alfarache*, though occasional nobility shines through and the hero is saved by his Catholic faith. More popular at first than the *Quijote*, it went through some twenty-nine editions in five years and was translated into a number of foreign languages. The second part contains many beautiful scenes of Spanish life, but they must be searched for in the maze of long, moralizing passages and countless digressions, perhaps used to avoid censure and clerical censorship.

*Guzman de Alfarache* like other picaresque novels, comprises a string of incident held together by a central character, and one avoids the moral while watching with the author the heroes and villains of life from the *Atalaya de la vida humana* (watchtower to view human life). This is also the subtitle of the novel.

4. *El libro de entretenimiento de la picara Justina* (1605), known simply as *La picara Justina* has been attributed to the Toledan Francisco Lopez de Ubeda and consists of an *Aertre poetica*, three prologues, and four books. It recounts Justina's adventures, which are quite difficult to follow. The book, in bad taste, is redeemed in part by its colorful and rich vocabulary and phraseology.
5. *Relaciones de la vida Escudero Marcos de Obregon* (1618) relates in autobiographical fashion the adventures of Civate Espinel (1550 – 1624). This novel differs from the ordinary in its lack of bitterness and in its refinement and appreciation of beauty. It has the marks of the Milesian tale and the usual digressions and moralizing. It is one of Spain's best picaresque novels and ranks along with *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzman de Alfarache*, and *El Buscon*.
6. *Vida del Buscon, llamado don Pablos* (1626) is simply called *El Buscon*. Considered by many to be Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas' greatest work, it represents the culmination of this type of fiction and is typical of its author's work. Quevedo is pitiless, almost grotesque, in describing the boardinghouses of Salamanca and a host of repulsive characters. He wrote in cruel, bitter and somber tones, for he neither liked nor admired his fellow man. He exaggerated his realism to the point of caricature, a technique that resounded throughout Europe, and Quevedo's extremes had enormous effect. Life is portrayed as cruel and heartless, but if the crudeness, misanthropy, sarcasm, and repulsiveness of *El Buscon* are offensive it attracts by its vigor and brilliance. The Baroque language is full of puns, conceits, and jokes despite the fact that Quevedo opposed Gongorism. Among his nonpicaresque works are the *Suenos*, a series of five visions in which he meets members of all strata of society undergoing punishment for their sins. This book is considered to be the bitterest social satire of the Golden Age.

Minor picaresque writers include Alonso de Castillo Solorzano (1584 – 1648), Alonso Jeronimo de Salas Barbadillo (1581 – 1635), and Luis Velez de Guevara y Duenas (1578 – 1644).

The vogue of the extremely popular picaresque novel lasted for approximately a century from 1550 to 1650. Had Spain not entered upon its great decline, the picaresque novel could have developed into a realistic novel of manners, but it died along with other literary forms by the end of the seventeenth century.

The influence of the picaresque novel on Spanish and world literature was enormous. All the important Spanish novels were promptly translated into the other European tongues. They contributed as much as *Don Quijote* to the demise of idealistic fiction and proved once again that all views of life the low as well as the high can fascinate and that a realistic representation of life, even if it portrays the ugly, the

grotesque, the unpleasant, the rude, and the repulsive, can be made appealing. This democratization of novelistic prose and the reinstatement of realism to fiction are two of the greatest contributions of the picaresque novel to literature.

D. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra (1547 – 1616)

Cervantes lived at a time when Spanish letters had entered their Golden Age and all forms of the novel had flourished, setting the stage for the appearance of the master. Born in Alcalá, a great center of learning, Cervantes traveled widely over Spain with his father, a surgeon seeking better fortune. He thus came into contact with people of all types and classes. His education was sketchy, but he read widely in works of the Classical and Spanish authors. In Madrid he studied for a time with Juan Lopez de Hoyos, who instilled in the youth a love of tolerance and freedom.

A poor lad of Cervantes' time had three career choices: he could emigrate or become a soldier or a priest. Cervantes chose the military and distinguished himself in the battle of Lepanto, in which he received three wounds. One of these deprived him of the use of his left hand, which gained him the title "El manco de Lepanto." This was always a source of pride for him. He fought in other battles, and after being honorably discharged, he set out for Spain. The ship on which he sailed, however, was taken by Barbary pirates, and Cervantes was held prisoner for several years in Algiers. Finally ransomed, he returned to Spain, wounded and poor but with a mind enriched by his experiences and hardships.

In Spain he obtained a government position as a purchasing officer for the Spanish Armada. His duties took him all over Spain, and once again he came into contact with various classes and types of people. Because of certain irregularities in his accounts and defection of an untrustworthy subordinate, Cervantes was arrested and put in jail where, it is said he began writing *Don Quijote*. His family was suspected of some involvement in the murder of a nobleman outside Cervantes' house in Valladolid, but the charges were eventually dropped. The incident shows, however, the low esteem in which his family was held. Cervantes spent the last years of his life writing, and he had plans for many other works when he died of dropsy on April 23, 1616.

In most ways Cervantes was an ordinary man, but he had the spark of genius to produce great creative works. His first love was poetry, for which he had no talent even though he tried repeatedly to write poems. He tried his hand also at the drama and wrote some twenty plays of which only two were performed.

He did succeed with the *entremeses* and wrote some of Spain's best. In them we see the same duality of materialism and idealism that would mark his fiction.

1. *La Galatea*, a pastoral novel, was written in 1583 and published in 1585. Cervantes completed only the first part, and until his death he thought his fame would rest on this work. He injected his double vision of life, the real and the ideal, into this novel and offered new elements such as blood and death and more vehement and tragic passion than appeared in the typical pastoral.
2. *Las novelas ejemplares* are much more closely allied with *Don Quijote*. In the prologue, Cervantes insists, perhaps to avoid difficulty with the Inquisition, that each *novela*, or short story, will teach some moral lesson. His twelve *novelas* can roughly be divided into romantic novels and novels of customs. In them he does not hesitate to paint vice and brutality, but he portrays them always in an artistic manner, and his occasional crude Naturalism is tempered by a delicate fantasy. Many of his heroes seem subject to moral compulsions to do the right thing.

His Romantic novels have too many digressions, tears, and false coincidences and take place in exotic settings such as the Orient or England. In the novels of customs, which take place in Spain, Cervantes unites his experiences, imagination, and prophetic vision into a unified whole. He takes a modern position on liberty and honor, and the true meaning of nobility and virtue for him differs greatly from the artificial Spanish *pundonor* of his time. He insists on virtuous matrimony and ethical and artistic harmony.

The value of these novels lies in the painting of the society of his time in many of its aspects, good, bad, and indifferent. The idea of a group of independent novels was almost unheard of in his day, but he tried to give them cohesion by promising that each would yield a profitable example and that the whole would provide tasty and honest fruit. Among

the better novels are *La gitanilla*, *El casamiento enganoso*, *El coloquio de los perros*, *El licenciado vidriera*, and *Rinconete y Cortadillo*. Next to *Don Quijote*, these novels constitute Cervantes' best work.

3. *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, Cervantes' last work, was briefly more popular than the *Quijote*, despite its impossible plot, complicated movement, and overly perfect characters. The *Persiles* has value for its exoticism, its adventures to realize a perfect love, and occasional references to problems of the day. The prologue contains one of the most beautiful passages of Spanish prose. Cervantes wrote it four days before his death and after receiving extreme unction.

Superficially, the *Persiles* resembles *Theagenes and Chariclea*, the Greek novel, and Cervantes admitted his indebtedness. He wrote it, he said, strictly as a "libro de entretenimiento" with no serious purpose in mind. It subtitled *Historia septentrional*, the north being the land of romance and mystery, and he moves his characters from northern to southern climes, from misty seas and distant islands through Lisbon, Spain, France, and Italy. Numerous subplots enhance the interest of the novel, and for William J. Entwistle they are the outstanding value of the work.

Outstanding in the *Persiles* too are the brief, concise histories of the soul. Interspersed are discourses on history, love, honor, ignorance, women, and almost every other conceivable subject. The main characters, *Persiles* and *Sigismunda*, and the minor characters as well are perfection incarnate, model human beings. The one exception is *Rosamunda*, a minor character, who is lascivious and lewd, full of amorous desire unable to resist vice sensuality.

Critical opinion on this book is varied, ranging from Fitzmaurice-Kelly's frankness in condemning it a failure to Bell's finding it "a great work full of vital thought." Perhaps Azorin came closest in summing it up as a "libro admirable de un gran poeta."

4. *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha*, known affectionately simply as the *Quijote*, is Spain's greatest literary masterpiece. It has remained Spain's most popular book for 385 years, and a good case can be made for it as the world's most frequently published book.

Cervantes had failed to receive fame on the battlefield or as a writer, and when he set about the task of writing the *Quijote*, he was probably not clear in his mind what he intended to do, for the book grows in every way as it proceeds. He said that he would write his book as a chastisement of those authors of the pernicious, inane novels of chivalry and that his purpose would be "poner en aborrecimiento de los hombres las fingidas y disparatadas historias de los libros de caballerias." Viewed in this light, the *Quijote* is a parody on the novel of chivalry, establishing a precedent for the burlesque, which has been an integral part of Spanish literature ever since. But Cervantes despised only the excesses of the chivalric novels, and when he condemned them, he saved from destruction some that convey idealism, bravery, loyalty and a sense of devotion to high causes. These virtues he wanted to preserve in an age when he could see them disappearing. His book, therefore, takes the form of the standard novel of chivalry, and *don Quijote*, who read these novels until his mind was turned, sets out into the world as a knight-errant in an age when knight-errantry has been dead for centuries. Accompanied by his squire, *Sancho Panza*, he fights and suffers for his knightly ideals as he attempts to right the wrongs of the world, to protect the weak and oppressed, to bring about what he called the "Golden Age," which to his mind was something like the "Kingdom of Heaven." He failed, to be sure, to reform the world, by the never relinquished his ideals, never retreated in the face of danger, hardships suffering or disappointment, and although he failed, he was quite sure that the effort had been worth making. Could Cervantes have intended to represent Spain in the character of *don Quijote*? The analogy holds for Spain, too, had set out to reform the world and had failed, but felt the effort had not been in vain.

To attempt to limit this great book to one theme is folly, for many themes abound therein, and it is much more than a pseudo novel of chivalry, parody, or allegory. Within the larger work are found the inserted tales that represent every fictional type of the age – the Moorish, the pastoral, the Italian, and others – Cervantes fused them all into a harmonious whole. Perhaps the basic question of the author is What is reality, a higher reality in the

fields of religion, art, and politics, and suggests that though the world may think the idealist mad, he may find a higher satisfaction within himself. And as one sympathizes with Quijote's splendid idealism and watches him in one failure after another, one wonders whether it is not reality, after all, that is at fault. Cervantes also makes the point that truth is relative, and what are windmills to the realist may be giants to the idealist.

The *Quijote* appeared in two parts, the first published in 1605 and the second in 1615. From the title itself one can perceive the dualism of the novel and the interplay of the real and the ideal. The name Quijote is a fanciful invention and La Mancha was well-known province of Spain, but *ingenioso* was a new and exotic word in Cervantes' time. Quijote, a typical *hidalgo*, of whom there were many, remembered a glorious Spanish past and was moderately well-off. Exactly as Cervantes failed in real life, so Quijote was to fail, for the lot of truthful "madman" is not an enviable one. The "real" world he wanted to bring back had never existed, and he discovered that, unfortunately, one cannot live continually in a Utopian or poetic world. In his "madness" he was on a higher level than reality, but eventually he had to accept an imperfect world. The tragedy of Quijote is the tragedy of reformers, and perhaps in the end he does not fail as he abandons his noble attempt and idealism. Madariaga said that while Hamlet represents the pressure of society on the individual don Quijote represents the pressure of the individual on society. Man must always strive to create through the use of his imagination, but even when that ability disappears at death, his Christian ideal of *hacer bien* continues. Cervantes satirizes everything and everybody, but he does it with kindness.

The *Quijote* is the complete novel of humanity, for the two characters, don Quijote and Sancho Panza, represent the two most common types to be found anywhere. Quijote is the idealist and the reformer, unselfish, long-suffering, striving for the good of mankind. Sancho is the utter realist, self-centered and desirous of satisfying first his own animal needs, hunger and thirst. Together they represent every man, and Cervantes seems to say that to be whole each person needs some attributes of both.

Sancho is the opposite of Quijote as the work begins. He sees windmills, not giants, but under the constant vigilance of Quijote he ascends to a somewhat idealistic level, though he always keeps his materialistic base. When he returns home, he is unable to explain his idealism to his wife, for the gulf between them is too wide; and when Quijote finally recognizes himself as Alonso Quijano, it is Sancho who begs him not to die but to remain steadfast to his ideal and sally forth once more into the world. Though Sancho is never loath to receive the material benefits of life, in the end he has himself become somewhat of a *caballero* sharing his master's idealism.

Cervantes sees goodness in all the world. For him, the evil is often good, for he does not judge by outward forms. He causes his characters to reveal their kindness and goodness, if they have it in them. (Cervantes insists that beneath the ugliest exterior may lie the most Christian soul), and don Quijote makes those around him enter his world rather than entering theirs. Although their motives vary, everyone strives to enter Quijote's poetic world. Believing in the reality of the novel progresses he assumes Christ-like attributes and expresses the need of the world for a new idealism, Christian knight-errantry, and *hacerbien*. He incarnates the chivalrous perfection of liberality, generosity, and faithfulness. The world judges him mad, but Quijote insists that the exterior is less important than the reality of imagination. In fact, this supposed madman gave lessons in sanity to the very ones who mocked him.

In 1614 a second volume appeared, written by an unknown, Alonso Fernandez de Avellaneda. It seems the very antithesis of the original and has little merit. It did spur Cervantes on to write his own second part, in which he deals somewhat charitably with Avellaneda despite his distortion of Quijote and personal attacks on Cervantes.

Cervantes' own second volume, published in 1615, contains less action and more conversation than the first volume, and the characters take on a deeper symbolic meaning. The psychological and spiritual qualities have greater impact, and it becomes clear that Sancho and Quijote, instead of being opposites, are more nearly identical in their dedication to an ideal. Here Quijote lives the entire life of a man, of all men. He and Sancho discuss religion philosophy in short, life itself, but as the end of the *Quijote*

approaches, the less the immortal pair have need of speech. Quijote creative imagination dies as he begins to recognize inns as inns instead of castles, but his deals continue. As Waldo Frank has said, though the knight gives us countless reasons for disliking him, Cervantes ends with love and we with veneration.

The book's construction is fairly loose, and when Cervantes thought of something new, he simply added an episode to the framework. Almost seven hundred characters from all walks of life, from the noblest to the basest, parade before us. Cervantes was such a master stylist that the Spanish language is sometimes referred to today as *la lengua cervantina*. He used many stylistic devices, but no single one or any combination of them can explain the poetry, beauty, and majesty of the work.

Perhaps the merit of the *Quijote* lies in a kind of interior harmony and combination of multilevel attributes. For some it is a comic work. Others see in it a new style, while still others see a great moral value or the conflict between the ideal and the real. Romanticists see Quijote as the supreme individualist, the man against the world. For others, Sancho is as great as Quijote in moral and ethical force. Many great novelists have copied some moral and ethical force. Many great novelists have copied some aspect of the *Quijote* as the supreme individualist, the man against the world. For others, Sancho is as great as Quijote in moral and ethical force. Many great novelists have copied some aspect of the *Quijote*, including Flaubert, Fielding, Balzac, and Galdos. Marx, Tolstoy, Turgenev, Goethe, Ben Johnson, Dostoyevsky, Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson read it. Dostoyevsky classified it as the supreme work of fiction that represented the highest expression of human thought.

Other works have better plots and finer technique, but none has achieved such an equal balance or has come so close to the wellsprings of human nature and endeavor. Cervantes' book has gone through some one thousand editions, and many more editions will appear in the future. Sanson Carrasco put it in perspective in Chapter 3 of the second part: "Los niños la manosean, los mozos la leen, los hombres la entienden y los viejos la celebran."

#### E. Minor Novelists of the Seventeenth Century

The post-Cervantes period was one of decadence. Novels were second-rate: the plots were frivolous and artificial, the writing was of a sophisticated superficiality, and the humor lacked the depth, pace, and meaning of Cervantes'. In addition to Lope de Vega, mention may be made of the following novelists: Francisco Lugo y Davila (1615 – 1669); Gonzalo Cespedes y Meneses (1585? - 1638); and Maria de Zayas y Sotomayor (1590 – 1650), the only woman among the minor novelists.

### THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The eighteenth century did not produce great literature. The Neoclassic tradition produced even less in the novel than in poetry and the drama. Only two names merit mention as novelists in this age, Torres Villarroel and Padre Isla.

#### A. Diego de Torres Villarroel (1693 – 1770)

This mysterious and enigmatic figure left home at the age of twenty, lived with a hermit in Portugal, performed as a bullfighter and dancer and returned home to study medicine, which he did not practice. After a couple of lucky predictions in some almanacs he published, he became famous, was known as something of a magician, and was hired to drive goblins out of the houses of Madrid. He entered the competition for the chair of mathematics at the University of Salamanca in 1726 and strangely won over all his opponents. He was publicly acclaimed as a scholar until he became a priest in 1745.

Torres wrote in many fields, but his best-known work is his autobiographical picaresque novel in which the adventures recounted may have been based on his own experiences. The full title of this book is *Vida, ascendencia, Nacimiento, crianza y aventuras del Dr. Don Diego de Torres Villarroel* (1743). He takes the reader through a series of picaresque episodes, during which he

serves a number of masters, and in so doing gives an accurate and sprightly commentary on the life of his times.

B. Jose Francisco de Isla de la Torre (1703 – 1781)

Padre Isla, a Jesuit, wrote the most famous novel of the eighteenth century, indeed the only pure novel worthy of mention, *Historia del Famoso predicador Fray Gerundio de Campazas, alias Zotes*, usually called simply Fray Gerudio. The two parts of this work appeared in 1758 and 1768 under the pseudonym Francisco Lobon de Salazar. The work's value lies in its satire of the abuses, education Baroque preaching, pedantry, and *mal gusto* of society in the eighteenth century. Fray Gerundio incarnates the type of preacher who could not read yet knew how to preach, having been taught all the trappings of Gongorism by his tutor, Fray Blas. Popular in its time and widely read by the educated aristocracy, it aroused the wrath of the clergy, who felt the sting of ridicule in Isla's unmasking of their defects.

Padre Isla, largely forgotten now like most writers of the eighteenth century, made several translations. One of them, the *Anocristiano* by Father Croiset, which contains short lives of saints, is still read in some Spanish homes. No translations succeeded better, however, than the one published in 1787 – 1788 of the French work of Lesage, the four-volume *Aventuras de Gil Blas de Santillana*, an eighteenth-century picaresque novel with a Spanish flavor. This translation by Padre Isla outlasted *Fray Gerundio* and it was the only picaresque novel that many ordinary readers had encountered up to that time. Fortunately, Padre Isla's skillful translation is better than the original.

#### Part IV : **NONFICTION**

#### **THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY**

A. General Considerations

Life changed radically in late fifteenth-century Spain as Ferdinand and Isabel tamed the rebellious barons and established their absolute monarchy. Noblemen drifted to the court and took to writing poetry, polishing their manners, and studying Latin. Swarms of historians recorded all events of consequence. Humanists produced their grammars and dictionaries, and moral philosophers tried to ennoble the spirit of the time. The introduction of printing in 1474 marked a new era. Verbal portraits were attempted for the first time. The Renaissance had dawned.

B. Historiography of the Fifteenth Century

Kings continued the custom of appointing an official chronicler of their reigns, but their ambition was much narrower than that of their predecessors, as they had recorded only the history of the reign of a single monarch, or even just a few years of a given reign. Also, lives of important personages other than kings and queens were recorded, and history became so specialized that some chronicles recorded single events. Two new types of writing appeared: the character sketch and descriptions of travel to exotic places. The histories are interesting not for their excellence but for the tumultuous events they record. No first-rank historian appeared, but those who chronicle the events of the time did preserve the record of the nation's approach to national unity and empire. Special mention should be made of several histories and historians.

1. *La cronica de don Juan II*, the first part ascribed to Alvar Garcia de Santa Maria (1390 – 1460), covers the politically troubled but artistically active reign of Juan II. Its most interesting portion concerns the execution of don Alvaro Luna and the king's reaction after his death.
2. *Pedro del Corral* produced around 1443 the *Cronica sarracina o Cronica del rey don Rodrigo con la destruccion de Espana*, a curious book that is a mixture of fact and fantasy. Some call it Spain's first historical novel, since the author freely substituted his own inventions for historical facts. It was very popular when it was published in 1511 because it recalled a national tradition and reflected the glamor of chivalry. Perez de Guzman

labeled the book "lies and manifest untruths," but it prospered, nonetheless. Later, ballad writers used it as a source.

3. *Mosen Diego de Valera* (1412 – 1487) wrote one of the more ambitious chronicles of his day at the request, he claimed of Queen Isabel. A prolific writer, he produced in addition to his *Cronica abreviada* a number of epistles and other histories.
4. *Alfonso Fernandez de Palencia* (1432 – 1492), one of the ablest nonfiction prose writers of the fifteenth century, was a leading Humanist of the time and produced a variety of works ranging from histories to translations of Plutarch, a dictionary of the language, and social and political satire. His greatest contribution, however, was his history of the reign of Enrique IV, first written in Latin and translated under the title *Decadas or Cronicas de Enrique IV*. Here he painted an appalling picture of the depravity and corruption of this sad era.
5. *Diego Enriquez del Castillo* (1433 – 1504) also wrote a history of the reign of Enrique IV, which in contrast with that of Fernandez de Palencia represents the king as benevolent and just, his kingdom as well administered, and the people as satisfied with the government. He was in the service of the king, and his work has largely been discredited as a reliable record.
6. *Andres Bernaldez* (d. 1513) is remembered for his *Historia de los Reyes Catolicos, don Fernando y dona Isabel*. This account is prized especially for the information it contains on Columbus' voyages; Bernaldez gathered reports from the admiral's diary and from personal interviews with him.

#### C. Character Sketches of the Fifteenth Century

1. *Fernan Perez de Guzman* (1376 – 1460) was the first to join together a series of moral and physical verbal portraits of eminent persons. The third part of his *Mar de historias* is entitled *Generaciones y semblanzas*, and it is here that he portrays verbally thirty-five men and one woman from the reigns of Enrique III and Juan II, leaving us a splendid record of the notables of his day.
2. *Hernando del Pulgar* (1436 – 1493) was a happy imitator of Perez de Guzman and wrote the *Libro de los claros varones de Castilla*, a book of short biographies in which he traced in precise strokes the verbal portraits of twenty-four of his contemporaries.

#### D. Private Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century

Historians did not confine themselves to kings but wrote entire chronicles on lives of prominent men. Two worthies of mention are *the Cronica de don Alvaro de Luna*, a favorable account of this famous man's life and execution possibly written by Gonzalo de Chacon; and *the Cronica de don Pedro Nino, conde de Buelna*, by Gutierrez Diez Games (1379 – 1450), a history that reads almost like a novel of chivalry.

#### E. Chronicles of Single Events

A few historians devoted a book to a single historical event. The best known of these is the *Libro del paso honroso de Suero de Quinones* by Pedro Rodriguez de Lena. Its lasting appeal is manifested by the fact that the Duque de Rivas used it in writing *El paso honroso* in 1812.

#### F. Descriptions of Travels

Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo (D. 1412) wrote the best of these, *Vida del gran Tamerlan*. Enrique III sent expeditions to the Middle East in search of emperors and kings. One of them found Tamerlane, the Tartar king who sent rich gifts back to Enrique. Out of gratitude, Enrique sent a mission to Tamerlane's court, a member of which was the author of this travelogue.

#### G. Humanists of the Fifteenth Century

The Renaissance gained a strong foothold in Spain in the waning years of the fifteenth century as medieval Scholasticism crumbled before the onslaught of the modern spirit emanating from new centers of thought, chiefly Italy. The study of Latin and Greek became fashionable, and philology replaced theology as the most important of studies. The philologists' interests were encyclopedic and embraced all fields of inquiry known at the time. New universities were founded, and the introduction of printing brought books within the reach of many. Though the new freedoms led some into the occult, Humanists solidly advanced their cause and opened the gates of the Renaissance.

1. *The Marques de Villena* (1384 -1434), a puzzling man, was accused of being a dealer in black magic, a wizard, and a romancer and of making a pact with the devil. The works he left are of ordinary merit. His library was burned, however, after his death, and perhaps his better efforts were thus destroyed. His *Arte cisoria* is Spain's first cookbook. His *Libro del aojamiento o fascinologia* discusses the ways of removing the spell of the "evil eye." He also left a treatise on the plague. His most important work is his *Arte de trobar*, Spain's earliest work on poetic criticism, but unfortunately only a portion of it has been saved.
2. *Elio Antonio de Nebrija* (1441 – 1522) studied at Salamanca but went to Italy at the age of nineteen and studied there for ten years. Upon returning to Spain he taught at the University of Salamanca, to which he hoped to bring the light of the new learning. Later he was called to the University of Alcala to help produce the Complutensian Bible. He was a typical Humanist, a walking encyclopedia, and he enjoyed the protection of highly placed persons, including Queen Isabel. His work embraced all fields of knowledge and he waged a singlehanded war against ignorance.

His works were written mostly in Latin. Among them is his Latin grammar, *Introductiones latinae* (1481). Two particularly important works by Nebrija appeared in 1492, *Gramatica sobre la lengua castellana*, commissioned by the queen, the first grammar of a modern language, and the Latin-Spanish portion of Nebrija's dictionary. He finished the Latin – Spanish portion of Nebrija's dictionary. He finished the Spanish-Latin part in 1495. His *Reglas de ortografia castellana* (1517) speaks for itself. Named official historian by Fernando, Nebrija translated Pulgar's chronicles of Fernando's reign into Latin hoping thus to achieve greater universality.

3. *Minor figures* of the fifteenth century include Cardinal Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros (1437 -1517), who founded the University of Alcala and published the first critical edition of the Bible anywhere, the Complutensian Bible; Don Alvaro de Luna (d. 1453), who, though not a Humanist, was a central figure of the age and made his contribution to letters in the book *Libro de las claras y virtuosas mujeres*, a study of outstanding women from Biblical days to his own; Alfonso de la Torre (1421 – 1461), who left an encyclopedic work entitled *Vision deleitable de la Filosofia y artes liberals* (ca. 1440); and Juan de Lucena (d. 1506), whose fictional *Libro de vida beata* (1463) reports on discussions between the Marques de Santillana, Alonso de Cartagena, Juan de Mena, and the author.

## THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Politically, this was the glorious age for Spaniards as the empire, begun by the Catholic Sovereigns, reached its peak under Carlos V. To this day it remains the largest domain ever organized under one scepter. Though Carlos tried honestly and valiantly for reconciliation with the Protestants, ultimately, he decided to make Spain the champion and principal defender of Roman Catholicism in Europe in order to preserve Church unity in the face of the religious wars that he could not win. This was more than the empire could bear, coupled with all its other troubles at home and in America, where colonization was proceeding rapidly. Carlos abdicated in favor of his son, Felipe II, who despaired of controlling the strong Protestant movements and closed Spain's doors to the world.

Culturally, Spaniards enjoyed free inquiry for a time, and a liberal spirit in the realm of ideas and philosophy prevailed as Spain seemed to be headed down the rationalistic road the rest of Europe was taking. Erasmus was known and admired, but after the Council of Trent, Carlos V and later Felipe II stilled the paganistic spirit of the renaissance and any deviation from approved dogma. Though Spain prospered for a number of years, Felipe's isolationist policies spelled eventual weakness in all areas, political, cultural, and economic.



Didactic prose reflected the political, cultural, and religious conditions outlined above. Erasmists, such as the Valdes brothers, wrote in the early years, as did philosophers. After the controls were invoked, the great Mystic literature of Spain flourished. Historians continued to produce volumes, and eyewitness history from the New World became fashionable. Prose style took two directions, namely toward the rhetorical, artificial style that pointed to Gongorism on the one hand and toward the simple, natural style that pointed to Góngora on the other. This diverse and unsettled era heralded the Golden Age.

#### A. Moralists, Humanists, Philosophers

1. *Antonio de Guevara* (1480 – 1545) wrote three books. His *Reloj de Príncipe's* (1529), also known by the title *Libro d'el emperador Marco Aurelio*, is a largely apocryphal didactic novel, a politicomoralistic treatise designed to give the emperor a model of the perfect ruler. It was very popular, probably for the great diversity of themes that Guevara treated, including war, religion, marriage, the family, misogynist propaganda, death, humor, anecdotes, and fables. Guevara is acknowledged as one of the leading prose stylists before Cervantes, and though his style smacks of Gongorism, he is eloquent and reveals a quick mind, a ready wit, and clever ingenuity.

*Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea* (1539) treats the traditional theme of the perils, corruptions, and sins of city life and the simplicity and purity of rural life. Guevara testified that it was his most carefully and painstakingly written work, in which he polished his language, strove for elegance, and exercised his judgment to the utmost. Like Fray Luis de Leon some years later, the harassed courtier longs for the peace of the country and laments the virtues he lost in the city. Between 1539 and 1545 Guevara wrote eighty-three *Epistolas familiares* to many different people on the widest range of subjects, and his *Decadas de los Cesares* is his rendering of the lives of ten Roman emperors. Though he took many liberties with facts, tampering with them or inventing them carelessly at times, he was undoubtedly in tune with his times, was an important man in his day, and had a strong influence on the development of prose writing in Europe.

2. *Juan Luis Vives* (1492 – 1540) personified the Renaissance in Spain and is considered by some as Spain's greatest philosopher. His chief claim to originality rests upon his use of the inductive method for philosophical and psychological discovery. He reacted away from Scholasticism toward the new Humanism, along with Erasmus and others. He eventually went to England at the invitation of Henry VIII. There he became the friend of Thomas More and served as royal tutor and lecturer at Oxford.

Preceding modern philosophers in the use of the empirical method, he insisted upon the importance of observation, introspection, and the removal of *a priori* judgments in reasoning. He will always be known as one of the stalwarts of Christian Humanism. His seventy – three works, all in Latin, are models of purity and style. Unfortunately, his contributions are not widely known, and he has yet to be acknowledged as one of the great thinkers of his time.

3. *Alfonso de Valdes* (1490? – 1532) was converted to Erasmism and corresponded with Erasmus until his death. In his *Dialogo de Lactancio y un arcediano* he defended Carlos V against criticism following the sacking of Rome in 1527 and laid blame on the pope. His *Dialogo de Mercurio y Caron*, whose real intent was to defend the emperor again, mercilessly flayed various social classes, especially the clergy, scoffed at certain practices of the Church, such as bulls and indulgences, and poked fun at high Church officials for their costumes and jewelry. Along with other Erasmists, Valdes was forced to flee Spain by the Inquisition's campaign against them. He died in Vienna, having escaped the Inquisition's *procesos* instituted against him and his brother.
4. *Juan de Valdes* (1501? – 1541), brother of Alfonso, absorbed the Humanistic spirit and was an enthusiastic disciple of Erasmus'. He too had to flee Spain because of his heterodoxy. His *Ciento die consideraciones divinas* (1550) outlines his theological system, which was somewhat at variance with orthodoxy. His *Dialogo de la lengua* (ca. 1535), styled as the first important linguistic treatise on the Spanish language, is of much greater interest today. In it he suggested many innovations, but since it was not published until 1737, it had little effect on the

development of the language. It is, nevertheless, an important statement on sixteenth-century Spanish.

5. *Pedro Mexia* (1449? -1551) compiled an interesting home, *Silva de varia lecion* (1542), a grand mixture of information and misinformation of all kinds that embodies much from Greek and Roman antiquity and from the sciences. This catchall was very popular in its day and was translated into various languages.
6. *Cristobal de Villalon* (1510? – 1562?), whose identity has never been clarified to everyone's satisfaction, was formerly credited with an interesting work, *El viaje de Turquia*, an account of his trip to Constantinople. Bataillon credits a Doctor Andres Laguna with the authorship of this book. Villalon's *El Crotalon* is a satire on contemporary life that points up the corruption and depravities of the human race that he had observed.
7. *Fernan Perez de Oliva* (1494? – 1533), a highly educated man, wrote treatises, dialogues, and discourses of a didactic nature. His best-known work is *Dialogo de la dignidad del hombre* (1546), in which he perceives the greatness of man and sees in hi the image of God.

## B. Historians of the Sixteenth Century

Sixteenth-century history can be divided into two groups: that which deals with Spain and that which describes the marvels, hardships, and heroism of the conquest of the New World. A new trend toward scientific documentation of facts indicated that the age of modern historical writing had begun. Two writers of real merit stand out in this period, namely Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Juan Mariana.

1. *Diego Hurtado de Mendoza* (1503 – 1575) was an important political figure and virtual viceroy of Italy under Carlos V. His *Guerra de Granada* chronicles Felipe II's war with the *moriscos* of *Guerra de Granada* and is rigorously accurate eyewitness history. Like Lopez de Ayala, he felt it his right to make moral judgments and to analyze motives and actions. His unusual gift of narrative, plastic imagination, and dramatic visions, with which he visualized a scene as a stage setting, made history come alive. His style was not impeccable, but his honesty, integrity, fairness, strength and lucidity have earned him a rank among his contemporaries second only to Juan de Mariana.
2. *Juan de Mariana* (1536 – 1624) wrote a thirty-volume *Historia General de Espana* that fixed his reputation as the best historian of his day. He began with the arrival of Japheth's fifth son in Spain and continued to the year 1516, the date of the death of Fernando, *el catolico*. His purpose was to eulogize Spain, and for the sake of universality he wrote it first in Latin with the title *Historia de rebus Hispaniae*. The first twenty volumes appeared in 1592, five more in 1595, and the final five in 1605. He himself translated his history into Spanish in 1601 and then published a definitive version in 1606. In doing so, he enlarged it considerably. An ardent patriot he wanted Spain's greatness known to the world and to the Spaniards themselves. Though he used legendary material, he also used something of the scientific historian's procedure. He too believed it his duty to praise right and condemn evil, and he told the truth even if it hurt. His fearlessness got him penalties on occasion but nothing of a serious nature. His history is still regarded as one of the high marks of Spanish historiography.
3. *Lesser historians of the sixteenth century*. Jeronino de Zurita (1512 – 1580) approached his task in a scientific manner and ushered in the modern age of history in Spain. Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo (1478 – 1557), who spent his life in the New World, lumped a heterogeneous mass of information about the new lands into a fifty-volume work, *Historia natural y general de las Indias*, a vast repository of facts about the colonies. Hernan Cortes (1485 – 1547), the great *conquistador*, reported his adventures in *Cartas de relacion*, written between 1519 and 1526. Francisco Lopez de Gomara (1512 – 1557?), Cortes' secretary and fervent admirer, wrote his *Historia general de las Indias*, which exhibits a strong bias in his captain's favor. Bernal Diaz del Castillo (ca. 1495 – 1584), a soldier in Cortes' army, corrected Lopez de Gomara's account to tell what he called the "true story of the conquest" in his *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva Espana*, not published until 1632. Bartolome de las Casas (1474 – 1566), a Dominican, wrote *Brevisima relacion de la destruccion de las Indias* (1552), in which he harshly criticized Spanish colonial policy, thus fueling the propaganda of Spain's colonial competitors and igniting the fire that led to the Black Legend. Alvar Nunez

Cabeza de Vaca (1490? – 1564?) wrote *Naufraios*, which narrates his incredible adventures along the Gulf of Mexico and the Gulf of California.

### C. Ascetics and Mystics of the Sixteenth Century

From the beginnings up to the sixteenth century, Spanish literature was in one way or another related to religion. Renaissance Humanism began to change that, but Felipe II's Counter Reformation brought religion back to a position of prominence, paving the way for the vast ascetic and Mystic writings of the second half of the sixteenth century.

1. *Juan de Avila* (1500 – 1569) was a leading figure in the initial phases of the luxuriant flowering of religious writings of his era. His *Audi, filia et vide* (1560) was an important contribution to the genre. More important, however, is his *Epistolario spiritual para todos los estados* (1578), consisting of 150 letters to men and women of all states and conditions, in which he offers advice, consolation, comfort, and warnings as well as speculations on the religious life in general.
2. *Fray Luis de Granada* (1504 – 1588) devoted himself to sacred oratory and became the preacher of greatest authority in his day. *Guia de pecadores* (1567) is his best-known prose work. It exhorts man to follow the road to salvation and includes a detailed discussion of sins and the ways of combatting vices. His *Introduccion al simbolo de la fe* (1582) is an encyclopedia of the Christian religion, and his *Libro de la oracion y meditacion* (1554) deals with the circumstances that favor or hinder true prayer.
3. *Santa Teresa de Jesus* (1515 – 1582) was the outstanding woman of her day and still holds the respect and admiration of the Christian world. She joined the Carmelite Order at the age of seventeen and later formed the *descalzas* branch, which expanded greatly under her custody. Teresa had no literary ambitions and wrote her books only at the request of her superiors or her nuns. Her most important work is entitled *El Castillo interior of las moradas* (1577). It is a treatise on the relationship of the soul with God and the prayer stages through which one must pass to reach that Mystic state where the soul is one with Him. Her intent was to teach one how to reach this stage of perfection. Other works of Santa Teresa are *El libro de su vida* (1562 – 1565), *El libro de las Fundación's* (1573), and *Camino de perfeccion* (1565); and in a definitive edition in 1570). Fray Luis de Leon published these works with a prologue in 1588.
4. *San Juan de la Cruz* (1542 – 1591), essentially a poet, was intimately associated with Santa Teresa and joined the male branch of the Carmelites. He was the most metaphysical of the Mystics, was fond of abstractions, and acknowledged the difficulties of expressing the ineffable. Some of his prose consists of extensions of and commentaries on his poetry and explains it in great detail. Both his poetry and prose are subtle, complicated, and difficult to understand, and though he is recognized as one of the great Mystics of all time, he does not have the popular appeal of Santa Teresa or Fray Luis de Leon. His prose works are *Cantico spiritual*, *Avisos y sentencias*, and *Cartas*. His writings represent the fullest development of Mysticism in Spain. The intensity of his being and the fervor of his devotion made him unique and brought Mysticism to the heights of its expression.
5. *Fray Luis de Leon* (1527 – 1591), better known as a poet, wrote good prose works that have been underrated because of the excellence of his poetry. Stylistically he ranks among the great prosists of all time. Believing in the power and beauty of the Spanish language, with his careful craftsmanship and unerring feel for his native tongue he elevated prose style works; *De los nombres de Cristo*, *La perfecta casada*, and *Exposicion del libro de Job* all republished over the years in many editions, women in the twentieth century. Fray Luis and San Juan died in the same year, and with them the blossom of Mystic literature withered and died. No great Mystic writers appeared after their time.

## THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

### A. General Considerations

The Golden Age was in full bloom when the seventeenth century dawned, but sensitive writers were beginning to foresee the unmistakable signs of degeneration that would continue its inexorable course to and beyond the end of the century. The most striking development of the period was the emphasis on the Baroque style that had long been ripening in Spain. The two authors in the field of nonfiction prose who best represent the Baroque period and who most clearly saw Spain's true condition are Francisco de Quevedo and Baltasar Gracian. Both are conceptistas, both are critical of their fellow man, and both are pessimistic. Diego de Saavedra Fajardo holds third place behind these two. Historians continued to write, but none of first category appeared. Religious writing had passed its peak and now entered a period of degeneracy.

B. Francisco Gomez de Quevedo y Villegas (1580 – 1645)

Francisco de Quevedo was one of the few men of his time to recognize and admit the truth of Spain's creeping political, moral, and economic degeneration. Consequently, at an early age he lashed out against the corruption, weakness, and sagging morality that were leading his country downward. His onerous warnings and unsparing criticisms earned him enmities that eventually led to his imprisonment and death; but he left a superior legacy that is extraordinarily rich and diversified and has earned him the reputation as Spain's foremost satirist and wit. He wrote poetry, political treatises, novels, ascetic works, lives of saints, literary criticism, dramas, philosophy, moral and theological treatises, history satiric works, and fantasies. He stands as a giant in Spanish letters, and his work has left an indelible impression on succeeding generations. The one great unifying thread that runs through his work is satire, for he fearlessly attacked faults and pleaded for reform.

Quevedo's work can be classified into several categories. Those known as the humorous or festive type number twenty-two and include *Prematicas y aranceles generales* (1600), *Origen y definiciones de la necedad* (1598), *El caballero de Tenaz* (1606), and *Libro de todas las cosas y otras muchas mas* (1627). His satire is not benevolent, and although it amuses, it often changes to mockery and caricature. Life was grotesque to Quevedo, and the smile on his face often changed to a grimace. A note of bitterness and even loathing invades his satire for finding little to admire in society, he became deeply pessimistic and disillusioned. Yet he had many admirers and some friends, and foreigners felt their visit to Spain was not complete until they had seen and talked to the great man.

Outstanding among his political writings is *Politica de Dios, gobierno de Cristo* (1617 – 1626), which sets forth his convictions concerning government, based on the Bible. A second part, published in 1634 – 1635, adds *y tirania de Satanás* to the title. Again, he strikes out against the decay of morals and the indifference of kings to their responsibilities. Justice, virtue, and the rights of the people were the basis of good government, and the good king was vigilant, solicitous of the people's good, tolerant, generous, and not too severe. Other political works are *Vida de Marco Bruto* (1631 – 1644) and *Espana defendida y los tiempos de ahora de las calumnias de noveleros y sediciosos* (1609). Quevedo clearly saw his own bitter, satiric spirit and said of himself in a poem: "soy/un scorpion maldiciente, / hijo al fin de las arenas, / engendradora de sierpes."

Quevedo's philosophical doctrines are disclosed chiefly in three works: *De los remedios de Cualquier fortuna* (1633), *Nombre y origen, intentom recomendacion y decencia de la doctrina estoica* (1633 – 1634), and *Sentencias*. The stoicism of Seneca dominated Quevedo's philosophical thinking, guided him in doubts, consoled him in trouble, and defended him against persecutions. It is seen in his *La cuna y la sepulture* (1612, 1630, 1633), an ascetic work, in which the author guides man through the sorrows and misfortunes of life from the cradle to the grave, pointing out the futility of placing one's hope in worldly things and proclaiming the true values.

The prose works that brought Quevedo the greatest renown, however, are the satiricomoral pieces entitled *Suenos y discursos de verdades descubridoras de abusos, vicios, y enganos en todos los oficios y estados*. There are five (some critics add a sixth) of these *Suenos* written at different periods of the author's life, dating from 1606 to 1622. Here Quevedo directs devastating attacks at all the professions, and nearly every human

type is the target of his satire and contempt, except the soldier and the poor. He sees corruption, dishonesty, deceit, injustice, and vice of every sort around him, and before he is through, he paints humanity in a pitiful state. He saw little in man that could redeem him, and his *Suenos* predicted the ruin awaiting Spain. Stylistically the *Suenos* were a triumph. The language in which Quevedo expressed his tortured visions is forceful and vivid, and the uniqueness of his imagination is unsurpassed. His sardonic laughter is frightening. His interpretation of life is depressing to read, but we must admire his honesty, his courage, and his patriotism in composing this scathing indictment of his times. Quevedo clearly saw what was wrong with Spain, but he had no solutions to offer. Yet he cures seem to be implicit in his incisive criticisms of existing evils. He only hoped that by demonstrating the ugliness of evil and corruption, man might correct himself.

### C. Baltasar Gracian y Morales (1601 – 1658)

Baltasar Gracian was a kindred spirit to Quevedo. Pessimistic, he viewed life as a constant struggle in which there was little hope for progress and happiness for mankind, but he did believe that two or three in every generation could rise to greatness. Gracian, too, hated fools, who in his view far outnumbered the wise. With Quevedo, Gracian represents the culmination of prose. All his works except two are moralistic, and his moral philosophy has earned *conceptistas* him the reputation of being the successor of Luis Vives.

Gracian wrote six important works. The first three provide a composite portrait of the ideal figure. *El heroe* (1637) reveals Gracian's concept of the hero of the seventeenth century. The hero is first of all a man of great intellect and understanding, of good judgement and great individuality, who wins eternal fame, through his writings, his virtue, his actions, or his politics. He shows interest only those who can absorb his teachings, and he loathes the masses. If he makes a mistake, he must know how to cover it up. Ability is no assurance of success, for luck plays an important part. Gracian's cynicism is also evident in his beliefs that one should not keep company with the poor or unfortunate lest he make a bad impression on the people and that he should exhibit some weakness, even if feigned, in order to counteract envy.

*El politico don Fernando el Catolico* (1640) deals with good government and proposes Fernando, who had founded an empire and brought order out of chaos, as the perfect ruler. The prince must be courageous and prudent, must choose his ministers wisely, and must not reveal his plans or motives, especially when he is preparing for war.

*El discreto* (1646) completes the portrait of the ideal figure. Gracian lists twenty-five excellent qualities of the *discreto* and devotes a chapter to the discussion of each attribute.

The only non-moralistic works Gracian left were *El comulgatorio* (1655), a guidebook to prayer; and *Agudeza y arte de ingenio* (1648), a revision of *El arte de ingenio*, *Tratado de agudeza* (1642). The *Agudeza* is the handbook and anthology of the literary craze of the day, *conceptismo*. Gracian, both *culterano* and *conceptistas*, desired to set down in writing the doctrine of *conceptismo* and provide rules and examples for future writers. He believed that obscurity was necessary and that a writer should attempt to conceal part of his meaning in order to dazzle and impress the reader. The conceit he believed, is to the intellect what beauty is to the eyes and harmony to the ears. He avoided the obvious words, made puns, used antitheses, inversions, obscure metaphors, and all the other tricks of Gongorism. He also developed a highly condensed style, a kind of literary shorthand, for he strove ceaselessly for concision. His contempt for clarity was probably related to his contempt for the ignorant masses, and he believed the essence of good art was obscurity.

The *Oraculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647) is a collection of three hundred maxims in which Gracian gives pungent, satiric advice on the problems of this life and seems little concerned with life after death. He has been accused of cold cynicism, hypocrisy, and anti-Christian sentiments. This is borne out to some extent in his maxims. After stating the kernel of his thought, he explains it in a short paragraph. The *Oraculo* probably influenced La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyere and certainly affected Schopenhauer, who translated it and stated that Gracian was his favorite author.

*El Criticon* (1651 – 1657), Gracian's last and most ambitious work, is the product of a lifetime of reading and reflection and is his judgment of the folly and stupidity of man. It is a philosophical novel in which mankind's faults are mercilessly and bitterly condemned; but Gracian does not abandon man to hopelessness. He must struggle against the adversities and wickedness of the world and perfect himself for immortality through virtue. *El Criticon* deeply influenced nineteenth-century philosophy. Schopenhauer considered it one of the best books ever written. Stylistically it represents the culmination of the Baroque manner, and ideologically, the pessimism of the age.

Gracian ranks as one of Spain's greatest writers and savants, one of few who looked beneath the surface and boldly exposed the decadence of his era. Cejador y Frauca, along with many others, saw in him an intelligent and distinguished author, philosopher, political critic, and censor of human conduct, one of Spain's deepest thinkers of all time, the equal of Quevedo and Seneca. Like the former, he offered no solutions but apparently hoped that his indictment of society would produce reforms.

#### D. Diego de Saavedra Fajardo (1584 – 1648)

Saavedra stood in the middle of European politics for thirty years. He was saddened by what he saw happening to Spain, for he was in a position, as a diplomat engaged in international negotiations, to witness her decline and failing prestige. His experience equipped him to produce the best political treatise of the seventeenth century, *Idea de un principe politico-cristiano representada en cien empresas* (1640). Here he gives much prudent advice to the king expressing Spain's weaknesses and decadent state. Saavedra reveals his deep political feeling, his immense sympathy for the people, and his uncompromising qualifications for the perfect prince. How different Spain's history would be had it found a prince who had followed Saavedra's advice!

Saavedra's second most important work, the *Republica literaria*, begun about 1612 and published in 1655, is one of the most significant works of literary criticism of the seventeenth century. He reviews poets, historians, philosophers, and other Spanish and foreign writers. His literary judgments are well grounded, and many are still valid today.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

### A. General Considerations

The Bourbons replaced the Hapsburgs on the Spanish throne, but no immediate artistic renewal occurred. The cultural level rose, however, as ideas came in from abroad and Spaniards worked from within. It was the age of the founding of academies, including the Academia de la Lengua Espanola, which was organized in 1714. Resistance to the Baroque period focused attention on language, and serious scientific studies tried to simplify it. The Academia de Historia was founded in 1738, the Academia de Bellas Artes in 1744 the Academia de Medicina y Cirugia in 1732, and the Academia de Derecho Espanol in 1763.

The academic and Neoclassic mood of the century produced countless artistic, political, literary, and religious *tertulias*, out of which came sustained literary polemics that sometimes degenerated into personal attacks. In the long run, though, serious literary discussions of the era helped to clarify uncertainties concerning the worth of both writers and works of past ages.

### B. Didactic-Erudite Writers

1. *Benito Jeronimo Feijoo y Montenegro* (1676 – 1764), one of the most important writers of the century, was the first to introduce modern European culture to his country. He wrote eight volumes of essays between 1726 and 1739 under the general title *teatro critico universal*. His *Cartas eruditos y curiosas* (1742 – 1760) is a kind of supplement. He comments on an outstanding number of topics, but in

general his works can be divided into three categories: articles on science, those on superstition and those on philosophy. He fearlessly attacked cherished institutions and superstitions, felt that literature needed rules, believed firmly in education, and directed his most consistent attacks against medical doctors. Though he was guilty of inconsistencies and outright errors, Fejoó was a man who strove to separate truth from error and to combat ignorance. He also saw the intellectual decay of his country and cared enough to do something about it.

2. *Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos y Ramírez* (1744 – 1811) studied for the priesthood but gave this up for a legal career, and in his lifetime, he became an economist, historian, educator, poet, philologist, philosopher, politician, dramatist, and statesman. His experiences with the penal system led him to write his lachrymose drama, *El delincuente honrado*, a plea for prison reform. He frequented many academies, held exalted posts in the government, and was a member of the Royal Academy. He also was imprisoned, possibly for his indignation at the queen's relationship with Godoy, and, as a vehement defender of nationalism, refused a position offered to him by Joseph Bonaparte.

His prose masterpiece is *Informe en el expediente de ley agraria* (1795), which showed a broad knowledge of the practical problems of each province and promoted local autonomy; but his *Memoria en defensa de la Junta Central* (1810), in which he pleads for understanding of himself and others, is more moving. His *Memoria para el arreglo de la policia de los espectaculos y diversiones puinlicas uy sobre su origen en Espana* (1790) is a treatise on the theater in which he proclaims that "la reforma de nuestro teatro debe empezar por el destierro de czsi todos los dramas que estan sobre la escent." He liked Luzan, was ambivalent about Calderon, but was uncharitable toward Lope. He was a reformer inspired by the French Enlightenment, but he was fervently nationalistic. He was Neoclassic by conviction but showed traces of Romanticism.

In his many letters and historical studies, Jovellanos exemplifies the dichotomy between the old and the new. Del Rio sees in him a Romantic or at least a pre-Romantic. He was a man of the *justo medio* who tried to unite old traditions to the new spirit sweeping Europe. His character and ardent patriotism led Menendez y Pelayo to characterize him as "el mas glorioso" of all eighteenth-century writers.

3. *Jose Cadalso y Vazquez de Andrade* (1741 – 1782), a poet and dramatist, is better known for his prose works. Following the death of an actress whom he loved, he refused to leave the church where she was buried. In a state of shock, he was forcibly dissuaded from attempting to disinter her corpse. Exiled from Madrid following this macabre incident, he went to Salamanca, where he produced his own account of his strange activities in a prose piece entitled *Noches lugubres* (1789 – 1790), which he desired to have printed on black paper with yellow ink. In this work he also complained that mankind is wicked, selfish, evil, and hypocritical and that life is a grim jest.

*Eruditos a la violeta* (1772), his didactic masterpiece published under the pseudonym Jose Vazquez, is a prose satire directed against poetasters and others. Here Cadalso set himself the following task: "reducer a un Sistema de siete dias toda la eriudiocion moderna." He takes up science, poetry, philosophy, natural law, theology, mathematics, and, on the seventh day, many things. He pokes fun at false wisdom and defends Spanish literature from its detractors, often with a pleasant irony.

His *Cartas marruecas* (1789), supposedly inspired by Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, are composed of a correspondence between three persons, two Moors, and a Spaniard. The ninety letters disclose the deterioration of Spain but contain many comments on various other matters, such as the variety in the character of the Spanish provinces, bullfighting, lack of peace, building and scientific progress, and the dress language, and social conventions of the day. Cadalso characterizes Spain as a land of underpaid teachers, false nobility, vanity, laziness, and ignorance, preceding in a sense the social satire of Larra. And like the latter, he

lived Romanticism but wrote in Classical style. Though he harshly criticized Spain and what he called the “in feliz y cuitado animal llamado hombre,” his criticism was born out of disappointed love of country and ardent patriotism.

4. *Other didactic-erudite writers* of the eighteenth century include Lorenzo Hervás y Panduro (1735 – 1809), Fray Martín Sarmiento (1694 – 1771), Padre Esteban Arteaga (1747 – 1799), Juan de Iriarte (1702 – 1771), and Padre Juan Andrés (1740 – 1817).

### C. Critics and Literary Solons

1. *Ignacio de Luzán* (1702 – 1754) was the focal point about whom revolved the struggle between the nationalistic and Neoclassic schools of his time. His *Poética* (1737), which espoused chiefly Neoclassicism, consists of four main books. The first deals with the origins and essence of poetry, the second with the delight and utility of poetry, the third with the drama, and the fourth with epic poetry.

Luzán abhorred the excesses of Gongora but praised his simpler poetry. He defined poetry as that beauty of light and truth that lights up our soul and frees it from ignorance. Nevertheless, it should serve a useful purpose. He divided writing into three categories: intellectual, a combination of understanding and fantasy, and fantasy. The *Poética* had a tremendously favorable impact on a small group of people and aroused the ire of others. For the majority of critics, it is the most important literary document of the eighteenth century, though works of Feijoo and Mayans run a close second. Luzán's objective of subordinating Spanish poetry to the rules that “cultured nations follow” was partially achieved; but the great debate over his *Poética* may have given it undue importance in the total picture of the eighteenth century.

2. *Gregorio Mayans y Siscar* (1699 – 1781) was one of the most erudite men of his time, respected both at home and abroad. In addition to criticizing literary works, he edited many classics, including the works of Fray Luis de León, Juan de Valdés, Cervantes, and Saavedra Fajardo.

In *Oración sobre la elocuencia española* (1727), he lamented the low opinion Europeans had of Spanish writers. His *Orígenes de la lengua española* (1737) treated the origins of the Spanish language and a reprint of *Diálogo de la lengua*, which he attributed to Juan de Valdés. His *Vida de Cervantes* (1737) was the first biography of that writer. Like Jovellanos, he tried to reform the Spanish educational system but lacked the former's sincerity, patriotism, and warmth. He wrote on many subjects, and though he made errors, his judgments were usually sound, and he must be remembered as one who resurrected many Spanish classics.

3. *Other critics* of the eighteenth century are Blas Antonio Nasarre y Ferriz (1689 – 1751), an extremist disciple of Luzán's; Agustín Gabriel de Montiano y Luyando (1697 – 1764), a Neoclassic dramatist and drama critic; Tomás Antonio Sánchez (1725 – 1802), the first to publish the *Cantar de Mio Cid* and the earliest editor of Nerceo's complete works; and Nicolás Fernández de Moratín (1737 – 1780), a failure as a Neoclassic dramatist, but a passable poet and a leading proponent of Neoclassicism who wrote devastating remarks about Calderón and Lope. Leandro Fernández de Moratín (1760 – 1828), a better critic than his father, is best known for his *Orígenes del teatro español* (1830) and *Discurso preliminar*, also entitled *Resena histórica sobre el teatro español y la literatura dramática en el siglo XVIII*. Juan José López de Sedano (1729 – 1801), Antonio de Capmany y Suris de Montpalau (1742 – 1813), Padre Francisco Javier Lampillas (1731 – 1800), Juan Pablo Forner (1756 – 1797), Manuel José Quintana (1772 – 1857), and Alberto Lista y Aragón (1775 – 1848) round out the list of important literary critics of the eighteenth century.

### D. Historians



1. *Padre Enrique Florez de Setien y Huidobro* (1702 – 1773) is probably the best ecclesiastical historian Spain has ever produced. His one major work was *Espana sagrada* in fifty-one volumes; he composed twenty-nine and helped in varying degrees on the others. If one wishes to know anything about churches, convents, bishops, or saints, he will find the answers here.
2. *Padre Juan Francisco Masdeu* (1744 -1817) wrote several works, among them *Historia critica de Espana y de la cultiura espanola* (1783 – 1805), in twenty volumes. He was the first historian to treat the Cid and others like him with a scholarly approach. Although many of his findings have been refuted, his work on Roman influence in Spain is still considered a classic standard.

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