TITLE POETRY AND IDEOLOGY: THE EFFECT OF THE POLITICS OF THE INTERWAR YEARS AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR ON THE POETRY OF CESAR VALLEJO

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'During the lifetime of great revolutionaries the oppressing classes constantly hounded them, received their theories with savage malice, the most furious hatred and the most unscrupulous campaigns of lies and slander. After their death attempts are made to convert them into harmless icons, to canonise them, to hallow their names ... while at the same time robbing the revolutionary theory of its substance, blunting its revolutionary edge and vulgarising it ... They omit, obscure or distort the revolutionary side of the theory, its revolutionary soul. They push to the foreground and extol what is or seems acceptable and bourgeois.'

V. I. Lenin, The State and Revolution

CONTENTS

Preface

My initial interest in the work of the Peruvian poet César Vallejo began in 1981 during the final year of a Degree in Comparative American Studies at the University of Warwick. This interest was further stimulated in the following year while I was studying for a Master's Degree in Latin American History and Literature at the University of Liverpool. It was here under the supervision of Dr. James Higgins that I began to focus specifically on Vallejo's last two collections of poetry, Poemas humanos and España, aparta de mí este cáliz, both of which were written during his years in Europe from 1923-1938. Working in this area for two terms I became aware of the fact that while there are many excellent studies of Vallejo's Poemas humanos, as indeed is also the case with his first two books which were published in Peru, Los heraldos negros and Trilce, the same was not true of his final book on the Spanish Civil War, España, aparta de mí este cáliz, which has received disproportionately less critical attention than his other works. However, most writers would agree that the poems that Vallejo includes in this final collection are some of his finest. Consequently, it occurred to me that this imbalance was not simply a reflection of the aesthetic preference of Vallejo's critics, but rather an indication that those methods of investigation which had been successful when applied to the main body of Vallejo's poetry were wanting when it came to the study of his Spain poems. The source of this problem I surmised, lay in the fact that in contrast to most of Vallejo's earlier work, these poems represent a conscious attempt by the poet to incorporate political ideas into his art: a process which had apparently not been fully appreciated by his critics.

On the basis of this realization it was decided that a new approach to Vallejo's Spain poems might be explored, which would depart from existing

methods of analysis which have tended to focus on textual interpretations of these poems, without taking adequate account of external influences on the formation of their content. Central to the formulation of such an approach would be an extensive study of Vallejo's intellectual development during his years in Europe as indicated in his prose writings, and especially the articles which he wrote for the Peruvian press as a Paris based correspondent between 1923-1931; this being also the period which coincided with his first years of political commitment. Furthermore, an attempt would be made to place Vallejo's politicization within its contemporary historical context, so that the significance of his ideas and his poetry could be measured against the wider artistic and intellectual trends of the interwar years.

The above proposals were duly submitted to Dr. James Higgins and Professor Clifford Smith at the University of Liverpool, and Professor Alistair Hennessy at the University of Warwick. Thanks to their recommendations to the Department of Education and Science I was granted an award to undertake two years full-time research.

After spending a year examining the works of Vallejo's critics and all the available material in this country which deals with his years in Europe, I applied to the DES for financial assistance to make a research visit to Peru, where I hoped to gain access to the prose writings which Vallejo produced during the interwar years. Thanks to the support of the DES I was able to spend two months in Peru. During this period I worked mainly in the Biblioteca Nacional in Lima, where most of the articles which Vallejo wrote in Europe for the Peruvian press are kept. While I was in Lima I also received invaluable advice and assistance from a number of Vallejo scholars, and in particular Professor David Sobrevilla and Professor Willy Pinto Gamboa, of the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos. Indeed, Professor Sobrevilla must be credited with making a substantial contribution towards the research for this thesis, by kindly agreeing to lend me a draft copy of Jorge Puccinelli's unpublished

compilation of Vallejo's European journalism entitled Desde Europa. Even though this work does not include all of the articles which Vallejo had published in Peruvian journals while he was a foreign correspondent, having access to this earlier research saved several additional weeks of study in the Biblioteca Nacional, and gave me sufficient time to visit Trujillo where some of the articles not kept in Lima, or included in Desde Europa, are to be found. In Trujillo I worked at the Biblioteca Central of the Universidad Nacional de Trujillo which holds a complete collection of the regional newspaper El Norte to which Vallejo submitted numerous articles during the mid 1920s.

On returning to England I embarked on a detailed study of Vallejo's intellectual formation in Europe as represented in his journalism, while at the same time attempting to link this process with the wider political, social, and intellectual developments of the period.

Hopefully this research has resulted in a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of the development of Vallejo's intellectual and political thinking during his years in Europe than has been recognised in previous studies of his life and works.

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In writing this thesis I received invaluable advice and encouragement from my supervisor, Professor Alistair Hennessy; to him I am very grateful. I would also like to acknowledge with gratitude the following people: Professor David Sobrevilla of the University of San Marcos, Lima, who made available to me a number of Vallejo's articles; Doctor James Higgins of the University of Liverpool for his useful advice on undertaking research in Peru; Salvador Ortiz-Carboneres of the University of Warwick for reading drafts of the thesis and making useful suggestions; last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank Beverley for typing the final copy.

INTRODUCTION

The task which this thesis undertakes is to explore a number of themes in César Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry which have so far either been neglected or not treated adequately by his critics. In putting together such a study a multi-disciplinary analytical approach to Vallejo's life and works has been employed, rather than attempting to remain within the bounds of a specific critical view of literature. While seeking to avoid the constraints of one critical method however, the premise on which the subsequent research is based is that literature can only be fully understood within a larger framework of social and historical reality. As a general perception of the process of literary production this idea can hardly be regarded as marginal or controversial, but as we approach the half centenary of Vallejo's death, it is clear that such thinking has played a disproportionately small part in the large accumulated body of critical works that now exists on Vallejo's poetry. This situation is however not so surprising if one considers the wider developments and trends in literary theory during this century, and especially since the Second World War, which have given rise to a mainstream of critical practices which despite their variety, are united in the belief that social and historical forces are peripheral or even irrelevant in the creation of literary works.[1]

Vallejo's poetry has in fact been subjected to a number of the above critical practices, all of which focus on some 'internal' aspect of the literary process. These approaches to Vallejo's work may be divided into two main groups; firstly there are those broadly humanist critics whose analyses are conducted from such perspectives as the artistic and creative genius of the poet; his spiritual or psychological subconscious; or the 'organic unity' of the poem. While these methods of analysis are often not followed rigorously

by those of Vallejo's critics who employ them, they do constitute a range of approaches which have dominated interpretations of the poet's work since his death in 1938.[2]

A second, smaller group of Vallejo critics, are those who have been influenced by such thinkers as Saussure and Wittgenstein, who recognised that literary meaning is not something simply expressed or reflected in language, but is actually produced by it. Mainly adopting a structuralist methodology these critics have attempted to analyse Vallejo's poetry in terms of its linguistic form.[3] This view of literature differs radically from those humanist arguments which support the Romantic notion that the individual subject is the source and end of all meaning. Nevertheless, structuralism shares a common ground with humanistic critical practice in that its exponents assume that literature can exist in isolation from the historical and social environment in which it was produced. Furthermore, critics from both schools also make a-historical and idealist assumptions concerning the 'competence' of the reader, whom they see as a transcendental subject absolved from all limiting social determinants.

While the majority of Vallejo critics can be included in the two groups described above, there are a few writers who have attempted to apply historicist and Marxist methods of analysis to Vallejo's poetry.[4] Again, like their humanist counterparts they have not been particularly rigorous exponents of their chosen critical methodologies, but they have nevertheless done much to weaken the subjective and idealist dominance of Vallejo studies which has existed for the last fifty years. And their efforts have resulted in some of the most stimulating analyses of Vallejo's poetry to be produced during this period.[5]

This thesis seeks to contribute to this third school of thought which sees Vallejo, the man and the poet, as a historical human subject whose real life experience played a fundamental role in the formation of his art. Unlike previous studies which fall into this category however, almost all of which attempt to review the whole of Vallejo's life and poetry in a single essay (seemingly

following the preferred form of the humanist critics), this thesis sets itself the more specific objective of tracing the influence of political ideas on Vallejo's thinking during his years in Europe from 1923-1938, and the effect such ideas may have had on his final collection of poems on the Spanish Civil War (España, aparta de mí este cáliz). It is hoped that by focussing on this crucial period of Vallejo's intellectual development, a better understanding of his political motivations will be achieved than has so far been realized in previous historicist and Marxist critical works, which partly because of their ambitious scope have tended to give only scant attention to the formation of his political consciousness in the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, it will be argued that Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry can only be fully understood through a detailed knowledge of his politics, and especially in terms of his interpretation of Marxism which provides the intellectual foundation on which these poems are based. España, aparta de mí este cáliz does in fact differ from the rest of his poetic works in three major respects; firstly it is totally committed to the struggle for socialism (several individual poems that Vallejo wrote during the 1930s, that are not included in this collection also fall into this category).[6] Secondly, in his Spain poems, and especially the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', Vallejo not only introduces a whole range of political ideas which he had developed in previous years, but also attempts a synthesis of his Marxist world-view. Thirdly, and most importantly, the political ideas which are contained in España, aparta de mí este cáliz are exposed by Vallejo to the supreme test of the revolutionary struggle itself, which leaves them suspended in a creative flux in which material action, rather than intellectual logic, becomes the measure of their legitimacy and the vehicle of their development. This creative instability which Vallejo introduces into his Spain poems, along with his frequent use of language with religious overtones, has led many humanist critics to claim that in this final work Vallejo reveals a Christian vision of human salvation which had always been latent in his

artistic subconscience.[7] It is therefore not the social revolution and its implications for mankind which are seen to be the central issue in these poems, but rather the poet's renewed faith in the Christian myth of salvation, which in the context of the popular struggle he feels can be realized on earth. Indeed, because of their failure to acknowledge the full influence of political ideas on Vallejo's artistic consciousness during the last years of his life, humanist critics have been forced into their most idealist and subjective entrenchment in their analyses of España, aparta de mí este cáliz. However, one may also argue that historicist and Marxist critics, though accepting Vallejo's political commitment in his art during the 1930s, have sadly been unable substantially to advance the humanist interpretations of his Spain poems, because they have never undertaken the necessary research which would allow them to understand the complex nature of his final political vision.

In attempting to rectify this omission in the field of Vallejo studies this thesis will depart from existing historicist and Marxist analyses, not only in its selective concentration on Vallejo's intellectual development during a given period, but also by seeking to base its arguments on a different combination of research materials. Therefore, while most historicist and Marxist critics have so far based their studies on a chronological analysis of Vallejo's poetry in the context of the cultural, social and literary environments in which it was produced, with occasional supportive reference to his prose writings, this thesis will concentrate its attention on his prose works, and the ideas and historical events with which they are concerned, rather than on a systematic study of his poetry. Central to this approach will be an extensive analysis of the articles Vallejo wrote during his short journalistic career in Europe from 1924-1930. This was also the time that he began to form his socialist world-view and therefore these articles provide an invaluable record of a number of crucial developments in his thinking. But despite the importance of his

journalism as a record of his intellectual formation, no serious studies of the content of these writings has yet been undertaken by his critics. In fact all of Vallejo's prose works, which include several theatrical plays, a novel, a number of short stories and two books on Russia, as well as his journalism, have received very little attention from his critics. Partly because of the lack of previous research on this large body of work to which one can refer, this thesis will not attempt to analyse all of Vallejo's prose works but rather concentrate on his journalism and his books on Russia.(These books are written in a journalistic style and contain sections which are based on earlier articles). This selective approach may also be justified by the fact that Vallejo's journalistic writings generally, give a more direct and consistent access to his political ideas than his fiction and theatre, which despite some of its overt political content does not add substantially to the understanding of his political formation. However, these works represent important early attempts by Vallejo to structure political ideas into art forms, and it must be acknowledged that outside the context of this thesis, both his fictional and theatrical writings warrant extensive study in their own right.

From late 1931, after his third visit to the Soviet Union, Vallejo also began to introduce some political ideas into his poetry, but again it may be argued that for the purposes of this thesis, this form of presentation of his socialist thinking, while providing an interesting area of research in terms of the development of his art, rarely provides clear indications of advances in his wider political consciousness. Furthermore, unlike his fictional and theatrical works, the poems which Vallejo wrote during the 1930s, excluding España, aparta de mí este cáliz, have recieved considerable attention from his critics, and there already exist some excellent studies of the politically committed poetry that he was producing at this time.[8]

It is hoped that by taking the above analytical approach a more coherent and accurate picture of Vallejo's intellectual development during his years in

Europe will be achieved, than if a further attempt were made to use his poetry as the main indicator of his changing political consciousness. One must also remember in this latter context that unlike many other committed poets in the 1930s, such as Rafael Alberti and Pablo Neruda, Vallejo did not immediately transfer his newly found political beliefs into his art. In fact it would seem that political ideas only began to emerge in his poetry several years after he became a Marxist, as he chose instead to concentrate his artistic efforts during his initial period of commitment from 1928-1931, on the writing of political theatre and a socialist realist novel. El tungsteno. For those historicist and Marxist critics who focus on the development of Vallejo's poetry from an external and broadly historical perspective, these early years after he became a Marxist have proved to be relatively infertile in terms of his artistic and intellectual formation. However, it was precisely during this period that he was undergoing an intellectual transformation that would play a vital part in the surge of poetic production which took place in 1937 towards the end of his life, and which included the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz.

Because this thesis only begins to look at Vallejo's poetry in its final chapter, and even then selects just one poem for analysis which is representative of the arguments presented in previous chapters, it cannot claim to be a purely literary study, even in Marxist terms. And as stated at the beginning of this Introduction a multi-disciplinary approach to Vallejo's life and works will be employed. This will involve a combination of various modes of analysis which will include; a biographical survey of Vallejo's life; a broadly Marxist interpretation of the historical and social environments in which he produced his work; a detailed analysis of his prose writings and especially his journalism; and a study of Vallejo's own involvement in politics during the inter-war years. These modes of analysis will in turn be directed towards the investigation of Vallejo's intellectual development, and the conclusions which are reached will be used to undertake an explanation of the political content of an example of

of his Spanish Civil War poetry.

While this thesis seeks to avoid the limitations of any one critical methodology, and is aimed at understanding Vallejo's own perceptions of Marxism rather than applying a Marxist method of analysis to his work, it does accept as its guidelines certain Marxist assumptions about literary production, which in turn must affect the critic's response. Firstly, acknowledgement must be given to Marx and Engels's most fundamental statements on the relationship between the economic structure of society, the 'base'; and its 'superstructure', which consists of certain institutionalized forms of physical and ideological organization whose essential function is to legitimate the power of the social class that owns the means of economic production.[9] To develop on this basic materialist argument however, one would wish to dismiss those notions which are sustained by so called 'vulgar' Marxists who claim that as part of the superstructure, literature, along with other forms of art, can be understood simply as a reflection of ruling class ideology, which in turn is seen as a product of existent socio-economic class relations: the base. This view, it may be argued, is mechanical rather than dialectical, and therefore cannot be regarded as falling within the Marxist tradition. Marx and Engels were in fact very careful to qualify their own statements on the question of base and superstructure, and chose art in particular as an example of superstructure which clearly does not form a symmetrical relationship with the base.[10] This argument was further developed by Leon Trotsky, who claimed that while all elements of society's superstructure such as art, politics, religion and law, could be found to have some independence from their socio-economic base, it was art which had the highest degree of autonomy.[11] Trotsky here is not suggesting however, that art can transcend the material historical conditions in which it was produced, but is rather acknowledging the fact that art is a particularly complex component of the superstructure, and when considering the nature of its production one must accept that there are a whole series of factors which mediate

between the text itself and the capitalist economy. These factors may take such forms as literary tradition; the social situation of the writer; the intellectual views which shaped his thinking; and the effect on his work of other elements of the superstructure. None of the above could be regarded as reliable indicators of the state of contemporary capitalism at any given period, yet each might have its own separate influence on the formation of a literary work.

Taking into account the above argument this thesis therefore will not attempt to understand Vallejo's Spain poems solely in terms of the crisis of western capitalism in the interwar years, and its immediate ideological and historical repercussions, but rather seek to draw on a wider field of possible influences on Vallejo's work which cannot be measured simply as the products of an economic system in convulsion. This said however, an effort will also be made to exclude a-historical and idealist assumptions about Vallejo's life and works that are common to humanist critics, and as a general guideline the formula which will underscore the subsequent research will be Marx's statement that 'it is not the consciousness of man that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness'.[12]

Any critical analysis which claims to have its roots in Marxism must also be aware of its own historical conditions. As Terry Eagleton states 'literary criticism selects, processes, corrects and rewrites texts in accordance with certain institutionalized norms of the 'literary' - norms which are at any given time arguable, and always historically variable'.[13] No critical response therefore can legitimately claim to be free of value judgements or unaffected by specific social ideologies. Literary criticism, like the works which it sets out to study, is a product of the social and historical circumstances which surround its formation, and consequently the Marxist critic must always be aware that in selecting various modes of analysis he is positioning himself historically and ideologically in relation to his subject.

Despite its predominantly non literary critical approach, this thesis accepts that it must also acknowledge the ideological composition of its method, and therefore openly declares its partisanship in favour of a materialist reading of Vallejo's poetry. Moreover, having set itself the specific task of investigating the formation of Vallejo's political consciousness during a given historical period, it must also recognise that ideas and interpretations of ideas are never static. Consequently, while every effort will be made to understand Vallejo's view of Marxism in the context of the historical circumstances of the late 1920s and 1930s, it is acknowledged that such a perspective will inevitably be distorted by the events of the intervening fifty years, and one's own contemporary understanding of the ideas which are being studied.

Based on the preceding statements concerning the inadequacies of earlier critical works in their treatment of Vallejo's Spain poems, and the subsequent response which has been proposed in terms of research objectives, materials and methodology to improve this situation, this thesis is presented in the following form: Each of the four chapters which make up the thesis are organized chronologically in accordance with the development of Vallejo's political consciousness. Subdivisions of chapters are based largely on the same criteria, but some flexibility in this approach has been found necessary to incorporate a number of separate analyses of events and ideas, whose influence on Vallejo's thinking was either belated or indirect. It should also be noted that unlike his poetry, which was written throughout most of his life, Vallejo's prose writings, and especially his journalism - on which most of the analysis in this thesis is based - was only produced with any consistency during his first seven years in Europe, and therefore different kinds of research materials have to be used for the years which precede and follow this period. Consequently, in the first half of Chapter One, most of Chapter Three and the early part of Chapter Four, all of which deal with the years that are not covered by his journalism, the main evidence which is used to develop the argument is based on a wider

selection of source materials than in other parts of the thesis. This includes not only the use of Vallejo's other prose writings in the form of his books on Russia, but also a more general analysis of the political, social, and cultural developments in which he was involved. Finally, all research is supported with frequent footnoting, which acts both as a source of reference and as a background, or extension, to debates that are included in the thesis.

In accordance with the above form of organization the first half of Chapter One looks at the political and intellectual influences to which Vallejo was exposed during his formative years in Peru from 1910 to 1923, most of which he spent as a student at the universities of Trujillo and Lima. While there is little indication that he became involved in radical politics during this period, many members of his generation, including close friends, began their political apprenticeship at this time and their ideas were to influence his thinking in later years. In the second half of Chapter One, a study is made of Vallejo's first years in Europe from 1923-1927, based mainly on the ideas that he had begun to put forward in his journalism for the Peruvian press, for which he worked as a foreign correspondent from the mid 1920s to 1931.

Again using Vallejo's own journalistic writings as a major source of information, Chapter Two explores the continuing progress of his intellectual formation in the period 1928-1931. During this time he began to adopt a more coherent political position in his journalism, which, while still covering a wide range of subjects, provides an invaluable testament to his strengthening faith in socialist ideas.

Throughout the analysis of Vallejo's intellectual development in Chapters One and Two it is argued that while his radical political formation was to a large extent based on this European experience, he also continued to maintain a significant interest in Peruvian politics until at least 1931 when his journalistic career ended. Therefore, although he acted as a foreign correspondent with the responsibility of reporting mainly on European events and ideas, this

did not prevent him from also entering into the intellectual debates which were taking place between his contemporaries in the Lima based press. Moreover, his work for the liberal press in Peru, and his subscription, and occasional contributions, to radical journals such as Amauta, meant that he remained constantly informed of the new political ideas which were emerging at this time.

Among the main sources of intellectual influence on Vallejo's thinking of a non-European origin, it was the ideas of the Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui which were to have the most profound effect. However, in tracing this relationship it has been found that Mariátegui's influence on Vallejo's work, though clearly present in the articles he wrote during the last two years of his journalistic career (1929-1930), only fully emerges in Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry. In fact after Marx, Mariátegui is Vallejo's main intellectual mentor in these poems. This would suggest therefore that even after Mariátegui's death in 1930, and the termination of Vallejo's journalism in the same year, Vallejo continued to study Mariátegui's works. Based on this assumption it has been decided therefore, in addition to a survey of Vallejo's journalistic response to Mariátegui's ideas, to also undertake a separate assessment of Mariátegui's wider theoretical understanding of Marxism. This exercise it is hoped will not only assist in the subsequent explanation of the political ideas which Vallejo presents in his Spain poems, but also help to reinforce the argument, which is supported in the last two chapters of this thesis, that Vallejo's own theoretical perceptions on Marxism were far broader than is suggested by his immediate involvement with the Moscow dominated political left of the 1930s.

Since Vallejo abandoned nearly all of his journalistic work in late 1930, one has to turn to alternative sources of information to continue with the analysis of his European experience and its effect on his final poetry. Chapter Three, which covers the period from 1931 until his death in 1938, consequently offers a wide ranging survey of the decade based not so much on

Vallejo's own statements, but rather on an assessment of the extraordinary political and intellectual atmosphere which existed in Europe before and during the Spanish Civil War; and in which Vallejo became fully immersed. The first part of this chapter concentrates on Vallejo's period of political exile in Spain in 1931 and the early part of 1932, during which he became a member of the Spanish Communist Party. It is argued however, based on the political ideas that Vallejo had put forward in his journalism in earlier years, and taking into account the state of flux which existed within the Party at this time, that he may not have been among the communist 'faithful' who took their directives from Moscow, but rather a sympathizer, if not a member, of a militant, more revolutionary wing of the Party. The suggestion that he remained outside the mainstream of communist dominated left-wing politics in the 1930s is in fact supported throughout the chapter, and provides, along with the revolutionary ideas which he had absorbed from his reading of Mariátegui, an indication of the political stance which he held at the time he wrote his poetry on the Spanish Civil War.

In Chapter Three a short survey is also made of Vallejo's two books on the Soviet Union which he wrote while living in Spain in the early 1930s; the first, Rusia en 1931, was based on a trip he made to Moscow in 1929, and the second, Rusia ante el segundo plan quinquenal, was written after he visited central Russia in 1931 as a member of a Western European cultural delegation. Again it is argued that while he was generally sympathetic to the Soviet experiment his political beliefs lay to the left of the Moscow line.

The final part of Chapter Three concentrates on the response of liberal and left wing intellectuals to the rise of fascism in the early and mid 1930s, and their efforts, under the auspices of Moscow, to play a significant role in anti-fascist struggle. In this context particular attention will be given to the reaction of writers and artists to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, which culminated in the Writers' Congress in Spain in 1937, which was

attended by intellectuals from all over the world, including Vallejo, who represented Peru.

In Chapter Four the conclusions that have been reached in previous chapters regarding Vallejo's political formation are used as a basis for analysing the content of a single poem from his final book of poetry, España, aparta de mí este cáliz. This poem, which is the first in the collection, and bears the title 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', has been chosen because it represents Vallejo's most concerted and complete attempt to incorporate his political ideas in his art. Many of the ideas which are presented in the 'Himno' are however expanded and given further historical significance by Vallejo in other poems in the collection, and reference will be made to these when deemed necessary. Furthermore, before a study of the poem in question is undertaken, a short analysis will be made of the poetry that was being written by radical Spanish intellectuals immediately before and during the Civil War, and the effect which their work had on Vallejo's last book. Finally, while the primary objective of Chapter Four is to study the influence of political ideas on Vallejo's Spain poems, acknowledgement is also made of the fact that religious language and religious imagery continues to play a vital role in this last work. In this context an attempt is made to show how Vallejo uses such forms of expression to develop, rather than detract from, his socialist materialist vision of human destiny.

During the last decade of his life Vallejo was in his own right a Marxist intellectual of note, and a committed revolutionary. To suggest, as some critics have in the past, that his political beliefs never became the central preoccupation of his art, or his life as an artist, and that therefore he was always forced ultimately to retain a spiritual view of the world, is to misunderstand and misrepresent Vallejo as a poet and an individual. As he had stated himself in his work El arte y la revolución, 'el intelectual revolucionario desplaza la fórmula mesiánica diciendo: "mi reino es de este mundo"'.[14]

This thesis will seek to demonstrate that after he had become a Marxist Vallejo accepted the above formula both in his life and his art, and was consequently able to link his sophisticated revolutionary ideology with his extraordinary poetic talents to produce some of the most important politically committed poetry of this century.

Footnotes

1. For a general history of such forms of literary criticism and the arguments they support see Terry Eagleton, Literary Theory: An Introduction (Oxford, 1983).

2. Most of Vallejo's humanist critics would appear to subscribe in varying degrees to the wider Romantic notion that great literature is the creation of the author's personal genius, which in turn is informed by a mysterious or transcendent consciousness. Literature is also deemed by this school of thought to embody universal and timeless qualities which sustain and uphold general truths about human life. From the same perspective as they view the writer and his work, humanist critics also believe that their own various ways of looking at literature are part of some 'natural' process, in which their task is to unlock and reveal the truths which are concealed in the text. Unwilling to accept the author's, or their own, subjective and ideological bias towards literature, the question of critical methodology is therefore either not addressed or played down, in the belief that their critical views are uncontroversial and immutable. But despite the appeals of humanist critics to such notions as orthodoxy, common sense, and universality, Marxists would argue that all interpretations of literature are part of an evolving theoretical discourse which is constantly responsive to social and historical change.

   Among Vallejo's main humanist critics who place particular importance in their works on the personal qualities of the poet (his genius, his mysticism, his archetypal subconscious etc.) can be included Juan Larrea, Alejandro Lora Risco and Américo Ferrari (See Guide to Criticism in this thesis for a brief review of their works, pp. 372-377). Broadly speaking, and not without exception, these critics belong to the 'traditional school of literary criticism's whose most notable (theoretical) exponents was I.A. Richards, who, in his work Practical Criticism (London, 1929) expressed the view that the poem was a complex medium through which the critic could interpret the poet's psychological processes.

   Other humanist critics of Vallejo's poetry have however tended to shift their critical focus from the poet to the poem itself. This approach would seem to reflect the ideas of the American New Critics who see the literary text as an 'organic unity', partly detatched from the subjective intentions of the author; but oddly not the reader, who, as in other humanist views of literature, is seen as an objective agent in the task of interpretation. Two of Vallejo's main critics who would appear to have been influenced by the New Critical Movement are Alberto Escobar and James Higgins (See Guide to Criticism, pp. 377-378 and 382-384). However, while Higgins seems to have retained a strong belief in the poet's ability to endow meaning to his art, Escobar has moved in the other direction, towards a phenomenological line of criticism which aims at a wholly immanent reading of the text, with the exclusion of all external influences.

3. The major Vallejo critics to have applied some form of structuralist analysis to their subject's poetry are Enrique Ballón Aguirre and Roberto Paoli (See Guide to Criticism, pp. 378-382).

Introduction - Notes

4. Both historicist and Marxist forms of criticism concentrate on the historical circumstances in which an author worked and the effect of those circumstances on his art. There are however some important differences between the two methods; firstly, the historicist sees history as an evolutionary process, in which each generation builds upon the developments of its predecessors in a way that eventually allows all of society to progress. In this context literature is seen to passively reflect the conventions , ideas and attitudes of a given period.

The Marxist on the other hand sees history as a dynamic and contradictory process based on constant conflict between classes, as each in its turn seeks to seize control of economic power. Furthermore, it is deemed that the class which controls economic power in any given period, not only ensures that the rest of society is organized to serve its material needs, but also exercises an ideological influence over society which creates the illusion that its rule is natural and eternal. Works of literature, which are usually produced by privileged groups within the ruling class, are therefore seen to represent part of that class's ideological hegemony.

Secondly, given their view of history, historicist critics see that their task is to make a work of literature from a different period more comprehensible to the modern reader, by showing how the historical environment in which it was written shaped its composition. The Marxist critic however, rather than placing an author and his work in some static historical context, attempts to reveal how literature indirectly reflects the nature of the class struggle in the period it was written, and to what extent it authenticates the social, cultural and economic realities faced by the class to which its author belongs.

Thirdly, while historicist critics judge a reader's competence mainly in terms of his knowledge of the historical circumstances in which a work was written, the Marxist critic would claim that even with the advantage of such knowledge readers still interpret and rewrite literature according to their own historical and ideological positioning. In such circumstances the task of the Marxist critic is not only to reveal the ideological processes that are at work in literature, but also to recognise the historical origins of his own method of evaluation.

Even on the basis of the above oversimplified view of historicist and Marxist methods of literary criticism, none of Vallejo's critics can be said to have clearly adopted either approach. Most Vallejo students who have considered the historical circumstances in which their subject produced his art, have in fact tended to loosely incorporate both methods of analysis in their works; some leaning towards historicism, others towards Marxism. Those who have adopted a predominantly historicist methodology include Luis Monguio and Roberto Paoli in his early works (see Guide to Criticism, pp.385-386 and 379-382). It may also be argued that Jean Franco's work tends towards historicism in parts of its analysis, but this is also linked together with some Marxist and poststructuralist criticism which makes it a difficult study to assess in its entirety (See Guide to Criticism, pp.386-389)Finally those critics who have adopted mainly Marxist approaches to Vallejo's poetry include Noel Salomon and Guillermo Alberto Arévalo (see Guide to Criticism, pp.389-391).

Introduction - Notes

5. See especially Jean Franco's analysis of Poemas humanos in César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence (Cambridge U.P., 1976), pp.161-222.

6. These include such poems as 'Salutación angélica', 'Los mineros salieron de la mina', 'Telúrica y magnética', 'Glebs' and 'Hoy me gusta la vida mucho menos'.

The above poems are to be found in the collection entitled Poemas humanos which includes most of the poetry that Vallejo wrote in Europe but never had published during his lifetime. See Georgette de Vallejo (ed.), César Vallejo: obra poetica completa (Lima, 1968), pp. 124-146.

7. Those critics who support this view include Juan Larrea, Lora Risco, Américo Ferrari and Roberto Paoli (See Guide to Criticism pp.372-377, Paoli, pp.379-382).

8. See especially Noel Salomon's essay entitled 'Algunos aspectos de lo "humano" en Poemas humanos', which is included in Angel Flores (ed.), Aproximaciones a César Vallejo, 2 vols. (New York, 1971), I, 191-230. For an assessment of Salomon's essay see Guide to Criticism, pp.389-390. See also Chapter eight of Jean Franco's work César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence which is entitled 'The Destruction of Prometheus', pp. 192-222.

9. See for example C.J. Arthur (ed.), Marx and Engels's, The German Ideology (London, 1982) and especially the first section on 'Idealism and Materialism' pp.39-95. See also Marx's preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (London, 1971). In this latter work Marx makes a succinct definition of the relationship between base and superstructure when he states,

> in the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness (pp.20-21).

10. See for example Marx's Introduction to the Grundrisse (Harmondsworth, 1973), in which he states 'in the case of the arts, it is well known that certain periods of their flowering are out of all proportion to the general development of society, hence also to the material foundations ...', p.23.

11. See Literature and Revolution (New York, 1971), p.41.

Introduction - Notes

12. A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, p.21.

13. Literary Theory: An Introduction, p.203.

14. Lima,1973, p.14.

CHAPTER I

CESAR VALLEJO: THE FORMATIVE YEARS, 1910 - 1928

Peru Enters the Twentieth Century: The Birth of a Generation of Radical Intellectuals

Because this thesis is directed towards César Vallejo's European experience between 1923 and his death in 1938, only a part of the first chapter will be devoted to the period of his life which was spent in Peru, and this in turn will deal mainly with the political and artistic environment to which he was exposed during the years immediately before he decided to leave for France.

César Vallejo was a member of the Peruvian postwar generation of intellectuals which also included such outstanding political figures as José Carlos Mariátegui, Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre and Luis Alberto Sánchez; the historians Raúl Porras Barrenechea and Jorge Basadre, and the writer and poet Abraham Valdelomar.[1] Even now, over sixty years hence, the political and artistic Generation of 1919 is still held to have been the most brilliant in Peru's history and many of the ideas and beliefs on which it was founded have increased rather than diminished in importance over the years.[2]

Vallejo and his contemporaries were born in the 1890s which in Peru, as in many other Latin American countries, was a decade of rapid economic expansion, stimulated by a surge in foreign investment of predominantly British and American origins. During this period many new capitalist enterprises came into being in the fields of raw material extraction, large

scale cash crop agriculture, public utilities, banking, and light manufacturing. Progress towards modernization though was an extremely disjointed process, and while economic penetration reached some of the most remote parts of the nation and affected the lives of the majority of the population, its benefits were reserved for the few. Thus, those national elites who could use their wealth or land to participate in the boom, were, along with foreign investors, well rewarded. But those who provided the labour power on the great sugar estates and in the mining complexes, saw the destruction of their traditional ways of life as they were subjected to economic laws that dictated that they should become wage slaves.[3]

Economic expansion also necessarily involved large shifts of people from the country into the towns and the growth of urban middle and working classes, these groups in Peru being represented especially by the increasingly self-conscious mestizo section of the population. It was from this upwardly mobile middle class of mixed racial decent that most of the members of the Generation of 1919 came, including César Vallejo, Haya de la Torre, and José Carlos Mariátegui.[4] The progression of the first twenty years of Vallejo's life represents in fact a typical example of the educational and social development of an intelligent young rural mestizo of the time, who was anxious to partake in the modernizing experience of his country.[5]

César, the youngest of a family of thirteen, was born in 1892 in the remote northern 'sierra' town of Santiago de Chuco, which at that time was a five day journey on horseback from the provincial capital, Trujillo. His father, a district official, was representative of an earlier generation of socially aware mestizos, who, having received some education were able to rise to positions of modest status in a largely illiterate society. For the sons of such middle class parentage, born at the turn of the century, a basic education was assured and

some like César Vallejo would go on to university. Many of these new intellectuals of rural descent also felt that the challenge no longer lay in establishing careers in their home towns, but in breaking away from the religious domination and anachronistic values which pervaded the provincial environment in which they lived.[6]

In 1910 at the age of eighteen, after finishing secondary school in the nearby town of Huamachuco, César registered in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Trujillo. Seemingly dissatisfied with academic life in the provincial capital he left for Lima in 1911 where he studied briefly as a medical student at the University of San Marcos before having to withdraw for financial reasons. During these first few years after he left secondary school he also tried a number of jobs, firstly as vacation work and then as a means to finance his return to university studies. In the summer of 1910 he worked as a clerk in the offices of a mining company at Quiruvilica; an experience on which he drew many years later in his novel El Tungsteno, which deals with the materialistic and exploitative society which grew around such new capitalist enterprises. In 1911 he became tutor to the son of a wealthy mine owner in the province of Pasco and the following year he took up a post in the accounts department of the hacienda 'Roma' in the Chicama Valley near Trujillo, where he worked for almost a year.[7]

Interspersed with the early part of his university education Vallejo therefore also gained first hand experience of the new economic and social developments that were transforming Peru. In these three years he would have witnessed the exploitation and degradation of the working masses, the ruthless profiteering of the powerful capitalist owners, and the petty materialist aspirations of his own class, who jealously guarded the marginal social and economic advantage which they held over the mainly Indian workforce. These experiences did not draw Vallejo towards politics while he lived in

Peru, but his disillusionment with the values of early twentieth century Peruvian society are clearly reflected in his first two books of poetry, which display a state of philosophical anguish which amounts to a total rejection of the human condition as it exists.[8] Sublimation of the problems of the world around him into poetry, in the form of abstract philosophical conflict, was in fact a method which he continued to employ in his art almost until the end of his life, and only with his poems on the Spanish Civil War did he clearly attempt to achieve a reconciliation between aesthetics and historical reality.

After his period of employment at the 'Roma', Vallejo returned, in 1913, to the University of Trujillo where he registered for a degree in literature.[9] At this time the university was beginning to feel the belated influences of Romanticism and the Modernist movement, and in defiance of the parochial atmosphere which dominated the city, Vallejo joined a bohemian student group whose literary and social nonconformity caused considerable distress among the Trujillo elites.[10] Despite the largely apolitical stance of the group, several of its members were later to become some of the most important radical intellectuals of the Peruvian postwar generation. They included Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, who led the student movement in the early 1920s and later founded the 'Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana'(APRA), and the left liberal journalist and literary critic Antenor Orrego Espinoza, who, along with another bohemian student of Vallejo's Trujillo days, Alcides Spelucín, formed in 1923 the influential newspaper, El Norte, which later became a mouthpiece of APRA.

In December 1917 after completing his studies in Trujillo, Vallejo set out for Lima where he soon became involved in the intellectual milieu of the capital. Among his first acquaintances were two of Peru's foremost men of learning, Abraham Valdelomar and Manuel Gonzalez Prada. Valdelomar, who was only a few years older than Vallejo, was the most avant-garde Peruvian writer

of the time, and the journal Colónida, of which he was editor, was the rallying point for the progressive literati. But, despite Valdelomar's considerable influence among Lima's young intellectuals it was the old political philosopher and poet González Prada whom they held above all others to be their mentor. Born in 1848 of aristocratic parentage, González Prada spent most of his life in revolt against social convention and the privilege and power of his own class. Unlike his peers he also proved to be an indefatigable scholar, capable of bringing new ideas to successive generations of Peruvian intellectuals.[11] During his early twenties in the 1870s, his main interest had been literature, but by then he had already begun to attack, from a nationalist perspective, the lingering legacy of Spanish colonialism, and in particular the dominance of the Catholic Church, which he regarded as one of the main brakes on progress in Peru. It was also at this time that he began to absorb from his avid reading of European journals and books, some of the ideas of the radical Enlightenment, and especially the scientific faith of positivism. González Prada's first involvement in politics, however, did not come until the second half of the 1880s, after Peru's ignominious defeat at the hands of the Chileans in the War of the Pacific. His first opportunity to initiate a political debate among his peers came in fact in 1887 when he became president of the 'Círculo Literario', which had been formed the previous year by a number of progressive writers and artists.[12] Almost immediately after accepting this post he gathered together the 'Círculo's' most radical members to form a political discussion group, whose aim was to look beyond the problem of damaged national pride and immediate economic difficulties which had resulted from the war, and to consider the wider question of Peru's failure to respond successfully - especially in comparison to Chile - to the process of modernization. The cause of the nation's backwardness, González Prada

and his followers argued, was above all a social problem, and in the group's journal Le Revista Social - which attempted to merge political criticism with literature - they proposed radical reforms that would alleviate the poverty and illiteracy of the masses, calling particularly for the integration of the Indian into the national community. But these ideas, which combined the scientific mystique of positivism with lingering romantic notions of moral obligation, called not for class conflict, but for the formation of a body of enlightened elites who would be capable of arguing the rationality and humane necessity of social and economic change to their peers. In 1891 the 'Circulo' reorganized itself as a national political party, taking the name of 'Unión National', in an attempt to put its ideas into practice, but received little support from an increasingly optimistic economic aristocracy, who were now beginning to enjoy considerable benefits from the growth in foreign investments and the expansion of the domestic and international markets. In the same year as the party was formed, González Prada, having become disillusioned with its initial failure, left for Europe.

During the nine years that he was away from Peru, most of which were spent in Paris, he eagerly drew on many of the ideas that had been generated by the European intellectual movements of the time, and was particularly influenced by anarchism, which was then having a considerable impact on the French literary and artistic vanguard.[13] When he returned to Lima in 1898 he enthusiastically conveyed his newly formed anarchist beliefs to his fellow members of the 'Union Nacional' party, but after years without ideological direction the movement had become weak and divided, and talk of revolutionary upheaval caused further splits. Faced with the loss of many of his intellectual followers he turned to the capital's fledgeling working class who were beginning to respond to anarchist ideas.[14] By 1902 González Prada was contributing regular articles to Lima's first anarchist paper, Los Parias.

where he talked of anarchism as 'el nuevo cristianismo ... sin Cristo', seeing it as a means by which man could achieve a higher and more just stage of liberation than that offered by religion.[15] However, while preaching the case for revolution and emphasizing the transformative effect it would have on mankind, he also retained some of his earlier notions of elitist leadership - albeit in modified form - and in a speech he gave to the bakers' union in Lima in 1905, entitled 'El intelectual y el obrero' he called for the formation of a pre-revolutionary alliance of intellectuals and workers.[16] Such ideas, along with his analysis of the Indian question, were unprecedented in Peru at this time, and continued to influence intellectuals well into the twentieth century, even though becoming detatched from the anarchist beliefs to which they had been originally grafted.[17]

Despite González Prada's immense contribution to radical political thought in Peru, he never formulated a clear programme for action, and remained throughout his life an eclectic thinker, unwilling to commit himself to the tenets of any one dogma. Up until his death in 1918 he also never abandoned his interest in literature, which had been the passion of his youth, and in the first decade of the twentieth century he was a leading figure in the Peruvian Modernist movement, then later in the years immediately before and during the First World War became associated with the emerging literary avant-garde.[18] Since he commanded such an heterogeneous body of ideas it was almost impossible for anyone to claim to be his follower, but many young intellectuals with diverse interests would argue that he had profoundly influenced their thinking, and spoke of him as an individual in almost reverential terms. In 1918 for example, Vallejo interviewed González Prada - who since 1912 had been director of the National Library - and in a subsequent article for the Lima daily, La Reforma, in which he described the meeting, Vallejo talked of his interviewee as being 'la máxima potencia espiritual de un

hemisferio del globo'.[19] Vallejo also records how González Prada, who had obviously read some of his poetry, suggested that technical style and grammatical correctness were secondary in artistic value to audacity of expression and intuitive experiment.[20] The young poet could not have been more pleased with such a response, and later the same month dedicated his poem 'Los dados eternos', which was published in the Trujillo periodical La Semana, to 'el gran maestro'.[21]

José Carlos Mariátegui, who, in the late 1920s became one of Latin America's most outstanding Marxist theoreticians, first met González Prada in 1909 when at the age of fifteen an anarchist friend with whom he worked at La Prensa took him to see the famous heretic.[22] In the years that followed he returned many times to González Prada's house to attend literary and political debates, and it is here where he met some of the most important writers and poets of the time, including Abraham Valdelomar, José María Eguren, and Percy Gibson. Up until 1916 Mariátegui's own main intellectual interest still lay in literature and therefore like Vallejo he initially saw González Prada as the artistic mentor of his generation. However this narrow perception was soon to change when he became increasingly involved in politics.[23] Unlike Mariátegui and Vallejo, Haya de la Torre saw González Prada as an essentially political figure, and after the formation of APRA in the mid 1920s, claimed he was the unequivocal precursor of the movement.[24]

In retrospect González Prada's influence on the Generation of 1919 lay not only in the intellectual ideas that he disseminated but also in his willingness to confront the problems of the day, which for him always had their roots in the organization of society itself, with a call for action. To those young middle class radicals who were born in the 1890s, and who had themselves been products of a period of great economic and social change, quiescent knowledge was anathema, and it was the life of González Prada

which represented for them an ideal, in the form of an intellectual who sought to challenge the world with the purpose of changing it. This remained true for artists as well as political thinkers, because even though his poetry and his literary ideas were not linked directly to his commitment to the social struggle, it was clear from his actions that there was no longer a place for a pure aesthetic elite in Peru. Vallejo was to become aware of this challenge soon after he arrived in Lima as the austerity of the war years increased social tensions. It was however from within the avant-garde circle of Abraham Valdelomar that he first began to perceive the growing necessity for the artist to be responsive to the society in which he lived.

In 1917 when Vallejo first joined the 'Colónida' group, Valdelomar and his followers still reflected in their thinking many of the ideas of the Modernist movement of the previous generation, and especially in terms of their treatment of art as a religion and the artist as a modern Christ.[25] Such thinking was substantially reinforced by José Enrique Rodó's enormously popular essay, Ariel, which was published in 1900 and which emphasised the nobility of the life of the 'spirit'. Artists, and especially poets, were held by Rodó to belong to an 'aristocracy of the best' whose motives were 'disinterested' and above the material aspirations of daily life. However, the detachment from society with which these kinds of ideas had previously been associated, began to be seriously questioned as the effects of the First World War began to accentuate the struggles of the lower and middle classes for economic justice.[26] In their rejection of materialist bourgeois values, the Modernists of the 1890s and early 1900s, many of whom were of aristocratic origins, had been able to stand aloof from the profane world that had begun to emerge, but later generations of writers and poets, while sharing some of their ideals, were often closer in their daily lives

to the hostile environment of capitalist society.[27] Vallejo as we have seen provides an excellent example of this process, having had to work in a number of jobs to finance his university education. On arriving in Lima he was also obliged to take up teaching as a profession in order to earn a living. And, even after the publication of his first book of poetry, Los heraldos negros, in 1919, which established him as one of the country's leading poets, the financial rewards from his art were still insufficient to allow him to consider leaving his teaching post. The reaction of the new middle class literary intelligentsia to the inimical economic and social surroundings which many of them were forced to endure was a varied one. Mariátegui, for example, who had been closely associated with Valdelomar's literary circle during the early years of the war turned to political journalism in 1917.[28] Vallejo on the other hand, much of whose work, up to and including Los heraldos negros, continued to show the influences of Modernism, adopted the stance of an alienated romantic in his poetry but did not become directly concerned with politics, either in his art or as an activist. The literary avant-garde were however not impervious to the social unrest that had been brought about by the economic austerity of the war years, and in 1918 Valdelomar called for the formation of an intellectual federation, which would bring together artists and outstanding men of learning with the purpose of formulating a new moral and intellectual goal for the nation.[29] Alcides Spelucín recalls that in February 1918 Valdelomar had enchanted Vallejo with talk of his recently formed plans to initiate the federation by making a lecture tour of Northern Peru, during which he would call together artistic elites to prepare for the creation of a new 'conciencia nacional'.[30] When the tour took place some weeks later Valdelomar attracted considerable intellectual support for his plans, but his untimely death in 1919 came before he was able to establish the federation as a coherent body. Despite the great esteem in which he was

held by the artistic and radical Peruvian intelligentsia no-one was willing to take up his project; perhaps the romantic notion of an elite of 'spirit' leading the nation had begun to seem increasingly unrealistic in the tense political atmosphere of the postwar years. Notwithstanding his idealistic optimism, Valdelomar had been one of the most outstanding Peruvian intellectuals of the second decade of the twentieth century, and his influence on such figures as Vallejo and Mariátegui, especially in their formative years, should not be underestimated.[31] His death also caused considerable grief among the members of the Generation of 1919.[32]

With the end of the First World War Vallejo's generation, which has aptly been associated with the year 1919, came of age. As in the rest of Latin America this was a time of great social and intellectual ferment. In Lima the year began with a general strike for an eight hour day which marked the first stage of a period of intensification of the social struggle. Since 1916 there had been many smaller protests and strikes throughout the country against food shortages, low wages and working conditions, but by 1919 the accumulation of these grievances among workers and some middle classes, began to encourage a mass response to the intransigence of the government and the ruling elites. For the country's young middle class intellectuals social upheaval was now beginning to be seen in terms of revolutionary change; the Mexican Revolution, and especially the Russian Revolution, had shown them that the battle for economic and social justice could develop into a transformation of society.[33] It was also felt that since Europe had recently engaged in the most destructive and barbarous conflict in history it could no longer offer a viable model of social and economic development, and consequently new solutions would have to be found to Latin America's problems. Even though still politically immature, the Generation of 1919 felt that the future was theirs, and at no other time could the words of González Prada have

seemed more appropriate: 'Old men to the tomb; young men to the task'.[34]

Mostly in their mid and early twenties, Peru's postwar intellectuals were to receive their radical apprenticeship in student politics. Since the 1870s Lima's University of San Marcos had been the centre of discontent among progressive intellectuals. At this time those students and lecturers who had begun to be influenced by positivist ideas rallied against the Catholic professors who devised and controlled the university's curriculum.[35] By the 1890s San Marcos had a small but influential group of positivist lecturers who as well as being academics were also members of Lima's new professional and entrepreneurial elite. Believing in a 'scientific' approach to the problem of modernization in Peru, some of their views were similar to those held by González Prada in the 1870s, and like their intellectual predecessor they felt that the country's main problem lay in its failure to make an effective break with its colonial past. But their proposals for social reform and national regeneration had little in common with the radical positivist vision of González Prada, and did not include any plans for the integration of the Indian into modern society or the extension of working class control over the process of modernization.[36] Their main concern was to find a means to preserve the status quo while their own class, the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, presided over the economic transformation of the nation. In this context they stressed the need for reforms in the education system which would bring into being a more technologically orientated middle class, capable of supplying the new skills required by an increasingly industrialized society. And it was the University of San Marcos which they felt should become the first centre of excellence for their project.

After the initial phase of economic expansion of the 1890s the sons of middle class families, both from Lima and the provinces, began to enter the university, and by 1914 they formed a significant proportion of the student

population. Their reaction to the ideas of the progressive bourgeois intellectuals of the previous generation, a few of whom were their professors, was however a mixed one, and while they supported the fight for reform of the education system - which as Mariátegui states was still imbued with the spirit of the colonial period - they did not feel a natural allegiance to their positivist mentors or the country's new capitalist class.[37] This sense of alienation was accentuated by the economic recession of the war years, from which few of the country's middle classes were spared. By 1918, as social unrest increased, many of the students of San Marcos began to give support to the working class struggle and saw their future not as a new emerging elite of managers and technicians, but as radical intellectuals, who, in accordance with the prophesies of González Prada were destined to become the vanguard of social revolution.[38]

In 1919 student unrest at San Marcos found expression in the University Reform Movement, which, after having been initiated in Córdoba in Argentina in 1918, began to sweep through Latin America.[39] Following the example of the Argentine students, a strike was called at the university and demands were made for a total reorganization of the higher education system. Principal among these were calls for greater academic freedom, a revised curriculum, the right to censure incompetent professors, and the participation of students in the governing councils of the university.[40] One of the most remarkable aspects of this historic event was that the students were wholeheartedly supported in their struggle by the organized working classes, whose confidence had recently been boosted by their victorious general strike for an eight hour day. After four months of combined militancy by workers and students from May to August, the government finally conceded to demands for university reform.[41]

Two young intellectuals who had an important influence on the development of the student movement at this time were Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre and

José Carlos Mariátegui. Haya de la Torre arrived in Lima in 1917 after completing his undergraduate studies in law at the University of Trujillo. After initially registering for a higher degree at San Marcos, he then accepted an invitation to study at the University of Cuzco where he met a number of young radicals, who introduced him to the reality of the suffering and exploitation of the Indian population. On returning to Lima in January 1918 imbued with a new political and social awareness, he immediately threw his energies into the growing wave of student protest, and in the same month volunteered to serve as university delegate on the textile workers' general strike committee.[42] From mid 1918 he also played a key role in a student body that had been formed to prepare for the coming struggle for university reform, and which later arranged the highly successful visit of the Argentine socialist, Alfredo Palacios, whose brilliant and persuasive oratory convinced the students of the legitimacy of their cause, and the necessity to take action. During the period of maximum pressure for reform,between May and August 1919, he became one of the principal leaders of the radical students, and in October was elected president of the increasingly powerful 'Federación de estudiantes del Perú'. One of Haya's first tasks in his new post was to convoke a national student congress, which met in Cuzco in March 1920. Here it was decided that the objectives of university reform should be co-ordinated throughout Peru, and that the 'Federación' would act as the main representative body of student interests.[43] The delegates also unanimously agreed that the alliance that had been formed with the working class movement during the previous year, should be strengthened by the formation of 'popular universities', which would be run by students to provide education programmes for workers. The following year Haya, and fellow student leaders from San Marcos, presided over the inauguration of the first centres of the 'Universidad Popular' in Lima and the nearby textile town of Vitarte. These new workers' sections of the

university offered evening classes in academic, as well as practical subjects such as first aid and hygiene. The 'Universidad Popular' also sponsored cultural and social events which brought the students and workers together on a more informal basis. Among those students who volunteered to act as tutors were many young men who would later become some of Peru's leading radical intellectuals, and included along with Haya de la Torre, and several future APRA leaders like Luis Heysen and Oscar Herrera, the historians Raúl Porras Barrenechea and Jorge Basadre; Eudocio Ravines the co-founder of the Peruvian Socialist Party; and later in 1923 when he returned from Europe, José Carlos Mariategui, who, even though never a student at San Marcos, became the Universidad Popular's most distinguished radical tutor. Vallejo himself may also have lectured to workers in the early 1920s but there is no recorded evidence of this.

In 1922 after a tour of Latin America during which he extolled the merits of Peru's students' and workers' alliance, Haya de la Torre returned to Lima to take up his new role as rector of the 'Universidad Popular'. Filled with enthusiasm by the ever increasing number of workers joining the new popular centres of education, and the wholehearted support he had received for his ideas among fellow Latin American student leaders, he proposed the formation of a 'United Front of Intellectual and Manual Workers', and also decided appropriately to rename the Lima 'Universidad Popular', the 'Universidad Popular González Prada'. Following these developments the student movement progressively embarked upon a path of direct involvement in national politics.

José Carlos Mariátegui did not play such a major part as Haya de la Torre in the establishment of the University Reform Movement in Peru, but in his capacity as a journalist, gave vital support to the radicalization of student politics after the war. Throughout 1918, while he was working for the Lima

daily El Tiempo , he had been sympathetic to the increasing militancy of the workers. But by early 1919, with the intensification of the struggle, the paper's liberal editorial board decided it could no longer be seen to support 'socialist' ideas and Mariátegui and another young radical journalist, César Falcón, were dismissed. After finding financial support the two dissidents quickly set up a new broad left newspaper, La Razón, which from its first issue on 14 May 1919 included a column entitled 'El Proletariado', which covered national and international working class activities. As student pressure for reform increased La Razón acted as a key propaganda organ in organizing the movement and helping to formulate its demands. In July when combined workers' and students' strikes broke out, it also played a crucial role in promoting the fragile alliance which existed between the two militant groups. Despite the anonymity of some of the most important political articles that were printed in La Razón, Mariátegui's influence as editor in chief was always clear.

After some concessions had been granted to the students by the new Leguía government, Mariátegui and Falcón continued to launch attacks against the State, and the increasingly dictatorial powers that were being assumed by the new president. This resulted in August 1919 in the proscription of La Razón and Leguía's personal intervention in ensuring the expulsion of its radical editors.[44] In October Mariátegui, Falcón and Humberto del Aguila, a militant student who had also written for the paper, all subsequently left for Europe.

During the three years that Mariátegui spent away from Peru he became immersed in the left-wing political currents of the day.[45] In Paris he met Henri Barbusse and members of a Clarté circle who were then expressing their full support for the Russian Bolshevika. After spending a few weeks in France he left for Italy where he stayed for almost two years, and where he fell under the influence of the Italian revolutionary left, and especially

the brilliant young theoreticians of Turin's 'Ordine Nuovo' group. During his stay in Europe he also read Marx and a number of radical political thinkers, including Sorel, Croce and Gobetti.

In March 1923 Mariátegui returned to Peru and, now a committed Marxist, he was determined to form his country's first socialist party. During his absence political tensions had increased as the workers' and students' alliance had gained in strength in the shadow of an ever more repressive dictatorship. Only weeks after his arrival in Lima, Mariátegui was to witness an escalation of the conflict between the alliance and the government, as Leguía, who was looking for the broadest possible support in the forthcoming elections, consecrated the nation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Haya de la Torre saw this gesture as an opportunity to rally together a massed protest against the dictatorship, and subsequently organized a number of demonstrations which he hoped would draw further support from the opposition. During one of these demonstrations violence broke out and a student and a worker were killed by the police.[46] At a massively attended funeral that followed, Haya de la Torre made this incident a symbol of the solidarity of the workers' and students' alliance, and called for an intensification of political pressure on the dictatorship. As a result of these events Leguía now saw Haya de la Torre as an unacceptable threat to his preparations for a return to power through the electoral process, and ordered his arrest and deportation. After four months in hiding, Haya was finally apprehended and sent into exile, but before leaving he asked Mariátegui to assume the directorship of Claridad, the Universidad Popular González Prada's official publication, and also to give a series of lectures on Peruvian history from an international perspective. On returning from Europe therefore, Mariátegui found himself almost immediately in direct contact with the 'Universidad Popular' and the workers' and students' alliance, and in a powerful position to expound his newly formed Marxist ideas.

Unlike Haya de la Torre, Mariátegui, and many more young intellectuals of the Generation of 1919, there is no evidence that Vallejo became seriously involved in the University Reform Movement or the radical politics of the day.[47] The two major books of poetry that he wrote in Peru, Los heraldos negros (1919) and Trilce (1922), even though registering a profound sense of alienation, do not offer any clear insights into his political thinking. A second, very limited source of information, which includes several short stories, scant journalism and a few personal letters, also give little indication of Vallejo's interests outside of the world of literature One suspects however, that his proximity to those events and individuals which radicalized Peruvian politics in the years before he left for Europe had some influence on his thinking, and this belief would seem to be substantiated by the content of the journalism that he began to write in Paris in the mid 1920s, and by his decision to join APRA soon after its formation in 1924.

In contrast to the poets of previous generations, Vallejo and his middle class contemporaries, who had also chosen to dedicate themselves to the arts, must have felt that the political struggle was inevitably becoming a part of their lives whether they accepted it or not. Vallejo for example arrived in Lima in late 1917 as the working classes began to intensify their protest against the economic austerity of the war years, and in May 1918, when he registered at the University of San Marcos to study for a doctorate in Arts, student unrest was beginning to develop a political orientation. Having known Haya de la Torre since they were at University together in Trujillo he could not have failed to notice the growing militancy of his old friend.[48] Furthermore, in a letter to the poet Oscar Imaña he notes that as well as his meetings with González Prada and Valdelomar he had also become acquainted with Mariátegui.[49] Very little has been written on Vallejo's life between 1918 and 1920, but one can assume that even though there is no record of him becoming

involved in political activities, he was fully aware of the problems of the time.[50] It is also clear that by the end of 1920 Vallejo had gained considerable popularity among the fellow members of his generation, both as a poet and as an individual. And, during his period of imprisonment from November 1920 to February 1921 - which was the result of an unfortunate incident in which he was implicated after a visit to his home town of Santiago de Chuco - intellectuals rallied together in protest to secure his release, and the Federación de Estudiantes del Perú initiated a campaign to prove his innocence.[51]

This period of imprisonment and his failure to completely exonerate himself, even after he was released, were obviously major factors influencing his decision to leave Peru, but it was an accumulation of events rather than any one incident that eventually led him to set sail for Europe in June 1923. As early as 1920 Vallejo was becoming disillusioned with life in Lima and began to feel that there was no future there for a progressive poet.[52] This belief would probably have been initiated by González Prada and Abraham Valdelomar, both of whom were enthusiastic advocates of Vallejo's poetry, and who having themselves lived in Paris, felt that only Europe offered a truly supportive environment for a young avant-garde artist. Their respective deaths in 1918 and 1919 caused Vallejo considerable grief and left him with a feeling of artistic isolation and spiritual loneliness; a situation which was accentuated by the death of his mother after which he fell into an acute depression. Between 1921 and 1922 Vallejo maintained a wide circle of friends, including many of the intellectual members of his generation, but failed to secure permanent employment and achieved only limited success with his artistic work.[53] Undoubtedly the greatest blow to his career as a poet in Peru, and perhaps a major reason for his final decision to seek a new life in Europe, was the negative response with which his second book of poetry, Trilce, which came

out in October 1922, was received by the Lima intelligentsia, including his contemporaries. Luis Alberto Sánchez described Vallejo's new collection as 'incomprensible' and 'estrambótico', and failed to understand how such an extraordinary book had come to be written.[54] Only Antenor Orrego's preface to the work offered some insight into its aesthetic content, but this could have provided little consolation for its author considering the attacks and ridicule with which it was greeted elsewhere.[55]

Possibly as a result of the failure of Trilce, in late 1922 Vallejo began to show some interest in journalism, and when Antenor Orrego and Alcides Spelucín started to publish their new Trujillo based daily paper El Norte, he secured a part-time post as its Lima correspondent.[56] Although containing some literary articles El Norte was mainly directed towards political issues, and even from its earliest numbers supported many of the ideas that were then being put forward by Haya de la Torre, and frequently published his writings. Before leaving for Europe, Vallejo made arrangements with his editors to continue working for the paper as its foreign correspondent in Paris, which would suggest, contrary to the view held by some of his biographers who claim that he arrived in France with no firm ideas on how he would make a living, that he did in fact have some hopes for setting out on a new career. It was also not uncommon at this time for many young Latin American artists and intellectuals to turn to journalism as a means of legitimizing, and sometimes, as in the case of Vallejo, financing their existence abroad.[57]

The "City of Light"; and Darkness: Vallejo's First Years in Paris 1923-1927

According to André Coyné, Vallejo's only possessions on arriving in Paris in the summer of 1923 were a small suitcase containing a few clothes, a book

for learning French in fifteen days, and one-hundred and fifty Peruvian soles.[58] At the exchange rate of the day this would have given him around five hundred francs, which was enough to survive frugally in Paris at that time for about three weeks.[59] Little is known about the first months he spent in Europe, and of the few accounts that do exist their only consistency is in their descriptions of his almost hopeless poverty. The Peruvian writer Ernesto More, who was living in Paris during the early 1920s, recalls for example, that during the autumn and winter of 1923, Vallejo often did not have enough money to pay for a room, and when he could not find friends who would take him in, he would spend the evening travelling the metro in order to keep warm.[60] More also points out that in those days the metro closed at one in the morning, and after that Vallejo would have been forced to walk the streets.

In early 1924 Vallejo began to make contact with a number of expatriate Peruvians but it seems that they were rarely able, or willing, to offer him any assistance; the one exception being the poet and diplomatic attaché Pablo Abril de Vivero, who appears to have taken pity on him and occasionally lent him money.[61] But the relationship was a tenuous one, and Vallejo was often reduced to writing pleading letters to his benefactor for help. In much of this correspondence he also emphasizes the difficulty he encountered in finding employment. Having submitted only sixteen articles to <u>El Norte</u> during his first year in France his existing journalistic work was clearly not sufficient to provide a living wage.[62] Vallejo's first real hope for regular employment came in July 1924 when the Argentine journalist Alejandro Sux, who represented various Latin American publications in Europe, offered him some work at a new press agency he was hoping to form later that year.[63] A further possibility of improving his financial situation also existed in the form of a Spanish government grant which he learned was available to

Peruvians wishing to study in Spain. Determined that he should be awarded the scholarship he wrote to Pablo Abril, who had recently been transfered to the Peruvian legation in Madrid, asking for his assistance in negotiations with the Spanish authorities.[64]

By October 1924 none of his plans had yet materialized, and after more than a year of deprivation and worry his health began to deteriorate. In the same month he was forced, through lack of funds, to seek treatment at the Hospital de la Charité where he underwent an operation for an internal hemorrhage. During his period of convalescence he experienced moments of extreme pessimism, and in a description of his state of mind to his benefactor and friend Pablo Abril, we are reminded of some of the more depressive poems in his first book, Los heraldos negros. Writing from his hospital bed he states, 'hay Pablo, en la vida horas de una negrura negra y cerrada a todo consuelo. Hay horas más acaso, mucho más siniestras y tremendas que la propia tumba. Yo no las he conocido antes'.[65] He then continues by expressing his nostalgia for a lost past, in the face of the reality of his seemingly hopeless future:

> A menudo me acuerdo de mi casa, de mis padres y cariños perdidos. Algún día podré morirme, en el transcurso de la azarosa vida que me ha tocado llevar, y entonces, como ahora, me veré solo, huérfano de todo aliento familiar y hasta de todo amor. Pero mi suerte está echada. Estaba escrito. Soy fatalista. Creo que todo está escrito. (p.61)

When one reads Vallejo's correspondence from his early years in Paris and finds such statements as the above, or some of his pleas for financial assistance, it is difficult not to feel some sympathy with his plight. However it also becomes clear that neither his material circumstances nor his health could have benefited from his profound and almost philosophical fatalism. Furthermore, those biographers who had known Vallejo personally indicate that he often found difficulty coping with financial matters. Asturrizaga, for example, recalls how in early 1919 Vallejo had managed his economic affairs so badly that he was completely without resources, to which

he adds, 'César, sin el menor sentido del valor del dinero y menos del ahorro y de un espíritu de precaución ...' (pp.72-73). It would be unfair to suggest that most of Vallejo's sufferings in Europe were a result of his own failings, but one cannot help feeling that his character was not suited to enduring the lonely struggle for survival that his first few years in Paris were to entail.

Vallejo's financial situation only began to improve in the spring of 1927 when he was given a part-time post as secretary in Alejandro Sux's new press agency, 'Les Grandes Journaux Ibère-américains'. Shortly before taking this post he obtained a journalist's card from Maurice de Waleffe, the president of the Paris based news bureau, 'La Prensa Latina', which gave him access to a wide range of events and functions from which he would have previously been excluded.[66] From this time he began to make contact with a number of intellectuals, who included numerous writers and artists as well as important political figures like the communists Ilya Ehrenburg and Paul Vaillant Couturier.[67] A second opportunity to enhance his financial position came shortly after he started work for Alejandro Sux, when he received notice that the Spanish government award for which he had applied had been approved. Although very anxious to accept this additional source of income he seems to have had no intention of using it to further his academic studies.[68] It did however provide sufficient resources for him to use his free time to develop his own journalistic career, and shortly after accepting the award he began to have articles published in the Peruvian weekly journal Mundial. From mid 1925 until the end of 1930, when he was expelled from France for political reasons, Vallejo's main source of income came from his journalism. During this period he worked predominantly for Peruvian publications, and especially the two weekly journals Mundial and Variedades, and then later, from 1929, for the Lima daily El Comercio.[69] His journalistic career was however never to provide him with an income that was sufficiently reliable, or financially

adequate, to allow him to live comfortably. During the seven years (1924-1930) in which he was engaged in writing for the Peruvian press, he often fell back into a state of poverty when payments for his work were delayed, or his contributions had been irregular. Lack of financial resources and the problems of basic survival were in fact to plague his existence in Europe until his death in 1938.

Vallejo's European Journalism 1924-1928

Vallejo's first period of journalism in Europe, from 1924 to 1926, when he was writing mainly for El Norte and Mundial, is only of limited interest in any analysis of the formation of his political thinking. Much of this early work seems to be motivated mainly by the necessity to have articles published in order to make a living. Consequently, many of his contributions are hastily written and lacking in interesting and well researched content, and only give a very disjointed picture of the intellectual developments he was undergoing at that time. Articles from this period deal with a wide range of topics from the arts, the natural sciences, politics and economics, to general discussions on contemporary trends, fashion, and even society gossip.[70] Underlying this treatment of so many diverse subjects it is however possible to detect a number of recurrent themes, and these in turn revolve around what becomes for Vallejo at this time an almost singular preoccupation; that is, the problem of coming to terms with the modern postwar world. Unlike many other Latin Americans who had visited or lived in France at this time, Vallejo did not see Paris simply as the world's cultural capital - a 'City of Light' - nor did he share the general sense of optimism that was felt by some intellectuals during the mid 1920s. While expressing only a very limited range of ideas himself, Vallejo's early perceptions of

postwar western society show some similarities to those of such nihilistic writers as André Malraux and Ernest Hemingway. The war itself, and what he felt to be its legacy - a profound social, economic, and spiritual malaise - seems in fact to pervade almost all of his journalistic writing up to 1928, after which he began to adopt an increasingly political perception of historical events. In one of the first articles that he wrote for Mundial, in August 1925, in which he reviews a number of current political and cultural events, he concludes with a statement which would be repeated again many times in a less direct form during the next few years: 'Nuestra época es eminentemente interrogativa. Todo es problemático; todo es una incógnita, vivimos entre problemas angustiosos, innumerables, acaso insolubles muchos de ellos. Tal es la resonancia de la guerra'.[71]

Vallejo's pessimistic view of postwar society, as expressed in his journalism, may be seen as both the product of personal experience as well as the influence of intellectual ideas. As noted previously his early years in Paris were blighted by poverty and poor health, and unlike many of his Latin American contemporaries who came to Europe to take up diplomatic posts, scholarships, a full-time occupation, or were simply sufficiently wealthy to finance their stay in a foreign country, Vallejo arrived with hardly any money and few prospects of finding permanent work.[72] For almost two years his major preoccupations had revolved around the basic daily necessities of getting a meal, and finding a place to stay for the night. Even after he began to earn a living from his journalism, his income was inadequate to allow him to move out of the poorer sections of Paris's Latin quarter - where he lived for most of his years in Europe - or be any more than an occasional participant in the café society of Montparnasse.[73] It is not surprising therefore, considering the struggles for survival Vallejo endured during the mid 1920s, that his perceptions of life in Paris, and the wider prospects for western

society at this time, were less sanguine than those of some of his fellow Latin Americans, who glided in comfort through the intellectual and cultural milieu of the capital.

Because of the lack of consistency in the themes and ideas which Vallejo presents in his journalism before 1927/28, it is difficult to identify any one major intellectual influence on his work. However one can ascertain from a number of his articles that he wrote during and after 1926, that he was well aware of those currents of western thought that had been greeted with particular interest in Latin America during the late ninetenth and early twentieth centuries. Consequently, it is not uncommon for him to refer directly to such figures as Renan, Keyserling and Spengler, as well as more contemporary intellectuals like Henri Barbusse and Romain Rolland, whose ideas found their way to Latin America through the influential transatlantic journal Clarté.[74]

From the time of his arrival in Europe in 1923, until early 1926, Vallejo's response to postwar European society in his journalism often reflects his own personal misfortunes, and presents the reader with a fatalistic and unstructured view of events. By mid 1926, however, his ideas become more coherent as he partially adopts the Spenglerian notion of the 'Decline of the West' in most of his analyses of developments in Europe during the 1920s.[75] In an article entitled 'La faústica moderna', for example, he attempts to explain the postwar 'decline' in terms of what he believes to be modern man's insatiable egoism.[76] Questioning the objectives of the pursuit of excellence in science, sport, technology, and the general dedication to materialistic quests, he states, 'Y no es que lo haga por una ansia de felicidad en sí, sino por gana de inquietud desinteresada y eterna. Tan cierto es esto que ninguna conquista le satisface'(p.5). He views such commitment to progress as illogical impulse which is peculiar to modern man, and especially the postwar generation,

whose faith in crass materialism is seen as a retrogressive step in human development. But his explanations of this 'mal del siglo' are inconclusive, and the reader is simply left with a vision of a world in which man has cast himself adrift from all previous history.

Even though the above article presents a descriptive rather than an analytical perception of modern society, and therefore cannot claim to be based on any particular theoretical understanding of history, it does indicate a number of ideas which appear to be of Spanglerian origin.[77] According to Spengler all cultures were subject to an internal cyclical process, which he likened to the biological stages in the development of a living organism. Consistent with this morphological understanding of history he believed that western culture had reached a stage of advanced maturity, and now faced an inexorable decline. This mature or 'Faustian' period, which began, he claims, in the high Middle Ages, and was now approaching its final phase, was characterized by an assumption on the part of western man that he inhabited a world of boundless extent, and that it was his destiny to reach out and fill it with his activity.[78] The great spires of Gothic cathedrals, the drive towards colonial expansion, and the conquest of space by telephone are all seen as being representative of this 'Faustian' urge.[79] During the latter stages of this period, which is also assumed to be the 'winter' of cultural development, the rate of progress tends to accelerate, but at the same time 'Faustian' man begins to loose his spiritual direction, which in turn saps his confidence in his own destiny. Largely a twentieth century phenomenon, this final part of the Spanglerian cultural cycle is associated with mass society, and the appearance of the 'world city', with its rootless proletariat, powerful plutocracies, esoteric art, and the subjection of life at all levels to the pursuit of short term materialistic goals. It is an age, furthermore, of imperialism, increasing political tyranny and almost constant warfare as the

great powers skirmish for world empire. In this latter context the Great War is seen as part of an inevitable development in the breakdown of western civilization, and a clear indication of its impending demise.

Shortly after its publication in 1918, Spengler's work was being widely read among Latin American intellectuals, who were attracted not only by those statements which proclaimed that all cultures followed a similar pattern of rise and decline, but also by the subsequent claim, that despite superficial interaction, each cultural unit was essentially an independent organic whole in itself. For Latin Americans these assumptions offered two important indications for the future; firstly, if all cultures passed through pre-determined historical phases, then the position of their continent in relation to Europe was that of a young developing culture in contrast to a mature and now declining one. Secondly, Spengler based his argument concerning the autonomy of separate cultures, on the belief that each consisted of a spiritual orientation of a group of people who had achieved some unitary conception of their world which informs all their activities, their art, religion, philosophy, politics and even warfare. On this basis Latin Americans could claim that their cultural destiny lay not in emulating and reproducing European ideals and forms, but in establishing a wholly independent and separate identity. It is on this latter theme in fact, which emerges from the basic premise of western civilization in decline, that Vallejo adopts a further position which would suggest that he had some notion of Spengler's arguments.

Since the time of writing his first articles in Europe for El Norte, Vallejo had begun to perceive the problems that modern postwar society presented to the artist in terms of creating an authentic response to the world around him.[80] By mid 1926 he came to focus more specifically on the challenge which this growing instability in western cultural development presented to Latin

American intellectuals, who had for so long sought to measure their own skills by standards that had been set in Europe. In his first attempt to deal with this theme, he suggests that the past two generations of Hispanic letters had offered no substantive traditions upon which young postwar American and Spanish artists could draw, as they were increasingly forced to seek indigenous forms of aesthetic expression.[81] Even Unamuno, whom he regards as the most outstanding writer of the Spanish generation of 1898, had, he feels, failed to provide any precedents in his work for those artists in Spain who sought to find a cultural and artistic identity in the 1920s. In Latin America the situation is seen to be even worse. There were those like José Santos Chocano , Leopoldo Lugones , and José Vasconcelos , who had produced some work of note but even this, he argues, was based essentially on bastardized European ideas which were remote for the realities of their continent.[82] As for the rest of Latin American writers he dismisses them as 'magníficos arribistas ... inconscientes', and claims that 'en cada una de estas máscaras está pintado el egoísta amarillo de codicia, de momia o de vesánico fanatismo'. As in Spain, he feels that young writers of his continent had been left in isolation because of the failure of their predecessors to provide an independent response to the pressures of modernization. He continues:

> ...la historia de la literatura española saltará sobre los últimos treinta años, como sobre un abismo. Rubén Darío elevará su gran voz inmortal desde la orilla opuesta y de esta otra, la juventud sabrá lo que ha de responder. 83
>
> Declaramos vacantes todos los resgos directores de España y de América. La juventud sin maestros está sola ante un presente ruinoso y ante un futuro asaz incierto. (p.7)

Some months later, in May 1927, Vallejo extended his attack to include not only his own generation of Hispanic writers, but also all elitist art forms that attempted to exist in isolation from the historical and cultural pressures of their age.[84] This hardening of his position on the role of artistsin general is significant, because despite the calls he makes for the

creation of 'authentic' art, the only realistic development that could emerge from this self imposed position, is a movement towards the acceptance of more politically committed forms of expression. Continuing the invective against Latin American writers however, his mode of criticism still seems to be of Spenglerian origins:

> Levanto mi voz y acuso a mi generación de impotente para crear o realizar un espíritu propio, hecho de verdad, de vida, en fin de sana y auténtica inspiración humana ... América presta y adopta actualmente la camisa europea del llamado 'espíritu nuevo', movida de incurable descastamiento histórico ... (see footnote 84)

After considering a number of stylistic devices, and experiments with artistic content, which had been employed by his own generation of Latin American writers, he continues:

> Por medio de las nuevas disciplinas estéticas que acabo de enumerar, los poetas europeos van realizándose más o menos, aquí o allá. Pero en América todas esas disciplinas, a causa justamente de ser importadas y practicadas por remedo no logran ayudar a los escritores a revelarse y realizarse, pues ellas no responden a necesidades peculiares de nuestra psicología y ambiente, ni han sido concebidas por impulso genuino y terráqueo de quienes las cultivan. La endosmosis tratándose de esta clase de movimientos espirituales, lejos de nutrir, envenena.

Vallejo develops his argument by condemning European 'vangardismo' in the arts, as itself being largely an elitist attempt to obscure the profound uncertainties which were being felt in postwar European civilization. This being the case he feels that Latin American artists of his own generation have even more reason than their predecessors to reject transcontinental influences on their culture, and consequently they should turn towards their own environment, their own 'materia prima', to find aesthetic and spiritual inspiration.

As well as identifying what he perceived to be the essential role of postwar Hispanic writers, Vallejo also began to consider by late 1926 the wider question of the responsibility of the literary intelligentsia in general in modern society. One of the first instances in which he deals with this problem is in an article he wrote in October 1926 entitled 'La gran piedad de escritores de Francia'.[85] Here he considers the financial plight of many of the lesser

known writers living in Paris, who he refers to as the 'literary proletariat', and among whose ranks he includes himself. But, despite showing some sympathy for his fellow artists he rejects the argument that they should receive charitable support. Throughout history, he claims, from Homer to modern writers like Carl Sandburg and Pierre Hamp, charity has been regarded as an offence to the dignity of the artistic professions and a detriment to creativity.[86] Along with Sandburg and Hamp he feels that writers should not attempt to make a living from literature alone, but should also become engaged in the daily working environment which provided a rich and varied source of stimulus to artistic creativity. In subscribing to this kind of thinking, Vallejo indicates that the experiences of his first few years in Europe had forced upon him the final break with the traditional belief among Latin American literary intellectuals, that the artist should remain above everyday society in his contemplation of the world and the human condition. The new worker artist that he now perceives is however, not yet the organic proletarian intellectual to which he would allude in later years. Hence, while he accepts that 'todo trabajo es digno o dignificable', he also insists that it can only become part of a creative process, 'ante el concepto superior y vidente del artista'.

Vallejo's understanding of the position of the artist in society, as well as the problems of the world around him, was at this time still largely apolitical. And, whereas he was no longer making the same naive statements as when in 1925 he had claimed that 'la historia pertenece a los grandes apasionados', he was still willing to support the general belief that a 'wise' politician like Poincaré could resolve the postwar economic crisis in France.[87] Poincaré is also regarded as being the representative of political moderation, which Vallejo holds to be a crucial stance in a world that was becoming polarized into political extremes. In an article entitled 'Los ídolos de la vida contemporánea' which he wrote some months later, in early 1927, we find

however that his support for moderation in politics is part of a wider view of postwar history:

> La boga popular en que están cayendo los revolucionarios es el mayor signo de la agonía de las revoluciones de post-guerra. Ya es difícil encontrar una persona que no sea revolucionaria o, al menos, que no esté adherida al revolucionarismo contemporáneo. Todos y no por el snobismo sino sinceramente vanguardizan en política con los comunistas integrales, en economía con el marxismo, en literatura con el superrealismo, en música con el jazz-band, en artes plásticas con los negros, en ciencia pura con Einstein, en ciencia aplicada con el cinema, en gimnástica con el tenis. 88

These 'fanatismos de post-guerra', Vallejo claims, had resulted from an overreaction to the war and were consequently an historical aberration. Moreover, he suggests that in the future a balance of political and cultural forces would be found in which only 'lo justo, lo exacto de exactitud histórica' will prevail. Vallejo then finally reveals the source of his thinking as he finally concludes that intellectuals should abandon their extremist positions and persue the development of an 'equilibrio dinámico, de justeza evolutiva y de ese buen sentido que predica Keyserling, tan caro a los creadores, a las brújulas, al concierto cósmico'. By early 1927 we can see therefore that at least in his journalism - which may not have always faithfully reflected his own intellectual developments - he was still being influenced by the ideas of such conjectural philosophers as Spengler and Keyserling. And, in an article he wrote for El Norte at this time, he makes some interesting comparisons between the two thinkers.[89] For Vallejo, Spengler's basic assumption concerning the decline of modern western civilization had clearly been vindicated during the postwar years. But it still remained, he believed, for intellectuals to ascertain with greater precision the nature and extent of the crisis; and it is Keyserling whom he sees as having addressed himself most convincingly to these questions. For the latter - in contrast to Spengler - cultural decline was taking place not only in European civilization but also in the 'new West' of the Americas. Furthermore, along with a number of other postwar thinkers, Keyserling believed that the East too was entering a phase of cultural and social decay. Keyserling, we

are told, despite his support of Spengler's claim that each culture had developed its own 'spirit', did not accept that this could provide sufficient protection from external influences. This was seen to be especially true in the postwar years as the European powers rapidly extended their hegemony throughout the world. Having given some attention to these assumptions Vallejo concludes that, 'hoy, más que nunca, las culturas han llegado a ser tan sensibles unas a otras, que lo que acontece en las entrañas de una resuena orgánicamente en las de las demás. Así pues, si la cultura occidental se halla en descomposición y en agonía, sus gérmenes patológicos y su ocaso atacan también de muerte a todas las demás culturas existentes'. Keyserling, he continues, suggests that the above process is most clearly represented in the extension to all parts of the world of those developments in western thought which put, 'el predominio de la inteligencia sobre el instinto y el sentimiento'. Expanding on this problem Vallejo states:

> En la actual organización psicológica de la especie humana, el elemento transmisible por fórmulas que es la inteligencia, domina sobre el elemento intransmisible y que muere con cada fórmula, que es el instinto y el sentimiento
>
> El espíritu científico ha derrotado para siempre a la "sagesse" y la abstracción a la intuición. Se posee el conocimiento de los hechos pero no se posee su significación vital. El hombre civilizado lo sabe todo pero no comprende nada. El hombre de nuestra época es un "ingeniero salvaje" o un chauffeur. El exclusivo progreso científico determina así la caída de la humanidad en la extrema barbarie.

Despite this pessimistic vision, Vallejo notes that Keyserling offers some hope for the future in his belief that the dying away of old cultures would lead to the creation of an environment in which new ones would be able to emerge. Notwithstanding the similarities with Spengler's conclusions, Vallejo claims that Keyserling believed that the 'spirit' of every civilization, even though unable on a superficial level to resist more powerful external cultures, was also part of a wider cosmic process. Hence, unlike Spengler he saw the possibility of the re-creation of 'spirit' through a number of cultural

transitions. Finally, Vallejo states his preference for Keyserling's philosophy above Spengler's, which he now finds outdated.

One assumes from the above analysis that Vallejo must have read Keyserling's travel diaries, into which were structured the author's unsystematic and speculative philosophical ideas.[90] In this work Keyserling also went on to claim - in addition to the points noted by Vallejo - that the human cultural and historical experience could not be interpreted through the formation of theoretical models, but must rather be understood through developing an intuitive response to one's environment. In this context, schools of philosophy as well as artistic movements were renounced as being contrived systems, incapable, because of their singularity of vision, of locating the essential 'essences' which underlay the complex diversity which made up the world.[91] Artists and philosophers, he argued, once they had rid themselves of their intellectual pretensions and become responsive to their surroundings were, because of their extraordinary intuitive powers, capable of reflecting such 'essences' in their work. For Keyserling this process would lead not only to the development of more authentic art but would also elevate the artist to the position of an integral prophet, capable of elucidating the intangible forces that shaped history. This role was important, he felt, in that extreme reactions to the world could thus be avoided as man became increasingly aware of the cosmic plan of which his life was a part.

As we have seen Vallejo seems to share some of these ideas when he considers the position of the modern writer in society. Like Keyserling he feels that the artist should come into closer contact with his environment, and that by doing so he would not lose, but in fact, enhance his prophetic role in society; a role which he sees not as part of a political process but as a means to help man understand his position in some pre-determined 'concierto

cósmico'. In an article entitled 'El apostolado como oficio', which deals with the ethical and artistic problems encountered by postwar French writers, Vallejo attempts to use this analysis to show how overt political commitment can devalue an artist's work.[92] Much of his strongest criticism is reserved for Henri Barbusse and Romain Rolland who he feels had far exceeded their responsibilities as artists by attempting to politicize the masses. Not only does he disagree with the nature of their project, and their methods, but he also argues that artists have for so long been members of an intellectual elite in society,that their attempts to communicate with the people are doomed to failure because they share no common experience with those they now wish to influence. Over-intellectualization and elitist seclusion - problems which Keyserling frequently refers to - had, according to Vallejo, made the ideas of most artists incommunicable to the masses. And now in the postwar period, when some writers like Barbusse and Rolland wished to convey their political thoughts for the purpose of a wider social good, they were viewed as outsiders. The peasants and simple people whom they addressed in their speeches on the postwar crisis might well ask, he suggests, '¿De qué crisis hablan estos hombres? ¿De qué cataclismo quieren redimirnos estos terribles cristos de smoking?'

A few months after writing the above article Vallejo began to consider more seriously the relationship between art and politics, but the influence of philosophers like Spengler and Keyserling still seem to dominate his thinking.[93] Therefore, while he confidently states that 'el artista es inevitablemente un sujeto político' we continue to be told that the ultimate aesthetic purpose lay beyond such materialist concerns.[94] An artist, he argues, can act politically by excercising his democratic right to vote, or he can even support a political party or pressure group but, he continues,

> la sensibilidad política del artista se produce, de preferencia y en su máxima autenticidad, creando inquietudes y nebulosas políticas, más vastas que cualquier catecismo o colección de ideas expresas y, por lo mismo, limitadas, de un momento político cualquiera, y más puras que cualquier cuestionario de preocupaciones o ideales periódicos de política nationalista o universalista.

The writer, he adds, again citing as examples Roland and Barbusse, should not use their artistic or oratorical skills to convey an overt political message. They should aim instead to highten the consciousness of their public in a non didactic manner; in a form which consists above all:

> en remover, de modo obscuro, subconsciente y casi animal, la anatomía política del hombre despertando en él la aptitud de engendrar y aflorar a su piel nuevas inquietudes y emociones cívicas. El artista no se circumscribe a cultivar nuevas vegetaciones con el terreno político, ni a modificar geológicamente ese terreno, sino que debe transformarlo químico a naturalmente.

Continuing his attack on the 'pseudo artists' who attempt to impose their most immediate political beliefs on society, he cites the case of the Mexican muralist painter Diego Rivera. Because of the latter's desire to create an aesthetic response to imperialism, he had, according to Vallejo, tried to accelerate the creative process, with the result that his work had degenerated into political propaganda. Again he emphasises that the artist should be above direct politics, and that his task is to reveal the 'nebulous' forces in history and not their material conclusions. Diego Rivera therefore, 'rebaja y prostituye ... el rol político del artista, convirtiéndolo en el instrumento de un ideario político, en un barato medio didáctico de propaganda económica'. Rivera's work, he adds, was doomed to failure because like all other artists throughout history who attempted to politicize their art, his intuitive genius is eventually reduced to banalities.[95] In conclusion, he outlines the main points of his argument:

> las teorías, en general, embarazan e incomoden la creación ... si el artista renunciase a crear lo que podríamos llamar las nebulosas políticas en la naturaleza humana, reduciéndose al rol, secundario y esporádico, de la propaganda o de la propia barricada, ¿a quién le tocaría aquella gran taumaturgia del espíritu?

After condemning Barbusse and Rolland for overstepping their professional responsibility as writers, and rejecting Rivera's attempts to create a

socialist art form, in a further article Vallejo extends his argument to include traditional bourgeois artists who, he feels, had also failed to produce an authentic response to their environment.[96] Directing his scorn particularly at such liberal writers as Anatole France and Paul Valéry, he accuses them of creating a 'literatura a puerta cerrada', which continued to celebrate the decadent and anachronistic values of the late nineteenth century, and failed totally to respond to the problems of the postwar years. This type of literature is, he argues, the product of a self satisfied bourgeois class, who, having lived for generations as exploiters and parasites had little understanding or sympathy for the masses who were forced to endure a daily struggle for economic survival. Such isolationist and elitist writing, he claims, will however eventually disappear to be replaced by truly representative and popular art forms, but he remains unspecific about the nature of the process which would bring about these developments.

As we can see by the spring of 1928, when this last article was written, Vallejo was beginning to develop a wider and more radical perception of the question of politics and art, and the comments he makes are some of the earliest indications of his developing political consciousness. However, one should not simply assume that it was only socialist ideas that had begun to influence his thinking. Fascist writers like Ernst Junger were also calling for popular art forms based on the struggles in modern society, and along with many contemporary socialist thinkers reserved their greatest scorn for nineteenth century bourgeois liberals.[97] Moreover, such ideas continue to be compatible with the philosophies of Spengler and Keyserling, who, as we have seen, had done much to shape Vallejo's perception of the world. Spengler in particular believed that bourgeois culture would disintegrate in the latter stages of the 'Faustian' period, as the masses began to impose their will onto society as a whole.[98] It was in fact not until the autumn of 1928

that Vallejo began to accept the materialist conception of history and the reality of class conflict. And, it is only at this stage in his intellectual development, that it can be said with certainty, that he had finally broken with the speculative philosophies which had influenced his thinking in earlier years.

Some Radical Political Influences on Vallejo's Thinking During His First Five Years in Europe

On reading Vallejo's European journalism between the years 1924 to 1929, one is struck by the swift transition from the broadly liberal perception of the world that he held up to mid 1928, to his outright commitment to the cause of revolutionary socialism in early 1929. Admittedly, during 1926, 1927, and especially the first half of 1928 he does indicate some sympathies with the arguments of the political left, but this, it could be held, would not be uncommon in the work of any liberal foreign correspondent reporting back to the Americas at this time; the progress of the Russian Revolution and the political developments in Europe were topical in the 1920s and 1930s, and attracted a wide readership. It was in fact only with the concerted efforts of western 'Cold War' propagandists that attitudes hardened towards the left, as it became compounded under the heading of communism.[99]

In attempting to explain the rapidity with which Vallejo adopted the socialist cause - as indicated in his journalism - it could be argued that, because of the sense of alienation he had displayed towards the modern materialistic world in his poetry and his writings up to 1928, as soon as he became aware of socialist ideas he adopted them with particular enthusiasm. Marxist thought did indeed increasingly provide for him answers to the numerous problems of the modern world, and his arguments embody

an unprecedented optimism after his first visit to Russia in the autumn of 1928. Nevertheless, enthusiasm alone cannot reasonably be seen as an adequate explanation for his unusually rapid assimilation of socialist ideas, and one tends to suspect that his journalism does not provide a reliable record of his developing political consciousness during his first few years in Europe. An analysis of his other written work at this time also gives no consistent evidence of his changing attitudes; the poetry he wrote during the second half of the 1920s often reflects a profound degree of philosophical anguish but does not treat political issues; his available correspondence, which is mainly with his two liberal friends, Pablo Abril and the Spanish poet Juan Larrea, also gives few insights into his political thinking. Finally, the accounts of his two main biographers, Juan Larrea and his wife Georgette, provide hardly any information on this aspect of his intellectual development for the period preceding his first visit to Russia in November 1928.[100]

Due to the lack of documented evidence dealing with the formation of Vallejo's political thinking during his early years in Europe, we are, of necessity, left with the prospect of making speculations regarding the origins of his first socialist ideas. Initially one might suggest that because of his work as a journalist he became aware, as a matter of course, of the main political arguments of the period, and it was those of the left that gradually gained his sympathies. Furthermore, as a foreign correspondent he must have come into contact with a number of politicians and intellectuals, some of whom undoubtedly played a part in his political education. Consideration might also be given to the fact that unlike the majority of expatriate Latin Americans living in Paris during the inter-war years, Vallejo, as we have seen, was plagued by financial problems, and lived for some time after his arrival in Europe in a state of considerable poverty. Enduring these hardships, it may be argued, made him particularly receptive to radical ideas.

Even though the above can be regarded as reasonably plausible influences on Vallejo's political development they remain, due to lack of evidence, too vague to be useful. To attempt to establish the sources of his early political formation within a purely European context may, in fact, offer too narrow a perspective, because for a number of years after he arrived in Paris he continued to have contact with Peruvians, both in Europe and Latin America. And, there are indications that at least up to 1930 he retained a considerable interest in political events and intellectual developments in Peru. It is also worth recalling, as indicated earlier in this chapter, that while his major preoccupations before leaving for Europe were of an aesthetic and philosophical nature rather than political, he had at least been exposed to the arguments of the radical intellectuals of his generation; some of whom like Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, Antenor Orrego and José Carlos Mariátegui were also personal friends.

During the immediate postwar years, before Vallejo left for Europe, it was Haya de la Torre, who, in Mariátegui's absence, established himself as the most important voice on the left in Peru. And, as president of the 'Federación de Estudiantes del Perú', and later rector of the Universidad Popular, his influence was considerable among the young intelligentsia. As we have seen Vallejo had remained in contact with Haya until 1923, and during his first few years in Europe we frequently find him making reference to the latter in his correspondence. Vallejo also met Haya on several occasions in Paris, and in one of his letters to Pablo Abril he recalls how he had discussed with his old friend, 'cosas de América'.[101] Moreover, during one such meeting in 1925 Haya persuaded Vallejo, along with several other expatriate Peruvians, to form a Paris cell of his APRA movement, which had been founded in Mexico the previous year.[102] It is not surprising therefore that in some of Vallejo's articles for <u>El Norte</u> and <u>Mundial</u> up to 1928

we find him taking what seems to be an Aprista position in some of his arguments; this being especially the case when he deals with the question of Latin American identity, and what he sees as the need for the development of native forms of cultural and political expression. Previously Vallejo's perceptions on these topics have been identified with the philosophies of Spengler and Keyserling, but one must also consider the influence on his thinking of the ideas being put forward by Haya de la Torre at this time, which culminated in the 1930s, with the formation of the theory of 'Historical Space-Time'.[103] Haya's theory owed most to the thinking of the British historian Toynbee, whose work he read during the 1930s, but as early as the mid twenties he had begun to outline his thesis on the basis of a critical analysis of Spengler, Keyserling, Marx and Hegel.[104] Haya felt that despite the valuable contributions to the study of history that had been made by the above thinkers, they had all - and he later includes Toynbee - viewed historical development from a European perspective. Therefore, while he was willing to agree with some of the ideas put forward by Spengler in The Decline of the West, he could not accept that Latin America should be included in a theory which, even though proclaiming the autonomy of separate cultures, was essentially founded on European philosophical ideas. Notwithstanding these reservations, by 1927, Haya, like Vallejo, began to view Keyserling as a more relevant thinker with regard to the Latin American experience than Spengler. Keyserling after all had largely dismissed the view that cultures passed through a series of gradually developing cycles, independent of each other, and believed that what for Spengler was the late 'Faustian' age was in fact not a stage in some unfolding process but a historically aberrant period that had been stimulated by the war, in which modern technological European man had found himself with almost unlimited power to influence and change the world, but at the same time could no longer find a philosophical or cultural rationale for his existence. To talk of the cultural autonomy of peripheral nations in

this context he felt was meaningless if the all pervasive effects of capitalist development were not taken into account. For Keyserling identity had to be developed therefore not only on the basis of cultural distinctiveness but also on a knowledge of one's own historical and economic position in relation to prevailing dominant world forces. The role of intellectuals was consequently seen not as one of passive acceptance of historical inevitability but as leaders in the resistance against external deviations which could weaken the process of self identification which their nations must follow. In contrast Spengler's young 'Faustians' were to seek careers in the new technology industries or join the armed forces, in compliance with the inexorable demands of their age. Clearly those ideas put forward by Keyserling were more compatible than Spengler's with Haya's growing interest in the effects of imperialism on underdeveloped nations and his insistence on the importance of indigenous cultural influences on the peoples of his 'Indoamerica'.[105]

Among the many intellectual currents to which Vallejo was responding in his journalism in the mid 1920s, there can be no doubt that the ideas of Haya de la Torre were among the most important. Haya's influence though, along with the ideas of Spengler and Keyserling, had only a transitory effect on Vallejo's thinking, and by 1928 he had become disenchanted with APRA and its leader. The reason for this can be traced to a fundamental split which was taking place on the Peruvian left in the late 1920s. Since the return of Mariátegui to Lima in 1923, sections of the working class movement and many of the country's radical intellectuals had begun to take an increasingly Marxist view of Peru's problems, and consequently set out on a course which would eventually lead to a conflict with Haya and his followers. Initially, Mariátegui, who was fully aware of the political immaturity of the Peruvian left, had sanctioned the formation of a broadly based anti-imperialist united front which included Apristas, but by 1927 this informal alliance began to divide along ideological lines.[106] In February of that year at the World

Anti-Imperialist Congress in Brussels, which was attended by a number of Apristas including Haya, political differences between APRA and the international communist movement came out into the open. This marked the beginning of what was to be a permanent break between the Apristas and the followers of Mariátegui, who were by this time gradually moving closer to the orbit of the Comintern.[107] After the Congress Haya returned to Mexico, and there decided - without consulting the Paris and Buenos Aires cells of APRA - that his movement should form a national Peruvian political party. Subsequently, in January 1928, the small Mexico city cell issued a manifesto known as the 'Plan de México' which declared APRA's independence from previous alliances, and the inauguration of the 'Partido Nacionalista Libertador del Perú'(PNLP). Mariátegui, who had placed much political emphasis on a united front strategy in Peru, was infuriated by Haya's proclamations. Haya retorted by accusing Mariátegui of 'Europeanism' which later became the standard charge by the Apristas against the Peruvian Marxists. As far as Haya was concerned socialism, like all other ideas that had been born in Europe, was an alien philosophy which could never be successfully implanted in Latin America. Instead he called for an American non-socialist, anti-imperialist, revolutionary programme, which APRA would formulate and the PNLP would put into action. Mariátegui's followers in Lima responded by sending a collective letter to all Peruvian groups outside the country, which proposed that APRA should be formally accepted as an alliance, but not a party.[108] In addition it was suggested that if Haya insisted in going ahead with his party strategy, then those in opposition should band together to form a Peruvian socialist party. In Mexico city and Buenos Aires APRA followers remained loyal to their leader, but in Paris, Eudocio Ravines, Armando Bazán and César Vallejo decided to break away, and were later to join the newly formed 'Partido Socialista Peruano'.[109]

The Marxist ideas of José Carlos Mariátegui: A new challenge for Peruvian intellectuals

According to Esteban Pavletich who arrived in Lima from Huánuco in 1923 - the same year that Mariátegui returned from Europe - Spengler's The Decline of the West was the most influential philosophical and political work of the day.[110] It is not surprising therefore that once back in Lima Mariátegui quickly realized that the Peruvian left, despite its readiness for action, was still in its political infancy with regard to a theoretical understanding of Peruvian society. It was consequently the battle for ideas into which Mariátegui threw his energies; a challenge which dominated his life until his death in 1930.[111]

Haya de la Torre's request that in his absence Mariátegui should take over the direction of Claridad, the official publication of the Universidad Popular González Prada, provided the first opportunity to extend the political debate in Peru. And, because the Leguía regime was at this time trying to present itself in a more democratic light, which included a relaxation of censorship, Mariátegui also found that Lima's two principal liberal weeklies, Mundial and Variedades were willing to publish his work. In the articles that Mariátegui wrote during the first few months after his return, he presented a radical new perspective of world history, which seriously challenged the speculative philosophical notions of intellectuals like Spengler. During his travels in Europe he claimed that he had experienced what amounted to a re-discovery of America and of his native Peru.[112] The world, he now believed, was indeed locked into a titanic struggle just as Spengler had claimed, but not one which involved the millennial rise and decline of cultures, but a revolutionary conflict between socialism and capitalism. Despite stressing the global nature of this process, he was, however, anxious to add, that he felt that it was in Europe where the most advanced revolutionary developments were taking place, and therefore Latin America had only a secondary role

to play at this stage of world history.[113] But when referring more specifically to Peru, he pointed out that the way in which this formative period of political struggle was conducted would be of crucial importance to the nation's future. With this latter question in mind, and in line with his further belief that socialist ideas should gain popular acceptance, Mariátegui readily agreed to give a series of lectures for the UPGP.[114] During these weekly talks, which began in June 1923, and which were attended by large numbers of students and workers, he outlined his predominantly Marxist interpretation of world history, placing particular emphasis on revolutionary developments in postwar Europe.[115]

Considering Vallejo's own developing enthusiasm for socialist ideas in the late 1920s, it seems unfortunate that he should have left Peru only a month before Mariátegui began his lecture programme. However, it would appear for a number of reasons that he may have become aware of the radical arguments of his fellow countryman as early as 1925. In that year Mariátegui published his first book, entitled La escena contemporánea, in which he consolidated many of the themes and ideas from his lectures and articles of the previous two years.[116] This work became immensely popular among the Peruvian intelligentsia and also gained some international acknowledgement. Barbusse, for example, in a review for Clarte, believed it to be a seminal study of great importance to the development of Peruvian and Latin American socialist thought. Even though Vallejo's journalism in the mid twenties does not offer any indications that he had read Mariátegui's writings, it is very probable that as a member of APRA he would have been eager to follow the development of political ideas in Peru. One must also remember that in 1925 Mariátegui and Haya de la Torre were still on reasonably good terms, and the former's book was regarded by many Apristas - who could not yet claim to have a clear ideological base for their movement - as an important

contribution to the thinking of the united anti-imperialist front. Even if Vallejo had failed to read La escena contemporánea, which seems unlikely, he would have begun to come across Mariátegui's arguments in the pages of Mundial and Variedades, for which he began working in 1926 and 1927 respectively. Since the early 1920s these two journals had in fact increasingly become the forum for intellectual debate in Peru, and it was perhaps the articles of Vallejo's contemporaries like Antenor Orrego, Haya de la Torre, Mariátegui and others which prompted him - along with economic necessity - to seek employment with these publications as a foreign correspondent. During 1925 and 1926 Mariátegui contributed a series of essays to Mundial and Variedades which dealt mainly with theoretical political issues, and which would probably have been read by Vallejo. In these essays, which were later included in a book entitled El alma matinal, Mariátegui gave a voluntarist interpretation of the revolutionary process, which reflected not only his reading of Marx but also his understanding of the ideas of such thinkers as Sorel, Croce, Gobetti and Bergson, whose works had first been introduced to him during his stay in Europe.[118] Besides providing an interesting and controversial analysis of the problems involved in creating a mass socialist consciousness, El alma matinal also served to establish Mariátegui's own interpretation of Marxism, and provide him with a distinctive theoretical position which he would continue to develop in his work for the radical monthly journal Amauta, of which he became editor.[119]

Amauta, which began publication in September 1926, claimed in the editorial of its first number that its main objective would be to deal with specifically Peruvian problems, including questions of race, which were regarded as being crucial in any attempt to establish an authentic national identity.[120] In this carefully worded 'Presentation', Mariátegui stressed however, that the journal would seek to encourage a 'scientific' analysis

of national problems, and further pointed out that such an approach would necessarily be based on the understanding that Peru was also involved in a wider world struggle. Without referring to Marxism or socialism by name, Mariátegui left no doubt concerning his own 'faith', and his hopes concerning the objectives of Amauta, but at the same time tried to provide a forum which was compatible with the needs of a broad anti-imperialist front. Particularly during its first two years of publication Amauta did not present a consistent socialist orientation, and as Pike notes, it frequently accepted the work of 'reform-minded intellectuals' as well as radicals.[121] Despite its emphasis on 'indigenismo' and national problems, Amauta also attracted the interest of foreign intellectuals, and as its reputation grew internationally it gathered together an impressive body of contributors, including André Breton, Henri Barbusse, Jean Cocteau, George Bernard Shaw, Leon Trotsky and many more. The radical French journal Clarté gave considerable ideological support to Mariátegui's new publication and succinctly described it in one article as a 'review of culture and revolutionary literature, orientated toward the ancient American civilizations, defender of a Marxist program and, above all, of the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses in South America'.[122]

One cannot imagine that Vallejo did not read Amauta, especially considering that during the years of its publication, from September 1926 to May 1932, he contributed several articles and a number of poems to its pages. His initial reaction to the journal when it appeared also seems to have been one of enthusiasm, and in a letter to Mariátegui thanking him for sending the first issue, he states,

> he recibido "Amauta". Sigo con fraternal y fervorosa simpatía los trances y esfuerzos culturales de nuestra generación a cuya cabeza está usted y están otros espíritus sinceros como el suyo. En estos días enviaré a usted con todo cariño algún trabajo para "Amauta", cuyo éxito y acción renovatriz en América celebro de corazón puesto que ella es, como usted me dice, "nuestro mensaje" [123]

Considering that Vallejo was still a member of the Paris cell of APRA when he wrote the above, his agreement with Mariátegui's assertion that Amauta

conveyed 'nuestro mensaje', indicates that as well as claiming to represent a broad front, the journal was also accepted as such, even by Apristas. Haya de la Torre was in fact a regular contributor until mid 1928; however this does not indicate that he supported all of Mariátegui's ideas. Since as early as 1924 when APRA was founded, Haya had decided that he could never become reconciled with any doctrines of European extraction. And, with the birth of Amauta he realized that, despite Mariátegui's statements concerning a broad radical alliance, the journal's ultimate aim was to consolidate the Peruvian left along socialist lines. It is not surprising therefore that soon after Amauta began publication in 1926, Haya brought out his first book entitled Por la emancipación de América Latina (1927) in which he outlined his largely non-Marxist interpretation of the social and political struggle in Latin America. Amauta nevertheless, because of its importance, provided a good vehicle through which to express his ideas; that is at least until the journal began to move sharply to the left in 1928. But, by this time Haya had clarified the position of his own movement, and could offer an alternative political strategy to the one pursued by Mariátegui.

As we have seen, when the breakdown occurred between Mariátegui and Haya after the 1927 World Anti-Imperialist Congress, Vallejo decided to leave APRA, and soon after joined Mariátegui's new Peruvian Socialist Party. This would suggest therefore that he had been following the political debates in Amauta and other publications, like Mundial and Variedades for some time, and finally came out in favour of Mariátegui's socialist arguments.

Concerning the effect of Amauta on Vallejo's intellectual development, it is interesting to note that its period of publication from 1926 to 1932 was also his years of political apprenticeship. Furthermore, the first regular treatment of political issues in his journalism from a socialist standpoint, which began in autumn 1928, coincides almost exactly with the

beginning of Mariategui's important series of articles in Amauta entitled Defensa del marxismo which consolidated their author's voluntarist interpretation of the Marxist historical process.

During the course of this chapter we have seen that even though Vallejo rarely treated political issues in his own published work before the late 1920s, he was either directly involved with, or on the fringes of, some of the most radical intellectual developments that were taking place in Peru during the postwar years. Indeed even in his early student days at the University of Trujillo he had belonged to a bohemian group, many of whose members were to become some of the major figures in the Peruvian Generation of 1919. Then, on arriving in Lima in 1918, he entered into a highly charged political environment, and despite the fact that for the following six years before he left for Europe we have no record of him becoming involved in political activities, he could not have failed to consider the implications of many members of his generation taking up political causes.

Once in Europe we find Vallejo experiencing acute poverty and social injustice at first hand, which destroyed for him the 'myth' of Paris with which so many of his Latin American contemporaries were imbued. However, his sufferings and his developing knowledge of the European social environment were not immediatly translated into a Eurocentric vision of the world but rather reflected in his increasing interest in Peruvian politics, and more specifically in the problem of national identity in Latin America. Consequently, in his journalism from 1925 we find him putting forward the argument of European civilization in decline, a belief which in turn he often juxtaposes with the programme of cultural nationalism which was being proposed by APRA at this time. To consolidate this position he became a member of APRA in 1926, but by the following year it seems that his ideological sympathies began to lean towards the stance of José Carlos Mariategui whose socialist vision offered

a more international perspective of the political struggle than the nationalist populism of Haya de la Torre.

Ultimately it is perhaps not surprising that Vallejo appears to have gained his first political notions from within a Peruvian intellectual context, considering that his main source of employment in Europe - that is his journalism for Lima based periodicals - remained linked to a Latin American audience. What is of particular interest however is that had he received his political grounding in Europe alone, he would almost certainly have been drawn - like so many other anti-fascist intellectuals during the interwar years - into the sphere of influence of the pro Moscow Communist parties which dominated left wing European politics in the 1920s and 1930s. But because of his varied political education it was not only the main currents of interwar communist thinking which informed his ideological move to the left but also the populist ideas of Haya de la Torre and then later the revolutionary socialist vision of Mariategui. Mariátegui, indeed, whose own political ideas had been nurtured in Europe - and especially in Italy during the heady years up to the foundation of the Italian Communist Party in 1921 - before Moscow established its control over the left, was to have a lasting effect on his thinking. For Vallejo, Mariátegui's influence was of particular importance because it gave him an insight into the sophisticated interpretations of Marx which had been espoused by the Ordine Nuovo movement, at whose head were such brilliant intellectuals as Antonio Gramsci and Piero Gobetti. By 1929 when Vallejo began to undertake a serious commitment to left-wing politics the theoreticians of the Ordine Nuovo had been silenced by Mussolini, and with them the ideas they had generated. This, along with the demise of Trotsky in the Soviet Union, and the persecution of his followers throughout the world, led to the emergence of a left-wing intellectual climate in the 1930s which became dominated by the monolithic Stalinist controlled

Comintern. Vallejo as we will see in subsequent chapters, was partly drawn into this narrow world of Soviet political expediency, but through the ideas of Mariátegui, who in turn had absorbed in his own thinking some of the most interesting developments in Marxism of the postwar years, he retained a vision of the revolutionary process, and of socialist man, which was shared by few of his contemporaries in Europe or Latin America. And, what is even more remarkable is that he was eventually able, during the latter years of his life, to sturcture this new faith into his poetry, which far from being devalued as a result, was raised into becoming the highest artistic achievement of his life.

Chapter I - Notes

1. Valdelomar was a few years older than the majority of the members of the Generation of 1919, and died at the end of that year, however he was widely regarded as a contemporary by many of the young intellectuals of the day.

2. Pablo Macera suggests that the intellectual currents that were instigated by the Generation of 1919 retained their hegemony into the latter decades of the twentieth century. See Conversaciones: Jorge Basadre y Pablo Macera (Lima, 1974), p.12.

3. For an exceptional account of the effects of this process on an Indian community see José María Arguedas's novel Yawar Fiesta (Lima, 1941).

4. The most concentrated period of economic expansion and modernization came between the years 1895 and 1908. Despite the far reaching effects of this process throughout Peru, it was Lima which reflected most clearly the spirit of the times and gave credence to the term 'belle époque', which has been used to describe this period. Much of the newly created wealth of these years of economic boom found its way into investment in the capital, and by the first decade of the twentieth century expansion had taken place not only in manufacturing and building but also in modern service industries. The introduction of public electric lighting (1902), the first tram service (1904) and the development of many more modern facilities, which along with a growing and increasingly Europeanized intellectual milieu, gave Lima the atmosphere of a cosmopolitan city. For many young rural intellectuals like Vallejo the attraction of the capital proved irresistible. A description of Lima at this time and an account of the lives of its leading social groups is to be found in Jorge Basadre, Historia de la república del Perú. 10 vols. (Lima, 1961-1964), 3333-3335.

5. Numerous biographies of Vallejo's life exist but the only one which deals specifically and in detail with his early years in Peru is Juan Espejo Asturrizaga, César Vallejo: Itinerario del hombre 1892-1923 (Lima, 1965).

6. César's brothers however, like the majority of the young rural middle classes at this time were seemingly satisfied with the opportunities that were offered at a local level, some of which had been recently created by the new economic enterprises. Víctor for instance became an administrator on a sugar estate, while Néstor and Manuel followed more traditional middle class professions, becoming respectively a judge and a district official. See Jean Franco, César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence (Cambridge U.P., 1976), p.4.

7. The 'Roma' was owned by the Larco Herreras family who controlled one of the largest sugar producing businesses in Peru. Life for the labourers on their plantations was renowned for being particularly harsh, with long working hours, poor living conditions, and starvation wages; most of which had to be spent at the company store. Even those who worked in the administration like Vallejo only received minimal salaries and had to observe a puritanical code of conduct.

Chapter I - Notes

Workers at the 'Roma' and several other estates in the area produced a number of spontaneous riots between 1910 and 1914 which had to be quelled by troops and armed overseers. This period also marked the beginning of organized labour struggles on some of the large sugar estates. See Peter F. Klaren, Modernization, Dislocation and Aprismo: Origins of the Peruvian Aprista Party 1870-1932 (Austin (Texas), 1973).

8. Vallejo's alienation, as represented in his poetry, cannot however be interpreted simply as a response to the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, and as James Higgins points out, like many young rural migrants who came to live in Lima he experienced a great sense of insecurity and homesickness in the impersonal environment of the capital. See The Poet in Peru (Liverpool, 1982), p.25.

9. For a detailed account of Vallejo's years in Trujillo see Espejo Asturrizaga, who was a fellow student and close friend of Cesar at this time, pp.30 - 62. During the period he spent at university Vallejo completed a degree in literature and spent three years studying jurisprudence(p.34). Receiving only minimal financial support, if any, from his family, he funded his education with his savings and by taking a part time post as a schoolmaster (p.33). Apparently he was a brilliant student especially in literature(p.34).

10. Describing the environment in which he and Vallejo spent their university years Asturrizaga states, 'por aquellos días ... Trujillo conservaba el aspecto quieto, lento y conventual de sus días coloniales ... sociedad cerrada, orgullosa, egoísta, con un sentido bastante medieval de su clase, de sus abolengos, que vivía todavía dentro de un pasado aún no renovado' (pp.31 - 32).

Among those writers and poets who were widely read by the students at this time Asturrizaga includes 'Rubén Darío, Amado Nervo, Maeterlinck, Verlaine, Baudelaire, James , Samain, Paul Fort, Rodenbach, Arthur Rimbaud, Walt Whitman ... Eça de Queiroz, Unamuno, Tagore, Ortega y Gasset, Valle Inclán, Azorín, Pérez de Ayala, Galdós, Baroja y otros'. He also notes that by 1917 the newly opened 'liberal' bookshop 'Cultura Popular' began to import a number of Spanish literary journals such as La Esfera and España whose contributors included Luis Araquistain, Guillermo de la Torre, Jorge Guillén, Antonio Machado, etc. Some Russian literature and contemporary European theatre was also becoming available at this time (p.57).

11. For a study of González Prada's ideas see Augusto Salazar Bondy, Historia de las ideas en el Perú contemporáneo, 2 vols. (Lima, 1965), I , 10 - 37. See also Eugenio Chang Rodríguez, El pensamiento político de González Prada, Mariátegui y Haya de la Torre (México, 1957).

12. A survey of González Prada's political development during the last decades of the nineteenth century is given in Jeffrey L. Klaiber, Religion and Revolution in Peru, 1824-1976 (Notre Dame (Indiana), 1977), pp. 28 - 32.

Chapter I - Notes

13. For an account of the influence of anarchism on French intellectuals during the 1890s see Donald D. Egbert, 'The Idea of the "Avant garde" in Art and Politics', American Historical Review, 73 (1967), 339. See also Kleiber who looks at the influence of a number of European intellectual ideas on González Prada's thinking at this time, pp.29 - 30.

14. A brief outline of the growth of anarchism in Peru can be found in Hugo García Salvatecci, El anarquismo frente al marxismo en el Perú (Lima, 1972), pp. 114-126.

15. González Prada's articles for Los Parias were gathered together by his son Alfredo and published in a book entitled Anarquía (Santiago de Chile, 1936).

16. For a short account of this speech see Jesús Chavarría, José Carlos Mariátegui and the Rise of Modern Peru, 1890-1930 (Albuquerque, 1979), pp.32-33.

17. This was not only the first time that an alliance between workers and intellectuals had been proposed in Peru, but also the first time the term intellectual had been used. Clearly, being witness to the 'Dreyfus affair' during his years in Paris had acquainted González Prada with this term. See Victor Brombert The Intellectual Hero (Chicago, 1964), pp.21-26.

18. The Modernist movement was late to become established in Peru in comparison to the rest of Latin America, where it reached its apogee during the 1890s. See Chavarría, p.48.

19. See Angel Flores who includes a large section from Vallejo's article in his chapter entitled César Vallejo 'Cronología de vivencias e ideas', in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo, edited by Angel Flores, 2 vols. (New York, 1971), 1, 40.

20. Concerning González Prada's influence as a poet on Vallejo's own work very little has been written. This however seems to be an unfortunate omission by the latter's critics, because some of the poetry that González Prada was writing during the war years until his death in 1918 - all of which was published as individual poems in various radical journals - bears a striking resemblance in style and content to many of the poems that Vallejo included in his first book Los heraldos negros. See especially González Prada's collection entitled Trozos de vida, (Paris, 1933), which was gathered together posthumously by his son Alfredo González Prada.

21. Flores, pp. 40-41.

22. Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez comments extensively on the relationship between Mariátegui and Manuel González Prada in his Poética e ideología en José Carlos Mariátegui (Madrid, 1983), pp.36-39.

Chapter I - Notes

23. An example of Mariátegui's treatment of González Prada as a predominantly literary figure is to be found in his article entitled 'La generación literaria de hoy: conversación con don Manuel González Prada', La Prensa, 2 October 1916, p.2. At this time Mariátegui was also still using the rather affected pseudonym, Juan Croniqueur, which would indicate that he still saw himself as a member of the literary avant garde. It is almost certain that González Prada did eventually have some political impact on Mariátegui's thinking, because in 1916-17 as the war-time economic crisis deepened, political discussions at González Prada's house were apparently increased. It is also during these years that Mariátegui started to make contact with working class militants. See Chavarría, p.53.

24. Luis Alberto Sánchez, Raúl Haya de la Torre o el político (Lima, 1934), p.64.

25. Despite Valdelomar's relative lack of political knowledge compared to González Prada's, there were few differences in their perceptions of the status of the artist in society. For Gonzalez Prada the artist, who was synonymous with the 'intellectual', was also seen in Modernist terms as a 'genius' and a man of extraordinary and even mystical intuitive talent. Intellectuals, González Prada had argued, should however offer their guidance to those engaged in the social struggle, but in saying this, he did not imagine that the poet himself could be affected by ideology, and therefore there remained no question of his right to assume a public or prophetic tone. By holding such beliefs it is hardly surprising that some of his followers regarded him as an essentially literary figure, nor that artists like Valdelomar eventually embraced vague political notions of the intellectual as a saviour of humanity.

    For an account of Valdelomar's literary ideas see Franco, César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence, pp.16-20. Franco also gives an excellent general analysis of the mainly literary influences on Vallejo's work during his period in Peru. See especially Chapter 1, 'Poetry as a mode of existence'.

26. During the period of rapid economic expansion of the first decade of the twentieth century the new urban middle and working classes, even though having benefited relatively little from the prosperity that had been enjoyed by the national elites and foreign investors, had shared in some of the optimism which had pervaded the period. By 1910 though, the boom began to slow down, and their insecurity within the economic and social organization of Peruvian society as it existed, became increasingly apparent. But, despite growing unrest among the lower classes, organised protest was largely limited to claims for higher wages and improved working conditions rather than any form of revolutionary struggle. With the outbreak of the First World War, however, class antagonisms were accentuated as a renewed export boom was clearly seen to increase the wealth of a few at the expense of the majority. As war generated demand grew, the working and middle classes suffered from food shortages and rising prices as lands previously used for growing agricultural produce for home

consumption increasingly shifted over to sugar and cotton production. While inflation of basic commodities rose by a hundred per cent during the war period, wages remained frozen. Such conditions provided fertile ground for radical and revolutionary ideologies to develop. For an account of the increasing social tensions of the war years see Ricardo Martínez de la Torre, El movimiento obrero en 1919, which was published in numbers 17 (September 1928), 18 (December 1928), and 19 (February 1929) of the radical Peruvian journal Amauta.

27. Describing the generations of intellectuals which preceeded that of 1919, Luis Alberto Sánchez claims that they were composed almost entirely of aristocratic elites, who not only enjoyed economic security but also often received state patronage, which gave them access to diplomatic posts abroad and prestigious bureacratic positions in government departments. See La literatura peruana, 5 vols. (Lima, 1965-66), 3, 963. The intellectuals of 1919 were extremely conscious of the differences between themselves and previous generations. In 1924, for example, the young Jorge Basadre wrote an article entitled 'Motivos de la época: la emoción social', in which he outlined the tensions which existed between his own generation and that of 1900, stating of the latter that 'they left books, articles, verses, but no action'. Then, after pointing out the poor socio-economic status of his contemporaries in comparison to intellectuals of earlier periods, he goes on to credit his generation with a 'social consciousness'. Cited by Chavarría, p.202.

28. Some years later after returning from Europe, Mariátegui referred to his youthful years as a member of the literary vanguard as his 'edad de piedra'. See Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez, Poética e ideología en José Carlos Mariátegui, p.57.

29. See the article by Valdelomar entitled 'Con el Conde de Lemos', La Reforma, 18 January 1918, which is included in Asturrizaga, pp. 213-215. Luis Alberto Sánchez notes that Valdelomar and his circle were becoming seriously disillusioned with their social and economic environment as early as 1911, and that they were looking for 'nuevos modos de mirar y entender la vida y el mundo'. See La literatura peruana, 4, 1215. One must also remember that from 1912, Valdelomar had regularly attended literary debates at the house of González Prada, and the latter's ideas on the role of the intellectual must have occasionally been a topic of discussion.

30. See Spelucín's article entitled 'Contribución al conocimiento de Cesár Vallejo y de las primeras etapas de su evolución poética', in Aula Vallejo, edited by Juan Larrea, 11 vols. (Córdoba, (Argentina), 1962 -), 2, 85.

31. Commenting on Valdelomar's influence on the Generation of 1919, Asturrizaga states, 'Valdelomar desdè su revista "Colónida" (1916) ha lanzado un grito de insurrección y de inquiedud intelectual. Ha traido de Europa su espíritu empapado de auras d'annunciamas y actitudes wildeanas. Trata de despertar el quieto y amodorrado ambiente literario de la capital' (p.83).

Chapter I - Notes

32. See for example the extremely sympathetic article by Vallejo entitled 'Abraham Valdelomar ha muerto', La Prensa, 4 November 1919, which is included in Asturrizaga, pp.220-221. Apparently the admiration was mutual and Valdelomar frequently praised Vallejo's work in his journalism; see especially 'La génesis de un gran poeta: César Vallejo, el poeta de la ternura', Sudamérica, 2 March 1918, pp.7-8.

33. An account of the radical atmosphere that prevailed in Lima during the last years of the war, which includes comments on the effects of the Russian Revolution on Peruvian intellectuals is to be found in Eudocio Ravines, The Yenan Way (New York, 1951), pp. 12-13.

34. Cited by Klaiber, p.18. Gerald Martin succinctly sums up the mood of the period as follows:

> The young Arielist students of the 1918 Córdoba movement had quickly put most of Rodó's philosophical idealism and Darío's literary posturing behind them, identifying themselves, in the wake of the First World War, Mexico and the October Revolution, with the material world of the Latin American peasantry and its incipient worker movements, on the lines envisaged by the great Peruvian intellectual González Prada. Sometimes missionaries (on the Vasconcelos model), sometimes revolutionaries, invariably educators and propagandists among the people (the muralists, the popular universities organized by Haya, Mella and others), that generation, born with the twentieth century, originated a link between students and workers and a practice of student political activism which would henceforth characterize Latin American social life and would reach one of its greatest crescendoes in the 1960s ... See 'Boom, Yes; 'New' Novel, No: Further Reflections on the Optical Illusions of the 1960s in Latin America', Bulletin of Latin American Research, 3, II, (1984), pp. 53-63 (p.56).

35. For an anlysis of the development of positivist ideas at San Marcos between 1870 and 1916 see Chavarría pp.33-41. See also Frederick B. Pike, The Modern History of Peru (London, 1977)), pp. 150-168.

36. Mariátegui makes this distinction clear in his Siete ensayos when referring to the spirit of positivism which prevailed at the University of San Marcos at the turn of the century. He states 'Javier Prado, García Calderón, Riva Agüero [three leading positivist thinkers of the period], divulgan un positivismo conservador. González Prada enseña un positivismo revolucionario. Los ideólogos del civilismo, en perfecto acuerdo con sus sentimientos de clase, nos sometieron a la autoridad de Taine; el ideólogo del radicalismo se reclamó siempre de pensamiento superior y distinto del que, concomitante y consustancial en Francia con un movimiento de reacción política, sirvió aquí a la apología de las oligarquías ilustradas'. (p.262)

Chapter I - Notes

37. Mariátegui, Siete ensayos, p.125.

38. Quoting the Peruvian educationalist José Luis Lanuza, Mariátegui adds his support to the view that this process involved 'la proletarización de los intelectuales', which was brought about not only by the austerity of the war years but also the failure of industrial development to provide sufficient opportunities for the growing middle class intelligentsia. Siete ensayos, p.126.

39. For a critical assessment of the University Reform Movement in Peru see Mariátegui, Siete ensayos, pp. 122-151.

40. For an account of the strike and a full list of student demands see Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, 'Latin America's student Revolution', The Bulletin of the Pan American Union, 60 (November, 1926), 1105-1108.

41. This success was undoubtedly aided by the fact that in July at the height of the strike the Civilista Party of José Pardo was ousted from power in a coup led by Augusto Leguía. Leguía, a shrewd and pragmatic politician with a long record of faithful support of big business interests, immediately took a conciliatory role towards labour and student unrest so as to diffuse what he perceived as a potentially dangerous political situation.

42. For a short summary of Haya de la Torre's formative years in student politics see Klaiber, pp.122-124.

43. For a short summary of the Cuzco congress see Chavarría, p.72.

44. Because of his widely proclaimed amnesty for worker and student militants Leguía could not have imprisoned or simply banished the editorial board of La Razón for fear of creating political martyrs. Consequently they were given journalists' grants, thereby sending them abroad in a semi official capacity rather than into exile. Leguía would later regret this decision when they all returned several years later as committed socialists; an education which they had received at his own government's expense.

45. For an account of Mariátegui's experiences in Europe see Chavarría pp. 65-70.

46. For an account of these events see Chavarría, pp.74-75.

47. Commenting on the politically charged events of 1919 Asturrizaga claims that 'Vallejo estuvo ausente ... no intervino ni en las actividades estudiantiles ni en ninguna otra ...', p.73.

48. Asturrizaga recalls that Haya de la Torre and Vallejo held a mutual admiration for each other's work when they were students together in Trujillo. In 1916 for example, Vallejo celebrated the successful production of one of Haya's plays entitled 'Triunfo Vanidad', by writing a poem of the same name, which was later published in the Trujillo daily La Reforma (18 December 1916). Haya, who at this time was writing under the pseudonym Juan Amateur, returned the gesture by dedicating a poem to Vallejo entitled 'Hiperestesia' which was also published in La Reforma (23 December 1916), pp.42-43.

Chapter I - Notes

Vallejo would also have become aware of Haya's increasing politicization as early as 1917, because the latter, who left Trujillo at the beginning of that year to study in Lima and Cuzco, returned briefly in September to see friends and lecture on the plight of the agricultural proletariat. See Asturrizaga, p.48. It was also at this time that Antenor Orrego, another fellow student of Vallejo's, began a campaign in the Trujillo daily, La Libertad, in support of the sugar workers in the Chicama Valley, who were fighting for better conditions. Vallejo, who had worked on one of the most regimented haciendas in the region could not have been unsympathetic, and may even have agreed with Antenor Orrego's assertion that it was the moral duty of all students to take the side of the workers in order to further their cause.

49. This letter (dated 29 March 1929) is included, along with most of Vallejo's available correspondence, in César Vallejo: Epistolario general, edited by José Manuel Castañón (Valencia (Spain), 1982), pp.24-27 (p.26).

50. By the early 1920s to regard oneself as a member of the 'Generation of 1919' - which Vallejo certainly did - meant almost automatically being associated with, even though perhaps reluctantly, the radical political developments of the time. Even if Vallejo had wished to remain uncommitted he would at least have had to listen to some of the arguments being put forward by his politically conscious contemporaries. This would seem especially so considering that in 1922 the house in which he lived in Lima became a meeting place for leading student radicals including Haya de la Torre; see Asturrizaga, p.107.

51. Asturrizaga gives a full account of the events surrounding Vallejo's imprisonment which includes a short survey of the response of Peruvian intellectuals to the incident (pp. 94-103 (p.101)). For example he notes that the Trujillo daily La Industria published a telegram from Haya de la Torre to the body which was to hear Vallejo's case, the 'Tribunal Correccional', in which were included the words, 'se une a la petición de los intelectuales nacionales respecto a la aceleración del juicio a César Vallejo a fin de que resplandezca cuanto antes su indulgente inocencia' (p.101).

52. Commenting on Vallejo's decision to leave for Europe Asturrizaga notes:

> Vallejo se marcha del Perú porque empezaba a ahogarse dentro del ambiente estrecho y provinciano que era la Lima de aquellos días. Incapaz para amoldarse y menos soportar la "mentalidad enana" que predominaba en los ambientes literarios y que le eran francamente hostiles, no solamente por que no lo entendían, sino por el sordo egoísmo de sus "capillas" y de sus grupos literarios que le estrañaron a sus ambientes. Vallejo no tenía otro camino que el de marcharse. Y así se marcha. Exilio voluntario y definitivo. (p.9)

53. In November 1921 Vallejo won the first prize in a literary competition for his short story 'Más allá de la vida y la muerte'. See Angel Flores, p.48. His poetry at this time continued to attract attention in intellectual circles, and was occasionally reproduced in the press but never became popular among a wider bourgeois readership.

Chapter I - Notes

54. Cited by Asturrizaga, p.109. Writing to Antenor Orrego immediately after the publication of Trilce, Vallejo himself accepts that he had produced a highly personalized work, which owed little to the literary genres of the time; he states 'El libro ha nacido en el mayor vacío. Soy responsable de él. Asumo toda la responsabilidad de su estática'. A section of the above letter is included in César Vallejo: Epistolario general, compiled by José Manuel Castañón (Valencia, 1982), p.16.

55. Palabras prologales, Trilce, (Lima, 1922). For an excellent recent analysis of the poetic content of Trilce see Franco, Chapter 4, 'The End of the Sovereign Illusion: Trilce', in César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence.

56. The first number of El Norte came out on 1 February 1923.

57. Concerning the wider attractions that Paris offered to the postwar generation of Latin American intellectuals, Gerald Martin notes:

> In the 1920s many young Latin American students yearned to be poets, usually at first on the model of a Darío whom they knew only too well to be outmoded (even though he had called his movement "Modernist"): like him they wanted to travel to the "City of Light" there to undergo aesthetic, erotic and political adventures; like him, most of them turned to journalism as a means of earning a living, travelling the world ("from our correspondent in Paris ..."), and engaging in writing as a profession; although, unlike him, in that decade in which the aesthetic and ideological attractions of France intermingled inextricably with the speed, dash, variety and sheer athleticism of the American Way of Life, they embraced the role of reporter "enthusiastically", if not wholeheartedly, for their inner soul still yearned for Art.

See 'Boom, Yes; 'New' Novel, No', pp.56-57.

58. See André Coyné, César Vallejo (Buenos Aires, 1968), p.127.

59. See Asturrizaga's calculations on Vallejo's financial circumstances on arriving in Paris, p.134.

60. See Vallejo en la encrucijada del drama peruano (Lima, 1968), p.153.

61. See Vallejo's extensive correspondence with Pablo Abril in Castañón ed. Epistolario general, which gives a good indication of his financial plight during his first years in Paris, pp. 47-70.

62. For a comprehensive list of the articles that Vallejo wrote in Europe see Elsa Villanueva de Puccinelli, 'Bibliografía selectiva de César Vallejo', in Visión del Peru 4 'Homenaje internacional a César Vallejo', pp. 58-65 (pp. 59-61).

63. Vallejo first mentions Sux's offer in a letter to Alcides Spelucín (not dated but most probably written in July), see Epistolario general, pp. 54-55.

Chapter I - Notes

64. Letter dated 4 August 1924, Epistolario general, pp. 55-56.

65. Letter dated 19 October 1924, Epistolario general, pp. 60-61.

66. See Georgette de Vallejo, 'Apuntes biográficos', in César Vallejo: Obras completas, 9 vols. (Barcelona, 1977), III, 95-268 (p.110).

67. Georgette de Vallejo gives a list of some of the intellectuals Vallejo met at this time, pp. 110-111.

68. Ostensibly Vallejo was to use this funding to finance the completion of his studies in jurisprudence, which he had failed to complete while he was in Peru. But, during the two years for which he received the award he never undertook his obligations to study at the University of Madrid, and only went to Spain for the purposes of collecting his termly grant cheque.

69. For a list of the publications to which Vallejo submitted his journalism while in Europe see Elsa Villanueva de Puccinelli, pp. 59-61.

70. Some of Vallejo's more carefully written articles remind the reader of the literary chronicles that became popular in the Latin American press - and especially in Lima - in the years before the First World War. The 'crónica' usually took the form of a medium length piece of newspaper journalism, which dealt with a number of contemporary topics of general interest in the same article. The subjects which were discussed could include literature, politics, sport, cultural events etc. with the author employing a literary style of writing, often with humorous or philosophical overtones. Many of the modernists like Ruben Darío, Julián del Casal and Amado Nervo saw the literary chronicle as a complementary aesthetic form to their poetry, and they all contributed a number of stylized and frivolous articles to the popular press of the day. This kind of journalism however only became widely popular at the end of the Modernist period, during the first decade of the twentieth century. It remained fashionable until the last years of the war, when it was gradually replaced by a more serious style of writing which sought to represent historical reality.

In Peru two of the most outstanding 'Cronistas' of the period 1914-1917 were Abraham Valdelomar and José Carlos Mariátegui. For an assessment of the latter's contributions to the popular press at this time see Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez, Política e ideología en José Carlos Mariátegui, pp.46-51.

71. 'Crónica de París', 14 August 1925, pp. 6-7. As the title suggests article is written in the 'cronista' tradition, and as well as dealing with a variety of contemporary issues, the author also adopts a literary style which suggests vague philosophical implications.

72. After having lived in Paris for a few years Vallejo makes this distinction clear when he states:

Chapter I - Notes

> Hay en París, desde hace pocos años, dos esferas de artistas y escritores de América: la oficial y la no oficial. La esfera oficial está formada por quienes vienen a París a brillar y triunfar ... La esfera no oficial está formada por quienes vienen a París a vivir libre y honestamente, sin premuras de llegar, ni preocupación de relumbrón ... En la actualidad ambas clases de intelectuales están tan separadas una de otra, que muchos elementos entre ellas no se conocen ni de vista. Permítaseme una nota personal: yo estoy en el número de los escritores hispano-americanos no oficiales.
> 'Una gran reunión latinoamericana', Mundial, 18 March 1927, pp. 18-19.

73. Pablo Neruda recalls that when he visited Paris in 1927 he found the Latin American community concentrated into a small section of the city around Montparnasse, and it is here where he first met Vallejo; see Confieso que he vivido. Memorias (Buenos Aires, 1974), translated by Hardie St Martin, Memoirs (London, 1977), pp. 67-68.

74. The 'Clarté' movement, which was founded by Henri Barbusse in 1920, was one of the first intellectual movements in Europe to seek the support of Latin American intellectuals.

75. The first volume of Spengler's Der Untergang des Abendlandes, subtitled 'Gestalt und Wirklichkeit' (Form and Actuality), was published in 1918 (Munich), and the second volume 'Weltlistorische Perspektiven, (Perspective of World History) came out in 1922. The first English translation of the complete work is by Charles F. Atkinson, The Decline of the West (London, 1928). Espejo Asturrizaga claims that in 1917, while still a student at the University of Trujillo, Vallejo read Spengler's thesis (p.57). This is clearly incorrect considering the first volume of the original text only came out in 1918. Jean Franco, however, suggests that a Spanish translation was available in 1919, The Modern Culture of Latin America (London, 1967), p.69.

76. Variedades, 7 August 1926, pp. 5-6.

77. Spengler's The Decline of the West can itself only be regarded as a theoretical work in the loosest sense, because its main assumptions are based on intuitive insight rather than objective historical analysis. For a survey of Spengler's work see H. S. Hughes, Oswald Spengler: A Critical Estimate (New York, 1952).

78. Spengler's thesis, despite its high degree of originality, was clearly influenced by Hegelian philosophy. In the broadest sense, his debt to Hegel can be seen - as indeed is true of many of Hegel's followers, including Marx - in that he attempted to outline a 'world system'. Spengler's work though, unlike his mentors, reflects the crisis of bourgeois liberal civilization, with its economic instability, its materialism and the shattering effects of the war. Hence, for Spengler history becomes an almost arbitrary process which suggests the fragmentation of humanity rather than its progress towards synthesis. Notwithstanding these fundamental differences, Spengler's concept of human cultures has some affinity with Hegel's concept of the State, as both envisage an organic unity of human attitudes and activities that

express a definite form of the human spirit. Spengler, however, denies that the spirituality of successive historical units taken together reveals the developing nature of 'spirit' itself, and therefore rejects the belief that one culture can be usefully influenced by another. The corollary of this is that individual cultures are set against the permanence of an indifferent cosmic back-drop which establishes them as ephemeral, if significant incidents in a common pathos.

Finally by comparing cultural and historical development to a biological process Spengler completely abandons the dialectical logic of Hegel, and his work as a whole can at best, only be seen as a pale reflection of the 'master's' majestic system.

79. The use of the Faust myth as an analogy of the process of modernization is not peculiar to Spengler, but has a long tradition in European philosophy and literature; Goethe's Faust being an outstanding example. For a fascinating analysis of this subject see Marshall Berman, All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity (New York, 1982), and especially Chapter I, 'Goethe's Faust: The Tragedy of Development'.

80. Even before he arrived in Europe, Vallejo had attempted to create new artistic forms in his own poetry, and Trilce (1922) is regarded by many of his critics as a surrealist work.

81. 'Estado de la literatura española', Favorables París Poema 1 (July, 1926), pp. 6-7.

It is interesting to see that Vallejo includes both Spanish and Latin American literature in his analysis. This position could be supported on the strength of linguistic and cultural similarities, but one finds from a wider reading of his journalism that he also saw Spain as an economic anachronism in a modern Europe, and subsequently felt that it had more in common with Latin America than its northern neighbours. See especially the article entitled 'Entre Francia y España', Mundial, 1 January 1926, pp. 4-5, in which he describes his first visit to Spain. See also his letter to Juan Larrea dated 24 December 1925 in which he states, 'Cada vez me convenzo mas de lo admirable que es España donde los americanos nunca podremos sentirnos extranjeros. A cada instante salta el recuerdo de nuestra tierra y las legendarias caballerosidad y simpatía que por todas partes se respiran no pueden dejarnos indiferentes', Epistolario general, pp. 89-90 (p.90). During the Spanish Civil War Vallejo continued to hold a vision of Hispanic unity, but now a Marxist, he felt that all existent social and cultural bonds could only be truly authenticated through the process of revolution.

82. Both Chocano (Peru) and Lugones (Argentina) had written works that praised the indigenous elements in their cultures. Chocano's poetry extolled the virtues of the 'aristocratic Inca', and Lugones in his book El Payador (1916) was the first Europeanized artist to raise Jose Hernandez's narrative poem Martín Fierro to the status of serious literature.

Chapter I - Notes

Vasconcelos was one of the architects of cultual nationalism in Mexico and in his essay entitled 'Discurso de Cuauhtémoc' (1922), he had appealed to Latin Americans to abandon the idea that they were 'spiritual serfs' of Europe, but at the same time not to reject all European ideas that could be relevant and applicable to the Latin American experience.

83. The lack of artistic merit, which Vallejo claims exists between the time when Darío was writing, and the 1920s, suggests that he recognised the Modernist movement as the first attempt to create an authentic Latin American literary form. The Modernists including Darío were paradoxically the first Latin American writers to endow French culture with the mystique that it was to continue to hold for successive generations, including Vallejo's. However, they also recognised the need to develop the Spanish language to deal with the modern realities of Latin America, and in this context their adulation of French culture can be seen as part of a complex revolt against the Spanish literary heritage that had dominated the continent since colonial times. Darío in fact had even spoken of introducing a non-Spanish vocabulary into Latin American Castilian, in order to develop a linguistic form which he felt would be more suited to expressing the American experience. For a short account of the ideas and aims of the Modernist movement, see Jean Franco. The Modern Culture of Latin America, pp.14-39.

84. 'Contra el secreto profesional', Variedades, 7 May 1927. The major part of this article is a critique of Jean Cocteau's essay, 'Le Secret profesionnel' (1926) in which the latter defends the right of the artist to adopt an elitist stance in his work. The reference to the above article does not include the page numbers of the journal in which it is included, as it is taken from Jorge Puccinelli's compilation of Vallejo's articles which has yet to be submitted for publication, and still lacks final pagination. All further references to Vallejo's journalism will also be taken from Puccinelli's work except in the case of those articles which were presented to European journals.

85. Mundial, 26 November 1926.

86. Pierre Hamp (1876-1962) came from French working class origins and wrote a number of novels about his varied experiences as a manual worker in modern industry. He gained some notoriety as a proletarian writer after the publication of his novel, Le Cantique de Cantiques in 1922.

87. The statement that he made in 1925 is to be found in an article entitled 'Guitry, Flammarion, Mangin, Pierre Louys' which was published in Mundial on 24 June. His comments on Poincaré were made in an article entitled 'Hablo con Poincaré' which was first published in 'El Norte' on 13 June 1926.

88. Mundial, 22 April 1927.

89. 'Keyserling contra Spengler', 21 March 1927.

90. Count Hermann Keyserling, Das Reisetagebuch eines Philosophen, 2 vols. (Munich, 1919), translated into Spanish by Manuel G. Morente, Diario de viaje de un filósofo (Madrid, 1926). Like Spengler, Keyserling's work was widely read among Latin American intellectuals and he became especially popular after the translation of his South American Meditation (Südamerikanische Meditationen, Stuttgart, 1930) into Spanish in 1931.

Chapter I - Notes

91. Keyserling, who borrowed some of his ideas from Spengler, believed like the latter that much of historical and cultural development was predetermined, and that man could do little to alter this process. However, whereas Spengler saw a need for man to attempt to impose his will on events, in the belief that dignity could be achieved through action, Keyserling felt that humanity could only become reconciled with its world by gaining an understanding of those cosmic forces which underlay history. For a critical account of Keyserling's work see Mercedes G. Parkes, Introduction to Keyserling (London, 1934).

92. Mundial, 9 September 1927.

93. Vallejo may also have read by this time the recently published work by the French writer Julien Benda, La Trahison des clercs (Paris, 1927), in which the author put forward a powerful case against political compromise on the part of intellectuals.

94. 'Los artistas ante la política' Mundial, 31 December 1927.

95. Vallejo's criticism of Diego Rivera was probably written in response to an article in Amauta entitled 'Diego Rivera: el artista de una clase', which praised the artist for his commitment to the proletarian cause. See Amauta, 5 (January 1927), 5-9.

96. 'Literatura a puerta cerrada', Variedades, 26 May 1928.

97. See especially Junger's diaries which were published in a book entitled In Stahlgewittern (Berlin, 1920). English translation by Basil Creighton, The Storm of Steel (London, 1929). A French edition came out in 1925.

98. Spengler however did not see this as a positive process but part of a growing 'herd morale' against which 'Faustian man' must distinguish himself. The Decline of the West, 2 vols. II, 341-343.

99. During the 1920s especially, there seems to have been an almost unbelievable tolerance towards socialist ideas in the Americas - that is, compared to the schizophrenic reaction adopted by the right in the post Second World War period. Mariátegui, for example, the most radical Marxist intellectual in Latin America in the mid 1920s, was allowed to lecture freely under the Leguía dictatorship and even went on to form Peru's first socialist party. Much the same can be said of Max Eastman, the North American Marxist, who also enjoyed relative freedom to express his ideas, and who influenced a whole generation of left-liberal thinkers.

100. Larrea's biography is included in César Vallejo: poesía completa, edited by Juan Larrea (Barcelona, 1978), pp. 9-214. Madame Vallejo's account of her husband's life entitled 'Apuntes biográficos sobre César Vallejo' was first published in César Vallejo: obra poética completa', (Lima, 1968). A slightly modified and extended version of this biography is included in the Spanish edition (Lais) of his complete works (see note 68). The latter publication of 'Apuntes biográficos' will be consulted throughout this thesis unless otherwise stated. Larrea who first met

Chapter I - Notes

Vallejo in September 1923, has consistently argued that Marxist ideas only had a transitory effect on Vallejo's thinking, and ultimately made little impact on his art. His wife Georgette on the other hand, emphasizes her husband's commitment to Marxism and vehemently denounces Larrea's statements on Vallejo's politics.

Both biographers agree however that Vallejo had begun to develop an interest in political issues by 1927, and Georgette makes the interesting claim that when she first met her future husband during that year:

> Vallejo empieza a estudiar la realidad social y el fenómeno marxista: asiste a charlas y reuniones en las que se exponen y discuten problemas socio-económicos, lee folletos y libros que tratan de la lucha de clases, de la organización socialista del trabajo (p. 113).

This would suggest that there was a strong European context to Vallejo's politicization even as early as 1927, but its effects do not become apparent in his journalism until the end of 1928.

101. Letter dated 25 July 1926, Epistolario general, p.121. For an account of Haya de la Torre's visits to Paris in the mid 1920s see Ravines, pp.19-53.

102. Short commentaries dealing with the formation of the Paris cell of APRA are to be found in Luis Alberto Sánchez, Haya de la Torre y el APRA. (Santiago de Chile, 1954), p.170, and Klaiber, p.136. See also Haya de la Torre, 'Nuestro frente intelectual', Amauta, 4 (December, 1926), 3-8 (p.4).

103. For a selection of Haya de la Torre's writings, including part of his thesis on 'Historical Space-time' see Aprismo: The Ideas and Doctrines of Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre, selected, edited, translated and with introduction by Robert J. Alexander (Kent State University Press, 1973).

104. Arnold Joseph Toynbee's monumental work entitled A Study of History, consists of twelve volumes (Oxford, 1934-1961), two of which were published during the mid 1930s.

105. Haya de la Torre's earliest ideas on imperialism came from his reading of Manuel Ugarte's anti-imperialist work El destino de un continente (Madrid, 1923), in 1923.

106. Mariátegui's strategy at this time was loosely in line with the Third International's policy in the 1920s of United Front (1921-1927), which placed emphasis on preparing cadres whose task was to indoctrinate a left wing alliance of workers parties in readiness for the coming revolutionary struggle.

107. For an account of the developing split between Haya de la Torre and Mariátegui in the late 1920s see Chavarría, pp. 102-106; see also Ravines, pp.27-56.

108. Comments on the content of this letter are to be found in Ricardo Martínez de la Torre, Apuntes para una interpretación marxista de la historia social del Perú, 4 vols. (Lima, 1948), II, 298.

109. Chavarría, p.104.

110. Cited by Chavarría (p. 79) who interviewed Pavletich in 1966.

111. Even when referring to the wider political context of international socialism Mariátegui had stated: 'La crisis mundial es, pues, crisis económica y crisis política. Y es, además, sobre todo, crisis ideologica'. See 'Historia de la crisis mundial' (Conferencias años 1923 y 1924) in Ediciones populares de las obras completas de José Carlos Mariátegui, edited by Sandro, Siegfried, José Carlos and Javier Mariátegui Chiappe, 20 vols. (Biblioteca Amauta, Lima, 1959), VIII, 27.

112. This statement is to be found in the article entitled 'Peruanicemos al Perú', which is included in volume II of Mariátegui's Obras completas, which bears the same title (p.146).

113. 'Instantáneas', Variedades, 31 March 1925, p.27.

114. Mariátegui saw the Popular Universities as 'escuelas de cultura revolucionaria' and 'escuelas de clase'. In this context the duty of the intellectuals was seen to be a revolutionary one, in which they must fight to help the proletarist create and develop its own popular culture and ideas. See 'Las universidades populares', Claridad, 2 (May 1923), p.5.

115. Mariátegui's lecture notes have been published in volume 8 of his Obras completas under the general title of 'Historia de la crisis mundial'.

116. La escena contemporánea has been re-published as volume I of Mariátegui's Obras completas.

117. 'José Carlos Mariátegui', Clarté, 7 March 1926, p.18.

118. El alma matinal, was a title chosen by Mariátegui himself but his essays were not published as a book until after his death (Lima, 1950). This work is included in his Obras completas, volume 3, which bears the title El alma matinal y otras estaciones del hombre de hoy.

119. The series of essays which fall under the general heading Defensa del marxismo, and which were published in Amauta between September 1928 and June 1929, seem in fact to be a natural progression of the theoretical ideas he was putting forward in El alma matinal.

120. 'Presentación de Amauta', 1 (September 1926), p.3. Mariátegui's interest in 'indigenismo' seems only to have begun after he returned to Peru in 1923. 'Indigenismo' as a movement had roots going back to the previous century and was particularly associated with the ideas of González Prada. By the 1920s the Indian question had become the major concern of intellectuals and politicians. Mariátegui's first statements linking himself with the movement are to be found in his article 'Peruanicemos al Perú', in which he claims that to talk of a Peruvian nation and a peruvian identity without including the Indian masses was meaningless. By 1926 when he

Chapter I - Notes

started writing some of the first essays that were to be included in his Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana (1927), Mariátegui began to incorporate the Indian question into a wider Marxist interpretation of Peruvian history.

Mariátegui's willingness to address the Indian question during the early and mid twenties was a major factor in delaying the inevitable ideological breakdown between himself and Haya de la Torre. Amauta, with its dedication to the question of race, proved to be particularly important in this respect, especially during its first year of publication.

121. Frederick B. Pike, The Modern History of Peru (London, 1967), p.236.

122. Cited and translated by Chavarría p.94.

123. Letter dated 10 December 1926, Epistolario general, p.132. It is interesting to note that in the same month that Vallejo was writing to Mariátegui expressing his approval of Amauta, he, and a number of other Latin Americans in Paris, were also preparing to bring out a new political journal, and in a letter to Pablo Abril dated 4 December 1926 he states, 'es muy posible que en estos días saquemos aquí una revista: "Foro", sobre política latinoamericana y en español .... "Foro" será una cosa sin fotos y de un carácter exclusivamente político.... "Foro" no tendrá compromisos'. Epistolario general pp.130-131 (p.130). Vallejo's final statement is ambiguous because it could either indicate that the journal was open to all shades of political opinion, or that it was to be an Aprista publication, and by refusing to be 'committed' it would indicate its resistance to the increasingly pro-Comintern line being adopted by Mariátegui. Regardless of the precise ideological stance of the journal Vallejo's involvement does indicate his growing interest in politics - an interest which is still not clearly apparent in his journalism at this time.

CHAPTER II

TOWARDS A POLITICAL IDEOLOGY: VALLEJO'S EUROPEAN JOURNALISM 1928 - 1930

In Chapter One we have seen that Vallejo had been exposed to a radical political environment since his early student days in Peru, and how during his first years in Europe he had retained, and in fact developed along ideological lines, his interest in events in that country. It has also been suggested that the ideas of the Peruvian Marxist, José Carlos Mariátegui, were to have a lasting influence on his political thinking. However, one should not assume on the basis of the above claims that Vallejo's interest in politics continued throughout the late 1920s to have its focal point in Peru. Indeed there is a clear dividing line when his attention shifted from Latin American to European affairs. This is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that during late 1927 and most of 1928 he fought desperately to obtain a Peruvian government sponsored passage back to Lima, but when this was finally granted to him in September (1928), he decided to use the money to visit Russia instead.[1] Due to the lack of information on this period in his life one can only speculate on the reasons for this extraordinary change of heart.[2] What is clear though, is that from this time his intellectual interests begin to shift substantially into the arena of European politics. And, while still writing in his journalism for a mainly Peruvian audience, he gradually changed his role from that of a liberal chronicler, dealing with a wide range of issues, to a left-wing political commentator. We are therefore now able to continue the analysis of the formation of Vallejo's political consciousness based almost entirely on his own writings.

César Vallejo did not become a committed Marxist until 1930, and it was precisely during the last month of that year, with his expulsion from France, that he abandoned nearly all journalistic work. Consequently, from this time until his death in 1938, apart from a few articles, the only record of the development of his newly formed political faith is to be found in an inconsistent body of work which includes his theatrical writings, a novel, two books on the Soviet Union (which were made up largely from previous articles), and a number of poems which deal with social themes, including the collection on the Spanish Civil War. The regular journalistic contributions which he continued to make from the middle of 1928, when he became increasingly politically conscious, up to the end of 1930, provide therefore, an invaluable record of the formation of his Marxist thinking.

The Soviet Union: A Revolutionary Dawn

Vallejo's understanding of Marxism and his hopes for the development of a future communist society was, as with many intellectuals during the inter-war years, highly influenced by the events that had been taking place in Russia since the 1917 Revolution. In France, as in the rest of Europe, the war had thrown the political left into disarray. The reformist and revisionist strategies which had dominated the Second International had collapsed in the face of major international conflict, and serious doubts were now being cast over the future effectiveness of parliamentary socialist parties. The only hope for many socialists lay with Soviet Russia, which they believed should become the natural leader and co-ordinator of the political left throughout the world. As a result of this belief, in France a splinter group broke away from the French Socialist Party, after the Tours Congress of 1920, to form the French Communist Party, whose Directing Committee immediately accepted allegiance with Moscow by joining the Third Communist International

(the Comintern).[3] The founding members of the Party were notably intellectuals rather than workers, reflecting the extent of disillusionment that had been caused in academic and artistic life by the war. And, after they took over the socialist paper, L'Humanité, the quantity of space devoted to the arts increased and a new page entitled 'La vie intellectuelle' became a regular feature.[4] In spite of increasing emphasis on proletarian leadership after the failure of the German revolution of 1923, and the hardening of attitude towards intellectuals with Stalin's rise to power, the Party continued to attract intellectual support. Both Henri Barbusse and Romain Rolland for example, remained faithful in their capacity as 'fellow travellers' for the duration of the inter-war years. Vallejo never became a member of the French Communist Party, but showed some sympathy towards their arguments, even if he was not always fully convinced by them.

Despite the dominance of the Comintern leadership in Moscow over the political life of its European member parties, many arguments continued to rage throughout the 1920s among Communists, as well as the wider political left, concerning the nature of the Bolshevik Revolution and the prospects for Russia's advancement towards Communism.[5] These debates were accentuated with the collapse of the German revolution in 1923, which in turn dampened the hopes for a world revolution which the Comintern leadership had believed to be imminent. Apart from the more obvious Marxist theoretical problems concerning a revolution in an underdeveloped country, where the objective conditions were not ripe for such an event, many other questions, often originating from this fundamental paradox, remained yet unanswered. Was the Revolution just the transference of power from a tsarist autocracy to a Bolshevik dictatorship? Did the 'workers' state of 1918 still exist? Soviet democracy had in practice been destroyed in the Civil War, and the Communist Party, the followers of Trotsky were later to claim, had 'emancipated' itself

from majority working class support. A further controversy emerged over the future of the Soviet Union itself. Would the new Soviet State with its enormous internal problems, coupled with imperialist agression from outside, forge forward to a Communist society? Were the developments that had taken place since 1917 regarding the organisation of society and work of a truly socialist nature; would the Soviet Union eventually become a model society which would increase the demands for social justice in the western capitalist economies?

These were some of the questions which confronted Vallejo as his interest in the developments in Russia began to increase in 1928. It was also in that year, during the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern, that the Bolshevik leadership abandoned all attempts at co-operation with socialists. Henceforth, an ultra-left line was to be imposed on communist parties everywhere, regardless of their local circumstances. At a time when fascism was growing into a real danger, especially in Germany, the social democrats were now regarded, seemingly against all political logic, as the main enemy.

The first article that Vallejo wrote which deals at any length with Soviet Russia was published in August 1928, and is entitled 'El espíritu y el hecho comunista'.[6] He begins by stating his belief that, 'hasta el día en que el hecho comunista se convierta en espíritu comunista - tomando éste como estado orgánico de la vida colectiva - habrán de sucederse en Rusia varias generaciones'. He then goes on to suggest that the Bolshevik Party, even at this early stage of revolutionary development, was not a force imposed from outside on the people, but rather an authentic revolutionary group which was organically linked to the masses. The 750,000 members who made up the Party are seen as the vanguard of a new political consciousness which still has to be developed and put into practice by the majority of the population. Emphasizing the difference between Party members and the people, he claims that 'el

Bolchevique ajusta su conducta a las disciplinas comunistas espontáneamente y con una religiosa y alegre austeridad, mientras que los demás individuos lo hacen imperfectamente a veces con escepticismo, otras a la fuerza y casi siempre a medias'. Consequently through the process of Communist education, and with the Bolshevik vanguard as an example, eventually the whole population would reach a higher level of understanding and in effect become Bolsheviks. The transition period would however, we are told, take a long time, because not only will the old political and social forms have to change but also the whole ideological consciousness of the people. Vallejo emphasizes particularly that such a change must in its essence be organic rather than functional, and therefore Communist education should 'eliminar por sana y natural secreción histórica, el viejo protoplasma político eslavo reemplazándolo con la nueva celulación social'.

Extending his argument to encompass the international response to the Revolution, he states that those who claim that a Communist society already exists in spirit in Russia, and cite as an example the collective adhesion of the people when they attend popular meetings, are mistaken. Aiming his criticism specifically at the French poet Luc Durtain, who was among those putting forward this argument, Vallejo contests that the degree of socialist development cannot be gauged simply through the somewhat artifical event of a popular meeting, but must rather embody a profound change of consciousness which affects all aspects of life, and even the thought process itself.[7] Speaking in morphological terms, which he does consistently thoughout the article when referring to the transformation of Russia into a Communist society, he repeats that real change will take time because it is based on 'una ley biológica de evolución social'. Due to this slow process of 'natural' formation he goes on to suggest that Russia was still far from being an ideal society, but that it had at least begun to enter into a

stage of development which would lead to profound changes for its people.

Vallejo may by this time have become increasingly receptive to Marxist orientated ideas but one can still trace elements of Spenglerian thought in his arguments. Clearly from the points he makes about the Bolshevik's role as vanguard and the aims of Communist education he is at odds with Spengler, but his belief in the evolution of society in biological terms suggests that he still retained important notions of a non-Marxist origin. A further indication of this is given when he concludes his eclectic analysis of Soviet society by making an unusual comparison between the Apostles of Christ and Lenin's Bolsheviks. claiming that both had been enlightened by great revelations which they must convey to the rest of the world.

It is doubtful that by August 1928 when the above article was written, Vallejo had read much of Marx's work or had developed more than a basic understanding of events in Russia. The issues which he raises in his analysis of the role of the Bolshevik do however represent some of his earliest thoughts on a question which was to become increasingly important as his political knowledge developed; that is the relationship between proletarian and non-proletarian forces in the revolutionary struggle. From his foregoing statements it is clear that he agrees with the Leninist principle that a socialist consciousness must come to the working class from outside itself, through the mediation of an enlightened elite. But, in accepting this belief Vallejo insists that the relationship between the Bolsheviks and the masses must be an organic one; a process which he explains in biological terms. So anxious is he, in fact, to emphasize the existence of an enduring and vital relationship between the two groups, that he compares the Bolsheviks to the Apostles of Christ, and thereby attaches to their task the implication of a divine mission. An idea which, in spite of his vastly improved understanding of Marx and his interpreters in later years, he never abandoned, but increasingly

transferred to the proletariat itself. Furthermore as his political consciousness matured and he became better informed of events in Russia, his perceptions of the Bolshevik idea, which he saw in its essence as being a symbiotic relationship between leaders and masses remained the same, but he rejected that element of Bolshevism which had grown into a monolithic party machine, insensitive to the proletariat and therefore the revolutionary struggle itself.

A good indication of the extent of Vallejo's political understanding in the autumn of 1928, before he made his first visit to Russia, is given in an article entitled 'El espíritu polémico'.[9] His opening statement is as follows: 'los tolerantes, los liberales, los eclécticos no saben inquietarse de los malos fermentos de la historia. En su concepto, los malos fermentos sociales - si son, en verdad malos - salen, a la larga, derrotados por los buenos'. The argument continues with the question of good and bad as seen in religion, and how it is assumed, based on a belief in the benign spirit of some god, that the forces of good will prevail. He goes on, 'en fin, lo que identifica mejor a todas las religiones, según este criterio, es un común sentimiento fatalista de la moral'. Christianity in particular, he suggests, fails to escape from this 'optimismo fatalista, que constituye el fondo dialéctico de la fe en la victoria teológica del Bien'. Such beliefs are seen as having held a sterile domination over man's perception of himself since the beginning of recorded history, and it is only with the development over the past century of Marx's theory of historical materialism that they have been seriously challenged. Even Marx though, Vallejo claims, could not completely rid his thought of all vestiges of fatalism. He continues,

> la dialéctica de Hegel, cuyo fatalismo subsiste en la base filosófica de la ciencia revolucionaria de Marx, es un humo que se aleja rápidamente de la nueva conciencia, dispersada por el viento de los acontecimientos modernos. Lo que del marxismo importa más a la humanidad - dice Eastman - no es lo que hay en él de vestigios metafísicos a la alemana sino su fuerza estrictamente científica para enfocar la historia y para poner en nuestras manos una técnica realmente transformadora de la sociedad.

It is almost certain, considering the above comments, that Vallejo had read Max Eastman's work, Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, which was published in England (London) in 1926 and translated into french in 1927.[10] Before continuing with the analysis of Vallejo's article it would therefore be useful to consider some of Eastman's main ideas and his significance on the intellectual left in the late 1920s.

After leaving the United States in 1921 where he had been the editor of the eclectic left wing magazine, Masses, (renamed, The Liberator in 1919), Eastman spent two years in the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1924.[11] Before returning to America in 1927 he lived in Paris, during which time he wrote three books dealing with developments in Russia since the Revolution. The first, which was published in 1925, was entitled Trotsky: Portrait of a Youth, and established its author as the first American Trotskyist.[12] His second book, Since Lenin Died, which also came out in 1925, was written under pressure from Boris Souvarine, Trotsky's main supporter in the French Communist Party. This became the first revelation in print of 'Lenin's Testament', which exposed the details of the conspiracy which destroyed Trotsky's authority and made way for Stalin's rise to power. After Trotsky had repudiated the contents of Since Lenin Died in an article for L'Humanité, Eastman lost much of his credibility, but his redemption came in October 1926, when The New York Times published the entire text of 'Lenin's Testament', which was then seized upon by the European press.[13] This coincided with the capitulation of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and the old Bolshevik establishment and Eastman's work was immediately vindicated, giving him considerable notoriety among the anti-Stalinist left around the world.

His third book, Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, which had been published in the early part of 1926, now also attracted considerable

attention. In this work Eastman attempts to give a theoretical foundation to his wider belief that the Russian Revolution had failed because it had been based on faulty ideological premises which were intrinsic to the Marxist world view. Central to this argument was Eastman's supposition that while the scientific base of historical materialism was a valuable contribution to the understanding of history, the vestiges of German philosophy, which he felt inhabited much of Marx's thought, had led to mystifications and utopian visions which were not compatible with 'human nature', and therefore had resulted in dangerous determinist assumptions. Hence, while he accepted the basic precept of the class struggle and the economic workings of the capitalist system, he rejected such notions as the dying away of the State, and the assertion that a socialist ethic would be formed in the revolutionary struggle, and other what he regarded as idealist postulations for which there was no clear scientific reasoning. Marx's great failing, he felt, was that he had believed that he had created a scientific system by fusing together the economic and social discoveries of the nineteenth century, with Hegel's philosophy of dialectics. But, what he in effect had done, claimed Eastman, was to create a dogmatic scheme which purported to be based on scientific objectivity, but which of necessity continued to rely heavily on metaphysical logic to support its assumptions, resulting in an irreconcilable conflict between theory and the reality of 'human nature'. In this sense Marxism 'was a step from utopian socialism to a socialist religion - a scheme for convincing the believer that the universe itself is producing a better society'.[15]

In the second part of Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, which is entitled, 'The Science of Revolutionary Engineering', Eastman attempts to show how Marxism cleansed of all its metaphysical logic, which he compares to the mystifications

found in religious dogma, could be used by socialists as a serious revolutionary guideline. From the time of the Bolshevik victory in 1917, and up to the last few months of his stay in Russia, Eastman had regarded Lenin as the 'engineer of the Revolution', whose pragmatism and flexibility had produced great practical results.[16] But by the time he left Moscow to return to Europe in 1924, he felt that dogmatic rigidity was beginning to set in, and Marxism was no longer being used as a practical tool but as a state religion. Vallejo, who had been introduced to Eastman in Paris, and probably came to know him reasonably well, was clearly influenced by some of these arguments.[17]

Thus, returning to the article in question, we find Vallejo continuing his criticism of Marx's method of analysis almost in paraphrase of Eastman, as he claims that 'donde empieza la metafísica hegeliana, con su ecuación fatal de los contrarios, allí termina la influencia de Marx en nuestra época y su poder creador del porvenir'. He then goes on to suggest that modern historical circumstances called for the emergence of a 'new socialist man', who would be able to put behind him the determinist assumptions of the past. And, for this new revolutionary technician 'es menester un control objetivo de las actividades ambientes y un franco espíritu polémico .... No se trata de una crítica de la historia pasada sino de un control, de reacción viviente e inmediata, sobre la realidad y los hechos actuales'.

Vallejo's reading of Eastman seems to have provided him with a basis for rejecting the fatalistic view of history to which he had subscribed earlier. But at this early stage of his political development he only sees Marxism as an aid to understanding the dynamics of capitalism, and a practical guide to revolutionary action, and does not regard it as an active body of knowledge operating within history itself. While Eastman

seems to have had a powerful influence on Vallejo's thinking at this time, one should not forget that his initial perceptions on the relevance of Marx's ideas to modern political struggles were also being developed through his reading of Mariátegui and the radical Peruvian journal Amauta. And, by the autumn of 1928, when he began to mention Eastman in his journalism and seemingly support his postures on Marxism, Mariátegui was also beginning his important series of essays in Amauta entitled, Defensa del Marxismo. Until the end of Vallejo's journalistic career in 1930-1931, it is mainly the ideas of these two intellectuals which informed his rapidly changing view of the world.

Along with the influence of intellectual ideas, Vallejo's developing political consciousness also grew out of his own experiences of the social struggle. This is particularly well exemplified in an article entitled 'La acción revolucionaria en Francia', in which he considers the history of working class militancy since the Great War.[18] As a basis for his discussion he cites the French socialist Jean Jaurès, who, on addressing the French Parliament on the day before the conflict proclaimed that the governments repression of the workers would only help to increase the forces of revolution, and bring nearer the inevitable demise of the bourgeois capitalist system.[19] Since this declaration was made he notes that the workers movements throughout the world have increased considerably in strength, and especially in France, where the concerted efforts of the Communist Party had helped to raise the consciousness of the masses. He goes on to claim that Jaurès's arguments had been vindicated by the events of the past decade, and takes as his example the contrast between the period of mild reformism of the 'Cartel des Gauches', during which the working class movements made little progress, and the increasingly repressive government of Poincaré, which had considerably stimulated

revolutionary fervour.[20]

Vallejo's analysis continues with an assessment of Communist Party organisation and discipline, followed by some perceptions on the active involvement of the working classes in the political struggle. Concerning the former he states, 'del meeting comunista, público o privado, está proscrito todo lo que sea vago, excesivo, aparatoso, inútil ... los militantes - hombres y mujeres, niños y ancianos - entran y salen del local de la reunión guardando un orden y una serenidad absolutas'. It is almost certain that Vallejo was himself becoming actively involved in politics at this time and may even have attended, with Communist friends, clandestine meetings of Party cells. While clearly impressed by the efficiency and commitment of the Party members, that which captivated him above all, and had the most important impact on his thinking during the rest of his life, was the fraternity he witnessed among the masses who banded together in political protest against their condition. Describing a demonstration organised by Communist militants and the atmosphere which prevailed among the participants, he states:

> se oye un rumor popular, alegre, sano, cordial, libre y vibrante, muy diverso del rumor popular burgués cuyo regocijo y cuya libertad, lejos de reposar sobre un entrañable y espontáneo sentimiento de equilibrio colectivo, dependen siempre de disposiciones y medidas exteriores ... Nadie allí vigila y mada a nadie. El sentimiento de la responsabilidad del acto está entrañdo a la propia sensibilidad e interés de clase de cada militante.
>
> Se canta la Internacional. Se venden folletos doctrinarios ... El harapaso no despierta la curiosidad de nadie. Los mutilados de la guerra, del trabajo o de la naturaleza son numerosos. El cojo, el manco ... Fácilmente se da uno cuenta del nivel cordial que solidariza e ilumina a estos hombres. No los une el traje sino la desnudez ... no les une el provecho egoísta que el uno puede obtener del otro individualmente sino el espíritu de sacrificio que todos ponen al servicio de todos ... El mutilado viene aquí a luchar contra el espíritu de mutilación del mundo. El andrajoso viene aquí a luchar contra el espíritu del hambre del mundo. La mujer desgraciada viene aquí a luchar contra el espíritu de la desgracia del mundo. Tales son los distintivos que hay entre una reunión popular revolucionaria y una reunión popular reaccionaria.

Even though Vallejo's understanding of Marxist theory was still limited at this time, his support for the intensification of class conflict by proletarian action is unquestionable. It was also in the political conflict itself that he seems to have felt that he had witnessed an example of unalienated man; a microcosm of future communist society. Henceforth, he also began to look tentatively at political struggle not only as a pragmatic method of rectifying economic injustice but also as a means of resolving less tangible aspects of the human condition; problems of philosophical angst which had dominated his poetry and nourished his depressions during his first years in Europe. Furthermore, the confusion and pessimism that he had expressed in his journalistic work in earlier years now no longer dominates his thinking, and ideas which incorporated beliefs in a 'mal del siglo' or some determinist perspective of history are dismissed for a more positive outlook, which embodies the conviction that meaningful economic and social change can be brought about by political action. It is important to stress at this stage however, that like Eastman, he does not see a dialectical relationship between political action and moral conduct, but rather a coincidental one. Clearly it was not so much his knowledge of political theory that convinced him of a new hope for the future, but rather his experiences of the class struggle at first hand. If one considers the themes and content of the final poems he wrote on the Spanish Civil War in 1937 it seems that this situation held true to the end of his life, however, what he regarded as being a spontaneous and essentially innate gesture of human fraternity in 1928, had by 1937, become more closely associated with the theory of revolutionary praxis.

The article from which the foregoing extracts are taken was one of the last that he wrote before setting out on his first visit to the

Soviet Union in October 1928. This was a time when his optimism about developments in Russia had reached its peak, and in spite of the warnings Eastman had been so anxious to put forward in his work, Vallejo seems to have believed that the Soviet experiment still represented a shining example for those who were fighting for political and economic justice in the West. On one occasion in the autumn of 1928 he even suggests that 'el ideal ruso es, sin duda, el dueño del porvenir de la humanidad'.[21] Clearly, while Eastman may have had some influence on his intellectual perceptions of Russia,his overall vision of the Soviet experiment was also informed from a wider range of experiences, and not least one suspects, his involvement with the French Communist Party, which by this time was faithfully obeying the directives of the Central Committee of the Comintern.

Art and Revolution: Some Initial Perceptions

It was seen in the previous chapter that before Vallejo began to adopt a serious political stance in early 1928 he had shown his greatest consistency of argument when treating the arts and the artist. Having almost abandoned such questions for some months as his enthusiasm for politics increased he now turns again, only weeks before setting out for Russia, to consider the nature of the writer's relationship to society. It must naturally have been of considerable interest to him at this time to ascertain the position of the artist in the Soviet Union, especially considering his hopes of finding permanent residence there. His article entitled 'Literatura proletaria' begins therefore with a reference to the declaration in July 1925 by the Central Committee of the Comintern of the official existence of a proletarian literary form, and their directive that the class struggle must continue in literature as well as other social spheres.[22] Quoting from the manifesto of the Association

of Russian Proletarian Writers (RAPP) he notes,

> La literatura es una incomparable bomba de combate. Si, como Marx lo ha observado ya, es innegable que las ideas directrices de una época son siempre las ideas de una clase dirigente, la dictadura del proletariado es incompatible con la denominación de una literatura no proletaria. En las actuales condiciones, la literatura es, pues, uno de los campos donde la burguesía libra su ofensiva suprema contra el proletariado.[23]

In response to this statement Vallejo agrees that literature is a powerful instrument in the class struggle and that proletarian art must of necessity be developed as part of a hegemonic process, but he totally rejects any claim that this gives the State the right to interfere with, or control, literary production. The artist, he states, should be free to develop his work in accordance with his own conscience, and art that is directed and produced for a utilitarian purpose was merely propaganda, and even in this capacity often failed to serve the purpose for which it was intended. Considering his own position as an artist he recalls an instance when Haya de la Torre suggested to him that artists should adapt their work to contribute to the revolutionary struggle in Latin America. In giving his answer Vallejo says that he sympathized with Haya's argument but felt that personally he could not manipulate his work to serve a pragmatic end. He concludes, 'como hombre, puedo simpatizar y trabajar por la Revolución pero como artista no está en manos de nadie ni en las mías propias el controlar los alcances políticos que pueden ocultarse en mis poemas. Los escritores rusos han rechazado el marco espiritual que les impone el Soviet. Lo ignoramos'. But the problem still remains, he adds, of the development of a truly proletarian art form. In contrast to Lenin's utilitarian approach to literature, he notes that Trotsky viewed the question from a wider perspective, and had concluded that no Russian poet or writer of the revolutionary period had yet produced work that could be regarded as proletarian. Even Gorky, who had received great accolades

from the Soviet State for his work, was not regarded by Trotsky as an authentic representative of the working class, precisely because of his bourgeois origins. Gorky's supporters, including Bukharin, on the other hand, felt that with his novel Los Vagabundos he had proved his status as a great proletarian writer. On being questioned on these matters, Gorky, Vallejo notes, responded by saying that in his work he actively condemned all that oppresses humanity and impeded the free development of human beings. His role he argued, was also to encourage the participation of his readers in the building of a new society and give them a sense of confidence in their own potential. And, seeing himself as a proletarian writer he felt that through his art he could add to the vitality of life and the joy of work. For Vallejo such a vague definition of artistic responsibility was meaningless, because it could be applied to any form of art, even bourgeois. He also argues that Gorky had responded with a moral critique of art and not an aesthetic one.

It would seem from the above statements that by the time this article was written, in the autumn of 1928, Vallejo did not discount the possibility of the development of a proletarian art form, nor did he believe that artists should avoid political influences in their work, however, he indicates that these developments should be part of an organic process and certainly not subject to State interference. It is reasonably clear at this stage of his political education that his attitude towards the process of artistic creativity had changed little since his earlier attacks on the literary avant garde, and the politically committed writers and artists. The problem though now seems to have narrowed from a broad perception of artistic responsibility, seen in terms of the need to produce an authentic response to postwar modernity and its multiple

effects on human life, to the more specific objective of finding an organic link between political commitment and artistic creativity. Seemingly lacking firm ideas on the matter himself, it is with some sympathy therefore, that in September 1928 - immediately before leaving for the Soviet Union - he reviews the then recently published work of the French essayist and philosopher Julian Benda, La trahison des clercs.[24] Summarizing Benda's main argument he states;

> [Julian Benda] acusa en su libro, a los pensadores del delito de traición al pensamiento puro, perpetrado a favor de las pasiones políticas. Pensamiento puro, a juicio de Benda, es la actividad abstracta y desinteresada del espíritu, ejercida por sobre las exigencias inmediatas de la realidad; un juego místico y libre de creación suprema cuyos móviles y fines no se relacionan con los intereses momentáneos de la vida social ni con las luchas políticas en general.

Expanding on this brief résumé, Vallejo points out that in stating that the intellectual ought to remain outside politics in his work, Benda does not imply that he should disregard events of importance which are part of the essential political and social development of modern man, but rather that his creative thought should always be guarded against the kind of impulses which could encroach upon the objectivity of his work. Many modern intellectuals, and Vallejo includes D'Annunzio, Kipling, Maurras and Barrès, have, according to Benda's formula, undermined their professional credibility by allowing their political sympathies to interfere with their work. The extent of this 'treason' we are told, had grown considerably during the postwar years, as intellectuals in the arts, sciences and even religion had become influenced by political causes. In conclusion Vallejo asks, '¿Cuáles son y serán las consecuencias de esta terrenización del pensamiento abstracto; de esta circunstancialización de espíritu?' It is perhaps a significant indication of his own uncertanties regarding the relationship between politics and art that he leaves the

answer to Benda, who had predicted that the compromise of intellectual objectivity would lead to the breakdown of society and the possibility of another world war.

In Search of a Promised Land: Vallejo's First Visit to the Soviet Union

Vallejo set out on his first expedition to the Soviet Union on 19 October 1928 and returned two months later in mid December. There is some indication in his correspondence that he had intended to stay longer, if not permanently, but as he states in his letters to Pablo Abril, the cold and the complexity of the language dissuaded him.[25] His decision to undertake the trip, which was the first of three that he made to Russia between 1928 and 1932, came after a long period of intellectual and physical crisis during which he had fought persistently to obtain a Peruvian government grant to return home. But, as noted earlier, by the time he finally received the money for his passage his enthusiasm for developments in Russia had increased sufficiently for him to use these extra funds to buy a rail ticket to Moscow, and thereby jeopardize any hope of again receiving official sponsorship to return to Peru.

Since he chose to travel alone, and not as a member of an official group, there is no record of his journey outside the comments he makes in his correspondence and the articles that he wrote after his return. But so prolific was his journalistic work covering his experiences in Russia that there is no shortage of material from which to gauge his reactions. In spite of some reservations he had expressed about the Soviet regime, and especially its pragmatic attitude towards the arts, he was optimistic about what he would find a decade after the Revolution.[26] Such were his hopes and anticipations that he devotes almost half of one article to the crossing of the frontier

between Poland and Russia.[27] As the train approached the border post he notes the excitement of a Communist militant with whom he was travelling and in almost poetic diction he continues, 'es una noche clara de otoño. Se puede distinguir, en detalle, la topografía del terreno bajo un cielo claro y transparente. El tren avanza con lentitud y el viento de la estepa arroja hacia atrás y muy bajo el humo sonrosado de la locomotora.' Then on sighting the border he recounts '"Mira usted!" - me dice, con vehemencia incontenible, mi amiga comunista - "Allí está la bandera internacional ...¡Viva el Soviet ...!"[28]

In a second article dealing with his outward journey to Moscow he again makes reference to his female Communist travelling partner.[29] We are told that she has tuberculosis and that in the twenty years since she was born both she and her family must have experienced untold suffering. He compares her plight and troubled breathing with the contented repose of a middle class Russian doctor who was travelling with them in their compartment, and then goes on to put forward his own feelings on the question of revolutionary social change

> pienso en la justicia, no como en un juego de revancha del pobre sobre el rico ni como en un expediente, sentimental y arbitrario, de venganza de una clase explotada sobre la clase explotadora. Pienso en la justicia no como un ideal sacado de la nada o inventado por los filósofos, apóstoles o taumaturgos, sino como en un fenómeno de equilibrio colectivo, que se plantea, se realiza y se transforma constantemente según las evoluciones y revoluciones de la historia.

He continues with an attack on the idea of social justice as an abstract intellectual concept, which he says has accounted for much of the history of socialism. Giving as examples Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen he states,

> son todos estos sistemas frutos de mentalidades típicamente literarias, que sueñan en una justicia social basada en utopías subjetivas, de imposible realización ... Solamente el marxismo ha concebido la justicia como una función en marcha de las fuerzas sociales, como un proceso viviente y cambiante del equilibrio de la historia.

The ideas that he puts forward in the above article are of little interest on their own. However, in comparison to some of his previous comments on Marxist thought he seems in this instance to be formulating his own perceptions,

rather than relating the interpretations of other thinkers like Eastman. Some support for this claim may be found in a third article dealing with his journey to Russia in which he recounts his conversation with a fellow traveller, who had asked him in what capacity he was visiting the Soviet Union.[30] In his answer he presents himself as an innocent visitor with no preconceived ideas which could affect the impartiality of his judgement of that which lay ahead. He states therefore,

> yo no soy invitado por nadie - le digo - . Nadie me ha invitado oficial ni particularmente .... Yo no pertenezco a ningún partido. No soy conservador ni liberal. Ni burgués ni bolchevique. Ni nacionalista ni socialista. Ni reaccionario, ni revolucionario. Al menos, no he hecho de mis actitudes ningún sistema permanente y definitivo de conducta. Sin embargo, tengo mi pasión, mi entusiasmo y mi sinceridad vitales.

Such a statement seems somewhat reserved compared to his earlier attempts to outline his political sympathies but can perhaps be regarded as a reasonably honest self assessment. It would be difficult to overstress the importance which Vallejo attached to this first trip to the Soviet Union, and it was certainly a crucial event in his life. Nevertheless, as much as he wished to find the embryo of human salvation in the Soviet experiment, he strove not to let his hopes cloud his objectivity.

It may be contested that the articles which deal with his journey to Russia, in that they were written after his return to Paris, offer a retrospective view of events rather than a reflection of his immediate feelings. His wife has argued however, that he always kept a notebook in which he recorded his experiences and thoughts as they occurred and rarely reworked his original ideas and observations.[31] His most immediate response to the Soviet Union can be found though, in one of the two articles that he wrote while in Moscow.[32] Perhaps not unexpectedly it begins with an attack on doctrinaire Marxists, and while written from a general point of view it is clearly aimed at some of the over zealous Communist Party members he met on his trip. Despite the claims he made in his journalism on returning to Paris, regarding the impartiality of his

perceptions of Soviet Russia, he was well aware of the criticisms that Eastman had made several years earlier in his work Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, and obviously felt that some of his own experiences in Moscow had done little to dispel any doubts he may have held before his visit. His attack on the formalist stance of certain Party members is in fact very much in line with the arguments set forth by Eastman, in that he criticizes above all their belief in the totality of a single political and philosophical formula, and their rigidity in its application to real events. He does however differ on one important aspect with his mentor when he refuses to accept that the problem of inflexibility is embodied in Marx's theories themselves, arguing instead that the danger lies with certain types of individuals who purport to apply them. Such supposedly devout disciples, he says, are not true interpreters of their master because even Marx himself claimed not to be a Marxist, inferring that he was against rigid systems. Those who Vallejo criticizes therefore, are not seen in terms of being the inevitable product of a faulty theory, but simply members of the Party, who, in defence of their privileged positions, had found greater security in a society bound by inflexible principles, than one which was shaped by the flow of the revolutionary process. In defining this group, who he sees as an essentially negative force, he states,

> los marxistas formales e esclavos de la letra marxista son, por lo general, o casi siempre, de origen y cepa social aristocrática o burguesa. La educación y la cultura no ha logrado expurgarles estas lacras. Tal es, por ejemplo, el caso de Plejanov, Bujarin y otros exégetas fanáticos de Marx, descendientes de burgueses o de aristócratas, convertidos.

This is a very severe analysis considering that he goes on to praise Lenin who came from precisely such a background. His attack is also clearly directed against Stalin, but he fails to mention him by name, perhaps because of his well known working class origins. The argument though becomes more explicit;

> otras tantas lecciones de libertad ha dado Trotsky. Su propia oposición a Stalin es una prueba de que Trotsky no sigue la corriente cuando ella discrepa de su espíritu. En medio de la incolora comunión espiritual que conserva el mundo comunista ante los métodos soviéticos, la insurrección trotzkysta constituye un movimiento de gran significación histórica. Constituye el nacimiento de un nuevo espíritu revolucionario dentro de un Estado revolucionario.

Eastman's influence here is unmistakable; like many of the foreigners who had been in Russia in the early 1920s Eastman had believed that Trotsky was the logical successor to Lenin, and that only by the application of the theory of Permanent Revolution could the Soviet System be prevented from falling into bureaucratic stagnation. And, while having become disillusioned as early as 1924 with events in Russia, he still held some hopes for a revival of the Trotskyist wing of the Party. By 1928 when this was no longer a possibility, and Stalin was firmly installed in power, he continued to support Trotsky in his attempts to create an anti-Stalinist Fourth International.[33] Like many others who followed the same course, Eastman was forced into the shadows of obscurity and persecution which befell the revolutionary left in the 1930s.[34] Despite Vallejo's rejection of most of Eastman's ideas in later years he remained sympathetic to Trotskyist arguments until the end of his life.

Art and Revolution: The Collapse of the Ivory Tower

Soon after returning from the Soviet Union Vallejo turned his attention to those questions which had taken up a major part of his journalistic work since 1925, concerning the nature of artistic production and the role of the artist in modern postwar society. So far in earlier articles he had condemned the avant garde movements because of what he regarded as a contrived, and hence fraudulent, response to their environment. And, as for those he termed 'bourgeois artists', he had rejected their continuing treatment of themes which he felt had no correlation with the experiences of modern man, and merely represented the aspirations of a decaying class bound to anachronistic values. Both these artistic groups were, as far as Vallejo was concerned,

out of step with the flow of history; as the former attempted an improvised response to modernity in the hope of redressing the void which had developed between art and historical reality, the latter simply remained in a state of elitist isolation. Shortly before leaving for the Soviet Union he had begun to suggest tentatively that both these groups were locked into a self perpetuating egotistical bourgeois consciousness, which could only be transcended by the influence of an external force. However, still uncertain of the nature of this new stimulant to artistic creativity he continued, as he had since the early 1920s, to exhort artists to search for an authentic response to their rapidly changing environment. Concerning the artists themselves, and their relationship to politics,he rejected the overt compromise of Romain Rolland Henri Barbusse,and showed some sympathy towards Julien Benda's claim that intellectuals who allowed immediate political considerations to influence their work and public lives were prostituting, what was taken to be, their time honoured role as purveyors of pure thought. But in spite of the extensive criticism that Vallejo directed against contemporary artists before his first trip to Russia, he rarely gives any indication of his personal position and noticeably never issues his own manifesto. It is only after his return from Moscow that he began to introduce a new body of ideas to the relatively static response he had presented in his treatment of the arts in previous years, and it is also from this position of increasing political awareness that he began to find the basis for expressing his own opinions.

An indication of the extent to which Vallejo's growing political commitment had influenced his perception of the role of the artist in modern society can be gauged from the comments he makes in an article entitled 'El pensamiento revolucionario', which was written soon after he had returned from Russia.[35] Taking into account that some months earlier he had condemned those artists who had become involved in the political struggle, he now states, with

special reference to Latin American writers:

> hasta cuando creemos ejercer el pensamiento de manera pura y desinteresada, no hacemos sino buscar inconscientemente, los medios de servir a nuestras necesidades e intereses. La psicología tradicional, que veía en el pensamiento un simple instrumento destinado a guiar nuestras reacciones ante el mundo exterior, ha sido radicalmente derogada. La inflexión finalista de todos los actos del pensamiento es un hecho de absoluto rigor científico cuya vigencia para la elaboración de la vida y de la historia crece día a día. "El reconocimiento de este hecho - dice Eastman - implica una de las revoluciones más profundas de la historia." 36
>
> El pensamiento abstracto y desinteresado no existe. La metafísica y la propia filosofía a base de fórmulas algebraicas, de puras categorías lógicas significan siempre un movimiento inconsciente para servir intereses y necesidades "refoulés" del filósofo. Cuando éste cree defender los fueros del pensamiento abstracto y desinteresado, lo que en realidad hace es practicar un fenómeno finalista de la inteligencia al servicio de tales o cuales intereses de su persona y de su clase social. Tal es el caso de Julien Benda, defensor arrogante de la inteligencia pura.

This is indeed a volte-face on some of the arguments he put forward before leaving for Russia. If the majority of intellectuals and artists, he now claims, including those who purport to be disinterested in their work, are essentially representatives of the interests of their social class, then it is clear that they must play a political role in the society in which they live, even if they are unaware of it. Summing up, he argues that the intellectual should abandon all pretensions towards pure thought and devote his energy to the revolutionary cause in a dynamic and creative manner. Quoting directly from Marx he states,

> 'los filósofos - dice Marx - no han hecho hasta ahora sino interpretar el mundo de diversas maneras. De lo que se trata es de transformarlo'. Lo mismo puede decirse de los intelectuales y artistas. La función finalista del pensamiento sirve, en este caso, los intereses de mera conservación de las formas vigentes de la vida, cuando debía servir para transformarlas.

Vallejo's rapidly developing perceptions on the role of artists and intellectuals in the revolutionary struggle may have been informed from a number of sources. Firstly, some of the ideas he puts forward indicate that he had been influenced by members of the Moscow intelligentsia during his stay in Russia; some of whom at that time were still willing to discuss

issues which lay outside the narrow scope of Party policy. Secondly, his statements also reflect the lingering influence of Eastman, whose ideas were still being discussed in his journalism up to 1930. Eastman however had little to say on the role of intellectuals except in terms of his concept of revolutionary technicians. He had vehemently condemned Soviet State interference in the arts, but this served as part of his wider attack on Marxism and what he saw as its logical outcome under Stalin, rather than a specific criticism of aesthetic manipulation. Among the books and articles he wrote on literary topics he also retained a conservative view of the position of the artistic intellectual in the political struggle, and saw art generally as an exclusive form of production. Finally, not discounting influences of a European origin on Vallejo's thinking at this time, which are unfortunatly difficult to trace, one should not forget his continuing interest in contemporary Peruvian journalism, and its importance as a source of radical ideas. During 1928 both Amauta and Variedades carried a number of articles dealing with the role of artists and intellectuals in society, and there can be little doubt that Vallejo was aware of the arguments they contained. As noted earlier, Mariátegui had had a continuous, if somewhat irregular influence on Vallejo's political thinking since the mid 1920s, but from 1929 onwards that influence began to be reflected more consistently in his work.

In an article for Variedades which was published in May 1928, entitled 'El problema de las élites', Mariátegui had drawn clear divisions between allegedly disinterested bourgeois artists and thinkers, and what he felt were a new emerging body of politically conscious intellectuals.[37] Claims supporting the existence of an impartial aristocracy of artists and philosophers were, he believed, simply symptomatic of a decadent and ideologically bankrupt ruling class who refused to accept that even their aesthetic energies were directed towards propping up the capitalist system. Many writers in the West,

he notes, consequently saw the crisis of European democracy in terms of a problem of elites, and felt that it was men of ideas who should be finding solutions to the postwar disorientation, and the rise of fascism. But, for Mariátegui, these established intellectuals could only be regarded as impotent custodians of bourgeois values, unable to accept or partake of any truly revolutionary developments, and therefore he felt that,

> las verdaderas 'élites' intelectuales operan sobre la historia revolucionando la conciencia de una época. El verbo necesita hacerse carne. El valor histórico de las ideas se mide por su poder de principios o impulsos de acción .... Es absurdo hablar de un drama de las 'elites'. Una 'élite' en estado de ser compadecida, por este solo hecho deja de ser una 'élite'. Para la historia no existen 'élites' relegadas. La 'élite' es esencialmente creadora. (p.18)

As we have seen, on his return from the Soviet Union Vallejo began to subscribe to such ideas with considerable enthusiasm.

Two further pieces of work dealing with the role of intellectuals in society also appeared in Amauta during 1928.[38] Their author, the Mexican writer Martí Casanovas, emphasized the tendency towards individualization and professionalization of art and literature which came with the development of capitalism. Like Mariátegui he felt that bourgeois intellectuals had become isolated from any popular or revolutionary sentiments, and despite claiming to represent a disinterested idealism in their work were in effect bastions of bourgeois culture. He further points out that any art form that was elitist and resisted or ignored popular political change in society was immoral, and that moreover only 'la inteligencia, al servicio de fines morales, es decir como arma de edificación social y de lucha social, es el afán creador de una nueva realidad humana'. Again, such ideas seem to have had some influence on Vallejo's thinking at this time.

In an article entitled 'La obra de arte y la vida del artista' Vallejo takes his debate on the role of the artist a stage further when he asks,

> ¿Existe una estrecha correspondencia entre la vida del artista y su obra? ¿Existe un sincronismo absoluto entre la obra y la vida del autor? ¿Hay algún caso en la historia, uno solo, de un artista cuya obra no siga paralelamente y de cerca las vicisitudes personales de su vida y, lo que es más importante, el ritmo político y económico de su espíritu?[39]

He rapidly comes to the conclusion that 'el sincronismo es un fenómeno ineluctable de biología artística', and that all artistic works give evidence of the social and economic environment of the artist. But, the process by which these influences are absorbed is seen to be a very complex one, in which individual subjective factors play a large part in obscuring the objective forces that constantly affect aesthetic production. However, he argues that

> si se analiza profundamente la obra, descubrirá necesariamente, en sus entrañas íntimas, no sólo las corrientes circulantes de carácter social y económico sino las mentales y hasta religiosas de su época. La correspondencia entre la vida individual y social del artista y su obra es, pues, fatal y ella se opera consciente o subconscientemente y aún sin que lo quiera ni se lo proponga el artista.

This was no doubt an extremely difficult stance to adopt for a poet who had spent the early part of his career in a social environment in which the artist held an almost sacrosanct place in society. Vallejo had in fact supported in one form or another up to 1928, a belief in the unique sensibility of the artist, which was in turn able to set into motion exclusive and even mystical powers of creativity. Those who commanded such talents were seen as having a very definite responsibility in society, in that they should bring into perspective the nature of human existence as history unfolded its destiny. Furthermore, because their vision of the world was assumed to be considerably more advanced than the mass of the people they were also credited with the potential of shaping consciousness, and hence events. This latter idea however, was only given tentative support,as Vallejo's main interest until 1928 lay above all in the 'spiritual' role of the artist.

Thus on returning from his first visit to the Soviet Union Vallejo's

perception of the role of the artist in society and the nature of artistic production undertook a radical transformation; history is now seen as a dynamic process in which man is not contemplative but interactive. The artist therefore is cast adrift from his idealistic position in society and is exposed to the forces of history, along with all other men. He becomes, in fact, not the illuminator of the world, but a purveyor of false consciousness; a reactionary in the face of change. Seeing the intellectual in this context though did not mean that all creative thought was doomed to serve to reinforce the ideology of the ruling classes. The artist would have to seek to become part of the force of historical change in society. As Mariátegui had stated, this is where the only opportunity for true intellectual creativity lay.

In Russia Vallejo had become intoxicated with hopes for the realization of the socialist promise, and wishing to be instrumental in such a project sought to find a way by which he could serve the cause in his art. But how was the bourgeois artist to adapt himself and his work to the needs of the revolutionary struggle? Could he transcend class barriers or was his ideological baggage too great? More importantly was 'priming' of the proletariat by external elements necessary, or would it produce its own intellectuals and separate culture as a direct result of revolutionary action? These were some of the questions Vallejo was posing in 1929.

Marxism: A Technology of Revolution or a Philosophy of Praxis?
A Debate Between Max Eastman and José Carlos Mariátegui

Vallejo's experiences in Russia were varied; he had not encountered a socialist paradise and some aspects of the Soviet system he had found disturbing, yet the work of the Bolshevika, in whom he saw the embodiment of revolutionary zeal, and the improved relationship between labour and production

in some of the new factories, greatly impressed him. Above all his visit gave him the opportunity to match his limited theoretical knowledge of Marxism with a practical socialist experiment, and as a consequence he became increasingly aware of the vast problems that a transformation of society along Marxist lines would involve. Unlike Eastman though, he did not return disillusioned, but held out even greater faith in the socialist promise, and began to see Marxism no longer simply in terms of a 'technical' aid to bringing about revolution, but a means by which man could understand and shape his own life; a process which involved not only economic and social transformation but also a profound change in human consciousness itself.

Vallejo's growing faith in Marxism as a means by which to understand human history and the nature of human existence is particularly well illustrated in an article he wrote in the spring of 1928 entitled 'Krishnamurti: un gran consulta internacional', which deals with the postwar 'malaise'; a subject which had preoccupied his thoughts since 1923 when he first arrived in Europe.[40] During the years in which he had been developing his views on this question he had considered the ideas of a number of speculative philosophers who had put forward various interpretations of postwar problems. Among these thinkers whose works he felt were worthy of some consideration - in addition to Spengler and Keyserling - he had included the teachings of the 'guru' Krishnamurti, who saw the war as having stripped man of their humality, thereby leaving the self seeking ego as the focal point of human existence in place of the soul.[41] This paradox could be resolved, Krishnamurti claimed, only through a spiritual renovation in which man would become aware of his 'true' self; a process which was seen to necessitate the intervention of abstract forces which would be mediated through certain chosen prophets.[42] But by early 1929 Vallejo had become far less sanguine about the possibility of finding a metaphysical solution to postwar problems. Consequently in his second article on Krishnamurti, while he remains willing to share the guru's concerns about modern man, he finds he can no longer accept his corrective teachings.

Krishnamurti we are told, with the help of his international following, proposed to locate the exact position of the 'essence' of the human spirit in the postwar world. The method which had been chosen for the enquiry was to send out a questionnaire to selected intellectuals from each continent, to obtain an assessment of the major spiritual forces prevailing in their societies. Vallejo having seen a copy of this global enquiry recalls that the first question asked, '"¿Existe una inquietud propia de nuestra época?"'. The answer he feels must be 'yes'; adding that such a profound malaise could have only been brought about by the devastation and suffering of the war. But this is as much as he is willing to accept of Krishnamurti's argument and he continues by stating that the problems of the postwar years were not only moral ones but also an indication of the crisis of a political system. The confidence of liberalism, he argues, had been shattered by the war, which had weakened its power to confront the uncertainties of the age. The key questions to which intellectuals should address themselves therefore were:

> la accidentada agonía del capitalismo - con sus grandes reacciones (fascismo italiano, imperialismo yanqui) y sus dolorosas pesadillas (las contradicciones de la estabilización) - de un lado y, de otro, la no menos accidentada epifanía comunista con sus vértices extremistas (política agraria) y sus traspiés (la Nep) - son evidentes manifestaciones de nuestra etapa "desaxée".

Such is the extent of the disorientation of the age, he continues, that the philosophers had felt an urgent need to react. Spengler and Keyserling had predicted the decline of Western Civilization, Benda had called for intellectuals to maintain their traditional roles in society and avoid direct commitment to political causes, and Krishnamurti had sought to rediscover the spiritual 'essence' of mankind. In addition to this philosophical speculation he feels that there is 'en nuestras entrañas más dolidas y en las más lóbregas desarticulaciones de nuestra conciencia, un aliento nuevo, un nuevo germen vital'. This new force is then revealed , 'me refiero al marxismo como interpretación científica de la historia o como doctrina constructiva de la sociedad futura'.

He then goes on to consider if Marxism as well as being a means of understanding and acting upon the world, also offered the possibility of resolving more profound human ills. Bukharin had claimed that the Russian Revolution had saved the human race from barbarism, this he suggests, remains open to question, and was also a claim based solely on military and political assumptions, but he continues,

> no nos interesa tanto saber si el marxismo - como tentativa rusa - ha salvado ya a la humanidad sino saber en qué medida y hasta qué punto el marxismo, como tentativa universal de reconstrucción social, salvará a la humanidad. Aquí radica la génesis de nuestra inquietud. ¿Resuelve el marxismo los múltiples problemas del espíritu? ¿Todos los momentos y posibilidades de devenir histórico, tendrán su solución en el marxismo? ¿Ha enfocado éste toda la esencia humana de la vida? El aspecto científico - que es su esencia creadora - de esta doctrina, ¿abastece y satisface a las necesidades extracientíficas y sin embargo siempre humanas y, lo que es más importante, naturales de nuestra conciencia?Aquí radica la génesis de la inquietud contemporánea.

It is clear that by the time the above article was written Vallejo had begun to place greater faith in the Marxist world view than the vague philosophical speculations of such thinkers as Spengler, Keyserling and Krishnamurti. However, he still seems to resent the idea that one doctrine could provide such a comprehensive interpretation of human history and moreover, propose the salvation of mankind as part of a 'scientific' process. How, he asks, can a body of thought that claims to be scientific encompass truly human elements; how could the fraternity among those he had joined in political demonstrations or the creativity of artists be reconciled with a materialist doctrine.

These were precisely the questions that Mariátegui was attempting to answer in his series of essays entitled Defensa del marxismo, which were being published in Amauta, and it seems in fact that Vallejo's article was written in response to a section of this work in which the author had considered the nature of the relationship between spiritual values and the socialist cause.[43] As part of his analysis of the postwar capitalist

crisis Mariátegui had claimed that the breakdown of any economic and social system must be accompanied by crisis in its spiritual values. This he goes on to argue, had become apparent in the West with the surge of interest in oriental religions and obscurantist metaphysics. With specific reference to Krishnamurti and his following, he points out that socialism could never reconcile itself with such beliefs because 'la evasión a los paraísos asiáticos tiene estímulos y orígenes netamente decadentistas'. The socialist ideal must be represented by the new emerging values and aspirations of the class in ascendancy. Bourgeois resistance to this process can be seen, we are told, especially in those arguments against Marxism which claim that 'una concepción materialista del universo no sea apta para producir grandes valores espirituales'. He continues, 'los prejuicios teológicos, - no filosóficos - que actúan como residuo en mentes que se imaginan liberadas de superados dogmatismos, inducen a anexar a una filosofía materialista una vida más o menos cerril'. History, according to Mariátegui has contradicted this 'arbitary concept', and those who had fought for socialism had understood the moral and spiritual value of their task; theirs was a truly human enterprise. The question is also not one of materialism against spiritualism as absolute concepts; does, he asks, an industrialist or a New York banker automatically assume a 'moral' superiority over those who are fighting for a new social order, because he claims to have faith in some occult spiritual revival? All classes that have succeeded in dominating the rest of society have always disguised their material motives in a mythology which helps to justify their conduct, and the bourgeoisie now entering a period of decline, in which their economic power and moral values are under great strain, were forced to pursue a frenzied search for new forms of domination.

Ethical claims against Marxism should therefore, argues Mariátegui, be judged for a political perspective and not simply accepted as a critique

issued from an assumed position of moral superiority. Finally, he points out that there are those who purport to defend socialist objectives like Henri de Man and Max Eastman, who also reject the materialist conception of history because they feel it can only explain man as a social and economic being and not as a spiritual one. This dualistic vision, Mariátegui felt, was the product of an over intellectualisation of the world, which fails to comprehend the revolutionary process and its effect on proletarian consciousness. Ethics and spiritual beliefs, he argues, are not part of a given static code from which all classes must draw but are part of the dynamic process of history. A truly socialist ethic cannot be formed therefore out of existent beliefs but must be born in the revolutionary struggle.

The question which Vallejo poses concerning the nature of Marxism in the article 'Una gran consulta internacional' marks the beginning of a major departure from his earlier understanding of Marx, which had been dominated by Eastman. There are also many indications in his journalism from this time that it was Mariátegui who was becoming the major influence on his rapidly developing political and intellectual consciousness. On a more tangible level Vallejo's acceptance of Mariátegui's ideas was further consolidated when, on the 29 December 1928, along with Eudocio Ravines, Armando Bazán and several other expatriate Peruvians, he took part in the formation of a Paris based cell of the nascent 'Partido Socialista Peruano'. As we have seen in Chapter One, Vallejo had begun to move away from the political position of APRA by late 1927, and now a year later he was to put his signature to a document - drafted by Ravines - which amounted to a total rejection of Aprista strategy. This resolution, which linked Vallejo and his comrades to the PSP, included the following statements:

> A los compañeros del Perú:
> Camaradas: después de una apreciación tan objetiva como es posible obtenerla desde aquí, de la realidad social-económica del Perú y América Latina, después del prolongado debate sostenido sobre esenciales puntos doctrinarios, en vista de las declaraciones publicadas editorialmente en "Amauta" y "Labor" hemos decidido constituir una célula del Partido

Socialista del Perú, la que se halla actualmente en funciones.

> "La ideología que adoptamos es la del marxismo y la del leninismo militantes y revolucionarios, doctrina que aceptamos íntegramente, en todos sus aspectos: filosófico, político y económico - social. Los métodos que sostenemos y propugnamos son los del socialismo revolucionario ortodoxo. No solamente rechazamos sino combatimos y combatiremos en todas las formas, los métodos y las tendencias de la social-democracia y de la II Internacional.[44]

The resolution continues with an outline of the proposed role of the Paris militants, which included the formation of a 'Centro Latinoamericano de Estudios Marxistas' whose aim would be to raise the political consciousness of Latin Americans in Europe and keep them informed of events in their own countries.

Even though one would not wish to suggest that the above document presents an authentic representation of Vallejo's own thinking at this time, his acceptance of its contents, along with his increasingly committed journalism does indicate that by late 1928 his political sympathies were moving rapidly to the left. This inevitably led him to abandon the ideas of such non-Marxist thinkers as Haya de la Torre, and as Mariátegui's influence on his political development increased, he also began to reject those intellectuals like Eastman, whose revisionist notions were regarded by Mariátegui as a travesty of Marxism.

It is unfortunate that Vallejo's journalism was almost completely terminated at the end of 1930 when he was exiled to Spain, because during 1929 and 1930 some of the most interesting developments in his thinking were taking place, and owed much to his reading of Mariátegui. Mariátegui's influence, however, is most clearly seen in Vallejo's poems on the Spanish Civil War which therefore indicates, that despite the lack of published material with which to trace Vallejo's political development from 1931 until his death in 1938, he never abandoned the ideas of his Peruvian mentor. As noted in Chapter One Vallejo may have first become aware of Mariátegui's political writings soon after his arrival in Europe,

but it is only with the publication of the Defensa del marxismo in Amauta that he adopted a substantial interest in the ideas of his fellow countrymen. Considering the influence of this series of essays on the development of his thought an outline of their content would therefore seem appropriate.

José Carlos Mariátegui: A defence of Marxism

Mariátegui's Defensa del marxismo was published in Amauta between September 1928 and June 1929 and along with his earlier analysis of Peruvian society in the Siete ensayos (much of whose content had appeared in Amauta before their publication in one volume in 1928) established him as the major revolutionary theoretician in Latin America. Henri Barbusse who had recently taken his Clarté group into the French Communist Party, called him the new light of the Americas and even the Comintern regarded him, up to 1929, as one of the most mature Marxist thinkers outside Europe.[45]

In the Defensa del marxismo Mariátegui presented an eclectic theory of revolutionary praxis in which he drew substantially from the works of Georges Sorel and Piero Gobetti and to a lesser extent from Bernadetto Croce, Antonio Gramsci and Lenin. In sharp contrast to those whom he had enlisted to defend his arguments, and who he felt were the true heirs of Marx, he set the whole pantheon of parliamentary reformism and revisionism of the Second International, and its contemporary postwar continuation in the works of such thinkers as Henri de Man, Emile Valdervelde and Max Eastman. Of the seventeen sections (presented in eight separate articles) which make up the Defensa del marxismo, Mariátegui only devotes two to the criticism of Max Eastman and his work Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, but he includes much analysis in those sections dealing with the works of other revisionists which is also relevant to the case against Eastman.

Mariátegui's aim, as the main title of his thesis suggests, is to 'defend'

Marxism against anti-revolutionary ideas and ideologies which he believed constituted a deformation and misinterpretation of Marx's thought. However, in attempting to rectify this heretical current, which he felt had begun with Ferdinand Lassalle, he chose as his main aid the work of the highly unorthodox and only marginally Marxian thinker, Georges Sorel.[46] But it was precisely Sorel he argued, who through his belief in the myth of violence as a creative force had re-activated the revolutionary spirit of early Marxism. In this sense Sorel could not be included among the revisionists, because he had in fact offered not a modification but an enrichment of Marxism, which was compatible with the historical circumstances of the postwar era. In his revolt against bourgeois historicism and evolutionism Sorel, had, claimed Mariátegui, transcended the rationalist and positivist assumptions of his times and found in Bergson and the pragmatists the means by which to restore to Marxism its original human content, and almost spiritual faith in the volition of the masses.

Before undertaking a direct criticism of Max Eastman in the Defensa del marxismo, Mariátegui devoted the first four articles to an attack on the Belgian reformist, Henri de Man, whose recent work entitled Au delà du Marxisme (1927) had caused some intellectual interest because of its author's attempts to dismiss the economic foundations of Marxism, with the argument that it was psychological factors that shaped the socialist consciousness rather than materialist ones.[47] From this viewpoint he went on to claim that workers who joined the class struggle did so from an ingrained inferiority complex, and not as a result of the pressures of economic injustice inherent in the capitalist system.

According to Mariátegui, de Man had gone beyond the revisionism of Bernstein and attempted a 'liquidación del marxismo' (17, p.4). But this, he argues, like all attempts since the end of the nineteenth century to substantially modify Marxist theory, had failed, and merely represented a transitory

interference with the revolutionary reality which remained the unshakable core of Marxist thought. Like many other postwar socialist intellectuals, de Man had allowed his own personal disillusionment with the contemporary failures of the working class struggle to destroy his faith in the socialist promise. Drawing on the arguments of Piero Gobetti, Mariategui goes on to suggest that the predominantly reformist tradition of Belgian socialism also served to undermine de Man's belief in revolution, and the whole Marxist prognosis of capitalism. From this isolationist and transitory view of the world he had copnsequently developed an excessively narrow conception of the problem of class consciousness, and failed to recognise the emotional and revolutionary vitalism which was sweeping postwar Europe.

De Man also belonged, argued Mariátegui, to a genre of nineteenth and early twentieth century intellectualism which placed an almost obsessive faith in the principles of science. By applying the most fashionable scientific methodology to other bodies of knowledge - and here he recalls the influence of Darwin on his native South America - such thinkers denied that each discipline had its own particular method of enquiry and consequently often overlooked vital causal factors, in the pursuit of their own subjective intellectual designs. De Man's employment of psychological and psycho - analytical investigative methods had, for example, produced some interesting observations of the mental attitudes of industrial workers, but had totally failed to see capitalism in its most fundamental Marxist terms, that is, as an economic system. Therefore, while he accepted that the capitalist mode of production had led to worker alienation and exploitation, he also supported the view that these were transitory phenomena which could be resolved by scientific means, and without destroying the system which had been their cause. As far as Mariátegui was concerned 'el neorevisionismo se limita a unas pocas superficiales observaciones empíricas que no aprehenden el curso mismo de la economía ni explican el

sentido de la crisis post-bélica. Lo más importante de la previsión marxista - la concentración capitalista - se ha realizado' (17, p.12). Capitalism, he claimed, was not resolving its crises, but as indicated by Lenin and Hilferding, was taking on new configurations in the form of imperialism and the rationalization of the production process. De Man's failure to grasp these essential economic developments had led to his naive acceptance of 'la colaboración de los obreros en el trabajo de reconstrucción de la economía capitalista', and his subsequent inability to see the efficacy of active class conflict and preparation for revolution.

After broadly outlining his critique of Au delà du Marxisme, Mariátegui then set out to challenge in greater detail a number of revisionist and reformist assumptions, some of which were specific to de Man and others which belonged to a wider body of postwar interpretations of Marxism. One of the first controversies which he explores in the Defensa del marxismo is that concerning the nature of the Hegelian legacy in Marx's thought. The critical reference in this instance is de Man, but the argument can be seen as a general attack on the anti-philosophical, scientific approach to Marxism, of the theoreticians of the Second International and their postwar heirs, and therefore is of significance in the development of Mariátegui's dispute with Max Eastman.

Mariátegui begins his argument by stating that even though Marx's philosophical thinking has clear links back to Hegel, whose work was in turn influenced by Kant, this does not indicate an automatic dependancy of Marxism on Hegelian philosophy. Quoting Benedetto Croce he continues, '"el presupuesto del socialismo no es una filosofía de la historia, sino una concepción histórica determinada por las condiciones presentes de la sociedad y del modo como ésta ha llegado a ellas"' (18, p.10). The materialist conception of history was not born, Mariátegui adds, as a result of the progress of ideas from one philosopher to another but rather developed dialectically as the antithesis of Hegelian idealism, thereby transcending, rather than building upon the ideas

which went before. When those like de Man claim that Marxism is simply a product of nineteenth century rationalist thought, now outmoded by scientific progress, they therefore indicate their misunderstanding of Marx's intentions. Marx had relied on some scientific and philosophical ideas, long since superseded by such discoveries as those of Freud and Einstein. However this did not compromise the validity of his most fundamental assumptions, and while capitalism continued to exist his work would remain relevant as his followers drew on new bodies of ideas that were capable of enhancing the socialist cause.

Comparing de Man's scientific and intellectualized understanding of Marxism, to what he felt was its living reality in the battle for the realization of socialism, he again quotes Croce; '"el materialismo histórico surgió de la necesidad de darse cuenta de una determinada configuración social, no ya de un propósito de investigación de los factores de la vida histórica; y se formó en la cabeza de políticos y de revolucionarios, no ya de fríos y acompasados sabios de biblioteca."' (18,p.10)

Marxism could not be codified in purely scientific terms nor seen simply as a product of nineteenth century rationalism and German idealism. As a body of thought it was not static and passive, but dynamic, and inextricably linked to historical reality. Therefore for Mariátegui,

> Marx está vivo en la lucha que por la realización del socialismo, vibran en el mundo, innumerables muchedumbres, animadas por su doctrina. La suerte de las teorías científicas o filosóficas, que él usó, superándolas y trascendiéndolas, como elementos de su trabajo teórico, no compromete en lo absoluto la validez y la vigencia de su idea. Esto es radicalmente extraña a la mudable fortuna de las ideas científicas o filosóficas que las acompañan o anteceden inmediatamente en el tiempo. (pp.10-11)

In the postwar era, it was Lenin and the leaders of the Russian Revolution who had made the most outstanding contribution to the social struggle, and by restoring to Marxism its dynamic function had also increased its contemporary relevance. Marx, he claims, had initiated the belief in 'este tipo de hombre de acción y de pensamiento. Pero en los líderes de la revolución rusa aparece,

con rasgos más definidos el ideólogo realizador. Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, Lunatcharsky, filosofan en la teoría y la praxis' (18, p.12).

Mariátegui's attack against positivism and the cult of scientific analysis can be seen generally as part of a wider Hegelian revival that accompanied the disintegration of classical Marxism after the First World War, and more specifically as a result of his involvement with the Italian Marxists of the Ordine Nuovo movement.[48] Mariátegui's arrival in Italy in 1919 coincided with the beginning of one of the most active periods of left wing politics the country had ever experienced (il bienno rosso). Before he returned to Peru in 1922 he was to witness the rapid expansion of the factory councils movement, the Turin General Strike and attend personally the Congress of Livorno in 1921, from which emerged the Italian Communist Party. During these few years he was substantially influenced by the thinking of a number of radical Marxist intellectuals including Gobetti and Gramsci, and by 1921 was writing back to Peru describing his conversion to revolutionary socialism in 'almost mystical terms'.[49]

The ideologues of the Ordine Nuovo belonged to a generation of Italian intellectuals whose grounding in political and philosophical ideas had been shaped by such thinkers as Benedetto Croce and Antonio Labriola, both of whom had been anxious to reintroduce a philosophical component back into Marxism. After the failure of the Second International to unite the European working class against the war, followed by the destruction of the political left during the conflict, those theoretical arguments which had condemned economic determinism and mechanistic interpretations of historical progress, were now seen to be vindicated. The coming to power of Lenin and the Bolsheviks also gave further justification for abandoning the 'attentisme' of the postwar decades, and strengthened the belief in the necessity of incorporating subjective factors into the revolutionary struggle. For the Ordine Nuovo Marxists it

was a fatalistic delusion to see history unfolding out of a series of objective laws; economic factors were naturally of great importance in the development of revolutionary conditions but, they contested, it was only through the introduction of conscious human volition that effective revolutionary progress could be made.

Gramsci above all was the key figure in formulating this praxical view of history, which stressed a return to the concept of dialectics. Philosophy and materialism, he felt, had become polarized during the course of the Second International, which had resulted in a great deal of theorizing at the expense of political activity. To break away from this state of deadlock would involve the restoration of dialectical interaction between idealism and materialism, theory and practice, subject and object, returning in his view, Marxism back to Marx. This, however, did not mean the systematic adoption of all the ideas put forward in Marx's original texts; it was in fact the rigid 'scientific' analysis as set out in Capital which he blamed for the blind faith in economic determinism which had prevailed during the Second International.[50] Marxism as a body of thought had to be developed to cope with a more advanced and sophisticated form of capitalism which existed in the twentieth century. This meant therefore, retaining Marx's methodology, but modifying or even abandoning some of those conclusions he had reached decades earlier, in what was essentially a distinct period of historical development. For Gramsci and other members of the Ordine Nuovo, Marxism was not a fully evolved scientific doctrine nor a form of revealed truth, but rather a theory which continued to develop and grow as it came into contact with new economic and social circumstances, and therefore must continually adjust itself to a changing world.[51] Marxism was seen in this context not simply as the theory of Karl Marx but rather a theoretical system which could be refined and enriched with the accumulation of historical experience. This sort of thinking profoundly

affected Mariátegui, and in turn Vallejo, who eventually incorporated a form of dialectical tension in his poetry.

Continuing his attack on the static, scientific approach to Marxism of de Man and the other neo-revisionists, Mariátegui goes on to examine their claim that Marx's theory was based on essentially determinist assumptions. Again, such criticism is seen as a product of the belief that Marxist ideas were irretrievably rooted in nineteenth century modes of thought. But, in de Man's case he argues, one could add the influence of the Belgian socialist tradition which rejected the notion of violent struggle in favour of electoral reformism. According to both Sorel and Gobetti this tendency was due to the distinct lack of heavy industrial development and the perpetuation of a strong agricultural and artisan sector in that country. In such a retarded economic and social environment they claimed that the Belgian working class had retained a petty bourgeois mentality, which had never understood the necessity of waging class struggle. De Man, he continues, had reflected this tendency in his work and had consequently failed to comprehend the process by which the working class developed its own revolutionary consciousness. Although not going so far as to suggest that Marx had purged the notion of free will from history, De Man had argued, based on his own jaundiced view of Marxism, that social volition remained subject to the general laws guiding the class struggle. But ultimately, he believed that these laws had their basis in a predetermined reality, that is, they were produced from class conflicts originating in the mode of production. Mariátegui concludes that,

> el marxismo, donde se ha mostrado revolucionario, - vale decir donde ha sido marxismo - no ha obedecido nunca a un determinismo pasivo y rígido ... cada palabra, cada acto del marxismo tiene un acento de fe, de voluntad, de convicción heroica y creadora, cuyo impulso sería absurdo buscar en un mediocre y pasivo sentimiento determinista. (19, p.10)

Mariátegui's attacks against the positivist and determinist arguments of de Man are, as in the above instance, often developed in order to provide

a clear theoretical opposite against which he can juxtapose his own interpretations of Marx. Relying to some extent on such thinkers as Sorel and Croce, and the works of the members of the Ordine Nuovo, he formulated a creative interpretation of Marxism which constantly stresses the active voluntarist side of theory, in contrast to the fatalistic reliance upon objective forces and scientific 'laws' of capitalist development. Economic conditions and material interests in isolation, he argued, would not inspire in the proletariat the will for creating a new socialist society. It was at the level of consciousness that the first steps towards socialism had to be made. The task was not simply one of seizing power but also of preparing for power.

The third main area of debate in which Mariátegui engages in the Defensa del marxismo concerns the formation of a working class revolutionary consciousness, and the question of ethics and morality in relation to Marxism. Considering the numerous charges against Marx, which claimed that he had failed to incorporate a socialist ethic in his theory on account of his materialist assumptions, he again turns to Croce to take up the defence. For the latter the opposition can be divided into three main currents, the first of which based its case on the statements by Marx and Engels in their argument with the utopian socialists, in which they emphasized that the social question could not incorporate moral considerations; an assertion which subsequently invited the accusation of crass materialism. (What Marx and Engels were suggesting however, was that each class had its own egotistical form of reason and therefore plans for the reconstitution of society on 'moral' grounds amounted to no more than bourgeois idealism.) Secondly, Hegel, unlike his predecessor Kant, had not shown so rigorous a concern with the problem of ethics; a tendency which it was claimed was further accentuated by Marx and Engels. Finally the term 'materialism' as used by Marx had invited many diverse interpretations, some of which had overstressed the opposition between mind and matter. In response

to the above tendencies Croce advances the view that all of Marx's work was aimed at discovering the processes which would bring forth a more just social order and therefore, of necessity, must have involved a moral presupposition.

Taking the argument a stage further, Mariátegui suggests that

> la función ética del socialismo ... debe ser buscada, no en grandilocuentes decálogos, ni en especulaciones filosóficas, que en ningún modo constituían una necesidad de la teorización marxista, sino en la creación de una moral de productores por el propio proceso de la lucha anti-capitalista. (19,p.11)

Then quoting Kautsky he continues,

> 'en vano ... se busca inspirar al obrero inglés con sermones morales una concepción más elevada de la vida, el sentimiento de más nobles esfuerzos La ética del proletariado emana de sus aspiraciones revolucionarias; son ellas que las dan más fuerza y elevación. Es la idea de la revolución lo que ha salvado al proletariado del rebajamiento.' (19, p.11)

Sorel would add to the above arguments, Mariátegui claims, that Marxists also have every right to reject moralist arguments by reformists, utopians, and social democrats, because it was precisely their rhetorical statements in support of democracy and justice that had been responsible for misleading and weakening the working class movement. For Mariátegui therefore,

> una moral de productores, como la concibe Sorel, como la concebía Kautsky, no surge mecánicamente del interés económico: se forma en la lucha de clase, liberada con ánimo heroico, con voluntad apasionada. Es absurdo buscar el sentimiento ético del socialismo en los sindicatos aburguesados, - en los cuales una burocracia domesticada ha enervado la conciencia de clase - o en los grupos parlamentarios, espiritualmente asimilados al enemigo que combaten con discursos y mociones .... La ética del socialismo se forma en la lucha de clase. Para que el proletariado cumpla, en el progreso moral, su misión histórica, es necesario que adquiera conciencia previa de su interés de clase; pero el interés de clase por sí sólo, no basta .... 'Sin teoría revolucionaria, no hay acción revolucionaria', repetía Lenin, aludiendo a la tendencia amarilla a olvidar el finalismo revolucionario por atender sólo a las circunstancias presentes. (19, p.12)

Consequently, the workers who are indifferent to the class struggle and are conscious of their interests on the level of material wellbeing alone will never develop a truly socialist ethic, and will remain under the influence of a 'mediocre moral burguesa'.

Turning to the importance of the workplace in the process of socialist

education Mariátegui now quotes from the work of Piero Gobetti.

> 'La fábrica ... da la precisa visión de la coexistencia de los intereses sociales: la solidaridad del trabajo. El individuo se habitúa a sentirse parte de un proceso productivo, parte indispensable en el mismo modo que insuficiente. He aquí la más perfecta escuela de orgullo y humildad .... Quien vive en una fábrica, tiene la dignidad del trabajo, el hábito al sacrificio y a la fatiga. Un ritmo de vida que se funda severamente en el sentido de tolerancia y de interdependencia, que habitúa a la puntualidad al rigor, a la continuidad. Estas virtudes del capitalismo, se resienten de un ascetismo casi árido; pero en cambio el sufrimiento contenido alimenta con la exasperación el coraje de la lucha y el instinto de la defensa política'. (19, p.13)

For Gobetti it is here within the capitalist production process itself that the worker begins to form a socialist consciousness.

The existence of this inevitable contradiction within capitalism, claims Mariátegui, is a source of boundless hope, and remains a constant threat not only to the exploiters but also to the parliamentary reformists, the apolitical unions, and all custodians of bourgeois ideology. And, while social democrat revisionists like de Man and Bernstein put most of their faith in organized unionism, they also recognise the importance of the work environment itself in the social struggle. However, it is not the ideological and spiritual preparation for revolution that they are concerned with, but in educating the workers to believe that it is in their power to effect a peaceful transition to a more rational and just economic order. Assuming therefore, a partisan enterprise between exploiter and exploited, whereby, as a result of a socialist initiative, capitalism can be manipulated democratically into resolving its crises and contradictions.

For Mariátegui such a strategy is absurd. The whole point of undermining capitalism is to prepare for its eventual destruction; there can be no room for compromise. Reformism would mean increased incorporation of the proletariat into the bourgeois ideological and economic structure, resulting not in socialism but a more sophisticated and complete exploitation. In order to realize its destiny the proletariat must develop organically and dialectically

out of the core of the capitalist system, creating its own alternative ethical and ideological codes. Proletarian self realization for Mariátegui is an essential stimulant in the class war; a conflict which he sees not simply as a power struggle based on economic factors, but a total revolution in which man himself is transformed.

In rejecting the need for revolutionary struggle, and thereby failing to understand the process by which the proletariat can develop its own socialist ethic, the reformists and revisionists were forced to believe that existent moral and humanitarian arguments can provide a proper ethic for the working class. These assumptions, Mariátegui claims, are clearly detrimental to the socialist cause and

> por la vía del socialismo 'moral', y de sus pláticas anti-materialistas, no se consigue sino recaer en el más estéril y lacrimoso romanticismo humanitario, en la más decadente apologética del 'paria', en el más sentimental e inepto plagio de la frase evangélica de los 'pobres de espíritu'. (20, p.13)

Socialism based on such ideas is seen as being retrogressive, with its ideals frozen in a romantic and utopian past. It is also indicative of a resistance to accept the historical process as set out by Marx, in which 'el proletariado sucedía a la burguesía en la empresa civilizadora'. Any proposals for social change based on humanitarian reformism reflects the reasoning of a fading and decadent bourgeois class, not the aspiration of a class that is still forging its destiny. Therefore,

> el marxismo es totalmente extraño y contrario a estas mediocres especulaciones altruístas y filantrópicas. Los marxistas no creemos que la empresa de crear un nuevo orden social, superior al orden capitalista, incumba a una amorfa masa de parias ni de oprimidos, guiada por evangélicos predicadores del bien .... El proletariado debe elevarse a una 'moral de productores', muy distante y distinta de la 'moral de esclavos' de que oficiosamente se empeñan en proveerlo sus gratuitos profesores de moral, horrorizados de su materialismo. (20, pp.13-14)

For Mariátegui it is Marx who can be credited with the 'discovery' of the proletariat in the sense that he distinguished its unique role in

history from the romantic notion of 'the people'. A notion, he suggests, which has a long history in the socialist movement; from the invocation to 'the poor of the earth' to rise up in the first verse of 'The Internationale'; to the utopian socialists; the reformists and revisionists of the Second International and their followers; and even great contemporary literary figures like Henri Barbusse, with his idealization of 'la masa intemporal, eterna, sobre la que pesa opresora la gloria de los heróes y el fardo de las culturas. Masa-cariátide! (20, p.14). It is however, only the proletariat as defined by Marx that can be viewed as the authentic masses whose mission is to carry forward the destiny of history.

It is clear from the beginning of Mariátegui's analysis of Max Eastman's work, Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution that his disagreements were initially not so acute as they had been with de Man.[52] Eastman, he notes, like de Man, had introduced much of his knowledge of psychology into his study of Marxism but had produced a more 'original contribution' than his Belgian contemporary. A distinction is also made based on the fact that 'Henri de Man es un hereje del reformismo o la social-democracia. Max Eastman es un hereje de la revolución'. In Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, claims Mariátegui, no attempt is made to diminish the validity of Marxism on the basis of modern psychological discoveries, and similarities are even suggested between the works of Marx and Freud. This being especially the case over the question of false ideology, or false consciousness, which for Marxists indicated the tendency for classes to obscure their true economic aspirations behind a mask of idealized beliefs, like religion and morality. For the Freudian, even though dealing with individuals rather than classes, the problem of relative consciousness presented a similar situation in which the patient suppressed his subconscious sexual desires by a process of substitution or sublimation. Quoting Eastman he continues, "la interpretación económica de la historia,

no es más que un psicoanálisis generalizado del espíritu social y político." Like Marxism, Freudian psychology had contributed to the dismantling of the bourgeois ideological structure which had developed in the last century, and therefore also faced a considerable degree of resistance from the custodians of established beliefs.

Eastman's comparisons of the works of Marx and Freud, and the problems they shared in finding acceptance for their ideas form however, only a minor section of Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, and there is very little in the rest of the book - which was essentially an outright attack on some of the most fundamental tenets of Marxism, and a condemnation of the developments of the Russian Revolution - with which Mariátegui could agree.

The main challenge to Eastman's work begins in earnest in the final part of the Defensa del marxismo, when Mariátegui considers Eastman's assertion that Marx and many of his followers had proved incapable of emancipating themselves from the philosophical legacy of Hegel.[53] This tendency, Eastman had concluded, had proved detrimental to the development of Marx's ideas on a pragmatic basis, and in Russia especially, after the death of Lenin, had led to bureaucratic stagnation and the use of Marxism not as a tool of revolution, but as an inflexible State religion. For Mariátegui, Eastman's anti-Hegelianism 'más bien que la imposibilidad de Marx de emanciparse de Hegel es la incapacidad de Max Eastman para emanciparse de William James'. James, he continues, from his purely pragmatic vision of the world, had never seriously attempted to understand Hegel, and clearly neither had Eastman, who

> en su ofensiva contra el método dialéctico, actuan todas sus resistencias de norteamericano - proclive a un practicismo flexible e individualista, permeado de ideas pragmáticas, - contra el panlogismo germano, contra el sistema de una concepción unitaria y dialéctica. En apariencia, el 'americanismo' de la tesis de Max Eastman, está en su creencia de que la revolución no necesita una filosofía sino solamente una ciencia, una técnica; pero, en el fondo, está verdaderamente en su tendencia anglosajona a rechazar, en el nombre del puro 'buen sentido', toda difícil construcción ideológica chocante a su educación pragmática. (24, p.25)

Eastman's reproach against Marx for failing to purge his thought of Hegelian influences is also seen by Mariátegui - as he had noted previously in his criticism of de Man and the neo-revisionists - as part of a wider attack against philosophy in general. If Marx, argues Mariátegui, had simply relied on contemporary scientific knowledge to elaborate his analysis of society then his conclusions would have been somewhat mediocre, and held little import for the future of socialism. However, Marx had not restricted himself to empirical evidence alone in elaborating his ideas, but had fused together several bodies of knowledge to give birth to a new dynamic theoretical structure. Lenin - for whom Eastman had expressed considerable admiration for his 'pragmatism' - like Marx, Mariátegui affirms, had also displayed this ability to transcend the dominant ideas of his times and thereby enhance the revolutionary cause.

Eastman's major failing, as far as Mariátegui was concerned, was his inability to recognise the effective use that Marx had made of Hegel for his theory of revolution, and therefore he continued to believe that '"el hegelianismo es un demonio que hay que hacer salir del cuerpo del marxismo exorcizándolo en nombre de la ciencia"'. Quoting at length from Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution Mariátegui then attempts to illustrate how Eastman had failed to understand the true nature of Marx's debt to Hegel, by simply assuming that the latter's notion of the 'spirit' had been transferred from the ethereal to a material dimension. This initial misunderstanding had led to an inability to understand the new revolutionary significance Marx had given to the dialectic. In his work Eastman had taken examples from the German Ideology, and in particular the 'Thesis on Feuerbach', in an attempt to support his claim against Marx, but seemed ultimately to have disregarded Marx's own closing statements on Feuerbach in which he points out that,

> 'el método dialéctico, no solamente difiere en cuanto al fondo del de Hegel sino que le es, aún más, del todo contrario. Para Hegel el proceso del pensamiento, que él transforma, bajo el nombre de idea, en un sujeto independiente, es el demiurgo (creador) de la realidad, no siendo esta última sino su manifestación exterior. Para mí, al contrario la idea no es otra cosa que el mundo material traducido y transformado por el cerebro humano'. (24, p.26)

Eastman's ultimate position, claims Mariátegui, amounts to a total rejection of philosophy, on the basis that all earthly phenomena can be interpreted in scientific terms, and that the social revolution does not need philosophers but technicians. Finally, concluding this last section of the Defensa del marxismo, he suggests that Eastman, like de Man, had offered little of worth to the study of Marxism and the furtherance of the socialist cause, and that their works would remain on the level of a purely academic exercise.

In addition to the foregoing arguments, the Defensa del marxismo also includes an analysis of the role of intellectuals in the proletarian struggle. This debate however will be considered later, in conjunction with Vallejo's own developing perceptions on this theme. Finally a further point which should be emphasized - and which will also be taken into account at a later stage - is Mariátegui's almost religious faith in the proletariat. Not only does he see it as the agency of historical change, but also the liberator of mankind; a modern messiah in the form of a class, rather than an individual. In this context, he even attributes saintly qualities to those intellectuals who devote their lives to the workers and their struggle; Rosa Luxemburg he claims, in the forth section of the Defensa del marxismo, may one day attract the same devotion as Santa Teresa de Avila. He is also anxious to emphasize the cultural, as well as the political mission of the proletariat. These, like many other of his ideas, were shared enthusiastically by Vallejo, who seems to fall increasingly under the influence of Mariátegui's thinking from 1929 onwards. It is noticeable also, from this time, that Eastman had become a fading star on his intellectual horizon.

The Soviet Union: A Second Appraisal

In September 1929 Vallejo set out to visit the Soviet Union for a second time and was accompanied by his fiancee, Georgette. Their journey included visits to Berlin, Leningrad, Moscow, Prague, Budapest, Rome, and Nice, before returning to Paris in November.[55] The first report of the trip in Vallejo's journalism was again a travel sketch set in a train on the way to Moscow.[56] Describing the passengers in his compartment he alludes to a wider analysis of Soviet society:

> el doble aspecto actual de la sociedad rusa: la burguesía moribunda y el socialismo naciente. Porque mientras nuestra amiga es un ardiente militante comunista, el fanático tipo de la mujer revolucionaria rusa, nuestro compañero de compartimiento es un médico burgués, ruso blanco, de cuya boca he visto saltar edificantes apostrofes contra el Estado proletario.

With similar travelling companions on his previous trip he had been far more lenient on a female Communist guide, who he felt embodied in her enthusiasm the hopes and aspirations of a class recently liberated from exploitation. By the time he made his second journey he had obviously become more sceptical of certain economic and social developments in the Soviet Union, and seems to have replaced the innocent optimism which prevailed on his previous trip with a degree of hard headed realism. But unlike Eastman he was not to abandon the Revolution or his belief in socialist promise as understood by Marx.

After his first visit to Moscow it became clear to Vallejo that the road to socialism in Russia was strewn with innumerable obstacles, and the consequences of bringing about a revolution in a country which lacked many of the most fundamental objective social and economic conditions for such an event, were after a decade becoming painfully apparent. How was a small elite of city based revolutionaries and a nascent industrial proletariat - between whom links had become tenuous after the Civil War - to control and shape a predominantly peasant nation? The leaders of Soviet Russia claimed to

be acting according to Marxist principles but in many instances such assertions rang hollow; there were no Marxist rules as such for economic development after a revolution, and even Lenin had been forced to consider the limited introduction of capitalism to stimulate the economy. As a matter of necessity many internal problems were being resolved by far from ideal solutions; with the New Economic Policy being an outstanding example.

The Old Bolsheviks had set their hopes on the World Revolution, which would have meant a universal collapse of capitalism and the incorporation of Russia into a new socialist order. The reality of the situation though, was vastly different; capitalism had not collapsed, and the Soviet Union remained isolated in a hostile world intent on its destruction. Furthermore, many intellectuals like Max Eastman and Victor Serge, felt that Stalin's rise to power effectively meant the end of any truly socialist developments in Russia, and that the Revolution was decaying into a totaliterian dictatorship. Vallejo could not have been as well informed as those who had had first hand experience of events in the Soviet Union, and some of the arguments he puts forward in his articles register a considerable naivety. However,his lack of personal involvement also allows for a greater degree of objectivity. As far as he was concerned Russia had placed itself in a unique situation; the Revolution was arguably the greatest event in the history of world socialism in that it had broken the monopoly of pre-war bourgeois liberal domination, and represented the most powerful force for change in the world at that time. Above all, Soviet Russia presented a great lesson in history from which much could be learned, both from its mistakes and its successes. As noted earlier, this is perhaps one of the first areas in which Vallejo began to disagree with Eastman, who saw the Revolution and its development more in terms of a test for Marxism. Vallejo seems to be unwilling to adopt this somewhat academic stance, and in his analyses of Russia he focuses most of his attention on

tangible economic, political, and literary realities rather than theoretical speculation.

In an article entitled 'La verdadera situación de Rusia', Vallejo concludes that foreign opinion concerning the Soviet Union had polarized into two camps; those who felt the Revolution was a failure and that the country was heading for ruin, and those who claimed that a communist paradise was being created.[57] The first opinion we are told, could usually be equated with disillusioned intellectuals and also the political right and centre, who, he asserts, were not capable of objective analysis because of their obsessive fear of losing their power and privilege; a development which they felt was the inevitable consequence of a socialist revolution. His comments on the second body of opinion, which, he claims, was representative of the doctrinaire Comintern dominated left, and the new recently converted intellectuals, are equally derisive:

> de parecido fanatismo y de idéntica parcialidad padecen quienes participan del sector blanco o rosado [the left as opposed to the 'negro o amarillo' with which he identifies the right] de la opinión extranjera sobre Rusia. Este sector se obstina en, candorosamente, las flores y frutos del régimen soviético. Ya he dicho en otra ocasión que las realizaciones marxistas de Rusia - con ser de un gran sentido vital e histórico - no pasan, hasta este momento, de mínimos pasos hacia el orden socialista. Las dificultades que la implantación de este orden ofrece en Rusia son de una gravedad infinitamente mayor que la que imaginan los revolucionarios sentimentales y los empíricos correligionarios del extranjero.

Having outlined his own overall position in relation to developments in Russia Vallejo goes on to review some of the economic problems facing the Soviet leadership, using as a reference a report given by the French Communist leader Henri Barbé to his party. The industrialization programme, we are told, was achieving a good growth rate but agriculture remained almost stagnant; a problem which is attributed partly to 'class war' in the countryside. After citing further developments in Russia he concludes that the Soviet experiment must be viewed objectively, and any undertaking which involves building a new society must entail much suffering and sacrifice.

The question may legitimately be raised concerning Vallejo's intellectual honesty; did he represent faithfully his political beliefs in his journalism? It is difficult to give a firm answer on this point but one suspects, considering the variety of topics he treated over the years, and the numerous political arguments he entered into, that he generally conveyed what he felt at the time of writing, and rarely manipulated his ideas to influence his readers. It may be argued nevertheless that from the middle of 1929 he took a softer line towards the developments in Soviet Russia and the subsequent responses of Comintern directed communist parties in various countries, than he would have felt inclined to do, if it was not for the attacks of the bourgeois press on the whole Soviet experiment. Writing for predominantly liberal magazines and newspapers he might have felt the need to present a fairly consistent opinion which generally supported developments in the Soviet Union, even if sometimes not too enthusiastically. This approach also seems to have been common to other members of the Peruvian Communist Party who were falling out of favour with the Comintern by 1929.[58]

Considering the nature of the topics covered by Vallejo in his journalism when he returned from his second visit to Russia, it is relatively clear that he and his fiancee were accepted as official guests, and were consequently subjected to the selective introduction of Soviet achievements, organized by Inturist for foreign visitors. His articles include reports on factories, housing conditions, and various economic projects, and while he registers his approval of most of the new developments he witnessed, he seems at pains to find anything over which he could become enthusiastic. On one occasion he states 'la existencia en Rusia es, ciertamente, dura en lo que toca a holgura económica, a confort material y cotidiano'.[59] His description of Leningrad, which he had been so anxious to visit, is also somewhat strained, as he notes, 'Leningrado en general, es una ciudad limpia, clara, holgada y

hasta alegre'.[60]

Whereas he finds most aspects of contemporary Soviet life disappointing - a situation he defends with the argument that a new society can only be built with some sacrifice - it is the dedication of the Bolsheviks which he feels continues to remain the most positive aspect of revolutionary development. Set against a background which he probably felt offered little immediate hope for the betterment of life along socialist lines, the Bolshevik for him assumed a unique role in Soviet society. For Vallejo therefore,

> el bolchevique es el padre de la vida soviética. Es el abanderado de la causa proletaria. Es el "pioneer" del socialismo. Su conducta participa del heroísmo sacerdotal y artístico. No me refiero al "rol" del bolchevique como unidad militante de la Tercera Internacional. No me refiero al ejercicio de su estatuto comunista, a sus funciones políticas dentro del partido. Me refiero, en este capítulo, a su simple y diaria conducta de hombre y de particular ... su pasión colectivista, su combatividad científica, su espontánea aceptación del orden soviético, su dinamismo, su fe creadora, en fin, su técnica vital. Naturalmente, su conducta particular no puede librarse de su espíritu militante. Pero esto no quiere decir que en ella deje el bolchevique de ser un hombre, para degenerar en profesor o misionero de Lenin o de Marx. Esta es una de sus cualidades profundamente humanas. Ella quita a su condición particular todo asomo evangelista o taumaturgo a la clásica manera religiosa, por mucho que sus menores actos sean y son de inspiración esencialmente apostólica y de propaganda revolucionaria.[61]

Similarities can be drawn between the above analysis and the one he made almost two years earlier before undertaking his first trip to Russia, in that the Bolshevik continues to be seen as the builder of socialism and the embodiment of a new consciousness. Nevertheless, the differences that do exist are fundamental ones; whereas previously the Bolshevik was seen as having a 'biological' and 'natural' relationship with the rest of Soviet society, he now assumes a more 'technical' role in which subjective actions become increasingly important in undertaking his civilizing mission. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, the Bolshevik is no longer regarded as the disciple of an idea or some individual leader, and therefore looses his quasi spiritual function, as he abandons the ranks of divine messengers to become 'un hombre ... profundamente humana(s)'. But because of the many sacrifices

he must perform in his daily life and the exemplary conduct that is required of him in the workplace, Vallejo suggests that such selfless commitment can be likened to the faith of a martyr or a saint and that 'su vida dolorosa y abnegada y, a la vez espontánea y apasionada, desconcierta e impone un respecto casi religioso'. Seeing the Bolshevik as a social technician indicates the lingering influence of Eastman, but the emphasis on his essentially 'human' qualities, which are described in the context of a religious paradigm, shows Vallejo's growing acceptance of the ideas put forward by Mariátegui. Finally, it is also of significance that while in 1928 the Bolshevik was seen as the educator of 'the people' of Russia, he is now credited with the more specific task of being 'el abanderado de la causa proletaria'. Again, the source of this new thinking seems clear.

The above article displays an extreme naivety on Vallejo's part with regard to the developments which were taking place in Soviet Russia under Stalin. The sort of people who were joining the Party by this time were far removed from the type of Bolshevik that existed both before, and for a few years after the Revolution. Even the 'old guard' itself had by 1929 been almost completely silenced. The new Bolsheviks had few ideals outside of self-preservation, and realized that only as members of the Party could they escape the rigors and uncertainties of the daily life of the masses. Mostly dull executioners of Stalin's rule they were certainly not the saintly figures Vallejo describes.

It has been argued by César Levano that from the end of the 1920s Vallejo began to accept the line followed by the Comintern and remained faithful to that position until the end of his life; thereby indicating that he belonged to the second generation of postwar intellectuals whose vision of Soviet Russia, and understanding of the struggle for socialism,were shaped in accordance with Stalinist directives.[62] Some of the articles that Vallejo published in 1929 and

1930, and the two books he wrote on the the Soviet Union in the early 1930s, would indicate that he supported some aspects of Soviet development at that time, but a wider examination of his work shows that his political formation involved a far more complex process than is suggested by Levano. Vallejo's understanding of the the role of the Bolshevik may in fact have had less to do with his own observations and perceptions of reality than with the need to define and clarify an image of socialist man. Like Mariátegui, he mythologized the socialist promise by attempting to combine objective and 'scientific' necessity with an almost messianic faith in the possibilities of human volition: a mode of thought which many Marxists would feel bound to reject, but with which the master would undoubtedly have had some sympathy.

Vallejo's idealization of the Bolshevik as the embodiment of socialist man, despite its variance with historical reality, remains a fundamental aspect of his thinking until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, when it is the Volunteers for the Republic who seize the mantle which the Bolshevik had been forced to relinquish. This transition also involves a change in his understanding of the relationship between the proletariat and its leaders. Following Lenin's most idealistic perceptions of the role of the Party, Vallejo never equated the Bolshevik with elitist control of the masses. There was for him no case of substitution of Party for class; the relationship was perceived to be horizontal rather than vertical, with the Bolshevik simply acting as a vanguard member of the proletariat who had attained an advanced consciousness of the realities of the social struggle. Nevertheless,one suspects that Vallejo continued to believe that such a role demanded an element of missionary leadership. It was in fact only during the Spanish Civil War that he became fully convinced that the masses were capable of developing their own revolutionary consciousness and imposing their own will on events, rather than relying on the guidance of representative

elements from outside. The Spanish Volunteer is not seen therefore, as a clear substitute for the Bolshevik but rather as a more organic product of the class conflict - an idea which again indicates Vallejo's growing acceptance of Mariátegui's arguments. One must also remember that the historical circumstances in Spain during the Civil War were such that the struggle of the working classes against their class enemies was more clearly defined than it had been in Russia in 1917, and the proletariat itself, rather than any one political party, seemed to take the lead, at least in the early stages of the conflict. It could be argued in this respect that the Spanish Revolution was a more authentically revolutionary struggle than its counterpart in Russia. Vallejo also experienced the war in Spain at first hand, and this undoubtedly further stimulated his faith in the possibilities of proletarian self-emancipation. Consequently, the question which is given most consideration in his Spanish Civil War poetry is not so much the relation between political parties and the masses, but rather the involvement of literary and artistic bourgeois intellectuals in the class struggle.

Revolution and The Bourgeois Intellectual

Vallejo's developing perceptions on the role of intellectuals were, as with much of his political thought from 1929 onwards, influenced by Mariátegui, and especially those ideas that had been put forward in the Defensa del marxismo. As we have seen, Mariátegui scorned those bourgeois intellectuals who purported to be above the political conflict and claimed to serve only a disinterested idealism. He also suggested that a new type of intellectual was emerging who was aware of his role in the class struggle and understood the necessity of forging a new consciousness that was contrary to dominant modes of thought; these were beliefs which Vallejo began to subscribe to with some enthusiasm

by 1930. In sections fifteen and sixteen of the Defensa del marxismo, - which we have so far not considered - Mariátegui further elaborated his ideas on these topics.[63] Setting the question of intellectuals in a wide context he begins by considering the young intelligentsia of the postwar era, who, he felt, were imbued with 'un sentimiento mesiánico, romántico ... que la inclina a una idea excesiva, a veces delirante, de su misión histórica ...,' (23, p.6). The youthful spontaneity of 1919, he continues, had been sustained by a unique optimism which was marked by a spirited longing and impatience for change. In an atmosphere which had been dominated by the Russian Revolution these young intellectuals had done a great deal of radical posturing and employed much revolutionary rhetoric but, adds Mariátegui, they represented a reflection of, rather than a solid contribution to, the revolutionary movement of the times. Criticising those who had idealized the 'spirit' of 1919, he states,

> la historia de ese episodio sentimental, que Chamson eleva a la categoría de una revolución, nos enseña que, poco a poco, despues que las ametralladoras de Noske restablecieron en Alemania el poder de la burguesía, el mesianismo de la "nueva generación" empezó a calmarse, renunciando a las responsabilidades precoces que en los primeros años de post-guerra se había apasionadamente atribuído. La fuerza que mantuvo viva hasta 1923, con alguna intermitencia, la esperanza revolucionaria, no era, pues, la voluntad romántica de reconstrucción, la inquietud tumultuaria de la juventud en severa vigilia; era la desesperada lucha del proletariado, en las barricadas, en las huelgas, en los comicios, en las trincheras, la acción heroica, operada con desigual fortuna, de Lenin y su aguerrida facción en Rusia, de Liebnecht, Rosa de Luxemburgo y Eugenio Leviné en Alemania, de Bela Kun en Hungría, de los obreros de la Fiom en Italia hasta la ocupación de las fábricas y la escisión de las masas socialistas en Livorno. (23, p.8)

Some members of the postwar generation had nevertheless, he adds, surpassed the stage of student rhetoric and left wing dilettantism and become truly revolutionary figures. In Italy those like Antonio Gramsci and Umberto Terracini, represented the most positive and dedicated commitment to the ideals of youth that had been outlined at the end of the war. In Germany, Ernest Toller, J. R. Bechner and George Groz played a similar role. None of the above, he argues, believed any longer that youth would make the

revolution. More responsible and mature, they were now simply committed to the ranks of socialism. Ending his analysis of postwar youth he concludes that, 'el mito de la nueva generación, de la revolución de 19, ha perdido mucho de su fuerza', and that the young intellectuals should devote their energies no longer to a lost and discredited myth but dedicate themselves to the proletarian struggle (23, p.9).

Mariátegui's accusation of lack of passion, commitment, and maturity on the part of youth was also aimed at intellectuals like Emmanuel Berl and Julien Benda, both of whom he takes to task because of their defence of the subjective intellectual category of pure intellegence, and their belief that artists and writers must resist any commitments that would compromise their higher duty to 'lucidity' (24, p.23). In this context they felt that it was both negative and diminishing for intellectuals to become political activists because it would threaten their autonomy and service of 'universal' ends. For Mariátegui there could be no position 'above' the political struggle and the revolution, and the true responsibility of the intellectual must be to commit himself to principles capable of transforming him into an agent of historical change. There were, he adds, those intellectuals like Berl who were sympathetic to the socialist cause but their position was essentially one of being associated with the revolution without being in it. Characteristic of a large part of the left-wing bourgeois position was its irremediable coupling of idealistic morality with political practice. Such a stance is seen as representing a desperate attempt to bridge the contradiction between decaying bourgeois values and strengthening revolutionary reality. Those intellectuals who subscribe to this moralizing dilettantism would dearly love to become the guardians of a new consciousness, but subject to their own definitions and on their own terms. This, argues Mariátegui, is precisely why they tend to reject Marxism as being too materialistic or

too technical to be compatible with 'human nature'. But, it is they, he adds, who have distanced themselves from the mass of humanity through their devout service to bourgeois ideology, and the egocentric rewards which such a role entailed. Their position therefore, was not one of defending their 'lucidity' against the profane temptations of Marxism, but was rather representative of a fear that in a socialist society they would lose their status as a result of their intellectual compromise with the now threatened ruling class.

All art, argues Mariátegui, springs ultimately from an ideological conception of the world, and there can be no such thing as a work of art, or a set of ideas, which are entirely devoid of ideological content. Free thought and 'lucidity' are concepts which cannot be sustained in a world in which man is the central agent of change and progress. There is no higher plain of consciousness "au dessus de la Mêlée", all men are involved in interaction between themselves and their surroundings; static categories of human existence and thought do not exist.

Advancing on this somewhat crude Marxist interpretation of the relationship between intellect and ideology, Mariátegui goes on to suggest that there can be a degree of liberty within dogma itself. It is only when a set of ideas or a mode of thought becomes ossified and insensitive to historical change that it becomes a reactionary force. Dogma, he claims, when it is part of a process of significant historical and social change finds a new value and

> mientras el cambio se opera, esto es, mientras el dogma no se transforma en un archivo o un código de una ideología del pasado, nada garantiza como el dogma la libertad creadora la función germinal del pensamiento. El intelectual necesita apoyarse, en su especulación, en una creencia, en un principio que haga de él un factor de la historia y del progreso. (24, p.24)

In this context dogma did not impede Dante from becoming one of the finest poets of all time, nor Lenin from becoming a great statesman and revolutionary.

Marx and Engels had, in fact, given dogmatism a new meaning, elucidating its function in the development of history. For Mariátegui,

> la posición marxista, para el intelectual contemporáneo no utopista, es la única posición que le ofrezca una vía de ilusión de avanzar, el mismo recorrido y de no encerrarse, por mala información, en ninguna "impasse" .... El dogma no es un itinerario sino una brújula en el viaje. Para pensar con libertad, la primera condición es abandonar la preocupación de la libertad absoluta. (24, pp.24-25)

Finally, in concluding his analysis of the role of intellectuals, it is Sorel who is taken as an outstanding example of the type of thinker who had proved capable of transcending static bourgeois consciousness. While remaining outside the discipline of a political party, he had been faithful in his support of class struggle and revolutionary objectives. Unlike Henri de Man, he had not repudiated Marxism a priori, but had, along with Lenin, made an original extension of Marx's ideas, thereby adding to the socialist cause rather than attempting to undermine it.

In those articles Vallejo wrote for the Spanish periodical, Bolívar, which deal with the relationship of artists to the revolutionary struggle, the influence of Mariátegui again becomes apparent. As noted previously Vallejo's stance against State dominated art was one of strong aversion, and he refused to believe that anything but a parody of proletarian culture could develop out of such a system. In an article entitled 'Vladimiro Maiakovsky', he now considers the case of this Russian poet who he feels was in the unenviable position of having straddled the Revolution with his artistic career.

> La revolución le había llegado a mitad de su juventud, cuando las formas de su espíritu estaban ya cuajadas y hasta consolidadas. El esfuerzo para voltearse de golpe y como un guante a la nueva vida, le quebró el espinazo y le hizo perder el centro de gravedad convirtiéndolo en un desaxée, como a Essenin y a Sobol. Tal ha sido el destino de esta generación.[64]

For those writers who did not belong firmly to either the pre-revolutionary or post-revolutionary generations, 1917 and the subsequent social upheaval

which followed, had a traumatic effect on their aesthetic sensibilities and he claims, 'la tragedia de transmutación psicológica personal ha sido ... brutal, y de ella han logrado escapar solamente los indiferentes con máscara revolucionaria, los insensibles con pose bolchevique'. This latter group, who responded in their art almost directly in line with events, and the demands of the State, are in Vallejo's opinion simply charlatans who adopted revolutionary themes in their work out of self interest. However, Mayakovsky, he feels, made a serious attempt to transpose his work to serve revolutionary ends without total compromise to his pre-revolutionary intellectual and artistic formation. But, good will and loyalty to a self imposed aesthetic code were, notes Vallejo, not sufficient to bring about a breakdown of class barriers. Mayakovsky's artistic consciousness had been formed in the petty bourgeois environment of pre-revolutionary Russia, and his attempts to become a proletarian poet had destroyed him as an artist and a man. It was not the Revolution itself that had been so damaging, but rather the increasing demands of the State for art to serve propagandist ends under the guise of proletarian literature. During the first half of the 1920s there had been relatively little State intervention in the development of the arts and a continuation of this would, it is suggested, have allowed for those bourgeois artists like Mayakovsky, who were sympathetic to the revolution, to develop a gradual and more faithful response to their changing environment; but this had not been the case and

> la verdadera vida interior del poeta, aherrojada en fórmulas postizas de un leninismo externo e inorgánico, seguía sufriendo silenciosamente y sintiendo todo lo contrario de lo que decían sus versos .... Pocos casos de divorcio más rotundo entre la vida y el arte de un escritor como éste de Maiskovsky ... los versos de Maiskovsky, su contenido revolucionario, resultó, por eso, artificial y falso. Y ni poeta revolucionario ni poeta reaccionario salió de él. Su lucha interior neutralizó su sensibilidad y su expresión artística, totalmente.

Finally he claims that it was precisely this intellectual trauma which led to Mayakovsky's subsequent suicide.

Art and Revolution: The Birth of a Proletarian Culture

Like Mariátegui, Vallejo believed that bourgeois art was a highly representative element of bourgeois ideology but that the process of artistic formation itself was infinitely complex, and great art as well as reflecting ideology, could also penetrate the historical depth of a particular period with extraordinary intensity. But this latter quality was precisely one of the aspects which they felt was lacking in the postwar period, which they both regarded as being the beginning of an era of advanced bourgeois decadence and decline.[65] Art, Mariátegui had argued, needed again to take account of historical forces of change, and therefore when he suggests that the bourgeois artist should not fear Marxist dogma, and calls for allegiance to the revolutionary cause, he is not claiming that all artists are potential proletarian artists. His point is, in fact, that bourgeois idealism has an inbuilt tendency to rigidity and stagnation as it matures, which inevitably results in claims of legitimacy based on immutable and universal values. The bourgeois intellectual though, can free himself from this vortex of decay by becoming aware of history as a dynamic process in which all aspects of human existence are in constant interaction, and in doing so, both he, and his art,will be exposed to a wider spectrum of creative possibilities. Naturally, Mariátegui assumes that an artist, on making these realizations would adopt the proletarian cause as his own politically, but accepts that his art would be allowed to develop in response to his newly forming consciousness. State interference in this latter process, even in the aftermath of a revolution, would therefore be highly detrimental.

For both Mariátegui and Vallejo the double task of the revolutionary intelligentsia was to overthrow the intellectual predominance of the bourgeoise and to make contact with the proletarian masses, but to attempt to develop a proletarian literary form from their purely contemplative position in

society was doomed to failure. The conditions for revolutionary change were not based on the changing of attitudes on a limited elitist level, but relied on the development of external circumstances; the proletarian struggle itself. The existence of this reality however, had not prevented the left calling for proletarian poets, thinkers and artists; a process which in Russia had even been institutionalized. Authentic proletarian intellectuals would only emerge out of a truly proletarian culture, which itself was the product of class conflict and the realization of revolutionary objectives. But even in the Soviet Union this process was still at an embryonic stage of development. The question therefore, was not one of making the artist of bourgeois origin into a master of 'proletarian art' but rather of deploying him/her as a vanguard element in the revolutionary struggle whose position was not perennial but transitional. Mariátegui does not devote a great deal of analysis to the problem of artistic creativity in the Defensa del marxismo, but he gives sufficient indications that he saw such activity as an organic, rather than a crudely mechanistic process. Very much in keeping with his perceptions on the formation of a proper proletarian consciousness and a proletarian ethic, he felt that the process of change should be hegemonic, rather than catastrophic, in order to achieve the most lasting advances.

A further statement by Vallejo, concerning the problems faced by bourgeois artists who purport to support the cause of social revolution in their work, is contained in the article entitled 'Autopsia del superrealismo'.[66] Vallejo's interest in the Surrealist movement, as indicated in his journalism, began soon after his arrival in Europe. (Some critics have in fact described his second book of poetry, Trilce (1919) as a Surrealist work, which would suggest he anticipated the movement in its European form.) As we have seen earlier in Chapter One, some of his articles in the mid 1920s dealing with the arts were highly critical of the avant garde in general. These modern

postwar artists, he claimed, had produced spasmodic responses to the war, which had reflected the intellectual traumas of the period, but had few links with the authentic economic and social experiences of life in the 1920s. But, by the end of the decade, with his increasing absorption of Marxist ideas, Vallejo began to view the artistic avant garde in a somewhat different light, and while he retained his belief that many of the strivings towards new art forms were essentially contrived, and merely represented adventures in bourgeois idealism, he began to accept with more sympathy those movements which declared their commitment to the socialist cause. Surrealism was one such case, and he also shared the movement's beliefs that grammar, logic and establishment literature were indispensable ideological weapons for the maintenance of the bourgeois order. The problem for the Surrealists though, lay in how the dissident bourgeois artist could effectively challenge that order through his work; declarations of political commitment alone were meaningless unless they were accompanied by artistic forms which were truly revolutionary, and presented a counter ideology rooted in the class struggle.

Vallejo's 'Autopsia del superrealismo' begins with a reference to the upheavals in the world capitalist system; the war, the financial crash, the rationalization of industry, the insurgent colonies, the suffering of the unemployed and the low paid workers. Against this he sets the spectre of proletarian revolution, which, he suggests, is the only objective force capable of replacing the existing chaos with a more just and humane society. In the hectic environment of the postwar years the traditional bourgeois dominated arts had failed to absorb the shock waves of crisis and change, and the 1920s were marked by an acute fragmentation of the aesthetic world out of which had evolved numerous new movements; and especially since the emergence of Surrealism in 1924. Attempting to draw a parallel with previous ages, he states,

> anarquía y desagregación semejantes no se vieron sino entre los filósofos y poetas de la decadencia, en el ocaso de la civilización greco-latina. Las de hoy, a su turno, anuncian una nueva decadencia del espíritu: el ocaso de la civilización capitalista.

Surrealism, he felt, like all other avant garde artistic movements was an improvization rather than an authentic response to contemporary times. All its theories and manifestos amounted, at the end of the day, to little more than 'inteligentes juegos del salón', based essentially on metaphysical abstractions. As Mariátegui had also noted in 1930, in a general reference to the artistic avant garde, 'no podemos aceptar como nuevo un arte que no nos trae sino una nueva técnica .... La técnica nueva debe corresponder a un espíritu nuevo también. Si no, lo único que cambia es el paramento, el decorado. Y una revolución artística no se contenta de conquistas formales'.[67]

Tracing the history of the Surrealist movement Vallejo notes how during its early years as a new art form, emphasis had been placed on the purity of its aesthetic representations, but as the 1920s progressed followers of the movement had become increasingly receptive to Marxist ideas. These later Surrealists had sought to link their concepts to the social struggle by what they believed to be their outright attack on bourgeois aesthetic codes. Surrealism had indeed, claims Vallejo, for a short period become one of the most promising radical art forms of the postwar decade, but unfortunately, he adds, 'Breton y sus amigos, contrariando y desmintiendo sus estridentes declaraciones de fe marxista, siguieron siendo, sin poderlo evitar y subconscientemente, unos intelectuales anarquistas incurables'.

Like other avant garde movements of the 1920s, Surrealism had been born out of a spiritual and intellectual crisis of bourgeois origins, and therefore reflected much of the pessimism and desperation of the environment from which it had emerged. Lacking in nourishment from the tangible historical reality of the revolutionary struggle it remained as far as Vallejo was concerned -

in spite of vehement claims to Marxist purity from its theorists and their incorporation in the Communist Party - a static academic experiment. Breton, in his 'Second Surrealist Manifesto', we are told, asserted that the movement had been a success because it had achieved what it set out to do, which was to stimulate, from a moral and intellectual point of view, a crisis of conscience, which would in turn provide a basis for the growth of new radical alternative art forms.[68] In response Vallejo states,

> Breton se equivoca: si, en verdad, ha leído y se ha suscrito al marxismo, no me explico cómo olvida que, dentro de esta doctrina, el rol de los escritores no está en suscitar crisis morales e intelectuales más o menos graves o generales, es decir, en hacer la revolución por arriba sino, al contrario, en hacer la revolución por arriba, sino, al contrario, en hacerla por abajo. Breton olvida que no hay más que una sola revolución: la proletaria, y que esta revolución la harán los obreros con la acción y no los intelectuales con sus "crisis de conciencia". La única crisis es la crisis económica y ella se halla planteada - como hecho y no simplemente como noción o como "diletantismo" - desde hace siglos.

Mariátegui, some months earlier in an article for Variedades had also criticized Breton for the 'romantic' notions he put forward in his 'Second Surrealist Manifesto' but regarded the movement in its entirety as the most impressive attempt within the artistic vanguard to incorporate itself in the revolutionary cause.[69] Above all, he felt, the Surrealists had not confined themselves to pure aesthetic speculation in their art, or their theorizing, but followed the line of 'autonomía del arte ... pero, no clausura del arte', to which he adds that 'nada les es más extraño que la fórmula del arte por el arte'.

Vallejo, as indicated above, had decided to take a much harder line against the Surrealists. Perhaps the influence of the members of the 'Association of Proletarian Writers' he had met in Russia, had had more influence on his thinking than he was willing to admit in his article on Mayakovsky. It was they who had stated to him in an interview, 'guerra a la metafísica y a la psicología .... La inteligencia trabaja y debe siempre

trabajar bajo el control de la razón. Nada de superrealismo, sistema decadente y abiertamente opuesto a la vanguardia intelectual rusa'.[70] In the final analysis, Surrealism was a failure, Vallejo suggests, because it lacked roots in historical reality, and therefore, in spite of much radical posturing by the followers of the movement it was unable to transcend its essentially abstract foundations. Or in his own words, 'junto con el árbol abortado se asfixia la hojarasca'.[71]

'Autopsia del superrealismo' was one of the last articles Vallejo wrote on contemporary artistic movements before being forced into exile in Spain. During the period he spent in Madrid from January 1931 to February 1932, he almost completely abandoned journalism to concentrate on writing books and plays, and on his return to France submitted hardly any work for publication.

To conclude an analysis of Vallejo's journalism on this rather doctrinaire criticism of Surrealism would be disappointing, not only because of the somewhat rigid political stance which he adopts, but also because of his overall failure to propose any art form which he regarded as being complementary to the proletarian struggle. Fortunately, in the last few pieces of journalism that he wrote while in Spain, and after he returned to France, he seemed very concerned to rectify this situation. In an article entitled 'Duelo entre dos literaturas' he again puts forward his ideas concerning the inevitable demise of bourgeois literature but elaborates on the problem of language itself in capitalist society.[72] The most prominent feature of the 'expropriation' of literature by a small elite of writers was

> el agotamiento del contenido social de las palabras. El verbo está vacío. Sufre de una aguda e incurable consunción social. Nadie dice a nadie nada. La relación articulada del hombre con los hombres se halla interrumpida. El vocablo del individuo para la colectividad se ha quedado trunco y aplastado en la boca individual. Estamos mudos en medio de nuestra verborrea incomprensible. Es la confusión de las lenguas, proveniente del individualismo exacerbado que está en la base de la economía y política burguesas. El interés individual desenfrenado -

> ser el más rico, el más feliz, ser el dictador de un país o el rey del petróleo - lo ha colmado de egoísmo todo, hasta las palabras. El vocablo se ahoga de individualismo. La palabra - forma de relación social la más humana entre todas - ha perdido así toda su esencia y atributos colectivos.

Bourgeois writers, claims Vallejo, perpetuated this situation, representing and reinforcing in their work the egotistical ideals of their class. Ideals which had little relevance to the lives of the mass of the people and which were conveyed in a language which had become equally alien. Listing a number of words such as 'liberty', 'truth', 'work', 'love' 'passion', he adds that even the most fundamental linguistic indicators, representing essential human experiences, had become compromised with an exclusive ideology.

Returning to the question of economic forces, we are told that the only hope for the final destruction of bourgeois dominated literature lay in the Revolution, and the seizure by the proletariat of the means of production. However, as the number of workers directly incorporated in the capitalist system increased and their class consciousness grew they, he claims, would begin to create alternative ideologies including new aesthetic forms. The function of a new developing proletarian literature would be to return

> a las palabras su contenido social universal, llenándolas de un substractum colectivo nuevo, más exuberante y más puro, y dotándolas de una expresión y una elocuencia más diáfanas y humanas. El obrero, al revés del patrono, aspira al entendimiento social de todos, a la cabal comprensión de seres e intereses. Su literatura habla, por eso, un lenguaje que quiere ser común a todos los hombres. A la confusión de lenguas del mundo capitalista, quiere el trabajador sustituir el esperanto de la coordinación y justicia sociales, la lengua de las lenguas. ¿Logrará la literatura proletaria este renacimiento y esta depuración del verbo, forma suprema está y la más fecunda del instinto de la solidaridad de los hombres?

The prospect of a proletarian culture which represented, not a single class but the whole of humanity was, he adds, not a utopian vision but a reality, and one which was already taking shape in 'la producción literaria obrera de hoy'; that is those works in which the central theme was based on some aspect of the proletarian struggle. In listing Upton Sinclair, Gladkov,

Selvinsky, Kirchen, Pasternak and O'Flaherty, among those who represented this new literary form in their work, we thereby learn that he believed, despite his strictures on Surrealism, that the bourgeois artist could become an authentic representative of the proletarian cause in his art.

While the foregoing analyses of Vallejo's perception of class and art have been based almost exclusively on his journalism a further record of his thinking on this topic does exist in the form of his work El arte y la Revolución, which never found a publisher during his lifetime.[73] This book was begun in 1929 soon after his first trip to the Soviet Union, and initially took the form of a personal notebook which he referred to as his 'Libro de pensamientos'.[74] While living in Spain in the early 1930s his desperation for money encouraged him to expand and revise this work in the hope that it would find a publisher, but along with his plays and his second book on Russia it was rejected.

While repeating in slightly modified form many of the arguments Vallejo was putting forward in his journalism during the late 1920s and early 1930s, El arte y la Revolución also includes a number of important insights into his thinking which are not to be found elsewhere in his writings. For example, commenting on the nature of socialist art he makes some unusually candid statements, especially when compared to his rather doctrinaire attack on the Surrealists:

> Ni Plekhanov ni Lunacharsky in Trotsky han logrado precisar lo que debe ser temáticamente el arte socialista. ¡Qué confusión! ¡Qué vaguedad! ¡Qué tinieblas! ¡Qué reacción, a veces, disfrazada y cubierta de fraseología revolucionaria! El propio Lenin no dijo lo que, en substancia, debe ser el arte socialista. Por último, el mismo Marx se abstuvo de deducir del materialismo histórico, una estética más o menos definida y concreta. (p.32)

He then goes on to consider the particular problems faced in the Soviet Union in the search for a true socialist art form, and again he sees no clear answers:

> Después de la revolución rusa, se ha caído, en cuestiones artísticas, en una gran confusión de nociones diferentes aunque concéntricas, congruentes y complementarias. Nadie sabe, a ciencia cierta, cuándo y por cúales causas peculiares a cada caso particular, un arte responde a una ideología classista o al socialismo. (pp.32-33)

While it is difficult to ascertain when Vallejo wrote the above statements, the fact that he was willing to submit them for publication in 1932 shows that at that time he was still extremely sceptical of Soviet claims to have begun producing proletarian art. As noted earlier he had questioned the ability of a writer of bourgeois origins like Mayakovsky to produce socialist art, but now he also seems to place doubt on all contemporary perceptions of how such art should be developed and what form it should take. And he even goes on to conclude that in general 'el arte bolchevique es principalmente de propaganda y agitación' (p.36).

In <u>El arte y la Revolución</u> Vallejo seems more determined than in his journalism to fully explore the question of socialist art and the problems of its production. His claim that contemporary conditions were still unfavourable for the development of a new proletarian art form, even in Soviet Russia, should not be seen however as an indication of his own doubts concerning the future of socialism itself. On the contrary, his refusal to believe that art could respond to abrupt economic and social change is consistent with his Marxist view of the world, and this becomes clear later in <u>El arte y la Revolución</u> when he states:

> La sociedad socialista no va a surgir de golpe, de la noche a la mañana. La sociedad socialista será el resultado de todo el proceso social de la historia ... Ella no será una improvisación, sino una elaboración racional y científica, lenta, evolutiva, cíclica y revolucionaria. (p.40)

Then after considering the prospects for socialist development in the capitalist world, the significance of the Russian Revolution, and the necessity for a world proletarian revolution he adds, 'pues bien: las obras de arte socialista han seguido, siguen y seguirán idéntico desarrollo progresivo que la sociedad,' thereby suggesting that socialist art like contemporary progress towards

socialist society was still in an embrionic stage of development.

Of the numerous statements that Vallejo made between 1928 and 1932 criticizing bourgeois literature and the attempts by bourgeois artists to create proletarian art, we are given very little indication of the nature of what he understood to be a potentially revolutionary art form. However in one article that he wrote in 1931 at the end of his journalistic career entitled 'El nuevo teatro ruso', he indicates that he was impressed by some of the early experiments in Socialist Realism. Vallejo begins this article with a description of the theatrical setting of a Russian play he had recently seen in Paris. Unlike most bourgeois theatre, the set, we are told, is not a pastoral utopia, a stately home or any place which is representative of the idealism of ruling class ideology, but rather the working environment of a vehicle repair shop. This he feels, shows an authentic and and dynamic aspect of the daily life of modern industrial man; something to which the mass of working people could relate through their own experinces. He goes even further to suggest that,

> se siente aquí la pulsación de un nuevo mundo: el proletario, el del trabajo, el de la producción. Hasta hoy, los teatros se redujeron a tratar asuntos relativos del despilfarro de la producción, a su cosecha por los parásitos sociales, los patrones ... Nunca vimos en escena la otra cara de la medalla social: la infra - estructura, la economía de base, la raíz y nacimiento del orden colectivo, las fuerzas elementales y los agentes humanos de la producción económica. Nunca vimos como personajes de teatro a la masa y al trabajador, a la máquina y a la materia prima.

The play, which was acted in Russian, which Vallejo did not speak, restricts him to commenting on the environmental setting and the overall atmosphere, but this does not diminish his enthusiasm, and he continues:

> la emoción que despierta el decorado es de una grandeza exultante. De las poleas y transmisiones, de los motores, de los yunques, de los pistones y tornos, brota la chispa, el relámpago violáceo .... Es éste un taller de verdad, una maquinaria en carne y hueso, un decorado verista y realiza, un trozo palpitante de la vida. Los obreros se agitan aquí y allá, a grandes y angulosos movimentos, como en un agua - fuerte. El diálogo es errátil y geométrico: tal un haz de corrientes eléctricas. Los circuitos del verbo proletario ...

The play, we are told, is called 'El brillo de los rieles', and depicts the lives of Bolshevik workers in the Soviet Union and their struggles to

shape the social and economic environment to the advantage of all workers. As in previous articles the Bolshevik is lauded for his exceptional conduct, he is the

> personficación escénica de los destinos sociales de la historia, embraza conscientemente todo el peso y la responsibilidad de la misión dialéctica de su clase. Como en el drama sagrado, su alma está triste hasta la muerte. También tiene sus buitres, como el viejo Prometeo. Es el capitalismo extranjero, los kulaks y los nepmans, la ignorancia del mujik, el clero recalcitrante, Ginebra, los ingenieros y los técnicos, la burocracia soviética, las desviaciónes de izquierda y de derecha del Partido, la reacción blanda. Hay en esta pieza un cuadro culminante, que, por su grandeza trágica y universal, recuerda los mejores pasajes de la Pasión y del drama esquiliano.

The Bolshevik is seen here again as the embodiment of socialism; as a man and an individual he forms a microcosm of a coming world system which will bring about the salvation of humanity. For Vallejo the religious connotations which such a belief implies are irresistable. The immediate role of the Bolshevik in this early stage of socialist development is as educator of the proletariat; a task which in the context of the play is carried out on the factory floor. Here we see the Bolshevik in direct relation to the production process, and not as an abstract intellectual or a theoretician of socialism but a fundamental participant in the work environment. He is therefore a member of the proletariat itself sharing their experiences and understanding all their problems as his own. In this sense Vallejo sees an exploited class that has produced its own intellectuals and has attained a high degree of self sufficiency and internal knowledge of its own destiny. He accepts though, that the struggle for ascendancy will be a long and protracted one in which the Soviet State bureaucracy, the remnants of capitalism, and the political battles within the Party would be as much enemies of the Russian proletariat as the hostile western powers.

As an art form therefore, Vallejo saw the early developments in Socialist Realism as an important medium through which to represent and reinforce working class culture, but certainly could not have accepted its role as

an instrument of State propaganda, and by 1934 when the Congress of Soviet Writers had adopted it as the official art of the Revolution he had lost interest in the movement.

It can be concluded from the arguments put forward in this chapter that by the early 1930s Vallejo was convinced that the way forward in art was through the development of new aesthetic forms based on the proletarian struggle, however he remained unsure on how such forms could be authenticated. Clearly nowhere, even in Soviet Russia, had the proletariat been able to consolidate its power sufficiently to begin to create its own modes of artistic expression. Indeed the mass of working classes throughout the world had barely reached the stage of self recognition as a class, and were still taking their first steps towards the formation of a basic socialist consciousness. In such circumstances Vallejo accepted that committed bourgeois artists and intellectuals still had an important role to play in the class struggle by acknowledging the proletariat in their work as the class in ascendancy. However this did not mean that they should attempt to anticipate the creation of proletarian art.

But despite Vallejo's uncertainties regarding the problems of art and revolution it is clear that by the early 1930s he had accepted the main tenets of Marxism, and believed in the notion of social transformation based on those assumptions. While still slightly cautious in his own representations of such beliefs, it seems that he had begun to form a coherent materialist view of history and develop a vision of future socialist society. By the time he wrote the poems on the Spanish Civil War such ideas, now having been integrated and rejuvenated with the contemporary interpretations of Mariátegui, were to become almost mythologized as he attempted to conceive of the endless possibilities of men on this earth after they had emerged out of their pre-history of strife and exploitation.

By 1931 when Vallejo abandoned his journalistic career he was perhaps

the most politically conscious of all Latin American artists living in Europe, and when the Spanish Civil War broke out he was in an almost unique position among Hispanic poets from which to incorporate the conflict in his art.

Chapter II - Notes

1. Vallejo considered returning to Peru on several occasions before 1927, but it was only in that year that he began to make a determined effort to secure a government sponsored passage. One would not wish to suggest that it was political motivation alone that encouraged him to seek a means to return to Latin America, but it is interesting to note how closely the timing of his decision to leave Europe coincides with his changing ideological position. In July 1927 for instance, while he was still supporting Aprista cultural arguments in his journalism and showed little indication that he was willing to embrace a wider perception of politics, he wrote to Pablo Abril suggesting how fortunate they were as Peruvians to be able to live in Europe (Epistolario general, pp. 144-146 (p.144)). Then in September 1927 he wrote again asking Abril to assist him to obtain a sponsored return passage (Epistolario general, pp.152-154 (p.153)). His reasons for this request he states were because of his lack of finances after the termination of his Spanish grant and a general pessimism about the future of his life in Europe. But, by April 1928, when the ideas of Haya de la Torre had almost certainly been superseded by the growing influence of Mariátegui on his political thinking, he wrote for a third time to Pablo Abril asking for assistance with his passage, but added the following in the same letter:

> A medida que vivo y que me enseña la vida ... voy aclarándome muchas ideas y muchos sentimientos de las cosas y de los hombres de América. Me parece que hay la necesidad de una gran cólera y de un terrible impulso destructor de todo lo que existe en esos lugares. (Epistolario general, pp. 174-177 (p.175)).

His statement continues with a vaguely anarchist appeal for a spontaneous popular revolution, but despite the naivety of his comments it is clear that his political perceptions were beginning to change along revolutionary lines and he perhaps began to feel that his destiny lay in returning home to take part in the political struggle. The plan though seems to have been short lived and in September 1928, after he had recovered from a period of illness and depression, he finally chose to go to Russia.

2. Georgette Vallejo does however offer some useful insights into her husband's developing political interests in the late 1920s, suggesting that even as early as the winter of 1927 Vallejo, 'se interesa en los autores y los filmes soviéticos, y asiste, entre otros, a la presentación de El acorazado Potemkin, que le revela una dimensión desconocida de este mundo' ('Apuntes biográficos', p.113). His interest in Eisenstein's work was in fact to develop considerably, along with his interest in Russia, in subsequent years.

3. Edward Mortimer, The Rise of the French Communist Party: 1920-1947 (London, 1984), p.31.

4. David Caute, Communism and the French Intellectuals: 1914-1960 (London, 1964), p.128.

5. During the first decade of its existence (1919-1929) the Third International was still a forum of discussion and conflict between different forms of communist ideology, but with Stalin's rise to power it became little more than an instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

Chapter II - Notes

6. Mundial, 31 August 1928, p.5. Since its inception Amauta had published numerous articles on Soviet Russia, while Mundial and Variedades had been dealing with this topic since the 1917 Revolution. This would indicate that Vallejo had a long tradition on which to draw before submitting his own work on post-revolutionary Russia.

7. Durtain made a visit to the Soviet Union in 1927, and on his return wrote a number of articles for the French press which dealt mainly with daily life in Russia ten years after the Revolution. He was also an occasional contributor to Amauta.

8. Vallejo's biological interpretation of social transformation under Bolshevik communism may, as suggested, be a consequence of the lingering influence of Spengler on his thinking, but could also be an indication of his growing interest in the ideas of the American radical, Max Eastman. In his major work, Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, which was published in 1926, Eastman had put forward an instrumentalist interpretation of Marx, claiming that only Freudian psychology and Darwinian evolutionism could provide a truly scientific basis for Marxism, ridding it of what he regarded as Hegelian metaphysical illusions. Vallejo only began to quote Eastman in his journalism from September 1928, but may have read his work much earlier. His first mention of Eastman is to be found in fact in a letter he wrote to Pablo Abril in March 1928 in which, after bemoaning his unsuccessful solicitations to secure a government sponsored passage back to Peru in characteristically fatalistic terms, he attempts to give his misfortunes a political dimension:

> si nos atuviéramos a la tesis marxista (de la que ha de dar a usted una densa idea Eastman), la lucha de clases en el Perú debe andar, a estas alturas, muy grávida de recompensa para los que como yo, viven siempre debajo de la mesa del banquete burgués. No sé bien si las revoluciones proceden, en gran parte, de la cólera del paria. Si así fuera, buen contingente encontrarían en mi vida, los "apóstoles" de América (Epistolario general, pp.173-174 (p.174)).

9. Mundial, 2 November 1928, p.18.

10. Soon after its publication Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution became popular with French left-wing intellectuals, and especially those who were involved in the 'Clarté' movement. Eastman's work was also widely read by Latin American intellectuals, who probably first learned of its existence from their reading of the journal Clarté. See V. Bratt, Henri Barbusse, sa marche vers la clarté: son mouvement "Clarté" (Prague, 1963), p.161.

11. Masses was founded in 1911 by a Dutchman named Piet Vlag whose main interest was to promote the development of consumer co-operatives. But due to his failure to respond to the wider socialist issues which were in ferment at that time the magazine soon foundered. Eastman, on taking over as editor in 1912, realized the potential for a broadly based socialist periodical in the increasingly radical and non-conformist intellectual atmosphere of pre-war New York, and rapidly gathered together an impressive

Chapter II - Notes

body of contributors, among whom were included Upton Sinclair, William Carlos Williams, and John Reed. Reed's coverage of the Mexican Revolution was particularly important in establishing the reputation of Masses and enhancing its popularity. In spite of some claims from the doctrinaire socialist left, that Masses was little more than a frivolous bohemian rag, it had an important influence on many of the young radicals of the day. While tolerating a broad range of opinion it was not indifferent to politics, and offered unswerving support for the labour movement; Eastman himself taking on the task of systematically explaining and endorsing the need for radical action in bringing about socialist objectives.

Due to its anti-government stance on intervention during the First World War, Masses was proscribed in 1917 under the Espionage Act, but after the lengthy and popular trial of Eastman and his editorial board, many of its subscribers readily accepted its replacement, The Liberator. The Liberator, however, showed early signs of abandoning the lyrical leftism of Masses; the collapse of international socialist solidarity in the face of war; America's intervention in the conflict, and the Russian Revolution had destroyed much of the libertarian idealism of the prewar decade. By 1918 the political struggle had entered into a period of rapid distillation and The Liberator reflected this mood, adopting a stance of firm political commitment towards the developments in Soviet Russia. Again it was John Reed's brilliant reportage that played a large part in maintaining the journal's reputation. Reed's articles were later published in collected form in his best known work, Ten Days That Shook the World (1919).

During his early years in New York from 1907 to 1912, when he became editor of Masses, Eastman had shown little more than vague sympathies with socialist ideas, but by 1918 he had become one of the most famous and influential radicals in America. In 1921 he abandoned the editorship of The Liberator, which increasingly fell into the hands of the new communist ideologues, and set out, in the steps of the now dead John Reed, to Soviet Russia, where he believed was taking place 'the supreme social achievement of mankind'.

12. Milton Cantor, Max Eastman (New York, 1970), p.86.

13. William L. O'Neill, The Last Romantic: A Life of Max Eastman (New York, 1978), p.120.

14. Eastman's initial interest in politics was nurtured through his studies in philosophy. In 1908, soon after arriving in New York, he became immersed in the rapidly developing cultural and intellectual milieu of Greenwich Village, where he met the instrumentalist philosopher John Dewey. Dewey was impressed by Eastman's enthusiasm, and offered him a job as tutor at the University of Columbia. Knowing very little about philosophy at this time, Eastman relied heavily on his mentor for guidance and soon became an eloquent exponent of instrumentalist ideas. But whereas this branch of philosophy led him towards political activism, it also imbued his thought with an almost rigid faith in the possibilities of science, both in the social, as well as the natural environment. In this context

metaphysical philosophy, religion, or any other body of knowledge based on non-scientific speculative assumptions became anathema to him. Therefore, while he was willing to accept most of the work of thinkers like Freud and Darwin, he found great difficulty in coming to terms with the totality of the Marxist 'world view', which he felt, because of the scope of its claims could not be based on pure scientific methodology alone, and consequently was forced to rely heavily on metaphysical logic for its rationale. Eastman, however, only began to read Marx in depth during his stay in the Soviet Union, and this led him to see, in what he felt was a failing revolutionary experiment, the clear exposition of a faulty revolutionary theory.

Before journeying to Russia he believed, as did many other western intellectuals - that is at least up to the mid 1920s - that in the Soviet Union the ideas of Marx and Engels were at last coming to fruition. In fact the Revolution was seen, among American radicals especially, as the practical vindication of the analysis of history that had been set out in the Communist Manifesto. Eastman shared this view, but also believed that the Revolution was conclusive proof of the correctness of his own perceptions on the need for a 'scientific' socialism. In this context he saw Lenin as the great 'instrumentalist', and the Bolsheviks as 'specialists in the science of revolution' (The Liberator, 7 May 1919, p.6). His confrontation with reality and his first serious study of Marxism led him inevitably to reject these beliefs, and eventually in the 1940s to abandon the political struggle.

15. Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, p.238.

16. Since Lenin Died (London, 1925), p. 238.

17. Interview with Rafael Alberti, Granada (Spain) May 1983. Alberti did not get to know Vallejo until 1929 but he recalls that Vallejo often spoke of Eastman as being one of the most influential radicals in Hispanic circles in Paris in the mid 1920s.

18. Variedades, 3 November 1928, p.18.

19. Eastman had spoken of Jaurès as a 'pragmatic Marxist' and applauded his ability to treat Marxist theory as a tool rather than a religion. Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, p.72.

20. Two years earlier, as noted in the First Chapter, he had praised Poincaré for his 'moderation', but now having absorbed a number of left-wing ideas such reactionary figures were condemned forever to the enemy camp.

21. 'Tolstoy y la nueva Rusia', Mundial, 26 October 1928, p.7.

22. Mundial, 21 September 1928, p.18.

23. This article may have been written in response to an article entitled 'Hacia la organización de la literatura proletaria: acuerdos del Pleno de la Oficina Internacional' which was published in Amauta (15 (May-June 1928), 22-23), and which included the statement by the Comintern concerning the organization of an international body of proletarian writers.

Chapter II - Notes

24. 'La traición del pensamiento', Mundial, 23 November 1928, p.6.

25. See letters dated 19 October 1928 and 29 October 1928 in Epistolario general, p.53.

26. Vallejo's decision to visit Russia, in preference to returning to Peru, must have been stimulated not only as a result of his increasing political consciousness and his subsequent desire to live in a society which presented a real alternative to the capitalist West, but also by the numerous reports of those who had made the journey. For example Carmen Saco, in a series of articles for Amauta praised the Soviet experiment and described her visit in terms of an almost ethereal experience. See 'Moscú la ciudad mística', 10 (December, 1927), pp. 34-35. See also 11 (January, 1928), pp. 32-33, and 13 (March, 1928), pp.27-28. Vallejo may also have received first hand advice on making such a trip from such friends as Haya de la Torre and Max Eastman, both of whom had spent some time in Soviet Russia. Generally speaking there was plenty of information available in the press and elsewhere on developments in Russia, even though much of it was contradictory.

27. 'En la frontera rusa', Mundial, 26 April 1929. This article, like many of the others he wrote covering his trip, were later included in his book Rusia en 1931, which was published in Madrid in 1931.

28. Eudocio Ravines, who made his first visit to the Soviet Union in September 1929, also found himself in a lyrical mood on crossing the frontier: 'as the sun blazed in the sky above the immense plain, we arrived at the frontier that separated two worlds. I leaned out of the window, my breath catching in my throat. There was the wooden arch on which was carved the crossed hammer and sickle, and the phrase: "Workers of the world, unite!"' We were at Negoreloye. Here was the Promised Land'. The Yenan Way, p.53.

29. 'Acerca de la Revolución Rusa', El Comercio, 28 April 1929.

30. 'César Vallejo en viaje a Rusia', El Comercio, 12 May 1929, p.7.

31. 'Apuntes biográficos', p.148.

32. 'Las lecciones del marxismo', Variedades, 19 January 1929, p.7 (written in Moscow and dated 1 December 1929).

33. On returning to the United States in 1927, Eastman became Trotsky's publishing agent and undertook personally the translation of a number of the latters works, including the monumental, History of the Russian Revolution He also attempted (unsuccessfully) to obtain an American visa for Trotsky (O'Neill, The Last Romantic, p. 142). His support for Trotsky, from as early as 1924 when he left Russia, was, however, based more on sympathy and the hope of finding a practical alternative to Stalinism, than political concurrence. For some years after the publication of Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, Eastman tried to get Trotsky to read his work in the hope that it would lead him to a more pragmatic understanding of Marxism. Trotsky's response was to condemn Eastman as a petty bourgeois revisionist (O'Neill, p.130).

Chapter II - Notes

34. The main organ of the American Communist Party, The New Masses, which superseded The Liberator in 1926, now even refused to publish Eastman's articles (O'Neill, p.122).

35. Mundial, 3 May 1929, p.5.

36. The quotation he cites is to be found in Marx, Lenin, and the Science of Revolution, p.15.

37. 7 January 1928, pp. 18-19.

38. Martí Casanovas, 'La inmoralidad de la inteligencia pura', Amauta, 13 (March, 1928), 25-26, and 'Arte de decadencia y arte revolucionario', Amauta, 14 (April, 1928), 31.

39. El Comercio, 6 May 1929, pp.21-22.

40. Mundial, 31 May 1929, p.5.

41. See 'Oyendo a Krishnamurti', Variedades, 11 August 1928, p.11.

42. Krishnamurti's statements on the role of intellectuals in modern society bear some resemblance to those made by Keyserling, in that they both felt that the prophet/artist should act as a medium between the intangible world of the 'spirit' and the world of man. Krishnamurti though, unlike Keyserling, sees this as a purely metaphysical process and not as part of a developing cultural and historical relationship between mind and matter.

43. Defensa del marxismo, Section 14, Amauta, 23 (May 1929), 2-6.

44. A complete transcript of the document, from which these citations are taken, is included in Cesár Levano, 'Vallejo, militante obrero', p.130.

45. Cited by J. M. Bains, Revolution in Peru: Mariátegui and the Myth, (Alabama, 1972), p.105.

46. Many of the intellectuals of the 'Ordine Nuovo' movement had been influenced by the works of Sorel, including Antonio Gramsci whose early writings owe much to the Frenchman. While rejecting many of Sorel's clearly non-Marxist ideas Gramsci was enchanted by such notions as the imposition of self-will into the revolutionary struggle, and above all, Sorel's insistence that 'the proletarian movement expresses itself in its own forms, giving life to its own institutions'. Cited by John M. Cammett, Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism (Stanford (California), 1967), p.125. Much the same can be said of Mariátegui's perception of Sorel, and he frequently cites the latters main work Réflexions sur la violence (1908) in the Defensa del marxismo.

47. Mariátegui's criticism of Henri de Man is to be found in those sections of the Defensa del marxismo which were included in the following numbers of Amauta: 17 (September 1928), 4-14; 18 (October 1928), 10-16; 19 (November to December 1928), 10-16; 20 (January 1929), 13-15. References to the above in the text will include the issue number of Amauta followed by the page number.

Chapter II - Notes

48. An account of the formation of the 'Ordine Nuovo' is to be found in John M. Cammett, pp.71-95.

49. Chavarría, p.68. Soon after his arrival in Italy in 1920 Mariátegui began to read the left socialist journal L'Ordine Nuovo, in which Gramsci's contributions were later described by the communist leader Angelo Tasca as 'the most original and powerful expression of socialist thought in the last fifty years'. Cited by Cammett, p.93.

50. For a short account of Gramsci's attitude towards Marx's Capital see Carl Boggs, Gramsci's Marxism (London, 1976), p.26.

51. A discussion on Gramsci's perception of Marxism as a developing theoretical system is to be found in John Hoffman, The Gramscian challenge: Coercion and Consent in Marxist Political Theory (Oxford, 1984), pp.99-129.

52. Mariátegui's critique of Eastman in the Defensa del Marxismo begins in Amauta, 21 (February to March 1929), 11-12 and is continued in 23 (May 1929), 5 and 10, and finally concluded in 24 (June 1929), 25-27.

53. Amauta. 24 (June 1929), 22-27 (pp. 25-27).

54. Amauta. 18 (October 1928), 10-13 (p.12).

55. For a detailed map of Vallejo's travels between 1923 and 1938 see Jorge Puccinelli, 'Geografía literaria de César Vallejo', Visión del Peru, 4 (1971), p. 58

56. 'De Varsovia a Moscú', Mundial. 27 September 1929, p.15.

57. Mundial. 2 November 1929, p.7.

58. See Armando Bazán, Biografía de José Carlos Mariátegui (Santiago, 1939).

59. 'Filiación del Bolchevique', Un reportaje en Rusia, VIII, Bolívar, 9 (June, 1930), 21-22 (p.22). Also published in El Comercio. 14 September 1930.

60. 'Una reunión de escritores soviéticos', El Comercio. 1 June 1930, p.12.

61. 'Filiación del Bolchevique', p.21.

62. See César Levano, 'Vallejo, militante, obrero', p.129-130.

63. Section fifteen can be found in Amauta, 23 (May 1929), 6-9. Section sixteen begins in the same number (pp. 9-11) and is continued in Amauta. 24 (June 1929), 22-25.

64. Bolívar. 7 (May 1930), 7-8 (p.7).

Chapter II - Notes

65. For Mariátegui the words decadence and decline were not simply used to indicate the final and terminal phase of bourgeois liberalism in terms of a state pre-revolutionary collapse. Capitalism, as far as he was concerned was far from exhausted, and the increasing mechanization and standardization of the production process as envisaged by Taylor and Ford, coupled with the conquests of imperialism would usher in a new, and even more vigorous era of capitalist development. An age of mass production and mass consumption which would sweep all before it. See José Carlos Mariátegui, Obras Completas. 'Teoría y practica de la reacción', Defensa del marxismo: polemica revolucionaria. V, 115-139.

The Spaniard, Ramiro de Maeztu, Mariátegui felt, had been one of the most perceptive intellectuals on the right, with his claims that the United States and Russia would become the two poles between which world history would revolve for many decades to come; concluding that it was the United States which would be the ultimate victor because of the uniquely advantageous social and economic conditions which existed there for the growth of capitalism, compared to the limited possibilities for the expansion of the Russian model of socialism. ('Teoría y práctica de la reacción', p.128.)

In this context Mariátegui dismissed fascism as a potential force for taking the leadership of world capitalism. Its roots, he felt, were too closely linked with Latin culture and Roman Catholicism and lacked essential protestant values which were fundamental to the myths of progress and modernization. (These assumptions were made, it must be remembered, in 1929 before the Great Depression and the consolidation of fascism in Germany.)

When Mariátegui talks of decadence and decline he is referring to the breakdown of early bourgeois liberal aesthetic values; a phenomenon which he felt had only begun after the First World War with the loosening of the bourgeoisie's cultural links with the aristocracy. In England, he noted, this process had been slow to develop, but in France it was far advanced. The 'ancien-regimes' had provided an aesthetic frame of reference by which all new insurgent forms of art could measure themselves; the bourgeois child had grown healthy and strong in the materialist environment it had created for itself but the price of these advantages had been cultural insecurity. While capitalism remained powerful as an economic force, with every prospect of further advances, as a developing system it was passing through a period of flux, characterized by loosening political and cultural ties with the landed elites; incomplete institutionalization of the new technical revolution in the form of mass society; and the emergence of a more confident and autonomous labour movement. Art, in particular, argued Mariátegui, reflected this dilemma, and while many postwar artists had claimed to be above the immediate historical concerns of the period in their work, the 1920s had also been a period of innovation and experimentation in an attempt to break from the past and herald in the future. He remained uncertain though about the achievements of such movements as Surrealism, Futurism, and the whole European Avant Garde phenomenon, which he felt owed more to a desire to escape from the past than an authentic response to the present.

Chapter II - Notes

66. Variedades, 26 March 1930, pp. 18-19. The article was also published in Nosotros (Buenos Aires), 250 (March 1930), and Amauta, 30 (May 1930).

67. 'Arte, revolución y decadencia', Bolívar, 7 (1930), p.12.

68. 'The Second Surrealist Manifesto' was published in the periodical La Revolution Surrealiste, 12 (1929).

69. 'El balance del suprarrealismo', Variedades, 19 February 1930, p.7.

70. 'Una reunión de escritores soviéticos', El Comercio, 1 June 1930, p.8.

71. The above analysis represents Vallejo's attitude towards Surrealism after he had become politically committed. If one were to also include the development of his ideas on the movement during the years 1925 to 1928 then a far more varied and complex picture would emerge. For a wider perspective of his views on Surrealism see André Coyné, 'Vallejo y el surrealismo', Revista Iberoamericana, (July - August 1967), 242-294.

72. 'Duelo entre dos literaturas', Universidad, U.M.S.M., (Lima) 2 (1931), 31-32.

73. El arte y la Revolución was first published in Lima in 1973 by Mosca Azul, with an introduction by Georgette de Vallejo.

74. Georgette de Vallejo, Introduction to El arte y la Revolución, p.7.

75. Nosotros (Buenos Aires), 266 (July 1931), 27-28. This article was also included with slight variations in Vallejo's book, Rusia en 1931: reflexiones al pie del Kremlin (Madrid, 1931), pp.130-131.

CHAPTER III

THE 1930s AND THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Because of the abundance of journalistic work which Vallejo was producing during the late 1920s and up to the end of 1930, it has been possible in the previous two chapters to adopt an analytical approach towards his treatment of the issues of the day, and to arrive at some conclusions regarding the formation of his political consciousness. When dealing with the period from 1931 until his death in 1938 though, during which he almost totally abandoned journalism, one is not able to trace the progress of his ideas in such a methodical manner. The few books, plays, and infrequent articles that he wrote in the 1930s, in addition to his poetry, unfortunately do not offer the reader a clear or consistent picture of his personal political development. These works, unlike his earlier journalism, which seems to give a relatively authentic representation of his thinking, also often appear to be tinged by the political exigencies of the period. As a result of the considerable restrictions caused by this decline in both quantity and quality of Vallejo's writing after 1930 the following chapter will attempt, while making reference to his work where possible, to give some indication of the political and intellectual atmosphere to which he was exposed during the 1930s, placing special emphasis on his involvement in Spain, and his perceptions of those ideas which found their first real test in the Spanish Civil War. Of necessity such an approach will tend towards description rather than analysis, but it is hoped that the information provided will allow for a more complete understanding of Vallejo's final poetry.

Political Exile in Spain, January 1931 - February 1932

After returning from his second visit to the Soviet Union Vallejo became increasingly active politically, and even though he did not join the French Communist Party he was sympathetic to at least some aspects of their cause.[1] During 1930 his radical views also began to dominate his journalism, and possibly as a consequence his work for the liberal Peruvian journals El Comercio, Mundial and Variedades declined and finally ceased.[2] In an attempt to replace this source of income he began to contribute to Pablo Abril's recently formed monthly journal, Bolívar (Madrid), as well as beginning to work on a number of plays, a polemical text, and perhaps some new poetry.[3]

Vallejo's strengthening political commitment came at a time when the right-wing government of Pierre Laval was pursuing a particularly virulent anti-communist line.[4] His writing, which was almost entirely aimed at Hispanic audiences did not present a problem in these circumstances, but the visits to Russia, his membership of the Paris cell of the Peruvian Communist Party, and his peripheral involvement in militant activities, made him a prime subject for police surveillance. According to Larrea, Vallejo was finally arrested in early December 1930 while he was at the railway station seeing off a group of Peruvian communists, who were on their way home after attending an international trades union congress in Moscow.[5] After a search had been made of his apartment, where a number of left-wing texts and periodicals were found, an expulsion order was issued by Paris's then Prefect of Police, Jean Chiappe, which gave Vallejo until the end of January 1931 to leave the country. Not wishing to wait until then he and Georgette set out for Spain almost immediately, arriving in Madrid on New Year's Day.[6]

Spanish politics on the revolutionary left during the early 1930s

Vallejo's arrival in Spain coincided with the collapse of the dictatorship

of Primo de Rivera, which marked the beginning of a period of popular enthusiasm for a return to democracy, and an end to the monarchy. In April 1931 municipal elections were called. Having failed to obtain a mandate the King abdicated, making way for the formation of a coalition government of republicans and socialists. According to Georgette, Vallejo's reaction to the arrival of the Second Spanish Republic was one of 'total indiferencia', to which she adds, 'una revolución sin efusión de sangre - y la experiencia lo demuestra, decía Vallejo - no es una revolución' (p.125). Larrea on the other hand, argues that Vallejo greeted the new government with some enthusiasm, but this view has been challenged, not only by Georgette but also by several other of Vallejo's biographers.[7]

Despite the fact that Vallejo may not have been enthusiastic about the Second Republic, the return of democracy in Spain meant a relaxation of censorship and greater freedom for the political left, and only days after the election Vallejo joined the Spanish Communist Party (PCE). Among those who have attempted to give an account of Vallejo's life during this period, including Juan Larrea and André Coyné, this gesture of solidarity towards the Party is taken as a clear indication of his political sympathies, and consequently not worthy of any further investigation. Even César Levano, who has considered Vallejo's politics in some detail, argues that he remained one of the Party faithful from the early 1930s until his death in 1938.[8]

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the assumptions that have been made by Levano do not take into account the full complexity of Vallejo's political development. Firstly, his understanding of socialism had not been nurtured simply along the lines of Comintern propaganda, but had been influenced by sophisticated Marxist intellectuals like Eastman and Mariátegui. The former had exposed Stalin's machinations as early as 1926, and declared his support for Trotsky, and the latter's interpretations of Marx were certainly

not compatible with the idea of 'socialism in one country'.[9] One has also to take into account the comments made by Georgette de Vallejo who is the most vehement advocate of her husband's Marxism. She states for instance with regard to his political leanings, 'Vallejo si bien no participaba del trotskismo por disciplina, no menos creía por entonces en sus convicciones, sin exceptuar las del terrorismo como decisivas e irreemplazables en el terreno de la acción revolucionaria vencedora'.[10]

Due to the uncertainty regarding Vallejo's political sympathies, a brief survey of the controversies within the Spanish Communist Party at the time he joined would consequently seem appropriate. In any such analysis the fact that stands out initially is the minuscule size of the Party: in 1931 when Vallejo joined, it probably had no more than one thousand members in the whole of Spain.[11] The PCE had initially been formed in 1920 by pro-Bolshevik socialists and anarchists who were in favour of joining the Third International. By 1922 it had almost 5000 members, but during the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1930) persistent repression led to a decline in numbers and an almost total breakdown of morale.[12] From its inception, until the formation of the Second Republic in 1931, the Party was characterized by its lack of home grown theoretical tradition and subsequent domination by the Comintern. The great debates of European social democracy of the Second International were unsounded in the ranks of Spanish socialism and this inadequacy was passed on to the communists, who failed to produce any Marxist theoreticians for nearly a decade. Some resistance however developed during the late 1920s to the extent of control that was being exercised by Moscow, and after the Sixth Comintern Congress of 1928, when Stalin initiated his ultra-left, Third Period, which emphasised outright class war, many members had to be expelled from the PCE for their opposition to Comintern directives.

In 1931 when Vallejo joined the PCE the main controversy which existed

within the Party concerned the nature of the revolutionary process in Spain. Due to the relative economic backwardness which this country displayed compared to other Western European nations, agreement could not be reached over whether the revolution was still in a bourgeois democratic phase, or whether a historical situation had been reached which was compatible with proletarian ascendancy. The first assumption was based on the premise that Spain still retained substantial vestiges of 'feudalism', and that therefore the communists should support the aspirations of the bourgeois democratic parties. The second however, resulted from the belief that the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera had instigated a finance capital stage of development, and consequently the situation called for intensive organization of the proletariat in preparation for the coming struggle for power. This latter analysis accorded most favourably with the prescriptions of the Sixth Comintern Congress of 1928 and was the line that was followed by the PCE until the emergence of the Popular Front in the mid 1930s. But both Comintern agents, as well as PCE members, remained, throughout the whole period, in some doubt concerning the appropriate political strategy. With the collapse of the monarchy in 1931 the official PCE position was strengthened when Moscow declared that the new Republican Government represented the final phase of bourgeois revolution. Stalin's strategists now simply assumed that the Spanish proletariat were in a position to prepare for a seizure of power, and that the communists should seek to hasten this process by drawing the working classes away from their traditional allegiances to the socialists and anarchists, to form a truly revolutionary party. In this context the Republic was regarded as a dangerous 'democratic illusion' that should be opposed at all costs.

The increasingly dogmatic stance of the Comintern after 1931 caused further dissatisfaction among a number of PCE members, some of whom like José Bullejos, the Secretary-General of the Party, offered a degree of resistance but not

disaffection; others however were strengthened in their resolve to form a coherent anti-Stalinist opposition.[13] This latter group consisted mainly of those members who could be regarded as Marxist intellectuals, and included Juan Andrade, the editor of the communist periodical La Antorcha, José Loredo Aparicio, an Asturian communist who founded the theoretical journal of the Left Opposition, Comunismo, and Esteban Bilbao, a founder of the Partido Comunista de Bilbao, and one of Spain's first followers of Trotsky.[14] And finally, but perhaps of most significance to the development of the dissident left, Andrés Nin, who returned to Spain in September 1930 after spending over nine years in the Soviet Union, where he had been Secretary of the Red International of Labour Trade Unions and a close friend of Victor Serge and Trotsky.[15] From 1926 Nin's sympathies for the Left Opposition to Stalin were well known, and he was kept under constant GPU surveillance, but as Serge notes, his status as a foreigner saved him from imprisonment.[16] Nin returned therefore not only with a considerable intellectual baggage, but also with a determination to organize a Spanish section of the International Stalinist Opposition. Arriving in Barcelona he found initial support from Joaquím Maurín, leader of the Communist 'Federación Catalano-Balear'. Maurín had been disenchanted with the Central Party in Madrid for some time, and Nin joined the 'Federación' in the hope of moving it further to the left.[17]

The first serious attempt to unify the anti-Stalinist cells throughout Spain came in June 1931, when the second 'Conferencia Nacional de la Oposición Comunista' was convened in Madrid, during which, along with discussions on political strategy, agreement was reached to form a publishing body, 'Ediciones Comunismo', whose initial task was to re-print Trotsky's thesis La revolución española y sus peligros.[18] The first issue of the 'Oposición's' theoretical journal Comunismo had also been published the previous month which provided the new left with a national mouthpiece.[19] After the Conference Madrid

became the centre for the 'Oposición', but the influence of Nin and several other regional members remained considerable through their contributions to anti-Stalinist publications, which were produced not only by the newly formed Trotskyist press but also by sympathetic publishing houses like 'Editorial Cénit'.[20]

Even though divisions existed within the 'Oposición' itself, the main political thesis this group put forward for the advancement of the revolutionary process in Spain, was a coherent one. Unlike the main body of the Comintern dominated PCE they attempted to formulate a realistic analysis of the historical and economic situation with which they, as Spanish communists, were confronted, rather than relying on the doctrinaire demands of Stalinist policy, which, they argued, could only offer a narrow 'Russian formula for revolution'.[21] While broadly agreeing with the Comintern's perception of the Second Republic in terms of a final phase of bourgeois revolution, the 'Oposición' still believed that this process was incomplete, or at best malformed. It was therefore felt that they could not accept Moscow's formula for the advancement of the proletarian cause, which was based on the assumption that through an increase of communist power in workers' organizations and parties, a popular insurrection could be precipitated, which would in turn lead to the formation of a worker/peasant government based on soviets. Such a strategy, it was argued, was unrealistic in Spain, where the communists were an extremely marginal political group, vastly overshadowed by the socialists and the anarchists whose mass of supporters were too politically immature to respond to the sort of tactics which the Comintern proposed. The official PCE policy which condemned the Republic was also seen to be short sighted, and again based on sterile demagogy rather than historical analysis.

What was needed, the 'Oposición' argued, was a united front, which would include not only industrial and agricultural proletarians, but also other

groups that were being threatened by capitalist expansion, including petit-bourgeois elements.[22] The PCE should therefore not simply condemn the Republic in its entirety but support the most radical democratic pressures that emerged as a result of its formation. The pursuit of such a policy would, the 'Oposición claimed, channel communist energies into a more practical dual strategy, which instead of being based on a crude power struggle with the anarchists and socialists, would be aimed at winning the support of the masses, while at the same time forming an effective vanguard among the most advanced sectors of the proletariat and intelligentsia.[23]

In March 1932 the 'Oposición' called a third 'Conferencia Nacional' in Madrid during which the movement was re-named the 'Izquierda Comunista de España' (Sección Española de la Oposición Comunista Internacional). Until this time their anti-Stalinist strategy had been based on attempting to reform the main body of the Spanish Communist Party from within, through theoretical debate, but the increasing intransigence and bureaucratization of the PCE made the continuation of this position seem untenable. Consequently, it was decided that the 'Oposición' should, in addition to its critical stance, make direct contact with the working classes who were still unaware of the political alternatives that the movement proposed. This declaration did not however herald the birth of a new party, but rather the consolidation of a dissident faction which continued to remain in the shadows of the PCE and the Comintern.[24] Trotsky, who had been pressing Nin to form a new opposition party since 1930, was infuriated, and henceforth the relationship between the Spanish anti-Stalinist left and the international Trotskyist movement began to decline.[25]

Where did Vallejo stand in relation to all this? Was he an unquestioning member of the PCE, who, like Dolores Ibarruri or the new Secretary-General, José Díaz, placed almost total faith in Comintern leadership? Or did he

have some sympathy with the 'Oposición'? Without substantial research into the radical periodicals of the day, to which he may have contributed some articles, it is impossible to be precise about his political stance, but there are indications that would suggest that his membership of the PCE was not as clear cut as some of his critics would have us believe. Firstly, it must be remembered that even though the 'Oposición' was small in terms of numbers during the early 1930s - perhaps no more than 500 militants in all of Spain - so was the main body of the PCE, which according to previous estimations was unlikely to have exceeded 2000 in 1931.[26] The influence of such a large faction, many of whose members remained in the Party in spite of their disagreements with the Comintern, must have been considerable, especially when one takes into account that among their numbers were included some of the most competent Marxist intellectuals in Spain at that time. Vallejo, who gave lessons in Marxism to groups of left-wing students, cannot have been oblivious to the arguments which the 'Oposición' had instigated.[27] The Spanish writer Andrés Iduarte suggests in fact, that during the early 1930s Vallejo was not only a member of the PCE but also 'uno de los fundadores de una de las primeras células de intelectuales españoles', which may be taken as an indication of his involvement with the 'Oposición'.[28] Unfortunately however, Iduarte does not expand on his claim, nor does he reveal his source of information and one is again left to speculate on the nature of Vallejo's political sympathies during this period. Ultimately, because of the general lack of information concerning the years he spent in Spain there are no firm indications of his reaction to the anti-Stalinist left, and the only occasion on which it is known that he made contact with them was when in March 1931, soon after arriving in Madrid he submitted his novel <u>El tungsteno</u> to 'Editorial Cénit' to be published in their series 'La Novela Proletaria'. According to Pagés 'Cénit' was run by members of the 'Oposición' and along with 'Ediciones Comunismo'

was the main publishing house of the pro-Trotskyist left.[29]

Clearly none of the above evidence is conclusive concerning the nature of Vallejo's political sympathies, but it does suggest that in the early 1930s he would have been exposed to the controversies which existed within the PCE at that time. It would consequently seem unreasonable to assume that by simply joining the Party he had automatically offered his allegiance to the Comintern and Stalin. Finally, for someone whose understanding of Marxism had been initiated by such figures as Eastman and Mariátegui, it is hard to believe, even if he did follow directives from Moscow on certain issues, that he was always convinced by them. In putting forward such suggestions nevertheless, one would not wish to go on to develop an argument which would seek to extricate Vallejo from the Stalinist camp, in order to place him politically within the constraints of some other narrow interpretation of Marxism, as say offered by the international Trotskyist movement. Such an exercise would not only invite a very selective reading of his work, but would also inevitably lead to a biased interpretation of his poetry on the Spanish Civil War. In this final collection of poems we are in fact presented with a Marxist vision that cannot be understood in terms of party politics, but must be seen as the fusion, in an aesthetic form, of the political ideas and experiences which he had accumulated during the last decade of his life. Nevertheless, a clear strain of political thinking does emerge in these poems which does not accord with the Popular Front spirit of the period in which they were written, but reflects again the revolutionary and praxical understanding of Marxism which he had espoused in his journalism from 1929-1930. It would seem therefore, that while he ostensibly endorsed Comintern policy by becoming a member of the PCE and occasionally supporting the Party line in his work, his deeper sympathies, up until the last months of his life, lay outside the formulas put forward by Moscow. This is perhaps especially

true during the period of Popular Front when the threat of fascism forced a degree of compromise on many intellectuals, whose real allegiances were well to the left of the tactical politics of the day.

From expatriate to political exile: a continuing problem of writing as a means of subsistence

Vallejo's decision to go into exile in Spain rather than returning to Peru, which he had considered doing some months earlier, was almost certainly a pragmatic one. Firstly, having abandoned nearly all journalism during 1930 his financial situation was very poor at the time he received his expulsion order, and he and Georgette could not afford to travel further afield. He also had friends in Spain whom he perhaps felt could help him to find work; Georgette notes in fact that when they visited Madrid in 1930 to arrange for the re-edition of Trilce, Vallejo met a number of Spanish intellectuals including Pedro Salinas, Miguel Unamuno, Corpus Barga and Rafael Alberti, as well as strengthening his relationship with José Bergamín and Gerardo Diego, who had both assisted in finding a publisher for his poetry (p.118). Alberti also recalls that when Vallejo and his fiancée arrived in Madrid they were almost penniless and he helped them to find a place to stay.[30] By March 1931, according to Georgette, their financial position was at its most precarious, and Vallejo was forced into accepting work as a translator.[31] It was also during this month that his novel El tungsteno was published, which was an expanded and modified version of a short story dealing with the plight of the Peruvian Indians entitled, Sabiduría, which he had written some years earlier.[32] The novel received very little critical attention and there is no evidence that its sales were sufficient to improve Vallejo's financial position. The failure of El tungsteno to sell at the time of its first publication does not however reflect on the quality of the work, which represents an impressive

attempt to write a socialist realist novel, and offers a complex and fascinating analysis of the concept of alienation, which dominated so much of Vallejo's poetry, especially in the 1930s.[33]

Desperate for money, Vallejo decided to take advantage of the favourable climate that existed for political literature at that time and began to compile an account of his experiences in Russia. The resulting book, which came out in July 1931 under the title of Rusia en 1931: reflexiones al pie del Kremlin, was made up mainly from those articles that had been published in Bolívar the previous year; some of which were re-written and expanded to suit the new form of presentation.[34] Vallejo's publishers, Ulises, gave his work a supportive launch, with large advertisements in a number of major newspapers and periodicals.[35] The subsequent response was impressive. The book ran to three editions in four months, and received a recommendation from the 'Asociación del Mejor Libro del Mes', whose committee included Azorín and Pérez de Ayala.[36] The critical reception was also favourable, and Gil Benumeya writing for La Gaceta Literaria (Madrid) felt that 'este libro es la mejor versión sobre la Rusia actual. El autor de Rusia en 1931 ha estado en Rusia estudiando por su cuenta; no ha ido en misión oficial ni en turista, ni en afiliado a ningún grupo político'.[37] Other critics praised Vallejo for his 'impartiality'.[38]

With hindsight the author of Rusia en 1931 could be accused of naivety and bias in favour of the Soviet system, which he heralded, despite some reservations concerning the extent of state power, as the beginnings of a new world civilization. One must remember though, that for Vallejo, as for many other intellectuals who visited Russia in the late 1920s, much care was taken by the Soviet authorities that only the most impressive aspects of revolutionary development should be on display. If this, and the general optimism which still existed on the left concerning the future of Soviet

society are taken into account, then it would seem reasonable that Vallejo's work was regarded as being 'impartial' at the time it was written.

In addition to the information which he had transcribed from earlier articles, Rusia en 1931 also includes accounts of conversations (held through his guide and interpreter) with people he had met, both as part of his official itinerary and more informally during his travels. In this respect, a good part Rusia en 1931 is written, perhaps with encouragement from his publishers, to appeal to a wide audience, and its author presents himself as a perceptive but disinterested traveller, anxious to understand the reality of daily life in Soviet society twelve years into the Revolution. As a result of this approach most of the analysis is concentrated on such topics as education, the family, marriage, religion and working conditions, and does not question the nature of the regime in power or the individuals who control it.[39]

In dealing with a wide range of issues that affected the lives of Soviet citizens, Vallejo maintains throughout his analysis the unshakable belief that he was witnessing the functions of a 'workers' state'. Having visited Russia in the late 1920s, this perception was certainly not unusual, and accords with the general view that was held by sympathetic foreign visitors at that time.[40] This was also the end of the period of the 'New Economic Policy', and those remaining bourgeois capitalist elements in society that had been allowed to survive were, by 1928-29, now being eagerly displayed as remnants of a decadent past, soon to be swept away by workers' organizations.

The redeeming factor about Vallejo's book is that he sees revolutionary development in Russia - wrongly in retrospect - in terms of the inexorable rise of proletarian power and the birth among the masses of a true socialist consciousness.[41] Unlike many other Western observers he did not confuse the prospects of workers' control with the ideals of the bourgeois Enlightenment, and when reporting on such questions as education and religion he sees their

transformation in Marxist terms. In this respect he places particular emphasis on the function of the work process in changing man's economic and social environment. His most interesting discussion on this topic is to be found in a chapter on the Russian cinema in which he praises the art of Sergui Eisenstein, who he feels had brought to the screen,

> ...la teoría del materialismo histórico, (y) se ha ceñido en La línea general y en El acorazonado Potemkin al leit-motiv del trabajo, movilizando, para realizarlo, el aparato social entero: el Estado-reaccionario y revolucionario - el ejército, el clero, la burocracia, la marina, la burguesía, la nobleza, el proletariado, la fábrica el agro, la ciudad, el tractor, el aeroplano, la riqueza, la miseria. Porque estos diversos factores sociales no son más que la creación del trabajo. Sin él, la sociedad humana es imposible. El trabajo es el padre de la vida, el centro del arte.(p.220)

Eisenstein's cinematic method, he continues, is to show firstly the social mechanism of work, representing it above all as a force which demands collective action and organization. This is followed by introducing the question of the division of labour and the subsequent division of society into classes, a process which by the capitalist phase of historical development had produced its own irreconcilable contradictions. He then goes on:

> En fin, la socialización integral y justa del trabajo - en la producción de la riqueza y en su distribución - constituye el segundo aspecto cinemático en Eisenstein. Esta es la edificación socialista por el proletariado, la colectivización infinita de la vida por los trabajadores. El socialismo. Aquí llega Eisenstein a la glorificación del trabajo, no ya del trabajo como mito asentado en el origen de la sociedad humana - punto de partida del desarrollo total del arte eisensteiniano -, sino como mito asentado en el futuro. Es ésta la fiesta de esperanza, de fe, de esfuerzo, de buena voluntad, de justicia práctica y de amor universal.(pp.221-222)

The perceptions that Vallejo makes here on Eisenstein's films are also fundamental for an understanding of his own final poetry on the Spanish Civil War. In the poem entitled 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', in particular, he represents human labour as emerging from a history of exploitation into becoming the ultimate liberating force for mankind. The introduction of these ideas into his art almost certainly owes something to the impressions that Eisenstein's films had made on his thinking some years earlier.[42]

Ultimately, Rusia en 1931 is based on its author's belief that the Russian masses were the driving force behind the Revolution. The state, therefore, even if not clearly a dictatorship of the proletariat, is seen as being an authentic representative of the workers' interests. From this perspective, instances of injustice in Soviet society - of which Vallejo records many - are mainly seen as a necessary part of social transformation. There are, however, occasions in the book when he expresses sincere doubt concerning certain aspects of the Revolution, and these include not only the excessive cases of poverty and degradation which he witnessed, but also the corruption within the bureaucracy, which he felt threatened the 'workers' state'.

In the final analysis it is clear that Vallejo displays considerable naivety in his perceptions of the Soviet system, but it would be wrong to suggest that his enthusiasm for what he saw was simply a reflection of his obedience, as a communist, to Comintern propaganda. His faith lay not in Stalin, or the Soviet State, but in the Russian workers and their relationship to a historical process which he had understood from his reading of Marx and Mariátegui. It was only later that he began to realize that the 'vision', like the army of Napoleon, had foundered on Russian soil.

On 11 October 1931 Vallejo set out for the Soviet Union for the third, and last time, to attend the International Writers Congress that was being held in Moscow later that month.[43] On reaching the capital after a non-stop train journey lasting five days, he joined up with other delegates on a State organized tour of a number of Soviet cities. According to his wife, he left the party as it was on its way to the Urals, arriving back in Moscow on 24 October, from where he returned almost immediately to Madrid.[44] No explanation is given however by Georgette why he chose to abandon the tour and the Congress. Once back in Spain he began to write a second

book dealing with developments in Russia, entitled Rusia ante el Segundo Plan Quinquenal, which he completed in two months. But despite the success he had enjoyed with Rusia en 1931, he failed to find a publisher for this new work.

In 1928 and 1929 when Vallejo made his first two trips to the Soviet Union he would have witnessed the beginnings of the First Five Year Plan, and he does in fact acknowledge some the new economic policies which were being initiated by the State. However he could not have anticipated the enormous surge forward that was to take place in the ten years that intervened between his first and final visit. This 'second revolution', as it has been called, was aimed at modernizing the Russian economy and bringing it into the twentieth century; but what had taken nearly a hundred years in Western Europe was, under Stalin's now exclusive control, to be achieved in little more than a decade.[45] Hyper-industrialization and mass collectivization of agriculture were brought about though at an enormous cost in social dislocation and human suffering. Among the endless list of statistics that were produced the most outstanding was the fact that between 1929 and 1938, 140 million peasants were forced from the land to the cities, or driven into collective farms. Some did not even get away with their lives, and were shot in their villages or sent to a certain death in the labour camps. For the foreign visitor it was almost impossible to realize the full extent of the repression, and many, having seen the effects of the Depression in their own countries, could only find praise for a system which had brought about full employment and economic growth. Some, like Vallejo, began to see the flaws but believed that at least here suffering had a purpose, the building of socialism, whereas in the capitalist world it seemed interminable and pointless.[46]

It is clear from reading Rusia ante el Segundo Plan Quinquenal that during his third visit to the Soviet Union in 1931, Vallejo still believed, despite considerable changes in economic and social life that had occurred since he was last there, that he was still witnessing the function of a 'workers'

state'.[47] But the naive optimism of Rusia en 1931 is now replaced by a less enthusiastic, sometimes dogmatic, and often uncertain, defence of Soviet State policy.

As with his earlier book on Russia, the main theme of Rusia ante el Segundo Plan Quinquenal is the daily lives of Soviet citizens, and it does not deal with the internal politics of the State machine. Again, the question which seems to dominate his thinking is that of social and economic justice, and the first fifty pages are devoted to a tedious analysis of the lives of waiters and hotel porters in Moscow, and the nature of their continuing role in a 'socialist' society. Unlike in Rusia en 1931 however, the major part of his survey of Soviet life is conducted, not in Moscow and Leningrad, but in the cities and towns of the interior. Much of the book is in fact devoted to a study of the new model city of Dneiprostroi, on the banks of the Dneiper river, where the worlds largest hydro-electric station was being built, and which was the showpiece of Soviet achievement.[48] Vallejo recalls that like the other foreign delegates with whom he travelled, he was astounded by the sheer scale of the Dneiprostroi project, but could not help feeling sympathy for the labourers who had to work outside in the intense cold. He also notes that, in contrast to the increasingly confident and optimistic proletarians he had met in Moscow, the manual workers here were undistinguishable from any exploited mass of day labourers in the capitalist world.[49] On speaking to a number of these workers through his interpreter he learned that they were peasants who had been sent from the Steppe, and even though they praised the Revolution he felt that they simply saw it as a new master, which had replaced the Tzar.

While Vallejo and several other delegates were inspecting the works they came across the frozen body of a woman labourer who had obviously been dead for some time, but who attracted little attention from the other workers or

the medical services. Only moments after this gruesome experience they also witnessed two men being crushed to death by a falling metal girder, but even in such grave circumstances work was only stopped for a few minutes. Vallejo cannot help registering his horror and revulsion at the callousness with which these incidents were treated, but he nevertheless goes on to suggest that accidents were rare, and that the fellow workers of the men who had been killed showed genuine grief (pp. 126-128).

In a number of conversations he had with workers and engineers he also finds that huge differences existed in wages, housing standards and general living conditions, between the various groups involved in the project. At the bottom were the labourers, who not only performed the most dangerous and arduous tasks - often with primitive tools - but also had to survive on minimal wages. Their housing conditions were 'standardized', we are told, which meant whole families had to live in one or two small rooms. Their meals were also 'standardized', in that there was no choice; they ate what they were given. The second group were the Russian engineers and managers who earned considerably more than the workers and enjoyed better living conditions. At the top were the foreign engineers and specialists who were given huge salaries and 'special' housing facilites (passim, 130-171).

In the conversations that Vallejo records, he readily allows such discrepancies to be defended by those loyal to the State, and often supports such arguments himself, but he also seems anxious to find people who were willing to criticize the system. On one occasion when he was invited back to the house of a Soviet technician who spoke French, and whom he regarded as an independent interpreter, he met with a woman writer who took a very cynical view of the regime, and particularly its stance towards literature. As in Rusia en 1931, he indicates that such attitudes are remnants of bourgeois ideology or the products of a malformed social consciousness, but there is

no conviction in his argument, and he records sufficient of his conversation to leave little doubt in the reader's mind that intellectuals who did not comply with State directives were being victimized (pp. 174-185).

A further aspect of the Revolution which Vallejo seems to find disturbing, but does not condemn openly, is the break up of the family; a process which had been accentuated through the massive mobilization of labour and the formation of new forms of social and economic organization. Having come himself from a large catholic family, with which he maintained strong ties until he left for Europe, he must have found it hard to accept the nonchalance of the young Russians he interviewed, many of whom had lost touch with their parents or simply did not wish to know them (pp. 166-168).

Finally, whereas in Rusia en 1931 he had expressed the belief that the Soviet people enjoyed an extraordinary degree of freedom, he now acknowledges the existence of the secret police, and accepts that the guides who had come along with the delegation were very 'selective' in what they showed to foreigners, and often told outright lies when it suited them (pp. 194-196). He also condemns those communists whose radicalism was such that it touched 'los límites del fanatismo y de la utopía'; which he feels often made them blind to the truth (p.184).

Despite revealing many of the unacceptable aspects of Soviet development during the early 1930s, Vallejo does not openly abandon his faith in the Revolution, and strongly defends the argument that the building of socialism must necessarily involve numerous contradictions, especially in its early stages. In 1931 though, he was much more aware of these problems and contradictions than during his earlier visits, and he even suggests that if a situation were to develop in which social and economic justice did not improve for the masses through the industrial advances that were being made, then the whole Soviet system would become nothing but a monstrous outgrowth of

of capitalism (pp. 139-140). But he cannot envisage this happening and his overall view of developments under the Five Year Plan is essentially a favourable one. It should not be assumed however that his stated optimism is a totally accurate reflection of his own beliefs, and one must take into account that, because of financial pressures, Vallejo must have been anxious to produce a book that would repeat the success of Rusia en 1931. In this context he would have been particularly conscious of the fact that it was unfashionable to criticize the Soviet Union at that time, and this may have had some effect on his interpretation of what he saw. A further possible reason for placing doubt on the sincerity of his sometimes dogmatic defence of the Soviet State, emerges from the fact that he inexplicably abandoned his final trip to Russia from which the book emerged. This alone would not be sufficient to suggest that he was disillusioned, but his subsequent political silence for almost five years until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, may be an indication that by the end of 1931 he had become less sanguine about developments in the Soviet Union, than he had been in previous years.

Vallejo and the Spanish literary intelligentsia of the early 1930s

During Vallejo's stay in Spain, in addition to his political activities and writing, he also became involved in the literary environment of the period. As we have seen in previous chapters, he had known the Peruvian diplomat and literary critic Pablo Abril, and the Spanish poet Juan Larrea, since the mid 1920s, both of whom lived in Madrid. And, in the months before his expulsion from France he became acquainted with a number of leading Spanish intellectuals. According to his wife, soon after arriving in Spain as a political exile in January 1931, he began to see regularly some of the writers and poets he had met previously, and she remembers particularly that he spent much of his time with Federico García Lorca, Fernando Ibáñez and Pablo Abril (p.126).

Having such friends probably encouraged Vallejo to be more positive about his own writing, and in addition to Rusia en 1931 and the novel El tungsteno he also attempted to have several other pieces of work published, including a childrens' story entitled Paco Yunque, his collection of pulitical thoughts and observations, El arte y la Revolución, and two plays, Entre las dos orillas corre el río and Lock-out. All of these along with his second book on Russia were however rejected.[50] Lorca apparently gave him considerable assistance while he was trying to find a theatre that would stage his plays, but even with such a reputable sponsor they were turned down, supposedly because of their overt political content.[51]

As with Vallejo's involvement in politics during the period that he lived in Spain, the full extent of his association with the literary intelligentsia is also difficult to ascertain due to the lack of published material which mentions either him or his work. One must also remember that in Europe, Vallejo was virtually unknown as a poet, and even with the re-edition of Trilce there is little evidence that his work attracted much critical attention, apart from the comments by José Bergamín and Gerardo Diego who both collaborated in its publication. Most Spanish intellectuals probably regarded his poetry as being obscure; many perhaps would not even have read it. His brief success with Rusia en 1931 may have enhanced his standing in certain political groups, but again would not have had much impact on the literary establishment. Consequently, in reading the memoirs of various Spanish intellectuals of the period, some of whom knew Vallejo personally, there is only passing reference to him, if any.[52]

Because Vallejo was almost unknown as a poet in Spanish literary circles from the time of his arrival in Europe in 1923 to his death in 1938, there is no evidence that he had any influence on his artistic contemporaries, and it is also difficult to find any clear influences that they may have had on him.

However, the poems that he wrote on the Spanish Civil War suggest that he understood the political and social environment of the time at least as well as any native Spanish poet. Thus, there seems to be a case for considering his final book of poetry not in terms of literary movements or genres, but as a response to the historical realities of the inter-war years, and especially as they were interpreted and understood in Spain.[53] From this perspective he had much to share with an increasingly politicized generation of Spanish poets, who, by the early 1930s, were beginning to register their commitment in their art.

Spain, as Vallejo notes in some of the articles he wrote in the second half of the 1920s, was an economic and social anachronism when viewed in relation to the rest of twentieth century Western Europe.[54] Industrialization had only taken place on a limited and regional basis, intensifying the tendency towards national fragmentation. This in turn resulted in weak economic and cultural hegemony on the part of the Spanish bourgeoisie, who failed to develop coherent and homogeneous class aspirations. Hence, while parts of Catalonia and the Basque country shared similar experiences to those of the industrialized European nations, much of the rest of Spain languished in a state of agricultural underdevelopment, with all its concomitant forms of social organization. However, while the upper classes remained almost feudal in their outlook, and the bourgeoisie could only muster a half-hearted response to modernization and industrialization, large sections of the working classes eagerly adopted some of the reactive ideologies which these processes had produced in other countries, and set about adapting them to their own circumstances. Anarchism and socialism became established in Spain during the second half of the nineteenth century, and by the time the First World War broke out the Spanish left could already claim a long tradition of social struggle. The war itself stimulated political consciousness and by the 1920s both anarchist and socialist organizations

were supported by mass followings, whose power was greatly feared by the right.

In his study of political 'commitment' in Spanish poetry in the twentieth century, J. Lechner notes that the reaction of literary intellectuals to the social struggle, from the turn of the century to the end of the First World War, was negligible. And, he claims that only in Antonio Machado's work Campos de Castilla (1912) can we begin to see signs of a non-paternalistic and sympathetic view of the plight of the agricultural masses.[55] Continuing his survey into the so called 'Generación de 1927', which he suggests - according to Dámaso Alonso - can be divided into two periods, one running from 1920 to 1927 and the other from 1927 to 1936, he claims that only during the second period did a serious strain of political commitment begin to take root in Spanish poetry (p.64). Rafael Alberti, for example, began to show such developments in his work from 1929; Garcia Lorca from 1932; and Emilio Prados from 1929 (p.65).

When Vallejo arrived in Spain in 1931, Alberti was perhaps the only poet of note to have had some first hand experience of the political struggle, as well as having written poetry which indicated a degree of commitment.[56] Lechner points out that 'nadie mejor que Alberti ha pintado el ambiente de aquellos días turbulentos que precedieron a la proclamación de la República, su advenimiento y el entusiasmo con que fue acogida' (p.67). And, referring to the years 1933 to 1934 Alberti himself states 'empiezo a ser un poeta en la calle. Escribo multitud de poemas satíricos y de agitación, que recito en los actos públicos, en las bibliotecas obreras y en las plazas públicas. Aparece Consignas, librito en que recojo mis primeros poemas revolucionarios. Muchos amigos se distancian de mí.'[57] By 1933 Vallejo was back in Paris, but considering his acquaintance with Alberti during his stay in Madrid, he would probably have been aware of the latter's attempts to write political poetry as early as 1931, from when the first poems in his second committed work, Consignas,

were dated. Taking into account the comments Vallejo had made on the role of literary intellectuals in his journalism during the late 1920s, he must have viewed these developments with considerable interest. One suspects though that his attitude towards Alberti's poetry may have been one of reservation, or even mild aversion, as was the case in his treatment of the Russian poet Mayakovsky, who he felt typified the bourgeois intellectual who simply adapted his poetry to suit new social circumstances. Vallejo, however, shared a great deal more with Alberti than Mayakovsky, in the form of a common language and a common - even though perhaps differently interpreted - understanding of the political and social situation in Spain, and may therefore have been more sympathetic. According to Georgette, Vallejo began writing committed poetry himself in late 1931 soon after his third visit to the Soviet Union. Among the poems which she claims he initiated while still living in Spain she includes 'Salutación Angélica', 'Los mineros salieron de la mina', 'Telúrica y magnética', 'Gleba', 'Fue domingo', and several others which were later included in the collection Poemas humanos, which was only published after Vallejo's death (p.172)

Along with those literary intellectuals who were moving towards a degree of political commitment in their work, during the early to mid 1930s, can also be included García Lorca, who, like Alberti, Vallejo knew personally. Lorca, though, cannot be viewed as an artist with a clearly defined political stance, and the extent to which he was willing to commit himself and his work to the social struggle is subject to much controversy. Dámaso Alonso has noted, for example, that only days before the outbreak of the Civil War, Lorca was horrified to learn that a collegue had become directly involved in political activities, and vowed that he would never undertake such a role.[58] But on the question of adopting some form of commitment in art, he seems to have been more flexible; stating in the winter of 1935 that 'en nuestra época, el poeta ha de abrirse las venas para los demás. Por eso ... me he entregado a lo

dramático, que nos permite un contacto más directo con las masas'.[59] If these latter comments were also representative of his thinking in 1931, then he and Vallejo would have had much in common at that time. Vallejo, while living in Spain, began to write some committed poetry but his main artistic interest lay in the theatre, which along with the cinema he believed was the most appropriate art form through which to influence the consciousness of the masses.[60] Like Lorca, he also probably felt that bourgeois poetry was too aesthetically fragile to be used as a vehicle for political ideas, and would not survive the transition from contemplation to commitment. On a more pragmatic note, the possibility of mass communication through poetry before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, despite Alberti's claim to have become a 'poeta en la calle', was still very limited, and lacked the more direct appeal of the theatre.[61]

Given the uncertain political content of Lorca's plays it is clear that at no time did he become as committed as Vallejo in his work. Nevertheless, it would seem that he respected the decisions of others who had incorporated a high degree of 'compromiso' in their art and he readily praised Alberti's poetry in 1935.[62] We have also seen that as early as 1931 he was offering his assistance to Vallejo - albeit unsuccessfully - to find a theatre which would stage the latter's overtly political plays. In retrospect one wonders how much influence the Marxist Vallejo may have had on the developing political consciousness of the young García Lorca.

Among the other literary figures that Vallejo knew at this time, who included José Bergamín, Gerardo Diego, Unamuno, Juan Larrea and Fernando Ibáñez, none had displayed any serious political commitment, either in their art, or as individuals. The only other major poet apart from Alberti, who was beginning to deal with social and political themes in his work by the early 1930s, was Emilio Prados, but there is no evidence that Vallejo knew him or was

familiar with his work.

Ultimately it was Vallejo's own politics, his Marxism, that set him apart from the Spanish literary intelligentsia of the time. As we have seen , when he arrived in Spain in 1931 he had already developed a strong theoretical commitment to the revolutionary cause. In this respect he was far more advanced politically than any member of the 'Generación de 1927', including Alberti, who was the most vociferous with regard to his own left-wing ideals. Some Spanish poets and writers had begun to consider the question of political commitment in art at this time, but their is no evidence that they had read Marx seriously or even understood the major implications of his teachings. Considering that it was only in the late 1920s that the Spanish Communist Party itself began to produce home-grown theoreticians, it is hardly surprising that literature was also late to respond to the Marxist intellectual current.

Vallejo's understanding of political theory in the early 1930s was undoubtedly more sophisticated than his Spanish contemporaries, but for precisely that reason it was a liability, and his membership of the PCE, his books on Russia, and his attempts to write radical theatre would only have served to undermine his credibility in literary circles. If, as noted earlier, a well established poet like Alberti could claim that he became distanced from his generation after introducing political themes into his poetry, then one can assume that Vallejo's prospects for making a living in Spanish letters were very poor. In the last analysis we are left with a rather inconclusive picture of Vallejo's relationship with the Spanish literary intelligentsia of the early 1930s, and can only assume that throughout his stay in Spain he remained a very marginal figure, who would perhaps have been more renowned for his perpetual poverty than his literary work.

By early 1932 it is clear that Vallejo had become disillusioned with Spain and was anxious to return to Paris. In a letter to Juan Larrea, who was

then living in France, he states,

> Madrid es insuportable para vivir aquí. De paso, pasa y hasta es encantador Pero para hacer algo y para vivir, no se vive ni se hace nada ... ¿Cuándo podré ir a París? ... Aquí en Madrid, hay sólo pocas cosas que me gustan: el sol, que es infalible, como el Papa; el arroz a la valenciana ... las famosas angulas ... como verás, esto es muy poca cosa, al lado de lo que Madrid tiene de aburrido, de vacío y de aldeano precisamente.

In the same sardonic style he goes on to describe the political situation:

> En cuanto a la revolución española, tú debes estar muy al corriente de todo: del nuevo Niceto I, de la dictadura del General Azaña y (esto va en serio) de la pobreza terrible de España.[63]

According to his wife, who had returned some weeks earlier, Vallejo arrived back in Paris in February 1932 (p.128). Apparently, due to the fact that his expulsion order was still in force he was only able to cross the frontier with the help of fellow members of the Spanish Communist Party. On arriving in Paris he was obliged to face the authorities, who granted him permission to remain in the country on the condition he avoided all political activities and reported frequently to the local police.[64] This latter requirement was however waived when the new centre-left government of Camille Chautemps granted conditional amnesty to those radicals who had been expelled under the previous right-wing administration of Pierre Laval.

From Exile to Isolation: Paris 1932 - 1936

The period from 1932 to the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 is the least documented of Vallejo's life. During this time his journalism was negligible, he failed to have any of his literary work published and he even seems to have broken off contact with many of the intellectual acquaintances he had made in previous years. Larrea suggests that Vallejo and his wife (they were married in October 1932) were reduced to living in abject poverty, moving to ever cheaper hotels as their income declined.[65] Georgette however

refutes this claim - as she does with almost everything else Larrea has had to say concerning her husband - stating that their life in the 'Hotel Garibaldi' was frugal, but certainly not on the point of destitution.[66] André Coyné also suggests that the Vallejo's lived in considerable poverty, and that César was almost permanently ill and in a state of depression.[67] Georgette though insists that her husband enjoyed good health during these years (pp. 176-177).

From 1932 Vallejo probably continued working on the collection of poems which fall under the general heading Poemas humanos. Some of these were written while he was still in Spain, but he only began to produce the main body of this work after he had returned to Paris.[68] Instances of him finding paid employment are scarce. His first publication after returning to Paris was in June 1933 for the weekly socialist periodical Germinal, and entitled 'Que se passe-t-il en Pérou, au pays des Incas?'.[69] In 1934 after failing to secure any regular journalistic work, he attempted to find a publisher for his poetry. According to his wife he decided to approach the Spanish publishers of Trilce, CIAP (Compañía Ibero-Americana de Publicaciones), with a selection of poems which included Poemas en prosa, and a number of more recent examples of his work from the collection later entitled Poemas humanos (p.181). The response was apparently favourable but Vallejo failed to receive notification of acceptance. In a letter to Juan Larrea he indicates that he had seen Alberti in Paris and told him of the poetry he was hoping to publish.[70] He may in fact have trusted Alberti with a copy of his work to present to other publishers in Madrid, apart from CIAP, but if so little seems to have come of such a project.[71]

The rise of fascism and the birth of the Popular Front

Concerning Vallejo's involvement in political activities during the

period 1932-1936, very little is known, and because of the restrictions he had to observe as a result of his earlier militancy he probably only participated in a clandestine form. His wife recalls though that he took part in the 'Rassemblement Populaire' of the 14 July 1935, in which half a million supporters of the left came out in protest against the quasi-fascist rallies that had been organized for that day (p.178).[72] In May, shortly before these events took place Stalin and Laval had signed a Franco-Soviet pact in response to the increasing threat from Germany, marking the beginning of the period of Popular Front.[73] A year later, after the May 1936 elections, Leon Blum came to power, heading a loose coalition of left and centre parties which included the Radicals but not the Communists. In spite of making substantial gains in its number of seats the PCF refused to join the 'Front Populaire' claiming that its participation would cause undue panic among the right and upset an already delicate political situation.[74] Their support for most of the policies of the coalition, including those which were instigated by the Radicals was however, reliable and consistent, and the Party became the voice of moderation.[75] One cannot imagine Vallejo subscribing wholeheartedly to these tactics and his wife is probably correct when she suggests that 'entre otras divergencias ideológicas, Vallejo no podrá admitir un 'frente popular', que no es marxismo sino, en aquel momento histórico, estalinismo y por otro lado, socialismo; prototipo cabal: Blum' (p.184).

By early 1936 it was the events in Spain that seemed to be capturing Vallejo's attention, and in a letter to Larrea written a few weeks before the forthcoming elections he states, 'de España no tengo nunca noticias ... Escríbeme ... Dame noticias grandes y profundas. España cobra ahora más interés que la misma Francia. No seas flojo'.[76] As he suggests, he was not alone in his interest in the political situation in Spain at this time, as both the French right and left felt that their political destinies were closely linked to the

result of the Spanish elections. The Communist Party paper L'Humanité for example ran daily articles for a number of weeks dealing with the prospects of the 'Frente Popular', and the threats to democracy posed by the Spanish right. Whereas in 1932 the formation of the Second Republic had hardly caused a stir among the Comintern and its followers, simply being condemned as 'bourgeois adventurism', it now seemed that with the advent of a Popular Front strategy the credibility of communist parties in Western Europe was to be based on the successes of their old enemies.

Vallejo's response to the electoral victory of the Spanish 'Frente Popular', as expressed in his correspondence with Larrea, indicates some optimism mixed with a certain degree of reservation: '¡Qué sorpresa, el resultado de las elecciones españolas! Según tu última carta, que me llegó el mismo día de las elecciones, [16 February 1936], el triunfo de las derechas estaba descontado. Aquí mismo, la prensa así lo decía; ¿Y ahora? ¿Cómo sigue la situación? ¿Qué perspectivas hay? ... De todas maneras, al decir de todos, hay ahora para dos años de azañismo'.[77] Again, due to the fact that he was having no journalistic work published at this time we have no satisfactory record of his thoughts on the developments that were taking place in Spain. But as with the majority of the politically conscious intelligentsia in Europe, it is almost certain that after the victory of the 'Frente Popular' he saw in Spanish politics a microcosm of the wider struggle that was soon to engulf the continent.

The Spanish Civil War: The Birth of a New Hope

The only account of Vallejo's immediate reaction to the outbreak of the Civil War in Spain on 18 July 1936 is that given by his wife, and we have no reason to doubt its accuracy:

> Surge la guerra civil de España .... Ante la magnitud del acontecimento, Vallejo depone toda discrepancia. Vuelve a su militancia marxista incondicional, colaborando de inmediato en la creación de 'Comités de Defensa de la República'.78 Ayuda en las colectas de fondos, en mítines cuyas repetidas actuaciones y pasión no se hubiera sospechado. Consulta a cualquiera hora del día o de la noche los cables que llegan de España y son publicados en la Estación de Ferrocarriles Montparnasse. (p.184)79

In a letter to Larrea some months after the Civil War had begun Vallejo was to confirm his commitment in his own words.

> ¡Nos tienes tan absorbidos en España, que toda el alma no nos basta! ...
>
> Aquí trabajamos mucho y no todo lo que quisiéramos, a causa de nuestra condición de extranjeros. Y nada de esto nos satisface y querríamos volar al mismo frente de batalla. Nunca me di más cuenta de lo poco que puede un hombre individualmente. Esto me aplasta. Desde luego, cada cual, en estos momentos, tienen asignado un papel, por muy humilde que este sea y nuestros impulsos deben ajustarse y someterse al engranaje colectivo, según las necesidades totales de la causa ... la causa del pueblo es sagrada y triunfará, hoy, mañana o pasado mañana, pero triunfará. ¡Viva España! ¡Viva el Frente Popular!80

A few weeks after making these statements, on 21 December 1936, Vallejo set out for Spain on a fact finding mission for the propaganda section of the Spanish Embassy in France.[81] There exists some disagreement on his itinerary; Larrea claiming that he visited Barcelona and Valencia, while others, including his wife and Luis Monguió indicate that he went to Barcelona and Madrid.[82] Further evidence suggests though that the latter case is correct.[83]

The spontaneous revolution

By the time Vallejo arrived in Barcelona in December 1936 the effects of the anarchist revolution, which had taken place there during the first few months of the war, were still clearly apparent, even though by this time the anarchists were beginning to loose their control over the running of the city. Three months earlier, in fact, the anarchists and the marginal anti-Stalinist Left Opposition - now formed into a separate party - the 'Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista' (POUM), had entered into a coalition with the Catalan government, the 'Generalitat', thereby accepting some degree of centralized control while still holding the balance of power.[84]

By December the struggle had also begun to intensify between the Catalan communists - who had increased greatly in number due to their policy of attracting petty bourgeois elements into their ranks - and the anarchists and POUM. The crucial political debate on the left revolved around the fact that while the anarchists and the POUM saw the revolution and the Civil War as being inseparable, the communists, acting under Comintern directives, emphasized the Popular Front policy of class collaboration in the battle against fascism. The militants of the POUM, who were later liquidated by the communists, were viewed with especial hatred because not only were they mainly dissidents from the PCE with Trotskyist sympathies, they also presented the very real threat of taking over the revolution from the anarchists, and strengthening and consolidating it through their superior organizational techniques.[85]

Vallejo cannot have been oblivious to the political struggles that were taking place in Barcelona; not only had he been in Spain when the first serious anti-Stalinist split had taken place in the Communist Party, but also since its formation in 1935 the POUM had become well known internationally.[86] Unfortunately there seems to be no detailed record of his trip either in his own work or in the memoirs of Spaniards that he knew, like Alberti; however, there is some evidence that he may have visited POUM headquarters while he was in Barcelona and that he had discussions with Nin and several other members of the Party.[87] It is also an interesting coincidence that Vallejo arrived in Barcelona at about the same time as George Orwell, who went on to join a POUM column fighting on the Aragon front.[88]

From Barcelona, the centre of revolution, Vallejo went on to Madrid the city of dogged resistance. Here he met Alberti, who had begun to establish himself as the Republic's foremost 'poeta en la calle'. By the time Vallejo arrived in Madrid the main Nationalist offensive against the city had been checked, but the atmosphere remained one of considerable tension with the

front line still located in the suburbs and the population of the capital daily expecting a renewed attack.[89] The period which ran from the departure of the republican government to Valencia in November 1936, up to the spring of 1937, when the communists began to consolidate their power in the city, was also a time of popular euphoria. Power lay ostensibly in the hands of the 'junta de defensa' under General Miaja but apart from some co-ordination of military strategy, functions like production, distribution and the general running of the city were left to the trade unions, and a few activists from various political parties, many of whom had very different ideas on how things should be organized. In Barcelona the revolutionary developments were more profound, but under siege the capital was also experiencing unprecedented advances towards popular power.

Vallejo arrived back in Paris on the 31 December after having spent little more than a week in Spain. His trip, even though brief, proved to be an unforgettable experience, and one that he was to reflect on later in his collection of poems on the Civil War. It is almost impossible to overstress the significance of the Republican cause to the European left at this time, and for many who visited Spain during the struggle, like Vallejo, the experience proved overwhelming. Even without a record of his journey we can still gain some understanding of the atmosphere which prevailed in Barcelona and Madrid during the first year of the war, not only from historical texts but also from the works of such writers as George Orwell,[90] André Malraux,[91] Gustav Regler,[92] and many more intellectuals who were also in Spain at this time. The one thing which all these writers share, despite their diverse responses to the war, is their acknowledgment of the human fraternity that emerged from the struggle, and their belief that united human will was capable of changing history. In this sense Vallejo's poetry can be compared, in terms of content, to many other literary works on the Spanish Civil War, with the

exception that only he tempers his art with a clear understanding of Marxism.

Vallejo's most immediate response to his experiences in Spain is to be found in an article he wrote early in 1937 entitled 'Los enunciados populares de la guerra española', which never found a publisher during his lifetime.[93] It is clear from the comments that he makes in this short survey of the popular resistance to the nationalist threat, that the revolutionary atmosphere which he had experienced in Barcelona, and the determined and almost instinctive reaction of the people of Madrid in defending themselves against the enemy, had had a profound effect on his thinking. Like many of his contemporaries who had visited Spain during the first months of the war, he felt he had been witness to a unique moment in human history, in which the issues that were being contested were of momentous significance for the whole of mankind. The article begins with an acknowledgement of the greatness of the struggle of the Spanish people:

> ¡Cuántos nuevos enunciados de grandeza humana y de videncia cívica van brotando del atroz barbecho operado por la guerra en el alma del pueblo español! Nunca vióse en la historia guerra más entrañada a la agitada esencia popular y jamám, por eso, las formas conocidas de epopeya fueron remozadas - cuando no suscitadas - por acciones más deslumbrantes y más inesperadas.[94]

This war, he adds, was unlike other wars because it was not being fought on behalf of the State, but as a result of a spontaneous response of the people to those forces which threatened their existence. In this context the participants in the 'ejército del pueblo' were engaging in conflict on different terms to their counterparts in national armies, who had to obey the orders of a military elite. The actions of the Spanish 'pueblo' were sacrifices in pursuit of social justice, which as an objective was born out of a will for a better world. The representatives of such a cause therefore are seen to go beyond the 'drama del deber' of the ordinary soldier, becoming champions of the destiny of all humanity.

Going on to consider the historical context of the Spanish Civil War, Vallejo emphasizes its unique aspects, especially in relation to those wars

which appeared to have been fought as a result of a popular incentive. Recalling the Greek and Roman wars of antiquity and the modern revolutions of 1789 in France, and 1917 in Russia, he accepts that they all incorporated populist elements, but in the case of the ancient conflicts he feels that a powerful leader, or some wider State interest was always of greater significance than the will of the people. With regard to the modern revolutionary struggles he notes that even they were largely motivated by strong leaders, like Marat and Lenin, and were also preceded by the tactical positioning of elite groups in the form of the Jacobins and the Bolsheviks. But, the Civil War in Spain, he claims, was distinct from these earlier episodes of violent conflict:

> En la España de 1936 no se descubre al origen del empuje guerrero del pueblo hombre alguno de talla, orador, general u organizador; los trabajadores que se lanzan a la toma del cuartel de la Montaña o del de Atarazana no han celebrado antes junta alguna tribunicia en las plazuelas, ni salen de catacumbas de conspiración en que han erdido lenguas de iluminados a cuya vibración fuera tocada con la sagrada chispa, el alma de las masas, y menos todavía, van atraídos por la pitenza, regresiva, zoológica, del saqueo y la revancha del estómago. (p.36)

The leaders of the republican government 'Largo Caballero, Azaña, Prieto' were, he continues, overshadowed by the actions of the masses, as were those members of the army who remained in support of democracy. The spontaneity of the people temporarily transcended State power, and State objectives, to become an autonomous social force capable of realizing its own potential and,

> desde estos puntos de vista, la epopeya popular española es única en la historia. Ella revela de cuánto es capaz un pueblo, lanzado por exclusiva propulsión de sus propios medios e inspiraciones cívicas, a la defensa de sus derechos, rebela, en pocos meses, una vasta insurrección militar, detiene dos poderosas invasiones extranjeras coaligadas, crea un severo orden público revolucionario, estructura sobre nuevas bases su economía, funda de pies a cabeza un gran ejército popular y, en suma, se coloca a la vanguardia de la civilización, defendiendo con sangre jamás igualada en pureza y ardor generoso la democracia universal en peligro. Y todo este milagro - hay que insistir - lo consuma por obra propia suya de masa soberana, que se basta a sí misma y a su incontrastable devenir. (p.37)

Looking back over the comments Vallejo had made in his earlier work since 1929, concerning the formation of a proletarian political consciousness, the above statements would appear relatively utopian in their outlook. One

must however take into account the immense significance which the radical intelligentsia gave to the popular resistance in Spain and its revolutionary developments. Even level headed Englishmen like George Orwell and Stephen Spender were overwhelmed by what was happening. In Homage to Catalonia for example, Orwell states 'I had come to Spain with some notion of writing newspaper articles, but I had joined the militia almost immediately because at that time and in that atmosphere it seemed the only conceivable thing to do'(p.8).[95] Spender felt that Spain 'offered the twentieth century an 1848'.[96] A wide spectrum of European intellectuals of both the right and the left also saw the conflict in terms of 'an apocalyptic moment' in which previous artistic and intellectual reservations seemed to lose their coherence.[97] Vallejo himself points with extraordinary perception to the source of this almost mystical mood when he states, 'los primeros meses, señaladamente, de la guerra española reflejaron ... un acento instintivo, palpitante de prístina pureza popular, que hicieron exclamar a Malraux: "En este instante, al menos, una revolución ha sido pura para siempre."'.[98]

By the time Vallejo came to write his collection of poems on the Civil War, in the autumn of 1937, the euphoric tones with which he greeted the revolutionary struggle earlier that year were still present, but they now fell more clearly within the context of his understanding of Marx.

The Intellectual Atmosphere on the Left in the 1930s

The influence of the Comintern

As David Caute has shown in his work Communism and the French Intellectuals, the Soviet Union's attitude towards foreign intellectuals, from the Revolution to the period of Popular Front in the mid 1930s, was one of vacillation, which loosely coincided with the Comintern's wider international strategies.[99]

After the formation of the first Soviet government, the Council of People's Commissars, which itself was composed mainly of intellectuals, the world intelligentsia was viewed as being a potentially valuable asset in the development of the international revolutionary struggle. By the early 1920s though, when the hopes for world revolution began to fade, those intellectuals who remained faithful to Moscow began to find themselves in the new, and now more important position, of moral advocates of the Soviet experiment. With the creation of a number of national communist parties after the first World War intellectuals were predominant among the founding members, and as Caute points out, this was the period of 'la main tendue' in which even sympathizers were nurtured with great care by the Party. But by 1924, with the mounting struggle against Trotsky, the question of the role of intellectuals in the revolutionary vanguard became a matter of increasing controversy among the Bolsheviks, and as Stalin began to consolidate his power a mood of anti-intellectualism began to spread throughout the International. In the French Communist Party (PCF) influential intellectuals like Boris Souvarine, who had been one of the Party's founding members, were expelled for 'intellectual arrogance' (a term which became synonymous with Trotskyism), and replaced by mundane figures like André Marty, Marcel Cachin, and the political chameleon Jacques Doriot. By the mid 1920s disillusion had also set in among many of the Party's intellectual sympathizers, and even the general membership fell from 131,000 in 1921 to 20,000 in 1929.[100]

In 1930 European communist parties were still treating intellectuals with varying degrees of contempt, and in Russia the 'cult of the proletarian' had gone so far as to make even members of the middle class professions fear for their lives.[101] This situation - at least outside the Soviet Union - was however to improve with the increasing threat of fascism, and as early as 1931 Maurice Thorez, the General Secretary of the PCF was beginning to give covert encouragement to intellectuals to return into the Party orbit. One of the

first attempts to organize a group of intellectuals against fascism came in the spring of 1932 when the editor in chief of the communist paper, L'Humanité, Paul Vaillant Couturier, formed the 'Association des Ecrivains et Artistes Revolutionnaires' (A.E.A.R.) which was specifically aimed at those writers and artists, whom it was hoped, could be brought closer to the Party and incorporated in its developing anti-fascist strategy.[102] It has been argued that organizations like the A.E.A.R. played an important vanguard role in preparing the ground for the left-wing unity of the Popular Front; and the Comintern, which was still ostensibly pursuing a policy of outright class war, may have had precisely this objective in mind when showing renewed tolerance towards intellectuals in the early 1930s.[103]

By the summer of 1933, after Hitler had come to power in Germany, the A.E.A.R. was able to claim a broad range of support from committed and uncommitted intellectuals alike, and its journal Commune, on whose editorial board sat Gide, Barbusse, Rolland, Malraux and Vaillant-Couturier, enjoyed a large readership among those writers and artists who were becoming conscious of the cultural and political threat of fascism. Early in 1934, as tensions between the right and the left increased, the 'Comité de Vigilance des Intellectuels Antifascistes' (C.V.I.A.) was formed, which was even more willing than the A.E.A.R. to accept bourgeois liberal intellectuals into its ranks. Again the guiding hand of the Party was felt but not seen.[104]

After almost a decade of abandonment and persecution by the Comintern it seems surprising, even faced with the threat of fascism, that in the 1930s intellectuals were so willing to answer the Party's call for their support.[105] However, the relationship between the Party and the intellectuals at this time must be seen as one of mutual need. For the Comintern, the European cultural intelligentsia was viewed almost exclusively in pragmatic terms; intellectuals and especially those of some eminence, gave the Party greater prestige.[106]

Furthermore those who had some grasp of Marxism could act as educators, either through their public influence or among fellow men of learning: artists and writers who were committed in their work being of particular importance because of their wide communicative potential. Sympathetic intellectuals also provide the Party with a degree of moral justification, which was an invaluable commodity in the 1930s, by which time certain aspects of the Soviet experiment had begun to accumulate critics on the left as well as the right.[107]

The response of intellectuals to communism - that is as represented by Moscow - in the 1930s, is a far more complex phenomenon, warranting extensive treatment of its own which goes beyond the scope of this thesis.[108] However, a brief survey of the pressures which drove intellectuals towards the left during the inter-war years would seem appropriate before considering their response to the Spanish Civil War.

Much of the rhetoric expressed in the left-wing press, and at the writers' and artists' congresses during the period of Popular Front, emphasized the political and cultural idealism of those who had joined together in the battle against fascism. There were though, in addition to the immediate threat, a number of long standing and more pragmatic reasons why intellectuals responded to the Party's appeals. The function of bourgeois capitalist society during the inter-war years had engendered irreparable grievances among the intelligentsia, and for many on the left the rise of fascism was seen as the inevitable consequence of the wider disillusionments of the age. Vallejo himself describes one of the more practical sources of discontent at the time in an article entitled 'Sobre el proletariado literario', in which he bemoans the low status, both in economic and social terms, which was given to the majority of writers and artists in postwar France.[109] Several studies were published dealing with this problem during the late 1920s and the 1930s, the most

influential of which was probably Victor Roussot's work La condition ecomique et sociale des travailleurs intellectuels (1934), which shows how the war had profoundly changed the lives of the middle and lower strata of intellectuals who had been forced through economic necessity, into forming unions.[110] This process, Roussot notes, had been accentuated by the effects of the Depression in the early 1930s, as intellectuals were one of the groups most severely hit.[111] The PCF leadership, and especially Maurice Thorez, were particularly sensitive to this problem, and in a speech which Thorez gave to the Chamber of Deputies in 1934, he acknowledged that learned professionals were high among the exploited classes; while at the same time secretly expressing the fear that pauperized intellectuals would turn in desperation to fascism, as had occurred on an appreciable scale in Germany.[112] Seizing on this malcontent among the European intelligentsia, the Comintern, as part of its Popular Front strategy, made some remarkably disingenuous claims concerning the quality of life of learned groups in Russia, and attempted to verify its assertions by inviting eminent academics and writers to visit selected universities and institutes of higher education in the Soviet Union.[113]

Even for those who were sceptical of communist propaganda, a not particularly close reading of Marx would have told them that capitalism can become hostile to certain branches of mental production, and in crisis could resort to cultural barbarism; a prophesy which loomed large in Germany. In contrast, the political struggle for social justice, above which hovered the spectre of proletarian revolution, offered the prospects of a new society in which greater emphasis would be placed on man's cultural development.[114] Economic and social injustice though, was, like fascism, seen to be the product of a more profound malaise, and it is this which should be seen as the main impulse behind the movement towards left-wing ideologies.

Looking back to the two decades preceding the period of Popular Front

in the 1930s, it has to be acknowledged that the Great War was the decisive experience for European intellectuals. By the early 1920s many were turning towards communism, which itself as a movement had been born out of the ruins of past revolutionary movements, socialism, anarchism and syndicalism, all of which had collapsed in 1914 with the onset of war. As Caute points out: 'The first generation of communist intellectuals in France shared no common ideological background; what they shared was a burning revulsion from the sheer physical horror of the war, from the evil passions it let loose and from the insane waste it everywhere inflicted' (p.59).

If the war had brought fragmentation and disillusionment to European societies, its immediate repercussions, and especially the Bolshevik Revolution, were to act as an unprecedented unifying force on the intellectual left.[115] Such was the impact of the Revolution in fact that Soviet Russia continued to hold an almost hypnotic power over many intellectuals during the inter-war years. This inevitably led to some alarming justifications for the increasingly obvious discrepancies between theory and practice which were taking place by the late 1920s and 1930s under Stalin's leadership.[116]

On the other side of the equation the horror and violence of the war made it no longer possible for many intellectuals to accept the optimism and rationality, which had been the cornerstones of nineteenth century liberalism.[117] During the 1920s there was a brief period of euphoria when the capitalist ethic seemed to have been re-born on a new wave of technological advancement and prosperity, but the Great Depression of 1929 shattered this illusion, as economic performance, the last legitimate claim of liberalism, was also seen to be fallacious. For some intellectuals the way forward now seemed to have been thrown open to new ideologies, and it was communism and fascism which offered the most radical and violent break with the past.[118] The 1930s more than any other decade of this century, was one of clear political

extremes, both of which saw in each other's beliefs the antithesis of their own. It was at the height of this ideological conflict that the Spanish Civil War broke out, becoming for both sides the first real opportunity for violent confrontation, and the first tangible test for their diametrically opposed beliefs.

Spanish intellectuals against fascism

It was out of the growing political tensions of the mid 1930s that the first 'Congrès des Ecrivains pour la Défense de la Culture' was held in Paris from 21-25 June 1935, under the presidency of André Gide and André Malraux.[119] Towards the end of the Congress it was decided to form an 'International Bureau', which would be responsible for encouraging the formation of an association of anti-fascist intellectual groups in various countries. The Spanish section of the association, 'La Alianza de Intelectuales Antifascistas para la Defensa de la Cultura' was formed during February and March 1936 - coinciding with the victory of the Popular Front at the elections - and among its founders were José Bergamín and Rafael Alberti. The first number of the group's propaganda organ, El Mono Azul, appeared in August 1936 and was directed towards the troops at the front, and included in its pages articles on marksmanship and hygiene, as well as examples of committed poetry.[120]

Early in 1937 some members of the 'Alianza', including Bergamín, Max Aub and Alberti, went to Paris to organize the second Congress of Writers for the Defence of Culture. Vallejo recorded the Spaniards' visit in an article entitled 'Las grandes lecciones culturales de la guerra española', in which he indicates - with qualifications - his approval of their commitment as writers to the political struggle.[121] The article begins with the statement, 'sin duda, no es de lo que digan o hagan los intelectuales que nunca ha dependido el giro de la política...' to which he adds that it is the whole financial and economic structure of

capitalism which gives the main stimulus to political activity.[122] Addressing more specifically those intellectuals, who like himself were becomming politically conscious, he continues, 'no nos hagamos ilusiones. Escritores hay de izquierda que cerrando los ojos a la experiencia y a la realidad, superestiman la influencia política inmediata del intelectual, atribuyendo a sus menores actos públicos una repercusión que no tienen' (p.86). Intellectuals throughout history have, Vallejo argues, always been indirectly the products of material forces, and their attempts to bring about idealistic changes in the world have nearly always been frustrated by their unconscious compromise with their economic and social environments. But modern capitalist conditions, he feels, had produced a situation in which compromise was no longer possible, and that 'hoy más que nunca, la mecánica social fundada en el triunfo de la técnica industrial, funciona completamente de espaldas al consenso del espíritu, personificado por el artista, el escritor o el sabio' (p.86).

In order to challenge these forces the intellectuals should, Vallejo states, unite in directing their work and their actions towards the singular purpose of continuous protest, which would be more effective than individual and isolated commitment in raising the general level of consciousness. Qualifying this process he continues;

> lo que importa, sobre todo, al intelectual es traducir las aspiraciones populares del modo más auténtico y directo, cuidándose menos del efecto inmediato (no digo demagógico) de sus actos, más de su resonancia y eficacia en la dialéctica social, ya que ésta se burla a la postre, de toda suerte de vallas, incluso las económicas, cuando un "salto" social está maduro. (p.86)

In terms of the utility value of the intellectual in the revolutionary process the above comments would seem to owe something to Mariátegui and, indirectly, Gramsci, whose concept of the intellectual as 'permanent persuader' is here represented in basic terms.

Vallejo goes on to suggest that such an analysis does not negate the value of the great writers like Shakespeare, Goethe, Balzac and others, who showed an awareness of social injustice in their work, yet did not involve themselves openly in the political struggle. They, he claims, were often responsible through their acute perception of the world around them for sowing the seeds of revolution in others, to which he adds, 'inútil es decir que, cuando la conducta pública del intelectual contiene, a la vez que el gesto, vivido y viviente de protesta y de combate, en grado máximo de irradiación ideológica, el caso alcanza los caracteres de un verdadero arquetipo de lo que debe el hombre de pensamiento' (p.87).

Within this category of 'true' intellectual, Vallejo goes on to place those Spanish writers who had given their support to the Republican cause, and especially the ones who had come to Paris to organize the Second Writers' Congress. By committing themselves faithfully to the struggle against fascism in Spain they had become part of a historical battle of universal significance in which 'el mundo se inclina a mirarse, como en un espejo, sobrecogido, a un tiempo, de estupor, de pasión y de esperanza'. If the Spanish people were to succeed in their struggle, he adds, then among the benefits of such a victory would be a powerful indication to those intellectuals around the world who felt themselves to be above politics, that the commitment of the Spanish writers, both as militants and artists, was justified, and that 'una obra intrínsecamente revolucionaria, es una cosa bella y trascendente, lo es aún más crearla en medio del fragor de una batalla, extrayéndola de los pliegues más hondos y calientes de la vida' (p.87).

In comparison to the comments he was making in his journalism in 1930, it would appear that he was now far more sanguine about the possibilities for the bourgeois writer to fuse his art to the popular cause. This belief clearly stems from what he felt were the unique circumstances that had been produced

during the Civil War in Spain, and does not constitute a renouncement of his earlier ideas concerning the role of the intellectual in the revolutionary struggle. It is also the volition and commitment which he praises above all of those who had given their full support to the Spanish people, rather than their assumed, but unrealistic, potential as eminent bourgeois intellectuals to influence events. Some months later however, at the second Writers' Congress in Madrid, Vallejo was to temporarily abandon this position for reasons of political expediency.

The Writers' Congress of 1937

The second International Congress for the Defence of Culture opened in Valencia on the 4 July 1937; met in Madrid from 6th to 7th July, and then moved back to Valencia, meeting finally in Barcelona where it closed officially on the 10th. Two further meetings were however held in Paris on the 16 and 17 of July.[123] The Congress was attended by almost two hundred delegates, with representations from over twenty countries, and attracted some of the most outstanding literary intellectuals of the 1930s.[124] Among the Spanish delegates, who were naturally the centre of attention, were José Bergamín, Rafael Alberti, Antonio Machado, Corpus Barga and Ramón Sender. A large delegation also came from France and included André Malraux, Julien Benda, André Chamson, Tristan Tzara and Claude Aveline. Delegates from Latin America included, along with Vallejo who represented Peru, Alejo Carpentier, Octavio Paz, Nicolás Guillén, Juan Marinello, Vicente Huidobro, Pablo Neruda and Raul González Tuñón. Descriptive accounts of the Congress are scarce and consist mainly of the personal records of those who attended, such as Stephen Spender, Pablo Neruda, Mikhail Koltsov, Ilya Ehrenburg, and a number of others who make a passing reference in their memoirs.[125] Of the above

Stephen Spender's recollections are the most interesting and complete. Pablo Neruda's account is disappointing, and the communists, Koltsov and Ehrenburg take a firm 'Party' stance on the proceedings. Concerning Vallejo's attendance at the Congress, apart from the transcript of the speech he gave which was published in El Mono Azul, there is hardly any recorded information. J. Vélez and A. Merino do however make two interesting observations regarding his involvement in the Congress: firstly they claim that he travelled from Paris to Barcelona in the same rail coach as Malraux, Marinello and Carpentier, and secondly, that he was among a small group of delegates who left the main party after the session in Madrid to visit the front at Guadalajara (pp. 118-120

The idea of a large number of intellectuals from around the world gathering in Spain during the Civil War to proclaim their support for the Republic, and their solidarity against fascism, has a certain idealistic appeal, but as Spender suggests, such an image was largely superficial:

> The public purpose of the Congress was to discuss the attitude of the Intellectuals of the World to the Spanish War. But there was also a hidden theme constantly discussed in private and almost as often dragged on to the open platform. This was the Stalinists versus André Gide. For Gide had just published his famous 'Retour de L'U.R.S.S.' in which he had made a detached and critical account of his impressions of a tour of Russia, where he had been the honoured and flattered guest of the Soviet Government. Far more sensational than the book itself was the fury with which it was received by Communists. Gide, who only a few weeks previously, had been hailed in the Communist Press as the greatest living French writer come to salute the Workers' Republic, became overnight a 'Fascist monster', 'a self-confessed decadent bourgeois', and worse. The Writers' Congress was divided over the issue of Gide. (p.240-241)

Spender's overall impression of the Congress and the delegates who attended is equally uninspiring, and some of the criticisms he makes were also voiced later by Vallejo in his poetry on the Civil War. For Spender,

> the Congress, with all its good qualities, had something about it of a spoiled children's party, something which brought out the worst in many delegates.
>
> This circus of intellectuals, treated like princes or ministers, carried for hundreds of miles through beautiful scenery and war-torn towns, to the sound of cheering voices, amid broken hearts, riding in Rolls-Royces, banqueted, fêted, sung and danced to, photographed and drawn, had something grotesque about it .... Speeches, champagne, food, receptions, hotel rooms, were a thick hedge dividing us from reality. (pp.241-243)

He continues with a description of the individual delegates, some of whom he feels were blatantly hypocritical, like Julien Benda and André Chamson, who, on hearing shells explode near to the hotel where the congressional members were staying in Madrid decided to return to Paris, claiming that if either of them were killed, France would be forced to declare war on Franco and a world war would ensue. In contrast to the 'fanatical self-importance' which seized many delegates, others simply travelled along in a 'tourist spirit', only vaguely aware of the issues that were at stake in Spain. The picture that Spender paints is a depressing one, but perhaps the most accurate considering his non-partisan stance towards the Communist Party, yet perceptive understanding of the political atmosphere of the 1930s.

A second line of approach for assessing the Congress would be through a survey of the speeches that were given by a number of delegates including Vallejo. Such a task, if conducted in detail, would be beyond the scope of this thesis, but a brief overview of the major themes seems necessary in order to give Vallejo's own statements a context, and provide a background to some of the issues he deals with in his poetry on the Civil War.[126] Leaving aside the image of nearly one hundred political dilettanti touring around war-torn Spain in considerable luxury, and concentrating on some of the ideas that were put forward at the Congress, one gains a more favourable, though not unmarred, perception of events. Fine speeches were made by a number of the delegates including the Cuban communist, Juan Marinello (President of the Spanish American delegation), José Bergamin, Antonio Machado, André Malraux and several others. Marinello's contribution is of particular interest in relation to Vallejo's speech because they both emphasized the question of Hispanic unity, and what they felt was the vital significance of the struggle of the Spanish people for the oppressed of Latin America and the Caribbean. The enigmatic Malraux, whose heroic actions during the early

months of the war as leader of a private air squadron fighting on behalf of the Republic, had earned him the reputation of 'l'homme engagé par excellence', gave four speeches during the course of the Congress, three of which remain unpublished.[127] In the one which was published he emphasizes the unique examples of fraternity that had been precipitated by the Civil War in Spain, both in the context of the immediate self-defence of the Spanish people against fascism and in the form of international solidarity.[128] This situation he argues, had created unprecedented opportunities for intellectuals to become part of a dynamic human process which held the potential to shape history.[129] As one might expect at a Congress that had been organized both for and by intellectuals, Malraux had here introduced a vital theme, and one which would be included in some form in almost all the speeches.

For the Spanish delegates, and especially Antonio Machado and José Bergamín, their role in the present struggle, they claimed, was representative of a long tradition among Spanish intellectuals to support the cause of the people; the 'pueblo'.[130] In the first part of his speech, which is entitled 'El poeta y el pueblo', Machado condemns the attitude of the members of his own literary 'Generation of 1898' towards the 'pueblo', claiming that they saw their relationship with the 'people' in terms of a clear personal choice; that is they were free to write for the 'pueblo' or remain in their 'torre de marfil'.[131] This belief, he adds, was an illusion because the greatest writers of all nations have always represented the 'people' in their work, whether they were conscious of it or not. Refocusing his attention on the question of the Spanish writer, he emphasizes the historic relationship which has existed between men of letters of the 'pueblo', stating:

> Entre españoles, lo esencial humano se encuentra con la mayor pureza y el más acusado relieve en el alma popular. Yo no sé si puede decirse lo mismo de otros países. Mi folk-lore no ha traspuesto las fronteras de mi patria. Pero me atrevo a asegurar que, en España, el prejuicio aristocrático, el de escribir exclusivamente para los mejores, puede

> aceptarse y aún convertirse en norma literaria, sólo con esta advertencia: la aristocracia española está en el pueblo, escribiendo para el pueblo se escribe para los mejores. (p.207)

Machado had in fact been the only member of the 'Generation of 1898' to show a real sense of solidarity with the 'pueblo', and not simply a paternal concern, as had many of his contemporaries. But, even in what is regarded as his most radical work, Campos de Castilla (1912), he goes no further than to present a realistic and sympathetic picture of the hardship of rural peasant life, and does not suggest any programme for change. As with the comments he made at the Writers' Congress, the implication is that the intellectual should be 'for' the people , but he does not envisage a time when he could be 'of' the people . He even states in his speech that a day will come when to write for the people will be 'la más consciente y suprema aspiración del poeta'; which suggests the continuation of society divided along class lines.

José Bergamín in his speech for the Congress, sees a more complex interrelationship between the 'pueblo' and the intellectuals.[132] However, because he continues to regard the former as a unique historical category rooted in centuries of Spanish culture, rather than an agglomeration of working class elements, some of whom were becoming conscious of their own destiny, he has to create a quasi religious framework to put forward his argument, in which class barriers are transcended by a 'comunión de sangre', expressed through language and culture.

Bergamín begins his discourse by stressing the need for the intellectual to become aware of his responsibility towards the people, which in turn, he claims, will bring about the realization that commitment constitutes the purest role for the writer, and one through which his work can find a new and vibrant meaning. Like Machado, after making a broad generalization which is applicable to all intellectuals, Bergamín focuses his attention on 'los problemas de la cultura española', and especially the historical relationship

of the writer to the 'pueblo':

> Toda nuestra mejor literatura en el pasado, la que impulsa y mueve los anhelos populares hacia el porvenir o en los presentes, es un testimonio popular, por el lenguaje, de una voluntad única y total de ser de España. De esa posible y ansiada comunicación o comunión humana por la palabra, por la sangre, que todos los verdaderos escritores españoles compartieron íntegramente con el pueblo, surge nuestro luminoso Mediterráneo descubierto: es de la cultura popular española; porque en España toda nuestra riqueza cultural es expresión viva y verdadera de nuestro pueblo. (p.226)

While Vallejo would have been sympathetic to the claims that were made by his friend Bergamín, he shows in his final poetry on the Spanish Civil War, and especially the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', that such beliefs do not always coincide with historical reality.

The theme of the significance of the 'pueblo' in Spanish culture was also treated by several other conferees including Fernando de los Ríos, Corpus Barga and Feodor Kelyin, a Soviet delegate, who emphasized the influence that Spanish literature and its special relationship with the 'people', had had on both pre and post-revolutionary Russian writers. While for the Spanish writers their allegiance to the 'pueblo' was regarded in terms of a complex historical and cultural phenomenon peculiar to that country, for the Russian, Ilya Ehrenburg the problem of intellectual commitment was more simplistic and universal, and after praising those intellectuals who, like Ralph Fox, Ludwig Renn and Gustav Regler had taken up arms to defend the Republic, he states, 'hay un solo medio de defender la cultura: exterminar el fascismo. Hemos entrado en la época de acción'.[133] Claude Aveline from the French delegation also took a universal, but less pragmatic position than Ehrenburg, touching on the theme which had been introduced by Malraux, and was to become the most popular idea of the Congress, that is, the unique circumstances of the Spanish Civil War and the almost unprecedented opportunities this offered for intellectuals to commit themselves and their work to a worthy cause. For Aveline - as well as for Malraux and Julien Benda - all

previous modern wars had only provided false causes, and it had been the First World War in particular with its immense emotive calling, that had destroyed the confidence of intellectuals in the morality and efficacy of commitment. In such circumstances those who had remained 'au dessus de la Mêlée' now seemed in retrospect to have chosen the most realistic course.[134] But now, in Spain, Aveline claims, 'he aquí que hace un año dió comienzo en Occidente una guerra tan simple, tan pura, que ha obligado al intelectual a intervenir, que ha exigido de él que intervenga'. After emphasizing the international significance of the anti-fascist struggle in Spain, and praising the foresight and commitment of those who were in attendance at the Congress, he states:

> Algunos episodios de las sesiones de Madrid - y Madrid mismo - han producido el milagro, tan raro en el intelectual, de hacer renacer en él al hombre total, es decir, al hombre entre los hombres. Esos episodios han logrado romper esta soledad interior que alguno de nosotros reconocía como una necesidad, pero que la mayoría de las veces es pesada y desesperante. Acabamos de vivir momentos que justifican, no solamente la adhesión, sino la existencia. (p.239)

Not only therefore was the Spanish Civil War seen to provide a justification for the intellectual to become involved in politics, but it was also believed to have engendered conditions in which men of learning were faced with an extraordinary opportunity to reject their isolationist past, in favour of a new vital and creative link with the people. Such moments of optimism and mild euphoria were understandable under the circumstances in which the Congress took place, but one cannot help feeling that this sort of thinking, was at least in part, influenced by the Popular Front rhetoric that was being put forward by the Comintern.

Communist influence had certainly been important concerning the development of the theme of the 'defence of culture' against fascism, which even before the outbreak of the Civil War had been a major issue at a number of congresses attended by intellectuals during the 1930s. As noted earlier in this chapter,

with the rise of fascism the Comintern had been anxious to attract the support of intellectuals and encourage the belief that they had an essential role to play in the political struggle, however, this struggle was now no longer presented in broadly Marxist terms as in the 1920s, but rather as a cultural conflict between civilization and barbarism. Increasingly throughout the 1930s Russia showed itself to be the most enthusiastic defender of Western culture and democracy; a position which was enhanced in the eyes of the opponents of fascism, and especially the intellectuals, when it became the only major power to come to the aid of the Spanish Republic. It was consequently not uncommon at the 1937 Writers' Congress (which was in title dedicated to the 'Defence of Culture'), to hear lengthy discourses which treated the Civil War as part of a wider struggle to save civilization, and of which the Soviet Union was the natural leader. Jef Last, a Dutch delegate, for example, states categorically in his speech to the Congress that it was 'la lucha por la cultura: eso es lo que nos reúne' and then continues with reference to 'nuestro gran jefe Stalin' and 'este frente popular ... nuestra ... garantía de la victoria'.[135] Naturally some delegates were sceptical about Comintern strategy both internationally and in Spain - where the Communists had gained considerable power by way of some extremely crude methods - but even they had to accept that Russian assistance was a crucial factor in keeping Republican hopes alive. Consequently there were few, if any, overt critics of the Party at the Congress.[136]

In such an atmosphere discussions on Gide's recent book Retour de l'U.R.S.S., in which he criticized certain aspects of Soviet society, were almost predictable. For the Communists both Gide and his work became subjects of ridicule and Spender recalls that the Pravda correspondent Mikhail Koltsov was particularly adept at improvising parodies of Gide's criticisms.[137] On the other hand there were those intellectuals with no

political affiliations, like José Bergamín, who felt that even though developments in the Soviet Union, as well as Soviet policy towards Spain, may have had their tarnished side, these were minor issues compared to the gravity of the struggle that was taking place, and if pursued would be of no benefit to anyone except the enemy.[138]

Vallejo's speech at the congress, which was entitled 'La responsabilidad del escritor', does not stand out as being a particularly controversial or outstanding contribution to the proceedings, and as Jean Franco points out, he 'was saying and doing exactly what most of his fellow writers at the Congress were saying and doing'.[139] Some of the comments he makes in his discourse are of interest though, because as a Latin American he attempts, like Marinello, to link the Civil War to a wider Hispanic context. But having been an expatriate for many years he is also capable of seeing the war from a European, and even peculiarly Spanish perspective. His speech consequently appears to be rather eclectic, combining the ideas of Marinello, Benda and Bergamín into a vaguely Popular Front political stance.

Despite his wide ranging approach to the Civil War, Vallejo is consistent in that he sees the conflict as ultimately having universal significance, and in the first line of his address he states:'Traigo el saludo de mis compañeros (i.e. as Peruvian delegate) al pueblo español que lucha con un interés sobrehumano, con una vocación sin precedentes en la Historia y que está asombrando al Universo'.[140] He then continues with the theme of Hispanic unity, and after condemning the dictatorships of Latin America, he indicates that in his native Peru support for the Spanish Republic came not only from a number of intellectuals but also from large sections of the working classes, adding that, 'estas masas, contrariamente a lo que podáis imaginaros, tratándose de un país que arrastra una vieja cadena de ignorancia y de oscuridad ha podido desde el primer momento apercibirse de que la causa de la Republica española

es la causa del Perú ...' (p.32). The explanation he gives for this assertion is that Peru, as well as other Latin American nations, shared with Spain similar experiences of dictatorship and repression, and a form of class struggle, which despite being part of a wider universal conflict, had certain peculiarities which were unique to the Hispanic historical experience. To this he adds the cultural similarities of race, language, and the more abstract concept of the special relationship between Latin America and 'La Madre España'. Finally on a lyrical note he concludes: 'América ve, pues, en el pueblo español cumplir su destino extraordinario en la historia de la humanidad, y la continuidad de este destino consiste en que a España le ha tocado ser la creadora de continentes; ella sacó de la nada un continente, y hoy saca de la nada al mundo entero' (p.32).

It is perhaps of some significance that in a discourse, which for the most part lacks any original ideas, and seems, like many of the other speeches, to be structured to appeal to the general mood of the Congress, Vallejo should point out initially that he sees the conflict in Spain, as well as the political and social tensions in Latin America, in terms of class struggle. He also states clearly that it is his belief that 'las masas trabajadoras de América luchan ... al lado de las masas trabajadoras de España'. In a Congress that was attended almost exclusively by bourgeois intellectuals, most of whom were anxious to establish the importance of their own role in the battle against fascism, such statements were rare, and Vallejo was one of only a few delegates to make a specific reference to the working classes in relation to the defence of the Spanish Republic. Others preferred such terms as the 'people', the 'Spanish pueblo' or the 'defenders of civilization', all of which were more acceptable in the language of Popular Front politics.

The first part of Vallejo's speech also serves to complement Marinello's much longer discussion on the significance of the Spanish Civil War for Latin

American nations, in which the latter states:

> España es nada menos que nuestro mañana. La derrota del pueblo español, derrota imposible, sería el inicio de una terrible edad media hispano-americana ... El triunfo español será, en cambio, un ejemplo de trascendencia inmensurable... No puede hablarse hoy de España sin hablar de la Argentina, de Cuba, de Venezuela, del Ecuador. No se puede combatir el fascismo sin atacar a su hermano gemelo el imperialismo'. (p.68)

Among the Latin American delegates it was Vallejo and Marinello who held the most clear vision of the realities of Hispanic unity in political and cultural terms, and it therefore seems particularly unfortunate, and wasteful, that they should have both chosen to have devoted large parts of their discourses to satisfying the drab popular demands of the Congress.

For the second part of his address Vallejo turned to his main topic; 'La responsabilidad del escritor ante la Historia'. His treatment of this subject is disappointing compared to the analyses of the problems faced by the politically conscious bourgeois intellectual which he made in his journalism some years earlier. Like many of the other delegates who also discussed this topic, he now talks in terms of the intellectual's duty to break down the barriers between himself and the people; the inference being that the bourgeois intellectual, who is naturally a representative of high-culture, and hence nearly always an outsider with regard to the people, should seek to modify his position from above, in a gesture of utopian solidarity. Following Bergamin in particular, he goes on to talk of the power of language in the formation of a new political and social consciousness, but again sees this in terms of the intellectual's superior powers as a communicator and the possibilities this would open up if he were to commit his aesthetic energies to the popular cause.

Nowhere in his speech does Vallejo return to his earlier beliefs, which had been influenced by Mariátegui, where he saw the need for the intellectual to become rooted in the working class struggle itself. Only from this perspective, he had argued, could one understand the needs, aspirations and

suffering of the masses, and thereby produce literature and ideas which represented a truly popular consciousness. One suspects that like Bergamín, Vallejo was putting forward an argument which he felt, under the circumstances, would best serve the Republican war effort, and this inevitably meant accepting compromise.

Clearly Vallejo's ideological stance, as indicated in the speech he gave at the Writer's Congress must be seen to reflect a degree of compliance with Communist Party strategy at that time. And it would appear that his past experiences as a Party member had instilled in him a greater propensity towards discipline than acts of conscience; especially in situations that required political expediency. However, one should not simply assume on the basis of Vallejo's statements at the Congress, that by 1937 he had begun to accept the Popular Front line. At this time in fact there are no indications that he was still even a Party member, and in the final chapter of this thesis when we look at the poetry he wrote on the Civil War - which he began writing shortly after attending the Congress - it will become clear that he had renounced none of his earlier revolutionary ideas. Why then, one might ask, did he display what seems to be an isolated instance of support for Popular front policy in 1937? As we have already stated, Vallejo may, like Bergamín and several other delegates at the Congress, have been willing to accept a degree of compromise, if he believed that by doing so, he was acting in the best interests of the Republic. Such a claim nevertheless would seem to invite a more detailed consideration of the purpose of the Congress and the composition of its delegates.

Earlier in the chapter it was noted that pragmatism was a vital tool in the implementation of Popular Front strategy, and nowhere was this more so than in the Communist treatment of intellectuals. And, since the emergence of the anti-fascist cultural congresses in the early 1930s the Party consistently attempted to ensure that such events attracted a wide spectrum of intellectual

support. This inevitably meant that those in attendance ranged from committed communists to apolitical liberals, with the middle ground being taken up by fellow-travellers. Despite being united in their fear of fascism, such a broad alliance needed careful management by the communists, who were always very much in the minority. Hence, political issues that were likely to provoke controversy were avoided. In fact so anxious was the Party not to upset the often tenuous support of its delicate bourgeois allies, that overt gestures of politicisation were much frowned upon. For example at the first International Congress of Writers, which was held in Paris in 1935, Gustav Regler delivered a spirited ideological speech which stirred a number of delegates to rise and sing the Internationale; for this he was later sternly reprimanded by fellow Party members, and reminded by a German comrade that, 'we are at present in an under-cover phase. Whoever breaks cover is a counter-revolutionary'.[141]

As we have suggested, Vallejo was probably not a member of the Party at the time of the Second Writers' Congress in Spain, and may even have held political sympathies far to the left of the Popular Front line. However such were the circumstances during the Civil War, that the necessity of attracting and maintaining international intellectual support for the Republic seemed to overshadow some of the gravest political differences on the left. In this context the Congress was divided not only on the question of Gide's book, but also - and perhaps more importantly - between a few politically conscious delegates like Marinello and Vallejo, who along with the hard line Communists like Koltsov, understood events in Spain, and a much larger body of delegates who had recently discovered politics in the face of the fascist threat. This latter group were not aware of the political complexity of the Civil War, and only had a vague understanding of the divisions of the Spanish left. Indeed, even Spender seems to be unsure of the composition of the Republic's supporters, and many delegates may in fact only have heard of the communists in their short political

lives.[142] Under such circumstances the 1937 Writers' Congress could not realistically have become a forum for political debate, and consequently had to be used by the Spanish delegates and other politically conscious intellectuals as simply an opportunity to rally support for the Republic from an influential gathering of distinguished artists and writers.

When considering the contributions of politically conscious - but not necessarily communist- intellectuals at the Congress, one must also remember that to be openly on the left in the mid 1930s was almost synonymous with being sympathetic to the line followed by the Comintern. To be opposed to, or simply outside of, this monolithic body of organised ideology, while still claiming to be on the left, was to step into a political wilderness which held untold dangers. For Gide, dissent had led to intellectual persecution, but for the POUM it had meant political ostracism and the liquidation of some of its members.[143]

Perhaps one should not be too hard on Vallejo's performance at the Writers' Congress considering the above circumstances, along with the general belief among politically informed delegates that a degree of expediency was necessary in the face of war. However, in the light of his knowledge of political events in Spain, and his occasional support, during the 1930s, of individuals and ideas to the left of the official Communist Party line, it is hard to see how his conscience allowed him even to attend a congress which was held under the auspices of a party which still had the blood of POUM militants on its hands.

Throughout this chapter we have considered the complex and often highly charged political environments to which Vallejo was exposed during the first half of the 1930s. But due to the lack of information on his life during this period it has not been possible to make a clear assessment of the political sympathies that he held. From the evidence presented it seems unlikely that

he was, as his wife suggests, a follower of Trotsky, yet Levano's claim that he was one of the Communist Party faithful also seems to be open to question. If Vallejo had not gone on to write his collection of poetry on the Spanish Civil War, his personal political beliefs would continue to remain a subject of much speculation - which indeed still seems to be the case among many critics of his work. But it is in this final book that the politics of expediency that he displayed at the Congress give way to an extraordinary ideological synthesis, which leaves no doubt that its author was a Marxist and a revolutionary

Chapter III - Notes

1. One of the main reasons why Vallejo did not join a French political party of the left at this time may have been due to the fact that after becoming a member of the Peruvian Socialist Party in December 1928 (renamed Communist Party in May 1929) he began to show a renewed interest in returning to Latin America. Some evidence of this is indicated in a letter he wrote to his brother Néstor on his return from his second trip to Russia in which he states:

   'He sufrido mucho. Pero al propio tiempo he aprendido y aprovechado mucho de mi dolor. Sin embargo o, más bien dicho, en consecuencia me parece que debo volver a América a luchar y trabajar públicamente por mi país ... He cambiado mucho: en moral, en conducta, en ideas y hasta físicamente'. Dated 27 October 1929 (Nice), Epistolario general pp.206-207.

2. The final article that he wrote for El Comercio was dated 14 December 1930, and his last contribution to Mundial was 11 January 1930, and Variedades 19 January 1929.

3. His wife Georgette claims that in 1930 he began writing the plays Moscú contra Moscú, Lock-out (written in French and deals with the Paris strikes of 1930), and Mamper, which was destroyed some years later. He also began his collection of political thoughts entitled El arte y la revolución in the same year. See 'Apuntes biográficos', p.119. Further references to Madame de Vallejo's biography of her husband's life in his Obras Completas (Barcelona) will be followed by page numbers in the main text.

4. For an account of this period see David Caute, Communism and the French Intellectuals, pp. 93-94.

5. Larrea adds that Vallejo was accompanied by several other expatriate Peruvians at the station, who were also arrested. Two of these were students, and were released with a warning, but Armando Bazán and Juan Luis Velásquez, who like Vallejo were also members of the PCP, received expulsion orders. All three apparently decided to leave for Madrid. See Juan Larrea, César Vallejo: Poesía Completa (edición crítica y exegética), p.184.

6. Larrea, p.184.

7. See for example J. Veléz and A. Marino, España en César Vallejo, 2 vols (Madrid, 1982), I, p.104. One must also take into account that the Comintern was still in its ultra-left, 'Third Period', at the time of the republican victory in Spain and consequently condemned the return to democracy as 'bourgeois adventurism', and instructed the Spanish Communist Party to remain in total opposition. Vallejo, who was by this time a member of the PCE as well as the Peruvian Communist Party, both of which accepted Comintern leadership, would almost certainly have espoused the Party line even if he did not wholeheartedly agree with it.

Chapter III - Notes

8. 'Vallejo, militante, obrero', pp. 129-130. Levano's evidence in support of this claim is based on the fact that Vallejo had been in Russia in late 1928 at the height of the campaign against Trotsky, and on returning to France indicated in his journalism that he favoured the action that was being taken by Stalin against the left. This evidence though cannot be taken seriously because during the same period Vallejo was also writing articles which attacked Stalin and defended Trotsky. Levano also claims that Mariátegui, who he accepts had considerable influence on Vallejo's thinking, had condemned Trotsky in his writings (p.130). Mariátegui, though, like Vallejo, cannot be seen as an unquestioning supporter of Stalin, and in the months before he died was still sceptical about the PSP's allegiance to the Third International. For a discussion on Mariátegui' political position at this time see Robert J. Alexander, Communism in Latin America (New Jersey (Rutger's U.P.) 1957), p.223.

9. Mariátegui never visited the Soviet Union and devoted very little of his polemical work to developments there. While he was in Europe in the early 1920s the Russian Revolution was still being heralded as the birth of world socialism, and on returning to Peru the information he would have received on the developments under Stalin would probably have been inconsistent, and too inadequate to destroy the perceptions he had formed earlier. The failure of reliable information on developments in the Soviet Union to reach Peru is noted by Ravines, who suggests that the discrepancy between propaganda and reality was considerable (p.114). Mariátegui's willingness to affiliate the Peruvian Socialist Party to the Comintern and take a seemingly pro-Stalinist line in his journalism in the late 1920s may therefore have been based on available information rather than theoretical commitment. It is also worth noting that Antonio Gramsci, whose work had had considerable influence on Mariátegui's thinking, was communicating his opposition to Stalin from his prison cell by 1931. See Isaac Deutscher, The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky 1929-1940 (London, 1963), p.41.

10. See 'Apuntes biográficos', César Vallejo, Obra Poética Completa (Lima), p.53.

11. See Luis García Palacios, Los dirigentes del Partido Comunista al desnudo (Madrid, 1931), p.28. See also Hugh Thomas, The Spanish Civil War (Harmondsworth, 1979) , who suggests that the membership could have been between 120 and 3000 in 1931. The former figure being given by the Comintern and the latter by José Bullejos the Secretary-General of the Party. An accurate estimate was apparently impossible because underground parties did not collect membership dues (p.120). In comparison the membership of the anarchist Confederación Nacional de Trabajo was almost two million, and the socialist trade union movement the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) had more than a million members. E.H. Carr quoting a PSOE leader states that the Communist Party in Spain was 'totally unknown' in the spring of 1930. See The Twilight of the Comintern, 1930-1935 (London, 1982), p.290.

12. Thomas, pp. 116-120.

Chapter III - Notes

13. After General Sanjurjo's attempted 'pronunciamiento' against the Republic in 1932, Bullejos agreed to the launch of the slogan 'Defence of the Republic'. The Comintern agents in Madrid objected and Bullejos and his supporters were sent to Moscow to 'discuss' the matter. Five months later, after a period of unexpected and enforced 'correction' they were allowed back to Spain, reminded that the Republic was the main enemy. All those involved in the incident were expelled from the Party shortly afterwards. See José Bullejos, Europa entre dos guerras (Mexico, 1944), p.112, and also Thomas, p.121. For a further analysis of the arguments which existed within the PCE during the years 1928-1931 see E.H. Carr, pp. 290-299. See also Pelai Pagès, El movimiento trotskista en España 1930-1939 (Barcelona, 1977), pp. 22-70.

14. From August 1926 La Antorcha, which was then the official Spanish Communist Party paper, began to include reasonably objective analyses of the final stages of Stalin's battle to achieve supreme power. Andrade was the principal author of these articles and may have received his information from Andrés Nin who by this time had been living in the Soviet Union for some years. See Pagès, p.37.

15. Pagès, p.49.

16. Victor Serge, Memoirs of a Revolutionary, 1901-1941, translated and edited by Peter Sedgwick (London, 1963), p.245.

17. Trotsky, who by this time was in exile in Turkey, maintained regular correspondence with Nin, whom he upbraided for not breaking away from the 'Federación' to form his own authentic left opposition party. See Pagès, pp. 51-56.

18. The first 'Conferencia' was held in Liege in Belgium in June 1930. See Pagès, pp.67-68.

19. The first five issues of Comunismo were published in Oviedo under the direction of José Loredo Aparicio, but later numbers were produced in Madrid with Juan Andrade as editor (Pagès, p.97). Andrade claims that the journal's circulation was about 1500 and that it was read by sympathizers in the Communist and Socialist parties as well as by members of the 'Oposición' (Pagès, p.98).

20. Pagès, p.100.

21. See E.H. Carr for a short survey of the political ideas of the Left Opposition in Spain at this time (p.299). It was in fact the rigidity of Comintern policy which had caused the initial splits within the PCE, and Nin makes this clear in an article entitled 'La crítica y el comunismo', where he states;

> 'el mayor peligro que el stalinismo representa para el comunismo radica, precisamente, en su aversión a la crítica, en su tendencia a sustituir el análisis y la crítica, que constituyen el alma de marxismo, por un dogmatismo cerrado ...'

He concludes the article with a formula which remained central to 'Oposición' thinking; 'Libertad de discusión: unidad de acción'. El Soviet, 23 June 1932. Cited by Pagès, p.229.

Chapter III - Notes

22. In this sense they rejected the Comintern policy of outright class war and the definition of all non-proletarian elements as 'social fascists'.

23. A complete formulation of the above strategies is to be found in Andre Nin's work El proletariado español ante la revolución (Barcelona, 1931), much of which was clearly influenced by Trotsky's La revolución españoles y sus peligros. Despite the increasing differences of opinion which were developing between the two at this time, Nin continued to admire Trotsky, as well as accepting many of his ideas. For an analysis of the nature of this split see Pagès, pp. 148-152.

24. Pagès. pp. 126-127.

25. Disagreements were however almost entirely over the question of ICE strategy in Spain, and Trotsky's wider analysis of world capitalism was accepted by Nin and others. See Pagès, pp. 222-223.

26. For an estimate of the membership of the 'Oposición' from 1926 to 1930 see Pagès, p.20.

27. Vallejo's role as a tutor of Marxism is mentioned briefly by Larrea (p.185), Georgette de Vallejo (p.125) and J. Vàlez and A. Merino, who give two additional references in the works of Aurora de Albornoz and Victor Fuentes, noting that the latter mentions the poet Serrano Plaja as being a member of one of the Marxist cells that were taught by Vallejo (Vol.I, p.107). This latter information would suggest that his activities as a political tutor were relatively well known and perhaps respected, even though it does not help us to establish the nature of his political sympathies.

28. See Andrés Iduarte, 'César Vallejo', Hora de España, 20 (August, 1938), 17-24).

29. Pagès, p.100.

30. Interview with Alberti, Granada (Spain), May 1983.

31. Apparently the works which he translated were Henri Barbusse's novel, Force (1926) and Marcel Aymé's La Jument vert (1933) and La Rue sans nom (1930), p.122.

32. El tungsteno (Madrid, Editorial Cénit, 1931). Reprint edition in César Vallejo: Obras Completas (Barcelona, Laia, 1976), volume 4.

33. A critical analysis of El tungsteno would not seem essential for the purposes of this thesis, but it should be noted that Vallejo's treatment of the relationship of the Peruvian Indian to primary forms of capitalist production in the novel is much influenced by Mariátegui's thinking on the Indian question, especially as exemplified in his Siete ensayos. Within this context El tungsteno also embodies some analysis of the problem of forming a political consciousness among, what in Marxist terms, would be regarded as backward social elements. Some of the ideas that are expressed in the novel are therefore relevant to Vallejo's perception of the peasantry in his Spanish Civil War poetry, but in spite of the potential importance of this comparison the author feels that such an analysis warrants a separate study.

Chapter III - Notes

34. Rusia en 1931 is a misleading title for a work which was based essentially on observations its author had made in 1928 and 1929. However, Vallejo's publishers may have felt that because 1931 had been such an eventful year in Spanish politics, with a perceptible move to the left in popular opinion, that an up to date account (ostensibly) of developments in Russia - which was still seen as the testing ground for socialism - would be of particular interest, and attract a wide readership.

35. For a list of the publications that carried advertisements for Rusia en 1931 see Willy Pinto Gamboa, César Vallejo: en torno a España (Lima, 1981), p.22.

36. It has also been claimed that between July and October 1931 Rusia en 1931 was an equal 'best-seller' along with Remarque's All's Quiet on the Western Front, see J. Vélez and A. Merino, I, 109.

37. Cited by Pinto Gamboa, p.22.

38. See for example Leopoldo Panero Torbado, 'Rusia y la imparcialidad. En torno a un libro de César Vallejo', El Sol (Madrid), 18 August 1931, p.2.

39. Vallejo's failure to mention the political struggles within the Party or consider the prospects for Soviet society under Stalin, leads to a peculiar situation in which the reader feels that the revolutionary process is almost completely autonomous of its leaders. And, when he does name such figures as Lenin, Stalin and Trotsky he places them all together as servants of the Revolution; perhaps forgetting that by 1931 Stalin had repudiated many of Lenin's ideas and forced Trotsky into exile. Rusia en 1931, re-print edition (Lima, 1965), pp.110-121. Later in the book he even goes on to quote Trotsky with apparent approval (p.146).

40. The American writer Waldo Frank, for example, on a visit to Russia in 1932 recalls that on reaching the first Sovietrailway station he got out onto a deserted platform and looked up at the train's engineer who he describes as 'the first lord I had seen of the new kingdom of labour'. Cited by David Caute, The Fellow Travellers (London, 1973), p.63.

41. On being asked by one of his guides what had impressed him most about the Soviet Union Vallejo answered without hesitation: 'Las masas obreras', and when prompted to give a second choice simply replied: 'La esperanza y la fe que las anima' (pp. 104-105). See also the comments he makes on the differences between workers in capitalist countries and the Soviet Union (p.105).

42. Vallejo claims that while he was in Russia he went to see some of Eisenstein's films with Mayakovsky, and it is conceivable that the two may have discussed the possibilities of introducing a similar 'estética del trabajo' into poetry (p.215). Vallejo's enthusiasm for Eisenstein's work was apparently shared by few other Latin American intellectuals.

Chapter III - Notes

43. For a short account of his trip see André Coyné, 'César Vallejo, vida y obra', in Cesar Vallejo: El escritor y la crítica edited by Julio Ortega (Madrid, 1974), p.45.

44. Georgette de Vallejo, Introduction to Rusia ante el Segundo Plan Quinquenal (Lima, 1965), p.1.

45. Reference to the First Five Year Plan as the 'second revolution' is to be found in Isaac Deutscher, Stalin: a Political Biography, revised edition (Bungay (Suffolk), 1966), p.296. Deutscher also gives an excellent account of the implementation of the Plan (pp. 320-342).

46. The era of the first Five Year Plans was in fact the period when the Soviet Union began to attract increasing support from foreign intellectuals. André Gide, Bernard Shaw, Louis Fischer, Stephen Spender, Henri Barbusse and many more visited Russia in the early 1930s and approved of what they saw. Few at this time were critical. See David Caute, The Fellow Travellers, pp. 64-66.

47. Again he sees the developments that were taking place as the embodiment of Marxist theory. Hence, while in the early stages of the revolution he accepts the necessity for 'rigid' State power, he also notes that, 'en Rusia, la dictadura proletaria y hasta el Estado, son provisorios y tienden a destruirse a sí mismos, junto con las normas de fuerza que les son propias' (p.13). Then talking of the numerous State controls over the economy he continues, '... independencia ... esto es y debe ser el destino de todos las actividades e intereses sociales: liberarse del Estado'(p.26).

48. Henri Barbusse also visited Dniepropetrovsk in the early 1930s and recorded his impressions in his book entitled Stalin, translated by Vyvyan Holland (London, 1935), p.206.

49. Stalin's call for industrialization first fired the imagination of the urban working classes, it is they who had seen the most benefits of the Revolution during the second half of the 1920s; cheap housing and food, guaranteed employment and opportunities for further education gave them every reason to believe the propaganda to which they were constantly exposed. The younger generation especially, cherished the dream of Russia becoming 'another America', a socialist America, and with their recently obtained qualifications and boundless optimism they became the driving force behind the 'second revolution'; see Deutscher , p.329. These new technocrats swarmed to projects like Dniepropetrovsk where the 'new world' was being created, and obsessed with the possibilities of the future they were often impervious to the suffering and injustice of the present. Throughout Rusia ante el Segundo Plan Quinquenal Vallejo gives clear indications of the above process but he does not comment on it specifically.

50. Georgette de Vallejo, p.127.

Chapter III - Notes

51. Georgette de Vallejo, p.127. See also the letter Vallejo sent to Gerardo Diego dated 27 January 1932 in which he states,

> Lorca ha sido muy bueno conmigo y hemos visto a Camila Quiroga, para su comedia [Colacho hermanos], sin éxito. La encuentra fuera de su estilo. Vamos a ver en otro teatro. Además, Lorca me dice, con mucha razón, que hay que corregir varios pasajes de la comedia, antes de ofrecerla a otro teatro. Yo no sirvo para hacer cosas para el público, está visto. Sólo la necesidad económica me obliga a ello ... ¿A qué escribir, si no hay editores? No hay más que escribir y guardar los manuscritos con cerrojo. (Epistolario general, pp. 242-243).

52. Rafael Alberti in his work, La arboleda perdida : memorias (Buenos Aires, 1959), for example, gives a comprehensive account of intellectual life in Spain in the 1930s, and mentions almost all the people Vallejo was supposed to have known but only refers once briefly to the Peruvian himself (p.284). In an interview with the author of this thesis in 1983, Alberti stated however that he had known Vallejo since 1928 when he met him in Paris, and that they saw each other frequently during the period the latter lived in Spain. In retrospect he felt that Vallejo was the greatest of the Spanish Civil War poets. Obviously Alberti had not realized Vallejo's potential while he was alive.

53. For an excellent short survey of the European political and intellectual climate of the interwar years, with special references to Spain, and the increasing social commitment of a generation of Spanish poets and writers, see the chapter entitled 'España y Europa 1900-1936: el clima en que surge el compromiso' in J. Lechner, El compromiso en la poesía española del siglo XX, 3 vols (University of Leiden, Holland, 1968), I, 22-37.

54. See for example 'Wilson y la vida ideal de la ciudad', Mundial, 5 February 1926, pp.32-33.

55. El compromiso en la poesía española del siglo XX, I, 41-64.

56. For an account of Alberti's involvement in political protest during the latter years of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera see La arboleda perdida: memorias, pp.282-284. His first poetic work which reflects his developing political consciousness was entitled Elegía cívica and was published in January 1930. Alberti notes in his memoirs that this date also marked the beginning of serious political commitment in his life (p.316).

57. Cited by Lechner, p.67.

58. Poetas españoles contemporáneos (Madrid, 1952), p.173; also quoted in Lechner, I, p.77.

59. Cited by Lechner, I, p.77.

Chapter III - Notes

60. Vallejo's observations on the role of the theatre in the political struggle are to be found in a number of articles that he wrote in 1930; see especially 'El nuevo teatro ruso', Nosotros (Buenos Aires), 266 (1931), 27-38. See also his section on Soviet theatre in Rusia en 1931. pp. 126-127. One must also take into account the comments he made on the cinema between 1929-1931, and particularly his section on Eisenstein's films entitled, 'El cinema - Rusia inaugura una nueva era en la pantalla' in Rusia en 1931. pp. 215-225. It is interesting to note that the Spanish public had been particularly enthusiastic about motion-pictures since the late 1920s, and in 1930 there were more cinemas in Spain than in France according to Thomas (p.29). In an interview with the author of this thesis in May 1983 (Granada), Aurora de Albornoz stated that many playwrights in the early 1930s, including Lorca, showed an increasing interest in the cinema as an art form, and as a means of mass communication.

61. Lorca's mobile theatre 'La Barraca', was extremely popular in the years before the Spanish Civil War. For a short assessment of the political content of Lorca's productions see Lechner, p.77. Lechner also includes some statements made by Lorca himself on the objectives of 'La Barraca', p.139 (note 3).

62. For Lorca's comments on Alberti's poetry see Lechner, p.73.

63. Epistolario general. pp. 243-244.

64. Noted by Angel Flores, pp. 117-118.

65. See César Vallejo: Poesía Completa. pp.173-177.

66. One assumes from the comments made by Georgette that they were obliged, for economic reasons, to move out of the apartment she had inherited on the rue Moliere into more modest accommodation. However, it seems that the apartment was not sold as Larrea suggests but rented out in order to provide a reliable income (p. 173). In 1934 Georgette found work in the 'Conservatoire des Artes et Métiers', which allowed them to enjoy a slightly more comfortable existence (Larrea, p. 187). Apparently Vallejo himself failed to find regular work from when he returned to Paris until his death in 1938.

67. Coyné, 'César Vallejo, vida y obra', p.47.

68. Georgette de Vallejo, p.176.

69. Larrea, p.187. The author has been unable to locate this publication and therefore cannot comment on the content of Vallejo's article nor the precise political stance of the periodical.

70. Written in Paris, and dated 25 December 1935, Epistolario general, pp. 258-259. In an earlier letter to Larrea dated 23 November 1935 he refers to Alberti in terms that would indicate his disapproval of the latter's style in adopting the revolutionary cause; he states, 'Alberti volvió de América, triunfal, gordo y más revolucionario que nunca', Epistolario general. p.256.

Chapter III - Notes

71. Describing Vallejo's frustration during these years at being unable to find a publisher for his work his wife recalls him stating,'¿A qué escribir poemas? ¿Para qué y para quién? ¿Para el cajón?', and she also points to the line in his poem 'Los nuevos monstruos', which was written at this time; 'Y, ya no puedo más con tanto cajón ...'(p.181).

72. For an account of this demonstration see Edward Mortimer, pp. 236-237.

73. Trotsky, in a widely publicized article, denounced Stalin for his open abandonment of 'proletarian internationalism' for 'social patriotism'. E. H. Carr, The Twilight of the Comintern: 1930-1935, p. 151. Carr also points out that 'henceforth world revolution became an article in a creed ritualistically recited on solemn public occasions, but no longer an item of living faith or a call to action' (p.151).

74. A more plausible reason for the non-participation of the PCF in the coalition was that the political situation in France did not correspond to the conditions laid down by the seventh World Congress of the Comintern (July 1935) for the formation of an anti fascist people's front government, which presumed a situation of near collapse of bourgeois democracy in the face of fascist advances. See Mortimer, p.265.

75. Mortimer, pp. 260-264.

76. Letter dated 31 January 1936 (Paris), Epistolario general, p. 260.

77. Letter dated 13 March 1936 (Paris), Epistolario general, p.261.

78. Vallejo was one of the founder-members of the 'Comités de la defensa de la República española' and helped publish (along with Pablo Neruda, David Alfaro Siqueiros, García Monge of Costa Rica and Aníbal Ponce) a mimeographed sheet entitled Nuestra España. See Georgette de Vallejo, p. 184 and Jean Franco, p.227.

79. Georgette goes on to say that Vallejo also wrote a series of articles supporting the revolutionary cause in Spain and denouncing the policy of Non-Intervention on which the European democracies had agreed. These articles, she claims, were delivered by Vallejo to the headquaters of the Committee for the Defence of the Republic, which was the central point from where pro-republican propaganda was distributed, but on finding no one in the office he left his work in Pablo Neruda's desk. Some months later his articles were still in the same place and were eventually to disappear without trace (p. 185).

80. Letter dated 28 October 1936 (Paris), Epistolario general, pp. 262-263.

81. Larrea, p.190.

82. Larrea, p.192, Georgette de Vallejo, p.187, Monguió, p.40.

83. The author favours the latter claim due to the fact that it is also supported by Alberti, who stated in an interview in 1983 that he remembers meeting Vallejo in Madrid in December 1936.

Chapter III - Notes

84. The main reason for this unprecedented act of compliance with State political authority on the part of an anarchist movement, was the alarming extent of disorganization which existed in Barcelona by September 1936. At the beginning of the Civil War the anarchists had seized power in the streets and began to organize factory production and distribution along libertarian lines. They refused though to recognise the importance of the existant State apparatus, and almost suicidally failed to take over the banking system which even though weak in Catalonia would have given their revolution a degree of autonomy.

By the autumn of 1936 it became apparent to many anarchist leaders that seizure of de facto power was insufficient to guarantee survival, and the masses needed some form of co-ordinated leadership which only a government could provide. It was also very clear by this time that the recently formed Popular Front government (August 1936) headed by Largo Caballero, would continue to starve Catalonia of arms and other forms of support while the anarchists refused to collaborate with the 'Generalitat'.

For a detailed account of the political situation in Barcelona during the first months of the Civil War see Ronald Fraser, Blood of Spain: The Experience of the Civil War, 1936-1939 (Bungay, Suffolk, 1979), pp.179-187.

85. The POUM's relationship with the International Trotskyist Movement should not be overstressed. Disagreements had existed since the early 1930s between Trotsky and the anti-Stalinist left in Spain, and at no point could relations have been worse than when the POUM entered the 'Generalitat'. See Thomas, p.523. A further source of discontent for the communists was the POUM newspaper La Batalla, which made regular references to the Purges in the Soviet Union, which the Comintern was anxiously attempting to dismiss as fascist (Trotskyist) propaganda. In mid December the communists had their first successful attack on the POUM by securing their expulsion from the 'Generalitat'. See Fraser p. 591 .

86. The POUM attracted particular attention and support from the intellectual left of European socialist parties such as the British Independent Labour Party; see the comments made by Bernard Crick in George Orwell: A Life (London, 1980), p. 209. POUM sympathizers were also to be found among those supporters of Trotsky who were more sensitive to events in Spain than their mentor; see for example Victor Serge, Memoirs of a Revolutionary, pp. 335-336. Thomas also points out that 'foreigners in Barcelona joined the POUM in the romantic supposition that it embodied a magnificent utopian aspiration' (p. 302).

87. Interview with Antonio Rodríguez Espinola, Sarlat la Caneda (Southern France), March 1983. Espinola's parents - both anarchists - left Andalusia during the 1920s to find work in Barcelona. Antonio joined the anarchists in the early 1930s but with the outbreak of the Civil War he became a member of the youth movement of the POUM, the 'Juventud Comunista Ibérica'. Part of his work was to meet foreign visitors and

Chapter III - Notes

introduce them to POUM leaders in Barcelona and he remembers taking a Peruvian called Vallejo to see Nin in late 1936.

During the purges of the POUM Rodríguez Espínola left Barcelona and lived for some time with relatives in Aragon before crossing into France. From 1941 to the end of the Second World War he fought with the French Resistance, and in the 1950s worked with the clandestine anti-Franco broadcasting organization 'Radio Pirineos'.

88. Bernard Crick states that Orwell arrived in Barcelona on the 26 December 1936, which was probably the day Vallejo set out from Barcelona to Madrid (p.208). However, Vallejo returned to Paris via Barcelona and according to Rodríguez Espinola it was during the last days of 1936 that he took him to see Nin. Had Vallejo decided then to take up arms for the cause he so dearly believed in, the chances are he would have joined the same battalion as Orwell, who at that time was collecting his kit from the POUM barracks.

89. The Nationalists began a heavy bombing campaign against Madrid on 29 October 1936. During the next few days the small towns to the east were taken by the advancing forces and on the 4 November the airport at Getafe fell. Two days later fighting was taking place in the outskirts of the city and despite the successes of the newly arrived Russian tanks and aircraft, the Nationalist forces seemed poised for victory. Fearing an impending collapse of the Republican lines, Largo Caballero's government left the capital for Valencia, handing over to General Miaja the responsibility of forming a 'junta' of defence with representatives from the Popular Front parties (except the POUM which was vetoed by the increasingly powerful communists). It was at this critical moment that the first units of the International Brigades arrived. They were composed mainly of German and French volunteers but with the German battalion were a number of British machine-gunners, including the poet John Cornford, who was later killed.

By the 23 November after more than two weeks of intense fighting the Nationalist advance was checked and both armies, having reached a state of almost total exhaustion, began to dig trenches and fortifications in preparation for a protracted war; smaller, but equally fierce battles continued however to be fought along the Madrid front line for some months after. See Thomas for a detailed description of the defence of Madrid, pp. 467-497; and Fraser, pp. 258-271.

90. See Homage to Catalonia, for a description of revolutionary Barcelona in December 1936, pp. 8-9.

91. See L'Espoir (1938) translated Days of Hope by Stuart Gilbert and Alistair Macdonald (London, 1968), for descriptions of Madrid (pp. 3-30) and Barcelona (pp. 30-44) during the early part of the Civil War.

92. The Great Crusade (New York, 1940).

93. This article is included in Juan Larrea, César Vallejo o Hispanoamérica en la Cruz de su razón (Córdoba (Argentina), 1957), pp. 165-175; and in A. Merino and J. Vélez, II, 32.

Chapter III - Notes

94. A. Marino and J. Vélez, II, 32.

95. He continues: 'The Anarchists were still in virtual control of Catalonia and the revolution was still in full swing. To anyone who had been there since the beginning it probably seemed even in December or January that the revolutionary period was ending; but when one came straight from England the aspect of Barcelona was something startling and overwhelming. It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle.' (p.6)

96. World within World: An Autobiography of Stephen Spender (London, 1951) p.187.

97. For an account of the impact of the Spanish Civil War on the intellectual atmosphere of the 1930s see the Introduction ('Spain an Apocalyptic Moment', pp. xvii-xxvi) to Murry Sperber, And I Remember Spain: A Spanish Civil War Anthology (London, 1974).

98. 'Los enunciados populares de la guerra española', A. Marino and J. Vélez, II, 35.

99. See especially Part One, 'The Party and the Intellectuals', pp. 23-56.

100. These figures are given by Caute, p.25.

101. In a rather cynical but perhaps accurate commentary on the Party's attitude towards intellectuals in Russia Arthur Koestler has written: 'A special feature of Party life at that period was the cult of the proletarian and the abuse of the intelligentsia ... We had to be tolerated because Lenin had said so, and because Russia could not do without the doctors, engineers and scientists of the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia ...'. See The God That Failed, edited by Richard Crossman, (New York, 1959), p.42.

102. Barbusse had in fact been organizing anti-fascist meetings among intellectuals since the mid 1920s, but only during the early 1930s did his activities begin to attract interest from the Comintern, who now saw him as the ideal mouthpiece through which the Party could approach the left-leaning, non-Party intellectuals, whose support might be obtained for the defence of the Soviet Union against imperialist aggression (this being the first tactical stance against fascism). The First International Congress against Imperialist War, which met in Amsterdam in August 1932, attracted a wide range of intellectuals from all over the world (Rafael Alberti was among the Spanish representatives), and must have been regarded by its organizers, amongst whom Barbusse was the most prominent, as a considerable success. During the proceedings a world committee against Imperialist War was set up - generally referred to as the 'Amsterdam Movement' - with national and local branches. In June 1933 a second Congress was held in the Salle Pleyel in Paris where the movement renamed itself the 'World Committee for the Struggle against War and Fascism' (Comité Amsterdam-Pleyel). Unlike the A.E.A.R. this movement was aimed at attracting intellectuals in general rather than

Chapter III - Notes

writers and artists alone; see Mortimer, p.193. In 1933 several surrealists including André Breton, Eluard and Benjamin Peret criticized Barbusse and Romain Rolland for organizing the Amsterdam-Pleyel meetings, saying that a united front of intellectuals against fascism was directly in conflict with the notion of class struggle; see Jean Franco, César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence, p.225.

103. See Caute, p.113.

104. The Party General Secretary, Maurice Thorez, even though himself of strictly proletarian origins and a product of the hard line Comintern strategy of the late 1920s, continued to show considerable foresight in his dealings with intellectuals. And, in January 1934, over a year before the official adoption of a Popular Front strategy by Moscow, he was calling in the pages of L'Humanité for workers and intellectuals to unite with other exploited classes against fascism. See Caute, p.27.

105. Accurate figures are difficult to obtain concerning the movement of intellectuals towards communism in the 1930s, both in the form of new Party members and as 'fellow travellers'. Citing from a speech by Georges Cogniot to the Central Committee of the PCF in July 1937, David Caute talks of the '"thousands" of intellectuals who had now joined the Party' (p.27). The PCF election manifesto of 1936 also refers to a '"galaxy of intellectuals and representatives of learning who, forced with the decadence of our country, are turning more and more to the great ideal which is communism"' (The defence of French culture was a favourite theme with the PCF throughout the Popular Front period). See Edward Mortimer, p.259. In other European countries where the communists had not been crushed a similar process seems to have taken place, especially in Spain.

106. This being especially true in France where intellectuals tend to be held in higher esteem by the community in general than in other European countries.

107. The extent of the commitment of some intellectuals to Soviet policy and Stalin's leadership was at times almost inexplicable; for example Romain Rolland, who had vehemently defended the case for intellectual detachment in his work Au-dessus de la Mêlée (1914) was, by 1937, defending the 'necessity' of the Moscow Trials. This latter position though cannot be seen as simply another case of intellectual naivety, because after visiting Russia in 1935 he had displayed no illusions in his private diary that a state of terror was in operation under Stalin. Cited by Frank Field in 'European Writers in the 1930s', a seminar recorded for Sussex Tapes (Wakefield, 1971).

Perhaps only the fear of fascism could have driven intellectuals to accept such a dangerous compromise. Many though remained oblivious to what was happening in Russia in the 1930s and simply relied on the reports of those who had witnessed the 'Soviet experiment', thereby making the position of writers like Rolland even more contemptible.

Chapter III - Notes

108. Works which deal with this topic at some length include David Caute's two books The Fellow Travellers and Communism and the French Intellectuals. In this latter work see especially the chapter entitled 'Intellectuals and the Party'. See also Frank Field, Three French Writers and the Great War (London, 1975).

109. Mundial. 7 April 1928, 18-21.

110. Caute, p.30.

111. Among the figures Roussot quotes to support his argument he indicates that in 1931 out of 7000 professional musicians in Paris, 600 were unemployed, and 1200 only partially employed. Cited by Caute, p.31.

112. Cited by Caute, p. 31.

113. Caute cites the case of Marcel Cohen, the Professor of Oriental Languages at the Sorbonne, who reported after one such visit, that a Soviet Professor 'normally had an "easy life" and that a lecturer could expect to earn a good wage' (p.32).

114. Apparently, Karl Kautsky's article, 'Intellectuals under Socialism', in which he relates and develops Marx's stance on this topic, was widely read among left-wing intellectuals during the 1930s. See The Intellectuals, edited by G.B. de Huszar (Glencoe, 1960), pp. 332-333.

115. The Revolution was welcomed by a great many french intellectuals from its earliest days, while the working class and the mass of socialist militants remained almost indifferent until the war had ended. See Caute p.66. For Victor Serge, for example, Russia in 1917 became his '...Holy Land, the focus of his emotions and his reason. See Memoirs of a Revolutionary, p.73.

116. One must alsoremember in this context that the Revolution had in fact triumphed in non-Marxist historical circumstances, and for many years seemed to be pursuing its own unique form of existence. This process gave enormous hope for both Marxists and idealists alike who saw Russia creating a new society out of what seemed to be sheer will-power, and they consequently often saw themselves as observers and intellectual guardians of an unprecedented social experiment, rather than looking at events with a critical objectivity.

117. This was true for the right as well as the left, for example, the German writer Ernst Junger in his work Storm of Steel talked of a new race that had been born in the trenches; a race of warriors who had forged new heroic values through the violence and camaraderie of war. Fascism, in fact, as a developing ideology in the 1920s saw among its first enemies, the democratic ideals of nineteenth century liberalism.

Chapter III - Notes

118. The sense of having broken with the past was further accentuated by the failure of liberal intellectuals to continue openly supporting their beliefs. For example, the great liberal writer E. M. Forster remained silent during the 1930s, emphasizing to others the bankruptcy of an ideology that could not even find serious intellectual advocate,

119. The Congress brought together 230 delegates from 38 countries including Aldous Huxley, Heinrich Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Waldo Frank, Boris Pasternak and Ilya Ehrenburg. Vallejo did not attend but as Jean Franco points out he must have been aware of the debates which took place and which were recorded in Commune and other left-wing journals (p. 226). See also Lechner, p.145 for an account of the Congress.

120. Lechner, pp. 165-166.

121. Repertorio Americano (San José, Costa Rica), 196 (March 1937), 13-15. Reprinted in Pinto Gamboa, pp. 85-87.

122. Pinto Gamboa, p.85.

123. The locations and dates of the Congress sessions are given in Jean Lacouture, André Malraux (Paris, 1973), p.253.

124. A list of the most eminent delegates is included in J. Vélez and A. Marino, I, 117-119.

125. Stephen Spender, World Within World (Autobiography) (London, 1946), pp. 238-247. Pablo Neruda, Memoire, pp. 130-133. Mikhail Koltsov, Diario de la guerra de España (Paris, 1963), p.431. Ilya Ehrenburg, The Eve of War (Men, Years and Life, Vol. IV), (London, 1963), p.408.

126. Accounts of the Congress with records of the proceedings and transcripts of some of the speeches can be found in Commune, 48 and 49 (1937) and Hora de España, 8 (1937). A short review of the Congress is also given in Left Review (September 1937).

127. For a comprehensive account of Malraux's attendance at the Writers' Congress of 1937 see Robert S. Thornberry André Malraux et l'Espagne, Histoire des Idées et Critique Littéraire, 166 (Geneva, 1977), pp. 65-69.

128. See 'André Malraux à Madrid', Commune (September, 1937), pp. 41-43. This speech was also published in the Madrid daily newspaper ABC, 8 July 1937.

129. Many of the ideas Malraux puts forward in this speech are much elaborated in his novel on the Civil War, L'Espoir.

Chapter III - Notes

130. The term 'pueblo' is peculiar in its range of meaning to the Spanish language, and has a particular relevance in Spain. The dictionary definition indicates that it signifies 'people' in the sense 'el pueblo español' or 'el pueblo inglés; it can also therefore mean 'the nation', as in the expression 'la voluntad del pueblo' (the nation's will). A second tier of meaning exists in which 'pueblo' is the term used to refer to a village, a small town; and especially one situated in the country, but it may also be applied in a more coloquial sense to anyone's native town, even in some cases large cities. Finally within the strictures of a dictionary definition 'pueblo' can also indicate, in a slightly perjorative sense, the common people or the lower orders.

Beyond the relatively clear meanings suggested above, there exists a more complex and almost indefinable range of associations which are deeply rooted in Spanish history and culture. Indirectly the term is linked with the resistance of Spaniards to invaders and subjugation by foreign powers. In this sense the idea of the 'people' enduring siege and occupation goes back to the Moorish invasion, and the seven-hundred years of 'reconquista', and perhaps even tentatively to the Roman siege of the city of Numancia in which all the inhabitants committed suicide in preference to surrender. In Spanish literature the term 'pueblo' was first used in such early works as La celestina and El libro de buen amor, and referred to a world of folk and street culture, which, by the seventeenth century became associated with the concept of the 'pícaro' - a rogue with origins in the common people who observed a corrupt but definable code of conduct. After centuries of treatment by Spanish writers, the 'pueblo' as a tangible popular force found what seemed to be its own identity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century conflicts with France. During these struggles the 'people' formed the backbone of resistance against the invading forces and became, as they did again during the Civil War, an international symbol of the struggle for liberation from oppression and dictatorial power. The historical circumstances were however immensely different between the two periods, and during the wars with France the 'pueblo', as portrayed by Goya, can be seen as a heroic but reactionary force, trapped by its own ignorance and submission to the anachronistic values of Spanish society.

Despite its unusual and varied history the myth of the 'pueblo' came again to the fore during the Civil War, and as always referred to the lower orders, which in modern terms were now the working classes. However, in a country where the majority of those who laboured did so on the land, and were not yet widely seen as proletarians, the appellation and concept of 'pueblo', with its long tradition in Spanish culture, may have seemed the most appropriate term to define those engaged in the popular resistance against fascism.

131. A transcript of Machado's speech can be found in Hora de España, 8 (1937), pp.203-211.

132. Hora de España, 8, pp.222-228.

133. Hora de España, 8, pp. 228-230 (p.230).

Chapter III - Notes

134. Julian Benda, who was one of the most extraordinary examples of an elitist intellectual being drawn towards political commitment in the mid 1930s, gave a particularly enthusiastic rendering of this argument in the speech he gave to the Congress. In adopting this position he was able to claim some vindication for his work La trahison des clercs, which had been written in the 1920s, and had been avowedly elitist in its defence of the intellectual's right to remain above politics. See Hora de España. 8 (1937), pp. 21-24.

135. Hora de España. 8, 48-52 (p.49). Others were not so implicit, but their speeches often contained unmistakable examples of Popular Front rhetoric. Julian Benda for instance states, in complete contrast to the position he had held in the 1920s, 'yo digo que el intelectual está encuadrado perfectamente en su papel cuando sale de su torre de marfil para defender los derechos de la justicia contra la barbarie' (p.91)

136. Stephen Spender, for example, states in his autobiography that he had been among those who had supported Gide at the Congress, (p. 248) yet the speech he gave does not mention the latter, and in true Popular Front spirit he emphasizes the need for the intellectuals, whom he refers to as 'nosotros, los del movimiento revolucionario' to act against fascism, and like Ehrenburg gives particular praise to those who had taken up arms. See Hora de España. 8,62-64.

Many years later in a seminar entitled 'Literature and Politics in the 1930s' (recorded for Sussex Tapes, 1971), which was held at the University of Sussex, Spender recalls that on returning from the Writers' Congress in Spain he had a discussion with Auden and they both agreed that even under circumstances of extreme exigence the intellectual could never be justified in telling or condoning lies. Clearly the atmosphere at the Congress was not conducive to expressing such arguments publicly

137. World Within World. p.241.

138. During the University of Sussex seminar, Spender gave an account of Bergamin's stance towards Retour de l'U.R.S.S. at the Congress, and while disagreeing with his criticisms of Gide was sympathetic to his overall position.

139. César Vallejo, The Dialectics of Language and Silence, p. 229. Vallejo's speech was published in El Mono Azul, 4 (1939), pp. 103-106. It is also reproduced in Willy Pinto Gamboa, César Vallejo: en torno a España. pp. 32-35.

140. Pinto Gamboa, p.32.

141. Cited by Caute, The Fellow Travellers . p.143.

142. George Orwell, perhaps the most informed of British intellectuals on the Civil War, attempted to expose the machinations of the communists in Barcelona when he returned to England, but his articles were rejected, even by the New Statesman. This is undoubtedly a reflection of the naivety of the left-wing British intelligentsia with regard to events in Spain.

Chapter III - Notes

143. As communist power increased during the Civil War, their campaigns against the POUM and its revolutionary strategies intensified. Since the early months of the war the communists had waged a propaganda battle against the POUM and denounced its leaders as fascist agents, but it was not until mid 1937 that they judged their position strong enough to take final action. In May communist pressure had secured the banning of the POUM's paper La Batalla, and the following month forty members of the party's central committee were arrested, and its remaining battalions at the front disbanded. Among those arrested was Andrés Nin who was immediately taken to a secret communist prison. Nin's disappearance led to a widespread campaign both in Spain and internationally - where he was one of the most well known and highly respected intellectuals in the Spanish revolutionary movement - to find his whereabouts. By July it was clear that he had been murdered by his gaolers. Nin's death and the suppression of the POUM was viewed with revulsion by the non-communist left in Spain and Europe, and along with the purges in Russia forced many intellectuals like Orwell to totally reject the cause of Soviet Communism. Vallejo who had visited POUM headquaters in December 1936, must have known what was going on in Barcelona at the time the Writers' Congress was being held, but he, like a number of other delegates who were in the same position, chose to remain silent. For an account of the purge of the POUM see Thomas, pp. 701-709; see also Orwell, who had fought in a POUM battalion and was in Barcelona when the communists launched their final attack. (Homage to Catalonia, pp.116-221).

CHAPTER IV

CESAR VALLEJO: POET OF REVOLUTION

In previous chapters we have outlined the historical circumstances, both in Latin America and Europe, in which Vallejo's political consciousness was formed, and also considered the impact of the works of a number of radical intellectuals on his thinking. The conclusions which have been reached from the above study suggest that throughout the 1930s, until his death in 1938, Vallejo held a Marxist view of the world, and was particularly influenced by those contemporary interpretations of Marx which continued to emphasise the indispensability of revolutionary struggle for the effective transformation of society along socialist lines.

In this final chapter an attempt will be made to show how those radical ideas which Vallejo absorbed during the last decade of his life were incorporated in his poetry. In undertaking such a task it has been decided to concentrate on one poem, namely the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' from the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz. This decision has been made for a number of reasons; firstly the poem in question offers a powerful and integrated representation of many of the political and intellectual ideas which Vallejo had been exploring in his writing, and especially in his journalism, since the late 1920s. Secondly, because of its highly charged political orientation, along with the fact that it was written towards the end of his life, the poem incorporates a number of Marxist ideas which are not to be found in his other writings, and would seem therefore to reflect

the progress in his political thinking during the mid 1930s, when hardly any of his work was being published. And, in no other poem or piece of writing that Vallejo produced in Europe does the influence of José Carlos Mariátegui stand out more clearly. Thirdly, the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', unlike the rest of the Spain collection, attempts to compress the whole of the Civil War, and its significance, into one epic poem rather than dealing with separate aspects of the conflict. As such it presents a complex artistic rendition of intellectual ideas, historical reality and human sacrifice, which are in turn bound together in an extraordinary synthesis. Lastly, the object of this thesis, as stated in the Introduction, is not to analyse Vallejo's poetry from a political, or any other standpoint, but to show how his belief in a radical mode of action and thought became incorporated in his art: to represent this case the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' offers the finest example. However, to attempt to understand this one poem in isolation from the rest of Vallejo's poetry would be a futile task, and therefore frequent reference will be made throughout this chapter to other poems in the collection <u>España, aparta de mí este cáliz</u>, as well as his wider body of European poetry that is included under the general title of <u>Poemas humanos</u>.

Before engaging in a detailed analysis of the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República', some consideration will also be given to the politically committed poetry that emerged in Spain during the 1930s, and which found unprecedented popularity during the Civil War. Those Spanish poets who committed themselves and their work to the Republican cause were held in great esteem by Vallejo, and his own poems on the war must be seen - perhaps more than the work of any other Latin American or European poet who sympathized with the Republic - in the context of this new radical poetic genre. Finally, Vallejo's frequent inclusion of religious imagery in his poetry will also be considered briefly before exploring the importance of political ideas in his work.

'The Poet in the Street': Popular Art in the Republican Camp during the Spanish Civil War

The poems which are included in the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, even in view of their clear political commitment, are generally of a higher artistic quality, and representative of a more complex poetic style, than most of the popular poetry which was written in Spain in support of the Republican cause during the Civil War. However, Vallejo's work does show that he was influenced by the politically engaged Spanish poetry of the period - which was produced by all classes of Spaniards, including intellectuals, workers, and combatants - and this is reflected most importantly in the fact that his Spain poems were written to be read by the troops at the front, and were therefore intended to serve a popular purpose. Furthermore, Vallejo was well aware of the influence and political importance of popular art during the Civil War, and his poems often incorporate some of the common images, ideas, and slogans which characterized much of the pro-Republican poetry of the time. Finally, the irresistible example of poets like Rafael Alberti and Miguel Hernández, who had taken their work into the streets and to the battlefront, undoubtedly inspired Vallejo to submit his own work to the cause.

As indicated in the previous chapter, Vallejo had been living in Spain in the early 1930s when the first attempts were being made by poets like Alberti to commit their work to the political struggle. And, while there is no evidence to suggest that these developments had a direct effect on Vallejo's own poetry he must have observed the experiments of his Spanish contemporaries with some interest. This interest may, in fact, have been sustained after he returned to Paris in 1932, through a number of newly founded Spanish literary journals which accepted, or were devoted to, the publication of committed poetry. One particularly radical example of this genre was the periodical Octubre which not only published the work of left-wing poets like Alberti and Prados, both

of whom were on its editorial board, but also openly declared its purpose to be 'contra la guerra imperialista, por la defensa de la Unión Soviética, contra el fascismo, con el proletariado'.[1] Octubre only ran to six numbers (published spasmodically between June 1933 and April 1934) but attracted wide ranging international support, and included articles by eminent intellectuals like Barbusse, Aragon, Gide and Lunatcharsky. Vallejo was not among Octubre's contributors but his novel El tungsteno was included in a list of recommended books that the journal's editors felt 'el proletariado no debe ignorar'.[2] For this reason, and because of Octubre's appeal among European anti-fascist intellectuals, one suspects that Vallejo subscribed to the journal. This being the case he could not have failed to be fascinated - even though perhaps not convinced - by those statements which emphasized Octubre's commitment to 'proletarian literature', and its aim to serve as a forum for a new emerging popular culture.[3]

During the years 1934 and 1935 when the Republican government was dominated by the forces of the right - and especially after the defeat of the Asturian miners in October 1934 - political censorship, and the vicious repression that was unleashed on the supporters of the left, made it almost impossible for such journals as Octubre to survive.[4] But, by this time, international interest in Spain had begun to increase and the silencing of her radical artists was now seen by many members of the European intelligentsia, including Vallejo, as part of a wider struggle between fascism and democracy. Regarding Vallejo's interest in Spain during the 1930s, we can see therefore that he was in contact with Spanish politics and radical literary ideas almost continuously throughout the first half of the decade, and when the Civil War broke out in July 1936 his intellectual preparation for such an event was substantially more complete than most of his European and Latin American contemporaries, who had only begun to focus their attention on Spain in the mid 1930s.

During the Civil War, committed art, and especially poetry, surged forth from its embryonic beginnings in the early 1930s to become a vital and far reaching form of expression and communication at a popular level. Politically committed poetry was written on both sides during the war, but in terms of quality, and quantity, that which was produced by the supporters of the Republic was most notable. The main reason for this lay in that it was the Republican cause which attracted by far the greatest number of Spanish artistic intellectuals, who, as well as dedicating their own work to the struggle, also helped to encourage the development of a popular culture. During the first year of the war a plethora of journals and newspapers were published on the Republican side which contained examples of committed poetry. These can be divided broadly into two main groups; the first being the organs of the various political parties, army battalions, militias and section of the front, which frequently included poems by combatants and intellectuals; and secondly, and very much in the minority, a number of journals with a literary orientation, which included some poems by combatants, and which were aimed at a wide readership, but whose main subscribers and contributors were mostly intellectuals.[5] One of the best examples of this latter group was the periodical Hora de España which published some of the finest committed poetry to be written during the conflict. Lying between these two broad groups were publications like El Mono Azul, which was produced by the Spanish section of the Alliance of Antifascist Intellectuals, and which was directed towards the troops at the front. Its editors claimed that it was a combatative rather than a literary journal, and it did indeed devote some of its pages to the practical issues of war, but like its forerunner Octubre its main aim was clearly to unite intellectuals and combatants in a common cause through the popular medium of poetry.

Before going on to assess the extent to which Vallejo would have become acquainted with the poetry which was circulated in the above periodicals, some

consideration should be given to the nature of artistic commitment in Spain during the Civil War, and the composition and quality of the literary forms that it produced. After outlining the complex problems involved in defining a term like 'commitment' (compromiso) with regard to aesthetic production, Lechner states:

> por poesía comprometida española entendemos la escrita en español por poetas españoles residentes en su propio país y conscientes de su responsabilidad como miembros de la sociedad y como artistas y que asumen conscientemente las consecuencias de esta actitud, tanto en el terreno civil como en el literario; una poesía cuya fuente de inspiración no está sólo en el propio vivir del poeta, sino también, y principalmente, en el del español concreto, contemporáneo del poeta en su situación real: una poesía que no persigue exclusivamente fines extraliterarios. (p.18)

Lechner goes on to say that in his subsequent analysis of 'committed' poetry he retains the belief that if an effective value judgement is to be made of the works in question then the reader must accept the existence of the controversial artistic category of 'literary quality'. Clarifying his position, he accepts that some left-wing militants see literature mainly in terms of a decadent bourgeois enterprise which cannot be torn away from the sacred formula of 'art for art's sake'. This sort of thinking, he adds, which largely rejects the aesthetic function of literature, has led to the emergence of much simplistic and crude, utility poetry, which displays no artistic qualities. The corollary of this, he suggests, has been an overreaction by traditional literary conformists, who refuse to believe that good art and political commitment can exist together.

While admitting that there can be no such thing as a universal means to gauge when poetry qualifies as literature and when it does not, Lechner does propose, for the purposes of his study, that two broad categories of committed poetry can be defined; the first, which he terms 'poesía directa', indicates a form of expression which openly displays its didactic purpose and has few, if any, pretentions to artistic quality. The second category, 'poesía reflexiva',

on the other hand is associated with the type of poetry which, despite its political orientation, does not directly suggest any programme for action, or employ the frequent use of popular slogans, but rather adopts a more subtle and 'thoughtful' approach to historical events.

For analysing the work of politically committed Spanish poets of mainly bourgeois origins, Lechner's methodology proves indispensable, but because of the nature of the poetry he is dealing with, which mainly falls within the category of 'reflexive', there is little discussion of the question of proletarian art and the problem of its formation. This, one might add, is perfectly reasonable considering that the author's stated task is to analyse the poetry that was written during a given period, rather than to consider the problems of artistic production. It should also be noted that Lechner pays considerable attention to the popular poetry that was written by combatants, as well as intellectuals, when it is deemed to display some 'literary quality'. However, in the final analysis, committed poetry and popular poetry do not necessarily indicate the beginnings of an authentic proletarian art form, and the question remains for any artist in a revolutionary situation, and especially one of bourgeois origins, as to how he can best serve the struggle with his art, and, if by simply being committed, he can become the harbinger of a new aesthetic form.

As Lechner implies in the section of his work which deals with the Spanish Civil War, the poets who supported the Republic did not regard their commitment - in contrast to some of their counterparts in Russia at this time - as a conscious attempt to produce proletarian art, but rather as an opportunity to engage their artistic talents in support of a political cause in which they believed (p.198). During and immediately before the Civil War, the question of new art forms merging from the class struggle was occasionally discussed in radical literary journals, but the exigency of war called for an immediate

and pragmatic response from the literary intelligentsia, and nowhere was this enshrined more clearly than at the Writers' Congress in 1937. The reality of this situation presented a particularly difficult dilemma for Vallejo, who, even though having praised intellectuals like Alberti and Bergamín for their commitment to the Republican cause, probably remained uncertain, as he had in the late 1920s and early 1930s regarding the value of bourgeois modes of expression in the context of revolutionary development. Furthermore, he had also indicated during the last years of his journalistic career, that he was even less sanguine about the ability of the politically committed bourgeois artist to produce the seeds of a new proletarian art form in his own work. As we have seen Vallejo ostensibly abandoned such preoccupations at the Writers' Congress for, one suspects, political expediency. But the question still remained concerning his own stance as an artist; how was he to react to the Civil War? To stay silent in the face of an historical event of such enormous political import and emotional calling, was to ignore his responsibility as a poet; yet to respond through his art was to consciously enter into a dilemma to which he believed he could offer no solution. And, as it will be shown it is in the poem 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' where he confronts these problems with outstanding perspicacity.

Vallejo's exposure to the poetry written on the Republican side during the Civil War, as well as the whole experience of poster art, political slogans and other popular forms of communication must have been considerable. Not only did he visit Spain twice during the war but he also remained, until his death in 1938, almost obsessed with the events that were taking place there. Even his dying words are claimed to have been 'España, me voy a España'.[6] Among the Spanish publications which were printed during the Civil War, and which Vallejo would have most probably been able to read in Paris, was Hora de España. This monthly journal was first published in January 1937, and, as

noted earlier, contained work by many of the Republic's most talented poets. As well as seeking to maintain high standards in poetry, literary essays, and criticism, it also declared itself unswervingly, 'al servicio de la causa popular'. According to Juan Gil-Albert, who was a frequent contributor to its pages, Hora de España, as well as being sold in Spain, was also distributed to Spanish embassies and consulates, and foreign organizations which supported the Republic.[7] Vallejo, who made his first visit to Spain during the Civil War under the auspices of the Spanish Embassy in France, and was also involved with such organizations as the 'Comités de Defensa de la República', must have had access to Hora de España. Indeed, when one reads his own poems on the war, it becomes clear that some of the poetry included in this journal had a marked effect on his thinking. Vallejo, in fact, was also sufficiently well known to its editors to warrant the publication of a laudatory article, soon after his death, on his life and works.[8]

In terms of the poetic forms that were adopted by the Spanish poets who supported the Republic, by far the most common was the Spanish ballad or 'romance', which had a long history in Spain's popular literary tradition. With the coming of the Civil War and the mass participation of the 'people' in the political struggle, the 'romance' proved to be the ideal poetic form for committed poetry. Because of its stylistic simplicity even the most amateur poet with limited education could employ it as a means to convey his ideas and sentiments, while for more accomplished artists it provided a vehicle by which they could reach out to a popular audience.[9] Despite its relative simplicity compared to other literary forms some fine poems were written in the 'romance' style during the war, by both intellectuals and combatants.

In the early months of the Civil War Rafael Alberti collected a number of 'romances de la guerra' for publication in El Mono Azul. Soon after, poems in the 'romance' style rapidly gained in popularity and were to be heard on

the radio and in theatres, as well as being published in a wide range of journals, newspapers and leaflets; they were even recited by the blind on street corners. By the time of the Writers' Congress in July 1937 Emilio Prados was able to gather together a large selection of 'romances' - originally 900 but later reduced to 302 - for an anthology entitled Romancero General de la Guerra de España, which was made available to the delegates as an example of the fecundity of popular poetry written in support of the Republic.[10] Some poems by Rafael Alberti, Emilio Prados, José Bergamín, Miguel Hernández, and several other established poets were published for the first time in the Romancero General, which made it, despite the inclusion of some mediocre work, an important and controversial example of committed art.

Vallejo, having attended the Writers' Congress, would have come into contact with this publication, which was undoubtebly the most comprehensive record of Civil War poetry available at that time. He would also have been able to read for a second time some of the better poems from the anthology, when they were re-published in Hora de España. As will be shown, Vallejo's own poetry on the Civil War indicates that he was well acquainted with the work of the Spanish poets, and while their influence can be seen mainly in terms of the content of his work, it could also be argued that his poetic style does occasionally remind one of the 'romance'.

In early September 1937, only a few weeks after attending the Writers' Congress, Vallejo began what was to be the most productive period of artistic creativity in his life. In just over three months he wrote the fifteen poems which make up the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, and substantially modified and expanded the body of poetry later entitled Poemas humanos, adding twenty five new poems and reworking many others.[11] During this intensely productive period Vallejo probably hoped that he would find a publisher for all of the poetry that he was working on, but it seems that he was particularly

anxious to complete the poems which make up España, aparta de mí este cáliz, and prepare for their publication. Of all the poetry that Vallejo wrote during his fifteen years in Europe, this collection was in fact the only organized and clearly autonomous body of work that existed when he died in 1939. In contrast the rest of his European poetry (despite the individual dating of some poems) remained in disarray, and the order of its publication is still a source of controversy among his biographers and critics. Furthermore, because of its advanced state of completion España, aparta de mí este cáliz - unlike the rest of Vallejo's poetry which fell exclusively into his widow's possession - became available to some of his friends either before, or shortly after his death. Georgette Vallejo, however, suggests that her husband's associates, and especially Juan Larrea, had shown little interest in Vallejo's poetry during his final years. Nevertheless, his Spain poems did reach a publisher before the end of the Civil War through some agent other than his wife.[12]

España, aparta de mí este cáliz was first printed in Catalonia in January 1939 by Republican troops of the Army of the East, who had volunteered to work under the direction of the Spanish poet Manuel Altolaguirre. Altolaguirre's printing shop, though small and badly equipped, was situated in a location commensurate with the grandeur of the poetry it published; the Monastery of Montserrat. In 1938 the government of Catalonia, the Generalitat, had commissioned the monastery for use as a hospital and field dressing station, and it was also here, under the intense pressure of the last few months of the war, that such fine books of poetry as Vallejo's España, aparta de mí este cáliz, Neruda's España en el corazón and Emilio Prados's Cancionero menor para combatientes, were printed.[13]

Until recently it had been assumed that all copies of Vallejo's work had either been lost or destroyed by Franco's advancing armies. However, in the past few years several examples of the first edition of España, aparta de mí

este cáliz have been found, thanks mainly to the diligent investigations of Julio Vélez and Antonio Merino who located four copies (still uncatalogued) in the library of the Monastery of Montserrat, and one of these has now been reproduced in volume one of their two volume work, España en César Vallejo.[14] Because of the fidelity of this first edition to Vallejo's own original manuscripts it has been decided to refer to Vélez and Merino's reproduction in the subsequent analysis of the poem 'Himno a los voluntarios de la Republica'. References and citations for his remaining poetry that does not form part of España, aparta de mí este cáliz will be taken from César Vallejo, obra poética completa, which contains 'Apuntes biográficos' by Georgette Vallejo and was edited by Francisco Monclos (Lima, 1968). This edition also includes facsimiles of Vallejo's original manuscripts.

España, aparta de mí este cáliz: A Christian humanist vision?

Throughout Vallejo's poetic career the most consistent aspect of his work was his almost obsessive use of religious imagery, and language with religious overtones. For many critics of his poetry, the most notable among whom was the late Juan Larrea, this unbroken continuity in Vallejo's mode of expression is taken to be an indication that he never abandoned the belief in man's ultimate salvation through Christ. Most of those who support this argument accept that in the last decade of his life Vallejo was sympathetic to a number of left-wing causes and ideals, but this, they claim, does not detract from his fundamentally Christian humanist vision of the world. Such critics it should be added see the clearest evidence in support of their case in the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, which, as even the title suggests, is permeated with religious imagery.

Since Vallejo's death, and especially during the last twenty years as

interest has increased in his work, the majority of his critics have accepted, in varying degrees, the above interpretation of his poetic message. Larrea, for example, in his introductory words to a discussion on Vallejo's final weeks of poetic production, leaves no doubt concerning the position he intends to adopt in the subsequent debate as he states, 'tras los poemas que enmarcan en ese mes de noviembre de 1937 el episodio de su investidura transcendental entre las estaciones de su Getsemaní, Vallejo escribió aisladamente el 8 de diciembre, día de la Concepción Inmaculada, su último e incomparable poema Sermón sobre la Muerte ...'.[15] In the same section Larrea also goes on to look at the 'mystical' message of España, aparta de mí este cáliz which he sees as part of an unbroken Christian humanist vision which is fundamental to all of Vallejo's poetry (pp. 123-142). A further defender of Vallejo's 'mysticism' is Alejandro Lora Risco who takes a highly uncompromising position in his analyses of the poet's works including España, aparta de mí este cáliz.[16] Indeed even a critic like Roberto Paoli who accepts that Vallejo's deep political convictions ultimately affected his poetry is still able to conclude that 'España es la última estación venerada del vía crucis interior del "hogar" de Vallejo'.[17]

Very much in the minority are those students of Vallejo's work who reject such interpretations, and who adopt a more historically objective view of his work, and among these can be included Luis Monguió, Jean Franco, Noel Salomon and most recently J. Vélez and A. Merino.[18] Though obviously presenting distinct individual arguments in their separate works, these critics could all be expected to concur with the following statement by Noel Salomon, which, because of its importance in the debate on Vallejo's poetic perception of the world, warrents quoting at length. After questioning the nature of 'humanism' in Vallejo's poetry Salomon states:

A medida que van pasando los años el historiador de la literatura constata que se ha desarrollado un verdadero culto alrededor de la figura de César Vallejo y que ligado a él se elabora una imagen del autor de Poemas en prosa, Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz, que no corresponde forzosamente a la realidad o que, por lo menos, descuida o desvirtúa algunos aspectos de importancia histórica. Sucede que, movidos por los sentimientos más dignos de tomarse en cuenta, varios amigos de C. Vallejo participan en esta operación 'mitólogica' (tradicional en la historia de la literatura) y al lado de algunos libros justos, equilibrados y exactos, entre los que cabe mencionar los de Luis Monguió y André Coyné, descubrimos una literatura abundante - las más veces ditirámbica y admirativa - que contribuye a alterar el sentido del humanismo 'vallejiano' de Poemas en prosa, Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz, ora por una orientación falsa del análisis, ora por el silencio que guarda sobre ciertos aspectos del mensaje que el texto encierra.

Una de las direcciones que ha tomado el trabajo de exágesis, consiste en explicar que el espíritu de estos poemas es fundamentalmente cristiano. Es cierto que Vallejo recibió una formación religiosa en su infancia y adolescencia. Este aspecto de su educación debería estudiarse en detalle, porque se conoce poco y es sorprendente que por un falso sentido laico se haya descartado en alguna ocasión este problema importante que no puede eludirse si se pretende comprender con el máximo rigor un libro como Los heraldos negros (1918), donde nos enfrentamos, sin duda, con sentimientos claramente cristianos, o por decirlo con mayor precisión, católicos. Pero colocar todas las épocas de Vallejo en el mismo nivel sería cometer un anacronismo - pecado en el que no debe incurrir el historiador - y hacerle representante de un 'humanismo cristiano' en Poemas en prosa, Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz (1923-1938), implica no tener en cuenta la evolución interior del poeta. En particular significa anular o minimizar el hecho de que a partir de 1929-1931, se compromete políticamente, se adhiere ideológicamente al marxismo ....(pp. 194-195)

Rejecting the 'metaphysical' and purely 'aesthetic' approaches to Vallejo's poetry, Salomon goes on to emphasise 'la importancia del compromiso vital e histórico de César Vallejo'. He then extends his argument to include the question of religious imagery and language in Vallejo's poetry, and attempts to assess its significance in relation to the debate on the nature of the poet's personal vision. The points he puts forward include some of the most important and controversial statements to have been made on Vallejo's work, and effectively set out an irreconcilable dividing line among the critics. Referring in particular to the poems that Vallejo wrote during the last decade of his life, when he was most influenced by radical ideas, Salomon states:

no cabe duda de que varios títulos de la colección de 1939 [i.e. Georgette de Vallejo and Raúl Porras Barrenechea's edition of Poemas Humanos which includes España, aparta de mí este cáliz] proceden de la Escritura o del lenguaje religioso ... Pero concluir rápidamente, como algunos, que lo medular en Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz, es cristiano, es ver solamente la corteza de las palabras. En presencia de esas formulaciones indudablemente religiosas parece prudente considerar que pueden ser formas tradicionales de una expresión metafórica que en nuestra cultura son el dominio de todos - incluyendo a los ateos -, formas capaces de involucrar contenidos que no son necesariamente cristianos ... Para apoyar la interpretación "cristiana" del Vallejo de Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz, se puede también invocar que el escritor recurre repetidamente a los símbolos de la Pasión (la crucifixión, las espinas, el buen y el mal ladrón, el cáliz); pero, creemos, esos recursos significan meramente que el poeta no abandona en Poemas humanos y España, aparta de mí este cáliz, formas de expresión y alegorías que para él correspondían a un contenido indudable cuando escribió y alegorías que para él correspondían a un contenido indudable cuando escribió Los heraldos negros, pero que ya no lo conservan con la misma fuerza cuando escribe Poemas humanos y luego España, aparta de mí este cáliz, principalmente despues de 1929-1931, años decisivos en su evolución. Estos símbolos y estas alegorías (que se encuentran constantemente en la pluma de Vallejo, tanto en su prosa como en su poesía) pertenecen entonces a su cultura, como pertenecen a la de otros poetas latinoamericanos de su generación, sin que por eso correspondan a una vísión fundamentalmente cristiana. (pp.201-202)

While Salomon focuses his argument on the use of religious language in a Catholic Hispanic cultural context, and particularly in relation to twentieth century Latin American poetry, one suspects that he would also agree with C. M. Bowra who supports the belief that Christianity in general 'provides a ready-made mythology' for the poet.[19] To illustrate his claim Bowra cites the case of the German anti-Nazi post Werner Bergengruen who, he argues, in his poem 'Die letzte Epiphanie' (The Last Epiphany), 'moves inside a Christian scheme, and this makes it easier for him than if he had drawn on some system of invention. More than this, it allows him to identify his feelings with a scheme of values which anyone can understand and which carries many ancient and powerful associations' (p.98). Referring to the specific use of the image of the Messiah in politically orientated poetry, Bowra gives the example of the Russian post Alexander Blok who, to the amazement of his fellow radicals, portrayed Christ as the guardian of the Revolution. But as Bowra points out, 'for him Christ is not the Christ of the Orthodox Church, nor of any theology, but simply the incarnation of the most tender and generous impulses of the Russian Soul. Blok creates his own religion and finds his own symbols for it

and among them is Christ, who is needed as the only possible figure that can give meaning to so tumultuous and so violent a change' (p. 50). Unlike Blok, Vallejo rarely makes direct reference to Christ in his later poetry, but his use of Christian symbols, even in his most committed work, provides for some potentially interesting comparisons between the two poets. Vallejo, as Salomon indicates, may in fact have read in translation the work of a number of Russian poets in the French Communist journal Commune (p. 222). And, if this were so, he would have come across the work of Blok. Even though Bowra's examples of the use of Christian imagery in modern politically committed poetry, do suggest a wider context in which the religious language in Vallejo's work may be viewed than the one given by Salomon, this does not devalue the relevance of the latter's emphasis on the importance of Vallejo's Latin American cultural heritage, and especially the ideas of his own generation, as a source of influence on his poetry. Wishing to concentrate on Vallejo's period of politicization in Europe and its effect on his later poems, Salomon does not expand on the above theme, but his implications are clear. Firstly, almost all Latin American intellectuals of Vallejo's generation came from staunchly religious Catholic backgrounds. A number of Vallejo's relations had become priests, and his father, we are told, was a deeply pious man who ensured that religious instruction was an integral part of family life.[20] Social activity outside of the home was also dominated by religion, with the Church presiding over all aspects of daily life and particularly education. At infant school the young César was taught by Catholic priests, and religious studies remained a major component of the curriculum during his secondary education. Even when at university in Truijillo and Lima, he would still have felt the influence of religion on his studies through a number of traditional Catholic professors. Like many other members of his generation Vallejo reacted against the dominance of religious ideas during his years at university, and

this can be seen most clearly in his first book of poetry in which he casts 'black heralds' of doubt over the Christian promise of salvation. Ironically though, despite his attacks on some of the most fundamental tenets of Catholicism, his poetry is also an eloquent testament of the profound degree to which the Christian myth had shaped his consciousness.

Vallejo's generation was, in fact, the first Latin American generation to seriously challenge not only the established church but also the whole anachronistic legacy of Spanish colonialism. From the 1880s to the First World War, intellectuals had been forced to recognise the effects of rapid capitalist expansion on their surroundings, but invariably members of the aristocratic ruling class they were too much the product of the old colonial system to be able to assimilate these new experiences in their work. A few like González Prada absorbed a number of modern ideas, which they attempted in turn to apply to the new world that was coming into being, but most sought the sanctuary of religion, or the inner self, to escape from the maelstrom of modernity. Perhaps above all else it was the war which was the juncture between the past and the future. As we have seen in the first chapter the young middle class intellectuals of Vallejo's generation felt they had been cast adrift from previous generations, and believed that it was their task to give direction to the inexorable economic and social forces which had seized their continent. But while they felt themselves to be truly modern in their aspirations the burden of their cultural heritage, and especially their Catholic religion, continued to weigh heavily on their subconscious. Ironically it was precisely this legacy from the past which they most wished to abandon. One of the fundamental prerequisites of progress they believed was to attack the spiritual dominance of religion and thereby undermine the ideological power of the Catholic Church over all aspects of society.

The revolt against the spiritual and social hegemony of establishment religion had begun in the previous generation with the Modernists,

but it was only during and after the war that this revolt began to articulate itself through action in such developments as the University Reform Movement. However, while attacks against the ideological domination of the Church over education and many other elements of daily life were deemed politically and morally necessary, most intellectuals found it far more difficult to overcome some of the more complex psychological problems caused by the abandonment of centuries of spiritual security. Vallejo's first two books of poetry Los heraldos negros and Trilce, both of which were written while he was still living in Peru, provide outstanding examples of a poet's struggle to come to terms with the spiritual void in which his generation had found itself. And, when he proclaims in the poem 'Espergesia', 'yo nací un día/ que Dios estuvo enfermo/ grave', he is clearly not only referring to his own personal anguish but also the age of spiritual uncertainty into which his generation had been born.

In such circumstances it is hardly surprising that Latin American intellectuals became involved both consciously and subconsciously, in a frantic search for a new set of spiritual values. Sometimes they looked to their own continent to find a solution to their paradox, and such movements as 'Indigenismo' can be seen partly as the result of a longing on the part of Hispanicized intellectuals to incorporate themselves in a wholly different cultural and spiritual structure from the one to which they belonged. But mostly they turned towards Europe, where the quest for new spiritual values had by the 1920s, in the context of over one hundred and fifty years of capitalist development, a long and varied history. As Pike notes in his analysis of the spiritual content of the works of Haya de la Torre, it was above all the ideas of the new philosophers and mystics like Oswald Spengler, Count Hermann Keyserling, Carl Jung and Krishnamurti which caused the greatest impression on the young Latin Americans of the postwar generation.[21] After the cataclysm of the war the

search for a new spiritual identity in Europe had turned away from insular philosophies, in an attempt to identify some cosmic system which could return a sense of order to the world. For Latin American intellectuals such systems not only promised to incorporate their continent in a new world process in which they could play an important part, but also offered a universal scheme of sufficient grandeur and wholeness to provide a substitute for their lingering Catholicism. In fact among these panacean bodies of thought one could include the ideas of Karl Marx, which even though formed in the nineteenth century and based in the unshakable foundations of economic reality, contain a mystical kernel which instil in Marx's followers a boundless hope in human possibilities. And nowhere is such a hope more clearly represented than in the political vision of José Carlos Mariátegui and the Spanish Civil War poetry of César Vallejo.

But while many Latin Americans of the postwar generation sought to replace their Catholic Christian heritage with new ideas and new beliefs, the structure of their language and modes of expression remained tied to the old mythologies which they longed to abandon. This problem was especially acute for the poet, and as will be shown in the case of Vallejo, the only solution he could find was in a compromise, in which the language of Christianity provides a vehicle, 'a ready made mythology', through which to convey the significance of a whole new body of ideas.

As indicated by the foregoing analysis of Vallejo's Latin American cultural heritage, his use of religious language in his poetry is part of a far more complex process than those critics who support the belief that he never lost his Catholic faith, would have us believe. Furthermore, we will see in the subsequent interpretation of the poem 'Himno a los voluntarios de la

República' how he uses the framework of religious mythology not only to express his Marxist beliefs, but also to give them a messianic urgency, which far from indicating a continuing faith in religion, establishes the completeness of his belief that it was in mans' power to bring about his own salvation through revolutionary struggle.

Himno a los voluntarios de la República:

A Revolutionary Vision

During the course of the subsequent analysis of the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' much of the poem will be cited in the text. However, for the convenience of the reader a transcript is also included as an appendix to this chapter (pp.367-370).

The defence of the Republic: A peoples' war

> Voluntario de España, miliciano
> de huesos fidedignos .....

The first statement in the poem, along with the title, reveals the central figure to whom the 'Himno' is devoted, namely the Spanish militiaman who had volunteered to fight for the defence of the democratically elected government of the Republic.[22] Vallejo here seems to have made a conscious choice to concentrate his attention on those forces that were made up from the Spanish population, rather than the foreign volunteers which constituted the International Brigades. However, there can be no doubt regarding the importance which he attached to international support for the Republic, and towards the end of the poem he devotes a stanza to those foreign radicals who came to defend democracy in Spain during the Civil War.

Vallejo's decision to deal mainly with the Spanish militiamen and Spanish

history and culture in the 'Himno', as well as in the rest of the poems that make up the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, can be assumed to stem from two main factors; firstly, because his native language was Castilian, he was able to write for a Spanish audience, and like his radical intellectual contemporaries in Spain he felt the need to submit his poetry to the popular cause, which in turn demanded that he should include in his work some of the common themes of the literature of the war. Secondly, Vallejo had been a close observer of Spanish culture and politics since the early 1930s, and when the Civil War broke out in 1936 he was in a favourable position to understand the significance of the conflict. Both these factors gave him a considerable advantage over most foreign poets who supported the Republic in their work, in that he was able to communicate his ideas on the war from within a Spanish context.

The first line of the 'Himno' also gives an early indication that Vallejo does not wish to champion the political position of any single radical group active in Spain during the Civil War, but rather to support all those Spaniards who had volunteered to fight against fascism. But, as we will see later in the poem, it is the revolutionary significance which was embodied in the struggle that instils him with hope, not simply the rightful moral and political defence of republican democracy. In this context the voluntary commitment of the militiaman has important implications for Vallejo, because by making a free choice to fight for a cause which he believes in, he not only distinguishes himself from the conscript soldiers of State armies, but also shows that as a worker he has taken his first conscious step towards self-emancipation.

When one considers that at the time Vallejo was writing his Spain poems (November-December 1937) not only had the militias been absorbed into the regular army, but also a form of conscription had been in force for some time,

it would seem that his perception of the militiaman as expressed in the 'Himno' is historically outdated and even misleading. But, if one takes into account Vallejo's Marxist view of events, which he sustains throughout the poem, then it becomes clear that his purpose is not to give a historical documentation of the Civil War - which he does to some degree in a number of other poems in the collection - but to identify and extol the revolutionary potential which emerged during the conflict. Having this as his objective the actual historical timing of events becomes secondary in importance to his theoretical and practical presentation of the revolutionary process, which in effect sets the programme for the poem. Therefore, while writing in late 1937 when the Republican cause had begun to be seen to fail, both ideologically and militarily, by some intellectuals on the left, Vallejo finds that he can still refer optimistically to the first revolutionary months of the war. In fact with regard to his own personal experience of the conflict, most of the poem would seem to be based on his first wartime visit to Spain in late 1936, rather than his second trip in 1937 when he attended the Writers' Congress. This can be seen most clearly when one compares the statements he made in his article entitled 'Los enunciados populares de la guerra española', which records his initial experiences of the war, with some of the ideas which emerge later in his Spain poems.[23] The first paragraphs of this article for example, give an important insight into the significance of the first line of the 'Himno', and also provides what is perhaps the finest short introduction to the whole poem.

> Por primera vez, la razón de una guerra cesa de ser una razón de Estado, para ser la expresión, directa e inmediata, del interés del pueblo y de su instinto histórico, manifestados al aire libre y como a boca de jarro. Por primera vez se hace una guerra por voluntad espontánea del pueblo y por primera vez, en fin, es el pueblo mismo, son los transeúntes y no ya los soldados, quienes sin coerción del Estado, sin capitanes, sin espíritu ni organización militares, sin armas ni kepis, corren al encuentro del enemigo y mueren por una causa clara, definida, despojada de nieblas oficiales más o menos inconfesables. Puesto así el pueblo a cargo de su propia lucha, se comprende de suyo que se sientan en esta

> lucha latidos humanos de una autenticidad popular y de un alcance germinal extraordinarios, sin precedentes.
>
> La prensa europea - hasta la misma prensa de la derecha - ha registrado casos de heroísmo insuditos por su disinterés humano señaladamente consumados, individual o colectivamente, por los milicianos y milicianas de la República. (pp. 32-33)

After praising the extraordinary commitment and bravery of the militiamen and women, he then goes on to distinguish their heroism from the heroic deeds of soldiers in other wars. He continues:

> Se ha hablado sin duda, del "soldado desconocido", del héroe anónimo de todas las guerras. Es otro tipo de heroísmo del deber, consistente, en general, en desafiar el peligro, por orden superior y, a lo sumo, porque esta orden aparece, a los ojos del que la ejecuta, investida de la autoridad en que se encarnan las razones técnicas de la victoria y un principio de fría, ineludible y fatal necesidad .... El drama más hondo y agudo del soldado en 1914, la tragedia que concreta y resume todas las disyuntivas del destino, no es la que emanaba del dolor y del peligro en el combate, sino el drama del deber, la tragedia de su inexorabilidad ....
>
> El heroísmo del soldado del pueblo español brota, por el contrario, de una impulsión espontánea, apasionada, directa del ser humano. (p. 34)

Almost a year after making the above statements Vallejo set himself the task in the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' of presenting the struggle of the Spanish people in terms of his understanding of Marxism. The result was perhaps the greatest poem of revolution ever to be written.

The 'miliciano', a modern saviour with an entirely worldly mission

The militiaman, as we will see later in this poem, is not only the champion of a popular cause, but more fundamentally, a worker, a proletarian, which for the Marxist Vallejo sanctifies his right to wage class war against his exploiters. Consequently, when we are told of the militiaman's 'huesos fidedignos' in the second line of the poem, while religious connotations abound, we can also conceive of the more direct implication of such an image, which would point to the strength of the combatant's physical frame; a strength and reliability which could only be formed through hard labour. In both abstract and real terms this can be seen as an essential prerequisite for supporting the weight of his

responsibilities.

Continuing with his adulation of the militiaman Vallejo states:

> ... cuando marcha a morir tu corazón
> cuando marcha a matar con su agonía
> mundial, ...

Again we are almost invited to see the militiaman in a religious context as he is portrayed in language of clearly biblical origins. Roberto Paoli, in fact, relates a number of constructions throughout the poem, such as 'con su agonía mundial', to specific references in the Bible.[24] However, as we have suggested earlier in this chapter, the use of religious imagery by Vallejo cannot be seen simply as an indication of his own continuing religious faith. This said, the problem still exists as to how one should interpret his presentation of the militiaman in Christian terms. To assume the substitution of the Spanish volunteer for Christ on the basis of the importance of his perceived mission by the poet, may be too facile an interpretation of Vallejo's intentions. Such an analysis would suggest that the 'ready-made mythology' of Christianity was simply a convenient framework on which to attach new ideas. This may to some extent be true, but one feels that Vallejo's purpose in his use of religious imagery, is part of a far more complex linguistic and philosophical process. In considering this aspect of Vallejo's poetic method one should remember firstly that the audience for whom the 'Himno' and the rest of the poems from <u>España,aparta de mí este cáliz</u>, were written were the same individuals which they set out to praise, namely the Spanish Republican soldiers fighting at the front. In this context Vallejo's use of religious imagery in his poetry has a special relevance in that it acknowledges the vital function of the Christian myth in the formation and content of the language of Hispanic peoples, and especially the lower classes. This is important not simply because of the communicative potential of employing such forms of expression, but also because

it indicates the poet's understanding of the perception of religion on the Republican side during the war. In the first decades of the twentieth century, and especially at the time of the Civil War, it was felt by the mass of the people in Spain that the right, along with the Church establishment, had hijacked Christ for their own political purposes. For the Spanish left generally, the battle with the Church was not a crusade against the tenets of Christianity, but a reaction against its powerful and inflexible influence in Spanish society and its overt collaboration with the material interests of the ruling classes.[25] In fact in the Basque country large sections of the priesthood supported the Republican cause, alongside socialists and communists, and it was precisely the material compromise of the Church with the Nationalists which they claimed to be their prime reason for not falling in line with the main body of the Catholic establishment. They also argued, along with many other individual priests in the areas held by the Republic, that their task was to rescue Christ from the rich and deliver him back to his rightful place among the poor.

While Vallejo shows no interest in his Spain poems in defending any particular stance towards the Catholic faith, he acknowledges through his use of religious imagery its lingering importance in the Spanish consciousness. And, in the 'Himno' especially, he employs this still dominant mythological structure as a means through which to project his political ideas. The purpose of this poetic technique is however, as suggested earlier, not simply a case of substitution in which socialist ideas are presented in spiritual terms but rather a process of dialectical interaction. For Vallejo the revolutionary will of the masses was the dynamic creative force out of which would be born a new socialist consciousness, yet during this early stage of the historical struggle socialism only existed as a part formed ideal, with prospects for its practical realization only existing in the distant future. Therefore, while being born constantly out of the economic and material interaction of

social forces, socialism as a form of human organization remained a mythical projection which still contained many imponderables.[26] In this context Vallejo brings together in the 'Himno', what he regards as two mythical structures and allows them to cross fertilize. Yet this development is not maintained as an interaction of equal forces, but as a creative tension in which the older religious myth is absorbed and reborn in a new socialist vision. This process however, despite its spiritual overtones, is underpinned throughout the poem by tangible human forces. Like Ludwig Feuerbach, and indeed, Marx himself, Vallejo saw in religion, and the image of God, a reflection of the possibilities of man on this earth. Consequently religious alienation, the 'dream of the spirit', becomes not only an error but an impoverishment of man, since it takes away all his best qualities and faculties and bestows them on the Deity. Hence one finds in the 'Himno' not a rejection of the myth of Christianity but its incorporation into a totally human project. Interestingly this is an idea towards which Vallejo had aspired in his first book of poetry, Los heraldos negros when he states in the poem 'Los dados eternos', 'Dios mío si tú hubieras sido hombre/ hoy supieras ser Dios ... Y el hombre sí te sufre: el Dios es él!'. In fact throughout all of Vallejo's poetry it is God who is answerable to man and not vice versa. But it is only after his absorption of Marxist ideas that he began to conceive of a way forward for humanity, as he recognises the proletariat as the agency of historical change, who in liberating themselves would liberate the whole of mankind.

The notion of man forging his own socialist destiny with the role of God reduced to a human level, was, like many of the ideas in Vallejo's Spain poems, also one of the central themes - even though presented in a less complex form - of the radical popular literature of the Civil War years. Like Vallejo, some of the left-wing Spanish poets of the period also saw religion generally, not as a threat to the socialist cause, but rather as a myth in

transition. For example, León Felipe in an article on religion and the popular struggle written in 1937 stated, 'el momento es revolucionario, mas no irreligioso ni anticristiano. La exaltación religiosa huyó de Castilla hace más de tres siglos, y vuelve ahora con la Revolución, con los revolucionarios ... But he also warns 'si el cielo es injusto, nos levantaremos en armas contra él'.[27]

Returning to the lines of the 'Himno' it could be argued therefore, that despite the presentation of the militiaman in a highly symbolic religious language, his task is to undertake an entirely worldly mission. Firstly he is 'marching' which emphasizes a forward physical movement, which when portrayed in different forms throughout the rest of the poem, implies historical progress through material action. And, in a later stanza which celebrates the international volunteers,the feet of those who are marching to the front are said to be clad with 'imanes positivos', suggesting the worldly and tangible nature of their task. That which drives the militiaman towards his goal is also not a sense of national duty or the demands of some faith, but the purest conscious impulse of the heart ; a profoundly human heart, whose fate it is to 'die'. Vallejo may also be making an allusion here to Marx's famous statement in which he claims that it is the working class who are the heart of the movement, while it is the revolutionary intellectuals who are its head. Like all other soldiers the militiaman must kill his enemy, but again it is not the arbitrary orders of his military superiors which drive him to this act, but the exploitation and suffering endured by himself and his fellow workers. In this sense he is engaged not in an isolated conflict but one of 'world' proportions in which his struggle for justice reflects and represents the 'agony' of the proletariat of all nations.

As with all fine poetry the 'Himno' does not lend itself easily to interpretation and the above analysis, along with subsequent observations which will be made on various sections of the poem, would not seek to be

definitive, but rather a suggested reading based on the arguments presented earlier in this thesis. However, by employing this method of analysis, which is highly reliant on Vallejo's own ideological formation, it is hoped that the subjective assessments of the critic, though inevitable, willnot be as prevalent as in an intuitive interpretation of the poem.

Poetic contemplation and revolutionary action: The dilemma of the bourgeois intellectual

After outlining the status and the role of the militiaman in the first few lines of the poem, Vallejo goes on to consider his own position as a poet in relation to his subject of adulation. Like the militiaman who symbolizes his class, the proletariat, Vallejo now sees himself as being representative of the bourgeois intelligentsia. As noted in earlier chapters Vallejo was particularly concerned with the position of radical intellectuals in the revolutionary struggle. How, he had asked, could these disaffected bourgeois break with their class background and serve the proletarian cause? The inadequacy of the conclusions he had reached on this question, can be gauged by the state of physical and intellectual disarticulation in which he now finds himself when faced with the heroic struggle of the Spanish working class against its oppressors. His dismay at not being able to serve the revolutionary cause as he would wish, is however also mixed with a sense of elation and joy at being witness to an event of such vital historical significance. He states therefore:

> ... no sé verdaderamente
> qué hacer, dónde ponerme; corro, escribo, aplaudo
> lloro, atisbo, destroza, apago, digo
> a mi pecho que acaba, al bien que venga,
> y quiero desgraciarme ...

Overwhelmed by emotion, the poet attempts to calm himself by reasoning with his 'pecho', which is the source of his impulsive feelings, but he remains in a state of frustrated elation. Such is his frame of mind that he even wishes to destroy himself, perhaps in the hope that in this way he could be reborn into a new form which would allow him to fulfil his desires for unity with the militiaman. And, as he strives to move closer to the revolutionary vitality to which he is a witness he states:

> descúbrome la frente impersonal hasta tocar
> el vaso de la sangre, me detengo,
> detienen mi tamaño esas famosas caídas de arquitecto
> con las que se honra el animal que me honra;

No longer able to control his feelings he wishes to expose his rational intellect ('frente impersonal') to the mainstream of his emotion ('vaso de sangre') in an attempt to imbue the former with what he believes to be a more vibrant consciousness, more closely akin to the spontaneity of the militiaman than his own powers of reason. But he quickly finds that his hopes for tangible involvement cannot be fused to any advantage with his mental reasoning, because both are abstractions which are born out of contemplation and not action. For the militiaman on the other hand his emotions ('heart') and intellect are inextricably linked as they are formed not out of passive intellectual study on an individual level, but from an active and tangible understanding of the world, based on the collective experience of the class struggle. In the above lines Vallejo makes it clear that even for the bourgeois intellectual who, like himself, is committed to the revolutionary cause, the long history of the division of labour in class society makes it impossible for him to share the consciousness of the proletariat. In a complex analogy he describes the restrictive forces which he faces as 'esas famosas caídas de arquitecto' which suggests the dilemma of the pure theoretician, who, even though a revolutionary, is only able to outline or make speculations about the process

by which history will move forward, as it is the workers through their practical involvement who are the true builders of the new social order, both in consciousness and reality. Therefore in the revolutionary activity of the proletariat the educator and the educated are the same: the development of the mind is at the same time the historical process by which the world is transformed, and there is no longer any question of priority between mind and external conditions or vice versa. In this situation the working class is the agent of a historical initiative and is not merely resisting or reacting to the pressure of the possessing classes. This is in fact the first of many instances in the poem in which Vallejo alludes to the praxical view of Marxism, which he had developed mainly through his reading of Mariátegui and Marx.[28] The 'caídas' which he experiences are therefore representative of contemplative thought, which because of its detatchment from practical reality can never become an authentic force of change. These 'falls' are also seen in terms of a failure to control his own intellect which like other parts of his body (animal) is able to exercise its own autonomy (se honra). Abstract thinking, he seems to be suggesting, intensifies the individual's feeling of alienation because it knows no existence outside of the self. This idea can in fact be found throughout Vallejo's poetry represented in the form of the self consuming ego, which constantly seeks liberty by exposure to collective consciousness. Clearly long before he had read Marx, Vallejo conceived of man as a 'species being'.

Trapped in a state of almost total impotence, in which neither his emotions nor his intellect can become reconciled with the militiaman and his cause, the poet continues:

> refluyen mis instintos a sus sogas,
> humea ante mi tumba la alegría
> y, otra vez, sin saber qué hacer, sin nada, déjame,
> desde mi piedra en blanco, déjame,
> solo...

Now in command, the intellect drives his 'instincts' and emotions back under its own autonomous control, and as the poet's hopes for tangible contact with the militiaman fade, he is left only with an abstract vision of the future. A vision, which despite the happiness which it instils in him, is overshadowed by the fact that only with the sweeping away of the bourgeois intellectual dilemma which he is experiencing, can it be realized. Hence the premonition of his own 'grave' and the vapidity with which he associates his abstract joy.

Caught in this intellectual and emotional dilemma based on factors outside his control he asks to be left alone to come to terms with his situation. One is reminded here of the feelings that he expressed in the prose poem 'Las ventanas se han estremecido', which was written during his stay in the Hospital de la Charité in 1924, when, after considering the tenuous ground between life and death, he states, 'Pido se me deje con mi tumor de conciencia, con mi irritada lepra sensitiva, ocurra lo que ocurra, aunque me muera! Dejadme dolerme, si lo queréis, mas dejadme despierto de sueño ...'(p.212). While these lines express the direct fear of physical death itself, they can be compared on an allegorical level with Vallejo's statements in the 'Himno'. In this latter poem he sees himself inhabiting an abstract middle ground from which he can glimpse the new world that is coming into being, and which is synonymous with life, but at the same time he remains harnessed to the false consciousness and alienation of a bourgeois past, which in Vallejo's terms bears an inexorable destiny with death itself. In the above context the construction 'piedra en blanco' holds an interesting range of possible meanings; the most obvious is its association with a tombstone and death. On a more abstract level it conveys the idea of past history and cultural tradition, and in this sense it is significant that the 'stone' is 'en blanco' which would indicate the dilemma faced by the poet, who, as a bourgeois artist, burdened by the whole ideological structure of language, form, and aesthetic tradition, feels he is

ill prepared to convey the meaning of the new radical historical and cultural process to which he is a witness. One may also see the 'piedra en blanco' as the still unwritten poem. In this latter interpretation the use of the term 'piedra' suggests an analogy with the prophesies of the Old Testament, many of which were written on stone tablets. Indeed Vallejo indicates on several occasions throughout the poem, that because of his stated inadequacies the only role that is left to him is to prophesy the coming of the new socialist harmony. Facing intense intellectual and emotional anxiety he continues:

> cuadrumano, más acá, mucho más lejos,
> al no caber entre mis manos tu largo rato extático,
> quiebro contra tu rapidez de doble filo
> mi pequeñez en traje de grandeza!

It is significant that after including language itself among the restrictions which he faces, Vallejo should immediately revert to a neologism. This however should not be seen as simply an attempt to create a new form of expression by aesthetic manipulation. Throughout his poetic career he had always insisted that language and art could not be invented, but must always emerge from a fundamental change in the social and economic climate. In the last decade of his life, during which he became a Marxist, he also became convinced that it was only the class in ascendancy which could be the harbinger of a new consciousness, and new aesthetic and linguistic structures; and never could the 'inteligentes juegos del salón' of the avant-garde anticipate such a process. Neologisms are used by Vallejo therefore, not as perceived new creations, but as a means by which to vent his frustration with the limitations of language. They become in fact the language of the poet's own alienation.

The neologism 'cuadrumano' would seem to be formed out of the two words 'cuadrúpedo' and 'mano', which would suggest the fusing together of animality with humanity. If this is so then its use in the first stanza of

the 'Himno' provides for some interesting interpretations. Firstly, looking back to the Poemas humanos one finds many poems in which Vallejo adopts an almost obsessive pessimism regarding the dominance of human life by the uncontrollable forces of nature. This is perhaps best represented in the poem 'El alma que sufrió de ser su cuerpo' in which man's physical condition is seen as an insurmountable obstacle which confounds his inner aspirations to higher levels of existence and intellectuality, with death itself as the ultimate absurdity. This existential anguish preoccupied Vallejo throughout his life, but in his final years it became associated more with the frustration of pure intellectual aspiration than with the human condition in its entirety. And it is in the 'Himno' where this problem is most clearly expressed, as the alienated bourgeois intellectual with his contemplative strivings towards lucidity is transcended by the revolutionary workers, whose mission is to go beyond utopian speculation to socialist reality. For Vallejo theirs is a truly human task, because the struggle in which they are engaged is ultimately for the good of all mankind, not just the interests of their own class. In the Poemas humanos, and in his earlier work, he also often expressed the belief that human animality and alienation were only truly absurd conditions in an aggressive and individualistic world. How, he seemed to ask, could man destroy and exploit his fellow beings when the whole species was faced with an indifferent universe? The only solution to this paradox he had always believed, lay in collective human fraternity, and it was in the early stages of the Spanish Revolution that he felt he had been witness to a process which made this hope a reality.

With reference to the above points the term 'cuadrumano' would indicate a stage of transition, as the militiaman breaks from his alienated past to begin his humanizing mission. This interpretation also concurs with the dialectical developments which are described in the final lines of the stanza.

Here the militiaman and his task continue to remain in a state of flux, and while he is perceived by the poet on one level as simply a very ordinary working man ('más acá') he is also part of a unique and vitally important process with unprecedented implications for the future ('mucho más lejos'). Further contradictions arise as his struggle is described as a 'largo rato extático', but again from a Marxist perspective the logic of the statement is clear; the fight is 'largo' because it has its roots in centuries of class war, but now, at last, the accumulation of past antagonisms have found their expression in spontaneous revolutionary upheaval ('rato extático'). Finally, consistent with the main themes that have been introduced so far, the stanza ends with the poet re-stating his feelings of self doubt and inadequacy in relation to the militiaman. And, again he makes it clear that his perceptions are not simply those of an isolated individual, but represent the position of all bourgeois intellectuals, who, despite their traditional role in class society as the high priests of culture and civilization, are in the context of authentic revolutionary struggle, mere superficial observers hiding behind their 'traje de grandeza!'.

On reading the first stanza of the 'Himno', and indeed the entire poem, one cannot help feeling that Vallejo's perception of the bourgeois intelligentsia is unusually negative in comparison to some of the statements he had made on the role of intellectuals in his journalism and writings some years earlier. For example, even without reference to the laudatory - though perhaps disingenuous - comments that he made at the Writers' Congress concerning the support of bourgeois writers for the Republican cause, there are many instances in his work when he expresses the belief that revolutionary ideology must initially come to the working class from an external source. This kind of thinking can first be seen in his acceptance of the Bolsheviks as the legitimate vanguard of the Revolution in Russia, and was further developed

through his reading of Mariátegui, who devoted much attention to the role of intellectuals in the class struggle. By the early 1930s he was in fact beginning to develop his own perceptions on this subject, stating in his unpublished 'Libro de pensamientos',

> el intelectual revolucionario opera siempre cerca de la vida en carne y hueso, frente a los seres y fenómenos circundantes. Sus obras son vitalistas. Su sensibilidad y su método son terrestres (materialistas, en lenguaje marxista), es decir, de este mundo y no de ningún otro, extraterrestre o cerebral .... La función política transformadora del intelectual reside en la naturaleza y transcendencia principalmente doctrinales de esa función y correspondientemente prácticas y militantes de ella. En otros términos, el intelectual revolucionario debe serlo, simultáneamente, como creador de doctrina y como practicante de ésta ... el tipo perfecto del intelectual revolucionario, es el del hombre que lucha escribiendo y militando, simultáneamente.[29]

While setting out an exacting regime for the committed intellectual to follow, the above statements do not give any indication that Vallejo saw the role of the bourgeois intelligentsia in the revolutionary process as a peripheral one; on the contrary, ideas and forms of artistic expression are seen to be of fundamental importance to the struggle, so long as they are nourished in the realities of the class conflict. Why then, one might ask, did Vallejo take such a hard line against intellectuals in his Spain poems and especially in the 'Himno'? The first reason may stem from the fact that because the poem does not take the form of a historical commentary on the Civil War, but is rather a celebration of the revolutionary process itself, it is logical that the workers should play the central role. Secondly, Vallejo like many other intellectuals at the time, was overwhelmed by the spontaneity and revolutionary zeal of the Spanish masses during the early months of the war, and perhaps at no other time in the history of the twentieth century did the distance between the men of ideas and the volition of the people seem greater. Finally, the type of intellectual at which Vallejo aims his criticism, is not so much the revolutionary political leaders like Nin and Durruti, or the militant poets like Alberti and Hernández, but the left-wing dilettanti who filled the

anti-fascist congresses of the 1930s. That he should place himself in the front line of his own criticism is perhaps a reflection of the fact that, in his own life he felt that he had failed to achieve what he perceived to be necessary standards of a true revolutionary intellectual.

The birth of a revolution

After outlining in the first stanza his perceptions on the role of the militiaman, and the problems faced by the intellectual who wishes to commit himself and his work to the Revolution, Vallejo now goes on, in the second stanza, to consider some of the immediate historical circumstances which led to the Civil War:

> Un día diurno, claro, atento, fértil
> ¡oh bienio, el de los lóbregos semestres suplicantes,
> por el que iba la pólvora mordiéndose los codos!
> ¡oh dura pena y más duros pedernales!
> ¡oh frenos los tascados por el pueblo!
> Un día prendió el pueblo su fósforo cautivo, oró de cólera
> y soberanamente pleno, circular,
> cerró su natalicio con manos electivas;
> arrastraban candado ya los déspotas
> y en el candado, sus bacterias muertas ...

The 'day' referred to in the first line, and later in the stanza, is an election day, which one would assume, given the context of the poem, is an allusion to the general election of 16 February 1936, which resulted in the victory of the Popular Front left-wing coalition. This assumption is also based on the use of the word 'bienio' in the second line, which is clearly a reference to the 'bienio negro' which was the term used in Spain to describe the years 1934 and 1935 when the right-wing Catholic party, the CEDA, held the balance of power in the Republican government. During this period many of the earlier reforms which had been instigated when the Republic was first established were reversed, and a general attack was launched on all progressive forces. The most notable conflict of these years was the general strike of

1935 which culminated with a major revolutionary uprising in the Asturias, which, when finally crushed by Moorish troops under Franco, was followed by a wave of right-wing persecution of the political left. The victory of the Popular Front coalition in the February 1936 elections brought fresh hope for some moderates, but the acute political polarization which had taken place in the two previous years boded ill for the survival of the democratic process, and by the spring of 1936 both right and left felt that a civil war was inevitable.

The second stanza of the 'Himno' gives an excellent indication of the tensions that preceeded the Civil War. For example the image of 'pólvora mordiéndose los codos' suggests a political situation laden with foreboding, and ready at any time to burst forth into violence. Throughout the stanza Vallejo concentrates on the suffering of the working classes, who, after enduring 'lóbregos semestres suplicantes' have, he feels, every right to take action against their exploiters. Moreover his reference to 'duros pedernales' in the fourth line, may also be a specific allusion to the plight of the agricultural proletariat, many of whom had to till some of the rockiest and infertile land in Europe. It has been argued in fact by several historians of the Spanish Civil War that it was the failure to bring about effective agricultural reform that was the major cause of the conflict.[30] Vallejo would have been aware of this fact, and later in the poem he devotes most of one stanza to the agricultural workers who fought for the Republic.

Before the outbreak of the war working class hopes for the improvement of their lot still remained a possibility through the democratic process, therefore the day of the election is seen as 'un día diurno, claro, atento, fértil'. But Vallejo goes on to emphasize that in such a politically charged situation an election was little more than an act of faith, because the seeds of war had already been sown, and more importantly, the pre-conditions for

revolution had been fulfilled. The revolutionary undercurrent which made the elections so tentative is indicated in the statement 'un día prendió el pueblo su fósforo cautivo, oró de colera'. The image of lighting a 'captive match' suggests that after a period of repression the election provided the first opportunity for the people to express their will, however it also indicates the starting of a fire which once lit would have the potential to spread. Furthermore, the fact that the people are said to have 'prayed with rage' again adds to the general feeling which is presented in the stanza, that the idealistic hopes for democratic reforms were also permeated by a will to action. The electoral process itself is seen in fact by Vallejo as an ineffectual means of achieving social change, and this is shown particularly by its association with the term 'circular' which suggests the limitations of bourgeois capitalist democracy. Therefore, while acting in good faith by taking part in the elections, the workers also delayed (cerró) the true day of their liberation; the Revolution (su natalicio). The victory of the Popular Front however is held to be an indication of the peoples' aspirations which succeeded in terrifying the ruling classes, who now felt they were facing a serious challenge to their power and privilege. Here though, as in the rest of the poem, Vallejo does not refer to the enemy or any of its social and political components by name. They are simply 'déspotas' who are condemned not only for their direct physical exploitation of the masses, but also for their whole ideological domination of society. It is not therefore, the army, the Church, the capitalists or the landlords which are singled out for criticism, but the whole bourgeois capitalist system, which in its entirety is seen as a retrogressive form of social organization, incapable of bringing about true human progress. In this latter sense the 'despots' are said to 'drag their lock', which suggests that the entire process over which they preside is now threatened, and ironically it is they who are responsible for sowing the seeds of their own destruction. In the

final line of the stanza Vallejo further complicates his image of the enemy, by stating that in the 'locks' with which they are burdened, are also to be found 'sus bacterias muertas ...'. As stated earlier, anatomical and biological terms are frequently used in Vallejo's poetry to point to the organic frailty of the human condition, and by implication also refer to man's alienation from himself and the world that surrounds him. In this context the 'bacterias' signify not only the corrosive aspects of nature, which are seen to be analogous with the parasitical survival of the ruling classes from the exploitation of the workers, but also indicate the degree of penetration, the intricate complexity, and above all the illusory and pervasive nature, of bourgeois ideology.[31] However, unlike in the earlier poem 'El alma que sufrió de ser su cuerpo' from the collection Poemas humanos where the 'atrocísimo(s) microbio(s)' were still very much alive; they are now dead, which would suggest that Vallejo felt that even before the outbreak of the Civil War, conscious popular resistance to capitalist explitation had already begun to turn the tide of bourgeois hegemony. But an indication of the still incomplete nature of this process is suggested by the ellipsis with which the stanza ends.

A holy war?

The third stanza takes us directly into the war and begins:

> ¿Batallas? ¡No! Pasiones! Y pasiones precedidas
> de dolores con rejas de esperanzas,
> de dolores de pueblos con esperanzas de hombres!
> ¡Muerte y pasión de paz, las populares!
> ¡Muerte y pasión guerreras entre olivos; entendámonos!

The accumulated antagonisms of the past have now exploded into violence, but this is no ordinary capitalist war to extend the egotistical ambitions of the ruling elites, but a conflict deeply rooted in the class struggle. It is the result of a developing working class resistance to domination and subordination,

and an expression of their will to take charge of their own destiny. For Vallejo this surge of self-will and determination on the part of the masses makes their fight an act of passion and sacrifice rather than an act of war.

Again the language which is chosen to describe the struggle contains powerful religious overtones. But, as noted earlier in this chapter, Vallejo sees Christianity as a myth in transition, and the use of the term 'pasiones' in the above lines gives a good example of how he employs religious imagery to dissolve the realm of the spiritual, into the tangible world of human existence. In this context 'pasiones' would seem to represent several levels of meaning; firstly, it has the positive value of Christ's sufferings on the Cross, which are representative of the moment when the Messiah gave his greatest commitment to man. For Vallejo this is the point when the Christian myth came closest to associating its message with the real needs of humanity, and therefore provides a symbolic value in the modern struggle which he is witnessing.[32] However, because of the interpretation of the Christian message by the established Church, the tentative language of liberation that is to be found in the Bible was perverted to serve the interests of the ruling classes. Passion therefore became associated with pain and suffering, which though the direct consequence of economic exploitation, also conveniently became the prerequisite for heavenly salvation. In Spain this association between the Cross and earthly penitence was even brought out into the streets in elaborate religious ceremonies. For Vallejo such beliefs are nothing more than 'dolores con rejas de esperanzas' because the hope which they instil is false, and adds to the ideological enslavement of the people. But the causes of economic strife and injustice had eventually begun to be understood in class terms by the masses, whose collective perception of their suffering was now no longer dominated by ethereal religious beliefs but rather seen as the product of the material struggle of their daily lives. Their hopes for the future therefore

became increasingly concerned with worldly justice (esperanzas de hombres) rather than spiritual salvation.

In the fourth line of the stanza the illusion of spiritual passion and salvation is broken by the word 'muerte' which is also associated with a tangible 'pasión de paz'; this in turn is not seen as the mission of the Church or individuals but of 'las populares'. This is a true passion for peace and justice on earth, and must therefore be fought for; it is not a contract with Heaven for salvation, but a practical task which must involve the destruction of the real causes of suffering and exploitation. Interestingly Vallejo sees this battle being fought 'entre olivos', which, taking 'olivos' as a symbol of peace, reinforces the belief that a wider peace will be its ultimate result.[33] Alternatively such Christian symbolism may be seen, like the Church's interpretation of passion, as oppressive enemy ideology which should be challenged. Hence, the war may be fought on what was previously holy ground. Regardless of the intended meaning of the word 'olivos', Vallejo's analysis of 'passion' ends with an exhortation that the nature of the war should be understood. 'Entendámonos', he cries, indicating his belief that ultimately it is on the level of consciousness where the most telling battles are fought.

In its multiple range of meaning the term 'pasiones' therefore firstly recalls an original Christian myth: Christ on the Cross and the religious significance for man of the symbolic martyrdom of the Son of God. The poet then acknowledges the corruption of that myth by the function of class divided society. And, finally, in the context of the struggle for social justice, the myth is restored to a state of pristine purity. However, by the time it has reached this final stage it has become stripped of all spiritual associations to take the form of a totally human project with entirely human objectives.

The stanza continues with further reference to the worldly mission of the revolutionary masses:

> Tal en tu aliento cambian de agujas atmosféricas los vientos
> y de llave las tumbas en tu pecho,
> tu frontal elevándose a primera potencia de martirio.

In the above lines the word 'aliento' has a similar implication to the use of 'humos' in the first stanza in that it suggests something that is still not yet fully formed. However, an essential difference does emerge from the contexts in which the two terms are used; in the case of the 'smoke' which existed at the poets tomb, one assumes a situation in which the committed bourgeois intellectual is able to perceive in abstract terms the significance and implication of the revolutionary task of the militiamen, but his own cultural and social compromise with his bourgeois past prevents him from becoming fully integrated with the new socialist man. 'Humos' therefore, is associated with limitation, while on the other hand 'aliento' indicates creative forward development and is not part of abstract contemplation but a force which has tangible consequences; it can be registered in reality by 'agujas atmosféricas'. Furthermore, unlike the 'smoke' which is associated with a vision before death, the militiamen's 'aliento' is a 'llave' to 'las tumbas en ... su pecho', which indicates that by destroying the legacy of an alienated bourgeois past he will be able to realize his true self. As in many other instances in the poem the making of the Revolution is seen to embody a life giving force.

In the final line of the stanza we again return, by implication, to the theme of 'pasiones' as the militiaman becomes directly associated with martyrdom. But in his capacity as a human being, and not a divine intermediary, he assumes an even greater degree of responsibility than his religious counterpart. Moreover it is not the passion associated with heavenly salvation which had brought him to this juncture, but his consciousness

(frontal) which was born in the class struggle; it is this that had raised him to the 'primera potencia de martirio', because he is willing to sacrifice his life for a truly human cause.

The Spanish 'pueblo': a supra-historical phenomenon?

The forth stanza begins:

> El mundo exclama: "¡Cosas de españoles!" Y es verdad.
> Consideremos,
> durante una balanza, a quema ropa,
> a Calderón, dormido sobre la cola de un anfibio muerto,
> o a Cervantes, diciendo: "Mi reino es de este mundo, pero
> también del otro": ¡punta y filo en dos papeles!

Here we see Vallejo registering his apparent agreement with many Spanish intellectuals of both left and right, that the Civil War was essentially a Spanish affair. But as the stanza proceeds it becomes clear that he is only willing to support this argument on a limited basis. After all he had stated with considerable conviction in the first stanza that the militiaman was the representative of an 'agonía mundial', and even though he now accepts that the war reflected many distinctly Spanish qualities, it was also ultimately part of a wider battle for the realization of international socialism. Furthermore, Vallejo's analysis of Spain's cultural heritage in terms mainly of outstanding literary figures and their relationship to the Spanish 'pueblo' is not entirely sympathetic, and he challenges such nebulous concepts as 'hispanidad', with its implications of a unique cultural unity, peculiar to Spain, which transcends class barriers.

In his brief synopsis of Spanish literary history Vallejo considers firstly the Baroque poet and playwright of the late Spanish 'Golden Age', Calderón de la Barca, who, in a complex allegory is presented as being oblivious to the historical realities of his times. Much of Calderón's work was in fact imbued with narrow aristocratic and courtly values, and he also saw art itself

as representing part of an ethereal order, with its own autonomous existence, separate from worldly reality.[34] By the time of Calderón's death in 1681, Spain was coming to the end of its 'Golden Age', not only in the arts but also as a world power. For over one hundred and fifty years great wealth had been accumulated from the exploitation of the American empire, but much of this had been absorbed in defence against the mercantilist and expansionist aspirations of the northern European nations. The result of this policy led to under investment in Spain itself, and the subsequent stagnation of economic and social development. Calderón, who was renowned for his limited knowledge of the real world, had paid little attention to these historical factors in his work, as is clearly indicated by the title of his most famous play, La vida es sueño. In the wider context of Spanish history he therefore appears to Vallejo to be 'dormido'. The allegorical reference to an 'anfibio muerto' presents, however, a more complex problem of interpretation, but despite its obscurity, one might assume - tentatively - that 'anfibio' is an oblique reference to the 'Golden Age'. If so, Vallejo's use of the term may have a similar significance to 'reptiles' in the last stanza of the poem, which he uses to indicate his belief that bourgeois intellectuals were, in comparison to the new emerging socialist men, representative of a lesser and still incomplete stage of social evolution.[35] Consequently, the 'Golden Age' could be seen as an 'anfibio', and hence half-formed, because of the failure of the ruling classes at that time to encourage economic and social development commensurate with the great wealth and power which they enjoyed. The fact that the 'anfibio' is 'muerto', and that Calderón is placed 'sobre la cola', may therefore be a reference not only to the Baroque detachment of his work, but also an allusion to his life, which came at the end of this great, though somewhat illusory period of Spanish history.

Having dealt briefly with Calderón, Vallejo now turns to Cervantes to

whom he attributes the statement '"Mi reino es de este mundo, pero también del otro"'.[36] These were also the same words which were used by Vallejo himself in the speech he gave at the Writers' Congress to emphasize the necessity for writers to become conscious of their role in the social struggle.[37] Clearly, by employing the ideas of late sixteenth century novelist to indicate the attitude that should be adopted by twentieth century intellectuals, gives a favourable impression of the former. Cervantes, even though possibly not responsible for making the statement in question, did indeed pursue a lifestyle in which he came into direct contact with the historical realities of the day.[38] With the publication of Don Quijote he also inaugurated a new literary genre, the novel, in which he mocked the epic's idealized vision of the past by embodying the epic imagination in a hero who inhabits mundane reality. Based on Vallejo's short commentary it would seem that he felt that Cervantes was a more authentic literary representative of his times than Calderón, who, writing nearly a century after Cervantes, when the 'Golden Age' was almost at an end, still failed to perceive the historical contradictions of his times.

Continuing with his survey of Spanish cultural history Vallejo moves on to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and chooses Goya as the representative of this period; he states:

> Contemplemos a Goya, de hinojos y rezando ante un espejo,

While one could perhaps offer a satisfactory interpretation of the above statement in a few lines, the author feels that Goya holds a particular significance in terms of Vallejo's understanding of the role of the 'pueblo' in Spanish history, and therefore an overview of the artist's work and times would seem appropriate before assessing the implications of Vallejo's comments.[39]

From a brief survey of his art, Goya, may, with some justification, be regarded as an artist of the people, in that it was they who remained the main

subject of his work for almost his entire career. One of his best known works, the collection of engravings entitled Los desastres de la guerra is, for example, dominated by his almost obsessive interest in the Spanish 'pueblo'. This interest however was not so much the product of his class background, which was partly plebeian, nor was it the result of a personal sympathy towards the lower orders, but rather reflected the deep contradictions which existed in the artist's own life, and in Spanish society, at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Goya was a man of the Enlightenment and an apologist of its philosophy of rationalism. Reason in fact became the central theme for his series of etchings entitled Los Caprichos. And, commenting on the hideous and grotesque figures he had created he stated 'imagination deserted by reason, begets impossible monsters. United with reason, she is the mother of all arts, and the source of their wonders'.[40] His faith in the ideas of the Enlightenment and his extraordinary artistic talents ensured that he was accepted in the royal Bourbon Court, as well as gaining a prominent place among the liberal elite of late eighteenth century Spanish society. Spain as a nation however, was not at this time entering a period of bourgeois revolution like her neighbour France, and those small elite groups with enlightened ideas were no more than isolated islands in an ocean of backwardness, at whose centre was the 'pueblo'. Not surprisingly therefore in Los Caprichos. Goya presents the 'pueblo' as the antithesis of reason; dominated by superstition, ignorance, exploitation and disease, all of which were presided over by the Church, and its supreme court, the Inquisition. This is not the 'pueblo' of proletarian liberators which was lauded by left-wing intellectuals during the Civil War, but the 'burro-pueblo' of the amorphous masses.

During the French Revolution 'the people' entered history, but in Spain there was no fraternal support from the masses or the petit-bourgeoisie, and

when the forces and ideas of progress began to spill over into the peninsula a bloody war of independence broke out. During the two decades which straddled the new century, Goya, and many of his 'afrancesado' sponsors and friends, were often in grave danger in their own country from the forces of reaction, and Goya was himself to be interrogated by the Inquisition.

The resistance of the Spanish 'pueblo' against the French invader was however magnificent; it was both the first guerrilla war and also the first peoples' war of modern history. And, Goya, like many other Spanish intellectuals, despite his enlightened ideas and support for France, did not fail to feel some sympathy and national solidarity with the struggle of the lower classes. But, in his record of the conflict, Los desastres de la guerra, he retains many of the monsters of irrationality which filled Los Caprichos, and the overriding theme is not the heroic resistance of the people but the brutal lunacy of war itself. Given the historical circumstances of the time, one could not expect Goya to have seen any potential for progressive change in the struggles of the 'pueblo'; rationality told him that only an enlightened elite could lead humanity towards higher levels of civilization, and there was no one to contradict him. In the final analysis, his work, and especially Los desastres de la guerra, reflects the contradictions of early nineteenth century Spain, with its half-formed and unarticulated classes and its necessary but impossible bourgeois revolution.

Vallejo only devotes one line to Goya in the 'Himno' but it is suggestive of the complexity of the period in which the artist lived, and points to the dilemmas which he faced in his art. Firstly, Vallejo asks us to 'contemplate' Goya not simply in terms of his work, but as an individual, who is 'de hinojos y rezando ante un espejo'. In all of the artist's work there is no such self-portrait to which the above allusion could be seen as a direct reference, but the image that is given is not obscure. For example, in much of Goya's work

dealing with the War of Independence, the victims are often to be found on their knees in a gesture of suplication before the enemy. One could perhaps recall most readily the painting 'El tres de mayo' or some of the engravings from the collection Los desastres de la guerra and in particular number twenty-six, which carries the caption 'No se puede mirar'.[41] Here we see the 'pueblo' about to be slaughtered by a cluster of anonymous bayonated rifle barrels that enter the frame from the right. In front of the 'pueblo' are two bourgeois figures who are both on their knees praying; one facing directly at the enemy guns, while the other with his head lowered, has his back turned to the impending threat. The clearly visible face of the former bears a striking resemblance to some of Goya's official self-portraits. Could this be the work, if any, which Vallejo had in mind when he describes the artist in the 'Himno'? There is no 'mirror' in this particular engraving, but there is an extremely bright light which surrounds the bayonets and lies directly in front of the praying man who appears to be Goya himself. This light also throws a reflection over the entire scene.

While one would not wish to suggest that Vallejo's comments on Goya in the 'Himno' are entirely based on the above engraving, this work, along with its possible visual associations with the poem, does also provide the basis for a wider understanding of the historical contradictions which were faced by the artist. Therefore, for convenience, reference will continue to be made to the work in question, but it should not be assumed that a case is being made to present this one particular engraving as the sole source of inspiration for Vallejo's statement. Furthermore the dominant idea which is conveyed by this work, the 'dream' of reason, is a common theme in Goya's art.

In engraving number twenty-six of the collection Los desastres de la guerra enlightenment and reason are contrasted with reaction and anachronism, through the appearance and actions of the two bourgeois figures who inhabit

the centre of the scene. These are both men of influence and wealth, but as representatives of early nineteenth century Spanish society their differences are authentic and striking. The figure who has his back to the rifles and his head lowered is dressed in the elegant traditional style of the eighteenth century Spanish aristocracy; he is representative of the still dominant old order of Spanish society, and he is offering his prayers to God. The second figure, which may in fact be a self portrait of the artist, and who is facing the light and the rifles, is dressed in a modern nineteenth century European style, and he seems to be uttering words of supplication to the executioners; he is a man of reason. The 'pueblo' in the background waits in terror to die, but their reactions are the most human; a mother gives futile protection to her children under her robe, a man hides his face in his hands in despair, and a young woman throws her arms forward and her head back in a brilliant and silent cry for justice. Here, in this one engraving, are all the major contradictions of Goya's life and of early nineteenth century Spain.

The image Vallejo gives of Goya conveys his understanding of some of the problems faced by the artist in the period in which he lived. Firstly, even though it is the reader of the poem who is asked to 'contemplate' Goya, the use of this word also implies the passivity with which the artist's aristocratic audiences would have viewed his work. As we have seen earlier, Vallejo strongly supported the belief that the artist should seek to serve the forces of progress in his work, and therefore become himself an authentic component of historical change. But in early nineteenth century Spain, even for an artist like Goya who wished to go beyond pure aesthetic representation to express a degree of realism and passion in his art, how was he to transcend the historical circumstances of his time? Hence Goya's insoluble dilemma, in which despite his longing for the coming of an age when man could regard himself as a reflection of the real world (espejo), he remained bound to

a society in which the burden of the past, centred around the power of the Church (de hinojos y rezando), continued to dominate his life and his art.

The stanza continues:

> Contemplemos ...
> a Coll, el paladín en cuyo asalto cartesiano
> tuvo un sudor de nube al paso llano
> o a Quevedo, ese abuelo instantáneo de los dinamiteros,
> o a Cajal, devorado por su pequeño infinito, o todavía
> a Teresa, mujer, que muere porque no muere,
> o a Lina Odena, en pugna en más de un punto con Teresa ...

In sharp contrast to Goya, the contemplative liberal artist of the early ninateenth century, with his ambivalent perception of the 'pueblo', we now move on to a dynamic product of the 'pueblo' itself, Antonio Coll, a proletarian, and a man of action. Coll, who was among the volunteers fighting on the Madrid front, is reputed to have destroyed alone two enemy tanks, by strapping dynamite to himself and walking in their path.[42] Coll's actions, along with a number of other outstanding acts of commitment by Republican volunteers during the war, were given an almost legendary significance in the popular literature of the times. Among the many poems which were written in praise of Coll, perhaps the most memorable, and the most representative, is Emilio Prados's, 'Al camarada Antonio Coll' in which the poet concentrates, not so much on the volunteer's deeds, but on their significance.[43] Coll is seen therefore, most importantly, as an authentic hero of the 'pueblo', and the embodiment of the popular will. Prados captures this sense of universality most clearly in the lines 'cada cuerpo late en tí/ y vives en cada cuerpo'. While Vallejo shares the same understanding of Coll's actions he places greater emphasis on the volunteer's self-volition in the context of his class background. Coll therefore becomes a 'paladín' who has undertaken an 'asalto cartesiano'. Here we see a possible oblique reference back to Goya, who, as 'Pintor del rey' was indeed a court palatine. Coll however was a 'palatine' of the people, a servant of the new world that is being born through his actions. Unlike

the 'pueblo' of Goya's time, enslaved by ignorance, exploitation and anachronistic values, the volunteers of the people such as Coll, were exercising a 'Cartesian' will, which was the product of their self recognition as a class and a consciousness of their historical objectives. But again Vallejo accepts that this is a process still in embryo, and hence his continuing use of vaporous imagery (sudor de nube) to represent what he sees as the initial phase in a transition to a higher stage.

Returning again to Spanish cultural history, Vallejo turns to the seventeenth century novelist and poet, Francisco Quevedo, who he sees as the 'abuelo' of those like Coll who had fought with dynamite. Quevedo was indeed revolutionary and Cartesian in his treatment of poetry, and in his attacks on some of the abuses of the Spanish State, but at the same time he was also willing to support such deformations of human freedom as the Inquisition. Vallejo perhaps felt however, that Quevedo's revolutionary ideas outweighed his bigotry and elitist idealism.

Turning from the arts to the world of science, the histologist Ramón y Cajal is included in Vallejo's list of significant representatives of Spanish culture. Cajal, who died in 1934, made important contributions to the study of the structure of nerve cells and received the Nobel Prize in medicine and physiology in 1906.[44] For Vallejo he seems to typify the insensitive positivist creed of modern science, and 'devorado por su pequeño infinito' he had little time to consider the plight of the 'pueblo'.

As Vallejo's survey draws to a close he turns to the spiritual custodian of Spanish culture, Santa Teresa de Avila. Her writings, which included the great mystic work <u>El castillo interior</u>, were mainly presented in plain unliterary language, but her ideas were focused not on life itself, but death, and the ultimate sanctity which she believed it would bring. Finally, Vallejo calls again on a popular figure of the Civil War, Lina Odena: murdered by Nationalists

on the southern front between Guadix and Granada she became, like Antonio Coll, a celebrated example of the popular resistance against fascism. Between her and Santa Teresa the poet claims there would be a number of differences, one of which we might suppose would be the fact that in Vallejo's terms Lina Odena was fighting for life itself and a better existence for humanity on this earth, not an illusion of individual extasy after death. One is also reminded by the juxtaposition of these two individuals of Mariátegui's claim that those who fought for socialism would one day be remembered with the same devotion as Santa Teresa.[45]

The stanza continues with a section in parentheses in which Vallejo explores the significance of the 'pueblo' in relation to his foregoing survey of Spanish cultural history.

> (Todo acto o voz genial viene del pueblo
> y va hacia él, de frente o transmitido
> por incesantes brizna, por el humo rosado
> de amargas contraseñas sin fortuna.)

When Vallejo speaks here of the 'pueblo' he is referring not to the cumulative meanings with which this term is often associated in the Spanish language, but more specifically to the history of the Spanish masses and their progression towards becoming agricultural and industrial proletarians. In this context cultural concepts like 'hispanidad' and the 'auténtico ser' of the Spanish people, along with the great artistic and scientific works of an elitist minority, are seen to be of secondary importance to the class struggle which is held by the poet to be the primary vehicle of historical change. However, Vallejo, like Mariátegui and Gramsci, clearly recognizes in the 'Himno', as well as in the rest of the poems from the collection <u>España, aparta de mí este cáliz</u>, that national identity plays an important part in the formation of a people's consciousness. In fact, in the first two lines of the above section Vallejo emphasizes the central importance of the 'pueblo' in Spanish history. Here

the national context would seem important because of Spain's failure to produce a dynamic and homogeneous bourgeois class in relation to other Western European nations. And it may be argued that this one sociological factor in particular made the 'pueblo', or the lower classes, appear to have a more authentic identity in comparison to their counterparts in those countries where the bourgeoisie were more advanced in their destruction of the ancien régime, and their absorption of intermediate classes.

Vallejo also suggests that the 'pueblo' in its development was inevitably influenced and shaped by external forces, but its historical destiny is seen to be inexorable. The example he chooses to support this belief is the ideological domination of religion (humo rosado) which in spite of its tenacious and dogmatic (contraseñas) grip on the consciousness of the 'pueblo' for centuries, eventually failed to hold back historical progress.

Turning away from the external ideas and ideologies which have influenced the development of the 'pueblo', and which have served their time bound purposes, Vallejo now begins to illuminate the unique identity of the class that he believed would liberate humanity:

> Así tu cristura, miliciano, así tu exangüe cristura,
> agitada por una piedra inmóvil,
> se sacrifica, apártase,
> decae para arriba y por su llama incombustible sube,
> sube hasta los débiles,
> distribuyendo españas a los toros
> toros a las palomas ...

The birth of self consciousness in the militiaman and his class is seen by Vallejo as the inevitable outcome of the historical process as indicated by Marx, but because of the immeasurable significance he attributes to this development for the future of mankind, he describes the unfolding of the proletarian destiny as though it were the Immaculate Conception of history. However, yet again, his use of language with religious overtones does not

serve to weaken his socialist vision, but rather to give it a messianic impulse which intensifies its Marxist purity. It is therefore not simply the militiaman as he exists in his contemporary role as a freedom fighter that instils the poet with hope, but the process in which he is engaged. Through a series of brilliant dialectical images Vallejo indicates that only by transcending himself and his past can the militiaman begin to emerge as the new socialist man. As he had stated in his work El arte y la revolución, 'revolucionariamente, los conceptos de destrucción y construcción son inseparables' (pp. 16-17); and hence the whole point of the proletarian revolution is to produce conditions which are antithetical to those which brought the proletariat into being as a class; that class therefore in liberating itself also effects its own destruction.

The force of which the militiaman is an agent is seen as his 'criatura'. Clearly Vallejo is referring here to revolutionary development in terms of consciousness. And, whereas earlier in the poem he had lauded the militiaman's actions and their implications in a contemporary context, he now considers the historical trajectory of a forming socialist consciousness. Looking to the past he considers the 'piedra inmóvil' of centuries of domination by an anachronistic ruling class, which starved the 'pueblo' not only of material wealth but also of education and the progressive ideas of the rest of Europe. But as these elites become increasingly involved in capitalist forms of production the unavoidable tensions (agitada) of the modern world began to undermine their material and ideological hegemony, and foremost among these contradictory forces were the increasingly self conscious working classes who were the direct product of economic exploitation. In his journalism Vallejo had expressed the belief on many occasions that only in the context of capitalist development would the authentic forces of revolution be produced. Therefore, while he would have had much sympathy for the dignity and humanity of the struggles of the 'pueblo' - that was so outstandingly

portrayed by Goya - in pre-capitalist times, he realized that the self-realization of the masses as a class in themselves was the unique product of modernity.

Returning to the theme of sacrifice, which had first been introduced in an earlier stanza, we now learn in the context of the militiaman's dialectical development that his suffering has an even more complex relationship to his destiny than was suggested previously. Sacrifice now becomes the engine of his emancipation and the force which distinguishes him and his class from other classes in society. It would seem that here Vallejo is referring not only to the militiaman's immediate selfless commitment to his cause, but more importantly in Marxist terms - to his status in bourgeois capitalist society as the alienated product of an economic system. On this basis the dynamic quality of his sacrifice arises not from enforced poverty, but mass collective dehumanization; this, and not simply his spontaneous commitment to the armed struggle distinguishes him from the parishs of history, and motivates his class to engage in a conscious trancendence of its condition(apartase).

To emphasize this latter process Vallejo increases the dialectical tension between the militiaman and his destiny. Thus the fall (decae) into dehumanization becomes a creative force as it is juxtaposed with its opposite; ascendancy (arriba) towards collective humanization of the world. The historical energy which drives the militiaman (llama) is also seen to be 'incombustible', because the class he represents, unlike other classes in history, will be able to transcend its own internal contradictions rather than being consumed by them. In pursuing its objectives the working class acts as a class for itself, but its interests also coincide with the interests of all of humanity, therefore in fulfilling its destiny it prepares not for the continuation of class society but its destruction. And, it is this vital undertaking, which involves the breakdown of society based on economic antagonism, with its inhuman repercussions, and its replacement by a world system which is

motivated by human need and fraternity, that Vallejo saw in embryo in Spain during the Civil War.

In the final three lines of the stanza Vallejo links his theoretical perception of the revolutionary process more closely to the immediate task in which the militiaman is involved. Firstly, the militiaman is seen to have tried to defend the interests of his class (los débiles) against exploitation. This in turn led to a polarization of Spanish society into two hostile camps (españoles) whose irreconcilable contradictions eventually broke down into violence (toros). The use of the term 'distribuyendo' to describe the immediate political developments which led to the war indicate that Vallejo saw the conflict as the inevitable and necessary result of accumulated class antagonisms (this point is further emphasized in the following stanza when he talks of the militiaman's 'violencia metódica'). But, in the final line, we learn, as he concludes his dialectical interpretation of history, that the ultimate result of revolutionary violence will be peace (palomas). By ending the stanza with an ellipsis he indicates again though that there is much to be done before this final hope can be realized.

<u>The proletariat: a class with a universal mission</u>

The fifth stanza begins:

> Proletario que mueres de universo, ¡en qué frenética armonía
> acabará tu grandeza, tu miseria, tu vorágine impalente,
> tu violencia metódica, tu caos teórico y práctico, tu gana
> dantesca, españolísima, de amar, aunque sea a traición, a tu
> enemigo!

In the first line we find that the militiaman, the 'pueblo', and the masses, are now given a sociological specificity; they become proletarians. While in earlier stanzas the militiaman's role in the conflict is described in terms that have clear Marxist implications he still remained, above all,

a protagonist in a specific historical event; the Spanish Civil War. But now, as the poet identifies the hero in terms of his class, he immediately sanctions the universality of his task and its significance in a world context.

After establishing the enormous gravity of the proletarian's historical responsibilities (muerse de universo), the poet asks what will be the final consequences of the victory of the working class in their struggle. As in the previous stanza he continues with the use of antithetical statements to convey the dialectical development of the revolutionary process. The conclusion of the proletarian mission is seen in truly Marxist terms, in that it is not associated with some preconceived vision of an idealist utopia, but remains part of an ongoing process; a 'frenética armonía'. This is no place where man can rest after his long historical trajectory through class divided society, but a world in which humanity, now liberated from the barbarous repercussions of constant economic rivalry, can go forward to direct all its energies towards universal human progress. Again Vallejo sees the historical motion which leads mankind to this juncture as an inexorable force. Proletarian revolutionary action therefore becomes a 'vorágine impelente' into which all of society is drawn. Furthermore, the Revolution is not simply a reactive response by the working class to exploitation, it also contains its own internal logic; its own 'caos teórico y práctico'. As noted earlier in this chapter the concept of revolutionary praxis was fundamental to Vallejo's understanding of the proletarian struggle, and a failure to recognise this fact renders much of the poem incomprehensible.

After giving his interpretation of the role of the proletariat, Vallejo goes on to describe the developments he has outlined as a 'gana dantesca', which suggests a comparison between the progress of the working class towards self realization and emancipation, with Dante's journey in <u>The Divine Comedy</u>. Both have indeed to endure much suffering and disillusionment as part of a

necessary part of the preparation for the destiny that lay ahead, but whereas Dante's 'Paradise' already existed, waiting for humanity to inhabit it, the proletariat still have the task of building the new world after they have endured and conquered the old one.

Having made the militiaman a universal figure by calling him 'proletario', Vallejo does not neglect the fact that the war in which he is engaged is still essentially a Spanish affair, and the poet reminds us that many traits common to the people of that nation are visible in the conflict. In particular he feels that the Spanish ability to 'love', 'aunque sea a traición, a ...[su] enemigo' is a vital quality, and later in the poem he goes on to consider the importance of this national characteristic in terms of the magnanimity he feels must be shown to the enemy after a proletarian victory.

The stanza continues:

> Liberador ceñido de grilletes,
> sin cuyo esfuerzo hasta hoy continuaría sin asas la extensión
> vagarían acéfalos los clavos,
> antiguo, lento, colorado el día,
> ¡nuestros amados cascos, insepultos!

After elucidating the destiny of the proletarian in universal terms in the first part of the stanza, Vallejo now considers the more immediate aspects of his struggle. But before going on to describe the exploitation and oppression that has been endured by the working class which he represents, we are reminded that the proletarian's task does not simply involve the improvement of his own circumstances but the transformation of society, and he is therefore a 'liberador'. To assume this latter role though, it is a necessary prerequisite that his life involves more sacrifice and suffering than the members of other classes. He is a 'liberator' therefore precisely because his existence is 'ceñido de grilletes'. If the working classes were not destined to impose their desire for freedom on a class divided

society in the form of revolution, then history would continue in an endless cycle of exploiters and exploited. Vallejo's description of this latter process is a complex one, in which history (la extensión) is seen, in the absence of revolutionary proletarian intervention, to continue its course outside of tangible human control (sin asas). This essentially alienated condition is further likened to 'nails wandering aimlessly without heads', which seems to suggest that historical development would continue to be dominated by impersonal forces like money and market mechanisms until proletarian action 'fixed' a meaningful conscious direction for the future. Again, because of his belief in revolutionary praxis, Vallejo places considerable emphasis on human volition (esfuerzo) in the realization of the above objectives, and does not talk of the class struggle in terms of historical 'necessity' or any other determinist perspective.

Giving further consideration to pre-revolutionary times, Vallejo sees this period as a long extended process of historical accumulation in which each day remained 'colorado', suggesting that only with the coming of the proletariat could history emerge from this perennial sunset, to partake in a new dawn. He then goes on to reveal his concern for those who would never enjoy the freedom which the Revolution would bring. In this context he feels that their 'cascos' would remain without proper burial, suggesting that only the Revolution will result in a true redress for those who had suffered and died in the past from exploitation. By refering to 'nuestros cascos', Vallejo may however, be alluding more specifically to those who had fought and given their lives for the socialist cause.

Drawing more closely again to the historical circumstances of the Spanish Civil War, Vallejo continues:

> Campesino caído con tu verde follaje por el hombro,
> con la inflexión social de tu meñique,
> con tu buey que se queda, con tu física,
> también con tu palabra atada a un palo

y tu cielo arrendado
y con la arcilla inserta en tu cansancio
y lo que estaba en tu uña, caminando.

To begin the stanza with a universal perception of the role of the proletariat, and then to go on to choose as a specific example of proletarian struggle the actions of a 'campesino' rather than an industrial worker, may seem, in Marxist terms, to be rather curious.[46] However, one should remember that by the time of the outbreak of the Civil War, Spain was still a predominantly agricultural country, and during the conflict the agricultural labouring classes made up a large proportion of both Republican and Nationalist armies.[47] Furthermore, as suggested earlier, in the years before the war it had been the question of land reform which was perhaps the most important single area of contention between left and right, and the failure to find a compromise on this issue was one of the main causes of the collapse of democracy in July 1936. Vallejo's decision to give the most important practical revolutionary role in the poem to an agricultural, rather than an industrial proletarian, may however be based on more than simply a desire to be historically accurate in his poetry. One must remember that like many of the Spanish poets who supported the Republic, Vallejo had been brought up in a backward rural environment during the early years of his life. Peru, like Spain, was also a predominantly agricultural nation. Consequently, despite having developed his political consciousness in Europe, he remained fascinated the prospect of bringing about revolutionary developments in countries which had only marginal levels of capitalist development. And, this is most clearly illustrated in his novel <u>El tungsteno</u> in which he describes the introduction of nascent capitalism to an Indian community in Peru, and the subsequent reactions of the Indians to new forms of exploitation and degradation. Mariátegui had also argued in his <u>Siete ensayos de la realidad peruana</u> that the peasant and Indian masses in Peru were a potentially

revolutionary force, and Vallejo, who was much influenced by his work, must have been aware of such ideas.

In the address Vallejo gave to the Writers' Congress he stated 'América va, pues, en el pueblo español cumplir su destino extraordinario, en la historia de la humanidad', which suggests that he also believed that those nations which shared similar experiences of economic, political and cultural development were compatible in terms of their prospects for revolutionary change.[48] Clearly, as a Marxist, Vallejo understood the significance of the industrial proletariat as a revolutionary force, but as a Peruvian and a Hispanic he was anxious to see an example of revolutionary potential in the agricultural masses, and it was in Spain during the Civil War that such a development was to take place with unprecedented vitality. Notwithstanding the importance which Vallejo attached to such a process, he is nevertheless extremely cautious in his presentation of the 'campesino' in the 'Himno', who, despite his immediate historical significance, remains in terms of the revolutionary process, a backward social element, having only made his first initial steps towards a socialist consciousness.

Finally, Vallejo's emphasis in the 'Himno', and several other of the poems in the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, on the role of the agricultural proletarian in the Civil War, may also be a consequence of his wish to write poetry for popular consumption. As stated earlier, most of the troops that went to fight at the front were from agricultural backgrounds, as indeed were many of the Republic's committed intellectuals, and therefore the popular poetry of the times tended to reflect this rural predominance among its readers and its creators.[49]

In his elegy to the fallen 'campesino', Vallejo does not register grief, but hope; like all proletarians engaged in the struggle for socialist justice, his life had been sacrificed for the future of humanity (por el hombre).

However, while this agricultural worker is held to have been capable of contributing to the enormous task which has been outlined earlier in the stanza, he is seen by the poet to be still 'verde' in terms of the class struggle. To die fighting against injustice was indeed a true sacrifice, but the backward historical conditions that had forced the 'campesino' into battle could only have produced a limited political awareness: an 'inflexión social de ... mañique'. After making his assessment of the agricultural proletarian's development in terms of revolutionary consciousness, Vallejo goes on to consider the nature of rural life, and those aspects which eventually produced social conflict. Firstly, the 'campesino' is seen in terms of his backwardness, with his body tied to brute manual labour and his mind dominated by primitive superstitions and rural insticts (tu física). Physical exploitation and lack of education are however also the root of more complex forms of social disadvantage, and even language itself, because of its limitation in such an environment, becomes a self-perpetuating instrument of oppression. Vallejo's use of the allegorical statement 'palabra atada a un palo' to describe this latter process, also suggests the direct relationship between labour and language. This is especially true if one returns to the 'buey' of the previous line; on a direct level the form of communication between the 'campesino' and his 'ox' would be through the use of a 'palo', which suggests that a similarly primitive relationship would exist between the labourer and his language, because of the basic nature of the work in which he was engaged. For the poet these problems are not simply the product of economic backwardness, but of economic exploitation. By owning the land, as well as controlling the labour power of the 'campesinos', the rural capitalists could effectively dominate the entire lives of their workers. Therefore, the alienation embodied in existent property relations, is also seen to extend to the entire cultural and intellectual outlook of the 'campesino', whose horizon is nothing more than a 'cielo arrendado'. But

despite the historical rigidity of these conditions, which in the previous stanza had been described as a 'piedra inmóvil', it is the whole process of exploitation through wage labour, which is deemed to provide the pre-conditions for liberation.

Clearly in terms of the political development of the agricultural proletariat, the conflict on the land which preceeded the Civil War, as well as the war itself, were the great educators, however Vallejo looks back to a more organic source of enlightenment, which he sees embodied in the work process. Thus, in spite of the 'campesino's' dull and restricted existence, it is the very nature of his exploitation in the form of physical subjugation to harduous dehumanizing work, that is the source of his revolt against his condition. Because of these circumstances the worker would eventually become conscious of the need to shape his own destiny, and therefore, the poet sees 'arcilla inserta en ... [illegible] cansancio'. Furthermore, in direct relation to the 'campesino's' involvement with the land, 'clay' is also seen to have lodged behind his 'fingernails', which emphasizes the tangible nature of the process in which he is involved; a process which because of its transformative potential has allowed the worker to break away from his static past, and to begin 'caminando'.

The stanza continues:

> ¡Constructores
> agrícolas, civiles y guerreros,
> de la activa, hormiguante eternidad: ...

After having given the 'campesino' the status of a proletarian and including him among the 'constructores' of the new socialist civilization, Vallejo now goes on to speculate on the future for humanity after the victory of the revolutionary struggle. In the first instance he suggests that the eventual result of proletarian action will be the establishment of an 'activa,

hormigueante eternidad'. This statement gives several insights into his perception of a socialist society; firstly, that it is 'activa', again indicates that his vision rejected all notions of a static utopia. Secondly, the use of the term 'hormigueante' further suggests dynamic activity, but also points to mass cooperation and unity of purpose. As stated earlier, Vallejo believed that man's true destiny lay in the realization of his fraternal and cooperative species-essence, which in the context of scientific and industrial modernity would offer boundless possibilities for united human advancement.[50] Finally, these developments are seen to have the potential for eternal growth and survival. Vallejo's understanding of 'eternity', one suspects however, does not include any spiritual implications but is based on the belief that once man has - in Marxist terms - emerged out of his 'pre-history' and established a world which is motivated by human need, then he will be free to develop himself and his environment as he wishes.

As Vallejo begins to examine the possibilities which will be open to man in a socialist world, his language and the structure of his vision are again imbued with religious overtones:

> ... estaba escrito
> que vosotros haríais la luz, entornando
> con la muerte vuestros ojos;
> que, a la caída cruel de vuestras bocas,
> vendrá en siete bandejas la abundancia, todo
> en el mundo será de oro súbito
> y el oro,
> fabulosos mendigos de vuestra propia secreción de sangre,
> y el oro mismo será entonces de oro!

Indeed, Roberto Paoli, in his analysis of the poetry of <u>España, aparta de mí este cáliz</u>, selects the above lines from the 'Himno' to show how Vallejo draws directly from ideas in the Bible to elaborate his vision, and in particular from the <u>Prophecy of Isaiah</u>, on which he believes this latter section of the fifth stanza is based.[51] But despite Paoli's emphasis on the

continuing Christian implications of Vallejo's final poetry, he is also one of the few critics who accepts the incorporation of Marxist ideas in the poet's work on the Spanish Civil War. Arguing from what seems to be a Christian humanist standpoint, Paoli gives some excellent insights into the formation and content of the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz, but because of the religious and spiritual implications which he still attaches to this work, when he is faced with the question of the moral ascendancy of the protagonists of the poem, and the poet's vision of the future, he returns to the realm of the 'nebulosa', in which only religious mysticism seems to offer a satisfactory interpretation of the prophetic poetry which he sees before him.[52] Furthermore, while Paoli acknowledges that la 'grandeza del proletario nace de la conciencia de su miseria' he does not see revolutionary action and revolutionary consciousness as the instruments of change and transition, but sacrifice. This emphasis would be acceptable in Marxist terms if, as suggested earlier, sacrifice were directly associated with capitalist dehumanization and its subsequent revolutionary implications. But, for Paoli, the concept of sacrifice, as employed in the 'Himno', still partly retains its religious meaning, and is associated in true Biblical terms with the suffering of the 'poor of the earth' rather than specifically the working classes.[53] In this context Vallejo is held to be presenting in the final lines of the fifth stanza of the 'Himno',

> 'la teoría marxista recalcando la profecía de la Sagrada Escritura que sólo con el sacrificio del "despreciado, del último de los hombres, del hombre del dolor, acostumbrado al padecer" (Isaías, 53.3), se abrirá una nueva era para la humanidad; que, penetrando él en las tinieblas de la muerte, se hará la luz para todas las naciones (S. Mateo, 5, 14-16; Isaías 42,7; etc.) A la era de las tinieblas y la privación, seguirá una de luz y abundancia (Isaías, 54; 55; 61; 62; 65). Se restablecerá inmediatamente la Edad de Oro (¡cuánto mito bíblico y cuán poco marxismo hay en esta esperanza!). (p.356)

While the above Biblical citations have clear associations with Vallejo's statements in the 'Himno', and one assumes that the poet must have been aware of such a relationship, this does not necessarily show

conclusively, as Paoli seems to suggest, that Vallejo's use of language with religious implications is an indication of his lingering spiritual faith. Why, one might ask, did Vallejo in the last years of his life, and for almost a decade a committed Marxist, have to supplement his beliefs with the ideas of an external spiritual vision and moral code to substantiate his understanding of the socialist promise? Even at the time of writing Los heraldos negros he had abandoned his belief in Christianity, and during his years of deepest pessimism in the mid 1920s he never tried to re-establish his faith.[54] Paoli is right to suggest that Vallejo incorporated Christianity into his perception of Marxism, but it is the structure and form of the Christian myth which he adopts to serve as a vehicle for other ideas, not the spiritual vision and its implications. As Mariátegui had argued in his critique of the postwar revisionists in the Defensa del marxismo, Marxism assumes the development of an autonomous ethical code from within the political struggle itself. Hence, attempts to graft moral or spiritual elements from external bodies of knowledge onto an emerging revolutionary ideology were ultimately futile. This thesis would consequently argue that Paoli's approach to Vallejo's final poetry creates an unnecessary contradiction in which the poet is seen to be suspended between political commitment and spiritual anticipation, leaving his ultimate vision of mankind as simply a reflection of his divided self. In the 'Himno' there exists no such duality, because as a Marxist Vallejo fully understood the implications of proletarian revolutionary action, and did not need external philosophies to complete his perception of the world. Thus one might conclude, that when Vallejo states, prior to his allusion to the new world and its creator, 'estaba escrito que vosotros haríais la luz', that while biblical connotations abound, the text he is refering to is Marx, not Isaiah, and the 'vosotros' are not the 'poor of the earth' but the proletariat.

Despite Paoli's belief that a spiritual and 'nebulous' message underlies Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry, and especially those lines in the 'Himno' in which the poet outlines his vision of a more humane world, he accepts that this vision also embodies certain materialist aspirations. Considering Vallejo's statements at the end of the fifth stanza he states therefore,

> Si ahora los trabajadores son mendigos de su propio sudor (y, para el marxismo, sudor es igual a riqueza), mañana - luego que se realice la redención por su propio sacrificio - " ... el oro mismo será entonces de oro", o sea no servirá más a pocos, causando la miseria de muchos, pasando de ser sinónimo de miseria y opresión a ser sinónimo de riqueza y libertad, siendo lo que verdaderamente es, eliminará del mundo la contradicción económica. (p.356)

Interestingly, and somewhat in contradiction to his foregoing argumenta, Paoli sees Vallejo's reference to 'mendigos' as an indirect allusion to the working classes. In terms of the Prophecy of Isaiah it is through the sacrifice of the parisha of the earth that the new world would be brought into being, but for Marxists such a prospect is absurd. Marx had only contempt for the lumpenproletariat, and Vallejo himself also makes it clear throughout the poem that the Revolution was the task of the proletariat itself, not the shapeless masses. One feels, therefore, that Paoli is correct to assume that Vallejo uses the term 'mendigos' in the poem not to describe a social group but a social condition. In this sense the workers are 'beggars' in a capitalist society because they only share a minimal proportion of the wealth that is produced. Furthermore, the ignominy of being forced to sell their labour and barter for better wages and conditions could also be compared to a form of supplication. The sacrifice which this condition entails, and which Vallejo describes as a 'secreción de sangre', is seen by Paoli however, as a quality in itself, and not part of a specific revolutionary process, out of which will be born the proletarian's frail, but autonomous, 'exangue cristura' to which the poet referred in the previous stanza. Furthermore, it is in this latter sense that the workers are truly 'fabulosos mendigos', because their suffering and sacrifice becomes

the vehicle of their independent political consciousness.

Drawing even further away from the Prophecy of Isaiah Paoli sees Vallejo's reference to 'gold' as having direct materialist implications. Again, by making such a claim Paoli would seem to contradict some of his previous statements, but from a Marxist perspective such an interpretation is entirely consistent with the development of the poem. The notion of 'gold' being restored to its true state in a materialist context would also indicate a process by which as a consequence of the Revolution, capitalist wealth based on the extraction of surplus value from living labour, is replaced by a new form of wealth, in which labour is directed towards the service of human need, rather than to create profits for a minority. The real wealth under both capitalism and socialism is labour power, but its use as a resource would be radically different under each of these forms of economic and social organization. [35]

In the above context, while it may be argued that the Prophecy of Isaiah serves to offer a mythical framework for Vallejo's vision, it is the ideas of Marx which put that vision in contact with historical reality. And, whereas Paoli chooses to illustrate the similarity of Vallejo's vision to a Biblical myth, one could equally select passages from Marx, of which the poet's statements towards the end of the fifth stanza also seem to be a reflection. For example in his Critique of the Gotha Programme Marx states,

> In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!

A vision of unalienated man

After considering the possibilities for the economic transformation of the world through social revolution Vallejo now considers the human implications

of the Revolution, and in the sixth stanza he states:

> ¡Se amarán todos los hombres
> y comerán tomados de las puntas de vuestros pañuelos tristes
> y beberán en nombre
> de vuestras gargantas infaustas!
> Descansarán andando al pie de esta carrera,
> sollazarán pensando en vuestras órbitas, venturosos
> serán y al son
> de vuestro atroz retorno, florecido, innato,
> ajustarán mañana sus quehaceres, sus figuras soñadas y cantadas!

The belief that all human beings will love each other in a future communist society is fundamental to Vallejo's vision. But despite the mythical projection which such a vision involves, he does not allow his hopes to exceed human possibilities by alluding to some quasi religious earthly paradise. One also notes that in true Marxist terms, and in contrast to most religions, it is not only the chosen ones who will enter the new world, but all of humanity, and in this context the poet suggests that after the Revolution there should be universal recognition of those who initiated the struggle for liberation.

Despite the continuing Marxist implications of Vallejo's vision the adulation of the proletarian revolutionaries which he advocates, bears a close similarity with the celebration of Holy Communion in the Christian Church. But the acts which he describes are not ones that are bound by tradition and dogma, but reflect socialist man's conscious acceptance of the importance of the revolutionary struggle. In remembrance of the fallen there will therefore be no symbolic acts like the partaking of Christ's body in the breaking of the bread, but rather an expression of true grief. Similarly, instead of drinking Christ's blood in the form of wine the members of this new society will drink to the names of the dead. While presenting the dead revolutionaries as saintly figures the emphasis is also not on worship and adulation, but continuity. Those who gave their lives for the socialist cause were not like the idealized individuals of religious or heroic mythology who represented

codes of behaviour which were beyond the reach of ordinary mortals, but real human beings who through their revolt against exploitation and dehumanization rediscovered the authentic essence of humanity. Post revolutionary man is therefore seen to be able to identify with the historical struggles out of which he emerged, and accept their significance in the continuing process of liberation of which he is a part. The proletarian may have been the first 'liberador' and the first 'constructor' but the task that he initiated has a permanence which means that socialist man must continue 'andando al pie de esta carrera ...'. But, when this new man considers the violent struggles and suffering of his progenitors he will not only express grief, but feel fortunate that he belongs to a liberated generation that did not have to experience the first cataclysmic birth of freedom.

At this point Vallejo issues a warning as he contemplates the 'atroz retorno' of the proletarian and the Revolution. Here he is perhaps suggesting that if the Revolution faltered, and there was a return to exploitation and class domination, then such developments would be again destroyed by violent action. The poet however seems to think that a return of the proletariat would not be possible after a true revolution, because historical consciousness and social and economic well being would prevent a recurrence of the conditions which led to political struggle. Furthermore, the socialist myth would remain alive with its 'figuras soñadas y cantadas'. Again, this last claim, and in fact all references to the remembrance of the proletariat in the stanza, remind one of Mariátegui's vision of a socialist future in which the heroes of the Revolution would be held in the same esteem as Christian saints and martyrs.

In the sixth stanza Vallejo elaborates his vision of communist society as follows:

> ¡Unos mismos zapatos irán bien al que asciende
> sin vías a su cuerpo
> y al que baja hasta la forma de su alma!
> ¡Entrelazándose hablarán los mudos, los tullidos anderán!
> ¡Verán, ya de regreso, los ciegos

y palpitando escucharán los sordos!
¡Sabrán los ignorantes, ¡ignorarán los sabios!
¡Serán dados los besos que no pudísteis dar!
¡Sólo la muerte morirá! ¡La hormiga
traerá pedacitos de pan al elefante encadenado
a su brutal delicadeza; volverán
los niños abortados a nacer perfectos, espaciales
y trabajarán todos los hombres
engendrarán todos los hombres
comprenderán todos los hombres!

As in the previous stanza Vallejo's language appears to be laden with biblical prophecy, but consistent with the rest of the poem one finds from a close analysis of his statements that his vision is not religious or spiritual, but Marxist. The above 'miracles' are not perceived by the poet in terms of divine intervention in the human condition, but are seen rather as the result of man's own conscious transcendence of his alienated existence in class divided society. In fact, for Vallejo, as for his mentors, Marx and Mariátegui, it was religious alienation, in which man attributes to an alien form qualities that are proper to himself, that provided an essential paradigm for understanding all other forms of alienation.

In capitalist society alienation exists in its most fundamental form in the relationship between the worker and the product of his labour. As Marx states in Capital:

> The relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves but between the products of their labour. This is the reason why the products of labour become commodities, social things whose qualities are at once perceptible and imperceptible by the senses ... The existence of things qua commodities, and the value-relation between the products of labour which stamps them as commodities, have absolutely no connection with their physical properties and with the material relations arising therefrom. Here it is a particular social relation between man that assumes, in their eyes, the imaginary form of a relation between things. To find an analogy we must have recourse to the mist-enveloped regions of the religious world, where the productions of the human brain appear as independent beings endowed with life, and entering into relation both with one another and with the human race. (Vol I, 4)

The commodity and money-form assumed by objects is also the root of a particular illusion which Marx calls 'commodity fetishism', which is the embryo of all other forms of alienation, and accounts for a large part of the false consciousness which human beings hold in regard to their own social existence. Vallejo acknowledges this process in his poetry, both in Poemas humanos and España, aparta de mí cáliz, paying particular attention to how alienated labour succeeds in alienating man from his species and the species itself from the material and natural world which it inhabits.

In the above stanza Vallejo projects a vision of what he perceives would be the nature of human existence in a world in which man had rid himself of alienation. But realizing that no language yet exists to describe this state of being - because the material conditions have yet to be fulfilled in which appropriate forms of expression would emerge - he again uses the framework of religious mythology to act as an analogous representation of his ideas.[56] The wide range of human constraints and disabilities which are seen to be overcome in communist society are an indication of the all-pervasive nature which Vallejo attributed to alienation in the modern capitalist world.

Before describing in detail his perceptions of the unalienated human condition, Vallejo gives several complex images relating back to his memorial to the dead proletarians which he presented in the previous stanza. Again we are reminded of the unity of purpose and the fraternity which the heirs of the liberators would enjoy, but the poet also seems to further emphasize that the foundations of this new found harmony could only be based on the resolution of the contradiction between theory and practice. Both those who have come to understand the revolutionary process through their own activity and participation, and without a pre-formed theoretical knowledge (sin vías), and those who gave intellectual contributions to the struggle, will become one. The illusion of the priority of mind over matter will gradually be destroyed,

as communist man constantly reflects in his life the essential example of the revolutionary proletarian who came to understand the historical world through the process of its practical transformation. Understanding history and participating in it will become one and the same and require no separate justification. If the above interpretation is correct, then it is interesting to note how Vallejo sees the proletarian's actions as his 'cuerpo' and his revolutionary consciousness as his 'alma'. Furthermore, those who take the direction of his 'body' are seen to 'rise' and those who look to his 'soul' to 'descend', suggesting, as Marx pointed out that 'it is not consciousness that determines life but life that determines consciousness'.[57]

Indicating the particular problem he faces as a revolutionary poet in a bourgeois society concerning the limitations of language, Vallejo states early in his description of humanity's future in a communist world, that even the 'mute' would be able to speak. Seeing man in class society as being 'mute' shows that Vallejo believed that the division of labour and the personification of material objects had produced a form of communication which reflected man's alienated existence. However, because consciousness is only realized in speech, language itself becomes not only the product of alienation but also helps to perpetuate it. Communism would however bring an end to the forms of economic and social organization which leads to alienation, and language in turn would reflect this transition. Therefore, what was once an instrument of false consciousness would become the means by which man could express his true species-essence.[58] Vallejo emphasizes the fraternity which will exist in this new found world by stating that the 'mute' would not only be able to speak in a non alienated language, but they would also do so 'entrelazándose'. This term may however be a more specific reference to the nature of the new language itself, which because of its foundations in non-alienated forms of human endeavour, would become a

universal means by which man could express and communicate the nature of his liberty.

Looking at the remaining references to the overcoming of physical disabilities in the stanza in terms of their allegorical relationship with alienation, one might suggest the following interpretations, firstly, the 'paralyzed' would walk because work would no longer involve the condemnation of some members of society to repetitive boring labour, which robbed them of their physical and mental well-being. It is only in a society ruled by private property and the division of labour that productive activity is a source of misery and de-humanization, and under capitalism particularly labour destroys the workman instead of enriching him. When alienated labour is done away with, people will still have to externalize their powers in the form of work, but such activity will no longer be motivated by the inhuman quest for capital accumulation, but directed towards human need, thereby making work itself an expression of mans' collective ability. Vallejo further claims that the 'blind' will see, and adds that they will do so 'ya de regreso' which suggests that in having their sight restored they would be returning to a lost past. However, such a non-Marxist idea would be inconsistent with the rest of the poem, and one consequently feels that Vallejo is here not alluding to some notion such as 'ricorso', as expressed by Vico, where mankind makes a cyclical return to its forgotten sources, but is rather indicating a process by which man retrieves a latent human essence which has always been implicit in the nature of his species existence, but has always been suppressed and perverted by alienated forms of human organization.

Continuing his overview of communist society Vallejo also claims that the 'deaf' will hear, indicating that having destroyed the language of alienation the acoustic messages which reach the brain will no longer be the vehicles of propaganda and false consciousness, but a true reflection of

united human endeavour. Adding to the ideas he put forward in the opening lines of the stanza Vallejo again refers to the position of the intellectual as he states; '¡sabrán los ignorantes, ignorarán los sabios!' Clearly the poet is not suggesting here that 'men of ideas' in the traditional sense would become a sub class in a communist society, but rather that in a world where there was no division of labour and all men were able to develop their abilities to the full, the separate and abstract category of the contemplative intelligence would be meaningless.

As Vallejo progresses with his description of the human condition after the demise of alienation he even suggests that '¡sólo la muerte morirá!'. While one can interpret this statement in the context of the foregoing analysis, it must also be noted that the concept of 'matar a la muerte' was a common theme during the Civil War among the Republican poets. Alberti for example, states in his poem 'Vosotros no caísteis', which applauds the sacrifice of the peasant militiamen in the war; 'de sol a sol trabajan en la nueva costumbre/ de matar a la muerte, para ganar a la vida'.[59] One feels however, from a reading of the works of the Spanish poets from this period, including Alberti, that their allusions to the destruction of death did not hold such a complex significance as implied in Vallejo's poetry. For the Spanish poets the nature of the death to which they referred was mostly associated with the aggression of the enemy forces, and the more immediate consequences of the war, whereas in Vallejo's Civil War poetry, and especially the 'Himno', death, while including the above associations, also infers alienation, and hence may be linked more clearly with his wider philosophical understanding of socialism.

While the Marxist perception of alienation would seem to provide a means of interpreting the stanza in question, one must also acknowledge the unique individual presentation of human estrangement which

Vallejo includes in his poetry. In this instance the process of alienation, and by association death, is seen in biological terms as the poet states; 'la hormiga/traerá pedacitos de pan al elefante encadenado/ a su brutal delicadeza'. Again it is necessary to look back to the earlier poetry that Vallejo wrote during his period in Europe to understand the implications of the above statement. In the poem 'Epístola a los transeúntes' for example, in which he had considered the absurdity of human life when seen purely in terms of its biological functions, he had compared his own existence to the lives of animals stating; 'reanudo mi día de conejo/ mi noche de elefante en descanso'. The implication of the above statement being that despite man's high status in the living world, which he had achieved through his inventiveness and dexterity, his life still amounted to little more than a lonely struggle for survival against alien forces outside of his control. As stated earlier in this chapter such a condition, in the context of man's inability to resolve the economic and social crisis which impaired his species, seemed even more absurd. In the 'Himno' however, as Vallejo perceives man becoming involved in a more fraternal form of existence, the burden of his biological fate seems to lessen, and the poet is no longer left contemplating the 'inmensidad en bruto' of his own body, as he had in the 'Epístola a los transeúntes',but rather considering the possibilities of a new relationship between man and nature. As we have seen in the second stanza the breakdown of ruling class hegemony is described in terms of expired 'bacterias' but now, in what would seem to be a representation of a post revolutionary society, the whole process of physical decay is reversed as 'hormigas' - Vallejo's symbol of united purposeful effort - are seen to bring 'pedacitos de pan' to the 'elefante encadenado' of human animality. As with all of Vallejo's more complex poetic statements the above analogy may represent several levels of meaning. Firstly, the revolutionary action of the masses

(hormigas) could be seen to be a cumulative form of salvation (pan) for alienated humanity under capitalism. On another level human activity under socialism, which Vallejo had described earlier in the poem as'hormiguante', may be viewed as the tangible and necessary process by which total human potential can be released from its state of enslavement under mutant forms of economic and social organization. Thirdly, but by no means exhaustively, Vallejo may also be suggesting that in a situation in which communist man is fully engaged in fraternal activity, aimed at the satisfaction of human need, it will be in his power to conquer aspects of nature which were previously alien and detrimental to his species. Disease, hunger, and pain, as well as many other aspects of human existence in which nature is in conflict with man could be overcome if all of mankind's efforts were directed towards improving its own condition. In this context however, nature should not simply be seen as an external force to be tamed, but rather as an instrument of mans' self realization. Man is himself a part of nature, yet unlike other animals he has the unique ability to realize his own self-creation through labour. Nature therefore, once it is perceived through a truly unalienated consciousness will become humanized by its active relationship with man.

The stanza ends with a series of statements which suggest the vitality and harmony of human existence in a communist world:

> ... volverán
> los ruíos abortados a nacer perfectos, especiales
> y trabajarán todos los hombres,
> engendrarán todos los hombres
> comprenderán todos los hombres!

It would seem that for Vallejo the recovery by man of his 'species-essence' is comparable in allegorical form to his true birth into the world. But, because this development is not simply the supersession of one form of human organization over another, but rather the realization of mankinds inherent

qualities, the possibility exists for a form of rebirth in which the past is reconciled with the present. Time in its historical sense is therefore transcended, and human interaction is seen to exist on a new 'spatial' level in which man's progress is not indicated in terms of the domination of the world by successive and transient classes, but rather by united human achievement. The process which will bring about this final reconciliation, in which man becomes at one with himself, his species, and the world in which he lives, is indicated in the final three lines of the stanza. Firstly, the means by which man will transform himself and his world is through work. As a Marxist this belief is fundamental to Vallejo's thinking, and is the main source of his faith in human possibilities in a communist society.[60] As we have seen in Chapter Three of this thesis, in his book Russia en 1931 Vallejo had shown particular interest in the work process as presented in Eisenstein's films. Eisenstein he claimed, had shown that 'el trabajo es el padre de la vida', and that in socialist terms it was work that provided the only means by which humanity could achieve an authentic realization of its collective potential. Then commenting further on the work process Vallejo states;

> El trabajo es el gran recreador del mundo, el esfuerzo de los esfuerzos, el acto de los actos. No es la masa lo más importante, sino el movimiento de la masa, el acto de la masa, como no es la materia la matriz de la vida, sino el movimiento de la materia (desde Heráclito a Marx) ... Las demás formas de la actividad social no son más que expresiones específicas y diversificadas del acto primero de la producción económica: el trabajo ... el trabajo es en el hombre un fenómeno esencialmente colectivo, un acto de multitud. Todos deben trabajar. (pp.220-221)

Under the capitalist mode of production work becomes the instrument of human enslavement and alienation, but with the material destruction of this parasitic and exploitative form of economic organization, man will be allowed to realize his full productive and creative powers. Hence for Vallejo, in a communist world not only will all men be engaged in united productive effort to satisfy human need, they will also be able to go beyond the realm of necessity, to begin to develop human potentiality for its own sake (engendrarán

todos los hombres). And finally, with the breakdown of the division of labour, and the freeing of all men to become complete human beings, the illusion of priority of mind will be destroyed as it becomes universally realized that consciousness is, and can only be, a product of a social relationship with the material world (comprenderán todos los hombres).

To emphasize the importance of the proletariat as the instrument of the liberation of the work process Vallejo goes on to devote a short stanza, in the form of a litany, to the contemporary working class struggle to which he had been a witness. He states:

> Obrero, salvador, redentor nuestro,
> ¡perdónanos, hermano, nuestras deudas!
> Como dice un tambor al redoblar, en sus adagios:
> qué jamás tan efímero, tu espalda!
> que siempre tan cambiante, tu perfil!

Here again religious connotations abound, but this still does not alter the clearly Marxist perspective of human liberation which Vallejo has offered so far in the 'Himno'. In this latter context the sequence in which he places the qualities of the proletarian are significant; he is first of all a 'worker', and then once engaged in the revolutionary struggle he becomes a 'saviour', and finally through his actions he brings 'redemption' to all of humanity.

As a result of the strife and dehumanization of his daily life the proletariat is the class which had begun to offer the greatest resistance to the capitalist system, and by attempting to transcend their condition they had set into motion the embryonic beginnings of a communist society. For Vallejo their task carried inestimable importance for the future of mankind, and it is therefore not surprising that he should ask for forgiveness from this 'hermano', for those like himself, who could not give themselves fully to the cause, and also those who were simply unaware of the gravity of the mission which had befallen the Spanish working classes. One also notes

that the use of the term 'hermano' to describe the proletarian attains a special significance in the context of a stanza which takes the form of a paraphrase of the 'Lord's Prayer': as 'brothers' humanity is not engaged in a battle to establish a pre-ordained destiny dictated by an external power, but bound to a task in which it must establish its own freedom and self realization.

The Spanish Civil War: a test for international socialism

After considering in detail the historical task of the Spanish proletariat Vallejo now turns, in the ninth stanza, to the international response to the war, and in particular to the International Brigades that came to defend democracy in Spain during the first two years of the conflict. As will be remembered from Chapter Three, Vallejo was in Madrid shortly after the arrival of the first International Brigades in late 1936, and one assumes he was greatly impressed by their commitment and their actions. The stanza begins:

> ¡Voluntario italiano, entre cuyos animales de batalla
> un león abisinio va cojeando!
> ¡Voluntario soviético, marchando a la cabeza de tu pecho universal!
> ¡Voluntarios del sur, del norte, del oriente
> y tú, el occidental, cerrando el canto fúnebre del alba!

When one considers Vallejo's Marxist world perception of socialism, it is not surprising, even in a poem which is directed towards the Spanish working classes, that he should include a section on the International Brigades. While perhaps of only limited military importance to the Republican war effort, these international volunteers had an enormous impact on the morale of those Spaniards who remained in support of the democracy. And, in the popular left-wing Spanish media of the times they were hailed as representatives of the working classes of the world, who in an outstanding gesture of solidarity

had come to fight alongside the Spanish people in their resistance against fascism.[61]

Among the international volunteers who Vallejo names directly in the above stanza are the Italians and the Russians. Based on a numerical assessment of the International Brigades this would seem to be a rather unjust representation, because several countries including France and Germany sent more volunteers to Spain than Italy and Russia.[62] In the case of the Italians however, their prominent place in the stanza may be due to Vallejo's acknowledgement of their contribution to the Republican victory at Guadalajara in March 1937, where they helped to defeat a fascist army which was composed mainly of their fellow countrymen. Longing for a notable success for his army in Spain, Mussolini persuaded Franco that he should be allowed to attack the Republican forces at Guadalajara. During the battle the Garibaldi battalion, which was composed of Italian anti-fascist volunteers, many of whom had been persecuted in their own country, played an important and heroic role in support of the Republican cause. The victory against fascism at Guadalajara soon became heralded on the left as an outstanding example of working class solidarity, and a vindication of the strength of proletarian internationalism above national chauvinism. Mussolini, who was anxious to rekindle the popular euphoria at home which he had experienced during the Abyssinian campaign, was furious at the defeat of his army in Spain, and this is indicated by Vallejo's statement, 'un león abisinio va cojeando'.

The second group of volunteers to be named by Vallejo are the Russians. The term 'volunteers' however, seems inappropriate for those individuals who were sent to Spain under directives from Moscow to act as military and technical advisers, pilots, and political commissars. Russia though, was the only nation to offer substantial military assistance to the Spanish Republic, and the International Brigades were also organized under the auspices of the Comintern, therefore Vallejo may have felt that the Soviet contribution

to the war should be presented in the most favourable terms. He probably realized, furthermore, that many members of the international communist movement, including some of those Russians who had been sent to Spain, were becoming disenchanted by Stalin's political and economic strategies.[63] Moreover, in a world in which the economic depression of the early 1930s and the rise of fascism had weakened the power and will of the left, with even the world's only socialist state falling back into isolation, the struggle in Spain seemed to represent an extraordinary purity, which for many rekindled the international revolutionary ideals of 1918. In this latter context Vallejo's description of the Soviet volunteer's 'marchando a la cabeza de tu pecho universal', would seem to indicate that those Russians who were fighting (marchando) in Spain - in contrast perhaps, to the large contingent of communist advisers, agents and bureaucrats who were not engaged in direct action - were the legitimate heirs of the world's first socialist revolution.

The remaining volunteers which Vallejo includes in the stanza are not recorded according to nationality but geographical origins, and, emphasizing the international nature of the struggle in which they are engaged, he makes it clear that they have come from the four corners of the earth. It is in the hands of those from the West however, that he accepts has been placed the most immediate task; the defeat of fascism (el canto fúnebre), which is he believes, an essential prerequisite to the emergence of the new socialist 'dawn'.[64]

The stanza continues:

¡Soldado conocido, cuyo nombre
desfila en el sonido de un abrazo!
¡Combatiente que la tierra criara, armándote
de polvo,
calzándote de imanes positivos,
vigentes tus creencias personales,
distinto de carácter, íntima tu férula,
el cutis inmediato,
andándote tu idioma por los hombros

y al alma coronada de guijarros!
¡Voluntario fajado de tu zona fría,
templada o tórrida,
héroes a la redonda,
víctima en columna de vencedores:
en España, en Madrid, están llamando
a matar, voluntarios de la vida!

As Vallejo had noted earlier in his article entitled 'Los anunciados populares de la guerra española' those who were fighting for socialism in Spain were distinct from the soldiers who fought in national state armies, in that they were acting as a result of a conscious desire to serve a cause in which they believed, rather than in response to the arbitrary orders of a military elite. In the same article Vallejo also suggests that heroism in conventional wars is often symbolized by the grave of the unknown soldier, but in contrast, he adds, in the popular revolutionary struggle in Spain, heroism will not be measured in such tragic terms but will be associated with the will of a people, who, by engaging in a struggle for their own liberation become the heroes, and the symbol of hope, for all of humanity. Throughout the 'Himno' and the rest of the poems which make up the collection <u>España, aparta de mí este cáliz</u> Vallejo retains the above beliefs, and constantly emphasizes what he believes to be the unique identity of those who had taken up arms to defend the Republic. When he comes to describe the international volunteers who came to fight alongside their Spanish comrades he therefore presents them as 'soldados conocidos'. The battle for socialism is one that transcends national boundaries, and as we have seen, for Vallejo it is also part of a war for total human liberation. Hence, those who had banded together to undertake this great task, are seen as brothers united in a fraternal cause.

Continuing with his description of the international volunteer he suggests that not only is he 'known' but that he also has a generic 'name'. This 'name' however, is not given but rather said to 'desfila en el sonido de un

abrazo'. Almost certainly Vallejo is recalling here, and for the remainder of the stanza, his own experiences in Madrid in December 1936 when he must have seen some of the newly formed International Brigades marching to the front. Consequently one would assume that the 'sonido de un abrazo' to which he refers is an allusion to the singing of the Internationale - the 'embrace of nations' - by the marching troops. For those who came to Spain, both as international volunteers and Republican sympathizers, the example of men from many nations, marching together singing the Internationale, had an immense emotional impact and instilled in observers and participants alike an unprecedented faith in the righteousness of the cause of socialist internationalism. André Malraux, for example, in his great novel L'Espoir, which is based mainly on his own experiences in the Civil War, gives particular emphasis to the fraternity which existed between the Republic's own Spanish supporters, and the international volunteers who came to aid their cause. Malraux also acknowledges the importance of the Internationale as a symbolic gesture of unity among men who did not speak the same language, and recalling in lyrical tones his first sighting of the International Brigades at their headquarters in Albacete he states - through his hero Magnin - 'as they were nearing the barracks they started to sing. For the first time in history, the strains of the Internationale were rising from men of every nation united to do battle together'.[65]

Having presented the international volunteers in terms of the universal nature of their task, Vallejo then turns to those qualities which he feels distinguishes them from most other soldiers. His description begins with a statement which would seem to herald their rural background: 'combatiente que la tierra criara'. However, as we have seen earlier, Vallejo was very conscious of the differences in revolutionary potential between agricultural and industrial proletariats, and furthermore he must have known that most of those who came to join the International Brigades in Spain were workers from the

industrial sectors of their own countries. Hence one feels that Vallejo's use of the term 'tierra' is not a reference to the rural background of the combatants but rather an allusion to some aspect of their ideological formation. An indication of the meaning of the above line, and the subsequent reference to the volunteer 'arming himself with dust' may in fact be given in the poem 'Redoble fúnebre a los escombros de Durango' which is also to be found in the collection España aparta de mí este cáliz. This fascinating poem - almost totally neglected by Vallejo's critics - may be seen from a Marxist perspective as a complex allegorical representation of mans developing materialist perception of life and history in a revolutionary situation. Below are a selection of lines from the poem which would seem to substantiate the above argument:

> Padre polvo que subes de España
> Dios te salve, libere y corone,
> padre polvo que asciendes del alma
> .....
> Padre polvo, biznieto del humo
> .....
> Padre polvo en que acaban los justos,
> Dios te salve y devuelva a la tierra
> .....
> Padre polvo, compuesto de hierro
> Dios te salve y te dé forma de hombre
> .....
> Padre polvo que avientan los bárbaros,
> .....

As seen earlier in the foregoing analysis of the 'Himno' Vallejo often uses such terms as 'humo' or 'aliento' when describing a process of transition. However, in the above poem it would seem that the stage of 'humo' has been superseded by a more tangible and complete stage of development represented by 'polvo', which now becomes the 'biznieto del humo'. Consequently, we find the 'polvo' is about to finalize its transition by returning to the 'earth' and then taking on the 'form of man'. Furthermore while such terms as 'humo' and 'aliento' had been used to describe partial development towards a new level of consciousness mainly on an abstract

level, 'polvo' would seem to be more clearly associated with direct material action. As noted in the opening stanzas of the 'Himno' it was Vallejo's firm belief that it was ultimately only through revolutionary action that true socialist ideas could be formed, and man could finally put an end to false consciousness and the mystification of the world by ruling class ideologues. Therefore, in juxtaposition to the socialist militants, who by fighting and dying for their cause are bringing about a de-mystification and humanization of the world, it is the enemy - los bárbaros - who are seen to be engaged in reversing this process and returning man to ideological enslavement.[66]

Taking note of the above points and returning to the description of the international volunteers in the 'Himno', the line 'combatiente que la tierra criara, armándote de polvo' would seem to suggest part of a complex representation of Vallejo's perception of the relationship between material action and consciousness. Similarly, such statements as 'calzándote de imanes positivos' and 'el alma coronada de guijarros' may also be seen as indications of the task of de-mystification and materialization of the human experience which the poet felt was the consequence of the actions of those who are fighting for socialism.

The birth of a new consciousness for Vallejo also implied the necessity for a new language and this is tentatively suggested in the line 'andándote tu idioma por los hombros'. Such a language, one suspects, considering the theme of the stanza, was seen by the poet in its most embryonic form in the strains of the Internationale which he had heard being sung by the companies of international volunteers marching to the front. But again turning directly to the materialist emphasis of the stanza Vallejo may also be referring to the guns which the volunteers would have had slung over their 'shoulders' - violent action was also part of their 'language' of liberation. This latter interpretation would also seem increasingly plausible when one considers that

the stanza ends with the lines 'en España, en Madrid, están llamando/ a matar, voluntarios de la vida'.

As with much of Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry the above stanza, despite some of the complex ideas which it suggests, also presents a very real and accessible image of men marching to war. Indeed one feels that in the 'Himno' it is precisely the poet's sensitivity to events, combined with his extraordinary manipulation of language, which allows him to present a Marxist vision that clearly lacks the sense of being intellectually induced, and consequently seems to grow dialectically out of the tangible struggle which he sets out to relate.

The battle for the conquest of alienation and its implications

After calling at the end of the last stanza for those fighting for socialism in Spain to go forth and kill the enemy, and thereby destroy the source of their alienation and oppression, Vallejo continues in the tenth and eleventh stanzas to elaborate his perceptions on the implications of this liberating struggle to which he is a witness. The tenth stanza is as follows:

¡Porque en España matan, otros matan
al niño, a su juguete que se para,
a la madre Rosenda esplendorosa,
al viejo Adán que hablaba en alta voz con su caballo
y al perro que dormía en la escalera.
Matan al libro, tiran a sus verbos auxiliares,
a su indefensa página primera!
Matan al caso exacto de la estatua,
al sabio, a su bastón, a su colega,
al barbero de al lado - me cortó posiblemente,
pero buen hombre y, luego, infortunado;
al mendigo que ayer cantaba enfrente,
a la enfermera que hoy pasó llorando,
al sacerdote a cuestas con la altura tenaz de sus rodillas ...

While in previous stanzas we have been able to set all but Vallejo's more obscure statements within the general historical context of the war, one suspects that many of the images presented in the above stanza are composed

to a large extent of some of the poet's own personal recollections of the conflict and therefore defy consistent interpretation.[67] The theme of the stanza, however, is clear: on a specific level it presents the poet's perception of the part played by the enemy in the war and more generally it acknowledges the barbarism of war itself. As one might expect, considering Vallejo's elaborate representation of the revolutionary role played by the Republican volunteers in the Civil War in previous stanzas, his treatment of the Nationalists is also a complex one, which goes beyond the stereotyped left-wing perception of the times which saw them simply as fascist aggressors. In fact, in that they are an enemy which directly opposes and even threatens to destroy the progress that had been made towards socialism, they become the antithesis of all that Vallejo had found positive in the revolutionary struggle. Hence in the context of his foregoing analysis of the role of the militiaman and the international volunteers they are shown to be representative of a force that can only have negative consequences for humanity. The diametrically opposed roles which the poet attributes to his 'builders of socialism' and their enemies can be most clearly seen by comparing the final lines of the previous stanza with the first statements in the stanza in question. In the former Vallejo calls on his revolutionary heroes to go forth and commit the most extreme of human acts; to kill their enemy. But because of the significance which he attaches to their struggle even their most destructive actions are held to be justified. To kill in fact becomes an essential part of the process through which the poet believes they will liberate humanity, therefore he feels that they are ultimately engaged in a battle for life itself. In contrast when he considers the killing which is perpetrated by the enemy in the following stanza, he sees their actions as barbaric and retrogressive. The kind of death which they exact is even held to be more far reaching because it is associated not only with the destruction of human life, but also with the reactionary ideologies which they are attempting

to preserve. The enemy become in fact the champions of injustice and alienation, which as we have seen earlier in the poem, Vallejo believed were the two forces which perpetuated the contingency of man's existence and were therefore synonymous with death. In the above context the main area of alienation which Vallejo selects is that which exists in language, which as noted previously, he felt was one of the most crucial aspects of modern life to be deformed by its exposure to capitalist forms of economic and social organization. He accuses the enemy therefore not only of destroying cultural and social development but also more specifically - in alegorical terms - of killing 'al viejo Adán que hablaba en alta voz con su caballo'. As Jean Franco suggests, refering to the above line, it was Adam who, according to Jacob Boehme, had spoken the perfect language in which words had an authentic relationship with the things they named.[68] Clearly Vallejo must have had the above association in mind when he refers to 'Adam' but again one feels that he is not alluding to the lost perfection of some mythical past, but rather suggesting that it is fully within mans' power to realize his true essence so long as he is not impeded by negative alienating forces. On the question of language his analysis of the effects of enemy aggression become more complex as he states 'matan el libro, tiran a sus verbos auxiliares/ a su indefensa página primera'. Clearly the Spanish Nationalists with their anti-intellectual obsessions and paranoid fear of communism could be seen as the destroyers of literature. In fact their censors were responsible for confiscating some of the most innocuous material which did not constitute the slightest threat to their ideological objectives. However, Vallejo's more specific reference to the dismembering of the written word presents a more difficult problem of interpretation. Turning to Jean Franco's analysis of the above stanza, she claims that 'by throwing out the auxiliary verbs the Fascists destroy a part of the sentence which had no function in isolation but without which no sense is possible'(p.237). This would again

indicate that the poet believed that enemy activity was part of a wider anti-cultural process in which they attacked, directly or indirectly, everything which constituted free unalienated human expression.

In contrast to Vallejo's perception of the enemy as an alienating force and particularly in terms of literature and language, one might consider his treatment of the dead republican volunteer in the poem 'Pequeño responso a un héroe de la República', which is also to be found in the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz. Here, because of Vallejo's belief in the righteousness of the revolutionary struggle and the enormous human implications which it embodied, the corpse of the dead volunteer is seen not only as a sacrifice to a great cause but also a first step in man's progression towards a higher level of cultural development. He states therefore, 'un libro retoñaba de su cadáver muerto ... poesía en la carta moral que acompañara a su corazón', indicating clearly that the battle that was being fought held a significance which went far beyond the immediate necessity to defeat fascism. The associations which Vallejo ascribes to the dead 'volunteer' also remind one of the concept of the 'organic intellectual' which was developed by the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, and further supported in the works of Mariátegui. In this context the volunteer is certainly an authentic representative of the peoples' struggle with his motivations rooted in the suffering of his own class. Furthermore, through his exemplary actions he becomes a symbol of commitment to the revolutionary cause and a preliminary 'author' of the new culture which its victory presupposes. Finally the statements Vallejo makes in the above poem also provide a bold antithesis to his cultural perceptions of the enemy.

After describing the diametrically opposed roles of the contesting sides in the Civil War, Vallejo then continues in the eleventh stanza, to again invoke the Republican volunteers to kill their enemy because he believes their actions will not only serve the greater good of mankind but also bring

about true human reconciliation.

> ¡Voluntarios,
> por la vida, por los buenos, matad
> a la muerte, matad a los malos!
> ¡Hacedlo por la libertad de todos,
> del explotado y del explotador,
> por la paz indolora - la sospecho
> cuando duermo al pie de mi frente
> y más cuando círculo dando voces -
> y hacedlo voy diciendo,
> por el analfabeto a quien escribo,
> por el genio descalzo y su cordero,
> por los camaradas caídos,
> sus cenizas abrazadas al cadáver de un camino!

By killing their enemy we are told that the 'volunteers' are in effect waging war against death itself, and that consequently their actions are ultimately 'por la libertad de todos'. In this context Vallejo even includes the enemy among those who will be saved. This belief again emphasizes his perception of the struggle in Marxist terms. Marxism in fact distinguishes itself most clearly from religion and speculative philosophies on the basis of its rejection of the abstract concept of 'human nature'. For Marx human beings are the products of their economic and social circumstances and therefore any belief in the existence of inherent and universal human qualities, such as good and evil is seen as an example of false consciousness. Hence, Vallejo sees the enemy not as an evil force per se but rather an element within class society which has set as its task the defence and perpetuation of its own economic interests and concomitant ideological beliefs. Furthermore, as we have seen throughout the poem he does not condemn the Nationalists as human beings - as for example is intimated by the use of the term fascist; a word which he never employs in his poetry - but rather in terms of their historical role as a reactionary force, which he believed was responsible for holding back positive human progress.

As a result of his Marxist perception of the enemy, Vallejo feels therefore that their defeat as a class, and the subsequent restructuring of society along

classless lines, will be an improvement not only in the life of the 'explotado' but also the 'explotador'. As Marx had stated in the Communist Manifesto, in capitalist society all classes suffered from alienation, the only difference being that for the wealthy bourgeoisie such a condition was bearable because it was intrinsically linked to their economic security. On the other hand for the working classes alienation was the product of their economic exploitation and simply added to their misery. But, he concludes, it was in the interests of all of humanity to move towards a classless society, in which alienation would be eliminated and man could for the first time in his history direct his energies towards the universal good of the species.

The bourgeois intellectual and the demands of the Revolution: an impossible metamorphosis?

In the final stanza of the 'Himno' Vallejo again returns to the question which had preoccupied his thinking in the early part of the poem; namely the position of the bourgeois intellectual in relation to the revolutionary struggle.

> Para que vosotros,
> voluntarios de España y del mundo, viniérais,
> soñé que yo era bueno, y era para ver
> vuestra sangre, voluntarios ...
> De esto hace mucho pecho, muchas ansias,
> muchos camellos en edad de orar.
> Marcha hoy de vuestra parte el bien ardiendo,
> os siguen con cariño los reptiles de pestaña inmanente
> y, a dos pasos, a uno,
> la dirección del agua que corre a ver su límite antes que arda.

Addressing those who had taken up arms to fight on the side of the Republic - including the international volunteers - Vallejo begins his concluding analysis on the role of the intellectual by suggesting that before he had witnessed the war at first hand he had had some faith in his own good intentions. As a committed bourgeois artist he had believed that he would be able to comprehend

the struggle and even perhaps play a satisfactory part in it, but having seen the verity of the sacrifice of the volunteers and recognised the gravity of their mission he felt ashamed of his naivety. And, by placing an ellipsis at the end of the fourth line after the word 'voluntarios', it is as though he were asking forgiveness for his presumption from these men of action. However, such feelings of dislocation and anxiety have, he suggests, been experienced by many intellectuals, who, on being faced with the reality of the struggle in Spain have had to acknowledge their impotence. His description of such individuals as ' camellos en edad de orar' invites one to compare their journey to Spain with the pilgrimage of the Biblical 'Wise Men' who came to Bethlehem to witness the birth of Christ. These contempory 'wise men', Vallejo may in fact be suggesting, also belonged to a rapidly fading age of prophesy and myth, which would soon be transformed by a new truth which the proletarian saviour would reveal. This new truth, or in the poet's words, 'el bien ardiendo' is indeed seen to fall squarely in the hands of the volunteers, who had been brought together in an act of creative violence which had the potential to change the world. In such circumstances all that the bourgeois intellectuals can do is follow 'con cariño'. These revolutionary dilettanti are also likened to 'reptiles', which as we have noted earlier in the analysis of Vallejo's comments on the Spanish writer Calderón, may suggest the inability of passive ruling class intellectuals, in comparison to the active masses, to form a progressive historical consciousness.

As the stanza draws to a close Vallejo becomes increasingly scathing of those intellectuals who came to Spain during the Civil War, and one suspects that this is because his later references are specifically aimed at those writers and artists who attended the Writers' Congress - as noted earlier this event was something of a shabby affair which attracted a large number of 'fellow travellers' and dilettanti. Moreover, when Vallejo states in the last stanza

'os siguen con cariño los reptiles de pestaña inmanente ... a dos pasos, a uno ...' he may in fact be making a specific reference to a trip he made to the battlefront with a number of other delegates directly after the Congress had terminated its session in Madrid. Apparently on this occasion he was particularly disillusioned by the political naivety of his colleagues.[69]

Vallejo's sentiments at that moment when he stood at the front in the company of fellow intellectuals, and indeed the entire sense of the last lines of the 'Himno' can perhaps be best summed up in the words of his most consistent mentor, José Carlos Mariátegui:

> Todos los intelectuales que ... adhieren abstractamente a la Revolución, pero se detienen ante la revolución concreta ... que repudian a la burguesía, pero no se deciden a marchar al lado del proletariado. En el fondo de su actitud, se agita un desesperado egocentrismo.[70]

Chapter IV: Notes

1. Cited by Lechner, p.87.

2. Cited by Lechner, p.92. This recommendation may have resulted from Vallejo's meeting with Alberti in Paris in 1932 when he asked the latter to help him find a publisher for his work in Spain. If so, it seems unfortunate that Alberti chose not to include Vallejo's poetry in Octubre: that is of course assuming that Vallejo had included some of his politically committed poems amongst the ones he entrusted to Alberti.

3. Describing the function of Octubre and its importance, Lechner states:

> Revista ... de extrema izquierda y de carácter deliberadamente popular y combativo
> .....
> Octubre contribuyó sin duda a polarizar la conciencia del público lector y a preparar el ambiente de solidaridad que reinaría a partir de los primeros momentos de la Guerra Civil entre los artistas e intelectuales disconformes. Una de las facetas más importantes de la revista dentro del dominio de la poesía, nos parece el hecho de que colaboraran fraternalmente en las mismas páginas los poetas más importantes y ya consagrados, y hombres totalmente desconocidos y pertenecientes a capas que antes no solían asomarse ni se atrevían a enviar sus escritos a las revistas literarias. En cuanto a la temática, continúa la evolución que se inició en El poeta en la Calle de Alberti. (p.97)

4. One exception being the radical literary journal Nueva Cultura which was first published in late 1934 and continued into the Civil War. See Lechner, p.97. Lechner also notes that the Peruvian Communist, Armando Bazán, who was a close friend of Vallejo's worked for a number of years on the publishing committee of Nueva Cultura (p.97).

5. Among the first group can be included such publications as Venceremos (journal of the battalion of popular militias of the Jaén), A Vencer (Andalucian militias), Avanzada (battalion Thaelmann), Perfil del Día, No Pasarán (Somosierra front). For a more extensive selection see María Teresa León, Crónica general de la guerra civil (Madrid, 1937), pp. 53-55.

6. This claim is made by Gonzalo More but denied by Vallejo's wife. See Georgette de Vallejo, p.225.

7. Cited by Lechner, p.179.

8. See Andrés Iduarte, 'César Vallejo', Hora de España, 20 (August, 1938), 17-24.

9. Commenting on the 'romance' Lechner states:

> La sintaxis y el vocabulario son generalmente sencillos; los términos altisonantes y la retórica, en los casos en que se manifiestan, son más bien síntomas de incultura y torpeza que voluntad de crear un estilo ampuloso ... el lenguaje, aunque sencillo, no es siempre

coloquial; predomina un estilo narrativo, nada sorprendente en estos versos de guerra.

> La poesía contenida en este romancero [i.e. el Romancero General de la Guerra de España] épico-lírico - con acentuación de lo épico - es un documento no sólo importante para el estudio de la historia de la poesía española contemporánea, sino incluso, con frecuencia, impresionante: todos los romances de Emilio Prados ... Miguel Hernández ... [etc]. (p.178)

10. Two earlier 'romanceros' had been published before the Romancero General de la Guerra de España but this latter edition was the largest, and contained some of the finest poetry. A reprint of this work, which was first published by Ediciones Españolas (Madrid-Valencia, 1937), was made by the library of the Institute G.G. Feltrinelli (Milan, 1966). For a history of the 'romance' from the beginning of the Civil War up to the Writers' Congress see Lechner, pp.165-168. Enthusiasm for the 'romance' as a poetic form continued until the end of the war, and its popularity may be gauged from the fact that the Biblioteca National in Madrid has now gathered together sufficient examples of this genre to fill forty volumes.

11. Georgette de Vallejo, p.197.

12. Georgette de Vallejo's comments on Larrea are to be found on p.169 of 'Apuntes biográficos'. She also notes that she entrusted Gonzalo Mora, a friend of her husband, and a member of the PCF and the Comités de Defensa de la República, with some of Vallejo's work after his death (p. 236). Clearly if Mora did receive a copy of España, aparta de mí este cáliz he would have been able to pass it on to the Comités, who in turn could have arranged for its publication in Spain.

13. Referring to the printing of his work España en el Corazón in his memoirs, Neruda recalls the difficulties faced by Altolaguirre and his men, and their determination to keep producing books even in the last weeks of the war. He states:

> The soldiers at the front learned to set type. But there was no paper. They found an old mill and decided to make it there. A strange mixture was concocted, between one falling bomb and the next, in the middle of the fighting. They threw everything they could get their hands on into the mill, from an enemy flag to a Moorish soldier's bloodstained tunic. And in spite of the unusual materials used and the total inexperience of its manufacturers, the paper turned out to be very beautiful. (p.125)

The title page of the books produced by Altolaguirre's printing shop at Montserrat including the works of Vallejo and Neruda, carried the following short statement: 'Soldados de la República fabricaron el papel, compusieron el texto y movieron las máquinas'. This preceded the publication details which read, 'Ediciones Literarias del Comisariado. Ejército del Este. Guerra de Independencia. Año de 1939'. See Merino and Vélez who include a transcript of the title page of Vallejo's book (I, p.173).

14. Vélez and Merino's account of the developments which led to the discovery of a number of first editions of Vallejo's work is also included in volume one of España en César Vallejo. pp. 141-148.

15. Introduction (with biography and criticism) to César Vallejo: Poesía Completa, pp. 122-123. Larrea first put forward his case for a Christian humanist interpretation of Vallejo's poetry in the introduction to his own edition of España, aparta de mí este cáliz which was published in Mexico in 1940, and in which he states; 'esencialmente cristiano en su verdad profunda era, César, el espíritu de profecía que le inspiraba' (p.9). for a more detailed analisis of Larrea's argumenta see Guide to Criticism. pp. 372-375.

16. See Guide to Criticism. p.376 for an overview of Lora Risco's critical position.

17. See Roberto Paoli, 'España, aparta de mí este cáliz', Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. II, p. 350. See also Guide to Criticism. pp. 379-382.

18. See particularly; Luis Monguió, César Vallejo (1892-1938) Vida y Obra Bibliografía Antología: Jean Franco, César Vallejo: the Dialectics of Poetry and Silence: Noël Salomon, 'Algunos aspectos de lo "Humano" en Poemas humanos' in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. II, 191-230 (Salomon's paper was first presented at a conference on Peruvian literature held at the University of Toulouse in November 1965), and finally J. Vélez and A.Merino, España en César Vallejo. Short surveys of the works of Monguió (pp.385-386), Franco (pp.386-389), and Salomon (pp.389-390), are to be found in the Guide to Criticism.

19. C. M. Bowra, Poetry and Politics, 1900-1960 (Cambridge, 1966., p.97.

20. Asturrizaga, p.18.

21. See 'Visions of Rebirth: the Spiritualist Facet of Peru's Haya de la Torre', Hispanic American Historical Review. 63 (3), 1983, 479-516.

22. Prior to the outbreak of the Civil War each of the major radical political groups which supported the Republic had their own paramilitary organizations, and during the early months of the war they served as militia units operating in the field. Eventually, these armed wings were incorporated into the Republican army as companies, divisions and brigades, yet often still retained their distinct political identity. The Fifth Regiment which was made up of communists, for example, grew out of this militia tradition, as did those units formed by the anarchists in Catalonia and Aragon. During the course of the war many more Spaniards volunteered to join the Republican army and become incorporated in this militia structure. The Nationalists experienced a similar phenomenon, although not as diversified. See Thomas, p.322.

23. This article is included in Merino and Vélez, II, 32-37.

24. See 'España, aparta de mí este cáliz' in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. II, 349-359 (p.364).

25. In this context one should also remember that the left's ideological opposition to the Church was not particularly strong. This is especially true in the case of the two main left-wing movements in Spain, the anarchists and the socialists, both of which had enormous popular followings, but remained relatively immature in terms of political theory compared to the wider European left. For example, Largo Caballero, the Socialist leader, only began reading the works of Marx and Lenin during a period of imprisonment in 1935, one year before the outbreak of the Civil War (See Thomas, p.145). As for the anarchists they would have claimed to have their own separate political ideas, but one must remember that while anarchism was still popular in Spain in the 1930s, it had begun to lose its influence on the mainstream European left three decades earlier as Marxist orientated ideas gained increasing acceptance. Furthermore, as noted in the previous chapter, even the Spanish Communist Party only began to give serious consideration to its theoretical position in the early 1930s.

In the above context the Nationalist perception of the Republic's supporters as 'Godless' Marxists and communists, while having a powerful appeal in terms of propaganda value, did not square with political reality. There was indeed a strong feeling against the Catholic Church establishment among the groups on the Republican side, but even those on the far left, who saw the Civil War and the Revolution as inseparable, were not ideologically committed to the destruction of religion, and were certainly not the Antichrists their enemies made them out to be. Despite the terminology of their propaganda what the right feared above all was not some perceived threat to their spiritual values but the Revolution. Ironically it was precisely those 'Godless' communists who, taking their orders from Moscow, did the most to save the ruling classes from this social upheaval.

26. Vallejo's use of myth in this context clearly owes something to his reading of Mariátegui, and provides an interesting area for analysis in the 'Himno'. However, the author of this thesis feels that this theme should be part of a separate study because of the additional complexity which its introduction would present in the interpretation of the poem.

In any such study one would have to consider firstly Mariátegui's perception of the importance of myth in the process of mass politicization, and especially in underdeveloped countries like Peru where capitalist development was extremely lop-sided and constantly in conflict with existent economic and ideological structures. In many ways Spain during the Civil War provided an ideal test for some of his ideas on the question of the mythification of socialist ideology. Firstly, the mass of the people were poorly educated and still retained strong ties with a dominant religious ideology; secondly, capitalist development - even though a highly disjointed process in Spain - had brought most workers, including a large number of rural labourers, into contact with modern forms of exploitation. And finally, and most importantly, the Spanish masses had been guided into a revolution situation by weakly ideological (this may be disputed in the case of the anarchists) political parties. Given these historical circumstances the mythification of revolutionary ideas, was, as Vallejo indicates in the 'Himno', an essential prerequisite to a coherent mass movement. Vallejo, like Mariátegui, one suspects, felt that the masses in underdeveloped countries, who were in the early stages of conflict with capitalist development, yet still tied to anachronistic ideological values,

could not make a natural transition to a socialist consciousness simply on the basis of the economic struggle and its reflected ideologies. But on the level of myth this transition became a possibility because instead of the workers having to wait for the breakdown of their 'spiritual' ideas by exposure to capitalist materialism, which in turn would develop into a higher stage of socialist materialism, they would be directly confronted with socialist ideas,made more comprehensible by spiritual implication.

Such notions may, on a superficial level, seem to be highly speculative and even utopian, but as we have seen in both the works of Mariátegui and Vallejo, they are based on sound Marxist foundations in which the proletarian struggle is held to be paramount to the formation of a socialist consciousness. The mythification of the socialist promise is also not simply a contrived tactic formulated by intellectuals for proletarian consumption, but as shown earlier in this chapter, it is also bound up with a need, especially on the part of Hispanic intellectuals, to inhabit the same spiritual environment as the masses.

Some of Vallejo's own perceptions on the function of myth in the context of socialist development are to be found in his work Rusia en 1931. While initially emphasizing the materialist base of socialism and his subsequent belief that socialists should not attempt to present their ideas as a new theological vision of life he also states:

> Sin embargo, tampoco hay que desconocer la existencia en la revolución socialista de una nueva mítica y de una nueva dogmática. Pero esta mítica y esta dogmática son igualmente de esencia y estructura materialistas; es decir, económicas. No hay que confundirlas con la mítica y la dogmática metafísicas de las religiones. Los mitos "revolución", "proletariado", "Internacional", "capital", "masa", "justicia social", etc., son creaciones directas del sentimiento o instinto económico del hombre, a diferencia de los mitos "dios", "justicia", divina", "alma", "bien", "mal", "eternidad", etc., que son creaciones del sentimiento religioso. Los dogmas, en la doctrina socialista, proceden asimismo de una necesidad o conjunto de necesidades históricas de la producción...(pp. 166-167).

By the time Vallejo came to write his poems on the Civil War he still held the same fundamental beliefs on the nature of socialist myth, as he had in 1932, when the above was written, but he realized more clearly by then, that in societies where religious mythology was still prominent in the national consciousness, socialists had to accept that newly developing ideas would for a period interact with still dominant modes of thought. But clearly neither Vallejo nor Mariátegui saw this as a disadvantage to the development of a socialist consciousness so long as such thinking remained linked to a material base.

27. Cited by Lechner, p.196.

28. In addition to the citations from Mariátegui which are given in Chapter Two on this subject, one should also consider Marx's own statements on the relationship between consciousness and life, many of which Vallejo would have read. For example, in The Holy Family (Moscow, 1956), Marx states, 'ideas never lead beyond the established situation, they only lead beyond

the ideas of the established situation. Ideas can accomplish absolutely nothing. To become real ideas require men who apply a practical force' (p. 160). And, he further states, 'theory is only realized in a people so far as it fulfills the needs of the people ... it is not enough that thought should seek to realise itself; reality must strive towards thought'. Cited in Karl Marx, Early Writings, edited by T. B. Bottomore (London, 1963), p.53.

29. El arte y la revolución, pp. 13-15.

30. See for example Edward E. Malefakis, Agrarian Reform and Peasant Revolution in Spain: Origins of the Civil War (New Haven, 1970).

31. As we have seen in previous chapters Vallejo was particularly interested in the influence of ideological hegemony in the class struggle, believing firmly that material subjugation also requires intellectual subugation. The ideas of the dominant class therefore are seen as the dominant ideas of society; the class which commands material force also commands the means of intellectual and spiritual coercion, as it produces and propagates the ideas that express its own supremacy.

32. Again Vallejo's use of religious mythology in the context of contemporary socialist struggle suggests the influence of Mariátegui on his thinking, however in this instance the possible direct association with the sufferings of Christ that is implied by the term 'Pasionsa' also indicates his broader perception of the 'myth' as a vehicle for socialist ideas. One is reminded here particlarly of some of the ideas put forward by one of Mariátegui's mentors, George Sorel. For Sorel the immense will-power and commitment that was portrayed by Christ during his final sufferings, and the continuatior of that struggle through the lives of the early Christian martyrs, embodied more than the teachings of the Bible, the true spirit of Christianity. As a mode of action this spirit was neither determinist nor utopian in its outlook but apocalyptic. Socialism, and more precisely the proletariat, Sorel argued, must capture this same spirit for its own purposes, thereby not destroying the spiritual power uf religion but replacing it by a dynamic materialism. However, like Marx, he believed that action for a material cause would also embody a new morality. And it was through action, and revolutionary violence, that he felt the proletariat would become most conscious of their own myth, and their own historical mission. In this sense the proletariat was an apocalyptic class which like the early Christians was imbued with a destiny which demanded solidarity, inflexible heroism, dignity, and above all a total refusal to compromise with the world of its persecutors. But, despite these similaritias Sorel believed that the modern working classes differed on one essential point with the early Christians in that they represented in their mission the authentic destiny of history, and in this context the World Revolution was the true Apocalypse.

One can see from the above synopsis of Sorel's revolutionary ideas that he may have in fact had a direct influence on Vallejo's thinking, and especially in terms of the use of myth and the vision of the Revolution as an apocalypse, but there is no concrete evidence of this. Sorel's main work in which the above ideas are expressed is his Réflexions sur la violence (Paris, 1908). English translation with an introduction by E. A. Shils (Glencoe, 1950).

33. The construction, 'pasión guerreras entre olivos' even though employing the word 'olivos' in a symbolic sense, may also be a visual recollection of the battle fronts which Vallejo visited in 1936 and 1937, in the olive growing region around Madrid. Moreover Vallejo is perhaps referring here more specifically to the battle of Jarama which took place in February 1937, and which was fought among olive groves in an area to the south of Madrid. Furthermore, it was at Jarama where a famous incident took place, in which after having been beaten back by Nationalist forces for some hours, the Fifteenth International Brigade - composed of volunteers from twenty-six nations - rallied for a counter attack, and as they marched forward through the olive groves singing the Internationale the enemy fell into retreat thinking reinforcements had been sent. Vallejo's statement, 'pasión guerreras entre olivos' appears to correlate with this incident, and this would seem especially so if one takes into account the comments he makes on the International Brigades later in the poem. For an account of the battle of the Jarama see Thomas, pp. 588-596.

34. Describing Calderón's aesthetic philosophy Carlos Blanco Aguinaga states:

> En la dramática Calderoniana, extraordinario ejemplo de literatura al servicio de una ideología, destacan el estoicismo filosófico cristianizado, el neoescolasticismo razonador y el contrarreformismo más consciente; son básicos los característicos conceptos acerca de la inutilidad de lo vital y humano y del desengaño, originado todo por la creencia en el pecado original y en el "libre albedrío", entre cuyos extremos polarizadores mueven los conflictos personajes creados por su autor, junto a la aceptación de los valores de la sociedad castiza, monárquica - señorial - campesina.

See Historia social de la literature española. I, pp. 340-341.

35. The words 'reptiles' and 'anfibio' can also be associated with the natural state of the creatures which they represent, which are cold blooded and insensitive to pain. On an allegorical level this would seem also to be a relevant perception of the elitist Baroque philosophies of the 'Golden Age' with their detachment from the realities of human existence.

36. According to Julio Ortega this statement is not to be found in Cervantes's work. This claim was made during a lecture entitled 'César Vallejo en España' which was given at the Department of Latin American Studies, University of London, in May 1983.

37. See 'La responsabilidad del escritor' in Pinto Gamboa, p.32.

38. Cervantes fought at the battle of Lepanto (1571) during which he was wounded, and on returning to Spain he was captured and imprisoned for several years by the Moors in North Africa. Most of his life was also spent in poverty which made him acutely aware of the popular struggles of the day. For an account of Cervantes's life see William Byron, Cervantes: A Biography (London, 1978).

39. The subsequent survey of Goya's art, in the context of the historical circumstances of the times in which he lived, is based mainly on the arguments put forward by Gwyn Williams, in his work entitled Goya and the Impossible Revolution (London, 1976).

40. See José López-Rey, Goya's Caprichos: Beauty, Reason and Caricature, 2 vols (Princeton, 1953), I, 81.

41. Vallejo may have seen the engravings which made up the collection Los desastres de la guerra in a number of places during the 1920s and early 1930s. For example there was an exhibition of Goya's engravings in the Prado in 1928, and it was also here where the largest permanent collection of Goya's work could be found. Vallejo made several trips to Madrid during the 1920s and one imagines that he must have visited the Prado. While he was living in Madrid a further exhibition of engravings from Los desastres de la guerra was organized by the Sociedad de Amigos de Arte, one of whose leading members was José Bergamín, a close friend of Vallejo's at that time. Finally there was an important exhibition of Goya's work in Paris in 1935 at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

As well as seeing Goya's work, Vallejo may also have read some of the critical works that came out on the artist in the 1920s and 30s, and perhaps especially E. D'Ors, La Vie de Goya, which was published in Paris by Gallimard in 1928, and which was one of the earliest socio-historical interpretations of the artist's life.

42. See Thomas, p.478, and Lechner, p.158.

43. See Emilio Prados, Obras Completas edited by Carlos Blanco Aguinaga and Antonio Carreira, 2 vols. (Mexico City, 1975), I, 572-574.

44. See the World Who's Who in Science: A Biographical Dictionary of Notable Scientists from Antiquity to the Present, edited by Allen G. Debus (Chicago, 1968), p.1392.

45. See Chapter Two p.136.

46. Many of the remaining poems in the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz also have sections, or in some cases, the whole poem, devoted to the rural proletarians who fought in the Civil War. See for example poem number VIII which is dedicated to the 'yuntero' Ramón Collar, and the first section of the five part poem entitled 'Batallas', which begins 'Hombre de Extremadura'. Vallejo does however devote one poem (number III) to a 'ferroviario' but the imagery he uses remains rural rather than industrial. All citations from the collection España, aparta de mí este cáliz given in this chapter are taken from Merino and Velez's transcript of the first edition of this book, which is included in Volume I of their work entitled España en César Vallejo, pp. 173-233.

47. The determination and bravery of the rural proletarians who defended their towns and villages from Nationalist attack during the first year of the Civil War also attained an almost legendary significance for the intellectual left. As the Dutch Hispanicist Johan Brouwer notes;

> 'los campesinos pobres que al principio de la Guerra Civil defendían sus miserables pueblos con escopetas contra los tanques y bombarderos, producían una impresión tan estrafalaria como Don Quijote a lomos de Rocinante empuñando la lanza, pero las finas facciones de sus ascéticas cabezas, que apenas si se destacaban contra la parda tierra en que yacían exánimes, hablaban de una elevada sabiduría y dignidad humanas, que en otras partes de Europa han llegado a ser raras'. Cited by Lechner, p.150.

48. See 'La responsabilidad del escritor' in Pinto Gamboa, pp. 31-35.

49. The most outstanding Republican poet to have come from an agricultural peasant background was Miguel Hernández. Hernández also wrote committed poetry that was directed specifically towards the lives and struggles of the Spanish 'campesinos'. Few of the major Republican poets were so closely linked with the land as Hernández, but many, like Antonio Machado, Rafael Alberti and Emilio Prados were born and raised in rural environments and understood the plight of Spain's agricultural masses. They also devoted most of their poetic effort to the rural proletariat.

50. The term 'species-essence' as used by Marx may be seen as the opposite of alienation, in that it indicates man's recovery of his 'true self' in the context of his liberation from forms of economic organisation which subordinate the whole of human activity to a non-human purpose. To speak in these terms implies of course that one can know what man's 'true essence' is,as opposed to what he empirically is, and therefore requires a preliminary value-judgement. However, without some such standard philosophical categories like alienation and species essence would be meaningless. Accordingly, when Marx uses such terms he presupposes a non historical norm of humanity. This though is not seen as a collection of permanent, unchanging qualities belonging to some arbitrary ideal, but a conception of the conditions of development enabling man to display his creative powers to the full, untrammelled by material needs. The fulfilment of humanity therefore is not, in Marx's view, a matter of attaining some final imagined perfection, but of freeing man for ever from conditions that hamper his growth and make him a slave of his own works.

51. See 'España,aparta de mí este cáliz' in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. II, 349-359.

52. Throughout his analysis of Vallejo's Spanish Civil War poetry Paoli claims that the poet's work, despite its Marxist overtones, is imbued with a 'nebulous' and visionary perception of the world. To support his argument he introduces his critical survey of España,aparta de mí este cáliz with a direct quotation from an article entitled 'Los artistas ante la política' which Vallejo wrote in 1927:

> 'La sensibilidad artística del artista se produce ... creando inquietudes y nebulosas políticas ... suscitando grandes y cósmicas urgencias de justicia humana ... Si el artista renunciase a crear lo que podríamos llamar la nebulosa política ... ¿A quién le tocaría aquella gran taumaturgia del espíritu?'

Based on this quotation Paoli concludes that 'La "nebulosa" constituye el concepto fundamental de la poética Vallejiana. De aquí se deriva que la poesía de Vallejo, teniendo por objeto inmediato la tal "nebulosa" se funda como una Profecía y Mesianismo'. If one assumes that Vallejo's intellectual development during the period he lived in Europe remained static, then the above conclusions would seem logical. However, as we have seen in earlier chapters of this thesis, this was not the case, and between 1927, when Vallejo wrote the above words, and the late 1930s when he completed his poems on the Spanish Civil War, he underwent an intelectual transformation, in which his earlier broadly liberal

ideas were replaced by a clear Marxist understanding of the world. Paoli, therefore, despite his acknowledgement of the influence of Marxism on Vallejo's poetry, starts his analysis from the premise that such ideas are however not adequate to contain the full significance of the poet's vision. And, he goes on to conclude in his introduction to his interpretation of España aparta de mí este cáliz that, 'el profundo significado de la visión bíblico - cristiana no ha sido superado, sino incorporado profundamente al cuerpo del humanismo marxista. Es la aportación espiritual, hispánica a una adhesión materialista' (p.349).

53. While acknowledging the importance of the working classes in the struggle which Vallejo describes in the 'Himno', Paoli does not see this social group in terms of its autonomous revolutionary potential but as part of a combined force which includes 'escritores, santos, artistas, científicos' as well as 'héroes milicianos'. The task of the working class is also seen, not in terms of bringing about a revolutionary transformation of society but rather as in the final realization of 'la esencia perenne del alma española' (p. 353).

By placing such little emphasis on the direct action of the working classes and the significance of the Revolution, Paoli allows himself to make comments which would seem to misrepresent Vallejo's perception of the Civil War. He states for example after commenting on what he believes to be the poet's Hispanic vision, 'España era para el poeta, en el año 1936, antes de la agresión fascista, aquella nueva e ideal sociedad que estaba apenas nacida'.(p.350) As we have seen earlier in this thesis, this is certainly not what Vallejo felt in 1936 regarding the political situation in Spain.

54. An indication of Vallejo's attitude towards religion during the final years of his life is given in the poem 'Un pilar soportando consuelos' (dated September 1937) in which he registers his total abandonment of the Christian faith.

55. In his work Rusia en 1931 after commenting on the mass unemployment in the western capitalist world in the early 1930s, Vallejo stated:

> Los remedios y paliativos que se ensayan son superficiales, vanos, inútiles. El mal reside en la estructura misma del sistema capitalista, en la dialéctica de la producción. El mal reside en los progresos inevitables de la técnica del trabajo, en la concurrencia y, en suma, en la sed insaciable de provecho de los patronos. La plusvalía: he aquí el origen de los desocupados. Suprímase la plusvalía y todo el mundo tendrá trabajo. Pero ¿quién suprime la plusvalía? Suprimir el provecho del patrón equivaldría a destruir el sistema capitalista, es decir, a hacer la revolución proletaria (pp. 189-190).

56. The relationship between action and consciousness and consciousness and language is particularly well portrayed in the poem entitled 'Pequeño responso a un héroe de la República' from the collection, España aparta de mí este cáliz.

57. Such an assumption for Marx and Vallejo does not however deny the value of theory as a primer of revolution, but implies that those who adopt theory cannot claim that they have come into the possession of a set of values in the form of an external imperative. Theory can at best only be an advanced reflection of a practical historical process and if it loses contact with that process it must fall back into idealism. Vallejo indicates however in the first three lines of the stanza that through the creation of an economic system which ends the division of labour, the two separate categories of intellectual and worker (or man of action) will disappear.

58. One suspects that Vallejo would have understood false consciousness in Marxist terms, in which in doing away with this aspect of alienation communism does not substitute a correct image of the world for an incorrect one, but simply dispels the illusion that thought is, or can be anything other than an expression of material life.

59. See Rafael Alberti, Poesías Completas (Buenos Aires, 1972) p.410.

60. As Noël Salomon notes, Marx's Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (1844) which contained some of his most important early analyses of the work process, were first published in France in 1937, and it is highly probable that Vallejo would have seen a copy. If so, Salomon further claims that Vallejo would have read the statement; '"para el hombre socialista la presunta historia del mundo no es sino la producción del hombre por el trabajo humano"'. See Aproximaciones a César Vallejo, II, 219.

61. Eighty per cent of those who joined the International Brigades were in fact from working class backgrounds. See Thomas, p.455.

62. For details of the numbers of international volunteers from various countries that fought in Spain during the Civil War. See Thomas, p.983.

63. Many of the Russians who went to Spain were later liquidated when they returned home to the Soviet Union. Apparently Stalin found the 'disease' of revolutionary fervour even more heinous than his capitalist counterparts in Western Europe.

64. At the central recruiting office of the International Brigades in the rue Lafayette in Paris, prominent among the display of posters was one which suggested that Spain would be the 'grave of European fascism'. See Thomas, p.456.

65. See L'Espoir translated Days of Hope by Stuart Gilbert and Alistair Macdonald (London, 1968), p.263.

66. Considering the final outcome of the Civil War and the subsequent development of Spanish society under the Franco dictatorship, during which all radical activity was crushed while the power of the church and the ruling classes was increased, Vallejo's statement 'Padre polvo que avientan los bárbaros' would seem to have been sadly prophetic.

67. There are several instances in the above stanza when one might suggest a tentative context for Vallejo's statements. For example when he proclaims 'otros matan/al niño, a su juguete que se para' he may be recalling examples of the poster propaganda which was produced by the Republic during the war, some of which focused on the murder of children by the enemy as a result of the bombing campaign on Madrid.

Another example is the statement 'maten el libro' followed later by the lines 'maten el caso exacto de la estatua,/el sabio, a su bastón, a su colega' which implies not only the anti-intellectual fervour of the Nationalists but also more specifically their humiliation of the great Spanish writer Unamuno, and his subsequent death shortly after. For an account of this incident see Thomas, pp. 502-504.

68. Franco, César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence, p. 231.

69. Interview with Rafael Alberti, May 1983.

70. Defensa del Marxismo. Amauta 24 (1929), p. 23.

CONCLUSION

As shown by the analysis of the historical and intellectual influences which informed Vallejo's political development in the first three chapters of this thesis, it is clear that his adoption of Marxist ideas was part of a more complex and involved process than his critics have so far acknowledged. In fact even those who fully accept his commitment to radical politics in the last decade of his life, do not seriously question the source of his ideas, nor do they attempt to explore the composition of his Marxist thinking. Consequently, one is left to assume that Vallejo's radical stance in the late 1920s and 1930s was simply part of a wider European political trend that brought many intellectuals towards communism in those years. This failure to perceive the manifold sources of Vallejo's left-wing ideas and understand them in terms of his intellectual progression, has led to a situation in which it is accepted by the majority of his critics, that while he was to commit himself with some enthusiasm to a political ideology in the latter years of his life, it did not ultimately provide a solution to his wider philosophical problems, nor was he willing to completely absorb its influence in his art.

To fully understand the political ideas which Vallejo held in the last decade of his life this thesis has argued that one must turn back firstly to his years in Peru. It was here, as a member of the postwar 'Generation of 1919', that he was first exposed to a radical political environment, and while not becoming involved as an activist himself, he made contact with a number of progressive intellectuals, some of whom would continue to influence his thinking long after he had left Peru. One must remember however in this immediate postwar period in Latin America, that despite the intensification of the political

struggle throughout most of the continent, very few intellectuals had been introduced to socialist ideas, and the major preoccupation of the times, especially among artists, was the question of their own role as a perceived elite in the process of social change and national regeneration. It is not surprising therefore, that much of Vallejo's journalism as a foreign correspondent for the Peruvian press in the first few years after his arrival in Europe should continue to focus on this debate, or that his notion of politics remained peripheral to his aesthetic perception of the world. What is important concerning his political development however, yet seems to be much neglected by his critics, is that after leaving Peru he remained enthusiastically involved in the Latin American intellectual forum, which he used not only as a source of new ideas, but also as a vehicle through which to express and interpret his European experience. In Vallejo's writings for the Peruvian press in the mid 1920s, for example, while conforming with his Latin American contemporaries by basing many of his arguments on the fashionable Spenglerian notion of European civilization in decline, he also used this assumption to voice his wider disillusionment with postwar European society.

Vallejo's loss of faith in the future of Western man was however not only an intellectual reaction to what he had termed the postwar 'malaise', but also a response to the harsh realities of his own daily existence. Ceaseless poverty and the humiliation and misery which it brought made him far less sanguine about life in Europe than the majority of Latin American intellectuals, who, while willing to entertain such notions as the 'Decline of the West', still saw Paris as the 'City of Light' in cultural terms. Such myths soon turned sour for Vallejo who by 1926 became particularly anxious to disassociate himself with the cultural elitism of his fellow expatriates and declare his allegiance to the 'literary proletariat'.

As the practical pressures of Vallejo's European experience began to encourage him to adopt a more radical political stance, he continued nevertheless to

seek to express himself from within a Latin American context. And, in 1926, in his first gesture of political commitment, he joined a Paris based cell of Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre's recently founded APRA movement. Since the early 1920s Vallejo had given tentative support in his journalism to Haya's call for the need to establish a Latin American cultural identity that was detatched from European influences, but now, by joining APRA he also indicated his willingness to accept the movement's wider anti-imperialist political aims. By the end of 1927 however, Vallejo had begun to question Haya's notion of a separate social struggle in Latin America and increasingly offered his support to those arguments which emphasized the international nature of capitalism and the subsequent need for a global socialist strategy. This period of rapid development in Vallejo's political education was partly the result of his improving knowledge of European affairs, and growing sympathy with the ideas of the French left, but can also be again attributed to his continuing interest in contemporary intellectual debates in Peru. Throughout 1926 and 1927 the Lima based journals for which Vallejo was working as a foreign correspondent, had provided the forum for a contentious debate between Haya de la Torre and the Peruvian Marxist José Carlos Mariátegui, in which the latter had rejected Haya's isolationist arguments. Vallejo's acceptance of Mariátegui's political position was finally consolidated in 1928 when he left APRA to join the newly formed Peruvian Socialist Party.

Once a member of the PSP Vallejo became increasingly internationalist in his political outlook; a development which is particularly well exemplified by his decision in late 1928 to visit the Soviet Union instead of returning to Peru. At this time he also began to seriously expand his knowledge of socialist theory and according to his wife, after joining the PSP, he became a devoted student of Marx. Indeed it was Marx's original works which were to have the most significant effect on his political formation, but when faced with the

numerous interpretations of Marxism which had emerged in the context of contemporary historical circumstances, it was yet again to Peru, and the ideas of Mariátegui, that he turned for intellectual enlightenment.

In conclusion, it can be seen that throughout most of Vallejo's journalistic career in Europe, he continued to receive much of his political education from sources in his native Peru. During his early years in Europe there would exist in fact an almost direct correlation between the harsh realities of his daily life in Paris and his increasing drift to the left in Latin American politics. Even by 1927/28 when his growing familiarity with European political ideas began to indicate a greater autonomy in his intellectual development, on key theoretical questions he would still seek answers in the work of one of his Peruvian contemporaries. Mariátegui, was in fact the last member of the 'Generation of 1919' to seriously influence Vallejo's thinking but he was by far the most important in shaping his final political vision.

The most interesting aspect of Mariátegui's Marxism, and by implication Vallejo's, is that it was nurtured in the unique political atmosphere which prevailed in Italy immediately after the war, and which on the revolutionary left was dominated by the outstanding young Marxists of the Ordine Nuovo movement. The ideas of the Ordine Nuovo Marxists, while to a large extent the product of their immediate political environment, were also an intellectual reaction to the stagnation of Marxist thought during the last decade of the Second International. and the subsequent failure of socialists to confront the first capitalist world war with a coherent political strategy. During the short breathing space which existed in Italy between the end of the war and the rise of fascism, Marx's ideas were revitalized by the intellectuals of the Ordine Nuovo, who not only stimulated a whole new body of debate but also instilled in their followers an unprecedented optimism in the future of the socialist struggle. Unfortunately this current of Marxist thought was almost totally

suppressed with the rise of Mussolini, and was not to seriously influence European political thought until the mid 1960s when it became fashionable with the New Left. During the 1930s therefore the ideas of the Ordine Nuovo despite the fact that they were relatively advanced compared with much of the left-wing thinking that emerged at this time, remained almost unknown.

In Mariátegui's main theoretical analysis of Marxism, the Defensa del Marxismo he draws on many of the ideas of his mentors like Gobetti and Gramsci, quoting at times directly from their works. This eclectic but highly individual thesis, which continued to reflect its author's Latin American cultural heritage, presented the socialist struggle in terms of revolutionary praxis, and shunned the rigid economic determinism which continued to dominate many interpretations of Marx in the inter-war years. In the context of this theoretical framework, while continuing to accept the central importance of economic factors in the historical process, Mariátegui placed great emphasis on the question of ideology and the significance of the revolutionary struggle itself in the formation of a socialist consciousness. In the programme he set out for the PSP in 1928 he concluded for example that 'La política es hoy la única actividad creadora. Es la realización de un inmenso ideal humano. La política se ennoblece, se dignifica, se eleva cuando es revolucionaria. Y la verdad de nuestra época es la revolución'. For Mariátegui while the proletariat remained the only authentic revolutionary class, he felt that its economic circumstances alone were not sufficient to make it realize its socialist mission. Therefore, the working class struggle, he argued, must be stimulated both from within and without by voluntarist elements which would help to create a socialist 'myth', to challenge and reverse the insidious and debilitating effects of bourgeois ideology. And the foundation on which this 'myth' should be constructed was the promise of the social revolution.

Such beliefs were also central to Vallejo's Marxism, and form the basis of his political arguments in the articles that he wrote towards the end of his journalistic career, but most

significant is their influence on the ideological content of his poetry on the Spanish Civil War. More than simply an aid to Vallejo's theoretical understanding of history, the ideas which Mariátegui presented in the Defensa del marxismo and his other works also provided vital intellectual continuity with a common past. As Latin Americans, and more specifically as members of the Peruvian 'Generation of 1919', Mariátegui and Vallejo had shared a similar cultural and historical experience in their early years. Both had come from a society deeply impregnated with the Catholic religion, yet one which was also being increasingly exposed to the process of modernization and the challenge to social and spiritual values which this posed. Many young intellectuals were in fact in the vanguard of the attack against those forces which threatened to hold back development towards modernity, but they were also some of the first to experience the spiritual void that was left in the wake of progress. Having rejected their Catholic faith in their late teens the early works of Haya de la Torre, Mariátegui, and particularly the poet Vallejo, are shot through with a spiritual loneliness which registers their longing for the security of a lost past in the face of an uncertain future.

As a consequence of their philosophical anguish many young Peruvian and Latin American intellectuals threw themselves into politics as though it were a new faith. Mariátegui, for example, though a brilliant interpreter of Marx, and far less utopian in his political outlook than many of his European Marxist contemporaries, embodied in his writings an almost spiritual faith in the Revolution and the possibilities he believed it would bring to mankind. For example writing on the question of a socialist 'myth' in his work La escena contemporánea he stated, 'La revolución más que una idea,es un sentimiento. Más que un concepto, es una pasión. Para comprender se necesita una espontánea actitud espiritual, una especial capacidad psicológica' (p.67). For Vallejo such thinking, along with many other of Mariátegui's ideas, proved irresistible, and did much

to shape his understanding of Marxism. The strength of Mariátegui's socialist convictions, and the peculiarly Latin American form in which he presented them, was in fact to have a more profound effect on Vallejo's thinking than could have been expected if his political education had been confined to European sources.

Vallejo, however, unlike Mariátegui who returned to Peru in 1923, was fully exposed to the pressures that confronted the European intelligentsia as a result of the ravages of the Depression and the rise of fascism. Foremost among these was the political conformity that was demanded by the Moscow controlled communist parties, who purported to offer the only socialist strategy capable of confronting the inter-war crises within capitalism. Indeed, Mariátegui had himself accepted leadership from Moscow and taken his party into the Third International before his death in 1930, but one doubts that he would have continued to accept the developments which took place within the movement during the subsequent decade, and especially the political pragmatism which was synonymous with the period of Popular Front. Vallejo however, despite his revolutionary theoretical grounding in politics, and his occasional gestures of support for parties that offered programmes to the left of the Moscow line, often took a relatively uncritical stance towards Soviet policy in the 1930s. This can be seen particularly in the favourable statements he made in his books on Russia concerning economic developments under Stalin's first Five Year Plan, and perhaps more significantly in his acceptance of the Moscow line at the 1937 Writers' Congress in Spain. Yet one finds in the poetry he wrote on the Spanish Civil War, only months after the Congress, that his compromise with Popular Front pragmatism had not clouded his ideological beliefs.

The struggle of the Spanish Republic in defence of democracy from 1936-1939 represented for the contemporary European left the greatest cause of the inter-war years. Not only was this the first chance to confront fascism, but also as Vallejo suggests, quoting Malraux: 'the popular resistance of the Spanish people constituted a revolution of unprecedented purity'. This revolutionary potential, which existed especially during the first few months of the war, was acknowledged by many artists and intellectuals, but few had the ideological

background or political will to present in their work the significance of these developments in Marxist terms. Vallejo however, as a student of Mariátegui, had not only retained an unshakable faith in the revolutionary process, but had also absorbed many ideas from his mentor's Hispanicized brand of Marxism which he would find were particularly relevant to the struggle in Spain.

As seen in the final chapter of this thesis, in the analysis of the poem 'Humno a los voluntarios de la República', Vallejo's presentation of the revolutionary struggle reflects the direct influence on his thinking of the ideas of Marx, which in turn had been reinforced by his reading of Mariátegui. This poem is indeed the most comprehensive testimony of Vallejo's Marxism and confirms convincingly that many of his ideas had little in common with the mainstream of European radical political theory in the 1930s. There are in fact several intellectual currents in the poem which can be specifically identified with Mariátegui's and Vallejo's own brand of Marxism. Two main areas which fall into this category, and which have been discussed in this thesis,are the questions of the role of the bourgeois intellectual in the revolutionary struggle, and the significance of religion in the formation of a socialist consciousness.

Despite Vallejo's conversion to Marxism in the late 1920s many critics have continued to argue that he never entirely abandonded his religious faith, and some have suggested that in his final poems on the Spanish Civil War his vision of human destiny continued to be a Christian one. Such claims however do not take into account the full significance of the spiritual disillusionment which Vallejo suffered before his discovery of Marxism, nor the extent to which his new political faith convinced him of humanity's power to improve its own condition on earth.

As a Marxist Vallejo saw the religious establishment and the beliefs and

ceremonies which it so jealously protected, as nothing more than an instrument of ruling class domination. But, like Sorel and Mariátegui, he distinguished between this kind of institutionalized faith and the Christian myth itself, which he felt retained a too powerful influence on human consciousness for it to be dismissed out of hand by Marxists. He also believed, as is clearly indicated in his poems on the Spanish Civil War, that many Christian beliefs - and especially those which emphasized the importance of human fraternity and the need to fight against the divisive forces of evil - were compatible with the demands of the modern socialist struggle. Furthermore, while progress towards socialism was in an embryonic stage, with its own myths still weak and without proper shape, the mythological framework of Christianity could serve as a vehicle of interaction and transition in the growth of the ideology of the new social order.

In putting forward the above ideas both Mariátegui and Vallejo believed that the use of the Christian myth as a form of reinforcement for an emerging socialist consciousness was particularly important in underdeveloped countries, and especially Hispanic nations where the masses were closely tied to the Church. The task of intellectuals - who themselves retained many vestiges of their Catholic heritage - in such societies was therefore to project their socialist ideas from within the existent mythological structure of Christianity, rather than try to proselytize the masses by direct materialist arguments. As we have seen in Chapter Four of this thesis, Vallejo's poem 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' provides an outstanding example in art form of this process.

Considering Vallejo's and Mariátegui's perception of religion in relation to the social struggle one could argue that their ideas anticipated the programme of the Liberation Theologists. However, it should be remembered before developing such a comparison, that both Vallejo and Mariátegui fully

accepted the main arguments of Marx's materialist conception of history, and while willing to recognise the compatibility of some spiritually orientated beliefs with a developing socialist consciousness, they may not have been able to accept the high degree of interplay between Christianity and Marxism which is championed by the modern radical priests.

The second main area of debate into which Vallejo entered within the context of his Marxism was the question of the role of the intellectual, and especially the artist, in the proletarian struggle. While having been concerned for some time before he became a Marxist with the function of the artist in society, the above debate would again seem to have been stimulated mainly by the ideas of Mariategui, who in turn was informed by the revolutionaries of the Ordine Nuovo who had placed great emphasis on the question of intellectuals.

As Vallejo's political knowledge increased during the late 1920s he became particularly interested in the possibilities which a revolution offered for the creation of a new proletarian art form, and held out great hope that he would find such a development taking place in the Soviet Union. But he was soon to realize, to his dismay, after visiting so called 'proletarian' artists in Moscow and Leningrad, that they were not authentic representatives of the working class but bourgeois intellectuals like Mayakovski, who had modified their work to satisfy the new demands of the Soviet State. After such experiences Vallejo totally rejected the notion that the middle class intelligentsia could be the harbinger of a truly progressive socialist art form, and began to concentrate his attention on the more practical question of how politically conscious bourgeois intellectuals could best serve the proletarian struggle in countries which were still dominated by capitalism.

The prime task of such intellectuals, Vallejo felt, was to treat the proletarian cause as their own, and seek constantly to support and encourage

its revolutionary objectives. This however, did not mean that they must attempt to emulate the working classes in all respects, as he believed had happened among writers in Russia, but rather to employ their bourgeois inherited skills to advance the hegemony of socialist ideas. In the case of artists this meant that they should not simply seek to convey a didactic message to the workers, but rather to use their full artistic talents to present the proletarian cause to a multi class audience. Like Mariátegui, Vallejo believed that the masses in their struggle for socialism would produce their own authentic intellectuals, and therefore the role of the bourgeois intelligentsia was not to supplement this process but to champion its legitimacy by giving credence in their work to the historical necessity of proletarian ascendantcy.

Despite Vallejo's willingness to attach a vital significance to the role of bourgeois intellectuals in the revolutionary struggle in his work in the early 1930s, his poetry on the Spanish Civil War does not reflect the same optimism. This however, was not an indication of a loss of faith in his own theory, but rather the result of specific historical circumstances: because the outbreak of the conflict in Spain coincided with, and indeed intensified, a period of acute political tension in Europe, it attracted the attention not only of deeply committed intellectuals, but also a wide range of dilettanti who had only recently discovered politics. The majority of intellectuals who came to Spain during the war were in fact in this latter category, therefore it is not surprising that in the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' intellectuals are represented in a poor light in comparison to the heroic struggle of the Spanish masses and the international volunteers.

One also realizes from reading the 'Himno' that Vallejo himself was highly disappointed with his own contributions to the service of the popular struggle. This may be seen both in terms of his failure to take action to

defend the cause which he believed in, as did say Orwell, and also in his own perceived failure to serve the revolution directly in his art, as did some of his Spanish contemporaries. However, his choice not to write didactic or easily communicable popular poetry was obviously a conscious one. Undoubtedly he must have felt that the most important task he could perform in the context of the political dilettantism with which he was surrounded was to use his poetic talent and ideological beliefs to register the true revolutionary significance of the struggle of the Spanish masses, and thereby rescue this great historic moment from the danger of being misrepresented by the utopian notions of his bourgeois peers.

In retrospect, in his poetry on the Spanish Civil War, Vallejo did not make any inroads towards the development of a proletarian art form, nor did he even write poems that the subjects of his work could fully understand. But what he did do was to present in his poetry the most authentic representation of the dignity and extraordinary revolutionary potential of the Spanish working classes during the Civil War. In this respect alone he created a work of art that is not simply a record in aesthetic form of an outstanding historical event, but also an important weapon in the ongoing struggle against the dominance of bourgeois capitalist ideologies, and in this Vallejo can be regarded, even when judged against his own exacting standards, as a true revolutionary.

APPENDIX

Mismo a los voluntarios de la República

Voluntario de España, miliciano
de huesos fidedignos, cuando marcha a morir tu corazón,
cuando marcha a matar con su agonía
mundial, no sé verdaderamente
qué hacer, dónde ponerme; corro, escribo, aplaudo,
lloro, atisbo, destrozo, apago, digo
a mi pecho que acabe, al bien que venga,
y quiero desgraciarme;
descúbrome la frente impersonal hasta tocar
el vaso de la sangre, me detengo,
detienen mi tamaño esas famosas caídas de arquitecto
con las que se honra el animal que me honra;
refluyen mis instintos a sus sogas,
humea ante mi tumba la alegría
y, otra vez, sin saber qué hacer, sin nada, déjame,
desde mi piedra en blanco, déjame,
solo,
cuadrumano, más acá, mucho más lejos,
al no caber entre mis manos tu largo rato extático,
quiebro contra tu rapidez de doble filo
mi pequeñez en traje de grandeza!

Un día, diurno, claro, atento, fértil
¡oh bienio, el de los lóbregos semestres suplicantes,
por el que iba la pólvora mordiéndose los codos!
¡oh dura pena y más duros pedernales;
¡oh frenos los tascados por el pueblo!
Un día prendió el pueblo su fósforo cautivo, oró de cólera
y soberanamente pleno, circular,
cerró su natalicio con manos electivas;
arrastraban candado ya los déspotas
y en el candado, sus bacterias muertas ...

¿Batallas? ¡No! Pasiones Y pasiones precedidas
de dolores con rejas de esperanzas,
de dolores de pueblos con esperanzas de hombres!
¡Muerte y pasión de paz, las populares!
¡Muerte y pasión guerreras entre olivos, entendámonos!
Tal en tu aliento cambian de agujas atmosféricas los vientos
y de llave las tumbas en tu pecho,
tu frontal elevándose a primera potencia de martirio.

El mundo exclama: "¡Cosas de españoles!" Y es verdad. Consideremos,
durante una balanza, a quema ropa,
a Calderón, dormido sobre la cola de un anfibio muerto,
o a Cervantes, diciendo: "Mi reino es de este mundo, pero
también del otro": ¡punta y filo en dos papeles!
Contemplemos a Goya, de hinojos y rezando ante un espejo,
a Coll, el paladín en cuyo asalto cartesiano
tuvo un sudor de nube el paso llano,
o a Quevedo, ese abuelo instantáneo de los dinamiteros,
o a Cajal, devorado por su pequeño infinito, o todavía

a Teresa, mujer, que muere porque no muera,
o a Tina Ódena, en pugna en más de un punto con Teresa ...
(Todo acto o voz genial viene del pueblo
y va hacia él, de frente o transmitidos
por incesantes briznas, por el humo rosado
de amargas contraseñas sin fortuna.)
Así tu criatura, miliciano, así tu exangüe criatura,
agitada por una piedra inmóvil,
se sacrifica, apártase,
decae para arriba y por su llama incombustible sube,
sube hasta los débiles,
distribuyendo españas a los toros,
toros a las palomas ...

Proletario que mueres de universo, ¡en qué frenética armonía
acabará tu grandeza, tu miseria, tu vorágine impelente,
tu violencia metódica, tu caos teórico y práctico, tu gana
dantesca, españolísima, de amar, aunque sea a traición, a tu enemigo!
Liberador ceñido de grilletes,
sin cuyo esfuerzo hasta hoy continuaría sin asas la extensión,
vagarían acéfalos los clavos,
antiguo, lento, colorado, el día,
¡nuestros amados cascos, insepultos!
Campesino caído con tu verde follaje por el hombre,
con la inflexión social de tu mañique,
con tu buey que se queda, con tu física,
también con tu palabra atada a un palo
y tu cielo arrendado
y con la arcilla inserta en tu cansancio
y la que estaba en tu uña, caminando!
¡Constructores
agrícolas, civiles y guerreros,
de la activa, hormiguante eternidad: estaba escrito
que vosotros haríais la luz, entornando
con la muerte vuestros ojos;
que, a la caída cruel de vuestras bocas,
vendrá en siete bandejas la abundancia, todo
en el mundo será de oro súbito
y el oro,
fabulosos mendigos de vuestra propia secreción de sangre,
y el oro mismo será entonces de oro!

¡Se amarán todos los hombres
y comerán tomados de las puntas de vuestros pañuelos tristes
y beberán en nombre
de vuestras gargantas infausta!
Descansarán andando al pie de esta carrera,
sollozarán pensando en vuestras órbitas, venturosos
serán y al son
de vuestro atroz retorno, florecido, innato,
ajustarán mañana sus quehaceres, sus figuras soñadas y cantadas!

¡Unos mismos zapatos irán bien al que asciende
sin vías a su cuerpo
y al que baja hasta la forma de su alma!

¡Entrelazándose hablarán los mudos, los tullidos andarán!
¡Verán, ya de regreso, los ciegos
y palpitando escucharán los sordos!
¡Sabrán los ignorantes, ignorarán los sabios!
¡Sarán dados los besos que no pudisteis dar!
¡Sólo la muerte morirá! ¡La hormiga
traerá pedacitos de pan al elefante encadenado
a su brutal delicadeza; ¡volverán
los niños abortados a nacer perfectos, espaciales
y trabajarán ludos los hombres,
engendrarán todos los hombres,
comprenderán todos los hombres!

Obrero, salvador, redentor nuestro,
¡perdónanos, hermano, nuestras deudas!
Como dice un tamor al redoblar, en sus adagios:
qué jamás tan efímero, tu espalda!
qué siempre tan cambiante, tu perfil!

¡Voluntario italiano, entre cuyos animales de batalla
un león abisinio va cojeando!
¡Voluntario soviético, marchando a la cabeza de tu pecho universal!
¡Voluntarios del sur, del norte, del oriente
y tú, el occidental, cerrando el canto fúnebre del alba!
¡Soldado conocido, cuyo nombre
desfila en el sonido de un abrazo!
¡Combatiente que la tierra criara, armándote
de polvo,
calzándote de imanes positivos,
vigentes tus creencias personales,
distinto de carácter, íntima tu férula,
el cutis inmediato,
andándote tu idioma por los hombros
y el alma coronada de guijarros!
¡Voluntario fajado de tu zona fría,
templada o tórrida,
héroes a la redonda,
víctima en columna de vencedores:
en España, en Madrid, están llamando
a matar, voluntarios de la vida!

¡Porque en España matan, otros matan
al niño, a su juguete que se pára,
a la madre Rosenda esplendorosa,
al viejo Adán que hablaba en alta voz con su caballo
y al perro que dormía en la escalera.
Matan al libro, tiran a sus verbos auxiliares,
a su indefensa página primera!
Matan al caso exacto de la estatua,
al sabio, a su bastón, a su colega,
al barbero de al lado - me cortó posiblemente,
pero buen hombre y, luego, infortunado;
al mendigo que ayer cantaba enfrente,
a la enfermera que hoy pasó llorando,
al sacerdote a cuestas con la altura tenaz de sus rodillas ...

¡Voluntarios,
por la vida, por los buenos, matad
a la muerte, matad a los malos!
¡Hacedlo por la libertad de todos,
del explotado y del explotador,
por la paz indolora - la sospecho
cuando duermo al pie de mi frente
y más cuando circulo dando voces -
y hacedlo, voy diciendo,
por el analfabeto a quien escribo,
por el genio descalzo y su cordero
por los camaradas caídos,
sus cenizas abrazadas al cadáver de un camino!

Para que vosotros,
voluntarios de España y del mundo, viniérais,
soñé que era yo bueno, y era para ver
vuestra sangre, voluntarios ...
De esto hace mucho pecho, muchas ansias,
muchos camellos en edad de orar.
Marcha hoy de vuestra parte el bien ardiendo,
os siguen con cariño los reptiles de pestaña inmanente
y, a dos pasos, a uno,
la dirección del agua que corre a ver su límite antes que arda.

Guide to Criticism

Introduction

While providing a brief overview of the works of Vallejo's major critics, this guide will concentrate on the response of these critics to the poetry which Vallejo wrote after he became a Marxist in the late 1920s, with special attention being given to their treatment of his final book of poetry entitled España, aparta de mí este cáliz. In the above context the main controversy which has emerged since Vallejo's death in 1938 is over the extent to which his political beliefs influenced his art. Some critics have argued that despite his involvement in revolutionary politics his poetry continued to be informed throughout his life by spiritual considerations, while others claim, in varying degrees, that in the 1930s and especially during the Spanish Civil War, political ideas and the social struggle itself began to motivate and inspire his poetic production.

The first of Vallejo's critics to initiate this debate was the Spanish poet Juan Larrea in his essay entitled 'Profecía de América', which served as an introduction to his edition of Vallejo's España, aparta de mí este cáliz, which was published in Mexico in 1940. Because of Larrea's seminal role in the field of Vallejo studies, and the fact that he knew his subject personally from 1925 to 1938, his main arguments will be used to provide an introduction to the body of thought which takes the view that Vallejo's poetic sensibilities were never substantially influenced by his politics. The order in which subsequent writers are presented will therefore depend on the nature of their response to Vallejo's poetry, rather than on a chronological or alphabetical form of organization. Thus, as the essay begins with those critics who take an

internal, a-historical view of Vallejo's poetry, it will end by looking at the works of those who have attempted to apply historicist and Marxist methods of analysis to their subject's art. Clearly at these two extremes there are few problems with regard to organization, but in the case of those critics who inhabit the middle ground, or whose works simply cannot be easily judged by the above criteria (i.e. the structuralist analysis of Ballón Aguirre), no particular significance should be attached to their relative positioning.

Finally, it should be remembered again that this Guide to Criticism is purposely selective in its approach to the works of the various critics which are listed below. Therefore while some critics, like Larrea, are challenged on certain views that they hold with regard to Vallejo's final poetry, this does not detract from the fact that they may have made valuable contributions to the field of Vallejo studies in other areas of their work.

Juan Larrea

In addition to having shared the experience of European intellectual life between the wars, Vallejo and Larrea also had much in common as individuals. They were both poets for whom Spanish was a native language and they also held a mutual interest in the artistic avant-garde movements of the 1920s. As a result they collaborated together in 1926 to produce a short-lived literary journal entitled Favorables París Poema, whose main purpose was to challenge prevailing literary values in Spain and Latin America from an avant-garde perspective. (For a survey of the contributions which Larrea and Vallejo made to the journal and an assessment of the literary environment out of which it emerged, see Robert Gurney, 'César Vallejo, Juan Larrea and the avant-garde magazine Favorables París Poema', Bulletin of the Society for Latin American Studies, 31 (October 1979), pp. 56-76). Up to the end of 1926 when the second and last issue of the journal came out, Vallejo and Larrea seem to have held similar views on literary questions, but by mid 1927 with Vallejo's increasing

interest in Marxism and left-wing politics, they began to drift apart intellectually while continuing to maintain occasional contact as friends until Vallejo's death in 1938.

Largely as a result of this friendship Larrea became not only a critic of Vallejo's poetry (most of Larrea's major articles on Vallejo's poetry have been collected together in one book entitled Al amor de Vallejo, Valencia, 1980), but also one of his biographers an an editor of his work (see especially César Vallejo: poesía completa: edición crítica, Barcelona, 1978, in which Larrea includes a long introductory essay on Vallejo's life and poetry). In 1961 Larrea also became Director, coordinator, and a major contributor to a continuous compilation of essays on Vallejo's life and art entitled Aula Vallejo (Cordoba, Argentina). By the time of Larrea's death in 1983 eleven volumes of the Aula had been published.

Throughout his career as Vallejo's biographer and a critic of Vallejo's poetry, Larrea maintained, that while left-wing political ideas had some influence on Vallejo's thinking after the late 1920s such ideas did not alter his subject's artistic sensibilities. Indeed, Larrea goes even further and suggests that Vallejo remained a 'mystic' for the duration of his life, and that all of his poetry, including his final work on the Spanish Civil War is an attempt to express his perception of the world in terms of his own inner spirituality. While such beliefs pervade all of Larrea's writings on Vallejo they are most clearly presented in his essay entitled 'Cesar Vallejo o Hispanoamérica en la cruz de su Razón' (included in Al amor de Vallejo, pp. 43-93) in which, claiming to draw from Vallejo's own statements, he states,

> ...Vallejo, que estaba ganado por el materialismo histórico en uno de sus sectores vitales, confesaba repetidamente en el seno de la confianza que las teorías sociológicas sólo resolvían ante su persona los problemas relativos a la organización de la sociedad. Pero que en cambio sus problemas, los correspondientes al Sujeto, el marxismo no se los resolvía en modo alguno ... No puede incurrir en él, no obstante su dedicación a los problemas político-sociales, por ser fundamentalmente un poeta informado por una mente metafísica. (pp. 54-56)

Having divided Vallejo's personality between two unrelated levels of consciousness, the material and the mystical, Larrea then goes on to suggest that it was the latter which informed Vallejo's poetic vision. This argument is supported by reference to Jungian depth psychology whereby the 'subjective' and 'objective' mind are regarded as having separate functions, in which the former is seen to embody a transcendental potential because of its presumed relationship with archetypal formations. A clear indication of this process, Larrea claims, can be seen in Vallejo's final collection of poems, España, aparta de mí este cáliz, where even though dealing with a contemporary historical event, his poetic vision is presented in terms of a biblical prophesy and his poetic language is laden with religious overtones. Consequently, it is not historical reality and political ideas which Larrea sees being represented in these poems but the synthesis of a Christian and Hispanic view of the world, which he feels had always been latent in the poet's consciousness.

As we have seen, Larrea also attempts to support his interpretation of Vallejo's poetic vision by claiming that Vallejo himself accepted that political ideas had only a passing and superficial influence on his thinking. One finds however from reading Larrea's essay in which the above claim is made, that his evidence is based almost entirely on the contents of one letter that he received from Vallejo in 1932 in which the latter states,

> En cuanto a la política, he ido a ella por el propio peso de las cosas y no ha estado en mis manos evitarlo. Tú me comprendes Juan. Se vive y la vida se le entra a uno en forma que casi siempre nos toma por sorpresa. Sin embargo, pienso que la política no ha matado totalmente lo que yo era antes. He cambiado seguramente, pero soy quizás el mismo. Comparto mi vida entre la inquietud política y social y mi inquietud introspectiva y personal y mis part adentro (p.55).

The above statement does indeed represent one of the few, and hence significant, instances after Vallejo became a Marxist, in which he would appear to be expressing some limited reservations regarding the impact of his political beliefs But it seems extraordinary that this one letter can constitute for Larrea, and several other critics who choose to see Vallejo as a mystical poet, sufficient

evidence to undermine the validity of the clearly Marxist position which Vallejo adopted during the last decade of his life in over thirty articles, several plays, three books and at least one entire collection of poetry.

Moreover, one should also take note of Georgette de Vallejo's claim that while her husband regarded Larrea as a friend, politically he felt that he was an incurable bourgeois liberal (See 'Apuntes biográficos' in César Vallejo Obras Completas, 9 vols., Barcelona, 1977 - III, 97-226, p.137). Robert Gurney in his article on the journal Favorables París Poema, also points out that 'Larrea was a-political until the birth of the Second Republic in Spain, and even then he did not join a party' (p.61). If the above claims are correct then Vallejo may have written his letter to Larrea with the latter's political naivety in mind.

While one may argue that Larrea has made valuble contributions in the field of Vallejo studies in certain areas of his work, it would seem unfortunate that having known Vallejo personally, and experienced with him some aspects of the extraordinary intellectual environment which existed in Europe in the 1930s, he failed to understand Vallejo's political motivations in those years, and their effect on his art. As a result of this failure Larrea became one of the first major critics of Vallejo's work to espouse the idea that his subject's poetry was motivated by spiritual concerns, even after he had become politically committed. This static a-historical view of Vallejo as a poet, which emphasises the priority of 'spiritual' over 'intellectual' development, is also shared by some members of the second generation of Vallejo's critics, including Alejandro Lora Risco and Américo Ferrari. And even while most critics now seriously question such beliefs they often still continue to support the idea that Vallejo's poetry was essentially the product of an internal artistic process which remained responsive to, but not necessarily motivated by, external realities.

Alejandro Lora Risco

Among Vallejo's major critics Lora Risco is perhaps the most adamant champion of his subject's spirituality. In an early essay entitled 'Revaloración de Vallejo' (Atenea, 396, Santiago de Chile, April-June 1962, 115-127), Lora Risco claims that 'el eros Vallejiano es profundamente religioso, numinoso, irracional, que no social ni revolucionario', and this belief is sustained and developed up to, and including his main critical work on Vallejo's poetry, Hacia la voz del hombre (Santiago de Chile, 1971).

Convinced that Vallejo was motivated thoughout his life by a 'profoundly religious' consciousness, Lora Risco does not accept that 'external' forces were ever sufficiently powerful to influence Vallejo's poetic vision, and therefore rejects the notion that a progression of ideas is represented in his poetry. (For a more comprehensive assessment of Lora Risco's book Hacia la voz del hombre, see David Sobrevilla, 'La investigación peruana sobre la poesía de Vallejo: 1971-1974', Revista de Crítica Literaria Latinoamericana, I, 1975, pp. 99-150, 100-104. This essay also includes sections on the main critical works of Américo Ferrari, pp. 104-117, Enrique Ballón Aguirre, pp.117-133, and Alberto Escobar, pp. 133-147).

Américo Ferrari

Ferrari's view of Vallejo's poetry in his main work El universo poético de César Vallejo (Caracas, 1974), is based on the premise that 'el objeto central, immediato, directo de la meditación poética de Vallejo es el hombre y su destino, que aparece desde el primer poema, y sigue dominando, señero y omnipotente, en la obra más madura del poeta' (p.19). While few of Vallejo's critics would disagree with the above statement, Ferrari's subsequent analysis of the poet's work in terms of an esoteric philosophical quest, largely unmoved by external reality leaves itself open to question. This being especially so when one considers Vallejo's ideological commitment to Marxism in the late 1920s, and

the subsequent implications this had not only on his poetic production, but also on his perception of the role of the artist in society. Seeing Vallejo as essentially a metaphysical poet allows Ferrari to make some useful insights into his subject's first two books Los heraldos negros and Trilce, but his attempt to maintain this perspective through to Poemas humanos and España, aparta de mí este cáliz is fraught with problems. For example in his analysis of España, aparta de mí este cáliz he concludes that even though the poet's hope of a better future for humanity is based on his faith in the contemporary social struggle, his final vision of human destiny is not historical, but biblical (pp.180-186).

Alberto Escobar

Like Ferrari and Lora Risco, Escobar, in his work entitled Cómo leer a Vallejo (Lima, 1973) concentrates his analysis of Vallejo's poetry on its central theme; the nature of the human condition and the destiny of mankind. But in contrast to these critics Escobar does not attempt to understand Vallejo's poetic preoccupation simply in terms of a static philosophical quest, but rather introduces the idea of the poet's own intellectual development, and its reflection in his poetry. In this context Escobar sees an ideological progression in Vallejo's response to the question of human alienation, which is first represented in the religious and metaphysical preoccupations of Los heraldos negros and Trilce, followed by the existential anguish of Poemas en prosa, and finally ends with the social consciousness of Poemas humanos and España, aparta de mí este cáliz.

However, while accepting that Vallejo's poetic vision remained responsive to external factors throughout his life, Escobar qualifies this belief by stating, 'los rasgos linguísticos, los factores ideológicos y culturales acontecen unitariamente en el texto y de igual modo debe concebirlos y apreciarlos nuestro método' (p.147). While Escobar's 'method' allows for a more objective approach

to Vallejo's poetry than that taken by those critics who base their analyses on the poet's presumed mystical motivations, his belief in the 'organic unity' of the poetic text and its potential to reveal itself to the reader, is highly debatable. Among the criticisms that might be leveled at Escobar, one might argue that if he wishes to claim that economic, social and literary influences helped to shape Vallejo's poetry, then he should complement his study with some reference to the historical conditions out of which they emerged. Escobar however is adamant that such investigations are not relevant to his method; a claim which suggests the rather improbable corollary that as a critic he himself is without historical or ideological formation.

Enrique Ballón Aguirre

In his work entitled Vallejo como paradigma: un caso especial de escritura (Lima, 1973), Ballón Aguirre undertakes a structuralist/post-structuralist analysis of Vallejo's prose and poetry drawing on the ideas of such linguistic theorists as Saussure, Barthes and Kristeva. Ballón Aguirre's thesis represents a competent and interesting attempt to apply the methodology of modern 'scientific' literary theory to Vallejo's work, and is particularly notable for the fact that his mode of analysis is sufficiently flexible to acknowledge and expose the effect of Vallejo's political ideas on the linguistic formation of his poetry. For most of his study however, Ballón Aguirre adopts a more authentically structuralist approach in which subjective factors, including Vallejo's intellectual development, and his conscious efforts to endow meaning to his work, are bracketed off to give priority to an analysis of the poet's work in relation to the impersonal linguistic structures out of which it is seen to emerge.

Ballón Aguirre has also edited a compilation of Vallejo's poetry entitled César Vallejo: obra poética completa (Caracas, 1979). This is particulary useful to the student of Vallejo's work because it contains a comprehensive introduction

by Ballón Aguirre which examines a number of ideas which Vallejo presented in his journalism on such topics as literature, writers, and politics.

Roberto Paoli

Paoli's first major work in the field of Vallejo studies takes the form of a long introductory essay to his bilingual selection of Vallejo's poetry entitled Poesie di César Vallejo which was published in Milan in 1964. In this essay Paoli claims to adopt a historicist critical methodology, but while recording diligently a number of crucial events in Vallejo's life, he fails to make full use of his subject's prose writings, and his treatment of the historical and intellectual environments to which Vallejo was exposed is limited. These omissions in his research are particularly apparent in his analysis of Vallejo's final book of poetry España, aparta de mí este cáliz (This section of his Introduction is included as a separate article in Aproximaciones a Cesar Vallejo, II, pp. 349-370), where he bases his main argument regarding Vallejo's perception of the relationship between politics and art, on a statement which the poet made in 1927, than years before he wrote the Spain poems. By placing emphasis on this one statement Paoli appears to neglect the fact that between 1927 and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War Vallejo underwent an intellectual transformation. Therefore the comments Vallejo was making on art and politics in the late 1920s, before he became a Marxist, may not be entirely relevant in an analysis of the committed poetry he was writing in 1938. (For an assessment of Paoli's arguments see the main text of this thesis, pp. 312-316.)

However, despite this weakness in his research, Paoli makes some valuable intuitive insights into the poetic content of España, aparta de mí este cáliz and his work still remains one of the best analyses of the poems available. Throughout his introductory essay he also distinguishes himself clearly from those critics who see Vallejo as a metaphysical poet, by claiming that most of Vallejo's poetry was inspired by material rather than spiritual concerns.

After the publication of Poesia di César Vallejo in 1964 Paoli went on to write a number of articles on Vallejo's poetry, in which he developed and modified some of the themes which he had introduced in the earlier work. These articles were originally published in various Italian literary journals during the late 1960s and 1970s, but most have now been translated into Spanish and included in a compilation entitled Mapas anatómicos de César Vallejo (Florence, 1981). Since the late 1960s Paoli has also tended to shift his critical focus from the interpretation of poetic content to the analysis of Vallejo's poetic language.

One of the main themes which Paoli has continued to develop in the essays he wrote after 1964 is his perception of Vallejo as a materialist poet. This argument would appear to have its foundations in Paoli's belief that 'el mensaje humano y poético del peruano César Vallejo tiene su raíz profunda en el alma india, mestiza y serrana (see 'Poética y poesía de Vallejo' in Mapas anatómicos, pp.7-30, p.9). More specifically Vallejo's Indian heritage is seen to be represented in his enduring poetic vision of man as a communal being and his frequently expressed longings for a reconciliation between man and nature. These essentially material and humanistic concerns, Paoli argues, were instrumental in giving Vallejo's poetry a philosophical and artistic formation which distinguishes it from the mainstream of European art. Eurocentric aesthetics he claims - under whose influence he also includes most Latin American writers - is dominated by a worship of individuality and a fetishization of beauty in the material world. This latter tendency he believes has its philosophical roots in mysticism. Vallejo's poetry on the other hand is almost free of all notions of idealized reality, and concentrates on the more tangible question of man's worldly survival and the struggle for collective human fraternity. Unlike the majority of Western avant-garde, and radical poets, Paoli therefore feels that when faced with the collectivist aspirations of modern socialist man Vallejo was better placed ideologically than his contemporaries to deal with such

developments in his art, and he states, 'y este hombre nuevo, que en Vallejo es un mito antiguo, anterior a su adhesión al marxismo, se encarna sucesivamente en tres figuras: el indio, el bolchevique y el miliciano (p.79). Paoli claims, furthermore, that it was not only the idea of socialist unity which Vallejo was able to comprehend and express in his later poetry, but that even his language is 'orgánicamente revolucionario' (p.21); a quality which he feels was not shared by other socialist poets of the period. As an example he cites the case of Pablo Neruda, whose poetic language, even after he became a Marxist, continued to reflect the influence of European aesthetics.

In a second article on Vallejo's poetic language entitled 'Mapa anatómico de Poemas humanos: poética y lenguaje' (Mapas anatómicos, pp. 115-129) Paoli further consolidates his argument by claiming that Vallejo took the great themes of socialist poetry, work, human solidarity, primary needs and material life, and gave them 'su propio lenguaje, en concretas homologías del lenguaje; ha convertido la predicación en emoción, el canto cantado en canto hablado, la sonoridad circular de la poesía en una sonoridad esquinada y lancinante'.

Paoli's treatment of the form and linguistic structure of Vallejo's poetry, in the essays which are included in Mapas anatómicos de César Vallejo, provide a powerful challenge to those critics who see Vallejo as a metaphysical poet. In fact it may be argued that Paoli's work represents a substantial demistification of Vallejo's poetic language, and reveals in his poetry one of the most interesting linguistic experiments of the inter-war years.

Ultimately, one feels however, that Paoli's failure to understand the complexity and extent of the intellectual developments which Vallejo experienced in Europe, has left some of his arguments on weak foundations. For instance his claim that Vallejo was a materialist poet, though persuasive if seen as an argument based soley on the poetic texts themselves, fails to convince when he appeals to external evidence in the form of the lingering psychological influence of Vallejo's Indian heritage. Clearly Vallejo's work was affected

by his upbringing in Peruvian sierra society, but in terms of the development of his materialist view of the world it would seem logical that his marxism was ultimately more significant.

In his early analysis of España, aparta de mí este cáliz Paoli does in fact accept that Marxist ideas influenced Vallejo's final poetry but he does not see such ideas as a transformative intellectual force, but rather as an additional component in the growth of Vallejo's accumulative and 'nubulous' humanistic vision, which had its foundations in his original Sierra Indian consciousness.

James Higgins

During the late 1960s and early 1970s James Higgins became the leading British critic working on the poetry of César Vallejo. His publications in the field of Vallejo studies include a number of articles in a wide range of literary journals in Britain, Europe, and Latin America (See Bibliography for a selection) and two books: César Vallejo: An Anthology of his Poetry (Oxford, 1970) and Visión del hombre y de la vida en las últimas obras póeticas de César Vallejo (Mexico City, 1970).

In the 82 page introduction to his 'Anthology' of Vallejo's poetry, Higgins combines a biography of Vallejo's life, in which he includes references to social, literary and political influences on the poet's intellectual and psychological formation, with an overview of the development of his poetry. This essay also includes some analyses of individual poems both in terms of their content and language. While exploring a number of diverse themes in Vallejo's poetry the main argument which Higgins puts forward is that Vallejo held an existential view of the human condition throughout his poetic career. In this context Higgins suggests that his subject's poetry is based on three main objectives: firstly, to unmask the myths which prevent humanity from realizing the true nature of its existence, secondly to find modes of expre

both in terms of language and poetic structure, which are capable of supporting the above revolt, and lastly to constantly seek to advance the idea of human fraternity as the only real hope of bringing meaning to human existence.

While Higgins's perception of an existential motivation behind Vallejo's poetry provides the basis for some excellent analyses of poems in Los heraldos negros, Trilce and a large part of Poemas humanos, as a means of understanding Vallejo's politically committed poetry, and especially España, aparta de mí este cáliz, it is inadequate. Writing in defence of his critical position he states,

> Vallejo does not write in function of his communism and his verse does not expound Marxist-Leninist propaganda. His final poetic works are existential rather than social and political. It is true that many poems deal with the misery and destitution of the underprivileged, the parishs and oppressed of capitalist society, or sing of the Revolution and the Spanish Civil War. But for Vallejo the victims of society are also the victims of life and the Civil War is not simply a struggle against Fascism but a symbol of man's struggle to create an ideal world. (p.43)

Like Paoli, while recognising the social and material task to which Vallejo directs his final poetry, Higgins fails to acknowledge the full effect which Marxism had on Vallejo's thinking and consequently continues to see the poet's work in terms of an idealized philosophical vision. Somewhat in contrast to the above statement however, Higgins states in the same essay that 'for Vallejo the way out of the impasse of human misery is through the Communist Revolution. Communism offers the possibility of a transformation of the conditions of life. Thus he [Vallejo] quotes Marx: "Los filósofos, - dice Marx, - no han hecho hasta ahora sino interpretar el mundo de diversas maneras. De lo que se trata es transformarlo"' (p.66). To this he adds that Vallejo believed that the Revolution could only be truly authenticated through a revolution in human consciousness, and the class which were in a position to realize this task were the proletariat. Throughout his critical works on Vallejo's poetry Higgins does in fact show - unlike Paoli and numerous other critics - that he is familiar with Vallejo's prose works, and is aware of many of the poet's Marxist

ideas. But he does not accept that such ideas affected Vallejo's existential perception of the human condition.

Seeing Vallejo as a poet whose philosophical and aesthetic ideas are to a large extent motivated by an existential view of the world however, leads Higgins to reject the notion of Vallejo as a mystical poet. Therefore while acknowledging that 'Biblical associations and religious symbolism abound' (p.79) in some of Vallejo's final poems he adds, 'it is to be emphasized, however, that these poems deal not with religious experience but with ordinary human experience and the religious terminology is applied not to the divinity but humanity. It is man, not God, who is the divinity in Vallejo's religion' (p.79).

Higgins's second book on Vallejo's poetry, Visión del hombre y de la vida en las últimas obras de César Vallejo, examines in considerable detail a number of themes which are seen to run through Poemas humanos and España, aparta de mí este cáliz, including 'the absurd', 'time', 'universal suffering', 'the Revolution', and 'Vallejo's Communism', all of which are treated under separate headings. Of his critical method Higgins states, 'opino que, para llegar a comprender a un autor, hay que acercarse a él desde dentro y no de fuera, a través de un análisis detallado y sistemático de los textos más que a través de un examen de su biografía o de las influencias literarias' (p.2). Despite this claim he demonstrates, as in the Introduction to his 'Anthology', that he is aware of the historical and intellectual influences which played a part in the development of Vallejo's poetry. But again, his overriding belief in Vallejo's internalized existential view of the world, while allowing for some fine analyses of the poet's perception of the absurd and his view of death, leads to a rather restricted view of the effect of Marxism on Vallejo's thinking and his poetry.

Luis Monguió

With the publication of his work César Vallejo (1892-1938: Vida y obra - biografía antología (New York, 1952), Monguió became, along with Larrea, one of Vallejo's first major critics. But his approach to Vallejo's life and works has little in common with that of his contemporary. Firstly, while Larrea bases his biography of Vallejo's life mainly on his own personal knowledge of his subject, Monguió provides a more objective study, which draws not only on the accounts of those who had known the poet personally but also includes a succinct analysis of Vallejo's responses to the historical and intellectual environments to which he was exposed during his lifetime. Secondly, while Larrea chooses to treat his biographical study and his analyses of Vallejo's poetry almost as separate areas of research, Monguió attempts to understand Vallejo's artistic production in terms of the poet's life experience. Throughout his work Monguió does in fact give priority to literary influences on Vallejo's poetry, but he links these to a wider historical process to provide a dynamic rather than a passive view of his subject's artistic development. Moreover, unlike most of the critics examined thus far Monguió frequently uses Vallejo's own prose writings, and particularly the books El tungsteno and Rusia en 1931, to gain insights into the poet's intellectual formation.

In his short analysis of the poems which comprise España, aparta de mí este cáliz (pp.76-80) Monguió concentrates his attention on Vallejo's perception of death in this final work. In Vallejo's earlier poetry death had been associated with what the poet felt was the living death of the isolated individual in an alienating world. However, Monguió claims that Vallejo saw in the popular struggle of the Spanish masses for social justice an example of the enormous human potential of collective and fraternal action. Therefore he believes that in Vallejo's Spain poems death is not seen by the poet as the ignominious fate of the alienated individual, but rather part of a creative and evolutionary process which in the context of the struggle serves to strengthen the life of the mass, whose collective consciousness would in turn

sustain the hopes and aspirations of the dead individual. Monguió's conclusion is clear: it was in the struggle for socialism that Vallejo found the answer to his lifelong quest to solve the riddle of human alienation. Furthermore this vision was not a product of the workings of an esoteric individual consciousness but the result of an active involvement in the world in which he lived.

Monguió concludes, commenting on the structure of España, aparta de mí este cáliz:

> la poesía de Vallejo es experiencia, y es emoción o no es nada. En este caso es experiencia, es emoción y es poesía. Es su contenido, no su forma necesariamente, que es revolucionario, revolucionando como se ha visto conceptos tradicionales sobre la vida y la muerte. No es poesía revolucionaria porque es una poesía a base de una sensibilidad revolucionaria, la de Vallejo. No son las palabras, ni las imágenes, ni las metáforas, lo que es "social" o "revolucionario" en estos poemas; es el hombre y su sensibilidad. Por ello ésta es una de las pocas poesías sociales, revolucionarias, que conozco, que sea a la vez social, revolucionaria y poesía.

While some critics might not agree with Monguió's perception of the revolutionary nature of Vallejo's final book of poetry (not least Paoli who places great emphasis on Vallejo's 'organically revolutionary' language) Monguió was the first critic to see Vallejo the artist, as a living historical human subject, whose material experiences played a fundamental role in shaping the content of his poetry.

Jean Franco

Jean Franco's work César Vallejo: The Dialetics of Poetry and Silence (Cambridge U.P., 1976) is the most comprehensive single study to come out on Vallejo's poetry since the poet's death in 1938. As with most of the critics we have looked at so far Franco attempts to overview Vallejo's entire poetic works, tracing the continuities as well as the developments which are represented in his art. Franco's critical method however stands out clearly from that employed by almost all earlier critics in that she attempts to undertake an

extensive and coherent analysis of the historical, intellectual, and literary influences which shaped Vallejo's thinking, and which were eventually to be incorporated in his poetry. Before the publication of Franco's work a few perfunctory studies of the external realities of Vallejo's life had been included with analyses of his poetry (Paoli, Larrea, Higgins etc.) but these were mostly too brief to provide a serious understanding of Vallejo's intellectual development. Consequently, when such critics came to look at Vallejo's poetry they were forced to give priority to the 'internal' mechanisms which they perceived to be operating in Vallejo's consciousness and his art. The one early exception who stands out from this body of critics is Luis Monguió, who, as we have seen, the first notable attempt to combine biography with criticism. Franco's work in fact may be seen as a sophisticated expansion of Monguió's seminal study.

While concentrating her essay on the influence of historical environments and ideas on the content of Vallejo's poetry, Franco also includes some analysis of the linguistic formation of the poet's work. These two approaches are combined with particular effectiveness in Chapters 4 and 5 ('The End of the Sovereign Illusion', pp. 79-116 and 'The Discourse of the Given', pp. 117-137), which both deal with Vallejo's second book of poetry Trilce. Franco's analysis of a number of poems in Trilce is arguably the finest selective study of the collection available: a vindication of her critical flexibility, which draws its legitimacy from the fact that she understands Vallejo's poetry in terms of a constant dialectical interchange between its internal and external formation.

Chapters 6 to 9 of Franco's book are devoted to Vallejo's years in Europe from 1923-1938, and the poetry which he wrote during that period. In Chapter 6 entitled 'Art and Revolution' (pp. 138-160) a survey is made of the artistic and intellectual environment which prevailed in Europe during the 1920s. In this invaluable study Franco makes frequent use of Vallejo's own prose

writings and shows clearly how the radical artistic and political ideas of the times influenced his thinking. With the aid of the historical and biographical information provided in Chapter 6, Franco goes on in Chapters 7 ('The Dialectics of Man and Nature', pp. 161-191) and 8 ('The Destruction of Prometheus', pp. 192-222) to make a selective analysis of those poems which, after Vallejo's death, were included under the general heading of Poemas humanos. Again, as with her treatment of Trilce, this study surpasses almost all previous critical works and makes major advances towards an understanding of this extraordinary book of poems. In particular her reading of such politically committed poems as 'Salutación angélica', 'Los mineros', 'Gleba', 'Telúrica y magnética' and 'Los desgraciados' represent outstanding examples of her ability to demystify Vallejo's complex poetic language and reveal in his art a powerful political message.

Chapter 9 of Franco's book ('The Mirror of the World: España, aparta de mí este cáliz', pp. 223-250) deals with Vallejo's final collection of poems on the Spanish Civil War. Before embarking on an analysis of the poetry she again presents a broad overview of the historical circumstances under which Vallejo's work was written, concentrating particularly on the response of intellectuals in the 1930s to the rise of fascism. Franco's treatment of España, aparta de mí este cáliz is brief (only 17 pages are devoted to the poetic texts themselves) and despite the many useful insights she makes into this great work, it seems that the main thrust of her book ends with her earlier analysis of Poemas humanos. While it has to be accepted, given the size of the project which Franco undertakes, that only limited space can be devoted to each of Vallejo's major poetic works, it may be argued that her critical method is not suited to a detailed study of the content of España, aparta de mí este cáliz. Such an argument is based on the premise that while she makes use of Vallejo's own prose writings in her work, she only uses these selectively rather than employing such information to undertake a systematic

analysis of the poet's intellectual development. By choosing this approach - which to some extent is dictated by the priority she gives to her chronological treatment of Vallejo's poetry - she is able to secure adequate information from Vallejo's writings to deal competently with the political themes which he introduces into Poemas humanos such as his perceptions on alienation, the functioning of the capitalist economy and his experiments with poetic dialectics. But in the poems of España, aparta de mí este cáliz and especially the 'Himno a los voluntarios de la República' in which Vallejo attempts to bring into synthesis his Marxist world view, her perception of the poet's intellectual formation is not adequate to fully explain the significance of this final work. This said however, Franco's book remains the most outstanding of the major critical works on Vallejo's poetry so far, and introduces many new and fertile ideas into the field of Vallejo studies which invite further investigations.

Noël Salomon

In Jean Franco's 'Guide to Texts and Criticism' which is included in César Vallejo: The Dialectics of Poetry and Silence she states, 'astonishingly, there has been little good Marxist criticism of Vallejo, the notable exception being the indispensable article by Noël Salomon, 'Algunos aspectos de lo "humano" en Poemas humanos' (pp. 259-263, (p.263)). Salomon's article, which was first given as a paper to a conference on Peruvian literature at the University of Toulouse (France) in 1956, is included in an updated form in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. II, pp. 191-230.

As Franco suggests Salomon's article is 'indispensable' for those critics, who, like herself, wish to include in their own works a historical and materialist approach to Vallejo's poetry. Salomon was in fact the first of Vallejo's critics to present a substantial and convincing challenge to those such as Larrea, who felt that Vallejo's use of religious language in

his later poetry was an indication of his continuing spirituality. Almost uniquely among Vallejo's critics to date, Salomon also attempts to understand Vallejo's Marxism, and its application in his poetry, not simply in terms of a standardized view of the world, but rather through the political arguments which his subject had developed in his prose writings during the 1930s.

For a more detailed account of the contents of Salomon's article see the main text of this thesis (pp.361-364).

Guillermo Alberto Arévalo

A more recent attempt to undertake a Marxist critique of Vallejo's poetry is to be found in Arévalo's book Vallejo: poesía en la historia (Bogota, 1977).

After including in the first lines of his Introduction the appropriate quotation from Marx and Engels's German Ideology on the relationship between the economic 'base' and the political, cultural, and institutional 'superstructure of societies, Arévalo goes on to state,

> esta tesis, una de las fundamentales del materialismo histórico, es la que posibilita buscar científicamente un origen histórico al arte, y en concreto a la poesía, desalienándole de la concepción que la considera una "categoría universal del espíritu", o una "función eterna de la naturaleza humana"; así se devuelve la poesía a las exigencias reales e históricamente determinadas en las que tuvo origen. Claro que, como es lógico - y como por otra parte lo aclara y explica Engels - la relación entre la obra de arte y la base económica es una relación mediata y además dialéctica; y es sólo "en última instancia" que la base determina a la obra (p.1).

Then commenting on his own method Arévalo states,

> el método usado en este trabajo se orienta por los postulados fundamentales de las escuelas historicistas y especialmente del marxismo, sin que por ello se dejen de lado los aportes que en sus análisis han hecho algunos críticos "a-históricos" ... considerando a Vallejo históricamente, hay dos hechos que me parecen fundamentales: el papel que jugó en su obra el momento histórico, la realidad tanto de su país como la europea que también conoció, la cultura occidental y la tradición peruana; y por otra parte, el papel que su obra ha tenido en la historia (pp. 3-4).

However, after arguing the case for a broadly historical approach to Vallejo's poetry in his Introduction, Arévalo goes on in the main body of his work to

present a rather narrow historical perspective of his subject's work. A disproportionately large part of his study for instance is devoted to a literary historical view of Vallejo's poetic production. While this is indeed a highly relevant area of research within the framework of a Marxist analysis of the poet's work, and especially in dealing with such early books as Los heraldos negros and Trilce, Arévalo does not link this section of his study very convincingly to its wider historical context. His analyses of the economic and social circumstances both in Latin America and Europe during the years in which Vallejo was writing his poetry are in fact mostly superficial; and he often chooses simply to list events and make general observations about a specific period rather than engage in any form of analysis. Furthermore, he disregards almost totally Vallejo's own intellectual development as indicated by the poet's prose writings in Europe. This omission in turn leads Arévalo to form a very limited view of Vallejo's own Marxism and its significance in his final poetry.

Despite these weaknesses César Vallejo: poesía en la historia represents an encouraging development in the field of Vallejo studies and one hopes that it will help to inspire more Marxist criticism in the future.

Georgette de Vallejo

While having undertaken hardly any critical assessments of her husband's work, Georgette de Vallejo, along with Juan Larrea, is one of the most important biographers of Vallejo's years in Europe, and a major editor of his poetry.

Georgette de Vallejo, then Georgette Phillipart, first met Vallejo in 1927 and they lived together from 1929 until the poet's death in 1938. They were married in 1932. In the year after Vallejo died, Georgette, along with the Peruvian historian Raúl Porras Barrenechea, who was then living in Paris, gathered together all of Vallejo's unpublished poetry which had been written during his years in Europe, including España, aparta de mí este cáliz (this

collection was in fact first published in Spain during the last months of the Spanish Civil War, but few copies survived the chaos which prevailed in the Republic as the Nationalists secured their final victory) and brought out a compilation which they entitled Poemas humanos. This first edition of Vallejo's European poetry was based on Georgette's typed copies of her husband's original hand written scripts. Not surprisingly these copies contained many errors which in turn were transferred to the first edition of Poemas humanos. Partly because of the dissatisfaction expressed by many of Vallejo's critics with this publication, Georgette, who has remained the sole custodian of her husband's original scripts, brought out a second idition of Vallejo's poetry in 1968. This book, entitled César Vallejo: Obra poetica completa (Lima, 1968), unlike its predecessor not only included Vallejo's early works Los heraldos negros and Trilce but also a much improved presentation of his European poetry, which was complemented with facsimiles of the poet's own scripts. To introduce this new edition of Vallejo's poetry Georgette wrote an essay entitled 'Apuntes biográficos sobre César Vallejo' which included many interesting and controversial statements on her husband's life (this essay is included in a slightly modified form in César Vallejo: obras completas. 9 vols., Barcelona, 1977-, III, 97-226).

One of the most significant aspects of Georgette's essay is that it brings out clearly the full extent of the disagreements which have existed between herself and Juan Larrea since Vallejo's death, over such questions as biographical details, dating of poetry, publication rights, and the nature of Vallejo's politics (for an account of some of these disagreements see Juan Carlos Ghiano, 'Desacuerdos sobre Vallejo' in Aproximaciones a César Vallejo. 2 vols., New York, 1971, I, pp.13-22).

Concerning this last area of debate, as we have seen earlier Larrea accepted that Vallejo was influenced to some extent by radical political ideas in the late 1920s and 1930s, but he did not believe that such ideas changed

Vallejo's poetic sensibilities. Georgette on the other hand (while not having undertaken any critical studies of her husband's poetry personally) insists that Vallejo was a committed revolutionary during the last decade of his life, and that his radical ideas inspired much of his final poetic work.

Many of Georgette's statements on her husband's politics are included in the main text and footnotes of this thesis so further elaboration is not felt necessary in this essay. However, it is worth recording here Georgette's own response to the accusation which has been made by some of her husband's critics, including Larrea, that she played a significant role in Vallejo's politicization. On this issue she states:

> hay quien también pretende hacerme responsable del marxismo de Vallejo. Esto revela un total desconocimiento de la mentalidad del pequeño burgués en Francia. En mi familia, por ejemplo, nadie ha oído jamás hablar de Marx, ni de Lenin o Trotski, pero todos saben que "Comunismo" significa: "¡Quítate de aquí para que me ponga yo!"; y, naturalmente, este criterio tenía que ser el mío.
>
> Es siendo yo radicalmente anti-comunista, que viajamos a la Unión Soviética. (p.130)

That Georgette de Vallejo should have become the most vehement advocate of her husband's Marxism is perhaps an indication of the extent of his political commitment.

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