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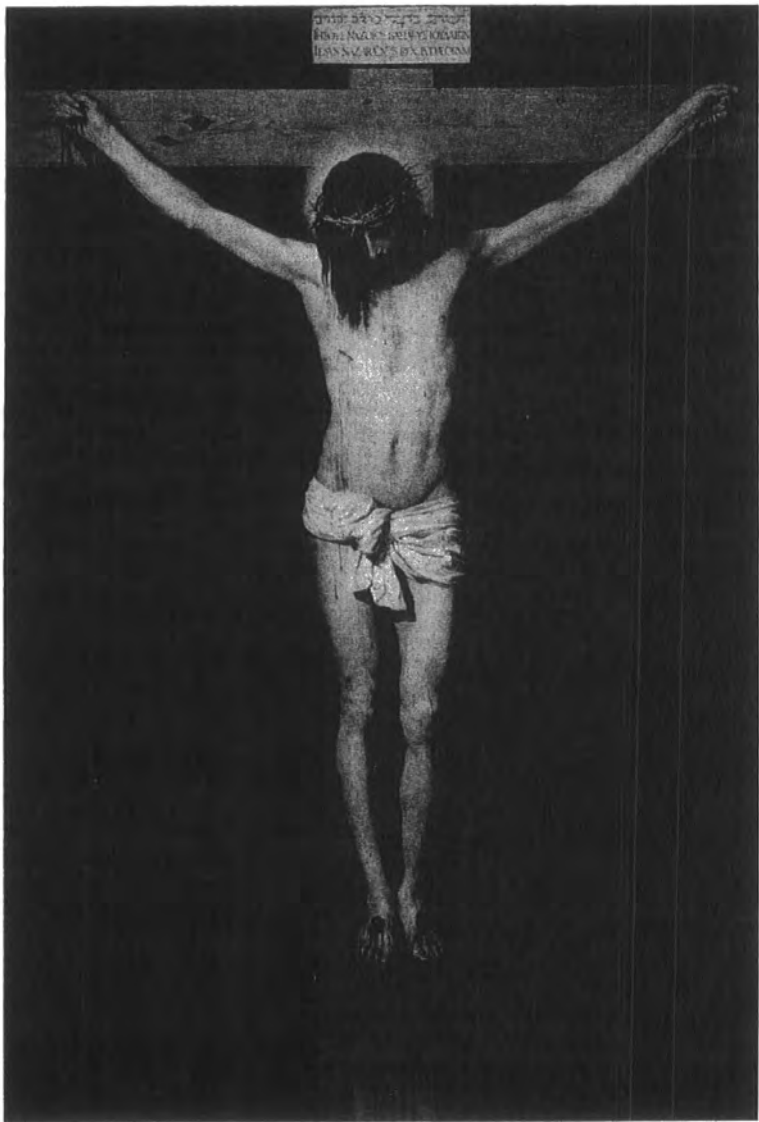
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**THE THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION OF "EL CRISTO DE VELÁZQUEZ"
IN RELATION TO "DEL SENTIMIENTO TRÁGICO DE LA VIDA"**

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In this thesis I show that in the poem Unamuno exhibits two tendencies. Besides the tranquil moments of the poem, there are many expressions of anxiety. In this anxiety can be seen certain links between this work and Del sentimiento trágico de la vida.

At times Unamuno finds peace and religious hope in the contemplation of the white body of Christ and the light shining from it. At other times, describing Christ's black hair and the darkness surrounding Him, Unamuno shows anxiety about the apparentiality of the world, the nature of God and the possibility of a death in which we would be unconscious.

In Chapter One I give an outline of Del sentimiento trágico and show where its thought is echoed in El Cristo de Meláquez. The rest of the thesis concentrates on Unamuno's use of white, black, light and darkness to express his religious hopes and anxieties. Chapter Two describes how Unamuno's recognition of the apparentiality of the world arouses in him the need to believe that the light from Christ gives purpose to life by promising eternal consciousness. Chapter Three is a discussion of the mystic heights in the poem. Chapter Four discusses Unamuno's reaction to the darkness and shows that the happiness of the mystic heights is frequently shattered by anxiety.

**THE THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION OF "EL CRISTO DE VELÁZQUEZ"
IN RELATION TO "DEL SENTIMIENTO TRÁGICO DE LA VIDA"**

**A Dissertation Presented
by
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**B.A. Spanish, Lawrence University (U.S.A.) 1965
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CONTENTS

	INTRODUCTION	page 1
I	THE TRAGIC SENSE OF LIFE AND ITS ECHO IN "EL CRISTO DE VELAZQUEZ"	10
II	"EL FONDO DEL ABISMO"	38
III	"LA DULCE LUMBRE" AND MYSTIC HEIGHTS	71
IV	"LA NOCHE NEGRA" AND ANXIOUS MOMENTS	91
	CONCLUSION	128

INTRODUCTION

In 1913, a year after the completion of Del sentimiento trágico de la vida, Unamuno started writing the poem El Cristo de Velázquez (1.). He spent seven years revising, perfecting this poem of which he said: "Es la obra que trato con más cariño" (2.). In 1914, having written 1,500 lines or two-thirds of the poem, he said that Del sentimiento trágico de la vida and El Cristo de Velázquez were his most significant works:

Y, francamente, todo lo que habría podido hacer, o desde la oposición o desde el poder, no creo que hubiese valido nada, en eficacia íntima y duradera, junto a mi libro Del sentimiento trágico de la vida en los hombres y en los pueblos, o junto a mi poema El Cristo de Velázquez.

(3.)

The poem is a series of meditations on the "Cristo

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1. Unamuno says in a letter of 28 July, 1913 to Teixeira de Pascoaes that he has begun the poem. (see García Blanco, M. Introduction: Unamuno, Obras completas Vol. XIII, Afrodísio Aguado, Madrid, 1955.p.120) In the thesis all references to the two works will be to the following editions: Del sentimiento trágico de la vida. Ensayos Vol.II, Aguilar, Madrid, 1964; El Cristo de Velázquez. Obras completas Vol XIII, Afrodísio Aguado, Madrid, 1958.
 2. García Blanco, M. Don Miguel de Unamuno y sus poesías. Universidad de Salamanca, Salamanca, 1954. p.225.
 3. Unamuno, Miguel de. "Pequeña confesión cínica". Nuevo Mundo, Madrid, 7 November, 1914. Quoted by García Blanco op. cit. p. 126.

de San Plácido" by Velázquez. In this painting the solitary, luminous Christ is surrounded by darkness. In fact, the body seems to float in the darkness. His face is partially hidden by black hair. The Christ by Velázquez is a unique interpretation of the crucifixion. As José Antonio Maravall says:

La soledad y ocultación de la mirada
contradice en aspectos esenciales las
representaciones habituales.

(1.)

The poem centres on the painting. The painting is one of the chief unifying elements of the poem.

The poem consists of 2,539 unrhymed hendecasyllables. It has four parts of unequal length. These parts are subdivided into sections. Part I is the longest of the four parts. The first three sections serve as an introduction in which Unamuno says that Velázquez was inspired by the Holy Spirit. He says that, through the painting, it is possible to feel the actual presence of God. The rest of Part I is a series of mostly white images which the body of Christ evokes. Part II is much shorter than Part I. It is a description of the actual death of Christ and the significance of it.

1. Maravall, José Antonio, Velázquez y el espíritu de la modernidad. Ediciones Guadarrama, Madrid, 1960. p. 220

Part III differs from Parts I and II in that most of the sections in this part are detailed descriptions of the body of Christ. Each of these sections is devoted to a particular part of Christ's body. The sections in Part IV recall religious attitudes which have appeared throughout the poem.

Important unifying elements of the poem are the painting, the biblical references and the leitmotifs. As I have said, Unamuno centres around the crucifixion depicted by Velázquez. However, though the poem focuses on the scene which Velázquez has painted, it is much more than the eulogy of a painting. Unamuno is attempting to feel, through the painting, the actual presence of Christ and God.

Throughout the poem are marginal references to the Bible, the source of most of the images applied to Christ. The biblical sources give religious authority to the poem.

The most important stylistic unifier is the use of leitmotifs. By far the most significant of these leitmotifs are: "blanco"; "negro"; "luz"; "tinieblas".

These leitmotifs are echoed in every part of the poem (1). A great part of this thesis will be concerned with Unamuno's use of white, black, light and darkness, through which he expresses his hopes and anxieties.

As we have seen, Unamuno considered El Cristo de Velázquez one of his best works. It is curious, therefore, that it has been given very little extensive critical attention. Those who do mention this poem vary in their appreciation of it. At one extreme are those who consider it a mystic work. At the other extreme are those who feel that it is blasphemous (2.). S. Serrano Poncela calls it a "breviario de mística cristiana" (3.). The following are others who consider it comparable with the religious poems of the Siglo de Oro. Some of them maintain that, as a mystical poem, it is a contrast to Del sentimiento trágico:

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1. For a detailed examination of the minor leitmotifs in the poem see Cannon, Calvin. Unamuno's "El Cristo de Velázquez". thesis for Ph.D. at Tulane University, 1958. Chapter Four. He says that the most important leitmotifs are "blanco" and "luz". He does not mention "negro" and "tinieblas" which I hope to show are equally significant.
 2. See Luque, Fr. Luis de Fátima. "¿Es ortodoxo el Cristo de Unamuno?". Ciencia Tomista, Vol. 64, Salamanca, 1943.
 3. Serrano Poncela, S. El Pensamiento de Unamuno. Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 1953. p. 20.

- Howard T. Young: It is a great religious poem, orthodox... and worthy of comparison with the best religious lyrics of the Siglo de Oro. (1.)
- José M. De Cossío: el más importante poema religioso escrito en castellano desde nuestros grandes siglos literarios. (2)
- Calvin Cannon: In any future history of Spanish mysticism, El Cristo de Velázquez must occupy a significant place. (3.)
Certainly El Cristo de Velázquez is quite unlike anything else he wrote and stands in especially sharp contrast to the tragic sense of life... (4.)
the greatest religious poem in Spanish literature since San Juan de la Cruz. (5.)
- Agustín Esclasans: Es una entrega mística del alma de don Miguel de Unamuno, creyante perfecto, a la Verdad crucificada. (6.)
O admirar, o callar. (7.)

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1. Young, Howard T. The Victorious Expression. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1964. p. 23.
 2. De Cossío Jose M. Introduction in Antología poética de Unamuno. Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1964. p. 11.
 3. Cannon, Calvin. Unamuno's "El Cristo de Velázquez". thesis for Ph.D. at Tulane University, 1958. p. 83.
 4. Cannon. op.cit. p. 50.
 5. Cannon. op.cit. p. 84.
 6. Esclasans, Agustín. Miguel de Unamuno. Editorial Juventud Argentina, Buenos Aires, 1947. p. 161.
 7. Esclasans. op.cit. p. 166.

Luis Felipe Vivanco: Como salmo tranquilo y creyente de confianza en Dios, por tanto en el destino del hombre, este poema representa, dentro de la obra total de Unamuno, algo único y hasta opuesto a todo ese resto atormentado de ella que culmina en las páginas de San Manuel Bueno, mártir. (1.)

The following, however, see a relationship between this work and Del sentimiento trágico:

Salvador de Madariaga: In his poem, El Cristo de Velázquez Unamuno undertakes the task of giving a poetical rendering of his tragic sense of life. (2.)

Julián Marías: Se ha dicho, con plena razón, que todo en Unamuno es poesía, y que hay honda relación entre Del sentimiento trágico de la vida y El Cristo de Velázquez. (3.)

M. Romera-Navarro: En él ha vertido Unamuno toda la fuerte pasión religiosa que le embarga ánimo y corazón, su trágico sentido de la vida y de los hombres. (4.)

Jorge Luis Parras Cruz: El "sentimiento trágico de la vida" circula por todo el poema y lo llena. (5.)

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1. Vivanco, Luis Felipe. Introduction to Unamuno, Antología poética de Miguel de Unamuno. Ediciones Escorial, Madrid, 1942. p.XII
 2. Madariaga, Salvador de. The Genius of Spain and other Essays. Oxford University Press, London, 1930. p. 161.
 3. Marías, Julian. Miguel de Unamuno. Espasa-Calpe, Madrid, 1950. p.18.
 4. Romera-Navarro, M. Miguel de Unamuno. Sociedad General Español de Librería, Madrid, 1928. p. 126.
 5. Parras Cruz, Jorge Luis. Miguel de Unamuno "El Cristo de Velázquez". in Puerto Rico, 2.ª época, año I, num.3, San Juan, junio, 1935. p. 236

Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, in his book El Unamuno contemplativo, refers to El Cristo de Velázquez as an expression of the contemplative side of Unamuno's character (1.). Blanco Aguinaga defines the contemplative tendency as "una tendencia incontrolable hacia el aflojamiento de la conciencia. (2.)" He implies that the whole of the poem is an expression of the contemplative side:

La misma tendencia al abandono y la paz contemplativa...encontramos también en El Cristo de Velazquez...en la ternura que fluye tan lenta y entregada de cada uno de sus versos. (3.)

But Calvin Cannon is the only one of these scholars who has made an extensive critical examination of the work. As seen in the passages of his which I have quoted, he maintains that it is a mystical poem in which there is no tragic sense of life. Indeed, he says that it is a contrast to the tragic sense of life (4.).

1. He says that there are two opposing tendencies in Unamuno. To substantiate his theory he quotes from an essay by Unamuno entitled "Conversación primera":
Llevo dentro de mí...dos hombres, uno activo y otro contemplativo, uno guerrero y otro pacífico.
Blanco Aguinaga, Carlos. El Unamuno contemplativo. El Colegio de México, México, 1959. p.33.
2. Blanco Aguinaga. op. cit. p.282.
3. Blanco Aguinaga. op. cit. pp.90-91
4. Cannon, Calvin. op. cit. In Chapter Two, The Mystic Experience he maintains that mystic heights are sustained throughout the poem.

I maintain that, far from being an expression of sustained mysticism, or wholly of the contemplative aspect of Unamuno, the thought and expression in much of the poem is closely linked to Del sentimiento trágico. I do not deny that there are moments of peaceful contemplation and even mystic heights in the poem. But there are also many expressions of anxiety about the apparentiality of the world, the nature of God and the possibility of a death in which we would be unconscious. This anxiety is expressed, for the most part, in Unamuno's reaction to the darkness surrounding Christ. He relates this darkness to the world, death, and God. All those who have examined the poem have neglected this reaction to the darkness.

In Chapter One I will give an outline of Del sentimiento trágico and show where the main theories expounded in that work are repeated in the poem. The rest of the thesis will be concerned with Unamuno's expression of his thought in images of white, black, light and darkness. I will show that he relates the darkness to the world, death and God. He relates light to consciousness. Chapter Two describes how Unamuno's

recognition of the apparentiality of the world arouses in him the need to believe that the light from Christ gives purpose to life by promising eternal consciousness. Chapter Three is a discussion of the mystic heights in the poem. In Chapter Four I will show that the happiness of the mystic heights is frequently shattered by anxiety.

Chapter One

THE TRAGIC SENSE OF LIFE AND ITS ECHO IN "EL CRISTO DE VELÁZQUEZ"

In this chapter I will first give an outline of Del sentimiento trágico. I will then show where some of the theories and attitudes of that work are recalled in El Cristo de Velázquez.

1. OUTLINE OF "DEL SENTIMIENTO TRÁGICO DE LA VIDA"

Unamuno emphasizes in the first chapter the importance of emotion as well as reason in man's nature. In philosophy the subjective element plays an important role. It is our temperament, whether optimistic or pessimistic which determines our ideas.

He says in Chapter Two that the most important problem which faces us is that of our own personal immortality. In fact, it is the endeavour to persist, the longing never to die, which is our essence (1.). Unamuno says that, in facing this problem of immortality, the philosopher should employ both reason and emotion.

1. He develops this theory later in the work.

The tragic sense of life is felt in the impossibility of reconciling the needs of the heart with the conclusions of reason. In the rest of the book Unamuno examines this conflict between reason and emotion.

Although his reason tells him that there is no life after death, Unamuno's emotion creates in him the need to believe that he will be immortal. He has "el hambre de inmortalidad" (the title of Chapter Three). But the immortality he desires is not one of absorption in God. He wants to continue to be an individual, conscious of himself, after death. He is most afraid of extinction, of nothingness. Indeed, he imagines hell, not as eternal punishment, but as nothingness.

In Chapters Four and Five he examines two approaches to his central problem, that of immortality. In Chapter Four he describes the Catholic solution of the problem. This solution satisfies his emotion but not his reason. In Chapter Five he describes the rational approach to the problem. This approach leads to total relativism, to scepticism.

In Chapter Four he states his belief that the resurrection of Christ is the basis of Christian faith.

The popular Catholic Christ is the eternalizing Christ. His importance lies first and foremost in His guarantee of immortality. The Protestant Christ, on the other hand, is the ethical Christ. He is considered the perfect man and the teacher of morality. Unamuno does not say that Catholicism is not concerned with ethics, or that Protestantism is not concerned with immortality. But he believes that the emphasis in Catholicism is on the eternalizing Christ, whereas in Protestantism the emphasis is on the ethical Christ. Essentially, the popular Catholic Christ promises the resurrection of the body. Catholicism in its purest, simplest, form defends life, the irrational, in the face of reason. Unfortunately, when faith no longer feels sure of itself, it seeks to establish its foundation, not against reason, but upon it. Catholicism oscillates between mysticism, in which the individual risks losing his own personality by being absorbed in God, and rationalism. The rational foundation is weakened by contradictions, impossible to accept rationally. Unamuno's conclusion is that the Catholic approach to the problem of immortality satisfies his will but not

his reason.

In Chapter Five he asserts that a rational approach does not solve the problem. It is impossible to prove rationally the immortality of the soul. In fact, reason denies that the soul can exist after the death of the body in which it is enclosed. Analytical reason is essentially sceptical, destructive. Reason, taken to its extreme, turns upon itself and doubts its own validity. It ends in total relativism, in scepticism. Reason does not support the longing of the heart for personal immortality.

The conclusions of these two chapters bring Unamuno to "el fondo del abismo" (the title of Chapter Six) where the anxiety of the heart meets the scepticism of reason. Unamuno says that the conflict between the heart and reason must be the condition of his spiritual life. For Unamuno, absolute doubt or absolute certainty is impossible. Whatever reason tells him the heart will always long for a personal immortality. It is the clash between reason and desire that gives him what he calls "la salvadora incertidumbre" (1.), which is his

1. Del sentimiento trágico. p. 836.

supreme consolation. From this incertitude he is led to assert that faith is a matter of will; that to believe is to wish to believe. He wishes to believe that God is the guarantor of the immortality of individual consciousness. He tries to show in the rest of the work how the anxiety in the "depths of the abyss" can be the basis of faith.

The next four chapters are, as Unamuno tells us, the expression of imagination founded on feeling. Chapter Seven shows how man can gain interior richness from sorrow, how hope can rise out of the "depths of the abyss". Starting from an examination of love, which he equates with pity, he arrives at a feeling of the Consciousness of the Universe, which is God.

Love is born of sorrow. A man can feel this love, or pity, for all other men in society. Looking within himself, his reason discovers his own apparentiality, his own nothingness, and he feels the depths of misery; he pities himself. He then pities others, loves others, because they are also apparential, condemned to nothingness. He pities himself because he fears that, as he was nothing before birth, he will return to nothingness

after death. He pities others because he feels they too fear death. He not only loves, pities all men, but also all things because they too will die. His imagination animates the inanimate. He comes to love everything. To love everything is to feel that everything, to varying degrees, suffers like oneself, it is to humanize, to personalize everything. The imagination, humanizing a thing, gives it personality, consciousness. Unamuno says that everything tends to acquire, preserve and increase consciousness. Love, personalizing everything, discovers that the total All, the Universe, is a Person possessing Consciousness. This is God.

A greater consciousness of self, which is personality, is only achieved by suffering. Suffering is not only caused by the fear of death. One suffers when he feels distinct from other beings, when he feels his limits. When one is happy he blends into another, he forgets he exists. He becomes conscious of himself through the suffering caused by his separation from others.

On the one hand, Unamuno wants to personalize everything, to feel the total consciousness within himself. On the other hand he does not want to cease

to be himself; he wants to be conscious of himself. This is an aspiration to be God who, he imagines, is composed of the consciousnesses of all existing things and yet has a personal consciousness distinct from them. We need God, the Supreme Consciousness, in order to save the Universe from nothingness, from apparentiality. If there is no consciousness, there is no purpose in life. All that is not conscious and eternally conscious is no more than appearance. If God, Consciousness, does not exist, then we do not exist either. Faith in God, in Consciousness, is based on the need to give purpose to existence. This is the God of life he is describing, not the God-Idea.

Unamuno describes these two opposing concepts of God in Chapter Eight. The savage sees a consciousness in things. He personalizes the sun, the moon, fire etc. He feels the divine more subjectively. For him the divine and the human are intimately blended. To say the sun is a god is equivalent to saying it is a man, that is, a human consciousness.

Later Reason, defining God, took away His vital essence, His personality. It converted the God of feeling

into the God-Idea. Reason treats God objectively. Unamuno feels that if God is not felt subjectively, if God is conceived as merely thinking and does not act on us, then He has no meaning for us; He does not exist for us. As he repeats throughout the work, only that which acts exists. The God of Reason is abstracted into a pure idea which does not act and therefore does not exist.

The God Unamuno needs has human characteristics. He is personality universalized. As we have seen, we come to feel this personality, or consciousness, through love and suffering. Unamuno feels God most in moments of spiritual suffocation. This feeling is a longing for God, a need for God, a feeling of the lack of Him. We must first long for God before knowing Him.

In Chapter Seven the God of feeling, the God Unamuno desires, was described as the Supreme Consciousness, composed of the consciousnesses of all things yet with a personal consciousness distinct from them. Unamuno emphasizes the difference between the God of feeling and the God-Idea in Chapter Eight, where he describes

the opposition between individuality and personality. Individuality is that which contains. Personality is the thing contained. Personality is consciousness. In the sense that consciousness pervades everything in the Universe, then personality is infinite and individuality is finite. Personality is the link between beings. Individuality is that which separates. The God of reason, the God-Idea, is finite; boundaries are imposed on Him. He is separated from us by His individuality. He lacks interior richness, personality. His individuality has stifled His personality.

The God of feeling has a greater personality. He is not isolated from man, as is the God-Idea. He is felt, to varying degrees, in all things. He pervades everything. He is the feeling of consciousness within all things. He is within us to the extent to which we feel Him. Each man should seek, therefore, to increase his consciousness, his personality, the feeling of God within him, and decrease his individuality, that which separates him from others. The greater his feeling of consciousness, the greater his feeling of God. To feel Him is to long for Him, to feel the lack of Him.

We need to believe that God guarantees eternal consciousness, but our reason challenges this desire. As a result, we suffer. This suffering sharpens our consciousness, the feeling of God, the longing for God within us. This is what Unamuno means when he says we must first love God, long for God, before knowing Him. Unamuno feels God as consciousness, the hunger within him for eternity and infinity. He imagines that the divine, the consciousness, in all things is personalized, conscious of itself in God. The name of God that satisfies his longing for personal immortality is Saviour, Jesus.

Unamuno says that the problem of the existence of God is identical with the problem of consciousness. God is the Consciousness that saves the world from apparentiality, from nothingness.

In Chapter Nine he says that God not only has a maximum of personality, but also a maximum of individuality. This contradicts his theory of the relationship between personality and individuality, the one decreasing in proportion to the increase of the other. However, it satisfies his desire that God consist of the consciousnesses

of all existing things yet have a personal consciousness distinct from them.

He defines faith in this same chapter. Faith is an act of will. A vital faith is based on uncertainty and yet must give us hope. We believe in what we hope for. It has reference to the future. Hope in God is the longing for the God who guarantees the immortality of personal consciousness. As we have seen, to believe in God is to long for Him. In this sense faith creates. We create God, or rather God creates Himself in us. We seek an immediate relationship with God, the Consciousness of the Universe. We feel a personality surrounding us. God draws us closer to Him. We feel that He acts, and to act, for Unamuno, is to exist.

Each man should seek to feel within himself the consciousness of the Universe. This is an aspiration towards God who is the Universal consciousness. Each man should strive to increase his personality, consciousness. Within each of us there is a consciousness that strives to be pure consciousness. But it is trapped by individuality, by matter. Matter makes it suffer by limiting it. Suffering, it acquires consciousness of itself.

Suffering is the clash between the conscious and the unconscious. The consciousness of each being seeks to be eternal and infinite. But it is trapped by the unconscious, matter, the temporal and finite. Later in the work (Chapter Eleven), describing the nature of sin, Unamuno says that it is evil to give more importance to matter, to individuality, that which separates one being from another. It is good to wish to expand consciousness (1.). We must increase our personality. We must enclose within ourselves the consciousnesses, the personalities of other men and things. In order to do this we should diminish our individuality, matter, that which separates. But Unamuno does not want to destroy completely his individuality, his matter. Matter is important because it makes consciousness suffer. Only by suffering can we feel our consciousness.

Our consciousness, the feeling of God within us must struggle to free itself from matter. Yet, if it succeeded, we would no longer feel it. To believe in God is to feel Him suffering. It is to pity Him, to love Him.

1. pp. 980-981.

In our relationship with God we must choose between happiness and love. We should choose love. There is no true love without suffering. The happy are satisfied; they no longer suffer; they no longer feel their consciousness. They fall asleep. Love, pity, strives to free consciousness from matter. But if it succeeded, we would no longer feel that consciousness. To love God is to feel Him suffering. Suffering sharpens consciousness. It is impossible to feel consciousness without suffering. Only by suffering can we feel our existence and the existence of God, Consciousness.

In Chapter Ten he tries to imagine what life after death will be like. He does not want to lose his personal consciousness. He does not want to be lost in God. He is afraid that the initial happiness of the beatific vision might result in a loss of personal consciousness. He hopes that the beatific vision is a gradual apprehension. Man's greatest pleasure is in acquiring and intensifying consciousness. He gets pleasure from learning, not from knowing. If we

completely knew God, the wonder would soon cease. Happiness would eventually dissolve into unconsciousness. We must retain some of our individuality, matter, a degree of separation from God. After death Unamuno really wants to go on living the same mortal life but without death.

He tries to find consolation in the Apocatastasis imagined by Saint Paul. According to this concept, there is a consciousness trapped in matter that struggles to free itself. The Apocatastasis is the triumph of consciousness over matter. It is the time when God, Consciousness, will end by being all in all.

Recapitulation is another aspect of the Apocatastasis. It is the gathering together, at the end of the world, of all men in Christ, the perfected Human Consciousness.

What Unamuno fears in both these concepts is that the humanization or divinization of all things will do away with matter; individuality, matter, will be destroyed by pure consciousness which would not feel itself because it would not suffer. But seeking some hopeful aspect in the Apocatastasis, Unamuno says that, as consciousness is consciousness of limitation, it

thereby excludes infinitude. He concludes that we continually approach the Apocatastasis without ever reaching it. What he wants is an "eternal purgatory".

These last four chapters have been the product of imagination. There are some logical difficulties but this is not surprising as Unamuno did not expect to prove logically the existence of God and of life after death. He is essentially expressing what he needs to believe (at times contra-rationally) in order to give his own life purpose.

In the last two chapters he advises us to act in such a way as to merit eternity. We should act so that we are irreplaceable.

In showing the relationship between the Sentimiento trágico and the Cristo de Velázquez I will be concerned primarily with Chapters Four through Ten, the imaginative chapters.

The Sentimiento trágico is an expression of Unamuno's effort to believe in God, the guarantor of personal immortality, of eternal consciousness. He says that the tension between reason and emotion arouses the need to believe in this God. Reason tells

Unamuno that he is finite and temporal. But the heart desires to be infinite and immortal. The clash between these makes him suffer. But in suffering, he feels his desire all the more. That desire, the longing to be infinite and eternal, is his consciousness, the feeling of God within him. Because he suffers, Unamuno's imagination tells him that everything, to varying degrees, suffers because of its desire for immortality. His imagination tells him that everything has a consciousness. He personalizes this total consciousness as God. To believe in God, the guarantor of eternal consciousness, is to long for Him. Only that which is conscious exists. All else is appearance. Unamuno wants to personalize everything, to feel the consciousness of everything within himself. That way he would expand his consciousness, his personality, the feeling of God within him, and decrease his individuality, that which separates him from others. He wants, however, to retain some individuality, some matter. He wants to approach a union with God, an absorption by God, but never to attain it.

The Sentimiento trágico is concerned with anxiety and creative tension. Only by the suffering caused by

tension can we feel the existence of God. The tension between reason and emotion, between matter and spirit, between unconsciousness and consciousness, between individuality and personality, between evil and good, leads us to feel the existence of God. Unamuno wants to retain this tension after death.

What Unamuno hopes for, what he must believe to give his life meaning, is that after death he will continue to feel his personal consciousness and that it will be united without being confounded with other consciousnesses in the Supreme Consciousness.

2. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE "SENTIMIENTO TRÁGICO" AND "EL CRISTO DE VELA ZQUEZ"

The Sentimiento trágico is concerned with the problem of consciousness. Unamuno wants to be conscious of himself after death. As he says in that work, "ese inmortal anhelo de inmortalidad... no es más que una batalla por la conciencia." (1.) Only that which is conscious exists:

Lo único de veras real es lo que siente, sufre, compadece, ama y anhela; lo único sustancial is la conciencia.

(Sentimiento trágico p.868)

El Cristo de Velázquez is also concerned with consciousness. Throughout his contemplation of the painting, Unamuno is trying to feel that Christ, though dead, has retained His consciousness. Unamuno's hope of immortality depends on the consciousness of Christ. If Christ is not conscious after death then there is no hope of immortality. The poem is much more than the eulogy of a painting. It is an attempt to experience, through the painting, the actual presence of Christ. It is an attempt to feel the divine consciousness. In the very first section of the poem Unamuno says that the painting is inspired by the Holy Spirit:

Volaste al cielo a que viniera,
 consolador, a nos el Santo Espiritu,
 ánimo de tu grey, que obra en el arte
 y tu visión nos trajo. Aquí encarnada
 en este verbo silencioso y blanco
 que habla con líneas y colores, dice
 su fe mi pueblo trágico. Es el auto
 sacramental supremo, el que nos pone
 sobre la muerte bien de cara a Dios.

(Part I, section 1, lns. 11-19) (1.)

In the rest of this chapter, focussing on Unamuno's development of the theory of consciousness, I will show relationships between the Sentimiento trágico and El

1. Notice that the painting shows the faith of "mi pueblo trágico".

Cristo de Velázquez.

In the Sentimiento trágico he mentions the painting by Velázquez:

Podemos decir que la más alta expresión artística católica, por lo menos española, es, en el arte más material, tangible y permanente . . . de la escultura y la pintura, en el Cristo de Velázquez, ¡en ese Cristo que está siempre muriéndose, sin acabar nunca de morirse, para darnos vida!

(Sentimiento trágico p. 792)

The significance of this Christ is that He gives Unamuno hope of eternal consciousness. This Christ never finishes dying; He is still conscious. Unamuno repeats this thought in Part IV, section II ("Salud") of the poem:

Y estás muriendo sin cesar; tu muerte,
perenne sacrificio, nos es vida
perenne; sin cesar por Tí morimos,
resucitando sin cesar.

(Part IV, section II ("Salud"), lns. 2.300-2.303)

I have explained previously the distinction which Unamuno makes between the Protestant, "ethical" Christ and the Catholic, "eternalizing" Christ. The Christ whom others have depicted suffering in the torture of the cross is felt by Unamuno to be the judging, ethical Christ:

Representánnos
cual de azogado en contorsión tu imagen

los que temblando ante la muerte vieron
al Juez en Ti;
(Part 1, section 11, ins. 24-27)

But Unamuno seeks in the Christ of Velazquez a guarantee
of his immortality:

Revelación del alma que es el cuerpo,
la fuente del dolor y de la vida,
inmortalizador cuerpo del Hombre...
(Part 1, section III, ins. 42-44)

This, for Unamuno, is the significance of Christ. The
main concern of the Cristo de Velázquez, as of the
Sentimiento trágico is the desire for immortality.

Faced with the problem of immortality, tension
arises between reason and emotion. As we have seen,
throughout the Sentimiento trágico Unamuno refers to
this tension. He has a desire for immortality, but
his reason tells him that only nothingness awaits
him after death. He decides that, as it is impossible
to reconcile the needs of the heart with the conclusions
of reason, he must make the conflict itself the
foundation of faith. Unamuno refers to this creative
conflict in the poem:

Tú que a traernos guerra descendiste
a nuestro mundo, guerra creadora . . .

(Part I, section XI ("Paz en la guerra")
ins. 381-382)

Sólo en tu guerra espiritual nos cabe
tomar la paz, tu beso de saludo;

Part I, section XI ("Paz en la guerra")
lns. 391-392)

This conflict makes him suffer. Suffering, by increasing his need to believe that God guarantees his immortality, sharpens his consciousness, the feeling of God within him. Thus, suffering can lead to hope. He expresses this, describing Christ, in Part I, section XIII ("Rosa") of the poem:

de Tí aprendimos,
divino Maestro de dolor, dolores
que surten esperanzas.

(Part I, section XIII ("Rosa") lns. 429-
431)

By suffering, a man increases his consciousness. He feels the presence of God more strongly within him. He becomes more divine. Unamuno expresses the necessity of suffering in Part III, Section VI. He is speaking to Christ:

Confortándote
buscabas cobrar bríos en la lucha
con el sufrir, al toque de la tierra,
granero de dolores. Te faltaba
para hacerte más dios pasar congojas
de tormento de muerte.

(Part III, section VI ("Rostro")
lns. 1.708 - 1.713)

His imagination tells Unamuno that everything, to varying degrees, suffers and thus is conscious. The imagination animates the inanimate; it personalizes, humanizes everything. He expresses his belief that there is a consciousness within all things in various sections of the poem. Christ is the pledge of this consciousness:

al humanarte humanizaste al mundo
vuelto conciencia en tu dolor.

Tú sobrenaturalizaste, el Hombre
lo que era natural, humanizándole.
(Part III, section XXVII, "Soporte-
Naturaleza", 2.229-2.239)

Tú has humanado al universo, Cristo,
¡que por Tí es obra humana!
(Part I, section VI, "Ecce Homo",
179-180)

Unamuno needs to believe that there is a consciousness in all things, as only that which is conscious exists. This is achieved by the imagination which, as I have said, animates the inanimate. Imagination is opposed to reason. Reason, scepticism, annihilates. Imagination completes. Unamuno relates the conflict between reason and imagination to the painting. He is led by imagination to believe that the white Christ is conscious and thus promises him eternal consciousness. But in some sections,

as we will see later, reason threatens this belief and draws Unamuno to the darkness surrounding Christ.

Unamuno says in the Sentimiento trágico that he hovers between being and nothingness (1.). It is his will which causes him to resist the destruction to which pure reason, that is scepticism, would lead him. He must believe that Christ is conscious after death. Only that which is conscious exists. If He is not conscious, He does not exist. If He does not pledge eternal consciousness, then life has no purpose and we are apparenial. Unamuno expresses this in the poem:

Tras este velo de tu carne anúnciase
la osamenta, la roca de tu cuerpo,
que es hueso de los huesos de la Tierra,
que es roca de la roca de tu Madre.
Y si no floreció, muerto, tu roca,
es vana nuestra fe, esta imagen vana,
es infinita vanidad el mundo;
como sombras que pasan nuestros días,
y el hombre no es ni sueño de una sombra.
(Part III, section XV, "Osamenta"
1.956-1.964)

The need to believe has led Unamuno to imagine that this white Christ in the darkness is conscious. Does he love Christ? To love Christ is to feel Him suffering, to pity Him. One suffers because he fears he is not eternal or because he knows he is not infinite.

In some sections of the poem Unamuno loves Him because Christ suffers the fear of an eventual loss of individual consciousness. In other sections of the poem Christ suffers because matter traps His consciousness, because He is not infinite. I will show this later in the thesis describing the expression in the poem. We will see that this suffering is a sign that Christ is conscious.

In the Sentimiento trágico Unamuno distinguishes between spiritual love and happiness. This love is desire, uncertain hope and is full of suffering. Once it becomes happy and satisfied it is no longer love because it no longer suffers and it no longer desires. The essence of faith must be love. The happy lose their consciousness and fall asleep. We must choose between love and happiness, and we ought to choose love. In the poem, however, Unamuno shows his desire for both. In much of the poem, he does not stress his own suffering or that of Christ. In these sections he prays for happiness; this is a desire to fall asleep in the vision of Christ. He expresses this in Part III, section I:

Como yerba, humildes,
tu nevada de luz, las manos quedas,
queda la mente, el corazón latiendo,

cual la nevada blanco y silencioso
te recibamos.

(Part III, section I, "El rótulo"
1.523-1.527)

In this prayer for happiness he asks for a
quiet mind. In another section, however, he expresses
his love for Christ which he equates with a need for
Christ, a hunger for Him:

Amor de Ti nos quema, blanco cuerpo;
amor que es hambre, amor de las entrañas;
hambre de la Palabra creadora
que se hizo carne; fiero amor de vida
que no se sacia con abrazos, besos,
ni con enlace conyugal alguno. (1.)

(Part I, section XXXII, "Eucaristia",
898-903)

Later, in Part IV, section VII he asks for the desire
to love, implying suffering, because love attained,
happiness, is sleep. The love he wants has reference
to the future. As I said previously, it is uncertain
hope:

Mientras dure
nuestra vida en la tierra, sea el ansia
de amarte nuestra vida; que se duerme
sobre el amor logrado, y es el sueño
no vida, sino muerte.

(Part IV, section VII, "Ansia de amor", 2.396-2.400)

1. The "enlace conyugal" would be a mystical union.

Love attained, happiness, would be a mystical state.

In the Sentimiento trágico he defines mysticism as the

experiencia íntima del Dios vivo en Cristo, experiencia intransmisible, y cuyo peligro es, por otra parte, absorber en Dios las propia personalidad, lo cual no salva nuestro anhelo vital. . . (Sentimiento trágico pp. 797-798)

For a man whose greatest desire is to retain his own personal consciousness, a mystical experience, which he defines as a loss of consciousness, would seem to be undesirable. However, the tranquil aspect of Unamuno's character, "el Unamuno contemplativo", does appear in some sections of the poem. He does ask Christ, in these sections, that he might sleep in the vision of Him. I will show later where Unamuno approaches mystic heights in the poem.

Although he prays for happiness, which would result in a loss of consciousness, he rarely suppresses the echo of doubt and fear which sharpens his consciousness. These doubts and fears lurk in the darkness around Christ. I will prove this later when I describe the expression in the poem. The love he feels for Christ, the need for Christ, is based, in some sections, on the uncertainty

about Christ's promise of resurrection. Unamuno says that he who does not believe in the resurrection of Christ is a Christophile, not a Christian. Yet, in parts of the poem he shows that the love he feels for Christ is based on uncertainty about the resurrection. At times, Unamuno seems, by his own definition, more of a Christophile than a Christian.

On the other hand, we must remember that faith for Unamuno is a matter of will. He believes in what he hopes for. Although throughout the poem there is a thread of doubt about the resurrection, Unamuno shows the need to believe (contra-rationally) that Christ, indeed, rose from the dead. To counteract the doubts about the resurrection which he expresses in descriptions of the darkness, he imagines that the light shining from Christ's body is His promise of eternal life. One example is Part I, section XII where he compares Christ's light to the dawn:

que albor de aurora diste a nuestra vida
 vuelta alborada de la muerte, porche
 del día eterno. (Part I, section XII, "Alba",
 403-405)

His light is the promise of eternal day, of eternal life.

Unamuno shows in El Cristo de Velázquez the need to believe in the promise of eternal consciousness. In many sections of the poem the expression of this need rises from dynamic tension. His reason leads him to the darkness. It tells him that only nothingness awaits him after death. This recognition makes him suffer and arouses the need to believe in Christ's promise of eternal consciousness. Unamuno's emotion leads him to imagine that Christ, in His white light, promises eternal consciousness. Throughout the poem he hovers between being and nothingness, between a faith in the white Christ and a fear of the darkness surrounding Him. I will now examine the expression of this tension in the poem. We will see that many expressions of faith in the poem are based on the tension described in the Sentimiento trágico.

Chapter Two

"EL FONDO DEL ABISMO"

In the last chapter I showed where Unamuno repeats some of the theories and attitudes of the Sentimiento trágico in the poem. In the rest of the thesis I will show how he uses white, black, light and darkness to express his faith.

In this chapter I will show how the recognition of the apparentiality of the world arouses in Unamuno the need to believe that Christ is conscious. As in the Sentimiento trágico, hope, for Unamuno, rises from "the depths of the abyss".

1. THE DARKNESS OF THE WORLD

Christ, in the painting, is surrounded by darkness. In many sections of the poem, Unamuno relates this darkness to the world. In the darkness around the crucified Christ there is no matter. It is formless, chaotic. Unamuno says in the Sentimiento trágico that all that is not eternally conscious is appearance only:

Hemos creado a Dios para salvar al Universo
de la nada, pues lo que no es conciencia y

conciencia eterna, conciente de su eternidad y eternamente conciente, no es nada más que apariencia.

(Sentimiento trágico p. 868)

Relating the formless, empty darkness to the world, he emphasizes that, without Christ's pledge of immortality, that is eternal consciousness, the world would be apparenial. In the following section Unamuno expresses the need to believe in Christ's pledge of the resurrection of the body. Christ's skeleton is called a rock ("roca"):

Y si no floreció, muerto, tu roca,
es vana nuestra fe, esta imagen vana,
es infinita vanidad el mundo;
(Part III, section XV, "Osamenta",
1.960-1.962)

Pure reason, that is scepticism, annihilates. It says that everything in the world, including man, is indeed apparenial. Pure reason would leave Unamuno in the darkness. But finding himself in darkness, recognizing the appareniality of matter, Unamuno feels the need to believe that within matter there is a consciousness that will be eternal. I will show later in this chapter that he finds the pledge of eternal consciousness in the light on Christ.

At the end of Part I, section IV Unamuno writes

of Christ's light in the dark night of the world. In this section darkness is considered a time for sleep and dreams. Indeed, Unamuno says that life is a sleep. But it is a sleep in which he dreams. The recognition of the apparentiality of the world, the experience of darkness, leads him to dream that Christ, by pledging eternal consciousness, saves the world from apparentiality. Christ's light strengthens him and gives him hope of life after death:

Los rayos, Maestro, de tu suave lumbre
 nos guían en la noche de este mundo,
 ungiéndonos con la esperanza recia
 de un día eterno. Noche cariñosa,
 ¡oh noche, madre de los blandos sueños,
 madre de la esperanza, dulce Noche,
 noche oscura del alma, eres nodriza
 de la esperanza en Cristo salvador!
 (Part I, section IV, 125-132)

Without this dream about Christ, life would be empty. It would be a dreamless sleep, an empty existence. As he says in Part I, section X:

Di, ¿de qué vivimos
 sino del sueño de tu vida, Hermano?
 (Part I, section X, "La vida es sueño",
 366-367)

The night of the world in Part I, section IV is the "madre de la esperanza". The recognition of the darkness

of the world, of the apparentiality of matter arouses in Unamuno the dream, the hope that Christ's light is a promise of eternal consciousness, of eternal day. The "noche oscura del alma" (1.) inspires in Unamuno the need to believe in Christ's promise of life after death. In this sense, the recognition of the apparentiality of matter, of the darkness of the world, is the mother of hope in Christ. For this reason, Unamuno does not fear the darkness in this section. It is a mother. It is "dulce". His reason has led Unamuno to a recognition of the darkness. It arouses the need to believe in Christ.

In Part II, section IX he implies that pure reason, in the absence of emotion, by annihilating, would leave him in the darkness. Although he once again affirms that Christ brings light to the darkness, he shows a greater fear of the darkness. The need to find the light which carries with it a guarantee of eternal consciousness is more urgent. He expresses the frantic effort of man to escape the darkness. He says in this section that reason alone cannot find the light which would give meaning to life. He compares the spirit of

1. This is a reference to San Juan.

man, before the time of Christ, to a condor which has been blinded. The bird, thinking itself in a ravine without light, flies straight up seeking the light. He soars so high in his search that he dies for lack of air:

Así del hombre el insaciable espíritu
 tras de la luz se alzó hasta las alturas
 donde no hay aire para el huelgo y vuelo
 saber buscando a trueque del abogo;
 pero bajaste Tú, luz de la gloria,
 la vida que era luz para los hombres,
 luz que en lo oscuro brilla, iluminando
 a todo hermano tuyo que a este mundo
 a respirar el graso aire del valle
 mejido con la boira de las lágrimas
 y del sudor penitencial se viene.

Con tu muerte trajiste Dios al suelo
 y la luz verdadera has enterrado;

. . . .
 Dios antes nos cegó para traernos
 como a Saulo, camino de Damasco,
 a morir a tus pies, y con tu muerte
 darnos la luz a cuya busca errábamos
 por las alturas del mortal saber.

(Part II, section IX, 1.319-1.339)

Before Christ came down to earth, men sought the light that would enlighten the darkness of the world, give purpose to life. But mortal knowledge, alone, cannot find the light. Unamuno implies that we must believe, contra-rationally, that Christ promises resurrection. Christ, at His death, brought God, Consciousness, the

true light to earth. Reason alone cannot show the purpose and meaning of our life. It leaves us in the formless, orderless, chaotic darkness of the world. Nevertheless, it arouses the need to find some meaning in life. Only belief in Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness can satisfy this need. Christ's death is a promise of life after death. This promise is seen in His white light (1.). That white light illumines the darkness of the world. It is a sign that Christ is conscious after death. It is a promise that gives a purpose and a direction to life. Without it we would be lost in darkness. Once again Unamuno implies that the recognition of the darkness, of the apparentiality of the world arouses the need to believe that Christ's light is a pledge of eternal consciousness.

The spirit of man seeks to find a purpose and meaning in life. It seeks light in the darkness. But ignoble men lack that spirit. In Part III, section X he describes this type of man. The men who struck Christ were soulless creatures:

1. I will discuss this in more detail later in the thesis.

cimarrones
 desalmados que ignoran lo que se hacen...
 huyendo de la luz.

(Part III, section X, "Mejillas",
 1.814-1818)

These ignoble men are: "cruda cria; "vil chusma"; "engendro de lobreguez". They do not recognize the apparentiality of life and thus do not feel the need to believe in Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness. Instead of seeking the light which gives meaning and purpose to life, they flee from it and are left in darkness.

In none of these sections has Unamuno strongly emphasized the anxiety caused by the conflict between reason and emotion. He implies that once reason recognized the vanity, the apparentiality of the passing world, the heart would feel the need to believe in Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness. But Unamuno does not stress, as he does in other sections of the poem, that it is the suffering caused by the recognition of the darkness, of the apparentiality of the world which arouses the need to believe that Christ is conscious. In the sections I have thus far discussed, he does not stress the tension between the recognition of reason and

the needs of emotion. He does not emphasize that belief in Christ is based on anxiety. In Part IV, section V he does not say how he makes the transition from the recognition of the apparentiality of life to a belief in Christ. He simply affirms that the world is apparential and that Christ is the Truth:

Eres Tú la Verdad que con su muerte,
resurrección al fin, nos vivifica.

(Part IV, section V, "Verdad", 2/347-2.348)

. . . .

Solo embuste
y error no más Naturaleza; engaño
del sentido, mentira lo que vemos;
una añagaza urdida por la Muerte,
que muerta de hambre sin cesar nos ronda
para tragarnos. ¡Curas el hastío
que nos meten al tuétano del ánimo
los halagos del mundo lagotero
que nos envuelve en sempiterno error!

(2.356-2.364)

Unamuno shows in other sections that Christ is the Truth because His light gives hope of eternal life.

In Part I, section VII he affirms that only through Christ can we find the light, the consciousness, that gives us hope of eternal life. Only Christ's light tells us that God lives. Unamuno relates Christ to the moon and God to the sun in the following:

eres testimonio
Tú el único de Dios, y en esta noche
sólo por Tí se llega al Padre Eterno;
sólo tu luz lunar en nuestra noche
cuenta que vive el sol.

(Part I, section VII, "Dios-Tinieblas,
192-196)

He does not emphasize that this faith is based on anxiety. We shall see, however, that in some sections of the poem he shows that, in fact, it is.

In some sections of the poem (though not all, as I will show in Chapter Three) he emphasizes the suffering caused by the conflict between reason and emotion. In these sections the affirmations of belief in Christ have their roots in suffering. The affirmations rise out of the fear of the annihilation by reason.

Suffering makes him feel the need for Christ. He periodically expresses the anguish in "el fondo del abismo" where the scepticism of reason meets the anxiety of the heart. The following are some expressions of this suffering: Life is "nuestra noche triste" (Part III, section I, "El rótulo", 1.533); he hopes that Christ hears "el lamento fugaz de nuestra nada" (Part III, section VIII, "Orejas", 1.775-1.776); the world is "el valle de amarguras" (Part I, section V, "Luna", 135); "aqueste valle de amarguras" (Part I, section XXXI, "Arbol", 861-862); "granero de dolores" (Part III, section VI, "Rostro", 1.711); "este valle de lágrimas" ("Oración final", 2.450); "nuestro abismo de miseria humana" ("Oración final", 2.453)

The recognition of the apparentiality of the world, of the darkness, causes Unamuno to suffer. He suffers because his reason conflicts with his desire for eternal consciousness, immortality. That suffering makes him feel the need for Christ, the guarantor of eternal consciousness. Suffering, by making him feel the need for Christ, in a sense, creates Christ. This is what he means in Part I, section XVII where he says that Christ is a white wafer which has been made from grain ground by the sorrow of the world:

Hostia blanca del trigo de los surcos
del desierto, molido por la muela
del dolor que tritura.

Hijo eres, Hostia, de la tierra negra.

(Part I, section XVII, "Hostia", 558-561)

In Part III, section VIII ("Orejas") he again implies that suffering, by arousing the need to believe in Christ's promise of eternal consciousness, in a sense creates Christ. He compares Christ's ears to two roses and then to two shells in the following:

Son dos rosas
que se abren al rocío del lamento
fugaz de nuestra nada; son dos conchas
marinab que recojen los sollozos
de las olas de lagrimas del piélago

de la noche, que oyen la sed y el hambre
 de vivir para siempre. ¡La Palabra,
 por sólo serlo, no puede ser sorda,
 que vive de ellas, y de ruegas Tú!
 (Part III, section VIII, "Orejas",
 1.774-1.782)

Unamuno, suffering, feels the need to believe that Christ pledges eternal consciousness. Without Christ's light, His sign of consciousness, the world would be left in darkness. As he says in Part IV, section VIII, without the promise of eternal consciousness, life would indeed be apparential, a fraud:

la vida toda
 no es sino embuste si no hay otra allende
 (Part IV, section VIII, "Saduceismo",
 2.419-2.420)

He needs to believe that Christ "saves" the world because He is conscious after death, thus promising eternal consciousness. In Part III, section XXVII, Unamuno says that Christ draws matter out of the darkness of apparentiality and into the whiteness of His body. Christ's light is a pledge that there is a consciousness within matter. Unamuno says that Nature came to its highest point in the whiteness of Christ's body. The Earth is called our black nurse which Christ lifts up

into himself and puts in the light of God, Consciousness. He thus brings the world out of black chaos and shows its meaning. Christ humanizes the world, gives it consciousness:

Tú a la Tierra,
nuestra negra nodriza, con tus manos,
selladas con tu sangre, la levantas
como hostia al cielo y a la luz la pones
del Sol eterno que en blancura anega
su verdor y en idea la convierte.
(Part III, section XXVII, "Soporte-
Naturaleza", 2.232-2.237)

Christ made human, that is personalized, gave consciousness to all things. By drawing everything into His white body, He saves it from the black, chaotic sea. He is compared to Noah's ark which saved natural things from the deluge ("diluvio lóbrego"):

Tú sobrenaturalizaste, el Hombre
lo que era natural, humanizándolo.
Selvas, montañas, mares y desiertos,
confluyen a tu pecho, y en Tí abarcas
rocas y plantas, bestias, peces y aves.
Es como un arca de Noé tu cuerpo
donde se salvan del diluvio lóbrego
cuantos hijos parió la Madre Tierra
para darlos al hombre en mayorazgo.
(Part III, section XXVII, "Soporte-
Naturaleza", 2.238-2.246)

Unamuno shows in other sections that it is his fear of the "diluvio lóbrego" that arouses in him the

need to believe that Christ is the guarantor of eternal consciousness. In Part I, section XXXIII the darkness of the world has a fearful quality. In this section Unamuno refers to earth and heaven as two black seas. Souls seek shelter in Christ from the hostile sea of the world. Unamuno stresses the immensity of both seas. They are both enormous and formless. The only form is the white Christ on the Cross, so the souls cling to Him. Without Him they would be lost; they would drown. The darkness of the world is no longer a sweet mother of dreams as in Part I, section IV, but a chaotic sea from which souls try to save themselves by clinging to Christ:

Sólo la cruz respaldo, el tronco errante
 donde sujeto vas, el árbol muerto,
 sin raíces, sin hojas y sin fruto,
 armadía al azar de los abismos
 de la tierra y del cielo inacabables,
 santo madero en que navega el alma
 tendida entre las dos eternidades.
 Al mar dormido de la luz - tinieblas -
 su recia cabecera sacudiendo
 como la cuña de una proa, espuma
 de rastro esplendoroso - estrellas - alza,
 y rómpense las olas en sus brazos
 donde las almas sollozando penas
 van a abrigarse. Y se despliega enorme
 sobre ella el otro mar, el mar del cielo

negro y también sin fondo y sin orillas,
 y allá donde se besan ambos mares,
 donde descansa cuanto vive: ¡el Sol!
 (part I, section XXXIII, "Barco",
 920-937)

Notice the threatening nature of the two "abismos".

The cross is compared to a raft which wanders "al azar de los abismos". The two abysses are "inacabables".

Where the waves of the dark sea of the world break on the cross are souls "sollozando penas". They seek shelter ("abrigarse" on Christ. Notice also the words Unamuno uses to describe both seas: "enorme"; "negro"; "sin fondo "; "sin orillas". The darkness of the world has a hostile, chaotic quality in this section.

Unamuno clings to Christ because of the fear of the apparentiality of the world. In this section he shows that his faith in Christ is based on anxiety, on the conflict between reason, which leads to the darkness, and emotion, which drives him to cling to Christ in his search for God (el Sol). He needs to believe that Christ promises eternal consciousness.

The sorrow of living, the fear of the apparentiality of the world arouses in Unamuno the need to believe

that Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness saves the world from the darkness. In Part III, section XVI Unamuno seeks relief from the black chaos of the world. Christ is that relief. Unamuno calls Christ's arms oars of the Spirit which float over the dark waters of the sorrow of living:

Son las dos alas
lumínicas de Dios tus blancos brazos,
los remos del Espiritu que flota
sobre el haz de las aguas tenebrosas
del dolor de vivir.

(Part III, section XVI, "Brazos", 1.992-
1.996)

Christ, pledging the existence of God, Consciousness, gives Unamuno hope in the darkness of the world. Without Christ he would drown in that dark sea of the sorrow of living. The light of the Spirit shining from Christ gives Unamuno hope of eternal consciousness. But, as we have seen, Unamuno shows in some sections of the poem that this hope is founded on the fear of the apparentiality of life, on the desire to escape the darkness.

I have shown where Unamuno's recognition of the apparentiality of the world, of the "depths of the abyss", arouses in him the need to believe that Christ

gives purpose to life by pledging eternal consciousness. In these sections he follows the philosophy of the Sentimiento trágico. I will now discuss the sections in which Unamuno describes Christ as suffering after death. I will show how this suffering satisfies Unamuno's need to believe that Christ pledges eternal consciousness. In the process I will show yet another relationship between the Sentimiento trágico and the poem.

2. CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE "CRISTO DE VELÁZQUEZ"

The theory of consciousness is the core of Unamuno's philosophy in the Sentimiento trágico. In the light of this theory, he reflects on our life on earth, God, and life after death. It is necessary to understand the theory of consciousness for a deeper understanding not only of the Sentimiento trágico, but also of the Cristo de Velázquez.

The following are the main points of this theory.

Suffering sharpens consciousness:

El dolor es el camino de la conciencia, y es por él como los seres vivos llegan a tener conciencia de sí. (Sentimiento trágico p. 855)

The fear of death is one of the main causes of this

suffering. A man pities himself because his reason tells him that, as he was nothing before birth, he will return to nothingness after death. This self-pity leads him to pity all things because they too will die. Unamuno equates pity with love. One can only pity, love that which feels itself, that which suffers. His imagination leads Unamuno to believe that all things suffer with the fear of death. He comes to believe that all things have a consciousness.

One suffers not only because he fears he is not eternal, but also because he knows he is not infinite:

Y si doloroso es tener que dejar de ser un día, más doloroso sería acaso seguir siendo siempre uno mismo, y no más que uno mismo, sin poder ser a la vez otro, sin poder ser a la vez todo lo demás, sin poder serlo todo.
(Sentimiento trágico p. 854)

The man who suffers because he is not infinite feels his limits, his separation from others. He suffers when his matter opposes itself to his spirit. Matter is a thing's individuality. Our bodies separate us from others. We are most obviously individuals because we have separate bodies. But anything that makes each one

of us unique, which separates us from others, is our individuality. Within matter is trapped personality or consciousness. God is the personalization of the total consciousness of all things. He is within everything to varying degrees yet, at the same time He is a Person outside of them (1.). God is trapped in matter and strives to free Himself from it. In other words, He strives for pure consciousness in which there would be no matter. Unamuno, however, believes that God, Consciousness, will never completely free Himself from matter. Matter is important because it makes the spirit suffer. A man feels his consciousness as a result of the suffering caused by the limitation of matter, of his individuality. Without matter there would be no consciousness.

It is the suffering of not being eternal and infinite that causes each man to feel a consciousness within himself. His pity, love for other things because they also suffer, makes him personalize these things, feel their suffering within himself:

1. God encloses within Himself all things. Yet, at the same time, He is trapped within them. This is a logical contradiction which Unamuno never fully resolves. (see Sentimiento trágico p. 917)

Para amarlo todo, para compadecerlo todo,
humano y extrahumano, viviente y no viviente,
es menester que lo sientas todo dentro de tí
mismo, que lo personalices todo.

(Sentimiento trágico p. 854)

He thus expands his own consciousness by including within it the consciousnesses of other things. Unamuno is striving for a maximum of personality, consciousness, and a maximum of individuality. He strives to be infinite yet unique. He strives to be God:

Todo ser creado . . . quiere el máximo de individualidad con el máximo también de personalidad, aspira a que el Universo sea él, a Dios. (Sentimiento trágico p.916)

Consciousness, in order to be felt, must be trapped in matter. Because of this, Unamuno wants to retain his material limits, his individuality after death. He has said that without matter there would be no consciousness, and all that is not eternally conscious is no more than appearance. He is trying to believe in some sections in the poem that Christ feels His individual consciousness after death, thus pledging eternal consciousness. Unamuno's hope in life after death depends on what he feels was Christ's fate.

Suffering sharpens consciousness. According to Unamuno's theory of consciousness, if Christ does not suffer, being dead, then He is not conscious. As I have pointed out, Unamuno believes that the two main causes of suffering are the fear that one is not eternal and the knowledge that one is not infinite. It would seem, then, that in order for Christ to retain and increase His consciousness after death, His death must be not a resolution, but a continuation of the suffering of life. I will show where and why Christ suffers in El Cristo de Velázquez

In one section of the poem (Part II, section VI, "Alma y cuerpo") Christ suffers the fear of an eventual annihilation after death. His soul has just left the Body:

Tu alma
sobre tinieblas frías recostada,
de la agonía descansando, mira
su compañero cuerpo, al que ha dejado
de la cruz en las garras, de los clavos
pendiente, y al mirarlo se entristece
de amor más vivo que la vida.

(Part II, section VI, "Alma y cuerpo,
1.199-1.205)

This seems to contradict Unamuno's belief that consciousness must be trapped in matter in order to feel itself.

Although Christ's soul is outside the body, it is conscious. Yet, later in this section, Unamuno says that the soul suffers because of the fear of an eventual annihilation. Without the body, it would eventually lose consciousness of itself:

Y al temor oscuro
de, sin vaso, fundirse en las tinieblas
y perderse cual viento libre, ansía
recojerse en su cuenco - carne y huesos -,
añora de su cuerpo la hermosura,
buscando ella, infinita, deslindarse;
las lindes quiere de su coto; ¡quiere
dentro de él abarcándose vivir!
(Part II, section VI, "Alma y cuerpo,"
1.209-1.216)

The soul fears the eventual loss of consciousness that would result without the body. In this section Unamuno is attributing to Christ the desire he himself feels to retain his body after death.

Unamuno shows in other sections his need to believe that Christ pledges the resurrection of our bodies:

tu muerte en el año fué la prenda
de la resurrección de nuestros cuerpos.
(Part IV, section III, "Palabra",
2.333-2.334)

Y si no floreció, muerto, tu roca (1.),
es vana nuestra fe.
(Part III, section XV, "Osamenta", 1.960-1.961)

1. "roca" refers to Christ's skeleton

The body is the most obvious sign of individuality. But anything which separates one man from another is his individuality. Unamuno shows in the Sentimiento trágico that he wants to retain some individuality after death. Individuality makes consciousness suffer by limiting it. But only in suffering can we feel that consciousness. Unamuno needs to believe that Christ retains His individuality after death. He looks for a sign that Christ, as an individual, is conscious.

It is evident that the Christ of Velázquez does not suffer the physical pain of the torture of the cross. This physical pain is in the past. But in various sections of the poem Unamuno attributes to Christ mental pain, anguish. In these sections Christ, as an individual, suffers and thus is conscious. Unamuno finds Christ's expression of consciousness in the light of the halo. In these sections he describes Christ as suffering as a result of His knowledge of evil. Evil, as we will see, is the matter which separates one consciousness from another. In these sections Christ suffers because He is separated from others, because

He is not infinite.

The origin of evil, as defined in the Sentimiento trágico, is the inertia of matter (1.). Matter and consciousness seek opposite ends:

Cada conciencia quiere ser ella y ser todas las demás; sin dejar de ser ella, quiere ser Dios. Y la materia, la inconciencia, tiende a ser menos, cada vez menos, a no ser nada, siendo la suya una sed de reposo.
(Sentimiento trágico p.921)

Suffering is caused by the clash between the unconscious, matter, and consciousness (2.). It is good to try to increase consciousness at the expense of matter. It is evil to increase one's matter, one's separation from others, one's individuality at the expense of consciousness (3). Unamuno says that in man there is either an abundance of spirit or too much matter (4.). The man who has too much matter separates himself from others in an attempt to preserve himself. The individual who acts solely under the instinct of preserving his matter, which is temporal and unconscious, tends towards annihilation (5.). It is evil to act as an individual, opposed to society,

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1. Sentimiento trágico p. 920
 2. op. cit. p. 920
 3. op. cit. p. 921
 4. op. cit. p. 881
 5. op. cit. p. 981

for the sake of one's own preservation. The man who has an excess of spirit, on the other hand, is ruled, not by the instinct of preservation, but by the instinct of perpetuation. This instinct drives him to try to break down the walls of matter which separate him from other men. He wants to be infinite. As Unamuno says in the passage quoted above, the consciousness of this man seeks to enclose within itself the consciousnesses of all other men and things.

We have seen, however, that Unamuno does not want completely to do away with his matter which separates him from others. He says that if it were not for the suffering caused by the limitation of matter upon his consciousness, he would not feel that consciousness. Each man should strive to be good. It is good to try to increase his consciousness, including within it other consciousnesses, and to decrease his inertia of matter which separates him from others. Yet, if he succeeded in destroying his matter, he would not feel his consciousness, because he would no longer suffer. Each man should always feel guilty of the inertia of

matter which separates him from others. As long as he feels this guilt, the suffering caused by the limitation of matter upon his consciousness, he will feel his consciousness.

Each man should not only feel his own guilt, but should also take upon himself the guilt of others, thereby expanding his consciousness. He should love others because they are guilty and suffer because of the guilt of being separated from others. Loving them, he would feel their consciousnesses within himself and thus expand his own consciousness. He increases his guilt, his suffering, when he appropriates the guilt of others. Being guilty is not the same as being evil:

Y no es lo mismo hacer el mal que ser malo.
El mal oscurece la conciencia. Y es que es
bueno cuanto exalta y ensancha la conciencia,
y malo, lo que la deprime y amengua.

(Sentimiento trágico pp. 989-990)

The evil man tries to increase his matter, his individuality, at the expense of his consciousness. His consciousness becomes dull. The man who feels guilt suffers because his matter traps his consciousness. He is not evil

because this suffering, this guilt sharpens his consciousness.

Christ is innocent. Yet, as He is most conscious of the guilt of Man, He is, in this sense, the most guilty. His suffering, as a result of the appropriation of this guilt, sharpens His consciousness.

In some sections of the poem this consciousness is described as being felt within the limits of Christ's body. Unamuno expresses Christ's awareness of evil in descriptions of His hair and His crown of thorns. Unamuno feels that Christ suffers because of the knowledge of our guilt. This suffering is a sign that He is conscious.

In Part I, section XXI Unamuno wonders if the hair is the shadow of the wing of Satan:

Es la sombra del ala sin perfiles
del ángel de la nada negadora,
de Luzbel, que en su caída inacabable
- fondo no puede dar - su eterna cuita
clava en tu frente, en tu razón?

(Part I, section XXI, "Nube negra",
678-682)

He asks if Christ is thinking of the grief of Satan.

He continues:

Se vela
el claro Verbo en Tí con esa nube

negra cual de Luzbel las negras alas,
 mientras brilla el Amor, todo desnudo,
 con tu desnudo pecho por cendal?
 (Part I, section XXI, "Nube negra",
 682-686)

In Part I, section XXV the hair is again related with Satan. Christ is compared with a white door which opens to God. Satan, Christ's hair, leans on the doorhead and looks out into the darkness which is related with God in this section:

!...en su dintel se apoya cejijunto
 Luzbel, a las tinieblas acechando!
 ¡Pobre Luzbel, estrella de la tarde,
 en sombra de tinieblas convertido,
 caído desde el cielo como un rayo!
 (Part I, section XXV, "Puerta", 764-768)

In Part II, section XIII Unamuno calls the drops of blood on the brow of Christ drops of His innermost passion:

Esas gotas de sangre de tu frente
 son gotas del sudor del pensamiento
 que se ve de antemano trastrocado
 gotas de la más íntima pasión.
 (Part II, section XIII, "Rey", 1.484-
 1.487)

Those drops of blood are a sign that Christ suffers. The blood is drawn by the crown of thorns which, as I will show later, represents the sins of men. The thorns

make Him suffer. Suffering, He feels His consciousness. Around the thorns and His Black hair which Unamuno calls the shadow of Christ's sorrow shines the halo, an expression of consciousness:

De la zarza que ardía en el desierto
de Horeb, monte de Dios, sin consumirse,
se tejíó esa corona de realeza
que irradiá en torno de tu tenebrosa
cabellera de noche como un nímbo
de las centellas, hijas de la sombra
de tu dolor, que es pensamiento vivo.

(Part II, section XIII, "Rey", 1.472-
1.478)

The halo is the expression of Christ's consciousness sharpened by His suffering.

In Part III, section II he relates the hair and the crown of thorns with Christ's knowledge of evil. He says that our sins are the prickles of the crown of thorns. They draw blood from Christ. He feels our sins and He suffers because of them. Unamuno relates Christ's blood, as he does the hair, with Christ's knowledge of evil, the matter which separates one man from another. Our sins sharpen the consciousness of Christ:

Y la fruta del árbol de la ciencia
 del bien y el mal, la que ha de hacernos dioses,
 su rojo jugo da entre esas espinas.
 ¡Oh, feliz culpa, de la ciencia madre,
 - la ciencia no es sino remordimiento -,
 fuente de redención, culpa fecunda,
 tú hiciste al Verbo carne, esto es: conciencia,
 carne que toca y siente, que oye y ve!

(Part III, section II, "Corona", 1.572-
 1.579)

Unamuno sees Christ as suffering mentally, that is feeling anguish. Christ no longer suffers physically in the torture of the cross. But this does not mean that He is unconscious. According to Unamuno, Christ still feels anguish. He is still conscious. Unamuno rejoices that Christ suffers, because this suffering is a sign that He is conscious, though dead, and thus pledges eternal consciousness.

Our sins are the prickles of the crown of thorns. Christ's awareness of these sins causes Him to suffer. The sign of that suffering is the blood drawn by the thorns. But these sins which cause Christ to suffer also cause His head to shine in a halo. The halo gives Unamuno hope that Christ hears, sees, touches and feels. The halo is the expression of Christ's consciousness:

Nuestros pecados son las púas
que hacen brillar la sombra de azabache
de tu cabeza en nimbo. Sacan chispas
de sol nuestros pecados en las sienes
del Verbo, del troquel de nuestras almas,
carne que oye, que ve, que toca y siente.

(Part III, section II, "Corona", 1.553-
1.558)

In Part III, section III he describes how Christ suffers as a result of the appropriation of our guilt. Although he does not specifically state it, he is relating Christ's suffering, as a result of the knowledge of evil, to the hair:

dobla tu frente ebúrnea
de la ciencia del mal la pesadumbre.
Tu rostro como oculto y despreciado
con la vergüenza del común linaje.
Dormido de dolor sufres del mundo
todo el pesar. El mal que obran los hombres
sólo Tú en sus raíces lo conoces,
y a Tí te pesa, pues que te lo apropias
con tu visión de su más honda peste
- pues se hace el alma aquello que conoce -
(Part III, section III, "Cabeza",
1.582-1.591)

The hair is the weight which bows down His head. He suffers all the weight of the knowledge of evil. There is no specific reference to the hair. But both the content of the section and the apparent weight of the hair in the painting, strengthen this interpretation.

Later in the section he says that Christ took our sins upon Himself and thus made Himself a sinner for our sake:

Tomaste sobre Tí el pecado,
del bien y el mal la triste ciencia amarga,
la que te hace ser dios siendo al par hombre,
pues te has hecho pecado por nosotros,
y el cielo pueblas de almas que le arrancas
al mundo, de energías el ladrón.

(Part III, section III, "Cabeza", 1.598-
1.603)

The hair is the sign of Christ's knowledge of evil. Christ forgives others but not Himself. He suffers under the weight of this knowledge of sin.

Unamuno, in this section, expresses his theory that Christ, though innocent, is, in a sense, the most guilty. Because He appropriates the sins of men and suffers as a result of that appropriation, He is the most conscious of that common sin:

Con tu visión de amor a cuyo atisbo
nada se escapa, envuelves al pecado,
y al perdonar al hombre de su culpa
no te perdonas a Tí mismo, el único
hijo del Hombre de pecado libre,
más el único, Tú, que lo comprende.
Y así tomaste sobre Ti el pecado,
del bien y el mal la triste ciencia amarga. . .

(Part III, section III, "Cabeza", 1.592-
1.599)

In the sections I have quoted, Unamuno feels that Christ suffers because of His appropriation of sin.

This suffering gives Unamuno hope that Christ, as an individual, is conscious since, as we have seen, suffering sharpens consciousness.

To feel that Christ suffers after death is to feel that He is conscious. The fact that He is conscious is an assurance that there is life after death. In some sections, Christ is described as suffering as a result of His knowledge that our matter, our individuality, not only separates man from man, but also separates man from God. It is evil to wish to preserve this matter. Yet, if it were not for the suffering caused by this matter, we would not feel the consciousness within us. I have shown that Unamuno relates Christ's knowledge of evil with the black hair and the crown of thorns. The thorns draw blood. They make Christ suffer. Around the hair and the crown of thorns shines the halo, the sign that He is conscious.

Unamuno shows, in some sections, his need to believe that he will retain his individuality after death. Individuality, the matter which separates us, will make us suffer, but only thus will we be conscious.

Only by suffering will we feel the presence of consciousness, of the feeling of God within us. This recognition of the necessity of suffering recalls the philosophy of the Sentimiento trágico.

However, in other sections of the poem Unamuno shows a desire to put to sleep the suffering caused by his individuality. In some of these sections he describes the happiness of a peaceful contemplation of Christ. In other sections he shows a desire to shed his individuality in a mystic experience. I will now examine these sections.

Chapter Three

"LA DULCE LUMBRE" AND MYSTIC HEIGHTS

I have discussed some of the sections in which Unamuno admits his own suffering. I have also shown where he describes the suffering of Christ. Christ suffers because human matter traps His divine consciousness. He suffers because of His separation from others. According to the theory of consciousness expounded in the Sentimiento trágico if it were not for this suffering caused by the limitation which individuality imposes upon personality, consciousness, that consciousness would not feel itself. I have shown where Unamuno finds in the fact that Christ suffers after death a hope that he will not lose his own individuality after death.

Unamuno says in the Sentimiento trágico that there is no true love without suffering (1.). He also says that the essence of faith must be love, not happiness (2.).

1. Sentimiento trágico p. 914
2. op. cit. p. 914-915

Faith, as the longing for God, implies a certain separation from God. Unamuno wants ever to approach a union with God, but never to attain it. He wants to retain some individuality, some slight separation from God. This would cause him to suffer. But in suffering, in longing for God, he would feel his love for God. The happy do not feel their consciousness, the longing for God, because they do not suffer. Unamuno shows that his faith is one of love in the sections where he describes his own suffering and that of Christ. However, in some sections of the poem he prays for happiness. In these sections he does not stress any suffering. In these sections he also describes Christ as being conscious without suffering. It is in these sections that Unamuno approaches mystic heights.

In much of the poem, Unamuno does not stress the individuality of Christ. Christ does not suffer. In some sections Unamuno affirms that he feels the consciousness of Christ, but does not say that this consciousness is limited by Christ's individuality. Individuality is the matter which separates one being

from another. We will see that, by relating Christ to many things, Unamuno breaks down Christ's separation from things, His individuality. The individuality of the things to which He is related is also broken down. Christ becomes the perfected consciousness of all things. I will show how this perfected consciousness negates individuality. This will lead to a discussion of the mystic heights in the poem.

Unamuno uses many biblical images to describe this white Christ in the painting. This is very noticeable in Part I. Most of these images are white. He relates Christ to other things through their common whiteness. In the process, Unamuno instils the essential qualities of these white images into the whiteness of Christ. Christ absorbs the essences of the white images. In the process, His consciousness is expanded and perfected.

In Part I, section XVI Christ is the "cordero blanco del Señor"(ln. 533). He is related to a lamb by His whiteness. In that whiteness Unamuno sees the gentleness of the lamb:

es mansedumbre
divina la blancura de tu cuerpo. . .
(Part I, section XVI, "Cordero", 536-537)

Unamuno relates the brilliant whiteness of snow to the whiteness of Christ in Part I, section XII. He describes the pure waters which descend from the snow on mountain tops. He says that pure waters descend from Christ, the summit of life, to us:

Gual la nieve de las cumbres
 ermitañas, esñidas por el cielo,
 donde el sol reverbera sin estorbo,
 resbalan cristalinas aguas puras,
 espejo claro de la luz celeste,
 para regar cavernas soterrañas
 de las tinieblas que el abismo ciñe.
 (Part I, section XII, 408-415)

Unamuno relates the whiteness of Christ to a white rose of the briar (later related to the cross) in Part I, section XIII. Christ is the perfect flower of creation:

Como la rosa del zarzal bravío
 con cinco blancos petalos, tu cuerpo.
 flor de la creación.
 (Part I, section XIII, "Rosa", 422- 424)

Christ is compared to the white cloud of the Lord which led the chosen people through the wilderness. Related by their common whiteness, Christ, like the cloud, is seen as our guide:

Nube eres de blancura al par de aquella

que a través del desierto fuera al pueblo de Dios guiando.

(Part I, section XV, "Nube-Música", 488-490.
See also Part I, section XII)

In Part I, section XX Christ is compared with the white eagle of Patmos which gives to us the light of the Sun (1.).

Águila blanca que bebiendo lumbre
del Sol de siempre con pupilas fúlgidas
nos la entregas. . .

(Part I, section XX, "Águila", 640-642)

Unamuno attributes to Christ the zeal of the white lion hunting his prey, in Part I, section XXII. This zeal is His love for us:

Blanco león de los desiertos
. . . . con amor furioso
persigues a quien amas.

(Part I, section XXII, "León", 687-691)

In Part I, section XXV Christ is a white door that opens to God:

Eres la blanca puerta del empíreo,
siempre abierta al que llama, y donde se abre
de las tinieblas - divinas entrañas -
el resplandor.

(Part I, section XXV, "Puerta", 755-758)

. . . .

abertura

Tú eres de Dios. . .

("Puerta" 772 - 773)

1. I will show later that the light of the Sun is identified by Unamuno with the Supreme Consciousness (God).

He is compared to the dove which flew from Noah's ark and found land, thus announcing the end of the flood. Christ is a white dove which pledges the existence of heaven to us:

! Tú, así, paloma blanca de los cielos,
 nos vienes a anunciar que hay tierra firme
 donde arraigar allende nuestro espíritu
 y que florezca por la eternidad!
 (Part I, section XXIX, "Paloma", 845-
 848)

In Part I, section XXXVI He is the white serpent that heals with His love, unlike the primeval serpent that tempted Eve.

A glance at the titles of the sections gives some idea of the number of images related to Christ in the poem. I have discussed some of these sections, mostly from Part I. The following are some of the other images which are titles of sections: "Arroyo-Fuente"; "Hostia"; "Lino"; "Toro"; "Lirio"; "Espada"; "Leche".

In Part I, section XXIV Unamuno relates Christ's whiteness with a page of a book which appears blank to pure reason. Only with love can we see in the whiteness of Christ the qualities developed by Unamuno in Part I:

Es tu blancura,
 con enigmas sangrientas salpicada,
 para la vana ciencia de este mundo
 fuente tan sólo de ceguera incrédula,
 y tropiezo tu cruz, leño de escándalo.
 (Part I, section XXIV, "Querubín-Libro"
 735-739)

. . . .

Sólo el amor las cinco llaves puede
 manejar, que descifran su blancura.
 ("Querubín-Libro", 743-744)

The dominant image in the poem is the moon. Its white light is identified with the light of Christ and illumines much of the work. The white light of the moon in the night is an assurance that the sun is burning on the other side of the world. Christ is the Moon which reflects the light of the Sun which, in many sections, Unamuno identifies with God. The white light of Christ is the assurance that the source of light (God) is living:

Luna de Dios, la dulce lumbre
 que en la noche nos dice que el Sol vive
 y nos espera.
 ("Oración final", 2.459-2.461)

The expression of promise in the white dawn is related to the white light of Christ. As the dawn tells us that a new day comes, Christ's light is the

promise of life after death, of eternal day:

que albor de aurora diste a nuestra vida
vuelta alborada de la muerte, porche
del día eterno. . .

(Part I, section XII, "Alba", 403-405)

Christ's light is a light which never dies. In Part I, section XIII Unamuno compares it to the fire of the burning bush, not consumed, of the Old Testament:

blanco y con cinco pétalos tu cuerpo;
como la rosa del zarzal que ardía
sobre el monte de Dios sin consumirse,
blandón de fuego en medio de la zarza,
del blanco fuego del amor eterno.

(Part I, section XIII, 440-444)

Christ is all these things. All these images flow into Christ. Their essence enriches the whiteness of Christ. He is exalted and perfected by being related to this series of images. His personality increases. He becomes the supreme, the perfected consciousness. But while these images increase His perfection, they blur the outlines of His body. In one section He is a cloud, in the next a lamb, in the next a wafer and so on. His outlines, His limits change with each new image. As He is exalted as the perfected consciousness, as

His personality increases, His individuality decreases. This is consistent with Unamuno's theory of the relationship between individuality and personality as developed in the Sentimiento trágico. In that book he states that the one decreases in proportion to the increase of the other. It is significant that Unamuno in much of Part I of the poem does not concentrate on Christ's suffering which would be caused by His individuality. His outlines change; His individuality decreases. What remains is His whiteness in which shines light. That white light is the link between Christ and the images. It is the essence of the images passed on to Christ. The white light becomes Christ's essence, His divinity. In many sections the light is Christ. It becomes pure, untrapped consciousness. In Part II, section XIV Unamuno writes:

El temor del Señor, de las tinieblas
arranque es del saber; mas la confianza
en Ti, Jesús, luz de la vida, es como
de ese saber.

(Part II, section XIV, "Del Sinaí al
Calvario", 1.488-1.491)

Calvin Cannon points out that the association of Christ and light has its roots in the Bible (1.). The prologue

1. Cannon, Calvin. Unamuno's "El Cristo de Velázquez"
thesis for Ph.D. at Tulane University, 1958. p.28.

to the Gospel of John which Unamuno frequently refers to, equates Christ with light. There too light is associated with life (1.). The association between light and life can also be seen in the Old Testament. God revealed Himself to man through light. He gave life through light. Unamuno identifies Christ, light and life in the poem. The following are some examples:

Eres la luz...
 Luz, luz, Cristo Señor, luz que es la vida!
 (Part I, section XX, "Águila",
 649-651)

pero bajaste Tú, luz de la gloria,
 la vida que era luz para los hombres.
 (Part II, section IX, 1.323-1.324)

Porque eres Tú la vida
 para los hombres luz.
 (Part II, section XI, 1.385-1.386)

Christ is light, and that light is living. Cannon says:

To realize fully the significance of the penetration of light into all parts of the poem, the reader must bear in mind that the light not only emanates from Christ and ultimately from God, but as an emanation of the divine it is the divine. The light of Christ is not only of Christ; it is Christ, and Christ made perceptible to eyes of faith. (2.)

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1. John I, 1-5
 2. Cannon, Calvin. Unamuno's "El Cristo de Velázquez". thesis for Ph.D. at Tulane University, 1958. p.60.

As I have pointed out, Unamuno says that the divine in things is their consciousness. Where Christ is light, He is the perfected, untrapped consciousness. The moon imagery strengthens this theory.

As I have said, the moon is the dominant white image in the poem. Christ is the moon which reflects the light of the Sun (God). That light is the essence of God:

La luz que te rodea es el espíritu
que fluye de tu Padre, el Sol eterno,
las tinieblas rompiendo, y a nosotros
de Tí, su luna en nuestra noche triste.
(Part III, section I, "El rótulo",
1.530-1.533)

The light is the life force of God, His blood, "el jugo divino":

Tú has mejido tu sangre, tuya y nuestra,
tributo humano, con la luz que surge
de la eterna infinita noche oscura,
con el jugo divino.
(Part I, section VII, "Dios-Tinieblas,
210-213)

The light, as the essence of the living God, is the consciousness of God. Christ, reflecting this consciousness, pledges that there is a consciousness with all things. In Part III, section XXVII all Nature is seen in the

light of God, the Supreme Consciousness:

Tú a la Tierra,
nuestra negra nodriza, con tus manos
selladas con tu sangre, la levantas
como hostia al cielo y a la luz la pones
del Sol eterno que en blancura anega
su verdor y en idea la convierte.

(Part III, section XXVII, "Soporte-Naturaleza"
2.232-2.237)

The light of the sun gives life:

Blanco tu cuerpo está como el espejo
del padre de la luz, del sol vivífico.

(Part I, section IV, 87-88)

Christ reflects the eternal light of the sun.

He is a pledge of eternal consciousness. Pledging
our immortality, He makes us gods:

Eres el Hombre,
y en tu divina desnudez nos llega
del sol enegador la eterna lumbre.
Tú al retratar a Dios nos pregonaste
que somos hombres, esto es: somos dioses.

(Part I, section V, "Luna", 137-141)

In the sections where Christ does not suffer, His
individuality is blurred. He becomes light. That light
is perfected, untrapped consciousness. It is pure life,
supreme love:

blanco tu cuerpo
blanco como la luna desangrada

que blanca y fría en torno de la tierra
lleva la antorcha del amor constante
por la noche del mundo.

(Part I, section IX, "Sangre", 326-330)

Esa luz es amor y ella nos funde.

(Part III, section I, "El rótulo", 1.542)

In some sections Unamuno speaks of himself as partaking of the light of God in Christ. He says that he feels the light of God within himself. He expresses this in Part II, section IX:

Con tu muerte trajiste Dios al suelo,
y la luz verdadera has enterrado;
con ella nos bañaste las entrañas.

(Part II, section IX, 1.330-1.332)

In Part III, section I he also says that the light of God from Christ enters him:

Y hablas, Tú, la Palabra, con tu muerte
sin ruido de aire, en el silencio negro,
y dices la blancura de tu vida
de luz que nunca acaba. Cae tu lumbre
silenciosa en nosotros, copo a copo,
como la nieve blanca que se posa
sobre la yerba verde; caé tu sangre
gota a gota en nosotros; no se escurre
y empapa el alma. Como yerba, humildes,
tu nevada de luz, las manos quedas,
queda la mente, el corazón latiendo,
cual la nevada blanco y silencioso
te recibamos. De tu luz los rayos,
aun dormidos taládrannos los párpados,
los rayos de tu luz, y alumbran sueños.
La luz que te rodea en el espíritu
que fluye de tu Padre, el Sol eterno...

(Part III, section I, "El rótulo",
1.515-1.531)

This is one of the sections in which Unamuno expresses his inner experience of the light of God from Christ.

In that light Unamuno experiences the love of God:

"Y esa luz es amor y ella nos funde." (1.542)

In Part I, section VIII Christ's outlines blur.

Unamuno seems to be submerged in untrapped consciousness, in the light of God:

La luz de Dios se espeja como en foco
dentro tu corazón, que ya no late,
y es tu cuerpo cortina transparente
del corazón. Tu blanco pecho quieto,
de la lámpara velo, no respira;
lago sin ondas, retratando al cielo
en su quietud serena y resignada,
nos da la lumbre inmoble y sin principio.
¡Oh luz queda, sin olas, luz sin tiempo,
mar de la luz sin fondo y sin riberas,
mar de la muerte que no se corrompe
y de la vida que no pasa mar!

(Part I, section VIII, 286-297)

How far he is from the anguish expressed in other sections of the poem! How far he is from a fear of the darkness! Unamuno, happy, is submerged in the white light of God.

Unamuno's experience of the living God on Christ is, according to his own definition, a mystic experience. He defines mysticism in the Sentimiento trágico as the

experiencia íntima del Dios vivo en Cristo,
 experiencia intransmisible. . .
 (Del sentimiento trágico p. 797)

Calvin Cannan implies that Unamuno has this mystic experience of God throughout the poem. He says that there is no tragic sense in the poem; that there is no struggle between faith and reason (1.). He maintains that the mystic experience is sustained throughout the work:

The mystic light of Christ that rents the veil of divine darkness is projected over the length of the entire poem, illuminating each contemplative moment. (2.)

I agree that Unamuno does experience, in some sections, the presence of God in Christ. Christ becomes light. He becomes pure, untrapped consciousness. In that light, that supreme consciousness, Unamuno communes with God. In these sections he is experiencing the living God, the God of feeling which he describes in the Sentimiento trágico. In that book he distinguishes between the God of feeling and the God of reason. As I explained in my outline of the Sentimiento trágico,

1. Cannon. Unamuno's "El Cristo de Velazquez".pp. 49-50
 2. op. cit. p. 60

the God of reason is finite. He lacks interior richness, personality. His individuality has stifled His personality. The God of feeling is the Supreme Consciousness. Unamuno fears that the pure personality of the God of feeling might destroy His individuality.

I am not attempting in this thesis to deny that Unamuno expresses, in some sections, the happiness of an intimate experience of the living God, the Supreme Consciousness in Christ, which he would call a mystic experience. But I disagree with Cannon's belief that this mystic happiness is sustained throughout the poem.

We have already seen some sections where Christ is described as suffering as an individual. In these sections Unamuno does not experience mystic happiness because Christ is separated from him. I will show in describing Unamuno's reactions to the darkness surrounding Christ that his mystic happiness is frequently shattered by fear. One of his fears is to lose his own personality in the pure personality of the God of feeling. In the same sentence from the Sentimiento trágico in which he defines mysticism, this fear is expressed. Mysticism is the

experiencia íntima del Dios vivo en Cristo, experiencia intransmisible, y cuyo peligro es por otra parte, absorber en Dios la propia personalidad, lo cual no salva nuestro anhelo vital...

(Sentimiento trágico pp. 797-798)

In the Sentimiento trágico he shows the same fear of the mystical experience that he shows of St. Paul's theory of the Recapitulation. After death he does not want to be absorbed by Christ. In the poem the white things that he relates to Chríst lose their individuality by being absorbed into the whiteness of Christ. Unamuno shows in much of the poem that he does not want to sacrifice his individual consciousness in the same way even if it enriched the Supreme Consciousness. He shows in many sections that he does not want to be absorbed by Christ or God after death. In the Sentimiento trágico he calls the Recapitulation the supreme religious sacrifice:

Y henos aquí en lo más alto de la tragedia, en su nudo, en la perspectiva de este supremo sacrificio religioso: el de la propia conciencia individual en aras de la Conciencia Humana perfecta, de la Conciencia Divina.

(Sentimiento trágico p. 958)

In the mystic experience Unamuno finds a hint of the

Recapitulation. In some sections he prays for it. In others he fears it.

In the poem, the fear of the consequences of the mystic experience is expressed in Part IV, section VII:

Que a tu bulto
no logremos tocar ni en puro angelo;
que como en este del pincel prodigio,
- relieve inmaterial y milagroso -,
de nuestro abrazo corporal tu esquives
aquí en el mundo ruin.

(Part IV, section VII, "Ansia de amor",
2.385-2.390)

. . . .

Mientras dure
nuestra vida en la tierra, sea el ansia
de amarte nuestra vida; que se duerme
sobre el amor logrado, y es el sueño
no vida, sino muerte.

("Ansia de amor", 2.396-2.400)

As I have shown, in some sections Unamuno does experience mystic happiness; he expresses "amor logrado". In other sections he expresses a desire to sleep in happiness. One example is Part I, section VIII:

al reposo llamas
a la congoja de que el alma vive
quemándose a esperar. Y nuestras penas
sobre tu corazón, fuente sin corte
de humanidad eterna, como en piélago
donde se mira la quietud del cielo,
adurmiéndose sueñan. Aquietado
tu corazón en sí, su luz derrama;
se anchan desde él tus brazos sobre el mundo,
y tu silencio dícenos: "Hermanos,

"venid aquí a acostar vuestros pesares;
 "Yo soy la luna que embalsando al valle
 "con laguna de leche esplendorosa
 "mece el ensueño."

(Part I, section VIII, 266-279)

In the mystic heights of the poem, where he experiences the presence of the light of God on Christ, he feels happiness. There are a few sections where he experiences pure light. But in most sections of the poem, even some in which he prays for submersion in light, there is an echo of fear, a passing shadow of the darkness surrounding Christ.

Mystic happiness is not sustained throughout the poem. It is increasingly shattered by fear. This expression of fear shows that he is never completely absorbed by Christ. He says in the Sentimiento trágico that he wants eternally to approach, but never to attain complete absorption in Christ:

Y el alma, mi alma al menos, anhela otra cosa, no absorción, no quietud, no paz, no agagamiento, sino eterno acercarse sin llegar nunca, inacabable anhelo, eterna esperanza que eternamente se renueva sin acabarse del todo nunca.

(Sentimiento trágico P. 958)

The happiness which he hopes for is renewed when he

feels the presence of Christ as light. But it is not sustained. It is shattered in some sections by doubts and fears which he shows describing the darkness surrounding Christ.

Calvin Cannon says that there is no tragic sense in this poem. He says there is no struggle between faith and reason. I disagree. I have already discussed some sections in which Unamuno expressed the anxiety caused by this struggle. Now I will discuss this anxiety in more detail.

Chapter Four

"LA NOCHE NEGRA" and ANXIOUS MOMENTS

In this chapter I will discuss Unamuno's reaction to the darkness surrounding Christ and to His black hair. I have already shown where the darkness is felt to emphasize the apparentiality of the world. I will now examine the sections in which Unamuno relates the darkness with death and with God. We will see that in many of these sections Unamuno shows anxiety. These sections, scattered throughout the poem, show that Unamuno never completely suppresses his fears and doubts.

1. DARKNESS - DEATH

I have shown the relationship between the world and darkness in Part I, section IV. In the same section he relates death with darkness:

Tú salvaste a la muerte. Abres tus brazos
a la noche. . .

(Part I, section IV, 114-115)

There is a connection between saving death and opening

His arms to the night. Death is related with night.

Unamuno shows in the Sentimiento trágico his need to believe that he will retain his consciousness after death. He wants to believe that death is not a return to the nothingness before birth, but a continuation of life. His greatest fear is of a death of unconsciousness, of nothingness. This would be a death of darkness. In some sections of the poem the fear of such a death is overwhelmed by Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness. But in other sections the description of the darkness related with death is more fearful.

In Part I, section IV, as I have said, Unamuno relates death with the darkness surrounding Christ. In this section he affirms that Christ conquered death. Unamuno describes Him as "triunfador de la muerte". By the death of Christ, death was elevated to life. His death is a pledge of eternal consciousness.

Unamuno develops this idea metaphorically. Christ's body is the dead moon which reflects the light of the sun which is the father of light and the life-giver:

Blanco tu cuerpo está como el espejo
del padre de la luz, del sol vivífico.
(Part I, section IV, 87-88)

As we have seen, light is the expression of consciousness. The sun, as the father of light, is the supreme consciousness. The sun is a father. Later in this section Unamuno calls death a mother. The light of the sun, the life-giver, has entered the darkness of death. The symbol of this union is the white light of the moon in the dark night. That light tells us the sun lives. It is a pledge of eternal consciousness. The union of the sun and the darkness, of the life-giver and death, is affirmed by the presence of the moon. The moon is dead, but it reflects the light of the sun, the life-giving light, in the darkness of death. By relating Christ with the moon, Unamuno can say that through Him, death was elevated to life. Through Christ, death has become our mother. Christ's white light promises us that on our death we are born to eternal life. Christ's death is not one of darkness, of nothingness in which there is no hope of further life. Christ's death is a death of light which promises us eternal life. The darkness of death was made beautiful by the presence of the moon reflecting the life-giving light

of the sun:

Tú salvaste a la muerte. Abres tus brazos
a la noche, que es negra y muy hermosa,
porque el sol de la vida la ha mirado
con sus ojos de fuego: que a la noche
morena la hizo el sol y tan hermosa.
Y es hermosa la luna solitaria,
la blanca luna en la estrellada noche
negra cual la abundosa cabellera
negra del nazareno. Blanca luna
como el cuerpo del Hombre en cruz, espejo
del sol de vida, del que nunca muere.
(Part I, section IV, 114-124)

This section is an expression of what Unamuno hopes for. The darkness of death is a beautiful mother. It gives birth to eternal life.

In Part II, section XI he once again seeks hope in the white body of Christ. Christ is the Moon which reflects the light of the Sun (God). Unamuno says that Christ's death was not one of eternal darkness. His death was the darkness of fire. His light is a sign of consciousness and thus the promise of His resurrection:

tu muerte
fué oscuridad de incendio, fué tiniebla
de amor abrasadora, en que latía
de la resurrección la luz.
(Part II, section XI, "Desnudez",
1.387-1.390)

Christ came naked into the world and He will return to

God naked. His body shining in the light of consciousness is the body of life:

Ya desnudo
vuelves al Padre como de Él saliste;
por la ley del espíritu tus miembros
se rigen, y tu cuerpo sin mancha
lo es de vida.

(Part II, section XI, "Desnudez",
1.419-1.423)

At the end of this section Unamuno expresses a desire to be absorbed by Christ after death:

Revista
tu desnudez, Señor, sobrevestido
de nuestra muerte, ¡ y que la vida lleve
lo que en nosotros es aun mortal !
("Desnudez", 1.429-1.432)

Unamuno is expressing here a desire for the Recapitulation in which he would be absorbed after death by the perfected Human Consciousness (Christ). Recapitulation, as I have said previously, would mean a loss of individual consciousness. It is curious that Unamuno should ask for this. This is one of various sections of the poem in which Unamuno is willing to lose his individual consciousness by being absorbed by Christ or God either in a mystical experience (discussed in the last chapter)

or in the Recapitulation. However, in other sections he shows a dread of a loss of individual consciousness after death. This dread conflicts with his expressed willingness to accept the Recapitulation.

In Part I, section XXXI the darkness has a more frightening quality. It is not a beautiful mother, as in section IV. It is a dark abyss ("sima tenebrosa") from whence comes a cold, beating north wind ("hostigo del cierzo"). Although he does not specifically state the relationship between this darkness and death, Unamuno strongly implies it. He compares the cross with a tree. Frightened souls, like leaves, cling to it. The beating of the north wind of the dark abyss makes them tremble:

Así del leño de la cruz prendidas
 tiembla, pobres, las almas al hostigo
 del cierzo de la sima tenebrosa,
 que lleva en vilo su temblor sonoro,
 cual misereve de las secas hojas,
 sollozos de pasión que en sí no cabe.

Part I, section XXXI, "Árbol", 871- 876)

I believe that this wind from the darkness is related to the threat of death which frightens men. This interpretation is strengthened later in the section

where Unamuno says that this cold north wind from the abyss eventually tears them off the tree. They then flow in Christ's blood to eternal life in the bottomless sea:

y cuando, al cabo,
 el cierzo del abismo las arranca
 de la copa del árbol misterioso,
 van al caer rodando por el pecho
 blanco del Cristo, y a su pie se pierden
 en el río de sangre que las lleva
 de la vida eternal al mar sin fondo.
 ("Arbol", 882-888)

Unamuno still affirms that there is life after death, but he shows much more fear of the darkness of death.

In Part II, section VI he describes the experience of the moment of the death of Christ. In this section Unamuno expresses the fear of an eternal life without his body. He fears an eternal life in which the individual soul is not contained within a bodily form. He describes the moment of Christ's death when the soul left the body. At this moment all was silent and dark. His death, then, was one of silence and darkness:

Se siguió el silencio.
 Y al callar todo con silencio íntimo,
 quedó en tinieblas todo; luz es música,

y ¡ay del que ver creyendo no oye!
 (Part II, section VI, "Alma y cuerpo",
 1.196-1.199)

It is this dark death that Unamuno fears. He goes on to describe the feelings of the soul lost in this cold darkness ("tinieblas frías"). He shows his fear of this dark death in which the soul, without its body, is lost:

Tu alma
 sobre tinieblas frías recostada,
 de la agonía descansando, mira
 su compañero cuerpo, al que ha dejado
 de la cruz en las garras, de los clavos
 pendiente, y al mirarlo se entristece
 de amor más vivo que la vida. ¿Cómo
 sin él podrá tomar el Sol? ¿La lumbre
 donde prender podrá? ¿Dónde la mano
 del Padre eterno encontrará asidero
 para apuñarlo? Y al temor oscuro
 de, sin vaso, fundirse en las tinieblas
 y perderse cual viento libre, ansía
 recojerse en su cuenco - carne y huesos -,
 añora de su cuerpo la hermosura,
 buscando ella, infinita, deslindarse;
 las lindes quiere de su coto; ¡quiere
 dentro de él abarcándose vivir!
 ("Alma y cuerpo", 1.199-1.215)

The tone here is much different from that of Part I, section IV, where death is called a mother, a mother who gives birth to eternal life. The darkness is as fearful as it is in Part I, section XXXI, "Árbol".

Black death threatens to swallow up the soul of Christ, The white body of Christ, in which Unamuno had seen a living quality and a promise of eternal life, is left hanging on the cross, lifeless. The soul is not enclosed within that white body any more, but is lost in the darkness. Unamuno fears that the soul will eventually lose consciousness because it is not enclosed within the body. He shows his fear here that death might be a return to the darkness, the nothingness before birth. This section contradicts the affirmation in Part I, section IV and Part II, section XI ("Desnudez") where the white body of Christ and the light shining from it conquer the death of darkness.

In Part III, section XXIII Unamuno says that Christ, as all of us, experienced the unconsciousness of prenatal sleep:

Tú también, pobre germen encerrado
dentro oscura prisión de humano seno,
y que del sueño prenatal gustaste
la inconciencia, portada de la vida,
probando la materia tenebrosa,
que es el espanto del que ser ansía.
(Part III, section XXIII, "Ventre",
2.149-2.147)

Unamuno fears that death might be a similar state of unconsciousness in darkness.

He implies that death, before Christ's death, was a state of dark unconsciousness in Part III, section XXVI. He says that, before Christ, men descended to the black kingdom ("negro reino") which is the kingdom of death where they changed to dust. But the blood of Christ entered that dust as the fluid of eternity ("la linfa de la eternidad"). It gives them eternal life:

Baja a la lobreguez de las entrañas
del negro reino de los que ya fueron,
donde su sed apaga de la muerte,
y ese polvo que un día corazones
fué que latieron con afán pesares
bebe la linfa de la eternidad!

(Part III, section XXVI, "Pies",
2.218-2.223)

But will they regain individual consciousness?
Does Christ's death bring them out of darkness?

In Part IV, section I Unamuno expresses the need to believe in Christ's promise of eternal consciousness. The death he fears, he calls the second death which would be one of unconsciousness, of darkness. He has a need to believe that death is the beginning of eternal life. Only belief in Christ can satisfy this need:

Eres Tú de los muertos primogénito,
 Tú el fruto, por la Muerte ya maduro,
 del árbol de la vida que no acaba,
 del que hemos de comer si es que quisiéremos
 de la segunda muerte vernos libres.
 Pues Tú a la Muerte que era el fin has hecho
 principio y soberana de la vida. . .

(Part IV, seccion I, "Muerte", 2.257-
 2.263)

Christ in His pledge of eternal consciousness
 gives the Universe human aim. Belief in this pledge
 gives purpose to our life:

Hijo, el Hombre es de Dios y Dios del Hombre
 hijo; ¡ Tú, Cristo con tu muerte has dado
 finalidad humana al Universo
 y fuiste muerte de la Muerte al fin!
 ("Muerte", 2.269-2.272)

He affirms in this section, as he did in Part I,
 section IV, that Christ makes death the beginning of
 eternal life.

It is evident that Unamuno's reaction to death
 varies in the poem. In some sections he fears that
 nothingness, darkness, awaits him. In other sections
 he finds in Christ the hope of eternal life. But what
 is the nature of the eternal life which Christ pledges?
 Unamuno expresses two possibilities. In some sections
 he says that Christ pledges the resurrection of our
 bodies. In other sections he says that Christ announces

the coming of the Recapitulation. I have already shown an expression of the latter possibility in Part II, section XI, "Desnudez". In Part IV, section IV ("Recapitulación") he affirms the coming of the Recapitulation:

Quando todas las cosas soyugadas
 bajo tus pies ensangrentados sean
 por tu Padre, y escano de tu gloria
 la creación entera al pie del Hombre,
 Tú mismo al punto rendirás tu cuerpo,
 mansión de la Palabra, y sometido
 bajo el poder de Dios, será ya todo
 por siempre en todos E1. ¡Y Tú, cabeza
 del mar sin lindes de cuanto se alcanza,
 del ser hecho Visión final Caudillo,
 por Tí humanado el Universo entero
 y el Hombre mira de la Creación!
 (Part IV, section IV, "Recapitulación",
 2.335-2.346)

Yet, in the preceding section Unamuno says that Christ is the pledge of the resurrection of our bodies:

tu muerte en el leño fué la prenda
 de la resurrección de nuestros cuerpos.
 (Part IV, section III, "Palabra",
 2.333-2.334)

Unamuno hopes for both the promise of the resurrection of our bodies and the Recapitulation. But these two desires are contradictory. The first is a desire for a retention of individual consciousness after death.

The second is, in effect, a desire for a loss of consciousness. I have shown that Unamuno, himself, says in the Sentimiento trágico that one would lose his individual consciousness in the Recapitulation. He would be absorbed by the perfected Human Consciousness (Christ). As he shows in some sections, describing the darkness, he fears the loss of individual consciousness after death.

In the poem his belief in Christ's expression, seen in His white light, of eternal life is periodically challenged by the darkness. There is tension between the hope inspired by the white light of Christ and the fear awakened by the darkness. Sometimes he concentrates on the white body of Christ in which he seeks a sign that Christ is conscious after death, thus pledging eternal life. At other times the darkness receives most of Unamuno's attention, in which case he shows his fear of a death of melting away into nothingness.

2. THE HAIR

I have shown in Chapter Two that Unamuno relates Christ's hair to His knowledge of evil. The knowledge

of evil causes Christ to suffer. Unamuno sees in Christ's suffering a sign that He is conscious after death.

The hair hides much of Christ's face. The face is the clearest expression of consciousness. The hair, veiling this expression, causes Unamuno to question whether Christ is, in fact, conscious. In some sections he affirms that Christ is conscious. But in other sections he fears that Christ is unconscious.

In some sections Unamuno relates the hair with death. In some of these sections, describing the hair, Unamuno affirms that death is just a stage to eternal life. But in other sections he is anxious. He fears that the hair is a sign that Christ is unconscious.

In Part I, section IV, Unamuno calls Christ's hair a curtain of night. He asks:

¿ En qué piensas Tú, muerto, Cristo mío?
 ¿ Por qué ese velo de cerrada noche
 de tu abundosa cabellera negra
 de nazareno cae sobre tu frente?
 (Part I, section IV, 80-83)

The hair, like a dark night, veils. It veils Christ's facial expression of consciousness. Yet, Unamuno

immediately affirms that Christ is conscious. Christ looks within Himself "donde alborea el sol eterno de las almas vivas" (85). Unamuno finds a sign of consciousness, of life, not in Christ's face, but in the white light of His body. In this section Unamuno stresses the white body by contrasting it with the darkness:

blanco tu cuerpo está como la hostia
del cielo de la noche soberana,
de ese cielo tan negro como el velo
de tu abundosa cabellera negra
de nazareno.

(Part I, section IV, 92-96)

The white body is set against the darkness which is related with the hair. I have shown previously that Unamuno relates death with the darkness surrounding Christ in this section. The white light of Christ, expressing consciousness and thus promising life after death, makes the darkness, which is death, beautiful. Death is now a mother who gives birth to eternal life. Unamuno relates this "beautiful" darkness with the black hair of Christ:

a la noche
morena la hizo el sol y tan hermosa.
Y es hermosa la luna solitaria,

la blanca luna en la estrellada noche
 negra cual la abundosa cabellera
 negra del nazareno.

(Part I, section IV, 117-122)

Unamuno thus relates Christ's hair with death. The descriptions of the hair are not fearful. Death is not feared. Unamuno does not despair because the face is veiled by the hair. He finds the sign of Christ's consciousness in the light on His body.

In Part I, section VIII Unamuno once again mentions that the hair veils Christ's face:

Cubre con cariño
 la blanda noche de tu tenebrosa
 melena de abatido nazareno
 tu frente, albergue de divina idea,
 y esplende blanco cual la luna el velo
 de tu llagado corazón que sufre;
 porque hiciste razón de tus entrañas.

(Part I, section VIII, 279-285)

It is a soft night and it covers His brow "con cariño". As I said towards the end of Chapter Two, this is one of the sections in which Unamuno approaches mystic heights. Unamuno is not anxious about the veiled face because he experiences the eternal consciousness of Christ in the white light of His body.

¡Oh luz queda, sin olas, luz sin tiempo,
 mar de la luz sin fondo y sin riberas,

mar de la muerte que no se corrompe
y de la vida que no pasa mar!
(Part I, section VIII, 294-297)

Consciousness is shown in the white light on Christ, not in His face. Nevertheless, even in this mystic experience of the light of Christ, there is a passing shadow of the darkness of Christ's hair.

In Part I, section X he relates the black hair with Christ's death which he says was just a long sleep, after which He would awaken to eternal life. His hair, covering much of His face, is compared with a canopy formed by the wings of the angel of silence and forgetting, the angel of sleep. These wings are like a canopy which covers sleeping men. They wrap the head of the dead, or sleeping Christ:

Posábase,
ángel, sobre tu sien esa primicia
del descanso mortal, ese pregusto
del sosiego final de aqueste tráfago;
cual pabellón las blandas alas negras
del ángel del silencio y del olvido
sobre tus párpados.

(Part I, section X, "La vida es sueño",
352-358)

The hair, though related with death, is not described with fear. The wings are soft and they form a canopy

to aid sleep. Death is again thought of as a stage. After His sleep of three days, Christ will awaken to eternal life.

In Part I, section XX Unamuno again mentions the hiding quality of the black hair. He compares it to a black cloud which hides. He compares Christ to a white eagle which drinks the light of the Sun (God) with His eyes and passes it on to us. But although he affirms that Christ passes this light on to us, he implies regret that Christ cannot pass it on to us with His eyes, because they are hidden by the black hair, as by a black cloud:

Águila blanca que bebiendo lumbre
del Sol de siempre con pupilas fúlgidas
nos la entregas, pelícano, en la sangre
de tus propias entrañas convertida;
Águila blanca, ¿por qué así tus ojos
vela esa negra nube, esa cimera
de nazareno? Luz nos das; antorcha
tu corazón. . .

(Part I, section XX, "Águila"
640-647)

Although he insists that Christ does give us light, he shows concern that His hair hides His face. Christ does not show this light, this consciousness, in His eyes. Unamuno is more anxious about the black hair.

In the next section (Part I, section XXI), as I explained in Chapter Two, he wonders if the hair is the black wing of Satan. He also relates it with a black cloud and asks if it hides the clear Word:

Se vela
 el claro Verbo en Tí con esa nube
 negra cual de Luzbel las negras alas,
 mientras brilla el Amor, todo desnudo,
 con tu desnudo pecho por cendal?
 (Part I, section XXI, "Nube negra",
 682-686)

This section is a series of unanswered questions. Unamuno is more anxious about the hidden face. Relating Christ's hair with the wings of Satan, he instils a fearful quality into the black hair. Unamuno once again seeks hope in the white light, the sign of consciousness, in which he sees Christ's love. But he hints at his concern that the hair veils Christ's facial expression of consciousness.

In Part I, section XXXI Christ is called a mysterious tree ("árbol misterioso"). As I showed earlier in this chapter, the darkness in this section is related with death. The souls are frightened by the threat of this dark death. They tremble with the

fear of death round Christ's black hair:

se estremecen
 en corro a la cabeza coronada
 por la melena, negra cual la noche
 del blanco Nazareno;
 (Part I, section XXXI, "Árbol"
 879-882)

The difference between this section and others I have examined is that here the souls are not calmed by the white body of Christ, on which shines the expression of consciousness, the promise of eternal life. Unamuno affirms that after their death they will flow to eternal life, but he implies that there is no peace for them while they live. Why do these souls tremble round Christ's hair? Do they tremble because it veils Christ's facial expression of consciousness? Do they tremble because it is as black as the darkness of death? In this section Unamuno expresses fear of the black hair.

Yet later, as I have shown previously, in Part II, section XIII ("Rey"), Part III, section II ("Corona") and Part III, section III ("Cabeza") the Hair, related with Christ's knowledge of evil, gives Unamuno hope that Christ is conscious. Unamuno shows no concern

that it hides Christ's facial expression of consciousness. He finds the expression of consciousness in the light of Christ's halo.

In Part III, section IV the hair reminds Unamuno of various moments in the life of Christ. He also relates it with death. Over Christ's hair Mary poured balm to anoint Him for the sepulchre. Later, Unamuno calls the hair a "garba de luto". At the end of the section the hair is again related with death. With His arms stretched out on the cross, Christ reminds Unamuno of Samson breaking the two pillars which supported the temple of the Philistines (1.). Christ destroys the temple of Death. Unamuno affirms that the falling stones give us life after they have killed us:

Y ahora abrazado al templo de la Muerte
con tus dos brazos a la cruz clavados
lo derrumbas a tierra, y sus sillares
vida al darnos la muerte nos darán.

(Part III, section IV, "Melena"
1.676-1.679)

Unamuno does not fear the death which Christ's hair represents. He affirms that it is a stage to eternal life.

Yet, in Part III, section VI Unamuno is again

I. Unamuno cites Judges XVI, 28 - 30 which describes this event.

anxious about the hair. He begs Christ not to hide

His face from us:

No escondas
de nosotros tu rostro, que es volvern
chispas fatuas, a la nada matriz.
(Part III, section VI, "Rostro" 1.724-
1.726)

The following are two references he cites from the

Psalms:

How long wilt thou forget me,
O Lord? for ever? how long
wilt thou hide thy face from me?
(Ps. XIII, 1.)

. . . .

Wherefore hidest thou thy face,
and forgettest our affliction and our
oppression?
(Ps. XLIV, 24.)

Unamuno begs Christ not to hide His face. But much
of Christ's face is hidden. It is hidden by the hair.

In Part III, section VIII Unamuno again mentions
the hiding characteristic of the hair:

Vélate la melena las orejas,
cual por misterio que trazó tu Padre.
(Part III, section VIII, "Orejas",
1.761-1.762)

Later he repeats this, but he affirms that Christ's
ears do hear us:

Recatas tus orejas
de nazareno bajo el velo virgen,
pero ellas nos escuchan.
("Orejas", 1.772-1.774)

He is concerned that the ears are hidden, but he wants to believe that they hear us. He needs to believe that Christ is still conscious.

Unamuno implies that the hair is related to death in Part III, section IX where he says His head is:

doblada al peso muerto de la muerte
(Part III, section IX, "Nariz",
1.803)

There is no specific mention of the hair, but in the painting the hair does seem to bow down the head with its weight. In this section there is no mention of death as a stage, as the beginning of eternal life. There is a depressing, permanent quality about it.

When the hair is related with Christ's knowledge of evil, Unamuno does not fear it because it gives him hope that Christ is conscious. Even in some sections where it is related with death or referred to as a veil he does not fear it because he finds hope in the

white light on Christ's body that He is conscious. But in many sections Unamuno is anxious about the hair. In these sections the happiness of the contemplation of the light of Christ is shattered. Interspersed among the sections in which he sees in the light of Christ an expression of pure consciousness are sections in which he fears a loss of individual consciousness. Unamuno never completely suppresses his fears.

3. DARKNESS - GOD

Besides relating the darkness with death and with the apparentiality of the world, Unamuno relates it with God. In the early sections of the poem he does not fear this darkness, as he sees the essence of God, Consciousness, in the light of Christ. Unamuno thus affirms a mystic experience. It is the "experiencia íntima del Dios vivo en Cristo" (1.). However, in the course of the poem, Unamuno shows a growing fear of the darkness of God. The darkness in some sections represents the mystery of God. In the early sections Unamuno affirms that Christ enlightens the mystery

1. Sentimiento trágico p. 797

by reflecting the light of the Sun, the Supreme Consciousness, the essence of God. In these sections God is light. But later God becomes darkness. Where the essence of God is not felt in the light on Christ Unamuno does not have a mystic experience, an experience of the living God in Christ. In one of these later sections Unamuno is anxious about the existence of God. In another section he believes in God but fears an absorption in Him and thus a loss of individual consciousness. I will now discuss the growing fear of the darkness of God.

In Part I, section VII Unamuno affirms that Christ's light shows us the essence of God. If it were not for Christ, God would be hidden in darkness; He would be mysterious. Christ, in His white light, draws the hidden part of God from the darkness:

Te envuelve Dios, tinieblas de que brota
la luz que nos rechazas: escondida
sin tu pecho, su espejo. Tú le sacas
a la noche cerrada el entresijo
de la Divinidad, su blanca sangre,
luz derretida; porque Tú, el Hombre,
cuerpo tomaste donde la incorpórea
luz, que es tinieblas para el ojo humano
corporal, en amor se incorporase.

(Part I, section VII, "Dios -
Tinieblas", 200-208)

In this section, Unamuno states that the light is the blood of God and that it is the divine essence.

Unamuno sees the light on Christ as "el entresijo" (the hidden thing), and not "un entresijo" (a hidden thing). Christ's humanity brings light to the darkness. He sheds light on the mystery of God. He shows us God:

Tu humanidad devuelve a las tinieblas
de Dios la lumbre oculta en sus hondones
y es espejo de Dios.
("Dios - Tinieblas", 224-226)

The white Christ draws back the thick black curtain behind which God had been hidden. He uncovers the mystery of God:

descorres la cortina de tinieblas
del terrible recinto del secreto
que a la casta de Adán le acongojaba
mientras ansiosa consumía siglos.
("Dios - Tinieblas", 233-235)

The darkness, or mystery of God, is compared with a dark cloak in which Christ was muffled. Christ casts it off and, in His white nakedness, shows the hidden part of God:

con tus abiertos brazos la negrura
del abismo de Dios, tu Padre, rasgas

y echándolo hacia atrás, de tu cruz cuelgas
el negro manto en que embozado estabas
dándotenos desnudo.

("Dios - Tinieblas", 237 - 241)

. . . .

tu cuerpo blanco. . .
en desnudez al Padre retrataba
desnudo.

("Dios - Tinieblas", 245-247)

. . . .

con tus dos brazos
desabrochando el manto del misterio
nos revelaste la divina esencia,
la humanidad de Dios, la que del hombre
descubre lo divino.

("Dios - Tinieblas", 248-252)

Unamuno uses darkness in this section as an image to express the mystery of God. But it is like a cloak that has been shed by Christ, or a curtain which has been drawn back. Thus, he affirms that because of Christ there is no longer any mystery. Christ shows us the humanity of God. In His light, Christ reveals the essence of God, His Personality, Consciousness. At the end of the section Unamuno implies that God is no longer wrapped and hidden by the darkness. Instead, Christ's white body wraps the darkness. In Christ's whiteness is the essence of God. To experience the essence of God in Christ is, according to Unamuno's

definition, a mystic experience. It is the "experiencia íntima del Dios vivo en Cristo". Christ's white body wraps the darkness:

Y envuelves las tinieblas, abarcando
tenebrosas entrañas en el coto
de tu cuerpo, troquel de nuestra raza,
¡porque es tu blanco cuerpo manto lúcido
de la divina inmensa oscuridad!
("Dios - Tinieblas", 256-260)

God is revealed in the white light of Christ's body.

Later, in Part I, section XV, Christ's body is no longer seen as wrapping the divine darkness. It is wrapped by it. It is compared to a white pearl in the infinite black shell of God:

la perla de la negra nube
sin contornos, del infinito concha
que es tu Padre.
(Part I, section XV, 491-493)

Though part of God is outside of Christ, the essence of God is still shown by Christ.

In Part II, section V His body is again wrapped by the darkness of God. Christ rests in God's invisible hands which are in the darkness:

"¡Mi espíritu en tus manos encomiendo!"
De tu Padre en las manos invisibles,
cimiento y techumbres del abismo,

manos que nos hicieron a tu imagen,
 'recostaste en sus manos hacedoras
 tu espíritu al rendirse de dolor!
 (Part II, section V, 1.181-1.186)

As in the last section I discussed, Unamuno shows no fear of the darkness here. But if God is in the darkness, as well as in the light of Christ, then there is still part of God that is hidden, that is mysterious. There is a part of God that is not felt in the white light on Christ.

Yet, later, in Part II, section XI Unamuno insists that Christ's body is the Word and that it dispels the mystery of the darkness:

al desnudarte, Luna del espíritu,
 la oscuridad eterna quedó en cueros.
 Es tu cuerpo desnudo la Palabra,
 la leche racional y sin engaño;
 pues que no le hay en el desnudo cuerpo.
 (Part II, section XI, "Desnudez",
 1.401-1.405)

In Part II, section XIV Unamuno again states that the way to the God we hope for is through the whiteness of Christ. The fearful God of the Old Testament is related to darkness. Before Christ, the love of God was hidden. Unamuno says that, although the beginning

of wisdom is the fear of the Lord, of the darkness,
the height of wisdom is trust in Christ. The darkness
arouses fear; the light gives hope:

El temor del Señor, de las tinieblas
arranque es del saber; mas la confianza
en Ti, Jesús, luz de la vida, es colmo
de ese saber. En la ceñuda cumbre
del rocoso Siná, tu Padre envuelto
tras negra nube, erizo de relámpagos
- cual horno el monte humeaba estremeciéndose -
" ¡ Soy el que soy! ", tronaba al pueblo...
(Part II, section XIV, "Del Siná
al Calvario", 1.487-1,495)

. . . .

Ya no tememos al Señor, tu Padre,
el Calvario de amor cual sol percude
del Siná las nubes y nos muestra
la sonrisa del cielo, que es el nido
donde nuestra esperanza irá a parar.
("Del Siná al Calvario", 1.508-
1.512)

Faith in Christ is the height of wisdom. Is this a
reaffirmation that the essence of God is seen in the
whiteness of Christ? Is he saying that God is no
longer hidden, and that his essence is Love? Relating
the Old Testament God with darkness, we think of the
darkness surrounding Christ. Is part of God still
hidden in that darkness? Unamuno seems to be saying
that if we focus on the whiteness of Christ, then the

mysteries of God will be solved. The essence of God will be drawn out of the darkness and fused into the light of Christ. But what of that fearful God of the Old Testament who dwelled in darkness. Does that stern side of His character still dwell in the darkness? Is not some of that fear reawakened when we look at the darkness surrounding Christ?

In Part III, section VIII Unamuno admits that much of God is still hidden and mysterious. He hopes that God hears our prayers. He relates the blue vault of the sun to the ears of God and asks:

¿Será el Padre sordo
no siendo mudo?
(Part III, section VIII, "Orejas",
1.764-1.765)
. . . .

¿Para qué doliente
plañe en la costa el mar, y canta el pájaro,
si la boveda azul del sol, oído
de tu Padre, se cierra a nuestras voces
de congojo?
("Orejas", 1.768-1.772)

There is a note of anxiety about the very existence of God in these questions. The blue vault of the sun, the ear of God, is hidden. It is hidden by the darkness.

Unamuno turns to Christ to shed light on this mystery. But the ears of Christ are hidden by His black hair. Although he insists that Christ does hear, he has admitted that part of God is still hidden by the darkness. This section contrasts with the mystic heights where Unamuno feels the essence of God in the white light of Christ.

Later, in Part III, section XIX he is again anxious about the darkness surrounding Christ. Christ's shoulders are:

¡médanos que del mar caliginoso
 donde al alma se ahoga, que es tu Padre,
 la espuma susurrante nos orillan
 en que asidos de Tí poder flotar!
 (Part III, section XIX, "Hombros",
 2.048-2.051)

In this section God is separated from Christ. God is no longer the light but a dark sea ("el mar caliginoso") in which the soul drowns. Unamuno believes in God but fears that he might be lost in Him, that he might be absorbed by Him. Unamuno clings desperately to Christ so that he will not drown. This is the last section in which he stresses the relationship between the darkness

and God. The tone is quite different from that of the first section I quoted in which he calmly, confidently wrote that the mystery of God was like a black curtain that had been drawn back by Christ. He no longer feels the mystic experience of the essence of God in Christ.

4. THE "ORACIÓN FINAL" - ANXIOUS FAITH

The "Oración final", the culmination of the poem, is not the expression of mystic happiness. It does not come from a man absorbed in peaceful contemplation. It is a prayer which rises from the depths of suffering:

Tú que callas, ¡oh Cristo!, para oírnos,
oye de nuestros pechos los sollozos;
acoje nuestras quejas, los gemidos
de este valle de lágrimas. Clamamos
a Tí, Cristo Jesús, desde la sima
de nuestro abismo de miseria humana...
(2.448-2.453)

This beginning of the section is followed by a series of requests in which Unamuno recalls some of his images of Christ. He asks for the blood of Christ. He asks for the light of Christ. He then expresses a need for faith, a need to believe in order to be saved from "aguas tenebrosas":

Déjanos
 nuestra sudada fe, que es frágil nido
 de aladas esperanzas que gorjean
 cantos de vida eterna, entre tus brazos,
 las alas del Espíritu que flota
 sobre el haz de las aguas tenebrosas,
 guarecer a la sombra de tu frente.
 (2.475-2.480)

Unamuno, suffering, hungers for Christ:

Ven y ve, mi Señor: mi seno hiede;
 ve cómo yo, a quien quieres, adolezco.
 (2.482-2.483)

He prays that after death he will retain some
 individuality:

Danos vida, Jesús, que es llamada
 que alienta y alumbra y que al pábulo
 en vasija encerrado se sujeta;
 vida que es llama, que en el tiempo vive
 y en ondas, como el río, se sucede.
 (2.494-2.498)

He wants a life dependent on food, a life that lives
 in time. As we have seen, only thus would he retain
 consciousness. He does not want to be lost in chaos
 after death:

Que no, como en los aires
 el humo de la leña, nos perdamos
 sin asiento de paso...
 (2.503-2.505)

We suffer in darkness while we live:

Avanzamos, Señor, menesterosos,

las almas en guñapos harapientes...
 apiñados por tromba tempestuosa
 de arrecidas negruras.
 (2.511-2.516)

In this darkness Unamuno feels the need for the
 white light of Christ, for the light that gives hope:

¡haz que brille
tu blancura...
 sobre el sendero
 de nuestra marcha, y esperanza sólida
 sobre nosotros mientras haya Dios!
 (2.516-2.521)

He hopes that he will retain his body in heaven
 and that standing he will meet the living God, the
 God who is a person, who will speak, standing with
 His arms extended:

. . . como Tú, subamos a la gloria
 de pie, para que Dios de pie nos hable
 y con los brazos extendidos.
 (2.528-2.530)

He wants to retain his body, some individuality,
 after death in order to retain consciousness. Yet, in
 the last lines of the poem, he asks to be submerged
 in the beatific vision of God ("mi mirada anegada en
 Ti, Señor") which would negate individual consciousness:

¡ Dame,
 Señor, que cuando al fin vaya rendido

a salir de esta noche tenebrosa
 en que soñando el corazón se acorcha,
 me entre en el claro día que no acaba,
 fijos mis ojos de tu blanco cuerpo,
 Hijo del Hombre, Humanidad completa,
 en la increada luz que nunca muere;
 ¡mis ojos fijos en tus ojos, Cristo,
 mi mirada anegada en Ti, Señor!
 (2.530-2.539)

The "Oración final" is the expression of the hopes of a man who suffers in the darkness of the world. After death he wants to retain his individuality, a slight separation from God, in order to feel his consciousness. But he wants also to be happy, through a union with God, involving a loss of individual consciousness in the beatific vision. However, even where he prays for happiness in this section, he suffers. He admits he has not attained the happiness of the submersion he seeks in God.

Many scholars agree with Calvin Cannon's assertion that mystic heights are sustained throughout the poem. They say there is no tragic sense in the poem. I do not agree. Even the "Oración final", the last and one of the most moving sections of the poem, is an expression, not of mystic happiness, but of anguish,

of the longing for God.

The faith expressed in this section, and it is faith, is a faith full of love and suffering. It is felt as a hunger for Christ, a longing for God. It is a faith which breathes the tragic sense of life.

CONCLUSION

In the beginning of this thesis I showed some of the main relationships between Del sentimiento trágico and the poem. Both are essentially expressions of the desire for immortality. Both show that, faced with this desire, there is a conflict between reason and emotion. In many sections of the poem Unamuno expresses the anxiety caused by this conflict. The conflict arouses the need to believe that Christ is the guarantor of immortality.

Consciousness is the main concern of both works. Much of El Cristo de Velázquez is an effort to believe that Christ is conscious after death, thus promising the immortality of consciousness.

In Del sentimiento trágico Unamuno says that love kindled by suffering should be the basis of faith. He repeats this in some sections of the poem. He says that the happy no longer feel their consciousness. One loves God when he suffers because of some separation from God. The happy are absorbed by God and their consciousness becomes numb. The danger of the happiness of a mystic

experience is the loss of consciousness. Suffering must be the condition of a loving faith. In some sections of the poem, sections which are indeed a contrast to the Sentimiento trágico, Unamuno does not express suffering, but the happiness of a calm contemplation of Christ. He even reaches mystic heights in a few sections. But there are many sections where Unamuno shows anxiety, where he recalls the tragic sense of life.

In Chapter Two I described some of the sections of the poem which express the conflict between reason and emotion. Reason leads to a recognition of the apparentiality of the world, of the darkness of the world. This recognition arouses emotional anxiety, the need to believe that there is a consciousness within matter, that the world is not apparential. The pledge of this consciousness is found in the light on Christ.

In some sections Unamuno does not stress that the recognition of apparentiality, of the darkness of the world causes him to suffer. But in many later sections he shows that belief in Christ's pledge of eternal consciousness is based on anxiety, suffering. In these

sections he is reflecting the attitude of Del sentimiento trágico. Hope in Christ rises from the anxiety in "the depths of the abyss".

Christ, as an individual, is conscious after death because He suffers. As Unamuno says in Del sentimiento trágico, suffering sharpens consciousness. Christ suffers in one section of the poem because of the fear of an eventual loss of consciousness. In many other sections He suffers because of His knowledge of evil. This knowledge is related to His black hair, and the crown of thorns. The halo is His expression of consciousness. In the sections in which Christ, as an individual, suffers and thus is conscious after death, Unamuno finds a guarantee that he will retain his own individuality in order to retain consciousness after death.

But I showed in Chapter Three that there are some sections of the poem which contrast with those that reflect the tragic sense of life. In these sections Unamuno does not express love kindled by suffering, but the happiness of the contemplation of Christ. He expresses a desire for absorption in Christ or God.

Unamuno does not stress his own suffering, or that of Christ in these calmer sections. Neither Unamuno nor Christ suffers because of individuality. In fact, in much of Part I Christ's outlines are blurred. He loses His individuality and becomes light which is pure, perfected consciousness, Unamuno, in a few sections, experiences the presence of God in this light. To experience God through Christ is a mystic experience. There are some sections of the poem in which Unamuno does reach mystic heights. But in most sections of the poem there is a shadow of darkness, a hint of anxiety which prevents Unamuno from being absorbed by Christ or God. I maintained at the end of this chapter that mystic happiness was frequently shattered by fear.

I attempted to prove this assertion in greater detail in Chapter Four. I pointed out that Unamuno often relates death with darkness. In many sections, describing this death of darkness, he shows anxiety about a loss of consciousness in death. This anxiety is allayed in some sections where Christ promises the resurrection of our bodies or in other sections where

He announces the Recapitulation. But the anxiety returns. Unamuno's attitude oscillates between hope inspired by the light and fear awakened by the darkness.

Anxiety is also expressed in descriptions of Christ's hair. The hair veils Christ's facial expression of consciousness. In some sections Unamuno fears that Christ might not be conscious in death. He often relates the hair with death. In some of these sections he affirms that Christ's death was just a stage to eternal life. He sees the promise of eternal consciousness in the light on Christ's body or in the halo. But in other sections he fears that Christ is unconscious. In these sections he shows little hope of immortality. Again there is an oscillation between hope in Christ's promise of immortality, seen in His light, and fear of a death of unconsciousness, evoked by the hair.

There is a change in Unamuno's attitude to God in the poem. In the beginning of the poem God is the Sun whose light is reflected by Christ. In these sections Unamuno relates the darkness with the mystery of God which Christ uncovers. The light on Christ is the essence

of God. But there is a growing anxiety in the poem about the darkness related with God. The darkness becomes, not simply the mystery of God which Christ draws aside, but the nature of God. In the last section in which he relates the darkness with God, Unamuno clings to Christ because of the fear of drowning in "el mar caliginoso", in God (1.). Unamuno no longer feels the mystic experience of the essence of God (light) on Christ. In various sections Unamuno shows anxiety about the nature of God by relating Him with the darkness.

The "Oración final" is one of the many examples of an anxious faith. Like other sections of the poem it is an expression, not of happiness, but of suffering, a suffering which arouses the need to believe in Christ. Unamuno shows that it is the fear of the apparentiality, the darkness of the world which arouses this need. The main attitude in this section, as in many others in the poem, is one of anxiety, of suffering.

In the Introduction I mentioned Blanco Aguinaga's theory that there are two opposing aspects of Unamuno's

character. As well as the active side, the side of conflict, there is the contemplative, tranquil side. Most critics maintain that every line of the poem is an expression of the tranquil Unamuno. These critics consider this work to be a contrast to Del sentimiento trágico. I do not agree. I have shown that much of it is by no means what Vivanco called a "salmo tranquilo... de confianza en Dios" (1.). It is not an expression just of the contemplative side of Unamuno's character as Blanco Aguínaga implies (2.). It is certainly not an expression of sustained mysticism as Calvin Cannon maintains (3.). Although, as I have shown, there are sections which are expressions of the tranquil side of Unamuno, there are many sections which reflect the religious anxiety of Del sentimiento trágico.

In my Introduction I quoted other critics who mentioned the relationship between the poem and Del sentimiento trágico. But none of them has supported this assertion by an extensive examination of the poem.

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1. See Introduction p. 6.
 2. Introduction p. 7.
 3. Introduction p. 7.

The fact is that Unamuno expresses both tranquillity and anxiety in the poem. There are religious affirmations expressed through images of white and light. But there are also moments of anxiety shown in Unamuno's reaction to black and darkness. In these moments Unamuno expresses anxiety about the apparentiality of the world, the nature of God and the possibility of a death in which he would be unconscious.

This poem is a moving expression of Unamuno's complex yet sincere faith, at times serene, at others anxious.

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