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THE HEROIC DENIAL OF DEATH IN SELECTED DRAMAS OF THE SPANISH GOLDEN AGE

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ABSTRACT

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The human fear that physical death may represent complete annihilation and the inherent need to transcend that fear and deny the finality of death by achieving some means of symbolic immortality through heroic magnanimity are reflected by the protagonists of the dramas selected for this study. Echoing the human desire to avoid an unmitigated destruction of self, these protagonists seek to individualize themselves and symbolically immortalize their existence by somehow standing above and apart from the rest. This drive towards individualization and self-perpetuation leads them on a path to heroism, be it secular or spiritual, as a means of denying death's finality. The Christian and social heroism undertaken by the protagonists of the comedias studied herein and their quests for immortality illustrate the ability of the hero to tolerate physical death while focusing on a higher goal of infinite symbolic existence, thereby overcoming through acceptance the fatality of physical life.

Licurgo, the archetypal hero of Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas, the collective protagonists of Cervantes' Numancia, the Christian knight Fernando, the heroic martyr of Calderón's

El príncipe constante and Enrico, the unlikely saint of Tirso's El condenado por desconfiado are all symbolic of the human desire to overcome mediocrity through dedication and commitment to the ideals of secular or religious codes of conduct and are recognized as heroes. Transcending the finite by reaching for the infinite, these heroic protagonists demonstrate the necessary exchange implicit to the human duality of physical and symbolic existence, and by accepting mortality, deny the finality of death.

To my family

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DEATH, IMMORTALITY AND HEROISM: AN INTRODUCTION

Human beings have long been concerned with the denial of death, not so much the denial of physical death, but rather the concept of death as complete annihilation. As Robert Weir in Death in Literature suggests, a desire to avoid death's finality has traditionally accompanied the recognition of human mortality:

> Questions about immortality are ancient. Whenever humans have come to realize the pervasiveness of death, they have wondered if death is a necessary condition of human existence--or if there is some possibility of not having to die...they have wondered if death is not only inevitable but also final. (346)

Weir's underlying premise seems to be that as long as human beings are able to maintain the belief that some remnant of their existence will remain even after physical death, mortality may be more readily accepted. One means of coping with mankind's concern with the mystery of human existence is to reject the idea that death marks the end of a finite human life. To that end, the religious and social canons of Christianity and honor, whose influence extends beyond the physical existence of any one individual, may provide some means of symbolic immortality, thus allowing human beings to avoid the finality of death.

Death, the end of physical presence among the living, is inescapable. Therefore life, for some, must inspire not the preservation of the body that is doomed, but rather some means of immortality not dependent upon physical existence. Because the physical body dies, some characters in the literature of the Spanish Golden Age seek to deny death and assure some means of symbolic immortality on a higher plane and on a grander scale than the physical. Unfortunately, there is often an uneasy dependence between physical and symbolic life. This dependence reveals a paradox of human existence.

Human beings experience life through their relationship with the physical world, all the while aware of its temporal nature. The body is at once a symbol of life, and a condemnation to death. Given the duality of body and spirit and the fatal quality attributed to the physical, it is understandable that human beings are by nature symbolic creatures. While the body is held to a single earthly existence, the mind may drift back into the past, revel in the endless possibilities of the present, or project itself into the future (Becker, 50-51). Ironically, it is the very awareness of this duality of existence, and the freedom of the human spirit, that allow for and encourage the conception of symbolic immortality.

The present study will investigate the desire to deny death as a significant motivation of the heroes of selected dramas of the Spanish Golden Age. The comedia is particularly

relevant to this investigation because it provides physical representations which metaphorically depict the duality of physical and symbolic existence. The nature of this dual existence is reflected in the symbolic immortality achieved by protagonists who are identified as heroes because of their exemplary compliance with the ideals of Christianity and the honor code. Actions taken by these heroes demonstrate that the concern with extending one's human existence is one of the most powerful motivations of human behavior, be it a quest for immortality or a denial of death.

In the comedia the duality of body and spirit providing a symbolic outlet for human existence is repeated in the metaphor of life as drama, in which the participants are aware, to varying degrees, of their existence as mere players. A study of the denial of death as attempted by literary heroes is particularly interesting as encountered in Golden Age drama because of the scope of the genre in that period. Dramas of the seventeenth century were presented to a vast audience impacting all levels of Spanish socio-economic strata. The extent to which the drama either reflected or influenced life was so great that the delineation between drama and audience was sometimes obscured. During the staged presentation of a drama the audience was witness to the duality of actor and character, reflective of the human duality of physical and symbolic existence. The identification the audience might have experienced with a protagonist allowed observers to

identify with the successes and failures of the dramatic character. Heroic characters thus enabled the common man to envision his own quest for immortality. However, members of the audience, although buoyed by visions of eternal perdurance achieved by dramatic heroes and a continued hope that they too could attain such a prize, were generally surrounded, as is all humanity, by reminders of their mortality and its seeming inevitability. The cycle of generations, their birth, life and death provided a backdrop for the metaphor of a timeless drama of earthly existence. While characters lived out their brief dramatic roles, the audience was reminded of the brevity of each individual's appearance in the on-going drama of life, yet envisioned their own lives as somehow eternal. This ability to accept the mortality of others and still deny the inevitability of one's own death, is acknowledged by Weir who states:

> In a variety of ways, we act as if we are exceptions to the fact of mortality. Rather than adjusting to the harsh reality that death is inevitable, we find it easier to believe that the ancient words of the Psalmist were written especially for us: 'A thousand may fall at your side,/ ten thousand at your right hand;/ but it will not come near you. [Psalms 91:7]'. (2)

As a general concept, death is acceptable, but when it becomes personal it poses a problem, and the need to believe the Psalmist (91:7) surfaces. When faced with the demise of others, an awareness of the inevitability of one's own death

flashes through the mind only to be quickly gathered up and discreetly tucked away so as to permit the normal course of life.[1] According to Ernest Becker in The Denial of Death, even if one is able to come to grips with the fact of personal mortality, it is difficult, perhaps impossible, to imagine one's self as a non-entity. Subsequently, although an individual's death may in fact leave a void in the world, that person imagines himself as a witness to, rather than a participant in, that void. The inquietude caused by such thoughts of eternal nothingness are fundamental to the human quest for immortality:

> ...the idea of death, the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else; it is the mainspring of human activity--activity designed largely to avoid the fatality of death, to overcome it by denying in some way that it is the final destiny for man. (ix)

An awareness of death and constant reminders of its inevitability do not require the passive acceptance of its fatality. Although limited to a brief physical existence, the inherent heroism of the human spirit is reluctant to accept such fatalistic determinism and grapples with fate, searching for possibilities of immortality. The contemplation of death is relegated to the abstract or, as in the case of the drama, the symbolic.

In Golden Age Spain, the quest to deny death was undertaken within two profoundly influential systems promising eternal fame and glory, Catholicism and the code of honor,

each vital to society and reflected in the drama of the period. In the comedia, the hero's quest to conquer symbolically the finality of physical death, is encouraged by the belief that the honor code and Christianity may provide some means of symbolic immortality. Both systems provided basic paradigms by which individuals, both real and fictitious, led their lives. To varying degrees, the principles of conduct established by these social and religious systems influenced the masses. Occasionally an individual would excel (or in drama be represented as excelling), complying with the ideals; either through the preservation of honor or saintly virtue. The recognition and remembrance attained by heroic endeavor of this sort elevated the importance of Catholicism and the code of honor to new heights, thus allowing them to evolve into systems of social behavior and venues of symbolic immortality.

Although Christianity and honor were embraced in Golden Age Spanish society as viable means of symbolic immortality, as such they are by no means unique. Nor do they constitute humanity's first attempts to devise some type of eternal existence. Historically, philosophers and theologians have grappled with the seemingly innate desire for immortality and have devised many means of denying death the last word. Jacques Choron discusses the influence of philosophy and religion on Western Tradition in Death and Western Thought:

> ...the history of the death problem in philosophical thought is on the one hand

> the story of attempts to ascertain that--as man wants to believe and as myth and religious doctrine assert--death is not the absolute end, and that survival after death is not an illusion. (27)

The key to this statement is that man wants to believe. The shadow of doubt that is cast over systems of immortality is what truly preoccupies humanity. According to Choron, allegations that philosophy is simply the contemplation of death, a belief commonly attributed to Plato, are unfounded.[2] It is true that themes regarding death and its meaning are prevalent in western philosophy, but the heart of the matter is often the desire to prove the human capable of transcending death. Therefore, it is the philosophical contemplation of immortality, not of death, that causes uncertainty. Plato himself presents a compelling argument for immortality based on the eternal existence of the soul, contending that the soul existed before birth.

The preexistence of the soul is based on the premise that true knowledge, recollection, is a priori rather than empirical. The true knowledge, which includes eternal and immutable ideas, is comprehended by the soul; and because what is mortal cannot know what is immortal, the soul must therefore be as eternal as the knowledge it possesses. As proof that the soul not only preexists the body but also remains after physical death, Plato suggests that because the soul is a single entity, it is incapable of dissolution. He believes that the soul as ruler of the body is irremutable in

quantity and quality; unwavering as the essence of life, and not subject to death.[3] While Plato's system of immortality is based on the omnipresent soul, there are similar philosophical theories, too numerous to investigate within the scope of this study, which detail the eternal qualities of will, love, and time itself.[4]

An alternative to philosophic theories of eternal existence, religion--particularly Christianity, offers the promise of immortality based solely on faith. Paramount to the Catholic faith widely held in Golden Age Spain is the belief that Christ transcended death and that His followers will likewise be resurrected and share in His immortality. While philosophers debated various aspects of immortality, Christianity professed a single immortality, differentiating instead, among variable qualities of death. Choron, who studies matters of faith as well as philosophy, treats the Christian concept of immortality and introduces a tripartite definition of death.

> ...the Christian theologians, when speaking of death, give it a three-fold meaning. There is, first of all the physical death, which is the end of biological life. Then there is spiritual death, which is the condition of humanity outside of the Christian faith. Finally there is mystical death, which is the participation already in effect during this earthly existence, and despite physical death, is the divine life made accessible by Christ. The mystical death is the victory over physical death; and resurrection is but another phase of this mystical death, which is, at the same time, eternal life. (86)

According to the Christian assessment of the qualities of death, it may be final, temporal or eternal, depending on the physical, spiritual or mystic realm in which it occurs. Although at times agreement as to the precise nature of death and immortality is lacking, there is a consensus among some philosophers and Christians, that death provides a measure by which to evaluate life. Death, then becomes an integral part of life even for those who would escape it. Ray Perret, in Death and Immortality, defends the necessity of death as a measure of one's life by implying that three commonly viewed means of immortality: eternal existence, eternal recurrence and timelessness, are not attractive for a variety of reasons, one of which is the failure to provide value in life (105). While some agreement seems to have been reached regarding the desire to deny death, there is no universally accepted definition of exactly what death is. Be it an abstract concept of finality or a moment of personal justification, the human relationship with death, reflected in art and literature, has evolved throughout western tradition and has ranged from medieval abstract resignation to renaissance personal anguish. The common thread that prevails in the human perspective towards death, regardless of its degree of social acceptance at any point in history, is the universality of death. Accepted or resisted, understood or feared, death is a facet of life that all humanity experiences.

Perhaps more important than a discernment of death's

properties is a perception of the attitudes surrounding it. As D. J. Enright points out in The Oxford Book of Death: "...ignorance is a reason both for fearing death and for not being too afraid of it" (22). If ignorance, in this case, may not be bliss, at least it may be somewhat comforting. But given the natural curiosity of humanity, questions regarding death's relationship with the living remain. While death has always played a role in human existence, the perception and tolerance of that role has varied considerably. The evolution of the human understanding of death is summarized by Phillipe Aries in Western Attitudes toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present. During the early Middle Ages death was viewed as one of the immutable facts of earthly existence and rather than resist or glorify it, it was merely accepted for what it was, a threshold that all must cross. Eventually, death's significance evolved from one of generalization to one of individualization. An early belief in a liber vitae, a celestial book in which the deeds of one's lifetime were accounted for and balanced at the last judgement, gave way to that of a final deathbed test as a means of deciding one's fate. Scenes of both types are reflected in the artes moriendi of the Middle Ages, and are categorized and studied by Aries:

> During the second half of the Middle Ages, from the 12th-15th centuries, three categories of mental images were brought together: the image of death, that of the individual's knowledge of his own biography, and that of the passionate

> attachment for things and creatures possessed during one's lifetime. Death became the occasion when man was most able to reach an awareness of himself. (45-46)

However, as the appreciation of death grew more personal, its inevitability became less acceptable, and mankind's animosity towards death grew. This changing attitude was reflected in the art and literature of Spain. The reaction to individual death as compared to its acknowledgment in general is seen in El libro de buen amor as the Archpriest laments the death of his go-between and curses death for taking her from him. The Archpriest recognizes and comments on the inescapable and pervasive nature of death:

> Al que hieres tú, Muerte, nadie lo salvará;
> humilde, bueno, malo, noble, no escapará;
> a todos te los llevas, diferencia no habrá;
> tanto el Rey como el Papa ni chica nuez valdrá. (1521)

Although the medieval resignation to death as an immutable fact of life is sustained throughout the more than fifty stanzas eulogizing the Archpriest's go-between, the anguish felt at the moment of his personal loss is also reflected:

> ¡Ay muerte! ¡Muerte seas, bien muerta y malandante!
> ¡Matásteme a mi vieja! ¡Matárasme a mí antes!
> Enemiga del mundo, no tienes semejante;
> de tu memoria amarga nadie hay que no se espante.
> (1520)

The despair of the Archpriest later turns to anger. If death is inescapable for every living thing, then why should death itself be immortal: "¡Ay, implacable muerte!, ¡Matáraste a ti sola! / ¿Do está mi leal vieja? Tu gran ira matóla. / ¡Tú la mataste, muerte! ..." (1568a-c). Also revealed in this stanza is the constant preoccupation with the finality of one's existence. The Archpriest questions the whereabouts of his loyal friend. Even though he earlier comments on the fate of the body: "piensas que, una vez muerto, se lo coma el escuerzo;" (1544c), the renewed interest in her presence reveals the underlying hope that death is a means of transition rather than an end in itself.

Although the medieval view of death in general as a measure of life and as the great equalizer that comes to all that is seen in the Libro de buen amor was maintained well into the Golden Age, the personification of death evolved into something more individualized and thus more feared. As Aries contends: "In the oldest dances of death, Death scarcely touched the living to warn him and designate him. In the new iconography of the sixteenth century, Death raped the living" (56). While the interaction between death and the individual is not generally so violent,[5] the growing personalization of death, unfettered by social distinction, is equally apparent in the evolution of the Spanish dances of death. Beginning with the Dança general de la Muerte (c. XIV-XV), the first known example of the Iberian peninsula,

the personification of death calls to individuals warning them of their tenuous position and attempts to persuade them to forfeit the illusion that they will somehow escape his grasp.

> Qué locura es esta tan magnifiesta
> Que piensas tú omne, que el otro morra,
> E tú quedarás por ser bien compuesta
> La tu complisyon e que durara. (379:2)

This stanza echoes the sentiment previously credited to the Psalmist, that each individual hopes that his life will somehow endure, even when faced with the downfall of those around him. Also referring to the early Dances of Death, Leonard Kurz, in The Dance of Death and the Macabre Spirit in European Literature, presents the image of a somewhat pragmatic if not sympathetic personification of death which recognizes humanity's growing concern with personal mortality but offers no recourse:

> At the beginning, Death tells mankind that it should listen to what the wise preachers advise, in view of the brevity of life. People should strive to live well in order to have pardon for the sins they have committed. (148)

While in general a life well lived may have provided an individual with a sense of abstract acceptance, at the moment of death, such predications--however well intentioned they might have been--were often rejected as the anguish of personal loss overcame any general recognition of death's inevitability. In addition to the inability of a person to contemplate his own death is the impossibility of changing one's physical destiny. This inescapable mortality is also

reflected in Part Two of the Quijote when Sancho summarizes a popular concept of death in the Golden Age:

> Todos estamos sujetos a la muerte, y que hoy somos y mañana no, y que tan presto se va el cordero como el carnero, y que nadie puede prometerse en este mundo más horas de las que Dios quisiere darle; porque la muerte es sorda, y cuando llega a llamar a las puertas de nuestra vida, siempre va de prisa y no la harán detener ni ruegos, ni fuerzas, ni cetros, ni mitras, según es pública voz y fama, y según nos lo dicen por esos púlpitos. (II, 585)

Ever the voice of the common man, Sancho presents an attitude towards death that reflects the medieval tradition of the acceptance of death as well as the Christian belief that human existence is overseen and controlled by God. Needless to say, the strong Catholic tradition throughout Golden Age Spain influenced this outlook and its projection into the literature of the period. The inescapable mortality evidenced in the theme of desengaño, as has been noted above, was predominant in the Spanish dances of death and continued to evolve in the literature of the Golden Age.[6] In my opinion, these constant reminders of the brevity of life that were found in art and literature of the period undoubtably contributed to the desire of individuals to seek symbolic immortality within their religious and social systems--Catholicism and the honor code. For Pérez del Río, Christianity, as a means of symbolic immortality, provides an opportunity to reconcile the dual aspects of physical and symbolic existence: "El hombre es el

único ser que puede dar a la muerte un sentido. Así el hombre religioso, llevado de su celeste ideal, hace de la muerte un sacrificio y la ofrece a Dios" (28). The capacity and desire to make death a symbolic, rather than exclusively physical, occurrence reflects a sense of optimism towards the inevitable. Pérez del Río holds that death, as accepted in salvation-based religions such as Catholicism, may signify not complete annihilation, but a symbolic beginning of a superior reality:

> ...cuando la muerte llega, ésta no significa la aniquilación total, sino la vuelta al fondo común de la vida, del que proviene toda individualidad. Adentrándonos en este camino, el supremo optimismo se hallaría en las religiones de salvación, donde hay siempre una preservación de la vida personal más allá de todo límite. En la esperanza religiosa la vida vence siempre a la muerte. Esta no es un término absoluto, sino el comienzo de una realidad superior. No es un fracaso, sino un triunfo. (16)

The religious conviction that life triumphs over death lends itself to a quest for symbolic rather than physical immortality. But lest one believe that, given the optimism of celestial eternity, Spaniards are too accepting of their earthly mortality, Pérez del Río adds:

> Este temor a la muerte es el sentimiento que parece surgir en nosotros más fácilmente; algo, sin duda, que emerge del fondo de nuestra naturaleza humana. Todos sabemos que somos mortales, que nuestro destino es morirnos, sin remedio; y sin embargo, no acabamos nunca de acomodar por entero nuestro ánimo a este "fatum" implacable. (59)

After discussing attitudes towards death and its relevance to life, we are reminded again of Becker's initial premise that the awareness of death is accompanied by fear and an innate desire to deny its finality.

As has been suggested by Pérez del Río and Choron, death's inevitability does not have to be regarded as the last word on human existence. Religious faith has been signaled as one means of continued existence, but faith is only one facet of a system of immortality. If the limitations of physical life are inescapable, and if an awareness of one's ultimate fate causes reflection upon the paradox of human existence, the inherent duality of body and spirit may be employed in the development of symbolic systems of coping with and surviving the physicality of human existence.

As has been previously stated, the human being is a symbolic creature whose consciousness, while being cursed with the knowledge of ultimate physical death, allows for the construction of systems for living while he can, and also for ensuring that the end of physical existence does not signal complete annihilation. Noting the means by which human beings aspire to a more enduring means of existence than their own physical survival, Farrell, in his book Play, Death and Heroism in Shakespeare, states: "...people imagine themselves connected to the world that will survive them, through biology, posterity, significant deeds, and nature" (47).

Culture as a whole is reflective of the connections that Farrell suggests humans envision themselves to have with the world. And within each culture exist built-in systems for symbolic immortality. The social systems that human beings utilize help structure and provide meaning to life, and after they have served their purpose to the living, they remain as possible venues of immortality for those who have excelled at keeping their order. Becker discusses a variety of symbolic immortality systems ranging from species survival at the most basic and creaturely level, to divine immortality. Within the scope of this broad spectrum lie systems of symbolic immortality through relationships with other individuals or society as a whole. Following, is a brief discussion of some of the possible systems suggested by Farrell, Becker and other scholars to define and individualize human existence. These systems range from the most accessible and common means of self-affirmation, to the heroic and divine.

While a predominantly social creature, the human is also driven by a desire to stand apart and be heroic, to be recognized in some way as an individual yet still maintain acceptance from the group. Becker recognizes this urge to individuation and the ways the majority of the group's members find to extend themselves into what he calls the "beyond":

> Most people play it safe: they choose the beyond of standard transference objects like parents, the boss, or the leader; they accept the cultural definition of heroism and try to be a "good provider" or a "solid" citizen. In this way they

> earn their species immortality as an agent of procreation, or a collective or cultural immortality as part of a social group of some kind. (170)

The need to stand apart is contained by the need to belong to the group so that heroism and participation in the symbolic immortality are bound by the opportunities provided within the safety of the group. The daily existence in which every member of the group shares, provides a safe way for each member to participate. There is, however, a converse relationship between the safety of the immortality system and the satisfaction it provides. The group may provide a means of immortality, but then it must be shared among the members.[7] One of the most basic sources of individual participation in immortality is founded not in the spiritual, but in a purely physical dimension. Physical union represents the potential of the human race, and by complying with the laws of nature, an individual may participate, by virtue of procreation, in the immortality of the species.[8] Human beings may encounter a means of symbolic immortality recognizing that as members of a greater whole they will endure, at least partially, in the progeny they create. Becker states that "...in this way they earn their <u>species immortality</u> as an agent of procreation, or a collective or cultural immortality as part of a social group of some kind" (170). This is among the easiest, albeit less satisfying means of symbolic immortality because when approached by either direction it relies solely

on the physical component of human existence, the very component one seeks most to deny. One may participate in species immortality, but it fails to elevate humanity above even the lowest of the beasts. Again, the individual is faced with the duality of human existence, knowing that he is more than a beast but equalled by the beast in this means of immortality. If one relies solely upon physical existence to gain immortality, it tarnishes the prize. Becker infers that while any means of immortality is favored above the finality of death, immortality dependent solely upon the physical component of human existence will itself be likewise doomed:

> Sex is the body, and the body is of death. As Rank reminds us, this is the meaning of the Biblical account of the ending of paradise, when the discovery of sex brings death into the world. As in Greek mythology too, Eros and Thanatos are inseparable; death is the natural twin brother of sex. (162)

It seems somewhat ironic then, that sex thus can be viewed as a threshold to both life and death. If one hopes to escape the influence of Thanatos, the means are not to be provided by the twin, Eros.

Although reminded here of the creatureliness of the body, Becker reveals also the human ability to transcend the purely physical union and attain a higher alliance with another individual, thus achieving another possible means of symbolic immortality. In many cases, the individual seeks to fulfill an "urge to immortalization and self-perpetuation by pleasing

the other by conforming to the code of behavior that he represents. People hunger for immortality and get it where they can: in the small family circle or in the single love object" (Becker, 212).[9] The relationship between lovers is investigated by Thomas O'Connor in his study of Calderón's mythic heroes. O'Connor's study of these mythic relationships leads me to believe that heroic action, action that stands above and apart from that of the group, is many times motivated by love, either of an individual or an altruistic love for the group which allows the hero's self-sacrifice for the good of the loved one or of society. An explanation of the hero's motivation to self-sacrifice on behalf of another is offered by O'Connor, who states:

> Life is a risk, and the obligations of nobility force one to spurn personal safety in order to save the other. There is no higher expression of what is meant by <u>fineza</u> than this assumption of risk, this willingness to sacrifice oneself for another. (220)

The inspiration for self-sacrifice that O'Connor calls <u>fineza</u> is the nobly inspired quality that allows one individual to transcend an average existence and become a hero.

The notion of self-sacrifice on the part of the hero often links the variety of planes on which the heroic denial of death is seen. In the quest for immortality the selflessness of the hero does not go unrewarded. As Farrell insightfully notes: "While the hero converts death into energy for life, usually there is an economy of sacrifice implied,

in which giving--or giving up--life brings more life in return" (76). By accepting physical mortality in exchange for an eternal symbolic existence the individual is elevated above the creatureliness of human duality, consciously sacrificing himself for others and truly becoming a hero. This self-sacrifice may be motivated by various factors influencing the life and immortality structure of the hero:

> Whatever your secular religion--country, king, family, honor, love, children, money--by participating in it you deny death and acquire immortality while living. But at the same time, precisely because it is sacred, you will not only kill but die for it. (Calderwood, 41-42)

The importance of the honor code in Golden Age Spain as a "secular religion" is fundamental to the motivation of dramatic heroes by providing them a means of symbolic immortality.

In the comedia there are abundant examples of Calderwood's claim that individuals are apparently willing to sacrifice themselves and others in the name of symbolic immortality based on religious and social systems. The works chosen for the present study as representative of the motivating force of honor in the hero's quest for symbolic immortality are Ruiz de Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas, and Miguel de Cervantes' La Numancia. In each example, the protagonist, in compliance with the code of conduct idealizing the preservation of one's honor, consciously chooses death rather than dishonor and is rewarded with a form of eternal

glory and remembrance. The parallel importance of the Catholic faith as a means of securing symbolic immortality is found in Calderón de la Barca's El príncipe constante and Tirso de Molina's Condenado por desconfiado. Just as honor provides secular immortality to Licurgo and Numancia, the dedication to the principles of Christianity as represented by Calderón's and Tirso's protagonists also ensure them eternal existence on a spiritual plane. These works were chosen because of the exemplary nature of their protagonists whose denial of death, by secular or religious means, is heroic.

The quest for immortality is undertaken by those who have in some way transcended their creatureliness and escaped mediocrity. Those who excel in life are deemed heroes, the heroes who achieve excellence may be deemed immortal. While each of the immortality systems mentioned by Calderwood, O'Connor and Becker may represent viable attempts to deny death, their existence in the drama of the Golden Age is too extensive to be discussed within the scope of this study and therefore I will limit further discussion of symbolic immortality to that achieved within the parameters of the honor code and Catholicism. Before considering the manner in which the representative heroes excel in their quests for immortality within these systems, it would be helpful to discuss the role of honor and the Catholic faith in Golden Age Spain and its drama.

Still a key article on honor and the Catholic faith in Golden Age drama is Reichenberger's, oft-quoted "The uniqueness of the comedia":

> It was in the literature of Spain's Golden Age that the honor code received its most thorough and diversified expression; it, combined with the Catholic Faith served as the foundation upon which the comedia was constructed. (308)

As this statement suggests the secular and religious codes defining life and immortality in the Golden Age were fundamental to the development of the drama. The importance of the Catholic Faith with regard to the denial of death in the comedia will be considered following a discussion of honor.

If the influence of honor on the drama of the period is to be examined, it should first be approached as it was most likely perceived during the Golden Age of Spain. Much attention has been devoted to the relationship between honor and honra. In the Diccionario de Autoridades, definitions of honor and honra cite publicity, reputation, and dignity due to familial origin, action or position for males, and modesty and virtue in the case of females.[10] Honor and honra, two comparable but slightly different concepts, are discussed by scholars utilizing both conceptual and linguistic based methodologies.[11] As one can note, linguistic definitions do not satisfactorily differentiate between honor and honra. I prefer the conceptual view of Castro when discussing a theme that existed not within a linguistic vacuum, but rather as an

inherent quality of society and its members. Castro, an influential scholar in Golden Age criticism, distinguishes between the related concepts of honor and honra as found in literature:

> La lengua literaria distinguía entre el honor como concepto, y los "casos de la honra"....la palabra honra parece más adherida al alma de quien siente derruido o mermado lo que antes existía con plenitud y seguridad. (De la edad conflictiva, 55)

For Castro, the difference between the two concepts seems to be more quantitative than qualitative. Rather than mutually exclusive, honor seems to be the greater whole to which particular merits of honra are subordinate. The meanings of the terms have changed throughout the history of Spanish language and literary use, as Podol points out in his dissertation The Evolution of the Honor Theme in Modern Spanish Literature.[12] However, beyond frequency of appearance or the evolution of the respective terms, honor and honra, and the connotations each word carries imply a degree of worth to be recognized in an individual perceived to embody the concept.

Gustavo Correa's "El doble aspecto de la honra en el teatro del siglo XVII" which focuses on concepts of honor and social stratification is more enlightening to the present study. Correa, adopting the view expressed by Castro that honor and honra are conceptually more related than different, accepts honra as the more general concept of esteem and

equates honor with masculinity, correlating it with feminine virtud. Means of evaluating the concepts of individual esteem and social position are presented in terms of honra vertical and honra horizontal:

> La honra vertical es, pues, honra inmanente, la cual existe en virtud de nacimiento o de méritos extraordinarios o fuera de lo común en la persona, y que ocasionalmente puede derivarse de posiciones oficiales y estatales. La honra horizontal, en cambio, se refiere a las complejas relaciones entre los miembros de la comunidad en el sentido horizontal de grupo. Tal concepto de honra puede ser definido como fama o reputación y descansaba por entero en la opinión que los demás tuvieran de la persona. La honra vertical actuaba como factor diferenciador en el sentido ascendente de status, al paso que la honra horizontal obraba con un sentido de igualamiento en calidad de símbolo de cohesión social. (100-101)

Given that the majority of heroic protagonists in Golden Age drama are endowed with a level of honra vertical or social status that remains static, it is the honra horizontal or reputation and fama as judged by others within the protagonists' society upon which will rest the prospect of symbolic immortality. Since no definitive concensus has been reached as to the difference between honor and honra, for the remainder of this study, the English term honor will be understood to encompass all connotations inherent to the Spanish concepts of honor and honra. The code of honor which provides the heroes with some venue for symbolic immortality will be shown to be based on both societal values and

individual merits and virtue.

Given the dependent nature of one's honor upon the opinion of others, it was most vigilantly protected and defended. Américo Castro affirms that both in society and the comedia the importance of preserving one's honor was a profound reality:

> El honor en el drama del siglo XVII no es un simple tema literario, ni un rasgo de psicología humana y universal. Es, sí, la expresión de realidad profunda, de la inquietud española por el valer de su persona frente a otras personas, de la creencia constitutiva de su valer personal, afirmada en roces, ajustes y pugnas con otras creencias rivales. (139)

If one accepts that honor was of paramount importance in society as well as drama the questions remain: What were the origins of this cult of honor? And why did it rise to play such a pivotal role in Spanish society? The following pages will be dedicated to an investigation of these questions, the answers to which I believe have not yet been fully proved.

An ongoing debate exists as to the possible genesis of the Spanish honor code. Castro provides a summary of different theories regarding the origins of the honor code in "Algunas observaciones acerca del concepto del honor en los siglos XVI y XVII" (6). According to Castro, some scholars believe the code to be influenced by Arabs (Viel-Castel), Germans (Munárriz, Ticknor) and Italians (Stuart), or by the tradition of chivalric literature (Munárriz, Rubió y Lluch),

others contend that it is inherent to the nature of the Spaniard (Marchena, Schack, Escosura). Rather than a specifically Spanish preoccupation, Menéndez Pidal recognizes the development of a code of honor as a universal concern in the Middle Ages: "...las ideas sobre el honor en nuestro teatro no son sino el desarrollo de principios universales que regían en la Edad Media y que también se encuentran en otros países en los siglos XVI y XVII" (Del honor en el teatro español, 166). Menéndez Pidal's observation that the concept of honor represented in the Spanish Golden Age drama is but a development of universal principles seems to imply that an honor code may be universally accepted as a social system. One might extrapolate from that opinion to conclude that a universal social system may evolve and become an accepted means of symbolic immortality.

The honor code as a social system as well as a means of symbolic immortality is functional only to the extent that it is upheld. Given that one's honor must remain intact if it is to be of any value, socially or symbolically, the importance of its preservation is also the topic of scholarly discussion. An individual may be blessed with honor, revered by society and therefore likely to secure some form of symbolic immortality. But if that individual's honor is questioned the difficult task of restoring it must be undertaken. Typically the implications of maintaining the honor code are addressed taking into account only the most

obvious reason, vengeance, that one would choose the more difficult task of restoring honor rather than turning a blind eye to the opinions of others, but it is Menéndez Pidal who recognizes the multi-dimensional nature of the subject as felt by the seventeenth-century Spaniard. While accepting the internal conflict of a state of dishonor, he recognizes the social implications of maintaining the code. The need to restore one's honor through vengeance is seen not only as an individual desire, but also as a social obligation. As such, the preservation of social order, as well as one's reputation, is inherent in the code of honor. While García Valdecasas recognizes the duality of personal and social motivation in keeping the honor code, he discusses individual and collective aspects of honor and relegates the individual's personal feelings regarding the required vengeance in the face of dishonor strictly to a sense of social responsibility (15). This emphasis on the purely social motivation of the honor code differs from the opinion of Castro who gives more importance to the individual rather than social need to preserve one's honor. Be it personal or social, the motivation for maintaining the code of honor was clear; dishonor to the Golden Age Spaniard was not only equal to, but worse than death.[13]

If, as Castro suggests, dishonor could have been equated to death, then conversely, honor may have become as important as life itself; in some cases even more closely guarded, thus

elevating it into a viable system of symbolic immortality. The code of honor probably served the seventeenth-century Spaniard, not only as a means of ordering and providing meaning to his life, it offered him enduring fame as a reward for following its rules.

One final aspect of the honor code that must be addressed is its relationship with Christianity, the other principal social system upon which Spanish society of the Golden Age was founded. There are several opinions regarding the coexistence of honor and religious faith. While P. N. Dunn believes that Christianity and the honor code are diametrically opposed, García Valdecasas and others contend that they are fundamentally similar with regard to the sense of social responsibility that they inspire.

Focusing on the conflicting relationship of the basic tenets of Christianity and honor, Dunn, in "Honour and the Christian Background in Calderón," comments:

> In short, honor as we see it in these plays entails a structure of ideas, rituals and symbolism which parodies the Christian pattern at each of these points. Honour's pattern and the Christian pattern cannot co-exist, because honour unbinds the destructive forces and the human psyche which Christianity reconciles. (41)

This view seems unduly critical of the honor code, focusing on the anti-Christian act of vengeance that occasionally occurs, rather than the underlying value that, as a social system, the honor code provided seventeenth-century Spanish

society. Valdecasas presents a more moderate view. He recognizes certain divergent elements, but is nonetheless able to partially reconcile the honor code and Christianity, stating:

> La venganza del honor será una idea anti-cristiana; pero, en cambio, poner el honor en la mujer es una idea profundamente cristiana, porque "la mujer es la gloria del varón. (Corintos, I Cap. XI, 7)". (185)

Further examples of the ability of honor and Christianity to converge, in principle, are presented by Podol, who points out that the two are thematically reconcilable. He agrees with A. A. Parker's premise in "The Approach to the Spanish Drama of the Golden Age" that action is subordinate to theme in the comedia and concurs that since justice always prevails in the comedia, honor and Christianity are thematically unopposed, sharing a common foundation in justice (Podol, 21-22).

The ideal of honor can coexist with the Christian ideal if one focuses on the inherently social nature of each system. Rather than the personal importance, one must look to the social implications of a culture in which ideally everyone's honor is intact. Although the component of vengeance included in the code of honor is anti-Christian in spirit, I would venture that the underlying ideals of honor and Christianity were able to coexist as systems of ordering society and also as means of symbolic immortality.

The coexistence of Christianity and the honor code is alluded to as Correa notes a further parallel between honor and religion as social systems. Here, honor is seen as a sanctification of the society that maintains its code:

> La restauración de la honra implica un deber de carácter ritual y sacrosanto con el ofrecimiento de una víctima propiciatoria (el ofensor) a una oscura divinidad ofendida. Esta última no es otra que la sociedad misma, es decir, la peculiar estructura social que hace sentir su presencia a través del denso símbolo de la honra. La sociedad se santifica a sí misma y al santificarse confiere un matiz de religiosidad al símbolo que la expresa. De este carácter religioso emana la fuerza mística de la honra y al carácter violento de su acción simbólica. (105)

The conversion of honor into a sanctifying social ritual supports the previously mentioned theory introduced by Calderwood that presented honor as one possible "secular religion". If it can be said that the honor code was a secular religion, as such, it provided some means of symbolic immortality while Christianity offered a parallel system of immortality on a spiritual plane. As further indication of the possible coexistence of these social systems, Becker notes that the pre-romantic society was able to subscribe equally to the honor code as well as Christianity without finding them to be mutually exclusive. He contends that many honorable characteristics such as personal dignity and devotion to faith and family were viewed not only as having secular merit but were a means of fulfilling one's Christian duty:

> When man lived securely under the canopy of the Judeo-Christian world picture he was part of a great whole; to put it in our terms, his cosmic heroism was completely mapped out, it was unmistakable. He came from the invisible world into the visible one by the act of God, did his duty to God by living out his life with dignity and faith, marrying as a duty, procreating as a duty, offering his whole life as Christ had--to the Father. In turn he was justified by the Father and rewarded with eternal life in this invisible dimension.... Christianity took creature consciousness--the thing man most wanted to deny--and made it the very condition for his cosmic heroism. (159-160)

If one considers the close ties that existed between the earthly and celestial realms, the parallel between the honor code and religious faith as means of symbolic immortality becomes more plausible. Whether one subscribed to the code of honor or to Catholicism, ideal behaviors are clearly indicated, as is the encouragement for an individual to live up to those ideals. As systems for symbolic immortality the honor code and Christianity differ, however, in the treatment of those who fall short of the mark. For those who would aspire, but fail to achieve the Christian ideal, divine forgiveness proves to be more readily bestowed upon them than for their counterparts who are unsuccessful in maintaining the ideals of secular honor. Although the code of honor and Christianity have obvious differences, they are similar in the manner in which one who came close to their ideals was rewarded. In both cases the individual is granted a sort of

immortality, be it secular or divine, by an outside source. And while heroes' actions are dictated by a desire to comply with the required code of conduct, they are judged and their ultimate fate is controlled by another. A hero's exemplary honor might be rewarded by society with so called "eternal" fame and glory, whereas faith would be rewarded with spiritual immortality.

The importance of Christianity and honor is that they provide symbolic immortality, culturally or spiritually, to those who believe in and live by their codes of conduct.[14] As with any aspect of human endeavor, there are varying degrees of success and failure, but the optimism that leads one to a belief in immortality also directs attention not toward those who fail, but to those who succeed and do so exceptionally, to heroes.

Becker discusses systems for heroism and contends that heroism itself may be indicative of the human drive towards immortality. In a compelling chapter on human nature and psychological motivation he states: "heroism is first and foremost a reflex of the terror of death" (11). He later comments on the opportunities available to the individual who reacts to that reflex and aspires to achieve immortality through heroism: "The social hero-system into which we are born marks out paths for any heroism, paths to which we conform, to which we shape ourselves" (82). While the drive to heroism and immortality may be inherent in the human being,

the manner in which that desire is acted upon depends not only on the individual but also on the circumstances by which one is surrounded. Once again, the communal nature of human beings influences their acts, even as they strive to separate themselves from the group. Regardless of the hero system provided by the culture in which one exists, there is some degree of accord when attempting to define those who excel and go beyond the course laid out for them.

The archetypical hero seems to transcend, in many ways, cultural boundaries. Joseph Campbell, in The Hero with a Thousand Faces, presents a composite of the hero and his destiny as found in myth, religion and legend throughout the world. Although it is valuable to know that characteristics of heroism are common regardless of culture, the present study focuses on the Western tradition of the hero as it evolved from the ancient Greece and Rome to Golden Age Spain.

The attitudes towards heroism throughout Western history and their combination with Christian ideals greatly influence the Golden Age Spanish concept of the hero. Regardless of the particular characteristics of the hero or the specific circumstances with which an individual is faced, the destiny of the hero seems to follow a predictable cycle that has been summarized by Campbell as follows:

> The standard path of the mythological adventure of the hero is a magnification of the formula represented in the rites of passage: separation - initiation - return: which might be named the nuclear unit of the monomyth. A hero ventures

> forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man. (30)[15]

Campbell defends the existence of this heroic cycle by citing numerous examples of mythical and legendary heroes of varied cultural backgrounds. Included is the example of Christ, who suffered physical death, descended into hell and returned from the dead to promise eternal life to His followers. Given the influence of the Catholic church in medieval and renaissance Spain, the Christian ideal of heroism is of great importance to the evolution of the Golden Age hero since it provided not only a mythical figure to revere but also a model to follow in one's own quest for heroic immortality.

Antecedents of the Spanish Golden Age hero can also be found in the Classics. The Greek hero is described by Maurice McNamee in Honor and the Epic Hero, as "individualistic, self-sufficient and proud" (1), all characteristics easily attributed to the Spanish hero. In McNamee's study of heroic magnanimity, honor also plays an important role:

> it was Aristotle who first defined magnanimity as the virtue that is concerned with the rational attitude of a genuinely great man (great because pre-eminent in the practice of all virtues honored in his society) toward his own personal honor and placed it above all the other virtues because it contained them all. (xii)

The recognition of one's own honor was also accompanied by

the need for it to be recognized by others, as in the Spanish honor code of the Golden Age. One means of ensuring that this came about was to engage in some heroic deed in battle,[16] a tradition maintained in medieval Spain and glorified in the chivalric literature of the Renaissance.

The Greek hero, not unlike the Golden Age Spaniard, felt a particularly close relationship between his honor and his very existence. As suggested by McNamee (3), the Greeks recognized the futility of any quest for corporeal immortality and had only a vague indication of an afterlife.[17] The cult of honor continued to be present in the evolution of the classical Greco-Roman hero, but became more refined in the Roman social system. As McNamee states:

> In the Roman ideal it was not the personal glory of the individual Roman that was to the fore, but rather the glory of the State.... The Roman ideal was always social rather than individualistic.... The Basis of honor for Cicero, as for Aristotle, is preeminence in virtue or moral goodness.... But unlike Aristotle, Cicero emphasizes the virtues which are social in character rather than those qualities that focus attention on the excellence of the individual in himself. (40-42)

I believe that this Roman concern for the welfare of the state is similar to the social context for the Spanish honor code and the acute sense of responsibility one felt to uphold its ideals. These traits of personal and social responsibility for one's honor and a focus on personal merit are balanced by Catholicism. The overwhelming pride one might be tempted to

feel when contemplating personal honor is tempered by the belief that all that is possessed in this world and beyond is granted by the grace of God and not as deserved rewards.[18] This too instilled an awesome sense of social responsibility particularly relevant to the hero. Commenting on the influence of Christianity in the development of the hero, McNamee states:

> A recognition that all the good one has comes from God and that to Him, therefore, should go the greater glory, and a willingness to use all that one has for the benefit of one's neighbor--these constitute in Saint Paul the ground plan for the great structure of Christian heroism that was to be built in every succeeding century of the Christian Era. (79)

Although it may seem ironic, given such an altruistic perception of the hero, the evolution of heroic characteristics comes full circle to rest on the foundation of one's honor. As McNamee points out:

> [Saint] Thomas agrees with Aristotle that magnanimity is a virtue dealing with the right reasoned attitude toward honor; and he agrees, too that it is concerned with the great honor owing to a great man who is pre-eminent in all the virtues. (123)

In the Spanish Golden Age, magnanimity seems to unite the two principle systems--the honor code and Christianity--which motivate the hero. Honor, in religious as well as secular tradition, is a predominant characteristic when considering heroism in the Spanish tradition. The honorable characteristics of the medieval Spanish hero included not only

the requisite physical and military prowess but also devotion to God, king and countrymen, traits sustained and refined in the evolution of the Golden Age hero. As for the hero of the comedia, Ruíz Ramón reiterates the mythic proportion of the importance of excellence in duty as vassal and warrior, and devotion to faith and family:

> En el héroe castellano el dramaturgo propone a la contemplación admirativa del español del Siglo XVII una visión mítica de un modo radical de ser hombre: buen hijo, buen vasallo, buen guerrero, buen cristiano, buen marido, buen padre. (186-187)

The characteristics of loyalty to and defense of country, and attentiveness to familial and religious obligations, are not so different from what one would expect of any hero, either literal or literary. What seems truly universal to the hero regardless of the system or genre in which he functions, is the ability to confront the fear of death and take action to protect that which he holds most dear. Heroes of the Spanish Golden Age, as represented in drama, accepted death but struggled to deny its finality by means of two symbolic immortality systems--the code of honor and the Catholic faith. The protagonists selected for this study, given their compliance with the ideals presented within the honor code and Catholicism, are representative of the heroic quest to deny death. Because of the mutually influential relationship between seventeenth-century Spanish society and its drama, it is through the study of dramatizations of the heroic quest

for symbolic immortality, secular or spiritual, that a broader insight into the society of Golden Age Spain is to be found.

NOTES

1.Regarding the human need to repress thoughts of one's own mortality, Becker states: "...the fear of death must be present behind all our normal functioning, in order for the organism to be armed toward self-preservation. But the fear of death cannot be present constantly in one's mental functioning, else the organism could not function" (16).

2.Choron disputes the misconception that philosophy was, according to Plato, centered on the contemplation of death. He points out that Plato dedicated much thought to the proof of immortality, rather than to death itself (50).

3. Plato's arguments are succinctly summarized by Choron as follows:

The arguments for immortality that Plato advances in Phaedo are:

(a) The soul existed before birth. This pre-existence of the soul is based on the contention that knowledge is recollection (real knowledge is considered here not to be empirical, but a priori). This, however, established only the existence of the soul before birth.

(b) There are eternal and immutable "forms," or "ideas," and since the soul is capable of apprehending them, it must be itself eternal and divine ("nothing mortal knows what is immortal").

(c) The soul rules the body, and therein resembles the immortal gods.

(d) The soul is simple; it is uncompounded, and therefore incapable of dissolution (what is simple cannot change, begin or end--the essence of things is simple, indivisible, unseen and eternal).

(e) The soul, whose essence is life and thus the very opposite of death, cannot be conceived of as dying, any more than fire can be conceived of as becoming cold. And additional proof is given in Phaedrus: the soul, being self-moved and the source of life and motion, can never cease to live and move (48).

4.See Choron for detailed summaries of various philosophical theories of immortality, including those of Petrarch, Schopenhauer and Feuerbach.

5. Ildefonso Vega Fernández's commentary regarding Manrique's Obra poética provides a synthesis of the works and traditions influential in the Coplas and the varying attitudes towards death that are presented within the work.

6. For a detailed study of the desengaño theme in the Spanish dances of death including the Dança general see Felkel (1-82).

7. Becker comments on the human need to belong to the group and the conflicting desire to stand alone and be recognized for doing so. The hero must resolve the conflict between these two urges and extend himself beyond the limits imposed by the group. Regarding those who compromise, Becker states: "Why does man accept to live a trivial life? Because of the danger of a full horizon of experience.... The safest thing is to toe the mark of what is socially possible" (74). Also: "The social hero-system into which we are born marks out paths for any heroism, paths to which we conform, to which we shape ourselves..." (82).

8. Commenting on the physical relationships of the hero as a means of symbolic immortality, Campbell states: "The meeting with the goddess (who is incarnate in every woman) is the final test of the talent of the hero to win the boon of love (charity: amor fati), which is life itself enjoyed as the encasement of eternity" (118).

9. Regarding relationships in the absence of Christian heroism, Becker states: "...he [the romantic hero] fixed his urge to cosmic heroism onto another person in the form of a love object. The self-glorification that he needed in his innermost nature he now looked for in the love partner. The love partner becomes the divine ideal within which to fulfill one's life" (160).

10. The similarity of honor and honra is evident in the use of the term honra as a definition of honor:

Honor

a) Honra con esplendor y publicidad.
b) Se toma muchas veces por reputación ilustre de alguna familia, acción u otra cosa.
c) Se toma asimismo por obsequio, aplauso o celebridad de alguna cosa.
d) Significa también la honestidad y recato en las mugeres.
e) Se toma asimismo por dignidad: como "el honor de mi empleo."

Honra

a) Reverèncía, acatamiento y veneración que se hace a la virtud, autoridad o mayoria de alguna persona.

b) Significa también pundonór, estimación y buena fama, que se halla en el sugeto y debe conservar.
c) Se toma también por la integridad virginál en las mugeres.

d) Vale también merced o gracia que se hace o se recibe (172-73).

11. Van Beysterveldt, in Repercussions du souci de la pureté de sang sur la conception de l'honneur dans la "comedia nueva" espagnole, attempts to distinguish honor and honra relying on the difference between inherent or attributed honor represented linguistically in the use of the verbs ser and estar:

> ...on pourrait affirmet que les significations de honra sont en relation avec la sphere personnelle exprimée par estar, tandis que celles d'honor se rapportent au noyau le plus intime de l'être, dont les relation avec les choses concrètes son exprimées par ser (37).

12. Podol finds that at times the terms honor and honra are used exclusively and occasionally the two terms appear together synonymously (43-44). However, regarding the frequency with which each term appears, he concludes:

> If we view these terms across the development of Spanish literature, "honra" emerges as dominant. In representative texts from the different periods of the literature, "honra" is used to express all the different meanings of the English word "honor" involving both real and spiritual connotations (44).

13. Referring to the Golden Age, Castro states: "La vida sin el honor no tiene sentido, por eso, cuando alguien se cree infamado, la idea de la muerte le ocurre en seguida". "Algunas observaciones acerca del concepto del honor en los siglos XVI y XVII" (20).

14. Regarding the admissability of Christianity and the honor code as immortality systems, Becker states: "If history is a succession of immortality ideologies, then the problems of men can be read directly against those ideologies--how embracing they are, how convincing, how easy they make it for men to be confident and secure in their personal heroism" (190).

15. See Campbell for a diagram and prose description of the heroic cycle (245-246).

16. McNamee states: "In the early period of every cultural epoch, some of the most important, and sometimes almost the exclusive claims for honor, are physical prowess and courage displayed on the battlefield" (3).

17. "There is something, Aristotle insisted more valuable to him than life itself--his honor and reputation" (McNamee, 3).

18.Referring to the Christian recognition that "all the good one has comes from God and that to Him, therefore, should go the greater glory" (79), McNamee states: "This is fundamental to the Christian attitude toward honor. The fact that all that a man has both in the natural and supernatural orders he has from God should prevent him from overweening pride in their possession" (78). McNamee also notes: I Corinthians 1-4 and 13, and II Corinthians 10-13.

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LICURGO: THE HEROISM AND IMMORTALITY OF SUICIDE

In Ruiz de Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas (c. 1620) the protagonist Licurgo's heroic resolve to act honorably in the face of a prophesied death reflects a quest for some means of symbolic immortality. The climactic denouement, ennobles Licurgo as "el dueño de las estrellas," a fitting epitaph for a hero who exerts his will not only to protect the social systems in which he functions, but also to defy a celestial plan that influences his destiny. His suicide, an uncommon occurrence in Spanish Golden Age theater, is pivotal with regard to the action of the drama. Motivated by his sense of honor and free will, Licurgo's self-inflicted death dramatizes the depth and magnitude of his heroism. Perhaps the greatest measure of Licurgo's valor is a persistent ability to remain true to his convictions when confronted with adversity and to take action fulfilling his commitment to the code of honor and society.

Throughout the drama Licurgo is shown to be a hero in keeping with the humanistic view of Greco-Roman and traditional Spanish characteristics of magnanimity, civic responsibility and fealty. Due to the pre-Christian setting of the drama, his heroic activity is influenced, and subsequently assessed by a secular code of honor rather than

by Christian religious standards. I believe, however, that characteristics associated with Christianity and ideals projected by the Catholic Church are superimposed on rather than inherent to the motivations and actions of the protagonist. Therefore, although some discussion will be devoted to Licurgo's Christianized traits and their significance regarding his suicide, the focus of this chapter will be primarily on secular heroism as Licurgo's means of securing symbolic immortality. Also of interest to this and subsequent chapters will be the prophecy of the hero's death and the reaction of the individual to an inescapable consciousness of his own physical mortality. The prophecy of death that haunts Licurgo influences his thoughts and actions and ultimately the sense of heroism which guides his actions.

Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas is a dramatic account of the legend of the ninth-century B. C. Spartan ruler Lycurgus, the wise legislator who, when advised by the oracle at Delphi that his laws would be maintained only for the length of his absence from Sparta, decided not to return to his homeland. The seventeenth-century Spanish drama demonstrates the exemplary nature of Licurgo as the ruler and social reformer of Sparta as well as his outstanding heroism when confronted with a crisis of honor stemming primarily from his personal relationship with the King of Crete. Licurgo is ever conscious of an astrological prediction that his fate is to either take the life of a king or himself be killed by a

king. The fulfillment of this prediction seems certain when Licurgo finds his honor jeopardized by the monarch of Crete. Unable to overlook the King's affront to his reputation and unwilling to accept passively his portended fate, Licurgo hopes to find a just and honorable resolution to the conflict. In an heroic display of magnanimity, Licurgo eludes the anticipated fulfillment of his foretold destiny. In a rational manner he rejects various alternatives as unjust according to his personal code of honor. He commits suicide and wins for himself a means of symbolic immortality as "el dueño de las estrellas".

Due to the play's association with the story of Lycurgus, the seventeenth-century audience might have correctly assumed that Licurgo possessed the same classic qualities of heroism--primarily wisdom and justice--attributed to the ancient legislator. In fact, the legislative dimension of Licurgo's character is the aspect most closely connected to Lycurgus' life as recounted in Plutarch's Lives. In the play, although the actions taken by Licurgo are perhaps more passionate and flamboyant than those of the legendary figure, they do not stray from what is expected and acceptable behavior of a hero. Therefore, the artistic license employed by Juan Ruiz de Alarcón serves to reinforce the nature of Licurgo's heroism, rather than detract from it.

As previously discussed, the Renaissance Spanish concept of heroism was greatly influenced by the ancient cultures of

Greece and Rome. The principle of honor, fundamental to the notion of heroism and defined by Aristotle as magnanimity, referred to one's social position and reputation and assumed of a hero an aspiration to excellence in duty as king, vassal, or warrior, as well as loyalty and devotion to family and faith. The foremost heroic trait embodied by Licurgo is an inspiring sense of civic duty, which echoes the Ciceronian ideal of action for the common good.[1] That the welfare of the community must precede personal happiness is evident in Licurgo's explanation to the King of Crete recounting the circumstances of his self-imposed exile. Licurgo tells of the Spartan's reluctance to accept his laws and of his desire to avoid a revolt that would abolish his reforms. In an effort to forestall any civil disruption, He convinced the citizens of Sparta to delay any amendments to his legislation until he returned from a consultation with the oracle of Febo. Recalling his pilgrimage to Pitia to seek the wisdom of the god Delos regarding the propriety of his laws in Sparta, Licurgo informs the King of Crete of the oracle's response:

> Me respondió que eran justas
> mis leyes, y sólo el tiempo
> que durasen duraría
> la tranquilidad del reino.
> Yo, atento al bien de mi patria,
> porque no salga, volviendo,
> de la obligación precisa
> que le puso el juramento,
> determiné no volver
> a verla jamás, haciendo
> con mi eterna ausencia en ella
> mis estatutos eternos. (1052-63)

As this passage reveals, even prior to the events of the play, the actions of the hero foretell of eternal consequences. Licurgo's selfless forfeiture of his homeland assures enduring peace for his nation. The importance of his decision make it apparent that there is no compromise for Licurgo. When he is informed by the oracle that his laws are just and that they will be upheld only for the duration of his absence, he decides to disguise himself as a peasant and retire to the country and vows never to return to Sparta. By absenting himself from his homeland and making his laws eternal, this hero is destined for some means of symbolic immortality, the true magnitude of which will be known only at the moment of his death.

However selfless and praiseworthy Licurgo's self-exile may be, the true intensity of his sense of civic responsibility is best witnessed in the final scene of the drama. In the moments prior to his death he gives reasons for his suicide regard the protection, not only of his native Sparta, but also of his adoptive Crete revealing Licurgo's magnanimous regard for the citizenry of the two nations rather than his personal welfare. Addressing the King of Crete, Licurgo insists:

> ni es razón, ni yo lo espero,
> que tus gentes ya, en defensa
> de un extranjero afrentado,
> sufran de Esparta la guerra;
> ni es razón que yo a mi patria
> por su mismo daño vuelva,
> si en no derogar mis leyes
> consiste su paz eterna. (2699-2706)

Licurgo knows that his death at the hands of the King would motivate Sparta to attack Crete, inciting a bloody war that would cause both nations great and undue suffering. He therefore rejects that possible scenario of his prophesied death, deigning it unjust. As ruler of both Sparta and Crete, Licurgo weighs the impact of his actions against a code of conduct as they pertain to his personal honor and also to the consequences they imply for the people he represents.

The above mentioned instances of self-sacrifice for the common good reveal a primarily social element of Licurgo's heroism as demonstrated from a position of leadership. However, Licurgo also demonstrates a sense of vassalage to king and country, thus maintaining his commitment to civic order as a member, as well as a leader, of the social hierarchy. On three occasions Licurgo, a king himself, complies with the wishes of the King of Crete. Although vassalage is not required of Licurgo, he feels compelled by his commitment to a social code to obey the King of Crete. The first occasion that Licurgo opts for vassalage rather than individual freedom is when Severo, an advisor to the King of Crete, finds Licurgo in the countryside disguised as Lacón. Severo shows him the King's medallion and requests that Licurgo accompany him to the court. Severo asks: "¿Conocéis esta medalla?" (438). Licurgo's sense of vassalage is implicit in his response: "Conocella y respetalla / por su

dueño soberano / es fuerza, y a vos por ella " (439-441). Arriving at court, Licurgo is asked by the King to join him in the reign of Crete. Licurgo demonstrates his honorable commitment to the King, agreeing to their proposed shared rule of Crete despite the astrological prophecy warning him of an ill-fated relationship with a king. Recounting the astrologers' prophecy, Licurgo explains his reservations to the King of Crete:

> ... pronostican las [estrellas] mías
> que he de verme en tanto aprieto
> con un rey, que yo a las suyas,
> o él quede a mis manos muerto. (1112-1115)

Given the ominous nature of this prediction regarding Licurgo's alliance with another king, he believes that joint rule will lead to disaster. However, in response to the King's request that they rule Crete together as decreed by Apollo, Licurgo acknowledges his obligation to the King. Even in the face of disaster, he honorably maintains his commitment of vassalage to the King and simply refers to difficulties that might impede their goals:

> Señor, aunque obedeceros
> es fuerza, ya por el dios
> que lo ordena, ya por vos,
> que sois rey, el proponeros
> es forzoso las urgentes
> dificultades que veo
> opuestas a ese deseo,
> con graves inconvenientes
> que resultan. (980-988)

It is noteworthy that Licurgo immediately stresses his duty to the King. Only after affirming his intention to comply

with Apollo's apparent desire for the joint rule of Crete does Licurgo reveal the extenuating circumstances that influence his participation in such a situation. The urgent difficulties and grave inconveniences alluded to here by Licurgo stem from his own history. In addition to the foreboding prediction regarding his relationship with another king, Licurgo's previous attempts at rule and social reform, although just, are maintained only by his well intentioned deceit requiring the Spartans to uphold his laws until his return. With this in mind, Licurgo explains the possibility of a bloody conflict between Sparta and Crete if the Spartans hear of his whereabouts and demand his return from Crete. Motivated by his concern for the welfare of both nations rather than any reluctance to fulfill his commitment as vassal, Licurgo advises the King that his plan for joint rule, although intended to ensure peace is destined to end in conflict when or if the Spartans learn of it:

> han de pediros
> que me entreguéis, y el hacerlo
> en vos fuera gran bajeza,
> y gran destrucción en ellos.
> No hacerlo ha de desnudar
> la espada a Marte sangriento,
> porque han de intentar las armas
> lo que no alancen los ruegos.
> Y así, de lo que intentáis
> para la paz deste imperio
> ha de resultar la guerra
> del espartano y el vuestro. (1084-1095)

Even if joint rule between Licurgo and the King of Crete does not cause such a catastrophe, Licurgo anticipates the possible

reaction of Crete to a reign shared, in part, by an outsider. Recognizing that his reign was only grudgingly accepted in his native Sparta, he expects no more from Crete: "Fuera desto, si mi patria / lleva tan mal mis decretos, / ¿cómo sufrirá la vuestra / las leyes de un extranjero?" (1096-1099). The King refutes Licurgo's apprehensions of political involvement and rejects Licurgo's vulnerability to any ill-fortune. Licurgo, therefore, pledges his allegiance as vassal to the King of Crete: "Yo os juro por cuantos dioses / desde el Imperio al Averno / rigen, de seros vasallo / leal, firme y verdadero" (1208-1211). The importance of this vow as proof of Licurgo's outstanding commitment to civic responsibility can be recognized when viewed in light of the reciprocal nature supposed to be inherent to the vassal--king relationship. Although vassals must swear loyalty to kings, the oaths are taken with the understanding that kings will reign honorably and on behalf of those who serve them. In this case, the King of Crete fails to uphold his implied vow of royal protection and leadership. With his moral weakness and corruption of social mores the King of Crete proves himself undeserving of Licurgo's vassalage. The vassal's dedication to uphold his vow to the King of Crete stands out in stark contrast to the unworthiness of the monarch. In recognition of their new found alliance, the King offers Licurgo a medallion symbolizing nobility, honor and service to the throne:

> Tres calidades publica
> esta señal en el pecho:

sangre que goce de reyes
el heroico parentesco:
puro honor, cuyo cristal
no haya enturbiado el aliento;
y servicios que hayan sido
en utilidad del reino. (1232-1239)

Although Licurgo is technically entitled to accept the medallion offered to him by the King, he declines it citing lack of service to the reign. Later, after fulfilling the three requirements of nobility, honor and service according to his own code of conduct, Licurgo requests the medallion. But by the time Licurgo accepts the revered symbol of vassalage, the King of Crete who bestows it has on several occasions demonstrated himself as unworthy of such an ally as Licurgo.[2] When presenting the medallion to Licurgo for the second time, the King of Crete reiterates obligations of vassalage which Licurgo fully accepts:

Rey: La obligación
en que esta heroica señal
os pone, vuelvolo a explicaros:
ser leal, y en mi defensa
morir, no sufrir ofensa
de vuestro honor sin vengaros.
Licurgo: Por los dioses celestiales
juro cumplirlo. (2468-2475)

This oath of vassalage that Licurgo swears to uphold will ultimately pit his personal honor against loyalty to the King making for a climactic demonstration of Licurgo's heroism. Because of this oath, when the King offends Licurgo's honor in the final scenes of the play, the need to avenge the insult is all the more complicated. While the code of honor would dictate that Licurgo slay the King of Crete in order to

restore his reputation, the vow of vassalage would require that Licurgo die in defense of the King to whom he has sworn allegiance. Although the King is unworthy of such sacrifice, Licurgo will choose suicide as the only means of honorably maintaining his vassalage. In addition to his overwhelming commitment to civic duty and the social hierarchy as vassal and leader, Licurgo demonstrates other, perhaps more personal, characteristics equally revered in both classic and renaissance Spanish traditions.[3]

Also praiseworthy is Licurgo's dedication to family and to the fundamental role of the family unit in the hierarchical society to which he belongs. An example of this dedication to the family and the rules of assent inherent in birthright is provided as Licurgo describes to the King of Crete the circumstances surrounding his reign in Sparta. Licurgo recounts that following the death of his father and older brother, he ascended to the throne, unaware that his late brother's wife was carrying a legitimate heir to the throne of Sparta. When the child was born, Licurgo embraced him as the true heir and relinquished the crown to his nephew (1000-1015). While another, lesser man might have sought to maintain the throne, given the late arrival of the true heir, Licurgo abdicated the position opting to serve justice rather than his own ends. Regardless of his position in society, be it ruler or vassal, Licurgo's heroism is prompted by his dedication to justice and honor.

The qualities of leadership, vassalage, and familial position of a hero, be they social or personal, are related in that they are motivated by Licurgo's inherent sense of honor. Licurgo internalizes the essence of the honor code to the extent that it becomes the primary motivation of his actions. The magnanimity envisioned by the Greeks, the civic responsibility revered by the Romans, as well as other admirable traits, evolved into the Spanish ideal of heroism in the Golden Age. If one were to identify the seventeenth-century Spanish hero with a single concept, it would be the honor code by which society was ordered and individual actions were judged. The respect Licurgo demonstrates for the social structure in which he participates, both as vassal and ruler, and his dedication to family as a basic unit of society stem from his participation in a broad system of social honor. His sense of personal honor suggests that Licurgo, more than a mere participant in society's honor system, internalizes the social code. The personalization of the code of honor suggests that Licurgo dedicates himself, not to apparent propriety and reputation, but to honor in the true sense. It is this embodiment of the spirit of the honor code that confirms Licurgo's status as hero.

The audience witnesses one example of Licurgo's heroic commitment to the spirit of the code of honor when, disguised as Lacón, he defends Coridón, a cuckolded peasant, against the violence of Teón, a noble. Because of his disguise, Licurgo's

nobility goes unrecognized. Known only as a peasant, he would be under no obligation to uphold the code by which a noble was bound. However, Licurgo is compelled by a noble spirit to intervene on behalf of Coridón and defend him against the insults and attack made by Teón, a dishonorable libertine. Although the peasants with whom Licurgo lives are unaware of his true identity, he stands apart as their champion and their defender. When threatened, Coridón calls to Licurgo for help. Licurgo responds, assuring him that righteousness will prevail: "Yo iré contigo: no temas; / que la razón te acompaña" (158-159). It is not only this quickness to respond to the needs of another but also the propriety with which Licurgo acts that confirm his dedication to honor and justice. His heroism is contrasted by Teón's lechery, which demonstrates that nobility of birth does not ensure nobility of spirit. This comparison with Teón serves to augment the audience's appreciation for Licurgo's forthright nature. As Licurgo intervenes on behalf of Coridón, he chastises the noble for such a dishonorable act, saying to him: "¡Tened! No le maltratéis, / tras hacerle tanta ofensa, / que no es justo castigar / en él vuestra culpa mesma" (177-180). Annoyed by a the continued interference of a supposed peasant and unaware of Licurgo's identity, Teón strikes him. The true character of each man is revealed during this exchange. While Licurgo states: "Yo lo que es justo pretendo" (195), Teón's response, in word and deed, demonstrates that because he

considers himself and his own interests above all others he lacks true honor. As Teón strikes Licurgo, he states: "Pues, villano, aunque lo sea, / ni te opongas a mi gusto, / ni a mi grandeza te atrevas" (196-200). Licurgo recognizes the need to avenge this verbal and physical offense to his honor at the moment of the affront, and alluding to the tradition of restoring one's honor by spilling the blood of the offender, calls out: "Coridón, dame ese tronco; / que con él verá esta sierra / la venganza deste agravio / con sangre escrita en sus peñas" (199-202). This episode is an instance of Alarcón's characterization of Licurgo. While no such confrontation is attributed to Lycurgus, its inclusion in the play demonstrates the Golden-Age Spanish code of honor and vengeance. Also revealed in this statement is the custom that those who witness the offense also witness the vengeance of the offended. When Teón flees the scene of the assault, Licurgo's opportunity to defend his honor and avenge himself is momentarily lost but far from forgotten. With this need for vengeance, the dual characteristics of Licurgo/Lacón become increasingly evident. While the peasant Lacón would have no recourse against the abuses of a noble, Licurgo cannot dismiss Teón's affront. As other villagers participate in celebrations honoring the gods Febo and Titán, Licurgo discusses with his servant Danteo the patience he must have in seeking his postponed vengeance against Teón: "Pagaréme el bofetón / aquella mano atrevida; / que el cielo me dará vida,

/ y mi cuidado ocasión" (347-350). This hope for future vengeance sustains Licurgo. He realizes that an occasion will again present itself. However, Licurgo's patience for vengeance was not reflected in the villagers following Teón's attack. When Teón fled after assaulting "Lacón," the peasants rose up against the nobleman's servants, hoping to in some way take revenge upon them for their master's ignoble actions. Licurgo intervened, however, preventing their wrathful vengeance and advocating justice instead. Unlike the uncontrolled fury of the villagers who would take their revenge against whomever might be available, Licurgo's desire to avenge himself of Teón's blow is founded on a strict code of conduct and motivated by the need to restore honor. Licurgo explains to the villagers who call for the death of Teón's men:

> No mueran. Tened, amigos!
> Que no es justo que padezcan
> del delito de su dueño
> ellos sin culpa la pena;
> antes, pues por él sus vidas
> como leales arriesgan,
> merecen premio, y a mí
> me obligan a su defensa. (217-224)

Licurgo's defense of the servants illustrates that for him, the defense of one's honor requires the recognition and defense of the ideals of the code by which society should function. As a true noble, Licurgo's commitment to protect those of lesser social prominence obliges him to defend Teón's servants. Aware of their debt to Licurgo's intervention,

Teón's men recognize their intercessor's inherent sense of honor and nobility respond: "Estatuas merece eternas / tal prudencia en ofendido, / y en villano tal nobleza" (230-232). Alluding to the eternal recognition that Licurgo's prudence deserves, they are grateful, no doubt, for his sound interpretation of justice. Although Licurgo resigns himself to wait for a future opportunity to confront Teón, the offended state of his honor effects Licurgo's actions until he is able to avenge himself. As earlier mentioned, when the King of Crete offers Licurgo a royal medallion, outwardly recognizing his nobility, honor and service to the throne, Licurgo asks that the King retain the medal. Although Licurgo states that he has yet to offer any service to Crete and is therefore unworthy of the award (1253-1258), it is the unresolved conflict with Teón that keeps him from accepting the King's award. Licurgo reveals his internal struggle regarding acceptance of the medallion in an aside stating: "Hasta que la mano corte / que dejó en mi rostro impreso / mi agravio, no ha de adornar / tan alta insignia mi pecho" (1290-1293). Because it is necessary to restore his honor, revenge against Teón continues to preoccupy Licurgo's thoughts and influence his actions. The issue is further complicated when it is revealed that Teón is the brother of Licurgo's betrothed, Diana. Circumstances pitting love against honor, frequent in Spanish Golden Age Drama, plague Diana and the King of Crete as well on other occasions. It is Licurgo,

however, who never vacillates in his resolve to maintain his honor even at the expense of personal happiness. Licurgo is constant with regard to honor unlike the King of Crete, who when faced with a similar conflict, disregards honor and duty in order not to jeopardize his romantic goals. Although Licurgo is torn by the conflict between a desire for Diana and the need to restore his honor, the decision he makes is clear and unfaltering. The code of honor by which Licurgo lives mandates that Teón's affront be avenged. He therefore resolves to restore the honor upon which his heroism is founded, although it means risking Diana's love. In the guise of Lacón, Licurgo confronts Teón and explains to him that honor and not personal revenge motivates his retaliation. Prior to meeting Teón in combat, Licurgo tells his companion Telamón: "Esto es ser honrado, no vengativo" (2338-2339). Honor is restored as Teón falls to Licurgo's sword. This episode with Teón is but one example of Licurgo's unwillingness to compromise his sense of heroic conviction to honor even at the risk of personal loss. The importance that Licurgo places on his honor continues to build to a crescendo in the climactic denouement in which he consciously and deliberately chooses death over any degree of dishonor.

While Licurgo's suicide dramatically illustrates his fervor for honor and is praised as a supreme act of heroism, one might question the enthusiasm of a Golden Age Spanish audience to receive it. Several scholars have commented on

the propriety of Licurgo's self-inflicted death within the tradition of the comedia. According to Augusta Espantoso-Foley, Alarcón was obviously aware of, and quite probably in agreement with the orthodox position of the Catholic Church. In her article "The Problem of Astrology and its use in Ruiz de Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas," she contends that the classical tradition and pagan beliefs surrounding Licurgo are more relevant to his suicide than the socio-religious mores of his seventeenth-century audience: "In a play where the protagonist and the background are predominantly pagan, the classical honor-suicide is obviously the most fitting solution whereby Licurgo could attain "fin honroso y fama eterna" (6). This view of Licurgo provides an appropriate point of departure when considering his actions and resultant heroism. Licurgo's stature as a hero is dependent upon his realization of secular ideals of conduct of the classical and Spanish traditions. Also commenting on the role of Licurgo's suicide, Ellen Claydon, in Juan Ruiz de Alarcón: Baroque Dramatist, designates Licurgo a "Christian" tragic hero with respect to the conflict between free-will versus pre-destination, a theme widely debated in religious circles in the seventeenth-century. Her argument is weakened however, by her definition of Licurgo's heroic suicide as nothing more than "literary convention". The reduction of Licurgo's suicide to mere custom provides an unsatisfying defense of the original position that he is a Christian hero, suggesting the

possibility that Christian traits may have been simply imposed upon a classical figure (29). On the other hand, James Parr's discussion of Licurgo's actions in "On Fate, Suicide, and Free Will in Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas" suggests that Licurgo's heroism extends beyond its classical origin. The concept of ethical relativism proposed by Parr justifies Licurgo's suicide, regardless of faith, as the "best available solution to the problem with which he is confronted at that point in the action" (199). In addition, Edward Friedman, in the genre-based study "A View of Tragedy and Tragicomedy in Ruiz de Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas and La crueldad por el honor," recognizes the theological undercurrents of seventeenth-century Spanish society present in the drama but still views Licurgo's suicide as a means of social redemption befitting a hero" (434). Robert Fiore, in "Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas: Hero and Pharmakos," focuses on the social rather than Christian implications of the hero's suicide. He treats Licurgo's death as a means of maintaining personal honor as well as a socially motivated act. Licurgo is at once a hero and a victim of the society in which he lives.[4] The imposed nature of Christianity suggested by Espantoso-Foley, and the peripheral importance of Catholicism implied by Parr and Friedman in comparison with the Classical influence regarding the characters and action of the drama is also demonstrated by the importance of astrology and the roles of fate and fortune as determining forces.[5] Throughout the play,

Licurgo reacts not according to a Christian canon of salvation and a promised eternal spiritual existence but instead to a pagan doctrine of fortune and astrological determinism. Licurgo's finite existence and his desire to somehow transcend fate is brought into sharper focus by the explicit announcement of death in a prophecy.

While knowledge of the fatality of human destiny is ever present in the human subconscious (Becker, 16), it is thrust upon Licurgo's consciousness by the prophecy that foretells his fate. As Licurgo strains against predetermination, consciously acting in defiance of the stars, the desire to control the predicted circumstances of his relationship with the King of Crete invariably influence his choices and actions. Because he is conscious of his own death which can no longer be repressed as an abstraction, Licurgo's desire to deny its finality becomes equally conscious. If, as Becker states: "we admire most the courage to face death" (ii), then Licurgo's involvement in a situation containing circumstances that are known to surround his death is not only courageous, but truly heroic. For instance, when the King of Crete asks Licurgo to join him in the nation's reign, Licurgo is honor bound to accept although he is already aware of the prediction that he will either kill or be killed by a king. He nevertheless demonstrates a refusal to shrink from civic responsibility, a fundamental component of his personal sense of honor. Licurgo's impulse to deny his foreseen death and

unwillingness to bow to fate are so great that he heroically pits his will and his honor against the influence of the stars. This heroic resolve to act honorably in the face of prophesied death is what ultimately wins for him symbolic immortality.

While the initial prophecy of Licurgo's quandary is fundamental to his acts, the King of Crete argues early on that Licurgo does not have to succumb to ill-fated predictions and has it in his power to become the "dueño de las estrellas". When the King of Crete is first informed of the prognostication and the problems it poses for joint rule, he responds to Licurgo, championing wisdom and free-will over astrology:

> ... ni vuestra virtud puede
> mover contra vos mi acero,
> ni contra mi en vuestra sangre
> caber traidor pensamiento.
> Y cuando vuestras estrellas
> os inclinasen a efetos
> tan injustos, vos sois sabio,
> y el que ha merecido serlo
> es dueño de las estrellas. (1168-1176)

Here, the King of Crete cites the very characteristics that confirm Licurgo's heroism and will ultimately lead to his symbolic immortality. Licurgo's virtue, nobility and wisdom are traits recognized and praised by the King of Crete. These characteristics contribute to the honor code internalized by Licurgo that provides the structure within which he confronts the problem of his mortality and the foretold circumstances surrounding it. And while many of Licurgo's actions are

initiated by the desire to control the course of destiny and deny its fatality, the symbolic immortality as "el dueño de las estrellas" is bestowed on him due primarily to the exemplary fulfillment of his role as hero in the social system of his time.

The final scenes of the play unite the multiple facets of Licurgo's destiny which is to deny death heroically by resolving the inherent conflicts between fate and free-will, death and immortality. As Licurgo enters his wife Diana's chamber and finds the King of Crete, the fulfillment of his predicted conflict with a King appears imminent. Because of his own status as ruler of two nations, Licurgo is astounded at the audacity of the intruder. He reveals his disbelief: "¿Quién pudiera / atreverse, sino un rey, / a hacer a Licurgo ofensa?" (2660-2662). This statement testifies to the failure of the King of Crete in what was conceived as an equal relationship with Licurgo. While the King of Crete's affront to Licurgo's honor presents to the audience an obvious comparison between the two, the King's actions throughout the drama have already shown him to be the lesser man.[6] When faced with difficult circumstances, the King's actions benefitted his own interests regardless of propriety, whereas Licurgo's actions were primarily determined by his code of honor. The hero's mission to maintain the social code of conduct is again witnessed in his resolve to carry out one final act that will epitomize his honor and nobility. Licurgo

asks that the door be closed, knowing what the outcome of this situation will be. He recognizes the full consequence of his intended action not wishing to be deterred, calls to his servant: "Esa puerta, Telamón, / cierra al momento; no venga / quien la más heroica hazaña / me impida que historias cuentan" (2663-2666). Although Licurgo plans to act honorably, elevating his heroism to historic proportion, the King of Crete accuses him of treason and thinks that Licurgo will fulfill the astrologers' prediction by killing him. Questioning Licurgo, the King charges that he will at last succumb to the influence of the stars: "¿Matarme quieres, traidor? / ¿Que al fin fueron las estrellas / en un sabio poderosas, / y en su pronóstico ciertas?" (2667-2670). Denying that he is controlled by the stars, Licurgo retorts that the only way they influence his actions is by providing an opportunity to fulfill the prediction. The stars, however, cannot control his reaction to that opportunity. Affirming his free will, Licurgo proclaims that with one honorable act, he will overcome the inclination of the stars:

> Rey, lo que pudieron ellas
> es darme ocasión tan fuerte
> con mi valor y tu ofensa,
> pero no a la ejecución
> obligarme; y porque veas
> que el sabio, aunque más le inclinen,
> es dueño de las estrellas,
> oye, y verás brevemente
> que con una hazaña mesma
> las venzo y cobro mi honor,
> aunque imposible parezca. (2672-2681)

The single act of which Licurgo speaks represents the

culmination of his wisdom and honor in a heroic display of free will. By taking his own life he is able to circumvent the circumstances of his destiny and the expected outcome of his fate. Unwilling to compromise the standards by which he has lived, Licurgo explains the significance of his suicide as the one act by which he can maintain his commitment to personal honor and social expectation. He begins his rejection of unjust or dishonorable outcomes to the situation caused by the King of Crete's offense by stating:

> Ni es razón, pues ya he besado
> tu mano real, que mueva
> a darte muerte el acero,
> aunque vida y honor pierda;
> ni es razón que tú me mates
> por gozar mi esposa bella, (2683-2688)

The two prophesied courses of action: that Licurgo kill the King of Crete or himself be killed are the first he rejects. Licurgo plans to demonstrate his ability to deny astrological pre-determinism and preserve the sense of honor that directs his life. To slay the King would break the vow of vassalage taken by Licurgo, an unacceptable act for one who so highly valued the preservation of social order. On the other hand, if Licurgo were to fall, in accordance with the prophecy to the King's sword, the result would be equally unacceptable because the King of Crete would win Diana and the assault to Licurgo's honor would remain unavenged. Licurgo rejects resolutions that fail to meet his internalized code of honor. The possibility of Licurgo's taking no action, given the

intended rather than actual nature of the affront, is also spurned because the mere allusion of dishonor is unacceptable to Licurgo:

> ni que yo afrentado viva
> es razón; que aunque mi ofensa
> fue intentada sin efeto,
> no ha de examinar quien sepa
> que con mi esposa te hallé,
> mi disculpa; y lo que intentan
> los reyes, ejecutado
> el vulgo lo considera; (2691-2698)

Licurgo's renunciation of apparent resolutions to his dilemma represents the rejection of injustices that would be incurred if he reacted in any other way. Licurgo's commentary preceding his suicide serves as a final reminder to the audience of his commitment to an ideal social code and his own personal honor. This commitment is continually revealed as Licurgo rejects the final possibilities, that Crete suffer an attack from Sparta, causing loss of life to both nations or that Licurgo return to his homeland, thus ending the peace maintained by his laws and his absence. In either case, the people of Crete and Sparta would be made to suffer the consequences of Licurgo's offended honor. Demonstrating his dedication to civic responsibility, Licurgo refuses to allow his personal situation to affect the stability of either nation's social order:

> ni es razón, ni yo lo espero,
> que tus gentes ya, en defensa
> de un extranjero afrentado,
> sufran de Esparta la guerra;
> ni es razón que yo a mi patria
> por su mismo daño vuelva,
> si en no derogar mis leyes

consiste su paz eterna. (2699-2706)

By rejecting the involvement of either nation, Licurgo isolates the effect of the King of Crete's affront to himself. He alone will accept responsibility and suffer the consequences of restoring his sense of honor. Death at his own hand is revealed as the only action through which Licurgo can at once be master of his fate and his honor. Licurgo explains to the King of Crete and the others present, that by taking his own life, he assures himself an honorable death and eternal fame as the master of the stars:

> yo mismo daré a mi vida
> fin honroso y fama eterna,
> porque me llamen los siglos
> el dueño de las estrellas. (2711-2714)

The magnitude of this act is not lost on Licurgo, who recognizes his suicide as an unequalled means of securing symbolic immortality through honor and fame. His death and its motivation also have a profound impact on the King of Crete who ultimately recognizes Licurgo's suicide as an act of true honor and heroism. The King closes the play, ordering the erection of a monument with an epitaph commemorating Licurgo's honorable death and proclaiming his eternal fame as the "dueño de las estrellas".

Heroically taking his own life, Licurgo overcomes physical death by virtue of the eternal fame bestowed upon him not only for his mastery of fate at the moment of his death, but because of impeccable honor maintained throughout his

life. It is the code of honor, both social and personal, that provides the structure for Licurgo's symbolic immortality. Licurgo's heroism and commitment to the preservation of the codes governing his mortal existence win for him symbolic immortality, denying the inclination of the stars and the finality of death. Alarcón's Licurgo is a consummate hero, symbolically immortalized by his ability to act honorably when faced with his own mortality.

NOTES

1."...for Cicero, the chief basis of honor for his great-spirited man was the willingness to sacrifice himself for the commonwealth" (McNamee 48-49).

2.Earlier in the play, the audience is apprised of the King of Crete's role in Severo's absence from Crete that allowed the King access to Diana. The audience has also witnessed the King of Crete's failure to deal justly with Teón, Diana's brother, for fear of losing of her favor. Later, by appointing Licurgo to lead the army, thus removing him from the scene, the King of Crete reestablishes the possibility of seducing the now married Diana. These acts contrast those of Licurgo, who when faced with difficult circumstances, rather than be driven by his passions acts honorably.

3.Recall Ruiz Ramón's definition of the hero of the comedia discussed in chapter one (p. 40-41): "En el héroe castellano el dramaturgo propone a la contemplación admirativa del español del Siglo XVII una visión mítica de un modo radical de ser hombre: buen hijo, buen vasallo, buen guerrero, buen cristiano, buen marido, buen padre" (186-187).

4.Hispanic Review, forthcoming.

5.See section II of Espantoso-Foley, wherein she discusses the opposition of the Church to the practice of Astrology as a pseudo-science and its rejection by Saints Augustine and Thomas (6-11).

6.Manuel Delgado Morales discusses the moral shortcomings of the King of Crete in "Significado político de la moral y de la justicia en El dueño de las estrellas". Regarding the King's inability to suppress is own desires in favor of his responsibilities as ruler, Delgado recalls the scene in which Teón is brought to the King's court by a group of peasants who demand justice. Because he is unwilling to risk Diana's reaction, the King passes the responsibility of judging Teón to Licurgo. Although Licurgo is concerned with Diana's response as well, he carries out his responsibility led by his sense of duty and honor. Delgado comments:

> ...la traición del Rey para con Licurgo, y que indica su despreocupación por los asuntos de gobierno, se manifiesta de manera singular cuando encarga al legislador el juicio de

Teón, hermano de Diana, para que castigue sus crímenes. Lejos de hacerlo por espíritu de verdadera justicia, el monarca sólo busca crearle a Licurgo una situación embarazosa y que favorezca sus planes personales. Según él, si Licurgo condena a Teón se atraerá el odio de Diana, con lo cual él verá más expedito el camino de su disfrute sexual (112).

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NUMANCIA'S TRIUMPH OVER ROME AND DEATH

Several parallels can be drawn between La Numancia (c. 1585) and El dueño de las estrellas by the manner in which symbolic immortality is gained through the heroic preservation of honor and the demonstration of extraordinary valor in the face of death. However, Cervantes' dramatization of Numancia, rather than recounting a single character's quest for immortality, communicates the universality of the desire to overcome death's finality through the epic struggle of a collective protagonist. While the heroic denial of death's finality through exemplary honor is the primary theme at hand, the so-called defeat of the Numantians by the Roman army lends an unique element to a study of heroism. The atypical heroism of the Numantians and their spiritual triumph over the militarily superior Romans merits investigation as well.

In La Numancia, the dichotomies of victory and defeat, life and death, are presented not only as individual realities as in the case of Numancia, but also symbolically, as universal concepts. One of these concepts, the eternal relationship between life and death is symbolized by the mythical Phoenix. This symbol of immortality mentioned at various moments during the play illustrates the relationship between what seem to be opposing themes. Just as the Phoenix

rises from its ashes, the Numantians, victorious in the end, rise to a new level of symbolic immortality from the ashes of their death.

The historical basis for La Numancia was derived from the legendary siege and subsequent destruction of the Celtiberian city of Numancia by the Roman General Scipio Aemilianus in 133 B.C.[1] The mythical nature of the Numantians, stemming from their historic suicide, grew as a symbol of Spanish heroism in the Middle Ages and beyond, being resurrected in times of crisis in the hope of motivating the Spanish people to unite and act as their ancestors once did.[2] As was the case with Licurgo, Numancia falls prey to a cryptic prophecy of death that ends in heroic suicide. They too demonstrate a determination to maintain a code of honor that requires supreme self-sacrifice and ultimately assures a sense of symbolic immortality. The concept of honor as a means of extending human existence beyond the purely physical realm promotes the secular nature of heroism in both dramas. As in El dueño de las estrellas, the pre-Christian setting of La Numancia allows for an investigation of the Numantians' secular heroism according to classic and traditional codes of conduct. The evaluation of suicide as heroic, when motivated by a code of honor, is less encumbered by conflicting religious convictions prevalent in seventeenth-century Spain.

The play begins as the Roman general Escipión, having been called to lead the seemingly endless war against

Numancia, discusses with his men their mission. Embarrassed by his soldiers' inability to conquer the comparatively small city of Numancia in battle or by siege, he chastises them for the lust and sloth that sully the Roman reputation. As the play progresses, the Roman siege is tightened and the Numancians' offers of peace are rejected by the Romans, making it clear that the Numantians will succumb to starvation. Deprived of the opportunity to defend themselves, the Numantians conceive of a plan to preserve their collective honor and deny Escipión the glory of victory. They burn their possessions and turn their swords upon themselves in an act of collective suicide. Witnessing the suicide of the last surviving Numantian, Escipión realizes that his victory is hollow while the honor and fame of Numancia will be eternal.

The death of Numancia and Escipión's moment of enlightenment have led to numerous critical studies debating the definition of La Numancia as tragedy. Nevertheless, the valor and honor of the Numantians are, to my knowledge, undisputed. Willard F. King acknowledges tragic elements in Escipión's victory over Numancia in "Cervantes' Numancia and Imperial Spain," and proclaims the drama a celebration of heroism and immortality.[3] Also directing his attention to the heroic rather than tragic elements of the play, Evelio Echevarría in "Influencias de Ercilla en La Numancia de Cervantes," notes the epic qualities of the work and the indirect glorification of the collective hero.[4] Both King and

Echevarría discuss the similarities between Cervantes' work and Ercilla's La Araucana in form as well as content. Although many of the comparisons of genre are compelling, most relevant to the present study of heroism and the denial of death are the contrasts between the so-called victors and the defeated Araucanans and Numantians, each epitomized by the self-sacrifice of a sole survivor that represents the struggle of the collective protagonist. The observations of King and Echevarría also provide a point of departure for further discussions of the distinguishing qualities of the unique heroism of Numancia. Emilie Bergmann, in "The Epic Vision of Cervantes' Numancia," states: "The Numantians represent the values of Spain upheld through victory and defeat: honor, pride, stoic refusal to admit defeat even when it is imminent" (86). The values of honor and pride that Bergmann cites are in keeping with those traditionally attributed to the classical as well as Spanish hero. Recalling the social as well as personal implications of heroism, Angela Belli discusses the Numantians' social values in "Cervantes' El cerco de Numancia and Euripides' The Trojan Women," suggesting that the Numantians' unfaltering spirit of purity and self-sacrifice serve as contrast to the depravity of the Romans. As illustrated by Belli, some of the Numantians' sacrifices are motivated by love, as in the case of Marandro's attempt to steal bread for Lira. However, in my opinion, their ultimate act of self-sacrifice stems to a greater degree from

the collective desire to preserve their social order based on a code of honor.

As was discussed by Bergmann (91) and Belli (126), the Numantians realize that their honor code sets them apart from the Romans. Even after they are overpowered militarily by the Romans, the Numantians esteem themselves equally with their opponents and because they demand honor among themselves they expect it from the Romans. The actions of each adversary, regarding expectations of honor, contrast the two peoples and ultimately decide true victory. The role of honor in effect elevates the conflict from one of victory and defeat in battle, to one of victory and defeat in life. Paul Lewis-Smith, in "Cervantes' Numancia as Tragedy and Tragicomedy," recognizes the duality of victory and defeat in the relationship between the Numantians and the Romans as well as in the disputed genre of the play. He employs this sense of duality in his definition of the internal opposition of La Numancia in both form and content. Lewis-Smith contends that the tragedy of Numancia's defeat is alleviated by their triumph over the Romans in matters of honor, truth and justice:

> The first movement, which represents the bulk of the work (Acts I-III and most of Act IV), shows how the Numantians are obliged by honour to suffer and eventually to kill themselves, when an enemy who is incapable of fully appreciating their valor mistakenly thinks that by dint of prudence (cordura) he can bend them to his will and dishonestly enhance his glory. It

> constitutes a tragedy on the theme of the cruelty of Fate. The second movement, which begins with Scipio's realization that his plan of campaign has gone awry and evolves into a delayed dénouemont, shows how, with help from Providence, the Numantians succeed in frustrating him and earn for themselves a glory far greater than that which their enemy had courted on false pretenses. The second movement transforms the play into a tragicomedy the subject of which is a providential triumph of greatness, justice, and truth over mediocrity, injustice, and falsehood (20).

Lewis-Smith's article reconciles conflicting theories of genre that surround the work[5] and pinpoints the motivation of the Numantians. What at first glance might seem to be the last desperate act of a conquered people is in reality the most heroic of deeds. The Numantians react to their situation according to their code of honor. The apparent opposition between death and immortality is reconciled when the audience recognizes that the Numantians' heroic quest for immortality, like that of Licurgo, is achieved only through the acceptance of physical mortality in exchange for eternal fame and glory.

This greater victory, the fame and honor won by Numancia, is recognized by Gustavo Correa in "El concepto de la fama en el teatro de Cervantes" and Edward H. Friedman in "La Numancia within Structural patterns of Sixteenth Century Tragedy". Friedman comments on the universal significance of the play and the transcendence of place and time as well as traditional concepts of victory and defeat central to the development of La Numancia stating:

> Cervantes constructs La Numancia around the essential paradox of the historical situation, the concept of victory in defeat. He stresses the antithetical nature of the subject matter through parallel focus on the Romans and the Numantians and through linguistic emphasis on antitheses. In addition to shifts in place, the temporal scope of the play transcends the present to include the future and the eternal, time and place are made to comprehend both the literal and figurative aspects of the dramatic material, its immediate and universal significance (80).

The parallel between victory and defeat is expanded as Friedman suggests, to include more universal concepts of existence and annihilation, be they literal or figurative. In La Numancia the relationship between victory and defeat, or existence and annihilation remains paradoxical. In the case of the Numantians, however, these concepts are not mutually exclusive. The physical death of the village does not, as Bergmann suggests signal the end for Numancia; it is merely the means to an end--symbolic immortality.[6] Friedman goes on to recognize the significance of the process of exchange stating: "The nucleus of the play depends on self-destruction as a source of spiritual survival and the realization on the part of the Numantians that death is ineludible, but that glory may be attained" (87). The bargain struck by the Numantians, although demanding the ultimate price, rewards them eternally.[7] Correa also signals the positive exchange made by the Numantians and comments on their triumph over death: "La conquista de la muerte se realiza con

el resurgir de una vida más potente" (289-90). The new life attained by Numancia is more valuable because it is symbolic and therefore no longer subject to physical death. This symbolic existence demonstrates the Numantians' success in their epic quest to deny human mortality.

Critics agree, in general, that La Numancia is in spirit an epic drama depicting the collective heroism of Spanish ancestry. The identification of the audience with the hero occurs, however, not with the sweeping generalization of a people as heroic, but with the individual acts of heroism that Belli refers to as "tableau" of the underlying heroic theme. The honor of the people, as a group and as individuals, is reflected in various actions leading up to and including the mass genocide of the village. This honor is epitomized by Bariato's final act that ultimately symbolizes the heroism of the group. The characteristics of physical prowess, loyalty and devotion to family, friends and country, and magnanimity in personal and civic relationships earlier attributed to the classical and Spanish definition of hero are also recognized in the actions of the Numantians.

Given the integral role of military force and deployment in the action of the drama and the ultimate defeat of the Numantians, one might question the applicability of this heroic trait to Numancia. While it is true that defeat is uncharacteristic of heroes as a rule, the circumstances of the Romans' military victory over the Numantians are suspicious,

implying an inability to overcome the tenacity of the Numantians in battle. Escipión himself bemoans the difficult task set before him when ordered to attack Numancia and muses:

> Esta difícil y pesada carga
> que el Senado romano me ha encargado,
> tanto me aprieta, me fatiga y carga,
> que ya sale e quicio mi cuidado.
> De guerra y curso tan extraña y larga
> y que tantos romanos ha costado,
> ¿quién no estará suspenso al acaballa?
> Ah! ¿Quién no temerá de renovalla? (1-8).

The war between Numancia and the Roman Empire has been long and costly, testifying to the strength and endurance of the smaller Numantian army. Even the great Roman General, Escipión, holds no false hope for a swift and decisive victory. Escipión further divulges the extent of the Numantian's successful defense against what at the time was the greatest military power in existence as he chastises his men for their inability to defeat a clearly less advantaged army:

> Avergonzaos, varones esforzados,
> porque, a nuestro pesar, con arrogancia,
> tan pocos españoles, y encerrados,
> defiendan este nido de Numancia.
> Diez y seis años son y más pasados
> que mantienen la guerra y la ganancia
> de haber vencido con feroces manos
> millares de millares de romanos (113-120).

The persistence of the Numantians in their struggle against a larger and better equipped enemy for sixteen years indirectly augments their standing as a military force. Comparatively, the Numantians excel as military heroes when compared to the Romans who, while outnumbering the Numantians,

are unable because of sloth and lust to win a decisive victory in battle.

Further evidence of the Numantians' greater heroism, in comparison with the Romans, is seen in the ever present sense of civic duty that compels them to act as they do. In an attempt to restore peace for both sides, the Numantians offer to begin a new relationship with the Roman Empire pledging their loyalty as vassals. This offer is refused, however, by Escipión. In response to the Roman refusal, one of the Numantian ambassadors warns Escipión that he will regret having turned away the friendship of the Numantians:

> ...pues niegas la paz que con buen celo
> te ha sido por nosotros demandada,
> de hoy más la causa nuestra con el cielo
> quedar por mejor calificada,
> y antes que pises de Numancia el suelo,
> probarás do se extiende la indignada
> fuerza de aquel que, siéndote enemigo,
> quiere ser tu vasallo y fiel amigo... (281-288).

The embassador's statement reveals the commitment of the Numantians to whatever stance they must take, be it friendly or antagonistic. Their determination is not motivated by stubbornness, but instead by the need to remain true to their values. In the better interest of all concerned, Numancia would be willing to sacrifice autonomy, but never honor.[8] They offer vassalage but refuse to surrender themselves into slavery. Regardless of their desire for peace, honor dictates that they defend themselves against an enemy who refuses their loyalty and friendship.

The inherent nature of the Numantians' honor is further revealed in their expectations of similar integrity in their opponents. This anticipation of honor on the part of the Romans is demonstrated first by attempts to arrange a peaceful settlement to the conflict and later, by offering a singular combat. Again, the failure of the Romans to act honorably, in accordance with the Numantians' expectations, serves to increase the disparity between the two peoples. Rather than engage in a singular combat, which would still favor the Romans, Escipión chooses to lay siege on the city. Although recognizing the unfavorable light this decision might cast on his valor, Escipión seems to gloat as he remarks:

> mía será Numancia a pesar vuestro,
> sin que me cueste un mínimo soldado,
> y el que tenéis vosotros por más diestro,
> rompa por ese foso trincheado;
> y si en esto os parece que yo muestro
> un poco mi valor acobardado,
> el viento lleve agora esta vergüenza,
> y vuélvala la fama cuando venza (1193-1200).

Escipión's mistake is that he believes that the fame of victory will restore the honor lost in an ignoble act. By contrast, the Numantian, Caravino's incredulous reaction to Escipión's stated plan demonstrates the depth of his own conviction to honor. In comparison to Escipión's inconsistent approach to honor as an end justifying dishonorable means, Caravino maintains courage and honor. He responds to Escipión, chiding him and the rest of the Roman soldiers for their lack of courage and honor:

> Cobardes, sois, romanos, vil canalla,

> en vuestra muchedumbre confiados,
> y no en los diestros brazos levantados.
> Pérfidos, desleales, fementidos,
> crueles, revoltosos y tiranos;
> cobardes, cudiciosos, malnacidos,
> pertinaces, feroces y villanos;
> adúlteros, infames, conocidos
> por de industriosas mas cobardes manos!
> ¿Qué gloria alcanzaréis en darnos muerte,
> teniéndonos atados de esta suerte? (1206-1216).

Fundamental to this flurry of insults is a basic lack of honorable qualities attributed to the Romans. Caravino's final question regarding the glory that a dishonorable victory might provide reveals that for the Numantians victory is not the singular goal. Because honor is so important to the Numantian sense of identity, it is inconceivable to them that their aggressors would choose a means of victory that is from its inception devoid of honor. The Numantian Teógenes best articulates their overwhelming desire to preserve honor. He contends that denying the Romans the glory of victory will be infinitely more important to the legacy of Numancia than the outcome of the struggle, perhaps even more so due to the lack of honor in the Roman strategy. As a leader among the Numantians, his first impulse is to attack the Romans directly. I believe that this planned attack, rather than prudent military strategy, is motivated by a commitment to preserve honor. Numancia's fall in battle would be less offensive than to surrender to a clever, but cowardly enemy. Recognizing the insurmountable odds against the Numantians in an attack against the Romans, Teógenes addresses his

countrymen inciting action even in the face of almost certain defeat:

> El enemigo muro sea deshecho;
> salgamos a morir a la campaña,
> y no como cobardes en estrecho.
> Bien sé que sólo sirve esta hazaña
> de que a nuestro morir se mude el modo,
> que con ella la muerte se acompaña (1233-1250).

Knowing that death will accompany any such attack, Teógenes' aim at this point is not to inspire in the Numantians any hope of victory in battle, but rather a victory in honor. The extended discussion between the assembled Numantians that follows Teógenes' call to rebel continues to support the argument that, physical death is no longer of concern to the Numantians. The collective motivation of the men, women and children of Numancia is elevated to a plane of symbolic victory and an assurance of eternal glory. Their hope is to exchange physical death for symbolic immortality. The Numantian dedication to moral victory is echoed in the statements of Caravino, who also prefers to die fighting. But, unaware that the women would likewise demonstrate their heroism by choosing honor over life, he fears that they will object to what might seem a rash and desperate attack against the Romans:

> Con este parecer yo me acomodo.
> Morir quiero rompiendo el fuerte muro
> y deshacello por mi mano todo;
> mas tiéneme una cosa mal siguro:
> que si nuestras mujeres saben esto,
> de que no haremos nada os aseguro (1251-1256).

Caravino recalls previous attempts to face the Romans that

were thwarted by the women's tears and he expects a similar reaction to the present plan. Marandro, however, defends the plan to attack, believing that the Numantian women will agree that their fate is already sealed and declares:

> Nuestro disinio a todas es patente;
> todas lo saben ya, y no queda alguna
> que no se queje dello amargamente,
> y dicen que, en la buena o ruina fortuna,
> quieren en vida o muerte acompañarnos,
> aunque su compañía es importuna (1266-1271).

According to Marandro, the women will agree that an attack is necessary and will want to join in the defense of Numantian honor.

The women of Numancia join this discussion, and in what would have been a predominantly male dominated society, they demonstrate equal valor. However, the women point out that by attacking the Romans, the men will be leaving their women and children unprotected, like a flock of unguarded sheep. A traditional male obligation to protect the virtue of the women as well as their own masculine honor is expounded by one Numantian woman who states:

> Peleando queréis dejar las vidas,
> y dejarnos también desamparadas,
> a deshonras y a muertes ofrecidas.
> Nuestro cuello ofreced a las espadas
> vuestras primero, que es mejor partido
> que vernos de enemigos deshonradas (1293-1298).

For the women of Numancia as well, death is more readily accepted than dishonor. Rather than await death or dishonor from the Romans, they too, choose the circumstances of their death. The first woman continues:

> Yo tengo en mi intención instituido
> que, si puedo, haré cuanto en mi fuere
> por morir do muriere mi marido.
> Esto mismo hará la que quisiere
> mostrar que no los miedos de la muerte
> estorban de querer a quien bien quiere,
> en buena o en mala, dulce, alegre suerte (1293-1305).

According to this woman, if death is forthcoming, it is better to die at the side of her husband. The desire to accompany the men in a collective effort against Roman domination is echoed by a second Numantian woman who asks that the women join in the attack as well. She reiterates the Numantian commitment to honor above physical life, hoping the women will be allowed to participate in the attack in order that they may "live" by dying at the sides of their husbands: "Si al foso queréis salir, / llevadnos en tal salida, / porque tendremos por vida / a vuestros lados morir" (1330-1333). At this point, death is believed by all to be inevitable. Rather than maintain false hopes of military victory, this woman chooses to defend Numancia by dying at the sides of those who will also fight and die for their honor. Surrounded by the Romans and their oppressive siege, the only freedom left for the Numantians is to choose the conditions of their imminent death. The walls of their city will be the only remaining witness to their ultimate act of freedom, and death will liberate them leaving a legacy of honor. A third woman beseeches the children of Numancia to tell their fathers that the freedom into which they were born will be preserved only

by an honorable death:

> Decildes que, pues la suerte
> nuestra va tan decaída,
> que, como os dieron la vida,
> ansimismo os den la muerte.
> Oh muros de esta ciudad!
> Si podéis hablar, decid
> y mil veces repetid:
> "Numantinos, libertad!" (1350-1357).

The liberty that the Numantians hope to find becomes increasingly focused on death. Their ability to control death is the last strategy of the Numantians and the collective commitment to preserve honor over life increases with each individual's statement. Lira concludes the women's objections to not being included in the men's plan to attack the Romans, protesting that the inevitable pillage of Numancia by their greedy victors will leave undefended women and children in peril. She chastises the men saying: "Desesperación notoria / es ésta que hacer queréis," (1378-1379), recognizing their need to die honorably but rejecting battle as a means of ensuring Numancia's glory. She also warns that an attack against the Romans, even if initially victorious, would not be joined by any other city in Spain and in the end would be mocked by the Romans:

> Mi pobre ingenio os advierte
> que, si hacéis esta salida,
> al enemigo dais vida
> y a toda Numancia muerte
> De vuestro acuerdo gentil
> los romanos burlarán; (1386-1389)

In her view, an attack will bring only death and ridicule to Numancia and will not achieve their goals.

Thus the scope of Numancia's collective heroism, a characteristic traditionally defined by male activity, is broadened to include women and children. Responding to the women's resolve to accompany the men, Teógenes embraces the unity of the Numantians and proposes a course of action that will resolve the conflict between death and honor, pledging to the women that they will not be excluded or abandoned by the men. He calls to the women, speaking for his fellow Numantians: "jamás en muerte o vida os dejaremos; / antes en muerte o vida os serviremos" (1408-1409). Just as their collective commitment to preserve honor extends beyond death, so does their heroic commitment to one another. Teógenes explains the Numantian's desire to avenge themselves and their honor in battle against the Roman's siege and tells the women that this was the motivation for their planned attack. But he now recognizes the need to include all of Numancia, women and children as well as men in the struggle to preserve the honor of their nation:

> Pensábamos salir al foso, ciertos
> antes de allí morir que de escaparnos,
> pues fuera quedar vivos aunque muertos,
> si muriendo pudiéramos vengarnos;
> mas pues nuestros disinios descubiertos
> han sido, y es locura aventurarnos,
> amados hijos y mujeres nuestras,
> nuestras vidas serán de hoy más las vuestras
> (1410-1417).

The plan must be revised so as to protect not only the honor, but also the unity of Numancia. A new course of action must be taken that will allow them, as a nation, to escape a slow

and agonizing death as result of the siege. In addition to controlling the circumstances of their death, the Numantians aspire to a plan that would deny the Romans the glory and riches of victory. As a result of Teógenes' intended plan, Escipión himself would be forced to recognize and testify to the legacy of Numancia's honor:

> Sólo se ha de mirar que el enemigo
> no alcance de nosotros triunfo o gloria;
> antes ha de servir él de testigo
> que apruebe y eternice nuestra historia;
> y si todos venís en lo que digo,
> mil siglos durará nuestra memoria,
> y es que no puede cosa aquí en Numancia
> de do el contrario pude hacer ganancia (1418-1425).

Teógenes inspires the Numantians with the proposed results that his plan would obtain and after describing the ends, reveals to them the means. At this point, he explains his plan to ensure the glory and honor of the city:

> En medio de la plaza se haga un fuego,
> en cuya ardiente llama licenciosa
> nuestras riquezas todas se echen luego,
> desde la pobre a la más rica cosa;
> y esto podréis tener a dulce juego
> cuando os declare la intención honrosa
> que se ha de efectuar después que sea
> abrasada cualquier rica presea (1426-1433).

Teógenes' plan that the Numantians commit their possessions to an enormous fire and control the circumstances of their death solves the conflict between physical victory that is imminent for the Romans and moral victory that in death is assured the Numantians. According to Teógenes, the memory of Numancia will endure forever and Escipión, in the face of his

own moral defeat will be compelled to recognize their triumph in terms of honor. Caravino agrees with Teógenes' plan and calls to the rest of Numancia to join in what he deems "un tan extraño y tan honroso hecho" (1445). The women also concur and set out under Lira's leadership to gather and burn the possessions that would otherwise fall into the greedy hands of the Romans. This is a pivotal point in the unfolding of the Numantians as a cohesive group committed to a collective goal. While the fundamental assessment of Numancia is collective, individual characters serve to personalize the situation and provide opportunities for the audience or reader to more closely identify with the heroic actions of the group.

One such example of individual heroism is witnessed as Leonicio, a young Numantian, accompanies his friend Marandro to almost certain death in a raid of the Roman camp for bread. While the action is more symbolic than effectual, it serves to demonstrate the depth of inter-personal relationships. Marandro's actions are motivated not so much by the effect that a bit of stolen bread might have in sustaining Lira, but rather as a symbolic victory of having won for her what the Romans are trying to withhold. As Lira voices her fear that she will succumb to hunger before she is able to help carry out Teógenes' plan, Marandro consoles her and pledges to bring her a bit of bread from the Roman camp:

> Yo me ofrezco de saltar
> el foso y el muro fuerte,
> y entrar por la misma muerte
> para la tuya excusar.

el pan que el romano toca,
sin que el temor me destruya,
le quitaré de la suya
para ponello en tu boca; (1506-1513).

The bread and any effect it might have in sustaining Lira is of secondary importance, Marandro's defiance of the Roman siege is symbolic of Numancia's need to act rather than wait helplessly for death. The willingness to face death head on, without fear or regard for personal suffering demonstrates Marandro's heroism, and by extension that of all Numancia. Leonicio recognizes the motivating ability of Marandro's love for Lira, and pledges to join in the raid. While Marandro's action is motivated by his love for Lira, Leonicio's valor is motivated by loyalty to his friend. Leonicio's commitment to Marandro and the motivating power of their friendship is illustrated as he vows his support saying: "Yo quiero, buen amigo, acompañarte / y en impresa tan justa y tan forzosa / con mis pequeñas fuerzas ayudarte" (1586-1588). The just motivation for Marandro's mission to enter the Roman camp compels Leonicio to join him and offer whatever help he might. His loyalty to Marandro inspires the same fearless heroism that he recognized in his friend. Leonicio continues, saying: "sabrás que no los miedos de la muerte / de ti me apartarán un solo punto, / ni otra cosa, si la hay, que sea más fuerte" (1601-1603). As an example of Becker's assertion that heroism is born of the ability to act when faced with death (11), Leonicio, although aware of the very real danger of death, is

not deterred from his desire to express allegiance to Marandro. Leonicio, as well as Marandro, is committed to the act, however symbolic, of winning a bit of bread and thereby a measure of victory from the Romans.

While Marandro's and Leonicio's defiance of the Romans is praiseworthy and incites respect for their loyalty to love and friendship, perhaps the most compelling act of one individual's devotion to another is that of Teógenes. The extent of the Numantians' collective commitment to their task is perhaps most felt as Teógenes addresses his family, explaining to them, as well as the audience, the Numantian preference for an honorable death rather than surrender to the Romans. The Numantian honor is not without its price. Teógenes struggles with the conflict between his love for his children and the commitment of all Numancia to die honorably rather than surrender to the Romans:

> Cuando el paterno amor no me detiene
> de ejecutar la furia de mi intento,
> considerad, mis hijos, cuál me tiene
> el celo de mi honroso pensamiento.
> Terrible es el dolor que se previene
> con acabar la vida en fin violento
> y más el mío, pues al hado plugo
> que yo sea de vosotros cruel verdugo (2058-2075).

The emotions of a father in Teógenes' position serve further to deepen the respect and compassion for the extreme situation of the Numantians. However, as Calderwood suggested, the human commitment to any "secular religion" (honor in the case of the Numantians) will at times motivate one to kill and die

for its preservation (41-42). Therefore, having expressed his deep love for his family and lamenting the cruelty of his fate, Teógenes continues, assuring them that their death at his hand is their only means of liberty:

> no quedaréis, oh hijos de mi alma!,
> esclavos, no el romano poderío
> llevará de vosotros triunfo o palma,
> por más que a sujetarnos alce el brío;
> el camino más llano que la palma
> de nuestra libertad el Cielo pío
> nos ofrece y nos muestra y nos advierte
> que sólo está en las manos de la muerte
> (2076-2083).

In order to protect them from slavery and dishonor, Teógenes must be the instrument of their death and spare them from the Romans. The fates have offered them but one means of liberty and Teógenes must lead his family on the road that has been indicated. Only in death can they be assured freedom. Because life without freedom equals for the Numantians a life without honor, defeat is an unacceptable conclusion to their dilemma. In their quest to deny death's finality, death itself provides the means.

The response of Teógenes' wife to his intended act is also indicative of the unanimous commitment to self-sacrifice rather than acceptance of Roman dominance. When faced with her own death and that of her children, she resolutely states: "Mas pues no puede ser, según yo veo, / y está ya mi muerte tan cercana, / lleva de nuestras vidas tú el trofeo, / y no la espada pérfida romana" (2100-2103). If death is near and unavoidable, she would rather fall to her husband's sword than

to that of a Roman. She asks Teógenes to take them to the temple of Diana where she and the children will die. As Teógenes exits the Temple, having taken the lives of his wife and children, he expresses the underlying pain of the Numantians. To be called on to sacrifice one's own family, even in the name of eternal honor, is a cruel fate to endure. Now for Teógenes, his own death cannot come quickly enough and he pleads:

> Sangre de mis entrañas derramada,
> pues sois aquélla de los hijos míos;
> mano contra ti mesma acelerada,
> llena de honrosos y crueles bríos;
> fortuna, en daño mío conjurada;
> cielos, de justa piedad vacíos;
> ofrecedme en tan dura, amarga suerte,
> alguna honrosa, aunque cercana muerte (2140-2147).

Overcome by the injustice of fate, Teógenes laments the death of his family yet still clarifies the universal desire of his people, an honorable death. He beseeches his fellow Numantians to strike him down, allowing him to suffer the force of their vengeance against the Romans. When another Numantian joins him they vow to die together, by whatever means available. As his death draws near, Teógenes' final words echo the Numantian desire to find an honorable end to their situation: "Ora me mate el hierro, o el fuego me arda, / que gloria y honra en cualquier muerte veo!" (2140-2183).

Just as Teógenes' sacrifice of his family and himself avoids the dishonor of defeat by the Romans, the mass suicide of Numancia is motivated by the desire to preserve, by

whatever means possible, the city's inherent honor. The self-sacrifice of the Numantians is not prompted simply by a refusal to accept the Romans. Instead, it is the Roman refusal to allow an honorable end to the conflict that leads to the Numantians' final act. As in the case of the previously discussed hero Licurgo, who also chose death over dishonor, each of the heroic characteristics of the Numantians finds root in the fundamental concept of the preservation of honor, be it individual or collective. The honor of the Numantians is evident and it may be further appreciated when compared to the behavior of the Romans.

Nearing the end of the play, Escipión looks out over the ruins of Numancia and realizes that the Numantian's suicide has snatched from him the glory he hoped to gain in victory. He recalls of the constancy and pride of Numancia as they held off the Roman invasion and his thoughts turn to hopes of saving face as well as to his own motivations in the siege:

> Con uno solo que quedase vivo
> no se me negaría el triunfo en Roma
> de haber domado esta nación soberbia,
> enemiga mortal de nuestro nombre,
> constante en su opinión, presta, arojada
> al peligro mayor y duro trance;
> de quien jamás se alabará romano
> que vió la espalda vuelta a numantino,
> cuyo valor, cuya destreza en armas
> me forzó con razón a usar el medio
> de encerrallos cual fieras indomables
> y triunfar de ellos con industria y maña,
> pues era con las fuerzas imposible (2244-2256).

The General admits that the desired triumph over the city was motivated less by a need for physical dominance than by hopes

to squelch the pride of the small community. The ability of the Numantians to withstand the Roman attack for sixteen years undoubtably led to Escipión's perception of them as mortal enemies of Roman reputation. The embarrassment of the Roman army quite probably was augmented by the impossibility of military triumph in direct battle which led to the less honorable victory by siege. In the play, Escipión is not the only Roman to recognize he Numantians' valor. Mario, a soldier reporting to the General after the failure of the siege, praises the Numantians' memory, acknowledging their moral victory over Escipión:

> El lamentable fin, la triste historia
> de la ciudad invicta de Numancia
> merece ser eterna la memoria;
> sacado han de su pérdida ganancia;
> quitado te han el triunfo de las manos,
> muriendo con magnánima constancia; (2264-2269).

The eternal nature of this collective act of heroism is articulated as Mario recognizes the glory due the Numantians, who by sacrificing themselves, snatch spiritual victory from physical defeat. Mario also praises their magnanimity, the trait most highly revered in the traditional Roman hero and compares the honor of Numancia to the power of Rome: "nuestros disinios han salido vanos, / pues ha podido más su honroso intento / que toda la potencia de romanos" (2270-2272). Mario realizes that all has been in vain and that the Numantians have won. Ultimately the honor of the Numantians was greater than the power of the Roman Empire. As a result of Numancia's

triumph, Escipión is reduced to a desperate hope to salvage some modicum of victory by forcing the surrender of a boy, the last surviving Numantian, who was found hiding in a tower. Realizing that this is his last opportunity, Escipión imagines his triumph over Bariato and a consequent Roman victory:

> ...eso bastaba
> para triunfar en Roma de Numancia,
> que es lo que más agora deseaba.
> Lleguémonos allá, y haced instancia
> cómo el muchacho venga a aquestas manos
> vivo, que es lo que agora es de importancia
> (2327-2332).

Escipión enters into a battle of wills with the boy and the pitiful state of the General's pride and his desperation to restore it are revealed in the final act. Once again the honor of Numancia is compared to the power of the Romans as Escipión calls to the boy Bariato: "Templa, pequeño joven, templa el brío; / sujeta el valor tuyo, que es pequeño, / al mayor de mi honroso poderío;" (2351-2353). The image of a boy surrounded by the most powerful army in existence and faced with that army's General epitomizes the conflict of the drama; the Romans' great military power versus the Numantian's strength of character and commitment to honor. Escipión, however, remains unaware of the extent to which the Numantians' honor surpasses his own as he tells Bariato to surrender his own small valor to the greater power of Rome. Refusing, the boy ultimately personifies in word and deed all of Numancia. Professing his commitment to externalize the Numantian's collective honor and glory, he speaks to his dead

countrymen saying: "Yo os aseguro, oh fuertes ciudadanos!, / que no falte por mí la intención vuestra / de que no triunfen pérfidos romanos, / si ya no fuere de ceniza nuestra" (2385-2388). He continues his pledge, assuring the Romans that they will not find victory in his capture regardless of their superior power. Bariato concludes his speech citing a purity of love for his country as motivation for his suicide: "Pero muéstrase ya el intento mío, / y si ha sido el amor perfecto y puro / que yo tuve a mi patria tan querida, / asegúrelo luego esta caída" (2386-2400). Bariato heroically accepts physical death to ensure the eternal honor of Numancia. The "secular religion" that motivates this great sacrifice stems from the desire to join in the preservation of the city's collective honor. As the boy hurls himself from the tower in defense of the honor of Numancia, Escipión realizes the magnitude of the act and the comparative unimportance of his own military victory. Just as the audience singles out heroes because they represent individual participation in the universal quest for immortality, perhaps it is the ultimate act of a single representative of Numancia with which Escipión is finally able to identify. Seeing the boy's body at the foot of the tower, Escipión cries out:

> Oh! Nunca vi tan memorable hazaña!
> Niño de anciano y valeroso pecho,
> que, no sólo a Numancia, mas a España
> has adquirido gloria en este hecho;
> con tu viva virtud, heroica, extraña,
> queda muerto y perdido mi derecho!
> Tú con esta caída levantaste
> tu fama y mis vitorias derribaste (2401-2408).

Bariato personifies the collective heroism characteristic of all Numancia. The glory, virtue and heroism of the city--here recognized and eulogized by Escipión, as Teógenes predicted--are reaffirmed by the voice of Fama in the final words of the drama. The allegorical figure addresses the audience as well as the Romans, entreating each to immortalize the Numantians in light of their honorable death:

> Vaya mi clara voz de gente en gente,
> y en dulce y suave son, con tal sonido
> llene las almas de un deseo ardiente
> de eternizar un hecho tan subido.
> Alzad, romanos, la inclinada frente;
> llevad de aquí este cuerpo, que ha podido
> en tan pequeña edad arrebataros
> el triunfo que pudiera tanto honraros, (2417-2424).

The triumph that could have honored the Romans is claimed for Numancia. The breadth of Numancia's eternal fame, won by strength and constancy is also guaranteed, as is the unending endurance of their name.

As is recognized by the audience as well as the Romans, Numancia's heroism and subsequent denial of the finality of physical death stem from the city's dedication to a system of honor which served as guide and measure to the actions of individuals as well as the collective. While the secular code of honor directed the actions of the Numantians, they were influenced, much like the previously discussed Licurgo, by prophecy and ill fate.

The importance of prophecy in the heroic denial of death represented in La Numancia as well as the other plays discussed in this study, is that it requires the hero to face the imminence and inevitability of physical death that is usually relegated to the subconscious mind. Therefore, the focus of a quest for immortality shifts from the physical to a symbolic existence provided by the code of honor. The initial physical defeat as well as the ultimate moral victory of the Numantians is prophesied during the course of the drama. Inherent, however, to prophecy is the enigmatic nature of its message. Early in the play, the allegorical figure of España enters after the Roman rejection of peace offered by the Numantians, lamenting her imminent fall to the Romans. This despair is tempered however by the introduction of the image of the immortal and mythical phoenix that rises from the ashes of its death:

> Numancia es la que agora sola ha sido
> quien la luciente espada sacó fuera,
> y a costa de su sangre ha mantenido
> la amada libertad suya y primera.
> Mas, ay!, que veo el término cumplido,
> llegada ya la hora postrimera
> do acabará su vida, y no su fama,
> cual fénix renovándose en la llama (385-392).

Here, although España expresses no hope for the present situation of the Numantians, their ultimate fate is optimistic. The river Duero enters and in addition to confirming the prophecy offered by España, continues to comment on the future greatness of Numancia, which coincides

with the strength of the seventeenth-century audience's present-day Spain (King, 213-214). While the prophecies offered by España and Duero are clear--predicting physical death but symbolic immortality--further glimpses into the future of Numancia are gleaned through the interpretation of signs by the Numantian priests and statements made by a corpse raised from the dead.

When a sacrificial ritual of the Numantian priests is interrupted by demons, the priests interpret the omens to foretell the imminent fall of the city: "Aquilas, de gran mal anunciadoras, / partíos, que ya el agüero vuestro entiendo, / ya en efeto contadas son las horas" (858-860). There are, however, indications that the victory of the Romans will not be enduring. A priest consoles the Numantians saying: "Aunque lleven romanos la vitoria / de nuestra muerte, en humo ha de tornarse, / y en llamas vivas nuestra muerte y gloria" (822-824). The images of Numancia's glory and death in living flames and the Roman victory turning into smoke recall the myth of the immortal Phoenix. Later in the ritual, the enigma of the prophecy continues in a message from a corpse, who when restored to life by the sorcerer Marquino predicts that Numancia will fall to the hands closest to her:

> están con rabia eterna aquí esperando
> a que acabe, Marquino, de informarte
> del lamentable fin, del mal infando
> que de Numancia puedo asegurarte,
> la cual acabará a las mismas manos
> de los que son a ella más cercanos (1068-1073).

The corpse alludes to the unexpected self-fulfillment of Numancia's predicted death. Just as the prophecy that Licurgo take the life of a king or himself be killed by a king was unexpectedly fulfilled by his suicide (by taking his own life he both killed a king and fell to a king's hand), the enigma of the prophecy is that the hands closest to the heroic city are not Roman, but Numantian. The prediction continues to say that Rome will be denied the glory of victory and that one instrument will bring about both the death and life of Numancia:

> No llevarán romanos la vitoria
> de la fuerte Numancia, ni ella menos
> tendrá del enemigo triunfo o gloria,
> amigos y enemigos siendo buenos;
> no entiendas que de paz habrá memoria,
> que habrá albergue en sus contrarios senos;
> el amigo cuchillo, el homicida
> de Numancia será, y será su vida; (1074-1080).

The image of the "amigo cuchillo" is in itself, further example of the ironic victory that will be won by the Numantians. Their suicide results in physical death, but also assures "life". The mention of eternal glory and the honor of the Numantians is of great importance with regard to the motivation of the people. Although they are fully aware of their predicted end and its inevitability, their actions remain guided not by fatalism with respect to physical existence, but instead by their belief that the system of honor which structured their lives would also serve them as a means of immortality. The actions of the Numantians, when

faced with impending and prophesied defeat to the Romans, reveal the exemplary fulfillment of the ideals presented in their secular code of conduct. In keeping with the myth of the Phoenix, the honor of Numancia assures that from the ashes, she will rise again eternally.

The collective hero of Cervantes' La Numancia, as well as Licurgo, the hero of Alarcón's El dueño de las estrellas, accept physical death at their own hands rather than compromise the code of honor which structured their individual lives as well as the societies to which they belonged. The equation of life with honor provides the motivation for the actions that lead them to sacrifice finite physical existence in exchange for a means of symbolic immortality which is granted them through the eternal remembrance of their glory and honor.

NOTES

1.Ruiz Ramón, Francisco. Historia del teatro español. Madrid: Cátedra, 1988. (129).

2.See Francisco Ruiz Ramón, Historia del teatro español (128).

3. King, although emphasizing the tragic nature of Escipión's victory, states: "the play is finally not a bleak tragedy.... Human effort and heroism are celebrated; even though they cannot prevail against the designs of providence on a given day, they win over death and oblivion in the pages of history" (200).

4.Echevarría compares Cervantes' La Numancia with Ercilla's La Araucana and contends that the collective protagonist, the indirect glorification of the hero as compared to the conquering forces, and the epic style in versification of La Numancia were influenced by Ercilla's work (98).

5.In "Classical Tragedy and Cervantes' La Numancia", Frederick de Armas defines the play as tragic if one accepts Escipión as the protagonist since he (not the city of Numancia as Raymond MacCurdy suggest in "The Numantia plays of Cervantes and Rojas Zorrilla: The Shift from Collective to Personal Tragedy") fulfills the required criterion of a classical tragic hero. De Armas incorporates the opinions of Reichenberger and Correa, which regard the play's deviations from classical definitions of tragedy, in his interpretation of Escipión as the tragic hero of La Numancia and he also uses Casalduero's tri-thematic defense of La Numancia's tragic unity to reject the city as the protagonist, thus negating the thesis of Casalduero's explication of tragic elements in La Numancia as play and as protagonist (Sentido y forma del teatro de Cervantes).

6.Bergmann states: "The boy Bariato's leap from the tower epitomizes Numantian Stoic heroism, ending the human action in nothingness..." (92-93).

7.Bergmann suggests that the Numantians do not benefit from their self-sacrifice and that they are unaware of its significance. She states: "What will be "bought" with this sacrifice is far more than the Numantians imagined, but they cannot benefit from the results of their acts as they are displaced to another plane of values" (92). While I agree that the sacrifice is supreme, I belive that

it was made with an awareness of the eternal nature of its rewards. The physical death accepted by the Numantians is recognized by them as a means to ultimately deny death's finality. They not only recognize its significance but also continue to reap the benefit of their final act because of, not in spite of, their existence on another plane.

8.William M. Whitby in "The Sacrifice Theme in Cervantes' Numancia" contends that the "remedies by which the Numantians seek to preserve their lives--first in a physical, then in a spiritual sense--always involve in some manner the idea of sacrifice" (207). He also demonstrates that the degree of sacrifice is increasingly augmented throughout the duration of the play: a ritual animal sacrifice, one warrior offered for single combat, all men of fighting age and finally all of Numancia (208).

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DON FERNANDO: CHRISTIAN KNIGHT AND MARTYR

Don Fernando, the protagonist of Calderón's El príncipe constante, (1630) is perhaps one of the paramount dramatic heroes of Golden-Age Spain. The constancy of his dedication to the Catholic faith, ultimately concluding in his martyrdom, earns for him the epitaph of "el príncipe en la fe constante" as well as spiritual immortality. The events preceeding his martyrdom, which some critics believe to parallel the stages of Christ's life and resurrection,[1] epitomize heroic Christian ideals as well as exemplify the traditional secular characteristics of heroism. As will be shown in this chapter, Don Fernando's enduring faith leads to his physical death and subsequent appearance as a divine image during the final scenes of the play, demonstrating the culmination of his participation in a heroic denial of death.

The heroic commitment to the Catholic faith that Don Fernando maintains throughout the play is evident from the beginning. His ordeal begins as he and his brother Enrique lead their troops to Africa in a campaign to Christianize new lands. Although initially successful, their fortune changes and Fernando is captured by the Moorish King of Fez--a character who will serve as a point of contrast in Fernando's

definition as a hero. The King offers Fernando's release in exchange for the Christian city of Ceuta, an offer King Alfonso of Portugal accepts. Fernando, however, rejects freedom at the cost of the Christian city, preferring instead to endure his captivity, regarding it as an opportunity to act upon his faith. Fernando's heroic actions, like those of other Spanish Golden-Age protagonists are inspired by a code of honor. However, his actions demonstrate that his dedication to the Catholic faith is the primary motivation for heroism throughout the drama.

Scholars often incorporate the theme of Fernando's heroism into a more general debate as to the plausibility of Christian tragedy and the existence of Christian tragic heroes. Much of the criticism regarding Fernando's heroic qualities is dedicated to defining the tragic hero and debating the manner in which Fernando reflects the designated characteristics. Preston Roberts, Henry Sullivan, James Parr and José Ruano de la Haza are among those scholars who defend the existence of Christian tragedy. Their studies range from the general--the creation of a Christian tragic poetics[2]--to the particular--the investigation of Fernando as a Christian tragic hero[3].

Of the scholars mentioned, Roberts, presents the most comprehensive study of the relationship between Christianity and Tragedy with regard to literary theories. Departing from the Greek theology inherent in Aristotle's Poetics, Roberts

endeavors to create a Christian poetics of dramatic tragedy. Although cognizant of the frequently stated belief that Christian tragedy is impossible because a tragic death "contradicts the whole theme and point of Christian theology" (6), Roberts refutes the mutual exclusivity of Christianity and tragedy:

> The kind of Christian theology in which I believe mitigates but does not simply deny or cancel out tragedy. It shifts the locus of tragedy from God, nature, others or our own essence to an aspect of ourselves and others--an aspect which is rendered sufferable, meaningful, and transformable by virtue of a conjunction between God's freely given grace and our freely received faith (7).

In Roberts' view, because tragedy is connected only with a single aspect of one's self and not with one's essence, it may be transcended through one's relationship with God. Faith, on the part of the hero, is therefore paramount to any consideration of Christian tragedy according to Roberts' theory. He implies that the Christian hero, while free to choose his own actions, is motivated by religious faith. This religious motivation creates a conflict between the hero's inherent freedom to act and a desire to comply with the codes of Christian conduct. Because the hero's internal conflict becomes the focus of dramatic tragedy, Roberts characterizes the plot structure of a Christian play as somewhat open throughout:

> By being open I do not mean that the course of events is unconditioned. It arises out of a definite, given, and

> limited situation: and it issues into a definite, given, and limited situation. I mean that at certain points and moments all individualities implicated in a Christian plot are internally determined and externally free, in that their tragedy is a function of freedom and of character rather than of fate and of circumstance; and that a Christian play begins, moves through, and ends in something more than the simply tragic (11).

The conflict between freedom and a sense of self-imposed restraint (what Roberts calls internal determinism) based on an accepted code of conduct, is central to a Christian heroic denial of death. I agree with Roberts' premise that Christian heroes, motivated by their dedication to faith, assume a certain degree of moral determinism in their actions. Just as the actions of other heroes are motivated by a secular code of honor, Christian heroes act in the way that they do in order to remain true to themselves as well as to the Christian faith. The tragedy in Christian drama ensues when heroes encounter an impasse between external freedom and internal determinism.

Sullivan confirms Roberts' assertion that Christian tragedy is not oxymoronic. In two studies, "Las tres justicias en una of Calderón and the Question of Christian Catharsis" and "Calderón, the German Idealist Philosophers, and the Question of Christian Tragedy," he takes up Roberts' opinion that the Christian hero is at once free and self-determined, basing his arguments on Lacan's theory of the moi

and the *je*.[4] The *moi* and the *je* are loosely equated with a sense of individual freedom (*moi*) that is balanced by an inherent respect for social necessity (*je*). Similar to Roberts' discussion of external freedom and internal determinism, Sullivan applies the theory of the individual *moi* and the social *je* to Christian drama stating:

> When [the martyrs] make the supreme sacrifice, they do so in the name of a system of belief, in an affirmation of selfhood and the deep "Truth" of being, which constitutes the simultaneous victory of the *moi* and the *je* over forces of necessity. They are true for the sense of alienated belief in a fictional image of self which is proper to the all powerful *moi*, as well as to the particular public system of belief, be it religious faith or patriotic conviction or something else, to which the *je* or conscious mind has sworn allegiance (Question of Christian Tragedy, 66).

In the case of the Christian martyrs, death is the necessity which is conquered by the combined forces of the *moi* and the *je*. Their martyrdom allows them to conquer death (a universal necessity) by voluntarily making it a choice. Freedom and necessity, the *moi* and the *je* of the human psyche become one, victorious over death. By making death a conscious choice, the martyrs make the supreme sacrifice, which is the virtue Sullivan regards as the common denominator between Greek tragedy, Greek religion, Christianity and Calderonian tragedy (63).

The arguments for the universal existence of Christian tragedy made by Roberts, and Sullivan's investigations of

Calderonian Christian tragedy in particular are extended by Parr and Ruano to include don Fernando as an exemplary Christian hero in the tradition of classical tragedy. Ruano, in "Hacia una nueva definición de la tragedia calderoniana," compares pagan and Christian attitudes in El príncipe constante as represented by the Moorish princess, Fénix and the Catholic prince, don Fernando. He also discusses underlying elements of tragedy relying on the play's relationship to Aristotle's Poetics. Given the combination of secular and religious traditions, Ruano identifies the drama as an early example of Calderón's "tragedia mixta".

While the studies of Roberts, Sullivan and Ruano range from a general investigation of Christian tragedy to discussions of Calderonian tragedy, James Parr, in "El príncipe constante and the issue of Christian Tragedy," makes the greatest effort to define the play and its hero as tragic. Parr contends that don Fernando is indeed a tragic hero, based on his fulfillment, in character and circumstance, of the following four criterian which he regards as pre-eminent in a definition of tragedy:

> 1) the protagonist is a man of relatively high estate; 2) his suffering and calamity contrast with a previous glory and happiness; 3) his fall results from actions for which he is at least in part responsible, since tragedy cannot be accidental; accidents are merely lamentable; 4) tragedy ordinarily ends in the death of the hero; moreover, this
>
> death must appear inevitable; the inevitability is seen to issue from the character of the hero (165-166).

Although I do not interpret the play as a tragedy, don Fernando's situation clearly complies with the elements that Parr sets forth as indicitive of tragedy. Don Fernando is a prince of Portugal whose quest to Christianize new lands had traditionally been met with success. His captivity, while initially beyond his control, is prolonged by his own determination to defend the Christian city of Ceuta from the Moors. This self-perpetuated captivity and enslavement leads to his physical decline and ends inevitably in death. Thus, Fernando fulfills Parr's criterian as a tragic hero. In his study of this play, Parr extends this basic definition of tragedy to include what he terms a "non-moralistic" explanation of tragedy in which the primary characteristic of the hero is the commitment to remain true to his nature when faced with adversity:

> Tragedy occurs when opposing sets of values or attitudes are brought into play, or when the protagonist is pitted against an overpowering set of circumstances, with the result that the one centrally involved in the action ends disastrously. The central character must end badly as a direct consequence of being true to his values, which is to say, true to himself. He must be seen to assume a considerable part of the responsibility for his suffering, and this means that he must struggle with reasonable awareness of the threat he faces. It will not do for him to be entirely ignorant of the end he may expect if he persists in maintaining a certain stance. We must be led to admire the nobility of the one who is defeated, both because of certain positive values he personifies and also because of his

> strength of character (<u>areté</u> or <u>virtus</u>) in remaining true to an established pattern when severely tested (166).

Regarding this play, the strength of character that Parr refers to enables Fernando to patiently suffer the cruelty and indignity of his captivity, knowing that it will ultimately lead to his death. When considered according to Parr's definition, there is little doubt that <u>El príncipe constante</u> is a dramatic tragedy. Don Fernando's plight is directly the result of the conflict between his religious convictions and the circumstances of his captivity as imposed by the King of Fez. He is responsible for his enslavement in that he rejects freedom when it is offered because of the unacceptable ransom of Ceuta that is demanded. He is fully aware of the consequences of his decision and almost joyfully embraces his suffering. Don Fernando's defense of his religious beliefs and his willingness to defend them to the death are admirable. I take exception, however, to Parr's heavy reliance on Fernando's disastrous outcome as characteristic of the protagonist's tragic qualities. While Fernando does indeed perish, he is resurrected as a divine image. In my view, in a Christian play this spiritual resurrection which Parr dismisses as "apparent," is of greater significance than physical death. Parr views Fernando's death as an "extinction of personality" representing tragedy in its most complete sense (167). I disagree with Parr's belief that death, for a Christian, represents the extinction of personality. It is

but a threshhold to another, higher, plane of spiritual existence.

Apparently, the difficulty in arriving at a suitable definition of a Christian tragic hero lies in the preservation or perversion of accepted definitions of a Christian hero as well as a tragic hero. Characteristics of both Christian and tragic heroes have been distorted and manipulated by some critics to allow their convergance. Although many of the elements of El principe constante are easily matched with Aristotle's definition of tragedy, there remain significant components of the Poetics that are left unresolved when applied to this play. For example, in order to argue his case for El principe constante as an example of Christian tragedy, Parr relies on Peter Alexander's definitions of catharsis (reconciliation or redemption) and hamartia (responsibility rather than fault), (Parr, 169). Distancing himself from the traditional importance of the hero's tragic flaw, Parr cites Dorothea Krook and Walter Kaufmann who deem "greatness of soul" to be the principal characteristic of the tragic hero (Parr, 168). Accepting "greatness of soul" as the quality universaly paramount to the tragic hero's character, Parr equates his own definition of heroic consistency to that found in Aristotle's Poetics stating:

> The central personage follows inexorably the path of his own destruction, then, because it is the only avenue open to him in consistency with his character. The alternative is eliminated as a viable option, for choosing it would cause him

to be untrue to himself (168).

In my opinion Parr's definition falls short when applied to this play. Fernando's consistency, to himself and his faith, constitutes his heroism, not his tragic destruction. He chooses loss of life over loss of principal and therefore in his martyrdom he denies death rather than himself. While Parr presents many compelling arguments for Fernando's identification as a Christian tragic hero, his conclusions are often based on alternative interpretations of what is tragic.[5] Because I do not believe that the play is tragic, Parr's insights into Fernando's character and heroism, be they tragic or not, are most relevant to my investigation of Fernando's heroic denial of death.

Distancing himself from the genre-centered debates surrounding the play, Bruce Wardropper, in "Christian and Moor in Calderón's El príncipe constante," focuses instead on comparisons between the Christian and Moorish characters. The dimension of eternity inherent to the Christian characters, particularly Fernando, is of primary importance to Wardropper's study. He states that "mortal man, by adhering to the moral laws and the truth, can participate in timeless eternity" (516). According to Wardropper, this hope for eternal life precludes tragedy for the Christian Fernando, whereas for a pagan the death of the body makes all life tragic (517). The focus on the eternal nature of Fernando as a Christian hero is taken up by María Norval who suggests that

Fernando's development throughout the drama symbolizes the life of Christ. The Catholic prince (a Christ figure) arrives in Africa (symbolic of the mortal world and its values) to conquer and redeem it (19). The symbolic division of mortal and eternal values represented respectively by Moorish and Christian characters according to Wardropper and Norval, is further investigated by Elena Gascón Vera in "La volutad y el deseo en El príncipe constante". Gascón Vera synthesizes the dramatic action of the play as:

> los enfrentamientos de dos voluntades: la paciencia del príncipe portugués don Fernando y el rigor contra él del Rey de Fez, y de dos deseos: la vida como trascendencia de lo humano en los cristianos y la vida como materialismo inmediato en los musulmanes (451).

The clash between the Christian and Moorish worlds is brought about by Fernando's mission to conquer and Christianize new lands, without fear of physical suffering or death. His commitment to the Catholic faith is the underlying motivation of his actions and as Gascón Vera states: "la constancia del príncipe está producida por su deseo y voluntad de seguir su ideal cristiano hasta las últimas consecuencias" (456). In light of his constancy, Fernando may be viewed as a model Christian hero, an opinion upheld by Arnold Reichenberger. In "Calderón's El príncipe constante, A Tragedy?" Reichenberger states that don Fernando is "the epitome of the Christian knight, whose actions are guided by two qualities: on the secular level his nobility, on the spiritual level his

constancy" (668). Reichenberger lays to rest the debate regarding tragedy, denying that Fernando's death represents the catestrophic end inherent to the genre:

> El príncipe constante lacks the one essential quality for tragedy, catastrophe at the end. Fernando is a flawless character who lives unflinchingly by a code of hierarchically arranged values, both secular and religious. His death, chosen by himself in the exercise of his libre albedrío, is the logical conclusion of his Christian constancy. His re-appearance as a spirit after death brings on the triumph of right. Fernando is a martyr and a saint, but not a tragic hero (670).

I must agree with Professor Reichenburger's assertion that Fernando's heroism is founded not on his reaction to tragic circumstances, but instead on his commitment to the secular and religious codes by which he lived.

Reichenberger's description of Fernando as a "Christian knight" summarizes the protagonist's embodiment of all of the secular and religious characteristics attributed to the seventeenth-century Spanish hero. While reference to Fernando's commitment to Catholicism is continuous throughout the play, the first mention of the secular code of honor which Fernando upholds is made early in the play by the Moorish General Muley, who reports to the King of Fez his encounter with a Portuguese ship. Muley reports that while many of the Portuguese crew members scrambled aboard the Moorish ship to save themselves: "...otros les baldonan, / diciéndoles, que el vivir / eterno es vivir con honra;" (I 326-328). As has

been seen in El dueño de las estrellas and La Numancia, preservation of one's honor is regarded as a viable means of immortality and therefore any action taken in its defense may be deemed heroic. Muley recognizes the heroism of the Portuguese sailors' preference for a means of eternal life through honor, rather than a dishonorable physical existence. Perhaps because Muley is cognizant of the potential for heroism inherent to the honor code, numerous examples of don Fernando's personal respect for the code of honor occur primarily when he converses with Muley. Their first encounter takes place during a battle between the Christians and the Moors in which Fernando takes Muley captive. Rather than flaunt his victory, Fernando attempts to console the desolate Muley who responds: "Valiente eres, español, / y cortés como valiente; / tan bien vences con la lengua, / como con la espada vences" (I 703-707). Here, Muley praises some of the heroic characteristics attributed to Fernando, his valor in battle and his courtesy and respect, not only for his equals but also toward his captive. Although they are adversaries, Fernando is recognized by the Moor as a true hero. Muley continues, explaining the duel impact of Fernando's victory over his spirit as well as his life:

> Tuya fué la vida, cuando
> con la espada entre mi gente
> me venciste; pero agora,
> que con la lengua me prendes,
> es tuya el alma, porque
> alma y vida se confiesen
> tuyas: de ambas eres dueño, (I 708-714).

Muley acknowledges Fernando's skill in battle as a warrior and the prince's equal ability to conquer the soul. He ends his surrender to Fernando stating: "por el trato y por las armas / me has cautivado dos veces" (I 715-716). Moved to great respect and admiration for the clemency of his captor, Muley confesses that the true nature of his melancholy is romantic rather than bellic, and recounts the misfortune he has encountered in pursuit of the Moorish princess Fénix. After hearing of Muley's romantic quandary, Fernando is moved to release his captive, sending him back to his lost love. Overcome by the generosity of his captor, Muley inquires as to the identity of his victor. Fernando's response is simply: "Un hombre noble, y no más" (I 825). The extent to which Fernando identifies himself with regard to his nobility is reaffirmed when he is taken captive by the King of Fez. In battle against the Moorish King and his men, Fernando fearlessly leads his troops, inspiring them by invoking the heroic characteristics of noble Christian knights. When his brother Enrique explains that the Portuguese army is surrounded by the Moors and asks what they will do, Fernando responds that they will go forth to die as good Christians:

> ¿Qué? Morir como buenos,
> con ánimos constantes.
> ¿No somos dos Maestres, dos infantes,
> cuando bastara ser dos portugueses
> particulares, para no haber visto
> la cara al miedo? Pues Avis y Cristo
> a voces repitamos,
> y por la fe muramos,
> pues a morir venimos (I 861-870).

Fernando's call to battle shows the importance that he places on his role as noble and Christian rather than on his own life as an individual. When the King of Fez defeats and captures Fernando in battle, the prince's identity is again questioned. Fernando's response is familiar as he states: "Un caballero soy; saber no esperes / más de mí..." (I 906-907). That nobility is the only identification necessary for the Catholic prince, leads the audience to identify him as the embodiment of that heroic quality. Fernando's inherent nobility and the code of honor which accompanies it are demonstrated by his actions throughout the play.

There are various examples of Fernando's extraordinary dedication to the principals of the honor code which his nobility compels him to observe. Fernando is repeatedly offered his freedom in exchange for the city of Ceuta. However, he refuses the opportunity that would sacrifice the lives of many to save but one. He questions why such an exchange would be considered, denying that his life is of greater importance than any other: "fuera bueno que murieran / hoy tantas vida, por una / que no importa que se pierda? / ¿Quién soy yo? ¿Soy más que un hombre?" (II 387-391). Rather than accept the exchange of the Christian city as ransom for his freedom, an offer made only because of his noble heritage, Fernando rejects the birthright by which he has previously been identified. This is perhaps Fernando's most honorable act. Demonstrating true nobility of character, Fernando

accepts the responsibility of his royal position--protecting the citizens of Ceuta, rejecting the favor of noble birth. Fernando explains that his secular nobility was lost when he was captured. In losing his freedom and nobility, he lost his identity as well and considers himself dead. Therefore, to ransom "dead nobility" with Christian lives would be unjust:

> Morir es perder el ser,
> yo le perdí en una guerra:
> perdí el ser, luego morí:
> morí, luego ya no es cuerda
> hazaña, que por un muerto
> hoy tantos vivos perezcan (II 401-406).

According to Fernando, his nobility, which he equated with his identity and his very life, where lost in battle. What remains, however, is not an individual bereft of honor. The nobility that he rejects was imposed upon him by birth; the depth of the honor inherent in his character remains and is witnessed in a later scene with Muley.

Not having forgotten his debt to Fernando, Muley offers to help the Christian prince escape. The situation is complicated, however, by Muley's conflicting sense of responsibilities--his friendship with Fernando on one hand and on the other, his loyalty to the King of Fez. To aid one would necessitate the betrayal of the other. Muley is torn by his dilemma, but Fernando again demonstrates the truest understanding of honor. He explains the hierarchical relationships between friendship, love, loyalty and honor to

Muley:

> Muley, amor y amistad
> en grado inferior se ven
> con la lealtad y el honor.
> Nadie iguala con el Rey;
> él sólo es igual consigo:
> y así mi consejo es
> que a él le sirvas y me faltes (II 880-886).

According to Fernando's counsel, Muley must honor first his commitment to the King of Fez. For Muley to do less would jeopardize his honor, a sacrifice that Fernando is unable to accept on his behalf. The captive prince rejects his freedom this second time in favor of Muley's personal honor, demonstrating his own refusal to participate in an act of dishonor. Fernando demonstrates his dedication to preserving his friend's honor, explaining that he would not leave his captivity even if another offered him escape, because to do so would tarnish Muley's reputation. Thus, he makes himself his own guard, as well as the guardian of Muley's honor:

> Tu amigo soy; y porque
> esté seguro tu honor,
> yo me guardaré también;
> y aunque otro llegue a ofrecerme
> libertad, no aceptaré
> la vida, porque tu honor
> conmigo seguro esté (II 887-893).

The code of honor that Fernando follows is so inherent to his character that his actions are motivated by a desire to prevent the dishonor of a friend as well as preserve his own honor. Fernando's heroism allows him to stand apart from the masses in what Becker called the "beyond"; but perhaps more importantly it encourages others to follow his example.

Although Muley protests Fernando's resolve, intending to free him regardless of the damage this would inflict on his own honor, Fernando silences him stating that his dedication to the Catholic faith and to his own code of honor require that he accept his enslavement: "por mi Dios y por mi ley, / seré un príncipe constante / en la esclavitud de Fez" (II 925-927). This statement summarizes Fernando's primary motivation throughout the play. It also prioritizes his actions, citing religious faith before secular tradition. As a Christian knight, Fernando demonstrates in word and deed the honor and nobility befitting a hero. His devotion to the Christian faith and preservation of the code of honor are at the source of his heroism. They define his character, guide his actions and are rewarded with symbolic immortality.

Don Fernando is compared with other characters in the play, and just as he was shown to have a greater understanding of honor than Muley, he surpasses others in his faith and constancy. Fernando's dedication to the Catholic faith is compared early in the play with that of his brother Enrique. When Enrique laments bad omens that have accompanied their voyage, Fernando chastises him. Fernando relies on his faith and rejects bad omens and unfounded fears as superstitions to be believed perhaps by Pagans, but not by Christians: "Estos agüeros viles, miedos vanos, / para los moros vienen, que los crean, / no para que los duden los cristianos" (I 545-547). Fernando tells Enrique that as Christians, they are not

subject to such superstitions, reminding him that they are embarking on a holy mission, not merely an attempt to embellish their own reputations. Therefore, as Christians they will triumph: "Nosotros dos lo somos; no se emplean / nuestras armas aquí por vanagloria / de que en los libros inmortales lean / ojos humanos esta gran victoria" (I 548-451). For Fernando, the victory is assured. He proclaims that their goal is to spread the Christian faith, one which will be accomplished regardless of their personal fates. While fear of God's judgement is justified, fear of omens is not. According to Fernando, they must proceed and carry out their Christian duty in order to serve God:

> La fe de Dios a engrandecer venimos.
> Suyo será el honor, suya la gloria,
> si vivimos dichosos, pues morimos;
> el castigo de Dios justo es temerle,
> éste no viene envuelto en miedos vanos:
> a servirle venimos, no a ofenderle:
> cristianos sois, haced como cristianos (I 552-558).

This response to Enrique's doubts and fears elevates Fernando's heroism to another level. While both recognize the possibility of death during their crusade, Enrique fears it. Fernando accepts it, discounting the importance of physical life and focusing on the greater importance of serving God as a Christian. After his capture by the Moors, Fernando's devotion to his Christian mission is so great that he protests against the very words that would free him. When Enrique arrives to deliver news that King Duarte of Portugal had agreed, before his death, to relinquish the city of Ceuta to

ransom the prince. Fernando interrupts him, rejecting the pronouncement as unworthy of a Christian. His commitment to protect the Christian city of Ceuta is so great that he cannot accept a lesser resolution in even the utterance of another:

> No prosigas, cesa;
> cesa, Enrique; porque son
> palabras indignas esas,
> no de un portugués infante,
> de un maestre, que profesa
> de Cristo la religión,
> pero aun de un hombre lo fueran
> vil, de un bárbaro sin luz
> de la fe de Cristo eterna (II 296-304).

Again, Fernando exemplifies for Enrique, as well as the audience, the behavior of a Christian knight. Furthermore, his commitment to the campaign surpasses that of the King of Portugal who would have delivered the city Ceuta to the Moors. However, unwilling to elevate himself above the late King Duarte in compliance with the Christian mission, Fernando explains that the King's decree was meant only figuratively as a demonstration of his desire for Fernando's freedom and the need to seek some means of liberating him:

> si en su testamento deja
> esa cláusula, no es
> para que se cumpla y lea,
> sino para mostrar sólo
> que mi libertad desea,
> y ésa se busque por otros
> medios y otras conveniencias,
> o apacibles o crueles (II 306-313).

Fernando's refusal to accept the freedom offered him demonstrates his dedication to the Christian faith as compared to others who would be his equals. It also provides the

circumstances under which his will is matched against that of the King of Fez. Fernando accepts his captivity, converting his misery into an act of faith, and proclaims: "que hoy un Príncipe constante, / entre desdichas y penas, / ya fe católica ensalza, / la ley de Dios reverencia;" (II 437-444). In much the same way that Numancia snatched moral victory from military defeat to the Romans, Fernando turns his suffering into his triumph. His almost joyous acceptance of captivity infuriates the King of Fez, who vows to make him suffer for having denied him possession of the Christian city. A battle of wills ensues in which Fernando defends his constancy to the Catholic faith. Because Fernando accepted his enslavement and the dominance of the King of Fez, the King challenges Fernando to obey his master's order and relinquish the city of Ceuta to him: "si cautivo te confiesas, / si me confiesas por dueño, / ¿por qué no me das a Ceuta?" (II, 482-484). Fernando refuses, but not as an act of defiance. He simply explains to the King of Fez that Ceuta is not his to give: "Porque es de Dios, y no es mía" (II, 485). Although Fernando is willing to subject himself to physical enslavement to the King, he maintains his spiritual freedom. Just as the prince explained the true sense of honor and nobility to Muley, refusing freedom at the cost of another's dishonor, he explains to the King of Fez the true nature of obedience to one's master, and by extension one's faith. When the King of Fez questions the propriety of disobedience from one who professes commitment

to his new station in life: "¿No es precepto de obediencia / obedecer al señor? / Pues yo te mando con ella / que la entregues" (II, 486-489), Fernando reminds him that blind obedience is not required from a slave to his master. Although compliance with the master's wishes is expected, to sin because one is ordered to do so is still to sin, therefore, Fernando is obliged to follow his conscience and protect the Christian city of Ceuta:

> En lo justo
> dice el cielo que obedezca
> el esclavo a su señor;
> porque si el señor dijera
> a su esclavo que pecara,
> obligación no tuviera
> de obedecerle; porque
> quien peca mandando, peca (II 490-496).

The King of Fez, infuriated by Fernando's arguments but unable to deny them, retaliates with the threat of death: "Daréte muerte" (II, 497), which Fernando accepts: "Esa es vida" (II, 497). Fernando maintains a truly Christian perspective as to the negligible importance of physical life. He equates death with life, presumably a new spiritual life encountered through the end of physical existence and is grateful for the opportunity to make such a sacrifice in the name of the Catholic faith. However, determined to undermine Fernando's resolve, the King of Fez vows that death will not come quickly: "Pues para que no lo sea, / vive muriendo; que yo / rigor tengo" (II, 498-500). Undaunted, Fernando reaffirms his determination and responds that he will patiently endure the

King's rigors. As a final threat, the King vows: "Pues no tendrás libertad" (II, 501). To which Fernando responds: "Pues no será tuya Ceuta" (II, 502). This exchange between Fernando and the King of Fez reveals the vastly different natures and desires of the two men. The King is furious while Fernando is calm. The King threatens death while Fernando awaits "life". It becomes evident that the King is guided by worldly goals and emotions whereas Fernando's motivations are spiritual. The King of Fez, in his desperation to defeat Fernando, issues a challenge of wills. Unwittingly he plays to Fernando's advantage, pitting his ill-conceived stubbornness against Fernando's spiritual devotion. The King of Fez threatens Fernando taunting: "Veré, bárbaro, veré / si llega a más tu paciencia / que mi rigor" (II 519-521). To which Fernando, ever confident of his patience in matters of faith, replies: "Si verás; / porque ésta en mí será eterna" (I 521-522). Although Fernando dies in captivity, at the close of the play he has clearly won the battle incited by the King's plan. In motivation and in action, Fernando proves to be the better man.

Fernando's noble character is demonstrated not only through his conflict with the King of Fez, but also his relationship with his fellow captives. In his enslavement, Fernando rejects any special treatment, equaling himself to the other captives who still regard him as their leader. Having disavowed the social position he once had, Fernando

tells the other enslaved Christians that their suffering is equal to his own and that they will all be made equal in death: "No me hagais cortesías: / iguales vuestras penas y las mías / son; y pues nuestra suerte, / si hoy no, mañana ha de igualar la muerte," (II 616-619). Fernando demonstrates that his acceptance of death is complete. He does not wish to avoid its inevitability, rather, he rejoices that he is able to sacrifice his physical life on behalf of his eternal faith. His constancy to the Catholic faith sustains him throughout his slavery to the King of Fez, but after much suffering and anguish, Fernando finds himself at death's door. The King of Fez addresses Fernando, challenging the purity of his motivation, and accuses him of feigning humility as a means of ennobling himself: "Constante / te muestras a mi pesar. / ¿Es humildad o valor / esta obediencia?" (III 398-401). Fernando denies the charge, but requests the liberty of speaking to the King of Fez as a slave to his master:

> Es mostrar
> cuanto debe respetar
> el esclavo a su señor.
> Y pues que tu esclavo soy,
> y estoy en presencia tuya
> esta vez, tengo de hablarte: (III 402-406).

Maintaining the reverence due to one's master, Fernando speaks to the King of Fez for the last time. Even from his position as a dying slave, Fernando's nobility and honor are revealed as he addresses the King of Fez, enumerating the characteristics that a monarch must embody. Fernando

recognizes the chasm between the Christian and Moorish traditions, but regards the responsibilities of a king, regardless of nation, as divinely endowed. Therefore, generosity and purity of spirit should be reflected in every reign as is dictated by the laws of nature:

> mi Rey y señor, escucha.
> Rey te llamé, y aunque seas
> de otra ley, es tan augusta
> de los reyes la diedad,
> tan fuerte y tan absoluta,
> que engendra ánimo piadoso;
> y sí es forzoso que acudas
> a la sangre generoso
> con piedad y con cordura;
> que aun entre brutos y fieras
> este nombre es de tan suma
> autoridad, que la ley
> de naturaleza ajusta
> obediencias; (III, 408-420).

Even as a slave, Fernando's activities were reflective of his commitment to defend the Catholic faith, but as his master, the King of Fez failed to demonstrate the compassion and generosity of spirit expected of a Ruler. Fernando's natural heroism stands out in stark contrast with the king's actions, allowing him to overcome his circumstances just as he will later triumph over death. Fernando cites examples from nature and the animal kingdoms to demonstrate the ideal functioning of social hierarchy. In this last comparison between Fernando and the King of Fez, the slave teaches the king how to rule justly. After chastising the King of Fez for using his position to enforce his blind rigor, Fernando reiterates that his own constancy has been divinely motivated: "firme he de

estar en mi fe; / porque es el sol que me alumbra, / porque es la luz que me guía, / es el laurel que me ilustra" (III, 562-565). Faith is the sole guide and purpose for Fernando's actions. His suffering and captivity have been endured only as a means of protecting the newly christianized city of Ceuta, not as a personal clash of wills between himself and the Moorish ruler. Realizing, however, that the King of Fez may think that by rigorously overseeing Fernando's demise in captivity has defeated the Christian prince, Fernando claims victory not for himself, but for the Church. His personal defeat, death in captivity, will be avenged by God, who will reciprocate Fernando's defense of the Catholic faith: "No has de triunfar de la Iglesia; / de mí, si quieres, triunfa: / Dios defenderá mi causa, / pues yo defiendo la suya" (III, 566-569). In the final analysis, the King of Fez's victory over Fernando is hollow. The capture and enslavement of the prince was motivated by pettiness and spite, but Fernando's dedication to the Catholic faith will ultimately triumph.

The triumph of Fernando's faith follows his death and is revealed by his reappearance as a spirit. This spiritual resurrection is the culmination of what may be viewed as Fernando's parallel to the biblical passion of Christ. Norval argues that Fernando's decent from prince to captive and finally to slave re-enacts Christ's decent from God to man and ultimately to that of a victim of crucifixion (20). The "manto capitular" which Fernando wore in life as a Christian

knight is symbolic of his victory when he reappears as a divine vision. As Reichenberger points out, before his resurrection Fernando suffers two deaths--first socially and then physically. When Fernando is captured in battle by the Moors and his social position is reduced to that of a slave rather than a prince, his noble identity is lost and he suffers what he perceives as a civil death: "perdí el ser, luego morí" (II 402), (Reichenberger 668-669). As Fernando's social position declines and his physical death becomes increasingly immanent (III 649), he remains focused on the Catholic faith that has been his primary motivation throughout the play. Realizing that his death is near, he asks his fellow captives to inter him in the religious cloak that he wore as he began his crusade:

> Lo que os ruego,
> noble don Juan, es que luego
> que espire me desnudeis.
> En la mazmorra hallareis
> de mi religión el manto,
> que lo traje tiempo tanto;
> con éste me enterrareis
> descubierto, (III, 633-640).

The cloak which will cover Fernando in death, symbolizes the faith that he embraced in life. Just as his dedication to the Catholic faith provided Fernando with the determination to undergo great hardship in captivity, his hope is that faith will free him after death. To this end, Fernando reassures the Christian captives that the King of Fez has not triumphed over their common faith:

si el Rey fiero
ablanda la saña dura,
dándome la sepultura;
y señaladla; que espero,
que aunque hoy cautivo muero,
rescatado he de gozar
el sufragio del altar; (III, 640-646).

At the moment of his death, Fernando is as certain of victory as he professed to be at the onset of his crusade. His dedication to the Catholic faith has remained unwavering throughout his many trials and sufferings and allows him to accept, without fear, his physical death. After Fernando's death and his assumed burial, shrouded as he requested in the cloak of his order, the Portuguese army arrives on the African beaches where the play began. As don Enrique and King Alfonso, unaware of Fernando's death, plan their attack to rescue the Christian prince from captivity, Fernando's image appears before them urging them to proceed and assuring them of God's support of their cause. The spiritual image of Fernando vows to lead them to Fez where they will be victorious:

Sí ayuda,
porque obligando al cielo,
que vió tu fe, tu religión, tu celo,
hoy tu causa defiende.
Librarme a mi de esclavitud pretende,
porque, por raro ejemplo,
por tantos templos, Dios me ofrece un templo;
y con esta luciente antorcha desasida del oriente,
tu ejército arrogante
alumbrando he de ir siempre delante,
para que hoy en trofeos
iguales, grande Alfonso, a tus deseos,
llegues a Fez, no a coronarte agora,
sino a librar mi ocaso en el aurora (III 702-716).

As might be expected, Enrique is doubtful of what he sees, but Alfonso is firm in his faith. Demonstrating the same dedication to faith that Fernando had, Alfonso leads his troops to battle saying: "si es de Dios la gloria, / no digas guerra ya, sino victoria" (III 719-720). The Christian attack of Fez is of course won, led by the image of Fernando.

Fernando's spiritual resurrection is the culmination of his heroism in that it allows him to overcome both the civil and physical deaths he endured. His nobility is restored as he leads the Portuguese army to victory, thereby winning a military victory as well as spiritual triumph for Catholicism. Because of his enduring faith, Fernando's earthly death is regarded not as an end, but as a transition to religious immortality. Ultimately, Fernando's faith and constancy triumph on all levels. Nationally, the Moors are defeated by the Christian army and personally, in his conflict with the King of Fez, Fernando's faith exceeds the stubbornness of the King which could last only as long as Fernando lived. The goals which Fernando set, motivated by his faith, are met. His exemplary compliance with the secular and religious codes governing the actions of a Christian knight make his spiritual immortality that of a saint and a martyr as well as that of a hero.

While the imminence of Fernando's death is never explicitly prophecies as was seen in the previously discussed

plays, he is always conscious of its possibility and once captured accepts its inevitability. The bad omens which Enrique fears are rejected by Fernando, just as he would have rejected any prediction or prophecy regarding his fate. According to Fernando, belief in such things is unbefitting of a Christian, and therefore would have had no bearing on the course of his actions. Death for Fernando is simply accepted as an inevitable part of life. And as a Christian, he welcomes the opportunity to face death defending his faith.

Throughout the play, Fernando's actions as a Christian knight are guided by his belief and dedication to his faith and his society. He his the embodiment of the ideals of heroism in the Spanish Golden Age. As Reichenberger concludes: "El príncipe constante leaves us at one with ourselves and with the ordained order of the world, both human and divine" (670).

NOTES

1.See Maria Norval, Bruce Wardropper and Gascón Vera, whose studies of Christian elements in *El príncipe constante* will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

2.Preston Roberts. "A Christian Theory of Dramatic Tragedy." *The Journal of Religion* 31.1 (1951): 1-20/

3.James Parr. "*El príncipe constante* and the issue of Christian Tragedy."

4.Sullivan summarizes Lacan's psychoanalytic theory of the *moi* and the *je* as follows:

> The formation of Lacan's *je* begins in the period between eighteen months to two years, ie., after the perceived intervention of the father (or some other "third term"), and coincides with the time that the child learns to speak. Language use (the articulation of signifiers to substitute for the signified, referential world) is also an alienating experience because of its implicit displacement. Both language and the father's presence act as dividing forces on the infant's ego by teaching essential psychosocial *desiderata* such as difference, individuation, renunciation, compromise and law. As we have seen, the father's "name" has been symbolized in the infant's psyche as social power, and has spelled an end to the paradise of primeval union. Thus through language and authority, the child enters the alienated order of cultural convention and myths, and must learn to repress early desires and postpone gratification in order to live by the codes of society.
>
> The relationship of Lacan's system to tragedy would lie in the effect of repression and submission to the "law of the Name of the Father" which are not achieved without heavy cost to the emotions of the individual. The unconscious *moi* never ceases to yearn for a reliable security or feel tempted to commit anti-social and irrational acts to spite the artificial laws of the social order. Love, moreover, will always spring, from that glowing source of psychic energy, not from the obedient, socialized persona. By acceding to the social order in ordinary life, however, the individual reenacts the submission that has been learned at an early age, and which is inseparable from language. Thus, while Lacan's paternal law is intangible and does not derive from maleness *per se*,

its impact is real. Its universality in human development exerts an immense power over societies and the preservation of societal structures, if not of psychic health, and requires that everyone submit to this necessity.

Now the moi, as the seat of unconscious desire, of alienated beliefs, and specular identifications, is actually the more powerful partner in this moi-je relationship. Moreover, the moi's functions are by definition unconscious and inaccessible to the conscious subject, the je. But the je has the principal task of mediating communication in society, in negotiating the arbitrary conventions and codes of society, of language, and the symbolic order. The moi is characterized by yearning and longing for absolute freedom, unity,and possession of the Other. The je, however, must often set aside these impulses in a repression of desire, in the name of a more artificial, but necessary social desirability. The je, in a word, must constantly sacrifice personal freedom to social necessity, and resacrifice the desire of the moi to the law of the Name-of-the-Father (Question of Christian Tragedy, 65).

5.For example, when discussing the element of anagnorisis in tragedy, Parr offers an alternate interpretation of what is traditionally accepted as a sudden insight, awakening or realization that one's actions have been misguided. Rather than look for anagnorisis in the Christian tragic hero, Parr transposes this element of tragedy to the reader:

> In a Christian martyr drama, it is unlikely that the hero will display a sudden recognition, insight, or awakening to reality, for he has been guided throughout by devotion to a set of immutable principles and by the absolute certainty that his cause is just. The only possible anagnorisis for such an individual would be the shocking realization that all was in vain, that he had been misguided, that his suffering was for naught....Whatever anagnorisis derives from El príncipe constante must therefore be sought in the reader/spectator. The anagnorisis in this instance is, I believe, a thematic one consisting of the realization that not only are great courage and nobility required to remain constant to one's values in the face of overwhelming opposition, but also that heroic constancy to the faith is ultimately rewarded through transcendence, through transformation of the corruptible into the sublime (171).

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THE MAKING OF A HERO: TIRSO'S SAINTLY BANDOLERO

All heroes are not created equal. And the smooth path that Licurgo, Numancia and Fernando followed to symbolic immortality is not always open to those who would take it. In Tirso's El condenado por desconfiado (c. 1635), the dual protagonists, Paulo and Enrico, lose their ways on the road to heroism and the symbolic immortality to which it leads. While the previous chapters of the present study have been dedicated to following the successful quests for immortality undertaken by exemplary heroes, this chapter will concentrate on Tirso's characterization of Enrico and Paulo; their potential as heroes, their realization as anti-heroes and their attempts to deny the finality of death by some means of symbolic immortality.

As has previously been discussed, the fear of death and the desire to overcome its finality have great power to motivate human activity (Becker, ix). Reluctant to accept that one's existence is finite, human beings strive to stand apart, to be recognized, to become heroes. Such was the case with Licurgo, Numancia and Fernando, who stood above the rest exemplifying the ideals that their societies presented: honor and/or Catholicism. Given their social and religious climates, the heroism achieved by the previous three

protagonists was anticipated and accepted because, as Becker points out: "The social hero-system into which we are born marks out paths for our heroism, paths to which we conform, to which we shape ourselves" (82). What happens, then, to those who cannot or will not conform to society's mold? When individuals feel that the heroic plan that society has mapped out for them is beyond their reach or no longer relevant, what recourse do they have? For those unable to give up the need to stand apart, but equally unable to do so by traditionally accepted means, one possible alternative is anti-heroism. That alternate route is the path taken by Enrico and Paulo.

Before entering into a discussion of each one's motivation and the manner in which Enrico's and Paulo's lives reflect different facets of the human drive to excel and achieve some means of immortality, I believe that a brief review of the play's action will be helpful.

Paulo, having lived for ten years as a hermit, is disturbed by a dream that depicts his death and damnation. Shaken, he asks God for a sign that he will be saved, but the Devil intervenes and, disguised as an angel, tells him to go in search of Enrico, whose final destiny he will share. When Paulo finds Enrico and learns that he is a notorious criminal, he recalls the Devil's prediction and, vowing to earn for himself the damnation that he is sure awaits Enrico, turns to a life of crime. Enrico, although on the surface devoid of redeeming qualities, possesses a devout love for his father

and an abstract faith in God's mercy, characteristics that go unrecognized by Paulo. In the end, Enrico converts his anti-heroism into sainthood by confessing to God and is granted salvation. Paulo, however, fails to overcome his doubts and is condemned.

Throughout the play, a strange duality exists between Paulo and Enrico, who at first seem polar opposites: a saint and a sinner. But the "saint" is damned and the "sinner" is saved and although there is little interaction between the two, they are connected by an erroneous prophecy, offered in response to Paulo's dream of death, that predicts a shared destiny: "...el fin que aquél tuviere, / ese fin has de tener" (283-284). The cause and effects of this prediction, rather than the prophecy itself, are central to a study of the heroic potential inherent to each one's character since, as has been shown in the previous dramas, the ability to face impending death and remain true to one's self is among the greatest characteristics of a hero.

This ability to defend one's convictions, under whatever circumstances, reveals the strength of character necessary for heroism; Enrico possesses it, Paulo does not. As Becker discusses the variable capacity that each individual has for heroism, he points out: "that a person is stuck with his character, that he can't evolve beyond it or without it" (276). A fundamental difference between Enrico and Paulo lies in each one's character, that element of their being that both

structures and limits their potential as heroes. In my opinion, Paulo's and Enrico's endeavors, heroic or otherwise, are simply manifestations of the desire to deny death by the only means each one's character would allow. I will demonstrate that Paulo's failed heroism, a ten-year hermitage, is motivated by fear rather than vocation and doomed by an inescapable weakness of character. When his faith and attempt at spiritual heroism are tested, his lack of character leads him to rebel against the lifestyle he hoped would be his means of immortality. Unable to cope with the demands of Christian heroism as dictated by Catholicism, he consciously chooses to become an anti-hero. Enrico's anti-heroism, however, was born of a genuinely heroic desire to stand apart. Lacking the nobility recognized by society as a prerequisite for traditional heroism, he embarked upon his own path, anti-heroism.[1] In the end, the inherent strength of character that allowed him to excel as an anti-hero enables him to fulfill his desire to deny death by more heroic means. Ultimately, the heroic potential of each protagonist is linked to his underlying nature, rather than the means first chosen to stand apart from the rest. For insight into the psychological make-up of Enrico and Paulo, I turn to A. A. Parker's "Santos y bandoleros en el teatro español del siglo de oro" which will afford a greater appreciation of the heroism and anti-heroism undertaken by these two protagonists on their quests for immortality.

Parker discusses what I have called character, in terms of passions: "pasiones fuertes" and "pasiones débiles". Whereas Paulo exemplifies weak passions which lead to sheep-like compliance with the status quo, Enrico is endowed with strong passions that, although initially misguided, represent energy, vitality and incline one towards a noble and generous life (400).[2] This disparity of character or "pasión" is responsible, in Parker's opinion, for Enrico's ability as well as Paulo's inability to achieve sainthood, the ideal of Christian heroism:

> Los teólogos definen la santidad como la virtud heroica, y el heroísmo o la valentía es una cualidad pasional e impulsiva, independiente de la razón y de la voluntad.... Uno podrá tener la convicción intelectual de que la mejor vida es la del santo, pero es imposible ser santo con solo esforzar la voluntad, puesto que el abondono total, abnegado y ardiente al amor divino requiere (además de la gracia divina) un fuerte impulso de la pasión y presupone el don natural y vital del heroísmo. (401)

If, as Parker suggests, sainthood is directly correlated with heroism in that it requires passionate conviction and extraordinary character rather than a simply intellectual acknowledgement that the ideals to which one must aspire are worthy, then Paulo's failed hermitage and Enrico's ultimate salvation may be better understood. Because Paulo lacked the passion and natural heroism that Enrico possessed, his calculated attempts at sainthood were doomed. The weakness of his faith precludes the complete self-abandonment to Divine

love that ultimately saves Enrico.

The first example of Paulo's weak passions and superficial virtue are seen early in the first act. As he comes out of his cave, praising the beauty of God's nature around him, the audience accepts him for what he appears to be, a virtuous hermit glorifying his Creator. His true motivation is revealed, however, as he states that his hermitage was undertaken for his own good, easing the rigors of the virtuous life he knows he should lead:

> bendito seas mil veces,
> inmenso Dios que tanto bien me ofreces!
> Aquí pienso seguirte
> ya que el mundo dejé para bien mío.
> Aquí pienso servirte,
> sin que jamás humano desvarío,
> por más que abra la puerta
> el mundo a sus engaños, me divierta. (63-70)

Paulo's retreat to the woods was motivated by conceit rather than vocation, having left civilization, not for God, but for his own future benefit. The nature that surrounds him is beautiful not because it reveals to him the harmony of God's creation, but because it shields him from worldly temptations. Not so much a saint as a coward, Paulo's apparent lack of vice is due not to restraint but to retreat. His hermitage is a farce; by removing himself from all temptation he has lessened the probability of sin, retreating only geographically, not spiritually. Because he is unable, under normal circumstances, to fulfill the ideals of a Christian life, he compensates for his lack of character with an egocentric plan

to achieve the appearance of heroism. Although on the surface Paulo is perceived as a saintly model of self-sacrifice and devotion, he reveals himself as a cowardly hypocrite who hides behind a heroic image as superficial as his faith. Parker looks beyond the surface of both protagonists and concludes that it was Enrico, not Paulo, who was destined for sainthood (412).

Angel Delgado Gómez concurs with Parker's assertion that Paulo was never intended as the play's hero stating: "Tirso no quiso en ningún momento ver en Paulo un modelo de santidad" (30). Because faith is the cornerstone of sainthood and Paulo's faith is superficial at best, Delgado characterizes Paulo's entire hermitage as an example of his absolute egotism. Regarding Paulo's lack of spiritual motivation and the selfishness of his quest for immortality, Delgado states:

> Toda su existencia se mueve exclusivamente en función de su salvación personal. Su condición de ermitaño no tiene ningún valor propio, sino que actúa de mero instrumento para llevar a cabo felizmente el negocio de su participación en la eternidad. Paulo nunca piensa en el bien, la virtud, el amor o la caridad, porque su alma desconoce todo espíritu religioso. (30)

As Delgado points out, Paulo's version of Christianity lacks the purity of faith characteristic of true saints. From the beginning, he is preoccupied, not with Christian works and ministry to others, but with ensuring himself a smooth progression from hermit to saint. When this process is

interrupted by a disturbing dream, his faith is so weak that he readily accepts an ambiguous prediction from an apparent angel (245-284). Rather than return to a hermit's life, secure in the knowledge that his good intentions would be recognized by God in his hour of judgement, Paulo ventures out to find the man whose fate he would share. His lack of faith in God's justice is again demonstrated when he incorrectly concludes that Enrico is beyond salvation and decides to earn the fate he judges Enrico to merit:

> bandolero quiero ser,
> porque así igualar pretendo
> mi vida con la de Enrico,
> pues un mismo fin tenemos.
> Tan mal tengo de ser
> como él, y peor si puedo;
> que pues ya los dos estamos
> condenados al infierno,
> bien es que antes de ir allá
> en el mundo nos venguemos. (978-987)

Assuming that the immortality that had been the sole motivation of his hermitage was lost, Paulo rejected the seemingly devout lifestyle that he practiced and turned instead to a rebellious life of crime. His act of rebellion against God and society reveals a lack of understanding of Christian salvation. Rather than accept spiritual immortality as a gift from God in recognition of one's striving to meet Christian ideals, Paulo expected immortality as something due to him in exchange for maintaining an appearance of faith, no matter how superficial.

Uncomfortable with his potential for heroism and limited by a weakness of character, Paulo attempted to fabricate his own sainthood according to accepted guidelines. When it became apparent that his attempts at heroism might go unrewarded, he lashed out at the system he had been unable to uphold. In a desperate need to stand apart and having failed at sainthood, he turned instead to the life of a bandolero, to anti-heroism.

While Paulo's criminal activity is undeniably inspired by his counterpart, Enrico, the underlying motivations of each one's anti-heroism are as important to an understanding of Paulo's damnation and Enrico's salvation as are their potentials for heroism. Whereas Paulo consciously became a bandit to avenge himself of God's supposed injustice, Enrico seems to have stumbled into his anti-heroics and, finding that he excelled, stuck with it. Discussing the atypical heroism of marginal characters such as Enrico, Parker cites the Medieval English legend of Robin Hood and the Spanish bandit Rocaguinarda, pointing out that anti-social types are often idealized as heroes of protest and rebellion against an unjust social system (396). While there is no evidence that Enrico's crimes were nobly inspired by a desire to re-establish social justice, Parker states that Enrico's passion to preserve his own dignity is in principle, the same, and therefore heroic.[3]

Enrico's heroism, atypical as it may be, is often overlooked because of his apparent lack of redeeming

qualities. However, if we return to the premise that the mark of a hero is the ability to remain true to one's self even when faced with death, then it becomes clear that Enrico, from the beginning, had a greater potential for heroism than did Paulo. Early in the drama, Paulo's weakness of character and lack of heroic potential is demonstrated by his reaction to the possibility of his death. Overcome by fear, he relates to his companion Pedrisco details of a dream:

> Qué desventura!
> Y qué desgracia cierta, lastimosa!
> El sueño me venció, viva figura
> (por lo menos imagen temerosa)
> de la muerte cruel; y al fin rendido,
> la devota oración puse en olvido. (139-144)

This mere dream of death terrifies Paulo to such a degree that he forgets the devotion and prayers that supposedly motivated his hermitage and sets in motion a course of events that will lead him to a life of crime and damnation and witness the conversion and salvation of the bandit Enrico. Paulo's commitment to Christian heroism is so weak that it is destroyed by a dream. Therefore, if the ability to remain true to one's self in the face of death is the mark of a hero, then Paulo's potential for heroism is minimal. His character and passion for heroism are as weak as his faith.

However misguided, Enrico possesses the raw material for heroism--courage and confidence: "Este es valiente, arrojado; con perfecta confianza en sí mismo ha adoptado una actitud resuelta (aunque equivocada) ante la vida" (Parker, 412).

Whereas Paulo is motivated by an obsessive fear of death and condemnation, causing him to escape into a faithless hermitage, Enrico remains true to his character and fearlessly faces life and death with unshakable confidence. According to Parker, this confidence is the root of Enrico's heroism and, exaggerated to the point of arrogance, also of his vices:

> Sus vicios son la expresión de la arrogancia: no una arrogancia intelectual sino más bien física, el orgullo de descollar, de querer dominarlo todo, de hacer que un mero gesto suyo infunda miedo en todo el mundo; y esto para demostrar que él mismo no conoce lo que es el miedo; ninguna cosa le puede hacer temblar. (413)

Whereas Paulo was motivated by fear (primarily of death), Enrico was motivated by a need to prove his fearlessness. His anti-heroism derives not from an inherent evil, but from an exaggerated drive to be heroic and a perversion of accepted social heroism. His criminal activity is meant to demonstrate a fearlessness of reprisal or punishment in life. Therefore, in overstated attempts to prove his "heroism", he flaunts his triumph over the fear of death and condemnation by refusing to confess to God when death appears imminent. When Enrico is met with the threat of execution by Paulo's band of criminals, he resolutely awaits the arrows that are aimed at him, refusing to show any sign of fear: "Pues no por aqueso pienso / mostrar flaqueza ninguna" (1771-1772). When Paulo comes to him, dressed again as a hermit and offering him the opportunity to confess, Enrico refuses. When challenged, he

assures Paulo that he is a Christian, but declines the opportunity to confess:

> Paulo: ¿No sois, pues cristiano?
> Enrico: Sí soy.
> Paulo: No lo sois, pues no admitís
> el último bien que os doy.
> ¿Por qué no lo recibís?
> Enrico: Porque no quiero. (1809-1813)

Although Enrico states that he does not want to confess, it seems that something other than lack of desire is holding him back. Parker explains that Enrico's arrogance is so great that he cannot bring himself to confess, even when he wants to, because to do so would be, for him, an act of weakness:

> El motivo ha de buscarse en su carácter. Sus crímenes han sido para él la expresión de su sentido de arrogante superioridad, mediante los cuales ha querido demostrar que no tiene miedo a nada. El confesarse sería la admisión pública de que no domina él la vida y de que teme a la muerte. (413-414)

Parker's opinion that to confess would be perceived by Enrico as an outward signal of fear and lack of control, is echoed by R. Y. Oakley who, when discussing the need for Enrico to control his fear, states: "La idea de que las pasiones deberían controlarse iba acompañada de otra: la necesidad de abrazar la muerte, de no temerla, como hace Paulo desde el principio. Enrico se caracteriza, en cambio, por su indiferencia ante la muerte" (501). Although strangely perverted, Enrico's refusal to confess demonstrates his "heroic" ability to confront death and maintain the code of conduct that he has adopted.

Exaggerated to the point of error, Enrico's need to prove himself by remaining true to his peculiar code of conduct is again demonstrated by a second refusal to confess. Jailed and awaiting execution, he is offered confession a second time, but refuses, citing inability to recall the many offenses he has perpetrated against God:

> ¿Qué cuenta daré yo a Dios
> de mi vida, ya que el trance
> último llega de mí?
> ¿Yo tengo de confesarme?
> Parece que es necedad:
> ¿Quién podrá ahora acordarse
> de tantos pecados viejos?
> ¿Qué memoria habrá que baste
> a recorrer las ofensas
> que a Dios he hecho? Más vale
> no tratar de aquestas cosas.
> Dios es piadoso y es grande;
> su misericordia alabo;
> con ella podré salvarme. (2393-2406)

Just as he professed his Christianity to Paulo when he first refused confession, here Enrico rejects only the act of confession, not his faith in God's capacity to forgive him. As proof of that faith, Enrico expresses his belief that God's clemency will be enough to save him. More important than his wayward passion to challenge both life and death and prove his fearlessness, Enrico's abstract faith demonstrates a potential for Christian heroism that is inherent to his character and lacking in Paulo's.

While Paulo seems motivated solely by appearances and fear, Enrico lives his life, however misguided, true to himself and his beliefs. Although acting in accordance with

a feeling that he had been criminally inclined since birth: "Yo nací mal inclinado." (722), Enrico does maintain one redeemable trait which guides him back to a more heroic path to symbolic immortality. Despite his anti-social "heroics", Enrico loves and respects his father: "mi viejo padre sustento, / que ya le conoceréis por el nombre de Anareto" (872-874). This love for his father is, according to Delgado, the motivation for the eleventh-hour confession that seals Enrico's conversion and salvation: "El amor desinteresado que Enrico profesa a su padre es por tanto el factor decisivo que culmina su proceso de conversión en buen ladrón" (34). While such a late confession, made at his father's request, might be unlikely to inspire confidence in the depth of Enrico's faith, it does reveal a fundamentally heroic trait in his character. Although he had previously rejected opportunities to confess, unwilling to compromise his own code of conduct, the inability to deny his father's last request of him--that he repent--demonstrates a dedication to his father that supercedes all else.

Although consistency to his code of conduct and dedication to his father may be accepted as evidence of some underlying heroism in Enrico's persona, it admittedly does little to explain his sainthood and worthiness of Christian immortality. The matter of Enrico's salvation, given his faith in God as related to his relationship with his father Anareto, is taken up by Raymond Conlon in "Enrico in El

<u>condenado por desconfiado</u>: a Psychoanalytical View". Basing his study of Enrico's character on the Freudian premise that humanity's perception of God is modeled after the relationship between child and father (175-177), Conlon states:

> His story in many ways dramatically prefigures the Freudian insight linking the individual's vision of God to his perception of his father. In fact, all of Enrico's feelings, attitudes, and expectations regarding the divine are unconsciously modeled on his relationship with his parent, Anareto. (173)

If the reader accepts that Enrico's relationship with Anareto is reflective of his relationship with God, then his final confession and salvation may be more credible. At first, because Enrico's relationship with God is on the surface less developed than Paulo's, he is not the obvious choice when looking for a Christian hero. However, when Enrico's relationship with Anareto (symbolic of his relationship with God) is compared to Paulo's superficial faith, it becomes clear that neither character may be judged according to appearances alone. For all of Paulo's noisy professions of faith and shows of apparent piety, his relationship with God lacks the very qualities on which Enrico's devotion to his father is built. Throughout the course of the drama, Enrico states and demonstrates his love, respect and obedience to his father. By comparison, Paulo, unable to give himself over to God's will without reservation, fails to act on his so-called faith, revealing its shallowness by rejecting it when tested.

The first demonstration of Enrico's almost religious dedication to his father takes place in the second act. After the long tale of crimes with which Enrico is associated at the end of act one (722-885), the audience may be ready to agree with Paulo's assumption that Enrico is destined for eternal condemnation (922-927). And when his evening plans of robbery and assassination are revealed (1012-1047), there is little to sway this opinion. However, when Enrico's companions leave and his thoughts turn to his father, another more humane facet of his character is revealed and with it are revealed the seeds of his Christian heroism and sainthood.

As Enrico makes his way to Anareto's house, he speaks of the love and respect he has for the elderly father he has supported for five years. This devotion to Anareto is the only virtue Enrico recognizes in himself. While it may be true that he lacks many other redeeming qualities, he looks upon this relationship with his father as sacred, guarding it religiously: "Que esta virtud solamente / en mi vida destraída / conservo piadosamente" (1068-1070). Ironically, Paulo earlier used this same expression when he was living as a hermit, but rather than acting on his professed devotion to God the way Enrico does for Anareto, Paulo asked God to act on his behalf: "siempre me conservéis piadosamente" (74).

Differences between Enrico's and Paulo's understandings of devotion are seen as well in matters of obedience, and their expectations of acceptance and forgiveness when that

obedience is lacking. Enrico, embodying this heroic virtue, regards obedience as his foremost responsibility to his father:

> Que es deuda al padre debida
> el serle el hijo obediente.
> En mi vida le ofendí,
> ni pesadumbre le di:
> en todo cuanto mandó
> obendiente me halló
> desde el día en que nací; (1071-1077)

He states that he has spent his life obeying his father's every request, and demonstrates his continued desire to please and care for Anareto, stating: "Todo esto y más ha de hacer / el que obediencia profesa" (1126-1127). Unlike Enrico who was motivated by his father's needs and his personal commitment to obey, Paulo chooses obedience only when it suits him, demonstrating that it is as self-serving as his faith. After presumptuously asking God for a sign of his fate, rather than relying on faith that he would be saved, Paulo is deceived by the Devil and happily obeys the direction to go to Naples and seek out Enrico, hoping to find a great saint: "A obedeceros me aplico, / mi Dios; nada me desmaya, / pues vos me mandáis que vaya / a ver al dichoso Enrico" (317-321). Certain that he will find the proof of his salvation in Enrico, Paulo is more than willing to obey. Just as faith that is untested by doubt is easy to maintain, obedience is easily rendered when it corresponds to one's own wishes. Therefore, the spirit in which it is rendered reveals much about its value. Paulo's obedience never extends beyond that

behavior which he sees to be in his own best interest. Enrico, however, obeys Anareto's wishes even when they conflict with his own. His desire to please his father is so great that just the presence of Anareto is enough to deter him from his crimes:

> No me atrevo, aunque mi nombre
> tiene su altivo renombre
> en las memorias escrito,
> intentar tan gran delito
> donde está durmiendo este hombre. (1215-1219)

If only Anareto were always present, the respect that Enrico has for his father would keep him from offending him with his crimes:

> Un hombre eminente
> a quien temo solamente
> y en esta vida respeto,
> que para el hijo discreto
> es el padre muy valiente.
> Si conmigo le llevara
> siempre, nunca yo intentara
> los delitos que condeno,
> pues fuera su vista el freno
> que la ocasión me tirara. (1220-1229)

Recalling Conlon's opinion that Enrico's relationship with Anareto is the basis for his understanding of God, the thought of an omnipresent father as a deterrent to misbehavior is very similar to the idea of an ever-watching God. This sense that the "Father" is watching reveals another difference in the characters of Enrico and Paulo; the fatherly presence that would tame Enrico's behavior is a justification for rebellion in Paulo's mind.

Believing himself condemned already, it is the very knowledge that God is watching and will witness his conversion to a life of crime that makes it worthwhile for Paulo. He explains himself to God, revealing again that his motives are self-serving:

> Señor, perdona
> si injustamente me vengo;
> tú me has condenado ya;
> tu palabra, es caso cierto
> que atrás no puede volver.
> Pues, si es ansí, tener quiero
> en el mundo buena vida,
> pues tan triste fin espero.
> Los pasos pienso seguir
> de Enrico. (1000-1009)

He recognizes that his actions will be wrong in God's eyes, but in his opinion, if God is not going to grant him immortality after ten years of fasting and boredom, he may as well enjoy himself while he can. By calling his change of lifestyle the pursuit of "buena vida"--the good life, he removes any doubt surrounding the sincerity of his hermitage. He was never motivated to obey God's word because of a belief that it was the right thing to do, he only played along, hoping to win immortality for keeping up appearances. Unfortunately, because he is so guided by the superficial, Paulo chooses to follow the footsteps of the Enrico he sees on the surface rather than the Enrico motivated by devotion to his father.

Returning to Conlon's premise that Enrico's relationship with Anareto is symbolic of an underlying connection to God,

a justification of Enrico's salvation and Paulo's condemnation may be undertaken. As has been discussed, Enrico's actions with regard to Anareto are more in line with the ideals of Christianity than are the hollow professions of faith offered by Paulo. The respect, love and obedience that Enrico shows Anareto is also accompanied by a blind faith in his father's acceptance. As Conlon points out, this assurance of acceptance and forgiveness from his father is extended into a nebulous faith of the same from God:

> For [Enrico], the deity is a cosmic father, one just like his earthly one, forgiving and magnanimous. Enrico manufactures a parallel between the acceptance which, despite his crimes, he receives from Anareto, and the forgiveness and salvation which, despite his sins, he expects from the Supreme Being. (175)

This belief in forgiveness represents a fundamental difference between Enrico and Paulo. Both fall short of Christian ideals; Enrico's crimes outweight the redemptive relationship with his father, and Paulo's conceit and conversion to crime nullify his seemingly devout ten-year hermitage. What ultimately saves Enrico and condemns Paulo is the ability or inability to trust in God's divine grace. Paulo concludes too quickly that Enrico is beyond salvation:

> Pues al cielo, hermano mío,
> ¿cómo ha de ir éste, si vemos
> tantas maldades en él,
> tantos robos manifiestos,
> crueldades y latrocinios,
> y tan viles pensamientos? (922-927)

Forgetting the Christian doctrine of forgiveness rather than judgement, Paulo looks no further than Enrico's crimes before condemning him. In addition to dooming Enrico and demonstrating his own lack of mercy, he forsakes any faith he might have had in God's clemency, and adds his own name to the list: "...si éste se va al infierno, / ...al infierno tengo de ir" (919-920) and sets out to earn his reward. Given the Devil's deceptive message that they would share an equal fate, Paulo's initial despair could be overlooked. But he commits himself to earning damnation with more zeal than he ever demonstrated as a hermit.

Having returned to the forest, as Paulo endeavors to commit his first crime, a voice rings out, imploring him to reconsider God's clemency and request the forgiveness that is never denied:

> No desconfíe ninguno,
> aunque grande pecador,
> de aquella misericordia
> de que más se precia Dios. (1471-1474)
> ....
> Con firme arrepentimiento
> de no ofender al Señor,
> llegue el pecador humilde,
> que Dios le dará perdón. (1479-1482)
> ....
> Su Majestad soberana
> da voces al pecador
> por que le llegue a pedir
> lo que a ninguno negó. (1487-1490)

Paulo recognizes his own situation in the verses, but even as a mysterious shepherd tells him of God's unbounded forgiveness (1512-1596), he can accept it neither for Enrico nor for

himself (1617-1646). Paulo's doubts destroy his faith. Although he recognizes his haste in condemning Enrico: "Pues si Enrico es pecador, / ¿no puede también hallar perdon?" (1627-1629) and his own error: "...tengo a Dios enojado / por haber desconfiado / de su piedad" (1620-1622), he is still unable to trust in redemption. While Paulo is given every opportunity to embrace the Christian doctrine of forgiveness and accept it, his obsessive need for proof of spiritual immortality precludes the faith necessary for it to be granted him. Enrico, on the other hand, is led by a blind faith in God's mercy that ultimately redeems him and allows him to participate in Christian immortality.

When Enrico meets Paulo face to face, he explains his simple, yet profound, faith:

> ...siempre tengo esperanza
> en que tengo de salvarme,
> puesto que no va fundada
> mi esperanza en obras mías
> sino en saber que se humana
> Dios con el más pecador,
> y con su piedad se salva. (1994-2000)

Enrico had faith that God would care for his final destiny, whereas Paulo felt a need to earn his fate, be it salvation or condemnation. Both, I believe, were too radical in their expectations of salvation and condemnation, but Enrico's faith is admirable. Also noteworthy is his warning to Paulo that the original prediction that they share the same destiny, if it was in fact delivered by an Angel of God, might not have been fully understood: "Las palabras que Dios dice / por un

ángel son palabras, / Paulo amigo, en que se encierran / cosas que el hombre no alcanza." (1961-1964). Recognizing human fallibility in matters of Divine communication, Enrico suggests that Paulo has quite possibly condemned himself: "No dejara yo la vida / que seguías, pues fue causa / de que quizá te condenes / el atreverte a dejarla." (1965-1969). He also insightfully interprets Paulo's criminal activity as a desperate attempt to avenge himself of God's word: "Desesperación ha sido / lo que has hecho, y aun venganza / de la palabra de Dios," (1970-1972). Enrico, the wayward hero, here demonstrates a much greater understanding of faith and obedience than does the hermit Paulo.

As the two part company, the fundamental element of faith and its importance to each one's final destiny is presented to the audience:

> Enrico: Aunque malo, confianza
> tengo en Dios.
> Paulo: Yo no la tengo
> cuando son mis culpas tantas;
> muy desconfiado soy.
> Enrico: Aquesa desconfianza
> te tiene de condenar.
> Paulo: Ya lo estoy, no importa nada.
> Ah, Enrico, nunca nacieras!
> Enrico: Es verdad; mas la esperanza
> que tengo en Dios, ha de hacer
> que haya piedad de mi causa. (2040-2050)

This conversation foretells the play's denouement. Paulo, who had every opportunity to return to grace, refused it for lack of faith, whereas Enrico had the seeds of faith that, cultivated by his relationship with his father, allowed him

to repent and receive forgiveness. Until Anareto's appearance in Enrico's jail cell, his only hope for salvation had been based on an abstract belief in God's mercy, regardless of his own lack of religious confession. His feeling that God would save him made him scoff at physical death, but his refusal to confess (based on an exaggerated need to show this fearlessness) threatened the spiritual immortality he took for granted. He fails to understand fully the relationship between repentance and forgiveness, salvation and damnation, until his father implores him to confess so that: "...ansí, siendo perdonados, / será vida lo que es muerte" (2500-2501). Miraculously, Enrico's eyes are opened to the concept of forgiveness and salvation for one who sincerely repents. He offers an eloquent prayer of contrition (2532-2566), and closes: "Gran Señor, Misericordia! / No puedo deciros más" (2568-2569). Enrico's prayer is heard and after his execution his soul is escorted to the heavens by two angels. Because of his confession and repentance, the Christian salvation of Enrico's soul is assured. He is deemed a saint, a Christian hero; but Paulo's fate remains uncertain.

When Pedrisco returns to Paulo with news of Enrico's repentant death, the former hermit is too cynical to believe it. His loss of faith is now so complete that he refuses confession, not because he thinks it unnecessary for salvation as did Enrico, but because he cannot believe it will be accepted. Rejecting God's mercy, he clings to the prediction

that instigated his fall from faith: "Esa palabra me ha dado / Dios: si Enrico se salvó, / también yo salvarme aguardo" (2903-2905). Misplacing his faith in the deceptive prediction rather than in the doctrines of Christianity, Paulo dies unconfessed and is condemned. Too late, he realizes his error and his image returns, engulfed in eternal flames:

> Si a Paulo buscando vais,
> bien podéis ya ver a Paulo,
> ceñido el cuerpo de fuego
> y de culebras cercado.
> No doy la culpa a ninguno
> de los tormentos que paso:
> sólo a mí me doy la culpa,
> pues fui causa de mi daño.
> Pedí a Dios que me dijese
> el fin que tendría en llegando
> de mi vida el postrer día;
> ofendíle, caso es llano;
> y como la ofensa vio
> de las almas el contrario,
> incitóme con querer
> perseguirme con engaños. (2945-2960)

Paulo finally accepts responsibility for his actions, recognizing that the lack of faith that prompted him to ask for proof of his fate also allowed him to be deceived by the Devil's prediction. Even after he was taken in by the Devil's deceit, faith in God's mercy could have saved him, but he rejected it: "Forma de un ángel tomó / y engañóme; que a ser sabio, / con su engaño me salvara; / pero fui desconfiado / de la gran piedad de Dios," (2961-2965). His lack of faith disqualifies him as a Christian hero and causes the failure of his quest for immortality. Conversely, Enrico's symbolic immortality, spiritual salvation, is granted to him despite

the fact that he is not a typical Christian hero in the image of Fernando (El principe constante). Unlikely as he may seem, he is a hero whose passion to remain true to himself fortunately includes the seeds of faith and a profound love for his father. His passionate character and his relationship with Anareto are combined with an abstract faith in God's mercy which matures into a fuller understanding of Christianity. Enrico is not saved because of an ideal life, any more than Paulo is condemned for his sins. The denial of death granted to Enrico is due to his compliance with the Christian ideals of faith and repentance, and therein lies his heroism.

NOTES

1.Regarding Enrico's motivation towards anti-heroism, see Becker, who states: "The crisis of modern society is precisely that the youth no longer feel heroic in the plan for action that their culture has set up. They don't believe it is empirically true to the problems of their lives and times" (6). When Enrico recounts his life story in the second act, he states: "...concocéis a mi padre, / que aunque no fue caballero / ni de sangre generosa, / era muy rico; y yo entiendo / que es la mayor calidad / el tener en este tiempo" (727-733). From birth, Enrico is locked out of Golden Age Spanish society's mainstream of heroism--family nobility. Seeing wealth as the next best alternative, he pursued money with the same zeal more traditional heroes demonstrated for honor.

2.When discussing those who are endowed with weak passions and are accepted solely for their apparent compliance with society's ideals, Parker states: "Hay un cierto peligro en las pasiones débiles: el que consideremos la ausencia de grandes pecados como señal de una vida virtuosa" (400). This acceptance of superficial goodness as a signal of inherent virtue is responsible for many an initial assumption that Paulo will be the one destined for sainthood.

3.Concerning the ideals that may motivate social rebellion as depicted in Golden Age dramas such as El condenado por desconfiado, A. A. Parker states:

> De ninguna manera quiero yo menospreciar el ideal de la justicia social; pero hay otros ideales que pueden considerarse más fundamentales. Estos dramas españoles presentan tipos de conducta extremadamente antisocial, pero los presentan para propalar los ideales sobre los cuales se basa toda la vida social del hombre. En primer lugar, el amor de familia; y en segundo lugar, la dignidad humana, la valentía espiritual. (416)

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CONCLUSION

The human fear that physical death may represent complete annihilation and the inherent need to transcend that fear and deny the finality of death by achieving some means of symbolic immortality through heroic magnanimity are reflected by the protagonists of the dramas selected for this study. Echoing the human desire to avoid an unmitigated destruction of self, these protagonists seek to individualize themselves and symbolically immortalize their existence by somehow standing above and apart from the rest. This drive towards individualization and self-perpetuation leads them on a path to heroism, be it secular or spiritual, as a means of denying death's finality. The Christian and social heroism undertaken by the protagonists of the comedias studied herein and their quests for immortality illustrate the ability of the hero to tolerate physical death while focusing on a higher goal of infinite symbolic existence, thereby overcoming through acceptance the fatality of physical life.

Demonstrating the duality of physical and symbolic existence in seventeenth-century Spain, honor and Catholicism were promoted as secular and spiritual codes of conduct and by extension grew into venues for heroism and symbolic

immortality. Dishonor was the equivalent of social death, conversely transforming honor into a means of secular immortality. Analogous to honor as a means of symbolic existence, the eternal life promised by Christianity represented spiritual immortality. Therefore, heroes who excelled in compliance with the ideals presented by society or the Church achieved some sense of immortality, either culturally or spiritually. As for the protagonists studied and their successful campaigns to deny death's finality, the heroism herein demonstrated ranges from the typical to the perverse, according to both social and religious standards. Licurgo is the archetypal social hero--patriotic, valiant and bound by a code of honor that he cherishes and protects above life itself. Relinquishing his life rather than his honor, he exceeds the social standard and his secular immortality is confirmed, destining him to be remembered eternally as "El dueño de las estrellas". The Numantian heroism too, is motivated by a social code of honor; and their compliance with that code ensures that like the Phoenix, they will eternally rise from their ashes. While the heroism and resulting sense of immortality gained by Licurgo and the Numantians is secular, the consummate Christian Knight, Fernando, embodies the ideals of both honor and Catholicism, demonstrating the compatibility of the seventeenth-century religious and social codes of conduct. Following his martyrdom, the glorious image of Fernando leads his army to spiritual and physical victory

over the Moors. Therefore, his legacy is that of a great military leader as well as a saint. Finally, Enrico demonstrates a dauntless ability to rise to heroism and spiritual immortality despite a less than honorable or Christian start, revealing an inherent potential for heroism and a denial of death due to his truly magnanimous spirit.

As demonstrated by each of these protagonists, the concept of magnanimity, central to secular as well as religious heroism seen in classical and Christian traditions, joins the fear of complete annihilation as a motivation to heroic activity and unites the two predominant canons of seventeenth-century Spanish society: the honor code and Catholicism. Although at times thought to be mutually exclusive, the honor code and Catholicism are connected by the ideal of magnanimity and provided, both independently and in conjunction, the means by which protagonists aspire to heroism and symbolic immortality.

Licurgo, the hero of Alarcón's <u>El dueño de las estrellas</u>, and the heroes of Cervantes' <u>La Numancia</u> exemplify the ideals of the Spanish honor code. Licurgo, a traditional hero, with his commitment to social order and magnanimity, embodies the characteristics attributed to a Golden Age secular hero: valor, free-will, protection of and obedience to the Monarchy and above all, honor. On both personal and social levels, his actions are dictated by an internalized code of conduct which requires compliance with the spirit and ideals of honor above

all else. Truly magnanimous, Licurgo is the first to demonstrate heroic fineza, self-sacrifice for another. This altruism is seen in his self-imposed exile from Sparta on behalf of its citizens, his alliance with the King of Crete for the benefit of that nation and finally, his suicide, epitomizing his commitment to honor and an acceptance of the duality of existence. Never shrinking from his heroic inclination, Licurgo faces his mortality without flinching. By choosing to sacrifice his finite physical life on behalf of honor and in the best interest of others, Licurgo gains symbolic immortality.

The collective protagonists of Numancia too demonstrate extraordinary self-sacrifice and are deemed heroes despite military defeat. Their dedication to the ideals of honor is attested to by their stoic endurance of the Roman siege and their refusal to retreat from overwhelming adversity. Although overpowered militarily, the Numantians heroically accept their imminent death and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat by sacrificing themselves in the name of honor. Their collective death is epitomized by the suicide of the last Numantian, Bariato and they are rewarded with the ever-renewing symbolic immortality of the Phoenix.

The heroism of Licurgo and the Numantians is determined by their actions in accordance with the codes of honor they maintain and rewards them with "eternal fame" or secular immortality. A denial of death's finality is achieved by

accepting, and even inviting, the inevitability of its occurrence. The suicides of Licurgo and some of the Numantians, although in conflict with the Catholic doctrine condemning the practice, are accepted as heroic due to the pre-Christian settings of the plays. These individual and collective protagonists represent a traditional secular heroism inspired by the code of honor rather than theology and are immortalized for their excellence in preserving their codes. The principles of the honor code ascribed to by Licurgo and the Numantians, when compared to the ideals of Christian heroism witnessed in the cases of Fernando and Enrico, represents for them a type of secular religion.

Spiritual, as well as secular heroism is epitomized by don Fernando, the Christian knight in Calderón's El príncipe constante. He embodies the exemplary heroism expected of a Catholic prince by complying with the ideals of Catholicism and the code of honor. Fernando represents the pinnacle of heroism in Golden Age Spanish society and is rewarded with spiritual immortality for his efforts, demonstrating an admirable commitment to both honor and faith throughout his ordeal. The anguish of his martyrdom is followed by his resplendent appearance as a holy image leading his troops to victory over the Moors thus making his heroism complete. Christian and secular heroism become one as Fernando, having already achieved spiritual immortality, returns to his position as a military leader ensuring his symbolic secular

immortality as well.

Enrico the bandit, the unlikely hero of Tirso's El condenado por desconfiado demonstrates an alternative to the typical secular and spiritual heroism demonstrated by Licurgo, the Numantians and Fernando. In the beginning of the play, his drive to heroism is misguided and leads him to lash out against the social and religious systems that Golden Age Spanish society provided for symbolic immortality. However, an underlying strength of character and a nebulous Christian faith, reflective of his inherent passion for heroism, allow him to convert his ill-spent potential to more acceptable ends. When faced with death, Enrico recognizes the error of his ways and turns to God with a humble and contrite heart. His confession and sincere repentance are accepted and reveal the boundless faith of a true saint, whose heroism, like that of Fernando, is rewarded with spiritual immortality. On the other hand, Paulo, the antithesis of Enrico, in the beginning seems a potential hero, but a failed attempt at Christian heroism that exposes a lack of genuine faith is followed by rebellion. Lashing out against society and God by dedicating himself to a life of anti-heroism, Paulo receives in exchange a converse immortality--eternal damnation. Thus, he provides a type of counterpoint to the heroes studied, demonstrating the difference between superficial, apparent heroism and the sincere, unfeigned passion and conviction of a true hero.

Licurgo, Numancia, Fernando and Enrico are all symbolic

of the human desire to overcome mediocrity through dedication and commitment to the ideals of secular or religious codes of conduct and are recognized as heroes. Transcending the finite by reaching for the infinite, these heroic protagonists demonstrate the necessary exchange implicit to the human duality of physical and symbolic existence, and by accepting mortality, deny the finality of death.

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