

## CHAPTER II: A Dream of God

Antonio Machado had a preoccupation with religion that manifests itself, in the words of José Luis Aranguren, as "a fluctuation between skepticism and imprecise belief, between desperation and hope."<sup>1</sup> It is true that these fluctuations or doubts have been evident in his religious thought, but the problem is in determining how they were resolved. What is it that finally triumphs: skepticism or belief; desperation or hope? In spite of the fact that for Machado this situation was problematic, many critics have resolved it simply in favor of skepticism and desperation.

I have often wondered, however, whether the lack of faith that these writers attribute to the poet was really his own, or if it was only a projection of the critics themselves. Because there are those who believe the opposite. José Machado, who was acquainted with his brother's religious beliefs, saw these religious fluctuations very differently when he insists that "in his constant comings and goings, he received the greatest gift that God could grant him: a heart always filled with hope."<sup>2</sup> The wife of José Machado, who lived with the poet during the latter part of his life, reinforces her husband's words when she declares that Machado "did not practice religion, but he was a man of religious beliefs... His religion was personal, not the official one"<sup>3</sup> Then, a friend of the poet, José Bergamín, also insisted: "For me, Antonio Machado was, in his life and in his work, completely and truly a man of faith."<sup>4</sup> And what would the poet himself have said to those who tried to deny his religious faith? It is not possible to answer this question with absolute certainty, but it is worth recalling here a declaration of faith that Machado made in one of his letters to Unamuno: "When I recognize that there is another self, that is not me, over which I have no control, I realize that God exists and that I must believe in Him as father."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> José Luis Aranguren, "Esperanza y desesperanza de Dios en la experiencia de la vida de Antonio Machado," *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos*, 11-12 (1949), p. 396.

<sup>2</sup> José Machado, *Últimas soledades del poeta Antonio Machado (Recuerdos de su hermano José)* (Santiago de Chile: multigrafiado, 1958) p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by Arturo del Villar in "Mi cuñado Antonio Machado: Charla con doña Matea Monedero, viuda de José Machado," *Estafeta literaria*, 569-570, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> These words of José Bergamín are taken from his Prologue to the book of José María González Ruíz, *La teología de Antonio Machado* (coeditado por Editorial Fontanella d Barcelona, y Editorial Marova de Madrid: 1975), p. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Antonio Machado, *Obras: Poesía y Prosa*, 2ª Edición (Buenos Aires: Losada, 1973), p. 1,025.

A typical example of the difference of opinion regarding the poet's religious faith is the attitude of the critics toward poem LIX, "Last night when I was sleeping..." Rodrigo A. Molina has tried to demonstrate that poem LIX belongs to the tradition of Spanish mysticism.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, Antonio Sánchez Barbudo feels that poem LIX is "quite exceptional" because the mystical aspect contradicts the religious skepticism which he has seen in the rest of the poet's work.<sup>7</sup> In the following pages I will show that those who deny Machado's faith have misunderstood his attitude toward religion; and although I do not believe that poem LIX should be seen solely within the tradition of Spanish mysticism, I hope to establish that it is not "exceptional" and that its content is closely related to what the poet has said in other parts of his work.

## 1. DREAMS AND INTUITIVE AWARENESS

Sánchez Barbudo belongs to the group of critics who regard Machado as an agnostic or even an atheist, who "never had faith." For that reason, when he writes about the mystical aspect of poem LIX, he finds it necessary to defend his anti-religious interpretations. "It will be said," he writes, "that once again we insist on denying his faith, on drying up even the little stream of hope that might be found in this poem. But the fact is that I insist, above all, on seeing clearly only what is there and nothing more, leaving aside vagueness, lies, and benevolent gestures. Others see something else, it is true; but many read incorrectly..." In making this statement, Sánchez Barbudo focuses especially on the two initial lines of each stanza where the following words are repeated: "Last night when I was sleeping, / I dreamed—blessed illusion!—" which have made him insist: "But do not forget what he *never forgets*, that all of this was only an 'illusion': that it was only a dream... It was a revelation, but *in dreams*; a revelation from which he woke up and, regretting it, did not believe."<sup>8</sup>

It is important to clarify here that in Machado's poetry the act of dreaming can represent two very different things. As we saw in Chapter I, he sometimes uses dreams to symbolize the illusory quality of the world revealed by the senses. On other occasions, however, the act of dreaming represents the use of intuition, or what Machado calls

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<sup>6</sup> Molina feels that when Machado chose these images—fountain, beehive, sun—he was recalling the words of Saint Teresa. He insists that this "metaphorical triad... recalls the simple words of the author of *The Interior Castle* and is like an allegory of the three mystical paths (the purgative path, the illuminative path, the unitive path) which mystical writers use to show the road the soul must follow to become one with God"; Rodrigo A. Molina, *Variaciones sobre Antonio Machado: el hombre y su lenguaje* (Madrid: Ínsula, 1973), p. 33. I agree with Molina that poem LIX has a certain mystical aspect; however, neither the structure of the poem—with four stanzas—nor the main images correspond to these three steps on the mystical path. It is true that these images sometimes appear in the work of Saint Teresa, but they also appear in the work of other writers; and as Molina himself observes (p. 37), the image of the bees has a different meaning in Machado's poem. We will also see that these same three images appear in other poems where there is no mystical influence and no relation to Saint Teresa. It may be that in choosing some of these images Machado was thinking of Saint Teresa or other mystical writers, but when we relate this poem to the rest of the poet's work, it will be clear that a broader interpretation is needed.

<sup>7</sup> Antonio Sánchez Barbudo, *Los poemas de Antonio Machado* (Barcelona: Lumen, 1969), p. 115.

<sup>8</sup> Sánchez Barbudo, *Op. cit.*, p. 117.

"poetic thought," which is the only method we can employ to escape the limits of our finite understanding. This is precisely what the poet wishes to express in poem LXXXIX when he praises "the marvelous ability to recall our dreams" (OPP, p. 130). Then, in poem LXI it is "in dreams" where the poet has witnessed "a divine certainty" (OPP, p. 113), and in poem LXXXVIII it is also "in dreams" that he hears the "forgotten music" which contains "a few truthful words" (OPP, p. 129). The experience of dreaming represents an illusion because the divine reality can not be verified rationally, but our non-rational mind can penetrate the veil of logical concepts in order to reach God. That is why for Machado the illusion is "blessed."

Rafael A. González has made some meaningful observations with regard to the dream of God in poem LIX: "God enters his inner awareness when he dreams because it is during dreams that the soul meditates on the universe. Since, as Shakespeare says, man is made of the same material as our dreams, it is in them where the absolute reality becomes present and takes metaphysical shape. For Machado, poet-philosopher, the reality which is God cannot be apprehended through the use of reason and because of this it is necessary to use another method to approach Him."<sup>9</sup> González seems to understand very well what dreams represent in the work of Machado, but it is especially significant when he uses the phrase, "meditate on the universe," because this is precisely the method which the poet has often used in order to arrive at an awareness of God.

All those who are familiar with the "new consciousness" which is the basis for the thinking behind this book cannot help but observe that on many occasions Machado seems to withdraw within himself as he experiences an alteration in the state of his awareness. It cannot be a coincidence that in poem LX, immediately after the poem in which he writes about the dream of God, the poet describes what happens when his thoughts are silent and he enters a different state of consciousness:

Has my heart gone to sleep?  
Are the beehives of my dreams  
no longer working? Has the  
noria of my thoughts gone dry,  
the buckets empty, spinning,  
filled only with shadows?  
No, my heart is not asleep.  
It is awake, wide awake.  
It neither sleeps nor dreams;  
with eyes wide open it sees  
distant signs, and it listens  
at the edge of a great silence.

It has been said that poem LX describes a vague desire to understand the mystery of life, but it is obviously much more than that. How should we understand the words "listens at the edge of a great silence" if not as a reference to the act of meditation?<sup>10</sup> The "great silence," which in this case is not silent, is the indefinable, ultimate reality which

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<sup>9</sup> Rafael A. González, "Pensamiento filosófico de Antonio Machado," *La torre*, V, 18 (1957), pp. 144-145.

<sup>10</sup> If, in fact, this poem refers to the act of meditation when the poet speaks of listening in silence,

is beyond human comprehension and can only be seen by the "eyes" of the heart. Man waits at the "edge" of the great silence because in this life his consciousness is limited to the evidence of his physical senses. But when he "listens" with the use of his intuitive consciousness he knows that, beyond these limits, there is a ineffable reality which his physical senses cannot perceive.<sup>11</sup>

But what are these "distant signs" that the poet sees within his heart? He does not describe them in poem LX, but the poems which follow offer an answer this question. As I have already stated, in poem LXI the poet speaks of a "divine certainty" which he has known "in dreams." Then, in poem LXII he describes an altered state of consciousness which may very well have been the result of an act of meditation:

The cloud is rent: the rainbow  
glowing in the sky,  
and the countryside enveloped  
in a sheet of rain and sunshine.  
I awoke. Who is it that disturbs  
the magic glass of my dream?  
My heart was beating  
with wide-open amazement... (OPP, p. 114).

Life is a dream because we see it only through the illusion produced by the five senses. But sometimes, when we dream or when we meditate, the veil is rent and we "wake up." In this way it is sometimes possible to touch a different reality.

The fact that Machado has published these poems in this order must have some significance,<sup>12</sup> since each poem from poem LIX to poem LXII is related to the search for

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this apparently paradoxical idea has a perfectly logical explanation. Like the concept of "solitude" that appears in other poems, the term "silence" is a metaphor which refers to the interior "voice" of his intuitive consciousness. This same theme appears on several occasions in the work of the poet. For example, in poem XXI, the voice of "silence" tells the poet not to be afraid of dying, because there will be another life after his death. Juan de Mairena also has said: "Only in silence, which my teacher called *the sonorous aspect of nothingness*, can the poet appreciate the great gift given by the divinity so that he can be an artist who discovers a world of harmonies" (OPP, p. 579). This does not mean that Machado used a specific method of meditation; but that Machado was well aware of this type of mental exercise is confirmed by these words from the Prologue to the 1917 edition of *Fields of Castile*, when he speaks of the difficulty of penetrating the "dual mirage"—both interior and exterior experiences—that hides the true reality: "A man who makes a conscious effort to become aware of himself smothers the only audible voice: his own, since it is muffled by extraneous sensations" (OPP, p. 52). As any person who has tried to meditate knows, the experience of entering another state of consciousness cannot be forced; by *trying* to hear the voice of silence, you hear nothing. But by shutting down all mental activity—"extraneous sensations"—that can block the inner voice, we are sometimes able to enter, spontaneously, into another state of awareness where one hears voices or sees visual images. These images and these voices have their origin in the inner awareness that, according to the concept of pantheism, is part of the divine consciousness.

<sup>11</sup> Remember what Machado said in the autobiographical document cited by Francisco Vega Díaz: "In fact, I am a believer in the existence of a spiritual reality that is opposed to the world of the senses"; "A propósito de unos documentos autobiográficos inéditos de Antonio Machado," *Papeles de Son Armadáns*, LIV (1969), p. 70.

<sup>12</sup> Sánchez Barbudo says poem LIX does not appear until Machado's *Complete Poetry* of 1917. He wonders why it was inserted in this part of his work, but was unable to offer a reason; *Op. cit.*, p. 119.

the divine reality. And if we have understood correctly what Machado wished to say with them, he has not only searched for this reality: he also feels that he has found it. Like the Christian whose prayers help him climb the mystical ladder, or like the Buddhist who meditates until he enters the ecstasy of nirvana, Machado has listened "at the edge of the great silence" and experienced the reunion of his soul with the divine consciousness.

## 2. FOUR METAPHYSICAL IMAGES

Having established that the dream of God represents a real experience for Machado, we are now able to continue with our study of poem LIX. In each stanza of this poem there is a central image: 1) fountain, 2) beehive, 3) sun, and 4) God. We will now examine the importance of these four images for this poem, and also their relation to the rest of Machado's work.

### THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

The image of water that gushes forth appears with some frequency in the poetry of Machado: as a fountain, a spring, the source, etc. In his earliest poetry the fountain represents time which flows eternally. In his later poetry it is no longer just a symbol of time, but also the origin of time and of life.<sup>13</sup> The fountain represents the divine origin, the pure source of being whose "living waters" constitute the eternal foundation of existence, as in the concluding lines of the sonnet dedicated to the memory of Leonor:

But although it flows toward an unknown sea,  
life is also the water that flows from  
a pristine source, drop by drop,  
or the noisy cascade of a torrent  
under the blue rushing over the stones,  
and there your name is repeated eternally! (OPP, p. 309).

There are times when Machado thinks about his loss of contact with the origin of life, as the following lines show: "Like me, next to the sea, / river of brackish silt, / do you dream of your source?" (CLXI. lxxxvii, OPP, p. 286). And sometimes when he meditates or when uses "poetic thought," he achieves a state of "integral consciousness" when "there are no mirrors, only a fountain." It is then that he senses the harmony of the "Great Fullness" and feels the unity of all things in the primordial source:

The forms of zero are erased;  
once again we see,  
bubbling up from the source,  
the living waters of being (OPP, p. 337).

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<sup>13</sup> For J. El Cirlot, the fountain is a universal symbol of Paradise, the "Center" or the "Origin" of life in its active phase. It is also the *fons juventutis* whose waters are the "draught of immortality," in Hindu mythology. Water which gushes forth is therefore a symbol of the dynamic foundation of all that is; *A Dictionary of Symbols* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), pp. 107-108. See also the article of Hugo W. Cowes, "El motivo de la fuente en la poesía de Antonio Machado," *Sur*, 234 (1955), pp. 52-76.

It is in this context that we must understand the image of the "fountain" in the first stanza of poem LIX:

Last night when I was sleeping,  
I dreamed—blessed illusion!—  
there was a fountain flowing  
deep within my heart.  
Water, tell me by what hidden  
channel you came to me,  
with a source of new life  
I never drank from before (OPP, p. 111).

It is clear that Machado is not referring to the "purgative path" which is part of the mystical ladder, but rather to the fountain of life. The living water flows from a "hidden channel" because man has lost the memory of his divine origin. The "new life" may be a reference to his experiences in this life, but the fact that he has not drunk from it before seems to point to a life that is completely new. In this case, the "new life" can represent a sort of spiritual renewal which the poet experiences in the moment of recovering the awareness of his origin.<sup>14</sup>

#### THE BEEHIVE

The image of bees which is described in the second stanza of poem LIX is not the one which usually appears in Spanish mysticism. Normally, bees make honey with nectar taken from flowers, but in Machado's poem they make honey and wax out of the past experience of suffering:

Last night when I was sleeping,  
I dreamed—blessed illusion!—  
I had a beehive  
deep within my heart;  
and golden bees  
were using old  
bitterness to produce  
white wax and sweet honey (OPP, p. 111).

A similar reference to bees also appears in other poems. For example, in poem LXI Machado describes the eternal labor of the "golden bees of my dreams"; then once again he refers to the past experience of suffering when he speaks of the poets' creative task:

we make new honey  
with our old pain;  
patiently, we make  
the pure white cloak (OPP, p. 114).

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<sup>14</sup> In his study of Machado, P. Cerezo Galán sees the water of a spring as the source of renovation: "The symbol of the spring is also related to the promise of rebirth and consummation. It is, as it were, like the water of baptism which renews the very substance of life, putting us in contact with the origin under the light which opened our first path into the world"; *Palabra en el tiempo* (Madrid: Gredos, 1975), pp. 92-93.

And in poem LXXXVI, Machado writes:

From many bitter flowers  
I have extracted white wax!  
Oh, time of my sorrows,  
you labor like bees! (OPP, p. 128).

Although it is not the same as that normally used by Spanish mystics, the image of bees has an important place in universal symbolism. In his *Dictionary of Symbols*, Juan Eduardo Cirlot has stated that in the literature of Egypt and also in the Bible, bees are associated with industry and creative activity because of the production of honey. In Greece they represent labor and obedience and, according to Orphic teaching they symbolize human souls, because they migrate from the hive in swarms in the same way that souls "swarm" from divine unity. In Christian symbolism from the Middle Ages, bees represented both diligence and eloquence.<sup>15</sup>

In the previously quoted poems, it is obvious that Machado describes the bees in a way that is similar to the universal symbolism mentioned by Cirlot. Machado's bees also "labor" with industry and diligence. In poem LXI and in others where he speaks of the task of the poet, it is obvious that bees—or the beehive—represent creative activity. But the bees in Machado's poetry are not only symbols of creative activity; in all three poems—LIX, LXI and LXXXVI—the labor of bees symbolizes the activity of the soul which is purified through suffering. The symbolic products of this suffering are the "white wax," the "pure white cloak," and the "sweet honey." For Cirlot, making honey suggests the production of something valuable which is difficult to obtain; the color white suggests the ideal of purity, while the color of honey as well as the "golden bees" which produce it suggests the idea of spiritual perfection.<sup>16</sup>

## THE SUN

In the third stanza, the light of the sun represents a mystical illumination which the soul experiences after the purification described in the previous stanza:

Last night when I was sleeping,  
I dreamed—blessed illusion!—  
a blazing sun was shining  
deep within my heart.  
It burned because it gave off  
heat like a red hearth;  
it was a sun that illumined  
and also made me cry (OPP, p. 111).

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<sup>15</sup> Cirlot, *Op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>16</sup> Here we can also see the similarity between Machado's thinking and universal symbolism. Cirlot says that honey can be a symbol of wisdom acquired through suffering and, because it is the product of a mysterious process it is, by analogy, a symbol of spiritual purification; *Op. cit.*, p. 143. In Chapter IV where the theme of reincarnation is studied, I also mention the possible relation between the idea of purification through suffering, and the law of karma.

José Machado says that in these words we find "the perfect expression of an authentic sun that must have illuminated the passages of the Poet's soul" (José Machado, p. 72). The sun is a universal symbol of divinity, but it can also be associated with mystical consciousness which reveals the reality of things. It emits light and heat and is related to purification and tribulation, the sole purpose of which is to render transparent the opaque crust of the senses so that they may reveal the higher truths.<sup>17</sup>

We will see that the theme of illumination appears with some frequency in Machado's writing. We have already observed it in poem LXII—"The cloud is rent: the rainbow / still glowing in the sky"—and it also appears in various poems from *New Songs* and the *Apocryphal Songbook*. Of this type of experience, José Bergamín has written: "It is like seeing visions... It is illuminative evidence which blinds our will and our reason which are struck by a revealing light like Saint Paul on the road to Damascus... It is the living experience of God, like the truth of the flame of the fire which illumines and burns us. This is the way that poetic testimony was given by Saint Catalina of Siena, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross..., mystical and theological teachers of our Antonio Machado."<sup>18</sup>

In this way the preparations are completed for the revelation of the highest truth of all: the experience of God which the poet has described in the last stanza of poem LIX:

Last night when I was sleeping  
I dreamed—blessed illusion!—  
it was God that I felt  
deep within my heart (OPP, p. 111).

Referring to these words, José Machado writes that the poet "now feels, in the most intimate part of his heart, the fusion of his own soul with the soul of the universe" (José Machado, p. 72). Undoubtedly this, and other similar experiences, was what made Machado say in an interview: "We all carry a bit of God in our heart."<sup>19</sup> And for this reason Juan de Mairena also defines God as "the father whose imprint, which is more or less blurred, we all carry in our soul" (OPP, p.435).

In order to have a clear understanding of these words, however, we must remember something which many critics have forgotten when they have written about the experience of God in this poem. I am referring to the concept of pantheism according to which God is present in all that exists. The words of José Luis Abellán help to clarify this point when he gives us his definition of God in the work of Machado: "We must not forget that the God of Machado is not that of orthodox Catholicism, nor the Aristotelian god, a logical god par excellence, and therefore just as absurd as logic itself... The God of Machado is the God of Abel Martín's pantheistic metaphysics, who is envisioned, as we will recall, as the Great Fullness or integral consciousness... This God [is] conceived

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<sup>17</sup> Cirlot, Op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>18</sup> From the "Prólogo" of the book by José María González Ruiz, Op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>19</sup> P. Pla y Beltrán, "Mi entrevista con Antonio Machado," *Cuadernos americanos*, LXXIII, 1 (1954), p. 237.



as the great consciousness of which ours is part."<sup>20</sup> So if our consciousness is part of the divine consciousness it means that our soul is part of God—"Soul light, divine light..."—and all we have to do is to meditate deeply, or think "poetically" in order to experience Him in our own being.

### 3. THE THREE MASKS OF THE ONLY TRUE GOD

I do not want to conclude this discussion of Machado's religious thought without mentioning another poem which some critics have used to claim that the poet does not believe in the existence of God. I am referring to the following short poem from his book *Fields of Castile*:

The God we all carry,  
the God we all create,  
the God for whom we search  
and are never able to find.  
Three gods or three persons  
of the only true God (CXXXVII, vi, OPP, p. 227).

When critics use these words as proof of Machado's lack of religious faith it is clear that they have not taken into account his metaphysical thought. To say that he does not believe because God is only a product of our imagination—"the God we all create"—and because we are never able to "find" God, does not explain what the poet refers to when he speaks of "the only true God," nor does it explain what he means when he refers to "The God we all carry..." In view of what was said in the previous chapter, it should be obvious that "The God we all carry" refers to the divine spark which, according to Machado's pantheistic metaphysics, we all have in our heart. The "God we all create" is a reference to the effort to perfect the self because, as we perform that task, we create part of the divine totality.<sup>21</sup> The poet's brother interprets these words in this way when he writes that "the path to arrive at God—as the Poet says—is to create Him in oneself by awakening the God that we all have in the depths of our soul" (José Machado, p. 46). Finally, "the God for whom we search / and are never able to find" refers to the idea that God's infinite being can never fit within the limits of our finite understanding. The "only true God" definitely exists for our poet, but His existence is always hidden by the veil of the three "persons" or three masks (according to the etymological meaning of the word) that only our intuition can penetrate "in dreams."

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<sup>20</sup> José Luis Abellán, "Antonio Machado: filósofo cristiano," *La torre*, XII, 45-46 (1964), p. 234.

<sup>21</sup> An indication of how Machado felt about the effort to perfect the soul can be seen in these words of Abel Martín when he talks about the person who tries to isolate himself from the material world: "Abel Martín does not feel that the spirit makes even one iota of progress in *the road to perfection*, nor does it achieve anything essential by trying to separate itself from the world of the senses" (OPP, p. 321, my emphasis). The verb "labor," or *laborar* in Spanish, which Machado often uses to describe the activity of the soul, suggests that it is not static, but is always striving to reach a state of greater purity.

#### 4. THE CIRCLE AND THE QUATERNITY

A final point which we have still not examined is the structural composition of poem LIX. Fernando Lázaro was the first to notice its circular form: "Notable in this poem is its significant structural design. There are three rotating stanzas around a center, three concentric waves that circulate around an essential concluding affirmation."<sup>22</sup> Rodrigo A. Molina has also noticed this aspect of the poem: "It seems like the poet wished to capture in the final stanza, the idea which he has been pursuing by forming concentric waves in each stanza: the idea of God."<sup>23</sup> In this way, the circular structure reinforces the effort to arrive at the Center, which is God.

But there is another perspective from which the structure of this poem can be approached, thinking not only about the circular movement, but also the four stanzas and the four lines which comprise the final stanza where the experience of God is described. For C. G. Jung, the circle and the number four—the quaternity—are archetypes that represent the concept of totality.<sup>24</sup> If we follow Jung's ideas, we can see that these structural elements serve to reinforce the content of the poem. First, the concept of totality, suggested by the image of the circle and by the number four, emphasizes the sensation of fullness felt by the soul in the moment of its reunion with the Great Totality which is God. This concept also corresponds to the pantheistic view that God is all that is. And finally, the circular movement caused by the repetition of the same words in each stanza not only reinforces the idea of the soul which achieves its own fullness, but also suggests the idea of the soul that emanates from God and then completes the task of purifying itself in order to return to its divine origin.

Because this is the trajectory which the poet follows in the four stanzas of this poem. In the first, he describes the loss of awareness which occurs when the soul emerges from the pure fountain of divine life. In the second, the soul is purified through the creative activity of suffering. In the third, the soul utilizes the purity achieved in the previous stage to elevate itself to a state of spiritual illumination. Then, in the final stanza the soul returns to its point of departure in the moment of its union—or reunion—with the hidden Deity.

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It should now be obvious that poem LIX is indeed closely related to the rest of Machado's work; it repeats many ideas that we have seen in other poems and it contains a mystical spirit which agrees perfectly with the pantheistic conception of reality which is the basis of his metaphysical thought. Some critics have doubted Machado's religious faith, partly because they have not taken into account his pantheistic philosophy, and also because their logical point of view has not let them accept the intuitive, non-rational awareness which has allowed Machado to experience the presence of the Divinity.

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<sup>22</sup> Fernando Lázaro, "Glosa a un poema de Antonio Machado," *Ínsula*, 119, p. 11.

<sup>23</sup> Molina, *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup> C. G. Jung, *Aion*, in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, IX, 2 (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 224.

For those who still doubt the importance that non-rational thinking has had for the foundation of the poet's religious faith, I offer the following words from one his letters to Unamuno:

War against nature, that is the command of Christ, against nature in a material sense... and against logical nature, which excludes by definition the ultimate ideas: immortality, freedom, God, the depth of our own souls.

*We trust  
that there is no truth  
in anything we think*

I recall having written in a poem: but I was referring to thought which is deconstructive and cold, to thought which is based on relations, on limits, on negations, to thought using empty concepts that do not prove anything that lives in our heart. The heart and the head do not agree, but we have to make a choice. I will take my stand with the former (OPP, 1,026).

I do not know if these encouraging words helped Unamuno to believe, but there is no doubt that they express very clearly the religious attitude of our poet and philosopher. When it is time to make a choice, Machado does not hesitate to declare his faith in the "ultimate ideas" that he finds within his own heart. In the following chapter we will see the importance of this faith for the concept of life after death.