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# Irrational and Visionary Imagery in cante jondo and the Neo-Popular Poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca and Rafael Alberti

David A. Briggs

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**IRRATIONAL AND VISIONARY IMAGERY IN *CANTE JONDO*  
AND THE NEO-POPULAR POETRY OF  
FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA AND RAFAEL ALBERTI**

**BY**

**DAVID A. BRIGGS**

B.A., Romance Languages, Boston University, 1964  
M.A., Spanish, The University of New Mexico, 2002

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy  
Spanish and Portuguese**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**December, 2009**

## **DEDICATION**

To the memory of my parents, Dudley and Louise Briggs, who nurtured in me the love of learning and the exploration for new knowledge.

I dedicate this work and personal success to all the poets, past and present, who sing the rights and value of all human beings with truth, love and beauty.

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**ABSTRACT**

Spanish poet Rafael Alberti of the Generation of '27 claimed that “Surrealism had been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry” (Rafael Alberti qtd. in Harris 34). What is it that permits applying an early twentieth-century term, “Surrealism” to the traditional popular song, *cante jondo*, and neo-popular poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca and Rafael Alberti? The answer begins with the verbal imagery of the popular song form *cante jondo* and the neo-popular lyric of García Lorca and Alberti as I demonstrate in this study. Considering the poetic imagery in *cante jondo* and Lorca’s and Alberti’s neo-popular work as irrational and visionary allows stating that “surrealism” within the popular lyric existed in Spain long before “Surrealism” as introduced by Guillaume Apollinaire.

With theories of poetic creation from Carlos Bousoño, C.G. Jung and the writings of Robert Bly and Guillaume Apollinaire, I show that irrational and visionary imagery



has indeed existed in “popular song and folk poetry since time immemorial” in *cante jondo* verse and Lorca and Alberti’s neo-popular lyric allowing for the use of the term “surrealism.”

I explore the elements irrationality and visionary together with spontaneity and orality through the examination of imagery in various *letra of cante jondo*, limited to this genre of popular song because of the broadness of the category, and several poems from Lorca’s Mariana Pineda, Poema del Cante Jondo, Romancero Gitano, Yerma, and Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías and Marinero en tierra, Cal y Canto, EL ALBA DEL ALHELÍ, AND VERTE Y NO VERTE from Rafael Alberti’s work.

My analysis demonstrates and supports Alberti’s claim that Surrealism has existed in popular song and folk poetry since time immemorial.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
Chapter I: Theory-Methodology .....	14
Jung and the Unconscious.....	14
Bousoño--Irracionalidad .....	15
“Swift Association” - Guillaume Apollinaire .....	15
Bly’s Leaping Poetry .....	16
Chapter II: <i>Cante jondo</i> as Textual Source.....	17
“Irrational” Imagery in Gypsy poetry ( <i>cante jondo</i> ).....	17
Chapter III: <i>Cante jondo</i> and the Neo-Popular Expression .....	18
CHAPTER I THEORY-METHODOLOGY .....	20
The Unconscious in Poetic Expression.....	21
Bousoño: <i>Irracionalismo Irracionalidad</i> .....	24
The Primitive in Irrational Imagery .....	28
Guillaume Apollinaire – Swift Association.....	31
Robert Bly’s Leaping Poetry .....	31
John Miles Foley and Paralinguistic Features .....	33
CHAPTER II “CON LOS DEÍTOS E LA MANO ARAÑABA LA PARÉ”.....	34
Gypsy History, Culture, and Lifestyle in Spain.....	40
Cante Jondo and Orality.....	45
Spontaneity in the Popular Poetic Expression .....	60
Grotesque Imagery, Orality, and the Popular .....	70
CHAPTER III CANTE JONDO AND THE NEO-POPULAR EXPRESSION .....	85

Lorca, <i>Cante</i> , and the Neo-popular.....	86
Alberti, <i>Cante</i> , and Neo-popularism.....	101
CONCLUSION.....	126
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	131

## INTRODUCTION

*“Surrealism had been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry”* (Rafael Alberti qtd in Harris 34).

Derek Harris posits the essence of Surrealist poetry of the Parisian poets of the 1920’s in “hallucination, both imagistic and linguistic” with the additional refinement of “the arbitrary and incongruous juxtaposition of normally unrelated elements” (56). Harris further ponders how popular song and folk poetry can be considered surreal “from time immemorial” (34). What is it that permits applying an early twentieth-century term to the traditional popular expression in the writings of Federico García Lorca and Rafael Alberti? This is the question this dissertation will investigate.

The answer to it begins with the verbal imagery of the popular song form *cante jondo* and the neo-popular lyric of García Lorca and Alberti as this examination will show. Considering their poetic imagery as irrational and visionary allows stating that “surrealism” within the popular lyric existed in Spain long before “Surrealism” as introduced by Guillaume Apollinaire.

Alberti’s statement that, “Surrealism had been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry” (Harris 34) requires clarification of the terms “surrealism” n., and “surrealist” n., adj., used in this dissertation. Surrealism is usually associated with the well-known avant-garde movement in Paris, France during the years between the World Wars. The Movement appropriated its name from a term coined by Guillaume Apollinaire to describe his avant-garde drama, Les Mamelles de Tirésias. An international movement, Surrealism included

many famous artists. The leader of the group, André Breton, and other Frenchmen, Robert Desnos, and Raymond Queneau; the Spaniards Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró and, later Salvador Dalí and Luis Buñuel; the German Max Ernst; the Swiss Paul Klee, and the American Man Ray and are just a few easily recognizable names. It would seem that these artists in that time and place constituted the beginning and foundation of the dramatic artistic expression known as Surrealism. The epigraph above from Rafael Alberti's interview suggests another possibility that, at least in Spain, surrealism has had a long history exhibited in the "popular song and folk poetry."

Surrealism was one "of a series of aesthetic waves that swept across Europe" in the early twentieth Century (Poggioli 131-32, 145). A sense of Surrealism is in the air throughout Europe, not just a phenomenon in the French capital. The primary characteristics of Surrealism are internal: dream states, including the nightmare, and stream of consciousness; that is "psychic violence of all types" (Ilie 3) where the reader or listener of surrealist poetry found himself in the presence of a "strange, disturbing world" with "sensations of uncanniness, incongruity, and absurdity" (5). The avant-garde expression employed a new type of illogic based on free association and unrestricted juxtaposition of words, ideas, and images (5) to produce irrational imagery. Ultimately, surrealism describes the poetics of the dream with its underlying basis in Freud's concept of the subconscious (4). Freud's term *unheimlich*, uncanny, applies to the avant-garde, surrealism and the Theater of the Absurd, a term that aptly describes the uncomfortable and disturbing world experienced in dreams as well as the absurd situations of life.

Jung's theory of the unconscious and two modes of poetic creation help explain irrational imagery as well. The theories of the two psychologists reflect the attention to

“similar irrational tendencies” across Europe during this era (Ilie 4), a focus on the internal world of the human and its irrational characteristics.

The Spanish aesthetic, however, claims a longer history that, although it does not use the term “surreal,” bases its expression on a tradition of the grotesque in art (Ilie 7-8). Long before the “new” expression in the Europe of the early twentieth Century, Spanish art and letters would leave the viewer and listener with strange, disturbing, and uncanny feelings reflected in bizarre images of a strange world; the imagery of *cante jondo*, an example of the tradition of “popular song and folk poetry,” presents such images.

Robert Bly distinguishes between French and Spanish irrational imagery. According to Bly, the difference exists in the fact that, although the French as well as the Spanish make leaps in their poetry, according to the French, there is little or no emotion in the unconscious, to “spark” the leap ((Bly Leaping Poetry 28); the result is “pure” poetry. On the other hand, the Spanish poet has “a heavy body of feelings piled up behind him as if behind a dam” where the poem seems to “roll over you” as it begins with powerful emotion (28). The distinction then, is that the Spanish irrational expression exhibits strong emotion in its formation while the French as well as Spanish “pure” poetry intended to avoid the emotional factor. The popular expression *cante jondo* has the same effect and frequently reveals the primal presence of the *duende* discussed later in the section on the *cante* and Lorca. The Spanish poetry results from “passionate associations” that are “wild” (28).

Maurice Nadeau in the foreword to, History of Surrealism asserts that “The surrealist state of mind, or better still surrealist behavior, is eternal” (Nadeau 35), an observation that augments Alberti’s statement that places surrealism in Spanish literature

in a broad historical context. Nadeau's view identifies surrealism as a universal constant and amplifies the more restricted definition of the movement usually associated with the period between the World Wars in Paris.

On the other hand, the Surrealists in France of the early twentieth century proclaimed a complete break with any previous literary movement. They intended to create a completely new mode of expression devoid of any earlier influences. The two groups then, the Spanish neo-popularists represented by Lorca and Alberti with their subscription to a traditional source, and the French represented by André Breton and the Surrealists in Paris in the 20's and 30's and their intention to break completely with former traditions, are interesting because the imagery from both orientations suggests a similar attitude regarding the mode of expression. That is, the two orientations result in similarly uncanny, shocking, even, grotesque imagery arrived at from different bases.

Apollinaire's view of the technique of distortion resides in: "the animation of dead objects, the defiance of time and place, rash and distant associations, the gratuitous combination of things in order to produce unforeseen meanings, and the procedure of putting aside the usual logic of reason and feelings" (Shattuck 49). The term "surréal" and its adjective form "surréaliste" are French terms coined by Guillaume Apollinaire in the introduction to his play Les mamelles de Tirésias in the early 1900's (Esslin 314). Martin Esslin in The Theatre of the Absurde quotes from Apollinaire's introduction:

To characterize my drama, I have used a neologism, for which I hope to be forgiven, as it does not happen often that I do such a thing, and I have coined the adjective "Surréaliste", which does not mean symbolical---but rather well defines a tendency of art that, if it is no newer than anything else under the sun, has at

least never been utilized to formulate an artistic or literary creed. The idealism of the dramatists who succeeded Victor Hugo sought likeness to nature in a conventional local colour that correspondes to the *trompe-l'œil* naturalism of the comedies of manner---To attempt, if not a renovation of the theatre, at least a personal effort, I thought one should return to nature itself, but without imitating her in the manner of the photographers. When man wanted to imitate the action of the walking, he created the wheel, which does not resemble a leg. He has used Surrealism without knowing it..." (Esslin 314).

Esslin adds that "Surrealism for Apollinaire was an art more real than reality, expressing essences rather than appearances" (314). Furthermore, as Esslin observes again from the introduction "Apollinaire wanted a theatre that would be 'modern, simple, rapid, with the short-cuts and enlargements that are needed to shock the spectator'" and further on, Esslin describes Apollinaires' drama as "grotesque vaudeville" (Esslin315). These quotes from Apollinaire's introduction and the observations by Martin Esslin then, discuss elements associated with the imagery of *cante* as well as the imagery from Lorca's and Alberti's work, namely: modern, simple, rapid, grotesque; that startle and awe the audience.

The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics presents two definitions from André Breton's first Manifesto. These definitions include two views, "one concerning modes of expression, the other relating to the dimensions of reality" (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 1234). The two views "announced a fundamental break with existing modes of communication and the conventional manner in which one perceives and accepts the exterior world" (1234). The hallmark practice of



this attitude is the practice of “psychic automatism” a method used to produce “orally, in written form...the repressed activities of the mind” (1234). The Encyclopedia summarizes this attitude and procedure by stating: “If thought is liberated from the dictates of reason and from moral and aesthetic strictures, it may achieve a form of expression beyond the domains of hitherto recognized artistic expression” (1234).

The Spanish poet and critic, Carlos Bousoño, in Chapter VIII of Teoría de la expresión poética describes the contemporary poet and his expresión in a similar manner: “el poeta contemporáneo es...un ‘creador absoluto’ que no ‘imita’ o ‘interpreta’ la naturaleza, la vida, sino que, al revés, la crea inventando una realidad inexistente: vacas azules, cielos o islas que bogan, crepúsculos, colores y hasta piedras que cantan y aun criaturas bastante más insólitas o imposibles” (Bousoño 138). Bousoño describes the break with former literary movements the Surrealist poets made clear in their manifestoes. There is the implicit rejection of the Romantic Movement and its imitation or interpretation of nature and life. There is even a hint of the grotesque that one sees in the new poetry.

Breton’s second definition, “encyclopedic,” presents surrealism as an “awareness of certain forms of associations previously neglected, but particularly immanent in the dream state, in sexual attraction and in the free play of thought” where Freudian theory provided a basis for much of these attitudes (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 1234). The encyclopedia goes on to quote Breton’s Second Manifesto which details the perspective of surrealism toward the reality of “ ‘ life and death, the real and the imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the high and the low’ ” (1234). This definition singles out elements that coincide with

Bakhtin's concept of "grotesque realism" (Bakhtin 18). Bakhtin sees grotesque realism in the time of the Renaissance as "degradation, that is, the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract" (Bakhtin 20-21). Grotesque realism has a transformative aspect involving birth and death and creates grotesque images that are "ugly, monstrous, hideous from the point of view of 'classic' aesthetics, that is, the aesthetics of the ready-made and the completed" (25). The transformative quality gives an ambivalent aspect to the imagery with "traditional contents: copulation, pregnancy, birth, growth, old age, disintegration, dismemberment" (25), important because they constitute a great part of the imagery in the *cante jondo* and the imagery of García Lorca and Alberti.

The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 10<sup>th</sup> Edition defines surrealism succinctly as "the principles, ideals or practice of producing fantastic or incongruous imagery or effects in art, literature, film, or theater by means of unnatural juxtapositions and combinations" (1183). Merriam-Webster's entries of "surreal" and "surrealistic" define these terms as "having the intense irrationality of a dream" and "2. having a strange dream-like atmosphere or quality like that of a surrealist painting" (1183).

The distinction then between "Surrealism" capital "S" and "surrealism" small "s" is that Surrealism refers to a deliberate organization of artists in France during the period between the two World Wars with an identifiable leader and a Manifesto of procedures and goals emphasizing psychic automatism while surrealism indicates an artistic characteristic with a long history that exhibits irrational imagery which startles, shocks, and awes the perceiver. The term surrealism, small "s," when used in this dissertation indicates irrational imagery in reference to *cante jondo* and the neo-popular lyric of Lorca and Alberti. The frequent mention of the unusual juxtaposition of objects and ideas in

order to form irrational images that shock and awe the perceiver has a cultural and historical basis in what can be identified as the original surreal Spanish juxtaposition of themes, life/death, so often presented Sundays and holidays in the *fiesta nacional*, the *corrida de toros*.

The use of the term “surreal” in relation to the *Cante jondo* can be problematic because the term as such did not exist at the time most of the traditional *letra* of the *Cante* was created. The fact that the process of the creation of the *Cante* and its affect on listeners and participants partakes of many of the same qualities as the “surrealist process” does not necessarily mandate the term Surreal.

The surrealism Alberti affirms then is that poetic experience promoted through irrational imagery from the unconscious energized by emotion. The imagery startles and/or awes the perceiver who then may, in the case of the critic, or not as the case may be, apply rational methods to interpret said imagery which, being polysemous in nature, may suggest various interpretations. Irrational imagery, surrealism, need not proceed necessarily from psychic automatism, or automatic writing.

*Cante jondo* is the “primitive Andalusian popular song or lament which persists to this day in poetry, music, and dance” and whose origins remain “completely unexplained” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 168). Frequently associated with Gypsies, (Pohren The Art of Flamenco 53), *cante jondo* features themes of suffering, anguish, and especially, love and death “often linked to telluric forces, expressed in solemn ritual” (The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 168). Relevant to *cante jondo*, this dissertation discusses the two poets, Federico García Lorca and Rafael Alberti who “were especially successful at integrating these popular motifs

with their sophisticated verse, an achievement which gave rise to the trend of neo-popularism (168), “an Andalusian folkloric tendency” that reflects “a popular intuitive genius of great lyrical power” (1201).

The term imagery has a long history dating from Biblical times to the present (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 559-64). Imagery, first used in the sense of “imitate” with the cognates “icon” and “idol,” becomes “figure” during the Renaissance, and then, “image” from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (559). With the development of psychology, “image” was seen as “the connecting link between experience (object) and knowledge (subject) defined as the reproduction in the mind of a sensation produced in perception” (559). The mind produces images not directly perceived as well, as in the case of memories, reflections, imaginative creations and the result of “hallucinations of dreams and fever” (559).

Imagery in literature “refers to images produced in the mind by language whose words may refer either to the experiences which could produce physical perceptions were the reader actually to have those experiences, or to the sense impressions themselves” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 560), a definition that particularly applies to *cante* and the Lorca and Albert’s neo-popular lyric. The romantic poets brought imagery toward the modern era by using it to represent the “concrete and particular” with the “abstract and general” in order to describe nature in terms of the Divine thereby elevating imagery to symbol (560). In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the image describes how the mind works, as figure (metaphor), in cluster criticism, and symbol and myth (560). The discussion of image and its use as metaphor requires a separate treatment further in the dissertation.

Carlos Bousoño combines the term image with the adjective visionary: “imagen visionaria” and describes it as different from the traditional image: “La imagen tradicional exhibe una estructura racionalista que difiere radicalmente de la estructura irracionalista que manifiestan las imágenes peculiares de nuestro siglo” (Teoría de la expresión poética 106). In Irracionalismo Poético (El Símbolo), Bousoño clearly defines traditional images (imágenes tradicionales) and distinguishes them from the visionary image (imagen visionaria): “Las imágenes tradicionales ( es decir, las de la estructura tradicional) se basan siempre en una semejanza objetiva (física, moral o de valor) *inmediatamente perceptible por la razón* entre un plano real A y un plano imaginario E” En la imagen visionaria, por el contrario, nos emocionamos sin que nuestra razón reconozca ninguna semejanza lógica, ni directa ni siquiera indirecta de los objetos como tales que se equiparan, el A y el E: basta con que sintamos la semejanza emocional entre ellos” (53). Thus emotion, not reason, is the operative feature of irrational and visionary imagery in Bousoño’s description, an explanation that applies to imagery in *cante* and neo-popular expression.

The title “Generation of ’27” refers to this group’s attention to the Golden Age master poet, Luis de Góngora y Argote. Góngora was and is noted for his masterful, if at times exaggerated, use of metaphor. Lorca and Alberti as neo-popularists in the group of ’27 developed the metaphor in their own novel manner while maintaining a tradition from Spanish folk poetry and popular song. The attention to the metaphor supports a further examination of the term. “Metaphor is a trope, or figurative expression, in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes new meanings” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 760). Metaphor in its simplest

form consists of two parts, “the thing meant and the thing said”, that is, tenor and vehicle, respectively (1268). The “transaction” between tenor and vehicle creates a meaning not possible without their interaction with “a meaning of more varied powers than can be ascribed to either” (1268). Metaphor has been considered since Aristotle “through the centuries” as “the most significant feature of poetic style” with new metaphors springing “from the poet’s heightened emotion, keen perception, or intellectual acuity” and considered by some modern critics generally as imagery (761). Often, when it is “organically unified” an entire poem can be called a metaphor (761).

Metaphor is basic to the study of imagery where it “overlaps” with other issues (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 560). Metaphor is one figure of speech wherein “one thing is said (analogue) while something else is meant (subject), and either the analogue, the subject, or both may involve imagery” (561). At times, more specifically, the expression may result in a “mixed metaphor” (561) where “the figures flash by in a rapid sequence” and “it is counterproductive to try to stop and picture each in our minds; the point is that they seem fitting and effective in context” (561).

The metaphor is a basis for irrational imagery in *cante jondo* and Lorca’s and Alberti’s neo-popular verse. It will be seen that examination of the imagery exhibits many of the above definitions of metaphor sometimes in a single image thus amplifying the irrational quality of the expression. Irrational imagery then, is a basis for surreal expression following the definition of metaphor as “a trope or figurative expression in which a word or phrase is shifted from its normal uses to a context where it evokes new meanings” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 760).

The broadness of the terms “popular song” and “folk poetry”, the Andalusian origin of the poets considered demand limiting this study to *cante jondo*, an important category because it not only exhibits the irrational characteristics in the imagery of a traditional popular expression, but also provides a vantage point from which to scrutinize the influence and development of these traits from strictly “popular” to the neo-popular imagery of both Lorca and Alberti.

The specific and nameable poet, here, Lorca and Alberti, of the neo-popular expression contrasts with the general and anonymous poet of *cante*, the *cantaor* who creates, often spontaneously, maintaining tradition while improvising verse. The neo-popular lyric manifests new imagery created by the poets and derived from the *cante* tradition. Both Lorca and Alberti grew up steeped in Andalusian folk traditions. And, similar to the *cantaor*, become agents both of conservation and of innovation through their neo-popular lyric.

All poetry including traditional poetry inherently manifests this double orientation. On the one hand, it maintains familiar styles and customs of tradition: on the other, it creates new expressions. *Cante jondo* adheres to tradition through the generational transmission of the songs while innovating the traditional themes and styles through performance, improvisation, and personal expression. Lorca and Alberti through their neo-popular lyric exacerbate the improvisation of *cante*.

Lorca celebrated Andalusia through both *cante jondo* and the traditional *romance* or ballad form in his poetic anthologies Poema del cante jondo and Romancero gitano. At the same time, he searched for a new style of expression in his poetry to “depurarla en el juego metafórico” and fled from “costumbrismo superficial” by employing “la

voluntad estilizante de Juan Ramón Jiménez y el poder metafórico de las vanguardias” (García Montero 43). The irrational imagery revealed in *cante* and in vanguard poetry coalesce in Lorca’s creation.

Alberti expressed nostalgia for his native land, the sea port of Cádiz, in Marinero en tierra, El alba del alhelí, and “Espantapájaros” from Sermones y moradas. He too subscribed to a newer imagery that avoided the trite “costumbrismo” of earlier Romantic lyric.

Lorca’s and Alberti’s study of and their enthusiasm for the traditional Spanish poetry as contained in the work of Gil Vicente, Lope de Vega, and Góngora engenders the conservative, traditional attitude in their lyrics, an attitude reflected in many of the poets of the Generation of ’27 whose orientation toward Spanish traditional poetry for inspiration and direction creates the national characteristic of their poetry (Díaz de Castro 44-45). The interest in Góngora for many of the Generation of ’27 was his intense and unusual use of symbol and metaphor (Díaz de Castro 43) which in turn influenced and stimulated the development of the startling imagery of the new generation.

Viewing Guillaume Apollinaire’s notion of “swift association,” Robert Bly’s concept of “leaping poetry,” and Carlos Bousoño’s theories of irrational and visionary imagery which coincide with the psychological theories of C.G. Jung helps trace the trajectory of irrational imagery in Spanish poetry. To these concepts, John Miles Foley adds the paralinguistic, a basic feature of orality that determines much of the spontaneity and thereby the irrational and visionary imagery of *cante*. In turn, these concepts clarify the heritage of irrational imagery in the poetry of Lorca and Alberti. The following



synopses of terms and Chapters I-III will outline the development of the focus of this dissertation

## **Chapter I: Theory-Methodology**

”Swift association” (Apollinaire)., “leaping poetry (Bly) on the one hand, and “irrational” and “visionary” imagery (Bousoño) with C. G. Jung’s psychological theory are ways to understand the popular in Lorca’s and Alberti’s poetry. Both poets emerged as eminently neo-popularist with the poetic group of the Generation of ’27 precisely because they intertwine “cante jondo,” the neo-popular, and the avant garde in their work. Love, death, loneliness, sorrow, pain, and the suffering resulting from personal involvement with these elements, i.e., life itself, are common themes in *cante* and the neo-popular expression and form a core in both their poetry.

*Cante jondo* and Lorca’s and Alberti’s imagery exhibit two orientations of traditional expression, namely, the conservative role and the innovative role.<sup>1</sup> The conservative attitude intends to maintain the traditional values, customs, and beliefs of a given category while the innovative expression tends to be creative and novel by departing from the traditional and using it as a motivation or spring-board to create new imagery. Museums, sound recordings, and written texts exemplify conservation while jazz and modern art reflect innovation

### ***Jung and the Unconscious***

C.G. Jung’s psychological theories offer several views of irrational imagery in traditional poetry as well as in the neo-popular expression. Jung’s “psychological mode” of poetic expression is initiated by “crucial life events” while the “visionary mode”

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<sup>1</sup> This idea developed from a Lecture by and conversation with Jorge de Persia in the summer of 2007 in Trujillo, Spain.

produces unusual imagery stirred by the life events (15:89-92). The two “modes” combine with the “transcendent function” in the artist’s creation of bizarre and irrational imagery continuing through *cante jondo* to its appearance in the neo-popular lyric of Lorca and Alberti.

### ***Bousoño--Irracionalidad***

Carlos Bousoño’s “el irracionalismo” (Bousoño Irracionalismo 21) or “la irracionalidad” (Bousoño Surrealismo 49) are basic to the investigation of the imagery in *cante jondo* and the neo-popular of Lorca and Alberti. Bousoño defines “irracionalismo (simbolismo)” in the contemporary sense, as that poetic expresión that “consiste en la utilización de palabras que nos emocionan” and these “palabras” become “portadoras de conceptos” of “asociaciones irreflexivas,” (Bousoño Irracionalismo 21).

In “irracionalismo poético” the “símbolo de irracionalidad o ilógico” (‘símbolo homogéneo,’ ‘imagen visionaria’ y ‘visión’) logical significance has disappeared completely (Bousoño Irracionalismo 28). The associations between terms of the image reveal the process of a “*salto*” that juxtaposes unusual elements in the image (Bousoño Teoría 230).

### ***“Swift Association” - Guillaume Apollinaire***

One of the affects of irrational imagery is surprise. Often, as in avant-garde expression, surrealism, it is a desired affect (Shattuck 15-16) achieved through a process of “swift” or “fast association.” in the language of the imagery (Apollinaire qtd.in Shattuck15-16). Apollinaire did not intend to completely shatter traditional aesthetic values, but instead, to select “from among the best of traditional elements” (Shattuck 16).

This attitude is similar to the neo-popularist attitude which intends to bring forward traditional popular imagery into new expression.

“Speed,” described as “fast” or “swift association,” of apparently unrelated, yet everyday, images that carry the force of an emotional charge (Shattuck 31) creates a “transformation” of objects, even people, in the imagery, relying as it does on intuition for the “understanding” of the expression. Similar to Bousoño’s “irrational” imagery, it first elicits an emotional response potentially followed by an “intuitive” understanding of the connections in the imagery. In addition, with the aspect to “swift association,” the process clearly demonstrates the spontaneous element of the new expression.

### *Bly’s Leaping Poetry*

“Leaping poetry” also resembles Apollinaire’s “fast association” and Bousoño’s “irrational.” “The leap can be described as a jump from the conscious to the unconscious and back again, a transition from the known part of the mind to the unknown and back to the known” (Bly 1). This process seems opposite from Bousoño’s model—an irrational image from the unconscious produces a feeling that results in another feeling in the conscious of the receiver. But Bly’s model takes place all in the mind of the poet while Bousoño’s model occurs between the poet and the reader. One may consequently assume that the poet’s and reader’s experience are similar.

Bly further defines leaping in language as the “ability to associate fast” (4), using almost identical terminology found in Apollinaire’s “swift association”. The distance between the associations in the imagery creates emotional intensity as well: “considerable distance between the associations, the distance the spark has to leap, gives the lines their

bottomless feeling, their space, and the speed of the association increases the excitement of the poetry” (Bly 4).

For Bly, *Duende* is, “passionate association” in Spanish poetry. Lorca’s *Duende*, on the other hand links death with both emotion and energy providing “wild association” necessary for the new poetry (Bly 28-29). *Duende* is a “preconscious” influence on the development of startling imagery of *cante*, the neo-popular, and vanguard lyric of Lorca and Alberti. *Duende* naturally associates with the “primitive” or primal mind. In Jungian terms it is the archetypal, “daemonic” energizer of imagery.

Orality, spontaneity, and the primitive as important factors for the creation of irrational imagery will be developed further in Chapters I and II.

## **Chapter II: *Cante jondo* as Textual Source**

Chapter II analyses *cante jondo* whose irrational imagery juxtaposes objects, even people, with little or no logical association in a symbolic unit. The primal quality of *cante* springs from the preconscious which fuels orality and spontaneity and energizes imagery with an emotional charge. Music, *cante jondo*, is a successful medium for irrational expression since it is less dependent on logic and mental order; “it relies heavily on intuition” (Ilie12) an activity displaying fast association and leaping poetry compatible with musical and oral expression.

### ***“Irrational” Imagery in Gypsy poetry (cante jondo)***

The Spanish Gypsies are major exponents of *cante jondo* that displays the characteristics of irrational imagery, the emotional preconscious source of intensity (violence, emotionality), spontaneity and other hallmarks of orality, and the grotesque, that result in the shocking, startling, or uncanny images. Indeed, Rafael Lafuente

describes the *Gitano* as having a “mentalidad surrealista” that produces poetic expression distinct from the usual flamenco *letras* further ascribing to it “un sabor singularísimo, inimitable, derivado de estos tres elementos esenciales: -Lenguaje pintorescamente incorrecto. – Surrealismo descriptivo. – Ternura (127). Depending on intuition these characteristics not only describe the Gypsy poetry, but find similarities with neo-popular expression.

### **Chapter III: *Cante jondo* and the Neo-Popular Expression**

Chapter III offers evidence of imagery of the popular song, *cante jondo*, in the neo-popular expression of Lorca and Alberti. The popularist and the neo-popularist poet merit differentiation:

Los poetas popularistas desean que su obra regrese lo más pronto posible al anonimato de la poesía tradicional. Los poetas neo-popularistas, por el contrario, están interesados en que se sepa su nombre, en que se conozca que ellos son los autores de estas poesías neo-popularistas. (Spang 40)

Neo-popularists differ from popularists because they chose exclusively those elements from the popular expression that corresponded to their “concepciones modernas y a veces vanguardistas de la poesía” (Spang 40). At times verses and phrases appear in Lorca’s works as *verbatim* borrowings from the *letra* of *cante jondo* and in other instances parallel expression of feeling resulting from the imagery. The analysis and comparison of the imagery from *cante* examined in Chapter II and that from the newer poetry of Lorca and Alberti reveal the conservation and innovation of the imagery from the popular to the neo-popular. The selections from Lorca include two ballads from the play Mariana Pineda, the *Romance sonámbulo* from Romancero gitano, and a *letra* or *copla* sung by

the washerwomen in the play Yerma, and Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías. An analysis of the imagery reveals orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque and the procedures of leaping poetry and fast association in imagery from popular to neo-popular.

The selections from Alberti's work "Saeta," "Los niños," and several "Nanas" from Marinero en tierra; "La Húngara" from El ALBA DEL ALHELÍ, VERTE Y NO VERTE an elegy for the *matador* Sánchez Mejías and juxtaposed with examples from *cante* demonstrate the same characteristics already signaled: orality, spontaneity, irrational and visionary imagery.

## CHAPTER I

### THEORY-METHODOLOGY

When the French Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé commented to the painter Edgar Degas that poetry is made of words not ideas, he offered a basic description of poetry (Princeton Encyclopedia 939). Moreover, words combine to produce images that can be metaphors, similes and other tropes (556). Metaphor as image hallmarks the Generation of '27 which included Rafael Alberti and Federico García Lorca. In 1927, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Baroque poet from Córdoba, Luis de Góngora, the group signaled his use of metaphor. As a member of the Generation of '27, Gerardo Diego linked it to the earlier Spanish Ultraist movement for which the function of metaphor was “poner en relación dos elementos no asociados normalmente en el mundo objetivo” (Geist 53). The Ultraists intended to create “nuevas realidades” within the poem that eliminated “referencias a ese mundo externo” (52-53).

The Generation of '27 held the metaphor as supremely important and inherited the Ultraist view of it “como un proceso mágico, el acercamiento de dos objetos alejados, lo que crea una relación nueva, supuestamente inexistente en el mundo natural” (Geist 85-86). Carlos Bousoño developed this view of the metaphor further with his theory of the “irrational image.”

Granted that image refers to a mental occurrence (Princeton Encyclopedia 557), this chapter will compare a special kind of imagery “irrational” or “visionary” imagery as it appears in the *letra* of *cante jondo* and the neo-popular poetry of Alberti and Lorca and eventually emerging in their newer expression often categorized as avant-garde and surrealist.

## **The Unconscious in Poetic Expression**

Irrational imagery springs from the preconscious according to Bousoño or from the unconscious according to Jung both of which concepts prove germane to the study of irrational imagery in *cante* and the poetry of Alberti and Lorca.

Scrutiny of the unconscious has a long history beginning at least in the Middle Ages with the study of the “soul” (Jung 8:159-66) and began to take on the characteristics of science with the work of psychologist Christian von Wolf in the seventeenth century (8:161). Later, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the term “unconscious” begins to appear in the works of experimental psychologist Wihlhelm Wundt and theorist Theodore Lipps (8:164-66). The summary of the interest in and the study of psychic phenomena imply a long historical basis for discussing the irrational imagery of poetic creation “from time immemorial” (Harris 34).

Of the two modes of the creation of poetry (art) Jung presents, one involves the “author’s intention to produce a particular result. He submits his material to a definite treatment with a definite aim in view” (15:72). Jung admits to the possibility of unconscious influences in the creative product, even though the artist has a definite aim and goal in sight and employs specific means to achieve this end. (15:72-73). The second mode of creation seems to spring forth from the unconscious almost ready-made. It appears that an activity in the unconscious Jung calls the “autonomous complex” moves the artist (15: 75) and “gains ground by activating the adjacent areas of *association*” (15: 79) which corresponds in many ways with the Surrealist concepts of automatic writing and surrealist imagery produced by unusual juxtapositions and fast associations. It



corresponds readily with Bousoño's definition of irrational imagery. The reader of the works that Jung describes must

be prepared for something suprapersonal that transcends our understanding. We would expect a strangeness of form and content, thoughts that can only be apprehended intuitively, a language pregnant with meanings, and images that are true symbols because they are the best possible expressions for something unknown-bridges thrown out toward an unknown shore (15: 75).

The autonomous complex derives its energy from the withdrawal of "conscious control of the personality" (15: 81) typifying the unconscious in the creation of the imagery and symbols of poetry.

Jung presents several descriptions of poetic creation. "Transcendent function" brings unconscious material into the conscious (8: 67-91). The spontaneity Jung describes parallels the spontaneity vital to the production of contemporary poetic imagery including that in *cante jondo*.

Jung presents the notion of the "transcendent function" as one bringing unconscious material into the conscious (8: 67-91). As well as the dream, the "active imagination is the most important auxiliary for the production of the contents of the unconscious which lie, as it were, immediately below the threshold of consciousness" (8: 68). This occurs when the unconscious contents "just below the threshold of consciousness" intensify and "erupt spontaneously into the conscious mind" (8: 68). This process parallels a similar description of the production of contemporary poetic imagery and the imagery of *cante jondo* and suggests Apollinaire's "fast association" and Robert Bly's "leap" in the creation of imagery. The poet and the *cantaor* are the artists that

experience this. Jung gives another view of this activity: “Great artists and others distinguished by creative gifts” have the advantage of the “permeability of the partition separating the conscious and the unconscious” (8: 70). On the other hand, Jung explains that the “directedness and the definiteness of the conscious mind” are extremely important for civilization and society (8: 70). Taken together, these observations give an interesting Jungian view of the artist in society: “The relative lack of these qualities (directedness, definiteness, reliability) in the artist renders these exceptional individuals of little value” (8: 70).

Jung proposes the “visionary mode” of artistic expression that contains unfamiliar material that surges from the “hinterland of man’s mind, as if it had emerged from the abyss of pre-human ages” (15: 90). Much like Bousoño’s “palabras que nos emocionan” that are “portadoras de conceptos” that actually carry the emotion, the visionary mode is an expression that owes its value to the “emotion of the experience and its shattering impact” (15: 90). Jung uses language to describe this mode that parallels Apollinaire and Bly: by turns, “sublime, pregnant with meaning, yet chilling the blood with its strangeness, it arises from timeless depths; glamorous, daemonic, and grotesque” This is the “dark, uncanny recesses of the human mind” (15: 90). This language is similar to the “contemporary poetic expression” that Bousoño analyzes that includes the surreal. The combination of the two Jungian “modes” of expression together with Bousoño’s “*irracionalismo*” in poetic imagery and the language of everyday objects describes the production of new and surreal imagery. <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In a note to these observations, editors Mead, Fordham, Adler, and McGuire explain that “The designation “psychological” is somewhat confusing in this context because, as the subsequent discussion makes clear, the visionary mode deals equally with “psychological material” (Jung 15: n.2 89). It should

### **Bousoño: *Irracionalismo Irracionalidad***

The concept of what Carlos Bousoño terms “el irracionalismo” ( Irracionalismo 21) or “la irracionalidad” ( Surrealismo 49) is basic to the investigation of the lyric expression in *cante jondo* and the neo-popular poetry of Lorca and Alberti and is key to the formation of the images and the language associations in both *cante jondo* and the neo-popular expression that surprises or shocks the reader. Bousoño defines “irracionalismo (simbolismo),” in the contemporary sense, as that poetic expression that “consiste en la utilización de palabras que nos emocionan” (Irracionalismo 21). These words are not only “portadoras de conceptos” but carry “asociaciones irreflexivas,” that is, associations that are not reflected upon, much like Apollinaire’s “fast associations” and Bly’s “leaping poetry”. These associations are made with other “portadoras” of concepts that actually carry the emotion, are seen to be “liberated” from their usual associations by the poetic and musical element of rhythm (Irracionalismo 360). This description of the emotionally charged language refers to the expression prior to what Bousoño designates the “período contemporáneo,” (Irracionalismo 23) that is, the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The earlier period begins with Baudelaire in Europe and Darío in the New World, the reader of the poetic expression first derived understanding of the lyric at hand followed by the experience of the emotion (Irracionalismo 23). On the other hand, the perceiver’s “irrational” experience of poetry reversed this procedure. He first

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be noted that the examples from Lorca that Carlos Bousoño uses to explain “irracionalismo” in imagery, seem to combine Jung’s two modes: there are “conscious” images from passion, suffering, and crucial experiences from life, while, at the same time, chilling, grotesque, and shattering “visions” from the dark abyss of pre-human life. These are examples from the Romancero gitano that have a popular orientation in the traditional Spanish ballad as well as many allusions and influences from *cante jondo*. The synthesis of the theoretical observations of Bousoño and Jung regarding the production of poetic imagery forms the basis for the analysis of the new imagery in *cante jondo* and the neo-popular and avant-garde expression of García Lorca and Alberti

experiences emotion and then comes to understand, intuitively and not necessarily completely, the “logic” of the expression in his consciousness; this constitutes an “irracionalidad” in which emotion “procede de una significación que se ha asociado inconscientemente al enunciado poemático, y que, por tanto, permanece oculta” (23). These two processes contrast: in the first case, traditionally, the reader understands, then feels; and in the newer instance, feels and then, intuitively, understands. The operative word here is “feel” rather than “understand” and emphasizes an emotional factor rather than a rational one. These poetic expressions are “símbolos,” “disémicos,” and “heterogéneos” that offer a “realistic” symbolic value to the expression as well as an “irrational” value. (Irracionalismo 27). Examples are from Lorca’s “Romance de la Guardia Civil Española” where “los caballos negros son” and “las herraduras negras son” (25). Here the color can be understood literally as well as figuratively; that is, the color of the horses and the horseshoes is black and, at the same time, by association, implies night, darkness, lack of sight, lack of life, and, finally, death. In the same ballad, the image of the riders as “jorobados y nocturnos” (25-27), a “logical” “realistic” image of riders bent over their mounts at night. The image of riders with humped backs suggests a monstrous (grotesque) image of the Guardia Civil at night thus presenting a dark feeling that portends evil and death (25-27). The *disémico* imagery describes the dark (black) of night that bodes evil and death and the hunched-over and hunched-back riders suggest a grotesque augury of death

The process of “equalizing” two terms characterizes the preconscious. Thus: “Soy un mueblecito de tristeza...” a classic metaphor creates the “irrational” imagery of the new poetry, especially the surrealist expression (Bousoño Teoría 230). Swift association

is a crucial ingredient for the development of the new poetry which depends on emotion for its energy and success. The emotion produced by the imagery catalyzes the reader's credibility and acceptance of the imagery, that is, an "asentimiento del lector" and the reader's faith in the emotional responsibility and maturity of the author of the poetic utterance (Irracionalismo 222). It is a case of rhyme over reason.

Vicente Aleixandre's "Juventud" from La destrucción o el amor provides an example: "mientras los muslos cantan" (Bousoño Irracionalismo 28-30). The personification lacks any intelligible meaning aside from the emotion the reader experiences nor does it provide any apparent logical association between "singing" on the one hand, and "thighs" on the other. (28-29). Later the reader may conclude that Aleixandre is alluding to the stunning beauty of thighs "en función amorosa" (29) that provokes a feeling, an emotion that causes an intuitive association of "amorous flowing beauty of motion" or something to that effect.

In Jungian terms, this imagery represents the first of "two modes" of artistic expression (15: 89). The first is "psychological" and has its roots in the "man's conscious life" whose contents include "crucial experiences, powerful emotions, sufferings, passion, the stuff of human fate in general" (15: 89). The second is more visionary and makes a leap from the unconscious to the conscious in the example from the "Romance de la Guardia Civil Española" from the more literal description of the riders as "hunchbacked" to the "visionary" image of the riders as an augury of death.

The synthesis of the theoretical observations of Bousoño and Jung regarding the production of poetic imagery forms the basis for the analysis of the new imagery in *cante jondo* and the neo-popular and avant-garde expression of Lorca and Alberti.

In The Dehumanization of Art José Ortega y Gasset describes metaphor as a process that “disposes of an object by having it masquerade as something else” (31). Normally the metaphor is used for “exalting the real object;” the simile, “to embellish and throw into relief beloved reality” (32). Ortega y Gasset points out that “in the new artistic expression” the poets instead of “ennobling and enhancing, belittle and disparage poor reality” (32). Finally, poetry is described as a “weapon” that “turns against natural things and wounds or murders them” (32). Ortega y Gasset is making his case for the “dehumanization of art.” However, the *cantaor*, the neo-popular poet, and the avant-garde poet, “humanize” nature with metaphor providing the reader and listener with rocks that cry and singers that become furniture. Insentient objects transform into sentient ones. Poetic violence surges from the preconscious spontaneously creating new visionary images that astound and awe the perceiver.

Robert Havard contends that the surrealist expression in Lorca and Alberti (as well as that of Dalí and Buñuel) is a result of early exposure to the Jesuit philosophy of transubstantiation i.e., the metamorphosis of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. Another lesson from the Loyolans and closely involved with surrealist expression in Lorca and Alberti requires that the incipient monk-priest not only imagine the horrors and tortures of Hell (22) but also learn to imagine the tastes, smells, feelings, sights, and sounds of Hell to understand the abomination. Transformation, transubstantiation and the closely related activities of distortion and fragmentation contribute to the grotesque quality of irrational imagery.

In the chapter, “Les themes du *je*,” Todorow discusses metamorphosis and pan-determinism in the supernatural in relation to the subject “I” (“yo,” Spanish, “je” French).

He proposes that, “le dénominateur commun des deux thèmes, métamorphoses (et pan-déterminisme) est la rupture (c’est à dire aussi la mise en lumière) de la limite entre matière et esprit” (Todorow 120). He finally formulates the hypothesis of the metamorphosis of spirit or mind into matter: “le passage de l’esprit à la matière est devenu possible” (120). Another consequence of the notion of the metamorphosis of mind into matter is the concept of the removal of the limits between subject and object (122). Todorow quotes Gérard de Nerval: ““Par un prodige bizarre, au bout de quelques minutes de contemplation, je me fondais avec l’objet fixé, et je devenais moi-même cet objet”” (123). The transformation described by Todorow mimics the confusion in the primitive preconscious mind where the appearance of a subject is recognized as its essence (Bousoño Teoría 285-86) and produces irrational imagery which astonishes the reader.

### **The Primitive in Irrational Imagery**

“Passionate associations” – “wild” and “animal” (Bly 2-4) – signal primitive origins of some poetic imagery and anticipate the definitions of lyric expression. As locus of the preconscious the primitive demands study in relation to *cante*, the neo-popular, and the vanguard as Bousoño elucidates. The primitive is basic to Jungian thought as well: “-it cannot be doubted that the vision is a genuine primordial experience” (15: 94). Jung argues that these visions partially form the “collective unconscious” and rise from this area into the conscious expression of the artist (15: 97). In the section on the transcendent function, Jung states that the primitive has more direct access to unconscious material and, while not having the same “directedness” as the “civilized” group, has regular input from unconscious material and that the unconscious “flows of its

own accord” in people with a “low level of conscious tension, as for instance primitives” (8: 75-78).

The primitive is a major spring for the development of the imagery of the three genres examined in this dissertation. The idea that the primitive views the naming of an object with the proprietorship of the object contributes to the sense of “magic” in the process which takes place in the preconscious of the individual and elicits an emotion associated with the object (Bousoño Teoría 246). There are three “*tendencias primitivas*” that occur in the primal development of imagery (Irracionalismo 274): the tendency to proceed from the part to the whole; the tendency toward the “*no selectiva abundancia*,” and the tendency “*confundir accidentes con las esencias*” (274). The first tendency suggests the development of metonymy, the representation of the whole by the part or *vice versa* (Irracionalismo 287-88) which takes place in the preconscious in the case of “irrational” imagery and suggests the continuing influence of the primal mind. The second tendency, the “*no selectiva abundancia*,” points to the action of the primal preconscious mind to accumulate objects in lengthy and redundant lists when a simple concept for the entire category would suffice (Irracionalismo 266-67). This suggests the unusual juxtaposition of objects that would come to define in great part the avant-garde expression. The third tendency is to confuse the appearance of a subject with its essence (274). These procedures result in irrational metaphoric imagery and occur in the preconscious in contrast with “rational” metaphors of the conscious mind (285).

As postulated in this thesis, Lorca and Alberti found inspiration in the popular song form *cante jondo*. For centuries, mankind has lived by preconscious emotional activity rather than rational thought (Bousoño Teoría 245). These emotional operations



in the primitive mind confuse the real object with its name which in the preconscious is “una verdadera identidad” not just a comparison of an everyday object, for example, in terms of a color (246-48). In the primitive mind, the emotional activity in the preconscious results in an “identidad real” rather than a simple comparison of distinct objects and energizes the production of the expression in intense imagery (249).

One result of the emotional operation in the preconscious of the primal mind is that the objects thus identified as “real,” are autonomous beings with a life of their own (Bousoño Teoría 239) such that, nature, landscapes, and inanimate objects become real entities rather than neutral or inert background (239). Natural imagery in *cante* demonstrates this vividly as in the personification “rocks that cry”. Furthermore, entire *letras* act as metaphors, for example “*He sembrao un tomillo / no me ha salío ná / Él que quiera tomillo / vaya al tomillar.*” Where nature is a protagonist in the drama, not merely a background, metaphor associates natural events and love with difficulties in a romantic relationship. Joining thyme plants and gardens with romantic difficulties demonstrates a preconscious irrational association in primal oral expression.

The appearance of a subject is equivalent to its essence in the preconscious, primal mind: “Según tal simbolización, la forma...se viene a confundir preconsientemente con la substancia o esencia” (Bousoño Irracionalismo 285-86). The preconscious equates two terms which produces: “Soy un mueblecito de tristeza...” The emotional basis of the operation in the preconscious gives it the irrational quality that continues in the new imagery of neo-popular and vanguard expression.

## **Guillaume Apollinaire – Swift Association**

Guillaume Apollinaire in L'antitradition futuriste extolled the value of surprise as an aspect of the new spirit in art which results from “swift” or “fast association” (Shattuck 15-16). Apollinaire did not intend completely to shatter traditional aesthetic values, but instead, to select “from among the best of traditional elements” (16) an attitude similar to the neo-popularist attitude which intends to bring forward traditional popular imagery into new expression.

Fast or swift association, or speed necessary for the creation of the new reality of apparently unrelated, often everyday, images carries the force of an emotional charge exhibited in Guillaume Apollinaire’s poetry (Shattuck 31). Fast association often creates a transformation of objects, even people, in the imagery and relies on intuition for the understanding of the expression. Because it elicits an emotional response that can be followed by an intuitive understanding of the connections in the imagery, it resembles Bousoño’s irrational image. Speed, inherent to swift association, inheres the emotional and intuitive energy necessary to make the associations.

## **Robert Bly’s Leaping Poetry**

“Leaping poetry” describes new poetic imagery and resembles Apollinaire’s fast association and Bousoño’s irrational imagery with its unconscious location: “The leap can be described as a leap from the conscious to the unconscious and back again, a leap from the known part of the mind to the unknown and back to the known” (Bly 1). The difference between Robert Bly’s model and Bousoño’s is that Bly’s takes place completely in the mind of the poet while Bousoño’s model occurs between the poet and

the reader. One may assume that in this model the reader will experience the similar intuitive feeling or “reading” of the imagery that inspired the poet.

Robert Bly further defines leaping as the “ability to associate fast” (Bly 44) which calls to mind Apollinaire’s swift association. And still refining, Bly makes clear how distance further intensifies emotion: “considerable distance between the associations, the distance the spark has to leap, gives the lines their bottomless feeling, their space, and the speed of the association increases the excitement of the poetry” (4).

Bly’s “spark” for the poetic creation recalls Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer’s “chispa eléctrica” when a poet creates. However the Spanish post-Romantic poet seemed to be referring to the stimulus or motivation for the poetry rather than the act of creating poetry itself.

“Rapid association” is also a “form of content” (Bly14) in that, not only does it produce intense exciting imagery as content, but is in itself content. An entire poem or, in the case of *cante jondo*, an entire *copla*, can act as a trope; for example in a *letra* from *cante* explained earlier: “He sembrao un tomillo/no me salió ná / Él que quiere tomillo / vaya al tomillar”.

The distinction between French and Spanish surrealism is clear. The associations that are wild and animal suggest primitive origins in poetic imagery that anticipate the definitions of surrealism in lyric expression. The Spanish poet has “a heavy body of feelings piled up behind him as if behind a dam” and seems to “roll over you” as it begins with powerful emotion (Bly 28). *Cante jondo* has the same effect and frequently reveals the primal presence of the *duende* discussed later in the section on *cante* and Lorca. The Spanish poetic imagery results from “passionate associations” that are “wild” (28) and

may be associated with the primal factor as well as the psychological attributes of the poetic associations. Although French as well as Spanish both make leaps in their poetry, according to Bly, in the French, little or no emotion in the unconscious, sparks the leap (28).

### **John Miles Foley and Paralinguistic Features**

In The Singer of Tales in Performance, John Miles Foley offers features, identified by Dennis Tedlock as “paralinguistic” from oral presentation of poetry that include voice control, volume, and pausing (18). *Cante jondo* exhibits, along with the paralinguistic features, another identified as melisma, a group of notes or tones sung on one syllable, basic to the study of irrational and visionary imagery in *cante jondo* and the neo-popularist poetry of Lorca and Alberti. As paralinguistic, these features appear spontaneously in the presentation of *cante* reinforcing the irrational and visionary. A problem occurs when rendering these features in the written or literary text (19). Lorca and Alberti frequently included the expression “Ay,” even extended on the page as “Ayyy” to represent the suprasegmental of rhythm.

Taken together, the theories and observations offered by the Ultraists, Generation of '27 on the metaphor, the writers Apollinaire and Bly, and theorists Jung and Bousoño provide a foundation for the examination of the imagery of *cante jondo* and the neo-popular poetry of Rafael Alberti and Federico García Lorca

## CHAPTER II

### “CON LOS DEÍTOS E LA MANO ARAÑABA LA PARÉ”

#### **Features in the genesis of irrational imagery in the popular song form, *cante jondo*: orality, spontaneity, the grotesque and the primitive**

*“Quizá la primer vez que un miembro de las hordas primigenias, uno de aquellos hombres que aún no tenían lenguaje, al ver muerto a su lado a un compañero de su especie, a su pareja, a su hijo, a su padre, con fiereza animal y desconuelo amanecientemente humano gritó sin fin contra el silencioso Universo”* (Grande 29).

*“Surrealism had been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry”* (Rafael Alberti qtd in Harris 34).

*“Una tragedia en primera persona”* (José Monleón qtd in Grande 174).

Felix Grande’s quote describes a primitive cry of our species and provides an example of surreal in *cante*, namely through its orality and through spontaneous, and irrational imagery. This chapter will examine the Gypsy-Andalusian *cante jondo* in terms of its emotional preconscious origin manifested in the resulting “*saltos*,” “swift association,” and “leaping poetry,” the terms of Bousoño, Apollinaire and Robert Bly respectively.

Rafael Alberti’s quotation, “ ‘Surrealism had been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry,’ ” opens the discussion and investigation of these characteristics in *cante jondo*, which would influence his own and García Lorca’s poetry and by which they subscribed to a

traditional form of popular expression. Despite nearly two hundred years of history and development based on early Arabic, Jewish, Byzantine, and Gypsy musical elements (Leblon 84-91), the *Romancero viejo* and the *Romancero general* added their own influence to *cante* (Mitchell 75-76) or specifically the avant-garde and surrealist traits of irrational and visionary imagery. Lorca's lecture from the preparation for the Concurso of 1922, "El cante jondo: primitivo canto andaluz," locates the origins of *cante* in Spain's ancient past, claims a transcendent quality to *cante*, and thereby augments Alberti's view of the surreal aspects of popular song and folk poetry "since time immemorial" (Harris 34):

El cante flamenco no procede por ondulación, sino por saltos; como en nuestra música tiene un ritmo seguro y nació cuando ya hacía siglos que Guido d'Arezzo había dado nombre a las notas (*Obras Completas* 975)

Es, pues, un rarísimo ejemplar de canto primitivo, el más viejo de toda Europa, que lleva en sus notas la desnuda y escalofriante emoción de las primeras razas orientales (975)

Es el grito de las generaciones muertas, la aguda elegía de los siglos desaparecidos, es la patética evocación del amor bajo otras lunas y otros vientos (976)

El cante jondo se ha venido cultivando desde tiempo inmemorial (979)

Veán ustedes señores, la trascendencia que tiene el cante jondo y qué acierto tan grande el que tuvo nuestro pueblo al llamarlo así. Es hondo, verdaderamente hondo, más que todos los pozos y todos los mares que rodean el mundo, mucho más hondo que el corazón actual que lo crea y la voz que lo canta,

porque es casi infinito. Viene de las razas lejanas, atravesando el cementerio de los años y las frondas de los vientos marchitos. Viene del primer llanto y el primer beso (982).

Lorca signals many salient factors of irrational imagery that are examined in this study: the early precedence of *cante*, its development by leaps (*saltos*), and the chilling emotional nature of its expression.

If audiences other than aficionados do not consider *cante* beautiful, what attracts listeners to it? What sets *cante* apart? The description of *cante* by some – Rafael Lafuente, Edward F. Stanton, and, D.E. Pohren, for example – as “striking” elicits the question: What is it that “strikes” us? What about *cante* struck Lorca and Alberti causing them to write and speak so eloquently about it and more importantly to incorporate it into their art? Although *cante* speaks of universal themes of love, death, sorrow, and, religion, along with many others, so does most of the poetry of the world.

The attention grabber in *cante*, what “strikes” the listener, is its imagery described as “palabras que nos emocionan” and it is “irrational,” that is, it is symbolical (Bousoño Irracionalismo 21). Illogical and irrational associations made through a “salto” in the imagery elicit an emotion in the reader or listener (230). When a poet, or in the case of *cante*, the *cantaor* creates an image, the site of creation is the preconscious. The first experience of the image in a reader or listener also takes place in the preconscious because the conscious experience of the image, logical analysis of the imagery happens subsequently. At the immediate preconscious experience it is an emotion potentially understood as a “level” of the unconscious similar to Jung’s “subconscious” or “quasi-conscious” (8:187-188). The preconscious genesis of irrational imagery ladens it with

qualities best described as the spontaneous and bizarre or grotesque of the primal mind, the locus of unconscious symbolization expressed consciously and spontaneously in irrational images.

In *cante*, imagery appears in a logical structure that recalls the *romance* or *copla andaluza*, while its performance re-orders the traditional structure and re-enforces irrational imagery. Although an important distinction exists between epic poetry, a cousin of the *romance* or *copla*, and *cante jondo* in that epic consists of hundreds of verses with irregular rhyme and more anecdotal description, *cante* at one time very possibly consisted of more verses and stanzas. The *non sequiturs* of some *coplas* points to the possible existence of more verses that carried the history, story, and gnosis of the Gypsy people in a more epic-like form.

Rafael Cansinos-Asséns summarizes the *copla andaluza* as a basis for *cante jondo* thus:

El cante flamenco es hondo porque viene de lo hondo, del abismo, de lo inconsciente, de lo que Dostoievski llamaba la caverna, y adviértase que al reconocerle esta hondura se le consagra, se le confiere cierta calidad de sagrado y serio, que es lo que precisamente le capacita para canto de mezquita y sinagoga.

La hondura del cante flamenco es lo que constituye su grandeza su religiosidad, su humanidad, pues estas dos palabras sí que son sinónimas. (168)

For Cansinos-Asséns then, depth, the abyss, and the unconscious promotes the sacredness and gravitas of expression. He echoes Jung's language in describing the unconscious origin of "visionary modes of artistic creation" (15: 90). *Cante jondo*, or deep song, exhibits "*irracionalismo*" or "*irracionalidad*" of "*imágenes visionarias*" used



to describe avant-garde and surrealist imagery (Bousoño Irracionalismo 230). To these we can add Bly's "leaping poetry" and Apollinaire's "fast association." The unconsciousness and depth Cansinos-Asséns alludes to in his description of the *copla andaluza* ties in with Bousoño's and Jung's concept of the preconscious, the first locus for the genesis of irrational poetic imagery. Moreover, Cansinos-Assén's description of the *copla andaluza* as basis for *cante* suggests the early history and origins of the *copla* (Asséns 35) while Bousoño's theory focuses on contemporary expression.

Federico García Lorca, in his lecture on *cante jondo*, described *cante* in poetic language as well as in terms that point to the neo-popular and even surrealist imagery. The quote from his lecture on *cante* used above to describe the early provenance of *cante* also points to *cante* as a source for striking imagery.

Vean ustedes, señores, la trascendencia que tiene el cante jondo y qué acierto tan grande el que tuvo nuestro pueblo al llamarlo así. Es, hondo, verdaderamente hondo, más que todos los pozos y todos los mares que rodean el mundo, mucho más hondo que el corazón actual que lo crea y la voz que lo canta porque es casi infinito. Viene de razas lejanas, atravesando el cementerio de los años y las frondas de los vientos marchitos. Viene del primer llanto y el primer beso. (Obras Completas 982)

Lorca describes the poetry of *cante* further on in his lecture:

Las más infinitas gradaciones del Dolor y la Pena, puestas al servicio de la expresión más pura y exacta, laten en los tercetos y cuartetos de la siguiriya y sus derivados.

No hay nada, absolutamente nada, igual en toda España, ni en estilización, ni en ambiente, ni en justeza emocional.

Las metáforas que pueblan nuestro cancionero andaluz están siempre dentro de su órbita; no hay desproporción entre los miembros espirituales de los versos y consiguen adueñarse de nuestro corazón de una manera definitiva (Obras Completas 983).

Lorca's words echo Jung's description of the source of artistic creation as "from the abyss of pre-human ages" (15: 90). Creation in *cante* transcends, transforms, and transubstantiates all processes pointing to a phenomenon that goes beyond the ordinary realm of consciousness and perception of reality. Moreover, Lorca, like Cansinos-Asséns, describes *cante* as deep which suggests not only its gravity but its unconscious or preconscious origins. Lorca claims emotional, irrational, and passionate qualities for the *cante* when it occurs with the "first sob and first kiss" essentially what Apollinaire posited when he coined the term *surreal*: more real than real, beyond real. The reader or listener finds special qualities of depth and spirituality in *cante* that avoid light-hearted, even trivial, romantic sing-song and which support the discovery of irrational imagery. J.M. Aguirre quotes Antonio Machado who writes in the criticism of Arias tristes by Juan Ramón Jiménez: "Creo que una poesía que aspire a conmover a todos ha de ser muy íntima. Lo más hondo es lo más universal" (67). Machado is primarily talking about the universality of symbolism and what makes poetry moving to all readers: intimacy and depth.

*Cante jondo* reveals evidence of orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque that underlie the irrational imagery of traditional and popular verse. *Cante* begins the

trajectory of the imagery in the popular vernacular, from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century through to the avant-garde in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. *Cante*'s imagery although not quite yet surreal contains the seeds of the avant-garde in irrational imagery that forms a basis for the next step in the trajectory of irrational imagery in the neo-popular expression. The Spanish Gypsies' creation and performance of *letra* and music demonstrate the primal and irrational nature of *cante* imagery.

### **Gypsy History, Culture, and Lifestyle in Spain**

A brief examination of the history and culture of the Spanish Gypsies will provide background for the study of *cante*. The particular cultural life-style, history, and mode of expression of this group lends a great deal to the irrational elements that influence the poetry of *cante jondo* and its later development, i.e., the neo-popular and avant-garde expression of García Lorca and Rafael Alberti. Andalusian-Gypsy *cante jondo* exhibits imagery that expresses emotions stimulated by the history and lifestyle described below.

Accepted lore has Gypsy originating in northern India, in what is now known as Pakistan, a determination traced to documents from the 18<sup>th</sup> century which note the great similarity between the Gypsy language and a dialect of Sanskrit spoken in northern India (Clébert 16-17). Furthermore, official documentation places the Gypsies in Eastern Europe toward the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Clébert) and in Spain (Cataluña) in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup> century although there is some evidence that they may have been in Europe from an earlier time (36). Still, another group of Gypsies, *Gitanos* (taken from *Egipcianos*, Egyptians), arrived in southern Spain at a somewhat earlier date (82-85). This particular group intrigues because of its contribution to the art of *cante jondo* and the ensuing influence in the lyric of Lorca and Alberti.

Berbard Leblon provides in Gypsies and Flamenco an understanding of what happened to Gypsies and I rely on him extensively in the following discussion. Gypsies suffered the same persecutions as their fellows in other parts of Europe and the Near and Far East. In 1499, “Ferdinand and Isabella...signed Spain’s first anti-Gypsy law” (28). This law, together with the Office of the Holy Inquisition, provided for the expulsion of the Gypsies if they did not “settle down and take up a trade or hire themselves out as servants” (28). If they refused this course of action they must leave the country within sixty days

on pain of 100 lashes and condemnation to perpetual exile. In case of recidivism, they were to have their ears slit (the contemporary equivalent to ‘having a record’), be incarcerated in chains for a period of 60 days then re-expelled. Finally, if they persisted in disobeying, they were to become the slaves for life of whoever captured them. (28)

For the next two centuries, the Spanish monarchy continued these measures with some interesting variations. In 1539, Charles I dictated that Gypsies be given a “three month deadline to choose between settlement and exile” (30). Non compliance with this regulation, resulted in males between the ages of twenty and fifty caught traveling in a group of three or more being sent to the galleys for six years (30). An interesting “scholarly” study in the 16<sup>th</sup> century suggested that Gypsies did not constitute an “ethnically distinct people” and led to the view that “there is no such thing as a Gypsy” (32). In 1695, 1717, 1745, and 1746 Charles the II signed the first Law of Assimilation (Leblon 37). These laws contained various articles that prescribed measures for controlling the Gypsies and forcing their assimilation into Spanish society. Failure by the

Gypsies to abide by these laws resulted in servitude in the galleys and in 1748, in agreement with the Holy See, a commission of Philip IV rescinded the secular law of “cold immunity” whereby an offender could seek sanctuary in a church (35-36). The Law of 1745 dictated that Gypsies who abandoned the forced assimilation in prescribed residences or who resisted this placement could be “shot on sight” (40). In 1783 Charles III signed the last of the Spanish Gypsy laws (43). This law, while maintaining harsh punishment for Gypsies who continued to behave as Gypsies (branding with red-hot irons and the death penalty for repeat offenders), provided freedom of residence and choice of occupation (43-45). These laws provided for the treatment or control of Gypsies and continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with amendments and regulations enforced by the *Guardia Civil* under the Franco regime in the 1940’s (54). The foregoing review of the Gypsy history in Spain as well as the rest of Europe highlights the social and civil conditions that created a nightmarish existence and the continuous psychic and physical violence the Gypsy suffered as societal pariah.

Together, the cultural distinctions the Gypsy brought from the Orient, and the nightmare of pariah combine to create a surrealist attitude in the Gypsy artistic expression. In other words, the horrific, intense experience of Gypsy life energizes unconscious material giving rise to the grotesque and irrational imagery of *cante jondo*.

A “wild” or “animal” quality of leaping imagery, characterizable as primitive, reflects the persistence of Gypsy customs and a primitive or primal lifestyle. To examine Gypsy lifestyle reveals factors that influence the imagery of *cante jondo* and, in turn, are evident in the poetry of Lorca and Alberti, neo-popular and avant-garde artists who

turned to the primal culture as a source for new imagery. The primal mind indeed resembles the preconscious aspect of poetic psychology.

Although the Gypsy lives in a contemporary society, many of his cultural activities exhibit behaviors found in a primitive lifestyle. One activity is his song, *cante jondo*, which expresses the vagaries of nomadic life and the discrimination and persecution experienced during peregrinations.

Rafael Lafuente describes the *Gitano* as having a “*mentalidad surrealista*” that produces poetic expression distinct from the usual flamenco *letras* (127). He further describes the Gypsy expression as having “un sabor singularísimo, inimitable, derivado de estos tres elementos esenciales: -Lenguaje pintorescamente incorrecto. –Surrealismo descriptivo. –Ternura (127). Such a prescription describes not only the Gypsy poetic expression, but also the newer neo-popularist and even avant-garde poetic. Clearly the Gypsy had little or no awareness of a Parisian Surrealist literary movement in the 1920’s. The poetic imagery produced by the Gypsy “*mentalidad surrealista*” results from a simultaneous and independent spontaneity with a bizarre cast to it. Said imagery reveals in its orality, in its “lenguaje pintorescamente incorrecto” the origin of irrational imagery in the preconscious mind which leaps into consciousness while shocking and startling the listener. The surrealist mentality of the Gypsy reflects his Oriental origins as well as his social and cultural history in Spain and other European countries.

Lafuente offers several *letras* from the flamenco repertoire supporting his observations on the particular Gypsy style of expression. The following is a typical example.

Con las fatiguitas de la muerte  
a un laíto yo me arrimé.  
Con los deítos de la mano  
arañaba la pared (Lafuente 128)

The stark description of a Gypsy in prison reflects the “surrealismo descriptivo” Lafuente points out in Gypsy poetry (127) while the terse, concise language demonstrates the spontaneity in this expression. The moribund image of a Gypsy in prison appears bizarrely fragmented as a portion of his body, his hand, “spiders” the wall. The image leaps from the preconscious of the *cantaor* in an archetypal symbol of aggressiveness and the eternal cycle of life and death (transmutation) represented by the spider, *araña*, image (Cirlot 304). The metaphor residing in the verb “arañar”, possibly stimulated by creatures in the prison cell, surges preconsciously from the tortured soul of the hapless Gypsy distorting a more “usual” reality to startle and shock the listener. The phrase manifests Jung’s two modes of artistic creativity: the conscious influence due to “crucial experiences, powerful emotions, suffering, passion, the stuff of human fate in general” and the spontaneous creation of images that express the emotion (15: 89). Common terms tell the story, “fatiguitas de la muerte,” los deítos e la mano,” and “la pared.” But their association reveals the spontaneous leap that demonstrates “irrational” and “visionary” imagery which Lafuente denotes as “*surrealismo descriptivo*” (127). The Gypsy dialect of the Spanish language, *caló*, an example of the “lenguaje pintorescamente incorrecto” adds to the general effect of the Gypsy poetry (127). Two modes of creative imagery combine in the terse quatrain of the *cante jondo letra* producing a striking, grotesque, and uncanny expression and response. The *letra*, a quatrain with octosyllabic meter and

assonant rhyme is a good example of the *copla andaluza* that demonstrates the influence of the traditional *romance*.

Another *letra* exhibits the “ternura” and “lenguaje pintolescamente incorrecto” of Gypsy poetry (Lafuente 127).

No le pegue usted a mi pare,  
que er probe es mu viejesito  
y no s’ha metío con naide (Lafuente 128)

The mixture of tenderness and violence, an image of “ambivalent unity,” startles the listener (Bakhtin 416). The emotional tone of the *letra* as well as the association of the images of punishment, “pegue,” of age, “viejesito,” and (lack) of confrontation, “no s’ha metío con naide,” lend spontaneity to the song. Add to this the performance aspects of orality and the innate conversational and tragic tone in the first person and the *letra* elicits a stark, shocking effect in the listener.

### **Cante Jondo and Orality**

Millman Parry and Alfred Lord’s *Oral Formulaic Theory* examines orality in Homeric and Slavic epic poetry. Orality is a feature of a “primal oral culture,” a community that has no contact with literacy or a literate culture that today is nearly impossible to find (Ong 6-11). Nonetheless, “Still, to varying degrees, many cultures and subcultures, even in a high-technology ambiance, preserve much of the mind-set of primary orality” (Ong 11). Felix Grande’s description of a possible first utterance of primitive man quoted above forms the basis for the discussion of various features that give a special quality to primitive song. The imagery of popular song, the music of the people, often categorized as “folk” song, contains these same components. Orality and



the vernacular serve as a source for the language and imagery in the popular idiom and for imagery in the neo-popular imagery in the poetry of Lorca and Alberti. The examination of primitive culture and song, an understanding of primitive and oral qualities of *cante*, the primal nature of Gypsy singers, and features of orality traces imagery from *cante jondo* through the neo-popular lyric of Federico García Lorca and Rafael Albert.

Many features described in Parry's *Oral Formulaic Theory* and found in *cante jondo* reflect the primitive lifestyle of the Gypsies<sup>3</sup> i.e., reflect characteristics of a primitive or "primal" culture of a "grupo reducido (que) se basta a sí mismo" since as nomads their territory is not geographic but vitally human (Botey 55-56). The characteristic first-person "yo" in much of *cante* suggests this aspect of Gypsy life, the "tragedia en primera persona" that Monleón observes (qtd. in Grande 174). The Gypsy, "autosuficiente," usually lives in groups of about one hundred individuals, is often illiterate and non-industrialized (Botey 56). The "civilized" non-Gypsy individual may be illiterate but not "uncultured" (Clébert 114). The attention paid to *cante* by Antonio Machado y Álvarez and others in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and García Lorca and de Falla in the early 1900's, for example, demonstrates the cultural wealth of the Gypsies.

Because Gypsy life is above all nomadic (Clébert 201), it places him in close touch with Nature much like the lifestyle of primitive man who "lives for the most part in the open air and knows the untamed, uncultivated realm of primeval nature with an intimacy beyond the reach of even the most ardent naturalist" (Bowra 141). The proximity to nature indubitably influences expression of the Gypsy's song and enables

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<sup>3</sup> (Josephs and Caballero prefer "primal" to "primitive" in order to avoid the often pejorative implication of the latter (p.45 n.40).

expression for whatever theme is appropriate at a given time: the search for food and shelter, love, birth, death, or the treatment at the hands of the societies through which he travels. The same proximity to nature provides the background for the preconscious, spontaneous, and bizarre imagery of his poetry. Even more, in Andalusia, the Gypsy uses the natural setting, nature, as a protagonist, a character in his expression not simply as a descriptive background. This feature stands out in Lorca and Alberti's new expression as well and becomes one of the most important features of contemporary poetry (Bousoño Surrealismo 115).

Gypsies' occupations enhance interest and insight into the themes of *cante jondo*, the poetry of Federico García Lorca and Rafael Alberti, and the irrational and visionary imagery discovered in these art forms. Across borders and times the Gypsies have primarily taken up the occupations as smiths, musicians and horse dealers (Clébert 96). These three occupations--the smith (and by extension its location, the forge), the musician, and association with the horse—form the poetic grist of *cante jondo*. The smith provides valuable information for this investigation.

As Mircea Eliade elucidates, from the Iron Age the smith had an important place in many societies as the person connected with the “large number of rites, myths, and symbols which have reverberated throughout the spiritual history of humanity” (24). The holy aspect of iron connects with its first arrival in useable form as meteorites from the sky and, later, as ore from mines (25).

The smith is first and foremost a worker in iron, and his nomadic condition—for he is constantly on the move in his quest for raw metal and for orders for work—puts

him in touch with differing populations. The smith becomes the principal agent in this spread of mythic rites and metallurgical mysteries.” (Eliade 25)

Eliade continues by stating that song and drinking beer are other activities that describe the (African) smith as he invokes the protection of the deities (61). The ritual mythic quality of the smith’s occupation, connected with his use of fire, enable him to “influence time and hasten the process of Nature (79). Irrational, visionary, even surrealist qualities reside in such activity: “It was therefore the manifestation of a magico-religious power which could modify the world and which, consequently, did not belong to this world” (79) a transcendent aspect of art that Apollinaire described with the coining of the word “surreal” in his introduction to Les Mamelles de Tirésias, seems to parallel this description. The transformative function of magic together with the alchemical processes of metallurgy provide a cultural basis in practice for the transformation of one object or substance into another. Magic and its supernatural powers of divination, resuscitation, conjuring, and general change of appearance underpin distortion (Shattuck 49-50). *Cante jondo*, the neo-popularist expression of Lorca and Alberti, and the poetry of the avant-garde with surrealist procedures display distortion (the grotesque, the bizarre), transformation, up to and including transubstantiation.

The smith transmits rites and genealogical information pertaining to the relationships between shamans, heroes, and smiths and the evidence of the beginnings of epic poetry which presupposes “the existence of a long oral tradition” (Eliade 88). A connection with epic singers and Gypsies exists. “Certain aspects of the kinship between the craft of the smith and epic poetry are perceptible even today in the Near East and Eastern Europe where smiths and Tzigane (Gypsy) tinkers are usually bards, singers or

geneologists” (Eliade 88). It follows that the Gypsy singers of *cante jondo* in Spain continue this tradition where the songs of the forge, the *martinetes*, are considered foundational Gypsy *cante par excellence*. The following is a traditional *siguiriyas*, a form derived directly from the *martinetes*:

Er yunque y martiyo  
rompen los metales;  
er juramento que yo a tí t’ha jecho  
no lo rompe naide (Machado y Álvarez 159)

Inert objects, the anvil and hammer, become animate. The singer declares the strength of his fidelity as a comparison to the behavior of the forge. In a spontaneous associative leap, the singer metaphorically compares the concrete operations of the hammer and anvil to his more abstract emotional tenor. This operation takes place in the preconscious of the singer where the strength of emotion energizes the creation of the imagery. The use of everyday objects common to the Gypsy’s life together with his passionate state, synthesize the conscious with the preconscious generation of the imagery.

The Tziganes, the *Rom* in Sanskrit, associate with the caste of musicians and untouchables in India (Eliade 99). Furthermore, “There would appear to have existed . . . a close connection between the art of the smith, the occult sciences (shamanism, magic, healing, etc.) and the art of song, dance and poetry” (99). The Spanish indie Gypsies, as already noted, maintain these traditional activities and forms of expression today.

Smith and the horse closely connect within Gypsy culture. The horse appears frequently in *cante jondo* and Lorca’s poetry. As symbol, the horse generally is associated with the links to “blind forces of primigenial chaos,” and the “natural,

unconscious, instinctive zone” as well as magic (Cirlot 152). The horse frequently symbolizes the instinctual, the libidinal, and is also a helpful animal (Allen 61-63). The horse thus functions as a psychopomp, a messenger of death, in some cases of life, as in the instance of the white horse as life and the black horse as death (Cirlot 152). The horse often represents the unconscious including the darker, lower side of human nature while the lucky horse-shoe suggests a magical quality (152). Horse trading and dealing activities reflect the importance of the horse for the Gypsy community (Clébert 103-104). The Gypsies are renowned for their trading, singing, and dancing in the annual horse fair in Triana, a suburb of Sevilla, Spain and in festivities around the fair. Gypsy participation in horse fairs is recognized world wide (Clébert 104) and their familiarity with equine animals has been noted as early as the writings of the great Cervantes himself.

Examples of the horse and its association with Gypsy expression abound in *cante* and in the poetry of García Lorca. *Cante* provides the popular versions that Lorca reworks in a neo-popular manner while keeping the irrational and illogical images that foreshadow the avant-garde expression to come. A poignant *fandango natural* sung by “Perrate” demonstrates these aspects:

Antes de llegar a tu puerta,

mi caballo se paró.

Parece que comprendía

que tú a mí me hacías traición

y echar el paso no quería (Flamenco Festival Gitano 3 Live #10)

In this *letra* the horse provides a polysemic symbol that reflects the emotions of anger, frustration, and heartbreak suffered by his rider as well as his vengeful attitude toward the betrayal by the lover. The horse carries the darker, libidinous, unconscious aspects of the Gypsy. The process of endowing an everyday object (animal) with emotional energy, cathexis, is consistent with the imagery of the popular and neo-popular expression as well as later avant-garde techniques. The juxtaposition or association of distant elements (objects), in this case the emotions of the jilted Gypsy and the mental process of his mount, creates the leap or spark in spontaneous irrational imagery that astounds the audience. The preconscious nature of this process cannot be subjected to rational scrutiny and reflects the “*salto*” with which Bousoño describes associations in the preconscious. The personification of the animal allows the horse to express human emotions, in this case the sense of loss and anger of his rider, and demonstrates the irrational component found later in the avant-garde expression. The Gypsy and his mount simultaneously express primal emotions effected by the irrational association of images. The primitive preconscious source of creation reveals a “magical,” spontaneous, and swift association generating a synthesis of conscious and preconscious imagery in a “contemporary” mode of poetic expression.

The structure of the *fandango letra* as it appears on the written page is similar to the traditional *cuarteta* except that it has five octosyllabic lines instead of the usual four of other *cante*. During the performance event the traditional structure does not stand out because of the paralinguistic prosody in the singing style of the *cantaor* which include the *melisma* of certain vowel tones, especially those at the end of a line, and, frequently, the rearrangement of the verse lines, another instance of spontaneity from a preconscious

source. The rearrangement produces “irrational” and “surreal” images through the juxtaposition of the language of *cante*.

The image of the horse continues in Lorca’s verse with the poem “Camino” in Poema del Cante Jondo from the section Gráfico de la Petenera<sup>4</sup>:

### Camino

Cien jinetes enlutados,  
¿dónde irán,  
por el cielo yacente  
del naranjal?  
Ni a Córdoba ni a Sevilla  
llegarán.  
Ni a Granada la que suspira  
por el mar.  
Esos caballos soñolientos  
los llevarán,  
al laberinto de las cruces  
donde tiembla el cantar.  
Con siete ayes clavados,  
¿dónde irán

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<sup>4</sup> The *Petenera* is not normally considered *cante jondo*. For further discussion of Lorca’s inclusion of this *cante* in his collection Poema del Cante Jondo see Josephs and Caballero Poema del Cante Jondo Romancero. Gitano n.\* p.174.

los cien jinetes andaluces

del naranjal? (Obras Completas 190)

Lorca seems to paraphrase a traditional version of the *cante* Peteneras which relates the death of the subject of the song:

La Petenera se ha muerto,

y la llevan a enterrar,

y en el panteón no cabe

la gente que va detrás... (Pohren The Art of Flamenco 152)

Lorca's neo-popular rendering presents a funereal setting in an orange grove where mourning horsemen and their mounts as harbingers of death elicit "ayes" of lament. The "laberinto de las cruces" suggests a cemetery likely situated in the Andalusian centers, Córdoba, Sevilla, and Granada which, along with the "jinetes andaluces" sets the verse in Andalusia, bedrock of *cante jondo*. Here Lorca presents *cante* itself as neo-popular expression; it is not another *letra* of *cante* but an irrational depiction of the very song itself. Irrational imagery lies in a dream-like aspect of horses and riders passing through the sky that lies above an orange grove whose description suggests a cemetery ("cielo yacente," laberinto de cruces") while the "ayes" suggest the song of the *cantaor* who laments the passing of La Petenera.

Contemporary Yugoslavian Gypsies employ the "creation of neologisms from Romani roots rather than using loan words from Serbo-Croatian or Albanian" (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 492) suggesting a traditional attitude of Gypsy poetic creation of imagery that parallels the neo-popular in Spain and the avant-garde in France.



The Gypsy community is a “sociedad folk” and a “cultura folk” because they have not been accepted by the greater civilizations and have not been integrated in the civilization of the city (Botey 14). Popular or “folk” song contains some of the startling and bizarre imagery primitive song exhibits.

*Cante jondo* is described as “primitive,” “popular” or “folk” song. The ambiguity of these terms lends to confusion. Primitive refers to the “elemental, natural” aspect of a “people or culture that is non-industrial and often non-literate and tribal” (Miriam-Webster 923). Often the terms primitive and folk are interchanged with ambiguous connotations that overlap and suggest people or aspects of culture as simple, unrefined and often illiterate. At times these terms carry a pejorative connotation (Lord 7). The term “popular” is equally ambiguous and usually designates something as “popular” as “suitable to the majority” and “commonly liked or approved” as in “a very popular girl” (Miriam-Webster 904). As for *cante jondo*, “popular” refers to the Gypsy-Andalusian music from Southern Spain that is a musical, poetic expression of the life-style, culture, and experience of these people. Lorca himself describes *cante jondo*: “Es, pues, un rarísimo ejemplar de canto primitivo, el más viejo de todo Europa, que lleva en sus notas la desnuda y escalofriante emoción de las primeras razas orientales” (Obras Completas 975). Briefly stated, Lorca includes several of the features this paper examines: the primitive and chilling aspect of *cante*, and the oriental and primitive provenance of its most notable exponents.

“Poetry composed and transmitted mainly but not exclusively by people who cannot read or write” defines “oral poetry” or “oral traditional poetry,” (The New

Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 863). The orality of poetry from primary oral cultures appears in the

heavily rhythmic balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulary expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero's 'helper', and so on) or in other mnemonic form. (Ong 34)

To this, *cante jondo* adds "paralinguistic features" such as the melismatic "ay ay ay" (Foley 17-18).

Richard Bauman, in Story, Performance and Event, discusses folklore as oral literature. From the studies of Johann Gottfried von Herder, Bauman observes that, "the oral literature of a people was both the brightest and truest expression of its authentic national culture and the appropriate foundation of its national literature" (1). Federico García Lorca similarly argued in his treatise on *cante jondo* for the preservation and support for this art form in the Festival of *Cante Jondo* in Granada in 1922, organized by Manuel de Falla, Lorca himself, and other artists (Obras Completas 973-1000). Lorca further viewed *cante jondo* as "El tesoro artístico de todo una raza" (973).

Parry and Lord's *Oral Formulaic Theory* focuses primarily on epic poetry and song, the story or history of events, people, and places which normally consists of many verses, sometimes hundreds or even thousands as in the case of the *Odyssey* or *Poema de Mio Cid*. The theory applies to *cante jondo* with certain reservations such as less evidence of pleonasm (wordiness, redundancy) in the language in *cante jondo* and the form or structure of *cante jondo* is distinct from the epic, in other words, a basic difference between narrative and lyric poetry. The *copla* of the *cante* is based on

folkloric traditions that include songs and Andalusian *romances* (Ríos Ruiz 16) and usually consists of four to six octosyllabic lines with assonant rhyme that expresses a complete idea that stands alone rather than the many verses of epic that speak of many themes, characters, events, and places and is anecdotal. On the contrary, the *cante* is almost never anecdotal and demonstrates economy of expression which heightens the emotional affect of the imagery. “The *coplas* are not anecdotal. They are lyrical and dramatic exclamations and confessions, pathetic or fierce sparks that inflame the imagination” (Hecht 159). *Cante jondo* has never abandoned its popular roots but has evolved from these roots to a level of art through anonymous and personal stylistic contributions (Ríos Ruiz 16).

The formation of the singer, the *cantaor*, contributes greatly to orality. Two factors are common to the new singer who is often illiterate with great desire to learn *cante*. More often than not, he displays unusual gifts for singing that are noticed by the elders (Lord 20). The tradition of *cante* being passed down orally to young *cantaores* from relatives or an older singer familiar to them helps maintain the features of orality in *cante jondo*. Although today many *cantaores* learn their craft from recorded versions or from the radio, the transmission maintains the features of orality except for features of spontaneity, as I shall discuss below. Even in the cases where the material is learned from written collections or anthologies, very often someone reads the *letra* to the *cantaor*. Another method for the transmission of the *cante* is the *peña flamenca*, or flamenco club, often with private membership, where *cante* is studied, performed, and passed on orally to the next generation thereby preserving the distinctive oral style of the poetry.

Oral poetry has a language with a “grammar” or sets of rules and patterns of phrases that the singer learns by the “natural oral method” (Lord 36). However there are exceptions to the rules – “irregularities and abnormalities, divergences” – occur during a performance “under pressure of rapid composition” (Lord 38) which form the bedrock of individual and spontaneous expression (Lord 36). In this sense, the *cantaor* re-creates the song virtually “every time he opens his mouth to sing” (Totton 18). Therefore the errors in the grammar of the oral poetry provide the tone of spontaneity that sets it apart from the literate category. The imagery of these expressions has its roots in the preconscious where it is spontaneously generated and, since the imagery uses everyday vocabulary to express intense emotional states, the synthesis of conscious with preconscious generation is the rule. The result is an “imagen visionaria” that continues in the neo-popular lyric of Lorca and Alberti and anticipates the avant-garde expression of the early twentieth century.

The singer’s use of the special patterns and rhythms together with the divergences that occur during performance provide continual re-creation of the song. These special patterns are often “for the opening of a song with its own beginning and cadence” (Lord 37). *Cante jondo* designates these patterns with specific vocabulary, *quejío* or *temple* which consist of utterances of “ay ay” that follow the specific *compás* and intonation of the song form being performed. Other formulaic patterns that occur in the *cante* consist of first lines which serve to introduce the *letra* which is then completed with other verses with content that individualizes the stanza. Some examples from *siguiriya gitana* and *soleares* are: “El día que tú naciste,” “Cuando yo me muera,” and “Te den una puñalá.” The emphasis highlights the line in question.

*Er día que tú nasites,*  
las campanas reoblaron,  
las sepulturas, s'abrieron,  
los muertos resusitaron (Machado y Álvarez 182)

*Cuando yo me muera*  
mira que te encargo  
que con la sinta e tu pelo negro  
m'amarren las manos (Machado y Álvarez 153)

*Te den una puñalá*  
que er Pare Santo e Roma  
no te la puea curá (Machado y Álvarez 143)<sup>5</sup>

The first line from the example above – *Er día que tú nasites* – provides the formulaic example. Many verses of the *cante* begin with this line with the remaining lines of the *copla* explaining the particular situation. Spontaneity violently associates birth with death in the image producing a strong reaction in the listener. The subject of the *letra* is born and bells ring. Suddenly, the *cantaor* associates the beginning of life with images of death, graves open and the dead are brought to life. These morbid images notwithstanding, the birth of the loved one is so powerful that it reverses the ultimate fact of life, the obvious intent of the *cantaor*. The preconscious origin of the emotional load

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<sup>5</sup> Machado y Álvarez's orthography represents Gypsy-Andalusian pronunciation.

inheres in the language of the *letra*. The resultant spontaneous creation of imagery juxtaposes the beginning and the end, birth and death, in the concisely structured quatrain while the intense feeling the Gypsy has for his beloved energizes the imagery. The formulaic phrase – “Er día que tú nasites” – constitutes a “salto” generating imagery as the *letra* exemplifies a “lenguaje pintolescamente incorrecto.”

The first line of the second, *letra* “cuando yo me muera,” is the formulaic feature that associates the dying request with the tender, albeit somewhat grotesque, image of binding the hands of the corpse. Morbidity associated with the tenderness in three short lines can but elicit a strong response. As pointed out in all these *letras*, the frequent use of the first line is a common feature of orality and demonstrates the springboard of the “salto” that generates the imagery throughout the *letra*. The crucial experience of death produces a preconscious emotional energy that associates the tender image of binding the hands with the somber burial. The synthesis of conscious and preconscious psychic events created the startling imagery.

The formulaic component in the third example – “Te den una puñalá – elicits a terrible punishment, a curse, for the offender. The third *letra* spontaneously links the stabbing of the loved one and the all-powerful “Padre de Roma” who is impotent to prevent the revenge of the curse on the faithless.

Other formulaic patterns can occur in the middle of the *letra* usually between the second and third line as in the examples: “Compañera de mi alma” and “Válgame Dios compañera.” These expressions serve to heighten the emotional impact of the song personalizing the orality of the *cante*. They almost never occur in the written versions of the song which invariably maintain the octosyllabic quatrain structure of the traditional

*copla andaluza*. Paralinguistic features are spontaneous expressions noted only in the live or recorded versions of live performances.

### **Spontaneity in the Popular Poetic Expression**

Spontaneity, another trait of primitive poetry, is associated closely with orality, and abounds in *cante jondo* and, often, in neo-popularist and avant-garde poetry.

Surprise and the unexpected drive the shocking, thrilling, uncanny imagery which originates in the preconscious of the poet or singer and acts irrationally on the reader or listener.

Carlos de Onís states “El surrealismo consiste, casi siempre, desde el punto de vista formal, en una explosión verbal, en una amplificación que partiendo de un sentimiento inicial, de un núcleo emocional o intuitivo, se ramifica o bifurca” (181). He echoes Bousoño in the assertion that “Por este camino se puede llegar muy lejos; las asociaciones apartan al poeta de una ruta que sólo puede recuperar mediante un esfuerzo consciente. El estímulo sentimental o emocional es dirigido por las palabras en lugar de dirigir éstas por aquél” (181). The emotional stimulus originates with the word in the preconscious or unconscious and only is brought forth with conscious effort.

Spontaneity of Apollinaire’s “fast association” or Bly’s “associative leap” produces the shock Apollinaire describes and the thrill C.W. Bowra explains. Surprise combines with bizarre for the surreal quality of *cante*, neo-popular lyric, and vanguard expression.

Spontaneity achieves the intensity of surprise and shock through the “courage of the imagination in connecting what are normally unrelated objects” (Shattuck 32-33). The determining factors of space, time, and distance along with speed produce

spontaneity, surprise, and, leap in the creation of the image. Spontaneity in poetry, then, is a leap, and the leap is “the ability to associate fast” (Bly 4). From a psychological point of view, the associative leap is “a jump from an object soaked in unconscious substance to an object or idea soaked in conscious psychic substance” (4). This echoes Jung’s explanation of his second mode of artistic creation wherein the expression surges forth from the unconscious seemingly ready-made by means of the “autonomous complex” (15:75). Spontaneity, a hallmark of Bousoño’s “salto,” is the length of the distance the “spark has to leap between the lines gives the lines their bottomless feeling, their space, and the speed of association increases the excitement of the poetry” (Bly 4). Spontaneity, active in the performance event, the singing of the song, the poetry, contributes to the orality and immediacy; the feeling of “being there.”

The post-romantic poet, Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer, adds to the concept of spontaneity when, for example in his “Cartas literarias a una mujer,” he declares that he wants to talk to her about literature “en una manera intuitiva” (López Estrada 229). Later, in the second *Carta*, Bécquer speaks of “amor” which arises like a gas or vapor and lets loose a feeling that “hace vibrar como si las tocara una chispa eléctrica” (232). Intuition and the physical effect of the “electric” spark describe a strong emotional impulse that includes spontaneity in preconscious imagery. C.G. Jung presents several examples from literary history that offer instances of the spark as a symbol in imagery originating in the preconscious or unconscious (8: 190-98).

In relation to the popular idiom, Bécquer reveals his poetics in the review of his friend August Ferrán y Fornés’ book of poetry, La Soledad. Reading Ferrán y Fornés’ lyric in Madrid during the winter, Bécquer recalls Sevilla and its narrow streets, the



Giralda, and the warmth of “siestas de fuego” (López Estrada 254) and hears “los cantos que entonan a media voz las muchachas que cosen detrás de las celosías” (López Estrada 255). Reading Ferrán’s poetry “Un sentimiento indefinible de vaga tristeza” awakens in his soul: “¡La soledad! La soledad es el cantar favorito del pueblo en mi Andalucía” (255), an unmistakable reference to one of the foundational forms of *cante jondo*, *soleares*, the popular form of the word “soledad” in the jargon of *cante jondo*.

Reviewing his friend’s poetry, Bécquer expands on his criteria for poetry by describing two kinds of poetry; one “magnífica y sonora, habla a la imaginación, seduciéndola con su armonía y su hermosura” (López Estrada 256), the other, described in his Cartas literarias a una mujer, “natural, breve, seca, que brota del alma como una chispa eléctrica, que hiere el sentimiento con una palabra y huye” (255). The phrase “chispa eléctrica” and the verb “huye” suggest the spontaneous leap or *salto* that creates the imagery. He summarizes the descriptions of the two types of poetry: “Las poesías de este libro pertenecen al último de los dos géneros, porque son populares, y la poesía popular es la síntesis de la poesía” (255). The first type is the more considered, reflective style while the second exhibits spontaneity as its basis. Bécquer’s view synthesizes two approaches with origins in popular poetry and parallels Jung’s psychological explanation of the two modes of artistic creation, particularly of poetry.

Juan Ramón Jiménez, “el Andaluz Universal,” makes clear his views on the discussion of spontaneity versus “considered” poetry. In notes at the end of the Segunda antología poética, Juan Ramón explains, “Que una poesía sea espontánea, no quiere decir que, después de haber surjido ella por sí misma, no haya sido sometida a espurgo por el consciente. Es el sólo arte: lo espontáneo sometido a lo consciente” (346). The

Universal Andaluz affirms a spontaneous surge of poetry but it is subjected to conscious scrutiny. Later, he addresses simplicity together with spontaneity and explains that simplicity and spontaneity are subject to the reflection of the conscious but are not eliminated from the finished work; on the contrary, the result is “la exactitud en la personificación o la descripción; esto es, perfección; esto es, sencillez y espontaneidad” (347). Considering simplicity of expression together with spontaneity results in perfection of the lyric.

Earlier in his notes, Juan Ramón discusses popular art again in terms of simplicity and spontaneity and does not believe there is “un arte popular exquisito, sencillez y espontáneo” but only an “imitación o tradición inconsciente de un arte refinado que se ha perdido” (346). The “primitivos” are not such primitives but only in relation to “our” brief cultural history (346). Juan Ramón concludes that “No hay arte popular, sino imitación, tradición popular del arte” (346). He seems to differ from the conclusion that Bécquer arrived at earlier that perfect poetry is found in the popular expression. Yet, Juan Ramón cannot avoid acknowledging spontaneity in popular poetry or poetry in general.

*Cante jondo* exhibits the discussion of craft versus inspiration. While the written form of the *letra*, octosyllabic quatrains with assonant rhyme, demonstrates the organization of the conscious mind, the irrational imagery and spontaneous rearrangement of verse order reflect a preconscious origin that gives the feeling of immediate and spontaneous generation. Taken together with the performance features that reflect orality, spontaneity provides the basis for irrational imagery in *cante jondo* and Lorca’s and Alberti’s neo-popular lyric.

Although a great deal of primitive song is traditional, communal, and used to celebrate traditional rituals, it contains an individual spontaneous component (Bowra 42). A sudden event may occur, an accident or death, and the witness may feel the need to express his reaction to it by spontaneous and individual creation of song “on the spur of the moment” (42). The nomadic marginalized lifestyle of the Gypsy provides many opportunities to express surprise, fear, or anger with spontaneous song and random insertion of paralinguistic features such as the “*ayes*” and formulaic expressions like “*Válgame Dios compañera*” reflect spontaneity in the performance. The Gypsy’s nomadic life close to nature is an indispensable background for the invention of imagery that includes the supernatural to explain and forecast the unexpected, shocking, and uncanny aspects of the human condition with imagery which eventually leads to the “surreal.”

The commune with nature has a quality of being at “the seat of supernatural powers” with material for songs in the primal cultures (Bowra 42). Magic, often associated with Gypsy culture, allows the displaying of “supernatural powers of divination, resuscitation, conjuring, changing of appearance, and the like” (Shattuck 49-50). The reputation of Gypsies “automatically regarded as sorcerers” (Clébert 151), as fortune-tellers and magicians is universal while their usual condition as nomads kept them in close contact with nature and helped maintain their seemingly innate disregard for “mechanical techniques” (151). The positioning of Gypsies within nature and beyond the city enhances the attraction of their magical practices for city dwellers (151-52). *Duende* in Gypsy expression displays magic as well as the “deep” characteristic of the song that comes from “remote races” as Lorca points out. In Jungian terms the *duende*

can be seen as “a primordial image, or archetype... be it a *daemon*, a human being, or a process-that constantly recurs in the course of history and appears wherever creative fantasy is freely expressed (15: 81). The first dictionary definition for *duende*, “elf, goblin, fairy, genie, ghost,” suggests a supernatural quality related more to Romantic literature and fairy tales; the second definition, “charm, charisma,” seems to relate more to popularity contests and Hollywood while the third dictionary offering, “an ineffable, enchanting quality present in some people and certain works of art and literature” approaches the usage as it applies to irrational imagery (Simon & Schuster’s International Spanish Dictionary 1152). *Duende*, “poetic, nonrational, intuitive” underlies Dionysian rather than Apollonian lyric qualities (Josephs 85). As primal force for the creation of imagery, *Duende*, in keeping with much of the imagery of Lorca’s Romancero Gitano, is “nocturnal and lunar” (85) while *Duende* in relation to *cante jondo* is a supernatural force that arises at a propitious moment during the performance. Lorca observed that the *duende* only comes when there is a possibility of death, thus emphasizing a supernatural and universal element of all human life (Obras Completas 1075) which often produces bizarre and startling imagery. Furthermore, Lorca’s lecture, Teoría y Juego Del Duende, presents explanations and descriptions of this mysterious force that illumine irrational imagery in Lorca and Alberti as well as in *cante jondo*. *Duende* is by turns, “un poder no un obrar, es un luchar y no un pensar” (1068), emphasizing spontaneity and nonrational qualities in artistic production. Distinct from “*angel*” that guides, regales, avoids, dodges, and cautions and “*musa*” that dictates and wakes up intelligence, often the enemy of poetry, both coming from outside; *duende* is aroused “en las últimas habitaciones de la sangre” (1069) and causes the blood of the poet/*cantaor* to burn and reject all “dulce

geometría aprendida” and “rompe los estilos” (1070). Edward F. Stanton describes Lorca’s lecture on *duende* as choosing “a word and a concept of flamenco-*duende*-as a criterion for judging all works of art. This lecture might be considered a statement of Lorca’s aesthetics, his *ars poetica*” (The Tragic Myth 12). Lorca’s lecture on *duende* presents in metaphoric style many of the factors that help understand irrational imagery: spontaneity and the predominance of emotion and instinct over reason in artistic struggle. An example from the *soleares*:

Diez años después de muerto  
y de gusanos comío  
letreros tendrán mis huesos  
der tiempo que t’he quería (Grande 715)

This *copla* reveals many characteristics of Gypsy poetry in *cante*: the striking mixture of tenderness with a graphic description of death and the colorful inaccuracy of the language combine to create an unusual image of emotional intensity the Gypsy experienced. The “leap” or “*salto*” evidence spontaneity and orality with the description of the bones bearing the words of the *cante* the *cantaor* sings to express his disillusionment. The phrase “ten years dead” very likely suggests a long period of sadness rather than an actual period of time. The entire *copla* then, is a metaphoric cry of deep sadness and disillusion elicited by unrequited love. The graphic detail of worm-eaten bones after ten years of death describes the depth of the Gypsy’s lament reflecting a telluric energy from *duende*.

Gypsy expression uses natural images to give a “striking depth” to lyric so that the listener intuits there is more to the song than mere description of nature, some “latent intention” in the song (Bowra 142). Nature as a source for spontaneity or “surprise” in

imagery (Shattuck 30) is normal for one who lives close to nature and a requirement for the success of communication of the sentiments of Gypsy song. The primitive singer, in this case the Gypsy, “sees song as an instrument by which some special force in himself (*duende*) is directed at others and works his will on them” (Bowra 255). The natural images from his familiar world let the singer have an “immediate impact on his audience” (251). *Cante jondo* offers many instances of such imagery. Two examples, one from *soleares* and one from *bulerías*, use natural images with a supernatural connection with nature:

De noche salgo al campo  
y hago a las piedras llorar,  
esas son las duquelitas  
Que tengo yo que pasar (Hispanvox Anthology, Manolito de María)

Yo he sembrao un tomillo  
no me ha salío ná;  
él que tomillo quiera  
vaya al tomillar (Le chant du monde ldx 274 1028 Tía Anica la  
Pirñaca)

These two *coplas* or stanzas on the written page are octosyllabic quatrains with assonant rhyme, a structure referred to as “*copla andaluza*.” The Gypsy-Andalusian pronunciation in performance often alters this strict structure. In the second *letra* above the orthography represents the feature that Lafuente describes as “lenguaje pintorescamente incorrecto”: “sembráo” for sembrado, “salío” for salido, And “ná” for nada. In performance the *cante*

*jondo* singing style frequently modifies the pronunciation of a vowel at the end of a line with melisma resulting in the elongation of the line as well as a change in the actual tone of the vowel. The emotional, spontaneous, and preconscious source of expression creates irrational imagery while often the entire *copla* is an irrational image.

The imagery of the *letra* is directly from nature. In the *soleares* rocks crying in the field at night let the singer express the anguish he and the listener share. The personification of rocks crying heightens the singer's intense emotion and the reaction of the listener. Juxtaposing human emotions and stones creates bizarre imagery causing pause. The *cantaor*'s existential desolation, involves nature as a principal player, not merely as simple background. It creates irrational imagery rising from a primal unconscious source of expression energized by *duende*.

In the *bulerías*, the entire *letra* is a metaphor for the vagaries of romantic relationship with the allegorical style of the *letra* revealing leaps and swift associations in images of nature and love. The entire stanza exhibits a feature of orality, the common folk expression of group wisdom in proverbial form (Ong 35). Again, nature is a principal player in the drama not merely landscape. The preconscious irrational association of thyme plants and gardens with the difficulties of romance jars.

As expressed in *cante jondo*, Gypsy nomadic life often leads to conditions that cause anxiety and disquiet; what Bowra terms, "The hard calls of primitive life" and create a "nice touch of worldly wisdom and astute perceptions" (136). The *cantaor*, a primitive singer, energizes *cante* with intensity via irrational imagery that reflect the "naked cruelty of existence" and "excites more troubled and more troubling moods" (136).

Yo ya no soy quien era  
ni quien deseara ser.  
Soy un mueblecito viejo  
arrimao a la pared. (Tía Anica la Piriñaca Le chant du monde 274  
1028)

The fusion of the human being, the singer, with an insignificant piece of furniture haphazardly tossed against the wall demonstrates irrational imagery that commonly occurs in Gypsy expression. The imagery, like a dream, reveals unconscious material becoming conscious in preconscious spontaneous generation. In the *letra*, the *cantaora* declares herself a piece of furniture while other singers have created the image of “un árbol de tristeza” (Pohren 132) and “un marco de tristeza” (Hecht 170) variations that demonstrate spontaneous features of orality and preconscious creation.

The relationship between Gypsy magic, the ability to change the normal appearance of things in the world, and the irrational imagery of contemporary poetry seems obvious. The poetry of suggestion together with the emotional result of surprise fit with Gypsy poetry which displays “elements of entertainment, spontaneity, and imagination” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 491). Magical imagery contains “ecuaciones mágicas” and “asociaciones mágicas” Bousoño posits as fundamental to creation of irrational imagery in contemporary poetry (Irracionalismo 428-31). In *cante jondo*, nature magically ceases to be inert.

La naturaleza, en especial, al ser descrita, desde este sistema expresivo, por el poeta, se tornará en sí misma, y sin más, sugestiva, y se hará posible así uno de los mayores hallazgos de la poesía contemporánea: la consideración del paisaje



como entidad autónoma y no como fondo (quizá ilustre) para otra cosa. (Bousoño Surrealismo 115)

### **Grotesque Imagery, Orality, and the Popular**

*Cante jondo* presents grotesque imagery that leads to shocked and disturbed responses in the listener or reader through the distortion of the “natural into absurdity, ugliness, or caricature” (Miriam-Webster 513). The Spanish word “*grotesco*” means “bizarre” in English (Simon & Schuster 65) and describes fragmentation of the human body and the mixture of animal and human forms that create “fanciful, bizarre” and “absurdly incongruous” imagery (Miriam-Webster 513). The grotesque distortion that produces absurdity, ugliness, caricature and the bizarre, fanciful and incongruous imagery importantly provides a link in the trajectory of irrational imagery that begins in *cante*, to neo-popular and on to avant-garde creation. Grotesque imagery has a practical usage in primary oral cultures for memorization since it is much easier to remember bizarre, outsize, and monstrous images for oral recitation (Ong 69-70).

Death is one aspect of the grotesque. The treatment of mortality in poetry often includes the grotesque in terms of the fragmentation, distortion, and general ugliness of the human body in its agony. In poetry as well as in pictorial art, the juxtaposition life/death creates startling and bizarre imagery. Lorca, in his lecture “Teoría y juego del duende,” states that the inspirational force, the *duende*, “no llega si no ve posibilidad de muerte” (Obras Completas 1075), that is, the spontaneous surge of energy that impels the *cantaor*, poet, or painter to exceed himself in his expression is somehow uncannily connected with the presence of death. Lorca further states that, “Un muerto en España está más vivo como muerto que en ningún sitio del mundo (Obras Completas 1073).

According to Lorca, a dead person in Spain is more alive, more vibrant, than in any other place in the world. The irrational juxtaposition of the two opposing states, life-death, creates bizarre imagery in lyrical expression and Lorca and Alberti derive many striking images in neo-popular poetry from this juxtaposition. Alberti's and Lorca's elegies for their friend and bullfighter, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, bear out Lorca's claims about Spanish mortal and immortal qualities and its fundamental factor *duende*. Both elegies appear in the middle 1930's long after the neo-popular lyric of both poets from the 20's. Both tributes to Sánchez Mejías contain a mixture of forms: sonnets, free verse, hendecasyllables, and variations of popular forms like the seguidilla and the ballad that at times resemble *cante*. The examples below treat sections from both poets that appear in a neo-popular re-working of these popular forms in keeping with the thesis of this dissertation.

Lorca's elegy, Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, is in four sections titled "La cogida y la muerte," "La sangre derramada," "Cuerpo presente," and "Alma ausente" (Obras Completas 550-58). The third stanza of the first section, "La cogida y la muerte," is an example that displays orality, spontaneity, irrationality, and the particular sense of death and *duende* that Lorca explains in Teoría y Juego del Duende. The eight line stanza is as follows:

Cuando el sudor de nieve fue llegando  
*a las cinco de la tarde,*  
cuando la plaza se cubrió de yodo  
*a las cinco de la tarde,*  
la muerte puso huevos en la herida

*a las cinco de la tarde.*

*A las cinco de la tarde.*

*A las cinco en punto de la tarde.*

Firstly, the repetition of the eight syllable line, “*a las cinco de la tarde,*” the traditional time for the commencement of the bullfight, in italics evidences orality and a tone of *cante*. The final three lines could easily represent a *letra* from traditional *cante* with its chant-like feeling and orality-flavored repetition. Secondly, the orality in turn suggests spontaneity which here can imply the sudden goring and death of the *matador* Ignacio Sánchez Mejías as well as a stimulus for imagery itself. And lastly, irrational imagery shows up in the rapid juxtaposition of “el sudor de nieve” wherein sweat and snow, two opposing concepts of heat and cold are combined to give a sense of the sudden passing from life i.e., heat, sweat, to death i.e., cold, snow. The stanza continues with a more descriptive image, still irrational, of iodine covering the bullring (la plaza se cubrió de yodo); iodine being used as an antibiotic in the bullrings of 1930’s Spain before the development of penicillin. The line concludes with a marvelous metaphoric image, “la muerte puso huevecos en la herida.” Here, death, almost personified, combines with life, the laying of eggs, in the wound caused by the bull’s horn, an image combining the spontaneity of the goring of the *matador* with visionary imagery of death laying eggs in the wound. Lorca, who was present at the death agony of his friend in the hospital (Cobb 68), seems to have envisioned the scenario of the goring and represents it with visionary, irrational imagery.

Alberti’s elegy “VERTE Y NO VERTE” is composed of five sections, four of which are designated as: “EL TORO DE LA MUERTE;” the fifth section is “DOS

ARENAS” (Poesías Completas 357-66). The enigmatic title seems to suggest the presence and absence (life/death) of the bullfighter. Interestingly, Alberti was not in Spain at the time of Sánchez Mejías’ death and, according to the poem itself where the poet joins the Mexican *matador*, Rodolfo Gaona, with the andalusian Sánchez Mejías (Poesías Completas 363), composed the elegy from “El Toreo,” the plaza de toros in Mexico City (Cobb 65). In a series of stanzas comprised of sonnets, free verse hendecasyllables, and several instances of “forms used in popular songs and poems (such as the *seguidilla*) lines of five and seven syllables” (Cobb 62), Alberti laments the death of Sánchez Mejías.

Paradoxically, Alberti’s language seems at times almost playful. In the third section titled EL TORO DE LA MUERTE, after a difficult sonnet that ends with a tercet suggesting an almost mythological *toro*:

huye, toro tizón, humo y candela,  
que ardiendo de los cuernos a la cola,  
de la noche saldrás carbonizado (Poesías Completas 362),

the gaditano poet brings in a Latinamerican scenario with a playful and erotic tone. The first two stanzas of the section read like this:

*(En la Habana la sombra  
de las palmeras  
me abrieron abanicos  
y revoleras.  
Una mulata,*

*dos pitones en punta  
bajo la bata.*

*La rumba mueve cuernos,  
pases mortales,  
ojos de vaca y ronda  
de sementales.*

*Las habaneras,  
Sin saberlo, se mueven  
por gaoneras (Poesías Completas 362-63).*

Here the imagery, “sorprendentes metáforas de frecuente tono surrealista, apuesto por lo absurdo, por el arte como juego” (López-Calvo 24), mixes bullfight terminology with sensuality in a Cuban setting. First, *la sombra*, in taurine lexicon the shady part of the bullring and, poetically, an intimation of death, of the palm trees mixes with the fans, frequently part of the female costume at the bullfight, and *revoleras*, one of the *pases* or movements executed by the *torero* in Havana, not a location usually associated with bullfights. The following mixture of taurine and erotic imagery is stunning: a *mulata* from Havana sports two budding *pitones*, taurine synonym for horns, but here also suggesting breasts, and dances to the sensuous caribbean rhythm of the *rumba* that somehow moves (stirs) horns, deadly *pases* (taurine techniques), eyes of cows, and the behavior of *sementales*, or seed bulls. Then, the Havana women, seeming not to be aware, move in the style of the *gaonera*, a bullfight maneuver invented by the Mexican bullfighter Rodolfo Gaona, a contemporary of Alberti’s and Lorca’s later killed in the

ring. Ostensibly, the skirts of the *habaneras* moving to the rhumba rhythm resemble the motion of the bullfighter's cape. All this has a playful aspect that seems to contradict the funereal theme of an elegy while it exhibits startling imagery with a mixture of sensuality, mortal taurine references, and caribbean locales.

Negativity juxtaposed with tender or sublime elements creates intensely grotesque imagery reflected in the orality of primal oral expression. The song form *playeras*, an older form of the *siguiriyas gitana* thought to be sung at burials (Pohren 152) demonstrates the procedure:

Cuando yo me muera  
mira que te encargo  
que con la sinta e tu pelo negro  
m'amarren las manos (Machado y Álvarez 153)

El carro e los muertos  
pasó por aquí;  
como llevaba la manita fuera  
yo la conocí. (Pohren 152)

The fragmentation of the body in the two examples constitutes a grotesque representation of the grim events described. The spontaneous combination of the death/burial of a loved one with a corresponding tone of affection intensifies the imagery.

The grotesque exists throughout the history of Spanish art and in the neo-popular poetry of Lorca and Alberti and in their later avant-garde work. An early example of the grotesque in Spanish verse is found in poetry of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Spanish poet Góngora.

The Golden Age poet borrows the Cyclops from the classical tradition in the *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea*.

Góngora, an Andalusian from Córdoba, represents an example of the development of imagery from this region. García Lorca in his lecture on Góngora points out that “En Andalucía la imagen popular llega a extremos de finura y sensibilidad maravillosas, y las transformaciones son completamente gongorinas” (*Obras Completas* 1002). Lorca gives examples of “the water ox” and the “tongue of the river” from popular language in Andalusia that “responden a una manera de ver ya muy de cerca de don Luis de Góngora” (1002) and suggests the possible influence and similarity in the imagery of the popular Andalusian expression and Góngora’s imagery. Lorca clearly “borrows” some of these images for “Romance del emplazado” from *Romancero Gitano*,

Los densos bueyes del agua  
embisten a los muchachos  
que se bañan en las lunas  
de sus cuernos ondulados.” (*Obras Completas* 42)

Lorca transforms the flow of the water into oxen that charge boys bathing in waves which he transforms into undulating horns, an ominous augury of death lurking in irrational imagery where nature and andalusian taurine culture mix with innocent boys swimming in a river.

The namesake of the Generation of '27, Góngora exhibited the grotesque in his imagery as well as in exaggerated metaphors:

62     Con violencia desgajó infinita,  
la mayor punta de la excelsa roca,

que al joven, sobre quien la precipita,  
urna es mucha, pirámide no poca.

Con lágrimas la ninfa solicita

Las deidades del mar, que Acis invoca:

Concurren todas, y el peñasco duro

La sangre exprimió, cristal fue duro.

63 Sus miembros lastimosamente opresos

del escollo fatal fueron apenas,

que los pies de los árboles más gruesos

calzó el líquido aljófara de sus venas.

Corriente plata al fin sus blancos huesos,

lamiendo flores y argentando arenas,

a Doris llega, que con llanto pío,

yerno lo saludó, lo aclamó río. (Rivers, 184-85)

Exaggerated metaphors describe the shepherd's death at the hand of Polyphemus. The boulder hurled by the Cyclops turns the expressed blood into pure crystal, crushes the bones of the shepherd, expresses the blood from his veins, turns his bones to a river of silver and converts his tears to a river. Similarly, examples from "Romance del emplazado" from Lorca's Romancero Gitano demonstrate a tender and grotesque mixture:

Ya puedes cortar si gustas

las adelfas de tu patio.

Pinta una cruz en la puerta



y pon tu nombre debajo,  
porque circutas y ortigas  
nacerán en tu costado,  
y agujas de cal mojada  
te morderán los zapatos. (Obras Completas 424)

The instructions to a dying man in the familiar “tu” form together with natural elements form an unusual juxtaposition of tenderness and grotesque to create irrational imagery that describes death and decomposition to startle the reader.

Lorca’s and Alberti’s association with *cante jondo* and Góngora demonstrates the influence of the traditional lyric and song in their work.

Like other major poets of seventeenth-century Spain, Góngora cultivated poetry, not only in the Italianate meters of the Renaissance tradition, but also in the octosyllabic and shorter lines of the older tradition. His *romances*, *villancicos*, and *letrillas* often reveal a thorough familiarity with the more popular themes and meters. (Rivers 21)

Góngora used traditional material as a source for expression but infuses it with a new style to make it his own by not repeating the earlier forms but renewing the expression and bringing it forward. Góngora’s exaggerated use and development of metaphor with radical associations produces a violent shock or thrill in the reader. “Armoniza y hace plásticos, de una manera a veces hasta violenta, los mundos más distintos” (Lorca Obras Completas 1009). Much as Góngora, Lorca’s and Alberti’s awareness of unusual metaphors in traditional lyric helped them develop irrational imagery in neo-popular and later avant-garde expression.

Without using the term synesthesia, Lorca describes this process in his lecture on Góngora. Lorca affirms that:

Un poeta tiene que ser profesor en los cinco sentidos corporales. Los cinco sentidos corporales en este orden: vista, tacto, oído, olfato y gusto. Para poder ser dueño de las bellas imágenes tiene que abrir puertas de comunicación en todos ellos y con mucha frecuencia ha de superponer sus sensaciones y aun de disfrazar sus naturalezas. (Obras Completas 1007)

Lorca proffers an irrational combination of two or more senses in synesthesia to create a striking metaphor. The verse from *cante* “rocks that cry” is a typical example.

Góngora’s baroque style reflected in his use of hyperbaton, classical allusions, and highly developed metaphors demonstrates a sense of grotesque that can be compared to other artists of the Golden Age. El Greco’s paintings display “grotesque caricatures” that “have nevertheless a spiritual beauty that disturbs while it inspires” (Kane 242). Golden Age sculptor Berruguete’s work revealed a distortion of reality in the “absurd combination” of “tremendous musculature” with the “mouldings of a nervous, wiry body, wasted away by much prayer and fasting” (218). In like manner, *cante jondo* contains imagery of distorted conventional reality, sometimes in bodily images. A verse from a *martinete* exclaims:

Con las fatiguitas de la muerte  
a un laíto yo m’arrimé  
con los deítos de la mano  
arañaba la paré (Grande 697)

and a *soleá* Lorca quotes:

Pues si mi corazón tuviera  
birieritas e cristar,  
te asomaras y lo vieras  
gotas de sangre llorar (Obras Completas 989).

The discontinuity of the human body depicted in these *letras* creates unsettling images that strike the reader or listener. The distortion of the subject projects an unnerving image that parallels much avant-garde and Surrealist imagery. In an uncanny series of images, imagined windows in the singer's chest would permit the listener to see tears of blood. The grotesque imagery exemplifies Bousoño's "imagen visionaria," "los elementos proliferantes pueden aludir irracionalmente a algo del objeto visionado" (Teoría 186) which applies equally well to the traditional *letra* of the *soleá*. The rapid association of glass, windows, blood, and human heart suggest preconscious creation of visionary imagery. The emotional shock caused by these images produces new and intense experience for the reader. In Jungian terms, the crucial experiences of life energize unconscious material and produce visionary imagery.

The violent aspect of human life frequently creates a locus for the grotesque. When the development of art is simultaneous with war or other upheavals; there can be a "vague relationship between the sword and the pen" (Kane 3). The wars and general "chaos" of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Europe and the Mediterranean bear witness to this relationship (Braudel 921-25). Indeed, speaking of contemporary art in the early decades of the twentieth century, Elisha Kane observes, "the two decades culminating in the past war have given birth to a new era in art" (5).

One of the early progenitors of surrealism in France, Guillaume Apollinaire, singles out Baudelaire as an important precursor to surrealism. In the preface to the 1917 edition of Baudelaire's Oeuvre poétique, Apollinaire observes

En lui s'est incarné pour la première fois l'esprit moderne. C'est à partir de Baudelaire que quelque chose est né qui n'a fait que végéter, tandis que naturalistes, parnassiens, symbolistes passaient auprès sans rien voir, tandis que les naturalistes, ayant tourné la tête, n'avaient pas l'audace d'examiner la nouveauté sublime et monstrueuse (Balakian 46 n. 7).

a *soleá* Lorca quotes:

Pues si mi corazón tuviera  
birrieritas e cristar,  
te asomaras y lo vieras  
gotas de sangre llorar (Obras Completas 989)

Apollinaire points out an avant-garde or "modern" attitude in Baudelaire that anticipates the surrealists by the juxtaposition of the sublime and the monstrous that creates the shock and thrill of surrealist expression, an important association because the Spanish poets develop an unusual and striking imagery through a combination of the grotesque (monstrous) and the sublime from a traditional source, *cante jondo*. The juxtaposition or combination of love or reverence for Christ and sorrow experienced because of His death in imagery of traditional *saetas* sung during Holy Week in Spain are examples.

Míralo por onde viene  
agobiao por er doló,  
chorreando por las seines

gotas de sangre y suor.

Y su mare de penita

destrozao er corazón

Ayy una soga lleva en su garganta,

que otra lleva en su cintura,

y otra en sus manos santas;

son tan fuertes ligaduras

que hasta las piedras quebranta. (Pohren 159-60)

Personal and intimate details of Christ's suffering accentuate the terrific emotion elicited by the imagery. Blood, sweat, and ropes binding the body of the deity together with the description of the mother's suffering heighten the deep emotion of the scene. A metaphor of the tightness of the bindings which breaks stones intensifies the expression. Jung's description of the crucial and passionate life experiences that energize unconscious material and produce unusual and striking imagery applies. With intense everyday language the singer expresses the sadness and horror experienced by the audience who seems to witness the actual event upon hearing these *letras*.

Cruelty as a component of the grotesque parallels the images of cruelty seen in *cante jondo*, especially the images of the Crucifixion in the popular *saetas*. Lorca's section Poema de la saeta in his collection Poema del cante jondo presents images of the Spanish celebration of Semana Santa he witnessed in Sevilla. In these songs to the crucified Cristo and his sorrowful Mother, the grotesque aspect is highly emphasized in neo-popular imagery:

Miradlo, por donde viene  
el mejor de los nacidos  
Mira ese cadáver frío,  
De esos tres clavos pendiente,  
todo llagado y herido:  
en su costado una fuente  
que el pecado ha redimido (Stanton 92-93)

The gruesome description of the Crucifixion is almost too much to behold, an exaggeration. The poetry of the *saeta* sung in an oriental manner of “semitones and a fluctuation between major and minor modes,” together with eery appearance of the *paso* at night by candlelight, swaying to the movement of the *costaleros* who carry it, presents a grotesque vision that gives a surreal cast to the entire proceeding. Although Lorca does not emphasize the grotesque aspects of the procession, he suggests it in some verses from his poems: “Sevilla para herir / Córdoba para morir;” “Cristo moreno / con las guedejas quemadas / los pómulos salientes / y las pupilas blancas” (167-71). Lorca’s description of the *Cristo* agonizing on the cross from his poem “Saeta” is nearly as shocking as the one from the traditional version. The grotesque implies cruelty with images of the wounds inflicted by the Roman soldiers. Such depiction recalls a similar attitude in the imagery of Lautréamont, a precursor to the Surrealist movement in France. As opposed to the rejection of religion by the Surrealists, the Spanish poet does not reject the popular religious aspect of his culture but embraces it as a source for emotion in imagery. These examples reveal the grotesque in *cante jondo* through the “agonistically toned” language that contains “enthusiastic description of physical violence” that “often marks oral

culture” (Ong 43- 44). There is no emotional or objective distance expressed by the singer; instead, he displays “close, empathic, communal, identification with the known” (45). The singer demonstrates close identification with his subject by the use of the first-person “yo” which associates the “yo” with the listener creating striking reactions in him and universality in the expression.

*Cante jondo* exhibits features of orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque that are surviving elements of a primitive song expression still performed today in the Andalusian region of Spain as well as world-wide. The creation of new poetic imagery in the early twentieth century in Spain is based on irrational imagery from oral features, spontaneity, from juxtaposition of human emotions with inanimate objects, often from nature, and bizarre images expressed in exaggerated metaphors that depict the fragmentation of the human body as well as intense images of cruelty, violence, and death and carried forward in the neo-popular lyrical expression of Lorca and Alberti. It is no accident that this imagery impressed and influenced these poets, both well acquainted with the traditional verse forms of their homeland and the popular expression of andalusian Gypsies. These poets demonstrate a step toward Alberti’s contention that surrealism has always played a part in popular song and folk poetry and doing so, they maintain a traditional feature of Spanish lyric and bring it forward.

### CHAPTER III

#### CANTE JONDO AND THE NEO-POPULAR EXPRESSION

“Yo ya no soy yo  
ni quien solía yo ser,  
  
soy un mueblecito de tristeza  
  
pegaíto a la paré” (Traditional)

“*Una tragedia en primera persona*” (José Monleón qtd. in Grande 174)

Alberti’s view that surrealism has always existed in Spain and furthermore, that it resides in the traditions of popular song and poetry establishes a different orientation from Surrealism between the World Wars in Paris, France and its definition as proposed by André Breton in his Manifesto of 1924. The poets, writers, painters, and sculptors in Paris during the 1920’s rejected previous aesthetic endeavors. Contrary to this, Federico García Lorca and Rafael Alberti resorted to the traditional popular verse and song for inspiration in order to create new poetic expression known as neo-popularist. In fact, Alberti, speaking of his poetry in his autobiography, Arboleda perdida, states that his poetry reveals “el estilo antiguo y nuevo de mi letra” (196) and recalls his assessment that surreal has been part and parcel of Spanish poetry and popular song “since time immemorial.” The popular lyric through its trajectory from primitive song recaptures the emotional force of orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque of earlier forms. The neo-popularist poet overcomes the sacrifice of emotion for intellect that occurs when a poet attempts to explain or teach and uses thinking versus emotion in his creation by



deliberation instead of intuition. Lorca's and Alberti's "borrowing" of imagery from *cante jondo*, counteract the overly conscious attention and control of poetry and foreshadows the avant-garde and surrealist orientation that attempts to free the subconscious imagination from the rational conscious mind.

This chapter examines Lorca's and Alberti's poetry for selected instances of verses of *letra* from *cante* acquired by the poet and inserted (*injertado*) in the new poetry and style manifesting its source. The chapter examines these examples for orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque and the psychological activity that create irrational imagery. The chapter begins with a discussion of Lorca's familiarity with *cante jondo*.

### **Lorca, *Cante*, and the Neo-popular**

Some critics suggest that Lorca and de Falla were "slipshod" in their historical background of Flamenco history (Mitchell 8) and "few had authentic connections to the traditional social milieu of deep song" (174), for example:

García Lorca, for one, was only distantly familiar with the actual performance styles of the *cante jondo* he touted, and was poorly appraised of the literature surrounding those styles. He misspelled the name of Manuel Torre-rendering it "Torres," an error that then gets repeated (see Bergamin 1957: 1)-whom he heralded as the avatar of the spirit he preached, and he was unaware of the work of Antonio Machado y Álvarez whose writings of the 1880's virtually launched the genre of flamencology (Grande 1992b: 25; Washabaugh 60-61)

Lorca had indeed a close association with *cante jondo* and was well-acquainted with the work of Machado y Álvarez. Lorca's immediate family demonstrated not only interest in but participation in the andalusian art form. Ian Gibson points out Lorca's

personal acquaintance with local singers, dancers, and Gypsies from an early age that included frequent visits to the caves of the Sacromonte where Lorca befriended Gypsy dancers and singers (29). Lorca's father, don Federico, was an *aficionado* of the guitar and his great uncle, Baldomero, displayed considerable talent as a *cantaor* (Maurer 5). The family frequently hosted gatherings in the evenings that focused on *cante* in which family members as well as the servants and other local *aficionados* took part (5). These informal *juergas* took place in the intimate confines of the home and demonstrate authentic connections with the environment of *cante jondo*.

A note to the presentation of Lorca's poem "Prendimiento de Antoñito el Camborio en el camino a Sevilla" from Romancero Gitano attests to Lorca's familiarity with *cante* (Josephs & Caballero 261-64). Commenting on the sources for some of the material in the poem, the authors point to a recording of the *cantaor* Chano Lobato's rendition of a *villancico* which describes the Virgin and the Niño "a la mitad del camino" on their way to Bethlehem which echoes Lorca's own "Y a la mitad del camino" describing Antoñito's trip to Seville. "Por supuesto, no creemos que Lorca estuviera pensando en ello, pero la coincidencia muestra hasta qué punto 'lo popular' estuvo grabado en su memoria" (Josephs & Caballero n. 4 262). These critical observations underscore the influence of *cante* in Lorca's new lyric insofar as it reflects his exposure and proximity to *cante*.

As noted earlier, the *cante* version of the *letra* sung by Manolito el de la María contains the image, "rocks that cry". Manolito enjoyed great prestige as a singer in the region of Acalá de Guadaira in the province of Seville until his death in 1966 (Pohren 129-30). His cousin, Joaquín el de la Paula (1883-1948) was also widely respected in the

flamenco world for his “many innovations” of the various *cantes*, “stamping them with a greatness formerly lacking” (100). “These *cantes* have been handed down for generations,” notes Donn Pohren; that is to say, from the earliest development of *cante* in the eighteenth century. It is entirely possible that the local servants and Gypsy friends of the Lorca family were familiar with this time-honored lyric and even performed it in the informal sessions in the Lorca household.

The poem “Preciosa y el aire” from Lorca’s Romancero gitano demonstrates the poet’s familiarity with Gypsy culture and mythology in general. The Gypsy has a well-documented fear and respect for the element of wind (Clébert 154) which not only has destructive capabilities but is reputed to have powers of “fecundation” and “regeneration” (Cirlot 373). Lorca’s comfortable use of *aire* in his *romance* demonstrates his close knowledge of the *Gitano* culture. Wind personified as a protagonist with the Gypsy girl demonstrates a new use of natural features where the landscape ceases as mere passive background for imagery. This usage has direct antecedents in *cante*.

Quisiera ser como el aire  
para estar siempre a tu laíto  
sin que la notara naide. (Traditional *soleares*)

The examination of Lorca’s work for the evidence of *cante* and its neo-popularist and avant-garde characteristics includes selections from the dramas Mariana Pineda and Yerma and selected poems from the Poema del cante jondo and the Romancero Gitano.

Starting with Mariana Pineda, one notes that the subtitle describes the drama as a “Romance popular en tres estampas;” by which the author immediately highlights the popular orientation of the drama in the character of Mariana Pineda, a historical figure

executed in 1831 during the repressive regime of Ferdinand VII (Gibson 130). The prologue establishes the popular setting of the drama with a group of girls singing a popular ballad relating the fate of the heroine:

¡Oh qué día tan triste en Granada,  
que a las piedras hacía llorar  
al ver que Marianita se muere  
en cadalso por no declarar!

Marianita sentada en su cuarto  
no paraba de considerar:

“Si Pedrosa me viera bordando  
la bandera de la Libertad”

¡Oh qué día tan triste en Granada  
las companas doblar y doblar! (Lorca 21)

The second line of the first stanza, “que a las piedras hacía llorar” pivotally, through personification of the stones creates an irrational image. Nature, no longer the inert backdrop for an emotional scene, a mere landscape, actually witnesses the event.

Through pathetic fallacy crying stones intensify the sadness of the first line and anticipate the violence of the subsequent lynching of the heroine. The irrational image highlights the violence experienced by all witnesses of the event, animate and inanimate. The verse demonstrates cathexis, the investment of the stones with the emotional energy of both the (anonymous) poet and the audience. The image juxtaposes the horrific spectacle of the

hanging of a woman with the image of normally insensate natural objects transformed into stones that cry.

The other verses are anecdotal in keeping with the ballad tradition. They inform the listener of the main protagonists, the heroine, Mariana Pineda, and Pedrosa, the official who apprehends her leading to her execution for her complicity in a revolt symbolized by the embroidering of the revolutionary flag.

The second line of the ballad parallels the principal image of the *letra* from *soleares* sung by Manolito el de la María on the Murry Hill recording The History of Cante Flamenco:

De noche me salgo al campo  
y hago a las piedras llorar,  
esas son las “duquelitas”  
que tengo yo que pasar. (Traditional)

The similarity of the two verses is obvious. Much like the *coro* in the *romance*, the *cantaor* expresses existential anguish by the image of rocks, this time, crying in a field, a transformation that takes the rocks away from their usual situation. Again, Jung’s transcendent function appears where the passion of the *cantaor* energizes unconscious material and produces uncanny imagery and associations that surge into conscious expression with language, i.e. into words that become “portadoras de emoción” (Bousoño Irracionalism 21).

Personification in this *letra* reflects, in the words of John Ruskin, “the tendency of poets and painters to imbue the natural world with human feeling” (The New Princeton Encyclopedia 888-889). He states that such pathetic fallacy “due to ‘an excited state of

feelings, making us, for the time, more or less irrational,' creates 'a falseness in all our expressions of external things" (889). In an example from Charles Kingsley's novel Alton Locke, Ruskin describes the sea as 'cruel, crawling foam'" (889) imagery of "the author's state of mind being unhinged by grief" (889). Ruskin's description reflects the irrational and unhinged mental state of a writer who creates imagery of the type employed by neo-popularist poets and even in avant-garde expression. The psychic violence of the imagery shocks the reader, an effect achieved by fast association and leaping poetry. (889). *Cante jondo* takes advantage of this long-standing trope in which the "origins of pathetic fallacy probably lie in a primitive homeopathy ... wherein man regarded himself as part of his natural surroundings" (889). The transformation enhances a "new reality" through the shocking imagery (Shattuck 31). Here it is a first person, "yo," that narrates in contrast to the third person narrator of the ballad. The "yo" in the example places the poet or singer in the center of the creative process and includes nature in the form of the rocks as a kind of "co-creator." Rather than a simple mimesis of nature, the *cantaor* and the rocks form a new reality expressive of human anguish.

Bousoño signals the break from earlier poetic movements when he describes the new poetry inventing "vacas azules, cielos o islas que bogan, crepúsculos, colores y hasta piedras que cantan" (138). Albeit pathetic fallacy, so essential to Romantic expression, it offers an instance of the irrational imagery of new poetry with roots in popular expression.

The *letra* Manolito el de la María sings on the Murry Hill recording exhibits the paralinguistic features of a *Cante* performance as mentioned by Foley. While the literary rendering of the *copla* as a quatrain maintains the octosyllabic assonant rhyme format of

essentially narrative ballad, the performance, essentially lyrical, bears little similarity. Repetition of verses, injection of exclamations, as well as the usual melisma in the intonation of the melody highlight features of orality of the *compás* of the *soleares* having little, if anything, to do with the meter of the traditional ballad form. The spontaneity of the performance owing to the paralinguistic ingredient easily disappears with the written materiality of the *letra* on the page.

In both poems rocks that cry intensify the nightmare. In the ballad, recalling the hanging of a young woman and in *cante* the immediate expression of the *cantaor's* anguished performance created horrific images. The question remains: which came first and therefore, may have influenced the other: the popular ballad, then the *letra*, or the other way around? And, of course, which version was Lorca responding to when he created the drama?

In Federico García Lorca *A Life*, Ian Gibson describes Lorca's inspiration to write the play about the nineteenth century Granadine heroine, Marian Pineda (130). He claims that the history of Mariana "about whom ballads still circulated and whose sad end was recalled by old people in the village" turned into an "obsession" for Lorca perhaps owing to a statue of Mariana "in the square that bears her name" near the García Lorca home (130) which added to the poet's interest in the heroine (130). A reader/listener would not be totally unjustified in making a surrealist "poetic leap" connecting the stone statue of Mariana and the "weeping stones in both the ballad and *cante jondo*. Gibson's bibliographical citing of Lorca's obsession with the fate of Mariana Pineda offers a firm basis as source for his dramatic version. Lorca includes additional irrational imagery of

the *cante* which heightens the dramatic effect of Mariana Pineda. In an emotional scene with Fernando, Mariana intones the popular *copla*:

Pues si mi pecho tuviera  
vidrieritas de crystal,  
te asomaras y lo vieras  
gotas de sangre llorar (46)

Mariana's song is virtually word for word from traditional *letra of cante jondo* included by Machado y Álvarez, "Demófilo" in his collection Cantes Flamencos y Cantares:

Si mi corazón tubiera  
berieritas e cristá,  
t'asomaras y lo bieras  
gotas e sangre yorá. (210)

The irrational image of a windowpane in the heart or chest that allows the observer, ostensibly a lover, to see the heart cry drops of blood stuns the listener while the heart crying drops of blood brings to mind *cantaora* Tía Anica's statement, "Cuando canto a gusto me sabe la boca a sangre" (Grande 56). The verse continues to use blood to represent fear throughout the drama. In Act (Estampa) I, Scene VII, Mariana quotes the *letra* in a dialogue with a young friend, Fernando, who is enamored of her which serves to emphasize the fear and terror she anticipates for the fate of her lover, Pedro de Sotomayor, at the hands of the policeman, Pedrosa. The glass window peering into the heart and the organ itself "crying drops of blood" reveal the psychic violence Mariana experiences anticipating her and her lover's doom. In the song form, the fast association



and poetic leaps heighten the emotional intensity of the scene in a synthesis of violent psychic and actual factors that shock the listener or reader where the grotesque is present in the physical distortion of the speaker's body. Earlier in Act I, Scene V, Mariana points out to Fernando in vivid language anticipating the *copla* that:

Perdrosa conoce el sitio  
donde la vena es más ancha,  
por donde brota la sangre  
más caliente y encarnada (Lorca 31).

One of the most well-known *martinetes*, a form of *cante jondo* originates in the songs of the forge:

Ya no soy yo  
ni quien solía yo ser,  
soy un mueblecito de tristeza  
pegaíto a la paré (Traditional)

Lorca includes the first line of this *martinete* in his poem "Romance sonámbulo" from the Romancero Gitano. In the third section of the ballad, in dialogue between the father of the *gitana* and the *contrabandista*, the latter expresses his wish to exchange his life-style for that of the former:

Compadre, quiero cambiar  
mi caballo por su casa,  
mi montura por su espejo,  
mi cuchillo por su manta (235).

The father replies:

Si yo pudiera, mocito,  
este trato se cerraba.  
Pero yo ya no soy yo.  
Ni mi casa es ya mi casa. (235)

The father's enigmatic reply causes the reader to wonder what the situation of the characters may be until he realizes that the language suggests sleepwalking per the title of the ballad. However, irrational effects produced by associations between sleepwalking and the description of the setting startle the reader with horrific images of the events depicted. Gregorio Salvador in his treatise on this poem sees the Gypsy girl, who appears first on a balcony and later floating in a cistern, as a possible suicide: "Pues, es, ni más ni menos, que una situación dramática que era posible en Granada, posible y frecuente, el suicidio de una joven, normalmente un suicidio por amor, arrojándose a un aljibe y ahogándose en el aljibe" (Salvador 19). The fact of a suicide is not stated or proved but remains a possibility. The dream-like setting of the poem allows for other causes of death: despondency at the failure of the lover to arrive due to a violent event (when he does arrive, he is seriously injured), or even murder. Whatever the actual cause of death, the father is beset with grief which he expresses in anxiety-ridden irrational terms, much like the anonymous *cantaor* of the *martinete*. Like the *cantaor* who likens himself to a piece of furniture tossed against a wall, the father juxtaposes his personal plight with a concrete object, his home. Paradoxically, he declares that, not only does he find himself not himself, but, in parallel fashion, his home is not his home. The irrational declarations – "yo ya no soy yo" and "ni mi casa es ya mi casa" – express soulful anxiety, disorientation, and grief that startle the reader. The *cantaor* uses everyday objects, the

furniture and the wall, in unusual imagery that contradicts rational explanation and express deep emotion about the human condition. Repetition of the lines underlines the tone of orality in the ballad. Lorca not only provides another example of existential anxiety and grief through irrational expression but adds a sense of oral tradition by using images from primitive *cante* as a model to express cruel aspects of the human condition.

Frequently, as in the *martinete* above, beginning *in medias res* impacts the performance by placing the listener immediately in the context of the *cantaor*. In the four line *letra*, the singer implies his past as he situates himself in the immediate present while he laments his fate. The selection from Lorca's Romancero gitano uses the same device. Present-tense narration sets the scene *in medias res* and colors the dream-like tone of the entire ballad, a recourse that adds to the dream aspect suggested by the title. The reader finds himself in the middle of a dream-like situation and is led to intuit past events which have led to the horseman and the Gypsy girl's current situation. The *cantaor's* cry of despair in the *martinete* and the dialogue between the father and the horseman in the ballad give a sense of immediacy that amplifies thrill, shock, and awe. The dream-like setting of the ballad *in medias res* together with enigmatic dialogue are factors that demonstrate visionary imagery that frame Lorca's poem.

Lorca's tragic drama, Yerma, offers more uses of *cante*. In the second Act, first *cuadro*, the washerwomen sing quatrains that comment on the previous action of the drama as well as provide more information about Yerma and Juan's relationship (66 n.17):

Yo planté un tomillo,

Yo lo vi crecer.

El que quiere honra

Que se porte bien (Ríen.). (66).

The washerwomen's song uses planting of thyme metaphorically for sexual activity and the appropriate behavior of husband and wife in order to gossip regarding Yerma and Juan's situation. A possible source for this *letra* is Tía Anica La Piriñaca's version in the style of the *bulerías*:

Yo he "sembrao" un tomillo,

no me ha "salío" "ná."

El que tomillo quiera,

vaya al tomillar (CD LDX 1028)

The *cante* version also uses the metaphor of planting thyme; however, la Piriñaca's version clarifies that one obtains thyme effectively by visiting the thyme garden. In both versions the entire *copla* is "organically unified" (The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics 761) as a metaphor for success in romance wherein irrationality arises from the association of a cultivated herb with courtship and love. In contrast to the earlier examples of *cante jondo* where the feeling is one of profound sadness, these verses reflect a more light-hearted or jocular attitude on the part of the singer(s) since La Piriñaca's version is sung to the festive rhythm of the *bulerías* and the washerwomen's version is choral and filled with sarcasm and laughter. The *cante* performance employs orality-based characteristics of repetition of verses and paralinguistic features of "Ayay." The rendition of the *copla* in Yerma, in choral style, reflects a neo-popular usage of classic Greek chorus that does not imitate a purely traditional performance of *cante*.

Although no direct evidence for Lorca's paraphrase of the *letra* exists, the poet's close association with *cante* suggests a possible source.

The *copla* uses an everyday "object", the herb, thyme, to represent illogical images of successful behavior in a relationship while cathexis gives the object, thyme, an emotional intensity that endows it with an almost magical quality transforming it into a symbol of sexuality and love. The compact structure of the stanza enhances the fast association of the first person "yo," and the third person "él" with the object. In this surreal image, the seeker of romance becomes obsessed with the attainment of a garden plant.

The psychic event produced in these verses is clearly not the thrill or shock of terror or disgust provided by grotesque images seen before. The *copla* from the drama produces a humorous reaction in the washerwomen realized from the stage directions. The audience may react this way and also with a sense of foreboding of the trouble between Yerma and Juan and the ensuing tragedy. La Piriñaca's *cante* version possibly provides humor, but also a sense of romantic frustration from the first two lines: "Yo he "sembrao" un tomillo, *no me ha salío ná.*" The unusual construction and use of these metaphors, derived from popular expression, demonstrates Lorca's new poetic experimentation.

Lorca does not imitate the traditional *letra* of *cante jondo* in the new poetry rather he transforms from the essence of *cante* in a kind of transubstantiation where the essential concept remains similar but results in new expression. The violence in the creation of the imagery and the surge of new expression from unconscious contents is energized by emotions experienced by the *cantaor* and the poet as crucial life events. The metaphors

destroy the usual image of the subject and revision it with often human characteristics thus producing crying rocks, ropes that crush Christ's wrists with strength that smashes rocks, horses that mimic the rider's emotions, and humans that become furniture.

In the lecture Cante Jondo, Lorca affirmed "Se da el nombre de *cante jondo* a un grupo de canciones andaluzas cuyo tipo genuino y perfecto es la *siguiriya gitana*" (Obras Completas 974), impressions of which he included in the collection Poema del Cante Jondo in a section titled Poema de la siguiiya gitana. The poem "EL GRITO" from this section exemplifies Lorca's view of the *cante* and his neo-popular treatment of the theme whose style includes irrational imagery.

#### EL GRITO

La elipse de un grito  
va de monte  
a monte.

Desde los olivos  
será un arco iris negro  
sobre la noche azul.

¡Ay!

Como un arco de viola

el grito ha hecho vibrar  
largas cuerdas del viento.

¡Ay!

(Las gentes de las cuevas  
asoman sus velones.)

¡Ay!

Lorca's poem is not mere *letra* for a version of *cante*, it is the *cante*, a figurative recourse that does what it says by using a synesthetic image of the song as a black rainbow which metaphorically transforms the bow of a musical instrument, the viola, which, in turn, causes the strings (cords) of the wind to vibrate like the vocal cords of the *cantaor*. The interjections of "¡Ay!" are the hallmark *grito* of the *siguiriya*, and evidence orality and spontaneity in *cante*. The image traces the song as an expression from nature, a primal scream.

The last stanza in parentheses which introduces "las gentes de las cuevas" is an obvious reference to Gypsies, the principal movers and shakers of the *siguiriya gitana*. The lamps suggest the darkness of night when *cante* usually is performed.

An important agent of transformation, magic, occurs in irrational imagery as *duende*, an archetypal influence of Gypsy artistic expression mentioned earlier. This supernatural factor remains the same although the vehicles of expression, *cante* as a

traditional form, and Lorca's neo-popular form, remain distinct. The presence of the supernatural and the transformation of the lyric form offer irrational imagery in both cases. What Lorca seems to say, in spite of his denial of his early reputation as the "Gypsy poet" while at the same time affirming the Gypsy as the "most authentic Andalusian," (Obras Completas 1084) is that the cultured poet and his poetry, especially the avant-garde, is parallel in great part to the Gypsy expression of *cante jondo*. The Gypsy, through his intuition, conjoins the traditional poetic expression and the contemporary, avant-garde expression. To use the word catalyst in reference to the Gypsy is too easy, too much of a cliché; he is the human, mythic, cultural, historic agent of the transmission of poetic expression for the Spanish lyric—he is *duende*. Lorca intuited this, possibly knew it consciously and his awareness of the tradition in Spanish lyric enabled him to fuse the popular and the traditional into a new neo-popularist expression leading to the avant-garde which transforms popular into the cultured.

### **Alberti, *Cante*, and Neo-popularism**

Based on excerpts from the collections Marinero en tierra, Cal y Canto, Sermones y moradas, and El alba del alhelí, Rafael Alberti's connection with and influence from *cante jondo* is similar to that of his contemporary, Federico García Lorca. Born in the Andalusian port of Cádiz, Alberti was surrounded by local *cante jondo*. Alberti's autobiography, La Arboleda perdida, makes reference to *cante* in the descriptions of his early life in Puerto Santa María. Alberti was raised by a mother who cultivated flowers and played the piano; "Era, . . . una mujer rara y delicada, que tanto como a sus santos y sus vírgenes amaba las plantas y las fuentes, las canciones de Schubert, que tocaba al piano,



las coplas y romances del sur, que a mí solo me transmitía quizá por ser el único de la casa que le atrayeran sus cultos y aficiones” (17).

Alberti describes the setting of the home of his youthful romantic interest, Margarita, “en frente al Penal, aquel triste Penal del Puerto que tantos ayes ha arrancado a la garganta del cante jondo” (72). Manuel de Falla’s definition of *cante*’s essential elements as used in formulas for enchantment and recitations that are possibly prehistoric supposes that *cante* precedes spoken language (80 n.80). In the La Arboleda perdida, Alberti describes his brother, Agustín’s laments at the death of their father as follows:

prorrumpió en ayes y palabras que parecían más bien versos caídos de alguna copla de nuestro cante jondo. Y a este mismo lamento volvía de cuando en cuando con dolor semejante al de ese hombre andaluz que cantaba solitario en la herrería acompañado únicamente por el redoble funeral de su martillo contra el yunque. (126-27)

The references to the singing of the *carceleras* in the prison at El Puerto, the comparison with the brother’s lament and the *martinete* in the forge, and the reference to the composer de Falla’s studies of *cante jondo* substantiate the presence of *cante* in Alberti’s world.

Alberti sometimes used references to *cante* to describe the poetry of other poets. In 1926 he traveled to Málaga to meet and visit with Emilio Prados and Manuel Altolaguirre, the editors of the poetry journal *Litoral* and members of the Generation of ‘27 (Alberti 216). When he read the poetry from Altolaguirre’s book, Las islas invitadas, Alberti described the *malagueño*’s anguish over the death of his mother as “de esa

angustia, de ese dolor, hondos, como los del cante andaluz más sublime y puro” (216) a reference that flowed quite naturally from the *gaditano*’s pen.

The La Arboleda perdida contains more evidence of Alberti’s close association with Andalusia. In 1927, Alberti was attempting to become a *torero* at the urging of his friend the famous bullfighter, Ignacio Sánchez Mejías (235-36). Alberti quotes a reputed comment by Juan Ramón Jiménez when the *moguereno* learned of this activity and the associated lifestyle: ““Me he enterado que Alberti anda con gitanos, banderilleros y otras gentes de mal vivir: Como usted comprende, está perdido”” (236). Alberti qualifies Juan Ramón’s observation saying “Una mínima parte de verdad encerraba este comentario. Pero en cuanto a lo de mi perdición...Aquí estoy, con quince o veinte libros más, recordándolo, sonriente, a treinta años de distancia” (236). The would-be bullfighter obviously suffered no remorse about his taurine activities and his social associations.

During this period, Sánchez Mejías, through his connections with the world of bullfighters, Gypsies, and “otras gentes de mal vivir,” provided other opportunities for these associations. One night at his home on the outskirts of Sevilla the *matador* invited several poets including Lorca and Alberti to a party that included a musical session by the renowned Gypsy *cantaor*, Manuel Torre with the guitarist Manuel Huelva (240). Alberti describes the performance by the famous *Gitano*:

el gitano comenzó a cantar, sobrecogiéndonos a todos, agarrándonos por la garganta con su voz, sus gestos y las palabras de sus coplas. Parecía un bronco animal herido, un terrible pozo de angustias. Mas, a pesar de su honda voz, lo verdaderamente sorprendente eran sus palabras: versos raros de soleares y

siguiriyas, conceptos complicados, arabescos difíciles. –¿De dónde sacas esas letras?-se le preguntó.

“-Unas me las invento, otras las busco-.” (240-41)

In a brief description of a *juerga* in the outskirts of Sevilla, Alberti describes *cante* that inspired Lorca and Alberti’s neo-popular lyric. The *cantaor*’s concise description of *versos* that include orality, spontaneity, and the grotesque and parallels the neo-popular and *avant-garde* creation in which emotion from the preconscious precedes the conscious understanding of the symbolism.

In 1931, Sánchez Mejías in conjunction with “la Argentinita” and García Lorca undertook a project to develop a dance presentation of “bailes andaluces” and invited Alberti to assist in the project (Alberti 286-87). In order to present an authentic performance, the group went to Jerez de la Frontera in the province of Cádiz in search of “gitanos ‘bailaores y cantaores’ puros” that were not contaminated with the “ópera flamenca” spectacles then taking place in Madrid (287). In this andalusian port city, made famous in Lorca’s “Romance de la guardia civil española,” Alberti and the group would discover and contract many Gypsy artists including the legendary dancers “Espeleta” as well as “la Macarrona,” la Malena,” and “la Fernanda” (287). The *gaditano* poet took part in activities that called on his familiarity and knowledge of the popular culture of his birthplace.

Alberti did not compose a collection of poetry based on the Gypsy culture *cante jondo*, as did his contemporary and fellow neo-popularist and member of the Generation of ’27, Lorca. Alberti appears as a nomad because of his trajectory through the various phases of his poetic aesthetics: “neo-popularismo, gongorismo, surrealismo, compromiso,

etc.” (García Montero (104). Luis García Montero in reference to a series of articles by Rafael Argullol, Territorio del nómada, describes the poet in terms that describe a Gypsy equally well. García Montero observes that Argullol’s title:

alude directamente a la condición de exilio ideológico que vive el poeta, un ser en constante movimiento, sin lugar natural, portavoz del yo frente a las imposiciones del sistema, antiguo habitante del deseo en un mundo tomado por la realidad.

Desde el romanticismo, la tradición contemporánea ha hecho del poeta, en sus disfraces de pirata, alunado o maldito, el héroe representativo de los seres humanos que sufren el fracaso de las promesas ilustradas de felicidad social.

(104)

García Montero describes Alberti the poet both in his personal life as an “exiliado” from his birthplace in Cádiz to the metropolis of Madrid, his political exile from Spain, and his aesthetic journey through the poetic movements similar to Gypsy culture and its dolorous journey through history. García Montero’s observations serve not only as a basis for the poetics of Rafael Alberti, but as an aesthetic of expression for *cante jondo*.

Alberti saw the artistic position of the Generation of ’27 in this way: no pretende unir artísticamente dos mundos separados; prefiere demostrar que en realidad, tomado las cosas en su origen, no existe separación entre los dos mundos, entre la tradición y la vanguardia (107). Thus the time-honored *cante* and the neo-popular are seen as a continuum of expression in imagery.

Kurt Spang’s analysis of the poem “El tranquilo” from the collection Cal y Canto, makes a distinction between Alberti’s “neogongorística” expression in this book and the vanguard or surrealist style to come. Here first the poem:

## EL TRANQUILO

Caras en neblina y humo,  
en los charcos y cristales.

A mi alcoba sube un árbol,  
de la calle.

Dos árboles  
Tres árboles.  
Ciento veinticuatro árboles.

Un Don Paquito de palo,  
tres serenos y un alcalde.  
Ciento veinticuatro alcaldes.

Sangre y tiros.  
Sangre.

Tú, en m cama,  
Sin temerle miedo a nadie (Poesías Completas 234).

Spang comments:

Aquí ya lo amenazante, lo funesto, y lo misterioso predominan como en los poemas angélicos albertianos. La técnica recuerda, en efecto, las imágenes

oníricas surrealistas de una naturaleza proliferante que no evoca y comunica sosiego, sino agresividad y hostilidad, con la importante diferencia de que se trata de creación consciente y deliberada y no de escritura automática. (70)

Spang's observations can be applied to the imagery in *cante* as well as the neopopularist expression. Spang lists, "lo amenazante, lo funesto, lo misterioso," together with the grotesque, as factors in Alberti's imagery. *Cante* and Lorca's lyric exhibit this imagery as well and reveal a clear line of ascendancy through these genres as well as evidence of the distinction between the French Surrealist Movement and the Spanish vanguard orientation. Spang notes an important difference between Alberti's lyric which while it uses "imágenes oníricas surrealistas" (70), is "creación consciente y deliberada" and does not derive from "escritura automática" (70) as with the Surrealist Movement in Paris during the Twenties. Again, the distinction between Surrealism of the 1920's and from time immemorial is made clear. The former demonstrates an attitude of rejection of all former literary history and emphasis on the unconscious process of automatic writing while the latter finds resources in the literary traditions and popular culture. But I would take issue with Spang's view that Albert's imagery was conscious and deliberate. Although one does not have direct evidence from Alberti about the composition of the poem, the predominant lack of verbs along with dream-like imagery of fog, smoke, and sudden appearance of numbers of trees and human characters seemingly from puddles in a street betray spontaneity, orality and leaps in the genesis of imagery.

In Inquietud y Nostalgia, Kurt Spang uses examples from *soleares*, selections from Bécquer's Rimas and Alberti's Tres recuerdos del cielo to demonstrate the development of imagery through popular, neo-popular and vanguard expression in

Alberti's poetry. Spang's citations from Bécquer's poetry reflect the idealization usually associated with the Romantic poets by the terms "inquietud" and "nostalgia" and demonstrates the "ambiente extraterrestre" in "Tres recuerdos del cielo," an homage to Bécquer by Alberti, and Rimas by Bécquer (96). In Rima XIX, a marvelous example of post-romantic verse, as Spang points out, Bécquer sings of the beauty of a lady:

Cuando sobre el pecho inclinas  
la melancólica frente,  
una azucena tronchada  
me pareces

Porque al darte la pureza  
de que es símbolo celeste,  
como a ella que hizo Dios  
de oro y nieve (Bécquer 126)

Alberti's "Primer recuerdo," the poetic treatment of the woman from Cádiz is similar to Bécquer's, but with "recursos más modernos" which evoke the image of a woman "de pureza intangible y sobrenatural" (Spang 97):

Paseaba con un dejo de azucena que piensa  
casi de pájaro que sabe ha de nacer.  
.....  
y un silencio de nieve, que le elevaba los pies.  
a un silencio asomada,  
era anterior al arpa, a la lluvia y a las palabras.

No sabía.

Blanca alumna del aire. (97)

Bécquer idealizes the woman in Rima XI with intangible and extraterrestrial qualities: “yo soy un sueño, un imposible / fantasma de niebla y luz” an expression of a failed or impossible love (Spang 99). Alberti, in his homage to the Sevillian poet, paraphrases the sentiment with the line: “Entonces, detrás de tu abanico, nuestra luna primera” (Spang 99) a disquietude mixed with nostalgia of failed or unrequited love. The expressions “detrás de tu abanico” and “luna” represent the “extraterreste” quality of the language present in both poets (99).

Fernanda de Utrera sings a *soleares* that demonstrates the idealization of the love object, “inquietud y nostalgia” as well as “intangibile y sobrenatural”:

Quisiera ser como el aire

Pa’ estar siempre a tu verita

sin que lo notara nadie ( Bernarda de Utrera Murry Hill Archive)

Las florecillas silvestres

se menean cuando yo paso,

a ti solita te quiero

y a nadie lo hago caso (Manolito el de María Murry Hill Archive)

The concise *soleares* form parallels the post-romantic expression of Bécquer and the more modern style of Alberti. Nature combines with the singer’s intense emotions to create a supernatural aspect to the song. Figurative language describes the desire of the *gitana* to be “aire” in order to be with her lover that associates an intangible quality with



the corporeal one magically in irrational imagery. With the intimate and tender tone and a sense of mystery of Gypsy poetry, the *gitana*, rather than personifying, reifies into a natural element in order to be with her beloved. In the following *soleares letra*, the waving flowers mimic the Gypsy's intense feeling for his beloved.

Spang's continues the critic's themes of "inquietud y nostalgia" as he examines Sermones y moradas. The collection is an expression "entre inquietud y resignación" that seems "más el catalizador de un estado de crisis personal que verdadera creación literaria. Es decir en este libro prevalece la función 'terapéutica'" (101) where the attitude of personal crisis follows much like the one expressed in Sobre los ángeles (100). Spang offers an interesting image from Sermones y moradas:

Ya en mi alma pesaban de tal modo los muertos futuros  
que no podía andar ni un solo paso sin que las piedras  
revelaran sus entrañas. (101)

That rocks reveal their entrails expresses the poet's disquietude reminiscent of Lorca's crying rocks in the drama Mariana Pineda examined earlier. The grotesque personalization of rocks revealing their entrails combines with the human aspect of the poet's soul and the "muertos futuros", to create stunning and irrational images.

Alberti's "*Nana*" reveals a new expression from the traditional *cante* and shows the trajectory from popular to neo-popular and, at times, the vanguard:

¡Al rosal, al rosal  
la rosa!

¡Luna,  
al rosal!

¡A dormir la rosa-niña!

¡Aire,  
al rosal!

¿Quién ronda la puerta? ¿El cuervo?

¡Pronto  
al rosal!

¡Al rosal la niña-rosa,  
que el aire y la luna vienen,  
mi sueño, a mecer tus hojas! (Alberti 152)

Using natural subjects in *nana* is widespread. Here the rose and the rosebush, the moon, the wind, and the sentient being, the raven, appear. Action verbs-- “ronda” and “mecer”-- as well as the preposition plus article-- “al” indicate motion, an obvious reference to the act of rocking a child to sleep common to the cradlesong. The *cante* version suggests a popular source for Alberti’s *nana*:

A dormir va  
la rosa de los rosales;

a dormir, niña,

porque ya es tarde...(Pohren 149)

The *cante* is an invocation to the girl-child, the rose, to go to sleep. Nothing particularly unusual resides in the use of the metaphor of rose for child nor in the suggestion of motion with “a” and “va.” The melancholy tone of the melody expresses the affection and care for the child in the traditional *nana*. Yet the plaintiff *Gitano-andaluz* melody of the performance by Bernado el de los lobitos in the *Hispanvox Anthology of Cante Flamenco* gives this example and other versions a singularly primal aspect. Lorca commented in his lecture on lullabies (La nanas infantiles), “Siempre he notado la aguda tristeza de las canciones de cuna de nuestro país” and later, “Al cabo de un tiempo recibí la impresión de que España usa sus melodías de más acentuada tristeza y sus textos de expresión más melancólica para teñir el primer sueño de sus niños” (Obras completas 1045). Very bright and gay melodies abide in the *Gitano-andaluz* tradition but these are not the choices made by the mothers and fathers of the children for the *nanas*. The choice of melody as well as the text reflects the parents’ emotions while simultaneously serving as a musical vehicle to put the child to sleep. The rhythm or meter is that of the rocking cradle (Pohren 149).

What interests the “neo-popular” poet is what can be termed the “disémico” quality of the symbolic language of the *nana* (Bousoño Irracionalismo 215-218). On the one hand, the logical rational imagery of the verses suggests the sweet, serene, positive aspects of the lullaby and its first intention to lull the child to sleep. On the other, the illogical, irrational aspect of the language allows the reader to intuit and feel the melancholy expression from the parent’s perspective, the looming specter of death so

frequently associated with the sleep-state, and for infants with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. The curious admixture of love and death reflect the Gypsy tendency to combine tenderness with melancholy, two themes noticed frequently in poetry and *cante jondo*. The reader senses in the *nana* the love and affection for the child on the part of the parents, while, at the same time, intuitively a sense of foreboding, of death, which stirs a melancholy reaction.

Alberti's neo-popular *nana* displays a more developed aspect of the disemic imagery from the popular version. The image of the rose is juxtaposed with "niña" by a hyphen that leads the reader to see the child and the flower as the same object, as a "child-rose". The poet has treated the metaphor of the rose from the traditional lullaby in a new manner. The logical and rational images from nature, moon, wind, and rose garden suggest a pleasant evening propitious for sleeping or an amorous encounter while rhythmic structure that alternates between 2 and 8 syllables mimics the rocking cradle of a traditional *nana* (Tejada 545). The verbs "vienen," and "mecer" describe the motion that induces sleep, the purpose of the lullaby, but at the same time suggest a *rendez-vous* in the rose garden by the adverbial expressions "al" "pronto" and "ronda". Whereas in the popular version time is suggested by the adverb "tarde", Alberti uses the noun "luna" in two places to imply the time of day as well as providing symbols of femininity, magic, and romance.

Alberti gives the word "sueño," a traditional, logical condition associated with the sleep-world, a new treatment as a locus for the amorous activity in the rose garden as well as a sleep event. In Alberti's *nana* the moon, wind, and other natural elements often

found in cradle songs, create a feeling of suspense and excitement associated with a garden tryst.

The exclamation points throughout Alberti's *nana* point to a different expression from the one in the popular version by representing excitement in an exhortation to action, opposite from the invocation to sleep in the popular *cante*. With the question in line eight, "¿Quién ronda la puerta? ¿El cuervo?" the speaker suggests that this is not a traditional *nana*. Instead the final stanza of the *nana* expresses affection towards a woman rather than a child.

Alberti's *Nana* has the same referent as the traditional poem by Gil Vicente "Del rosal vengo, mi madre, vengo del rosale" that describes a romantic *rendez-vous* (Tejada 545 n.10). In his biography *La Arboleda perdida*, Alberti points out the influence of the poetry of Gil Vicente initiated by the study of Luis de Góngora: "A él le debo muchas cosas. Una, fundamental, sobre todas: me dio a conocer a Gil Vicente, quien todavía refresca mis canciones de estos últimos años" (141).

Alberti's neo-popular style reflects a reworking of the traditional imagery of the rose garden in the amorous song from Gil Vicente from the Middle Ages and the rose and the rose garden in the *nana* from *cante jondo*.

Alberti's early work reveals the frequent use of the traditional popular form of *cante*, the *soleares*, as well as other traditional forms like the *romance* and the *redondilla* (Tejada 417). However, Alberti is not reproducing or creating new *soleares letras* in the popular style as Manuel Machado did in his poetic series, "Cante Hondo," but is bringing the expression forward by using the form for neo-popular expression. "Los niños" from Alberti's collection *Marinero en tierra* is an example.

## Los niños

SOLITA, en las balastradas,  
mi niña virgen del mar  
borda las velas nevadas.

¡Ay que vengo, que yo vengo  
herido, en una fragata,  
solito, mi vida, huyendo  
de tu corazón pirata!

¡De prisa, mi marinera!  
Que un jirón de tu bordado  
haga que yo no me muera (Tejada 385)

As an *aire* of the popular form of *cante*, *alegrías* (Tejada 386) traditionally associated with the seaport of Cádiz, the poem signals Alberti's heritage. The *alegrías* as a song form occur in the more basic category of *cantinas* which was "originally the name given to medieval songs from Galicia...today extended in meaning to signify 'popular song.' It derived from "*cantiñear*" a verb meaning 'improvised popular song'" (Pohren 122). The improvisational quality of *cante* goes hand in hand with unrehearsed imagery and performance where the emotional charge energizes the creation. Exaggerated military imagery describes amorous determination in a *letra* from *alegrías*:

Aunque pongan en tu puerta  
cañones de artillería,  
tengo que pasar por ella  
aunque me cueste la vía (Pohren 117)

Similar to Alberti's hero, the *cantaor* of the *alegrías* would risk death to achieve a goal expressed in an entire *copla* as metaphor.

Although the distance between the words "solita" in the first line referring to the girl and "solito" in the sixth line referring to the young man, suggest the themes of loneliness and unrequited love traditionally expressed by *soleares*, the playful joyous tone of the *alegrías* permeates the happy theme of young lovers. The simple description of the young virgin in the first stanza embroidering at the balustrade becomes magical since she is embroidering sails. It can be argued that these sails are to "catch" the young sailor who is fleeing the metaphorical "pirate heart" of the young lady in the second stanza. Finally, in a kind of paradoxical turn, the sailor exhorts the girl to hurry so that a scrap from her embroidery may save him from "death." The Romantic cliché of a wounded pirate being saved by a young girl is paraphrased in a neo-popular style that reflects the flamenco ambiance of the poet's childhood. The new poem echoes the hazards that young lovers may have to overcome as expressed metaphorically in the traditional *letra* of the *alegrías*.

The octosyllabic rhyme scheme is reminiscent of the *cante* structure, the repetition of the phrase "que vengo, que yo vengo," together with exclamations in first person demonstrate the orality and spontaneity intrinsic to the traditional form. The

*puerta* and the *cañones* of the *cante* and the *corazón pirata* and *jirón (de tu bordado)* of the new poem objectify the emotions of the protagonists in the two expressions.

Alberti's familiarity with Gypsy-Andalusian culture influenced his lyric.

Although he did not compose a ballad collection inspired by the Andalusian Gypsy as did his friend and contemporary García Lorca, he did offer *retratos* much in the same vein as Lorca. The group of ten *poemitas* entitled "LA HÚNGARA" is from the section "El blanco alhelí" from the book "EL ALBA DEL ALHELÍ" and was begun during Alberti's stay in the mountain town of Rute in the province of Córdoba (212). In Alberti's own words: "De aquellos paseos por el campo traje la húngara, coplillas dedicadas a una preciosa muchacha magiar, vagabunda con su familia dentro de un carro verde ornamentado de flores, pájaros y espejitos" (174). The "*coplillas*" in popular style (174) describe an encounter between a man and a Gypsy girl wherein the poetic "yo" expresses the yearning to accompany the Gypsy girl. The versification is predominantly octosyllabic in order to maintain the conversational tone and structure of a *coplilla*, while maintaining the rhyme scheme established earlier. In *coplilla* number 7 the Gypsy girl declares:

No puedo hasta la verbena,  
pregonar mi mercancía,  
que el alcade me condena.

¡Pero qué me importa a mí,  
si en estos campos a solas,  
puedo cantártela a ti!



---¡Caballitos, banderolas,  
alfileres, redecillas,  
peines de tres mil colores!

¡Para los enamorados,  
en papeles perfumados,  
las dulces cartas de amores!

¡Alerta, los compradores! (Poesías Completas 140)

The *coplillas* are divided in tercets with consonant rhyme and octosyllabic meter reminiscent of the *soleares* and *alegrías* forms frequently used in the earlier work, Marinero en tierra. The *tango* form used for the *pregones* of street vendors contains similar meter and rhyme scheme illustrated by the example of a *pregonera* singing her romantic disenchantment:

Tú andas vendiendo flores;  
Las tuyas son amarillas,  
Las mías de too colores. (traditional)

All the *coplillas* have a musical, singing quality reminiscent of the *letra* of *cante* with regular meter and versification together with orality and spontaneity that reflect the conversational tone and mirror the structure of the traditional *romance*.

The Gypsy girl's dress and her behavior in this group of *coplillas* recalls Lorca's *romances* that describe the Gypsy protagonist of "Prendimiento de Antoñito el Camborio

en el camino a Sevilla” and “Muerte de Antoñito el Camborio” who, with his cane staff, purple shoes, ivory medallions, and shiny curly hair, displays Gypsy haughtiness as he makes his way to Seville.

In *coplilla* number three, the repetition of present participles heightens the sense of sensuousness in nature and the passing of the night:

...Y yo, mi niña, teniendo  
abrigo contra el relente,  
mientras va el sueño viniendo.  
  
Y tú, mi niña, durmiendo  
en los ojitos del puente,  
mientras va el agua corriendo. (Poesías Completas 138)

Alliteration emphasizes the interest of the poetic “yo” and demonstrates orality and spontaneity with the s’s and t’s of the first quatrain giving a sensuous tone to the man’s description of the Gypsy girl’s appearance:

Tan limpia tú, tan peinada,  
con esos dos peinecillos  
que te asesinan las sienas,  
dime, di ¿de dónde vienes?

Con esa falda encarnada  
y esas dos rosas de lino  
en tus zapatitos verdes,  
dime, di, ¿de dónde vienes? (Poesías Completas 138)

Little combs that “murder” the girl’s temples gives a playful sense of violence, corporality and spontaneity that counteracts the logical association of combs and hair and anticipates the irrational imagery of Alberti’s later work. Although typical of a Gypsy girl’s appearance, the image adds an emotional almost “violent” quality that the poet experiences in the presence of the girl, an example of Bly’s leaping poetry and Apollinaire’s fast association.

“A Micaela Flores Amaya, La Chunga,” from Alberti’s later collection Poemas Diversos (Poesías Completas 770), gives neo-popular homage to a prominent *figura* of the flamenco world. Its tone is similar to the vignettes in the section *Viñetas flamencas* from Poema del Cante Jondo where Lorca gives homage to several important figures of flamenco artistry.

Alberti describes the famous Gypsy dancer in four stanzas that resemble *coplas* from *cante*. The poetic expression is neo-popular in nature since it creates an image of the flamenco dancer by reworking a popular form using popular imagery.

The stanzas resemble the *cante* in *fandango* form which consists of stanzas (*coplas*) of four or five lines with a mixture of assonant and consonant rhyme; instead, the poet improvises somewhat on the standard form which has four or five lines with consonant rhyme. Excepting the first line which acts like an introduction, and, again, resembles the popular form, the meter is octosyllabic copying the traditional style.

A MICAELA FLORES AMAYA,

LA CHUNGA

El primor,

La gracia de los primores,

como una brisa quebrada  
contra el junco de una flor  
o un relámpago de flores.  
Alada brisa salada.

Brasa viva,  
pájaro que ardiendo vuela,  
lumbre que embiste y se esquivo  
como un toro de candela  
libre y a la vez cautiva.

Arrebol,  
revolera de arreboles  
o un moreno girasol,  
farol entre los faroles.

Ya aparece,  
ya se escapa, ya se eleva,  
ya anochece o amanece  
desde el fondo de una cueva.

¡Aire, que la lleva el aire!

¡Aire que el aire la lleva! (Poesías completas 770-71)

The first stanza or *letra* contains a mixture of imagery of light and motion that creates an image of weightlessness, brightness, and quickness—all desirable attributes for a flamenco dancer—that are summed up in the poet's single word in the second line, "*gracia*."

Spontaneous imagery and its neo-popular quality, hinting at avant-garde, resides in the simile in the second and third lines, "como una brisa quebrada / contra el junco de una flor" and the metaphor in the fourth line, "un relámpago de flores". The metaphor in the last line, "Alada brisa salada," augments orality and spontaneity. The adjective "salada" personalizes the breeze with the characteristic gracefulness or charming qualities associated with the flamenco dancer.

The desirable attributes of the dancer – quickness, brightness, even violence and, particularly, spontaneity – inhere in the imagery of the "breeze broken against the stem of the flower." As in *cante*, the poet, "*cantaor*," employs fast associations and leaping poetry to create and heighten the vision of a "lightning bolt of flowers" where the quickness and violence of the poetic associations matches the same characteristics in the dancer. Finally the stanza culminates in the metaphor of the dancer as a "winged salty breeze." The alliteration of the "a" continues the image of air, lightness, and quickness-spontaneity- already seen, with the repetition of the vowel "a" reflecting the orality of the expression and mimicking the "ah" of the awed spectators.

The second stanza continues the associations of light, speed, heat, and violence. A string of metaphors describes the dancer: "Brasa viva," "Pájaro que ardiendo vuela," "lumbre que embiste y esquiva," and finally the simile, "como un toro de candela / libre y a la vez cautiva." The dancer is by turns a live coal, a metaphor that gives life to an inanimate object and a "bird that is burning in flight" an unusual image that brings

spontaneity into play. The word “lumbre” suggests “fire” and also “brilliance” in its figurative sense; but this fire is not only brilliant, it embodies the violence of the “bull of flame” that “charges and dodges” and is at the same time “free” and “captive.” The light and heat of the various types of flame used metaphorically to describe the dancer and her dance are unusual associations and reflect the fast association and leaping poetry of irrational imagery while the paradoxical images of “bull of flame” that is at the same time “free and captive” heighten the sense of incongruity and irrationality associated with avant-garde and surreal creation. The traditional rhyme scheme together with orality and musicality maintain the popular tone of the poem.

The third stanza continues and further develops the succession and mixture of images of motion, the bullfight, color, and light in the description of the dancer and her movements. In the first line, the poet suggests with a single word, “*arrebol*” that La Chunga embodies the color red, the blush of red in the cheeks of a person. In the next line, *revolera de arreboles*, the dancer becomes a swirl of the blushing color suggested by the word *revolera*, the term for a type of cape pass in the bullring. The poet presents a mixed image of power, speed and even violence by the use of description from the *corrida*. The third line presents a paradoxical image of the dancer: she is “un moreno girasol,” a brunette sunflower, as a flower of the sun necessarily tanned or morena, the dark complexion of the Gypsy is mixed with the colorful and bright image of the flower. The fourth line continues the startling associations of the mixed imagery of light, color, and the action of the bullfight: “farol entre los faroles.” The light of the lantern includes the motion of the *farol*, a flamboyant type of pass with the cape in the bullfight so that the dancer is the superlative “lantern / pass among lanterns / passes.” The assonant rhyme

“o” maintains the sense of musicality and orality and even harks back to the rhyme “o” of the first line’s flower imagery while the suggestion of light, farol, is mixed metaphorically with the taurine term for a pass “farol.”

The last stanza increases images of light and motion for the portrait of La Chunga. The anaphora of “ya,” gives spontaneity and immediacy that reflect orality in the poem. The verbs in the first and second lines, “aparece,” “se escapa,” “se eleva” connote human motion while the verbs in the third line are more poetic and associate night and day with the actions and emotions of the dancer while continuing the imagery of light and motion. She “becomes dark” and “becomes light (dawns)” as she personifies the passage of time of day and the emotions it suggests. Here, they represent the impressions of the dancer on the poet while maintaining natural associations with of the earlier stanzas. The fourth line refers to the primitive Gypsy origins of the dancer, La Chunga and implies the depth of her expression. The use of apostrophe and chiasmus in the final two lines emphasize orality on the rhyme of the poem. The imagery of light, lightness, and motion that have moved throughout the poem continue with the word “aire” and the verb “lleva.”

The sustained use of elemental imagery from nature – flowers, fire, light, air and images from the bullfight – give a telluric quality to La Chunga’s primitive dance. Alberti’s neo-popular lyric contains the traditional characteristics of *cante* while at the same time reflecting irrational imagery of the avant-garde.

These examples from *cante* and Lorca’s and Alberti’s work demonstrate a continuous development of irrational imagery from the popular to the neo-popular that anticipates the avant-garde expression of the two poets. Juxtaposing images of tenderness and melancholy, even cruelty, with spontaneity, orality and the grotesque,

these poets combined the dual processes of conservation and innovation while continuing the Gypsy model from *cante*. In this way, they not only perpetuated a traditional style, but created a neo-popular art that leads toward the avant-garde and surreal.



## CONCLUSION

The term “surreal,” coined by Guillaume Apollinaire in the early twentieth century, describes bizarre artistic creations, including poetic expression, and, as a proper noun, “Surrealism,” referring to the Surrealist Movement in Paris during the 1920’s it associates mainly with automatic writing, the irrational juxtaposition of various objects in the human unconscious to create images that startle, awe, or shock the perceiver.

As such, viewed as “surrealism,” meaning irrational associations in language, it pertains to poetry from time immemorial because it is an inherent, basic ingredient forming the bedrock of human creativity allowing, even demanding, promoting, and causing constant renovation in the art of poetry. It is this eternal, formative quality that draws attention to the unusual imagery of *cante jondo*, and its off-spring, the neo-popular work of Lorca and Alberti.

The analysis of selections from the *letra* of *cante jondo* and the neo-popular works of Rafael Alberti and Federico García Lorca traced irrational and visionary characteristics in imagery that consists of illogical juxtapositions, expressed in unusual associations that elicit striking and shocking reactions in the reader or listener. Such scrutiny of *cante* and the neo-popular lyric of Alberti and Lorca makes clear that it has existed from long before the Surrealist Movement and supports Alberti’s statement that surrealism has “been practiced in Spain since time immemorial as part of the tradition of popular song and folk poetry” (Rafael Alberti qtd. in Harris 34).

The introduction established the parameters for the examinations of irrational and visionary imagery: characteristics of orality and spontaneity and conservative and innovative traditions of artistic expression, the preconscious and unconscious locus for

the genesis of irrational imagery, procedures for the associations in the imagery, and paralinguistic features that add to the emotionality of the expression. It considered John Miles Foley's crucial observation of a clearly visible progression from orality into literacy in the transcriptions of *cante* and the neo-popular work of Lorca and Alberti.

Together with orality, spontaneity in its various manifestations – fast associations (Apollinaire), leaps (Bly), and *saltos* (Bousoño) – grounded the discussion of irrational and visionary imagery. Speed in the associations described the emotional energy producing images that startle and awe because of their strength.

Chapter I considered the theory of irrational and visionary imagery which lacks a conscious logical origin relying rather on a strong psychological origin. The psychologist C.G. Jung explained poetic creation as consisting of two “modes”: one based on critical life events that carry intense emotional loads and another that seems to burst forth unconsciously with nightmarish characteristics. Jung did not place his theory within any artistic era or movement, but seemed to speak for poetic creation in general and implied that poetry had always surged from this realm. Indeed, these two modes are useful in explaining the creative imagery of both the popular and the neo-popular, i.e., of both *cante* as well as the neo-popular expression of Lorca and Alberti.

Carlos Bousoño, pinning the symbolic of contemporary 20<sup>th</sup> Century poetry as irrational with an emotive force, also offers a variation of Jung's theory of poetic genesis, which he, Bousoño, locates in the preconscious mind of the artist. An examination of “*imágenes visionarias*” discovers the “salto” with its parallels to terms offered by Apollinaire and Bly. The main distinction between rational and irrational perception lies in the sequencing: in the rational, understanding the image precedes experiencing; in the

irrational, the sequence is reversed. Feeling emotion pre- or subconsciously created precedes its intellectualization. Although Bousoño theorizes on the creation of contemporary poetry, he used many examples from earlier Spanish poetry to illustrate his theory.

Guillaume Apollinaire contributed the characteristics of “swift” or “rapid” association to describe the creation of imagery. These designations connote a two-fold process: one being the distance between the words of a given structural image and the other the emotional charge of the trope. “Swift association” describes both the distance in logical relationship of the imagery and its energy propelled by emotion through speed. Although the Frenchman wrote in the early twentieth century, the designations have been seen to hold for the early Spanish *cante* and subsequent neo-popular expression as well.

Robert Bly, a contemporary American poet, explained the creation of imagery with the concept of “leaping poetry,” the “leap” being the distance between elements in the image and implies an unconscious emotional origin for the imagery. Bly described different Hispanic poets’ work, including Lorca’s, and used the word surreal only briefly in his chapter “Surrealism, Rilke, and Listening-Robert Bly.”

These theoretical perspectives posit Jung and Bousoño on one side with their strong psychological orientation and Apollinaire and Bly on the other with their emphasis on rapid associations and leaps juxtaposing objects, ideas, even people in strange relationships.

In Chapter II, the distant origins of *cante* makes clear that images, irrational and visionary, have inhered in poetry for a long, long time. The imagery from various *palos* of *cante* – *martinetes*, *siguiriyas*, and, *soleares* – presented poetic structures closely

resembling traditional *romances* with octosyllabic meter and assonant rhyme hints at orality, spontaneity, and bizarre associations which in turn resemble poetic characteristics which subsequently fall under the label “surrealist.”

The performance and structure of *cante jondo* differ markedly from the strict poetic form of the *romance*. No longer an epic or anecdotal ballad of interminable length, the concise quatrain of the *copla* uses melisma and paralinguist features with orality and spontaneity to enforce striking images. Lorca and Alberti incorporated these characteristics in their neo-popular verse as they created newer imagery for intense life experience giving it vibrancy and immediacy.

The innate vitality of primitivism, reflected in the folk or popular expression of Gypsy *cante*, serves as a fountain for the creation of irrational imagery germane for understanding the poetry of *cante* and the neo-popular verse of Lorca and Alberti. The very life experience of the primitive, the folk, the Gypsy contains the *élan vital*, the vital surge crucial for energizing the unconscious provenance of awesome, stunning images. The Gypsy’s *cante* contains many instances of illogical symbolism based on metaphors exhibiting orality, spontaneity and the bizarre (grotesque) that demonstrate swift associations, *saltos*, and leaps to produce irrational imagery. The writer Rafael Lafuente pointed to the innate surrealist tendencies of imagery in Gypsy *cante jondo* that differentiates it from even the andalusian variety while C. G. Jung’s theory supported the importance of the primal experience for the production of artistic expression. The primitive archetypal *duende* energizes the *cantaor* emotionally to create irrational images that astound and stun the listener. The often grotesque imagery in which the human body is fragmented or seen to transform into inanimate objects stuns and shocks the listener.

Lorca and Alberti, quintessential andalusians, moved easily in the popular community of *cantaores*, and *toreros* and took on *cante*'s "surreal" imagery, incorporated it with the popular ballad form, and developed their own neo-popularist creation. By not simply duplicating the popular expression of the anonymous folk poet, they created new images from traditional expression in their own names. With the new imagery the poets transformed the andalusian landscape into protagonists rather than mere descriptive background, an influence from the poets' early formation and reflected in their neo-popular works Poema del Cante Jondo, Romancero Gitano and the drama Mariana Pineda of Lorca and Marinero en tierra, Cal y canto, and EL ALBA DEL ALHELÍ of Alberti.

Taken together, the poets' use of the traditional forms and familiarity with *cante* as a basis for the creation of irrational imagery supports Alberti's statement that surrealism has always been present in the popular song and folk poetry of Spain. Another study of later works considered surrealist by these poets, Poeta en Nueva York and Sobre Los Ángeles, would demonstrate the continuation of this imagery.

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