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Alienation in the philosophical and literary works of Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo

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Unamuno y Jugo**

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San Jose State University, 1990

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**ALIENATION IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL
AND LITERARY WORKS OF
MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO Y JUGO**

A Thesis

Presented to

**the Faculty of the Department of Philosophy
San José State University**

In Partial Fulfillment

**of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts**

By

Melissa Burchard

May, 1990

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ABSTRACT

ALIENATION IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL AND LITERARY WORKS OF MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO Y JUGO

by Melissa Burchard

This thesis is concerned with alienation in the works of Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo. It attempts to provide an account of the character, expression, and consequences of alienation in Unamuno's philosophy. The works which are considered are literary as well as philosophical in order to extract as full an account as possible of Unamuno's thought.

In addition to the exposition of alienation, there is a criticism of Unamuno's views by way of comparison with those of José Ortega y Gasset. Ortega addressed many of the same issues and so makes an appropriate contrast. In the criticism it is argued that although some might see Unamuno as too personal, inconsistent or extreme, it can be shown that many of his claims are well-founded once they are understood. It is also argued that although these two philosophers are normally thought of as very different, their views are in fact highly complementary and at times even parallel.

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PART I
EXPOSITION

INTRODUCTION

In order to have a clear understanding of the type and character of alienation in the works of Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo, it is necessary to understand the circumstances of his personal life from which that alienation springs and those which made him aware of its existence. At this point, therefore, some brief biographical information and its consequences for Unamuno's thought will be discussed.

Unamuno's life is often considered in three sections: from birth in 1864 to the crisis of 1897; from that crisis to 1924; and from then until his death in 1936. The first period is characterized by the "un-consciousness" of his youth¹, which Carlos Blanco-Aguinaga explains as a period of living-for-others in the sense of being and defining himself as others wanted him to be, and as others saw him. In other words, at this point in his life Unamuno was a "normal" young man who accepted the history that was imposed upon him by his culture and by those around him, and who manifested himself in accordance with that history and the expectations of those people who were important to him. At this time he had not deeply considered his self, and lived in harmony

¹ Carlos Blanco-Aguinaga, "Authenticity and the Image," in the collection *Unamuno: Creator and Creation*, ed. José Rubia Barcia and M. A. Zeitlin (Los Angeles, University of California Press), 1967.

with the world around him, believing that he understood and agreed with the ideas that it presented to him of others, of itself, and of himself.

In the well-known "crisis of 1897" Unamuno suffered an emotional confrontation with death which caused him to re-evaluate his life and his beliefs. He became aware of the "un-consciousness" of his self before that time, and began to realize the importance of the agony which accompanied the crisis. After having been raised in the very traditional Spanish culture, including the Catholic church, Unamuno suddenly faced the revelation that death, rather than being a blissful extension of this existence, is simply nothingness. This revelation was terrifying for a man who could write that even as a child stories of hell held no fear for him, but that the idea of emptiness or nothingness inspired a deep and abject terror: "...nada se me aparecía tan horrible como la nada misma."² This new understanding of death, of nothingness, as the final end of life caused Unamuno to reconsider his life up to that point, and to come to the conclusion that a new beginning must be made. However, being the deep and philosophical thinker that he was, this new beginning could neither be a simple nor a superficial thing; what it implied was nothing less than the

² Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo, *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida en los hombres y en los pueblos*, 4th ed., Madrid (Espasa-Calpe, S. A., Selecciones Austral, 1985), 32. "...nothing appeared so horrible to me as nothingness itself."

separation of himself from that self which had gone before, in order to create the new self that he believed he must become. As Blanco-Aguinaga relates,

...the March night of 1897 signifies a radical moment of alienation at all levels and meanings of the word, for Unamuno's encounter with nothingness was the radical experience by which, unexpectedly, he found himself deprived of his being (*despojado de su ser*), naked, without past or future, while, in terror, he tried to keep hold of what, as of that moment, will forever after be the self's fall through absolute emptiness, being escaping from itself in its very center.³

As a result, between 1897 and 1905 Unamuno set about rebuilding that self in a new light, the light of his newly gained perspective on the self in its solitude and the anguish which accompanies that solitude. Although it may have begun as an attempt to build a self *for* others, it became a self *against* others. Blanco cites two primary reasons for this posture: one, the impossibility of recovering the serene existence and faith of his childhood; two, the need to keep alive the anguish of the crisis as a proof of existence, as a bulwark against the nothingness (this is a topic which will be discussed later in more detail, as will the following) and as a

very common practical necessity of opposing two sets of others; those who admired his early works, and those who wanted him to return to his "original" self. Thus, at all levels, "otherness" was from that time on present in every form of Unamuno's affirmation of existence as centered in self-consciousness.⁴

³ Blanco-Aguinaga, p. 54.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

The period after this crisis is a period of tremendous outpouring of work resulting from the re-organization of his thinking and world-view. Unamuno was a very political man as well as an intellectual, and in 1924 he was exiled to the island of Fuerteventura by Primo de Rivera, who at that time was the dictator of Spain. This experience threw him fully into the conflict of the dichotomies of inner/outer, authentic/image, and caused him to question the role-playing of himself and others in society as well as in private life. Again, this is a topic which will receive fuller treatment later; here it is simply noted as a catalyst for Unamuno's thought and intellectual development.

From 1924 to his death, Unamuno continued to write and to develop his ideas and beliefs. He escaped from exile and lived for several years in Paris, continuing to write from there, and publicizing the political conflict in Spain which kept him from returning. His own growing reputation coupled with his melodramatic escape made him into a symbol of resistance to the political party in power at the time, and helped to create even more of an image for him, which he constantly questioned and struggled with. In 1930, Unamuno returned to Spain, and in 1931 when Spain was declared a Republic he was reappointed as rector of the University at Salamanca, which post he held until his retirement in 1934. He was politically active until his death in December 1936, being at first pro-Franco; later, becoming disillusioned by

the Civil War and the dictator's policies, he reversed his stand just before his death and spoke out against Franco. The passion of his political life and the changes in his position are typical of his character, and indicative of the fact that he never did give up the struggle; he never renounced the agonized conflict which he came to understand as the only formal principle of life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERATURE IN UNAMUNO

Although Unamuno's style of writing is paradoxical, metaphorical and seemingly difficult and inconsistent, still there is much that can be agreed on in considering the basic tenets of his thought. In his major philosophical work, *Del sentimiento trágico de la vida en los hombres y en los pueblos*, the roots of his ideas can be found, and sometimes these are quite clearly elaborated. In this section, then, as a basis for understanding the alienation of Unamunian thought and its source, an exposition of his concept of the self is in order. This concept of the self provides a clear grounding for the sense of alienation which extends itself to pervade the rest of Unamuno's philosophy.

However, philosophy sometimes finds its voice in literature as much as in essay or other more traditionally familiar forms of writing in philosophy, as has been seen

particularly in the existentialist tradition. Some existentialist writers have employed more analytic approaches as well as novels and poetry, as Unamuno did; some have used chiefly or exclusively one or the other; Dostoevski, for example, although considered a philosopher by many, wrote exclusively in fictional prose. Women have often expressed their philosophical concerns in literary forms because that has been considered appropriate for them, whereas it was not always considered proper that they should openly appear "philosophically" minded. It comes as no surprise, then, that much can be gleaned from a study of the fictional writings of a philosopher such as Unamuno. His philosophy is clearly evident in his novels, dramas, and poetry. His expression of his understanding of being-in-the-world, although often metaphorical and difficult to discern in the attempt to be precise in philosophical essay, is made concrete in the personae who live in his fictional worlds. Consequently, in the attempt to understand Unamunian thought, some attention will be given here to the importance of literature in the philosophy of Unamuno, and then a brief study of some of his literary works will be included in each section in order to provide reinforcement for the philosophical tenets and examples of how these were worked out by Unamuno.

Don Miguel de Unamuno argued in a number of statements in *Del sentimiento* that philosophy and poetry are intimately

related, and in fact more closely related than philosophy and science. He tells us, for example, that "...la filosofía se acuesta más a la poesía que no a la ciencia..." and that "...poeta y filósofo son hermanos gemelos, si es que no la misma cosa..."⁵ There was more reason for his saying this, however, than simply the fact that he himself was both a poet and a philosopher, or that he simply liked poetry as a form of expression. Unamuno was firmly convinced that it was of paramount importance in philosophy to remember that the "subject and primary object" of philosophy is the concrete individual of flesh and blood. He also detested what he called "professional thinkers"; philosophers and scientists (among others) who were complete rationalists, dedicated to the proposition that the mind is all that is important, and that in order to be the best that one can, one must dispense with the body as much as possible and concentrate on the mental faculties. This attitude gave rise to a very elitist group which had the mental ability and the wherewithall to ignore the everyday worries of the physical condition in pursuance of a philosophical ideal. Unamuno rejected this concept and the philosophers he believed to be devoted to it (in particular, Descartes). He wanted to be able to appeal to the individual whom he saw as the true subject and object

⁵ *Del sentimiento*, p. 27 and 31 respectively.
 "...philosophy lies down with poetry more than with science..." and "...the poet and the philosophers are twin brothers, if not one and the same..."

of philosophy, the "common man" who philosophizes on a "down-to-earth" level, without all the mental gymnastics of the "professional thinkers". Unamuno believed that he could reach this audience more effectively through a format with which it was more familiar, and to which it could relate more easily. Most importantly, this format should carry his messages to that audience with the greatest possible impact. Perhaps the average person with an average education wouldn't follow very well the convoluted and paradoxical principles in *Del sentimiento*, but he or she could certainly understand them on a "gut level" in novels or drama. And for Unamuno, this gut level understanding, this understanding on a real and personal level, is far more important than what he took to be the empty, unfeeling rhetoric of the rationalists. The literary forms of expression give life and feeling to philosophical principles, give intensity and passion to intellectual exercise, and make real the ideas and concepts which Unamuno needed to express and wished others as well as himself to understand in a personal and profound manner.

Another reason for Don Miguel to use the literary forms of expression is simply his own widely acclaimed ability as a creative writer. Even in his works in essay format he was constantly using metaphor and imagery that is more common to fiction, as though he couldn't quite manage to get away from that style completely. Metaphor is very important in

Unamuno's works, as well as in those of other philosophers (e.g., Nietzsche), and this type of imagery is perhaps most highly developed and effectively used in literature such as poetry and the novel. The ability to work with words and levels of meaning and expression are unquestionably highly developed in one who can write good literature; these skills certainly would then aid in the expression of philosophical concepts as well as fictional worlds, and would allow one who possesses such skills to combine these two in a tremendously effective and aesthetically pleasing style. It is evident that this is the case with regard to Unamuno, who enfoldes his philosophical concepts in his fictional worlds, and allows his characters to become spokespersons for and victims of his own thoughts. These things having been noted, the concept of the self can now be fully explored.

SELF AND ALIENATION

The first clear statement Unamuno makes about the self is that Descartes was wrong. In perhaps the first of his famous reversals, Unamuno declares that Descartes mistook himself in coming to the conclusion that *cogito, ergo sum*. The real truth of the matter is, in fact, *sum, ergo cogito*. What he means by this is that the first experience of consciousness that one can have is that of simply *being*; "La

conciencia de pensar, ¿no será ante todo conciencia de ser?"⁶ It doesn't make sense to consider the possibility that pure thought can exist without a person, and personality, with which it is connected; therefore Descartes, in giving priority to the activity of the mind over all other possibilities, is incorrect. It is necessary to understand that the first experience of self is one of *feeling that self existing*; not thinking, not involved in any mental activity, merely existing, and knowing itself to be existing by the fact that it feels this. Unamuno gives priority not to the rational component of the person, but to the irrational - "*lo irracional, el sentimiento*" are the words he uses, and he does so to emphasize the nature of that first experience as concrete rather than abstract, as sentimental rather than mental. However, it should be noted that before this stage is reached, there is another about which Unamuno is not so clear; it has been referred to as his statement of the "precogito", and is a state in which "This undifferentiated self is a prereflective phenomenon," a "basic, integrated self" existing in the world, of which the individual is unaware.⁷

Becoming aware of this self is this first experience of consciousness, and it happens through a process which

⁶ *Del sentimiento*, p. 52. "Consciousness of thinking; isn't that consciousness of being before all else?"

⁷ Paul Ilie, "Moral Psychology in Unamuno", in the collection cited above, *Creator and Creation*, p. 73.

Unamuno terms "*desdoblamiento*": separation from self, but also with the connotation of doubling back on the self. The individual begins, once aware of the self, to contemplate that self as though it were other, and this is the first separation of the self and the first experience of alienation. In order to come to some understanding of what the self is, the individual must study it, observe it, and in order to do this there must be detachment, distance, separation. This separation, however, cannot accomplish its purpose without this sense of doubling back on the self in order to study itself. Consequently, once the individual becomes aware of the self, it develops a reflexive consciousness so that it can obtain knowledge of that self.

At this point some clarification must be made about the vocabulary and the concepts that are in use here. At times Unamuno is vague about the meanings of the words which he employs, but there are some things about which he is very definite. Whereas the words "self" and "consciousness" ("*el yo*" or "*yo mismo*," "*la conciencia*") seem at times to be used almost interchangeably, implying perhaps a lack of strict differentiation between those terms, the concept to which they refer is quite clear. Unamuno's self, the subject and supreme object of philosophy, is the man of flesh and blood, ("*el hombre de carne y hueso*"⁸), the concrete and real person who exists now and who feels her/himself to be

⁸ *Del sentimiento*, p. 25. "the man of flesh and blood"

existing. The importance of this for Unamuno is tremendous, and reinforces his break from the rationalists, especially Descartes, whose reigning doctrine chose to see persons as abstract, as dualistic in nature, as mind or spirit weighed down and hampered by inconvenient physical and emotional attributes. In other words, Unamuno rejected the dualist doctrine to the extent that he rejected the valuation of the spirit or mind over the body. However, he did not manage to completely reject dualism, and he resolved the dilemma it poses by raising the valuation of the corporeal nature of persons to the same level as that of the spiritual nature. The self, then, is a concrete and existing-in-the-world self; not just an abstract concept, nor a spirit hovering in a noumenal world, but a combination of mind and body in which there is constant struggle (which will be discussed in more detail later). It is the consciousness of this kind of self that Unamuno is dealing with, and what is important in his treatment of its consciousness is that although consciousness is essentially of the spiritual or mental nature of the person, it must maintain constant contact with and understanding of the physical side of its nature (even if that understanding takes the form of struggle) in order truly to live. Those who would truly live, says Unamuno, must *feel* life, and this can be accomplished only through the sentiment, the physical attribute.

By this reflexive process of *desdoblamiento*, then, the self becomes aware of its existence, of its consciousness, and at the same time first becomes alienated from itself. Through its self-study and observation it comes to the realization that it is separate from itself, and with that realization come fear and doubt. It sees itself as other, and begins to wonder about its otherness in relation to itself and to the rest of the others that it sees around it. What it learns, however, is disturbing--it finds that although it can obtain much information by observing the others around it, and although it can, by reflection, know itself to be existing, it cannot reflect upon itself any further than that fact. It cannot know its own nature.⁹ This frightening revelation throws doubt onto all the knowledge that the cogito, the consciousness, has attained, for if it cannot know itself and its own nature, how can it be certain about the knowledge it has of others? The knowledge it has of the other that it is is uncertain; it cannot, therefore, rely on the information it has about other others to be true knowledge. In its continuing process of observation it recognizes that there are more divisions of itself than it at first realized; e.g., a social self, an inner self, a self that watches all the others. It recognizes its own various separations, and feels its own alienation, feels itself as separate from itself. In anticipation of Sartre,

9 Ilie, 73.

it feels its own divided nature on at least three levels (and these divided again into others): as seen by others, as seen and felt and known by itself, and as it really *is*. This last, of course, is the most difficult truly to know, as it is this self, the true nature, the *innermost*, upon which it cannot reflect, and which is constantly covered by the others. Here, then, is the root of the experience of alienation in Unamuno--and true to form, it is the experience of the concrete man Unamuno himself, as well as a philosophical expression of human experience in general.

Keeping in mind all that has been said so far, it can be seen that the experience of alienation in Unamunian thought extends throughout the nature of the person and colors all human experiences and projects. The separation of the self causes the self to choose between its manifestations at different moments and for different reasons; but always one must be chosen at the expense of the others. This affirmation at any given point of one self over the others deepens and entrenches the sense of alienation, and brings about the second emergence of the concept of the struggle in Unamuno's thought: "to be, is to be against oneself" (which statement has been referred to as the only "formal principle" of Unamuno's philosophy).¹⁰ Because there

10 José Ferrater Mora, *Unamuno: A Philosophy of Tragedy*, translated by Philip Silver (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1962), 34.

is only one self chosen at any one time, the one which is chosen in a sense destroys the authenticity of all other possible selves at that moment, and for this reason is referred to as the *satánico yo*, the satanic I or self, the one which is a divisive agent at that moment and as such has caused the loss of the others.¹¹ This self has a dangerous or satanic aspect in that it constantly questions the motivations and actions of the person; not only placing in doubt the sincerity of those motivations and actions, but also actually attaching adverse moral judgements to them.¹² To be is to be against oneself; if not the only formal principle in his philosophy, surely it is a clear statement of the basic and pervasive alienation at the heart of it. What keeps these selves together, and the individual from simply losing control, are the two principles of unity and continuity: unity in space, action, and goal or purpose, thanks to the body, and continuity in time, by way of the memory.¹³ So although to be is to be what one is, it is at the same time to *desire to be what one is not*¹⁴; to desire the ability to integrate all those selves into a whole which could live in harmony instead of conflict. (Other implications of this desire will be discussed later; at this point it is sufficient to note it in this context.) The fact

11 Ilie, 74.

12 Ibid., 74.

13 *Del sentimiento*, 31-2.

14 Ibid., 32, 132, 134.

is, according to Unamuno, that even though one might desire to be something which one is not, whether that thing be good or bad, one cannot become that thing without giving up that which one already is: "Querer ser otro, es querer dejar de ser uno el que es."¹⁵

These philosophical tenets are clearly illustrated in Unamuno's literature, and even at the heart of it, in his construal of the fictional character. The relationship between the person and the fictional character begins in Unamuno's way of thinking with the recognition of the fact that the latter is very much like the former in that she/he lives the same type of life. That is to say, she/he *lives*, has a life which goes from birth to death (although it may not all be seen within the space of any one work) and which is a story with its own personal history, just as that of any "real" person. The fictional character thinks, acts, and feels within a framework just as any "real" person does, and does all of these things in the same way that a "real" person would. A good writer is often said to be able to make his/her characters "live"; in fact, there seems to be little, in Unamuno's thinking, to distinguish between this type of life and that which we normally consider more real. What is most real in Unamunian thought is the "innermost,"

¹⁵ Ibid., 32. "To wish to be other, is to wish to no longer be that which one is."

the most inner self, the most intimate and profound ~~yo~~ which any person has. It is that self which creates by its very desire; it is the self one desires to be. Because it is motivated by desire, it seeks constantly to create, to change the individual into that which it wishes to be. But any well-rounded and developed fictional character also has this innermost self; if this is what is most real, then a "real" person has no more claim to reality than a well-developed character. Unamuno's paradox of the real/fictional character is an answer to the question, "What is the intimate (true, eternal, creative, poetic) reality of the individual?"¹⁶

The innermost is only one self, however, and it is the most difficult to know. Each person is constantly watching her/himself as though she/he were perhaps a fictional character, and this is part of the person's essential alienation. This paradox of the real/fictional character, then, is a manifestation and symbol of the fundamental alienation of the person, and in particular of the fragmentation of the self. It is the recognition of oneself as essentially alienated and outside oneself, observing, at the same time that one is within oneself, being observed. Both the author and the character are subject to this fundamental alienation separately; but the author may also view the character as one of his/her own selves which is now

¹⁶ See Ferrater, chapter 6.

outside and under observation. Paradoxically, at any point the character may also realize that the author is related to him/her in a parallel fashion. At the same time, once the character is completely developed, it has a life of its own and is capable of growing and living outside the influence of its author. It lives for itself, and is immortalized by any and all who read its life story.

The aspect of the fragmented self which is referred to as the *yo satánico* is clearly demonstrated in the drama *El otro*. In this work, the main character is a man who has lost all certainty as to whether he is one, himself, or the other, his identical twin. The character, who is never referred to directly by name but throughout the drama as the "other," has killed his twin out of jealousy, hatred and fear: fear of losing himself, of being robbed of his self by the other which stood physically outside him, and yet was him. The fact that the two are twins and not simply brothers or friends is, of course, significant. They were as two aspects of a single identity; they were the physical manifestation of the fragmented self. Each was observer and observed; each identity was separate from the other but at the same time intimately and necessarily connected with it. However, upon meeting Laura they both fell in love with her, and for the first time came in conflict with each other in a way that could neither be resolved nor tolerated. Both *yos*

desired and needed total possession of that which was desired, and neither could give way for the other. Finally they decided that one would marry her, and the other should leave forever, for they would be unable to live together thereafter: "Habían de separarse para siempre...."¹⁷. So one left, Damián, and one stayed, Cosme. Much as they now hated each other, however, they were unable to tolerate the separation, just as the self, although "separated," alienated, cannot have its parts "distant" from one another and remain healthy. They are alienated and in constant struggle with each other, but they must remain together. If not, the result is devastating: in the case of the self, mental illness is the most likely result (for instance, schizophrenia); for Damián and Cosme, the separation led to obsession as the satanic ego sought the destruction of the other.

The *yo satánico* is the ego which seeks to further itself and its desires at the expense of all other possible egos. Because Unamuno refers to the main character of the drama simply as the "other," it is never made clear whether this destructive ego is embodied in Cosme or his twin; surely this is exactly the point. As the "other" tells the housekeeper: "Nos hicimos malos los dos...Cuando uno no es

¹⁷ Unamuno, *El otro* and *Raquel encadenada*, ed. Frank Sedwick (New York, Las Americas Publishing Company, 1960), 46. "They were forced to separate from each other for always...."

siempre uno se hace malo...."¹⁸ Because they are two aspects of the same person, it could have been either one that became the satanic ego. And because they are so connected, both must suffer the results of whatever actions are committed by one. Consequently, when the one returns to confront the other who had remained with Laura, the pain, hatred and anguish of a lifetime of not knowing really who each is, not having separate and secure identities, overwhelms them both. In a rage they attack each other, and one is killed. The remorse that then overcomes the killer is heightened by the further loss of identity: instead of achieving a unity by ridding himself of the other, he realizes that he has destroyed a part of himself; in fact, he has in a sense killed himself, and no longer recognizes the self that survives. "¿Yo?, yo no sé quién soy...."¹⁹ he says, and repeats the lament throughout the drama. He has forever lost a self, and this loss has destroyed his ground for a total identity. As a final tragedy, the guilt of his deed magnifies this loss of identity in a peculiar fashion: it is as though, says the "other," the dead twin has become the persecutor and he the victim. The dead one now has the power of remorse over him who yet lives, and through this power now torments his own victim, the killer. Which one, asks the "other", is it who is the real victim? The

¹⁸ Ibid., 52. "We made each other evil...When one is not always oneself one becomes evil...."

¹⁹ Ibid., 53. "I? I do not know who I am...."

deceased, or the one who agonizes every waking moment, who in his anguish no longer knows with any certainty who he actually is? Unamuno compares the twins to Cain and Abel, but with his twist on the story, is it Cain or Abel who is the true victim? Even more interesting a question, is it that Cain kills Abel because he is Cain, or is it that he is Cain because he has killed Abel? In the case of the "other," the distinction cannot be made; whichever he was before, he is Cain now by virtue of his deed. And yet he has also become the victim of Abel in his agony of remorse; does that not make him Abel as well? "¿Yo? ¿Asesino yo? ¿Pero quién soy yo?...¿Quién es el muerto? ¿Quién el más muerto?" and later on the same page he continues his lament:

¡Caín! ¡Caín! Me lo digo yo a mí mismo todas las noches, en sueños...¡Pobre Caín! ¡Pobre Caín! Pero también me digo que si Caín no hubiera dado muerte a Abel, Abel habría matado a Caín...Si el uno no mata al otro, el otro habría matado al uno...[yo soy] uno y otro, Caín y Abel, iverdugo y víctima!²⁰

The separation of his selves is too severe, the remorse at the deeds of the *yo satánico* too acute, the anguish of the lack of identity too profound to bear; *el otro* commits suicide, and leaves the question of who he was to those who wish to pursue it.

20 Ibid., 51-2. "Cain! Cain! I say it to myself each night, in dreams...Poor Cain! Poor Cain! But I also say to myself that if Cain had not killed Abel, Abel would have killed Cain...If one does not kill the other, the other will kill the one...I am one and the other, Cain and Abel, executioner and victim!"

Closely related to the issue of the fragmentation of the self is the problem of sincerity. If one cannot know one's innermost self, how can one know that one is truly sincere in any thought or action? How can one be certain of one's own motivation? These problems afflict a number of Unamunian personae; among them Augusto Pérez and San Manuel Bueno. Augusto, in *Niebla*, never really manages to understand why it is that he is so obsessed with Eugenia, nor exactly what it is that he wants from her, nor yet what attracts him to Rosario. His lack of clarity in purpose and in motivation stems from the divided nature of his self; at one moment he is swayed by one self, and at the next moment by another. Because there is no cohesion among these selves, nothing to bind them together, he cannot come to a clear understanding of who he is, nor what his purposes and motivations are or should be.

The case of San Manuel, in the novel of the same name, is probably the best example of this concept in Unamuno's philosophy. San Manuel's very insincerity, and incapacity to deal with that quality and its ramifications, becomes the motivating force for all his actions and his whole lifestyle. San Manuel is the priest in a village in Spain, a man known to be so good and so holy that he comes to be called saint, and the title "the good" is affixed to his name. What the people of the village don't realize is that San Manuel lives in fear that they will discover the fact

that he himself is unable to believe in what he preaches; specifically, that there actually is a heaven and a life everlasting awaiting him or anyone else. He is the spiritual advisor of the people, and he serves his office with greater dedication than anyone else possibly could; however, he does so in an attempt to convince himself that what he says is true. His desperation has left him with nothing more than the hope that acting as though he believed will somehow make it true. In his case the fragmentation of his self has left him with two competing selves (primarily): one ruled by reason, which knows with certainty that there is no hope of heaven and immortality; and one which is unable to give up the need of and desire for that same heaven which the other knows can never be. This time the division leads to a whole life of insincerity, a deception which those around him would be shocked and profoundly disturbed to discover. When he can no longer bear the agony alone, San Manuel confesses his deception to Lázaro, who, impressed by the goodness of the man despite this involuntary façade, becomes his disciple. Both then suffer the same uncertainty, the same division, and the toll it takes on them is great. San Manuel sickens and dies, and Lázaro cannot long carry on without his support; he follows soon after. Lázaro's sister Angela, who tells their story, is left to wonder whether they didn't in the end convince themselves by the actions of their lives and die believing that which had eluded them while they

lived. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the case of San Manuel also provides an excellent illustration of the innermost self as Unamuno conceives it. San Manuel is driven to the lead the kind of life he does by his own deeply rooted and overwhelming desire to be a believer. His deepest wish is that he be able to believe in the god and immortality which he preaches to the *pueblo*. It is the innermost self which is the source of this desire, and it is the desire of this innermost self which matters in the end. This is precisely why Angela decides, after the deaths of San Manuel and her brother, that they did in fact die believing: the desire of the innermost self, constantly seeking to create the person as that which it desires to be, is the measure by which they are to be judged in the end: "...creo que Don Manuel Bueno, que mi San Manuel y que mi hermano Lázaro se murieron creyendo no creer lo que más nos interesa, pero sin creer creerlo, creyéndolo en una desolación activa y resignada."²¹

²¹ Unamuno, *Dos novelas cortas: San Manuel Bueno, mártir, and Nada menos que todo un hombre*, eds. James Stamm and Herbert Isar (New York, Wiley, 1961), 57. "...I believe that Don Manuel the Good, that my Saint Manuel and my brother Lázaro died believing that they did not believe that which is of most interest to us; but without believing that they believed, in fact believing with an active and resigned desolation."

ALIENATION IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF UNAMUNO

In this section it is argued that it is clear that upon this understanding of the fundamentally alienated nature of the person, Miguel de Unamuno has built his entire philosophy; it is, essentially, a philosophy of alienation, but alienation which never ceases, and must never cease, in its striving for integration, even though this is impossible to achieve. Unamuno's expression and treatment of his primary problematics are manifestations of this ground, as will be seen. This alienated nature is the foundation for his philosophy, and true to his philosophy as a man of flesh and blood, it is also his own nature. It is his own experience. The discussion will focus on three major concepts or problematics: (1) the fear of and possibility of the loss of self; (2) the resultant need for immortality, and consequently God, as a way of continuing; and (3) the role of the self as creator. In addition, an interpretation of Unamunian ethics will be offered as a way of dealing with the constant struggle and bringing meaning into the life of the individual. The struggle itself (*la lucha*), and the inevitable agony it causes (*la agonía, la congoja*), are the pervasive manifestations of alienation which underlie these concepts, and as such will be continuously under consideration.

The Loss of Self

The self in Unamunian thought is radically divided. The *satánico yo* attempts to assert itself at the expense of all other selves. It denies the authenticity of those other selves, and puts them in doubt. It is against them, and at the same time it desires to be what they are; it desires to be the self that it is and the selves that they are all at once. It desires to be integrated, whole, but it cannot. So it struggles. To be is to be against oneself; it struggles with itself. To be is to be against others; it struggles with others. It realizes that it cannot integrate even itself; it agonizes. "Según te adentras en ti mismo y en ti mismo ahondas, vas descubriendo tu propia inanidad, que no eres todo lo que no eres, que no eres lo que quisieras ser, que no eres, en fin, más que nonada."²² Upon reflection of its consciousness, the self realizes all that it is not, all that it wishes to be, and the inanity and futility of its own existence threaten to overwhelm it. It desires to be that which it is not in order to achieve meaning, and to give fullness to life. Unamuno agrees with Spinoza about the

²² Ibid., 131. "As you go into yourself, and as you then go deeper, you discover your own inanity, all that you are not, that you are not that which you wish to be, that you are, in the end, nothing more than nothing."

essence of the motivation for life--continuance: each thing, in so far as it is that thing, strives to preserve itself as it is. But the self as *it is* is divided, and it fears its own loss. For it wishes to become other, all the others that it is not, in order to be an integrated whole, and in order to become other it must cease to be that which it is now: it must die. Again, *la lucha* is manifested here in the need, due to the nature of the self, to strive for that which cannot be obtained, and which, if it were obtained, would be the death of the self. Clearly this illustrates the manner in which "to be is to be against oneself." The inevitability of this struggle, and of the agony which must accompany it, is the essence of the "tragic sense of life", *el sentimiento trágico de la vida*. The loss of the self would mean a return to the nothingness from which consciousness sprang,²³ and this possibility engenders a terror which is all but overpowering (see footnote 2 above). Unamuno's response is to take one more of Spinoza's principles and put it to his own use: the force with which each thing strives to preserve itself as it is does not imply a finite time or period of existence, but rather an infinite one. What this means for Unamuno is that the self does not wish to die; more than that, it desires, yearns, aches to continue not just now but forever. The fear of the loss of consciousness and the return to nothingness drives it to strive constantly to be

23 Ibid., 101.

it to strive constantly to be all that there is, to be itself and everything else, now and forever. This is what the self *needs*; it feels this need as deeply and wholly as it is capable of feeling; this need is settled deep in the self, *en las entrañas*. The fear of the loss of self, of consciousness, brings on the need for immortality.

The Need for Immortality

El hambre de inmortalidad is one of the major themes in the philosophy of Unamuno, although it is sometimes mistaken for a purely religious one. The "hunger for immortality" is a consequence which quite reasonably follows from the premises with which Unamuno begins and the argument leading from them, as has been shown. Nevertheless, this issue has been problematic for his reputation as a philosopher, primarily due to the emotional aspect it entails. This is exactly the point as far as Unamuno is concerned: the emotional aspect is what gives importance and validity to this issue in the first place. Emotion, it must be remembered, does not invalidate the world-view or reasoning in which it is employed; at least not in Unamuno's thinking. Consequently, here as everywhere in his philosophy, the emotional aspect and considerations must be given equal credence as those which are "purely" rational.

The need for immortality springs from the desire to continue, but because of the nature of the self, this cannot be achieved. Here the struggle takes on its greatest manifestation in Unamunian thought: that which the emotion desires most is that which reason knows beyond the shadow of a doubt simply cannot be. When consciousness looks as deeply inside itself as it can, it realizes that it came from nothing, and to nothing will it return. The emotional self cannot bear this knowledge, and begins to fabricate a way around it; the rational self knows that it is a fabrication, and cannot believe. Struggle, agony, and alienation are all clearly manifested here: the struggle of one self against another, the agony of *needing* to believe, to have something which cannot be, which must be denied, and the alienation of the person from her/himself, of the emotional from the rational. This radically alienated self, in order to survive, to continue, creates for itself a god.

The person creates and believes in God because by doing so she/he can justify a belief in her/his own immortality. The immortality of the soul is not postulated from a belief in the existence of God; rather it is the other way around-- God is postulated on the basis of a belief in, or desperate need for, the immortality of the soul. Because such a condition cannot be proven, however, reason will never be convinced that it can obtain, and so struggles with the faith that emotion produces out of its desperation. The

intellect is utterly aware that God is created out of this desperation to fulfill this need, but cannot negate the need, and cannot resign itself to the meaninglessness of life without the illusion it provides. To believe in the immortality of the soul is to need it so badly that one will believe, even in the face of evidence to the contrary:

...creer es querer creer, y creer en Dios ante todo y sobre todo es querer que le haya. Y así, creer en la inmortalidad del alma es querer que el alma sea inmortal, pero quererlo con tanta fuerza que esta querencia, atropellando a la razón, pasa sobre ella.²⁴

God is created to save the universe from nothingness, and to do that God must be eternal consciousness, and conscious of His eternalness; anything less would be only the appearance or illusion of eternity. As the individual is not capable of this kind of consciousness, there must be a god to provide it. This god, created out of an alienated desperation, is also alienated; like the person who creates him, God doubts himself.

Unamuno's immortality is a product of the incapability of the person (the concrete, living person) to reject reason, and at the same time to live without faith. Reason and faith are enemies, he says, but in an Hegelian sense, they need each other. Neither can exist without the presence

²⁴ Ibid., 113. "...to believe is to want to believe, and to believe in God is above all to want Him to be. And so, to believe in the immortality of the soul is to want the soul to be immortal, but to want it with such force that this desire surpasses reason, trampling over it."

of the other. Here again is the struggle. If there is to be an immortality, then, created out of the desperation and alienation of the individual, it must also be *la lucha*. Since neither pole of the dichotomy can be given priority over the other, since they must ceaselessly struggle toward an equilibrium which can never be obtained, the only kind of existence the individual can know is the struggle, and this is known by *feeling* that struggle. To be alive, to live, it must be remembered, means for Unamuno that one feels oneself alive and living, struggling and agonizing. Immortality, if one is to know that one is existing in that state, must also be a ceaseless and agonizing struggle; otherwise, one simply would not know oneself to be existing, and this is tantamount to *not* existing. If there is an immortality, it must also be ceaseless struggle, just as life is; otherwise it would not be any type of existence at all. The struggle against death *is* life, all types of life, and if any life would be immortal, it must be this struggle.²⁵ Any other type of immortality, of continuance, would be false, an illusion; or it would be such that it didn't amount to immortality at all. The possibility of continuing in an altered form, as disembodied blissful spirit or reincarnated in another body that doesn't remember the life before: these are not immortality for a particular, concrete person. They are entirely different states of being, if they actually

²⁵ See Ferrater, 53-55.

occur. Even the concept of some type of existence within the mind of God, as is postulated by some as a return to a state of spirit or energy, is no comfort: for what if God forgets about one? For Unamuno, if immortality is not a state of perpetual existence *exactly as one is during life*, then it amounts to the death of the individual. To become what one is not, after all, is to die; to change or break the continuity and unity which make the person exactly who he/she is, is the death of that person. The immortality that Unamuno needs, that anyone needs, is to continue forever in the same body (unity) and with the same memory (continuity) as one has always had; this is what it means to not die, to be immortal. Anything else is death, is nothing. Since reason and faith, or emotion, are in constant struggle, however, the problem is obvious: the intellect simply cannot accept as truth what it knows to be false. and neither can the will (*la voluntad*) accept the lack of what it needs to be true. As a result, the alienation of this conflict is projected even onto the God that is created by it. God suffers just as the person does, from the need to be all and the division that this creates; God, just as each person, knows himself to be existing by the agony that he feels, the agony that is the primary emotion and the strongest one. As each person is that god that she/he creates out of her/his necessity to be all (which only a god could be), God is also

each of them, and suffers their agony and alienation as well as His own.

...como yo sufro por ser El, también El sufre por ser yo y cada uno de nosotros."; "El dolor nos dice que existimos,...el dolor nos dice que existe y que sufre Dios; pero es el dolor de la congoja, de la congoja de sobrevivir y ser eternos."; "El dolor universal es la congoja de todo por ser todo lo demás sin poder conseguirlo, de ser cada uno el que es, siendo a la vez todo lo que no es, y siéndolo por siempre."; "Todo ser creado tiende no sólo a conservarse en sí, sino a perpetuarse, y además a invadir a todos los otros, a ser los todos en tierra llana, comunal, indefensa, confundiendo y pero sin romperlos.²⁶

The god that the individual creates is in his/her own image; anguished, alienated, struggling. The only immortality that could be achieved is perpetuation of the state of existence that is known, is *felt*; *la lucha perpetua*. When the individual no longer feels her/himself to be struggling, suffering, anguished, she/he will no longer know that she/he is alive.

Consideration of the conflict between reason and faith leads, of course, to the Unamunian concept of *la lucha*, which, being one of his central tenets, is exemplified in

26 *Del sentimiento*, 183. "...as I suffer being Him, He also suffers being me and each one of us."; "Pain informs us that we exist...pain tells us that God exists and suffers; but it is the pain of anguish, of the anguish of wanting to survive and be eternal."; "The universal pain is the anguish of all things wishing to be all that they are not, without being able to do so, of each person wanting to be that which he is, and at the same time that which he is not, and to be so forever."; "All created beings tend not simply to preserve themselves as they are, but to perpetuate themselves, and besides to invade others, to be all others...."

many of his works. *El otro* is among them, and although some things have already been said about this drama in connection with other concepts, it merits some brief attention here. The twins Cosme and Damián are alienated by their jealousy and hatred, but they find that they cannot remain separated from each other: they are the two dimensions of the struggle which must remain in tension, in conflict, in order to create life.²⁷ Resolution would bring peace, but there is no life in peace, only stagnation and decay. Consequently, trying to bypass the struggle is a false solution; what must be done is to confront the struggle head-on and live in it. In this way one *knows* oneself to be living. The character in this work who has understood this principle and tries to express it is Damiana, the wife of the twin who did not marry Laura. She feels the struggle, and knows that it means life: "Es que siento lucha en mi seno...Tú arulla a tus muertos, que yo arullaré a mis vivos...La vida mata, pero da vida, da vida en la misma muerte...¡Qué paz ahora, hijo mío, qué dulce y triste paz sin contenido!"²⁸

27 I do not mean to suggest here that one twin symbolizes reason and the other emotion; that is not at all what Unamuno had in mind. The twins represent the two opposite sides of any deep conflict, not one particular situation.

28 *El otro*, 68. "It's that I feel the struggle in my breast...You sing lullabies to your dead, but I will sing to the living...Life kills, but it also bestows life, it gives life in that very death...What peace now, my son, what sweet and sad and empty peace!"

Another character who typifies this concept is Augusto Pérez in *Niebla*. Indeed, this is part of what Unamuno wished to signify in the title: Augusto has been living, up to the moment in which Eugenia crosses his path and awakens something in him, in a "fog," a mist of complacency which has kept him isolated and protected from conflict, and therefore from life. In other words, he hasn't really been living at all. Before his mother's death she made everything easy for him, and kept him from conflict by not letting him face any problems. Since her death, he has simply not allowed himself to be caught up in anything; he hasn't been involved enough to feel any conflict that might arise. When Eugenia shakes him out of that complacency, he begins to realize what life really is and what it means to live: "Es que lo ha estado [loco] hasta ahora, o mejor dicho, es que ha estado hasta ahora tonto, tonto del todo, perdido en una niebla, ciego...Es...como si no hubiese vivido, lo mismo que si no hubiese vivido...."²⁹ The new anguish which he feels over the situation between himself and Eugenia is the vehicle for this new revelation of the nature of life as conflict, and Augusto begins to reflect on his discovery of the fact that it is pain which has made him truly aware of

²⁹ Unamuno, *Niebla*, ed. M.J. Valdés, 5th. ed. (Madrid, Ediciones Cátedra, 1985), 166. "It's as though I had been crazy until now, or better yet, that I had been foolish, foolish about everything, lost in a mist, blind...It's...as though I had not lived, exactly as though I had not yet lived...."

himself and his life. He begins to *ensimismarse*, and finds that there is much that he simply was not aware of - both joyful and painful. He asks himself, "...¿qué es lo real, lo verdadero, lo sentido?"³⁰ and the importance of the identification of the first two terms, the real and the true, with the third, *that which is felt*, cannot be overemphasized. Augusto has begun truly to feel, and it is due to this fact that he finally begins to leave the fog and live as a part of the "real" world. Now he recognizes the reality of the human condition into which he was born: that he and all others are born to die, that the ultimate struggle is that of life against death, and that only in struggling and feeling *la congoja* which inevitably accompanies it can he know that he is truly living. For the first time he decides to take a stand for something, to confront something, when he finds out that Eugenia already has a *novio*, and he declares to his dog, who is his confidante; "Mira, Orfeo...tenemos que luchar."³¹ Augusto has begun to understand what it is to live, and that in living his very soul is at the heart of *la lucha*: "Yo no vivía, ahora vivo; pero ahora que vivo es cuando siento lo que es morir."; "...el más triste y el más dulce de los dolores: el de vivir."; "...el alma misma, ¿qué es sino

30 Ibid., 273. "...what is it that's real, that's true, that's felt?"

31 Ibid., 134. "Look, Orpheus...we have to fight."

amor, sino dolor encarnado?"³² He feels as though he were reborn, as though he had actually just entered the world for the first time and is seeing all the joy and pain life has to offer as though it were new. But though there is joy in this new life, there is no peace, for part of the rebirth is the understanding that he must die, and until his death he must live in constant struggle. He has now become father to himself, he says, being reborn out of his recent experiences and new awareness; but he is reborn to suffer and die. His friend Victor concurs: "...el segundo nacimiento...es nacer por el dolor a la conciencia de la muerte incesante, de que estamos siempre muriendo."³³ He is born to die, and he must struggle against death to know that he lives.

Obviously the case of San Manuel is a clear example of Unamuno's understanding of the necessity of God growing out of the need and desire for immortality, which in turn is rooted in *la agonía y la lucha*. San Manuel clearly embodies this understanding. The fundamental division of his selves, as noted above, is between reason and the desire for faith. Because he cannot resolve the dispute between the two, San

32 Ibid., 167, 142, and 141 respectively. "I was not alive, now I live; but now that I live I feel what it is to die."; "...the saddest and sweetest of pains: that of living."; "...the soul itself, what is it but love, but pain incarnate?"

33 Ibid., 273. "...the second birth...is to be born through the pain of consciousness of incessant death, of the fact that we are always dying."

Manuel simply lives as though he really did believe. His reason, his mind tell him that there is no evidence to support the possibility of a heaven, a god, a life everlasting. His need to continue, his overwhelming desire to live forever as himself and not in an altered form, refuse to concede the point to reason and allow him to live in the relative peace of resignation. He *needs* to believe, and yet what is this belief? An illusion; an illusion that to all of this life there is some end, some goal, some point--that there be a reason for it. San Manuel knows that because he cannot believe, the illusion will not protect him; he will die, truly and for all time. He has seen the face of God, he says, and knows it for what it is--a dream. Exposing the dream as such, he loses it, and dies: "...he conocido al Señor, nuestro supremo ensueño, cara a cara...[y] él que le ve...se muere sin remedio y para siempre."³⁴ His only consolation has been that he could console others, even though it is not the same consolation as that which he gives. All true religions are such, he says, in that they give spiritual life to the people, that they give consolation in the face of having been born but to die. For his own part he is unable to believe in the consolation he gives: even in reciting the credo during mass, he cannot bring himself to say, "I believe in the

³⁴ *San Manuel*, 52. "...I have known the Lord, our supreme dream, face to face...[and] he that sees Him...dies without hope, and for all time."

resurrection of the body and the life everlasting." At that point he lets his voice drop out, and the people of the congregation don't notice. This concept of the need for God is beautifully demonstrated in San Manuel's expression, during certain special masses, of the Biblical passage, "My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?," described by Unamuno with great passion and exceptional literary style and beauty. This is obviously San Manuel's deepest expression of the anguish of having been abandoned, in the existential sense, in the world and knowing it--knowing that there is no god to redeem that anguish. It is Unamuno's own cry in the mouth of San Manuel.

The Self as Creator

It has been mentioned briefly that Unamuno sees god as created by the individual out of the need for immortality. In conjunction with examples taken from his literary works, this idea can now be explored further. The role of the individual as creator encompasses much more than the projection of a god. It begins for Unamuno with the realization that one's solitude and abandonment, one's agony, leave one little choice but to create a life for oneself. The individual creates his/her own selves by his/her acts in the world and the needs and desires which

are the bases of those acts, and also creates the others which surround him/her by his/her treatment of and with them. All these things, then, can be said of the novelist, and even more, for some of these others which the novelist creates will be the fictional characters which people her/his works.

Just as the novelist creates the characters which are outside him/herself, but at the same time part of and within him/herself, every individual creates him/herself for the outside world as though he/she were a character in a novel. This concept is central to the philosophy of Unamuno, and as has been seen, it follows directly from the fragmentation of the self. Each person's life is his/her own personal project which he/she has to create. Because of fragmentation at a fundamental level, each person creates different selves, which then compound that alienation. It is the realization of one's own alienation that causes one to create not only one's own selves, but also to create God as a method of combatting that alienation. God, while being the "highest" form of creation, is also the manifestation of the deepest alienation; if people were not so deeply alienated, they would have no need of god to help them justify and understand their lives and provide for immortality. After all, it is this alienation that creates a need for a self which can be believed to be immortal. By reason one recognizes that the "innermost" self is not immortal; even

though this may be its greatest desire, the creation of a self which pretends to immortality but consequently has a need of god is therefore obviously fundamentally alienated from the "innermost", and furthermore compounds the alienation by attempting to suppress the "innermost". In other words, the fragmentation of the self leads to creation of different *yos* which manifest alienation, and the deepest alienation leads to the greatest need for god in an attempt to oppose that alienation.

This concept of the self as creator is clearly demonstrated in the way that Unamuno thinks of himself as a novelist/creator, and of literary figures in general as creators as well as created. The importance of literature in considering his philosophy is therefore unarguable, as it is evident that in no other form of expression could this particular concept gain the kind of impact that he was able to give it in his novels and the characters in them. Unamuno sees the novelist as a god to the characters she/he creates, and as created in the sense that she/he exists as a novelist only because those characters exist; the characters create the novelist just as surely as she/he creates them. Consequently, there is a fascinating "grey area" in which, although the novelist is as a god in having the power of life and death over the characters in a novel, the characters also have the same power of life and death over their author in that if they cease to exist, the *yo* of the

author as novelist dies with them. The characters in certain of Unamuno's novels, therefore, are aware of him as their creator, and they worry about what would happen to them if Unamuno ceased to continue creating them, or to dream them, or if he were to forget about them altogether. This worry leads certain of them to confront Unamuno directly, and even to threaten him if he attempts to endanger their own fictional lives.

This interaction between novelist and character is exemplified clearly in a number of Unamuno's works. In the drama *El otro*, for instance, the character of the housekeeper has at the very end of the play a speech in which she discusses the mystery that has been enacted, and the confusion that afflicts all persons in their inability to know who they are, to know that one is one and not the "other". In recounting all those who don't know who they truly are, she has the option of including Unamuno himself in the list: the stage directions read "(Donde dice: 'el historiador no sabe quién es', puede decirse: 'Unamuno no sabe quién es'.)"³⁵ In the novel (or *novela*) *Niebla*, however, this issue is much more broadly developed, and is of great importance to the story. Augusto Pérez, the protagonist, decides to visit Unamuno in order to consult with him on whether or not he should commit suicide, having

³⁵ *El otro*, 72. "(Where it says: 'the historian does not know who he is', one could say: 'Unamuno does not know who he is'.)"

read an article by Unamuno on that very subject. During the visit he discovers that it is Unamuno who has written the story of his own life, which he is living at that very moment, and so becomes aware that he is actually a fictional character, something which he has suspected and actually discussed with his friend Victor. Unamuno's smugness irritates him, however, and he becomes angry. At first he simply tries to confuse his author by asking whether or not he might be mistaken; might it not, after all, be Unamuno who is the fictional character instead of Augusto? It is possible, suggests Augusto, that Unamuno exists simply as a tool for the telling of Augusto's story to the world, and cites as support for his suggestion the fact that Unamuno himself has said that Don Quijote and Sancho end up being more real than the Cervantes who wrote them. Unamuno becomes flustered, and the argument escalates until Augusto threatens to kill him. At this point Unamuno loses his patience and composure entirely, and tells Augusto that for his impertinence it will no longer be necessary for him to consider suicide: Unamuno has decided to write his death, and on arriving at home, he will die. No amount of pleading from the fictional being can dissuade him; although Augusto now begs for his life, begs to be allowed to live, and agonizes to be himself, to live forever, Unamuno replies, "¡No puede ser, pobre Augusto... no puede ser! Lo tengo ya escrito y es irrevocable; no puedes vivir más. No sé qué

hacer ya de ti. Dios, cuando no sabe qué hacer de nosotros, nos mata...."³⁶ When Augusto realizes that Unamuno cannot be swayed, he takes his leave with a final speech in which he accuses his author of not wanting to allow him the full life to which he is entitled, of not letting him come out of the fog of not knowing himself and his life truly. He warns Unamuno that even *he* will die someday, although he does not wish to, just as any fictional being: "...se volverá a la nada de que salió...¡Dios dejará de soñarle! ¡Se morirá usted, sí, se morirá, aunque no lo quiera...."³⁷ Although Unamuno maintains control of the scene and the episode it describes, he cannot refute his character's accusations, nor can he defend himself against these insinuations about his own identity. For the fact is that his *own* identity, according to his own philosophy, is every bit as tenuous as that of poor Augusto. Although chance has placed him in the role of Augusto's creator, he himself plays the same role of the created in a parallel scheme (that of himself in relation to God) and in the roles of himself as created by Augusto and his other fictional characters, and by others in his "real" life as well.

³⁶ Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla*, 284. "Poor Augusto, it can't be...it simply can't be! I have it written already and it is irrevocable; you cannot live any longer. I no longer know what to do with you. When God no longer knows what to do with us, he kills us...."

³⁷ Ibid., 284. "...you will return to the nothingness from which you came...God will stop dreaming you! You will die, yes, you will die, even though you do not wish to...."

In much the same way Unamuno treats the concept of the dreamer and that which is dreamed. In *Del sentimiento* he refers to the possibility that, if one cannot tell the difference between states of waking and dreaming, neither can one have any assurance that, assuming one's existence is being dreamed, the dreamer will not suddenly waken, and the lives of those dreamed will come to an end. The dreamer, then, is like the creator, and that which is dreamed is created in a similar fashion to those who are created for a work of fiction. The dreamer holds that same power of life and death over the dream-characters, in that by continuing to dream she/he continuously creates them, and by waking, destroys them.

That this entire issue of the self as creator so occupied Unamuno's thought is significant for his philosophy: it points to his own understanding of the "reality" of the world and what it means to exist in it. Unamuno's concept of the person is as a concrete individual, living, breathing, feeling, and especially agonizing. Such a person, in his thinking, doesn't belong to an established order of being as much as creates and reveals him/herself in the acts of living and agonizing. Since these actions are manifestations of fictitious personae as well as "real" persons, what Unamuno had in mind is that it would be better

to speak of the "will-to-be" of the person, fictitious or not, rather than the "being" of the person as something already accomplished and finalized. Again, since either type of personage could well encompass this kind of will-to-be, there is no clear distinction to be made as to whether one is of one type or the other. The blurring of identity at this fundamental level is obvious cause for the truly existential alienation with which Unamuno is concerned, and for the agony which results. The characters Unamuno creates in his novels (or who create him) are mouthpieces for this agony, and clear examples of this blurred identity. Augusto Pérez suffers, agonizes because he does not have a strong sense of who he is; because he is weak, he has never been capable of strongly creating himself as what he would wish to be. He has never had a strong sense of his innermost self; he has never experienced the overwhelming desire which it constitutes, and which then motivates and creates the life of the individual. It is the *will-to-be as fully as possible*, as a person, that makes the most authentic expression of what it is to be a person, of what is the only truly human resource--"...ceaseless creativity, which is possibly another name for the Unamunian concept of 'intrareality',"³⁸ or innermost self. This relationship between dreamer and dreamed, or creator and created, is clearly a demonstration of Unamuno's understanding of the

38 Ferrater, 111.

nature of being as fundamentally indistinct, and therefore alienated.

UNAMUNO'S SOCIAL ETHIC

Although Miguel de Unamuno is difficult to categorize, and indeed he resisted attempts by others to categorize him while he was alive, it is generally agreed upon that he can be considered in the existentialist tradition: if for no other reason, says one critic, he can be considered an existentialist by temperament.³⁹ Perhaps for this reason, among others, certain aspects and issues in his philosophy have often been concentrated on, and others have had perhaps less attention than they deserve; one of these may be his ethics. At this point some deliberation will be given to Unamuno's ethics as a possible approach to making something meaningful out of the alienated state of existence that he believed his reality to be: for, being the personality that he was, passionate and unresigned, it seems evident that this is the reason that he wrote to the extent that he did about ethics and moral practice. Although he believed that the struggle could never be resolved, he also believed that people must never allow themselves to cede that struggle,

³⁹ Alfred Stern, "Unamuno: Pioneer of Existentialism", in the collection cited above, *Creator and Creation*, 37.

that they must always strive for that unreachable resolution; *each* person must strive, and in a concrete manner. However alienated, the individual must strive for integration, and in his statements about moral practice Unamuno offers some ideas about how that can be done, how that conflict can be sustained, and how one can live in the midst of it. "Ahora me queda el exponeros cómo, a mi sentir y hasta a mi pensar, esa desesperación puede ser base de una vida vigorosa, de una acción eficaz, de una ética...."⁴⁰

There are two primary statements of Unamuno's ethics, rather in the style of Kant's statements of his Categorical Imperative. One of these he expresses in two slightly different formulations: (1) Let us make it so that, if all that awaits us is oblivion, it should be an injustice ("Y si es la nada lo que nos está reservado, hagamos que sea una injusticia esto..."), a twist on a statement by Senancour; (2) Work so that you are a person who *deserves* immortality, in your own judgment and in that of those around you, even though you know you cannot attain it ("...obra de modo que merezcas a tu propio juicio y a juicio de los demás la eternidad...que no merezcas morir."). The other statement is that one should make oneself indispensable, not just to

⁴⁰ *Del sentimiento*, 121. "Now it remains to me to expound to you how, according to my way of feeling and even thinking, this desperation can be the basis of a vigorous life, of efficacious action, of an ethic...."

one's own world, but to the worlds of those around one ("...obrando de modo que nos hagamos insustituibles, acuñando en los demás nuestra marca y cifra...de que es cada uno de nosotros único e irremplazable, de que no pueda llenar otro el hueco que dejamos al morirnos.").⁴¹

Two things are immediately obvious in these statements: one is the quality of resistance, of refusal to give in to the inevitable (the conservation, in other words, of the struggle), and the other is the extension of the self into the worlds of others. Regarding the former, it can be said that this is the obvious outcome of the whole of Unamuno's thought; if the struggle is to be understood as pervasive, it can hardly pass over the workings of people among themselves without its influence being felt in that arena as well as all others. The manifestation of *la lucha* in terms of human action is resistance--resistance to what must be understood as inevitable, but equally as horrifying and unjust. This resistance takes the form of an attempt to reverse or defeat the inevitable through living and working as though one could overthrow it by deserving that it not obtain. One must act, says Unamuno, as though one deserves

⁴¹ *Del sentimiento*, 224, 223, 227-8 respectively. "And if it is nothingness which is reserved for us, let us make this an injustice..."; "...work in such a way that you deserve, in your own judgement and the judgement of others, eternity...that you do not deserve to die."; "...working in such a way that we cannot be substituted, imprinting on others our mark and our stamp...in such a way that each of us is unique and irreplaceable, that no other could fill the emptiness we leave when we die."

to be immortal; perhaps in doing so one can convince oneself that such a state can be attained. One's actions are the moral test of one's being, and one must constantly strive to the limits of one's ability to pass that test, for this is the greatest consolation one can hope to acquire, however vain it may be:

Mi conducta ha de ser la mejor prueba, la prueba moral de mi anhelo supremo; y si no acabo de convencerme, dentro de la última o irremediable incertidumbre, de la verdad de lo que espero, es que mi conducta no es bastante pura...No hay seguridad y descanso...sino en una conducta apasionadamente buena.⁴²

The only other possibility of consolation in this alienated existence lies in the others which surround the individual, for the only type of immortality, however shallow, that can truly be seen and noted is that which comes of contact with others. For this reason, says Unamuno, people have children, or they work to create something tangible that will remain after them. Perhaps this is not the type of immortality that one desires, but it is, after all, the best possible alternative that can be seen. Consequently, the individual must not only work to merit immortality, but must work to make him/herself indispensable to the others in his/her world. Becoming a part of the lives of others that cannot be substituted by anyone or anything

⁴² Ibid., 223. "My conduct must be the greatest test, the moral test of my supreme desire; and if I don't end up convincing myself, in the face of ultimate or hopeless uncertainty, of the truth of that which I hope for, it is because my conduct has not been pure enough...There is no security and rest...except in passionately good conduct."

else is a way of being immortal, as well as a reasonable and effective way of coping with the radical alienation of life, and so this becomes a fundamental moral principle for Unamuno. Although at times it seems that he is using a language that is incompatible with ethical conduct and attitudes (of dominating and being dominated, for example), it is clear that Unamuno feels that affinity with those around one is of the utmost importance.

Since for Unamuno the paradox is a natural and normal way of thinking and philosophizing, it is not surprising to find that in his understanding, the solidarity that people can have comes directly from the alienation of each of them individually. The fact that each person, each consciousness, wishes to be all other consciousnesses in order to attain immortality leads directly to the fact that each person wishes to and must attempt to make her/himself a part of the lives of the others around her/him. Because of the agony that lets each person know that he/she is existing, he/she can know the agony of others, and can and should love them, should share their pain, pity them, sympathize; for to love is to pity and to sympathize. To love others one must know them, goes the old adage; Unamuno again uses a reversal: "...no se puede conocer bien nada que no se ame, que no se compadezca."⁴³ In love one surrenders, at least to a certain

⁴³ Ibid., 131. "...one cannot know well that which one does not love, that with which one does not sympathize."

extent, to the beloved, and this is also what Unamuno recommends, although at the same time one must demand the surrender of the beloved to oneself. Dominate and be dominated; open yourself to the other, and in doing so you will receive the other into yourself, and the two can become indispensable parts of each others' lives. This relationship need not take the form of romantic love; in fact, the most common and perhaps the best form that it takes is that of community. By being a part of and performing in the service of a community one can become an indispensable part of the lives of many people, thus assuring the greatest possibility of continuing in some form, as well as actually performing useful and necessary acts in society, which is of no small consequence. Each person, then, should have an office or vocation to perform for the good of the community, and should perform that office not only to the best of her/his abilities, but superseding those abilities as much as possible, excelling, striving to the utmost, for this is the immortality that can be understood as attained, and she/he must work for it not just conscientiously but passionately. In this passionate striving there is the possibility of finding some small relief from the overwhelming alienation that is this life: for as Unamuno says, "...esta lucha por la vida es la vida misma...."⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Miguel de Unamuno, *Ensayos*, Volume I, 3rd edition, (Madrid, Aguilar, S.A. De Ediciones, 1951), 947. "...this struggle for life is life itself...."

Unamuno addresses this issue of social interaction explicitly in the story of Don Sandalio, the chess player, in which the main character explores the need that humans have for others of their own kind. There is a fundamental need for people to seek others like themselves, and to form relationships with them. The main character in this story, who is nameless, has fled from the irritations of society to a quiet village in an attempt to rid himself of the presence of others. What he discovers is that he himself needs others, and Don Sandalio is the catalyst for this revelation.

The main thrust of this realization is that although people have a need for each other and a social dimension to life, this creates another arena for alienation. In many of the relationships that people create they also "create" the person with whom they are relating. The other is defined and categorized by the subject according to outward appearance and/or actions rather than by inner nature. This happens because the subject has a particular goal or end in mind in most, or at least many, relationships, and defines the other in terms of his/her connection with that end. Consequently, people often exist for others in a tremendously diminished or impoverished capacity, rather than as full individuals. This is what is happening between Don Sandalio and those who play opposite him: these players exist for him only in their

capacity as opposing players, not as people who live full and complex lives. The rest of their lives have no importance for Don Sandalio, and he thinks nothing of them. He never even bothers to find out their names; it simply doesn't matter. Since they only exist (for him) as players, as a category and not as individuals with inner sensitivities, he has no need or inclination to discover anything personal or individual about them. This is a great part of social alienation - the belief that either there is no personal individuation or that there is no need to bother with it; faceless functions and categories will suffice.

Another aspect of social alienation is that the subject, along with alienating others by identifying them with their actions and not their natures, can also alienate her/himself by allowing her/himself to become absorbed by some activity which is not essentially relational. That is, one can become involved in one's own activities to the extent that one no longer effectively "relates" to the others around one. One's work is often the activity which absorbs one, but other things can produce the effect: in Don Sandalio's case, it is the game of chess. As the narrator says: "¡Le veo tan aislado en medio de los demás, tan metido en sí mismo! O mejor en su juego, que parece ser para él como una función sagrada, una especie de acto religioso."⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Unamuno, "La novela de Don Sandalio, jugador de ajedrez", in *Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo*, 3rd ed. (Madrid, Espasa Calpe, S.A., 1974), 68. "He seems to me so

Because Don Sandalio has allowed himself to become immersed in his activity, he no longer sees the people around him as individuals; he sees them only in so far as they are a part of that activity. The activity has become his method of social interaction, and it extends only so far as is necessary for him to continue the activity. He is alienated in the midst of those who surround him.

In *Niebla* the concept of social alienation is treated from a different perspective. Whereas in *Don Sandalio* the narrator attempts to come to some understanding of the alienation of another, in Augusto Unamuno presents a character who seeks to understand the phenomenon in himself. He speaks of his life apart from others and how it amounts to really not having lived; about not sharing his life with another. Because he has lived isolated, not feeling anything deeply, he wonders whether or not he even has a soul:

"...¿el alma?, ¿dónde está mi alma?, ¿es que la tengo?...Hasta que se llora de veras no se sabe si se tiene o no alma."⁴⁶ In fact, Augusto's alienation from society is such that it makes him even doubt his own existence - he knows neither who or what he is for others, nor for himself: "Muchas veces se me ha ocurrido pensar, Orfeo, que yo no

isolated in the midst of the others, so immersed in himself! Or better yet in his game, which seems to be for him some kind of sacred function, a type of religious action."

46 *Niebla*, 182. "...the soul? where is my soul? Do I even have one? Until one really cries one doesn't even know if one has a soul or not."

soy, e iba por la calle antojándoseme que los demás no me veían."⁴⁷ He feels no connection to the people around him until he meets Eugenia, and then he finds that his connection to her is one of his own creating. He immediately begins to think of her as "his," as belonging to him in the sense that the Eugenia, her self, that is characterized by her relationship with him, exists for him alone. It is *his* Eugenia which concerns him, the one that exists in relation to *him*, not the one which exists in relation to the *novio*, or to her aunt and uncle, or to society at large. But this one relationship is not enough completely to bring him out of his alienation; it is too narrow, and unfortunately for him it never gets the chance to develop into something more broadly encompassing, which perhaps could have allowed him to form more connections and relations with others. Unamuno is presenting here the concept of social alienation in the form of role-playing: everyone has various roles which are played out in the social arena, in the form of the various functions they serve and through the various relationships they have. Each person is different from the perception another has of him/her, because that other perceives the self which pertains to him/her and not the entirety of the person, not the whole of the inner nature. "Que a todos nos gusta, señorito, hacer papel, y nadie es el que es, sino el

⁴⁷ Ibid., 140. "Many times it has occurred to me, Orpheus, that I don't exist, and I went along the road imagining that no one could see me."

que le hacen los demás,"⁴⁸ explains his housekeeper Domingo, and it is easy to see how alienation results in a world in which people can be so described. As is noted in the introduction to *El otro*, people can stand side by side for a lifetime without really knowing or wanting to know one another until something reveals to them their latent mutual sympathy as human beings.⁴⁹ This has been the case for Augusto, and it is Eugenia who makes this revelation for him.

The last case to be considered here is that of Unamuno's ethics as expressed in these works. This ethics of working to deserve immortality, and especially by making oneself indispensable to those around one, is clearly demonstrated by Unamuno's depiction of the life of San Manuel. This is in fact probably the paradigm case of the ethical person in Unamunian thought. San Manuel spends his entire life working ceaselessly for others, for the pueblo, and for the betterment of his people, and he has made himself so important to them that they can scarcely imagine what they would do without him. He is their spiritual father, their guide and counsellor, a force which unites the village. They all love him. And this is the result of conscious effort on his part: he lives thus because he

48 Ibid., 221. "Everyone likes to play roles, sir, and no one is who he is, but who the others make him."

49 Frank Sedwick, in the introduction to *El otro*, 18.

believes that this is the right way to live. The people must be provided for, they must be protected from that which would harm or overwhelm them. They are, after all, simple people, good people, who are still capable of believing, of having faith. They have not suffered the attacks of reason, and so they live in blissful ignorance, believing that at the end of their lives, another and better one awaits them. The narrator of *Don Sandalio* speaks of "la felicidad de la simplicidad,"⁵⁰ the notion that in their simplicity they are free of worry, free of the fears that can beset people, and Don Manuel echoes this thought in many places. As long as the people believe, they can be happy; awareness that their beliefs may be unfounded would destroy their peace and happiness, and this is what must be guarded against. In his confessions to Lázaro, San Manuel explains that he is living and must live a lie for the sake of the people, that he exists to give happiness to the people, to let them dream of the immortality he knows does not exist; for although *he* knows the truth (that there is no immortality), they must not know it. It would simply be too hard for them to comprehend, and impossible to live with. The anecdote of the clown reinforces this concept of providing for the happiness of the people, no matter what the sacrifices: the clown spends the day with a painted smile making the children of the village laugh, while he knows his wife lies gravely ill;

50 *Don Sandalio*, 71. "the happiness of simplicity"

before he can finish the day's performances and return to her, she has died, with San Manuel there to help her "die well." He tries to thank the priest, but San Manuel refuses his thanks, saying to him that surely *he* is the one who is the saint, a man who spends his life bringing happiness to others, even while such a catastrophe as this strikes him personally.

Even though San Manuel is living a lie, he is not a hypocrite, says Lázaro. It is that he has his office, his duty to the community, that requires of him this kind of sacrifice, and because he is truly a good man, he finds a way to fill that office. What is important is that the *pueblo* be happy, that the people live, and live in faith that they will continue to live; in other words, that they have comfort: "Lo primero...es que el pueblo esté contento, que estén todos contentos de vivir. El contentamiento de vivir es lo primero de todo...."⁵¹ So although San Manuel feels as though he might burst with the truth and the effort it costs him to conceal it, he knows that what is right is to keep it from the people who could not live with it. The *pueblo* is what matters, the community; he has his office to perform within that community, and he will do it because that is what is right. He knows that no eternity awaits him at his death, but he will not tell the people; this moral

⁵¹ *San Manuel*, 33. "The important thing...is that the people be happy, that they all be happy in living. The happiness of living is what matters above all...."

at his death, but he will not tell the people; this moral commitment will provide him with the only immortality he may have. Surely, Unamuno would say, if anyone deserves it, San Manuel does. Just as all the fragmented selves that comprise each person form a whole which is her/his consciousness, in a larger sense the community forms the conscience of the each individual. This conscience and the ties it entails (to the community) must not be ignored, and in his ethics Unamuno offered a system by which to live in what he saw as the best possible manner.

PART II CRITICISM

UNAMUNO AND ORTEGA

Perhaps the most serious criticism that can be made of Unamuno's work rather ironically revolves around the question of sincerity. Some of his claims have been criticized for their paradoxical nature, and for going "too far." The question may be raised, then, as to how much of what he says is what he really thinks and feels, and how much is said for effect or "shock value." Biographical information indicates that Unamuno was a person who very much enjoyed the limelight and the effect of some of his seemingly startling or outlandish claims on those around him; in the light of this, what must be understood about his paradoxical philosophy? Indeed, Unamuno thought of himself as being obligated to shake up others and to make them think; he described his mission as that of "waking the sleepers," as has been seen in previous sections. In considering the more problematic parts of his doctrine, then, certain questions may be asked: Did he intend these paradoxical doctrines to wake people, startle them into taking a closer look at themselves and their lives, to consider and reflect? Or did he mean them quite literally?

Exactly how much was he pushing the point, and for what reasons?

One way of illuminating some of the problems in the philosophy of Unamuno is by contrasting his thinking to that of another philosopher. In this section, an examination will be made of certain of Unamuno's doctrines in light of the thoughts of his compatriot, José Ortega y Gasset, on the ideas to be found in those same doctrines. As Ortega lived and worked in nearly the same era (one generation later) and in the same country, and shared many of the same concerns as Unamuno, it seems appropriate to consider the responses of this slightly younger philosopher to the writings of his predecessor for the purpose of contrast and criticism. The problems to be considered here are that of *ensimismamiento* and the distinguishing of the selves; that of creationism; the doctrines of love; and the need for immortality. Finally, some tentative conclusions will be suggested, and some general statements made in closing.

ENSIMISMAMIENTO AND THE SELVES

In turning to the criticism to be made, it may be seen that for both Unamuno and Ortega, the process of *ensimismamiento* is indispensable to the knowledge of the self. That is to say, it is by this process that one is

capable of coming to know one's self. However, for Unamuno, as has been seen, the process of *ensimismamiento* implies *desdoblamiento* as well. What this entails is the doubling of the self or consciousness, which is the beginning and foundation of the radically divisive nature of the self. An objection to this may be that it can be difficult to see how the selves that emerge in this process can then constitute a whole and integral person. It seems that what Unamuno wishes to claim here is that, true to the concept of *lucha*, there should never be one self which can be said to be a unifying force, a "main self" with the others operating as a part of it. Resolving the struggle, it must be remembered, is what Unamuno expressly insists one must not do. However, the lack of anything like an integrated personality is extremely problematical: for one thing, it is contrary to the widely held notion of an "integrated whole," a core or foundation upon which the personality is built and from which are issued the guiding principles of that person's life. Carried to an extreme, it could be said that such internal divisiveness might lead to a mental imbalance such as schizophrenia. Although Unamuno relies on his principles of unity and continuity to resolve this issue, the simple postulation of having these selves in the same body and connected by means of the same memory may not be enough to convince.

Ortega sees the process of *ensimismamiento* as something rather different. It is a turning inward, yes, but without the divisive nature seen by Unamuno. In fact, Ortega likens the process to philosophy itself, due to its meditative and intellectual nature; it is a process of thought, of directing the thoughts inward in order to discover what can be known about the self. It is a withdrawal into the self: "...[la] retirada al fondo solitario de sí mismo."¹ Although this is a process by which one comes to have knowledge of one's self at the deepest possible level, it is not a process which divides that self, nor cuts it off from the rest of society at large. For Unamuno, the other is first experienced internally as part of the self, and so prohibits integration; for Ortega, the other is primarily outward, and the self is indeed capable of integration.

Because the process of *ensimismamiento* is a process of thought in Ortega's view, it is an important part of his understanding of the place of the individual in society. For Unamuno this process is markedly personal, and the results of it are internal. For Ortega, although the process itself is personal and leads to personal knowledge, it is also the individual's primary connection with the world. It is the ability to *ensimismarse* which allows humans to escape the life of constant and complete alienation which is the

¹ José Ortega y Gasset, *El hombre y la gente*, 2nd ed., (Madrid, Revista de Occidente, 1958) 128. "...the withdrawal into the solitary depths of the self."

experience of animals. This ability is founded on the ability to think. Humans, since they are capable of thinking, and consequently of this process of *ensimismándose*, are capable of leaving the alienated state which is original to them. However, it must be pointed out that many do not, and most cannot sustain this escape. Alienation, then, according to Ortega, is a state of loss of thought: "...en la alteración el hombre pierde su atributo más esencial: la posibilidad de meditar, de recogerse dentro de sí mismo para ponerse consigo mismo de acuerdo y precisarse qué es lo que cree...La alteración le obnubila, le ciega, le obliga a actuar mecánicamente en un frenético sonambulismo."²

This notion of thought, however, entails action. Although humanness is characterized by the ability to think, it is not thinking for its own sake which characterizes the authentic person, but rather thinking for the purpose of living, of carrying out one's life in the world, of making a plan for living and then of carrying out that plan in the form of action. The person thinks, then, in order to be able to live. Yet the individual is human by virtue of his/her ability to think. What must be noted, says Ortega, is that

² Ibid., 36. "...in alienation man loses his most essential attribute: the possibility of meditation, of recapturing himself inside himself in order to come to accord with himself and to clarify that which he believes...Alienation clouds him, blinds him, obliges him to act mechanically, in a state of frantic somnambulism."

since living entails action, the person thinks in order to be able to act in the world, and is human by virtue of that action. This action must be comprehended in the sense of acting according to a preconceived plan (thought), not simply some reflex or random physical movement, which actually would be a manifestation of alienation. There is a fundamental relationship between thought and action: thought must precede any authentic action, and any authentic thought must manifest itself in some action. For this reason, says Ortega, the person is primarily and fundamentally action, not thought.³ Finally, this is Ortega's reason for claiming that the reality of the individual is not the individual as such, but the life of that individual: "Lo que he llamado así [la realidad radical] no es solamente yo, ni es el hombre sino la vida, su vida."⁴ In other words, that which is most fundamental to the individual, that which characterizes one at the most profound level, is action: action preceded by thought (not thought alone), but action nonetheless. This fundamental relationship between thought and action leads, of course, to Ortega's doctrine that one is oneself and one's circumstances,⁵ and does so in a very concrete sense. Consequently, the process of *ensimismamiento*

3 Ibid., 43.

4 Ibid., 70. "That which I have called by this name [the radical reality] is not simply myself, nor is it man, but is life, the life of man." See also Ortega's *¿Qué es filosofía?*, 6th ed. (Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1984), pages 177-196 for a more complete discussion of this topic.

5 Ibid., 63-67.

for Ortega can be seen as a process of internalizing the outside world. In exercising this meditative process, one takes in one's circumstances in order to internalize them and reflect on one's connection to them. Since this process is also a preparation for action, one returns then to the outside world with a plan for acting in that world based on the understanding one has achieved through withdrawal and reflection. One's connection to the world (i.e., one's circumstances, society, environment) is essential and primary in Ortega's view, and this marks him as a much more social philosopher than Unamuno.

The problem of having split selves, then, is completely avoided by Ortega by virtue of the fact that he considers the other to be outside the self and not within it, although there is a fundamental connection with the outside by way of *ensimismamiento*. However, the related problem for Unamuno is that of distinguishing among those divided selves, and he seems unwilling to give up the notion that there are many and that they are all on equal footing. What is it that he is attempting to gain with this claim?

One possible explanation is that what Unamuno was trying to do was to describe as faithfully as he could what he took to be the actual human condition. Upon looking inside himself, Unamuno discovered a mass of conflicts instead of a core of unity, and it is this discovery which he attempted to explain in his philosophy. The normal human

experience may be exactly as he describes it: one self, or "part of the self," pulls the person in one direction, another pulls the person some other way entirely. People constantly struggle with conflicting ideas about what they should do and be, with conflicting intuitions about what is real and/or important, with desires which contradict beliefs. This is the experience of the man Unamuno, and consequently he attempted to explain that concrete experience in philosophical terms, in concert with his doctrine that what is important in philosophy as in all the rest of human life is the concrete and particular experience of the individual person.

Ortega could be seen to agree that the experience of the person is often as Unamuno describes it; what he would differ with is the explanation given for the experience. People do experience conflict, true, but that does not mean that they cannot have a "whole" and "integrated" personality. Ortega would offer his doctrine of perspectivism to deal with this problem.⁶ If the self is suffering conflict, it is because there are differing perspectives by which the conflict-causing issue can be seen. These perspectives are all equally true, in that each one contains a measure of the truth, and if they could all be joined together in some fashion so that one could see

⁶ For a discussion of this theory of Ortega's, see his *El tema de nuestro tiempo*, 15th ed. (Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1984), chapter X and the appendix on perspectivism, 144-149.

from all of them at the same time, they would indeed constitute a total truth. However, no one is capable of seeing all the perspectives of any given question at once. This is not a problem, says Ortega, as long as no one person attempts to claim that her/his perspective is that one which everyone should accept as a whole truth. Each must recognize that other perspectives exist, and must respect those others, just as one realizes that in looking at a sphere one sees only a part of it even though other parts exist.

Ortega would say, then, that the conflicts created within the person are those that arise when tensions exist among perspectives, and not because there is any division of the actual self. Because the person thinks, and takes in the world around her/him, she/he also takes in varying perspectives and meditates on them in the process of *ensimismamiento*. Recognizing the validity of differing perspectives may cause some tension and difficulty in deciding how to act, but does not cause any fundamental split in the self. Indeed, Ortega would probably want to say that recognizing the validity of other perspectives will lead to a more authentic self, since the self who does so will have more "measures of the truth" by which to view the issue, and a more comprehensive understanding would then be possible. Ortega's response to Unamuno on this doctrine would be that the latter does indeed push the point too far, although on the point itself there seems to be agreement.

CREATIONISM

Another aspect of the philosophy of Unamuno which comes under criticism is what may be referred to as his principle of "creationism." This deals with the tenet of the self as creator. The process of *desdoblamiento* leaves one with knowledge of the self as fundamentally divided; this division in turn is a source of the agony which is at the heart of the Unamunian worldview. However, this agony is that which impels the person to create, and insofar as it does so, it is a positive experience. The innermost self which is so difficult to know is that which agonizes and creates. The self, for Unamuno, is a creator. It creates itself in that which it strives to be, that which it shows to others, that which it is at any given moment; it creates others in the roles that it chooses to see them in; it creates its world in the workings that it makes in it; it creates God in the projection of its own fundamental need to continue. Consequently, the self is at once the source of agony, due to its radically divided nature (the need to be one and yet all, the need to continue and the knowledge that it cannot do so, etc.), and it is the source of positive action for the individual. The person of flesh and blood finds, upon reflection, that she/he is constituted of a self

that is not only divided but mortal, and the effect of this discovery is firstly, agony, and secondly, the impulse to create as a reaction against the death which has been revealed as inevitable.

Three questions can be raised here by way of criticism: How can the self be, strictly speaking, the creator of other physical objects such as the world outside and others? What exactly is the innermost self, and what is its role? What does Unamuno mean by his talk of literary characters as creating their authors? These questions are all significant in considering this particular issue. Firstly, a problem which many might take to be the most important one here is that it is very difficult to believe that Unamuno was speaking literally of this creationism, if it entails the creation of physical objects. The question is simply, how can this be? And, if he is not speaking literally, then what does he mean by the metaphor? The innermost self is alluded to by Unamuno, and is clearly something which he considers to be crucial, yet it is never fully explained in his writings. If it is that which agonizes and creates, exactly what is it? What kind of self is this, and why is *it* creating, as opposed to any other of the many possible selves? Consideration of the third question provides an excellent example of what Unamuno might have had in mind in making these claims.

Creation of Objects Outside the Self

The doctrine of the self as creator does not cause any problems as long as Unamuno means by it something like the existentialist principle of being abandoned in the world and creating one's own life out of the freedom that one is thrown into.⁷ This is a matter of creation as controlling one's life and the choices one makes in it. However, Unamuno seems to want to say more than just that when he talks about the self as creating others. Others which are out in the world are separate, he says, but they are inventions of the self in two senses: firstly, in that, when faced with an other which is out in the world, and not part of the self, the self sees that it is other and "invents"⁸ it as a person, as a being like itself: "Ante el otro, y movido yo por mi amorosa compasión, mi imaginación inventa que él es persona, encuentra en él su fraterna condición del otro yo."⁹ Until this happens, the other is only an *apparent*

7 As developed in, for example, Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*. Ortega also expounds this principle very clearly on page 192 of *¿Qué es filosofía?*

8 The verb *inventar* in Spanish, according to Pedro Laín Entralgo in his *Teoría y realidad del otro*, Volume I (Madrid, Revista de Occidente, 1968), has not only the connotation of creating something but also that of discovering, i.e. dis-covering, finding. For this reason, he says, Ortega uses the phrase, "my discovering imagination" in speaking of the invention, creation of the person in the quotation which follows, and the verb "finds" in the same quotation.

9 *El hombre y la gente*, 182. "Faced with the other, and moved by my own loving compassion, my discovering

person. However, at the same time that the self invents in the other his/her condition as a real person, it also invents that person as the person she/he actually is; that is to say, it invents not only the condition in the other of a person as such, but also the particular and concrete "someone" whom that person is to be. The self notes what it takes to be the observable facts of that other, and then goes one step further, creating this person as a person for itself ("for itself" not in the sense of making use of but in the sense of relating to): "...yo convierto al otro en "mi otro" imaginando la vida íntima de que tales hechos sean consecuencia y expresión...."¹⁰

Again, a response which could be made by Ortega is that this doctrine, unless it is meant completely literally, can more easily be understood in terms of perspectivism. That is, seeing and understanding the other in terms of one's own self and circumstances is how Ortega would explain the fact that one person sees another in a particular fashion, while some third person may have a very different view about the second. Certainly it can reasonably be said that each person "is" one thing to one and something different to another; this can be seen as a matter of differing relationships and roles, and the perspectives these create. There is a sense,

imagination invents the fact that this other is a person, finds in him his fraternal condition as another "I".

10 Ibid. 183. "...I convert the other into "my other" by imagining the inner life of which such facts would be a consequence and expression...."

then, in which the individual creates the other, but it is in that the individual chooses the perspective by which to see that other, and then relates to the other as though that is exactly what she/he is. Anything more than that, Ortega would say, is surely unfounded.

There is definitely a sense, then, in which the person creates precisely what the other is for him/her; it seems that both Ortega and Unamuno are agreed on this. However, Unamuno does make a stronger claim than this. As has been noted, Unamuno contends that a person converts the other into a particular and concrete self "for me" by positing the intimate life and all the details of it which would accord with and account for the outward expression of the other which can be seen. What that means is that the person creates the other in a sense which is significant, for the person then proceeds to deal with that other as though she/he were exactly as the creator intended. This is not to say, of course, that no one is capable of escaping the interpretations which are projected upon her/him. Each person, it must be recalled, creates him/herself and then projects that self outward. The outward manifestations (actions, attitudes, etc.) of the person, then, provide a framework by which another creates the self which she/he believes is the correct inner life for those manifestations. If very little is known of the outward signs of a person, then another has much freedom to create a self to go with

them, and may in fact create one which bears little resemblance to the self which that person actually projects. However, if much is known, then the self which is created is likely to be a very good rendition of the reality of that person. In either case, and in all the possible variations in between, it must be noted that Unamuno does not think of this as an abstract or metaphorical creation: the person creates his/her understanding of the other, and then acts upon that understanding, thereby constituting the other as a concrete manifestation of the understanding which she/he has created. One creates the other as a person for oneself, and then treats with that other as the person one has created. The self which one creates for the other must be in accordance with the self which is manifested by that other; since this self is the one which is created and projected by the other, it is not some arbitrary imposition by the one of his/her desires upon the other. Rather, it is a result of attention to the other and then creation based on what is understood. It is on the whole, if not a mutual effort, then one in concert.

The reaction this view may draw is that it goes too far; that is, it cannot be said that a person literally "creates" those around her/him, in any concrete sense of the word. And, if Unamuno does not mean this creation in a literal and concrete sense, then what he is saying is true, but perhaps it is trivial. After all, it is rather taken for

granted that each person views those others in his/her world as, in Ortega's words, existing for him/her,¹¹ and so conceives of those others in the manner which seems appropriate to the context. But there is nothing particularly astounding or revealing in that idea. Why then does Unamuno wish to give this concept so much force?

The Innermost Self

The key to this question can be found in an understanding of the innermost self. Because Unamuno believed that philosophy must entail not just the rational aspect of humans, but the emotional as well, he looked not only to his thoughts and judgments but to his feelings in order to give him insight into the human condition. What he felt very strongly was that each person's desires had a tremendous influence on that person and the way she/he saw the world, and this fact, he thought, should not be ignored in a philosophy which seeks to explain something about what it is to be human. Unamuno believed that what he felt was not something out of the ordinary, but that it was probably representative of the human condition; if there was a difference between his condition and that of others, it was that he was aware. Not all people, he said, truly feel

¹¹ Ibid., 75-76.

themselves, and he was one of those who did.¹² This fact, he believed, gave him an invaluable insight in that it allowed him to see the struggle which is the human condition.

The key to the self as creator, then, is desire, and the key to that desire is the innermost self. In the prologue to the eighth edition of *Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo*, Unamuno gives a glimpse of what he means by the tenet of the self as creator, and by the innermost self. Reiterating the theory of Oliver Wendell Holmes about the three selves of each person (the self which one is, the self which one believes oneself to be, and the self which others believe one to be), he adds another, that self which one wishes or desires to be, and explains how it is this last self which is the innermost, and the most real: "...además del que uno es para Dios--si para Dios es uno alguien--y del que es para los otros y del que se cree ser, hay el que quisiera ser. Y que éste, el que uno quiere ser, es en él, en su seno, el creador, y es el real de verdad. Y por el que hayamos querido ser, no por el que hayamos sido, nos salvaremos o perderemos."¹³ The most intimate and deepest

12 *Del sentimiento*, 36.

13 Miguel de Unamuno, *San Manuel*, 14. "...aside from that which one is for God--if in fact one is someone for God--and that which one is for others and that which one believes oneself to be, there is that which one desires to be. And this one, that which one desires to be, is in oneself, in one's breast, the creator, and is the one which is truly real. And it is by this one which we desire to be, not by those which we have been, that we save or lose ourselves." (My emphasis.)

self, then, is that which one desires to be, and this is the one which is most "real." It is a creator in that it functions always in an attempt to convert the person into that self which she/he wishes she/he were. It is constantly and continually creating in that sense, and it is more "real" than the other selves because it is the motivating factor of the life of the individual: it is the desire which shapes and motivates life. And because this is what shapes life and makes each person who she/he is, it is this self which is the most "real."

The objection that this is a trivial view, then, can be seen to lose ground when the explanation becomes clearer. This sense of creation is indeed significant, not only in the shaping of the life of the individual but also in the way each individual relates to others. A person's desires strongly influence the relationships she/he will create, and can very definitely have a concrete effect on the other. This effect is sometimes referred to as "self-fulfilling prophecy" or "blaming the victim" in psychology. It is well documented that the desires and beliefs projected onto someone by people outside can shape the life of that person, such that, for example, the child who is constantly told he is stupid comes to believe that this is so, and acts in accordance with that belief. In this sense, the individual can very concretely create the others around him/her. Philosophically, it can be seen that this description of the

human condition is very accurate, and that this may well be the primary reason for Unamuno to have postulated such a theory. It was his own passionate desire for immortality which would have led him to formulate such a notion. Because he wanted to be immortal, and agonized over his inability to believe that he could be, he realized that each person's deepest desires constitute that which is most real about him/her.

Creationism and Fictional Characters

Nevertheless, does Unamuno mean to be taken literally in talking about the reality of the fictional character and its creation of its author? Perhaps yes and no: yes in that the reality of a person stems from her/his innermost desires, the innermost self, and a well-developed literary character will have such a self, just as a living person does. This is what Unamuno means by saying that Don Quijote is as real as Cervantes, and in fact more so for many people, since many know much more of the desires of the former than of the latter. There does not, however, seem to be any way to understand literally the idea that a fictional character creates its author, except in that by its existence it allows its author to be an author. Nevertheless, this does not need to be seen as trivial. It

certainly can be seen that Cervantes would not have been anywhere near the important historical figure that he is if not for Don Quijote. He did write other works, and the characters in them contributed to making him what he was--an author. It was Don Quijote, though, who made Cervantes something different from just an author; Don Quijote made Cervantes famous in his own time, and world-reknowned after his death. Since Cervantes would not have become world-famous nor earned such a prominent place in history without this fictional creation (or at least not in precisely the same way and under the same circumstances), it seems reasonable to claim that it was Quijote who created Cervantes as this world-famous, etc., author. This actually works out to be a fairly strong sense of creationism, and so does not seem as trivial as might have been suspected. However, it does not seem likely that the claims Augusto Pérez wanted to make in *Niebla* could have been something that Unamuno wanted to be taken literally. That is, the idea that a fictional character could directly cause the death of its author is far-fetched, and is surely a literary device which Unamuno employed for effect. If he did in fact mean to be taken literally, then it could be claimed that the mistake he has made is to extend his metaphor too far. That is to say, he has disregarded the fact that although it can be understood as a perfectly reasonable figure of speech to say that Quijote created Cervantes, this does not mean that

the figure of speech can be understood as literal. Consequently, it can be seen that there are limits to how much effect a fictional character can be said to have on its author, although there is very definitely a strong sense in which it can be said that such characters do create their authors. Interestingly enough, Ortega can be seen to support Unamuno in this problematical notion, if one can rely on the interpretation of Laín as cited above (see footnote 8). His ideas about the connections among the concepts of creation, invention and dis-covering can be seen to reinforce the notion of the fictional character as creating the author. It is, after all, the character that "dis-covers" one as author, and brings the person-as-author into existence.

THE DOCTRINES OF LOVE AND THE SOCIAL ETHIC

Another criticism that can be made of Unamuno's philosophy is that it is so radically personal as to be difficult to understand on any broader level. In all the intense concentration on that which is within, there seems to be little room left for an understanding or application of these doctrines on a social level, and yet there are reasons why one might wish to be able to. If this is simply a description of one person's inner turmoil, then perhaps it is closer to psychology than philosophy. It is clear,

however, that although Unamuno did concentrate on the personal aspect of life, i.e. the concrete person's experience of and response to life, he clearly meant this description and the conclusions he arrived at to be taken as representative of human experience, and hence as something which could be investigated systematically and understood philosophically.

As has been seen previously, Unamuno's response to this is provided by the doctrine of love which he adopts. His social ethics, then, grows (paradoxically) out of the personal need for immortality. Although this is not strongly developed by Unamuno, the foundation is there and the implications are evident. Support for his thinking along these lines can be found in Ortega in that their thinking develops in a parallel fashion regarding this issue. What Ortega says comes through with greater clarity and in greater detail, but both philosophers are clearly convinced that the individual must be connected with society in order to be authentic.

To begin with, Ortega's understanding of the person, the concrete individual, as the focus of philosophy is similar to Unamuno's. It is the individual who must be considered, not an abstract concept of Man. Nevertheless, some difference must be noted. Ortega sees the individual as a combination of self and circumstances, and this is of the utmost importance for his thinking, as it leads to the

doctrines of action. The fundamental reality of the person, says Ortega, on which all others depend, is the actual life of that person as an individual.¹⁴ As a fundamental consideration, then, the primacy of the concrete individual is obvious. Another parallel in the thinking of these two philosophers is the condition of solitude: both see man as ultimately alone. In Unamuno this has been discussed at some length above. In Ortega's thinking it can be seen in his statements that human life is essentially solitude:

"...tendremos que la vida *humana sensu stricto* por ser intransferible resulta que es esencialmente *soledad, radical soledad*."¹⁵ It is evident, then, that Ortega and Unamuno have a base in common. Nevertheless, their thinking does diverge at this point: instead of developing split selves and a need for God, Ortega finds the solution to this condition of solitude in human interaction. In fact, this interaction is what society actually *is*, he tells us: "...es lo social un hecho, no de la vida humana, sino algo que surge en la humana convivencia. Por convivencia entendemos la relación o trato entre dos vidas individuales...."¹⁶ How does Ortega get from the condition of human solitude to the

14 *El hombre y la gente*, 22.

15 Ibid., 69. "...it can be said that human life *sensu stricto*, due to its intransferible nature, turns out to be *solitude, radical solitude*."

16 Ibid., 24. "...that which is social is a fact, not of human life, but rather something which emerges from living together with others. By living together with others we understand the relationships or dealings between two individual lives...."

doctrine that each person, to be authentic, must be connected with society?

The answer is in two parts: one to be found in the process of *ensimismamiento* and the doctrine of action as the expression of what the person is; the other to be found in Ortega's expression of the importance of love. Ortega's understanding of the process of *ensimismamiento* has been discussed above, but here it is important to make a few points for emphasis. This process is an expression of the person's most essential attribute: the ability to turn inward and order thoughts, beliefs, feelings. These, however, are about the world which is outside, about others. Consequently, whenever one engages in this process, one takes in the world outside and in a very strong sense makes it a part of oneself. No one, according to Ortega, can be authentically human without doing so. Therefore, a very great part of what it is to be human is to have this kind of fundamental contact with the world. Since much of that world is in fact constituted by others, i.e. other persons, this means that one cannot be authentically human without contact with others. It can be said then that contact with others is essential for Ortega as much as for Unamuno, or even more so.

What does Ortega think that this contact should be like? This question can be answered by considering the second point of the question above. Seeing the relations

between individuals as necessary and essential to being human, Ortega made some observations as to how those relations could be conducted. What he concluded is, briefly, that there are primarily two ways to relate to others: through "use" or through love. By examination of these relations the parallel between Ortega and Unamuno can be seen.

"Use," says Ortega, is a form of human behavior.¹⁷ It has to do with the way one individual relates to another, or to any "other," such as objects. Because the first understanding one has in the world is of others as objects, it can be said that the fundamental relationship one has with others is the same kind of relationship one has with objects. That kind of relationship is use: that is, the understanding of the other is that it exists primarily to provide some use for the individual. Ortega states this very clearly: "...todo lo que compone, llena e integra el mundo donde al nacer el hombre se encuentra, no tiene *por sí* condición independiente, no tiene un ser propio, *no es nada en sí*--sino que es sólo un *algo para* o un *algo en contra* de nuestros fines."¹⁸ What this means is that, for Ortega, each human life is an independent "one," and everything else

¹⁷ *El hombre y la gente*, 106-108.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 75-76. "...all that which makes up, fills and composes the world into which upon birth man finds himself, has not *for itself* any independent condition, has not a being, properly speaking, *is nothing in itself*--rather it is only a *something for* or a *something against* the ends which we have for ourselves."

around it, everything else encountered by it, (including people) is "other." As far as the one is concerned, all these others exist solely and particularly in order to serve the needs of the one. In other words, the "other" is not "over and against" the one in an Hegelian or a dichotomous sense, it is for the one. Insofar as it is possible this relationship of use is a dynamic one; again, Ortega emphasizes the importance of active interplay between individuals, even in this kind of relation. However, at its most fundamental, the relationship between people is one of use--of using others to fit one's own purposes.

This is not necessarily a negative thing. According to Ortega, this condition of "use" serves some positive purposes and may, in fact, be a necessary form of relating. One result of it is that the individual does manage to obtain desired ends through using others, both objects and persons. Another less obvious result is that use allows people to live in close quarters with others who are unknown to them. Although this may not seem ideal, it does seem necessary, as there is a limit to the number of people that one is capable of knowing well and caring for. Use allows people to interact in a way that is completely acceptable when there cannot be a deeper relation. Along the same lines, use allows people to designate certain acts and responses as automatic, relieving the individual of the necessity of thinking about those acts, and allowing each

person to concentrate his/her energies on acts which do have personal meaning.

So although use is an impersonal kind of relation, it may provide some benefits. It is not, however, the ideal relation between individuals. Ortega sees this as a form of alienation, and although it may be necessary in some cases, he recommends deepening relationships where possible. The way to do this is to move from "use" toward intimacy, or love.

Even though the individual's first experience of others is as objects, the individual has a natural predisposition of openness towards others.¹⁹ This is a permanent and constitutive human state of readiness to respond to others in whatever way is appropriate, which forms a matrix of possible social relations. It is this predisposition which allows one to move from a relation of use to something more personal. What happens, says Ortega, is that repeated and/or prolonged exposure to others promotes a deepening of the relationship in two ways: one, through the fact that each time one engages in *ensimismamiento*, one "takes in" more of the person with whom one has this relation as part of one's circumstances, thus making that person more one's own, and creating intimacy. The other way is through gradual recognition of the fact that the other person is in fact more than an object: she/he is a *yo* in the same way that the

¹⁹ Ibid., 135.

one is. As the two persons in the relation become closer (i.e., their proximity increases) they become distinguishable from the general background of others. The other becomes not just an other which exists to serve the purposes of the one but an other which is in all ways like the one but distinct from the one, and which has purposes of his/her own which are of equal importance and must be recognized as such. This deepening of the relationship, then, leads to intimacy, and as intimacy deepens, to love.²⁰

The important parallels to note in this between Unamuno and Ortega can be drawn out and emphasized. For one thing, both philosophers claim that knowledge of the other comes first as a matter of recognizing the other as a self which is like oneself in important ways. In Unamuno this comes as seeing the other as a self like the many that one has, but outside of one. In Ortega it is a matter of recognizing the other as an equal almost in a Kantian sense; especially as an equal who is capable of responding to others in the same way as oneself. Another parallel is that the way one recognizes these conditions in others for both philosophers is in very large part a matter of the body. Unamuno expresses this in his doctrine of creationism: it is by way of the outward manifestations, i.e., the corporeal gestures

²⁰ For the development of this notion of intimacy, see *El hombre y la gente*, 138-139 in particular.

and postures and expressions, that one can see what is the appropriate inner life to postulate for that other. Ortega says something very similar: that it is the signs and gestures of the body which indicate to one the fundamental disposition of openness in the other, and the ability of the other to respond to one on a level equal to one's own. And just as Unamuno is not willing to concede that this is a trivial aspect of his philosophy, neither is Ortega. Seeing and recognizing the fundamental humanness of the other is not just a matter of perspectivism, he claims, for the condition of the other as a *yo* exists independently of the perspective of oneself. It is reciprocity which allows one to recognize the other as a *yo*, but the existence of an other as a *yo* does not depend, strictly speaking, on the recognition of that *yo* by oneself. If one does recognize the other in some way, then that other exists for oneself, as well as independently.

The broadest parallel here is that both Ortega and Unamuno see contact with others as a necessity for being authentic, or fully human. For Unamuno this contact is necessary for obtaining immortality, or at least as much immortality as one can hope for. For Ortega, this contact is a part of what it means to be fully human, in that it is necessarily involved in the process of *ensimismamiento*. Since Unamuno sees the *anhelo de inmortalidad* as part of what it means to be human, it could be said that both

philosophers come to the same conclusion here, and that they do so along very similar lines. It is important to note that this contact is not of a casual type in either philosophy. For Ortega it is a matter not of use, but of full intimacy, and for Unamuno it is manifested as service in and for the community of others. For both philosophers, it is this contact which keeps people from alienation, and also for each it is offered as an ethical form of conduct and relation.

CONCLUSION

Interestingly enough, the views of these two philosophers converge in many more ways than they diverge. What can be said about this in terms of a conclusion as to which views are "better"? It might be claimed that the main strength of Ortega's view over Unamuno's is not in the content as much as in the form. His thinking and writing are extremely lucid, his layout is systematic and rational, his ideas are clearly connected. Although his subject is the concrete person just as much as Unamuno's is (evident in his understanding of the life of the individual as the starting point for philosophy), his treatment of that subject is abstract and impersonal: "De lo archiconcreto estamos

hablando abstractamente y en general."²¹ In other words, Ortega philosophizes in the manner which is prescribed by the dominant philosophical paradigm as it has been seen in recent history. For this reason, his philosophy may be seen as "better" by those who also subscribe to this paradigm, and those may constitute a majority among philosophers. However, again it must be emphasized that Unamuno was intentionally working outside this paradigm for the specific purpose of showing that it does not present the whole story of what it means to be fully human. For this reason, in spite of whatever problems are incurred by his methodology, it can be suggested that Unamuno's philosophy can be considered at least equal to Ortega's in importance, and in fact may be seen as superior in that it does show the experience of humans in a more realistic light precisely in virtue of the fact that it is paradoxical and conflicted. It is evident at the very least that this is what Unamuno intended.

It also can be said about these two philosophies that they are in a very definite way complementary. What Unamuno presents through his views is a radically personal response, agony, to a social phenomenon which Ortega describes and was primarily concerned with in his thinking: bureaucratic depersonalization. This source of the alienation which so

21 Ibid., 117. "We are speaking abstractly and in general about that which is actually the most concrete."

clearly concerned both thinkers was growing in accord with the growth of the bureaucracy in Spain through the historical period in which they lived. Ortega's treatment of it is primarily prescriptive, in that he is concerned with recommending on a broad social scale what should be done to combat it: people must move on the spectrum away from empty relations of use toward the intimacy of love. Unamuno's primary response is personal and descriptive: he concentrates on the personal result of this alienation, the agony and conflict which are created by it within the person. In this light, then, the two views can be seen to work together in a very complementary fashion, each filling in what is missing in the other, and together forming a full response to what both philosophers clearly considered a major issue in their time.

In closing, then, it can be said that preferring one of these views over the other presupposes a certain understanding of what is important in doing philosophy. Miguel de Unamuno's philosophy rests on the premise that people are not wholly rational beings but are more or less equally endowed with reason and emotion, and further, that this is actually a good thing, one which people ought not to try to circumvent or ignore. If he is seen as going too far in making certain claims, as has been discussed above, perhaps he did so purposely as a way of emphasizing his

point that he was in fact a man of great passion, and of mission, and that he did not want his message, which he considered to be of the utmost importance, to go unnoticed. If he used emotion to make his point, it may be because he knew that exaggeration and appeal to emotion can be a more effective means of making people *know* something (that is, to know it *en las entrañas*, in the guts) than a simple reasoned explanation, and that this is due to the fact that people are not simply rational beings, but very emotional ones as well. However, if this premise of the importance of emotionality is not accepted, then it may in fact be very difficult to grasp the import of the views of this passionate, paradoxical man who not only thought, but felt, his philosophy.

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