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Art, Gender, and Sexuality
New Readings of
Cernuda's Later Poetry

PHILIP MARTIN-CLARK

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To Kate

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PREFACE

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AH</i>	<i>Archivo hispalense: revista histórica, literaria y artística</i>
<i>ALEC</i>	<i>Anales de la literatura española contemporánea</i>
AUS	American University Studies (New York: Peter Lang)
<i>BFFGL</i>	<i>Boletín de la Fundación Federico García Lorca</i>
<i>CHA</i>	<i>Cuadernos hispanoamericanos</i>
<i>CILH</i>	<i>Cuadernos para investigación de la literatura hispánica</i>
CLS	Comparative Literature Studies
<i>CNor</i>	<i>Los cuadernos del norte</i>
<i>REH</i>	<i>Revista de estudios hispánicos</i>
<i>RLit</i>	<i>Revista de literatura</i>
<i>RML</i>	<i>Revista mexicana de literatura</i>
<i>SiN</i>	<i>Sin nombre</i>
SSSAS	Society of Spanish and Spanish–American Studies
TWAS	Twayne's World Authors Series
UNAM	Universidad nacional autónoma de México
UNCSRL	University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures

INTRODUCTION

This book analyses the questions of aesthetics, gender and sexuality as they are addressed in Luis Cernuda's last four books of poetry—*Como quien espera el alba*, *Vivir sin estar viviendo*, *Con las horas contadas* and *Desolación de la Quimera*—and has three main objectives: firstly, to offer new readings of subjects that are well established within Cernuda criticism, such as the figure of the poet, mythology, the Absolute, nature, and the divine; secondly, to focus on the questions of male homosexuality and the sublime to which Cernuda's critics have directed little sustained attention; and, thirdly, to introduce into the secondary literature on Cernuda's work the issues of gender, sexuality and perversion with which critics have not engaged at all. In developing my arguments, I draw on four principal bodies of theoretical knowledge: aesthetics, feminism, gay and lesbian theory, and psychoanalysis. Almost entirely, these bodies of knowledge are either wholly new within Cernuda criticism or have never been used extensively by Cernuda's critics. In addressing a number of different issues and using a variety of theoretical approaches, I have taken my cue from Salvador Jiménez-Fajardo who, in 1989, recommended that critical work on Cernuda should use a 'variety of analytical instruments' and elucidate areas of Cernuda's work that still remain in obscurity.¹

I have chosen Cernuda's last four collections of poetry because they occupy such contrasting positions within Cernuda criticism. On the one hand, critics tend to consider *Como quien espera el alba* and *Desolación de la Quimera* to be two of Cernuda's most significant books, while, on the other, *Vivir sin estar viviendo* and *Con las horas contadas* are generally held to be less important. Two years after *Desolación de la Quimera* first appeared, Elisabeth Müller analysed the treatment of art and poetry in it. More recently, in 1984, Luis Antonio de Villena published a critical edition of *Desolación de la Quimera*, while, in the late 1980s, Manuel Ulacia and John C. Wilcox wrote articles on one of the poems collected in it, 'Luis de Baviera escucha *Lohengrin*'.² For its part, *Como quien espera el alba* contains many of Cernuda's most analysed poems, including 'La familia', 'A un poeta futuro', and 'Noche del hombre y su demonio', and was recently the subject of a monograph by M^a Victoria Utrera.³ In his 1978 study, Salvador Jiménez-Fajardo dedicated twenty-six pages to *Como quien espera el alba* compared with just nineteen pages on *Vivir sin estar viviendo* and seventeen on *Con las horas contadas*.⁴ Similarly, in his 1982 book, Luis Maristany discussed *Vivir sin estar viviendo* and *Con las horas contadas* in three pages each compared with five on *Como quien espera el alba* and four on *Desolación de la*

Quimera.⁵ In studying these four books together, therefore, I intend to reinterpret two of Cernuda's most canonical poetic collections and to stimulate critical interest in two of his supposedly more marginal books of poetry.

Many of Cernuda's critics have examined the links between Cernuda's biography (including his 'leyenda') and his poetry, and this is one reason why a chronological approach to Cernuda's work is standard practice.⁶ In contrast, I do not interpret Cernuda's last four books of poetry (auto)biographically nor do I analyse them chronologically. My purpose in severing the tie between Cernuda's life and work in these ways is to create a space for new readings of his later poetry that will lead to the knot between his life and text being retied differently. As part of my attempt to refocus Cernuda criticism, I have also tended not to address questions of poetic form, which are an integral part of the study of the relation between Cernuda's life and poetry and have already been the subject of much critical attention.⁷

In my first chapter, I shed new light on Cernuda's discussions of the figure of the poet and poetry through an analysis of the ideas about mythology developed by the German Romantic writer Friedrich Schlegel. Despite my use of Schlegel's work, my approach in this chapter is not literary historical. Consequently, I do not seek to argue that Cernuda was influenced by or sought to develop Schlegel's ideas nor do I engage with the debate about Cernuda's relation to Romanticism and the figures of the 'poeta maldito' and 'poeta moderno'. Rather, in this chapter, I argue that Cernuda's last four books of poetry construct a collectively valid mythology of freedom in an attempt to bring about change in the then contemporary historical present.

In his 'Talk on Mythology', Schlegel defined mythology in two contradictory ways. On the one hand, he argued that mythology could represent the infinite totality of nature and freedom, the Absolute. On the other hand, he claimed that mythology gave form to the sublime, to that which marked the failure to represent the Absolute and, through the experience of that failure, aroused in the subject a sense of his freedom. Both these strands of thought can be found in the secondary literature on Cernuda's poetry. It has long been recognized by critics that the representation of the Absolute is central to Cernuda's poetics. For example, Philip Silver has argued that, for Cernuda, poetry is a 'quest for permanence' motivated by the poet's desire to be reunited with nature.⁸ In writing poetry, according to Silver in the same book, Cernuda seeks to make the ephemeral permanent (p. 166) and to 'perceive the unity of the universe' (p. 180). Similarly, Derek Harris has argued that poetry's interrelated aims are to 'unite the divided visible and invisible realities in the world' and to 'halt the flux of time'.⁹ At the same time, there has existed within Cernuda criticism an

awareness of the difficulty of these poetic projects. For example, in *'Et in Arcadia Ego'*, Silver describes the poet's goal of 'bestow[ing]' eternity on the transient as impossible (p. 39) and argues that the poet's 'ideal union with nature is only rarely and fleetingly achieved' (p. 43). For his part, Harris argues that Cernuda has 'no illusions about the inescapable failure' of the desire to stop time and gain access to the 'invisible reality' (p. 98).¹⁰ Critical analyses of the representation of the Absolute in Cernuda's work have, therefore, frequently but tacitly also acknowledged the importance of the sublime in his work.

To my knowledge, the one exception to this rule of tacit acknowledgement is Silver's discussion of 'lo sublime cernudiano', with which he concludes his study of Cernuda in *De la mano de Cernuda: invitación a la poesía*.¹¹ For Silver, the sublime in Cernuda's work is not equivalent solely to the failure of representation. In keeping with this, Silver describes his analysis of the sublime in the fifth section of this book's last chapter as a reinterpretation of the 'Poética del Fracaso' that he sketched in the previous four sections (p. 117). Similarly, Silver concludes that the sublime in Cernuda's poetry not only signifies 'el fracaso de fundamental, de eternizar' but also alludes, in the 'contraste figurado' between oppositions, to 'lo que se retira, que es inefable' (p. 120), to 'el Ser' (p. 121). In contrast, in my discussion of Schlegel's ideas on mythology, I argue that, through oppositions (among other things), mythology can embody, rather than simply allude to, the Absolute and, as a result, is not limited to sublimity. In this respect my argument is similar to that of César Real Ramos, for whom the 'dimensión mítica' of Cernuda's poetry stems from its '*comprensión de la variedad y mutaciones del universo, [su] visión totalizadora que le da sentido [al universo]*'.¹²

Freedom is at the heart of the poet's identity in as much as he is an instance of the Absolute, of the unity of spirit and matter. Under different guises, this characterization of the poet is a commonplace in critical work on Cernuda. For example, Alexander Coleman argues that the poet is a 'mediator [...] between the world of things and the soul' who has a 'sense of divine power' and assumes a 'divine perspective'.¹³ In the same vein, Jiménez-Fajardo describes the poet as, in part, the 'voice of the gods' (p. 87), while Harris terms the poet a 'mediator between man and the daemonic power' (p. 97) and, therefore, an 'interpreter of the divine law' (p. 98). As a result, the poems in which the figure of the poet is represented can be considered mythological and inextricable from freedom because that figure is an embodiment of the Absolute.

The mythology of the poet created in Cernuda's later poetry functions as the cornerstone of a free, collective identity for both poets and non-poets. In emphasizing the collective nature of the mythology created in Cernuda's later

work, my argument is in keeping with my deferral of an (auto)biographical reading and differs from that of those critics who have seen Cernuda's poetry as a private or personal mythology. For example, Silver has argued that 'there is no part of Cernuda's literary *opus* that does not correspond to a particular point on the trajectory of [his] "personal myth"' ('*Arcadia*', p. 48), while Coleman has stated that Cernuda created a 'private mythology' by representing and appropriating the voices of figures that he admired (p. 88). In 1975, Jenaro Talens argued that, for Cernuda, poetry involved the 'creación del *otro* [...], el enajenamiento [del yo personal] como forma de salvación' but that Cernuda resolved this question with 'la seudosolución idealista: ocultarse en el mito'.¹⁴ Three years later, Jiménez-Fajardo echoed these arguments by describing Cernuda's poetry as an 'individual myth' (p. [ii]) and linked Cernuda's interest in myth with his 'search for idealized reality' (pp. [i-ii]). My emphasis on the collective nature of the mythology in Cernuda's later poetry also distinguishes my reading from those of Octavio Paz and Derek Harris, for whom Cernuda's poetry is mythical because it idealizes (Paz) or universalizes (Harris, p. 177) Cernuda's personal history but without transcending it.¹⁵

The principal ingredient of the collective mythology articulated in Cernuda's later poetry is a commitment to freedom (in the sense of a capacity for purposes). As will become apparent, one form that the mythology's commitment to freedom takes is an emphasis on faith. Such an emphasis places it in an apparently contradictory relation to reason that other critics have also noted in their analyses of Cernuda's work. For example, Rafael Argullol has argued that the Absolute cannot be known 'por medio de un ejercicio meramente racional' (p. 29) and that, in his efforts to reach 'lo divino', the poet 'no puede contentarse con los limitados horizontes de la razón' (p. 30). Rather, Argullol argues, the poet must submerge him/herself in 'el vértigo de las corrientes opuestas' (p. 30). In the same vein, Real Ramos has argued that the totalizing 'comprensión' of the world that the poet enjoys 'no es una comprensión racional' (p. 123) but, rather, 'un saber [...] que se nos manifiesta; es revelación' (p. 124). Like these critics, I argue that the Absolute is not an object of rational knowledge. However, unlike these critics, I also argue that the Absolute and faith are not in opposition to knowledge but are, rather, its necessary preconditions.¹⁶

Like C. P. Otero, for whom Cernuda's 'crítica nacional' was stimulated by an 'afán transformador' (p. 181), I argue that the mythology created in Cernuda's last four books of poetry was designed to have repercussions in the culture of the then contemporary Spain. In this respect, my argument differs from that of José Sánchez Reboledo for whom the 'transformaciones prácticas que pueden producir unas palabras' are of secondary importance in

discussing the figure of the poet.¹⁷ In attempting to bring about such change, historical periods or individuals that exemplify the Absolute are frequently commemorated in Cernuda's later poetry. The status of the cultures or individuals remembered means that the poems in which such remembrance occurs are mythological. Similarly, those of Cernuda's later poems which portray the present are also examples of mythology because the present is characterized by the failure to unite freedom and nature and, as a result, is an instance of the sublime (whereas, for Schlegel, the sublime was linked with nature). In contrast to his contemporaries, the present's sublimity is noticed by and unacceptable to the poems' speaker and generates in him a sense of his freedom which he realizes in his poems of historical remembrance. These poems are also mythological in that they are the sensuous products of the speaker's exercise of his freedom in order to perceive the Absolute in the past, a perception which is stimulated by his awareness of the absence of the Absolute in the present. However, in Cernuda's later poetry, the speaker's attitude towards the past, whether Spanish or non-Spanish, is not one of idealization or simple nostalgia. Rather, the use of history to establish a culture of freedom in the then contemporary present includes a critical attitude to history. As a result, the mythology articulated in Cernuda's last four books of poetry can be said to seek to change the present by simultaneously drawing on and differing from the past.

In my second chapter, which consists of two sections, I offer new readings of the divine and nature in Cernuda's later poetry by examining their relation with questions of masculinity and femininity. One of the distinctive characteristics of Cernuda's last four books of poetry is that female divinities appear in them more frequently than in any of his other books of poetry, which means that they offer particularly fertile ground for the analysis of the relationship between femininity, masculinity, and the divine. In the first section, I draw on Luce Irigaray's account of the relation between the divine and gender in order to challenge what is perhaps the one point of agreement among all Cernuda's commentators: the universality of Cernuda's poetry, to which I too subscribe in my first chapter. Against the critical consensus, I argue that the divinity (Christian and non-Christian) represented in Cernuda's later poetry, while supposedly universal, in fact frequently guarantees a form of masculinity which represses the specificity of women's gender identity and leaves women in a state of dereliction. A clear-cut example of the repression of women's gender identity in Cernuda criticism is Françoise Peyrègne's reference to a sculpture of seven women's bodies by Giacometti in order to exemplify her claim that verticality is the defining characteristic of the implicitly ungendered human body.¹⁸ However, at the same time, I also analyse a number of poems which show a greater respect for sexual

difference and/or the capacity of the maternal-feminine to undermine the coherence of the masculinity represented in Cernuda's later poetry.

In the second section, I argue that the male subject's relations to nature (including his country of origin) and his boyhood are built on an appropriation of the maternal-feminine which is not always without disruptive consequences for masculinity. Following on from my argument earlier in the chapter, the universality of nature is implicit in the link between nature and the divine made in other critics' analyses of Cernuda's later work.¹⁹ For example, Paz has argued that, in 'la antigua naturaleza', Cernuda discovers 'no a Dios sino a la divinidad misma' and that nature is transcendent as well as the site of 'lo santo y lo divino' (p. 156). Similarly, Otero has argued that, for Cernuda, nature is 'realidad radical y trasunto de la Divinidad' and that 'el sentimiento de la Naturaleza' in Cernuda's work is 'cifra de una emoción hondamente religiosa' (p. 181). The appropriation of the maternal-feminine in the male subject's relation to nature is suggested by a slippage in the chapter of Coleman's book entitled 'Nature as Symbol' (pp. 43–63). On the one hand, Coleman distinguishes between the 'two parts of the world', 'things' (natural objects) and 'beings' (humans) (p. 51). On the other hand, he describes natural objects as a being by arguing that, in transcending what he is by manipulating nature, the poet 'extends his whole being *into another*' (p. 63; my emphasis). Although this slippage by itself does not reveal the gender of the being that is equated with nature, Coleman's comments elsewhere suggest that that being is maternal. For example, Coleman writes that, when he transcends his temporal existence, Cernuda is carried back into a 'timeless world of *childlike* innocence', that Cernuda strives for 'rebirth' (p. 62; my emphasis), and that Cernuda's imagination '*feeds on* the particulars of the world' (p. 44; my emphasis). Other critics have also associated nature with the maternal-feminine. For instance, Paz describes the divinity that the poet finds in nature as 'madre de dioses y mitos' (p. 156), while Silver refers to the 'timeless embrace of maternal nature' ('*Arcadia*', p. 50). In the same vein, Maristany uses the comment that 'la imagen materna lleva aparejada la *imago* opuesta, la "madrstra"' ('*La realidad y el deseo*', p. 44) to gloss his argument that the idea of Andalusia is contaminated by that of Spain, while José Luis Cano compares Cernuda's relation to Spain with a male lover's 'desengaño' with his female beloved.²⁰

The poems analysed in this chapter remain valuable despite my criticism of the violence against women found in them. Firstly, these poems make it possible to raise the important question of the relation between gender and the divine by representing women and goddesses with comparative frequency. And, secondly, these poems are valuable for the complex and varied relation between gender and the divine that they portray, which includes not only

appropriation but also a hesitant respect for sexual difference and the maternal-feminine's power to disrupt masculinity despite its exploitation by men.

In my third chapter, I use the work of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick to examine the four different discourses through which male same-sex desire is articulated in Cernuda's last four books of poetry. I argue that Cernuda's work draws on gender-separatist and gender-transitive representations of male homosexuality as well as on minoritizing and universalizing understandings of male same-sex desire. Although, in this chapter, I bring into question the unity of the category 'male homosexuality' and thereby problematize its applicability to the male same-sex desire articulated in Cernuda's later work, it is not my intention to do away with that category. On the contrary, I show its pertinence to Cernuda's last four books of poetry and argue for its pluralization. As part of this pluralizing project, I also examine the representation of male same-sex desire in Cernuda's later poetry through the use of men-loving men from history and myth. These poems, I argue, not only testify to the difficulty of articulating and sustaining male homosexual identities in a hostile environment but also, through the plurality of sexualities represented in them, provide further evidence of the challenge to dominant understandings of sexual identity to be found in Cernuda's later poetry. One of the characteristics of this chapter and, in particular, of my examination of the use of history and myth to articulate male homosexuality is that it raises the question of the relation between gender and sexuality, which I suspended in my second chapter in order to concentrate on the question of gender.

Critical writing on male homosexuality in Cernuda's later poetry strongly supports Sedgwick's argument that discourses of sexual definition coexist with rather than eclipse one another. Most frequently, Cernuda criticism uses minoritizing and universalizing discourses to discuss male same-sex desire and often uses them together. For example, Rupert C. Allen emphasizes the specifically gay character of the identity and desire articulated in Cernuda's poetry and represents gay male identity in minority terms.²¹ At the same time, Allen also suggests that homosexual love may be condemned as a so-called abomination because the 'mind that so thinks secretly believes *all* forms of sexuality to be an abomination' (p. 76). In other words, rather than being an issue solely for a distinct, relatively small group of homosexual men, male same-sex desire is interwoven with other forms of desire which do not ostensibly have anything to do with same-sex object-choice. Adrián G. Montoro is another critic who combines minoritizing and universalizing discourses of male same-sex desire. He refers, for example, to the love described in Cernuda's poetry as 'el amor de un hombre por otro'

yet also describes homosexuality as ‘una forma de conducta sexual humana que [...] no conlleva ni más ni menos riesgos que toda relación de intimidad entre dos seres humanos’.²² Furthermore, Montoro also argues that, through his use of codes and the ‘tú’ form in particular, Cernuda constructs an affirmative, minoritizing discourse of male homosexual identity that is universally applicable in a way that does not erase that identity’s specificity (pp. 25–30).²³ Two critics who emphasize a minoritizing understanding of male homosexuality are Ángel Sahuquillo and Patricia Corcoran Thomas, whose work is among the most gay-affirmative that has been written on Cernuda’s poetry.²⁴ In contrast to the frequency of its deployment of minoritizing and universalizing discourses of male homosexual identity but in keeping with its silence on questions of gender, Cernuda criticism has, to my knowledge, never drawn on a gender-separatist model of male same-sex desire and very rarely on a gender-transitive one. An example of the latter model is found in Francisco Romero’s argument that the social requirement that Cernuda be ‘nada menos que todo un hombre’ meant that he had to repress his gestures, words and attitudes so that they did not give him away (p. 548).²⁵

One of the aims of Sedgwick’s work which I develop in this third chapter is to refine understandings of sexual identity by introducing into them terms other than the gender of the sexual object. The need for such a refinement is readily apparent in Cernuda criticism. Two characteristics of critics’ analyses of male same-sex desire in Cernuda’s later work have been a concentration on the gender and youthfulness of the sexual object. However, this latter factor has rarely led to an inflection of the term ‘male homosexuality’. For example, although Montoro refers to ‘la *paidierastía*’ in his discussion, he conflates this with male homosexuality (p. 25), while Silver refers to the ‘conflict between homosexual love and the established order of society’ yet specifies that the ‘objects of [Cernuda’s] love’ are adolescents (*‘Arcadia’*, p. 96).²⁶ With two notable exceptions, Cernuda criticism has also not acknowledged the historical specificity of male same-sex desire. The first exception is Allen who distinguishes the desire of the ‘modern gay world’ from ancient Greek pederasty (p. 73) as well as acknowledging the pertinence of age to discussions of sexual identity (pp. 64, 71–74). The second exception is Corcoran Thomas’s analyses of the cultural status of homosexuality in Spain, particularly in the Generation of 1927 and the Second Republic (pp. 45–53), and of the ‘creation of homosexuality’ in religious, legal and medical discourses from Biblical times to 1986 (pp. 118–27).²⁷

In my fourth chapter, which consists of three sections, I analyse the question of perversion from four main perspectives. In the first section, drawing on the work of Jonathan Dollimore, I use ‘perversion’ and its

derivatives to describe both the relation between the terms of the 'natural/unnatural' and 'truth/error' oppositions in the representation of male homosexuality and the relation between heterosexuality and male homosexuality. I also use the term 'perversion' to identify particular forms of non-sexual identity. I begin this section by examining the legitimation of male same-sex desire through the appropriation of the category of 'nature'. According to some critics, this extension of 'the natural' also inverts the 'natural/unnatural' opposition and leads to heterosexuality being identified with culture and homosexuality with nature.²⁸ In contrast, I argue that the transgressive reinscription of male homosexuality as natural is accompanied by an internal division within nature. As a consequence, although male homosexuality and heterosexuality are both posited as natural, the relation between them is represented as one of proximity rather than identity. Allen and Corcoran Thomas have both implied the same point. According to Allen, Cernuda knew that his 'sexual orientation was fully as "natural" as any other' (p. 64), while Corcoran Thomas argues that Cernuda believed that 'homosexuality was as natural [...] as heterosexuality' (p. 169).²⁹ After examining the interweaving of male homosexual desire with two non-sexual meanings of 'perversion', I analyse that desire's conjugation with truth. Whereas other critics, most influentially Paz and Harris, have tended to approach the question of truth in Cernuda's later poetry (auto)biographically, I examine the reworking of truth in the context of the representation of male homosexuality. The relation between truth and male homosexual identity in Cernuda's later poetry, I argue, not only reveals an awareness of the former's inextricability from error but also, and relatedly, at times involves the perversion and displacement of truth as the ground of that identity.

In the second section of this chapter, I point towards a reworking of men's relation to God (as also represented by the figure of the father) by drawing on Leo Bersani's account of the modulation of sadism by masochism in male homosexual desire. In as much as the divine is the traditional guarantee of the 'natural/unnatural' and 'truth/error' oppositions, my argument in this section develops that of the previous one. The account of male homosexuality on which I draw is part of Bersani's wider argument that the analysis of male homosexual identity should start from a consideration of male homosexual desire. The relevance to Cernuda criticism of Bersani's argument should not be overlooked. A recurrent element of critics' discussions of male homosexuality in Cernuda's work has been the claim, made most influentially by Paz, that homosexuality is about morality rather than desire for another man. For Paz, 'homosexualismo se vuelve sinónimo de libertad; el instinto no es un impulso ciego: es la crítica hecha acto. Todo, el cuerpo mismo, adquiere una *coloración moral*' (p. 151).³⁰ According to this line of

argument, male homosexuality is the effect, rather than the ground, of a political or moral situation. Similarly, Manuel Ramos Otero states that Cernuda's homosexuality, 'más que pasión erótica, es concepción ética del mundo, producto directo de su marginación'.³¹ From a different perspective but to the same effect, Harris has argued that the 'erotic concern of [Cernuda's] poems is, in fact, just another vehicle for the analysis of his personality' and that Cernuda's 'search for love' is 'part of his struggle for self-affirmation' (p. 119). Even Corcoran Thomas's 'working definition of gay sensibility' draws on similar arguments since it is based on the idea of 'consciousness of oppression and marginality' (p. 9; see also pp. 114, 116–17). In contrast with these critics, I argue that the male homosexual desire represented in Cernuda's later poetry derives its structure from the fantasy of penetrative sex between men and that that fantasy should form the ground for the analysis of male homosexuality in Cernuda's later work.

According to Bersani, in sadomasochism, the pleasure of self-dissolution which inheres in the exercise of power or sadism is repressed. In contrast, penetrative sex between men enables that pleasure to be acknowledged and, as a result, modulates the hyperbolic sense of self characteristic of the paternal or sadistic position. Such modulation represents the son's power to displace not only his father but also his own paternal identification, displacements which create a space for a gentler, compassionate exchange between men. In Cernuda's later poetry, I argue, each partner in the sexual exchange, through his identification with the other, comes to enjoy and rework the pleasures of both sadism and masochism, which cease to be polarized as they tend to be in sadomasochism. While many of Cernuda's critics have seen the experience of love as one of self-realization (for example, Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 44, 120; and Peyrègne, pp. 137, 139), others have linked it with the destruction of the self. For example, Cano states that love involves (or can involve) 'destrucción y muerte',³² Jiménez-Fajardo that love implies the 'surrender of oneself' (p. 136), and Quirarte that love destroys the lover (p. 79). In as much as the link that I establish between love and masochism makes love an experience of self-dissolution, my argument resembles that of these critics. However, these critics often also describe the effect of love in terms of self-realization or plenitude. According to Cano, love is also a moment of 'gloria y éxtasis' ('Notas', p. 225) while Jiménez-Fajardo refers to love as 'those instants of greatest self-realization' (p. 97). For his part, Quirarte characterizes love as a moment in which 'descubrimos a nosotros mismos' and in which we recover 'la idea de totalidad, del ser único e indivisible que fuimos' (p. 79).³³ In contrast, I argue that the place of self-dissolution in the love represented in Cernuda's later poetry undermines the hyperbolic sense of self that other critics have highlighted. However, although I emphasize the place of self-loss

in male homosexual desire, I do not posit such loss as synonymous with the death of the self but, rather, with what Bersani calls the subject's nonsuicidal disappearance.

In the third and final section of this chapter, I draw on the work of Jean Laplanche to argue that perversion is a structure common to all forms of sexuality rather than a term which can be applied to nonreproductive forms of sexual identity. According to Laplanche, in its emergence, sexuality is defined by three factors—propping, autoerotism, and the erotogenic zone—which point to its perversion of the self-preservative instincts. In Laplanche's argument, propping describes the relation between the vital and the sexual orders whereby sexuality first attaches itself to a nonsexual function and then detaches itself from the instinct. Cernuda criticism has tended to describe the love and desire represented in Cernuda's last four books of poetry in terms of the first of these two movements. This coupling of desire to biology is evident in, for example, Silver's argument that, for Cernuda, 'desire [...] is life' or the 'poet's life force' (*Arcadia*, pp. 113, 123 respectively) and in J. Luis Couso Cadahya's statement that, for Cernuda, 'el placer erótico [...] es la vida misma' (p. 27). Similarly, Talens states that, in Cernuda's earlier work, desire is an 'entidad física' (p. 58) but that, in his later work, it disappears 'por ley natural' (p. 58, fn. 8). For his part, Harris describes desire as an 'elemental life force' (p. 126) and argues that the 'condition of indolence and the feeling of nullity which Cernuda experiences as a result of the waning of desire with age are negative indications that desire continues to be equated with life' (p. 137). At the same time, in describing the 'identification of love with life' as a 'common trope' (p. 146), Harris points to a metaphorical displacement of the most general instinctual aim (the continuation of biological life), a displacement which, according to Laplanche, is a defining characteristic of sexuality. A similar displacement is also suggested when Jiménez-Fajardo describes as a 'wellspring of metaphor' the view that the 'object of love is a creation of our desire and does not exist truly as we see it' (p. 133). In line with this separation of sexuality from biology, I examine the applicability to Cernuda's later poetry of Laplanche's argument that every region of the skin, every organ, every function, and every human activity can potentially give rise to sexuality and, therefore, act as an erotogenic zone. I argue that Cernuda's last four books of poetry articulate a radical reorganization of pleasure because, in them, the sources of sexuality are extended beyond those privileged by biology (such as the genitals).

The role of autoerotism in the emergence of sexuality causes the sexual object to be constituted as an internalized and fantasmatic object. As a result, any subsequent sexual relation to an object mimics and reactivates the relation

to the original object. Quite clearly, therefore, in this account of the emergence of sexuality, the subjectivity of the sexual object is of secondary importance. Indeed, according to Laplanche, the sexual object functions primarily as a means by which the subject attains satisfaction and need only possess certain traits for the subject's satisfying action to arise. One of the commonplaces in critical discussions of love in Cernuda's later work is the argument that the sexual object lacks subjective being, is merely an object.³⁴ However, whereas critics, including those just cited, have tended to interpret such objectification in terms of narcissism and homosexuality,³⁵ I argue not only that the sexual object's objectification is linked with autoerotism but also that it is a defining feature of all sexuality and not simply of male homosexuality.

As will be apparent by now, I address a wide range of subjects in this book rather than tracing a single question or motif through Cernuda's later poetry. In keeping with my wish to introduce new questions and perspectives into Cernuda criticism, I also adopt a number of different theoretical approaches. The heterogeneity of my reading of Cernuda's last four books of poetry is motivated by the hope that these analyses will serve as starting points for new avenues of research into Cernuda's later poetry. Despite this heterogeneity, a number of questions do recur throughout my argument—humanity, the divine, nature, gender, and sexuality—and represent points of convergence and divergence between the different chapters. The chapters are also bound together by a central concern with the terms in which identity is represented, whether it be the poet's identity, masculinity, femininity or sexual identity, and, especially, male homosexual identity.

NOTES

1. 'Preface', in *The Word and the Mirror: Critical Essays on the Poetry of Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Salvador Jiménez-Fajardo (London: Associated University Presses, 1989), pp. 7–8 (p. 7). I will refer to essays included in this collection by their title followed by the abbreviation *The Word and the Mirror*.
2. Elisabeth Müller, 'La importancia del arte y de la poesía en *Desolación de la Quimera*', *RML*, nos. 1–2 (January–February 1964), 46–52; Luis Cernuda, *Las nubes. Desolación de la Quimera*, ed. by Luis Antonio de Villena, *Letras hispánicas*, 209 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1984); Manuel Ulacia, 'El teatro de Narciso: "Luis de Baviera escucha *Lohengrin*"', *Vuelta*, 12 (1988), 68–72; and John C. Wilcox, 'The Rhetoric of Bifocal Discourse in Luis Cernuda's "Luis de Baviera escucha *Lohengrin*" (*Desolación de la Quimera*)', in *The Word and the Mirror*, pp. 181–204. For an explanation of the abbreviations used in the footnotes and bibliography, see the list of abbreviations at the beginning of the book.
3. 'La estructura temporal de *La realidad y el deseo* en *Como quien espera el alba*', *AH*, n.s. 74 (1991), 119–45.
4. *Luis Cernuda*, TWAS, 455 (Boston: Twayne, 1978), pp. 70–95, 96–114, 115–31. All future references to work by Jiménez-Fajardo are to this book.

5. *'La realidad y el deseo'*: Luis Cernuda, Guías Laia de literatura, 5 (Barcelona: Laia, 1982), pp. 78–82, 82–84, 85–87, 89–92.
6. A critic who has recently linked Cernuda's biography with his poetry in book-length form is Eloy Sánchez Rosillo, *La fuerza del destino: vida y poesía de Luis Cernuda* (Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 1992).
7. Recent examples of such critical attention are Stephen Summerhill's article, 'Luis Cernuda and the Dramatic Monologue', in *The Word and the Mirror*, pp. 140–65; and the work of Hilda Pato, 'El "tú" (y el "otro") en la poesía de Luis Cernuda', *ALEC*, 11 (1986), 225–35; *Los finales poemáticos en la obra de Luis Cernuda* (Boulder, CO.: SSSAS, 1988); and 'Cernuda and Poetic Closure: An Account of One Way of Ending Poems and Its Variants', in *The Word and the Mirror*, pp. 205–24. Unless otherwise specified, all future references to Pato's work are to *Los finales poemáticos*.
8. *'Et in Arcadia Ego': A Study of the Poetry of Luis Cernuda*, Colección Támesis: Serie A—Monografías, 2 (London: Tamesis Books, 1965), p. 50.
9. Derek Harris, *Luis Cernuda: A Study of the Poetry*, Colección Támesis: Serie A—Monografías, 33 (London: Tamesis Books, 1973), p. 97. Other critics who have made these points include C. P. Otero, 'Poeta de Europa', in *Letras: I*, Colección Támesis: Serie A—Monografías, 8 (London: Tamesis Books, 1966), pp. 176–83 (p. 180); J. Luis Couso Cadahya, 'Búsqueda de lo absoluto en la poesía de Luis Cernuda', *CHA*, 316 (1976), 21–44 (p. 21); Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 112; and Rafael Argullol, 'Cernuda romántico', *Quimera*, no. 15 (January 1982), 29–32 (pp. 29, 31). Unless otherwise specified, all future references to Otero's work are to this essay.
10. Other critics who have pointed to such failure include Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 23; and Argullol, pp. 31, 32.
11. Philip Silver, *De la mano de Cernuda: invitación a la poesía* (Madrid: Fundación Juan March/Cátedra, 1989), pp. 101–21.
12. 'La raíz de la diferencia de Luis Cernuda: la visión mítica de la realidad', *ALEC*, 15 (1990), 109–27 (p. 121).
13. *Other Voices: A Study of the Late Poetry of Luis Cernuda*, UNCSRL, 81 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), pp. 14, 17, 18 respectively.
14. *El espacio y las máscaras: introducción a la lectura de Cernuda*, Argumentos, 35 (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1975), pp. 14, 16 respectively.
15. Octavio Paz, 'La palabra edificante', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, *El escritor y la crítica*, 103 (Madrid: Taurus, 1977), pp. 138–60 (p. 140).
16. According to Otero, Cernuda's poetry is wielded 'contra toda suerte de abstracciones científicas' (p. 180) in an attempt to correct them (p. 178).
17. 'La figura del poeta en la obra de Luis Cernuda', *CHA*, 316 (1976), 5–20 (p. 5).
18. *L'Expression du sentiment de solitude chez cinq poètes espagnols de la génération de 1927* (Paris: Centre de recherches hispaniques, 1981), pp. 237–41.
19. For a universalizing reading of nature in Cernuda's work, see Andrew P. Debicki, 'Luis Cernuda: la naturaleza y la poesía en su obra lírica', in *Estudios sobre poesía española contemporánea: la generación de 1924–1925*, Biblioteca románica hispánica: estudios y ensayos, 113 (Madrid: Gredos, 1968), pp. 285–306.
20. José Luis Cano, 'Estela de Luis Cernuda', in *La poesía de la generación del 27*, Colección universitaria de bolsillo: Punto omega, 87 (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1970), pp. 251–56 (p. 253). Similarly, Patricia Angélica Pinto has analysed the portrayal of natural Spain in Cernuda's work in terms of the Jungian Earth-Mother archetype, a subdivision of the Feminine. See, Patricia Angélica Pinto, 'España (presente e historia) en la poesía de Luis Cernuda' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1979; abstract in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 40 (1979–1980), 5050–51–A), pp. 126–81.
21. 'Luis Cernuda: Poet of Gay Protest', *Hispanófila*, 28 (1985), 61–78 (pp. 61, 63, 67).

22. Adrián G. Montoro, 'Rebeldía de Cernuda', *SiN*, 6 (1976), 19–30 (pp. 25, 26 respectively).
23. For other examples of the combination of minoritizing and universalizing discourses, see Paz, pp. 150–56; and Francisco Romero, 'El muro y la ventana: la "otredad" de Luis Cernuda', *CHA*, 396 (1983), 545–75 (pp. 560, 572).
24. Ángel Sahuquillo, *Federico García Lorca y la cultura de la homosexualidad masculina: Lorca, Dalí, Cernuda, Gil-Albert, Prados y la voz silenciada del amor homosexual*, Ensayo e investigación, 27 (Alicante: Diputación de Alicante, 1991); and Patricia Corcoran Thomas, "'La verdad de su amor verdadero": Gay Love and Social Protest in the Poetry of Luis Cernuda' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1991; abstract in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 52 (1991–1992), 3306–A).
25. See also, Allen, pp. 65–66, 70–71.
26. See also, Maristany, '*La realidad y el deseo*', p. 45; and Armando López Castro, 'Ética y poesía en Cernuda', *CILH*, 8 (1987), 75–105 (p. 99).
27. Sahuquillo's analyses also take historical considerations into account. However, although important, his book only deals fragmentarily with Cernuda's last four books of poetry.
28. One critic who develops this argument is Vicente Quirarte in *La poética del hombre dividido en la obra de Luis Cernuda* (Mexico, D.F.: UNAM, 1985), pp. 88, 89.
29. For his part, Montoro argues that homosexuality is neither natural nor unnatural because 'el hombre no tiene naturaleza, sino historia' (p. 26).
30. See also, José Olivio Jiménez, '*Desolación de la Quimera*', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 326–35 (pp. 331–32) (first publ. as part of 'Tres poetas, tres libros: Alexandre, Cernuda, Guillén (1962–1963)', in *Diez años de poesía española: 1960–1970* (Madrid: Ínsula, 1972), pp. 61–99).
31. 'La ética de la marginación en la poesía de Luis Cernuda', *Cupey*, 5 (1988), 16–29 (p. 22).
32. José Luis Cano, 'Notas sobre el tema del amor en la poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *La poesía de la generación del 27*, pp. 223–33 (p. 225).
33. Silver ('*Arcadia*', pp. 91, 123) and Harris (pp. 129–30) also describe love in terms of ecstasy and transcendence. In addition, Harris argues that, for Cernuda, love is a 'form of self-fulfillment' (p. 120), a means by which Cernuda comes to know himself (p. 119).
34. See, for example, Paz, pp. 154–55; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 136; Maristany, '*La realidad y el deseo*', p. 46; and Luis Martínez Cuitiño, 'El reflejo del mundo en la obra de Luis Cernuda', *RLit*, 45 (1983), 127–48 (p. 139).
35. For a different reading of the link between objectification and male homosexuality, see Corcoran Thomas, pp. 33–34.

CHAPTER 1

A MYTHOLOGY OF FREEDOM

In this chapter, I examine the connections between Cernuda's poetry and the two functions Friedrich Schlegel attributed to mythology in order to argue that Cernuda's later poetry creates a collectively valid mythology of freedom that seeks to bring about change in the then contemporary historical present. Given the Absolute's importance to Schlegel's discussion of mythology and to the texts by Cernuda that I discuss in this chapter, I shall start by giving a brief outline of its nature and place in early Romantic philosophy.

Andrew Bowie has argued that, in early Romantic philosophy, the Absolute was an infinite totality constituted by the identity of the subject of natural necessity (of the subject as an object of knowledge) with the subject of freedom (of the subject as a moral subject outside the realm of necessity).¹ According to Bowie, in this infinite totality were united the purposes which guided the subject's 'free moral action' and the 'overall purpose of nature' embodied in the subject as a natural being (p. 42), an 'overall purpose' not inherent in nature itself but, rather, assumed by the moral subject (p. 24). This totality, which had to be of a different status from the diverse elements within it in order to transform their difference into a higher identity, was only possible if the finite aspect of existence was overcome. As a result of the unity of freedom and nature, each 'passing, sensuous moment' ceased to be part of an 'endless chain or a random sequence' and became meaningful (p. 42). According to Bowie, early Romantic philosophy held that the understanding could only 'dissect reality' and that what could 'reassemble' reality, the Absolute or infinite, was indemonstrable and only present as a 'sense of loss' (p. 43). Nevertheless, Romantic philosophy attempted to grasp the 'sense of reality as a whole' through the desire to see it in the sensuous, a desire that expressed itself in "longing" (p. 43).

As a result of the impossibility of achieving knowledge of the Absolute through philosophical reflection, Romantic art became concerned with representing the unrepresentable, the Absolute.² An important part of the early Romantic understanding of art was "aesthetic reduction" or the "reduction of the time of the philosophy of history to an ecstatic moment".³ According to Bowie, an influential way of achieving such reduction was Friedrich Schlegel's notion of "humour" or the ability to create correspondences which suggested an 'essential unity of totally diverse phenomena, and thus of the whole world' (p. 53). However, this ecstatic moment, in which the Absolute was embodied in sensuous form, was characterized by 'randomness, suddenness, and transience' (p. 53).

It was from within the context of the Absolute's unrepresentability that Schlegel's work on mythology emerged (Bowie, pp. 53–54). In 1800, Schlegel published his 'Talk on Mythology' as part of his *Dialogue on Poetry* in the Romantic journal *Athenaeum*.⁴ In Schlegel's view, the deficiency of the then contemporary art stemmed from its lack of a centre, which meant that a poet had to create his own mythology 'like a new creation out of nothing' (p. 81) each time he wrote. As a response to this situation, Schlegel proposed his new mythology—the collective production of a centre of collectively binding images and symbols on which the then contemporary art could draw (Bowie, p. 54).

Whereas, according to Schlegel, ancient Greek mythology 'directly join[ed] and imitat[ed]' the 'most immediate and vital' aspects of the 'sensuous world' (pp. 81–82), his new mythology was to be produced through freedom, from the 'deepest depths of the spirit' (p. 82), and would be the 'hieroglyphic expression' of a natural world transfigured by 'imagination and love' (p. 85) and a 'free art of ideas [...] created by nature' (p. 86).⁵ According to Schlegel, mythology could not exist without 'something original and inimitable which is absolutely irreducible' whose 'original character and creative energy are still dimly visible' even after 'all the transformations' (p. 86). In mythology's 'absolutely irreducible' source, opposites were reconciled or, as Schlegel puts it, 'profundity permits the semblance of the absurd and of madness, of simplicity and foolishness, to shimmer through' (p. 86). For Schlegel, the uniting of opposites was synonymous with cancelling the 'progression and laws of rationally thinking reason' and had the effect of transporting us back into the 'beautiful confusion of imagination, into the original chaos of human nature' (p. 86). The key term here is 'imagination' or 'productive imagination', which was the highest principle of Schlegel's thought⁶ and took precedence over reflection (Bullock, pp. 91–93).⁷ In giving priority to productive imagination, Bullock argues, Schlegel emphasized the 'absolute thesis' according to which the I 'posits itself by a pure act—absolutely primitive, without antecedent or derivation—and away from the subsequent positing of *Nicht-Ich* in the reflexive succession that generates the concept of world' (Bullock, p. 91). Consequently, it was in the mode of thought represented by productive imagination that the subject's freedom was most fully realized.

In his 'Talk on Mythology', as Bowie has also indicated (p. 53), Schlegel argued that mythology fulfilled two, contradictory functions.⁸ On the one hand, the structure of mythology gave real form to the sublime, to that which marked the failure to represent the Absolute but simultaneously invoked the infinite through the experience of that failure.⁹ On the other hand, however, Schlegel also argued that poetry which manifested 'humour' and mythology

were both organized according to an 'artfully ordered confusion' or 'charming symmetry of contradictions' ('Talk on Mythology', p. 86). As a result, mythology was another means of creating an 'essential unity' out of diverse phenomena (p. 82) which enabled the reader to experience the union of the finite and the infinite. Indeed, for Schlegel, mythology's 'great advantage' was that, in it, 'what usually escapes our consciousness' could be 'perceived and held fast through the senses and spirit like the soul in the body surrounding it' (p. 85).

Many of the points I have mentioned in the last few pages are found in Cernuda's later poetry. In 'Mozart', for example, just as, for Schlegel, the subject was identified with the Absolute, so Mozart is identified with music (l. 3) and music with the Absolute, with that which is untouchable and invisible (l. 4) yet audible (ll. 5–6).¹⁰ The unity of matter and spirit in the figure of Mozart is also found in the description of the composer as a simultaneously human and divine voice (ll. 57–58). In keeping with Schlegel's argument that mythology can represent the Absolute, the speaker states that the architecture (l. 32) of Mozart's music:

Formas líquidas
Da de esplendor inexplicable, y así traza
Vergeles encantados, mágicos alcázares,
Fluidos bajo un frío rielar de estrellas.
(l. 32)

In these lines, Mozart's music creates magical spaces and objects in which time and eternity, finitude and freedom, coexist (ll. 34–35), an effect that justifies critics' inclusion of 'Mozart' in their discussions of poetry's unifying function (see, for example, Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 180–81; Harris, p. 172; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 138). In other words, Mozart's music gives the listener access to the Absolute or a 'transcendent reality' (Harris, p. 173) and, therefore, fulfills one of the functions of Schlegel's new mythology. In the same vein, Mozart's music unifies a series of contradictions (ll. 30–31 and 37–38), is said to awaken the lost dreams of a transcendental identity (ll. 59–60) and, in as much as it knows passion's power and eternal failure (ll. 41–42), to transcend passion. A little earlier in the poem, the suddenness of the moment of aesthetic reduction was suggested by the description of the theme and development of Mozart's music as wings (ll. 23–24) which open suddenly in music (l. 28) to another, more glorious firmament (ll. 26–27), whose freshness (l. 27) recalls the description of the Absolute in line six. Just as Schlegel privileged productive imagination over rational reflection and sought to cancel the 'progression and laws of rationally thinking reason' ('Talk on Mythology', p. 86) in his new mythology, so, in 'Mozart', Mozart's

music is described as placing reason in the service of imagination (ll. 29–30). Finally, and in keeping with the non-rational experience of the Absolute, the liquid forms (l. 32) that Mozart's music produces are characterized as incomprehensibly or indescribably splendid (l. 33).

The speaker in 'El poeta' (pp. 403–05) also links poetry and the Absolute in his statement that the poet is concerned with the unknowable unity of spirit and nature, the mysterious and divine image of things (ll. 20–21), a unity produced by the poet.¹¹ According to the speaker, the 'tú' learnt from Jiménez how to:

Mirar quieto, como
Espejo, sin el cual la creación sería
Ciega, hasta hallar su mirada en el poeta.
(l. 22)

In these lines, the poet reflects nature and thereby causes nature to recognize itself in him. However, it is only possible for the poet to transform nature, to bring it out of unconsciousness to self-consciousness, if he exceeds nature, that is, if he is also free.¹² In keeping with the Absolute's rational unknowability, the speaker states that Jiménez's poetry infuses (l. 16) the reader with faith or the magical certainty of the visible and invisible world (ll. 17–18), just as, in 'Mozart', the creation of the Absolute and magic were simultaneous (ll. 33–34). As a result of Schlegel's definition of faith as an act of freedom,¹³ the Absolute in Cernuda's later poetry can be said to be perceived through the exercise of the subject's freedom rather than through the laws of science. In keeping with this, in 'Río vespertino' (pp. 371–74), a description of the poet's task as the perception of the Absolute (ll. 20–21) is combined with a preference for silence (ll. 81–84).¹⁴ Although in 'Río vespertino', faith is described as contrary to reason (l. 79) and as thought's reassuring shadow (l. 80), the description of the Absolute as 'aquella cosa [...] De cuya fe conocimiento viene' (ll. 73, 74) suggests that faith also makes knowledge possible.¹⁵ It is, therefore, not a question of choosing between knowledge and faith but of acknowledging their interdependence. Such potential interdependence is suggested in 'Tarde oscura' (pp. 337–38) by the 'tú's search for faith in thought (ll. 25–27) as a way of counteracting Man's useless destiny (ll. 23–24) while, in 'Otras ruinas' (pp. 401–03; ll. 41–48), the separation of knowledge and faith is diagnosed as a trait of the then contemporary present and attacked.¹⁶

In 'Las edades' (pp. 412–14), a third-person narrator evokes a group of statues of animal gods in a museum and reflects on the place of the divine in human culture past and present.¹⁷ As natural/animal gods, the statues that the narrator describes are examples of the Absolute and, consequently, the

description of the statues is also a description of the Absolute's status in the present. In the narrator's opinion, as museum exhibits, the statues are out-of-place (l. 1), powerless, purely decorative (ll. 33–35), and subject, like humanity, to the destructions of time and chance (ll. 45–47), a vulnerability that is echoed in 'Otras ruinas' (l. 16), which depicts a form of life linked with humanity's forgetting of its gods (Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 111), and that is described as intolerable in 'Noche del hombre y su demonio' (pp. 366–70; ll. 60–61).¹⁸ In their rightful place, the statues of 'Las edades' were eternal and reflected their subjects' experience of the divine (ll. 9–10), an interdependence also noted by Jiménez-Fajardo (p. 111) and echoed in 'Noche del hombre y su demonio' (ll. 17–18). In the past, the gods of 'Las edades' bound their subjects' different activities together into a living unity whose destruction or fragmentation introduced a desire for death (l. 32) into the culture (ll. 29–32). In keeping with the Absolute's incarnation, the life of the people (l. 9) over whom the gods presided (l. 13) was one that was comprehended through myth (ll. 23–24) and in which the visible was created with the invisible (ll. 20–21).

However, why should 'Las edades' be considered mythological? Firstly, because the poem is the material product of the narrator's freedom and, as such, reconciles freedom and necessity. Evidence that the poem was written through the exercise of freedom is provided by the description of the statues as summoned by dreams (l. 5) since, in the past, the visible was created with the invisible and acts with dreams (ll. 20–21). The narrator, therefore, creates the poem (the visible/an act) by drawing on his freedom (the invisible/a dream). Secondly, 'Las edades' can be seen as mythical because the earlier culture it describes was a living example of the Absolute. The third link between the poem and myth stems from the sublimity of the present for the poet, a sublimity that derives from the contrast between a present unable to perceive the Absolute and the narrator's awareness of that failure (e.g. his sadness in line one), which results from his continued exercise of his freedom. It is because of his ongoing use of his freedom that the narrator can describe the statues as the traces of a god that existed and demands to exist always (l. 54). Consequently, the difference between the past and the present derives not from the presence or absence of the intuition of divinity (l. 17) but, rather, from the use or renunciation of that intuition. It is the foundation of the poet's identity in freedom that makes possible his description in 'Río vespertino' as the so-called herd's insistent conscience (ll. 12–16) and, in 'Noche del hombre y su demonio', as feeling 'por otros la conciencia/Aletargada en ellos, con su remordimiento' (l. 80).¹⁹ Both these definitions also presuppose the then contemporary society's continuing but negative relation to freedom as the ground of morality and explain the poet's then

contemporary marginalization, a recurrent theme in 'Río vespertino' (e.g. ll. 16–21, 30–32, 37–43 and 81–82) that Maximino Cacheiro has also noted (p. 57). This continuing relationship provides the hope for the successful realization of the poet's project of generating freedom in history. Without modern society's negative relation to freedom, the speaker's purpose would be utterly unrealizable.

'Retrato de poeta' (pp. 450–53) is another poem that can be interpreted as mythological for the same reasons as 'Las edades'.²⁰ For the poem's nostalgic speaker, the life of Fray Hortensio Paravicino exemplified a unity of the visible and the invisible since it was sustained by his faith in things that were invisible or only spiritually perceptible (ll. 33–38). In this sense, Paravicino is an example of the generations in 'Río vespertino' who 'labraron con fe lo no creído' (l. 76) and were sure in their faith, which had no need of the visible (ll. 77–78). In a parallel of 'Las edades', the visible is also created with the invisible in 'Retrato de poeta'. As Antonio Monegal has shown, the majority of the images described in the poem as belonging to the portrait of Fray Paravicino do not, in fact, feature in it (p. 70). Rather, the speaker supplements his description of what he sees with inventions, just as invention and description are combined in 'Otras ruinas' (ll. 9–32). The portrait, which Monegal reproduces on page sixty-six of his article, is described in most detail in the following lines:

Quietamente
Sentado ahí, en dejadez airosa,
La mano delicada marcando con un dedo
El pasaje en el libro, erguido como a escucha
Del coloquio un momento interrumpido,
Miras tu mundo y en tu mundo vives.
(l. 65)

However, even here, the phrase 'en dejadez airosa' (l. 66) points to the speaker's interpretation of the painting, while line sixty-nine refers to a conversation not included in the painting. In the same vein, the mention of Paravicino's world (l. 70) refers back to the detailed, but entirely imaginary, description of his world (ll. 12–23). Finally, again as in 'Las edades', that the speaker in 'Retrato de poeta' is able to diagnose the present's failure to represent the Absolute, implied by the present's lack of faith (l. 46), because he continues to exercise his freedom is shown by his statement that, through Paravicino, he can hear the 'dejo adormecido/ Queriendo resurgir' of that which can only be perceived spiritually (ll. 41–43). In a similar vein, in 'Otras ruinas' the ruined city is described as the gods' last gift to humanity (l. 56).

The characterization of the present in 'Las edades' as an age in which the traces of the past are whimsically owned and exchanged (ll. 34–40) is also found in 'Limbo' (pp. 460–62).²¹ In this poem, a description of a 'tú's' experience at an upper-class soiree is combined with a meditation on the cultural fate of the poet's work which testifies to the difficulty of bringing about social change in the present through poetry. The soiree is being held in the house of a dilettante (l. 22) who amuses himself by buying artefacts created from faith in another time and country and who is seated among his spoils next to a second-rate portrait of himself (ll. 17–24). As he moves about the party, the 'tú' overhears another guest saying that they have bought the first edition of an unusual poet (ll. 29–32), a comment which typifies for the 'tú' the indifferent reception to which the poet's work is subject, even centuries after his death (ll. 33–40). That the poet's work and the spoils of the soiree's host suffer the same fate of commodification or 'prostitution' (LaFollette Miller, p. 168) implies that poetry is also a product of faith and, therefore, of freedom. The interweaving of poetry and freedom is confirmed by part of the indifferent reception accorded the poet's work being to treat it like yet another futile object and any other useless ornament (ll. 45–46). Such treatment presupposes poetry's purposiveness or grounding in freedom since, to the contrary, its domestication could not be simultaneous with the subtraction of purpose from it.

In 'A un poeta futuro' (pp. 339–43), the speaker describes the relation of incomprehension between himself and his contemporaries and expresses the hope that, through his addressee (an unborn poet), he will enjoy a plenitude of life that he cannot enjoy while alive.²² The speaker describes his relation to society as one of attraction and hostility (ll. 1–2) and states that, when writing poetry, his feelings alternate between fear and bravery, failure and hope for success or poetic immortality (ll. 54–66). The coexistence in the poet of these three oppositions makes the speaker in this poem an instance of the Absolute since it echoes Schlegel's argument that, in the Absolute (which he identified with the subject), opposites are united. In the same vein, the speaker has access to both the divine and the human spheres, as is shown by his references to the gods' idea (l. 21), the gods' time (l. 32), our human time (l. 31), and a future in which humanity will be free from the primitive world to which it has returned (l. 84). Similarly, Philip II's identity in 'Silla del rey' (pp. 419–23) is mythological in that it is an instance of the Absolute since, in it, opposites are contained.²³ The King describes himself as a monarch with two aspects on account of his incomparable pride and humility (ll. 34–35) and states that the Escorial records his contradictory being (l. 36) that is exultant at its divinity or inhumanity (l. 37) and humble because it feels itself impossible (l. 38).²⁴

As in 'Las edades', the present in 'A un poeta futuro' is characterized by the separation of the divine and the human (ll. 28–33) and is experienced as sublime by the poet in as much as he has an intuitive knowledge of the future when the Absolute will be embodied (ll. 65–68) and predicts that the future will reflect the gods' idea (ll. 18–21). Consequently, given that the poet's identity is an example of the Absolute and that he experiences the present as sublime, a close parallel exists between this poem and Schlegel's contradictory definitions of mythology.

The poem 'El poeta y la bestia' (pp. 518–21) describes the confrontation at a particular historical moment between the figure of the poet (Goethe) and the forces of animality (Napoleon).²⁵ According to the speaker, the development of Goethe's life and work gives an insight into and balances Goethe's various gifts (ll. 17–19). That such development was simultaneously varied and harmonious posits Goethe's life and work as an instance of the Absolute and, therefore, implies that, as a remembrance of them, this poem is mythological. However, the realized freedom of Goethe's life and work is vulnerable to brute forces (l. 24) moved by Napoleon (l. 60) from afar, a vulnerability exemplified by the description of how close Goethe came to being murdered by the French soldiers billeted in his home (ll. 31–60).²⁶ The poem's third section (ll. 61–80) is an example of a move which has figured in many of the poems I have discussed so far: the use of history to intervene in history.²⁷ This use of history is clear in the following lines:

Napoleón, repetido cuantas veces se quiera, [...]
Jamás puede valernos
Lo que un único Goethe. ¿Quién lo ignora?
Mas hay que recordarlo a los que olvidan,
A los que todavía en nuestro mundo aclaman
A la Bestia.

(ll. 61, 62)

Although the speaker's identification with Goethe and against Napoleon is evident in these lines, the strength of his identification does not mean that it is an uncritical one, an ambivalence that Olivio Jiménez ('*Desolación*', pp. 330–31) and Villena (pp. 46, 55–56) both overlook. Indeed, in the poem's final stanza, the speaker expresses his puzzlement at Goethe's continued admiration for Napoleon despite nearly dying at the hands of his troops (ll. 71–78).²⁸ In the poem's final two-and-a-half lines, the speaker wonders whether Goethe was being arbitrary or just (l. 78) in admiring Napoleon. The critical distance in the speaker's identification with Goethe is indicated by the fact that he does not consider the possibility that Goethe's admiration was justified and, instead, speculates on the reasons for Goethe's

arbitrariness (ll. 79–80). By ending the poem with the possibility that Goethe worshipped Napoleon, the speaker underlines his criticism of Goethe.

As its title suggests, the poem ‘Díptico español’ is divided into two. The first poem, ‘Es lástima que fuera mi tierra’ (pp. 501–04), outlines a poet’s relation to the then contemporary Fascist Spain, while the second, ‘Bien está que fuera tu tierra’ (pp. 504–07), puts forward an alternative vision of Spain drawn from Spanish history as compensation and cure for the (then contemporary) present.²⁹ As this summary makes clear, these poems emerge from and seek to have an impact on history. They exemplify the use of history in and against history in defence of freedom and in the name of principles derived from the generous Cervantine tradition (l. 163).³⁰ I, therefore, disagree with Harris who argues that ‘Díptico español’ is essentially about Cernuda’s character rather than Spain (p. 169) and with Cano who claims that, in ‘Bien está que fuera tu tierra’, Cernuda holds on to the Spain of Galdós in order to flee from the Spain of the then contemporary present (‘Estela’, p. 255).

In ‘Es lástima que fuera mi tierra’, the historical present provokes a response in the speaker, who believes that humanity’s spiritual inheritance is being denied and confiscated in the then contemporary Spain and that, as a result, (Spanish) humanity is descending into animality (ll. 10–19). In contrast, but in an echo of the opposition to animality in ‘El poeta y la bestia’ that, for Cárdenas, represents the deepest and most radical meaning of the figure of the poet (p. 10), the speaker dedicates himself to the maintenance and transmission of humanity’s spiritual patrimony as a result of his faith in the craft of being human (ll. 69–71). Similarly, the narrator in ‘Supervivencias tribales en el medio literario’ (pp. 517–18) also seeks to resist forms of Spanish culture which, in his eyes, belong to the lower rungs of the ladder separating humans from animals (the ‘supervivencias tribales’ of the title), a project he shares with the speaker of ‘Otra vez, con sentimiento’ (p. 511), who refers to the tribe that has seized control of Lorca’s life and work since his murder (ll. 3–5).³¹ Just as, in ‘Río vespertino’, the narrator surveys the present and writes that he is surrounded by death (ll. 60–61), so Fascist Spain is described as a nightmarish country of death (ll. 19–21), a situation the speaker diagnoses as the revenge of life on those who have denied it (ll. 28–29), on those who have initiated Spanish history, Spain’s leaders (ll. 30–31).³² There are two points to highlight in this diagnosis: firstly, that the long standing of this deathly tradition and its dominance in the present are caused by human action. And, secondly, that the speaker’s criticism is directed primarily at Spain’s leaders and, contrary to Gracia Noriega’s claim (p. 40), not at the Spanish nation as a whole.

In the next stanza, the speaker turns his attention to the Spanish people whom he describes as lacking reason owing to the operation of political forces on them (l. 36). For the speaker, there is an inexorable line of development from the formation into irrationality of the Spanish people to their obscene cult of slavery in the present (ll. 36–43). Although inexorable, this development was, again, the result of human agency, as is shown by the fact that the Spanish people have been indoctrinated into being hostile to reason. Human activity, therefore, is necessary for history to be made and, implicitly, changed and it is this necessity that inspires the speaker to write since, to the contrary, it would be futile to seek to intervene in history.

As a poet, the speaker writes, he can exchange neither his country nor his language (ll. 49–51) and, indeed, country, language, and poetry are so tightly interwoven that the act of writing poetry appears necessarily to continue the poet's national poetic tradition (ll. 52–58). The only way in which a poet cannot further his country's tradition is by being loyal to his conscience and, as a consequence, to poetry (ll. 59–66). Therefore, the ground for the poet's dissent from the national tradition, whose boundaries poetry exceeds, is his conscience or sense of morality, which is grounded in freedom and indissociable from a capacity to posit purposes. Given that the speaker's activity in this poem is determined by his conscience, freedom can be said to be the ground of his intervention in history just as, in 'El poeta y la bestia', Goethe's life and work were also grounded in freedom. The indissociability of poetry and freedom is indicated by the fact that, for the speaker, to exercise his freedom is to act in accordance with poetry (ll. 64–66).³³

The inseparability of poetry and freedom is also suggested in the speaker's description of his intended audience as composed of people who listen to him with well-disposed understanding (l. 80) and who respect human freedom or the faculty for self-determination (l. 82), which the speaker describes as the ground of human agency (l. 83) and as directed towards the divine (l. 84), a divine which acts as the cornerstone of free cultural exchange among human beings.³⁴ The speaker in this poem, therefore, belongs to a community of individuals (albeit a very small one) who exercise their freedom and are, as a result, mythological figures in the way that Goethe was in 'El poeta y la bestia'. In a similar vein, in 'A un poeta futuro', the future union of the divine and the human (the Absolute), which the speaker seeks to help realize through his own poetry, will underpin a poetic community. In stark contrast, the poet's readers in 'Limbo', whose reception of his work subtracts freedom from it (ll. 43–46), conform to prescribed and unchanging forms of social behaviour (ll. 25–28). Art's political potential, its ability to become and

transform historical reality, therefore, depends on the identifications that the reader makes with it.

In 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra', the second poem of 'Díptico español', the speaker constructs a vision of Spain with which to counter that sketched in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra'. 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' also focuses on its addressee's experience as a reader, an experience described as that of wanting art to pass over into historical reality (ll. 113–15). The other Spain (l. 101) outlined in this poem and with which the 'tú' identifies is that represented by and in the novels of Benito Pérez Galdós and is based on the principles of tolerance of difference—or generosity—heroism, and tenacity in the struggle for an appropriate future (ll. 162–65). In this last sense, in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra', art offers hope for the future (Müller, p. 51). The characterization of this other Spain as the impossible homeland (l. 148) testifies to the gap between its principles and those prevalent in Fascist Spain.

Central to this fictional world are the characters that inhabit it, one of whom, Salvador Monsalud, was a particularly important role model for the 'tú' in his boyhood (ll. 113–121).³⁵ According to the speaker, in his boyhood, the 'tú' wished that, like Salvador, he would be moved by the devotion and faith that led Monsalud to pursue his goals or purposes (ll. 116–21). By referring to Monsalud's purposes in connection with his pursuit of his 'quimeras desoladas' (ll. 118–20), the speaker indicates that those impossible dreams were grounded in freedom. The central place of freedom in Monsalud's identity is also suggested by the importance of faith to his struggle (l. 121). Monsalud's association with freedom contrasts sharply with the slavery suffered by the Spanish people in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra', a contrast underlined by the description of his insistence on freedom as a madness (l. 117). In keeping with this, the speaker of 'Es lástima que fuera tu tierra' suggests that Fascist Spain has no faith (ll. 71–72) and, in 'Río vespertino', describes the then contemporary soul as no longer believing in God (ll. 50–51). Monsalud's freedom also positions him as a predecessor of the small group of individuals mentioned in the first poem of 'Díptico español', while his emphasis on faith establishes him as a bridge back to the generations of 'Río vespertino'.³⁶ Similarly, an ongoing faith is central to the identity of the ex-Lincoln Brigade soldier in '1936' (ll. 29–31) who, in the face of human baseness and harshness (ll. 2–3), has a compensatory/curative effect on the speaker (ll. 1–5, 33–39) just as Galdós's novels do and can be included in the generous Cervantine tradition to which Fray Paravicino in 'Retrato de poeta' also belongs. Also worthy of inclusion in this tradition is the speaker in 'Supervivencias tribales en el medio literario' (ll. 9–13) given that he attacks what he calls the Spanish idiosyncrasy of concentrating on the excellence of a single writer and denying that excellence 'puede corresponder

a varios' (ll. 17–19). Referring to characters from the first two series of *Episodios Nacionales*, the speaker in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' writes that the fictional heroes interwove his life with theirs (ll. 107–08) and were embodiments of freedom to the extent that their commitment to an impossible living dream (l. 112) echoes that of Monsalud to his disconsolate impossible dreams (l. 120). As a result, the 'tú' is liberated by the fictional characters because his identification with them (l. 106) presupposes his use of his own freedom. To different degrees, therefore, both the poems of 'Díptico español' present the reader with sensuous images of freedom and, by doing so, activate his own freedom. Consequently, these poems suggest that art can be the medium for a political engagement in history which takes place through the reader's exercise of his freedom.

The impossibility of extricating 'Díptico español' from history is reiterated in the last stanza of 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' (ll. 167–71) where the speaker describes the effects of the other Spain as being to compensate him and his addressee for the obscenity and degradation of Spain's then contemporary political situation and to cure it (l. 171). The use of the medical metaphor of curing recalls the speaker's description of Spain's leaders in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra' as the infected enemies of life (l. 31) and serves as a reminder that his attack is against those who wield and have wielded political power to debase the politically powerless rather than against the politically disempowered themselves.

'Ser de Sansueña' (pp. 417–19) and 'Silla del rey' put forward other moments in Spanish history as further models of the other Spain with which the speaker wishes to cure the then contemporary Spain. In this respect, these poems are further examples not only of the use of history in and against history but also of the identification with earlier cultures evident in poems such as 'Las edades' and 'Retrato de poeta'. The speaker's description of Sansueña (a fictional country readily recognizable as Spain) in 'Ser de Sansueña' echoes the animality and denial of spirit found in Fascist Spain in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra': in Sansueña, Man really succumbs (ll. 7–9) and the 'tú' is described as the compatriot of Sansueña's fauna (l. 25).³⁷ In this respect, I agree with Silver's comment that Sansueña is no longer the 'nation that put things of the spirit foremost' ('Arcadia', p. 198) and with Ruiz Silva's argument that the Spain represented in 'Ser de Sansueña' is 'indeleblemente entroncada con la brutalidad de la guerra civil y con su desastroso final' (p. 125). In contrast to the constructive tendency of 'Díptico español', the speaker in 'Ser de Sansueña' vents his anger at the then contemporary Spain and wishes that he had been alive when Spain was an imperial power (ll. 31–37), a duality that means that 'Ser de Sansueña' cannot be straightforwardly included in what Ugarte calls the 'series of

invectives, accusations, and curses' with which Cernuda 'lashes out' at Spain (p. 186). In the present, as Harris has also noted (p. 90), the supposed glories of Spain's past are in ruins (l. 39) and the speaker can only lament that he should have to witness and be associated with such national decay (ll. 41-42).

Just as the speaker's nostalgia in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' was inseparable from his deployment of Galdós against Spain's historical present, so 'Silla del rey' commemorates Spain's imperial past and attempts to use it against the maggots ('Ser de Sansueña'; l. 39) of the then contemporary Spain. The poem consists of Philip II's meditation, spoken as he watches the construction of the Escorial, on what he has achieved in his reign and on how history will treat it. However, as will become apparent, the treatment of the past in 'Silla del rey' includes a critical distance that was absent in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' and 'Ser de Sansueña' but which echoes that directed at Spain's leaders in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra' and at Goethe in 'El poeta y la bestia'.

There are a number of similarities between 'Silla del rey' and the poems of 'Díptico español'. For example, Philip II describes his subjects as illogical (l. 51) and sees his task as being to disable the animality (ll. 9 and 13) raging in his empire and to construct spirit (ll. 74-75). However, the most striking similarity between the two poems is the interest they both display in the exercise and achievement of freedom: Philip II claims that, in moulding his subjects' lives according to his Catholic canon (l. 27), he has liberated them (ll. 26-30) and that he has united his subjects' wills in a great, although absurd, task (l. 48) which gives their lives purpose (ll. 46-50). The exercise of freedom is also at stake in the King's guardianship of the Catholic faith (l. 4), while his aim is, in part, to bring to life his eternal work (ll. 71-75) in his mind (ll. 96-97), that is, to engender an eternity inextricable from freedom in finite, human consciousness. Finally, the King's description of the nation's life as an immortal flow of legend and history (l. 25) echoes the interpenetration of myth and history in the life of the people of 'Las edades', a poem that Silver also links to 'Silla del rey' ('Arcadia', p. 199), and posits his reign as another moment in history when the finite and infinite were united.

At the same time, however, both Philip II's political project and his execution of it are the antithesis of the generous Cervantine tradition that is tolerant of opposing loyalties ('Bien está que fuera tu tierra'; ll. 162-63). This is shown by the totalitarian tone of Philip II's comments that 'todo traza mi trama' (l. 21) and that life is adapting to his Catholic canon (ll. 26-27); by his hesitant pride in killing diversity (l. 31); by his emphasis on dogma (l. 76); and by his persecution of so-called heresy (ll. 77-85). In a similarly

contrastive vein, Spain's present in 'Silla del rey' is imposed on it dictatorially by one man who identifies with Caesar (ll. 76–80), whereas the emphasis in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' was on collective national self-determination (ll. 160–65). In addition, Philip II's claims that his reign represents the summit of Spanish history (ll. 61–63) and that his reign will be reflected in the future (ll. 96–102) also contradict the struggle of the other Spain in 'Bien está que fuera tu tierra' (ll. 164–65) for the future appropriate to it.

What, then, is the relation between the reign of Philip II as described in 'Silla del rey' and the project of using poetry to intervene in the historical present? After worrying over what the future holds for his work, the King concludes that future centuries will consider it a gloss on their own times and a glory (ll. 61–65). The foundation of Philip II's reign on death (l. 31), its dictatorial overtones, Catholicism, and intolerance all parallel the Spain described in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra' and make 'Silla del rey' an allegorical gloss on Fascist Spain, as Summerhill has also suggested (pp. 155–56). However, as a gloss on future centuries, Philip II's reign also highlights what is lacking in Fascist Spain since his reign cannot be equated with the animality and degradation of the Spain of 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra'. As the embodiment of what Fascist Spain lacks, Philip II's reign is an example of the goal it must attain in order to be saved, its heaven ('gloria'; 'Silla del rey', l. 65). In this sense, it is one of the spiritual achievements that the speaker in 'Es lástima que fuera mi tierra' described as humanity's patrimony and legacy to the future (ll. 13–14) and sought, in turn, to pass on. However, contrary to the arguments of Kitching-Schulman and Talens (pp. 309–10), 'Silla del rey' should not be read as an apology for dictatorship nor as uncritical of Philip II.³⁸

The poem 'El César' (pp. 432–37) develops threads of both 'Ser de Sansueña' and, in particular, 'Silla del rey'.³⁹ In 'Ser de Sansueña' (ll. 26–27), the speaker stated that corruption was the price of power, a statement echoed in 'El César' in the Caesar's comment that power corrupts the spirit just as a hidden illness corrupts the body (ll. 97–100). Significantly, in 'Silla del rey', Philip II also compares the sophistry of power to a vile evil that eats away at the body (ll. 91–94), a comparison which underlines his earlier identification with Caesar (ll. 76–80). Similarly, the Caesar's speech in 'El César' represents an instance of the sophistry practised by Philip II (see, for example, 'Silla del rey', ll. 86–90). Finally, a few lines after referring to power's corrupting effect, the Caesar changes his mind and says that, rather than corrupting, power maddens and isolates (ll. 110–11). Given that power's isolating effect divinizes the Caesar (ll. 100–03), which echoes Philip II's self-perception as divine (ll. 81–85), the emperor's change of mind implicitly

adds a further dimension to the criticism of Philip II's reign by implying that the King was mad and did not represent his subjects.⁴⁰

The poems that I have discussed in this chapter fulfill the two functions that Schlegel attributed to mythology in his 'Talk on Mythology'. Firstly, poetry is mythological because it is capable of representing the Absolute, a potential frequently realized in the speaker's remembrance of earlier cultures or historical individuals in which/whom nature and freedom were reconciled or contradictions united. Such acts of remembrance reflect the speaker's desire to establish a bridge between the pre-modern (both Spanish and non-Spanish) and the present. The speaker's aim in establishing this bridge is not to restore the so-called glories of pre-modern times or solely to mourn their loss but, rather, to uncover and build on the ruins of the past marginalized by the present. The second factor that makes poetry mythological is its capacity to portray the present's sublimity, the present's failure to perceive the Absolute. As is not the case with his contemporaries, the speaker experiences the present as sublime as the result of his ongoing exercise of his freedom, which is at the root of his critical attitude. In these different two ways, freedom is central to Cernuda's later poetry, which can, therefore, properly be described as a mythology of freedom through which the speaker attempts to construct in the present a culture of freedom that develops the past without uncritically duplicating it.

NOTES

1. Andrew Bowie, *Aesthetics and Subjectivity: From Kant to Nietzsche* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990; repr. 1993), p. 42.
2. Kathleen M. Wheeler describes Romantic art in similar terms. See her 'Introduction', in *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: The Romantic Ironists and Goethe*, ed. by Kathleen M. Wheeler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 1–27 (pp. 8, 11, 15).
3. Karl Heinz Bohrer, 'Friedrich Schlegels Rede über die Mythologie', in *Mythos und Moderne: Begriff und Bild einer Rekonstruktion*, ed. by Karl Heinz Bohrer (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1983), pp. 52–82 (p. 59). Quoted in Bowie, p. 53.
4. Ernst Behler and Roman Struc, 'Introduction', in Friedrich Schlegel, *Dialogue on Poetry and Literary Aphorisms*, trans. by Ernst Behler and Roman Struc (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968), pp. 3–50 (pp. 4, 5). Schlegel's 'Talk on Mythology' is on pages 81–93 of this same volume.
5. For Behler and Struc, the 'transformation and transfiguration of the objective world' was the 'very essence' of Schlegel's new mythology (p. 28).
6. Marcus Paul Bullock, *Romanticism and Marxism: The Philosophical Development of Literary Theory and Literary History in Walter Benjamin and Friedrich Schlegel*, AUS: Series 1—Germanic Languages and Literature, 51 (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), p. 100.
7. For other accounts of productive or creative imagination, see Behler and Struc, pp. 16–18; and Jürgen Habermas, 'The Entry into Postmodernity: Nietzsche as a Turning Point', in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, trans. by Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1987), pp. 83–105 (pp. 89–91).

8. For other readings of Schlegel's new mythology, see Bowie, pp. 53–57; Howard E. Hugo, 'An Examination of Friedrich Schlegel's "Gespräch über die Poesie"', *Monatshefte*, 40 (1948), 221–31 (pp. 226–28); René Wellek, 'Friedrich Schlegel', in *A History of Modern Criticism, 1750–1950*, II: *The Romantic Age* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955; repr. 1961), pp. 5–35 (pp. 16–17); Behler and Struc, pp. 25–29; Hans Eichner, *Friedrich Schlegel*, TWAS, 98 (New York: Twayne, 1970), pp. 74–82; and Habermas, pp. 88–92.
9. According to Bowie, Kant's notion of the sublime was central to early Romanticism (p. 39). Bowie's account of the Kantian sublime is in *Aesthetics and Subjectivity*, pp. 34–40. For another account, see J. M. Bernstein, 'Memorial Aesthetics: Kant's *Critique of Judgement*', in *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida and Adorno* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 17–65 (pp. 38–44).
10. Luis Cernuda, *Obra completa*, ed. by Derek Harris and Luis Maristany, 3 vols (Madrid: Siruela, 1993–1994), I: *Poesía completa* (1993), pp. 489–91. Unless otherwise specified, all future references to Cernuda's work will be to this volume and in the form of page numbers. For other readings of 'Mozart', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 169, 180; Harris, pp. 172–73; J. C. Ruiz Silva, 'En torno a un poema de Luis Cernuda: "Mozart"', *CHA*, 316 (1976), 61–65; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 138–39; Carlos Ruiz Silva, *Arte, amor y otras soledades en Luis Cernuda: ensayo* (Madrid: la Torre, 1979), pp. 161–65; Luis Antonio de Villena, 'Luis Cernuda, entre el exilio y sus metáforas', in Luis Cernuda, *Las Nubes. Desolación de la Quimera*, ed. by Luis Antonio de Villena, *Letras hispánicas*, 209 (Madrid: Cátedra, 1984), pp. 11–57 (pp. 47, 55–56); and Sánchez Rosillo, p. 172. Unless otherwise specified, all future references to Ruiz Silva's work will be to *Arte, amor y otras soledades*.
11. For other readings of this poem, see José Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción y trascendencia del tiempo en la poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *Cinco poetas del tiempo: Vicente Aleixandre, Luis Cernuda, José Hierro, Carlos Bousoño, Francisco Brines* (Madrid: Ínsula, 1964), pp. 101–54 (pp. 146, 151); Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 168, 180–81; Debicki, pp. 298–99; Coleman, pp. 169, 173–75; Harris, pp. 106–07; Martínez Cuitiño, pp. 136–37; and Philip Silver, 'Towards a Revisionary Theory of Spanish Romanticism', *REH*, 28 (1994), 293–302 (pp. 299–300).
Philip Silver points to a link between poetry and the sublime (although he does not use the term) when he states that 'words can only hint' at the pre-poetic experience described in this poem ('Arcadia', p. 181), an experience which he refers to as 'como una visión del Ser no disperso' ('Cernuda, poeta ontológico', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 203–11 (p. 209)). The eponymous poet is widely understood to be Juan Ramón Jiménez. See, for example, Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 168, 180; and Harris, pp. 106–07.
12. Although other critics have also noted that the 'tú' in this poem is not only passive, none has explicitly linked his activity with his freedom. See, for example, Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 180; Debicki, pp. 298–99; Harris, pp. 106–07; and Silver, 'Towards a Revisionary Theory', p. 300.
13. See Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments*, trans. by Peter Firchow (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 2.
14. For other readings of 'Rfo vespertino', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 152, 181; Harris, pp. 64, 79, 105–06, 111, 114, 158; Maximino Cacheiro, 'La problemática del escrito en "La realidad y el deseo"', *CHA*, 316 (1976), 54–60 (pp. 55, 56–57); Silver, 'Poeta ontológico', p. 209; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 90–92; Ruiz Silva, pp. 95–96, 105–06; Kevin J. Bruton, 'Luis Cernuda's Exile Poetry and Coleridge's Theory of Imagination', *CLS*, 21 (1984), 383–95 (pp. 391–92); and López Castro, p. 88.
15. Similarly, in the 'Talk on Mythology', Schlegel posited the Absolute as the condition of knowledge: 'every hypothesis', he wrote, 'even the most limited, if systematically thought through, leads to hypotheses of the whole, and depends on such hypotheses' (p. 90).

16. For other readings of 'Tarde oscura', see Coleman, pp. 47-49; Harris, p. 152; and Utrera, pp. 129, 136. For other readings of 'Otras ruinas', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 174-75; Coleman, pp. 81-83; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 110-11.
17. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 37-38, 198-99; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 111-12; Maristany, 'La realidad y el deseo', pp. 83-84; Argullol, p. 32; and Silver, *De la mano*, pp. 113-14.
18. For other readings of 'Noche del hombre y su demonio', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 177-78; Coleman, pp. 18-19, 106-11; Harris, pp. 116-17, 156-60; Luis Maristany, 'La poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 185-202 (pp. 187, 197-98, 200); Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 75-76; Quirarte, pp. 70, 71-72; Lorraine Ledford, 'Cernuda's *Demonio*: Devil or Divinity?', in *Essays in Honor of Jorge Guillén on the Occasion of his 85th Year*, ed. by Martha G. Krow-Lucal (Cambridge, MA: Abedul Press, 1977), pp. 42-51; and Summerhill, pp. 150-51.
19. Lorraine Ledford also posits freedom as the ground of the poet's identity in 'Noche del hombre y su demonio' by stating that the 'demon' makes the 'man' 'realize [...] that his choice of lifestyle was voluntary' (p. 47). Coleman has linked the poet in this poem with morality in a contradictory way. On the one hand, he argues that the poet 'can never uphold the values of the ordinary man' and 'must approach the Divinity with his art, serving as opposite to the moral collapse to which the devil invites him'. On the other, he asserts that the 'poet's superiority has nothing to do with morality' (p. 19).
20. For other readings of this poem, see Coleman, pp. 169, 173, 175; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 123; Maristany, 'La realidad y el deseo', pp. 38, 85; Villena, p. 38; Summerhill, p. 162; and Antonio Monegal, 'Pre-texto e intertexto en "Retrato de poeta", de Luis Cernuda', *BFFGL*, no. 9 (June 1991), 65-75 (pp. 65-73).
21. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 89; Montoro, pp. 21-22; Maristany, 'La poesía', p. 200; Pato, pp. 100-01; and Martha LaFollette Miller, 'Society, History, and the Fate of the Poetic Word in *La realidad y el deseo*', in *The Word and the Mirror*, pp. 166-80 (pp. 168-69).
22. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 135-36, 140-41, 148; Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 149-50, 178-79; Harris, pp. 112-13, 154, 155-56; LaFollette Miller, pp. 170-73; and Utrera, pp. 127, 134, 142-44.
 Incomprehension also characterizes the reception of the poet's work in '*Malentendu*' (pp. 524-25), 'Del otro lado' (pp. 525-26; ll. 8-18), and 'Soledades' (p. 464; ll. 7-9). For other readings of '*Malentendu*', see Harris, p. 167; and Villena, pp. 49-50. Maristany discusses 'Del otro lado' in '*La realidad y el deseo*' (pp. 30-31, 32). For different readings of 'Soledades', see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 177; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 121.
23. For other readings of 'Silla del rey', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 190, 198-202; Coleman, pp. 116, 121-30; Harris, pp. 102-03, 107-08, 113-14; Talens, pp. 128-30, 279, 309-10; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 112-13; Pinto, pp. 34-35, 100-01, 106; and Summerhill, pp. 153-57.
24. Other critics who have drawn attention to Philip II's pride are Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 202; and Harris, pp. 107, 113.
25. For other readings of this poem, see Müller, pp. 49-50; Harris, p. 174; Mercedes Cárdenas, 'Un tema cernudiano: el poeta como ser privilegiado', *Ínsula*, no. 327 (February 1974), 1 and 10 (p. 10); Sánchez Reboledo, pp. 12-13, and Sánchez Rosillo, p. 173.
26. For Sánchez Reboledo, this episode symbolizes 'la fragilidad del genio' and the opposition between 'las fuerzas verdaderamente constructivas' and 'los impulsos destructores' (p. 13), while, for Sánchez Rosillo, it represents one of the ways in which 'la sociedad burguesa' seeks to 'neutralizar el permanente peligro que el verdadero creador representa' (p. 173).

27. Other instances include 'Góngora' (pp. 330–32), '1936' (pp. 544–46; ll. 1–5) and 'Mozart', especially its third and final section (ll. 43–63). For other readings of 'Góngora', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 169, 193–94; Harris, pp. 110, 115–16, 154–56; Sánchez Reboledo, pp. 13–14; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 74–75; Maristany, 'La realidad y el deseo', pp. 38, 80–81; and Sánchez Rosillo, pp. 153–54. For other readings of '1936', see Harris, p. 175; Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', pp. 334–35; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 147–48; Villena, p. 51; and Pato, pp. 97–98, 101.
28. Jiménez-Fajardo has also noted that Goethe is a contradictory figure (p. 144). Müller speculates that the speaker's puzzlement is caused by Cernuda overlooking Goethe's interest in politics (p. 50).
29. For other readings of 'Díptico español', see Müller, p. 51; Cano, 'Estela', pp. 251–2, 254–55; Harris, pp. 168–69, 174–75; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 145–47; Villena, pp. 44–45; Antonio Muñoz Molina, 'Cernuda y Galdós: una elegía española', in *A una verdad: Luis Cernuda, 1902–1963*, ed. by Andrés Trapiello and Juan Manuel Bonet (Seville: Universidad internacional Menéndez Pelayo, 1988), pp. 62–63; José I. Gracia Noriega, 'España y Luis Cernuda', *CNor*, 10 (1989), 37–42 (pp. 40, 41–42); Michael Ugarte, 'Exilic Reality and Desire', in *Shifting Ground: Spanish Civil War Exile Literature* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), pp. 167–88 (pp. 182, 186–87); and LaFollette Miller, pp. 167–68, 173.
30. Jiménez-Fajardo (pp. 145, 146) and Müller (p. 51), among others, have also noted this poem's historical specificity and that the speaker seeks to recover a positive national tradition.
31. For other readings of 'Supervivencias tribales en el medio literario', see Harris, pp. 166, 167–68; and Villena, p. 50. See Harris (p. 166), Villena (p. 50), and Sahuquillo (p. 368) for other discussions of 'Otra vez, con sentimiento'.
32. For Muñoz Molina (p. 63), this situation fulfills the prophecy which Galdós made about Spain's future on the last page of the *Episodios nacionales*.
33. Poetry, conscience, and freedom also combine in the figure of Góngora in the poem of that name (ll. 14–15, 27–28, and 50–52).
34. I therefore disagree with Gracia Noriega (p. 40) and Quirarte (p. 117) who argue that the speaker adopts an individualist position. An individualist notion of freedom is rejected in the poem 'El prisionero' (p. 395) as a desolate victory, a figure of death (ll. 11–12). For another reading of 'El prisionero', see Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 103.
35. Jiménez-Fajardo describes Monsalud, the protagonist of the second series of *Episodios nacionales*, as a 'fighter for freedom and against tradition' (p. 146). For more information on Monsalud, see Brian J. Dendle, *Galdós: The Early Historical Novels* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), pp. 27, 88–127, 148–53, 155–57, 159–63, 165.
36. Similarly, Jiménez-Fajardo has argued that the speaker in 'Díptico español' both addresses himself to those who 'continue to respect life and reason' (p. 146) and seeks to echo the voice of those who, throughout Spain's history, 'sacrificed themselves against violence and unreason' (p. 147).
37. For other readings of 'Ser de Sansueña', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 198–99; Harris, pp. 89–90; Talens, pp. 128–29; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 113–14; Peyrègne, pp. 131–32; and Ugarte, p. 186.
38. Aline Kitching-Schulman, 'La realidad y el deseo: ¿autobiografía poética?', in *Teoría del discurso poético: Actes du Vème colloque du S[éminaire d'] Études L[itéraires]* (Toulouse: Toulouse-Le Mirail University Press, 1986), pp. 127–36 (p. 135). Other critics who are aware of the critical angle adopted in this poem include Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 202; Coleman, p. 116; and Summerhill, pp. 154, 156–57.

39. For other readings of 'El César', see Coleman, pp. 116, 130–35; Harris, pp. 135, 172; Ruiz Silva, p. 128; Kitching-Schulman, p. 135; and Summerhill, pp. 153–59.
40. Silver also argues that the Philip II of 'Silla del rey' is all but obsessed ('*Arcadia*', p. 200) and a 'near kin' of the 'mad' emperor in 'El César' ('*Arcadia*', p. 202) while Pinto describes Philip II as ill and obsessed (p. 102) and refers to the process of 'descomposición psicológica' visible in 'Silla del rey' (p. 106).

CHAPTER 2

GENDER IDENTITIES

In this chapter, which consists of two sections, I use ideas developed by the French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray in order to examine and stimulate discussion of the representation of masculinity and femininity in Cernuda's last four books of poetry. A further aim of this chapter is to suggest that gender is central to other, apparently ungendered issues, such as aesthetics, time, and nature, which have been the subject of much debate among Cernuda's critics. Therefore, instead of interpreting nature and the divine in universal terms as I did in the first chapter, in this chapter I develop gender-specific interpretations of them. In the first section, I focus on Irigaray's ideas concerning the role of the divine in the establishment and development of gender identity. This section initially focuses on poems in which the Christian God occupies an important place and examines the relation between those poems' portrayals of God and gender identity. I then draw out the similarities between those poems' representation of God and gender and that of poems which focus on goddesses from Greek mythology. I end the first section by examining some poems which offer more dynamic representations of gender in as much as they provide evidence of a greater respect for sexual difference on the part of their speaker and/or the power of the maternal-feminine to disrupt masculinity. My principal argument in the second section is that the male subject's relations to nature and boyhood can be understood as what Irigaray terms an 'obscure commemoration' of the maternal-feminine.¹ As in the first section, I also analyse a number of poems which testify to the maternal-feminine's potential to disrupt masculinity.

Gender and the Divine

In her essay 'Divine Women', Irigaray argues that woman can only become a subject in her own right if she posits her own God.² In doing so, Irigaray develops Feuerbach's argument in *The Essence of Christianity* that the human species can only exist if it posits a God ('Divine Women', p. 61, fn. 3). In contrast to Feuerbach, Irigaray rejects the concept of a gender-neutral humanity and insists that men and women have their own, different sexuate essences or gender identities. For Irigaray, in order to live or to become, it is necessary to will and, in order to will, one must have a goal. In Irigaray's opinion, the 'most valuable' goal is to preserve and develop life, that is, to 'go on *becoming*, infinitely' (p. 61). In order to achieve this goal of infinite becoming in the context of sexual difference—that is, in order for each sex to

develop an autonomous and living gender identity—each sex must have a ‘sexuate essence’ as its ‘horizon’ (p. 61), as both an ‘opening onto a beyond’ and a ‘limit that the other may or may not penetrate’ (‘Sexual Difference’, p. 17). In order to establish one’s sexuate essence, it is necessary to ‘orient [one’s] finiteness by reference to infinity’ (‘Divine Women’, p. 61), an orientation that implicitly involves performing two moves: firstly, adjusting one’s bodily specificity or finiteness to known facts and, secondly, defining an infinite form of one’s bodily specificity. It is in this second move that the divine comes into play since, for Irigaray, the divine guarantees the infinite for the sexed subject, male or female. Rather than being transcendental and static, however, this guarantee of the infinite, this sexed God, should be an infinite which ‘resides within us and among us, the god in us, the Other for us, becoming with and in us’ (p. 63) and should not be a ‘fixed objective, [...] a One postulated to be immutable’ (p. 67). From this it is clear that, for Irigaray, neither men’s nor women’s sexuate essence or gender identity should be understood as eternal but rather as constantly developing.³

The recognition that the human race is divided into two genders is one effect of orientating one’s finiteness. However, Irigaray argues, men created the Christian God in order to avoid their gender-specificity:

To avoid that finiteness, man has sought out a unique *male* God. God has been created out of man’s gender. He scarcely sets limits within Himself and between Himself: He is father, son, spirit. Man has not allowed himself to be defined by another gender: the female. His unique God is assumed to correspond to the human race (*genre humain*), which [...] is not neuter or neutral from the point of view of the difference of the sexes.

(pp. 61–62)

As this passage states, men’s creation of a falsely universal God has led to them avoiding their relation to their own bodily specificity and denying humanity’s division into two genders. As a result, the Christian divinity fails to acknowledge the specificity of both men and women’s identities. However, as will become apparent, the consequences of this failure—by both the Christian and the non-Christian divine in Cernuda’s last four books of poetry—are more severe for women than for men.

According to Irigaray, the female gender consists of two dimensions—mother and lover—both of which must be accommodated and united within woman’s God. Only if both these dimensions of women’s identity are acknowledged and developed can men conceive their own finiteness or gender identity. Over the last two thousand years, Irigaray argues, the development of women’s identity has been ‘paralyze[d]’ by the absence of a female God or trinity (mother–daughter–spirit) (p. 62). This absence has left women with no god of their own to become, with no representation of the freedom and

autonomy possible through their gender. In addition, it has meant that there has been no possibility of divinity being shared between mother and daughter, of the birth of a daughter representing the incarnation of a goddess. In contrast, the only way for women to become divine has been by assisting in the incarnation of the God of men by giving birth to the son of God.

Cernuda's poem 'Águila y rosa' (pp. 441–45) focuses on the experiences of Philip II in England and makes clear, in its portrait of him and Mary Tudor, the different role that the Christian God plays in male and female identity.⁴ For Philip II, being King of England generates a conflict between his true identity, which is linked with Spain, and his sense of duty to Charles V's greed for crowns (l. 2), a conflict clearly described in the third stanza (ll. 11–15). While lines fifty-one to seventy expand on the subordination of Philip II's 'ser propio' (l. 15) to the demands of life at the English court, the poem also shows that cracks appear in the King's façade that reveal the central place that Christianity occupies in his identity (ll. 56–60). A little later in the poem, Philip II's position as the Catholic king of a lapsed people (l. 78)—his inability to bring his English subjects under the wing of Catholicism—is described as one element of his alienation from all that is his (ll. 76–80) while his frustration with his situation and need for God find displaced expression in the soldier's song that he overhears (l. 80). Finally, Philip II returns to Castile because he can no longer bear the alienation from his true identity, including his desire to be an effective Catholic monarch, entailed by his dutiful allegiance to Charles V's wish that he be King of England (ll. 81–90). On returning to Castile, it remains for Philip II to:

Hacer que el mundo escuche y siga
 La pauta de la fe. Pudo mover los hombres,
 Hasta donde terminan los designios humanos
 Y empiezan los divinos. Ahí su voluntad descansa.
 Con ese acatamiento reina y muere y vive.
 (l. 96)

According to the narrator in these lines, Philip II was able to make others live in accordance with God's designs and, as a result of respecting the boundary between the so-called human and the divine, was rewarded with eternal life. The description of Philip II is similar to that of Cortes in 'Quetzalcóatl' (pp. 350–54).⁵ According to the speaker in 'Quetzalcóatl', Cortes was, at least during the conquest of Mexico, an obedient servant of the Christian God, 'un hombre/Tal manda Dios' (l. 36). The speaker also states that, as long as Cortes's identity was based on his respect for the divine-human distinction, it was guaranteed by God (ll. 97–101). Indeed, just

as Philip II won the divine attribute of eternity so too Cortes was for a time all but a god (ll. 99–100).

The first description of Mary Tudor in 'Águila y rosa' (ll. 26–35) sets the terms in which Mary Tudor's relation to God will take place in the remainder of the poem. The conditional clause (ll. 31–32) and the adverb 'quizá' (l. 33) indicate that nothing is certain for Mary Tudor in her relation to God: she has no guarantee that her years of suffering have not been, in fact, a 'denial of the divine' ('Divine Women', p. 67) rather than an extended prelude to her salvation. The inappropriateness of the Christian God to the Queen's identity as a woman is also suggested by the reduction of her body's temporality to a process of increasing decay and loss (her body is almost withered (l. 26) and her youth gone (l. 35)), a process which, according to Irigaray, does not adequately represent the economy of female sexuality.⁶ In 'Águila y rosa', God is not an enabling horizon for Mary Tudor's identity but rather an unpredictable and mean-spirited exchange partner. To all intents and purposes, Mary Tudor lives in a state of dereliction, a term which describes the 'state of being abandoned by God' (Whitford, p. 77).

At the same time, lines twenty-six to thirty-five also suggest that the Queen's relation to God may be about to undergo a change for the better through the fulfilment of her hope to love and to be loved (l. 30).⁷ This possibility is nourished in the next three stanzas by the propitious description of the sky (ll. 38–39), the comparison between the arrival of Philip II and the Annunciation (ll. 41–42) and her own hope (l. 40), the tenacity of which is underlined by the contrast between the sky's ominously cloudy appearance on her wedding day and its continued blueness in her (ll. 46–48). It is important to note, however, that the Queen's salvation from suffering, her receipt from God of a piece of happiness (l. 34), would coincide with her assumption of woman's classic Christian role, that of being mother to the son. The first indication of this comes when, referring to the bells and trumpets with which Philip II is welcomed to England, the narrator asks a question which creates a parallel between Christ and the son Mary Tudor longs for (ll. 41–42), while the second indication is found later (ll. 71–73) where she is described as trusting in 'el hijo' (l. 71) to make her happy. However, even woman's traditional Christian role is not available to Mary Tudor: 'Pero todo fue engaño; rezó y esperó en vano' (l. 74). In the face of the Queen's abandonment by God, the narrator seeks to salvage some value from the wreckage. Although, once Philip II has returned to Castile, all that remains for Mary Tudor is to die alone (l. 91), the narrator claims, as Harris (p. 138) points out, that Mary Tudor's life had value because she knew the shadow of love (ll. 93–95). In other words, she almost found salvation through love (in the form of marriage and motherhood), a proximity the

narrator considers a form of spiritual fertility. Such a form of salvation would, however, have reinforced the paralysis of her identity suggested earlier by God's mean-spiritedness and unpredictability.

'Las ruinas' (pp. 323–26) offers an important definition of the Christian God as well as a glimpse on to life after the death of God.⁸ According to the speaker, the Christian God does not really exist but is, rather, merely an inverted sign of humans' fear and powerlessness, a creation of human language and emotion (ll. 51–52). In keeping with this, a little later in the poem, the speaker classifies God as one of the eternal deaf gods that are nourished by humans' prayers and annihilated by their forgetfulness (ll. 63–65). By attributing omnipotence to God, humans define omnipotence as the horizon of their identity. However, such a definition of the horizon of human identity testifies to that horizon's false universality: according to Irigaray, the divine is represented as absolute master because relations between the sexes diminish or destroy the maternal-feminine and do not allow women their own life as subjects ('Sexual Difference', p. 10).

Rejecting the Christian God, the speaker states that the desire to instil eternity in the transient will be the basis of his life without God (ll. 59–62). However, these lines suggest that the speaker cannot entirely live without God because he needs God's cooperation to do so (ll. 59–60). In the same vein, the speaker's desire to fill the ephemeral with eternity (ll. 61–62) is synonymous with the thirst for eternity which he previously described as instilled in men by God (ll. 45–47). Furthermore, the speaker identifies with God and sets himself up as His earthly equivalent by claiming that his thirst for eternity is of the same value as God's omnipotence (ll. 61–62).⁹ Finally, the speaker defines life and his own actions after God's death largely in terms of impermanence and death (ll. 57–60 and 66–67).¹⁰ However, even here, where the speaker's rejection of God appears most complete, the influence of the divine is still evident since, according to the speaker himself, God made humans to die (ll. 45–46). This representation of God echoes the image of God as 'sheer oblivion and loss, [...] a crumbling away of existence' ('Divine Women', p. 67) which Irigaray rejects as an obstacle to the individual and collective fulfilment of gender identity.¹¹ The speaker's emphasis on the impermanence of human life is, therefore, further evidence of his continuing loyalty to his identity as the creation of a falsely universal God. In conclusion, 'Las ruinas' reveals the persistence and false universality of the Christian God, characteristics which pose insuperable obstacles to the successful realization of male and female gender identity even after his supposed death.

Despite the inhibiting influence that the Christian God has on the development of gender identity, Cernuda's later poetry shows that switching

to other divinities does not automatically produce more favourable results. Indeed, the characteristics of the Christian God in 'Las ruinas'—omnipotence and destructiveness—are echoed in the description of the Greek mythological monster the Chimaera in 'Desolación de la Quimera' (pp. 527–30).¹² For example, the Chimaera describes its divine desire as one which is realized in seeing '[e]l hombre' submissive before her and which used to beat humans into submission like animals (ll. 35–38). Furthermore, the Chimaera states that she rewarded some of her victims with aridity, ruin, and death (ll. 59–60), and drove others mad with their hopes and dreams (ll. 66–68). Since she either destroyed the identity of those who turned to her or offered them a future of madness, it is clear that the Chimaera was a profoundly inadequate horizon of identity.

That the Chimaera was primarily a horizon for male identity is made clear by three elements of her monologue. Firstly, the poets who currently heed the Chimaera are, among other things, bald (l. 46). Secondly, the Chimaera contrasts a past in which 'el hombre' served her and was tempted by her secrets (ll. 41–42) with a present in which 'no muchos' seek out her secret because they find their personal sad Chimaera in women (ll. 49–50). That these individuals who find their personal Chimaera in women are men is suggested by the description of their relationship with women as reproductive: the Chimaera expresses her repulsion at being sought out by people who have changed their child's nappies or wiped a child's nose (ll. 51–53). Thirdly, the Chimaera exemplifies her past destructiveness by saying that, if a prudent man sought her out, she would strangle him (ll. 69–70).

The appropriation by men of a female goddess, the Chimaera, has disastrous consequences not only, as I have shown, for their own gender identity but also for that of women. The Chimaera's detrimental effect on women is suggested by three elements in particular. Firstly, the Chimaera's description of the woman-mother as man's personal Chimaera (l. 50) transfers the goddess's attributes onto women who, as a result, are portrayed as human beings containing a potential for monstrosity and destructiveness. Secondly, the Chimaera refers to her sister, the Sphinx, as her rival (l. 30), as competing for the attention of the same men. Such rivalry, according to Irigaray, is caused by women's lack of an identity as women, which forces them to compete for the place of the mother in order to be loved by men.¹³ Such rivalry among women confirms their lack of a female trinity (in this poem, the Chimaera's failure to guarantee their gender) since, without a God, women are left in a state in which sharing among themselves implies 'fusion-confusion, division, and dislocation' ('Divine Women', p. 62). Finally, the Chimaera's destructiveness and the composite nature of her body (half-

animal, half-woman; ll. 13–15) both indicate that she does not guarantee a specifically female identity. According to Irigaray, woman acts as an ‘agent of destruction and annihilation’ when she lacks her own other to become and is divided between the human and the inhuman because she lacks a goddess who can ‘open up the perspective in which [her] flesh can be transfigured’ (*‘Divine Women’*, p. 64).

The siren of the short poem ‘Las sirenas’ (pp. 494–95) is a further example of a composite female monster from Greek mythology that is of particular significance to men and fails to guarantee an adequate identity for men and women.¹⁴ That the Chimaera and the siren embody the same horizon of identity is suggested by the various similarities between their attributes and effects: both creatures sing (ll. 1–6, 9–12, 16–17, 76); their songs are attractive (ll. 12, 79); both creatures possess and madden people (ll. 15, 61, 66–67); and both are associated with mystery (ll. 1, 29–30, 36, 42, 45, 57). Finally, both creatures also bestow destruction on the individuals who heed them (ll. 18, 59–60). The destructiveness (for both men and women) of the horizon represented by the siren is made clear in the narrator’s statement that whoever hears the sirens once is widowed and disconsolate forever (l. 18). In other words, either sex’s relation to the siren is one of eternal sorrow (individuals are ‘desolado[s]’) and results in a literal death for the other sex (men and women remain ‘viudo[s]’).

The association of the Chimaera and the siren with mystery suggests that these figures can also be seen as, in part, examples of ‘those points of recalcitrance’ in patriarchal representations of women that ‘indicate points of “repression” and sites of [the] symptomatic eruption of femininity’ (Grosz, p. 109). A further instance of femininity’s disruption of patriarchal masculinity is found in ‘Quetzalcóatl’, where the speaker gives a retrospective account of his experiences as a member of the army with which Cortes defeated the Aztecs during the Spanish invasion of Mexico. For the speaker, the most significant of these experiences was the miracle (l. 3) of seeing the defeated Aztec king Moctezuma, which Summerhill analyses in detail in relation to the dramatic monologue genre (pp. 159–61). As I will show, the speaker’s comments about this supposedly miraculous event are contradictory. In keeping with this contradictoriness, the belief in something as a miracle, according to Irigaray, is often a ‘result of weakness or narrowness in the field of conception’, a field which is traditionally the ‘privilege of the masculine’.¹⁵ As I will demonstrate, the contradiction in the speaker’s account of his vision of Moctezuma is a conceptual weakness that is inseparable from the return of the maternal-feminine into his relation to the divine and his gender identity.

In the poem's opening lines, the speaker emphatically states that, although he was present when the supposed miracle occurred, he doesn't want his listeners to ask him how or from where Moctezuma appeared. However, later in the poem, the speaker tells his audience both where Moctezuma came from and how the Aztec ruler approached the conquering Spaniards (ll. 82–85). Furthermore, the speaker also describes the state in which Moctezuma surrendered (ll. 94–96). Accompanying this contradiction is the speaker's experience of the fulfilment of his masculinity: for the speaker, seeing Moctezuma was like seeing God ('Me pareció romperse el velo mismo/De los últimos cielos, desnuda ya la gloria', l. 86). The realization of the speaker's gender identity, therefore, occurs at the same time as a 'weakness or narrowness' ('The Envelope', p. 92) is revealed in his thought by the contradiction in his narrative and the description of the sight of Moctezuma as a miracle. The link between the question of maternity and this paradoxical simultaneity of masculinity's fulfilment and conceptual failure is suggested by the echoes of birth in the description of Moctezuma's surrender. Not only does Moctezuma emerge through the arches and doors that the capital opened (ll. 82–83) but also, recalling the waters of the womb, he does so like a wave ('onduló', l. 84). Furthermore, he is carried forth by slaves (ll. 84–85), who take the place of midwives. The speaker's comment on seeing the defeated Aztec ruler—'no es rey quien nace, y Cortés lo sabía' (l. 97)—is further evidence of a connection between Moctezuma's appearance and the maternal-feminine: seeing Moctezuma reminds the speaker of the divine-human distinction and, implicitly, of the dependence of all human existence on the mother. The intrusion of maternity into the speaker's description of Moctezuma's appearance, into his experience of his masculinity's fulfilment, reveals the maternal-feminine to be the disruptive ground of, and a symptom of weakness in, men's relation to their gender and God.

Our understanding of the role of Greek goddesses in Cernuda's later poetry, however, will remain incomplete if we do not acknowledge that, at times, men's relation to a female deity goes some way towards acknowledging and respecting sexual difference. The poem 'Urania' (pp. 328–29) is one such poem. 'Urania' describes a statue of the goddess standing in a wood of plane trees at the foot of a waterfall and the significance she has for the poem's speaker.¹⁶ The two references to Urania's virginity (ll. 7 and 17) suggest that she embodies a specifically female horizon of identity that is not caught within patriarchal relations. According to Irigaray, one of the ways in which women can achieve a human identity is through the legal inscription of virginity as a 'component of female identity that cannot [...] in any way be converted into cash by the patriarchal family, state, or religion'.¹⁷ Such an inscription of virginity, Irigaray argues, can provide a positive individual and

social identity for girls and women which will contest and replace their status as the commodities whose exchange by and among men founds the patriarchal cultural order ('How Do We Become Civil Women?', p. 61).¹⁸

The autonomy of Urania's identity is also signalled by the hardness or irreducibility of the diamond on her forehead (l. 8), by the transcendental position she occupies in relation to life's suffering (ll. 21–23) and by her description as 'rosa del silencio' (l. 30). As the 'rosa del silencio', Urania flourishes on the other side of the speaker's language: in as much as his language cannot describe her, she marks and reminds us of the limits of his speech. Consequently, we should not confuse Urania's identity with the speaker's description of her statue: the latter is an imperfect portrait of the former which, in fact, exceeds the speaker's language. The poem's status as a representation of Urania is underlined by the fact that Urania moves the speaker to use signs or numbers (l. 18). Furthermore, she creates beauty without compromising her autonomy: she remains the virgin creator of beauty (l. 17). Beauty and, by implication, the poem do not impinge on her gender identity, which transcends its creations. In the poem's final stanza, therefore, when the speaker anticipates that he will relate to himself differently as a result of seeking the shelter of Urania's love (ll. 26–29), his new relation is implicitly grounded in his recognition of sexual difference.

In '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*' (pp. 498–99), the speaker's description of the nymph as naked (ll. 17 and 29) and his reference to her carnal beauty (l. 19) make clear that he is describing a woman's body.¹⁹ Contrary to Ruiz Silva's claim that the poem celebrates the beauty of the nymph and the shepherd (p. 173), our attention is solely focused on the nymph's body by the importance the speaker attributes to it: for him, it is the painting's centre and reason (ll. 23–24). This focus on and privileging of the divine female body is transformed into respect by the emphasis the speaker places on the tenderness and love (ll. 30–33) with which he claims Titian painted the nymph's body.

However, in both '*Urania*' and '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*', an opposing current of indifference to the particularity of gender identity also circulates around the divine female body. Contradicting the speaker's recognition of Urania's autonomous gender identity, there is also a universalizing thread to '*Urania*', which is indicated by two factors: the concealment of the gender of the individuals who benefit from her influence—they are simply referred to as souls (l. 19)—and the reference to Urania restoring silence over the world (l. 13). These aspects of the poem suggest that men and women have the same relation to Urania, even though the speaker has made it clear that Urania cannot be represented in his (that is, men's) language. In '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*', the speaker describes the nymph's body in order to fulfil the wish of the 'tú' to represent the implicitly ungendered human form (ll. 12–13).

Whereas, in 'Urania', the poem's status as a representation of the goddess was a factor in its acknowledgement of sexual difference, in '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*', the speaker's implicit recognition of the artifice of his representation of the nymph—his statement that the human form will be represented in the contradictory medium of silent speech (ll.13–14)—is part of a universalizing project.²⁰ Furthermore, the reference to the nymph's body as the painting's pleasure (l. 24) posits the divine female body as a source of pleasure for the male painter and viewer rather than for the nymph herself and, as a result, reduces her identity to that of a commodity exchanged among men. The painting, therefore, alienates the nymph from her body rather than, as López Castro (p. 97) has argued, providing it with its own materiality. The woman-mother is also reduced to a commodity in '*Las islas*' (pp. 427–30) where she is both represented as a prostitute for a male client (ll. 34–60) and described with the same adjectives as a piece of silk that the male speaker saw for sale (ll. 8–10, 50).²¹ In keeping with this, her client subordinates her pleasure to his and, when he leaves, takes with him the bracelet that had symbolized her pleasure (ll. 54–60). Finally, as in '*Desolación de la Quimera*', the woman-mother in '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*' is identified with animality given that Titian is said to have instilled animal innocence (l. 28) in the nymph's body.

Just as in '*Quetzalcóatl*' the maternal-feminine was a symptom of a conceptual weakness in men's relation to their gender and divine, so the presence of contradictory currents around the divine female body in 'Urania' and '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*' is evidence of the speaker's inability fully to take into consideration his bodily specificity: it is a precondition of his recognition and representation of autonomous female subjectivity that he have some awareness of the fulfilment of his own gender. That this precondition has not been met in '*Ninfa y pastor, por Ticiano*' is shown by the speaker's contradictory representation of Titian's and, by extension, the 'tú's' identity as both universal and specific. In the poem's last three lines, the speaker refers to Titian's human fervour despite describing it as still as innocent as it had been in the young man destined to be a man (ll. 40–42). The 'tú's' identity is also subject to this contradiction since, like Titian, the 'tú' is one of those people who were born to be men (ll. 6–8).

Gender, Nature, and Place

The absence of sexual difference in some of the poems I have analysed so far in this chapter is powerfully condensed in the narrator's description of the royal marriage in '*Águila y rosa*' where the royal couple, prostrated before God, are one in the flesh (l. 50). This description echoes Irigaray's argument that, historically, love between the sexes usually occurred 'in the *One*' and

that, in the present, relations between men and women take the form of an 'enslaving complementarity'²² which involves men's diminution of the maternal-feminine and is the hidden cause of the divine's representation as absolute master ('Sexual Difference', p. 10), a representation we have seen in poems like 'Desolación de la Quimera' and 'Las ruinas'. Within the terms of this complementary relation, the maternal-feminine 'represents *place* for man' but is '*separated from "üs" own place*' (p. 10) and, as a result, is conceived of as a threat to men (p. 11). Part and parcel of the woman-mother's separation from her own place is man's appropriation of her to constitute his acts which, as a result, can be interpreted as an 'obscure commemoration' of his 'prenatal home' (p. 11). In this section, I will examine the ways in which these ideas can help us to understand the male subject's relations to nature and boyhood in Cernuda's later poetry. On the one hand, I argue that the poems I analyse in this section represent precisely such an 'obscure commemoration' of the maternal-feminine since many of their images and analogies have strong associations with it. In other words, in these poems, the speaker uses the maternal-feminine as material with which to represent a place for himself. On the other hand, as in the previous section, these poems also contain evidence of the maternal-feminine's power to disrupt the masculinity represented in them. According to Irigaray, men 'unwittingly' place women in an 'unlimited site' by appropriating the maternal-feminine or using for themselves the resources that would allow women to represent their own specific place. It is this association of the maternal-feminine with unlimitedness that leads men to perceive women as a threat (pp. 10–11). In inadequate exchange for their appropriation of her, Irigaray argues, men put 'limits' on the woman-mother, of which those of the home are one example (p. 11).

In 'El indolente' (p. 365), we are confronted with exactly this limitation of the woman-mother inside a house, behind the bars of a grille (l. 11).²³ Although the eponymous man exemplifies a form of masculinity in which men relate to nature without depleting its resources and do not exploit one another (ll. 1–4), this new masculinity respects neither women's nor men's autonomous identity. That the indolent man's new relations to other men and nature are bought at the expense of women's gender identity is made clear by the fact that, although a woman makes possible his new relations by buying his goods (ll. 11–15), his material need for her does not lead to a more developed exchange between them. Indeed, the poem's final stanza describes the man as satisfying his physical and emotional needs alone (ll. 16–20). The role of silence within the poem is also of interest: both the economic exchange between the man and woman (ll. 11–15) and the man's relation to nature (ll. 19–20) are silent. Given the link Irigaray makes between

language, God, and place ('Divine Women', pp. 67, 71), these silences can be understood as evidence that the man and woman both lack their own gender-specific place. As I have already noted, one effect of the woman-mother's lack of her own place is that she comes to represent place for man. In keeping with this, the woman in 'El indolente' is described from the man's point of view as comparable to the earth (ll. 13-14), a comparison echoed in the claim that Titian had instilled a 'gracia terrestre' in the nymph's body ('*Ninfa y pastor*, por Ticiano', l. 28). Given this association of the maternal-feminine with the earth, the man's desire not to deplete nature's resources in 'El indolente' (ll. 1-4) can also be understood as a desire to keep available for himself the resources of the maternal-feminine. Such a desire is consonant with the woman's location inside the house and an effective brake on the symbolization of an autonomous female identity.

That the frequently anthropomorphic description of nature in Cernuda's later poetry reflects the subject rather than revealing anything about nature itself is made clear in the penultimate line of 'El árbol' (pp. 392-94), where the narrator states that the eponymous tree 'sólo aparece triste a quien triste le mira' (l. 59).²⁴ This statement suggests that the tree's subsequent description as 'ser de un mundo perfecto donde el hombre es extraño' (l. 60) reflects the male subject's desire to separate himself from and to preserve nature, which supports Coleman's argument that the poem does not express a 'metaphysical impulse for union' with nature (pp. 52-53).²⁵ The desire not to use up the resources of nature and, implicitly, those of the maternal-feminine can, therefore, be understood as motivating the description of nature's unattainability that recurs in Cernuda's later poetry and that is clearly expressed at the end of 'El indolente' in the image of the protagonist gazing at the stars in the night sky (l. 20).²⁶ Another example of the desire to preserve nature is 'Los espinos' (pp. 354-55), a description of hawthorn bushes in spring on a hillside (ll. 1-4) and an analysis of their value for the poem's male 'tú' (ll. 5-12).²⁷ According to the narrator, as other critics have emphasized (for example, Silver, '*Arcadia*', p. 149; Coleman, pp. 50-51; Harris, p. 151; and Gullón, pp. 86-87), the difference between nature and the 'tú' mirrors that between cyclical time and linear time:

Cuántos ciclos florecidos
Les has visto; aunque a la cita
Ellos serán siempre fieles,
Tú no lo serás un día.

(l. 5)

However, these lines also reveal an arresting of nature because they posit it as a site of constancy or fidelity (ll. 6–7). It is this description of nature as constant and different to human beings that testifies to the desire to preserve nature.²⁸ In the same vein, in ‘El retraído’ (pp. 399–400), the narrator states that, unlike memories, natural objects do not only have the form lent to them by the ‘tú’'s mind (ll. 9–14).²⁹ In other words, natural objects in part escape determination by the forms bestowed on them by the male subject and are, in this respect, inaccessible to him. As that which cannot be wholly determined, nature is associated with formlessness, a formlessness that, according to Whitford (p. 66), has traditionally been represented as female. An example of this association is found in ‘Las islas’ when the male speaker describes the prostitute as ‘fría, dura, flexible, escurridiza’ (l. 50). In keeping with their association with formlessness, women’s function has been to ‘subtend’ symbolic processes, to ‘represent that which is outside discourse’ (Whitford, p. 66) or, as Irigaray puts it, to be the ‘substrate for any possible determination of identity’ (‘Love of Same’, p. 99). Behind the male subject’s relation to nature and as its implicit condition of possibility subsists the maternal-feminine.

A number of Cernuda’s later poems about nature exemplify Irigaray’s argument that man ‘exists in his nostalgia for a return to the ONE WHOLE; his desire to go back toward and into the originary womb’ (‘Love of Same’, p. 100). Such a return, Irigaray continues, is only possible if man is ‘sure of a foundation within which there is place’ (p. 100), a place that men make the maternal-feminine represent for them (‘Sexual Difference’, p. 10). However, as I have already noted, such a reduction of the woman-mother is accompanied by her representation as a threat to men, a representation the effects of which I shall study later in the chapter.

In ‘Hacia la tierra’ (pp. 361–62), for example, the soul is described as returning to the eponymous land out of a mixture of desire (ll. 24–28) and necessity (ll. 13–14, 28–32).³⁰ That the portrait of the speaker’s homeland draws on the maternal-feminine is suggested by the references to the soul’s homeland as ‘la imagen primera’ (l. 6) and as its ‘morada/[...] antigua’ (ll. 27–28), the final image of a watery fusion between the soul and the earth (ll. 28–32) and, finally, by Harris’s statement that, in this poem, Cernuda’s desire to be ‘absorbed in the *bosom* of the earth is related to a desire to return to *his life’s starting point*’ (p. 91; my emphasis).³¹ The importance of gender and its symbolic associations in Cernuda’s poems about his homeland is made clear in ‘Luna llena en Semana Santa’ (pp. 537–38) where a reference to ‘clarines masculinos’ (l. 6) and ‘la flauta/Y oboe femeninos’ (l. 7) forms part of the description of his home city.³² Similarly, for Silver, the poem’s final line (l. 28) is evidence of the happiness the young Cernuda

enjoyed in 'el regazo de la madre naturaleza' (*De la mano*, p. 72). The connections between the speaker's homeland and the maternal-feminine suggested in 'Hacia la tierra' are explicit in 'Quetzalcóatl' (ll. 25–30), where the speaker compares his departure for the so-called New World to the cutting of an invisible cord, states that his tie to his homeland kept him alive just as the child is nourished in the womb and refers to Spain as his step-mother. (He does not, however, feel nostalgia for his homeland.) The importance that the speaker attributes to his relation to his homeland is in stark contrast to his attitude towards his first source of life:

Una aldea cualquiera
Me vio nacer allá en el mundo viejo
Y apenas vivo me adiestré en la vida
Del miserable.

(l. 4)

The marginalization of the speaker's mother is apparent both in the speed with which he mentions his birth and in his claim that he learnt about life by himself and contrasts with the love he professes for his homeland (l. 29). However, that his relation to his homeland borrows images and terms from his relation to his mother suggests that the former can appropriately be understood as an 'obscure commemoration' ('Sexual Difference', p. 11) of the latter.

The obscurely commemorative character of the male subject's relation to nature is also clear in 'El chopo' (pp. 362–63), which expresses the narrator's wish that, after his body's death, the soul should be reincarnated as a poplar tree.³³ The narrator's description of the reincarnated soul as covered with the poplar's trunk (ll. 7–9) and of the poplar as the child of the wind and the earth (ll. 9–10) posits nature as an envelope. Behind the envelope of the poplar's trunk, there is, in turn, the productive matrix of the wind and earth.³⁴ The attribution of maternal-feminine characteristics to nature in 'El chopo', its status as the soul's envelope and the producer of a child, again indicates that the male subject's relation to nature is built on the resources of imagery the woman-mother provides yet does not acknowledge its source in her body.³⁵ This suggestion is strengthened by juxtaposing the unconsciousness of the soul as a poplar (ll. 7–9) with Irigaray's tentative equation of the maternal-feminine with the unconscious³⁶ and by the poplar's description as unchanging (l. 12), which echoes the portrayal of nature as constant in 'Los espinos'.

This same relation of unacknowledged dependence is also found in 'Niño tras un cristal' (p. 492), which describes a boy in a room in the late afternoon/early evening, the male subject's identity is also built on and

disrupted by the mother's body.³⁷ Just as in 'Luna llena en Semana Santa' the boy learns about life alone (ll. 18–22), so the boy in 'Niño tras un cristal' is alone and apparently has no need of other people: he only relates to nature, books, and himself. As it progresses, the poem comes to focus on the boy's own generative power. The first stanza describes the boy watching the rain falling outside and a street lamp, the second concentrates on the room, the third and the fourth on the boy himself while the poem's fifth and final stanza consists of only one line: 'En su sombra [la del niño] ya se forma la perla' (l. 21). With the same effect, the image of the room enveloping the boy (ll. 6–7) is repeated in the later description of the boy enveloping himself (l. 16).³⁸ However, this, the boy's moment of greatest autonomy, is also, paradoxically, a moment of weakness since it is now that his identity's dependence on the maternal-feminine is revealed: the noun 'seno' (l. 16) can also mean 'breast' and 'womb' (in the expression 'seno materno') and, therefore, points back beyond the room to the boy's first envelope, his mother.³⁹ This is also suggested by Jiménez-Fajardo's comment that this poem echoes other poems by Cernuda to do with the 'birth of poetry in solitude', including 'La familia', in which the 'child's "difference" [...] is an alienness growing in the darkness within him' (p. 142). The woman-mother, in other words, has been repressed by yet lends her form to the boy's subsequent envelopes.

As I have noted, the reduction of the woman-mother necessary for her to represent place for men is accompanied by her portrayal as a threat to men. This duality is found in some of Cernuda's later poetry. For example, it is no surprise that the supposedly formless prostitute of 'Las islas' I have already mentioned should also make her client anxious: the man not only overhears, from inside the prostitute's room, the words "le encontraron muerto" (l. 45) and imagines them as a possible omen of his own fate (l. 47) but also he compares the prostitute's naked body to a drawn knife (l. 49). The same combination of desire for and anxiety about the maternal-feminine is also found in 'Tierra nativa' (pp. 329–30), where a male speaker remembers his geographical birthplace and describes his relation to it in the present.⁴⁰ Throughout the poem and in keeping with a description of a geographical place, the speaker describes his origin in terms of natural and human objects: a lemon tree, a fountain, a wall, a swallow, water (ll. 7–15). However, on one occasion, he establishes a similarity between his birthplace and a human being by describing it as 'extendida como una mano abierta' (l. 6), which suggests that his relation to his birthplace is entwined with his relation to another person. That the speaker's relation to his geographical origin is inextricable from the male subject's relation to the maternal-feminine is suggested by two factors. Firstly and most importantly, his birthplace is

described as 'aquel amor primero' (l. 22), a first love which the mother gives to the child," and, secondly, his birthplace is a now irrecoverable place of fertility (ll. 7–12) and gestation (ll. 13–18).

While many critics have rightly commented on the poem's nostalgic tone (for example, Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 193; Gullón, p. 84; and Utrera, pp. 138–39), it is important not to overlook the speaker's imprisonment in his relation to his birthplace. Given his origin's borrowings from the maternal-feminine, it should not come as a surprise that the speaker's relation to his birth-place is paradoxical: his birth-place is an irrepressible dream or memory whose influence on him becomes more insistent as the distance between him and his origin increases:

Raíz del tronco verde, ¿quién la arranca?
 Aquel amor primero, ¿quién lo vence?
 Tu sueño y tu recuerdo, ¿quién lo olvida,
 Tierra nativa, más mía cuanto más lejana?
 (l. 21)

Although these lines appear to indicate that the speaker is resigned to his inability to tear out or conquer (ll. 21–22) the memory/dream of his birthplace, the violence of the verbs 'arrancar' and 'vencer' suggests that his resignation is the result of his inability to find the release he desires, rather than, as Gracia Noriega has claimed, evidence that he does not seek to tear himself away from the memory of Spain (p. 37). That the poem should conclude with the statement of this paradoxical relation reinforces the suggestion that the speaker is trapped in his relation to his birthplace.

Although the poem's last stanza (ll. 21–24) points to the failure by the father definitively to outlaw a relation to the woman-mother that Irigaray mentions ('Body against Body', p. 15), it also portrays maternal power as a trap, a portrayal that results from the absence of a positive symbolization of the child's relation to the mother and her generative power (p. 16). In 'Tierra nativa', therefore, the parallels between the speaker's birth-place and the maternal-feminine as well as the negative portrayal of maternal power confirm Irigaray's argument that the woman-mother is threatening to men (a trap for the poem's speaker) because she lacks her own 'place' and 'is or ceaselessly becomes the place of the other who cannot separate himself from it' ('Sexual Difference', pp. 10–11).

Often, however, the disruption of masculinity in Cernuda's later poetry is subtler and less linked with violence. In 'Un momento todavía' (pp. 463–64), a male 'tú' is described standing at an open window looking out at the sea and rain as night falls. Just as the narrator of 'Otros aires' (pp. 416–17) states that nature might hold a promise for the male viewer which escapes complete

determination (ll. 24–28),⁴² the final stanza of ‘Un momento todavía’ portrays nature as exercising a power over the male subject that he does not understand:

En la ventana abierta
De la casa, aún te quedas
Sin saber lo que esperas.
(l. 10)

The presence in nature of God (ll. 1–3), the guarantee of male subjectivity, suggests that the incomprehensibility of nature’s effect on the male subject is also a sign of an unconsciousness in his relation to his gender identity. Given Irigaray’s tentative equation of the feminine with the unconscious to which I have already referred, the confusion that the contemplation of nature arouses in the ‘tú’ can be understood as the gentle disruption of his identity by the maternal-feminine. This interpretation is strengthened when it is recalled that the sky is described as an envelope (l. 2), which echoes the description of nature in ‘El chopo’ and points to the speaker’s desire to separate himself from nature thereby to preserve it.

The speaker’s borrowing from the woman-mother in his relation to his birth-place and nature and the maternal-feminine’s disruption of his identity are also evident in ‘Lo más frágil es lo que dura’ (pp. 468–69), in which, as in ‘Luna llena en Semana Santa (l. 27), the youth of the male ‘tú’ is described as his first existence (l. 13), a description made possible by the forgetting of his relation to his mother.⁴³ This repression is repeated (ll. 9–13), albeit in relation to a different object, when (the memory of) the smell of orange blossom, metonym or ‘objective correlative’ (Harris, p. 92) of the ‘tú’’s youth, represents his youth by excluding any other elements (for example, friends or lovers) and is defined as ‘lo más hondo’ of his existence (ll. 21–22).⁴⁴ The ‘tú’’s youth is, therefore, defined not only as his origin or, as Harris puts it, the ‘foundation of his personality’ (p. 93) but also as a time of solitude. Two factors in particular suggest that the description of the ‘tú’’s youth appropriates the maternal body. Firstly, one of the objects repressed by the smell of orange blossom is blood (l. 11) and blood indicates a relation to the mother (Whitford, p. 118). And, secondly, the smell of the ‘tú’’s youth is said to envelop him (ll. 6–9) just as his mother did before his birth. However, accompanying this appropriation, is the poem’s closure with a rhetorical question—‘¿Hubo algo más?’ (l. 26)—which suggests not the irony Harris believes (p. 93, fn. 50) but a defensiveness against the threat of the repressed and appropriated maternal-feminine out of which the description of the ‘tú’’s youth is built.

One of the most noteworthy characteristics of the representation of gender identity in Cernuda's later poetry is its complexity and variety. The relation between the divine and gender covers situations which include the denial of women's gender identity, the partial fulfilment of men's and a faltering respect for sexual difference. The simultaneous complexity of the divine-gender relation resides in the fact that, on the one hand, the maternal-feminine retains the power to disrupt patriarchal masculinity while, on the other, respect for and indifference to sexual difference can be found side by side. In the light of this variety and complexity, it would be misleading to claim that Cernuda's later poetry offered a one-dimensional view of the gender-divine relation. What we find instead is not an irreducibly oppressive representation of masculinity for a fully realized respect for female subjectivity but, rather, a conflictive and unstable relation between the two. The degree of instability and conflict in relations between the sexes is greater in Cernuda's portrayal of the divine and gender than it is in his representations of nature and boyhood, which tend to provide strong support for Irigaray's claims about the commemorative character of the male subject's acts. It would, nevertheless, be wrong to deny the potential the maternal-feminine continues to possess to disrupt the masculinity portrayed in the second section's poems. By reminding us of the need for men and women to articulate their own specific gender identities, the maternal-feminine's disruptive potential points tentatively towards the possibility of a new era in relations between the sexes.

NOTES

1. Luce Irigaray, 'Sexual Difference', in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, trans. by Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), pp. 5-19 (p. 11).
2. Luce Irigaray, 'Divine Women', in *Sexes and Genealogies*, trans. by Gillian C. Gill (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), pp. 57-72. For other discussions of the divine in Irigaray's work, see Elizabeth Grosz, *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 140-83; and Margaret Whitford, *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the Feminine* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 47-48, 140-47.
3. For discussions of essence in Irigaray's work, see Diana Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 55-72; and Whitford, pp. 135-40.
4. For other readings of 'Águila y rosa', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 200-01; Talens, pp. 133, 309-10; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 116.
5. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 38, 197; Coleman, pp. 116-21; Harris, pp. 156, 159; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 85-87; and Summerhill, pp. 153-56, 159-61.
6. 'A Chance for Life: Limits to the Concept of the Neuter and the Universal in Science and Other Disciplines', in *Sexes and Genealogies*, pp. 185-206 (p. 200). See also, Luce Irigaray, 'How Old Are You?', in *Je, tu, nous: Toward a Culture of Difference*, trans. by Alison Martin (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 113-17.

7. Mary Tudor's hope for love is echoed in Manona's impatience with a God who tests his creatures' emotions by depriving them of their loved ones ('Hablando a Manona', pp. 540–42; ll. 1–25). Manona's impatience also represents her desire for a new kind of God, one more generous and less punitive than the one the poem describes. For other readings of 'Hablando a Manona', see Harris, p. 166; and Villena, p. 55.
8. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 39–40, 165–66; Harris, pp. 84–85, 103, 151, 154, 155; Bruton, 'Exile Poetry', pp. 390–91; and Pato, pp. 67–77.
9. Armando López Castro also highlights the mirroring of God in the poet when he writes that 'lo que de modo originario vale para los Inmortales, llenar el instante de eternidad, eso mismo vale, como imitación, para el poeta en tanto que hombre' (p. 86). For her part, Pato argues that the poet's desire to instill eternity in the ephemeral is superior to God's omnipotence since his dialogue with God concludes with 'sentencias que invierten de manera terminante y sucinta los valores tradicionalmente asignados' (p. 70).
10. This is also the definition of life found in 'Mutabilidad' (p. 344) in which the soul, desire and beauty do not last because they are the finery of the eternal wedding with death (ll. 7–9). For other readings of 'Mutabilidad', see Harris, p. 151; Ricardo Molina, 'La conciencia trágica del tiempo, clave esencial de la poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 102–10 (p. 106); and Utrera, pp. 128, 132.
11. Similarly, in 'Hablando a Manona', God is primarily a source of deprivation: He deprives His creatures of others' love, which they can only experience again, if at all, after death (ll. 8–35).
12. For other readings of this poem, see Argullol, p. 30; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 143; and Ruiz Silva, pp. 128, 178–80.
13. 'Love of Same, Love of Other', in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pp. 97–115 (p. 102).
14. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 170; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 142–43; and Ruiz Silva, pp. 165–67.
15. 'The Envelope: A Reading of Spinoza, *Ethics*, "Of God"', in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pp. 83–94 (p. 92).
16. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 71; Ruiz Silva, pp. 98–99; and Sahuquillo, pp. 115–17. This poem also raises the question of the relation between male homosexuality and femininity that I examine in Chapter Three.
17. 'How Do We Become Civil Women?', in *Thinking the Difference: For a Peaceful Revolution*, trans. by Karin Montin (London: The Athlone Press, 1994), pp. 39–64 (p. 60).
18. See also, 'Civil Rights and Responsibilities for the Two Sexes', in *Thinking the Difference*, pp. 67–87 (p. 74); and 'Why Define Sexed Rights?', in *Je, tu, nous*, pp. 81–92 (pp. 86–87).
19. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, pp. 166–67, 170; Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', pp. 330, 334; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 140–41; and Ruiz Silva, p. 173. The painting is reproduced as plate #182 in Erwin Panofsky's *Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconographic*, The Wrightsman Lectures (London: Phaidon Press, 1969).
20. This indifference to gender identity is echoed in most of the secondary literature. For example, Ruiz Silva calls the poem a homage to the implicitly ungendered 'hermosura física' (p. 173) while, according to Olivio Jiménez, the speaker exalts Titian's 'voluntad de descubrir y rescatar lo humano esencial' ('Desolación', p. 334) and Jiménez-Fajardo claims that Titian's fervour 'realize[s] in him [Titian] a full humanity' (p. 140).
21. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 135; and Summerhill, pp. 153–55.
22. 'Love of Self', in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, pp. 59–71 (pp. 66–67).
23. For another reading of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 194.
24. For other readings of 'El árbol', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 152–53; Coleman, pp. 52–55; Harris, pp. 65, 134–35; Talens, pp. 126, 302 (fn. 16), 345–46; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 106–08; and Quirarte, pp. 110–11.

25. However, Coleman appears to contradict himself when he states that the poet 'binds himself to the animate immortality that it [the tree] represents' (p. 55). For his part, Quirarte argues that, ultimately, the poet 'quiere [...] ser el árbol' (p. 111). For Silver, the poem's closing lines allude to Ruskin's concept of 'pathetic fallacy' ('*Arcadia*', p. 153).
26. A further example is the isolation of the evening star in 'Tiempo de vivir, tiempo de dormir' (p. 532; ll. 3-4). For another reading of this poem, see Debicki, pp. 301-03.
27. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, '*Arcadia*', pp. 149, 152; C. P. Otero, 'La tercera salida de *La realidad y el deseo*', in *Letras: I*, pp. 150-75 (p. 159); Coleman, pp. 50-51; Harris, pp. 151, 158-59; Ricardo Gullón, 'La poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 71-88 (pp. 86-87); Maristany, 'La poesía', pp. 198-99; and Bruton, 'Exile Poetry', p. 388.
28. For Maristany, it is evidence of Cernuda's break with a Symbolist view of nature ('La poesía', p. 198). In a slightly different way, this desire to preserve nature is also found in the last stanza of 'Dos de noviembre' (pp. 512-13; ll. 25-28). For another reading of this poem, see Harris, p. 169.
29. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 144-45, 150; Silver, '*Arcadia*', pp. 73-75, 137 (fn. 13); Coleman, pp. 178-79; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 106; and Martínez Cuitiño, pp. 128-29.
30. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, '*Arcadia*', pp. 150, 194; Harris, p. 91; Silver, 'Poeta ontológico' p. 209; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 83-84.
31. Another clear statement of nostalgia for unity with nature is found in 'Tiempo de vivir, tiempo de dormir', where a natural scene provokes a complaint in the 'tú' (l. 6) and seduces him (l. 8).
32. For other readings of 'Luna llena en Semana Santa', see Harris, pp. 169-70; Sánchez Reboredo, p. 18; and Silver, *De la mano*, pp. 71-72.
33. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, '*Arcadia*', p. 151; Debicki, pp. 301, 305-06; and Coleman, p. 52.
34. The association of the maternal-feminine with the wind and the earth is regularly found in Cernuda's later poetry. For example, in 'Desolación de la Quimera', the Chimaera is described as bird-like (ll. 13-14, 70); in 'Urania', the statue's beauty is covered airily by blue robes (ll. 6-7), is associated with the sky (ll. 14-15, 21-22), and causes souls to become birds (ll. 19-20); and, finally, the woman of 'El indolente' is compared with the earth (l. 14).
35. Whereas God, according to Irigaray, traditionally envelops Himself, i.e. provides Himself with His own space-time, and is neither determined nor limited by anything but Himself, human beings receive their envelope from the woman-mother, at least initially ('The Envelope', pp. 83-87).
36. 'The Power of Discourse and the Subordination of the Feminine', in *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), pp. 68-85 (p. 73). See also, Grosz, pp. 106-07.
37. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, '*Arcadia*', pp. 79-80; Harris, p. 169; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 142; and Peyrègne, pp. 270-71.
38. Similarly, in 'Luna llena en Semana Santa' the 'tú's mind is described as enveloping the boyhood scene (ll. 14-16).
39. The 'tú's appropriation of the mother's generative power in 'Luna llena en Semana Santa' is suggested in the description of him as recreating his boyhood (ll. 18-20), as metaphorically making himself.
40. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, '*Arcadia*', pp. 72-73, 193; Harris, pp. 90-91; and Utrera, pp. 138-39, 142. According to Harris, both 'Tierra nativa' and 'Hacia la tierra' are attempts by the speaker to establish his identity (p. 91).

41. Luce Irigaray, 'Body against Body: In Relation to the Mother', in *Sexes and Genealogies*, pp. 9–21 (p. 14).
42. For other readings of 'Otros aires', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 154–55; Coleman, pp. 51–52; Harris, pp. 89, 162–63; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 104–05; and Ugarte, p. 180.
43. For other readings of 'Lo más frágil es lo que dura', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 78, 179; Harris, pp. 92–93; Silver, 'Poeta ontológico', p. 210; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 120; and Ruiz Silva, p. 142.
44. The smell of orange blossom is also one of the components in the 'tú's' recreated boyhood in 'Luna llena en Semana Santa' (ll. 1–4, 12–14).

CHAPTER 3 (HOMO)SEXUAL IDENTITIES

In this chapter, I examine the different and, at times, contradictory discourses through which male same-sex desire is represented in Cernuda's last four books of poetry. Throughout the chapter, I show how Cernuda's later poetry draws on gender-separatist, gender-transitive, universalizing, and minoritizing understandings of sexual relations between men. In highlighting the coexistence of differing discourses of (homo)sexual definition in Cernuda's later poetry, I wish to problematize the unity of the category 'male homosexuality' as well as the description of the sexuality found in that poetry as 'homosexual'. Although I emphasize the limitations of this description, my intention is not to dispense with the category of male homosexuality altogether but to demonstrate more precisely the extent to which it is relevant to Cernuda's later poetry. Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of the minoritizing discourse of sexual identity in Cernuda's last four books of poetry is its applicability to a variety of forms of male same-sex desire, and it is this that requires us, for the sake of accuracy, to refer to the male homosexualities represented in them.

The main area of overlap between my argument in this chapter and the previous one is the concept of humanity. Rather than trying to reconcile my different readings of humanity, the difference between them should be understood as an indication of the conceptual gap between the spheres of sexuality and gender. At the same time, however, my analysis of male same-sex desire in this chapter acknowledges the mutual inflection of gender and sexuality which I suspended in chapter two in order to focus on the question of gender.

One of the main aims of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's argument in *Epistemology of the Closet* is to develop a conceptual framework to serve as an alternative to that provided by essentialist and constructionist understandings of male and female same-sex desire.¹ Instead of adjudicating between the essentialist and constructionist positions, Sedgwick concentrates on the two 'most active' (p. 1) contradictions in twentieth-century, Western understandings of homo- and hetero-sexual definition. The first of these contradictions is between the 'minoritizing' and 'universalizing' views. According to the former, homo- and hetero-sexual definition is mainly a matter of significance for a 'small, distinct, relatively fixed homosexual minority', while, for the latter, such definition is an issue that determines the 'lives of people across the spectrum of sexualities' (p. 1). The second principal contradiction is between the 'gender-transitive' and the 'gender-

separatist' views, between those theories which understand same-sex desire in terms of a 'liminality or transitivity between genders' and those which see it as 'reflecting an impulse of separatism [...] within each gender' (pp. 1–2).

On the one hand, Sedgwick argues, since the nineteenth century, questions of sexual definition have been reduced to the gender of an individual's sexual object, a reduction which has been an integral part of the process of defining a minoritizing homosexual identity (pp. 8–9). On the other hand, Sedgwick states, there have 'persisted and developed' understandings of sexual object-choice which are 'less stable' and less concerned with identifying a sexual type (p. 9). According to these views, sexual object-choice is determined by factors which are not defined primarily in terms of gender and are, as a result, potentially common to all women and/or men. It is on these factors that universalizing understandings of sexual definition draw.

According to Sedgwick, both the gender-transitive and gender-separatist understandings of same-sex desire have existed since at least the turn of the century. In the first of these models, same-sex desire is understood through the lens of inversion, so that a man who desires another man is supposedly feminine and a woman who desires another woman supposedly masculine. As this suggests, this model of same-sex desire tends to maintain a distinction between identification and desire, that is, a man identifies as feminine yet desires another man. By contrast, in the gender-separatist model, desire and identification tend to be assimilated to one another so that it becomes the 'most natural thing in the world' for people of the same sex to 'bond together [...] on the axis of sexual desire' (p. 87). Whereas the gender-transitive model of same-sex desire locates its subjects between genders, the gender-separatist model places the man-loving man and woman-loving woman at the 'defining center' of their gender (p. 88). According to Sedgwick, the relation between gender and sexual identity allows for a variety of identifications as a result of which 'gender-separatist models [...] tend towards *universalizing* understandings of homo/heterosexual potential' while 'gender-integrative inversion or liminality models [...] tend toward *gay-separatist*, minoritizing models of specifically gay identity and politics' (p. 89). In other words, the gender-separatist model suggests that all men or women share the same homo/heterosexual potential, while the gender-transitive view makes possible an identification between gay men and lesbians on the grounds that their identities are located between genders.

One of Sedgwick's criticisms of the work of Michel Foucault and David M. Halperin is that it assumes that different discourses on homosexuality 'eclipse' rather than coexist with one another (pp. 46–47).² This, in Sedgwick's eyes, has the effect of classifying, for example, a discourse of acts in a contemporary social context as an 'anachronistic

vestige' (p. 47), a classification with damaging consequences. The importance of the fine-tuning that Sedgwick proposes stems from her belief that the most powerful results of modern sexual definition often arise from the 'inexplicitness or denial' of the differences that exist between coexisting and contradictory understandings of same-sex desire (p. 47). By presenting albeit different minoritizing understandings of homosexual identity as the only ones now in circulation, Sedgwick argues, Foucault and Halperin overlook the persistence of other discourses of sexual definition and, as a result, make it harder to resist, for example, the threat posed by a combination of sanctions against acts and persons.

In highlighting the coexistence of different understandings of (homo)sexual definition in Cernuda's later poetry, I am seeking not only to problematize what is understood by male homosexuality but also to generate a more nuanced view of Cernuda's representation of sexuality. In confirmation of Sedgwick's argument that discourses of sexual definition coexist with rather than eclipse one another, it is possible to find traces of minoritizing, universalizing, gender-separatist, and gender-transitive models of male same-sex desire in Cernuda's later poetry. The minoritizing bent of these poems takes the form of an avowal of particular forms of desire which are represented as characteristic of a circumscribed group of men and in which the maleness of the sexual partners is of paramount importance. The poems' universalizing tendency is found in the preference expressed in them for sex with one, human partner, for certain acts, bodily zones, and roles, for sex both between generations and within the same generation, for sex which only uses bodies, which takes place in public or in private, which is spontaneous and non-commercial, and which is sometimes orgasmic and sometimes not (or, at least, not explicitly so).³ Another aspect of these poems' universalizing spread is their use of sexual relations between men to focus or exemplify experiences and so on common to all human beings regardless of gender. This universalizing dimension of sexual definition makes a variety of sexual identities and identifications possible, including ones that cross gender boundaries. The gender-transitive dimension of the representation of male homosexuality takes, as expected, the form of an identification with femininity, while the gender-separatist model of male same-sex desire is revealed by a movement between descriptions of love between men and statements about all men.

Gender-separatist, universalizing, and minoritizing understandings of male same-sex desire all intersect in 'Amando en el tiempo' (p. 370) in which the male speaker describes experiencing the ageing of his beloved's body.⁴ Other men, he tells us, have had this experience in the past and will have it in the future (ll. 5-6). Although the lover describes his experience as a collective

male one (ll. 5–8), its collective character is paradoxical. On the one hand, it appears not to exist since each individual man must learn by himself about the feelings aroused by such an experience (ll. 9–11). The lover's experience is, apparently, unique and has nothing in common with that of other men. This is the strand of the 'tú's experience that Harris highlights when he cites lines nine to eleven to support his argument that the poem contains an 'injunction' to acknowledge Man's 'solitude' (p. 155). On the other hand, the lover can only comment on the past and make predictions about the future because, in fact, there are common features between his experience and other men's. This contradiction, according to which the speaker's experience is individual and universal, has its roots in the vicissitudes of one man's love for another. Male same-sex desire, therefore, furnishes an experience which is characteristic of masculinity in general and, as a result, of the homosexual lover's identity as a man. It is the movement between male homosexual identity and masculinity in general which testifies to a gender-separatist understanding of male same-sex desire and confirms Sedgwick's argument that gender-separatist representations of same-sex desire tend to promote universalizing understandings of sexual potential (p. 89).

However, is it accurate to describe the desire in this poem as same-sex, let alone as homosexual? Whereas homosexuality emerged late in the last century as a means of classifying individuals according to the gender of their sexual partners, the gender of the male lover's beloved in this poem is unclear: the lover refers to him/her using the non-gender-specific terms 'cuerpo' (ll. 1, 8, 16) and 'forma' (l. 7). Similarly, by itself, the reference to the beloved's 'gracia antigua' (l. 3) reveals nothing about their sex because, as Halperin has shown, in classical Athens, sexual partners were not distinguished by gender but by whether they played an active/dominant or passive/submissive role (p. 33). The beloved's 'gracia antigua', therefore, is linked not with their sex but with their sexual role. How, then, should we interpret the lover's sadness in this classical context? According to Halperin, women and 'boys' were two of the proper sexual objects for an adult, male citizen of Athens (p. 30). However, whereas a youth was only thought attractive to other males for the short period between the start of puberty and the 'arrival of the beard', women continued to be considered sexually attractive as they got older (p. 90). Consequently, in classical Athens, age was a more significant factor in sexual relations between male citizens and other men than it was in the former's sexual dealings with women. The lover's sadness at his beloved's ageing in 'Amando en el tiempo' can, therefore, be best understood in the context of classical Athenian pederasty and as indicating that his beloved is male.

This classical context has contradictory effects. On the one hand, it articulates sexual identity in terms of a preference for a particular distribution of roles (active/passive), for a partner of a certain age, and for a particular act (phallic penetration), all of which are unrelated in themselves to the gender of the sexual object and, as a result, point towards a universalizing understanding of sexual identity. The classical context, therefore, opens up a gap between 'Amando en el tiempo' and a minoritizing definition of male same-sex desire. Indeed, as Halperin has argued, the concepts of homo- and hetero-sexuality, or 'two differently structured psychosexual states [...] corresponding to the sameness or difference' of the sexual partners' gender, were alien to the classical Athenians (p. 33). As a result, any attempt to describe pederastic relations as homosexual is ultimately misleading. On the other hand, however, the male lover's sadness at his beloved's ageing is most readily intelligible in a context in which his partner is male. Together with the pederastic requirement that the active partner is also male, the lover's sadness means that his sexual identity is, in part, defined by the gender of his sexual object-choice, which brings us close to a minoritizing view of male same-sex desire. We can, therefore, justifiably describe as homosexual in a limited sense at least one of the forms of male same-sex desire found in Cernuda's later poetry. However, the specificity of the pederastic context is also an important reminder of the differences which should prevent pederasty from being equated with homosexuality.

A combination of universalizing, minoritizing, and gender-transitive discourses of male same-sex desire is found in the poem 'Elegía anticipada' (pp. 358–60).⁵ The poem begins with the evocation a cemetery (ll. 1–12) before describing the love affair which took place there between two men and whose links with gay culture have been examined by Allen (pp. 65–66). The affair's minoritizing dimension can be made out in the description of the love which smiled at the 'tú' as 'el amor único' (ll. 29–30) (that is, a specific form of love)⁶ and the masculine plural grammatical forms 'descuidados' (l. 37) and 'vosotros' (l. 47). Taken together, these two factors bestow masculinity on the body of the 'tú's lover which is described simply as a 'cuerpo amanecido [...] / Esbelto y rubio' (ll. 30, 31). Although this characterization of the beloved's body echoes that in other poems in which sexual relations between men take an at least partly pederastic form, the reciprocity of the men's pleasure in this poem (ll. 37–40) indicates that their identity cannot be described as pederastic with complete accuracy since, according to Halperin, the idea that sexual relations involved reciprocity between the partners was foreign to the classical Athenian understanding of all sexual relations, including pederastic ones (p. 30). Such reciprocity is also found in 'Versos para ti mismo' (p. 457), where the 'tú' is said to dream/remember the noble

shared effect (l. 6) that he enjoyed with a lover whose gender is left unclear, which places their pleasure in a universalizing frame.⁷

The gender-transitive representation of male same-sex desire is suggested in lines thirty-three to thirty-six, in which the divine figure who protects the space the men make love in is one which confuses binary notions of gender identity: the lovers have sex under the watchful eye of a male god whose sphere of influence is that of a woman, night, who is the day's female beloved. In a related vein, Silver understands the merging of identities as evidence that the 'whole cosmos became one' during the experience of love ('*Arcadia*', p. 113). A gender-transitive view of sexual relations between men is also evident in the description of the men's pleasure as the child of smiles and sighs (l. 40).

The love affair has various universalizing threads: its public setting (a cemetery); the spontaneity and randomness of the men's encounter, which are suggested by the description of the youthful partner as being blown in the wind (l. 31) and of their pleasure as the result of smiles and sighs; and the focusing of their pleasure on their lips (ll. 39–40). Similarly, in '*Despedida*' (pp. 533–34), the speaker's pleasure and desire focus on his lips (ll. 19–20) and, among other things, he longs to bathe in the sea with his now unattainable youthful male lovers (ll. 23–25), a gender specificity echoed in Olivio Jiménez's classification of the speaker's desire as homosexual ('*Desolación*', p. 331).⁸ In keeping with the universalizing dimension of love in '*Elegía anticipada*', the love affair is said to take place when an unspecified destiny was fullest (ll. 27–28) and, as other critics have noted (for example, Olivio Jiménez, '*Emoción*', pp. 135–36, and Harris, p. 128), the lovers are described as transcending human space (l. 47). Furthermore, in the poem's final lines (ll. 49–52), love between men gives rise to a comment on Man's wish to '*caer donde el amor fue suyo un día*' (l. 52). The universality of this wish is confirmed by the echo in it of a wish attributed to the male 'tú' in line sixteen when he was posited as representing the vague category of people who cannot fulfill their desires during their lifetime. The universality of the 'tú's' wish is indicated by these unrealized desires' lack of specificity, the fact that they could be anybody's desires for anything (l. 16). It is clear from this poem, therefore, that one man's desire for another man gives him access to a characteristic shared by all human beings. Consequently, and in keeping with Ruiz Silva's claim that '*Elegía anticipada*' describes '*una experiencia común*' of the sort that all humans have (p. 103), the poem's last line is addressed to anyone who has ever possessed love, including those men who recognize themselves in the minoritizing '*amor único*' (l. 29).

The poem '*In memoriam A. G.*' (pp. 454–55) displays the slippage between identification and desire which Sedgwick argued is characteristic of

gender-separatist views of homosexuality (p. 87).⁹ In the poem's opening stanza, we are told that the 'tú' was so taken up loving Gide's life that he forgot to think about his death (ll. 5–6), while, later, the speaker attributes to Gide the ability to restore the 'tú's 'aliento' (ll. 12–15). These two descriptions make it clear that an anaclitic relation exists between Gide and the 'tú': just as an infant's first sexual object 'derives from the person or persons who satisfy [its somatic] functions',¹⁰ Gide and his imagined presence are an object of the 'tú's love and the source for the satisfaction of his vital somatic functions (Gide restores the 'tú's 'aliento', his breath or, at least, his capacity to undertake physical tasks). At the same time, as Silver ('*Arcadia*', p. 169) and Jiménez-Fajardo (p. 121) among others have suggested, Gide functions as a model or object of identification for the 'tú': in the poem's last line, the speaker baldly states that there are few people left for the 'tú' to admire.

This gender-separatist view of male same-sex desire gives rise to a universalizing identification and sits alongside the traces of a minoritizing sexual identity. On the one hand, the speaker identifies with the homosexual 'tú' by referring to 'nosotros' (ll. 12, 18), while, on the other, there are moments when the speaker attributes an impermeable specificity to the 'tú's identity: two lines after referring to their shared lack of 'aliento' (l. 12), the speaker refers only to the 'tú' (l. 14) and then, immediately after mentioning their shared exploitation (l. 18), differentiates himself from the 'tú' by excluding himself from the exchanges between the 'tú' and those like him (ll. 18–21). The poem's final three lines also encapsulate the speaker's contradictory position: the speaker returns to the exploitation he shares with the 'tú' (ll. 21–22) yet, in the poem's closing line, distances himself from him by commenting on the scarcity of figures with whom he can now identify. The minority identity of the 'tú' is reinforced by the 'tú' and those like him (ll. 20–21) using the phrase 'nuestro mundo', which refers to the world of those belonging to the minority sexual grouping. However, the 'tú's words also transgress the boundary between his minority sexual identity and the speaker since the phrase 'este mundo' (l. 21) refers to the world they share. Its use by the 'tú', therefore, signals his identification with the speaker. The speaker's reciprocation of this identification is made clear both in his use of the pronoun 'nosotros' (as I have already suggested) and, as the poem's first three stanzas show (ll. 1–17), in his knowledge of what the 'tú' has lost with Gide's death. Contrary to the implication in lines twenty to twenty-one, the knowledge of what has died with Gide is not specific to the members of the sexual minority. This poem, therefore, is a further example of the capacity of gender-separatist representations of male same-sex desire to generate universal identifications.

The coexistence of various discourses of sexual definition in the poems I have analysed so far represents a profound challenge to the coherence of the two dominant categories of modern sexual definition, 'homosexuality' and 'heterosexuality'. The emphasis on sexual differentiation in Cernuda's later poetry also forces us to question the applicability to it of the adjective 'homosexual' and, at the same time, to talk of the male homosexualities represented in it. The same effects are also produced by other poems in which male same-sex desire is articulated by writing about men-loving men from history and myth. In the rest of this chapter, I shall analyse a number of these poems, some of which also testify to the difficulty and/or cost of such articulation in a hostile environment.

The poem 'Escultura inacabada (David-Apolo, de Miguel Ángel)' (pp. 424–26) is an attempt to preserve both the eternities embodied by the statue of David-Apollo and the love which created them (ll. 33–34) at a time when the former have been lost (ll. 27–28).¹¹ Refining Ruiz Silva's claim that that love is homosexual (p. 131), the desire at stake in this poem is more accurately described as pederastic and universal. The description of the statue as occupying the chronologically liminal position between childhood and youth (ll. 7–8) places it in the age bracket deemed appropriate for an object of pederastic desire. As a result, the statue can be seen as another example of the 'gracia antigua' attributed to the beloved in 'Amando en el tiempo' (l. 3), three of the components of which are beauty, harmony, and 'delicadeza'. Referring to the statue, the speaker tells the 'tú' to contemplate its beauty (l. 30), a beauty inextricable from its reconciliation of opposites (ll. 13–24), and, in an echo of the smooth forms denoted by 'delicadeza', describes the statue's penis as an unopened flower (l. 15) and its thighs as the arc of a lyre (l. 16). Nevertheless, the speaker also contradicts the specifically male conventions of pederasty by describing the love which moved Michelangelo to create the statue as 'la sola fuerza humana' (l. 34).

At the beginning of the poem (ll. 1–4), the speaker appears to confuse art and reality by describing the statue of David-Apollo as if it captured an event which had actually happened, whereas, of course, Michelangelo has simply represented the god as if he had been surprised in a private moment. Similarly, later in the poem, addressing the 'tú', the speaker treats the statue as if it were human by referring to its inevitable fall into time (ll. 25–26). (Other examples of this misrecognition are found elsewhere in the poem (ll. 17–24, 33–36).) The speaker's wish to preserve the statue from the ravages of time is based on his misrecognition of art as reality. In order to preserve the statue, the speaker instructs the 'tú' to be quiet (l. 25) and contemplate the statue's beauty (ll. 29–30) since, the speaker implies, if the statue were to hear the 'tú', it would wake up and lose its so-called eternities.

That there is, apparently, no danger of the speaker's words having the same effect presupposes their silence and, as a result, the specifically written, as opposed to spoken, character of the poem. The silence of the so-called speaker's address, therefore, points to poetry as a means of preserving both the statue's eternities and, implicitly, the desire which led to the statue's creation.

This optimism concerning the representability and preservability of male same-sex desire is reflected and modified in the poem 'El águila' (pp. 321–23), a retelling of the myth of Zeus's abduction of Ganymede.¹² As in 'Escultura inacabada', the speaker (Zeus) wishes to make the object of his desire (Ganymede) eternal and, in describing him, echoes the description of the object of pederastic desire in poems already discussed:

Tu edad estaba
 Florida de esa gala que los hombres
 Ostentan sólo un día, en los umbrales
 De juventud. [...]
 Y al mirarte pensaba en las futuras
 Áridas estaciones, despojando
 De armonía tu cuerpo liso y rubio.
 (ll. 35, 39)

Like Ganymede's body in these lines, the body of one of the partners in 'Elegía anticipada' was fair (l. 31), while the beloved's body was characterized by smoothness ('gracia') in 'Amando en el tiempo' (l. 3) and the statue of 'Escultura inacabada' was described not only as being between childhood and youth (ll. 7–8) but also as graceful (ll. 9–10).

Just as the lover in 'Amando en el tiempo' was troubled by his beloved's ageing and the speaker of 'Escultura inacabada' sought to preserve the eternities of David-Apolo's body, so, in 'El águila', the prospect of Ganymede's body losing its harmony (l. 43) moves Zeus to say that Ganymede must not die (l. 45) and that he wishes to make the beauty of Ganymede's body eternal (l. 57). However, Zeus contradicts himself on whether or not his objective is realizable. Initially, he describes beauty as a worldly embodiment of eternity but then compares it to an impossible redemption from death, an impossibility immediately underlined by the comparison of beauty's effects to those of the setting sun (ll. 45–52). Nevertheless, in a further twist to his argument, Zeus addresses Ganymede a few lines later and denies both the inevitability of death's destruction of beauty and the impossibility of making beauty eternal (ll. 57–61). The analogy between gods and poets (ll. 54–55) means that Zeus's difficulties are also the poet's and, as a result, points to the possibility of pederastic desire

being represented in poetry. However, the same analogy also testifies to the difficulty of such representation since Zeus seeks to preserve Ganymede as the object of his desire while portraying that goal as logically unrealizable.¹³

'*Birds in the Night*' (pp. 495–97), an account of Rimbaud and Verlaine's persecution and appropriation by the dominant culture, takes the difficulty adumbrated in 'El águila' to its extreme.¹⁴ The poem focuses on the two men's relationship and on the historical reception of their lives and work. Whereas, in 'El águila', logic appeared to prevent the representation of male same-sex desire, '*Birds in the Night*' testifies to the difficulty of acknowledging penetrative anal sex between men within a homophobic culture. The poem also makes clear the mutual inflection of questions of sexual identity and gender without, however, representing their only possible articulation. Whereas, in 'Escultura inacabada' and 'El águila', poetry was a medium through which male same-sex desire could be preserved and articulated, in '*Birds in the Night*' poetry perpetuates silence since the narrator is unable to sustain the sexuality of Rimbaud and Verlaine's relationship as an object of representation. Although '*Birds in the Night*' exemplifies, albeit for different reasons, the difficulty of representing male same-sex desire foreshadowed in 'El águila', the difference and similarity between pederasty and the in part sodomitic sexual identity represented in the former should not be overlooked.

The poem begins with the unveiling of a plaque by the French or English ambassador to mark the house in which Rimbaud and Verlaine lived during their stay in London in 1873 (ll. 1–5). The narrator represents the men's relationship in minoritizing terms by emphasizing the couple's difference: they are a 'rara pareja' (l. 3) and enjoy an 'amistad singular' (l. 15). However, this minority identity is combined with a universalizing discourse of acts given that the narrator refers to the couple's fornicating (l. 4), to Verlaine's imprisonment on account of his habits (ll. 24–26), and to the lovers' sodomy (l. 38).¹⁵ In keeping with such universalization, Rimbaud is characterized as a 'golfo' (l. 16), that is, according to María Moliner, a young man who is 'vicioso' or 'entregado con exceso a [...] placeres censurables'.¹⁶

From the beginning of the poem, these contradictory discourses of sexual definition are placed alongside references to alcohol and the men's status as poets (l. 4). A few lines later, Rimbaud's description as 'el golfo' is accompanied by that of Verlaine as 'el borracho' (ll. 15–16). All three factors reappear together when the narrator claims that their sodomy, drunkenness, and scorned verses are no longer an issue (ll. 37–39) and that details of their private lives are publicized without scandal or protest (ll. 41–42). In keeping with this, the narrator transcribes an imaginary dialogue between two men about the lovers in which Verlaine is described as

a lustful womanizer (ll. 43–44) and Rimbaud as a sincere Catholic (l. 45). However, this dialogue, in fact, gives the lie to the narrator's statement that the lovers' sexual acts are no longer an issue since it shows that, rather than a matter of indifference, the men's sexual acts are a matter for repression: Verlaine's sexual identity is reduced to heterosexuality and Rimbaud's sexuality is sublimated into religious belief. It is a sign of the disquiet generated in the imaginary interlocutors by sodomy that their description of Verlaine as heterosexual echoes the descriptions of him before and after his relationship with Rimbaud as married (l. 19) and spending his money on female prostitutes (ll. 32–33) respectively. However, even Verlaine's preference for commercial sex with women proves too disturbing for the male interlocutors who discard it in favour of a sexual identity determined solely by the gender of Verlaine's object-choice (ll. 43–44). Little wonder, then, that they describe him as normal and no different from them (ll. 44–45). Although this dialogue is part of the narrator's attack on the dominant culture, he also, as will become apparent, adopts the same repressive and censorial attitude to Rimbaud and Verlaine's sexual identities as the imaginary interlocutors.

The dominant culture is also disconcerted by the minoritizing dimension of Rimbaud and Verlaine's relationship, a dimension which Ramos Otero has also highlighted in his description of the poem as Cernuda's homage to, above all, male poets who loved other men (p. 29). The dominant culture's unease is apparent in the fact that, despite their opposing reactions to their persecution, both men are the object of the authorities' scrutiny even after their relationship has ended (ll. 30–35). Both men remain outlawed by officialdom despite, in the narrator's description, the absence of all sexual activity in Rimbaud's subsequent life and Verlaine's preference for female prostitutes (ll. 32–34). Given that Verlaine's preference for sex with female prostitutes does not exclude the possibility of penetrative anal sex, the disruptive status of his sexual identity appears to derive as much from his and Rimbaud's gender as from their preferred sexual acts. The representation of Rimbaud and Verlaine's relationship in universalizing and minoritizing terms, in terms of sodomy and male homosexual desire, is further testimony to the complexity of the male same-sex desire represented in Cernuda's last four books of poetry.

Despite his sharp criticism of Rimbaud and Verlaine's persecution and appropriation by the dominant culture, the narrator also occupies the same position as those he criticizes.¹⁷ On the one hand, he describes Verlaine and Rimbaud's reception as a 'farsa elogiosa repugnante' and expresses the wish that humanity were a cockroach so that he could squash it (ll. 54–56). However, misogyny is the price of the narrator's identification with the

lovers and of his attack on the reception of their lives and work (ll. 15–21). In these lines, the narrator gains access to the freedom he perceives to be embodied in penetrative anal sex between men by directing his hostility towards women, which neither López Castro (pp. 96–97) nor Pato (p. 96) comment on in their discussions of the third stanza. On the other hand, the narrator is implicitly the object of his own repugnance since one of the traits of the two lovers' reception is the attribution of good characteristics to them: it is a '*farsa elogiosa*' (l. 54; my emphasis). The narrator himself makes such an attribution by, for example, describing Rimbaud and Verlaine's relationship as an '*amistad singular*' (l. 15). The narrator's status as a target of his own disgust is also evident in the sarcasm of his reference to '*nuestro mundo y su progreso renombrado*' (l. 28). In keeping with his identification with those he also criticizes, the narrator describes Rimbaud as '*el golfo*' (l. 16), a description whose censorial consequences are enacted in the imaginary interlocutors' sublimation of Rimbaud's sexual identity. Furthermore, at the end of the poem, the narrator expunges all mention of sodomy (and alcohol) from his representation of Verlaine and Rimbaud and reduces them to poets (l. 52).

The poem '*Apologia pro vita sua*' (pp. 344–49) articulates another form of desire between men and offers a different perspective on the relation between gender and sexuality to that in '*Birds in the Night*'.¹⁸ As Gastón Baquero has noted, the poem's title is borrowed from the spiritual autobiography published in 1864 by John Henry Newman.¹⁹ Whereas Newman gave an account of his spiritual life, the speaker in '*Apologia pro vita sua*' spends the first sixty lines of the poem (just under half the poem) remembering his male lovers and his refusal to renounce his desire for other men. In the remainder of the poem, he reflects on and seeks to reconcile himself to his imminent death without ceasing to avow his sexuality. There is also an ambivalence in the speaker's attitude to his sexual identity, which testifies to the difficulty of reconciling male same-sex desire with God.

In the 1830s, Newman founded the Oxford Movement, a religious movement which sought to 'revive in the established church the traditions of the "ancient and undivided Church" in doctrine, liturgy, and devotion'.²⁰ According to Hilliard, one of the unusual features of the early Oxford Movement was the importance it attached to celibacy and, as a result, the founding of 'religious brotherhoods' (p. 185), a feature which, Hilliard suggests, may have provided an attractive alternative to marriage for men who were troubled by and unable to acknowledge publicly their desire for other men. Writing in 1895, James Rigg, a Wesleyan historian of the Oxford Movement, hinted strongly at this homosexual motivation by placing great emphasis on Newman's "'characteristically feminine'" mind and temperament

and the 'lack of virility of most of his disciples' (p. 185). Significantly, Charles Kingsley, one of Newman's opponents and the author of the article which prompted him to pen his *Apologia*, was an 'enthusiastic exponent of the duty of Christian "manliness", which he defined as courage, heartiness, physical vitality, and the procreation of children within marriage', and 'abhorred' the idea of celibacy as 'contrary to nature and a sin against God' (p. 188). Following Kingsley's attack on Newman, the 'charge of effeminacy—the usual nineteenth-century caricature of male homosexuality—stuck' (p. 188) to the Oxford Movement's successors. What is most relevant here for my argument is the representation of male same-sex desire as effeminate or, in Sedgwick's terms, as an example of gender-transitivity. In borrowing his title from Newman, therefore, the speaker of '*Apologia pro vita sua*' implicitly identifies with such a representation of male same-sex desire.

As well as further traces of a gender-transitive identity, '*Apologia pro vita sua*' also contains strands of other discourses of sexual definition. Looking back on the activities of his senses (including, oddly but significantly, his back), the speaker recalls, among others, the desire to possess beauty (ll. 110–11), smelling and kissing bodies (ll. 113–15), and having orgasms (l. 117). The importance of beauty in the articulation of pederastic desire in Cernuda's later poetry is clear from the descriptions of the beloved in, for example, 'Amando en el tiempo' and 'El águila'. This link with pederasty comes under pressure, however, in the description of the speaker's so-called sixth sense, his back, as an 'árbol trémulo del espasmo' (l. 117). This description certainly suggests the speaker's pleasure in penetrative anal sex and, as a result, is a possible further indicator of pederastic desire. However, the description does not make it clear whether the speaker's preference is to penetrate or to be penetrated and the poem as a whole makes it possible to assign both preferences to him. On the one hand, the echoes of pederasty indicate his preference for the role of penetrator. On the other, the analogy between his love and a house (ll. 1–15, especially ll. 2–5) has connotations of receptivity and, as a result, suggests his pleasure in being penetrated. Similarly, a little later in the poem, the speaker compares the succession of his lovers to that of kings (ll. 31–38) and refers to his lovers' 'pasión dominadora' (l. 38). According to Halperin, the conventions governing classical Athenian sexual relations, including pederastic ones, understood sexual roles in terms of domination and submission and considered them 'isomorphic' with the partners' respective social status (p. 30). As a result, an adult male citizen was only permitted to have sex with his social and political inferiors, who included youths. Given that the older man in a pederastic relation was, as a consequence, also the active and dominant partner, the

speaker's desire in '*Apologia pro vita sua*' exceeds a pederastic frame. To the same effect, the speaker's object of desire in '*Escultura inacabada*' is a representation of a social superior, the statue of a god-king. The traditional association of receptivity or passivity with femininity means that the speaker's pleasure in being penetrated is another indication of a gender-transitive understanding of his sexual identity.

By articulating his identity in such terms, the speaker establishes a similarity between himself and the so-called feminine men of the Oxford Movement, who are evoked by the friends (l. 46) that invite him to join their brotherhood (ll. 48–59). Although the men who make up this cosy and comfortable brotherhood are differentiated from the speaker by their renunciation of passion (ll. 58–59), their shared identification with femininity suggests that sexual identity exceeds a minoritizing framework based on object-choice. To the extent that he avows his sexual identity, the speaker makes good the historical silence or renunciation of the Oxford Movement's celibate brethren.

Another form that this universalizing strategy takes is the speaker's framing of his sexual identity as a matter of human relevance. For instance, immediately after complaining that his first lover's passion was not matched by that of any of his subsequent lovers, the speaker asks rhetorically whether passion is not the measure of human greatness (l. 39). Similarly, later in the poem, during his monologue with God, the speaker moves between referring to his sexual identity and making statements about humanity (ll. 91–98, 101–07). A third way in which the speaker universalizes his sexual identity is by relating it to the pleasures of smelling and kissing bodies and having orgasms (ll. 113–15, 117).²¹ However, the first two of these pleasures also introduce a minoritizing dimension into the poem since they echo the kisses the male lovers exchanged in '*Elegía anticipada*' (ll. 38–40) and '*Despedida*' (ll. 19–20) and the comparison of a young man's body to the smell of a flower in '*El perfume*' (pp. 411–12; ll. 13–23).²²

In contrast with the men of the Oxford Movement who renounced their sexual desire in favour of celibacy, the speaker in '*Apologia pro vita sua*' actively avowed his sexuality and, as a result, did not join the brotherhood (l. 58). However, interwoven with the speaker's avowal, there is now, on his deathbed, an ambivalence which causes him to resemble the men of the Oxford Movement. For example, in his reflections on his first affair with a man known as Archangel (l. 22), the speaker eventually (but tentatively) decides that he loved him (ll. 27–30) before immediately qualifying his decision by saying that '*mas eso ya no importa*' (l. 30), a qualification which echoes the statement made six lines earlier that '*perdón es ahora lo único que importa*' (l. 24). The speaker, therefore, is making two gestures at once: he

remembers/articulates his sexual identity and suspends its relevance. The same double gesture can also be seen in the poem's penultimate stanza (ll. 106–20), which begins with the speaker appearing to propose a reconciliation between his sexual identity and forgiveness (ll. 106–10) and remembering the physical pleasures he enjoyed during his lifetime (ll. 110–17). However, by ending the stanza with the statement that his memory has emptied of memories (l. 120), the speaker implicitly abandons his sexual identity and, therefore, signals the failure of his attempt at reconciliation.

Although the speaker ostensibly seeks forgiveness from God for not having believed in Him (ll. 93–94) rather than for having avowed his sexual identity, his non-belief and sexuality are inextricable since the example of belief which the poem offers, the celibate brotherhood, is based on the repression of a gender-transitive sexual identity. Unlike the members of the brotherhood, however, the speaker renounces his passions in favour of a God who he struggles to believe in, a situation that bears out Ruiz Silva's reference to the poem's 'contradictoria vena religiosa' (p. 103). For example, having described himself in the present as easy prey (l. 95) for God's ministers, who forgive or condemn Man's actions, the speaker questions the authority of those same ministers (ll. 97–98). More pointedly still, in the last stanza, the speaker uses two conditional clauses to qualify both his plea that God not destroy his soul (l. 126) and his anticipation of eternal life (ll. 131–32). The repetition of the poem's first line in its last line (l. 135) suggests that the speaker's situation is insoluble, that, ultimately, in his eyes, there is no alternative to avowing and renouncing his sexual identity in exchange for a doubtful salvation.²³

In 'Luis de Baviera escucha *Lohengrin*' (pp. 513–17), the sexual identity of King Ludwig is articulated through a variety of discourses and is represented as sustainable in a way that that of the speaker in '*Apologia pro vita sua*' was not.²⁴ Nevertheless, as will become apparent, the King is forced to pay a high price for his avowal of male same-sex desire. The poem moves between descriptions of King Ludwig and his reactions to a performance of Wagner's opera *Lohengrin*, descriptions of his relations with his ministers, and descriptions of his future. Central to all these descriptions is the King's identity: he discovers who he is by watching *Lohengrin*, his relations with his ministers are conflictive because he is unable to be himself and a king at the same time, and his future holds the fulfilment of his identity, including his metaphorical abdication of royal power.

According to the narrator, King Ludwig's dreams represent his true identity. This is clear in, for example, the statements that his true kingdom consists of dreams and solitude (ll. 43–45) and that the shadows of his

dreams were the truth of his life (l. 98). These dreams are condensed in the operatic character of Lohengrin who, the narrator writes, is (also) the King (ll. 55–57). In the same vein, at the end of the poem, the narrator describes King Ludwig as embodying the myth of Lohengrin (l. 105) and states that the music of the opera helps the King to know and fall in love with himself (ll. 107–08). Consequently, the description of Lohengrin as a fair-skinned, blond, beautiful male youth of pure, untouchable grace (ll. 56, 102) should also be understood as a description of the King. (Although the King is described as having black hair (l. 13), the narrator's comparison of him to a 'dios nimbado' (l. 101) makes it possible to imagine him as a blond.) Given that the myth of Lohengrin embodies King Ludwig's identity and that, as a result, the King is immortalized in the music (l. 108), the King's sexual identity is both more readily representable and more sustainable than that of the speaker in '*Apologia pro vita sua*'.²⁵

As the description of Lohengrin makes clear, King Ludwig has many qualities in common with the pederastic objects of desire I have already analysed in other poems. However, these pederastic parallels are subverted by three elements of the description of the King's love affairs. Firstly, the references to 'la presencia humana' (l. 46) and 'la humana hermosura' (l. 54) add a universalizing dimension to the King's sexual identity. Similarly, in 'Dostoevski y la hermosura física' (p. 493), the pederastic echoes set up by the description of the male youth, Falalei, are distorted because Falalei also exemplifies the universalizing and implicitly ungendered beauty of the title.²⁶ Secondly, instead of occupying the dominant position as pederastic convention would require, King Ludwig identifies with the role of the submissive partner (ll. 46–47, 50–54) or, as Jiménez-Fajardo states, becomes the 'slave' of 'youth and beauty' (p. 137). In keeping with this identification, the narrator states that, in gaining his identity through loving Lohengrin, the King occupies the same position as the character of Elsa in Wagner's opera, who loves Lohengrin without knowing who he is (l. 72). In the King's case, Elsa's ignorance translates into the confusion of his identity with Lohengrin's. Therefore, the King desires another man as if he himself were a woman and, in doing so, knows himself. However, this raises the question of how King Ludwig, who loves Lohengrin by identifying with Elsa, can know himself by loving a man who loves a woman (Elsa). The homosexual King can only recognize himself in the heterosexual Lohengrin and posit Lohengrin as the embodiment of his identity if Lohengrin's identity is gender-transitive and not determined by object-choice. Otherwise, the King's relation with Lohengrin would lead to him losing, rather than discovering, his identity. The third factor that disrupts the parallels between the King's desire and pederasty is the similarity of age between the young

King and his sexual partners (ll. 50, 52). Similarly, in 'El perfume', the description of the older male 'tú's desire as unchanged by his age (ll. 28–29) implies that it is not stimulated by the age difference between himself and his male partner. By the same token, however, such desire can also quite readily accommodate a difference in age as is shown by the fact that his desire in this instance is stimulated by a younger man. This is also the case in 'Cara joven' (pp. 414–15) in which the older man's pleasure in looking at the young face of the title is the same as always (ll. 7–8), as Harris has also noted (p. 138).²⁷ However, in 'Cara joven', the older man's pleasure is potentially universal since the younger individual's gender is not specified.

In an echo of the speaker's identity in '*Apologia pro vita sua*', the King's identity, as I have shown, is founded on an identification with femininity which exceeds the boundaries determined by object choice. Whereas the speaker in that poem was torn between avowal and repression, King Ludwig is able to affirm his sexual identity, albeit at the price of political marginalization (l. 96), a consequence that is simultaneous with the fulfilment of his destiny to desire himself (l. 94). Such a destiny is an instance of a minoritizing discourse of narcissistic object-choice since it is prefigured in the King's love for Lohengrin which not only involves object-choice but also helps him to know and fall in love with himself (l. 108).²⁸ The King, therefore, fulfills his destiny by desiring himself in other men.

In their articulation of male same-sex desire, the poems by Cernuda which I have discussed in this chapter frequently display an acute awareness of the difficulty of articulating that desire and of the price to be paid for its avowal. At the same time, they also offer a tapestry of male same-sex desire which includes a variety of homosexual identities and pushes beyond minoritizing terms in an attempt to disrupt and reorganize the dominant categories of sexual definition. As a consequence, Cernuda's last four books of poetry oblige us to refine our critical discussions of male same-sex desire to begin to do justice to the (homo)sexualities portrayed in them.

NOTES

1. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1994).
2. Sedgwick's criticism is aimed at Halperin's 'Introduction', in David M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp. 1–12 (pp. 8–9); and at Foucault's account of the emergence of homosexuality in *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (London: Allen Lane, 1979; repr. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 43.
3. I have derived this list of universalizing sexual characteristics from Sedgwick, pp. 8, 31, 34–35.

4. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', p. 123; Harris, pp. 151, 155; and José Ángel Valente, 'Luis Cernuda y la poesía de la meditación', in *Luis Cernuda*, ed. by Derek Harris, pp. 303–13 (p. 310).
5. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 113–14, 149–50, 193; Harris, pp. 127–28; Valente, p. 310; Kevin J. Bruton, 'The Cemetery Poems of Luis Cernuda', *ALEC*, 13 (1988), 189–208 (pp. 194–96, 201–04); and Pato, pp. 73–74.
6. Bruton has described this love as, in part, homosexual ('Cemetery Poems', pp. 195, 196).
7. The importance of nobility in love is also mentioned in 'Antes de irse' (p. 495), in which the world's lack of virtue is simultaneous with the frustration of the speaker's love. For another reading of 'Versos para ti mismo', see Harris, p. 136. For other readings of 'Antes de irse', see Harris, pp. 166, 170; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 148; and Villena, p. 43.
8. For other readings of 'Despedida', see Harris, pp. 166, 170; Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', p. 331; Ruiz Silva, pp. 172–73; and Villena, pp. 48–49, 54–55.
9. For other readings of this poem, see Silver 'Arcadia', p. 169; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 120–21; and López Castro, p. 92. The 'tú's reaction to Gide's death in this poem is close to that attributed to E. M. Forster by J. R. Ackerley who states that Forster "'wept to hear of the death of André Gide, not for personal reasons, he knew him only slightly, but because he felt that one of the great props of his own civilization had been withdrawn'" (J. R. Ackerley, *E. M. Forster: A Portrait* (London: Ian McKelvie, 1970), p. 19; quoted in Jeffrey Meyers, *Homosexuality and Literature, 1890–1930* (London: The Athlone Press, 1977), p. 14).
10. Richard Wollheim, *Freud* (London: Fontana, 1973; repr. 1987), p. 117.
11. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 75–76; Harris, p. 138; Ruiz Silva, pp. 129–30, 130–31; and Sahuquillo, pp. 115, 346.
12. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 123, 135–36; Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 36–39; Otero, 'Tercera salida', p. 160; Harris, pp. 71, 99–100; Summerhill, pp. 147–50; and Sahuquillo, p. 341.
13. For other discussions of the Zeus–poet analogy, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 36–39; and Harris, pp. 99–100.
14. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 169; Harris, pp. 168, 173; Villena, pp. 46, 47, 52; Pato, pp. 93–103; LaFollette Miller, pp. 174–78; and Sahuquillo, pp. 302, 367–68.
15. LaFollette Miller echoes this universalizing perspective when she quotes line four to support her argument that Rimbaud and Verlaine lived 'like Everyman' during their time in London (p. 175). Pato argues that the narrator's use of the noun 'sodomía' (l. 38) is part of his imitation of society's condemnation of Rimbaud and Verlaine (p. 96).
16. *Diccionario de uso del español*, 2 vols (Madrid: Gredos, 1990), I, pp. 1404–05, II, p. 1522.
17. To similar effect, LaFollette Miller has drawn a parallel between Cernuda's poem and the plaque commemorating the poets and has argued that Cernuda positions himself as one of the readers and critics referred to in the poem (pp. 177, 178).
18. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, pp. 82, 85, 131–32, 152; Maristany, 'La poesía', p. 200; Bruton, 'Exile Poetry', p. 393; Pato, pp. 58, 66, 71–74; and Summerhill, pp. 150–51.
19. Gastón Baquero, 'La poesía de Luis Cernuda', in *Darío, Cernuda y otros temas poéticos*, (Madrid: Editora Nacional, 1969), pp. 149–90 (p. 182). John Henry Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua* (London: Collins, 1962). According to Bruton, this poem mirrors Coleridge's poem of the same title ('Exile Poetry', p. 393).
20. David Hilliard, 'Unenglish and Unmanly: Anglo-Catholicism and Homosexuality', *Victorian Studies*, 25 (1982), 181–210 (p. 184).

21. A preference for orgasmic sex is one of the factors that Sedgwick includes in her list of sexually differentiating factors that are potentially disruptive of dominant understandings of sexual identity (p. 35).
22. For another reading of 'El perfume', see Harris, p. 136.
23. For a different reading of this last line, see Pato, pp. 71–74.
24. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, pp. 171–72; Paz, pp. 158–59; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 136–38; Villena, pp. 46–48, 55; Ulacia, pp. 68–72; and Wilcox, pp. 181–204.
25. For another reading of line 108, see Wilcox, pp. 189–201.
26. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', pp. 330–31; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 139–40; Ruiz Silva, pp. 177–78; and Villena, p. 46.
27. For another reading of 'Cara joven', see Harris, p. 138.
28. For other readings of narcissism in this poem, see Harris, pp. 171–72; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 136–38. Harris (p. 171) and Ulacia (p. 71) also mention homosexuality in relation to this poem.

CHAPTER 4

PERVERSIONS

In this chapter, which consists of three sections, I analyse the question of perversion in Cernuda's later poetry from a number of different angles. On the one hand, I use the term 'perversion' and its derivatives both to describe the relation between the dominant and subordinate terms of the oppositions 'natural/unnatural' and 'truth/error' in the articulation of male homosexuality and to refer to the relation between heterosexuality and male homosexual identity. On the other hand, I use perversion to describe particular forms of non-sexual identity and a structure common to all forms of sexuality. I begin the first section, which analyses the deployment of nature and truth in the representation of male same-sex desire, by examining the legitimation of male homosexuality in Cernuda's later poetry through the transgressive reinscription of the natural/unnatural opposition. I then discuss the applicability of some non-sexual meanings of perversion to Cernuda's work before analysing the links it establishes between truth and male homosexual identity. In the second section, I use psychoanalysis to examine how the representation of male homosexual identity in terms of masochism and self-shattering points towards a redefinition of men's relation to God (as also represented by the father). In as much as God has traditionally legitimated the natural/unnatural and truth/error oppositions, my argument in this section extends that of the first. In the third section, I draw on the psychoanalytic argument that all sexuality is structurally perverse to argue that the male same-sex desire represented in Cernuda's last four books of poetry points to an extension and reorganization of sexual pleasure.

My argument throughout this chapter resembles that of the previous one in as much as it focuses on the terms in which male homosexual identity is articulated. The questions of nature and the divine represent points of overlap with and divergence from my arguments in the previous two chapters since, in this chapter, I view nature as a means with which to legitimate male same-sex desire and argue that the sexualization of the divine raises the possibility of new relations between men and a new understanding of male homosexual identity.

Nature, Truth, Male Homosexuality, and Perversion

The theoretical source for my argument in this section is Jonathan Dollimore's complex analysis of the history of the concept and cultural dynamic of perversion in his book *Sexual Dissidence*.¹ Like Sedgwick

in *Epistemology of the Closet*, Dollimore not only interrogates the categories in which sexuality and, in particular, male homosexuality are represented but also argues that questions of sexual definition are always entwined with other (so-called) non-sexual issues. Dollimore seeks to defamiliarize the category of homosexuality through an analysis of the concept of perversion since he believes that recovering perversion's history entails rethinking some of the most fundamental categories that have been used to order and construct sexuality (p. 228). That male homosexuality embraces more than matters of sexual definition for Dollimore is made clear in his statements that homosexuality 'includes cultures, institutions, beliefs, practices, desires, aspirations, and much else' (p. 32) and that the 'paradoxical dynamics of perversion in its pre-sexological senses enable an account of dissidence within sexuality which is not [...] confined to sexuality' (p. 33).

Also like Sedgwick, Dollimore seeks to intervene in the debate between essentialist and constructionist understandings of sexual identity. However, rather than proposing an alternative theoretical framework as Sedgwick does, Dollimore argues against simplistic formulations of the opposition between essentialism and anti-essentialism and in favour of exploring that opposition in relation to the histories of different dissident cultures. The examination of these histories, according to Dollimore, reveals a greater degree of instability in the essentialist/anti-essentialist opposition than is often acknowledged in theoretical writing (pp. 25–26). As an example of this instability, at the end of his discussion of Gide and Wilde's encounter in Algiers, Dollimore states that, although 'divergent', Gide's essentialist and Wilde's anti-essentialist paths 'cross and reconverge' (p. 18).²

As Dollimore makes clear, the complexity and diversity of the history of perversion makes any definitive definition of it impossible. Nevertheless, he does offer a very general definition: typically, he argues, perversion involves a movement of 'erring, straying, deviation, or being diverted from' a 'path, destiny, or objective' which is 'understood as natural or right—usually right because natural (with the natural possibly having a yet higher legitimation in divine law)' (p. 104). It is, therefore, in part, the varied and historically specific forms of the natural/unnatural opposition that make it possible to conceive of perversion and deviation, whether as forms of demonization or cultural resistance (pp. 108–09).³ Dollimore's definition also highlights a link between perversion and wandering from the true or right that has its roots in a pre-sexological history in which perversion could signify erring and error (p. 41).⁴ Indeed, Dollimore argues that it is the theological understanding of perversion as 'deviation from the true faith to the false' that points to one of the 'paradoxes of the perverse' (p. 120) according to which the:

most extreme threat to the true form of something comes not so much from its absolute opposite or its direct negation, but in the form of its perversion; somehow the perverse threat is inextricably rooted in the true and the authentic, while being, in spite of (or rather because of) that connection, also the utter contradiction of the true and authentic.

(p. 121)

Another of these paradoxes, which partly explains the first, is the view that perversion is 'at once utterly alien to what it threatens, and yet, mysteriously inherent within it'. According to Dollimore, these paradoxes, which constitute part of the 'paradoxical perverse', can have a destabilizing effect because they reveal that the perverse threat originates inside that which it threatens (the dominant) even though it is perceived as external to it (p. 121).

Dollimore argues that the destabilizing potential of the paradoxical perverse is represented by the 'perverse dynamic', by which he understands 'certain instabilities and contradictions within dominant structures' which arise as a result of the 'interconnectedness' between the terms of a binary opposition (p. 33). For Dollimore, this interconnectedness consists of the 'antithetical inher[ing] within, and [being] partly produced by, what it opposes'. As this definition suggests, such interconnectedness should not be understood as unity or self-identity nor as meaning that the terms of an opposition are essentially the same. Central to this interconnectedness is 'the proximate', which Dollimore defines as something that is 'adjacent and *thereby* related temporally or spatially' to something else or as something that is drawing near in time or space or that is the 'opposite of *remote* or *ultimate*' (p. 33). According to Dollimore, the proximate is usually disavowed by the dominant and, as a result of a process of displacement, is often constructed as absolutely different to it, as the dominant's other. Despite this, Dollimore argues, the proximate also remains close by and facilitates 'transgressive reinscription' or the 'tracking-back of the "other" into the "same"' (p. 33). Such reinscription intensifies the instabilities generated by the perverse dynamic within the dominant norms and redirects them against those norms.'

In Cernuda's last four books of poetry, male homosexuality is repeatedly legitimated by being represented as natural. This representation takes, in part, the form of analogies between male same-sex desire and natural objects and descriptions of male homosexuality in relation to natural spatial and temporal frames. Obviously, this appropriation of nature does not seek to abolish the category of the natural but instead reflects an investment by the subordinate (male homosexuality) in the privileged term of the opposition natural/unnatural, an investment which it shares with the dominant culture. In Cernuda's later poetry nature is reworked by extending the category of the natural to male homosexuality rather than by inverting the dominant culture's use of that category. Nevertheless, the aim of this reworking is to reject the

dominant's deployment of nature as a means of legitimating heterosexuality and disqualifying male homosexuality. Instead of realigning the natural with male homosexuality and the unnatural with heterosexuality, the transgressive reinscription of nature in Cernuda's later work proposes that both forms of sexuality are natural. However, this does not make them the same and, as evidence of this, the redeployment of the natural is accompanied by an awareness of the difference between homo- and hetero-sexuality. Nevertheless, the representation of both sexualities as natural, the internal differentiation of nature, inscribes rather than disavows their proximity to one another.

The mediation of male homosexual desire through nature in 'Otros tulipanes amarillos' (pp. 363–65) represents the first stage in the reworking of the natural, its appropriation for the subordinate.⁶ As Coleman (p. 57) and Harris (p. 132) have stated, the speaker's description of an affair that the male 'tú' had with another man in a previous spring (ll. 23–29) is stimulated by the sight of yellow tulips in the misty, wet spring of the present (ll. 1–7). The tulips and spring serve, therefore, as frames through which to view male homosexuality. This framing function is emphasized by the description of the past and present springs as summarized ('cifrada[s]', l. 10) in the tulips, a description in which the spring, the temporal setting for the pleasures of love between men, is presented to us metonymically through the tulips (ll. 8–11). Other instances of the naturalization of male homosexuality are the comparison of the 'tú's desire with a plant (ll. 12–13) and the spring's illusory omens (l. 21), its branches of cherry blossom and warm southerly winds (ll. 17–18).⁷ Although these omens are said to have seduced the 'tú' as signs announcing the fulfilment of his love, they did not actually exist, as Coleman has also noted (p. 57), since they were 'presagios *ilusorios*' (l. 21; my emphasis). This suggests that the lover fed his desire by appropriating the blossoming cherry trees and the warm breeze, by bestowing on nature a significance it did not have. The figuration of male homosexual desire in natural terms is also found in the poem's final three lines, where the speaker instructs the 'tú' to continue responding to the so-called promptings of spring by calling out to 'los cuerpos' and learning 'ese silencio' (ll. 42–44).⁸ The silence (l. 44) which the speaker mentions is not only that caused by oblivion devouring the names of the 'tú's homosexual desire, his imperious affects (ll. 39–40), but also the lost sound with which the tulips' colour was compared at the end of the first stanza (ll. 6–7).

In the penultimate stanza, the 'tú's body is associated with the night and cyclical time when it is described as a waning moon (l. 37), a description that contradicts Coleman's assertion that nature and the human body follow a different 'continuum' in this poem (pp. 56, 57). His body is waning because

it is being consumed by his memories (l. 36), including that of his former lover (ll. 23–29), and not, as Jiménez-Fajardo has argued, by ‘oblivion’ (p. 84). Despite this image’s destructiveness, which could imply pathology, the ‘tú’’s relation to his past and his fading desire in the present are framed as natural as a result of the comparison between life and leaves freezing on a tree, the wind destroying a flower, and the sky clouding over (ll. 30–37). Although these events appear to represent nature as a site of unpredictable change in linear time, they are, in fact, as Jiménez-Fajardo has indicated (p. 84), moments in a cycle of death and rebirth to which the ‘tú’’s desire is also subject because they are analogous to the ‘tú’’s relation to his past in which his body is compared with a moon. It is the return of the moon implied by the body–moon comparison that leads me to disagree with Jiménez-Fajardo’s comment that death is ‘changed from [...] a decrease to an increase *and back again*’ in this poem (pp. 84–85; my emphasis) and with Olivio Jiménez’s differing view of death in this poem as ‘negación absoluta’ (‘Emoción’, pp. 138–39).

Nature is also central to the representation of male homosexuality in ‘Después’ (p. 459).⁹ For example, the lovers’ desire is awoken by the return of the spring (ll. 1–4), as Harris (p. 135) and Jiménez-Fajardo (p. 124) have pointed out, and the youth’s spell (ll. 5–7) is imagined as again running through their bodies like sap. In keeping with these natural frames, the mention of spray and wind in the men’s hair (l. 4) suggests that they are cruising on a beach (whence also the reference to their glances; l. 3). The analogy between homosexual love and the vegetable world and the linking of homosexuality to cyclical time are also found in ‘El fuego’ (pp. 389–91).¹⁰ In this poem, the ‘tú’’s love is described as rooted in his body as deeply as a tree in the earth (ll. 10–13) and both his love and the poplar tree by which he thought his love are subject to the same process (ll. 35–36). Furthermore, the descriptions of the ‘tú’’s love in ‘El fuego’ as destined to live only one summer (ll. 10–11) and of his body as invernal (l. 28) suggest that his emotions and body change in accordance with the seasons. Similarly, in ‘Ofrenda’ (p. 327), the ‘tú’’s love evolves in accordance with the seasons: in the spring, he seeks the gods’ favour with offerings of garlands (ll. 1–4) and then, in the winter, is unable to realize his love the object of which is compared with leaves, among other things (ll. 5–8).¹¹ Also, the comparison of his desire in winter to a living seed sown as an offering to the gods (ll. 10–12) suggests that his desire’s wintry non-fulfilment is analogous to the seed’s germinating below ground. Finally, in ‘Haciéndose tarde’ (pp. 475–76), natural events are used to justify the re-emergence of the ‘tú’’s homosexual desire: the speaker tells the ‘tú’ that he should not think that the season for his new love (l. 7) is over because the lark’s song, for example,

always fills the morning (ll. 9–10) and, in the poem's final lines, the speaker orders love to break open the doors of linear time (ll. 17–18).¹² In a similar vein, Harris argues that, by comparing his love to natural phenomena, Cernuda stresses its naturalness despite the lateness of its arrival in his life (p. 142).

In 'La familia' (pp. 334–37), male homosexuality is again articulated through the category of the natural, a category that, in this poem, is internally divided.¹³ Although the poem's title includes the male 'tú's sisters, the speaker only mentions them once (ll. 11–12) and concentrates on the 'tú's relation with his parents. Natural images recur throughout the poem and describe both the parents and the 'tú'. For instance, the family home is described as Man's nest (l. 14) and the 'tú's parents are specified as mammals by the reference to their 'fauces' (l. 37). Similarly, the speaker describes the young 'tú' as both a defenceless and a destructive animal (ll. 41, 50). However, although both the 'tú' and his parents are natural, they are differentiated in two respects. Firstly, the 'tú' does not receive his identity from his parents (ll. 49–53) and, secondly, the 'tú' and his parents are distinguished by their respective approaches to a love which is compared with fire. This difference is implicit in the speaker's comment that, following the experience of his parents' love, the 'tú' learnt to hate 'el amor que no sabe/Arder anónimo sin recompensa alguna' (l. 62). It is the similarity between the 'tú's love in 'El fuego' (ll. 18–24) and this description that makes it possible to code the 'tú's love in 'La familia' as one for other men.¹⁴ Therefore, although both parties love naturally, they do so differently. A similar internal division of nature is found in the comparisons between the freedom of the 'tú's identity and water which rises from a spring and flows to the sea (ll. 54–56) and between time and a river which freed the 'tú' by destroying his parents and their tyranny (ll. 64–67). While the first comparison exemplifies the use of nature to affirm male homosexual identity, the second is a dramatic example of nature being turned against the dominant culture. The speaker's deployment of fire and water, therefore, creates a space for the 'tú's identity which does not posit reproductive heterosexuality as the other of male homosexuality but, rather, articulates their indissociability. This interconnectedness, which Harris (p. 146) and Jiménez-Fajardo (p. 83) overlook in their emphasis on the difference of Cernuda's desire, is reinforced by the similarity between the description of the lovers as birds in 'Otros tulipanes amarillos' (ll. 19–20, 28–29) and 'El amigo' (pp. 386–87; ll. 31–35) and that of the parental home as a nest in 'La familia' (l. 14).¹⁵

The 'tú' and his parents also differ in their respective degrees of self-consciousness. For example, the 'tú's parents are described as adopting an

attitude of unthinking repetition to reproductive sex (ll. 25–29) and as unable to learn the lessons discernible in their surroundings (ll. 33–36). In contrast, the speaker defines the ‘tú’ as a force of solitude that wins his truth through his mistakes (ll. 52–53), that is, as able to draw conclusions from his experience. In addition, rather than copying others’ actions, the ‘tú’ is self-sufficient (l. 52) and, consequently, his actions possess an inner urgency that his parents’ lacked (l. 28). Later in the poem, however, the differential value of self-sufficiency and reflection and, therefore, the ‘tú’'s status as his parents’ supposed other are brought into question. After the death of the ‘tú’'s parents, their memory makes the ‘tú’ smile sadly as he transgresses their moral code (ll. 70–73) and the speaker asks whether all human actions are, as the ‘tú’ now believes, the fruit of imitation and unconsciousness (ll. 76–77). This question posits the ‘tú’'s identity as just as imitative and lacking in consciousness as his parents’, and, therefore, as apparently the same as his parents’. However, that the ‘tú’ reflects on the nature of his identity while his parents do not suggests that the imitation and unconsciousness of his identity do not make reflection altogether impossible and, therefore, do not entirely remove its differential value. Consequently, the question (ll. 76–77) portrays the difference between the ‘tú’ and his parents in terms of proximity rather than opposition. The proximity of their difference was hinted at earlier in the poem by the echo in the description of the ‘tú’ as ‘fuerza de soledad’ (l. 52) of that of his parents, in the context of their inability to learn from experience, as ‘dos soledades’ (l. 40). The ‘tú’'s transgressive identity, therefore, inheres within but also differs from that of his parents.¹⁶ In the same vein, the ‘tú’'s love does not fit easily into ‘la herencia humana’ (l. 80) to which it belongs and in which people unintentionally do good and bad (l. 82). The uneasiness of that relation is indicated by the description of the ‘tú’'s desire as ‘esta *extraña* llama’ (l. 78; my emphasis) and the possibility that he will go to hell after his death (ll. 83–84). The ‘tú’ wishes, not unreasonably, to avoid such a fate but without renouncing the difference or so-called strangeness of his desire. It is the longing for this difficult balance that leads the speaker to hope that the poem will bring forgiveness and peace both to the ‘tú’ and to his parents (ll. 88–94). This element of reciprocity has been caught by, among others, Jiménez-Fajardo, who argues that, at the end of the poem, the ‘tú’ ‘extends’ his new-found ‘understanding’ to his parents, to ‘those who lacked it’ in his childhood (p. 82). While it is also implicit in Pato’s belief that, in ‘La familia’, Cernuda offers himself up ‘en petición de paz, de perdón y de comprensión’ (p. 65), Ugarte argues, in contrast, that Cernuda only ‘seeks to understand and accept’ himself and his difference in this poem (pp. 184–85).

In 'Peregrino' (pp. 530–31), the male 'tú's identity as a wanderer or pilgrim is linked with his rejection of reproduction.¹⁷ In the first stanza, the speaker states that men who return home are tired of travelling and long for their home environment (ll. 1–5), while, in the second, he contrasts the 'tú' with such men and writes that he plans to:

Seguir libre adelante,
 Disponible por siempre, mozo o viejo,
 Sin hijo que te busque, como a Ulises,
 Sin Ítaca que aguarde y sin Penélope.
 (l. 7)

By using the verb 'pensar' to describe the 'tú's attitude to returning (l. 6), the speaker foregrounds the element of reflection in his present situation and establishes a link between consciousness and the 'tú's sexual identity reminiscent of that in 'La familia', which suggests that the 'tú' in 'Peregrino' is also homosexual. The 'tú's identity is perverse in a non-sexual sense given that, in the poem's final stanza, he is described as being loyal to a difficult destiny (ll. 11–15), a description that recalls Dollimore's suggestion that the 'wilful integrity' with which Gide legitimated his sexual identity could itself be considered a form of perversity (p. 13). Indeed, one of the paradoxes of the perverse that Dollimore identifies and that is applicable to 'Peregrino' is that whereby perversion lies 'not in the deviation, but the refusal to deviate' (p. 121, fn. 8).

The non-sexual meaning of perversion as wilful integrity and this paradox of the perverse combine with male same-sex desire in 'La escarcha' (pp. 388–89), the third poem in the series 'Cuatro poemas a una sombra'.¹⁸ In the first half of the poem, the male 'tú' remembers an affair with another man. However, his memories now jar with him and strike him merely as cold, ugly imitations of the affair (ll. 1–18). This leads him, in the next stanza, to feel that, after the affair, love is nothing but a disconsolate shadow over a few transitory fields in which he searches for the constant shape of things (ll. 19–24). Nevertheless, this inconsolable perspective is countered by an omen (l. 26) within the 'tú' which tells him neither to renounce nor to seek comfort for his desire but, rather, in an echo of the last stanza of 'Peregrino', to continue to desire in the midst of adversity (ll. 31–36). The perversity of such advice is underlined by the description of the omen as mad (l. 36), while that of the 'tú' in heeding the omen is reinforced by the ambivalent meaning of the noun 'presagio' (l. 26): 'señal que anuncia suerte o desgracia' (Moliner, *Diccionario*, II, p. 833). Such perversity combines with hope and paradox in 'Otra fecha' (p. 466) where, despite everything, the 'tú' continues to be both attracted and deceived by the future (ll. 13–14)

and knows this because, paradoxically, he involuntarily continues to believe in the future even though he does not believe in anything despite wanting to (ll. 17–20).¹⁹ The ‘tú’'s perversity bears fruit in ‘El viajero’ (pp. 457–58) in which he has reached a place where his reality and dreams coincide (ll. 17–18), that is, one of those places where, in ‘La escarcha’ (ll. 29–30), he was told he could find his spiritual centre.²⁰

In ‘Aplauso humano’ (pp. 360–61), a further non-sexual meaning of perversion is interwoven with male homosexual desire.²¹ In the fourth stanza, the speaker tells the ‘tú’ that he will pay a high price for being faithful to himself (ll. 13–14). Such faithfulness, to which Harris (pp. 114–15, 155) and Ugarte (p. 169) also draw attention, can, as I have already suggested, itself be considered a type of perversity. The ‘tú’'s integrity in such adverse circumstances recalls that of the ‘tú’ in ‘La escarcha’ and ‘Peregrino’ and, as a result, posits his sexual identity as homosexual.²² The speaker’s opinion that ‘desvío/Siempre es razón mejor ante la grey’ (l. 15) exemplifies that “*perverse temper*” which, according to the definition Dollimore quotes from a nineteenth-century edition of Webster’s dictionary, “likes or dislikes by the rule of contradiction to another’s will” (p. 107). The speaker is, therefore, also perverse because he advocates basing a relation to the herd on a principle (deviation) which is always applicable, regardless of the circumstances (l. 16). Furthermore, the principle which the speaker proposes as the basis of that relation is precisely that of perversion or deviation.

The construction of the ‘tú’'s homosexual identity in opposition to that of heterosexual culture, as the dominant culture’s other, is underlined by the speaker’s use of prepositions which confront the ‘tú’ and the herd. For example, he states that pedants, journalists, and even rudimentary yokels will think themselves perfect when faced with (‘frente a’) the ‘tú’ (ll. 5–8) and that deviation is an absolute principle in the face of (‘ante’) the herd (ll. 15–16). However, according to Dollimore, such alterity is the effect of a displacement made possible by the proximity of the so-called other to the dominant (p. 141). In ‘Aplauso humano’, this proximity, which has tended to be overlooked by critics seeking to emphasize Cernuda’s otherness or difference (for example, Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 73; Ugarte, pp. 168–69), is suggested by three factors. Firstly, although the ‘tú’'s honesty about his sexual identity means that the herd will be able to insult and mock him (l. 4), the speaker states that the ‘tú’ should pervert their insults by interpreting them as (albeit unpleasant) forms of praise or identification (ll. 23–24). The hostility of the herd not only posits the ‘tú’ as other but also, according to the speaker, conceals an unacknowledged admiration for him, which presupposes that the ‘tú’ represents an ideal which the herd would like to imitate, which is internal to it. Secondly, in the final stanza, the speaker describes the ‘tú’ as living

among ('entre') Mankind (l. 22) rather than as outside or opposite it. In both these instances, the other has tracked back into the same, in keeping with Ruiz Silva's belief that the boundary between 'marginación y no marginación (no digo integración)' is relatively easy to cross (p. 104). This tracking-back is also suggested by the appropriation for the 'tú's desire of the derogatory link made between orality and love in the speaker's description of marital sexuality. In referring to the (sexual) truth of the 'tú's lips (l. 21), the speaker echoes the description of the married couple's parsimonious thirst for love which is satisfied by conjugal dishwater (ll. 1-3). As a result of this transgressive appropriation, a characteristic belonging to the dominant emerges in a different light in the subordinate with potentially disruptive consequences for the former.²³

The basis of this transgressive reinscription is the truth of the 'tú's sexual identity, to which, like the 'tú' in 'Peregrino', he remains loyal. In keeping with this, according to the speaker in 'Aplauso humano', the 'tú's poetry makes visible a truth (l. 4) which is implicitly sexual and the 'tú' refuses to lie in order to enjoy a compliment with official goodwill (ll. 9-12). However, the link between truth and sexual identity in Cernuda's later poetry is complex and, at times, paradoxical as a result of its interweaving with error. The link between epistemological mistakes ('error') and wandering ('errar') also plays a part in the articulation of male homosexual identity in Cernuda's last four books of poetry. For example, in 'Otros tulipanes amarillos', Spring is said to send the homosexual 'tú' off along the path of transgression ('los yerros', l. 16). Similarly, the description of the 'tú' in 'La familia' as winning the truth about himself with his errors (l. 53) suggests that his relation to his true self is not given but, rather, requires a detour through mistakes in order to be realized. At the same time, the speaker's use of the gerund (l. 53) to describe the 'tú's relation to his true self implies that that relation is dynamic rather than a goal that he achieves once and for all. In other words, error can always reappear because the possibility will always remain that what the 'tú' thought was a relation to his true self was, in fact, a relation to a false self. Consequently, the relation between truth and error in the development of the 'tú's homosexual identity exemplifies that paradox of the perverse identified by Dollimore whereby error threatens truth while inhering within and simultaneously opposing truth (p. 121). This paradox means that the honesty which the speaker attributes to the 'tú' in his relation with himself and his parents in 'La familia' (ll. 31-32) and with the herd in 'Aplauso humano' is implicitly problematic and provisional. The appropriation of truth by and for a subordinate sexual identity in Cernuda's later poetry, therefore, is regularly accompanied by an awareness of truth's inextricability from falsity.

Like the other men in the poems I have analysed in this chapter, the male 'tú' of 'Nocturno yanqui' (pp. 445–49) is homosexual (ll. 96–98).²⁴ In this poem, the 'tú' feels remorse at becoming conscious of having been young when he no longer is young (ll. 57–61). The speaker describes this awareness in terms both of the 'tú's youthfulness hurting inside the 'tú' and of the 'tú' being his youth's avenging prey. These lines (ll. 57–63) suggest an identification between the 'tú' and his youthful self in three ways. Firstly, just as the 'tú' feels remorse (ll. 57–60), the 'tú's youth feels pain as a result of knowing that the 'tú's age makes its existence pointless (ll. 62–67). Secondly, it is difficult to think of the 'tú's youth, his former self, as being in pain and not also hurting the 'tú'. And, thirdly, an identification is implied by the pain common to the descriptions of the 'tú's youth and of the 'tú' as its prey (l. 63). As a consequence, the 'tú's identity and knowledge of himself in the present are inextricable from perversion in the senses of error and wandering. On the one hand, they are built on his mistake of not realizing that he was young when he was (ll. 58–60), while, on the other, the importance to his present identity of his youth implies that, paradoxically, he must wander from himself in order to be himself.²⁵

A little later in the poem, the speaker reflects on the 'tú's life and comments that the 'tú's goals in life have been to become worthy of his own and others' respect and esteem and constantly to be himself in a better way (ll. 86–90). For the speaker, these goals are equivalent to the 'tú' constantly seeking a youthful myth that he can serve and, by doing so, be himself (ll. 98–100). By implication, the more worthy the 'tú' becomes of his own and others' respect and esteem, the more truly he will be himself. However, as he pursues his goals, the 'tú' hopes that his pretext will be justified (ll. 91–94). In other words, the 'tú's pursuit of his goals is made possible by what María Moliner defines as a 'razón que se alega falsamente para hacer [...] cierta cosa' (*Diccionario*, II, p. 839). The motor of the 'tú's life, therefore, is a lie, the lie that his destiny and love for a youthful myth (ll. 96–98), for his youthful self (l. 101), moved him to pursue his goals. Falsity is also integral to the 'tú's identity in a second sense since the creature he sought to serve was a 'mito' (l. 98), an invention which he tried to make pass for the truth. Paradoxically, therefore, the 'tú' was himself by serving a fake. A few lines later, the speaker's question—'¿[E]s la verdad del hombre/Para él solo [?]' (ll. 102–03)—performs a powerful perversion of truth: Man's truth (the truth that the 'tú's life is driven by and aims at a lie) is that of truth's absence or replacement by a lie.²⁶ This is also implicit in the speaker's subsequent statement that:

Quien eres, tu vida era;
 Uno sin otro no sois,
 Tú lo sabes.
 Y es fuerza seguir, entonces,
 Aun el miraje perdido.
 (l. 107)

This statement empties the 'tú's identity of all substance since the dependence of his present identity on his past identity (ll. 107–08) is, in fact, a dependence on a lost 'miraje' (l. 111) or youthful myth (l. 98). Whereas in 'La familia', truth (albeit in a provisional and tentative form) was the basis of the 'tú's identity, in this poem, his identity is grounded on a falsity that, paradoxically, is described as the truth of Mankind.

This perversion of the relation between truth, falsity, and identity is taken one step further in 'La partida' (pp. 423–24) in which falsity is put forward as the sole principle of male homosexual identity.²⁷ The poem alternates between descriptions of a man on board a ship who is leaving a country to which he has no intention of returning and flashbacks to scenes from his life in that country. Although there is no explicit link between the man's wandering and his sexual identity, the echoes of 'Peregrino' and 'La escarcha' allow an implicit connection to be made. Error is constitutive of the man's identity in two senses. Firstly, as he looks back at the country he has left, he sees the last ten years of his life rubbed out like a mistake (ll. 16–18). Secondly, and more significantly, he states both that he originally arrived in the country he is now leaving as a result of error and that he is now leaving it as the result of another error (ll. 26–27). Whereas the 'tú' in 'Peregrino' founded his sexual identity on conscious thought (l. 6), in 'La partida', the speaker appears not to be a rational agent but, rather, to be blown about by error. Furthermore, in contrast to 'La familia', where error led to a problematically and provisionally true identity, truth is entirely absent in 'La partida' and the only relation the speaker can have to himself is a mistaken one. However, as the change from the third person singular to the first person singular in the last stanza (ll. 26–28) shows, the speaker is at least conscious that his identity is determined by the constant reassertion of error.

Male Homosexuality and Self-Shattering

In his general definition of perversion which I have already quoted, Dollimore states that perversion involves a movement of deviation from a path or goal which is perceived as natural or right and that the natural is at times legitimated by divine law (p. 104). It should come as no surprise, therefore, that as well as the reworking of the natural/unnatural opposition, a

redefinition of men's relation to the divine (of which I take the father to be a symbol) is also found in Cernuda's later poetry.

My starting point in this section is Leo Bersani's essay 'The Gay Daddy' in which he explores the modulation of sadism by masochism and, in a related move, seeks to reinstate the father as an object of male homosexual desire.²⁸ In the first twenty pages of his essay, Bersani argues that sadomasochism not only crudely raises questions about the link between pleasure and the exercise of power but also unwittingly invites an analysis of the 'defeat, or at least the modulation, of power by the very pleasure inherent in its exercise' (p. 83). Ultimately, according to Bersani, even though it does not share the oppressive intentionality of the structure of domination and subordination which organizes social relations, sadomasochism's pleasures are derived from that same structure. Sadomasochism, therefore, imagines pleasure in a way which is 'almost entirely defined by the dominant culture' (p. 87) and which does not challenge the structure of authority itself. However, sadomasochism does challenge the 'hypocrisy of authority' by revealing that the exercise of power is accompanied by an intense pleasure that the powerful usually deny (p. 87). For Bersani, sadomasochism's value derives from its 'shocking revelation' that, for the sake of sadomasochistic stimulation, 'human beings may be willing to give up control over their environment' (p. 95). Such a willingness, Bersani argues, characterizes masochists, who are defined by their 'potentially dysfunctional rejection of pain', that is, of the body's or ego's 'protection against self-dissolution' (p. 94). As a result, sadomasochism stages the 'potential ecstasy in both a hyperbolic sense of self [sadism] and the self's renunciation of its claims on the world [masochism]' (p. 95).

An important feature of sadomasochism, and one that Bersani highlights, is the reversibility of the participants' roles. Two effects of such reversibility are to disrupt the fixed distribution of positions of power and powerlessness and to denaturalize the link between power and gender or race. Role reversibility, according to Bersani, also allows us to speculate that the 'temptation' to renounce power is 'inherent in the very exercise of power' (p. 96). It is as if, Bersani goes on, the 'excitement of a hyperbolic self-assertion, of an unthwarted mastery over the world and [...] brutalization of the other, were inseparable from an impulse of self-dissolution' (p. 96) or 'masochistic jouissance' by which it could potentially be modulated (p. 99). For Bersani, jouissance is synonymous with the extended erotogenicity discussed by Freud in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* and is related to masochism in that it shatters the self or 'disrupts the ego's coherence and dissolves its boundaries' (p. 101).²⁹ In the same vein, in *The Freudian Body* Bersani had argued that sexuality was ontologically grounded in masochism (p. 39), adding that its 'constitutive excitement' is the same

regardless of the type of sexual or supposedly non-sexual acts in which it is manifested (p. 40).³⁰

For Bersani, Freud's case-history of the Wolf Man offers not only one of psychoanalysis' 'most morbid genealogies of homosexual desire' ('The Gay Daddy', p. 108) but also one form of resistance to the 'violence and avidity for power' that, according to Bersani, inheres in all intimate dealings between human beings.³¹ The resistance that Bersani has in mind is a resistance 'in the Foucauldian sense' (p. 108), that is, a resistance that is produced from within the exercise of power itself.³² The case-history revolves around a scene of parental love-making that, on the basis of a dream his patient had at the age of four, Freud claims his patient witnessed aged one-and-a-half. According to Freud, this dream caused his patient to repress his desire for his father because it reminded/showed him that the price of the realization of that desire was castration. For Bersani, the strangest part of Freud's interpretation of this scene of parental love-making is that it corresponds neither to Freud's own construction of the scene nor to Freud's account of his patient's version of it. One example that Bersani gives of this non-correspondence is that, in his dream, the boy does not have a terrified relation to his father as one would expect given the castrating function that Freud attributes to the father. Instead, Bersani points out, according to Freud himself, 'compassion for the father' was, 'from the very beginning', part of the scene of parental coitus as both he and his patient reconstructed it (p. 110). One form that the boy's compassion took after the dream was his attempt to distinguish his father from the 'cruel and punishing Father of Christianity', a compassion that, importantly, Bersani classifies as one of the 'remarkably tender paternal feelings' that the boy felt towards his father (p. 109). However, Bersani argues, instead of acknowledging that his patient loves his father and does not perceive him as threatening him with castration, Freud insists on giving the father the 'dubious privilege of exercising his castrating prerogative' (p. 110) because, for Freud, nothing would stand in the way of the 'confirmation of murderous relations among men' (p. 111).

Bersani picks up on Freud's comment that compassion for the father was part of the boy's primal scene and, disagreeing with Freud, argues that the young boy expressed his compassion by defecating. According to Bersani, the boy's compassion was motivated by his identification with his father's so-called loss of his penis inside his wife's body during love-making and his defecation was an attempt to compensate his father for that loss. Bersani argues that, as a result of this compensatory gesture, the scene of parental love-making gives rise both to the threat of power (in the shape of the castrating father who forces the repression of his son's homosexual desire) and to its 'transference' or 'reciprocity' (p. 110). Whereas Freud describes

the relation between father and son as one of permanent separation as a result of a 'threat of violence that forces the repression of love', Bersani rereads their relation as a 'gentler exchange' (p. 112). In this exchange, the son's power consists of his ability to compensate his father for the supposed loss of his penis and is 'improvised as a response to the vulnerability [signalled by that loss] inherent in the very position and exercise of power'. Such vulnerability, Bersani makes clear, does not stem from the father's fear of castration but, rather, from the risk he takes in 'merging with another, [...] risking [his] own boundaries for the sake of self-dissolving extensions' (p. 112). Therefore, the son's power lies in his ability to enable his father to experience (rather than deny) the pleasures of masochistic *jouissance* and, thereby, to abandon his position of sadistic authority. Consequently, in this gentler relation, the father's sadism is modulated by the masochistic pleasure to which he gains access through his son. This new relation between father and son is not sadomasochistic because, in it, pleasure derives not from the reproduction of the polarized structures of political oppression but from their undermining. Another way of describing this new relation is to say that it enables the father to disappear without dying or to achieve the '*nonsuicidal disappearance of the subject*' (p. 99). Such a '*nonsuicidal disappearance*' makes it impossible to locate the subject as an 'object of discipline' (p. 99) and, therefore, may provide a means of specifying a male homosexual identity without fixing it within the 'disciplinary constraints of identity' (p. 101).

A link is repeatedly made in Cernuda's later poetry between love and violence, in the form of domination and submission. Although the presence of these terms encourages a sadomasochistic reading, such a reading of Cernuda's poetry (which has never, in fact, been done) would overlook the masochistic shattering of the sadistic position. In my extension of Bersani's model of male homosexual identity to Cernuda's later poetry, I shall focus primarily on a number of poems in the series *Poemas para un cuerpo*. The 'yo' in whose name the majority of these poems are written describes himself as 'Luis Cernuda' and his lover (to whom most of the poems are addressed) as 'Salvador'. In order to prevent an overhasty identification of the Luis Cernuda of these poems with the historical subject Luis Cernuda, I shall refer to the former simply as 'Luis'. In keeping with this, the same gesture that has tempted critics such as Kitching-Schulman (pp. 129, 136) and José Romera Castillo to read these poems autobiographically—the statement in 'Para ti, para nadie' (pp. 471–72) that 'yo, este Luis Cernuda/Incógnito [...] /Estas líneas escribo' (ll. 11, 13)—also, paradoxically, problematizes such a reading by describing the historical subject as unknown.³³

In 'Salvador' (pp. 469–70), Luis's destiny is abolished and entirely dependent on Salvador's actions in as much as Luis is waiting for Salvador either to save or condemn him (ll. 1–3).³⁴ That masochism is synonymous with Luis's desire is made clear in lines seven to nine in which the speaker implores Salvador to condemn Luis. To the same effect, in 'Amor en música' (pp. 464–65), pleasure and pain merge in love (ll. 27–28).³⁵ The stated purpose of the condemnation in 'Salvador' is not to relieve Luis's pain but to release him so that he can repeat his present experience of suffering in relation to another man (ll. 8–9). At the same time, the speaker also implores Salvador to save Luis from himself and from him (Salvador) (ll. 4–5). Salvador is a threat to Luis because he is directing his sadism at Luis, a sadism which, when combined with his omnipotence (suggested by Luis's complete powerlessness; ll. 2–3), indicates that he occupies the supposedly desexualized position of the castrating father. Salvador would save Luis by sexualizing his own position or modulating his sadism through an identification with Luis's masochism. However, as the speaker suggests in lines four to five, Luis's masochism in the present represents a danger to himself since it implicitly takes the form of an identification with the masochist's 'potentially dysfunctional rejection of pain' ('The Gay Daddy', p. 94) in a sadomasochistic context (indicated by the polarization of roles between the two men). Consequently, Luis's salvation from himself would entail his salvation from a masochism tied to the deadly structure of domination and submission (p. 97). As will become apparent, Luis's salvation partly involves his identification with the paternal/sadistic position or, as Silver says in relation to 'Salvador', his becoming 'whole' ('Arcadia', p. 120). However, this identification does not lead Luis to abandon the pleasures of masochism.

In terms borrowed from Bersani's analysis of the Wolf Man case-history, Luis wishes Salvador to feel compassion for him (to save him) and offers himself to Salvador as compensation for the vulnerability Salvador would experience in identifying with his (Luis's) masochism. In other words, Luis occupies the position of the son in the Wolf Man case-history and that of the insertee in Bersani's account of homosexual desire. He offers himself to Salvador just as the insertee offers his penis to his lover as that 'protectiveness' that helps 'all human beings' to risk their 'own boundaries for the sake of self-dissolving extensions' (p. 112). At the same time, if Salvador responded compassionately to Luis, he would place himself in the filial role and Luis in the paternal position. (Paradoxically, even Salvador's condemnation of Luis would be a compassionate act since it would imply his momentary acknowledgement of or identification with Luis's suffering.) Consequently, in Luis and Salvador's relationship, each man would act as

both father and son for the other, each would provide the other with the protectiveness necessary for each to dissolve the boundaries of his self.

Luis returns to the beginning of his relationship with Salvador in 'Precio de un cuerpo' (pp. 482–83) and states that Salvador was unconscious of his sadistic effect on him, an unconsciousness fully in keeping with Salvador's resistance to the pleasures of self-loss implied by his non-identification with Luis in 'Salvador'.³⁶ In the opening lines of 'Precio de un cuerpo', Luis writes that a beautiful body such as Salvador's does not understand its attractive force (ll. 1–3) and, at the end of the poem, he states that Salvador was unaware of his effect on him (ll. 21–23). The violence involved in the arousal of Luis's desire is made clear in the final stanza's metaphor of Salvador ambushing or trapping the unwilling Luis, his prey. That the price of taking pleasure in Salvador's beauty, of being attacked by him, is described as a hell of anguish and desire (l. 25) reiterates the inextricability of Luis's desire from masochism. However, Luis's masochism is also interwoven with an identification with the father's position. On the one hand and in keeping with his masochism, he describes love as a humiliating servitude (l. 6), while, on the other, he refers to love as:

Necesidad de gastar la ternura
 En un ser que llenamos
 Con nuestro pensamiento,
 Vivo de nuestra vida.
 (l. 7)

In these lines, Luis occupies the paternal position by claiming to infuse life into Salvador, a claim which is echoed in line thirteen of 'De dónde vienes' (pp. 477–78) and which posits him as equivalent to a god.³⁷ Luis's desire is, therefore, one in which sadistic identification is constantly shattered by masochistic pleasure.

The defensiveness of the paternal position is clearly outlined in 'Divinidad celosa' (pp. 483–84), in which God is said to be jealous of the homosexual lovers because they are no longer alone (ll. 5–8).³⁸ In other words, God is not, but would like to be, the object of a man's affections. However, by only describing God as jealous when the lovers are together and not revealing how He reacts once He has separated them, the speaker gives the impression that His jealousy ends with their separation and that He does not seek to overcome his loneliness by becoming a lover himself. Indeed, by insisting that the lover give up his beloved (ll. 10–12), God is able to repress/forget his jealousy and his own desire. God's punishing/castrating actions are, therefore, a defence against the appeal of homosexual desire, against the pleasure of self-loss experienced in desiring another man. Consequently, God's exercise of power

is characterized by the unmodulated sadism of an unreconstructed father. A similar defensiveness can also be seen in 'Después de hablar' (pp. 474–75) in which an anonymous speaker complains about Luis not keeping silent about his love (ll. 1–5) and repeatedly tells him not to talk about his love (ll. 3–5, 11–12, 15–16).³⁹

That things are very different between Luis and Salvador is suggested by Luis's statement in 'Viviendo sueños' (pp. 476–77) that there is nothing in the world that is worth Salvador's presence (ll. 16–18), that Salvador is an object of great value for him.⁴⁰ As will become apparent, this places Salvador in the son's position. In keeping with this, Luis identifies with the paternal position in as much as he claims that Salvador only exists in his (Luis's) thoughts (ll. 23–24). As in 'Precio de un cuerpo', Luis's thought, god-like, brings Salvador to life or gives him existence. However, echoing the speaker's claim in 'Salvador' that Salvador could save Luis from a deadly masochistic identification, Luis's identification with the father saves him and is accompanied by life (ll. 13–15). As the interweaving of the men's roles in their relationship suggests, Luis's salvation is not at the expense of Salvador's death. In their relationship, the men's identities are modified in opposing, but interrelated and not exclusive, ways. On the one hand, Luis moves from a deadly identification with masochism to a sadistic identification which continues to acknowledge the pleasures of masochism while, on the other, Salvador's initial unconscious identification with sadism is modified by his identification with the son's position. The men's relationship, therefore, is characterized by a reversibility of roles not only between the two men but also, and simultaneously, by a modulation of each role within each man.

Just as Bersani described the relations between men outlined by his analysis of the Wolf Man case-history as a gentler exchange, so, in 'Salvador', the speaker states that Salvador's salvation of Luis would be accompanied by a reduction of violence achieved by dissolving the boundaries between the two men (ll. 5–6). Similarly, in 'Un hombre con su amor' (pp. 484–85), the men's sexual contact, while not penetrative, is described as the experience of peace and is simultaneous with Luis's enjoyment of the masochistic pleasures of self-shattering (ll. 6–7).⁴¹ That such self-oblivion represents the modulation of Luis's paternal identification is suggested in the remainder of the poem which makes clear that Luis's love cannot be realized without Salvador's body (ll. 17–20) and that his love is a paternal love (ll. 15–16) which contains within itself its own modulation through self-shattering (ll. 9–12).

According to Luis, the peace of self-dissolution creates an unrepayable debt between him and Salvador's body since that peace is priceless (ll. 3–8), a statement at odds with Silver's claim that the poet's 'debt' to Salvador is

'repaid' in his poetry ('*Arcadia*', p. 122). In the light of Bersani's argument that the son's feces are a gift with which he attempts to compensate his father (p. 110), Luis's statement indicates that he cannot dissolve himself without Salvador's body/penis which gives him (Luis) the invaluable experience of self-shattering. In this situation, value has been transferred from Salvador's body to Luis's experience given that the valuable object or gift is no longer Salvador's body/penis (as it was in '*Viviendo sueños*') but the experience which Luis has by virtue of it. Nevertheless, despite this transfer, Luis's identification with the son's position continues because value is involved in both cases. Consequently, Luis modulates his identification with the father's sadism by identifying with Salvador's compassionate self-offering.

In '*El amante espera*' (pp. 473-74), the men's relationship has finished and Luis appeals to God to act compassionately.⁴² Lest we interpret God's compassion in a non-sexual way, it is important to remember that Luis describes it as the object of his love (ll. 6-8). In the first stanza, Luis implores God to restore Salvador to him as He has done previously with other love-objects which he has lost (ll. 1-5). While God's omnipotence is the obvious reason why He should be able to do this, I want to propose a second reason which refers to the fantasy that would motivate such an action: God would restore Salvador to Luis because He identifies with the son's position in the Wolf Man's primal scene, an identification that would imply the modulation of His sadism. Luis's belief that God's compassion would restore Salvador to him points to the possibility of such an identification/modulation. However, although this new, homosexualized, paternal identity is implied (God has helped Luis before) and foreshadowed (Luis hopes He will help him again), it is not realized in this poem.

Luis describes his relationship with Salvador as one which brought him companionship and wealth and exempted his (Luis's) past from criticism (ll. 15-19). In an echo of the situation in '*Un hombre con su amor*', the wealth which Luis feels with Salvador is an indication of his identification with the son's compassionate position. Therefore, in as much as it justifies his previous existence, Luis's relationship with Salvador reworks Luis's paternal identification by suspending its castrating and judgemental stance.

Nevertheless, there is an important difference between God's compassion and that of Luis and Salvador's love. Whereas the men's relationship realizes their compassion, God's is still latent (Luis is only appealing to it). In other words, in '*El amante espera*', God occupies the sadistic position He did in '*Divinidad celosa*' and Luis is trying to encourage Him to identify with the son's masochistic pleasures by acting compassionately. In '*El amante espera*', therefore, Luis is at the same stage in his relation to God as he was in his relation to Salvador in '*Salvador*'. God's identification with the desexualized

paternal position as judge/critic is clear from Luis's comment that he knows that to ask God to return Salvador to him is sinful or to request an opportunity to sin (ll. 10–12). However, by the end of the poem, the link between God and the castrating father has weakened, without it being possible to describe Cernuda's God in this poem, as Corcoran Thomas has done, as 'compassionate and forgiving' (p. 187). Having explained that he is appealing to God because his relationship with Salvador exempts his past from criticism, Luis states that he is continuing his appeal because he is sure that, if he is committing blasphemy, God will forgive him (ll. 20–22). By using the conditional 'si', Luis raises the possibility that male homosexual desire is not a sin or blasphemous and, therefore, quietly questions God's authority. The avowal of such a possibility is the consequence of the redefinition of Luis's relation to his paternal identification in his affair with Salvador, a redefinition which opens up the prospect of a shift in God's attitude as well.

Sexuality as Perversion

In this third section, I examine a number of poems from Cernuda's last four books of poetry in the light of the relation between the biological and the sexual spheres which Jean Laplanche describes in his account of the emergence of human sexuality.⁴³ Laplanche reaches the conclusion that, especially in the second of the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud represents sexuality in its emergence as a perversion of the instincts or self-preservative functions (*Life and Death*, p. 23). The argument that sexuality in its essence perverts the instincts makes it impossible subsequently to claim convincingly that a sexual instinct exists or that a particular form of sexuality or sexual object-choice is natural. In my reading of Cernuda's later poetry, I shall trace the three elements of the perverse relation between the instincts and sexuality which leads to the 'whole of sexuality [...] becoming perversion' (p. 23). I will argue that the love described in Cernuda's poems is specifically sexual—that is, perverse—because it is characterized by the three features which mark all human sexuality: propping, autoerotism, and the erotogenic zone (p. 15). In pursuing this line of argument, I am taking issue with Dollimore's belief, to which I referred earlier, that an understanding of sexual dissidence should never be limited to sexuality (Dollimore, p. 33) since my argument in this section seeks to outline one version of such an understanding of sexual dissidence that disrupts and confounds the normative framework used to disqualify sexual dissidence.

Laplanche argues that Freud's use of the adjective 'anaclitic' in *On Narcissism: An Introduction* to describe a type of object-choice which is based on the object of the self-preservative function is, in fact, a secondary inflection of the notion of anaclisis.⁴⁴ This secondary understanding of

analysis has represented propping as an action whereby the subject's sexuality finds support in the object of the self-preservative function. Laplanche's point is not that such leaning does not occur but, rather, that propping is originally a term used to describe the relation between the drive and the instinct in the first phase of the emergence of sexuality.⁴⁵ In this first phase, sexual stimulation finds support in a self-preservative function, while, in the second phase of sexuality's emergence, it is separated from the instinct (*Life and Death*, pp. 16–18).

Following Freud in the *Three Essays*, Laplanche illustrates his argument about propping with the example of feeding. According to Laplanche, at the same time as the feeding function achieves satisfaction through nourishment, it is possible to perceive the emergence of a sexual process in which the infant's lips and tongue are stimulated by the nipple and the passage of milk (p. 17). In this phase, Laplanche argues, the sexual process models itself on the function and is almost indistinguishable from it as far as its object, aim and source are concerned.⁴⁶ For example, the relation between the instinctual object (the milk) and the sexual object (the breast) is one of 'contiguity': although the two objects are not the same, the breast is treated as a displaced symbol of the milk. (At this stage, the instinctual object has not been lost nor has the breast become a fantasmatic sexual object.) The difficulty of distinguishing drive from instinct is also apparent as regards the aim and the source. Firstly, the alimentary function and the sexual drive share the aim of taking the object (the milk and the breast respectively) inside the body and, secondly, the source (the mouth) is part of the digestive system and an erotogenic zone. Despite these difficulties, the sexual drive's leaning on the feeding function is revealed by the resemblance between orgasm and the infant's 'culminating satisfaction' at the end of feeding. In the second phase of sexuality's emergence, the instinctual object (the milk) is abandoned and the aim and source are detached from ingestion and the digestive system respectively. This separation is accompanied by what Laplanche calls the 'autoerotic turn' which consists, in part, of the sexual object being internalized as a fantasmatic object (pp. 17–20).

A change of aim occurs in parallel with the internalization of the sexual object. The aim of oral sexuality (incorporation) is, according to Laplanche, simultaneously the same as and different from that of feeding (ingestion). The similarity between the two aims lies in the fact that they both involve a taking into the body (of the milk and breast respectively). There are two differences between the aims. The first difference derives from the meanings that are attached to incorporation but not to ingestion, such as 'preserving within oneself, destroying, assimilating' (p. 20). In their dictionary, Laplanche and Pontalis extend this list to include 'obtain[ing] pleasure by making an object

penetrate oneself'.⁴⁷ The second difference between the aims is that incorporation includes relations involving parts of the body other than those belonging to the digestive system.⁴⁸ As a result of these differences, the relation between the two aims takes the form of an analogical or metaphorical displacement (p. 20). Although incorporation and ingestion are not identical, they are equivalent or analogous since they both involve a taking into the body yet, at the same time, incorporation also displaces or replaces ingestion as an aim because it covers a wider range of meanings and relations than the latter.

According to Laplanche's reading of Freud, the source of sexuality or erotogenic zones corresponds not only to biologically privileged places of stimulation (such as the lips or anus) which 'secrete sexuality' but also to a far greater number of processes. Consequently, not only the sites of oral, anal, urethral, and genital sexuality but also every region of the skin, every organ (including internal organs), every function, and every human activity is a potential source of erotogenicity (p. 21).⁴⁹ Following Freud, Laplanche argues that erotogenicity arises when the effect of an activity in the body passes a particular quantitative limit (p. 22). As will become apparent, one of the processes which Laplanche gives as an example of a source of erotogenicity—'affects, notably "painful" affects' (p. 21)—is central to the poems by Cernuda which I will discuss.

The different elements of the relation between the biological and sexual registers that Laplanche traces in the emergence of sexuality are also found in a number of Cernuda's later poems. My analysis of these poems will examine, among other things, the metaphorical displacement of the instinctual aim at its most abstract level, the continuation of biological life. Although, strictly speaking, the aim of an instinct is satisfaction or the appeasing of tension (p. 11) rather than the maintenance of life, such satisfaction is the precondition for the continuation of biological life since the organism would not survive if the tension were not appeased (it would, for example, die of starvation).

The displacement of the instinctual aim can be seen in the poem 'Sombra de mí' (pp. 472–73) from the series *Poemas para un cuerpo*.⁵⁰ In this poem, Luis distinguishes between two types of life. While the first type, biological life, is characterized by mortality and the absence or latency of love, the second is the life Luis experiences as a result of the extremes of affect that his love affair with Salvador gives rise to. In the poem's final stanza, Luis states that the aim of his biological life is to attain life through loving Salvador (ll. 22–25) just as, in 'Vereda del cuco' (pp. 375–79), the aim of love is said to be the creation of life (ll. 92–99).⁵¹ In other words, for Luis in 'Sombra de mí', the purpose of his biological life is to live in a register (love) different

from that of biological life. I disagree in this respect both with Harris, for whom love, in this poem, is the 'life-force itself' rather than the 'object [aim] of life' (p. 144), and with Jiménez-Fajardo, who argues that Salvador is the 'aim and purpose' of Cernuda's life (p. 128). Luis's non-biological aim of love represents the analogical displacement of the implicit aim of biological life (survival). The two aims are analogous since they both involve living but the amorous aim replaces the biological aim because the former covers a type of relations, emotional relations, that are not essential to the process of physical survival. This analogical displacement is also evident in the contradictory effects produced by the description of Luis's love as his heart in the previous stanza (ll. 16–20). On the one hand, this description suggests that Luis's love attaches itself to the needs of his body while, on the other, the fact that his heart only starts to beat with the arrival of Salvador (ll. 13–20) is an indication of the gap between the biological and the loving spheres. This gap is also highlighted in Luis's statement that he was born to wait for Salvador (l. 22) which indicates that neither man is necessary for the other's biological survival. There is in these contradictory effects a clear echo of Laplanche's argument that sexuality is initially wholly based in the self-preservative functions but is also in the movement that uncouples it from those functions (*Life and Death*, p. 18). As a result, the love between Luis and Salvador in 'Sombra de mí' can properly be described as sexual or as based on the perversion of the self-preservative instincts. The same dual relation between life and love is also evident in 'Fin de la apariencia' (pp. 481–82) where Luis writes that his relationship with Salvador gives him a new life (ll. 11–13) compared with which his life outside love is death-like (ll. 17–21).³² The love and life borrows its terms from yet also differs from the biological sphere, a point implicit in Harris's (pp. 141–42) and Silver's ('*Arcadia*', p. 79) discussions of the idea of rebirth in this poem and also applicable to the use of the metaphor of rebirth in the final line of 'Vereda del cuco' (l. 113).

The gap between biology and sexuality is also visible in the description of the men's relation in 'Contigo' (p. 478) since there is no literal sense in which Salvador is Luis's country (l. 2), family (l. 4) or life (ll. 8–10).³³ Indeed, the metaphoricity of the description is reinforced by what López Castro calls the 'gastado tópico becqueriano' (p. 94) involving the words 'mi vida' (ll. 8–10) in which Luis appears to mistake his sexual aim for his sexual object. Further evidence of the distance between the men's love and biology is furnished by Luis's statement in 'La vida' (pp. 480–81) that Salvador's presence gives to his existence splendour, pleasure, and beauty (ll. 5–8), while his absence, and the implied absence of love, return him to biology, leaving him with old age, death, and solitude (ll. 9–12).³⁴ However, in

'Contigo', the borrowing of the terms 'vida' (ll. 8–9) and 'muerte' (l. 5) also points to the leaning of the men's love on the biological sphere. Furthermore, the metaphor of Salvador as Luis's family ('gente', l. 4) is a further indication of the grounding of the men's love in the self-preservative functions: in his discussion of the infant's oral relation to its mother, the 'prototype of every relation of love' (*Three Essays*, p. 222), Freud states that he is also describing the infant's relation to substitutes for its mother's breast (p. 181). Potentially, therefore, any member of the infant's family can fulfill the function of the breast for the infant and it is this possibility which reveals the link between Luis's statement and the biological sphere. Such a leaning of the amorous on the biological is also found in 'Vereda del cuco' where the 'tú's desire is modelled on thirst (see, for example, ll. 34–39, 44–57, 67–71) and in 'Sombra de mí' in Luis's description of his paradisiacal experiences with Salvador as sweet (ll. 9–12).

As I have already stated, in the first phase of sexuality's emergence, the sexual object is the mother's breast (or its substitute) and is a displaced symbol of the milk. In the second moment, when the drive is detached from the function, the object of the function (the milk) is lost and, with it, the drive's first object (the breast). According to Laplanche, the loss of the breast coincides with the stage of autoerotism (*Life and Death*, p. 19), in which the drive achieves satisfaction from the infant's own body rather than from that of another person (Freud, *Three Essays*, p. 181). In order to obtain autoerotic satisfaction, the infant must internalize the satisfaction which it experienced at its mother's breast since, as Freud points out, that satisfaction acts as both the spur to seek further satisfaction and the model of that future satisfaction. Therefore, the loss of the breast is accompanied by the breast's fantasmatic preservation within the infant. This double internalization (of the breast and of satisfaction) means that any subsequent relation to a sexual object implicitly imitates and reactivates the relation to the original, fantasmatic sexual object which came into being with autoerotism.

In the emergence of sexuality, the sexual object is primarily contingent and fantasmatic and only secondarily linked with subjective being (*Life and Death*, pp. 11–12). According to Laplanche, there is a 'priority of satisfaction and of the satisfying action' in the subject's relation to the sexual object, as a result of which the object functions as a means by which the subject obtains sexual satisfaction (p. 12). Laplanche argues that, as a consequence, the 'individuality' of the sexual object is of little importance and that it is only necessary for the object to possess 'certain *traits* which trigger the satisfying action' (p. 12). As will become apparent, the position which Salvador occupies as Luis's sexual object mirrors Laplanche's description of the sexual object.

In 'Para ti, para nadie', the contingency of Salvador's status as Luis's sexual object is evident in the analogy between Luis and the lover who seeks the material traces (l. 8) of a former lover in a photograph or letter (ll. 5-9): Salvador's individuality is less important than his possession of certain traits ('rasgos'; l. 8) which 'trigger the satisfying action' (*Life and Death*, p. 12) in Luis. In the later poem 'Epílogo' (pp. 539-40), Luis himself is precisely such a lover: on contemplating a photograph of Salvador, he rediscovers the image it represents and re-lives their time together (ll. 6-12).⁵⁵ Similarly, in 'El amante divaga' (pp. 479-80), Salvador's contingency is made clear when Luis qualifies his reference to his and Salvador's story (l. 7) with the comment that '([m]ejor será decir nada más mía, /Aunque a tu parte queden la ocasión y el motivo)' (l. 8).⁵⁶ In clear confirmation of the satisfying action's precedence over subjective being in relation to the sexual object, Salvador's role in the relationship is merely to give Luis an opportunity ('ocasión') and reason ('motivo') to fulfill his metaphorically displaced aim of living or, as Harris puts it, to instigate Cernuda's love (p. 143). The same distribution of roles is found throughout *Poemas para un cuerpo* as well as elsewhere in Cernuda's later poetry. For example, in the poem 'Pasatiempo' (p. 460), the speaker describes a youthful body as a possible pretext in the 'tú's' life (ll. 11-12), while, in 'El amor todavía' (pp. 542-43), the existence of the 'tú's' potential beloved is described as offering the 'tú' a reason (ll. 7-8).⁵⁷ Salvador's fantasmatic and contingent status in 'El amante divaga' is reiterated towards the end of the poem when Luis states that he does not mind whether he loves, hates, remembers, or forgets Salvador once their relationship is over: all that matters to him is that Salvador exist (ll. 31-36). However, that this is not a sign of Luis's concern for Salvador's subjective being is shown by the link between his description of Salvador as 'mi infierno y paraíso' (l. 36) and his earlier statement that heaven and hell are human creations which, recalling Luis's amorous aim, instil life into life (ll. 25-28). Therefore, as Luis's heaven and hell, Salvador is apparently a creation produced by Luis in order to satisfy his desire. Luis's reference to the relationship he wishes to have with Salvador after their actual relationship is over (ll. 33-36) underlines Salvador's status as the incorporated object of his desire. In keeping with this, Luis's comment that he can bear forgetting Salvador but not never having known him (l. 30) makes clear that, paradoxically, forgetfulness is another form of incorporation or preservation or, as Harris has put it, that Salvador remains 'part of Cernuda's life' even when he is forgotten (p. 141). The love-object's fantasmatic status is also apparent in 'La ventana' (pp. 383-86) and 'Sombra de mí'. In the former, the speaker claims that the love-object is brought to life by the subject's loving gaze (ll. 45-50), while, in the latter,

Luis states that Salvador seems to be his mental image of love and that he has bestowed Salvador's grace on him (ll. 6–12).⁵⁸ However, I would not go as far as Maristany who refers to 'Sombra de mí' to support his argument that, in one strand of Cernuda's love poetry, the beloved is erased, becoming an image of the lover's thought ('*La realidad y el deseo*', p. 46), since, in the first stanza of 'Sombra de mí', Luis clearly differentiates Salvador from his mental image of love (ll. 1–3). In the same vein as Maristany, Silver describes Salvador as essentially an 'objectification of a pristine image of the poet's own childhood self' ('*Arcadia*', p. 79), while Jiménez-Fajardo refers to him as merely the shadow of Cernuda's love (p. 128) and Harris terms him the 'visible image' of Cernuda's desire (p. 143).

Although Luis's relationship with Salvador is implicitly marked by autoerotism, Salvador's image is not an original fantasmatic object. This is made clear in 'Sombra de mí' by the reference to the image which is permanently fixed in Luis's mind (ll. 1–2), the shadow of his love (ll. 3–4). As a consequence of its permanence, this image predates not only the particular men with whom Luis falls in love and who resemble it but also the images of them which Luis subsequently internalizes. In 'La ventana' (ll. 61–63) and 'Vereda del cuco', love is represented as eternal, that is, as always predating the particular object of desire. In the latter, the 'tú' is initially drawn to the path of the title by a desire which originates in previous generations (ll. 16–17), while the speaker describes love, rather than the beloved, as eternal (l. 57) and states that it makes each individual love affair possible since it is revealed/concealed in each affair (ll. 54–56). Similarly, the 'tú's' love is described as one that has existed since time immemorial and is revived in the youthful figures that today tread the path as the 'tú' did before them (ll. 88–113).⁵⁹ The lover's relation to the love object in Cernuda's later poetry is, therefore, always implicitly routed through a pre-existing fantasmatic object and, as a result, presupposes the perversion of the self-preservative function by sexuality.

As I have shown earlier in this section and in chapter three respectively, of the four biologically privileged sites of infantile sexual stimulation, the mouth, anus and genitals are central to the organization of sexuality in Cernuda's last four books of poetry.⁶⁰ In addition, Cernuda's later poetry articulates a vision of sexuality which extends beyond the boundaries of the erotogenic zones foregrounded by biology and, therefore, points to a reorganization of sexual pleasure. As I have shown, according to Laplanche, every area of the skin, every bodily organ and function as well as every human activity can potentially act as an erotogenic zone and does so when the quantity of stimulation to which it is subject passes a certain limit (pp. 21–22).

'Despedida' (p. 470) is an important poem in this respect because it describes two lovers separating in terms of skin breaking.⁶¹ The speaker describes the two men as having been one and compares the 'tú's leaving to the act of undressing (ll. 11–12). However, this comparison is complicated by the speaker's statement that night entered the 'tú' after he had broken with his lover (l. 9) since this implies that the 'tú's lover was, in fact, a skin that the 'tú' has shed.⁶² It is hard to imagine a more painful experience. At the same time, in the light of Laplanche's argument that painful emotions and sensations in particular can give rise to sexual excitation (p. 21), such an event leads to the erotogenization of the 'tú's soul (in lines five to eight, the speaker had equated the 'tú' with the soul). The night's entry into the 'tú' can also be seen as pleasurable given that one of the meanings of incorporation is that of 'obtain[ing] pleasure by making the object penetrate oneself' (*Language of Psycho-Analysis*, p. 212). The tú's loss of his skin and the night's entry into him suggest that he has become a hole, a transformation that is reminiscent of Laplanche's description of the child's erotogenic zones as a 'kind of breaking or turning point within the bodily envelope' (*Life and Death*, p. 23). The 'tú' has, therefore, in effect become an extended and erotogenized orifice.

That the two men in 'Despedida' were one and that the 'tú's lover was the 'tú's skin suggests that, in part, incorporation occurred in their relationship at the level of the skin, a process which, as I have stated, is one of the possible consequences of the metaphorical displacement of the instinctual aim. In keeping with the extended range of relations made possible by that metaphorical displacement, the speaker in 'El amor todavía' links the satisfaction of the 'tú's love through the creation of a lover with the process of visual incorporation (ll. 27–28). In keeping with this sexualization of the instinct, the aim of this act of visual incorporation is described as nourishment just as, in lines nine to ten of 'Lo que al amor le basta' (pp. 543–44), the metaphor of nourishment is equated with the first, visual stage of love.⁶³

The description of Luis's love in terms of paradise and hell is a sign of its affective intensity. For example, in 'Sombra de mí', addressing Salvador, Luis states that Salvador has the capacity both to make him suffer, cry and abandon all hope and to raise him to ecstatic heights (ll. 6–12). In the same vein, in 'El amante divaga', Luis describes Salvador as his hell and paradise (l. 36), while, in 'Vereda del cuco', the 'tú' experiences love as a divine torment and pleasure (ll. 68–69) and not, as Jiménez-Fajardo claims (p. 95), solely as a 'delight'. It is not difficult to see that the hellish moments of Luis's love for Salvador correspond to those painful affects which, as I have noted, can function as sources of sexuality. In keeping with this extension of

erotogenicity, Luis describes these hellish experiences in 'Sombra de mí' as moving him to tears (ll. 6–8), a description which posits his eyes as sources of sexual excitation. To the same effect, in 'La ventana', love is described as beginning in the lover's eyes (l. 41). That Luis's paradisiacal experiences with Salvador also contribute to the extension of erotogenicity is suggested in 'El amante divaga' not only by the extremity of the noun 'paraíso' (l. 36) but also by Luis's reference to the 'desmesura' of life's precious moments (ll. 3–4). According to such a description, the experience of paradise is violent and exaggerated. As a result, it is a further source of (painful) affects which exceed a particular limit and give rise to erotogenicity. According to Freud, 'terrifying' affects are another of the processes that can act as sources of sexual excitation (*Three Essays*, p. 203). That such terrifying feelings accompany both the hellish and the paradisiacal moments of the men's relationship is suggested by the violence of those experiences, while, in 'Despedida', the 'tú's' act of ending the affair is described as inducing a fear of freedom (ll. 5–8), which posits the end of the men's affair as, paradoxically, a source of pleasure.

The representation of male homosexual desire in Cernuda's later poetry in terms of propping, autoerotism, and erotogenic zones testifies to the irreducibly sexual nature of that desire and, therefore, to the perversion of the instincts upon which it and, indeed, all forms of human sexuality are founded. Such a perverse foundation has two principal effects. On the one hand, it frustrates any attempt to naturalize sexual identity or sexual object-choice by destroying the notion of a sexual instinct while, on the other, as the plurality of erotogenic zones in Cernuda's last four books of poetry suggests, it opens up the possibility of new organizations of sexual pleasure.

NOTES

1. Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
2. For another discussion of the relation between essentialism and anti-essentialism, see Fuss, *Essentially Speaking: Feminism, Nature, and Difference*.
3. For further discussion of the natural/unnatural opposition, see Dollimore, pp. 43–55, 108–16, 300–06.
4. See Dollimore's account of the pre-sexological and sexological histories of perversion, pp. 103–230.
5. Dollimore also discusses the perverse dynamic on pp. 228–30.
6. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 119–20, 138–39; Coleman, pp. 55–58, 161–62; Harris, pp. 132, 152, 154, 158–59; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 84–85.
7. Similarly, in 'El sino' (p. 398), a rose is the model for the 'tú's' experiences of love. For another reading of this poem, see Ruiz Silva, p. 129.
8. For Harris, the command to learn 'ese silencio' (l. 44) echoes a passage from the 'Epístola moral a Fabio' (pp. 158–59).

9. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 135; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 124.
10. Although no love-object is referred to in this poem, 'El fuego' is the last in the series 'Cuatro poemas a una sombra' (pp. 383–91), in which love occurs between men. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', p. 132; Harris, p. 129; Silver, 'Poeta ontológico', p. 210; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 97, 100.
11. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 113; Harris, p. 71; and López Castro, p. 86. Silver has also noted that the arrival of Spring and the resurgence of desire coincide in 'Ofrenda' ('Arcadia', p. 113).
12. Although no love-object is specified in 'Haciéndose tarde', it forms part of the series '*Poemas para un cuerpo*' (pp. 469–85), in which the lovers are male. For other readings of 'Haciéndose tarde', see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 121; Harris, p. 142; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 129.
13. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, pp. 146, 152–53, 155–56; Talens, pp. 276–77; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 70–71, 80–83; Allen, p. 67; Pato, pp. 58, 65–66; Ugarte, pp. 184–85; Sahuquillo, pp. 55–57; and Corcoran Thomas, pp. 191–98.
14. Sahuquillo (pp. 55–57) also understands the 'tú' in 'La familia' to be homosexual.
15. For other readings of 'El amigo', see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 149–50; Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 117; Coleman, pp. 167–69; and Ruiz Silva, pp. 124–25.
16. A further indication of the proximity of male homosexuality to reproductive heterosexuality is found in the description of a male homosexual 'tú's relation with his youth in 'La sombra' (pp. 415–16): the 'tú's inability to accustom himself to having lost his youth and his continued invocation of it (ll. 5–9) are accompanied by his failure to learn from his experience (ll. 10–12), while, at the same time, his youthful consciousness has, in the present, become an 'inconsciencia' (l. 14). For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 64–65; Harris, pp. 136–37; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 103; Ruiz Silva, pp. 123–24; and Allen, pp. 64–65, 73–74.
17. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, pp. 173–74; Olivio Jiménez, '*Desolación*', pp. 332–33; Villena, p. 54; and López Castro, p. 98.
18. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 118; Harris, p. 133; Talens, pp. 124–25; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 99–100.
19. For other readings of 'Otra fecha', see Harris, p. 93; Ruiz Silva, p. 141; and Maristany, '*La realidad y el deseo*', p. 85.
20. For other readings of 'El viajero', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 77–78, 80; Harris, pp. 93–94; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 116–17.
21. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 171–72; Harris, pp. 114–15, 133, 155; Maristany, 'La poesía', p. 200; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 73–74; Ruiz Silva, p. 104; and Ugarte, pp. 168–69.
22. Other critics who have interpreted the 'tú's sexual identity as homosexual include Harris (pp. 115, 133, 155), Jiménez-Fajardo (p. 73), and Ugarte (p. 169).
23. In his analysis of 'Aplauso humano', Ugarte describes what is implicitly the process of transgressive reinscription in relation to male homosexuality. He writes that '[t]he poet's need to transgress [...] marks itself constantly [...] What in the eyes of the "herd" is deviant and repugnant becomes virtuous in the eyes and words of the poet' (pp. 168–69).
24. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 120–22, 131–32; Harris, pp. 146–47, 164–65; Talens, pp. 133–36, 242–44, 290–91, 345–46; Gonzalo Sobejano, 'Alcances de la descripción estilística (Luis Cernuda: "Nocturno yanqui")', in *The Analysis of Hispanic Texts: Current Trends in Methodology*, ed. by Mary Ann Beck and others (New York: Bilingual Press/Editorial bilingüe, 1976), pp. 89–112; Maristany, 'La poesía', pp. 200, 201–02; and Ruiz Silva, pp. 140–41.

25. A similar detour to identity through identification is found in 'El éxtasis' (pp. 405–06; ll. 10–14). For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 118–19; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 101.
26. A similar perversion is also implicit in the speaker's statement that it is true (l. 95) that the 'tú' struggled as a result of fate and love (ll. 96–97).
27. For other readings of this poem, see Otero, 'Tercera salida', pp. 165–66; and Ruiz Silva, p. 108.
28. Leo Bersani, 'The Gay Daddy', in *Homos* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 77–112. This essay, and *Homos* in general, has many links with Bersani's earlier essay 'Is the Rectum a Grave?', in *AIDS: Cultural Analysis, Cultural Activism*, ed. by Douglas Crimp (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), pp. 197–222. Unless otherwise specified, all future page references will be to 'The Gay Daddy'.
29. Freud's *Three Essays* are in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by James Strachey, trans. by James Strachey and others, 24 vols (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1953–74), VII (1953; repr. 1964), 130–243. I will give future page references to Freud's *Three Essays* in the text.
30. Leo Bersani, *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).
31. For an overview of psychoanalytic accounts of male homosexuality, see Kenneth Lewes, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Male Homosexuality* (London: Quartet Books, 1989). The Wolf Man case-history is found in Sigmund Freud, 'From the History of an Infantile Neurosis', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, XVII (1955; repr. 1964), pp. 7–122.
32. In *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, Foucault argues that '[w]here there is power, there is resistance, and [...] consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power' (p. 95).
33. For other readings of 'Para ti, para nadie', see Harris, pp. 140–41, 145; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 126–27. José Romera Castillo articulates his views in 'Autobiografía de Luis Cernuda: aspectos literarios', in *L'Autobiographie en Espagne: Actes du IIème colloque international de la Baume-les-Aix, 23–24–25 Mai 1981*, *Études hispaniques*, 5 (Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence, 1982), pp. 279–94 (pp. 288–90).
34. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 120; Harris, p. 83; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 125–26.
35. For other readings of 'Amor en música', see Otero, 'Tercera salida', p. 165; Harris, p. 139; and Sahuquillo, pp. 339–41.
36. For other readings of 'Precio de un cuerpo', see Otero, 'Tercera salida', pp. 169–70; Harris, p. 143; and Sahuquillo, pp. 224–25.
37. For other readings of 'De dónde vienes', see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 45; and Harris, pp. 141, 142–43.
38. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 122; Otero, 'Tercera salida', pp. 167–68; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 130; and Ruiz Silva, p. 138.
39. For another reading of this poem, see López Castro, p. 94.
40. For other readings of this poem, see Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 128; and Martínez Cuitiño, p. 140.
41. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 122; Harris, pp. 144–45; Talens, pp. 138–39, 279–80; Ruiz Silva, pp. 139–40; and Sahuquillo, pp. 224–25.
42. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 83; and Corcoran Thomas, pp. 187–88.
43. Jean Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis*, trans. by Jeffrey Mehlman (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 8–24.

44. Laplanche uses the term 'propping' instead of 'anaclysis' to translate the German 'Anlehnung' (*Life and Death*, pp. 15–16). The passage from Freud to which Laplanche is referring can be found in 'On Narcissism: An Introduction', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols, XIV (1957; repr. 1964), pp. 73–102 (p. 87).
45. This point was made previously by James Strachey in a footnote to Freud's 'On Narcissism' (p. 87, fn. 2).
46. For a discussion of the four elements (impetus, aim, object, and source) which compose the substratum common to drives and instincts, see *Life and Death*, pp. 10–14.
47. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1973), pp. 211–12 (p. 212).
48. In the entry under 'Incorporation' in *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, Laplanche and Pontalis list incorporation through respiration, the skin, sight, and hearing as well as anal and genital incorporation (p. 212).
49. For Bersani, Freud's extension of erotogenicity in the *Three Essays* was the first significant attempt to uncouple pleasure from genitality and, thereby, to 'dissolv[e] the whole notion of sex in a reorganization of bodily pleasures' (*Homos*, p. 98).
50. For other readings of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 79, 121; Harris, pp. 143–44; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 128; and Maristany, 'La realidad y el deseo', p. 46.
51. For other readings of 'Vereda del cuco', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 114–16; Coleman, pp. 162–64; Harris, pp. 125–27, 146; Talens, pp. 121–22, 203, 245, 277–79, 345–46; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 92–95; Bruton, 'Exile Poetry', p. 392; and Quirarte, pp. 97–98.
52. For other readings of this poem, see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', pp. 145–46; Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 79; Harris, pp. 141–42; and López Castro, p. 94.
53. For other readings of this poem, see Harris, p. 141; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 128.
54. For other readings of 'La vida', see Harris, p. 141; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 129.
55. For other readings of this poem, see Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 134–35; Villena, p. 55; and López Castro, p. 98.
56. For other readings of this poem, see Otero, 'Tercera salida', pp. 167–68; Harris, pp. 141, 143; and Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 130.
57. For other readings of 'Pasatiempo', see Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 119–20; Harris, p. 139; and Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 123–24. For other readings of 'El amor todavía', see Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', p. 331; Jiménez-Fajardo, p. 136; Villena, pp. 54–55; and Allen, p. 72.
58. For other readings of 'La ventana', see Olivio Jiménez, 'Emoción', p. 145; Silver, 'Arcadia', pp. 116–17; Coleman, pp. 166–67; Harris, pp. 128–30; Jiménez-Fajardo, pp. 98–99; and Sánchez Rosillo, pp. 159–61.
59. Other critics who have highlighted love's eternal character in this poem include Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 114; Harris, pp. 126, 127; and Quirarte, p. 97.
60. This list of biologically privileged sites of sexual excitation is taken from *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis* (p. 21). Sexual stimulation of the urethra plays no part in the representation of sexuality in Cernuda's later poetry.
61. For another reading of this poem, see Silver, 'Arcadia', p. 120.
62. For his part, Silver equates the lover with the 'tú's body' ('Arcadia', p. 120).
63. For other readings of 'Lo que al amor le basta', see Harris, p. 170; Olivio Jiménez, 'Desolación', p. 331; and Villena, pp. 54–55.

CONCLUSION

My concern throughout this book has been to examine some of the possibilities and limitations that Cernuda's later poetry reveals when analysed through the lenses of universality and specificity. Having, in the first chapter, provisionally accepted the universality of Cernuda's poetry, which other critics had taken for granted, as part of the project of using art to engender freedom in history, I then, in the second chapter, highlighted the cost to women and, to a lesser extent, men of the universalizing view of the divine found in Cernuda's later poetry. I was also concerned to draw out that same poetry's occasional tentative recognition of sexual difference and to argue that the speaker's relation to nature and childhood could most properly be considered gender-specific since it bore the hallmarks of the male subject's relation to the maternal-feminine. In the third chapter, I analysed the richness and complexity of the male homosexual identities in Cernuda's later poetry made possible by a concentration on specificity and universalizing understandings of sexual identity. The first two sections of the fourth chapter were principally concerned with the representation of male homosexual identity and desire in particular, while the third section proposed a universalizing understanding of male homosexuality by arguing that it was defined by a relation to biology common to all sexuality regardless of the gender of object-choice.

In this book, I have analysed a wide range of issues from a variety of theoretical perspectives many of which either are entirely new in Cernuda criticism or had not received detailed consideration in previous critical work. Despite its variety of subject-matter and approach, in the course of this book, I believe a thematic core has emerged that is made up of the questions of the divine, nature, gender, humanity, and sexuality. Rather than developing an overall, synthetic argument, I have inflected these questions differently in different chapters in order to propose a series of new readings with the aim of stimulating new avenues of critical enquiry into work on Cernuda's later poetry.

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THIS STUDY opens up new avenues of inquiry into the work of Luis Cernuda. It analyses the representation of aesthetics, gender, and sexuality in his last four books of poetry by drawing on work in aesthetics, feminism, gay/lesbian studies, and psychoanalysis. The central concern is to examine the terms in which Cernuda represents particular identities, including the poet's identity, masculinity, femininity, and male homosexuality. The study explores Cernuda's creation of a collective mythology of freedom to change contemporary Spanish culture and examines his many-sided portrayal of gender, including the potential of women's identity to disrupt masculinity. It also discusses male homosexuality through the lenses of perversion and self-shattering.