

THESIS



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THE MODERNIST TREND IN ECUADORIAN POETRY

By

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PANORAMA OF ECUADORIAN POETRY PRIOR TO MODERNISM

Introduction

It was not until the twentieth century that Ecuador embraced the modernist movement that had dominated the literary world. This is not to say that there was a lack of capable poetic predecessors on which to found and establish the roots of the new movement. Ecuador was too involved in political and social problems to develop or adhere to the maturing trends in literature.¹ Throughout the historical changes of the country, however, there have been representatives of each literary phase serving as landmarks in their respective periods and fields, achieving recognition from each of the following literary schools of thought. It was during the colonial period in Ecuador that the first worthy poetic production developed. These works were primarily imitations, in style if not in theme, of Italian and Spanish authors of the day. We should note that the colonial period in Ecuador is one of internal conflict. There is persecution of the Jesuits, dissatisfaction with Spanish domination, and religious and political corruption. Nonetheless, a poetic sensitivity developed from this era, as well as creations of enduring popularity.

Ecuador's poetic maturity was achieved during its colonial period. The concentration on the production of a literature for and by the

¹ Benjamín Carrión, Índice de la Poesía Ecuatoriana Contemporánea (Santiago, 1937), p. xiii.

educated elite was the accepted pattern. The masses were a group ignored during this phase of development although they also possessed and were aware of their own level of literary entertainment. The idea of literature being an aristocratic diversion is exemplified by Juan Bautista de Aguirre. Born in 1725, he is recognized as the foremost colonial poet.² The works of this author contain words that are polished and refined to perfection.³ To understand best his contribution to Ecuadorian literature it will be fitting to examine the literary mood that existed during the time of his writing.

Por mucho que pertenezca a la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII y que se encuentre muy alejado ya de los grandes autores. . . tales como Góngora, Quevedo y Calderón, el modo verbal, el instrumento de la versificación y la misma dirección de las ideas, perduraba y duraría hasta que la literatura encontrara nuevos recursos imaginativos e ideológicos.⁴

The influence of Góngora, Quevedo, and Calderón is still evident during the second half of the 18th century. The use of the neologisms, hyperbates, epithets, allegory, symbolism and assonance found in the works of the aforementioned authors⁵ seem to differ in degree when contrasting the effect made by these men on J. Bautista de Aguirre. Isaac J. Barrera implies this attitude when he mentions that:

Poetas pertenecientes a la misma época, a la misma escuela, se mantienen la suficiente independencia para hacer que su nombre represente un prestigio aparte.⁶

² Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), II, pp. 155-156.

³ Ibid., p. 160.

⁴ Ibid., p. 156.

⁵ Richard E. Chandler, and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature (Baton Rouge, 1961), p. 30.

⁶ Isaac J. Barrera, op. cit., p. 157.

There are two phases of poetry in the life of Juan Bautista de Aguirre: the period prior to the expulsion of the Jesuit society in 1767⁷ of which he was a member, and the period of his exile in Italy.⁸ Until 1917 the only known works of J. Bautista de Aguirre were his Décimas concerning the cities of Quito and Guayaquil. Due to the investigation of Gonzalo Zaldumbide the works of J. Bautista de Aguirre were published in volume III of the Colección de Clásicos Ecuatorianos, 1943.⁹ The writings of J. Bautista de Aguirre are without extravagance and his works might be closely compared with 20th-century authors that flee the prosaic in word choice.¹⁰

It should be noted that the significance of the expulsion of the Jesuits lies in their representing Ecuador's educational force.¹¹ Perhaps due to the nostalgia they experienced, they were effective in expressing the loneliness of exile. The architectural beauty and natural splendor of Italy seems dwarfed by the most prosaic memories of their beloved Ecuador. The mood of this era was that of deep melancholia. Padre Manuel Orozco strongly illustrates this feeling of melancholy and confusion of direction through the torment expressed in these lines from "Lamentos por la Muerte de la Compañía de Jesús."

Que estoy de mi patria ausente
Y muy lejos de los míos;
Que son mis ojos dos ríos
De amarguísima corriente;
Que no puedo de mi mente
Separar lo que he querido,

⁷ Ibid., p. 107.

⁸ Ibid., p. 157.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 151-155.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

Y que viéndome abolido
 Tengo tanto desconsuelo,
 Que hasta la senda del cielo
 Me parece haber perdido;¹²

Padre Mariano Andrade joins the Company in its lament of exile in this manner:

Salí, no sé cómo diga,
 Ni bien muerto, ni bien vivo,
 Porque al salir de tu espacio,
 Salí también de mí mismo;¹³

This attitude inevitably finds lodging in the anguish of the Jesuit soul. The anxieties, hopes and life in exile of this persecuted element are reflected by Padre Juan de Velasco by including both the genius of Quito and its most celebrated creations in the book Colección de Poesías Varias, 1790.¹⁴

Manuel Orozco is counted among the few Jesuits that adopted the epic style prevalent in Italy.¹⁵ The Jesuits as a whole, however, did not fully embrace this form. It would seem their profound longing for Ecuador dulled their senses to the full acceptance of this trend. In contrast, there was reverence for Dante and his artistry which was illustrated by Padre Ramón Viescas in his work "Sueño sobre el Sepulcro de Dante". We are immediately attracted into a nebulous world of dreams. Through the imagery evoked, we are transported to the beauty, perfection, and peace of the Elysian fields.

¹² Alejandro Carrión, El Ocioso en Faenza (Quito, 1957-58), I, p. 283.

¹³ Ibid., p. 445.

¹⁴ Isaac J. Barrera, op. cit., p. 102.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 185.

Vime: soñé que me hallaba
 En los campos Elíseos, que su cielo
 Nuevo sol alumbraba,
 Y verdor nuevo matizaba el suelo;
 Al ver sus horizontes
 Dudaba si eran soles o eran montes.¹⁶

The introduction is appropriately designed to fit the theme of the poem.¹⁷ As one reads on, however, it becomes evident that Dante is only a vehicle used by Padre Ramón Viescas to praise Cardenal Gonzaga. The latter had proposed the repair of Dante's monument.¹⁸ There is an even more immediate reason for this work. Financial subsistence for the exiled Jesuits was not enough to permit them to provide for their daily necessities. Because of this, the priests were attracted to those capable of improving their position financially or professionally. This in part influenced the composition of "Sueño sobre el Sepulcro de Dante."¹⁹ The author hoped that he would be rewarded as a result of his work. Other poems of Padre Ramón Viescas were written for pure entertainment and not for publication.²⁰ This writer, like most of those of the colonial period, displayed many attitudes and literary tendencies in their works. Rather than attempt to classify these men under specific headings, it would seem more valuable to show the form and direction to be followed by later writers.

Amid the religious production and socio-political problems of the colonial period, there is another type of writing based on the relationship of man to man. This form is best exemplified by García Goyena

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 173.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 171.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 170-171.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 175.

(1776-1823).²¹ The main objective was to teach or moralize. Man and animals served as the principal personages. Behind the disguise of such characters, the author comments on the events of the period.²² In this way, we are given a picture of the 18th-century Ecuadorian world.

It is not until the latter part of the 18th century and the early years of the 19th century that Ecuador's poets begin to direct their artistry into well-defined channels. The movements in world literature begin to exercise a profound, although retarded, impact on its Ecuadorian proponents. Themes for the coming literary movement develop from the country's War of Independence from Spain and the heroic deeds of its leaders. Following the revolution we have idealistic desires common to all newly born nations and these display their influence in the formation of a precise movement: the neo-classical school, with recognizable supporters.

It is important to realize that the neo-classical movement in Ecuadorian poetry was not a return to the old forms and styles that had been popular in Europe, but to the study of the poets that had initiated the literary reaction against culteranism in Spain.²³ Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz in their book A New History of Spanish Literature have provided the mold that characterizes the works of the writers of the neo-classic school. This was not felt to be the case in Ecuador as mentioned by Isaac J. Barrera in the preceding lines. Ecuador's neo-classic

²¹ Ibid., p. 221.

²² Ibid., p. 222.

²³ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), pp. 920-921.

authors were familiar with the old forms and translated them in some cases into Spanish. An avoidance of excesses and a dominance of reason seem to be strongly evidenced. The movement is also characterized by clarity of style and expression. The poetry which resulted from this imposition of rules was assuredly intellectual, objective, very correct but cold, and revealing artistic impersonality.²⁴

The themes of the neo-classical period in Ecuador are American, with an appeal and problems of universal dimensions. As this is the period of Independence for Ecuador, this theme serves as a popular poetic topic. José Joaquín Olmedo, born in 1780,²⁵ is the outstanding poet of the period. His poems appear at the time Ecuador is liberating itself from Spain during the 1820's²⁶ and his production spans the gap between the colonial authors and the Romantics. In topic we have the emergence of a purely Latin American writer capable of evoking feelings and ideals common to newly formed nations. His favorite characters are Simón Bolívar, the Liberator, and the Indian heroes graced in the style and tone of the epic. A deep love of country is displayed through his narrative talents and his strong descriptive power. "La Victoria de Junín" or "Canto a Bolívar," as it is called, is the most representative of his work.²⁷ José Joaquín Olmedo died in February of 1847.²⁸ Treating national heroes is

²⁴ Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, op. cit., p. 327.

²⁵ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 602.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 613.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 630-631.

²⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), III, p. 63.

characteristic of other neo-classic authors and lends the patriotic quality to the movement in Ecuador.

The neo-classic movement is at times quite humanitarian. In this attitude an intimacy can be seen in the works of some authors. This is true of Juan Abel Echeverría (1853-1939).²⁹ The warmth which emanates from his poems is a result of the topic with which his works are concerned. The author's emotions become immediately evident as his poetic ideas arouse the emotions. Themes of charity, solitude, and religion are emotional rather than intellectual abstractions. As these attitudes are revealed, Romanticism begins to establish itself as a movement. It is felt by Isaac J. Barrera that the 19th century must be classified as Romantic.³⁰ There are hints of the Romantic attitude throughout the era. The deep patriotic sense developing in Ecuador seems to contribute to the Romantic mood. Romanticism perhaps becomes most evident in the pensive mood of the writings of Juan Abel Echeverría.³¹ He is grouped, however, with writers of the neo-classic school. His sonnet dedicated to Julio Zaldumbide, one of the greatest Romantic poets of Ecuador, may be indicative of his leaning toward Romanticism. J. Abel Echeverría's study of Latin and philosophy³² appears to indicate an effort to improve literature by the use of moderation, clarity, and rules that guided creativity.

The study of the Latin and Greek authors served as the educational foundation for those who adhered to the neo-classical movement in Ecuador.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 420-421.

³⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 105.

³¹ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), III, p. 421.

³² Ibid., pp. 420-421.

Isaac J. Barrera places this poet with the neo-classical writers although characteristics of Romanticism can be seen in his writings.

Although many of the poetic topics developing during the neo-classical period are patriotic in tone, it would be incomplete to ignore the religious theme in discussion of the over-all picture. Quintiliano Sánchez (1848-1925)³³ displays religion and patriotism in his poetry. As a writer and publisher he was active in politics. Most of his poetic works appear after his political period or following 1895.³⁴ In the writings of Quintiliano Sánchez can again be seen the anguish of exile that he experienced when the dictatorial government of 1882 came to power.³⁵ The artist also uses Simón Bolívar as the main figure in some of his poems. One of these, "Sueño y Realidad," gained public consideration for the author.³⁶ In the work "Pureza de María," however, the magnificence of the qualities of the Virgin Mary constitute the main ideas. A sample of this style is seen in the following lines.

El cáliz de la azucena,
En las mañanas de estío,
Con las gotas de rocío,
Temblante y lindo, se llena.
La serena
Atmósfera se perfuma
Con el aromapreciado
De esa hermosa flor del prado,
Que ostenta su gracia suma
Como reina de las flores.
Mas, con todos sus primores,

³³ Ibid., p. 414.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 415.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 418.

Y belleza
 Y alegría
 Pobre imagen es, María,
 De tu celestial pureza.³⁷

Nature was the necessary vehicle in an attempt to show the purity of Mary. It seems that simplicity and clarity are the outstanding features of this work. The poet closes with another beautiful idea: The purity of Mary is appropriate to her destiny. She is to mother the Christ child, the most pure of all.³⁸

The neo-classical literary movement found its basis in educational training. All of the Ecuadorian proponents of the movement were very cultured men. They were caught up in political change. These were men capable of effecting change in policy and in many cases did so through participation in government and civic activities. J. Joaquín Olmedo, J. Abel Echeverría, and Quintiliano Sánchez are members of this group that let their inner feelings be known through the adoption of this new poetic mode. Also counted among these men is Angel Polibio Chávez. His writings entitled "A Bordo del 'Bolivia,'" "Adiós a una Niña," "El Invierno," all express his thoughts while in exile and his longing for Ecuador.³⁹ It seems that nature is the best element to clarify his feelings. Nature is also important in the works of Juan León Mera (1832-1894),⁴⁰ and perhaps plays its most beautiful role. In theme and setting, J. León Mera is American. The conversation and tone of ideas expressed by the

³⁷ Antología Ecuatoriana-Poetas (Quito, 1892), p. 324.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 324.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 471-476.

⁴⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 793.

Indian characters that live in his creations reveal a refinement which is not in keeping with their low life existence. J. León Mera deals with the social problems confronting the people of Latin America during the period of Independence. He is a poet that deals with the life of the Indian.⁴¹ His characters are, at times, veiled in a superficial, highly idealistic tone and mentality. The mentioned characteristics are clearly evident in the author's poetic efforts, but it would be fitting to mention his novel Cumandá, published in 1879,⁴² which displays the full extent of his tremendous talent.

It has been noted that the 19th century in Ecuadorian literature is Romantic. Romanticism was baptized in France the same year that Ecuador became a Republic, 1822.⁴³ The retarded arrival of Romanticism into Ecuador, that is, its appearance as a firmly established movement, did not cause its proponents to be less enthusiastic in their support. Romanticism as described by Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz in their book A New History of Spanish Literature is a reaction against the order of neo-classicism. It may be characterized as a contemplation of nature and the intimacies of natural life. Romanticism represents a revival of the middle ages. The individual is all-important. Unrestrained emotionalism, pessimism, doubt and passion are the typical moods of the movement.⁴⁴ It should be noted that within the Romantic period man's interest in himself and the world around him achieved new enthusiasm. The

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 800.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 586.

⁴⁴ Richard E. Chandler, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

sciences are examined anew and with greater vitality. Within this active environment, there develops a new type of poet whose writings mature at a time in which scientific discovery and advancement are at their peak. Aware of the philosophical examination of man proposed by Rousseau, these Romantic poets display a greater concern for the individual which may be seen in their poetry. The new topics include the social and philosophical attitudes that regulate man's actions.

Ecuador was well supplied with dedicated cultivators of the Romantic movement. Although their predecessors looked toward those authors in Europe that reacted against the cultists, the new generation that matured around the middle of the 19th century turned its attention to the fountain from which Romanticism had sprung, Germany and France. These Europeans now become the pattern to which the Romantic Ecuadorian authors will look for emotional guidance.

There are three distinct literary schools within Ecuador's Romantic period. Each of these gave its own peculiarities to the development of the movement in the middle 19th century. The writings of three cities embody the dominant literary moods of the century best. Quito finds itself submerged and concentrating its efforts primarily toward the development of neo-classicism. Cuenca, in contrast, influenced by the purest of Castilian forms shows deep religious tendencies in its literary production.⁴⁵ Its main poetic dedication is to the Virgin Mary, but interest is also directed toward the chaste and devout woman. Guayaquil serves as 'the port through which world trends are introduced to the interior of the country. Guayaquil would be the most vulnerable to exterior transformations and

⁴⁵ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 114.

it would be expected to be first to receive and adopt new literary trends.⁴⁶

The Romantic period could be described as an era of free-thinkers. The Ecuadorian that perhaps is foremost among these poets is Julio Zaldumbide (1833-1887).⁴⁷ It is fitting that he has been called the Poet-Philosopher.⁴⁸ His works reveal deep thought. Isaac J. Barrera in his book Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana mentions that the writings of Julio Zaldumbide indicate: "una vida que ha sido más pensada que vivida."⁴⁹ Through Julio Zaldumbide's contemplation of nature, he seems impelled to question the purpose and the destiny of man,⁵⁰ which places him well in tune with his period. The eternal question of life and death, as shown in the following lines, is felt throughout his production:

¿Qué es morir? ¿Qué es la muerte?--Oscura nada,
Triste aniquilación,--dice el ateo.
¿Todo ser en la tumba se anonada?
¡Error! ¡funesto error! yo en ti no creo.-

Later:

¿A qué este don de penas y quebranto?
¿A qué darnos la vida, conducirnos
Por un desierto de dolor y llanto,
Y para siempre al cabo destruirnos?

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 773.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 777.

⁴⁹ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 111.

⁵⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 778.

Finally:

¿Y a dónde va quien deja nuestro mundo?
 ¿A dónde el que en tu sombra, muerte, escondes?
 ¡Jamás a esta pregunta, tú, profundo
 Silencio de la tumba, me respondes! (Meditación III-IV)⁵¹

The morbid attitude here expressed produces strong insight into the man. He asks why we must suffer a life of pain and what comes after death. The entire air is one of physical inactivity and bitterness draped, at best, in gray. J. Zaldumbide reveals evidence of the neo-classic epoch in the serenity of his stanzas, the harmony of his ideas, and the sure steady thoughts that flow throughout his poetry.⁵² The anguish and anxiety are now clearly Romantic.⁵³ The enchantment of nature, and the sadness of the era are expressed in a manner unknown until his appearance.⁵⁴

It has been noted that Guayaquil, being the port through which world innovations arrived in Ecuador, would perhaps be the first city to don the new cultural vestments from the exterior world. It is not strange, in view of this observation, that a guayaquileño would receive the dominant literary trends of Germany, Italy, Spain, and France. The representatives of these European countries introduced Romanticism and the characteristics to make it a universal movement. The German, Schopenhauer, exposed a deep pessimism heretofore unexamined though its presence was always evident. Victor Hugo and Leopardi offer lyric splendor tinged with sadness. To absorb these characteristics, Guayaquil supplied Numa Pompilio Llona

⁵¹ Antología, op. cit., p. 168.

⁵² Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 782.

⁵³ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 112.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 110.

(1832-1907).⁵⁵ His works, like those of Julio Zaldumbide, are dominated by philosophical attitudes. The descriptive quality of his poems is handled with such ease and grace that there are few worthy of comparison in this period. N. Pompillo Llona intergrates his descriptive ability with his philosophical aptitude to praise and glorify his subjects.⁵⁶

The social environment of Ecuador during the Romantic period is revealed to us through a new type of sadness and anguish which may be seen in the poetry. Social pressures exercised such rigid demands on its individuals that the desire to live in this sort of atmosphere became unbearable to some of its people.

Although the Romantic period is one of discovery and examination, the role of woman in that era was a minor one. To this degree, Dolores Veintimilla de Galindo was a woman out of her time. She lives and dies in the period preceding the emancipation of womanhood. The attitude toward the role of woman as being subservient no doubt contributed to her death. She was born in 1829⁵⁷ and died at twenty six years of age.⁵⁸ The following quotation describes the attention given to the education of women during the period.

La educación de la mujer ecuatoriana...era mirada con profundo desdén por todas las categorías de la sociedad: raras niñas de la aristocracia recibían instrucción esmerada y las del pueblo no conocían siquiera los rudimentos de la primera.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 112-113.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 112.

⁵⁷ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), III, p. 132.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 141.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 130.

The little concern for the education of women is joined with Rousseau's writings that attempt to investigate and justify the reason for being of man. To further complicate the situation are the laws which recognize the right of man to inflict the death penalty for crimes.⁶⁰ The early life of Dolores Veintimilla was happy and sheltered, filled with illusions and hope.⁶¹ Venturing outside of this charmed circle brought suffering and disenchantment.⁶² Her tragic death began by an essay she wrote entitled "Necrología" which revealed her stand in opposition to the death penalty. The individual being defended, however, is guilty of parricide. This caused her to receive savage attacks from other writers and the society condemning her stand. In rebuttle the artist rebukes society for not understanding her. This is done in her poem "A Mis Enemigos."

Por qué, por qué queréis que yo sofoque
Lo que en mi pensamiento osa vivir?
Por qué matáis para la dicha mi alma?
Por qué cobardes! a traición me herís?⁶³

The torment felt by this persecuted soul seems clearly revealed in this stanza. She asks why her enemies want to stifle her thoughts and do her harm by their brutality. The "¡Ay de mí!" attitude is felt throughout this work. Her Romantic soul⁶⁴ seems confused and bitter. Unable to reconcile her sincerity to the cruelty she has suffered, she looks for relief and finds it in suicide.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 137.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 133.

⁶² Ibid., p. 142.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 144.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 139

The purpose of this work will be to examine the development of Modernism in poetry as it was developed in the country of Ecuador. I feel that the modernists of Ecuador deserve comparison and examination along with José Martí, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, José Asunción Silva, and the most outstanding of this school, Rubén Darío. Though Ecuador is a small country, it produced giants in this field. It appears strange that there has been no widespread examination which would no doubt lead to a full appreciation of their efforts. I have made an attempt to examine the poetic contributions and influences that played such a dynamic role in the molding of Modernist Poetry in Ecuador. I feel it necessary also to show the direction that poetry followed after the waning of Modernism.

As we have seen, there was little production in Ecuador during the colonial period while it was dominated by internal problems that stifled literary creativity. With the advent of the neo-classical movement which was principally one of imitation, definable characteristics begin to take form and are epitomized in the works of José Joaquín Olmedo. Patriotism receives primary emphasis and the epic hero and style are developed. Inevitably, the vanguard of the neo-classical literary movement finds a discontent developing due to the rigid restrictions in form. This discontent matures until it takes on features directly opposed to those of the preceding movement. Romanticism is characterized by its looseness of structure. It centers its attention on exaggeration yet reflects universal feelings and anxieties. Ecuador's Romantic period is also fused with the philosophical attitude exemplified in Julio Zaldumbide. Nature is depicted by the Romantics in a more intimate role. Tragedy, patriotism, love of nature, and the exaltation of passionate love are among the essential ingredients. It is to be expected, nonetheless, that a literary

revolution should begin to form prior to the disappearance of this movement. As the Romantic period wanes in popularity, there are attempts made to break with the looseness and exaggerations of its form. As more leisure time became available, authors returned to the neo-classic period and dedicated themselves to its regeneration. This trend was not representative of the younger literary people who bent their ears toward Europe, particularly France, and found themselves proponents and captive of a new song. In the early 20th century, while the cry "Tuércele el cuello al cisne" is ringing down the curtain on Modernism for the rest of the literary world, Ecuador is only beginning to sense the influence of the movement.

It has been mentioned that Cuenca was a religious city in thinking and literary production. Here Romanticism took on a different appearance. It is not strange that this city should serve as the source of a new literary mood appearing during the death throes of Romanticism. The new aspect of Romanticism, mariano, is typified by a devotion to the Virgin Mary and an exaltation of nature.⁶⁵ The book Sábados de Mayo started in 1877 by Miguel Moreno⁶⁶ and published in 1908,⁶⁷ evokes the religious fervor and sincerity that made this movement a fruitful one in Cuenca. The tendencies and feelings apparent here helped serve as a springboard launching some of its members toward the new theme.

It would seem that the political condition of the country played a significant role in the molding and development of the temperament evoked

⁶⁵ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), III, p. 461.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 465.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

in verse. There is governmental instability that in some cases raised the aspirations of the people, and in others pointed to frugality and fostered melancholia. Due to the internal conflict being suffered by Ecuador, she is able to sense the repercussion of literary changes only after they have been duly acknowledged by most of the literary world. The elements initiated by Remigio Crespo Toral, César Borja, Cordero Dávila, and Antonio C. Toledo will now become molded anew. Dissatisfaction with the existing social atmosphere, incapability by temperament of overt actions that might induce change, and attitudes tempered with the style and feeling of the French parnassians and symbolists will cause a reaction in Ecuador's literary development of such dimensions as to warrant recognition from the literary world.

PRECURSORS OF MODERNISM

Chapter I

The tendencies that later become the characteristics of the Modernist movement in Ecuador were implied many years prior to the establishment of the Generation of 1910. Aside from the Romantic authors, a new aspect of the Romantic movement develops in Cuenca. It is the mariano mood that announces a different attitude in the formation of Romanticism in Ecuador. The marianos searched for and found in the French the elegant tones and symbols that would best express its main themes. The mariano mood, arriving toward the end of the Romantic movement, aids in bridging the gap between the Romantic and the Modernist periods. Its basis was found in Spanish mysticism,¹ and an almost pantheistic attitude toward nature. The simplicity of expression and blind devotion made the faith portrayed in these poetic creations more meaningful to the common people.

Rather than restate the treatment of the mariano attitude, it would be more appropriate to consider a man who not only bridges the gap between the Romantic and Modernist movements, but who also serves as a representative of each literary tendency to a greater or lesser degree. His writings also exemplify the style of the marianos. Remigio Crespo Toral's knowledge and dedication to literature is shown in the following quotation from Reginaldo Arízaga:

¹ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 460.

...todas las escuelas de innovación poética que han surgido...le fueron no sólo conocidas, como un medio de ilustración, sino estudiadas a fondo, en sus propias raíces...²

The respect accorded here could only be due Remigio Crespo Toral, (1860-1939).³ Standing out as one of the most prolific of Latin American writers, his themes vary from the Garden of Eden to Dante, nature, and religion.⁴ Foremost of his talents is his sharp imagination.⁵ Through the versatility seen in the man and in his refusal to be classified with any of the literary schools of thought, R. Crespo Toral represents the complete separation from the Romantic school. Isaac J. Barrera reflects on the poet's most outstanding attributes:

Sinceridad en sus creencias, junto al análisis
detenido de los hechos, de los acontecimientos y de
los hombres. Poder creador y analítico.⁶

Accompanying the analytical ability expressed in the aforementioned lines are love of nature, faith in God, and simplicity. These characteristics may be seen in these lines from the poem "Mayo":

¡Oh gratas primaveras
Que alegráis las andinas cordilleras!
¡Cómo a su primer rayo
Rompe en flores la pampa solitaria!
¡Es la hermosa estación de la plegaria,
Mes de las almas y la gloria, Mayo!⁷

² Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Poéticos de América (Quito, 1942), p. 238.

³ Isaac J. Barrera, op. cit., p. 975.

⁴ Ibid., p. 977.

⁵ Ibid., p. 988.

⁶ Ibid., p. 977.

⁷ Augusto Arias, Antología de Poetas Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1944), p. 89.

The smoothness and beauty that colorfully set the stage are followed by another description of equal beauty and sentiment.

¡ Oh valles de la patria! ¡ oh azulada
 Linde que cercas la feliz morada
 Donde habita la paz! Aquí los huertos
 Están siempre y los setos florecidos,
 Y calientes los nidos,
 Y es alegre aun la casa de los muertos.⁸

An overriding feeling of peace and contentment accompanies a well-balanced sense of patriotism that lulls the reader into the final lines.

También yo te escribí...Puse temblando
 En tus manos la carta,--Yo ignorando
 Del mundo, te pedía
 Un hogar a la vera de mi calle,
 Una heredad en el nativo valle
 Y el don de la adorable poesía.⁹

R. Crespo Toral concludes with a prayer for the essentials of life, those closely akin to the common man and taken for granted by many of the aristocrats. The glorification of nature is one of the predominant attitudes in this poem. Isaac J. Barrera interprets the poet's use of nature.

Los cuadros de la naturaleza no son interpretaciones
 emocionadas, sino meditaciones en el marco grandioso
 de esos cuadros y de las armonías.¹⁰

These lines also imply the absence of the exaggeration and artificiality that were evident in the Romantics. The adoption of the best models from every country and period was the framework within which R. Crespo Toral's talent seemed to develop. This same idea is expressed by Isaac J.

Barrera:

⁸ Ibid., p. 91.

⁹ Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, op. cit., p. 982.

Por "Las Leyendas de Arte" de Crespo pasan las figuras más gloriosas de todos los siglos y de todos los países: Dante, Miguel Angel, Tasso, Milton, Beethoven, Leopardi.¹¹

Barrera goes on to mention that R. Crespo Toral tried to penetrate the souls of these men:¹²

...pero la interpretación se conformó siempre al modo cómo comprendió la obra dejada por aquellos personajes.¹³

This would indicate the author's concern to be both artistic and psychological.

Modernism has been called a synthesis of literary schools of thought. If this is valid, R. Crespo Toral announces the scope to be employed by the Modernists by not allowing himself to be tied to any school.¹⁴ Thus, he is representative of the liberty which the Modernists will display relative to theme, rhythm, and experimentation.

It was of little consequence that the critics felt that the works of Remigio Crespo Toral did not fully comply with the literary exigencies of his period. He refused to compromise his writing or his thinking. It was this type of dedication that announced the death of the Romantic movement and another step toward Modernism. This should not be felt to be an abrupt change. Although a break with Romanticism can be seen in R. Crespo Toral, there is also an evident split with realism. Realism may be briefly defined as the presentation of life and nothing is left to the

¹¹ Ibid., p. 983.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 89.

imagination. There is little concern with an explanation of causes.

R. Crespo Toral seems concerned with bringing the reasons for man's action into a role of prominence in Ecuadorian literature. Isaac J. Barrera shows this feeling:

Es el bardo que se adelanta a las muchedumbres, para
crear ideales, para forjar ilusiones, para dar un
significado al atropellado andar de los hombres.¹⁵

In the creation of ideals and illusions, and by his effort to explain the direction of man, R. Crespo Toral stands in opposition to the realists.

As Remigio Crespo Toral represents the split with the Romantic literary period in Cuenca, César Borja initiates the same attitude in Guayaquil. He shows respect and avid support for the French symbolists and parnassians. Perhaps before continuing it would be appropriate to define these terms. The parnassian movement perhaps can best be described by the attitudes expressed by its chief proponent, Leconte de Lisle. He is opposed to the general looseness of the Romanticists, to their exploitation of self, to their sentiment and rose-color, as well as to their interpretation of nature and their ignorance of the sciences. He puts the least possible of himself into his work.¹⁶ He chooses his words and balances his rhythms to make the picture and the idea more salient. The poet is not inventive as regards meter, approving the restraint of the crystallized forms. There is also a certain coldness in his works.¹⁷ The

¹⁵ Isaac J. Barrera, op. cit., p. 978.

¹⁶ William A. Nitze, A History of French Literature (New York, 1955), p. 606.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 609.

motto of the parnassians is "Art for Art's sake". This movement is anti-religious, and displays a pagan love of pure beauty.¹⁸

The symbolist movement developed because of the widespread dissatisfaction with the brutality of naturalism, and the cold objectivity of the parnassians...¹⁹ At the back of the symbolist movement was the very general longing for values which, being dim, offered a wide field of imaginative perception and allowed for enchanting harmonies of sound and sense. It stressed the superiority of pregnant hints to plain statements; poets were staking everything on music,²⁰ from which little definite could be gathered, but which induced a pleasantly open frame of mind. French writers were obsessed by mere shades and subtle modes of feeling; they renounced the light, so long sought and cherished and turned to the dark. The vague and obscure was ushered in with symbolism.²¹

The devotion of César Borja to the symbolists and parnassians is an important development toward Modernism. The musical flavor that becomes a dominant element of Modernism is the primary contribution of César Borja (1852-1910).²² To discuss this author is to introduce the musical tones that serve as the basis of his production.²³ The rhythm and harmony evoked by this author overshadow the remaining Romanticism that may be

¹⁸ Ferdinand Brunetiere, Manual of the History of French Literature (London, 1898), p. 505.

¹⁹ L. Cazamian, A History of French Literature (Oxford, 1955), p. 380.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 379.

²¹ Ibid., p. 380.

²² Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 114.

²³ J.A. Falconí Villagómez, "Los Precursores del Modernismo en el Ecuador: César Borja y Fálquez Ampuero," Revista Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, No. 20 (enero-dic 1958), p. 41.

present in his works and he is well versed in the secrets of the Modernist muse.²⁴ "Pan en la Siesta" is indicative of this new sound as can be seen in these lines:

Bebí el néctar de Siria y el de Galia,
 prendí una breva y aspiré su algalia
 en humo blanco, de sutil beleño.

Me eché en la hamaca y a su arrullo blando,
 soñé despierto y me dormí fumando,
 dulce a mis ojos el placer del sueño.²⁵

This rythmical pattern is followed throughout the work. There is emphasis placed on the synalefa and soft sounding consonants. The opening of new rythmical avenues by C. Borja is molded and brought into prominence by his contemporaries and is to be fully expanded by the Modernists. It should be noted that although these rhythms are new to Ecuadorian poets, they were quite familiar to most European and American Modernists. César Borja's admiration for the French parnassians and symbolists is evident in his work Flores Tardías y Joyas Ajenas, 1909. Isaac J. Barrera, speaking of his book feels it to be:

La más importante contribución que pudo darse a
 la literatura ecuatoriana, que andaba un tanto
 desviada de las grandes corrientes del mundo.²⁶

Flores Tardías y Joyas Ajenas contains translations of Baudelaire, Leconte de Lisle, Verlaine, Prudhomme, and Heredia. The unmistakable feeling and attitude of the Modernists is observable in this section of translations.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 33.

²⁵ César Borja, Flores Tardías y Joyas Ajenas (Quito, 1909), p. 102. (Italics mine.)

²⁶ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 954.

The works of Baudelaire dedicated to beauty seem to reveal the feeling that is to become, in part, Modernism.

Mi pecho, es Cisne de glacial dureza;
y soy Esfinge, que el azur retrata,
y Armonía de líneas impecata,
y ni lloro ni río:--soy Firmeza. (La Beauté)²⁷

Herein are revealed the shades of symbolism. Along with the mention of the swan, which is the emblem of the Modernists, color and harmony, the senses are called on to assist in the clarification of the idea. There is later reference to the intoxicating powers of wine and perfume. The allusion to Death and the concern with the "yo" are also apparent and seem indicative of Romanticism.

The first four sections of the text contain the poetic works of C. Borja. In the words of Reginaldo Arízaga, the poetry of C. Borja is well worthy of praise.

César Borja es uno de los poetas mayores del Ecuador, por su entonación robusta y viril. Para todos sus motivos, tiene aquel centelleo de luz emocional, encauzado y gobernado por el impulso divino de Arte.²⁸

The man felt to be the most outstanding member of the transitional period is Francisco Fálquez Ampuero²⁹ (1877-1947).³⁰ He is a staunch advocate of the parnassian ideas and style.³¹ Isaac J. Barrera mentions that:

²⁷ César Borja, op. cit., p. 327.

²⁸ Reginaldo Arízaga, op. cit., p. 243.

²⁹ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 117.

³⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1094.

³¹ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 117.

Cada uno de los poemas de este escritor tuvo la incansable y salvadora lima que quita toda partícula impura de improvisación, para dejar la palabra que fluye en la representación verdadera de las ideas que se trataron de expresar.³²

Each word and idea is worked until the precise feeling is evoked in a polished production. These lines are indicative of the style of F. Fálquez Ampuero:

En rosa y verde pálido se funden
las nubarradas trémulas y rojas.
Sacude el árbol su melena de hojas
que, secas, con el viento se difunden.

De una calleja triste sale el duelo:
gente de pañolón y de chaqueta,
que domina la escuálida silueta
de un franciscano con la vista al suelo.

Brazos robustos, la pequeña caja
al cementerio llevan, donde baja
entre rezos y súplicas sencillas,

mientras esparce la amistad sus flores...
Bañad su tumba en tibios resplandores,
¡melancólicas tardes amarillas!

(En el Entierro)³³

The author views and describes the scene in this poem. There is evidence of the objectivity characteristic of the parnassians. In the development of these in Ecuador, Francisco Fálquez Ampuero plays a significant role in the molding of that country's literature.

It should be mentioned that the Ecuadorian writers directly preceding the Modernist are not interested in the masses. These men are deeply engrossed in aesthetic values that have no place in the life of the common people. Gonzalo Cordero Dávila (1885-1931)³⁴ is among the

³² Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1095.

³³ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 127.

³⁴ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1097.

"misunderstood" cuencanos. It would not be unusual to expect the poetic contribution of G. Cordero Dávila to display religious and sympathetic attitudes toward mankind. This has been characteristic of his city. The emotions of the author will play a primary part in his production.

Reginaldo Arízaga mentions that G. Cordero Dávila:

...descubre hondamente el misterio de la angustia
y el dolor que vela levemente el alma de los seres
y las cosas...³⁵

The nostalgia, melancholia, and anguish can be felt in these lines.

Eran las cuatro...y jueves... Al camino
que se va desde la urbe a la alquería
robó alegre su toque blanquecino
la gente aldeana que al hogar volvía.

Sonó por las tabernas del vecino,
henchida de rural melancolía,
alguna concertina que se vino
con un novio a la feria de aquel día.

Oliéndose a totoras y cantueso
corría el viento, que en la cementera
la primera hoja alzábale travieso...

Sentí los años de la edad primera
y, herido de nostalgias de regreso,
sólo pude pensar: quién se volviera!

(No Se Vuelve)³⁶

G. Cordero Dávila has captured feelings and emotions that are universally familiar. In the presentation of his poetry, the words, harmony, and technique, in the opinion of Reginaldo Arízaga, are flawless.

Su obra poética es perfecta en todas sus faces,
bajo las diversas modalidades de su temperamento
estético, y el hondo matizado miraje de su técnica.³⁷

³⁵ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1942), p. 143.

³⁶ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 152.

³⁷ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1942), p. 142.

With Gonzalo Cordero Dávila there is furtherance of the literary principles and attitudes necessary in the formation of the new mode. Nature and the lamenting for the Indian are surrounded by a mood of nostalgia and reminiscences. The literary contribution of this artist is pointed out in the following statement by Reginaldo Arízaga:

Fue un perfecto artista de la palabra, y sus versos guardan la interior armonía del mundo ideal, los grandes conciertos de la poesía cósmica, arrancados diestramente por su plectro de oro, a las entrañas de la naturaleza en infinitos viajes, por la inmensidad panorámica de nuestro Planeta.³⁸

The shades and flexibility of verse displayed in the Modernist movement become more stabilized as authors begin to consider the looseness of the Romantic period as being distasteful. Gonzalo Cordero Dávila lends assistance to the developing trend through the use of color, which was typical of the parnassians, and songs of melancholy that had been cultivated by French symbolists. The natural resistance by the literary groups, for the most part, persists. There remain those willing to fight for the new mode, and the general alteration of the existing literary attitudes.

Antonio C. Toledo (1868-1913)³⁹ was not an active participant among the group of revolutionaries except in his poetic writings. In temperament he might well be classified as Romantic. Defeat and resignation to life and the misfortunes of love seem permanently etched in his production. This quotation from Isaac J. Barrera clearly expresses this feeling:

...al leerlas (Brumas) se comprendió el dolor sumiso que acompañó toda su vida, sin una nota de rebeldía.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., p. 142.

³⁹ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947).

⁴⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 940.

The complete submission of the author in his pain can be sensed throughout his work. Antonio C. Toledo is the Latin American counterpart of the Spanish Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer. In his Brumas can be sensed his attitude.

Tras el velo impalpable del ensueño,
 Anoche me veía muerto ya;
 E imaginaba que mi frente pálida
 Hacías en tu seno reclinar.

Mañana cuando cesen mis dolores
 Y aquel sueño se torne realidad,
 ¡Irás, bien mío, con calladas lágrimas
 La arcilla de mi tumba a refrescar?⁴¹

Romanticism is evident in these lines. The author himself is a part of the pain, tears, and death of his poems. He is considered here because of the recognition given him as the "becquerian" poet of his period and due to the high esteem bestowed on him by the youth of the time.⁴²

Among the leaders of young poets, J.A. Falconí Villagómez must be included. His translation of French poets indicated the direction to be followed in years to come and are compiled in the book El Jardín de Lutecia, 1953. His original poetic works are concentrated in a book entitled El Surtidor Armónico, 1956, which was published under the author's anagram Nicol Fasejo.⁴³ The production of Falconí Villagómez contains:

Poemas de la adolescencia, de la juventud y
 de la madurez; pasan por ellos toda la gama de la
 transformación operada en el verso, en época
 en que se tenía ansias de transformación y cambio.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Augusto Arias, op. cit., pp. 117-118.

⁴² Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 119.

⁴³ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1128.

⁴⁴ Nicol Fasejo, El Surtidor Armónico (Guayaquil, 1956), p. 7.

From youth to maturity Falconí Villagómez is an active participant in all of the literary transformations. As he grows older, however, his attitude toward poetry mellows. Rather than concern himself with the popular "isms," it is more important later in life that poetry communicate beauty and emotion.⁴⁵ Literary magazines and newspapers served as the vehicle to display the poetic thought, talent, and contributions of the young artists. El Telégrafo Literario, Patria, Renacimiento, and Letras all served to reveal the literary attitudes of the Modernists, and this author shows in his works Modernism in bloom. Many of the characteristics seen in Falconí Villagómez will later become established. "Ruth Adora a los Cisnes" shows a consolidation of the tendencies introduced and expanded by French symbolists and parnassians and later adopted by Modernist Ecuadorian poets. This work, written in 1916⁴⁶ while Modernism is in its infancy in Ecuador, is typical of Falconí Villagómez during this period and of the Modernists. He writes:

Ruth siente por los cisnes del estanque un afecto
singular...Ella goza con el mágico efecto
que dan sus albas túnicas en la líquida plata.⁴⁷

The swan (Cisne) of the Modernists plays one of the primary roles. The choice of the most appropriate word helps in the development of the picture. There are constant shades that flow through the poem.

El óleo de la tarde es naranja

And later:

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

...Ruth reteniendo un grito
 deja que con el pico desfllore la batista
 de su blusa, que en medio el desmayo amatista
 muestra un rubí encarnado sobre campo de nieve...⁴⁸

The search for the expression that will best convey the desired mood seems apparent. But the most outstanding feature is "el arte por el arte." There is also the absence of a moral or purpose. The aim seems to be the expression of a beautiful idea. These lines reveal the parnassian current within Modernism. The purest among Ecuador's Modernists, Medardo Angel Silva comments on the author's influence.

...Se inició componiendo extraños versos de acre
 sabor de frutos emponzoñados; letanía perversa, en
 musical lenguaje de sonos inauditos...guiado por
 Moréas y Samain...fue a Grecia, al armonioso país de
 mirto verde...en su poético museo, expuso en vitrinas
 decoradas con raro gusto que no rehuía cierta barroca
 elegancia, lindas muñecas de seda y esfinges de
 ojos inquietantes y almitas de porcelana.

Y es poeta, un alto Poeta, buen maestro de ritmos
 y rimas.⁴⁹

Falconí Villagómez is the author to be closest aligned with the Modernists in his early style and temperament. Guided by the French parnassians, he used exotic themes and personages. The elegance of expression made the contribution of Falconí Villagómez a perfect springboard into Modernism.

Evidence of Modernism has been witnessed as the tastes of the poets were no longer satisfied by the looseness and exaggeration imposed by Romanticism. In a sense, however, the Modernist poets were Romantic. Their rebelliousness and anarchistic tendencies are Romantic traits.⁵⁰ The Modernists demand absolute liberty and freedom, as did the Romantics, and

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 214-215.

⁵⁰ Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, op. cit., p. 360.

their poems are subjective and contain a personal stamp.⁵¹ Aside from Romanticism, there are other elements that played roles in the formation of Modernism. This new attitude has been called a synthesis of all the preceding poetic schools. The aforementioned parnassians and symbolists shape the writings and thoughts of these new poets in Ecuador.⁵² The Modernist school in Ecuador rebels against the urban society of which they were a part and sought refuge in nature's landscapes. The remote village becomes the theme of their poetry rather than the urban community.⁵³ It should not be felt that the landscape is the only topic of the Modernist. This new school is exotic in its attitude toward subject matter.⁵⁴ In style these men stretch the language to its limits by new expressions and striking metaphors. Limitations imposed upon poetry in the past are ignored, and experimentation omnipresent. Artificiality is also to be considered an important phase of the Modernist movement. Although Modernism originates in America, it is cosmopolitan in scope. Although it is anti-romantic, it is pessimistic in mood.⁵⁵

The ingredients of Modernism had been fully formed by Rubén Darío for the literary world. Ecuadorian authors, finally faced with the opportunity to create, follow the pattern set not only by Darío but also by their own countrymen. Ecuadorian Modernists will find a road well worn and, for most, no longer in use. Although imitation to some extent is inevitable, we can expect novel and original form and treatment to develop due, it would seem,

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

to the environment in which Ecuador's Modernism took place. Modernism in Ecuador reaches a climax under the Generation of 1910.⁵⁶ The principal proponents of the new school are those to be examined along with their contributions. Arturo Borja, Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, and Humberto Fierro serve as the triumvirate that brings about the establishment of Modernism in Ecuador. Medardo Angel Silva escorts the movement to its purest form, at times being compared to the master himself, Rubén Darío. José María Egas bridges Modernism and the inevitable forthcoming reaction that brings Ecuadorian literature well into the 20th century.

⁵⁶ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 124.

ECUADORIAN MODERNISTS

Chapter II

ARTURO BORJA
(1892-1912)

...da, el primero en lares andinos, el son rubeniano.¹

Arturo Borja opens the door to the Modernist movement in all of its brilliance in Ecuador. Like most of the contemporary writers, he is from an aristocratic family. The father of Arturo, Luis Felipe Borja, was a professor of law, writer, and publisher of note.² Arturo was reared, then, within this intellectual framework of comfortable surroundings. Early in his childhood, Arturo felt an affection toward poetry. He rebelled against the type of intellectual study that was his father's life.³ This, however, becomes less unusual when we consider that it was an age of rebellion and disgust with the urban-aristocratic community that controlled the government and its supporters.

An important aspect in the development of Arturo Borja is his trip to "La Ciudad Luz," Paris, which served as the font for the new movement. It was a forced visit in that the child: ..."tenía que curarse de una

¹ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 165.

² Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 125.

³ Ibid.

afección oftálmica."⁴ Undoubtedly this event, although early in the formation of the author, had a very marked impact on the development of the artist. Paris cleared the eyes of Arturo physically and artistically. His exposure to the intellectual production will later become revealed.

The father of Arturo Borja was careful to blend the proper amount of Castilian grammar with his son's favorite readings, which were French, upon his return to Ecuador.⁵ This blending would later lead to a polish in his poetic expression; a polish worthy of recognition among the best of his school. The poet turns completely to his French masters for guidance. Hugo Alemán mentions that "Arturo Borja se abandonó líricamente a la subyugadora tutela de los poetas franceses."⁶ In his recognition of French poets it is Albert Samain who stands out as one of his favorites.⁷ He was first among the Ecuadorians to acknowledge and praise his works. The parallel in their lives perhaps caused the bond to Samain to be so strong. Isaac J. Barrera mentions of this Frenchman: "Conoció una vida triste y de dolor."⁸ In his dedication to the French poets, Arturo surrounds himself with other young men with like poetic and social opinions. In so doing, a strong companionship develops between Arturo, Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, and Humberto Fierro. This association led to the classification of these men as la Trilogía⁹ of Ecuadorian Modernism. A vital element of

⁴ Ibid., p. 165.

⁵ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 42.

⁶ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, p. 22.

⁷ Max Henríquez Ureña, Breve Historia del Modernismo (México, 1962), p. 367.

⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, Albert Samain (Quito, 1930), p. 86.

⁹ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 177.

the attitude of these men is expressed in:

...el rechazo de ese 'municipal y espeso' a que se aludía tan frecuentemente y que significaba la vida política y social de la hora en el Ecuador.¹⁰

Arturo Borja and the other followers of Modernism strove to place artistic values and contributions above those of politics. To do this it was necessary to create an artificial environment where literary perfection would supersede all else.

Arturo Borja knew the sadness and pain of which life is capable. Early he becomes bored with life and reflects this attitude at a very young age. Isaac J. Barrera is convinced of the author's early disenchantment with life.¹¹ This fatigue and disgust can be seen in "Madre Locura," one of the author's earliest works. He cites:

Tus hijos pertencen a la alta aristocracia
de la risa que llora, danzando alegres jotas.¹²

The disgust reflected in the author's opinion is readily revealed. The phrase "la risa que llora" appears to express Arturo's dissatisfaction with society and his concern with the problem of man accepting worldly pleasures over cultural interests. This element served to alienate Arturo Borja from society. Ecuador's environment could not compare with that of France.

Sólo amargura traje del país de Citeres...
Sé que la vida es dura, y sé que los placeres
Son libélulas vanas, son bostezos, son tedio...¹³

¹⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 45.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 169.

¹³ Ibid.

The artist seems to feel that Paris only made him more aware of the shortcomings of his country. It is apparent that although Arturo Borja found literary satisfaction in France, he lacked the inner rapport with society that made life meaningful. Pleasures are only artificial elements in an intrinsically boring existence. Finally the author reveals the type of relief for which he seeks.

Y por esto, Locura, yo anhele tu remedio,
que disipa tristezas, borra melancolías,
y puebla los espíritus de olvido y alegrías!¹⁴

The balm to ease the pressures and demands of life was found and was successful in its purpose. Little by little it began to devour the artist. The more he reached for relief, the more it became necessary and the more it consumed him. Hugo Alemán discloses the inner thoughts of Arturo Borja:

Los paraísos artificiales son para mí un oasis...
La morfina y el opio me producen un sueño tan
encantador, tan plácido, tan celestial y tan divino,
que bien vale ese sueño un trozo de mi carne.¹⁵

Although the taking of drugs was in vogue among the Modernists, it seems a bit unusual for him to flee from the social responsibilities demanded of his class. The idea of "noblesse oblige" was associated with improvement, optimism, and confidence. This mentality was not, however, disposed to develop any of the aforementioned attitudes. The most comfortable lodging was to be found in "la torre de marfil."

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 26.

Melancolía, ansia de olvido, llamamiento a la locura, éxtasis soledoso, cita con el destino y con la muerte, estos son los temas que se desenvuelven en las composiciones que se fijaron antes de ponerse en el papel, en la memoria de su autor, que vivía así el dolor extremo de su voluntad enferma.¹⁶

The attitude and temperament expressed in these lines reveal that the author was not prepared for the uncertainties of life. Every emotion seems to acknowledge this fact. A realization of the depth of these feelings is evident as they are revealed at an early age. Perhaps first of these would be melancholia accompanied by boredom which brings on the desire to escape. This desire to lose himself in the world where reason has no part becomes foremost.

Y para lograr una efímera placidez, una ilusoria proscripción de su habitual desasosiego, está el maléfico encanto de la morfina.¹⁷

The addiction to morphine, undoubtedly, was a welcomed relief, but necessarily accompanied with the realization that there was an unavoidable early appointment to be met with Death . Following this framework the words of Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, whom Isaac J. Barrera calls the "alter ego"¹⁸ and close companion of Arturo Borja, would fit very comfortably when he mentions that the life of Arturo is based on these principles: suffering, dreaming, and singing.¹⁹ In order for him to expose his feelings, "cantar," poetry was the most readily available vehicle. By using poetry, A. Borja was able to rise above the very attitudes that caused

¹⁶ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 128.

¹⁷ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 128.

¹⁹ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 21.

his melancholia. In the pessimism inherent in the author and his composition it is reasonable to expect little concern for the future except where Death is concerned. There is no possibility for a bright outcome for humanity. The author loses concern for this world and searches for that which is "más allá de las cosas," in his own imaginary world. In accord with this feeling Reginaldo Arízaga points out the refusal of the Modernist poets to be content in an environment that limits free-thinking and the reality of doubt.

Los poetas modernistas, los parnasianos, están muy lejos de la verdad de las cosas, desde el hecho que han adoptado y adoptan posturas artificiales, de simple convencionalismo, en sus poemas, buscando sólo el brillo de la forma, la falsa pedredría que encubre el cáncer del libre pensamiento y de la duda.²⁰

The adoption of the artificial and the dedication to form acquire a fulfillment never before recognized in Ecuadorian poetry prior to Arturo Borja. The expression of the artificial was effortless on the part of Borja. His inadaptability to life increases the ease with which each attitude is achieved. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño mentions that for Borja, "para sufrir, no le fue necesario esfuerzo ninguno. Le bastó contemplar el espectáculo del mundo."²¹ The soul of Arturo Borja can be made to suffer through the contemplation of nature itself as can be seen in his work "Bajo la Tarde."

Oh, tarde dolorosa que con tu cielo de oro,
finges las alegrías de un declinar de estío.
;Tarde! Las hojas secas en su doliente coro
van llenando mi alma de un angustioso frío.

La risa de la fuente me parece ser lloro;
el aire perfumado tiene aliento de lirios;
añoranzas me llegan de unos viejos martirios
y a mi mente se asoman unos ojos que adoro.

²⁰ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1942), p. 127.

²¹ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

Negros ojos que surgen como lagos de muerte
 bajo la sombra trágica de un cabello obsidiano,
 ¿por qué esa obstinación en dejar mi alma inerte,
 turbando mis delirios con su mirar lejano?
 ...Sigue fluyendo pena de la fuente sonora...
 Ha llegado la noche...Pobre alma mía: ¡llora!²²

The style, tone and mood of this poem are Romantic. One of nature's most beautiful scenes, the changing of day into night, provokes such strong depression that the author is left in tears. Images that may readily evoke joy are drawn with gloom and pessimism. The rustle of the leaves, water springing from a fountain, and the adoring eyes of a loved one, here are only capable of producing tears where they might have produced the smile of serenity. Every word seems to develop the same moods, those of suffering and pain. This pain is so deeply rooted that there remains but one alternative if the author is to survive through the tragedy which has been placed upon him; he must Dream. Pain, suffering, and dreaming cause the adhesion of theme in the creations of Arturo Borja and also in his soul. Reginaldo Arízaga speaks of the author's likeness in personality to the parnassians and of that same spirit of perfection to be found in his work.

...la personalidad de este poeta se hizo ostensible
 por su amoldenamiento a la escuela de los parnasianos,
 y como tal toda su obra lleva el espíritu y todas
 aquellas dolencias le son características...²³

Suffering also has a role in the Modernist school. This feeling of suffering and the desire to express it no doubt aided in attracting the poet closer to the Romantics. Once capable of expressing his emotions in the perfect style of the parnassians, the author is lured by consequence of

²² Augusto Arias, op. cit., pp. 168-169.

²³ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1942), p. 126.

his suffering into a dream world. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño speaking of his close friend mentions that:

Para soñar había de pasar por una doble etapa
de sufrimiento; antes en la carne viciosa y gemidora.
Después, en el alma insatisfecha. Encarándose a la realidad,
sensiblemente más tediosa.²⁴

Here re-emphasized is the inadaptability of the author to life. The boredom could only be eased at the price of his flesh, but a price that he was well willing to pay. The dreams of the author can be sensed in his work entitled "Mujer de Bruma."

Fue como un cisne que se aleja
Y se aleja, suave, dulcemente
por el cristal azul de la corriente,
como una vaga y misteriosa queja.

Me queda su visión. Era una vieja
tarde fría, de lluvia intermitente;
ella, bajo la máscara indolente
de su enigma, cruzó por la calleja.

Fue como un cisne blanco. Fue como una
aparición nostálgica y alada,
entrevista ilusión de la fortuna...

Fue como un cisne blanco y misterioso
que en la leyenda de un país brumoso
surge como la luna inmaculada.²⁵

This poem retains the Romantic subjectivity. There also appears to be the influence of Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer in these lines of Arturo Borja. The full scope of the dream can be seen in this work. The importance seems to lie not in the woman, but in how she is described. The image portrayed might be compared to the soul of the author himself. It appears a mysterious and misunderstood form without a well-defined destination is making its way through a world that finds him indifferent to its problems.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Benjamín Carrión, op. cit., p. 34.

This idea has previously found expression in Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer. The purity and grace of movement evident in the "Swan" is compared to the woman and her appearance stands out in sharp contrast to the surrounding environment as Arturo Borja and the Modernists must have when compared to their society. Theirs was a complaint, a cry for a change in society that, for the most part, went unheeded during their lifetime. This attitude is revealed in the first lines of "Voy a Entrar al Olvido."

Hermano, si me río de la vida y de sus cosas
notarás en mi risa cierto rezo de angustias...²⁶

Finally Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, commenting on the third element in the development of Arturo Borja, cites:

Para cantar, supo entregarse totalmente: en
rítmico ofertorio, en generosa dádiva, en plena
donación de sentimiento.²⁷

Arturo Borja was obligated to sing his lament, to interpret his feelings, and poetry served as the form best suited to communicate his emotions. The style and sentiment produced by the author's creations have a profound impact upon the reader. Arturo Borja is an artist talented in the development of ideas due to his sharp imagination and exactness in the choice of word.

The poem, "Primavera Mística y Lunar," describes the life in the city of Quito. The poet seems to be searching for the predominant mood in the description of the scene and, in so doing, passing this attitude on to the reader. The tone is mainly Romantic as is the use of varying meters.

²⁶ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 23.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

El viejo campanario
toca para el rosario.

Las viejecitas una a una
van desfilando hacia el santuario
y se diría un milenario
coro de brujas, a la luna.

Es el último día
del mes de María.

Mayo en el huerto y en el cielo:
el cielo, rosas como estrellas;
el huerto, estrellas como rosas...
Hay un perfume de consuelo
flotando por sobre las cosas,
Virgen María, ¿son tus huellas?

Hay santa paz y santa calma..
Sale a los labios la canción...
El alma
dice, sin voz, una oración.

Canción de amor,
oración mía,
pálida flor
de poesía.

Hora de luna y de misterio,
hora de santa bendición,
hora en que deja el cautiverio
para cantar, el corazón.

Hora de luna, hora de unción,
hora de luna y de canción.

La luna
es una
llaga blanca y divina
en el corazón hondo de la noche.

¡Oh, luna diamantina,
cúbreme! Haz un derroche
de lívida blancura
en mi doliente noche!
¡Llégate hasta mi cruz, pon un poco de albura
en mi corazón, llaga divina de locura!

El viejo campanario
que tocaba al rosario
se ha callado. El santuario
se queda solitario.²⁸

²⁸ Ibid., p. 32.

There is little of the condemnation of the city evident in "Epístola." The act of reporting the scene appears somewhat akin to the objectivity of the parnassians.

The role of the moon is very important in the works of Arturo Borja. It seems to represent the oasis of perfection for which he is searching in the midst of a blind society. There is a multitude of colors and odors scattered throughout the works of this poet, with a predominance of "white" symbolizing the purity that he seeks.

Hugo Alemán, commenting on the death of Arturo Borja, writes: "Y poeta fue en su muerte magnífica, devastada en plenitud, como un jardín lunado, delirante de flores."²⁹ He died at twenty years of age leaving to posterity a small legacy of his poetic creations. The morphine that helped make life somewhat more livable called for full payment on his tower of refuge, "la torre de marfil." With Arturo Borja, the Modernist movement arrives to Ecuador. Because of the abundance of subjectivity and other Romantic characteristics, this poet may be considered by some to be transitional rather than Modernist. Francisco Guarderas writing on Arturo Borja mentions that he represents a modern state of conscience, perhaps incoherent and sick, whose characteristics are individual restlessness that causes his self isolation which, though it frightens him, gives him a sense of pride... He mixes an almost brutal sincerity and a vain desire to simulate sentiments that are strange to him with a tacit refusal to express genuine and authentic sentiments.³⁰ It would appear that the

²⁹ Ibid., p. 165.

³⁰ Francisco Guarderas, "Arturo Borja," Biblioteca Ecuatoriana Mínima, No. 26 (Quito, 1960), pp. 249-250.

dominant characteristic of Ecuadorian Modernism as revealed by this poet (A. Borja) is artificiality intermixed with sincerity.

The elements initiated by forerunners of the Modernist movement have now become established. Arturo Borja sets the predominant stylistic and temperamental pattern to be followed by supporters of the new movement in his country. The poetic contribution of Arturo Borja is collected in La Flauta de Onix, which was published in 1920 some eight years after the author's death. In this book may be seen the influence of the French authors relative to the introduction of symbolism and the limpid treatment of material. The discontentment and anguish that were an inherent part of his being are felt in his poems.

Chapter III

Ernesto Noboa Caamaño
(1891-1927)

Hay tardes en las que uno desearía
embarcarse y partir sin rumbo cierto, (Emoción Vespéral)

Herein is encompassed the soul of the "alter ego" and inseparable companion of Arturo Borja. To treat one and neglect the other would be a major mistake. E. Noboa Caamaño is the second pillar in Ecuador's Modernist triumvirate. There is somewhat of a parallel in their backgrounds in that E. Noboa Caamaño has very illustrious parents. He is an aristocrat by birth.

Sus antecesores y parientes habían ocupado posición
expectante en el Ecuador: Diego Noboa y José María
Plácido Caamaño fueron presidentes de la República.¹

The social and political responsibilities associated with his family and class are completely ignored by the artist. As with Arturo Borja, the leaders of society appear to be deeply submerged in military rather than the cultural aspects of life. The satisfaction in which the "bourgeoisie" had become settled was stifling to this creative talent. It will not be surprising to find a repetition of the temperament inherent in Arturo Borja and the same boredom and desire to flee to the unknown. There is no room for pretense in the soul of this author and thus he evokes a type of frustrated sincerity with little hope that relief from his torment will be accomplished.

¹ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 47.

France has been in some respects the model for the Western world and traffic to and from this hallowed country is great during this period. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño welcomes the opportunity to visit the land of inspiration.

El anhelado viaje a Europa se acerca, gracias a
la munificencia de una parienta millonaria--la señora
de Díaz que reside en París.²

The poet finds little of the glamour, adventure, and excitement expected. This is a France torn by war and revealing little of the anticipated treasures. After arriving in Europe, he finds it dull and lacking in relief from his boredom. A longing for home replaces the enthusiasm felt by E. Noboa Caamaño for his European visit. Upon his return to Ecuador he finds himself once more enchained by the sources of melancholy. This feeling is repeated throughout his poetic works.

Aunque uno sepa que hasta los remotos
confines de los piélagos ignotos
le seguirá el cortejo de sus penas,

Y que al desvanecerse el espejismo,
desde las glaucas ondas del abismo
le tentarán las últimas sirenas. (Emoción Vespéral)³

Ernesto Noboa Caamaño seems to feel that as a result of searching there is but one source capable of providing complete satisfaction: "las últimas sirenas," Death. One is led to assume that there is but the final rest for his soul, which was incapable of life. With this artist, as with other Ecuadorian Modernists, there reigns a lack of will that completely shrouds and restricts all revolutionary intent. In the same sense there

² Raúl Andrade, "La Generación Decapitada," Gobelinos de Niebla (Quito, 1940), p. 86.

³ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 154.

is what Isaac J. Barrera calls: "...la debilidad de la desesperanza."⁴
This statement well identifies this lack of will.

Ernesto Noboa Caamaño surrounds himself with Ecuador's bohemian element made up of gamblers, musicians, and lovers. Those most exciting aspects of society were his favorites perhaps in an effort to cast off, what seemed to him, the drudgery of Ecuadorian society. The poet possesses characteristics, however, that set him apart from his associates; these being "...el triple prestigio de su talento, de su palabra y de su nombre."⁵ Due to his artistic talent, his gift of expression, his social position, and temperament the artist is destined to become a landmark in Modernism. He receives the nickname "el zambo"⁶ owing to his blond curly hair.

Pulcro en el vestir. Caminaba pausadamente,
como si no tuviera prisa de recorrer la senda.⁷

Here is sensed his boredom and lack of direction. E. Noboa Caamaño, it would seem, stands out brightly against this adventurous, devil-may-care background of men. There is a need in the soul of the author to remove himself from his present environment. This he accomplished through morphine. The taking of drugs is in accord with the vogue of his period. Rather than being enticed by the vice of his age, it seems E. Noboa Caamaño felt a strong and sincere need for the relief it afforded.

La morfina lo poseía por entero, En ella se
fiaba. Por ella vivía pero también por ella, por
su ausencia constante, iba muriéndose desesperadamente.⁸

⁴ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura (Quito, 1944), III, p. 49.

⁵ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., p. 84.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 142.

⁸ Ibid.

The search for relief becomes a drive that completely consumes the physical and mental being of the outstanding supporters of Modernism in Ecuador. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, unable to find satisfaction with the majority of his contacts, turns inward. He cannot turn to religion because he lacks faith. Raúl Andrade feels that "El cansancio, la carencia de fe, han corroído su alma para siempre."⁹ The corroded soul of the artist is beyond repair due to his weariness, his physical weakness, and his lack of faith. It can be assumed, at this point, that the author cannot be saved. Through morphine, he follows a black rainbow that offers only more mystery.

His days find him enslaved in the routine of office work. His nights, in the company of the works of Poe, Verlaine, and Samain were comforting and relaxing. Following their example, the author unrolls the charm of his discontentment. Hugo Alemán feels that Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, "Tenía que volcar su tristeza, tenía que traducir el dolor en su propio dolor."¹⁰ The artist was obliged to reveal to the world his suffering in an unfair environment. Because of the background and temperament of E. Noboa Caamaño, Arturo Borja, along with Humberto Fierro and Medardo Angel Silva, the last two to be discussed later, it is easy to realize why their souls might be compared with that of a "white wound in the heart of the night," a line used originally to describe the moon in the poem "Primavera Mística y Lunar" by Arturo Borja.

The poetic contribution of Ernesto Noboa Caamaño is compiled in his book La Romanza de las Horas, which was published in 1922. The influence

⁹ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., p. 85.

¹⁰ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 142.

of Verlaine and Samain is fully evident in the grace with which he presents his suffering to the world. The desire to escape dominates his being. Hugo Alemán exhibits this same attitude when he mentions that E. Noboa Caamaño seeks to "Evadirse de la fría realidad del desencanto."¹¹ This cold disenchantment is accompanied by an understandable bitterness toward life for being so boring, toward its people living in blind satisfaction, and toward the world for offering but one escape, the Grave. The most recognizable of the attitudes presented in the works of Ernest Noboa Caamaño must logically be flight from life's reality through dreams, a wandering without a well-defined direction, and an all-engulfing pain and suffering brought on by life itself. A sincere and revealing appraisal of himself can also be observed. E. Noboa Caamaño, without inhibitions, openly allows scrutinization, and the accompanying criticism, of his being. This self-portrait may be witnessed in "Ego Sum" from his book La Romanza de las Horas.

Amo todo lo extraño, amo todo lo exótico;
lo equívoco, morboso, lo falso, lo anormal:
Tan sólo calmar pueden mis nervios de neurótico
la ampolla de morfina y el frasco de cloral.

Amo las cosas mustias, aquel tinte clorótico
de hampones y ramerías, pasto del hospital.
En mi cerebro enfermo, sensitivo y caótico,
como araña poeana, teje su red el mal.

No importa que los otros me huyan. El aislamiento
es propicio a que nazca la flor del sentimiento:
el nardo del ensueño brota en la soledad.

No importa que me nieguen los aplausos humanos
si me embriaga la música de los astros lejanos
y el batir de mis alas sobre la realidad.¹²

¹¹ Ibid., p. 143.

¹² Ibid., pp. 143-144.

A shadow of pity and shock seems immediately to grasp the imagination as the author admits his devotion for everything associated with gloom and distrust. He openly admits to his need for drugs to settle his neurotic condition. Licentiousness and prostitution are welcomed elements of his society. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño views with indifference those who shun him because alone he may flee to the refuge of his dream world. With the assistance of "la morfina" he is able to rise above reality. This entire atmosphere represents one of flight. The very portions of society that would be particularly "taboo" to his social position are completely embraced by the artist. This seems to illustrate the profundity of the contempt in which he viewed the society of his era. His revelations border on the psychotic and the abnormal. Nonetheless, with almost a sense of pride he announces his affection for the vices of the world. The poet appears to call upon the world to yield to his "sanity" rather than to allow himself to become corrupted by the "insanity" of the world. This conflict in sincerity on the author's part makes it easy to understand the comment of Isaac J. Barrera:

La sonrisa no asoma a los labios, ni siquiera del lector actual, porque se penetra inmediatamente de la desolada sinceridad de los poemas que ocultan artificiosamente un dolor verdadero.¹³

It is difficult to remain unmoved as Ernesto Noboa Caamaño reveals his soul. Perhaps the strongest emotion drawn from the reader by this self-portrait is pity. "Ego Sum" displays a rare personal frankness that heretofore was nonexistent in Ecuador. The elegance with which the author relates his attitude and preferences seems to upgrade the low esteem in

¹³ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947), p. 48.

which they are generally acknowledged. Melancholia, flight from reality through dreams, and mental pain and suffering tinged with bitterness are easily recognizable characteristics to be found in the works of the artist. Flight from this world's reality is a recurring theme of E. Noboa Caamaño. It is closely alined with that of his friend Arturo Borja. Ernesto Noboa Caamaño himself shows how united they were in temperament in the following passages from "A Arturo Borja":

Se unieron nuestras almas cierto día,
al fulgor de un crepúsculo abrialeño,
por la santa virtud de la poesía,
en el dolor, la duda y el ensueño.¹⁴

The magnetic force of common interests and attitudes drew them together; not only poetry, but suffering due to the same causes: life, doubt, and dreams. Continues E. Noboa Caamaño:

Sólo he quedado en el sendero, hermano:
tu abandonaste el duro cautiverio
por recorrer el velo de lo arcano
sediento de infinito y de misterio.¹⁵

Ernesto Noboa Caamaño conveys a profound loneliness, but does not express the certainty of contentment for his friend although Arturo Borja longed for the relief presented by death. E. Noboa Caamaño knows only that Arturo Borja has left this world to enter that of mystery.

Dolor, sueño y canción; tal la extinguida
llama en que ardió tu espíritu sediento.
Sufrir, soñar, cantar: tal fue tu vida,
gris de dolor y azul de sentimiento.¹⁶

The pain, dreams, and poetry here attributed to A. Borja could also easily serve as a self-portrait of Ernesto himself. This entire work has

¹⁴ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 34.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 35.

the effect of a mirror which shows a nearly identical reflection of two tormented souls.

We have found evidence in Arturo Borja of a nostalgic urge to flee. This urge also ripens in E. Noboa Caamaño. It seems to reach its peak after his return, disillusioned, from Europe. It seems apparent that "to search" forms a part of his destiny, but "to find" is unrelated and not guaranteed. This attitude comes to life in the poem "Nostalgia."

Ante la ciudad dormida
bajo la luna sedaña
mi pobre alma dolorida
olvida
y sueña.

Un astro me está llamando
con su trémula mirada,
y el alma está contemplando
extasiada
y sollozando
su llamada.

Y sueña ante los reflejos
del rubio astro vagabundo:
¡partir al fin!... ¡lejos, lejos
de este mundo!

Olvidando de amarguras
y terrenales ternuras,
ya no sentir ni pensar,
¡tener dos alas oscuras...
... y volar!

Ante la ciudad dormida
bajo la luna sedaña
¡oh pobre alma dolorida
sueña, sueña,
olvida, olvida...!¹⁷

Ernesto Noboa Caamaño seems caught up in the effects of morphine which aid him to forget this world's problems and to fly into "la nada," the great expanse of the universe, leaving this world and becoming unconcerned

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 150-151.

except with the sensation of flight. This work well exhibits the solitude and serenity of his world of dreams and the idea of escape.

As with Arturo Borja, a note of pessimism flows throughout the poetic production of Ernesto Noboa Caamaño. He displays an elegant pain hinging on pride. Isaac J. Barrera in comparing the poetic works of Arturo Borja and E. Noboa Caamaño writes:

Los versos de Noboa, frente a los de Borja,
tienen una mejor maleabilidad armoniosa; hay
suavidad en la forma, delicadeza en los sentimientos,
mayor extensión en el dolor por un contacto más
extendido con el mundo.¹⁸

In form, harmony, and sentiment E. Noboa Caamaño is superior. It seems of equal importance, in the consideration of the two, that there also exists a lack of will preventing these men from active attempts to right the conditions responsible for their suffering.

Todo lo había subordinado al afán ilimitado de
soñar. Para él no quedaba sobre la superficie de
la tierra sino esta única verdad: el vicio.¹⁹

The idea of subordinating all else to the desire to dream aided by morphine is essential in the consideration of these "gemelos." The strongest of E. Noboa Caamaño's emotions is his elegant suffering which readily coincides with that of Arturo Borja. Love is nearly nonexistent and only hints at severe pain that may follow as its result. This can be seen in these lines from "luna de Aldea":

Y en un rincón apartado
quizás una amante pareja
se inicia en el sufrimiento
de la caricia primera...²⁰

¹⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, De Nuestra América (Quito, 1956), p. 109.

¹⁹ Hugo Alemán, op. cit., p. 144.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 140-141.

Love is not a cure-all to Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, but rather a warning of forthcoming pain which may be physical or emotional. Love would not comfortably fit in his world. Though of aristocratic birth E. Noboa Caamaño, along with Arturo Borja, shuns his responsibility feeling that it is a blind society which attaches importance to group after group of military men in a society in revolt. As the life of Ernesto Noboa Caamaño is unusual, so is his approaching death. Raúl Andrade mentions in La Generación Decapitada that the author:

Vive en una pieza en penumbra para poderse
acostumbrar a la gran sombra, sin principio ni
fin, que ya le envuelve.

Una plomiza mañana de diciembre de 1927 le toca

Emprender una larga travesía
y perderse después en un desierto
y misterioso mar no descubierto
por ningún navegante todavía...²¹

If the artist was not prepared for life, he made an effort to prepare himself for his journey on the deserted and mysterious sea still unknown to navigators: Death. At 36 years of age, Ernesto Noboa Caamaño died. Isaac J. Barrera says of his death "...vencido por el hastío, le mataba la vida."²² His melancholy temperament is revealed in his work La Romanza de las Horas establishing him as an important pillar in Ecuadorian literature.

²¹ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., p. 88.

²² Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1113.

Chapter IV

Humberto Fierro
(1890-1929)

Pero la vida es triste...
La noche va a venir
y el cisne
canta para morir. (Por el Estanque de los Nenúfares)

Humberto Fierro represents the final column of Ecuador's Modernist triumvirate. He is closely aligned with Ernesto Noboa Caamaño in his talent for displaying elegant suffering. He seems to represent the same lack of physical contact with the world outside and even less mental rapport. His lines quoted above from the poem "Por el Estanque de los Nenúfares" seem aptly to describe the inborn attitude evoked by the entire group. Life is sad to them and in the coming end of life they, like the swan, release their melodic song before dying.

In Humberto Fierro we witness the repetition of circumstances common to the other members of the triumvirate. He is also of a wealthy background. He also refuses association with society and finds refuge in his library containing the works of Hugo, Byron, Musset, Heine and Leopardi. The rich and poetic boldness of these authors and their consideration of the problems of life, love and destiny produces an impact on him similar to that seen in Arturo Borja and E. Noboa Caamaño. Humberto Fierro is a parnassian in his mode of expression. He possesses and depicts a pronounced awareness of, if not a longing for, Death. The full range of shades and perfumed fragrances is trapped in his imagery. There is a

difference, however, in topic. It seems that nature has a more dominant role here than observed before. Aside from serving as a symbolic element, it becomes the primary character. There is more concern for the Romantic and heroic days of the past.

Evoca la silueta de legendarios castillos medioevales. Los estratégicos puentes levadizos. El paso leve y atavío vaporoso de las marquesitas de antaño. Los errabundos trovadores, dóciles juguetes del capricho de alguna dama nostálgica. Las correrías cinegéticas, en procura de minutos emocionales, capaces de relegar a último término la murria impertinente de cualquier neurasténico señor feudal.¹

These lines from Hugo Alemán suggest a link with Romanticism, but the ability and desire of the artist to dream also contributed to the exotic flavor that enriches his production, and perhaps is indicative of the artificiality that may be alined with Modernism. This exoticism is not accompanied by the pronounced nostalgia to search for peace of mind in far away places as was seen in E. Noboa Caamaño. H. Fierro does not express a burning desire to visit the metropolis of the world or even the cradle of 20th century culture, Paris. This alone is an outstanding difference which sets him apart from the majority of this school. His longing is only for Athens. Hugo Alemán mentions that:

Fierro tenía la concepción de una especie de mundo de las formas y de las ideas, que es el mundo mismo del arte.²

The aspiration to visit the original fountain of culture was perhaps instilled in the artist through his love for music and painting. Without a doubt these talents will serve a useful purpose in the maturing of the

¹ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 50.

² Ibid., p. 58.

poetic skills of the man Hugo Alemán calls "el más griego de los artistas."³

Solitude emerges as one of the few pleasures of H. Fierro. He no doubt experiences greater comforts in his world of books and dreams than in the world of reality. He varies from the others of the triumvirate in that he does not become unconditionally attracted to the artificial paradises known to A. Borja and E. Noboa Caamaño. This may be due to the fact that Humberto Fierro found his paradise, his refuge from the trivial, proud, and aristocratic society of which he was a discontented member. "Quinta Verde"⁴ was his refuge of isolation that inspired his dreams and purified his mind to permit the revelation of his inner soul to mankind.

In the over-all portrayal of attitudes it would seem that Humberto Fierro is less desperate than his associates. Elegant suffering perhaps reaches its zenith in the production of this poet. His bitterness is not as sharp as that displayed by Arturo Borja or E. Noboa Caamaño. Humberto Fierro, however, shows the same pessimism. The beauty that he sees lies either in the past or in the world of Dreams.

Humberto Fierro, Arturo Borja, and E. Noboa Caamaño were acquainted. Humberto Fierro was the discovery of A. Borja. His first reaction toward the production of H. Fierro was strongly and bitterly critical. Humberto Fierro finally wins the approval of Arturo Borja and the latter becomes eager to share the ideas and emotion of the former.

³ Ibid., p. 59.

⁴ Hugo Moncayo, "El Poeta Humberto Fierro," América, No. 47. dic. 1931, p. 400.

Aquel soneto que tan hondamente comprometiera la emoción de Arturo Borja, se llamó primitivamente "Fantasía Desobligante." Pero en el único libro que alcanzó a publicar Humberto Fierro--El Laúd en el Valle lleva este título: "Sueño de Arte."⁵

Blanca estela dejaba el cisne blanco
En las mágicas aguas azuladas
Y en gallardas y suaves balanceadas
Me mostraba la seda de su flanco.

Desde el césped frondoso de mi banco
A la Milo de mármol enlazadas
Trepaban las volubles lanceoladas
A ocultar el divino brazo manco.

Armoniosa la tarde descendía.
Parpadeando su luz con agonía,
Ya la estrella de Venus fulguraba.

Y mirando unas flores abstraído
De repente salté muy sorprendido:
Impaciente Pegaso ya piafaba.⁶

This work may be recognized as one of those in which H. Fierro displays most fully his Modernist talent. Nature at its best (nature is definitely among the author's greatest loves) is glorified with a tinge of the mythological. The peace of the artist's green refuge is depicted through his sharp imagery which would rival the brush strokes of many painters. There is melancholy etched into the scene with the coming of dusk and the sun trying desperately to retard the advancement of night. In his world apart, the author is surprised, but pleasingly so, to find Pegasus, the winged horse, pawing the ground. The following lines substantiate Humberto Fierro's delight in his dream world. Raúl Andrade relates that "Se pasó la vida esperando encontrar a la princesa Blanca Nieves y su

⁵ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 54.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 54-55.

cortejo de gnomos."⁷ In the world of business, large buildings, and cities teeming with the social interplay of man against man there is no Snow White. For the artist there was to be no ending explaining how "They all lived happily ever after."

Among the most common references made in the works of Humberto Fierro is that to the sunset. He treats this subject metaphorically, symbolically, and as one of nature's most exquisite and poetic forms. The artist relates:

Tengo una obsesión de los crepúsculos. En mis poemas siempre hay ocaso que rima armoniosamente con mi alma.⁸

The obsession with sunsets is beautifully revealed in these examples.

"Por el Estanque de los Nenúfares" makes reference to:

El castillo florido
Parece el de Elsinor
Dormido
En el ocaso en flor.⁹

(The comparison of a castle to the seaport of Helsingore sleeping in the western sunset and engulfed by all its splendor.)

Armoniosa la tarde descendía,
Parpadeando su luz con agonía,
Ya la estrella de Venus fulguraba. (Sueño de Arte)¹⁰

(Venus announcing the coming of night.)

Y al fin, un dulce día
Se hundió en el lago eterno, (La Náyade)¹¹

⁷ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., p. 94.

⁸ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 55.

⁹ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 179.

¹⁰ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, pp. 54-55.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

(A sweet day submerging in the eternal lake which is night.)

En el puente de piedra que musgo
lento cubre he descansado viendo que
se deshoja el día, (La Tristeza del Angelus)¹²

(The author rests watching the day wither away.)

Y hay una sonrisa de oro en los prados,
de duración breve como la inocencia,
Y se hunde el divino sol de los venados
en el valle ameno de la adolescencia. (Los Niños)¹³

(The sunset is used to describe the shift from childhood
to adolescence.)

The thought and imagery evoked by the setting sun in the works of Humberto Fierro are the most clear. Although the use of sunsets alone is not exclusively Modernism, the choice of words in describing the scene is indicative of this school. One can also see other characteristics here such as exoticism, symbolism, color shades, suffering, melancholia, and rhythm. Nor does the use of nature end in these few examples. The use of sunsets is scattered and sensed throughout his production.

Humberto Fierro may be classified among the distinguished group of parnassians with the work "Tu Cabellera." Here we find his talent at its highest point and worthy of the acknowledgement of the Modernists. An outstanding aspect of this poem and almost all of his work is its artificiality.¹⁴

Tu Cabellera tiene más años que mi pena,
Pero sus ondas negras aun no han hecho espuma...
Y tu mirada es buena para quitar la bruma
Y tu palabra es música que al corazón serena.

¹² Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 178.

¹³ Ibid., p. 181.

¹⁴ Francisco Guarderas, op. cit., p. 309.

Tu mano fina y larga de Belkis, me enajena
 Como un libro de versos de una elegancia suma;
 La magia de tu nombre como una flor perfuma
 Y tu brazo es un brazo de lira o de sirena.

Tienes una apacible blancura de camelia,
 Ese color tan tuyo que me recuerda a Ofelia,
 La princesa romántica en el poema inglés.

Y tu corazón de oro...de la melancolía
 La mano del bohemio permite, amiga mía,
 Que arroje algunas flores humildes a tus pies.¹⁵

Although Humberto Fierro is a lover of music, rhythm is not felt by
 Isaac J. Barrera to be of primary importance when he mentions:

Se puede decir que la musicalidad en este poeta
 tiene poca importancia, porque lo principal reside
 en el vuelo inesperado de su balbuceo puesto en sordina.¹⁶

There is an appreciation and love of music observable, Liszt, Chopin, and
 Beethoven being among the poet's favorites.¹⁷ Humberto Fierro's poetic
 ability seems linked with his ability to see music and art and their
 importance in nature.¹⁸ Who is the woman in this work? Probably someone
 who was seen by the author once and has passed into his memory. Perhaps
 she was a portrait that captured the artist's devotion and has been
 found and worshipped in his dream world.

It would be a mistake to treat the poetic production of Humberto
 Fierro and to ignore the heroic lyric that prevails in some of his works.
 Latin American liberators are dealt with in a tone worthy of the European
 epic. The topic is restrictive but the treatment of theme represents the

¹⁵ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 182.

¹⁶ Isaac J. Barrera, De Nuestra América (Quito, 1959), p. 114.

¹⁷ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 57.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 49.

elegance and universality of Modernism. Witness the tone and atmosphere developed in the following poem.

Brisa Heroica

Bajando por las gradas de los Andes
entre rocas de Cíclopes mineros,
recordaba el honor de los guerreros
que llenaron la historia de hechos grandes
al desnudar los ínclitos aceros.

No tuvieron las águilas alpinas
paseo más triunfal sobre las ruinas
y las tumbas levíticas de Europa,
que los corceles de la invicta tropa
que luchó en las Repúblicas latinas.

Sagradas son las cumbres y los valles
donde se enrojecieron los detalles
que la Fama magnífica prolonga,
buenos para Rolando en Roncevalles
y dignos de Pelayo en Covadonga.

Oigamos las guerreras armonías
que dicen al pasar de aquellos días,
mientras huyen barridas al momento
la negra Tradición, las Tiranías,
croando como cuervos en el viento...¹⁹

Here again we are aware of the influence of nature. American heroes and liberators do not serve as a primary theme of the author, but it would be amiss to overlook his contribution to this style.

In Humberto Fierro as in E. Noboa Caamaño can be found a sharp self-portrait of the author's temperament. Hugo Moncayo in his article "El Poeta Humberto Fierro" has this opinion of the author:

Poeta sincero ante todo, porque era su propia experiencia la que le dictaba esa superior manera de producirse en todos los momentos de su vida y que el vulgo nunca habría de perdonarle--ya que el poeta se vengó de él ignorándolo--su poesía es el espejo de su vida.²⁰

¹⁹ Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 180.

²⁰ Hugo Moncayo, op. cit., p. 400.

There is little in his writings to expose even a knowledge of the common people although he reveals a charitable desire to know the poor. It seems, though, that this desire is to know the seemingly overt lack of concern that prevails, a resignation to their particular state free of responsibility. His personal experiences and attitudes serve as primary sources for the ideas expressed in his poetic production. Humbert Fierro expressed boredom as a main attitude.

Por si es breve el encanto de nuestra vida.
(Paseo de Aguas Durmientes)²¹

This boredom reveals Humberto Fierro's feeling toward life and humanity.

Acostumbrado a ver el mundo
Por el mal prisma de nuestros duelos,
Sin oír los silfos de cornamusa
Que hacen divinos los finos ecos,
Vamos hollando las florecillas
Que son guirnalda de pensamiento. (Navidad de los Angelus)²²

The blindness of society to the Modernists and their works seems to show in these lines. There is primarily self-centered concern while the poetic muses, which free the mind for more important considerations, are ignored.

In "Sonata a Lucía" he mentions:

Y entonces, convencidos de la verdad tremenda,
Sin que nadie nos ame ni nadie nos comprenda,
Un arte que es adoración,
Con rumbo hacia las playas donde ya no se escribe
¿Desterraremos de la belleza de lo que vive
Al dolorido corazón?²³

Once again the author shows the isolation of the poet and the beauty that is felt by the suffering heart of the Modernist. This attitude inspires the poet's yearning for a better world.

²¹ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 62.

²² Augusto Arias, op. cit., p. 178.

²³ Ibid., pp. 183-184.

Temía despertarme
Pues sé que siempre sueño. (La Náyade)²⁴

Humberto Fierro finds solace and comfort and begins to hint at a fear of society and of being awakened to face it. The artist moves on to express his primary concepts.

Yo escribo estas palabras: Amor e Ideal (El Placer)²⁵

It seems that this compassion is for humanity, a compassion that is brought on by what approaches pity. The ideal lies in his poetry and in his world. The chief ideas are purely Modernist: (1) There is a disregard for humanity hinging on sympathetic bitterness due to its disassociation from the beauty of the world; (2) Voluntary exile can be the only alternative in order to create a world of his own; (3) This world has as its source the ideal as the author sees it, beauty brought on by his suffering.

It has been observed that Humberto Fierro completely separated himself from his source of wealth, agriculture. Although he was employed he was a man in blinders, going directly from his work to the solitude of his room.

Al atravesar una callejuela, descubre una mujer en
su ventana, entre macetas...Se llama Soledad Paz.
El poeta va repitiéndose mentalmente: Soledad...Paz...
cree haber encontrado la meta de su destino, la
alegoría de su anhelar más claro que ha tomado contorno
de mujer. Meses más tarde se casa.²⁶

Humberto Fierro felt that he had found his peace and solitude. This marriage was frowned upon by the family in that he married a woman of lower birth. The pair left the aristocratic environment of his birth and

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

²⁵ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 72.

²⁶ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., p. 89.

the natural surroundings that he loved. This change along with marriage may have caused the alterations in the artist's poems. Raúl Andrade states that "Su obra de artista se va diafanizando. El matrimonio lo humaniza en cambio."²⁷ The humanizing effect of his marriage perhaps inspired his longing to know and to love people. Humberto Fierro found that there was no peace or solitude to be found in the development of his household. His economic condition worsened due to his disregard for money. The death of his child was no doubt one of the tragedies that pushed the author toward drug addiction. El Laúd en el Valle, published in 1919, contains the full poetic and spiritual development of the author. The illustrations contained in this volume show H. Fierro's artistic leanings.

Un buen día se supo que el poeta había muerto.
Partió calladamente, como había vivido, y en los
círculos literarios apenas se anotó su desaparecimiento.²⁸

Su epitafio lo pronuncia el burgués entre dos
cucharadas de sopa; '¡Pobre joven!...tan inteligente
que diz q'era.'²⁹

His disappearance from the literary scene was as quiet and unnoticed as his life. The impact of his poetry cannot in any way be minimized as he forms the third column of the triumvirate of Modernist poets of Ecuador. An elegance in suffering was epitomized in this artist. He did not know man as well as Arturo Borja or Ernesto Noboa Caamaño but the same disregard for life caused Humberto Fierro to submerge himself into the world of dreams. The effect of the parnassian influence is observable in his poetry. He is peculiar in that his desire is to know Athens rather than the great urban and entertainment centers of the world; we also find

²⁷ Ibid., p. 90.

²⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura (Quito, 1944), III, p. 55.

²⁹ Raúl Andrade, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

heroic moods and ideas expressed in his lyric. This topic is given more vitality by Humberto Fierro than by Arturo Borja or Ernesto Noboa Caamaño. Like his companions in the triumvirate, Humberto Fierro is a member of the aristocracy but does not associate himself with that class, preferring to marry a woman of lower birth. The temperament of this poet is most compatible with the mood of this school as it developed in Ecuador.

Chapter V

Medardo Angel Silva
(1898-1919)

Súbito en el silencio de la tarde olorosa, suena el llanto del rondador; no se ve el músico; las notas lagrimeantes, puras, venidas de la brisa, como de regiones de ensueño, llegan prestigiadas por lo desconocido, en una como deliciosa y ambigua sensación de fragancia y de música...

Un lucero lloroso se ha encendido en el cielo de ópalo...
cae una llovizna tibia..y el rondador sigue cantando en el
paisaje sin nadie. (El Rondador)¹

Medardo Angel Silva might be called the "old young man" of Ecuadorian poetry. His early writing seems to indicate a man cheated of his youth. His reply would have been in the negative had the poet asked himself "¿Era juventud la mía?" Medardo Angel Silva was not prepared psychologically for life. His works reflect this lack of preparedness and demonstrate that there was no excitement, no desire, no anxiety offered him except that aroused by Death.

Ni un ansia, ni un anhelo, ni siquiera un deseo,
agitan este lago crepuscular de mi alma.
Mis labios están húmedos de agua de Letheo.
La muerte me anticipa su don mejor: la calma.
(Estancia VIII)²

Death is almost immediately a friend. It would appear that in accord with the author's will, she wanders in and out of his mind and his ideas.

¹ Nicol Fasejo, op. cit., p. 96.

² Medardo Angel Silva, "El Árbol del Bien y del Mal," Revista Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, No. 13 (enero-junio 1953), pp. 414-415.

She seems to be expected and omnipresent in M. Angel Silva's world. His attitude toward her is evidenced by the name given her, "La Libertadora." She becomes a welcomed thought. The author approaches her unafraid and aware that the "Libertadora" is the only one capable of alleviating the torment being experienced in this life.

Unlike Arturo Borja, E. Noboa Caamaño and Humberto Fierro, Medardo Angel Silva is from a modest family. The role of his parents could aptly be described as "followers" in contrast with the "leader" position afforded the triumvirate due to their aristocratic social status. The works of Medardo Angel Silva ring of the aristocratic temperament and elegance evoked by the triumvirate and his pain is no less real or profound. His pseudonym, Jean d'Agreve,³ (John of grief) reveals the personality of this soul in torment. Reginaldo Arízaga in his work Valores Ecuatorianos mentions that:

Nació este poeta con el ansia infinita de escalar las cumbres más inaccesibles de la belleza ideal, y desde su adolescencia se reveló como un aristócrata de la lírica, manifestándose desde sus comienzos como un férvido admirador de Samain, el más pulcro y complejo de los simbolistas franceses.⁴

Reginaldo Arízaga continues, however, that: "Cuanto más ascendiera a las cumbres del ideal, más se sintió poseído de aquel cansancio de vivir."⁵ The works of M. Angel Silva seem to reveal the inner workings of his soul. It would seem his capacity to understand himself made more accessible to him that Ideal Beauty. At an early age, the poet formed many opinions

³ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, p. 61.

⁴ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1942), p. 168.

⁵ Ibid., p. 169.

about life and himself. This self-examination may have helped release the restrictions that might otherwise have limited his creativity. Then grounded in the French parnassians, he was swept along rapidly to the full realization of what Reginaldo Arízaga called "la fugacidad de su vida atormentada."⁶

Medardo Angel Silva worked on the newspaper El Telégrafo, which began the publication of a literary supplement. This supplement later became the magazine Renacimiento which served as the uniting force for Guayaquil's literary youth. He becomes editor of the magazine Patria, which enjoyed prestige within and outside of the country:

...por haber construido el mejor exponente de cultura y una amplia tribuna de las renovadores fuerzas espirituales de ese tiempo.⁷

Through this participation Medardo Angel Silva takes an active role in the furtherance of the literary maturation of Ecuador. Due to the quality of his production, even at this early age, the new literary school, "se le reconoció como a maestro."⁸ The production of the maestro served to lift him from the popular class into the upper strata of Ecuador's intellectuals.⁹ Along with the precision of the artist's poetic style there is an overriding sadness and pessimism that veils his work. These traits are substantiated in the following lines.

...Cuando se estudia la obra poética de este bardo guayaquileño...se advierte instantáneamente el fondo de pesimismo, de que están saturados sus poemas, y

⁶ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Poéticos de América (Quito, 1945), p. 295.

⁷ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1944), I, p. 61.

⁸ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura (Quito, 1944), III, p. 58.

⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

por lo mismo en ellos alienta el soplo de un dolor lacerante, finísimo, que se traduce en gritos de angustia y de quebranto, de cansancio y de dolor sin orillas.¹⁰

The atmosphere created in the works of Medardo Angel Silva is here described. It is one steeped with pessimism and tempered by anguish, weakness, and an exhausted sense of the futility of life. Reginaldo Arízaga recognizes this attitude.

Su obra poética fue el reflejo fiel de la fugacidad de su vida atormentada, y como tal, hay quienes la consideran ya decapitada.¹¹

It should be emphasized that these emotions were experienced and recognized by the author before the age of 21. With Arturo Borja we can see development toward death. His poetry displays, in its early stages a seemingly healthy mind that becomes corrupted as it views life and his relation to it. Medardo Angel Silva's poems are almost immediately depressing. The outer self of M. Angel Silva reveals some degree of physical activity while, within, the life cycle is being drastically shortened. This attitude can be attributed to society but even more so to the lack of direction or well-defined purpose for his existence. Whatever love that was made available was either insufficient, or he was incapable of receiving and acknowledging it. His role seemed to be that of an absorbent. The pains of life and the pains of the world were lodged in this tormented soul. This refrain presented by Hugo Alemán in his work Presencia del Pasado, vol. 1, might well identify the personality of the author.

¹⁰ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Poéticos de América (Quito, 1945), p. 292.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 295.

Dices que no tienen motivo mis penas,
 Pues las lloro más cuando son ajenas...
 ¡Ay! Ése es mi encanto:
 llorar por aquéllos que no vierten llanto.¹²

The pains and suffering evident in the production of Medardo Angel Silva is personal, but also universal in scope in that it is rooted in death. In this universality it takes on even greater dimensions, such as those that only few young minds are able to encompass. Like an ancient sage, Medardo Angel Silva cannot understand but welcomes the inevitable arrival of "La Libertadora."

Esposa inevitable, dulce Hermana Tornera,
 que al llevarnos dormidos en tu regazo blando
 nos da la clave de lo que dijo la Quimera
 y en voz baja respondes a nuestros cómo y cuándo.
 (Estancia XI)¹³

Victor Hugo Escala calls Medardo Angel Silva "un elegido de los dioses, un delicado orfebre del ritmo y del vocablo."¹⁴ He is sincere and simple in his style. He possesses a vivid imagination, strong creative ability, deep feeling, and sensitivity. His poetry reflects his inner spirit:

...Tierno, hondamente atormentado entre la pulcritud
 y la originalidad de la estrofa, y la gracia alada de
 un arpegio. Con mayor precisión podría decirse que el
 joven poeta guayaquileño fue un ahijado espiritual de
 Chopin y de Musset.¹⁵

¹² Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, pp.54-55.

¹³ Medardo Angel Silva, op. cit., p. 415.

¹⁴ Víctor Hugo Escala, "Medardo Angel Silva," América, No. 48, (enero-febrero 1932), p. 93.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 94.

The music of Modernism that had been in a stage of development in Ecuador now reaches its zenith. In the following work M. Angel Silva uses the alexandrine line to describe the beautiful music played by a pianist. In the second stanza can be seen the result of searching to express the exact mood. The use of adjectives makes apparent the striving to give due recognition to the beauty of nature.

¡Qué rosas de armonía deshojas a la tarde,
cuando sobre las teclas--lirios blancos y negros--
insinúan tus manos, en un lírico alarde,
las finas carcajadas de los locos allegros!

La agonía del sol pone de oro la estancia...
los verdinegros árboles son vagamente rojos...
y, desde el corazón,--búcaro de fragancia--
sube un dulzor de lágrimas que hace nublarse los ojos,
(Estancia II)¹⁶

The use of adjectives and references can also be witnessed in the following poem. The author has chosen the most appropriate rhythm to describe the dancer.

Danzas Nocturnas

Danzabas en la terraza, tu carne, bañada por
la luna, olía a luna. Y la luna era un escudo de plata,
sobre el corazón de la Noche.

A la luz de las antorchas amarillas tu desnudez
enjoyada era una llama rosa-pálida y tembladora.

Al danzar, tus pulseras, tus ajorcas y tus collares
producían una música metálica y sensual.

Y bajo los ojos vigilantes de la Noche, la música
de tu eurythmia y la música de los lejanos mundos
rutilantes se fundían en una vasta y silenciosa armonía.¹⁷

The situation created in these two works would necessarily force a change of rhythm. The excitement and drive of the dance is evident in the

¹⁶ Medardo Angel Silva, op. cit., p. 412.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 464.

description and the sound of each word seems to mold the posture and body of the dancer.

The rhythmical qualities that are inherent in the production of Medardo Angel Silva are the result of experimentation on the part of the precursors of Modernism in Ecuador. The work of Medardo Angel Silva may be described as

...pletórico de musicalidad, y a través del cual se escucha una honda y desconcertante lamentación de la vida, un enternecedor gemido...¹⁸

It is the Modernist that brings the rhythmical aspect to its highest point. Visibly entrenched in the poetry of Medardo Angel Silva are two qualities: the French parnassian attitude toward perfection, and a profound lamentation of life. He found that his sorrow could be eased only by submitting to drugs.

Silva fue un oficiante ante el maligno tabernáculo de su majestad el vicio, imperante en aquella época. No dejó de dirigir sus pasos...más allá del vedado lindero de los paraísos artificiales.¹⁹

There are two conditions, closely alined, that seem to lure the author in search of the artificial paradises. Both of these are the product of society's impact on the individual: "el cansancio" and "el tedio." The first is an indication of a lack of the energy necessary for an action and the second reveals boredom. This inertia attracts and announces death. It is easily noticeable in the poetic development of Medardo Angel Silva. This idleness accompanies death throughout the author's work. Alejandro Carrión points out this attitude in his work, "Medardo Angel Silva

¹⁸ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, p. 60.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 64.

o el Cansancio al Amanecer."²⁰ It is evident that the first hints of a lack of will can be witnessed in "Estancia I."

Mis ojos te seguían con la mirada triste
que lanza un moribundo a la salud que pasa.²¹

Again in "Estancia XVI":

...Ya nada me entusiasma
de cuanto me causara infantiles asombros y así
voy por la vida, cual pálido fantasma que
atravesara las calles de una ciudad de escombros.²²

Medardo Angel Silva later suggests in "Philosophia": "Dejemos el camino a los que tienen prisa."²³ The lack of will, as can be seen in the preceding lines, must be considered as a secondary element. It increases in importance when we realize that this is characteristic of the inner being of the poet. Perhaps it is for this reason, or due to the fashionability of the act, that drugs served to transport M. Angel Silva into his artificial paradise. This use of drugs appears to indicate the author's inadaptability of life.

Los años que vivió fueron suficientes para demostrar
la inadaptación para la vida, por llevar oculta una
llaga que le condenaba traidoramente a la muerte.²⁴

It would seem that the "llaga" mentioned by Isaac J. Barrera must include the lack of direction and purpose in the life of Medardo Angel Silva. Augusto Arias in his article which reviews a collection of the works of Medardo Angel Silva by Gonzalo Zaldumbide, Poesías Escogidas, expresses

²⁰ Alejandro Carrión, "Medardo Angel Silva o el Cansancio al Amanecer," Revista Casa de la Cultura Ecuatoriana, No. 13 (enero-junio 1953), p. 381.

²¹ Medardo Angel Silva, op. cit., p. 412.

²² Ibid., p. 427.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947).

a fear of life on the part of M. Angel Silva.²⁵ All of the aforementioned attitudes undoubtedly had an important role in the suicide of the artist.

El poeta, a seguidas de un disgusto con su novia, encerróse en su casa, y empezó a tocar en el piano a sus maestros favoritos, Debussy y Granados. No llamó la atención porque solía hacerlo cuando se entregaba a la música; pero al cabo de una hora se sintió una detonación, y no se oyó más el piano. Alarmadísima la madre del poeta hizo forzar la puerta y entonces sus ojos se encontraron con el cuerpo de su hijo tendido en tierra. Un chorro de sangre le salía de la sien derecha. Cerca de su mano diestra estaba caído un revólver.²⁶

The suicide of Medardo Angel Silva becomes more interesting when alined with another that took place in Colombia some years before. José Asunción Silva, a Modernist poet that also found the burdens of life too much to bear, found relief via suicide with a revolver.

The account of the death of Medardo Angel Silva reveals a little-discussed aspect of his life. It would indicate that a lover's quarrel was the cause of the suicide. It is difficult to conceive of a young man carrying the pains of life written on his soul being pushed to an untimely end for this cause.

No fueron los ímpetus del amor, ni los de la pasión que enseguece los que llevaron su mano, su cariciosa mano de poeta--armada y desalmada--hasta la puerta de su corazón hipertrofiado y le empujaron a la violencia del suicidio...Estaba escrito con caracteres profundos y remotos, en el Índice de la Tragedia que, en voluminosas páginas, va llenando la infatigable diestra del Destino.²⁷

²⁵ Augusto Arias, "Libros y Autores," Américas, Nos. 17-18 (marzo-abril 1927), p. 183.

²⁶ Víctor Hugo Escala, op. cit., p. 95.

²⁷ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, p. 66.

As soon as the poetic production of Medardo Angel Silva made itself known and even before, the indications of a life of tragedy with a tragic ending must have been revealed. In "Lo Tardío," written during the author's eighteenth year, he laments his birth and regrets that his life was not taken as a baby.

Madre: la vida enferma y triste que me has dado
no vale los dolores que ha costado;
no vale tu sufrir intenso, madre mía,
este brote de llanto y de malancolía.
¡Ay! ¿por qué no expiró el fruto de tu amor,
así como agonizan tantos frutos, en flor?

Por qué cuando soñaba mis sueños infantiles,
en la cuna, a la sombra de las gasas sutiles,
de un ángulo del cuarto no salió una serpiente
que, al ceñir sus anillos a mi cuello inocente
con la flexible gracia de una mujer querida,
me hubiera libertado del horror de la vida?...

Más valiera no ser a este vivir de llanto,
a este amasar con lágrimas el pan de nuestro canto
al lento laborar del dolor exquisito
del alma ebria de luz y enferma de infinito!²⁸

"Lo Tardío" seems to capture the personality and mood of the author himself. It contains two essential ingredients: lament, and the tiredness of living.

Although Medardo Angel Silva is not prolific, he stands out as one of the greatest and most pure of Ecuador's Modernists. The perfection of his work inspired Gonzalo Zaldumbide to state that: "Versos, estrofas, poemas hay de Medardo Angel Silva que bien pudieran pasar como inéditos de Darío."²⁹ Refinement of rhythm reaches full development in the production of this artist. Deep emotional concern with fear and torment of

²⁸ Medardo Angel Silva, op. cit., p. 454.

²⁹ Augusto Arias, "Libros y Autores," América, Nos. 17-18 (marzo-abril 1927), p. 183.

life caused this tender soul to welcome and hasten the arrival of Death. Isaac J. Barrera feels that Medardo Angel Silva closes the door to the Modernist movement in Ecuador.³⁰

As the purposefulness of Modernism ends we begin to sense a new motto forcing its way into poetry. The voices of protest ring in opposition to the uselessness of Modernism in Ecuador as that of González Martínez had many years before. The literary voices of Ecuador become one of purpose, a voice in protest against the social and political woes of the society. This change, however, is not abrupt and the spirit of transition will be seen in the literary works of Ecuadorian poets that follow the school of Modernism.

³⁰ Isaac J. Barrera, La Literatura del Ecuador (Buenos Aires, 1947) p. 61.

Chapter VI

José María Egas
(1897-)

Mi alma es como la música de un violín melancólico
desahogándose en rosas...Mi juventud es una
mujer que abre al azul sus ventanas de oro
y se queda extasiada bajo un claro de luna...(Ego)

José María Egas must be classified with the Modernist writers although he does not yield unconditionally to the format of this school. He represents, to a great extent, the mood and insight of the Mexican artist Amado Nervo, who served as a primary influence upon his production. As with Amado Nervo, there is strong religious belief. He shows little of the pessimism of the Modernists and employs a vocabulary that is easily understood by the populus. The other writers of the Modernist school generally had scant concern for the masses and concentrated their efforts toward pleasing the more sophisticated audiences.

Es un poeta puro y diáfano...pobre de altas idealidades.
Por un lado, amor, amor humano...dulce melancolía,
Suave resignación con la voluntad del Señor...y por
otro lado, un santo anhelo de perfeccionamiento, un
generoso afán de hacer de su vida una suprema oblación,
un perenne sacrificio de holocausto.¹

José María Egas displays on one hand a love for humanity and resignation to the will of God, while on the other offering himself as a sacrifice to the world. These are attitudes differing greatly from those of the triumvirate or Medardo Angel Silva. Their attitude was to cultivate high ideals

¹ César Arroyo, "El Perfil del Poeta," Unción y otros poemas (Quito, 1941), pp. 5-6.

within their poetic works and, because there is no hope for humanity, to withdraw from it.

We can expect more warmth from José María Egas than has to this point been displayed. His works can be expected to be more universal than individual in feeling although his personal experiences form the topic for his works and influence the tone. The masses find themselves able to identify closely with his ideas. Religious devotion, perhaps, helps to strengthen the relationship. Piety, however, is not the only phase observable in this artist. There can also be noted a regression toward the Romantic.

The popularity of José María Egas lies in three essential qualities:

...el haber sido premiado en un certamen universitario.
Su lacrimosa y musical ternura de oración. Y la
recitación, emocionada y tierna, de su autor, en
múltiples oportunidades.²

José María Egas captures the exotic tone of Modernism but his primary locations are the Holy Lands along with references to the Orient. This characteristic is accompanied by reflection on days gone by. This is not, however, a complete disregard for optimism as witnessed in others of this school in Ecuador. Unción is the revelation of the author's soul. He follows the path cleared by Amado Nervo and Santa Teresa de Jesús, but cannot follow it to the end. Amado Nervo was able to state that life owed him absolutely nothing, whereas J. María Egas retains doubt as to the worth of a sanctified existence in that it seemed that the image of good, his image, was not strong enough to evoke change. "Pero no tuvo la fe para llegar al término del viaje."³ This lack of faith caused José María Egas

² Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1944), I, p. 204.

³ Ibid., p. 202.

to stray from the difficult road and take the path of the world. He would not expect good for good, although he would continue to plant its seeds. The poet incorporates this feeling into the beauty seen in his poems.

Los poemas de este exquisito y sentimental bardo ecuatoriano se distinguen por su musicalidad interna y externa; pero con una suavidad de tonos, nunca expresados hasta entonces, con una emoción facetada de las múltiples impresiones recónditas de su alma y con una originalidad admirable de vocablos para describir y enoblecir los motivos que canta.⁴

He reveals himself in his poems with words that are easy to understand and most appropriate for describing the themes of his works. His self-portrait "Ego" is sincere and truthful but less startling than that of Ernesto Noboa Caamaño.

Mi alma es como la música de un violín melancólico
desahogándose en rosas...Mi juventud es una
mujer que abre al azul sus ventanas de oro
y se queda extasiada bajo en claro de luna....

Escucho en mis veladas románticas de ensueño
ruiseñores humildes que cantan su tristeza;
y voy bajo la luna, como va un jardinero,
cuidando los rosales de la madre Belleza.

Mi vida es una estela de llanto y de perfume
que dejo sobre el limpio cristal de mis cisternas....
Y llevo una atracción mística que me une
a las cosas divinas y a las cosas eternas!⁵

The author describes his soul as the melancholy music of a violin. He unashamedly opens his youth to scrutiny by mankind. The piety of the artist is revealed. Whereas E. Noboa Caamaño associated himself with vice, J. María Egas actively continued the doing of good. Finally he confesses the religious devotion that serves to unite him with the divine and eternal.

⁴ Reginaldo Arízaga, Valores Poéticos de América (Quito, 1945), p. 274.

⁵ José María Egas, Unción y otros poemas (Quito, 1941), p. 37.

The sadness disclosed seems to be in the form of pity for humanity. But we can see that the artist is struggling by deed and example to improve the situation. This work, along with others found in Unción, seems to emit the incense of religion smelled upon entering a Holy Sanctuary. He must be classified with the Modernist, but placed at the vanguard of the movement in comparison with the thought and action heretofore displayed. There is likely to be more rapport between this poet and the common people as he is discussing topics of religious teaching and living being sought after by them. The artist offers the rule for good living in these lines from "In Eternum."

Humedece tus labios en ondas de Letheo;
olvida, santifica todo humano deseo
y ábrete como un cáliz de amor a lo infinito!⁶

These lines call for submission of self to all good works. There is a close alinement here with the teachings to be found in the Bible.

We become acutely aware of the role of nature in the works of José María Egas. Nature rates with religious faith as a parallel expression of the ideal. Nature is the vehicle of his expression. There is constant reference to the "garden" and flowers. Blue and white dominate his moods. "Blue" seems to be the world of dreams "más allá," far away from the "white" perfection to be achieved through man's good works on earth. The environment of his works is molded around sadness and resignation. The smoothness with which he attacks his theme has inspired the title of "El Duque de la Suavidad."⁷ Evidence of the religious devotion of the artist is vividly depicted in the poem "Con las Manos Juntas."

⁶ Ibid., pp. 53-54.

⁷ César E. Arroyo, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

¡Qué no diera, mi Dios, por merecerte!
 ¡Qué no diera, mi Dios, por alcanzarte!
 Y coronar mi dicha, de tal suerte,
 que ilusiones mi fe para quererte
 y aguces mi dolor para cantarte!
 Si en lengua humana se pudiera hablarte
 y estos ojos--¡oh Dios!--pudieran verte,
 ya me faltara unción para adorarte
 y corazones para aprisionarte
 y vasos de piedad para beberte!

¡Qué no diera, mi Dios, para que un día
 supiera de tu púrpura mi lodo
 de tu música astral mi poesía,
 y embeberme en tu santa eucaristía
 el don de amar y comprenderlo todo!
 Que mientras aparece en mi recodo
 tu luminosa lámpara que guía,
 humildemente mis vergeles podo
 para ver si florece de algún modo
 esta miseria de carne impía!
 en la sutilidad de mis preguntas....
 ¡Qué si tu gracia mística alcanzara,
 en éxtasis de amor, yo me quedara
 toda la vida con las manos juntas!⁸

These lines, showing a direct resemblance to the style of Santa Teresa de Jesús, are indicative of the poet's religious vitality. With such faith and devotion it seems odd that J. María Egas could not complete the journey that would lead to complete satisfaction with life and the desire to aid men in the search for Salvation. The deeds as well as the example of José María Egas is compatible with those of men devoting their lives to the priesthood. J. María Egas refers to the desire that he has to be worthy of God and to achieve the Salvation that He offers. He expresses satisfaction in not being able to correspond with God on a human level, fearful that this would destroy his faith and devotion. The artist seeks divine love and understanding through God. He expresses realization of the fact that his sin will be cleansed through divine pardon. There is no room for doubt in God.

⁸ José María Egas, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

José María Egas prays for the survival of Grace through love and that he may never disassociate himself from the Grace of God.

José María Egas does not attempt to analyze the cause for man's behavior. He merely pities his incapability to accept God. Nor does the artist question his own attitude toward faith. He represents blind faith, the Word taken as truth. It is for us, then, to examine the sincerity of his dedication.

...en realidad, ese ser, que vive en pugna con el medio, que siente afanes de renunciamento y una invencible nostalgia, de las disciplinas claustrales, experimenta una sincera emoción, algún esotérico deleite o, simplemente, obedece a una voluntaria actitud que quiere ser epatante, en determinados momentos?⁹

The works of J. María Egas would indicate, in answer to the preceding question as to the source of his attitude, that he is experiencing a sincere emotion. Nevertheless, his dedication in the fight to change the thinking of man to good is not permanent.

Religious piety is not a final stage in the development of the author. He becomes disenchanted with religion and poetry. This disenchantment is probably the fault of humanity and the apples of temptation offered by the world. José María Egas registers some disgust with society for failing to see the guide to good living offered by religion and his own good example. It should be observed that the artist is presenting himself as an offering for mankind as Christ had done two thousand years ago. José María Egas intercedes for man. He first mentions the degrading state of man in his work "Plegaria."

⁹ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1949), I, p. 195.

Tu siglo se muere de un mal imprevisto.
 Tu siglo está loco, Señor Jesucristo!
 Ya no hay alma, verso, ni luz, ni oración.
 Y por eso llevo mi plegaria santa
 que desconsolada llegará a tu planta
 desde el incensario de mi corazón.¹⁰

Christ is called upon to pray for every element of society and "el santo país del Ideal," the Holy Land of the Ideal. If we are to interpret this Ideal Land as Heaven, we must ask why it should be necessary to pray for it in that it awaits the godly and offers a much better life. This may indicate a straying or a wonderment about the life hereafter. On the other hand this may be a reference to God's original desire for a world free of sin and the hope that Christ will intercede so that perfection may be achieved. I would be prone to feel that the author is not displaying doubt, but is calling for help for the world. This seems to be verified in "Elegía del Amor y del Verso." Here, however, can be noted a change in attitude. This work is filled with resignation. José María Egas approaches the others of the Modernist school in this poem in that he seems to have given up.

Señor...Para tu mundo no bastó mi tesoro
 de amor! Quise ser bueno,
 y cada vez que pude, para todo lo bueno,
 como un misal de oro
 se abrió mi corazón!
 Quise dar a los hombres lo que apenas tenía:
 pan de mi fortaleza, niño de mi alegría,
 oro de mi oración.
 Sobre todos los males
 florecieron un día tus místicos rosales
 en mi huerto, Señor!
 Hasta que ya no pude
 y secaron mi fuente tus raíces de amor!

¹⁰ José María Egas, op. cit., pp. 89-91.

Claro, que alguna vez dejé que el mundo ayude
 sencillamente, como si fuera de razón
 en mi lógica santa... Porque yo no sabía
 que era inútil ser bueno y que nada valía
 mi corazón!
 Todo anhelo fue poco...
 Para tu mundo loco
 no bastaron las alas ni bastó mi canción!
 Pues tus hijos, los hombres,
 por quienes te pusieron una cruz, (¡no te asombres!)
 al ver mis sienes mustias, la herida ensangrentada,
 se alejaron de mí, como quien no hace nada!

¿Y para qué este don... Y para qué esta santa
 locura de soñar y de vivir en una
 relación misteriosa con el alma que canta
 y con el ruiseñor inebriado de luna?
 ¿Para qué este inefable palpar de una entraña
 romántica, que fulge como estrella en el lodo?
 Y este afán inaudito de subir la montaña
 y hacer que el corazón lo purifique todo!
 ¿Para qué tanta gracia? ¿A qué tanto beleño?
 ¿Y para qué esta angélica vestidura de sueño
 sobre el irremediable corazón de la Vida?
 Si al fin hemos de ser los hijos del fracaso....
 Y el Verso es la locura de cincelar un vaso
 para beber la sangre de nuestra propia herida!¹¹

José María Egas asks why should he set an example when it is to no avail. In spite of all the good works that men of God display, they are destined to be the sons of failure. The world is not prepared for, or it is ignoring, the message that is being delivered.

Nature and patriotism also become internal attitudes steeped in idealism. Each topic seems to expose some state of the author's soul. There is evidence of earthly love observable in José María Egas. The other attitude toward a woman except for the Virgin Mary is one of carnal love that is found in "Líndica." A gypsy fortuneteller is the mate in this love affair, which the author describes in these lines:

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 81-82.

Y en ese instante con unción secreta,
fundí mi raza blanca de poeta
en su raza maldita de gitana.¹²

There appears to be the melting of the two bodies, that of the poet with the corrupted soul of the gypsy. This seems to be representative of the author's final phase.

The strongest attitude of defeat is found in "Desolación".

Ya que todos me ahogan en la paz del olvido
escanciaré la última gota de mi dolor;
y solo, con mi pobre tristeza de vencido,
me entregaré al refugio de mi vida interior.

¡Seguiré por la vida como por una selva
donde no llegue nunca la piedad de una luz
donde todos me huyan y donde nadie vuelva
los ojos al divino suplicio de mi curz!

Sólo me queda un triste perfume del pasado....
Yo sigo por la vida como un abandonado
a quien se le abren todos los Senderos del Mal....

¡Por eso es que mi rostro se consume de anemia
y las dos alas blancas de mi pobre bohemia
llevan rumbo hacia el puerto misterioso y final!¹³

The author is turning inward. He flees from society. He plans to go through life as if there were no pity. It appears that he will live the life of the world. With sad resignation and pity for society, the artist is defeated.

Religious fervor is not the only emotion expressed by José María Egas. He is capable of strong patriotic expression. Nature has the dominant role. It is not only beautiful but powerful. With all its power it yields, the artist seems to feel, to the greatness of man. This attitude is vividly expressed in the work "Diálogo de Cumbres". The author prepares the background.

¹² Ibid., pp. 41-42.

¹³ Ibid.

En todo hay una especie de temblor sobrehumano.
 Y la escena es olímpica, misteriosa, gigante,
 digna del padre Homero, de Shakespeare o del Dante!
 Es un soplo inmortal.... el que circula, acaso,
 hasta en las mismas vértebras andinas....
 Y queda estupefacto el Chimborazo
 entre la emulación de las iras divinas!....¹⁴

A shudder roars through nature so mysterious and so forceful as to disturb the Andes and Chimborazo, a volcanic mountain of the Andes in Ecuador. Chimborazo begins to ask, what can it be? The mountain tells how it has never experienced a force so strong as to cause its granite base to weaken and the mountain states that it was able to resist Bolívar, the liberator, who was the greatest of great men.

Yo que en mis flancos pude resistir (!no te asombres!)
 a Bolívar, el grande entre los grandes,
 soberano y magnífico,
 que en su delirio estremeció los Andes
 y alucinó el Pacífico.¹⁵

There is even more power in this new element. His brother mountain Tungurahua replies:

¿No le ves? ¿No le palpas?--Espíritu sin mengua
 orgullo de una raza, flor y prez de una lengua
 Atalaya de un mundo, faro de ideología,
 norte de la justicia y de los pueblos guía.
 Nació para romper coyundas y prejuicios.
 Adoró la virtud, fustigando los vicios.
 Templó su corazón en fraguas de Vulcano
 y antes sus ojos negros palideció el tirano
 rebelde como un himno de luz, de independencia;
 con su mano ciclópea libertó la conciencia.
 Supo, como los grandes, de dolor y ostracismo.
 Y cada golpe pudo superarse a sí mismo.
 Es él. ¿No ves como alza sus trompetas la gloria?
 ¡Es Montalvo que pasa redivivo en la Historia!¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 105-106.

This work was written for the centennial celebration in memory of Juan Montalvo, a man dedicated to the preservation and purification of the Spanish language and the political well-being of his country. J. María Egas displays a sense of pride in this work. This is probably more the pride for the individual, but also optimism for mankind. The tone hints of the patriotic element and religion has a secondary role. It is more sensed than expressed. José María Egas experienced the full phase of his development: Piety, resignation, disenchantment with religion and an almost complete separation from his old attitude, as witnessed in "Diálogo de Cumbres". The artist seems at this point to be more a part of society than ever before. He is not the saintly overseer of mankind but has his feet firmly planted in the reality of life. There is little of the soul being depicted as earlier observed. This poem seems to draw away from Modernism and give purpose to poetic production instead of the idealistic tendency expressed by this school. The purpose of this work is to recall the literary and political impact made by one of Ecuador's most outstanding figures. It would seem "Diálogo de Cumbres" indicates a new direction being developed in Ecuadorian poetry. Remnants of Modernism are still evident. It should be expected that its disappearance will be gradual with the coming of new ideas and expressions with roots deeply embedded in the practical, the patriotic, and the impersonal, with individual emotions as attitudes having a lesser role than before. The descent of the curtain on Modernism is now well under way.

It may be felt because of the abundance of Romantic individuality, parnassian and symbolist ideology, the melancholy temperament and tone that Ecuador had no well-defined Modernist movement. Perhaps in clarifying

this feeling parts of the definition of Modernism (pages 33 and 34 of thesis) quoted from Richard Chandler and Kessel Schwartz will be useful. Modernism is considered to be a synthesis of all preceding poetic schools. The writings of these poets are shaped by the French parnassians and symbolists. Although Modernism is anti-Romantic, it is pessimistic in mood. Artificiality also stands out as a predominant attitude. Imitation is to be expected from these Ecuadorian poets. Their imitation of writers naturally followed their individual stylistic preferences. This very action of picking and choosing would seem indicative of Romanticism and Modernism in that this action implies the demand for absolute poetic freedom. It appears that Ecuador's Modernist writers well fit into this pattern.

Chapter VII

THE NEW DIRECTION OF ECUADORIAN POETRY

As Modernism was a reaction to Romanticism, there was a like reaction to Modernism. The idea of using "the beautiful for beauty's sake" was not enough for those interested in giving purpose to Spanish poetry. Poets who evolved as a result of Modernism, called Renovators, had grown tired of its coldness, its superficiality, its subjectivity. Their works express a new temperament submerged in warmth and the reality of existence. Nicol Fasejo (Falconí Villagómez) in his book El Surtidor Armónico states:

Hoy, superada aquella etapa inconforme, rebelde e iconoclasta--toda mocedad lo es--, volvemos los ojos a los moldes eternos de belleza, a los clásicos de la literatura universal...la Musa...se ha vuelto esotérica, agnóstica, y cabalística para el común de los mortales.¹

Now that the literary rebellion has run its course, there is a return to the classic mode. There is a call for the more concrete, the tangible something that must be recognized. There is a disassociation from the "isms" that is accompanied by a new type of artistic maturity. Had the members of the triumvirate and Medardo Angel Silva lived, perhaps they too would have become a part of the new temperament.

The topic of man within his environment and his relationship to other men becomes paramount among the Renovadores, those hoping to return purpose

¹ Nicol Fasejo, op. cit., p. 7.

and meaning to poetic expression. Among the new qualities must be man's confrontation with life as it is, the rapid passing of time, and the uselessness of recalling the events of the past without consideration of the future. Serious consideration and concern for man announce and accent the themes to be expressed by this new group of writers.

J. A. Falconí Villagómez has been treated earlier as the author whose works served as a bridge between the Romantic and Modernism movements. It was mentioned that this author's relationship to Modernism was a quite intimate one. Falconí Villagómez is a recognized leader for the young poets and guides them both into and out of the Modernist era. Thus, he displays the complete cycle of Modernism in his works: (1) the tiring of the old mode of expression and rebellion; (2) receiving and embracing fully the new tendency, Modernism; (3) the disenchantment with Modernism and its principles and the urge to return purpose and meaning to poetic expression. This should not be felt, however, to be an obligation of poetry. These tendencies may also be closely aligned with the physical development of the artists by associating rebellion with youth, the establishment of new forms with manhood, and a return to order and serenity with full maturity of middle age. There is evidence of new thinking in the poetic work of Falconí Villagómez as early as 1921. "Arte Poética No. 2" sets the tone for the new ideas:

Como la Rosa de los Vientos sea tu musa
 atenta al alisio del Norte
 voltaica, dinámica, ultra-cósmica,
 como al viento venido del Austro,
 cuya brújula mire hacia un Polo
 y al otro;
 más allá de los límites cardinales,
 de las latitudes remotas,
 de los meridianos terrestres
 y de los equinoccios.

Y tú, Poeta, sé la antena
 que recoja las vibraciones de Cosmos
 espectacular y poli-fónico
 como el órgano de una Catedral.
 Y canta todo lo que veas
 sobre la tierra, digno y loable
 de acuerdo con una personal estética,
 pasando por la Venus rubia
 y la hotentote calipigia...

Y sé también un poco enciclopédico
 y otro poco cosmopolita,
 para hablar el universal lenguaje
 con todas las sirenas del Mundo
 y olvídate de la Retórica,
 de la Académica y la Señora Polilla
 porque ya no hay gramáticos en el Orbe
 y los últimos románticos
 murieron en Flandes o en las Argonas
 o en otro cualquier lugar de Europa,
 luchando por esto o aquello
 para que triunfe Artropos.

Así, pues, arroja tus dados al aire,
 Poeta dadaísta,
 sin que te importe el prójimo una higa
 pues asistes a tu propio espectáculo
 sin cobrar tarifa.
 Y que rujan los Zoilos y Sanchos,
 los "estupendos críticos"
 y por toda respuesta, regálales,
 de vez en cuando,
 como miel hiblea
 o una esencia sutil por gotas,
 la palabra eficaz y oportuna,
 talismánica y heroica
 de Cambronne.²

Herein are rules for the new mode. The role of the poet is greatly strengthened by the new literary philosophy proposed by Falconí Villagómez. It is strange how this poem, although laying the foundation for a new poetic school, contains so much of Modernism. The tone contains the cosmopolitanism of the movement which is fast coming to an end. The preference for the esdrújula (dinámica, cósmica, brújula, límites) is also evidenced.

² Ibid., pp. 118-119.

The poet is to be receptive and attentive to reactions around the world and to report everything praiseworthy. The artist must be erudite and able to communicate with all elements of society. Falconí Villagómez feels a need for originality and calls upon young artists to express this quality.

There has been in the preceding work a profound change in the thinking of Falconí Villagómez. In his first "Arte Poética" he states:

Odia, eso sí, "vulgo municipal y espeso":
 "margaritas ad porcum" no daréis al villano;
 ellos gustan la miel en consorcio del queso,
 pero ignoran del símbolo y el concepto de arcano.³

The idea of hating the life of the city and disregarding the villager seems to point out a need for solitude on the part of the Modernist poet. This feeling became artificial in some of the writers:

Later:

Entra, pues, a la selva sagrada de armonía
 y allí un instante tu mente reposa:
 verás más claro el lumínar del Día,
 más sol el Sol y más rosa la Rosa.⁴

The author seems to indicate withdrawing into one's self for life's supreme beauty, for life's ideal.

Finally:

Y en fin tuércele el cuello a la elocuencia como
 pedía nuestro amado viejo Pablo Verlaine,
 y para el crítico de hocico romo
 ten el supremo desdén de Rubén.⁵

It appears that the ideal of beauty was to be sought above all else. Later, however, the poet is charged to observe and report to mankind. This change

³ Ibid., p. 102.

⁴ Ibid..

⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

visible in Falconí Villagómez is perhaps due to the fact he was more open-minded than others of the Modernist school. He has realized in "Arte Poética No. 2" that society has changed and so must literary expression if it is to be recognized. Gone is the day of writing for one's personal enjoyment. Now is the time to reflect the events and thinking of the world to its people. The new purpose of poetry is clarified in his "Arte Poética No. 2".

In reference to his book El Surtidor Armónico, Falconí Villagómez writes:

Esta obra ha de ser juzgada de acuerdo con el criterio de Mao Tse Tung... 'la crítica literaria se basa en dos criterios: uno político y otro artístico. Sea cual fuere el género de la sociedad de clase o de la clase en la sociedad, el criterio político debe ocupar siempre el primer lugar y el artístico el segundo.'⁶

In accord with this quotation that expresses the idea that literature should first be political and second artistic, it seems that Falconí Villagómez is attempting to awaken the poets to their importance in society. He would agree that purpose and beauty must be intimately associated and inseparable.

Jorge Carrera Andrade follows the route prepared by Falconí Villagómez. His principle concern is with the world in a humanitarian and naturalistic sense. There is evidence of deep concern and love for humanity. J. Carrera Andrade explores the problems concerning men of every social stratum. The simplicity with which the author discusses the natural wonders of this hemisphere (countrysides, violent lights [in reference to tropical storms], lands, seas, and mountains) causes his topics to take on greater meaning. J. Carrera Andrade is attempting to show the men of Ecuador the beauty of

⁶ Ibid., p. 214.

nature that surrounds them in America. He also hopes to introduce the world outside of Ecuador to his countrymen. If J. Carrera Andrade can awaken this interest, a primary purpose of his writings, it seems to me, would be accomplished. It would appear that an even greater goal of his poetry lies in showing his people and country to the world. He does not become involved in the unreal. This is one of his most outstanding characteristics. In his youth, the author emphasizes the doing away with dominant attitudes of that time, dreaming and reflection. Isaac J. Barrera reveals, however, that:

...es su reflexiva meditación, que se encuentra cada día más, la que predomina en sus últimas composiciones.⁷

J. Carrera Andrade is perhaps the most typical of the new school of Renovators in that he is presenting a new sound and atmosphere into Ecuadorian poetic production.

We have seen how there is a growing interest in the social aspects of life. There was more concern for man's relationship to man and his environment. The primary proponent of the social attitude was Gonzalo Escudero. He represents a return to elegance and the epic tone which was popular many years before. In theme and treatment, however, he is completely original. All topics are subjects to be reflected.

Artista completo bucea en la realidad o el misterio, en el amor y el dolor, en el júbilo y la angustia, en la parábola varia del viaje, en la perduración y en la muerte, en lo transcendental y en lo efímero y sus descubrimiento se traduce en los sonos más vigorosos.⁸

⁷ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1944), p. 81.

⁸ Augusto Arias, Antología de Poetas Ecuatorianos (Quito, 1944), p. 245.

Reality, the mysterious, love and pain, joy and anguish, the parable, and life and death are all lodged within his poetic expression. An early affection for literature is awakened in this artist. Maturity in his thinking is also apparent at an early age. In his evolution there is to be revealed a bold poet. The sounds and the movements that are to flow in his works are to be violent. The author is not concerned with the portrayal of either serenity or violence in themselves, but with the full gamut of thoughts and emotions experienced by mankind. In expressing these feelings there is the accompaniment of a subtle melancholia and discontent. The interest in tracing the emotions of man through nature are readily observable in the poem "Tú," which seems to be representative of the style and the soft rhythmic disturbances to be found in the works of Gonzalo Escudero. Evident is the ease with which the metaphor is brought into play and the help it affords in the establishment of a particular emotion.⁹ The repetition "Tú" seems to be only an object to which the emotion can be associated. It is without gender and form, but in a greater sense represents the object that would evoke the described feeling for each individual. The seriousness of topic and the universal quality of the reactions of men engrave the popularity of Gonzalo Escudero into various strata of society.

Miguel Angel León was keenly conscious of the Indian tragedy in his country.

⁹ Isaac J. Barrera, Historia de la Literatura Ecuatoriana (Quito, 1960), p. 1137.

Palpó, con ojos encendidos de verdad, la tragedia del indio. Hirió la sensibilidad de su espíritu--ardiente de justicia, --el doloroso espectáculo, la vida lamentable y desgarrada del indio. La imaginación describió, también, la humana rebeldía del indio...¹⁰

"Elegía de la Raza" gives a sharp picture of the over-all situation. The works of M. Angel León reveal the lack of concern for the Indian and the difficult task of making him a part of society. The author shows familiarity with the Indian way of life. His vivid descriptions are most realistic reports of their customs. Later the artist establishes the Indian's right in Ecuadorian society. He also gives support to the physical and mental stamina of the Indian which grew out of a close contact with nature in all of its diverse changes. The temperament of the Indian is seen in his disregard for taking life and his adaptability to war. On the other hand he is portrayed as a farmer, but proud and vengeful. The author seems to feel the suffering and pain of being exploited by the whites and the shame of being subdued. The themes of Miguel Angel León are serious, provoking concern for man's soul. The problems are vividly depicted and realistic in comparison with those of the Modernist.

But the song of Miguel Angel León was not the only one submerged in social problems. This artist reveals the same seriousness of purpose found in the former. Jorge Reyes associates himself with the underdog, with the exploited. His ideals force him to be frank and truthful in all situations. The emotion involved in dealing with social problems is universal in scope. The manner in which the poet treats and develops this problem makes it regional in tone. M. Angel León describes the Ecuadorian social conflict. He feels, perhaps, that a solution in Ecuador may aid other countries in a

¹⁰ Hugo Alemán, Presencia del Pasado (Quito, 1953), II, p. 22.

similar crisis. Jorge Reyes has a new attitude to disclose in his writings. He initiates a lightness of expression that was unknown until this time.

The awakening of Ecuadorian poetic production to meaning and purpose seems to have entrenched itself completely within its literary society. This can best be witnessed in a poem by Enrique Noboa Arízaga written November 25, 1963. Inspiration for this work was found in the tragic assassination of the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy. The poet, it seems, has recognized fully his impact upon society and Enrique Noboa Arízaga has captured a portion of the world's sorrow.

Palabras Para un Niño Desolado

Ayer jugabas, mientras los ojos claros
de tu Padre, te miraban. Y del fondo
de su cristal azul, nacía un mar
para mojarle de ternura. Su mano, fuerte
en sostener el águila norteamericana,
se tornaba débil al soportar
tu peso de gorrión.

El tuvo
el destino de América, gravitando
en sus hombros,
pero,
sobre su corazón,
pesaba, aun más,
el continente de trompos
de tu vida. El protegió, en tu paz,
la paz de todos: de los negros del Sur,
en Alabama; de los indios bronceados
de los Andes; de los mineros sucios
de Bolivia; del marinero de los fiords
de Alaska y el pescador austral de Patagonia.
El descubrió en tus ojos
la ventana
para mirar a Dios.

Pequeño Niño de oro,
¿dónde estarán ahora:
el trigo de tu pelo, abatido
por la tempestad de Dallas; la risa
de tu boca, repartiendo manzanas
en la hora de la cena familiar?

¿Dónde
 caminarán tus pasos
 inseguros; de qué mano
 suspenderá, inhábil,
 la tuya: el fruto
 de tres años, florecido
 del árbol irlandés?
 ¿Dónde el pecho del héroe?
 ¿Dónde la rosa de la sien, herida?
 La blanca piel del hombre, amortajada:
 narciso rubio en Arlington, creciendo.
 ¿Dónde la voz huracanada para gritar
 la libertad
 y que, cerca de ti,
 se volvía brisa inocente
 para nombrarte?
 John, pequeño John, minúsculo gigante
 de una estirpe dorada de ojos claros
 y buenos. Niño triste
 y dolido. Niño, de pronto, viejo,
 con la vejez de todos
 los huérfanos
 del mundo.¹¹

This work shows the concern for humanity indicated by Falconí Villagómez. It also reveals paternal concern for "Little John," son of the president. The outstanding aspect is not only the fact that the man assassinated was the president of the United States, but that he was also a father. This work, simple in its beauty, warm and stirring in tone, establishes the reality that the poets of today are aware of a greater sense of responsibility than was portrayed by the Modernists. Through their literary talent, man is made to see and feel the exotic but with the full realization that there can be no escape from the world's problems because we are a part of them and have a duty to assist in solving them.

¹¹ Enrique Noboa Arízaga, "Palabras Para un Niño Desolado," El Comercio, Quito, 1963.

CONCLUSION

There are definite parallels that accompanied the Modernist movement in its varied localities. The arrival of European influences in many areas of the western hemisphere sparked a type of renaissance in literary productivity and cultural formation. This renaissance best exhibited itself in imitation, but it prompted much-needed advances. In literary production, many countries were looking to the past for style, ideas and mottos.

It has been noted that the retardation of Modernism in Ecuador was due to its internal problems which were political in nature. The objective of the early colonial writers was to enrich the language by the imitation of ancient authors. They looked to Europe during their period of literary development and found in Homer, Dante and Virgil the necessary guidelines. The writings began to mature as authors felt the impulse to relate their discomfort. In Ecuador this stage may be seen in the Jesuits. Men like Padre Juan Bautista de Aguirre and Padre Ramón Viescas wrote of the torment of exile. The struggle for independence inspired José Joaquín Olmedo to discuss the deeds of Simón Bolívar. Olmedo had a personal acquaintance with the Liberator and his reporting of events was a successful attempt at introducing the style of the epic Ecuador. The rigid style of the classical mode nurtures the writers of the colonial and neo-classical periods.

The arrival of Romanticism announced a decided break with the rules and restrictions of the classical school. The individual becomes

important. The author, in being subjective, implies that others should be interested in him and his problems and feelings. The role of death and pessimism is heightened. Sorrow and suffering are exaggerated. There are those among the Romantics who attempt to examine man's reason for being. In this attitude, Julio Zaldumbide must be acknowledged as outstanding. Romanticism takes on a completely original aspect in Ecuador in its waning years. This mood, mariano, was characterized by the glorification of nature and giving praise to the Virgin Mary. The writer who best exemplified this attitude was Remigio Crespo Toral. This shade of Romanticism enjoyed its greatest popularity in Cuenca, a city with strong religious convictions.

The transition to Modernism was accomplished through realism and after adoption of the ideas and philosophy of the French parnassians and symbolists. César Borja is first among the Ecuadorian poets displaying admiration for the new style which represents a return to searching for the precise words to express an idea and the employment of subtle hints. The poets whose works are maturing around 1910 have taken advantage of the aforementioned movements and writers that brought Modernism into prominence. They begin to write in the style of the master, Rubén Darío. This style, Modernism, is characterized by stretching the Spanish vocabulary to its limits. It is cosmopolitan and exotic in its attitude toward subject matter. Modernism perhaps may best be described as a synthesis of the preceding movements.

The men that professed the new attitude in Ecuadorian poetry were Arturo Borja, Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, and Humberto Fierro. These poets, called the Trilogía, were of aristocratic background and rebelled against their society. Their temperament was such that they did not work actively

to alter society, but withdrew into themselves to concern themselves with the expression of beautiful thoughts and ideas away from life's realities. Medardo Angel Silva is felt to be the most pure of Ecuadorian Modernists. It appears sufficient to state that Gonzalo Zaldumbide, an Ecuadorian critic, feels some of the poems of Medardo Angel Silva could pass for unpublished works of Darío.

José María Egas bridges the gap between the Modernists and the new poetic school of Renovators. The doctrinaire of this new movement becomes J. A. Falconí Villagómez. In recognition of the superficial tones of Modernism, he gave a more realistic purpose to poetic development. Falconí Villagómez became tired and bored with the idea of beauty without purpose. This new feeling began to creep into poetry with the appearance of José María Egas, who was first of the transitional poets to display concern for humanity and the soul of man. The result was to give meaning to poetic production but without complete disregard for beauty. Purpose and beauty are married in a ceremony approaching the realistic. As such, a primary theme of Falconí Villagómez seems to be: Reality clothed in beauty. The poets are delegated much responsibility in recording world reaction, culture, and emotions. It is unavoidable that they use their poetic talent to communicate not only to society's elite, but to the common man. There are two paths explored by the Renovators. One path led to Europe in the examination of its people and landscapes. The other was chiefly internal. Though closely aligned with patriotism and national pride, social aspects of life were paramount. In Ecuador the discussion centered around the Indian, his subjugation and exploitation. To arouse and agitate the conscience of society became the purpose of poetry. Compassion was the omnipresent attitude. First among the remedies was an

alteration of thinking relative to the Indian. It should be recognized that this new form also parallels the development of Ecuador politically and socially. As governmental problems are eased, society can better examine, compare, and explore. Humanitarian ethics are brought into clearer focus. The new movement also required the poet to be both truthful and realistic. These characteristics seem faithfully adhered to by Ernesto Noboa Arízaga as he displays warmth and deep concern for mankind and the son of the assassinated president of the United States. The regionalistic mood that had been predominant is subordinated by sympathy and sorrow for the tragedy of a neighbor country. Ecuador's poetic development demonstrates and reflects the thinking of its people at all stages in its political as well as literary formation.

I have attempted to discuss the development of Modernism in Ecuador and to bring into greater focus the works and lives of men who were its strongest proponents. In order to do this I felt it necessary to sketch briefly the poetic period prior to and following Modernism. I feel that the Modernist poets of Ecuador represent the moods and stylistic perfection worthy of the recognition that has been bestowed upon José Asunción Silva, Gutiérrez Nájera, José Martí and other precursors of this school. This is not to take away or belittle the well-earned prestige of these men. My only objective is to add these Ecuadorians to the list of those who increased the brilliance of the light cast by Rubén Darío. In the examination of the entire picture herein presented, one is again made aware of the tremendous range and popularity of Modernism in the large and small countries.

Arturo Borja, Ernesto Noboa Caamaño, Humberto Fierro, Medardo Angel Silva and José María Egas depict in their works the scope of Modernism

from its appearance as a well-defined movement to its period of degeneracy and replacement in Ecuador. These men displayed the aromas, ideas, colors, symbols and the temperament compatible with members of this movement. They so completely and perfectly evoke the characteristics of Modernism, in my opinion, that it is surprising that they have not achieved more universal recognition. I should hope that future study and examination would serve to reward them with the high esteem they so richly deserve.

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