

## THE CREATION OF MYTH IN CALDERÓN'S *LA DEVOCION DE LA CRUZ*

According to Domingo Ynduráin, hispanists have traditionally argued that Catholic theology informs the whole of Calderón's dramaturgy: "[L]a doctrina impregna y explica cada formulación, cada tesis parcial de nuestro autor. Las obras de Calderón, en definitiva, mostrarían el orden divino del universo en relación dialéctica con las disonancias que en ese orden introduce el hombre dotado de razón y voluntad libre" (748). According to this view, Calderón's plays depict man's struggle with a system of universal laws over which he has no control. William J. Entwistle, for example, suggests that Calderón was not an original thinker, but a craftsman who gave dramatic form to the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas. Nevertheless, at the end of his study of *El mágico prodigioso* even Entwistle must concede that Calderón's dramatic representations of doctrine are imperfect. To Menéndez y Pelayo's objection that "la ejecución" of *El mágico* "es inferior a la grandeza del pensamiento y a la severa teología de las primeras escenas," Entwistle responds that "[t]he abstract and intellectual plot of the play could not be more perfect within the framework of the given philosophy. To translate it into terms of human action and character is undoubtedly difficult. It was much better for Calderón when, in the *autos* of his last period, he was able to present his thoughts as a play of symbols only. It is hardly possible to avoid incongruence when making the abstract local and concrete" ("Justina's" 188-89).<sup>1</sup>

Entwistle notes the gap between theology and drama, but says that it is irrelevant to the understanding of Calderón. E. M. Wilson, however, suggests that Calderón's use of traditional materials is more problematic. In his classic study of the four elements, of fundamental importance for the conception of the medieval world, Wilson says that "Calderón made use of a formula... in order to concentrate on other things that interested him more" with the result that he "abused it [the formula] by too-frequent repetition and stylisation" (46). Wilson, then, suggests that Calderón made use of traditional materials to achieve other ends. Teresa Scott Soufas agrees. In her recently published study of melancholy in Golden Age literature, Soufas argues that Calderón used humoral medicine to reexamine the norms

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1. Entwistle encounters a similar problem in *La devoción de la cruz*: "In *La Devoción de la Cruz*, Julia, shut out of her convent by the chance removal of the ladder to her window, falls into despair and, as St. Thomas says, rushes into vice without rein. Every species of wickedness follows upon *desperation*, and the point is made by Calderón who causes Julia to rush into banditry and commit five or six murders right off the reel, though it is, perhaps, surprising that so young a convent-bred girl should have had the technical skill to do so" ("Justina's 180).

and values of post-Tridentine Spain. The melancholic protagonists of Calderón's honor dramas have secular minds with a "propensity toward excessive thought" (89). But while Soufas goes further than other *calderonistas* to show how Calderón anticipates a "new epistemological order that values highly the autonomous, secular mind" (ix), she ultimately comes to the same conservative conclusions as her predecessors, saying that "[t]he secular mind that thinks too independently is shown to be faulty and dangerous, and the society that applauds or tolerates such intellectual activity is depicted as disorderly from the royal figure on down" (100). I would submit, however, that we should not confuse a thinker who used traditional materials with a traditional thinker. The theoretical underpinnings of previous interpretations of Calderón have led critics to believe that the playwright supported the conservative ideology of the day. Using *La devoción de la cruz*, an early and somewhat enigmatic play, as my example, I will argue that Calderón is a mythical thinker who uses traditional materials to effect revolutionary ends. Calderón does indeed depict man's struggle with a system of universal laws, but he challenges rather than supports the old order by suggesting that man is capable of independent thought.

Regardless of their approach, critics of Calderón's *La devoción de la cruz* inevitably return to a common theme: the play's strangeness as manifested in the sudden conversion of Eusebio from *bandolero* to *santo*. Numerous solutions to this problem have been proposed. W.J. Entwistle argues that, however depraved Eusebio may become, he is never wholly damned because the play "demonstrate[s] throughout the sufficiency of Grace to redeem Eusebio, and that this sufficiency [is] made efficacious at the crucial moment by the sinner's repentance" ("Santos" 479). Alexander A. Parker explores the psychological underpinnings of this theological problem, saying that the saint and the bandit share a similar vital energy. Eusebio may sin, but he does so only in order to assert his own human dignity for which he deserves the promise of Christ's redemption: "He aquí, pues, en la cruz que tiene grabada en el pecho, y que todos los hombres redimidos por la sangre de Cristo llevamos grabada en el corazón... la prueba del inmenso valor de todo hombre, por muy pecador que él sea" ("Santos" 409). Robert Sloane places the problem within a different context, arguing that Eusebio plays a variety of roles (the gentleman, the bandit and the extreme villain), which, because they are assigned to him by Curcio, constitute false selves. Banditry, then, is not a sign of Eusebio's true nature; the role he plays in God's counter-play is more in keeping with his real being because "unlike Curcio, Eusebio respects the message of the miracles and so qualifies himself for redemption. As a sinner who repents, Eusebio becomes exactly the man God needs in order to bestow (and dramatize) his forgiveness" (308).

Each of these interpretations resolves the problem of the bandit's improbable conversion by positing an external creator who exerts control over Eusebio's world. For Entwistle and Parker only God can provide a framework within which the fallen world makes sense. God's divine providence directs human action; His mercy, made manifest in the symbol of the cross, extends to all sinners the hope that they can be

reunited with their Creator after death. This theocentric critical perspective finds its translation into aesthetic terms in the metatheatrical analyses of Sloane and Wardropper. Curcio, for example, accuses his wife Rosmira of having dishonored him while he was away from home on a papal mission. He projects his own suspicious thoughts onto his innocent wife, forcing her to play opposite him in a wife-murder play whose bloody *dénouement* takes place in a secluded mountain theater:

Y aunque a veces discurría  
 en su abono, y aunque hallaba  
 verisímil la disculpa,  
 pudo en mí tanto la instancia  
 del temer que me ofendía,  
 que con saber que fué casta,  
 tomé de mis pensamientos,  
 no de sus culpas, venganza (701-708).

Cursio is Rosmira's god, a creator who determines the outcome of her life, but who, unlike Entwistle and Parker's merciful Christian deity, remains indifferent to her claims of innocence. Both the religious and the metatheatrical approaches to the play are allegorical to the extent that they both posit a wholly recoverable presence beyond the play of signifiers to which the text refers, and from which it derives its meaning.

Although Thomas Austin O'Connor in his *Myth and Mythology in the Theater of Pedro Calderón de la Barca* takes a different approach and argues that Calderón makes a world rather than merely copies a representable idea, his view of Calderonian mythology also ultimately slips back into what we have broadly called the allegorical. O'Connor, influenced by Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutics, an approach itself rooted in Heideggerian phenomenology, tries to reconcile what he calls "creative remythologizing" with a mythic ground that serves to reveal a common humanity. As he says, "all of us are involved in the creation of meanings, and, though these exist apart from the consciousness that creates them, in the last analysis these very meanings link one consciousness to another" (31). O'Connor insists that, although many sixteenth and seventeenth century Spanish poets allegorized the Greco-Roman myths in order to bring them into harmony with Christian orthodoxy, Calderón's remythologizing is not similarly reductive because, unlike his contemporaries, Calderón "sought their own unique messages and dramatized them effectively" (38). Is O'Connor implying that Calderón's dramatization of this message is a representation, copy, or imitation of a transcendental signified? Of course he might say that this is nonsense. Myth is a phenomenological horizon to which we must be open; mythic thought may reveal, but only through the hermeneutic process itself which brings being into consciousness through the mutual grasping of subject and object.

But is this, in fact, what O'Connor does say? The phenomenological underpinnings of his book lead him to consider the problem of temporality in the process of

interpretation. Interpretation is ahistorical in the sense that texts from distinct historical periods can be understood only from the perspective of the present situation of the reader:

In the passage of time there is a benefit for understanding rather than a liability. Gadamer has shown that 'temporal distance' allows the fading of certain prejudgments concerning the nature of the subject, while at the same time bringing forth those that lead to true understanding... In the act of reading, a literary text is decontextualized (decoded) from its origin only to be recontextualized (recodified) in new and different situations. The value of older texts for our own present is realized in the process of recontextualization (44).

According to O'Connor, the older texts confronted by Calderón are the pagan myths of Antiquity which he liberates by "filtering them through his own Christian mythology" (37). The Christian principles of faith, hope, and love recodify the Greco-Roman myths and provide new controlling ideas through which Calderón interprets the world. But while a new text is brought into being as a result of this process, the old tired myth recedes behind its newly formed being in the hermeneutic act. Hazard Adams would argue that what O'Connor calls a recontextualization is really the old myth incarnate in the new, but in a fallen form. The relationship between pagan myth and Christian recontextualization, then, is allegorical. Although the infusion of old myth into the new momentarily creates a symbol, "the unity of two things that belong to each other," to use Gadamer's phrase (69), as the old myth recedes behind its newly emerging form, the unity of this symbol divides and falls into allegory.

O'Connor's analysis of *La devoción de la cruz* reveals that phenomenology is well suited to a critical posture which is essentially theocentric. Following the model originally elaborated by Edwin Honig, O'Connor argues that the play is the battleground on which two competing myths belonging to two distinct planes of reality not only come into contact but vie for preeminence. Curcio, the protagonist of the secular myth of honor, pursues Eusebio, the protagonist of the Christian myth of redemption, on a field delimited by the strict rules of the code of honor. Although Curcio defeats Eusebio on the human level, Eusebio is victim turned victor; his triumph over death in the final scene allows him to recognize that true power resides only with the miraculous mercy of God. O'Connor suggests that the secular and the religious are conflated in the symbol of the cross.<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, Eusebio adopts the cross, a sign of dishonor in Ancient times, as his personal signature. As the *graciosa* Menga explains to Eusebio, unaware of his identity:

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2. O'Connor does not say this explicitly. In the section entitled "The Symbolism of the Cross" he first reminds us that the myth of honor and the myth of redemption are at cross purposes in the play. He then enumerates the various meanings attributable to the cross, saying that while for "the ancient world, the cross represented a life of dishonor, and death upon one was dishonorable" (63), for the Christian the cross stands for something very different: "First of all, the Cross symbolizes the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. . . Second, the Cross is also the sign of Christ's victory over death. . . Third, the Cross [is a] symbol of deliverance" (63-64).

Si os coge [Eusebio],  
señor, aunque no le enoje  
ni vuestro hacer ni decir,  
luego os matará; y creed  
que con poner tras la ofensa  
una cruz encima, piensa  
que os hace mucha merced (1110-1116).

Here Eusebio uses the cross as a sign of death; the number of graves bearing his mark attests to the depth of his depravity. On the other hand, as a Christian Eusebio would agree with the priest Alberto that the cross, the "celestial madero / en que animoso y fuerte, / muriendo, triunfó Cristo de la muerte" (1008-1010), is also the instrument of God's love. The cross bears both of these interpretations until Act III when the dying Eusebio pleads to the cross for God's mercy:

No seré el primer ladrón  
que en vos se confiese a Dios.  
Y pues que ya somos dos,  
y yo no lo he de negar,  
tampoco me ha de faltar  
redención que se obró en vos (2305-2310).

Eusebio identifies himself with the thief who, when crucified with Jesus, admits his guilt and asks Jesus to remember him in heaven. Jesus's reply, "Amen I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise" (Luke. 24: 43), invites all men, however depraved, to share in his resurrection. Like the thief, Eusebio is both a sinner and a man without honor. Christianity uses the cross, the ancient mark of shame, as a sign of man's deliverance from evil. In the end the Christian myth of redemption first appropriates and then transcends the secular myth of honor. As it does so, the cross as a manifestation of dishonor recedes to the past while the new transcendent myth endows, or perhaps better said, reduces the cross to an ultimate meaning, "the miraculous love for human-kind that surpasses comprehension" (O'Connor 84).

What O'Connor calls myth Hazard Adams would call antimyth. In his *Philosophy of the Literary Symbolic*, Adams, following the philosophy of Giambattista Vico, says that the first poets were true myth makers who created worlds with the constitutive power of their language. Gradually, however, what they had once contained within an imaginative circumference, is thrust to the outside and turned into

inanimate or 'sensible' objects, abstracted from their mental deities, which are relegated at this point to subjective illusions and arbitrary signs by the dominating epistemology of subject / object .... The poetic verbal universe is destroyed by a competing idea of language that claims for language only the power to point outward toward things beyond which lies nothing; or only the power to point outward to things which stand 'platonically' or

'religiously' for an order of ideas or mysterious beings disembodied behind the veil of those things (*Philosophy* 106).

Religion is antimythical because it externalizes God as an object to man's isolated, subjective, and totally passive consciousness. Our relationship to this powerful external deity is allegorical, its signs mediate the distance between subject and object. It exerts control over man through a system of abstract laws which places limits on man's freedom and subjects him to moral restraint. Myth, on the other hand, opposes the subject / object negation with the relationship of identity: "The fundamental quality of mythical thought," Adams says, "is the drive toward identity, the contrary of difference / indifference. The recognition of pure myth would be the successful taking of everything into one's own imagination and the identification of all the elements once inside *with* the whole, yet the maintenance of the individual identity of everything" (*Philosophy* 336). Within this mythic relationship man is both himself and the other, but self and other are not the same. Myth and religion are related antithetically; while both acknowledge that God and man are not one being, myth says that God is within man, not the other way around. From Adam's perspective, O'Connor is right to see *La devoción de la cruz* as the struggle between the secular and the religious; what he fails to understand is that honor and religion, as he defines them, are both antimyths, each with a code of moral laws designed to limit human freedom.

I, on the contrary, argue that *La devoción de la cruz* is a true myth whose vitality derives not from some external source, but is instead both secular and radically creative. Before I make this argument however, it is necessary first to reevaluate the notions of secular and religious. Honig, Sloane, and O'Connor, all of whom see *La devoción de la cruz* as representing a struggle between honor and Christianity, identify Curcio as a character in a "drama de honor," and cast him into the role of antagonist. He is the fallen Adam, the inferior playwright, the embodiment of the secular myth of honor. But a close reading of the text suggests that Curcio's thought process is grounded in Christian orthodoxy. St. Thomas Aquinas, whose analogical conception of the world sought to reconcile unity and heterogeneity, says that the logic of cause and effect structures the relationship between God and man.<sup>3</sup> Since

3. St. Thomas says that the world consists of finite substances which are totally dependent on God; that is, they derive their existence from an external cause. The relationship between cause and effect, however, must be considered ontologically and not temporally. As Copleston explains, "we have to image, not a lineal or horizontal series, so to speak, but a vertical hierarchy, in which a lower member depends here and now on the present causal activity of the member above it. It is the latter type of series, if prolonged to infinity, which Aquinas rejects. And he rejects it on the ground that unless there is a 'first' member, a mover which is not itself moved or a cause which does not itself depend on the causal activity of a higher cause, it is not possible to explain the 'motion' or the causal activity of the lowest member. His point of view is this. Suppress the first unmoved mover and there is no motion or change here and now. Suppress the first efficient cause and there is no causal activity here and now. If therefore we find that some things in the world are changes, there must be a first unmoved mover. And if there are efficient causes in the world, there must be a first efficient, and completely non-dependent cause" (123).

"everything existing in any way comes from God," (64) God is the first cause whose effects are His creatures. But St. Thomas goes on to say that "effects that are not as great as their causes have not the same name and reality, yet between them there must be some likeness, for the nature of action requires that any action produced should be like the agent, inasmuch as everything acts according to its own actuality. Although the form of the effect is somehow present in its transcendent cause, because it is there very differently it is both like them and unlike them... God likewise gives all perfections to things and he, therefore, is both like them and unlike them" (135). In this way St. Thomas accounts for the fact that God's creatures are distinct from each other, yet related to the same deity. Curcio has a similar notion of the relationship of cause and effect. Because effects are not identical to their causes they cannot be truly understood except as manifestations of said causes: "Mienten, mienten las leyes; / porque no alcanza / los misterios al efecto / quien no proviene la causa" (677-680). But such privileging of cause may lead to disastrous results once it becomes rigidly dogmatic. In Act II, for example, Curcio admits that although he had believe his wife's declaration that she had not dishonored him, he found himself unable to stop the course of events emanating from his own suspicious thoughts:

El que una traición intenta,  
antes mire lo que hace;  
porque una vez declarado,  
aunque procure enmendarse,  
por no decir que tuvo causa,  
lo ha de llevar adelante (1359-1364).

Meaning imposed from without by a cause or origin renders man powerless; he becomes instead a passive receptor of an external given over which he has no control. Seen in this light, the honor code is not a parody of Christian teachings; honor and Christianity are in fact similarly antimythical.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike Curcio, Eusebio, who is usually deemed to be the protagonist of the "drama religioso," understands his world in a secular way. Because there exists for St. Thomas a distance between God and man, there must also exist two orders of priority described by Paul Ricoeur as "a priority according to the thing itself, which begins with what is first in itself, that is, God; and a priority according to signification which begins with what is best known to us, that is, creatures" (278). In other words, if from the point of view of God causes have certain effects, from the point of view of man effects have certain causes. Since effects are not identical to their

4. P.N. Dunn takes this antimythical view when he claims that honor is a false god: "The vengeful husbands of Calderón's plays pursue honor as a supreme good, and such values as love and mercy are sacrificed to its demands. We may reasonably think of honor, then, as a religion in which the values of our experience are inverted" (30).

causes, proceeding from effect to cause offers man only an imperfect knowledge of God. Such is the case for Eusebio who, although he bears a birthmark in the form of a cross and had witnessed its powerful effects, is ignorant of the source of its power. After recounting to Lisardo how a lightning bolt had killed his two companions while it spared his life, Eusebio says that as he turned around:

...hallé a mi lado una Cruz,  
que yo pienso que es la misma  
que asistió a mi nacimiento,  
y la que yo tengo impresa  
en los pechos; pues los cielos  
me han señalado con ella  
para públicos efectos  
para alguna causa secreta (331-338).

Eusebio lives a life unencumbered by the demands of origins of any kind. His knowledge of the world is secular because he takes as his point of departure not God but his creatures. Furthermore, since he does not even know the identity of his own father, he is also free from abstract moral codes imposed on man by society; consequently, he must author his own life.<sup>5</sup> For Eusebio, honor is not conferred from above, it is created from within. Accordingly, he feels as worthy of Curcio's daughter Julia as any other suitor:

Pero aunque no sé quien soy,  
tal espíritu me alienta,  
tal inclinación me anima,  
y tal ánimo me fuerza,  
que por mí me da valor  
para que a Julia merezca;  
porque no es más la heredada,  
que la adquirida nobleza (339-346).

In Act I Eusebio declares himself independent of external sources that seek to control him; what he fails to appreciate, however, is that his individual freedom may place constraints on others. While Curcio and Lisardo want to prevent him from becoming Julia's husband, Eusebio announces his intention to follow his own inclinations:

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5. I use the word "author" in the sense elaborated by Edward W. Said, who draws a distinction between beginnings and origins. An individual must create the authority for a beginning by breaking with his past (his origins) and directing himself toward a new future. A beginning is "an *intentional act*—that is, an act in which designating individual X as founder of continuity Y . . . implies that X has value in having *intended* Y. Although there are other ways of identifying beginnings, this one avoids the passivity of "origins" by substituting the intentional beginning act of an individual for the more purely circumstantial existence of 'conditions'" (32).

Y pues queréis estorbar  
que yo su marido sea;  
aunque su casa la guarde,  
aunque un convento la tenga,  
de mí no ha de estar segura,  
y la que no ha sido buena  
para mujer, lo será  
para amiga (355-362).

By Act II Eusebio, now a bandit, has externalized Julia as an object to be pursued. He seeks dominion over her, not unity with her; his response to the news that she has gone to live in a convent reveals that he is motivated as much by his desire to possess her as he is by love:

Asaltaré el convento que la guarda.  
Ningún grave castigo me acobarda.  
Que por verme señor de su hermosura,  
tirano amor me fuerza  
a acometer la fuerza,  
a romper la clausura  
y a violar el sagrado;  
que ya del todo estoy desesperado (1073-1080).

Ironically enough, Eusebio's freedom from his origins has now led him to see his relationship with Julia from the point of view of cause, not effect. As the object of Eusebio's desire, Julia becomes the final cause, the cause of all his subsequent actions. As St. Thomas explains, "[T]he efficient cause is called in relation to the aim, since the aim is made actual only through the agent's operation. Conversely, the aim is called the cause of the efficient cause since the efficient cause functions only by aiming at something... The aim, therefore, is the cause of the efficient cause's causality, since it causes the efficient cause to take action ... The aim ... is called the cause of causes, since it causes the causality of all the causes (171-172). Now, St. Thomas says elsewhere that "God is everything's ultimate end as well as first principle" (50), so Eusebio's fixation on Julia could be construed as a manifestation of his desire to close the distance between himself and an external deity. But these efforts are in vain. As he is about to take possession of Julia in the convent, he flees in horror after he sees on her breast a birthmark identical to his own. In doing so he retreats from the object of his desire, the cause of his audacity, in short, a *telos*, back into the realm of the secular:

Sin gozar al fin dejé  
la gloria que no tenía;  
mas no fue la causa mía,  
causa más secreta fue;

Pues teniendo mi albedrío,  
superior efecto ha hecho  
que yo respete en tu pecho  
la Cruz que tengo en el mío (1809-1816).

According to Adams, religion as antimyth returns to true myth if it creates a "vision of potential identity—the coexistence of freedom of individual moral choice with the law and the identity of each individuality with all others" (*Philosophy* 346). We catch a glimpse of this mythic perspective in *La devoción de la cruz*. Eusebio, who does not know that Julia is in fact his sister, rejects her of his own free will ("albedrío"), even though he attributes his action to some unknown cause. In doing so, his freedom of individual moral choice comes into accord with a law prohibiting incestual relationships. Eusebio no longer projects God as a distant other; he has extended himself mythically to include God as a unique entity within himself. Although Eusebio's decision has the effect of separating him from Julia, it does not externalize her as an alien other; because they bear the same birthmark they share a common identity, even as they retain their own individual particularity.

Eusebio first considers the cross on Julia's breast as a "señal prodigiosa" (1613), a magical talisman, the ominous sign of a powerful external deity. As he reflects in his apostrophe to the cross in Act III, however, he comes to realize that the cross' meaning is not a given, but is in fact the product of his own making. Eusebio, following the method of the biblical typologists, initially understands the cross only in relation to its numerous Old Testament manifestations:

Arbol, donde el cielo quiso  
dar el fruto verdadero  
contra el bocado primero,  
flor del nuevo paraíso,  
arco de luz, cuyo aviso  
en piélago más profundo  
la paz publicó del mundo,  
planta hermosa fértil vid,  
arpa del nuevo David,  
tabla del Moisés segundo (2281-2290).

As the antitype of Adam's tree, Noah's rainbow, Moses' tablets and David's harp, the cross represents the fulfillment of all God's promises to man. Genuine typology, which, as Jean Daniélou explains, demonstrates "the unity of the two Testaments, and the superiority of the New" (1), insists both on the literality and the historicity of Sacred Scripture. Time is linear; the Old Testament is a "then," a distant past which is completed and transcended by the "now" of the New Testament.<sup>6</sup> But when Eusebio attempts to identify his individual place within this system he places a strain on the rigid historicity demanded of the typological method:

6. Rosemund Tuve attests to the historicity of the typological method when she says that typology describes a "relation, caught in the word 'type,' between history itself (actual persons, events) and revealed truth, so that

pecador soy, tus favores  
 pido por justicia yo;  
 pues Dios en ti padeció  
 sólo por los pecadores.  
 A mí me debes tus lores:  
 que por mí sólo muriera  
 Dios, si más mundo no hubiera;  
 luego eres tú Cruz por mí,  
 que Dios no muriera en ti  
 si yo pecador no fuera (2291-2300).

Eusebio finds himself in the paradoxical position of being simultaneously posterior and anterior to Christ's crucifixion. While at first the bandit reasons that since Christ died on the cross for the sake of all sinners it should therefore favor him, he goes on to say that had he not been a sinner, Christ would have had no need of the cross. So, while, strictly speaking, Eusebio follows Christ chronologically, he is at the same time the essential precondition which makes Christ's sacrifice both necessary and possible. Eusebio radically personalizes biblical typology. As he recapitulates the experiences of the Old Testament types he successfully internalizes the course of human history.<sup>7</sup> The "going beyond" of typological transcendence presupposes the subject / object split because it requires that something be left behind which is then objectified as a distant past. Mythical thought, on the other hand, insists on the presentness of history in the person of each individual. Eusebio appeals to a sign with a transcendent meaning only to discover that the power of the cross in fact resides within him; he assumes the negations Old Testament / New Testament, "then" / "now" into himself, thus opening the closed book of biblical typology to new possibilities.

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the actual people and events pre-figure or shadow what later comes to pass, and thereby fulfill the figures . . . Types properly precede the figure that fulfills them, Moses before Christ. Only a divine Author can so write history that the types foreshadow the revelation of pure truth in another historical occurrence" (46-47). But Tuve also suggests that typology is a synchronic symbol system when she says that the Old Testament types, which are on a lower, representational level, "shadow" or copy the heavenly figures of the New Testament. In either case, the typological method is essentially antimythic. As a copy or representation of something yet to come, the Old Testament points forward (in time) and outward toward a distinct order of ideas.

7. Traditional medieval exegesis, which attributes four levels of meaning to the Bible (the literal, the allegorical, the tropological, and the anagogical), does provide for a personal application of Scripture, but only on the third, or tropological, level of meaning. Read in this way, the Bible becomes a figurative guide for moral conduct. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski argues that with the Protestant Reformation comes a different conception of the individual's relationship with Sacred Scripture: "the shift in emphasis in reformation theology from *quid agas* [the tropological level] to God's activity in us made it possible to assimilate our lives to the typological design, recognizing the biblical stories and events, salvation history, not merely as exemplary to us but as actually recapitulated in our lives. These various impulses led to a new, primary focus upon the individual Christian, whose life is incorporated within, and in whom may be located, God's vast typological patterns of recapitulations and fulfillments operating throughout history" (82). Such a conception of the typological method is mythic because it denied the subject / object split. History is not a past distanced as other; rather, past ages are eternally present in the person of each individual.

"Then" and "now," beginnings and endings, commingle in the following scene as the same cross that had presided over Eusebio's birth now officiates over his death. Eusebio surrenders to Curcio who, when he discovers that Eusebio and Julia have identical birthmarks, realizes that he has fatally wounded his own son: "Tú eres Eusebio, mi hijo" (2361). The cross, then, is the external sign of two distinct oppositions (life / death, Eusebio / Julia) which are themselves related linguistically. Edward H. Friedman, in his study of irony in the play, says that in *La devoción de la cruz* "the language of love is converted into the language of identity" (135), citing as his example the words Eusebio utters after Julia rejects him for having killed her brother Lisardo: "Saca un alma que adora, / y tu misma sangre vierte" (915-916). Not only do Julia and Eusebio share a common heritage, but her expression of anguish at loving a man whom she should hate has important consequences for Eusebio. Julia says that Eusebio's "mano...aleve"

...me ha quitado la vida  
y no me ha dado la muerte,  
porque entre tantos pesares  
siempre viva y muera siempre (889-892).

Julia uses the poetic commonplace of existing between life and death to describe her emotional state. In the final scenes of the play, however, the repentant but unshriven Eusebio takes this negation into himself as he waits for Alberto to hear his confession:

Rato ha que hubiera muerto;  
pero libre se quedó  
del espíritu el cadáver;  
que de la muerte el feroz  
golpe le privó del uso,  
pero no le dividió (2489-2494).

Eusebio casts Julia's words into mythical form by giving concrete expression to her figurative language. Moreover, as he beckons Alberto towards him he reenacts the events of his birth, thereby drawing beginnings and endings into a relationship of identity. In Act I Eusebio tells Lisardo that as an infant he had cried for help after having been abandoned by his parents. Although many people had heard his screams, he was found only by chance: "Hallóme un pastor, que acaso / buscó una perdida oveja / en la aspereza del monte" (231-233). Alberto likewise finds Eusebio lying helplessly in the same remote spot, but shepherd and lamb have reversed roles, for now it is Alberto, a spiritual shepherd, who gets lost ("... en este monte / perdido otra vez estoy" [2459-60]), and must seek refuge in the lamb Eusebio:

Otra vez pronuncia  
mi nombre, y me pareció  
que es a esta parte; yo quiero  
ir llegando (2469-71).

In *La devoción de la cruz* repetition is the instrument of mythical identity. As figurative language becomes literal and past becomes present, powerful externalities lose their ability to dominate passive subjects.<sup>8</sup> In the end, the lamb protects his shepherd, and man creates his god.

In *La devoción de la cruz* Calderón reworks ideas received from traditional Catholic doctrine to create his own mythical world. Calderón proposes a new man-centered ethics of inclusion which takes as its first principle "the need for the annihilation of the selfhood [and the] . . . sympathetic expansive identity to include the other" (Adams "Synecdoche" 69). This annihilation is not the void experienced by William Butler Yeats' saint who gives himself completely to the power of an external deity: "[the saint's] joy is to be nothing, to do nothing, to think nothing; but to permit the total life, expressed in its humanity, to flow in upon him and to express itself through its acts and thoughts. He is not identical with it, he is not absorbed in it" (180-81). Calderón rejects such passivity in favor of the energy of the outlaw. What we see in *La devoción de la cruz* is the void of evil which, according to St. Thomas, has of itself no essence, but is merely the absence of the Good who is God. F.C. Copleston explains St. Thomas' notion of moral evil as "a privation in the human free act of the relation which it ought to have to the moral law promulgated by reason or to the divine law" (149). Evil does not come from God; it is the result of man's effort to free himself from the constraints imposed on him by an external moral code. It is only after Eusebio's evil acts have distanced him from such a code that he can extend himself mythically to include God. Eusebio obeys a law of his own making when he recoils at the sight of Julia's birthmark. He takes the cross, the outward sign of an external deity, into himself. The void of evil, then, is filled not by a God in heaven, but by the vitality of a human action which contains God. The *bandolero* is not the opposite of the saint. He is not the manifestation of man's fallen state which is to be transcended after death. He is, rather, a necessary condition of sainthood defined now not as unity with a God above, but identification with a God within. The mythic saint is a contrary which contains the traditional oppositions sinner / saint, life / death, God / man. Once freed from the influence of

8. Alexander A. Parker's notion of causality is antimythical precisely because it externalizes the past as an other which dominates the present. He traces the "chain of causality" back to Curcio and concludes that "the past events for which Curcio was directly responsible are not part of the action proper since they are only narrated, but the fact that they are the *ultimate cause* of the tragedy gives a primary importance to Curcio and to sense of honor that was his motive, since it is upon him and upon those actions that everything turns. Through the inner dramatic structure of the play he clearly emerges as a deuteragonist" ("Spanish Drama" 701, emphasis mine). Thus from this antimythical perspective Eusebio is the victim of a past over which he has no control.

origins, Eusebio can author his own life. He is a mythic character who shows us that true power resides in the human breast, and that true life is the creative extension of the self to include the other.

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