Culture of the Baroque

Analysis of a Historical Structure

José Antonio Maravall

Translation by Terry Cochran

Foreword by Wlad Godzich and Nicholas Spadaccini

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I: The Conflictive Nature of Baroque Society

Chapter 1
Social Tensions and the Consciousness of Crisis

Economic and social crises are not always coincident phenomena, much less reducible to a single category, even though they are ordinarily produced in a reciprocal relation of dependency. Even when they overlap, the respective developmental curves of social and economic crises do not match in their risings and fallings, although the repercussions between them are beyond question. Perhaps a parallelism along the entire extension of both phenomena has never occurred (because of the logic of their respective mechanisms), no matter how closely they approximate one another. Most economists (except those of very specific orientations) consider economic crises to be a consequence of the market's objective laws or to be derived from immediate or mediate structures, and they are thus accustomed to ignoring the implications in the social milieu originating from such crises.

According to my thesis the baroque was a culture covering approximately the seventeenth century and consisting in the response given by active groups within a society that had entered into a severe crisis in association with critical economic fluctuations. Within certain chronological limits, the economic upheavals have been studied and are well known. Now, for the past several years, the associated social disturbances arising everywhere have begun to be studied. But it is not simply a matter of intermittent or isolated phenomena, of popular unrest, nor of the apparent explosions whereby they became manifest; it is rather that the baroque century was a long period of a profound social crisis, whose very existence allows us to comprehend that century's specific characteristics.

Bear in mind that the seventeenth century marks the beginning of the conscious-

ness (less clear at its outset than three centuries later) that there are periods in the life of a society in which difficulties emerge in the structure and development of collective life, thereby causing things not to proceed well. These periods, then, of differing duration, lead to the realization that society is not working in the normal fashion: relations between groups and persons become complicated, which is unfavorable in principle; driven by this very feeling that things have changed, alterations come about in what persons want, hope for, and do. The result is conflict, or rather, a generalized situation that we can designate as *conflictive*. Everybody knows that in seventeenth-century Spain the monarch was faced with asphyxiating difficulties of public finance, but the crisis went beyond the upheavals in prices that arose on a daily basis. Martínez de Mata, an intellectual who clearly saw the monarchy's critical situation, pointed out the distressing course of state finance, but he was not unaware that there was a general background of crisis constituted by "the other conflicts to be found in these Kingdoms."[1] This plural noun, and his insistent reference to the unrest of groups and individuals, makes us realize to what extent Martínez de Mata comprehended the conflictive nature of his time.

We shall abstain from idealizing some past time that offered a contrast to this somber aspect that the baroque begins to exhibit. The peasant in Andalusia, the weaver in Segovia, employees of the merchants in Burgos, even the merchants themselves and many others (and their counterparts in other countries) — would probably not have found themselves to be much better off in an earlier time. What is certain is that after the appearance of the type we have come to call the *modern individual*, there also began to develop in the individual the capacity to understand that things were not going well, principally in terms of the economy but in other branches of collective life as well; more important, this modern individual began to wonder whether things could be better. This consciousness of unrest and uneasiness was accentuated in those moments when serious upheavals in the social sphere became manifest, upheavals that stemmed largely from the intervention of these same individuals and their new forms of behavior, from the pressure that they — with new aspirations, ideals, and beliefs, and established in a new complex of economic relations — exercised on the social environment.

The word *crisis* had appeared some time before in the realm of medicine, and its derivative — the adjective *critic* (sometimes made into a noun: thus one spoke of the character of the critic) — began to be used in the early seventeenth century; but the word did not remotely signify the disturbing social states I have been referring to. Nevertheless, although the word may have been lacking, there was no lack of conscious awareness of the abnormal, unfavorable and especially agitated moments of social existence that I will call *crisis*. Therefore, people [*gentes*] were directly concerned with those disruptions of the common and established mode — or, at least, what they assumed to be such — whereby things take place in the life of society, and they set about discussing the adverse factors

that may have unleashed such consequences. Furthermore, they went on to reflect — and therein resides what is most characteristic of those who are already "modern" — how and with what remedy such ills could be eliminated or eased. Hence, the immense literature of remedies or *arbitrios* that was written.

Therefore, in addition to economic and social disturbances that prevailed, individuals acquired relative consciousness of the phases of crisis that they were undergoing. They also showed a difference in their attitude — which can be underscored in the Renaissance and medieval Christian heritage — toward the events they were witnessing: an attitude not limited to passivity, but postulating an intervention. The model for this mode of behavior came from the example of physicians and surgeons, which explains the preference for metaphors taken from the language of medicine; it also explains why the same economic and political writers — some of whom were physicians — frequently alluded to the curative techniques of medicine, implying that similar disciplines could be applied to the sickness of a society. It was a time of tireless inquiry into the crisis phenomena that were experienced, a time of writing repeatedly about them, about the way to put the monarchy's dealings on firmer ground. The attempt was made to find a remedy for the numerous insufficiencies in society's health because the writers believed that responsibility for saving society from this critical situation rested in human hands. These seventeenth-century politicans and historians, who gave themselves over to studying the ways in which disturbing and abnormal circumstances came about (above all because of their enthusiasm for Tacitism), contributed to the revelation that the course of human affairs is sometimes unfavorable; but they maintained that it was possible to intervene, although positive results could not be guaranteed.

From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, when precapitalist conditions began to take form, the first economic crises of a conjunctive type emerged; they were shorter and, in general, more abrupt in their beginning and end. Although these crises might have been unintellegible, they were perceived as such, and it was also possible to consider that the disappearances of their most ostensible effects could be achieved by manipulating factors that might cause the conjuncture's inversion. Therefore, when an improvement was experienced, it was because the crisis in question had been overcome — that is, the human remedies put into play had in some way operated favorably. Given that in the sixteenth century various cases of inversion of value were effected and that certain favorable results from such experiences lasted until the end of the century, it assuredly built up confidence in the reforming capacity of human work. It was accompanied by a transformation of the notion of human praise, according to the old topos of the *dignitas hominis*, raising to a high degree regard for the individual capable of producing effects [*hombre operativo*], of correcting or creating a new economic or natural reality. If we add that there was also the widespread impression — concretely in Spain — that after the country's anxiety-

ridden situation — followed by the politics of the Catholic Kings, certain measures in the government of the emperor Charles, and even (at determinate moments) some interventions during the reign of Philip II — the anxiety was viewed as receding, being replaced by the inverse expectation, it becomes comprehensible that in the Renaissance epoch there came about an attitude of confidence in the human capacity to reform reality. This attitude can be well defined by the title of one of the works it inspired: *Nueva filosofía de la naturaleza del hombre*, a work containing a "Discourse about things that improve this world and its republics." The author, Miguel Sabuco, was a physician.[2]

But if human intervention can heal, it can also worsen a situation. Inept manipulation by those in government can divert and hamper recovery from a crisis; it can even cause a further crisis. Although those who were conscious of social and economic crises in the seventeenth century expected the rulers to have a capacity to overcome them, they could also attribute to rulers the sad results of a turn for the worse leading to the point of collapse. An anonymous writing addressed to Philip IV around 1621, which was probably inspired or written by Cellorigo, captured this state of mind in every aspect: "The negligence of those who rule is without a doubt the author of misfortune and the door through which enter all the ills and injuries in the republic, and in my mind no republic suffers greater misfortune than ours because we live with neither suspicion nor fear of catastrophe, trusting in a lackadaisical confidence." Therefore, knowing that the difficulties exist, that human things are subjected to the risk of reversals, but not being unaware that those unfavorable aspects can be overcome if one remains attentive to them, it must be recognized that Spain's situation is grave and sad, for that is easily the case if "one wants to cover up and cure the dangers with appearances of sweetness and words of confidence," when "the dangers are evident and have a remedy."[3]

It required time to note this state of affairs and paint such a dark picture, as so many seventeenth-century writers did. If social crises last longer than strictly economic ones — to the extent that it is possible to seperate them — the social crisis that was so threateningly present in the last decades of the sixteenth century, and perhaps more forcefully in Spain than anywhere else, was to last long enough to permit the consolidation of a series of responses that would be systematized under the interpretation of what we are calling baroque culture.

But because historians, until recently, concentrated on the minutia of the event, which they improperly called a "historical fact," their versions turned out to be of narrow scope; longer periods, such as the War of Independence, the Restoration, or the Dictatorship, could only be encompassed by the successive addition of some anecdotal incidents to others. Economists first became accustomed to working with more complicated and longer time periods, with managing notions of "processes" and "complexes," phenomena that are waves of a broader radius.

Now social historians are obligated to exceed the measures of time customarily used even by the very specialists in economic cycles and periods. They realize that periods of social crisis are frequently longer, and therefore that the interpretive structures in need of construction must be of greater breadth and more complicated if one is to consider true and complete *complexes* that are endowed with historical meaning.

The economists are entirely correct, when even a Marxist like Liublinskaia (since the Marxists were perhaps the first and the most likely to take longer spans of time into consideration) fragments the seventeenth century into various periods of boom and bust.[4] Perhaps there is no economic crisis encompassing the entire seventeenth century, or even the greater part of it in uninterrupted continuity. But I am venturing to speak of a crisis of seventeenth-century society that extended throughout and went beyond the limits of the century. Even in those places and during those years when the economic crisis receded, the unfavorable aspects of the social crisis were not overcome. If in this the economic factors proved decisive, there were other factors that made the misfortune more acute and that prolonged it, factors that cannot be forgotten in speaking of the seventeenth-century crisis. In those countries that suffered the crisis more profoundly and for a longer time, its characteristics were more indelible.

In recent years economists have spoken of a marginal tendency toward consumerism, whereby — although incomes might suffer a recession for some time — a rate of consumption equal to the previous rate continues to be maintained without showing any effect from the restraints placed on earnings. It is as if there were a certain time lag in adapting to the new circumstances. Thus the waves in social crises have a much greater amplitude, in part because that rhythm of adaptation to the new phase is much slower. Economic historians can delimit positive phases well into the seventeenth century, but that has little import for the general development of a social crisis. In the face of the circumstances of such a crisis, those retaining power and those who offer their support assume attitudes that are abandoned only belatedly, although decades afterward the situation may have come to be very different. The modes of exercising freedom and the structures of repression continue to be maintained. Because this interplay of freedom and repression affects culture at its very roots, social crises are processes that profoundly alter the social state of a people; furthermore, they are creators of a new culture. One of these cultures was that of the baroque, which emerged from the critical circumstances in which the European peoples found themselves; these crises derived from economic causes that changed several times throughout the century, usually unfavorably, and also from a series of "novelties" (as described in the language of the epoch) that were put forward by technology, science, philosophical thought, morality, and religion. Nor can one discount that this economy was bound up with ideological motivations whose

actions and reactions in the face of the structural transformations — which at least in part happened in the seventeenth century — obligate the historian to speak of a new epoch.

The repercussions that an economic crisis produces in a social milieu are of a broader radius and continue to exist even though an improvement in the country's economic conjuncture has been produced. Social crises often show an autonomous continuity, and we can observe that their upheavals continue at length when the economic crisis that probably acted to set them in motion has either already ceased or has passed through intermittent phases of a positive or negative type. Thus the critical social situation of the seventeenth century was prolonged throughout almost an entire century from its beginnings in the last years of the preceding one, regardless of the moments of relative expansion that may have been occurring in the production process. The wave of social crisis that conditioned the development of the baroque was more prolonged and continuous than the economic crisis upon which it to such a great extent depended.

But this dependence fails to explain the baroque entirely: the complex phenomena of violent contrast and contortion that characterize the baroque would not have derived solely from such dependence. Another aspect must be taken into account: the immediate experience of those individuals living at the end of the sixteenth century, a complex experience that the Renaissance societies had known according to a very different tendency; this experience was specifically the case, within Spain, of Castilian society. I have dealt elsewhere with the expansive image of society that had spread throughout diverse social groups in seventeenth-century Spain and with the projection of that image onto the conception of a history turned toward what was to come — that is, onto a future-oriented view of human events.[5] When a situation in which one eventually expected the favorable became its contrary, when, instead of being able to count on the continuation of an upward movement, individuals were faced with the specter of the monarchy's ruin and collapse, of society's misery and laxity, of unemployment and hunger, the shock had to be sufficiently great to threaten many things. It called for the erecting of solid bulwarks in support of the traditional order, or at least of that part of the traditional order indispensable for maintaining the self-interest of those groups that continued to hold the power in their hands. Within this sphere, which was parallel to the sphere of reflection about economic problems (certainly not with an intensity comparable to today's reflections, but very much superior to that of any other epoch preceding it), people firmly believed that the adversity being suffered had human causes — causes, therefore, that could and should be corrected and that, from the outset, should be proclaimed. Gonzales de Cellorigo thought that human wisdom and prudence — autonomous, natural, secondary causes — allowed "the republics to be maintained in their well-ordered states and knowledge [*ciencia*] in politics to prevent their collapse"; in a similar way, physicians found the means to change the course of diseases

and to cure them, despite the strength of astral influences.[6] Rulers could operate in the same way. There were those who did not shrink from saying: "Many times the ministers' insolence irritates men to do what they don't need to do" — that is, they provoke upheavals in a political system. On 12 September 1654, Barrionuevo made a remark to that effect with respect to one of the most serious conflicts of the baroque monarchy: the insurrection and war in Catalonia. There was an inexhaustible literature whose aim was to correct and put into order the system of social and political relations; in Spain, as in many other European countries, this literature numbers into the hundreds of volumes. To such an extent, we can consider what Juan Alfonso de Lancina wrote as material devoted to human operativity — whether it proved successful or was in error; in 1687 he alluded with melancholy to the construction of a political society, specifically the seventeenth-century Spanish monarchy (which, he maintained, some men attempted to raise up but never learned how to get off the ground): "I well know of a monarchy that could have towered over the world, had its plan not been erroneously sketched."[7] Furthermore, perhaps the most complete verification of this point is the example of Sancho de Moncada, who came up with the idea of organizing an entire university school for the study of politics so that the rulers of his time might not fall prey to committing so many errors because of irredeemable ignorance.[8] This view underlay the curious and interesting preoccupation of writing and teaching about politics, a preoccupation shared by seigniors, bureaucrats, and even simple citizens. It documents an attitude full of modern sentiment and born of a serious consciousness of a crisis situation; as such, it must be considered a valuable datum for understanding the epoch.

We are discussing social crisis with a view toward specific aspects[9] that can be verified. (1) In seventeenth-century societies we recognize an alteration in values and in their congruent modes of behavior, which attained a broadly observable level — honor, communal love (which was in the process of being converted from vassal fealty into patriotism), wealth, inheritance, poverty. (2) If every society assumed an active or resigned acceptance — we would not quite call it *consent* — of such values and modes of conduct,[10] the fact that they were put into question entailed alterations, of unequal intensity, in the processes whereby individuals were integrated when they possessed those modes of conduct to such an unequal degree. The role of such processes was to maintain the stability of the society in question, and already in many cases this role was not being fulfilled (in terms of one who may be destitute, devoid of class, sick — think about what the social transformation of the hospital means in this respect). (3) The effects of unrest and of more or less declared nonconformity became evident in relation to the social localization of individuals or groups, which provoked in them a sensation of oppression and anguish (recall the energetic explosion of zeal for "self-gain" [*medro*], for moving up in estate position, for becoming a noble, which was ridiculed by so many literary works in France,

Italy, Spain, and other countries). (4) Interrelations linking individuals to one another were transformed, relations that now seemed more burdensome to those enduring them, which was how they were viewed in the minds of the epoch's nonconformists (salaried workers, with even the seigniors' servants considering themselves bound only by their salary; those working in the marketplace; rural elements displaced to the city; women in families that had become rich bourgeois, etc.). (5) There is proof regarding the formation within society of certain new groups or groups resulting from modifications in already recognized groups (foreigners, merchants, rich farmers, city officials),[11] whose social roles underwent disturbances in all of Europe and perhaps even more in seventeenth-century Spain (even though the bourgeois groups didn't fulfill their role as "bourgeoisie," the nobles stopped fulfilling their role of "nobility"). (6) Critiques appeared to denounce the profound unrest, and they provoked, with a greater or lesser index of frequency, cases of deviant conduct and of tensions between some groups and others, which, if they attained a sufficient degree of intensity, broke out in revolts and seditions. We shall discuss these below.

In sum, despite the slight upward and downward turns, undulations in space and time, we are faced with an extensive and profound social crisis in Spain from the last years of Philip II's reign to the end of that of Charles II; it paralleled crises that were less acute in other European countries: in France, Germany, and Italy, and in England until the Revolution assured the triumph of those factors changing the structure of the country. That shared crisis of the seventeenth century cannot be identified with a new phenomenon derived from the general conflagration of the Thirty Years' War because it began a long time before, affected spheres not threatened by the war, was more serious in countries that did not suffer direct damages from the fire and troops of battle, and its process of reestablishment did not follow the line of recuperation of war losses.[12] The crisis of the seventeenth century cannot be understood in Spain without bearing in mind the broad European framework in which it unfolded, although in Spain its effects would turn out to be irredeemable for centuries. Nor is that crisis understood by referring only to economic difficulties (however serious they were) or to military destruction (the Iberian Peninsula saw less fighting than anywhere in Europe). It was the spectacular and problematic breakdown of a society within which forces driving it toward change struggled with other, more powerful forces whose object was preservation. Wherever the resistance to these changes was greater, although in no instance could things remain as they were, the elements of the new society were not permitted to develop and all the factors of immobility become privileged. In such cases, including in Spain, the effects of the crisis lasted longer and had a negative import.

The crisis of complex manifestations that left a broad imprint on the face of the epoch. Lucien Febvre has directed his observation toward this last aspect, focusing especially on the semblance of individuals, from the moment when the

Renaissance was "liquidated."[13] (I believe, however, that a historical experience is never liquidated, and I thus prefer to stay with the concept of "historical change.")

Many negative events struck the consciousness that the course of the previous epoch had awakened: the economic recession and poverty imposed at the end of the sixteenth century; the disorderliness and unrest created by repeated conflicts between states; the moral confusion deriving from the preceding epoch of expansion; and the unjustifiable conduct of the Church and the critiques it promoted, giving rise either to laxity or to pathological attitudes of exacerbated intolerance.

Today many historians — including Koenigsberger[14] and me[15] — do not hesitate to apply the modern concept of revolution to the upheavals taking place in Europe since the sixteenth century, when so many of these agitations began their process. The agitations that exploded in the seventeenth century across a broad geographic area must even more rightly be characterized in this way. The work of Porshnev,[16] R. Mousnier,[17] A Domínguez Ortiz,[18] J.H. Elliott, and others[19] takes this approach. The threatening picture that was manifest all over Europe in that century is today well known, and no less so in Spain, where if some still refuse to recognize that state of nonconformism — with its revolutionary basis *avant la lettre* — Elliott's studies and the consequences for a sociohistorical view of the Spanish baroque are very instructive. My own studies have outlined the tendencies that were adverse to the official order of the seventeenth-century Spanish monarchy.[20] Elliott observes that the word *revolution* itself began to take on a modern meaning.[21] In Castilian usage one can verify a similar semantic displacement.[22]

This interpretation serves to explain the mobilization of an extensive social operation whose aim was to contain those forces of dispersion that threatened to disrupt the traditional order. To such an end, the absolute monarchy was latched onto as an efficient instrument: first mobilized to discipline the course of development taking place in the Renaissance, it was applied in the new circumstances of crisis toward subduing the different elements that could be raised up against the prevailing order. Thus the absolute monarchy was converted into the foundation or, rather, into the keystone of the social system: in the absolutist regime of the baroque, the monarchy capped off a complex of restored seignorial interests, supporting itself on the predominance of land ownership that became the base of the system.

The contemporary enhancement of the nobility's social role — using *nobility* to mean individuals of an upper and privileged estate position (nobility of lineage, priests, elevated bureaucrats, the rich who had numerous servants at their disposal), although it was the hereditary nobility who set the guidelines as to social behavior — was linked in a reciprocal relation to the process of revalorization and concentration of agricultural land ownership, which became manifest in the very years of the economic crisis.[23] This could not mean merely a return to a

feudal society of nobiliary predominance, inasmuch as the nobles themselves had in many aspects become more like the rich landholders. Above the level of the nobility, there was now the undebatable superiority of the monarchy — to this corresponded the effectiveness of a juridical-political notion that the baroque foregrounds, that of "sovereignty"[24] — and the unavoidable presence of other social layers. At issue were classes that could give rise to the threat of dissolution; to avoid this, there was no remedy other than trying to control them, in some way incorporating such layers toward the order's preservation, obliging them to defend it, moving them to increase their taxes, integrating them to the greatest possible extent into a system that we must for the most part consider new for this very reason. It was a question of the monarchical-seignorial pyramid, with a protonational base, which we are calling baroque society.[25]

In speaking of the baroque, so many have noticed a return to aristocratism or authority, to the aristocratic structure of bonds of dependency and to the order of privileged powers, which took place in opposition to concepts of the Renaissance as democratic and communal (though, on the other hand, this latter is no less debatable in terms of its time period). But by itself this observation tells us little and leads only to confusion, for in the Renaissance century the firm bases of the absolute monarchy, with its repressive regime of popular freedom, had not fully shown themselves; nor is baroque aristocratism reducible to a mere renewal of the feudal stage, nor even of a belated chivalric one. Although in the seventeenth century values of chivalric culture continued to exist and have been maintained even until now, this is not exactly the kind of society maintained by baroque culture. In the same way that monarchical absolutism cannot be confused with the arbitrary patrimonialism of the feudal reign (the English rightly speak of the *New Monarchy*), neither do chivalric and baroque cultures overlap one another. The economic upheavals (at first positive, later negative); the consequent changes in the structure of estates, however relative they might have been; the crisis of individualism that all realms were acquainted with in the seventeenth century; and the expansive character of culture in general (consider what printing represents), along with a participation of public opinion in new terms: all this gave rise to what, in reference to the baroque (since it comes after a broad Renaissance experience), can only relatively and figuratively be referred to as medievalism.

However, our affirmation that this anachronistic reaction was produced in connection with new economic and social data is in no way opposed to our recognition that this "baroquing" reaction was a drag on the development of the society in which it occurred, a serious obstacle to greater economic growth. Beyond the immediate economic reasons, the tendency to invest in land — which the rich and powerful of the city undeniably practiced before, though it was more pronounced in the seventeenth century — was also a product of tradition that continued in mental existence and that assured the maintenance of the

nobiliary and military principle as the inspiring doctrine of an estate society, since "a bond is elaborated between the existing social order and a system of ideas seeking to give it rational justification."[26] The possession of land thus came to assume an extraeconomic value and to combine its rule with the system of social stratification, contradicting even broader interests. "In this way the hierarchy of lands would be preserved as the source of social esteem and social prestige, although it would turn out to be detrimental to national interests. In such a way the fundamental principle of a society would come to dominate even economic activities." In France, although the nobility with its habits of luxury siphoned off an important part of the revenue from possible productive investment, aggravating an economic crisis that has been pointed out many times, it nonetheless demands an even greater number of honorific positions reserved for it in public offices, with their pecuniary benefits. At the same time it clamored for the maintenance of external signs to differentiate between individuals of different estates in clothing and other ways;[27] it sought to augment its territorial dominions and, rather than entering into manufacturing or commercial enterprises, reinforced the prohibition (*derogeance*) of these pursuits as being incompatible with nobility privileges.[28] A seventeenth-century law allowed for the compatibility of nobility and commercialism, but very few entered into the system; in some cases, they made use of intermediary agents. In Spain, these same facts became much more rigorously manifest. The circumstances of French and Italian life were similar to those so often attributed, and rightly so, to Spanish society;[29] perhaps the Spanish difference was limited to the clergy's widespread and closed participation as a privileged group, to the system's most severe application, and to the unquestionable support that, after Domínguez Ortiz's studies, we know the monarchy to have lent to it — in some instances making use of the Inquisition itself.

Products as characteristically baroque as the theater of Lope or of Corneille reflected this state of things, not so much anecdotally (although some references of this type can be obtained)[30] as structurally. In a previous work, I have repeatedly dealt with Lope from this perspective.[31] Recall that N. Salomon, to study the social bases of Lopesque comedy, found it necessary to analyze economic phenomena in relation to the land and its seignorial tradition as they came to bear on the Castilian countryside at the end of the sixteenth century. Regarding Corneille, Bénichou has applied the description "feudal" to his inspiration as a dramatist because "the epoch of Corneille is precisely, in modern times, the one in which the old moral themes of the aristocracy have been revived with greater intensity." Corneille's work, contemporary to la Fronde, would comprise "a long and drawn-out shudder, undoubtedly the last, of feudal sensibility"; Bénichou's entire interpretation is based on making Corneille's work the expression of nobiliary morality — so rigorously, in fact, that we think it would perhaps be difficult to attempt its strict application to any Spanish writer of the epoch.[32]

Despite the similarity to events in other western European countries, the Spanish social situation revealed a much more rigid structure that froze the possibilities of growth occurring in baroque culture itself. Without a doubt, there was in the baroque a tendency toward immobility or, at least, toward directing the progressive forces that the Renaissance had set underway. But in the struggle between the two tendencies, the expansive forces to be contained were of such energy that, sooner or later — in England and France, respectively — they ended up winning the war. Shakespeare or Ben Jonson did not represent a culture that would make the Industrial Revolution impossible. Racine or Molière might have contributed to preparing minds for the renewing phase of Colbertism. But the theater of Lope or of Calderón could not escape the conditions in which it was produced and which their works reflected — though they were no less modern because of it. Nevertheless, they could not move toward a definitively modern world, breaking the immobility of the social structure from which their works drew support. Despite everything, it is only when the work of Descartes and Galileo entered the peninsula, and with them modern science, that one discovers some innovations in thought; notwithstanding the noble polemic represented by the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, these innovations will still not succeed in triumphing.

After the changes brought by the Renaissance, the baroque, particularly in Spain, fostered a readaptation to the social circumstances; with regard to that experience we can now ask ourselves the question that Rostow posed in relation to the phase of conditions prior to the stage of the "takeoff": was there in seventeenth-century Spain a minority capable of taking advantage of transformations underway since the preceding century and directing them toward a future development? Was there a minority strong enough to displace the anachronistic group of traditional landowners and, furthermore, of seignorial landholders in the old or a new mold based on privilege, a group possessing vast territories? Would it then be realistic to expect that a new group, with a new conception of society and of the objectives of civil life, would arrive at significant participation in power or obtain the sure help of the autocrat who retained it?[33] At most, individuals were capable of petty, self-centered greed and egoism, abandoning the public good: "All are seeking to escape, while the monarchy is falling," Barrionuevo observed to his readers.[34] Undoubtedly, such a group was not found with enough consistency. The appraisal of the situation present in the epoch's consciousness cannot be less favorable from this point of view. From the outset, it translated into criticism of what we would call the "administration," which was in the hands of distinguished individuals. In an interesting and significant passage, Pérez del Barrio lamented that the traditionally privileged class did not have the preparation and necessary drive even for the management of their own interests.[35] Much less could it be counted on for the administration of public affairs, whether one was speaking of the Castilian or Catalan nobility.[36] When

some of its members reached a clear consciousness of the country's situation, or when individuals of other groups less prominent on the social scale tried to make their protests heard (there are traces of their attempting to participate in power), the results were completely negative.

When the praise of *mediocritas* is heard in so many Spanish and non-Spanish writers of the seventeenth century, one immediately becomes aware that it echoes the writings of Seneca, but one should also consider whether, in that epoch, the praise corresponded to a desire to endorse the formation and elevation of the middle class — or, better, the "intermediate" class — that had a larger part in the interplay of society and politics. Offering words of praise, Pérez de Herrera wanted to see the country integrated principally with "a sufficient and honorable moderation and mediocrity, for that is what common happiness consists in."[37] Using a more modern expression, Saavedra Fajardo also tells us that "the only republic that will endure for a long time will be one that consists of median segments, and not very unequal among themselves. The excess of riches in some citizens caused the ruin of the Florentine Republic and is today the cause of the restlessness of Genoa."[38] Perhaps it was Lope de Deza who sketched the most complete panorama of this intermediate class.[39] Such a program regarding the structure of society was also found in Montesquieu, who, from a clearly conservative perspective wanted to see a society of the middle aristocracy and farmers strengthened. Such would be the image of the French pre-revolution or the revolution of the nobility in 1788.[40] But if in France that program in part succeeded in its purposes at the end of the eighteenth century, the same thing did not happen in seventeenth-century Spain. Numerically it may have come to constitute a large group in the cities, but it fell under the power and influence of the absolute monarchy — which that intermediate class would be the first to dispute — and its powerful allies. Although at the time we are studying there were some cultural aspects that could be attributed to its influence (the vogue, for example, of the love-story novel), neither politically nor sociologically did it represent a great force in Spain. The intermediate class did not serve to limit and trivialize the nobiliary ideals; rather, it favored them with an epic heroism and gave them that aspect of being ideals appropriate for the public in general, as they were regarded during the baroque.

The Spanish baroque, under the insuperable domination of the monarchy, was ruled by the unadapted class of the traditional nobility, a class that was not equal to the times, even though the times made it change in more than one aspect; a class altered in its habits and conventions by a greater zeal for accumulating riches than for achieving profits; a class of people (Pérez de Herrera would say) swept along by their great expenses, who feel "an extremely ardent desire for property, and they do not hesitate in borrowing to get it";[41] a class, in sum, that was largely incapable of seeking wealth by properly economic means according to the modern mercantile economy. On the other hand, it was a class that, in

defense of its privileges, was capable of blocking the way of those who would have been able to open other channels for society had they been assisted by power they did not have. The closest the nobility came to economic activity, with no conception at all of the problems, was in imposing rent increases and in other related practices. In addition, the wealthy members of other groups who entered individually into the nobility [*hidalguía*] indirectly accentuated and expanded these characteristics, thereby preventing this directing, reforming group that Rostow calls for from ever constituting itself; this group didn't appear in Spain until the eighteenth century, and even then with few results. Domínguez Ortiz, who has studied the problem we are raising here (although from other perspectives), came to conclusions allowing us to continue along our line of interpretation:

> The role of the nobility in local life was relevant, with no relation to its numbers, and had more splendor in the cities of the southern half of Spain, where its small number was compensated for by the abundance of wealth and titles; by means of the cities the nobility dominated in the Cortes and in this way it assured itself a discreet influence in the government of the state. In the rural areas, the greater facility for the wealthy elements of the general state to accede to the nobility in one way or another, eased the tensions. And this is how a situation was being elaborated in which the essential distinction was not between the nobles and the populace, but between landholders and day laborers.[42]

In the seventeenth century the privileged estates, who put advantageous practices in effect, were accompanied by the outside elements that had been incorporated into them and had, with the strength of their money, augmented the strength of the group; such practices included occupying positions in municipal administration and making use of such positions to administer in their favor the division of the quotas of *servicios* and other taxes and to place the greatest burden on the modest taxpayer. By this same route, in the utilization of the peoples' goods, it was assured that the powerful would receive the articles of greater quality, through more or less fraudulent or threatening means. At times, in exploiting their possibilities, they arrived at practices that, despite the minor importance in terms of volume, nonetheless had a very clear meaning: the Sala de los Alcaldes de Casa y Corte de Madrid told Philip IV (in 1621?) that the seigniors and potentates had an overstock of provisions in their homes, which allowed them to sell delicacies, capons, chickens, rabbits, veal, and wine without license, without paying taxes and at abusive prices, going beyond the limits of justice.[43] (There is no doubt that, even in its insignificant aspects, the myth of the economic disinterest of the seventeenth-century Spanish nobility is pure fiction; it is only that the interest, more or less concealed, had to follow in so many cases an unhealthy course.) But on a greater scale and with more serious consequences,

when the occasion arose, the rich of every class adopted modes of activity that were more harmful for the majority; for example, monopolistic manipulation of the price of cereals, causing its rise or decline according to what the small producer had to sell at harvest time or had to buy at the end of the agricultural season. They caused the downfall of those who had no means to resist, and they bought in favorable circumstances the properties of those who were ruined. Secular and ecclesiastical domains were extended (these latter, in addition, under the appearance of the free will and testament) at the expense of communal lands or personal property. And when the weak saw themselves ruined, the purchase of their lands was realized at ridiculous prices. If it is possible to speak of a first phase of *mortmain disentailment*, with the sale of fallow lands in towns and villages, Philip IV's anonymous informant also made it known that the rich were the ones who bought such properties and rent them later to the poor at much higher prices, depriving the towns [*pueblos*] of them.[44] The texts of Caxa de Leruela, Francisco Santos, Fernández Navarrete, Lope de Deza, Martín de Cellorigo, Pérez del Barrio, and others describe in a black tone this iniquitous mode of procedure of the oligarchic groups: first, within the limits of the towns,[45] then within the limits of the state, they had the councillors — positions monopolized by the municipal oligarchies — elected as representatives in the cortes of the towns and cities. All this had as a consequence the ruin of the small landowners and sharecroppers, their abandonment of the countryside, the continuous entrance into the city of a mass of needy people,[46] the formation of groups inclined toward subversion, and, finally, the vigilance to contain the possible explosions that these new conditions of urban growth were producing.[47] Thus, the increment on a social level of the power of the seigniors and of their newly ascended fellow travelers explains many aspects of baroque culture that would not make sense or would have been something very different if it had not been for the dismal poverty of the social conditions or this threatening displacement to the cities.

One item of information cannot be more telling: the royal support for the economic well-being of the powerful, even going against the opinion of the Cortes (or, at least, of the Cortes' most intelligent representatives). Such is the case with the disproportionate protection the crown gave to the *Mesta* (association of animal breeders), which was simply protection for migrating livestock. New privileges granted in 1633 excluded stationary livestock, over the protests of Caxa Leruela and others, who saw in small-scale raising of livestock the wealth of the countryside and of the country as a whole.[48] Official protection was clearly directed toward the privileged groups, the owners of large flocks (the nobles, the church, some nouveaux riches) — those who constituted the founding strength of the monarchical-aristocratic, authoritarian government over against the democratic or popular influences that could arise from an economy of small flocks maintained in conjunction with agriculture. On occasion, baroque theater also supported the official policy of the intimate correlation of nobiliary and monar-

chical power. The spaces reserved in the major university colleges for the sons of the more prominent estate corresponded to the same tendency, during a phase of state formation when a system of bureaucratic selection was being constituted.[49] If the entire baroque was an epoch of "nobiliary reaction" (the expression is from Domínguez Ortiz),[50] in its last decades the phenomenon became accentuated. When seen from within, the situation is explained and defended as a mechanism whose logical functioning was beyond all arbitrariness. In effect, in accordance with its program of adhering to the network of the epoch's monarchical-seignorial interest and of its self-exaltation, in the midst of so many favors, dignities, titles, aids, ecclesiastical offices, benefices, and prebends of all sorts that the Spanish monarchy constantly bestowed, Almansa y Mendoza—panegyrist of the system, who filled page after page of his *Cartas* with nothing more than a stating of French concessions—transparently explained the meaning of the system: "As the true practical reason of state is to make sure the vassals accrue benefits so that they have no desire to change their lord or their fortune, in distributive justice one must take great care that benefiting the nobility is the most obligatory bond." Such, then, was the reason and meaning of the system: to privilege those who were most prominent with every kind of advantage so that they could maintain order together. Almansa maintained that "nothing proves more constitutive of their [i.e., an empire's] duration than lavishness."[51]

The bourgeoisie's loss of strength and dissolution in the first half of the seventeenth century stemmed less from its own crisis, less from a retraction of its role, than from an intentional strengthening of the nobility's power; to garner assistance, the nobility enlisted the rich in its cause and the other ascendant groups were restrained. Rather than speak of a genuine "betrayal of the bourgeoisie" (a phrase that has become famous), in this case one would have to speak of a defeat of the bourgeoisie, which in Spain abandoned the contest very quickly because it had lost in advance. According to Domínguez Ortiz,

> in the quantitative aspect it appears probable (although statistics are lacking) that the number of those in the privileged ranks increased: on the one hand, because their higher level of existence constituted a relative defense against the abnormal death rate; on the other hand, because of the incessant pressure that the most fortunate of the lower classes exerted to climb the social ladder . . . Although the increase within the privileged classes was great in absolute terms, their relative growth was greater, since the poorer classes diminished in number . . .: [but] if the numerical increase of those in the privileged ranks increased the degree to which the common estate was held in check, the common estate's deterioration in turn made the upper classes' situation more precarious.[52]

This social panorama explains the development of a culture in the terms we have been using to describe it: some upper, prominent groups try to maintain and

increase their privileges and wealth, which they consider to be threatened by crisis (apart from the nonconformity that the crisis provokes in turn); these groups count on an aggregate of social power and political means to achieve their ends, and, below, an estate of common people is overcome by the scourges of the plagues, poverty, hunger, and war; because of its social origins, this common estate cannot be limited to the base resignation of those peoples from the very lowest social levels, and, as a consequence, they repeatedly demonstrate attitudes of protest ("Wherever you go there is a stretch of bad road," a sentence that Barrionuevo repeated again and again; he also originates the exclamation: "Poor Spain, out of luck!").[53] To quiet such demonstrations of restlessness, those in power, thinking that the means [*resortes*] of physical repression may not be enough, see themselves obligated to help and make use of those who can furnish them with effective cultural expedients. Predominant in this culture, congruently, are the elements of attraction, persuasion, and compromise with the system, constituting an attempt to incorporate within the system's defensive integration that common mass that is much more numerous than the privileged groups, despite their increase, and that can threaten their order.

Such results, contrary to what has generally been assumed, belonged essentially to sovereign authority's parameters of conduct in baroque society: a strengthening of seignorial interests and powers as a platform that underlay the absolute monarchy, guarantor in its turn of this seignorial network. To strengthen the system, the seignorial network was assimilated into the seventeenth-century ideals of the nobility and of the prominent estate. Even the Church included in its code of "Christian" social morality those modes of conduct, precipitated out from aristocratic interests, that probably formed the least Christian framework of the Church of Rome throughout its entire history.[54] The ideals in the Count-Duke's Spain were no different from those of Richelieu's France, with the contempt of each toward the bourgeoisie that preserved itself as such, with their constitutive harassment of the common people.[55] In this way, we comprehend the following description of the most popular baroque poet among the Spanish public: "Lope's most agreeable and familiar dramatic subject is showing us how humankind's natural instincts behave in the realm of providential and social bonds and dependencies, barriers and echelons."[56] The description also applies to everyone else; all of baroque art, from Lope's comedy to the novel of Mateo Alemán, to Zurbarán's paintings of saints, becomes a drama of the estates, the gesticulating submission of the individual to the confines of the social order. The same thematics underlie arguments that on the surface seem indifferent to the question, and in works of a very different nature—by Villamediana, Quevedo, Gracián, and others.[57]

The characteristics we have just articulated were not imposed in the face of static circumstances in which nothing had altered secularly, but rather sought victory vis-à-vis opposing forces unleashed by sixteenth-century expansion:

therefore, they confronted a conflictive situation. To understand the seventeenth-century crisis, one must necessarily take notice of the manifestly opposing situation of the preceding century: baroque culture is inexplicable without taking into account a basic situation of crisis and conflict. The culture constituted itself under the pressure of the forces of contention, which dominated but did not annihilate the liberating forces of individual existence. Those energies of individualism that were once again to be submitted to the estate mold, thus preserving the traditional structure of society, occasionally appeared despite a powerful, vicelike social order that subdued and reorganized them; precisely for that reason, they became manifest in a manner that was constrained and somewhat deformed by accommodation to the social space that authority delegated to them — much like human figures that the medieval sculptor presents in a contorted shape so that they could fit in the architectonic space of the tympanum or of the capital in a Romanesque church. A gesticulating culture, one of dramatic expression, was produced whenever a situation of conflict arose between the energies of the individual and the ambit containing it. Vossler observed with respect to Lope that if people had been less oppressed, his characters would have been less developed.[58]

The baroque monarchy made use of a large repertory of means [*medios*] to succeed in dominating the tension of adverse forces; this, along with the novelty of some of these means, revealed what was constitutive of baroque culture. It included aspects all the way from physical constraint, based on military force, which is the ultima ratio of political supremacy, to psychological expedients [*resortes*] that acted on consciousness and created within it a repressed psyche (I shall deal with these aspects more extensively below). In between were diverse resources used in a surprising fashion, a use explicable only in terms of the psychological and moral assumptions of the baroque. For example, because sacriligious acts had been carried out in Madrid at various times and, on one occasion, twice on the same day and in different places of worship, repressive and purgative measures were taken that consisted of suppressing the *comedias* for eight days and imposing sexual abstention: "There were no public women." Almansa y Mendoza gives an account of this in his *Cartas*.[59]

The expressive character of that basic conflictiveness affecting the human being's social position was common to all the products of baroque culture, especially in Spain where the two antagonistic extremes acquired a considerable potency. The seventeenth-century Spaniard's horizontal nobility — that is, in terms of geography and profession — had been at a high level (because of the population movements in the peninsula, the colonization of America, and the European undertakings), the vertical mobility, to a lesser degree, had also been appreciable (although only as an effect of the preceding). Individuals thus saw themselves driven from their allotted positions only to come up against the rigid boundaries constituting those positions. Elsewhere I have spoken of the erosion

and even the profound alteration undergone by the estatist social order. But this society reacted by trying to conserve its structure; although in the struggle it lost some of its most characteristically integrating elements, it imposed its victory throughout the seventeenth century with a reactionary power, unfortunately, that had no parallel in Europe.

Although the seventeenth-century crisis had economic motivations to which we must attribute a determining role, it also had human aspects that lent an especially dramatic cast to the manifestations expressing that crisis and constituting Spain's baroque culture. In their own time, some of the writers concerned with economic matters and reflecting about the painful conditions of the people they were contemplating also indicated the human side of the problem. Today, these writers are of increasing interest to us, and their meditations on the functioning of the economic factors that set the crisis in motion still constitute a valuable work. Their interpretations are better in helping us to comprehend the faults in the mechanism of the Spanish economy than many of the explanations offered later. But along with defects in the manufacturing, mercantile and monetary expedients, they also considered the human element as simultaneously cause and effect of the crisis they witnessed. For centuries afterward, only the heroic side of our sixteenth-century history was revealed — whether in the theaters of war in Flanders, Germany, or Italy, or in the scenarios of Lope's *comedia*, which were dedicated to the exaltation of the topical values of seignorial society. Even during that time, however, a writer as acute and independent in his appraisals as Martín G. de Cellorigo saw that the ills did not come from war but from "our own weakness."[60]

With a more biting expression, Sancho de Moncada, a teacher at Toledo and a priest and writer on the economy, whom the Inquisition did not view in a politically favorable light — the Inquisition was a political organ — went even further: Spain found itself in grave danger because "all the people [are] so indulging and effeminate."[61] This may seem strange today, but it was reiterated at the time. Some decades later, Pellicer de Tovar pointed to indulgence and effeminacy as the causes of the country's distressing situation.[62] Although we know that preachers tend toward exaggeration, in a 1635 sermon Fra Francisco de León, prior of Guadalupe, pronounced some words along those same lines that would serve to verify where the basic source of ills was sought: we see, spoke the severe prior, "men converted into women, from soldiers into effeminates, covered with hair falling over the ear, trailing locks in back, and frizzed up in front, and who knows if they aren't made up and dressed up in things resembling what women wear."[63] Pellicer's *Avisos*, besides citing crimes of illicit sexual relations, pointed out cases of homosexuality that were no less common among the laity than the clergy.[64] The proposals of tribunals and councils requesting the renovation of adornments and uniforms that were worn ordinarily attributed the reason to their luxury and effeminacy.[65] Unquestionably, this

oft-repeated accusation, just as the lewd seventeenth-century literature about which so little is known, is often nothing more than a rhetorical ploy. Nevertheless, it helps us to verify how the seventeenth-century crisis had transformed the image of Spaniards from that of the preceding century; in showing that it affected the human basis of society, it revealed a generalized condition of moral laxity. As for Suárez de Figueroa, always concerned by the situation of the time he was contemplating, he spoke of the useless male adolescents at the court, of the affected and made-up females, of the "current little sissies": "the vanity of songs and dances entertains the effeminate and makes them waste their time in embellishing their faces, curling their hair, raising the pitch of their voice, in feminine caresses and affectation, and in making themselves equal to women in the delicateness of their bodies."[66] Evidence like this doesn't have a direct validity, but it tells us about the extent of sensuality in the seventeenth century, the zeal for pleasure, laxity, and even about the obvious reaction against the severity of another epoch's manly customs; *tenebrismo* and *macabrismo* rest on this foundation and therefore are derived tastes, just like the shabbiness of a pretended poverty in today's consumer society. If to this one adds the contemporary consciousness of the uncontainable and well-supported public and private immorality, Barrionuevo's saying becomes explicable: "There is a lot to clean if one would really sweep." This undercurrent of laxity explains many aspects that were projected into the farthest reaches of baroque culture.[67]

The conclusion we draw from all these facts, and from countless other facts taken from other fields, is that seventeenth-century Spaniards, in distinction to those of the Renaissance epoch, were shaken by a grave crisis in their integration process (after 1600, current opinion universally recognized that there was no way to stop the collapse of the Hispanic monarchy as the regime of group coexistence and that all that could be done was to shore it up provisionally). That crisis translated into a state of disquiet — which, in many cases, could be characterized as anguished — and, therefore, a state of instability. They themselves had a consciousness of irremediable "decadence" before the eighteenth-century enlighteners formed that idea of the preceding century. Such concerns were expressed in the considerations from the Consejo Real to Philip III (1 February 1619), speaking to him of "the miserable state in which your vassals are found," and in the severe warning in the same document that "it is not unlikely that they live discontented, afflicted and disconsolate."[68] They are repeated in dozens of writings from individuals or from high organizations, not just to Philip III but even more so to Philip IV; in the latter, ordinarily so insensitive, this evoked a sincere moment of anxiety when he confessed that he was aware of the distressing situation that supported his reign: "Today we are all on the verge of being lost."[69] The baroque's thematic repertory corresponded to this intimate state of consciousness — let us bear in mind what the themes of

fortune, chance, change, fleetingness, decay, and ruins represented in seventeenth-century art.

A similar situation occurred in all spheres of society. The conflict was so visible in the urban milieu that I fail to understand why Tapié wants to limit it in its structural circumstances to the peasant world. It is undeniable that, in the latter, "society is at that time more hierarchized and, to a certain extent, more stable. Men of the land are more resigned to their subjection, and even accept the religion of their overseer, and expect protection and aid from him; in their harsher misery they are inclined to rebelling with violent and blind outbursts that, on the other hand, are quickly put down by the regular army."[70] The conflictive situation was a normal ingredient of the baroque; it didn't have the occasional character that these quoted words seem to indicate, and the opposition was more manifest in the city than in the country — although attacks of violence were out of the ordinary in both places. This situation would be more strongly, more severely established in Catholic countries; but it also occurred among Protestants with an intensity sufficient to give a tint to the panorama of the epoch.

In my opinion, Tapié's well-meaning thesis cannot be sustained; according to it, the baroque would arise from the enjoyment and pleasure the rural peoples derived from seeing the luxury and wealth that the grandees displayed with such exuberant ostentation because, to a certain extent, in contemplating the wealth and luxury they could participate in them. Something else became manifest in the violent revolts alluded to by Tapié and in the bitter flavor accompanying so many baroque creations, which exemplified their protest circumstances. If we read H. Hauser's book on the epoch,[71] which deals with the ostentatious and apparently well-accepted French monarchy, we find that under Richelieu's government the traditional aspects in the structure of power and society were in many cases not only maintained by force but that the subjection imposed on the people and the harsh repression of their protests — here *the people* also comprehends the group of bourgeois — revealed the presence of conflict and the effort to contain it. "Punishing was always the reason of state," wrote G. de Bocángel;[72] but its raison d'être was never made a basic principle as it was in the seventeenth century.

Recent studies have elucidated a much more conflictive image of the sixteenth century, and even more so of the seventeenth, although the tendencies of opposition and the protests that exploded remained suffocated beneath the weight of absolutism and its social system. The opposition movements were more numerous and frequent, and the resulting manifestations of violence were harsher. One curious and significant observation is that Braudel, in the second edition of his magnum opus that is so often cited here, places greater stress on the multiplying and hardening social struggles.[73] After Villalar, the stances of opposition did not disappear in Castile, nor in other peninsular regions less directly affected by

that political defeat of the cities; such opposition sometimes came to armed violence, but more frequently it remained at the level of public protest (as in the Cortes de Madrid of 1588-93, 1618, etc.); at other times it was limited to severe critiques of the policies carried out by the government of Madrid, whether in placards and other printed media or in conversations. In a letter to the archbishop of Toledo (16 February 1580), Rivadeneyra commented that "all the estates are bitter, displeased and perturbed vis-à-vis His Majesty...," so the king "is not as well loved as he used to be." He added that people didn't want to fight in the war against Portugal, "seeming to many that what would be won in Portugal is an increase for H. M. and his Royal Crown and not for the properties and honors of those who are to fight."[74] If here the concern was about Philip II, late in his reign, I have at another time indicated a text of Matías de Novoa in which Philip IV was the object of criticism.[75]

In confirmation of what others were already saying, Barrionuevo informs us that papers frequently appeared cursing the government and criticizing and even ridiculing the king. We are never told that they promoted an agonistic public reaction. They were placed on some church walls, in plazas, on corners, even on the palace. In all public places could be seen painted placards — "amusing," commented the author — that critically attacked the king and his ministers.[76] One painter and his helper were arrested for circulating lampoons or painted handbills — they were recognized as his because of the painting, just as in other cases they were recognized by the writing — that "were very acute, biting, and painted and colored all over."[77] Could this be seen as the origin of the current liking for critical posters? "In Galicia," Barrionuevo also tells us, "it is said that many different placards, like here, have been put in various places and with the same complaints, and if no remedy is found for them, they say that Portugal is not too far away." The protest in this case was tied to a serious threat of secessionism.

We have testimonies whose authors cite discussions carried on between persons they presumed to be more or less familiar with governmental matters and who were esteemed because of their studies, wealth, or hereditary rank; but other genuine disputes were limited, on occasion, to simple persons who were interested nonetheless in public matters. The lawyer Alonso de Cabrera informed Philip IV (20 June 1623) about the complaint of the widow of Hernando Vásquez, who, for having handed the previous king a memorial "regarding things touching on the government of these realms, at which Duke of Lerma took offense," was incarcerated "and in prison was violently killed within fifteen days" (the informant bade caution that the judgment not bring down the wrath of whoever was then cardinal).[78] Pellicer offered information about the imprisonment of one person who often visited and accompanied seigniors of the upper levels: "the cause was speaking ill of the king and government"; he added that the judicial authority intended to give the man the garrote, but he hoped that the outcome would be banishment.[79] Whatever suppositions can be made today, the Jesuits declared

that the imprisonment of Quevedo owed to "something he said or wrote against the government."[80] Pellicer also said that Quevedo was arrested very quietly and that all of his furniture and papers were sequestered, for speaking ill of the monarchy, the government, or (according to others) for spying.[81] Some days later he reported that according to rumor Quevedo was beheaded although it was not confirmed.[82] Pellicer also related the case of a farmer who was suddenly put before the king to protest about the way the government was going.[83] The Jesuits, in one of their letters, also cited such an occurrence: Set before the king, the farmer shouted: "They are deceiving the king, this monarchy is nearing its end, and whoever fails to save it will burn in the flames of hell."[84] Nevertheless, Pellicer tells us that the king prohibited the authoritative teacher Agustín de Castro, S.J., from delving into certain political matters from the pulpit.[85] Similarly, Barrionuevo wrote about a preacher who, before the king, spoke crudely from the pulpit about the monarchy's misgovernment; on ending his diatribe he exclaimed that they could go ahead and arrest him and cut his head off if they wanted, but he was only doing his duty by speaking in such terms.[86] We don't know what happened with these people, but the newspapers contain items similar to this one by Pellicer: "Sentences were issued against those who take part in memorials for and against the seignior Count-Duke" — sentences of heavy fines and banishments.[87] We are acquainted with a curious case that tells us how far the possibility of conflict had extended: Almansa recounted a plot or strike within the palace itself, saying that "just yesterday there was no one to carry dinner up to the king, and the count ordered all the chamber assistants arrested." The *Noticias de Madrid (1621-1627)* tell us that the event it took place on 26 August 1624.[88]

These cases corroborate the impression we draw from literary sources. Ruiz Martín recorded the backlash of a violent political discussion that ended up in blows between the workers in a textile workshop in Segovia during 1625-30. Suárez de Figueroa rejected the "moral philosophy that, naked and hungry, reforms the world from a secure perch, reports on mores and discovers defects in everything."[89] Some writers of the epoch warned of the danger involved from the monarchy's immobilist and ultraconservative point of view; sometimes they revealed an outright sympathy for those who backed the established order, or they commented adversely on the whimsical recommendations put forth in such instances, or they merely alluded, as if it were an everyday occurrence, to the fact that ordinarily in the public promenade "there is talk of politics." Reflecting the social mores surrounding him, Céspedes has one of his characters say that all of us "young gentlemen and promenaders of the neighborhood [get together] in the doorways or on the benches in our parish, from where we customarily limit the power of the Turk, the activities of the Hungarian, the status of Italy, and voice our censures, governing the world with our opinions"; the same author tells about some travelers who happened to be going his way: "we pol-

iticians began to govern the world, its states and forces, comparing some, and highly praising or reproving others."[90] This concern for politics, which in the sixteenth century had been inherent in the conversations and writings of high bureaucrats, scholars, gentlemen, people of the court, and prominent persons,[91] had become generalized, democratized, had come to be a common pastime. People spoke publicly and, considering themselves capable of doing so, critiqued the administration of those in control. Francisco Santos tells us that in the public plaza, anyone spoke up "to discuss the shortage of basic foodstuffs" so that each had his own chance at abusing authority.[92] A curious text, recently discovered in the Vienna state archives and composed of four folios, bears the following title: *Dialogue between four people coming at the same time in the boat from San Lucar de Barrameda to Seville, during the time when the coming of His Majesty to Andalusia had been disclosed*; it bears no date and may have originated sometime after 1620. The document reveals the degree to which political talk had achieved popular currency and the extent to which the Andalusians remained unaffected or openly opposed to royal politics in Philip IV's reign. Of the four interlocutors, one does nothing more than criticize the "afflictions" characterizing the king's situation; another considers it impossible "even to stave off the many turmoils and losses forced upon him [the king] by necessity"; referring to the Spanish, and without a doubt the allusion is to those who are governing, the criticism is put forth that "every day they make very significant errors diminishing the public weal and the Royal Treasury" because they don't know — or don't want to know — "how to allocate the revenue for what is owed." One person comments caustically: "No one does anything for the common weal, all seek nothing but their own interest; this war at home hurts us more than the enemies of the crown."[93] There is no doubt that baroque Seville did not await the king's arrival with fervor.

Public opinion thus assumed a new role, and a coincidence of opinions could form into a dangerous stream and could even inspire a threatening movement of protest.[94] These movements of opinion were important for the monarchy: R. O. Lindsay and J. Neu have collected and published seven thousand pamphlets that circulated in France between the mid-sixteenth and mid-seventeenth centuries, and the total figure of those that appeared is incomparably greater.[95] We don't have data from Spain, but in the study published by L. Rosales on the success of political satire during this epoch, a great abundance of materials comes to light.[96] In print and in voice, "everybody complains and everybody is right," commented Barrionuevo, who might be called a gazetteer of the opposition; he advised his readers that of "the many tragedies I am telling about here," so many incredible notices about governmental measures without purpose or reason, he is writing "about what is seen every day."[97] Yet more than thirty years before, did not Páez de Valenzuela write to Philip IV himself in similar terms? The kingdom was plagued by so many misfortunes "and every one of its members

groans, the kingdom being formed as it is, of those who are solitary and individual, and these so weak and worn-out that they cannot hold up their heads."[98] Still, at this point we must cite an unusual item coming from Barrionuevo; while it is not verifiable, it at least reveals the extent to which adverse criticism surrounded the monarchy everywhere. On one occasion in Rome, the monetary necessities threatening the monarchy were made known in an effort to obtain economic concessions from the clergy; those negotiating on the part of the monarchy had to endure being given the answer that "the best option [the king] has is to change governments."[99] Given such universal grumbling and criticism, a Jesuit in one of his letters commented that, among the many vices and evils of the court, one must mention that "congregations are formed to grumble about the government." He accuses their members — in a shoddy and base attack, common in the political arena — of living an evil life: "in their house the gambler's industriousness performed miracles."[100] Another one of these letters requested banishment from the court for the "*noveleros*," the nonconforming and alarmist commentators of political events.[101] And Gayangos cited in his edition of such letters a passage from another *Noticias de Madrid*, an anonymous work that recounted about 1638 that some common people and some persons with titles had been effectively banished "because of gamblers who, getting together in the gaming houses, grumble about the present government and its most principal ministers, for no reason at all."[102] Years later, Barrionuevo reported that "the Royal Council has ordered the authorities to arrest all those speaking ill of the government."[103] Around that time the preachers had made their criticisms from the pulpit more severe, which put pressure on His Majesty. Some advised him to banish them, but the king answered that he didn't dare. In a particularly curious case, Barrionuevo tells on 24 April 1658 that "it is said that Fra Nicolás Bautista has been ordered not to preach so straightforwardly to the king nor to be rash about speaking truths in the pulpit; instead he will be granted an audience at any time so he may speak them in secret — anything else is to give rise to the people's feelings and promote sedition."[104] Sedition: here is the specter whose conjuring is already evoking fear in Europe. But bear in mind that, within the assumptions of baroque society, those words of straightforward and severe criticism were not, properly speaking, directed to the king but were a confrontation and dialogue with public opinion, whose presence could no longer be disguised. Villari observed that in Naples, which in the seventeenth century had a much greater geographical scope, the critiques frequently didn't allude to an occasional "bad government" but instead implied "that the political system is being placed in question."[105]

The attitude of the governments of the absolute monarchy, and their repressive politics, must necessarily be referred to this broad background of discussion, dissent, and possible public protest; until the mid-seventeenth century in Protestant countries and until much later in Catholic ones, this repression included

religion as a subject where dissent would be dangerous. In Spain, because of the silence imposed centuries ago on manifestations of religious dissidence, it has gradually become customary for historians to assume the nonexistence of such dissidence, except for exceptions like the already distant Usoz, or some of our contemporaries such as M. Bataillon, E. Asensio, and A. Selke. Nonetheless, many instances such as the following existed: people unhappy and irritated about the failed wedding of the Prince of Wales and a Spanish infanta "tried to throw the blame on the theologians" — a curious indication that a good segment of public opinion was not in agreement with the religious policies being followed.[106] Interesting in this context is Jerónimo Gracián's work, known but scarcely studied in this aspect, with its violence against the "atheists."[107] In baroque Madrid, explosions of an exacerbated antireligious position — certainly explicable from a psychological point of view and interesting to study — were witnessed: explosions caused by the harsh and eye-glazing discipline that dominated everywhere and in even the most unexpected moments of one's life. The *Noticias de Madrid*, from 1621 to 1627, related instances of genuine psychological explosion against public acts of worship that were confirmed by Almansa's *Cartas*.[108] Another striking example of this problematic undercurrent has remained concealed beneath the crammed shelves of official historiography; the example is extremely revealing of the dissidence present in both the social and religious spheres and of its political significance in contributing to the formation of the absolutist system. We know that in 1633 the king delegated Fra Hortensio F. de Paravicino to preach the funeral oration for the infanta Margarita de Austria, who died as a nun in the Descalzas Reales. Paravicino, in vociferously expressing what he regarded as an indisputable fact, referred to the appearance of public posters against the Christian religion affixed "on the corners and doors of Madrid's buildings." About these, Paravicino made the following comment: if it is certain that someone has put up "a placard or lampoon of the type that the ill-contented commoners put up against the rulers in one century or another," it is an act that, since it contains the "danger of offering a vicious example," deserves and "demands punishment, blood, and to be exposed to the final degree"; it is fitting to ask ourselves what "posters against the Law," "placards against God," "lampoons against Christ" will not deserve, here in the Catholic court, before the eyes of the prince himself. And Paravicino added, speaking entirely in contemporary terms and referring to the public: "Recall when it seemed strange to hear me make so many accusations against atheism and look to see if you have abundant signs of it, if not the guilt itself."[109] Some sources of the epoch spoke of the "atheists of Madrid," and one of Tirso de Molina's characters, as if drawing upon the feeling of certain people, said: "There is no God to bother about me, / Everything else is delirium . . . / Living and dying, there is nothing more."[110]

In remarking the misfortunes and calamities that came upon the Spanish monarchy, Barrionuevo commented: "We are the ones who don't know how to live

in the world," and he lamented "this great negligence of ours and the weakness of our existence."[111] It was an internal state of disarray, of discord. Its tensions affected the relation between nobles and commoners, rich and poor, old and new Christians, believers and nonbelievers, foreigners and subjects proper, men and women, central government and peripheral townships, and so on. Everywhere there were mutinies, riots, and rebellions of great violence: in the peninsular towns of Bilbao, Toledo,[112] and Navarre ("the noise of revolution in Navarre is so great . . ." commented the Jesuits);[113] and, again, in Toledo, in events that another Jesuit related by saying, "The other day there was a large riot in Toledo. A great number of common people, such as weavers and others, assembled together, saying they wanted to kill those governing the city because there was no bread to be found." It seems like a tableau from the nineteenth century: undoubtedly a crisis of necessities, but in these disturbances they were not burning the baker's house or attacking the farmer, or at least it was not limited to that — they wanted to kill the rulers.[114] Barrionuevo tells us that in Palma (Andalusia) the people revolted and killed the crown judge; in Málaga the mayor [*corregidor*] had to flee; in Palencia and León there were severe disturbances and upheavals; in Lorca and other places more or less in Andalusia, 1,500 men revolted and took up arms; in Rioja they killed two judges and many ministers;[115] in Belmonte the people mutinied against a company of soldiers.[116]

Taxes, necessities, and shortages were the resounding motives, just as they were in the first half of the nineteenth century. Thus can we understand a news item Pellicer offers sometime during those years: the king decreed the declaration and registration of all offensive and defensive arms possessed by natives and foreigners.[117] And outside of the peninsula, just as much was happening: in Brussels, where under the leadership of an apothecary a high magistrate met his death; in Naples, with the people "so unrestrained in their opposition to the nobility"; in Bari, where those hoarding bread were beheaded.[118] Yet the most serious insurrections were those originating not in conspiracies or assassinations [*golpes de mano*] but in popular disturbances that continued to increase and become more damaging.[119] The separatist uprisings (Naples, Catalonia, Flanders, Portugal) and similar conspiracies (Aragon, Andalusia, etc.) occurred in this way.[120] An odd character who exemplified his epoch, Alonso Enríquez de Guzmán referred at one point in his work to the upheavals that a certain Captain Machín caused in the kingdom of Valencia: ". . . the disturbances and mutinies and revolts in the kingdom of Valencia, where so many virgins were corrupted, and nuns violated and widows dishonored and altars robbed and many other hideous deeds," to which must be added what he also said about the revolts in Mallorca: "huge and enormous excesses were done, such as carving up boys in the butcher shop as if they were mutton, and others placing them on the ground as targets for shooting the crossbow and other similar things."[121]

Other tensions were not lacking: the inhuman consequences of the purity of

blood statute, which has been studied by Sicroff;[122] xenophobic manifestations that were feared by the rulers;[123] the first nonconformist feminine voices.[124] Prostitution and gambling were also on the increase as an antisocial expression, and, participating in a protest they didn't even try to formulate, well-to-do and noble youths ran away to be swallowed up in a vagabond existence [*en medios de picaresca*], such as the tuna fishing of Cádiz,[125] or they appeared with long hair on the city streets, and were condemned by some critics and moralists.[126] Through Pellicer we learn of a student revolt that was a violent protest: "In the same way there has been in Salamanca a nasty student revolution against a judge who arrived from the Chancery and whom they tried to hang and burned the court papers."[127] Furthermore, through Barrionuevo we find out about a no less violent school incident that aids us in understanding the basis of irritation and discord taking place on the most diverse levels and in the most diverse environments. Children at schools where they learned reading and writing fought among themselves, and when the authorities came to arrest them, the boys armed themselves and let loose selectively on the agents. The authorities returned afterward to arrest the teacher, considering him the instigator, but the boys beat them back with slingshots.[128] Clearly the most violent tendencies were present in the opposition between nobles and common people, between rich and poor, which on the whole are parallel divisions to the point that in the Cortes, and in the pages of some writers, there was talk of the hate some groups had for others.[129]

To respond to this multiple and complex fervor of discord and protest (in circumstances where the means of opposition had become more subtle, the cities had grown demographically, and the population participating in the manifestations against oppression had increased to a threatening degree), the absolute monarchy saw itself faced with two necessities: strengthen the physical means of repression and look for means to penetrate the consciousnesses and achieve psychological control — means that, favoring the process of integration and combating dissent and violence, would assure its superiority over the whole. One manifestation of baroque culture was, without a doubt, the military system of citadels well furnished with artillery, capable of putting down an uprising within urban centers (the diffusion of the use of the citadel is a baroque achievement); yet another was this entire complex of social, artistic, and ideological expedients that were cultivated specifically to maintain authority psychologically over the wills of those who might, as it was feared, be led to take up an opposing position. The baroque monarchy, with its structured group of seigniors, bureaucrats, and soldiers, and with its group — more informal but not less efficient — of poets, playwrights, and painters, put into play both possibilities.

It practiced them both even in extreme cases when it seemed that all social bonds had broken down; nevertheless, beneath the apparent contradictions, certain factors remained that could be played in favor of integration and could even serve to impose it, morally or physically, on the others.

From this point of view, for example, one can broach the very baroque theme of banditry. This extreme form of antisocial protest and deviant conduct grew at an alarming rate in the seventeenth-century crisis, and it provided baroque theater (Lope, Mira de Amescua, Vélez de Guevara, Calderón, etc.) with abundant subjects. If the adverse economic conditions at the end of the sixteenth century, which were accentuated in the following century, brought to all of Europe an alarming increase in misery, vagabondage, and banditry, as Braudel has insistently maintained,[130] such consequences were well marked in the Spain of Philip III and Philip IV, giving rise to what has been called the banditry of the baroque, important in Catalonia and in other regions.[131] At the end of the sixteenth century, when one begins to speak of the baroque one must not forget those groups of picaros, workhands, and beggars who inundated the cities, nor those bands of vagabonds, false pilgrims, and bandits who wandered along the paths of Europe. Let us not forget to mention the role that the theater gave to female banditry (Lope, Mira de Amescua, Vélez de Guevara). Those masses of the needy, deviant and full of animosity, emerged from the wars, epidemics, oppression by the powerful, and from the unemployment made obligatory by the economic crisis. In the seventeenth century they were found everywhere: France, Germany, and Flanders are familiar with them. Villari speaks of instances of priest banditry so widespread that the Church was obliged to leave priests in the hands of secular jurisdiction.[132] In Spain we have evidence of bandits going through Valladolid, Valencia, Murcia, and La Mancha.[133] Barrionuevo assures us that in Old Castile "all paths are full of thieves, particularly on the way to Andalusia," with groups of men on horseback forming gangs of thirty of forty individuals. One friar who had a falling out with his superiors escaped to Sierra Morena and headed a troop of bandits (this was a good plot for one of Mira de Amescua's comedies).[134]

Banditry constituted a shadowy area in seventeenth-century culture that must not be overlooked; the baroque's cultural techniques themselves, as we shall see, were designed for use in relationship to it. Braudel, who was perhaps the first to highlight the phenomenon of banditry in the history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, related it with forms of social marginalization endemic to the Mediterranean. Thus might one explain the great upsurge in Catalan banditry; P. Vilar assigned it prenationalist and romantic traits, which seem to us a little premature. Reglà, dealing with the same theme, considers that "banditry, as a social phenomenon aggravated by the economic crisis and very frequently related with political events in extenso, constitutes an extremely important factor in baroque Catalonia and has visible effects on the internal relations of the Hispanic monarchy, and even on the international relations of the European West."[135] Reglà later insisted on the phenomenon's ideological, political, social, economic, and geographic causes,[136] allowing us to comprehend its connection with the general historical circumstances of the epoch.[137]

I do not intend to assert that baroque culture emerged to integrate bandits or extreme cases of deviation. Nevertheless, there was no lack of attempts, undoubtedly calculated to show the system's broad validity by carrying it to marginal cases. An entire series of dramatic works demonstrated how the integrating force of social values operated even upon the bandit — social values such as those maintained by baroque culture through its religious aspects, as in *La devoción de la Cruz* (Calderón), monarchical aspects, as in *La serrana de la Vera* (Vélez de Guevara), or nobiliary aspects (which to a certain extent were fused with the others) such as those we are led to see in *El catalán Serralonga*, which Coello, Rojas and Vélez de Guevara wrote in collaboration. In this drama, the authors make a famous character into a noble and present him as bound to traditional social morality; along with the ossified nobiliary principle of "I am who I am" or the honor of the sword,[138] he holds to the irresistible *timor Domini* fomented by the Catholic church (no more than by Protestantism), with respect for the royal charisma and its representatives. The bandit Serralonga, with his gang, catches sight of people arriving on the path. They are transporting money to the king and, upon realizing who they are, he orders his second in command to let them pass, ". . . que al nombre del Rey / Que el Sol tocar no se atreve / Este respeto se debe / Por natural común ley" [By universal law of nature, this respect is owed to the name of the king, whom the sun does not dare touch].[139] In this fashion, not even the extreme (i.e., criminal) "deviation" of the bandit escapes integration into baroque society, fulfilling in a certain way his role in it; he does not break down the values on which society is based, but rather recognizes them as fully prevailing. He becomes a typical manifestation of the relation between seigniors and bandits that characterizes traditional society, inasmuch as we consider it an inconsistent fantasy to interpret it as anticipatory of romantic nationalism.

The proceedings of the Cortes acquaint us (although in this respect they have not been adequately studied) with the names of lawyers who, during the years when the baroque was being forged, protested severely against the politics of the government. In addition, Pedro de Valencia wrote to the royal confessor about the "athropophagy" that the king and those who had power subjected the towns to, and he accused the preceding confessor of concealing an analogous writing that he had previously submitted.[140] Sancho de Moncada informs us of the existence of a current of opinion that was complaining around the same time about the prohibitive measures suffocating the Spanish. Martínez de Mata organized groups of beggars to pass wailing through the streets — which the Inquisition prohibited — and cited the criticism that Damián de Olivares, the Toledo merchants, and other businessmen directed toward the socioeconomic policy followed by the government.[141] All these critical observations show that Spaniards were kept at the margin of active participation in determining the lines of the country's policy; by comparison, in England the butcher's opinions were already being consulted in deciding a question regarding the provisioning of meats.[142]

Since the end of the sixteenth century, the Spanish lamented the prohibitions, persecutions, and accusations that towns had to undergo. Shortly after beginning his reign, Philip IV drew up — or had drawn up — a program of government (a very significant document because of the modernity of its formulation); on 28 October 1622, he sent it as a royal letter or message to those cities having a vote in the Cortes. In it, he referred, with outright indignation at such wretched events, to the fact that some had put together, without any basis or authority, registry books of lineages and families (which were called "green books") and that someone need merely make reference to what others had seen in those pages to start up disputes, lawsuits, or calumies. The king prohibited the making of such registers and announced that penalties would be imposed on violators — something that was never put into practice, since the inquisitorial denunciations were carried on separately.[143]

People — including writers — also lamented the privileges of the powerful and the difficulties, which extended even to starvation, of those not among the elite: the state of exploitation and submission in which the monarchy's subjects were held, although they were supporting a crushing burden; the inequality that the plague made manifest in its most pathetic forms; and the ills of war and unruliness of the undisciplined troops. This latter complaint brings up an interesting issue. As we have seen in the case of France, Spanish society was rigorously based on the estatist principle whereby the nobles monopolize military action; but when war broke out the nobles not only refused to answer the king's summons[144] but in fact cast this burden upon those who were already suffering so successively from the levying of taxes (since these latter, in compensation, were held to be officially exempt from military service). The upshot was that the hardening of the structure of privileges in the baroque freed the nobility even of practically their sole obligation, which was military service; in violation of the very bases of the traditional system, it was cast on the shoulders of those responsible for bearing the brunt of fiscal contribution. When the king summoned the nobles to accompany him on a maneuver against insurgents, the people recognized that the nobles were ill-disposed to go to war, and there were comments — as one Jesuit alluded in a private letter[145] — that the king would soon resign himself to receiving two or three hundred escudos from each one. From a similar source we know that the nobles excused themselves from entering into battle, and since they availed themselves of the excuse that they were without the necessary funds to finance the expedition's expenses, the king ordered them to abandon the court and go to their rural lands — there they could cut back their expenses and save money, so that the next time they would find themselves with the funds to fulfill their obligations.[146] These threats were not carried out, and the nobility slipped

out from under its military duties. This understandably produced a bitter protest, which Gutiérrez de los Ríos attested to in the name of the anonymous people: "The poor should not go to war alone, as has been done until now; the obligation of the rich to go to war is greater."[147]

The objection was not an isolated instance, which emphasizes its currency in the public opinion of the epoch. The novelist María de Zayas commented that to fight in the war in earlier times "it was not necessary to take men by force or in chains, as it is now, to the unhappiness and misfortune of our Catholic King."[148] Barrionuevo mentioned that the drafting of people was decreed, "but there is no man to be seen by the squint of one's eye"; given the country's situation and the behavior of the upper groups, there is no money, there are no people, "nor is anyone going to serve by virtue of love or one's own willpower, but only by means of force which accomplishes nothing." On receiving the news that some captains had left Madrid to raise people, he commented: "I don't know where they are; few are left and those are very cowed."[149] A political and economic writer, with a blatantly critical character, showed his indignation for the fact that while the nobles were the ones obligated to bear arms, "against all the laws of these kingdoms, they constantly use force to carry the poor day laborers to the armies." That was written by Álvarez Ossorio,[150] and his words make it understood that it was not a question of widespread aversion to war (a feeling that was far from being the case in the seventeenth century) but the forced imposition on the people at large — an imposition the absolute monarchy seized as part and parcel of a system of measures to favor the seigniors[151] (a system that, on this point and others, Cánovas del Castillo would still staunchly defend).

The subject of revolts and sedition became a necessary element in the literature of the first half of the seventeenth century; an entire technique of repression was developed, remotely echoing Machiavelli, but having nothing to do with Machiavellianism. Now it was not a question of the "prince" as an individual dominator but of a subversive attitude casting its shadow over the entire state: "Those who are seditious," Luis de Mur wrote, "transgress against those who deserve their respect and against the state, upsetting its tranquility and disrupting the axes of stability."[152] Therefore, Saavedra Fajardo, who did not feel to content with Spanish policy and who did not hesitate in speaking out for popular participation (which in one passage he called "freedom"), was opposed to formulating this as the establishment of a republican government. The Tacitists — very representative of the baroque as writers of political literature — repeated the references to problems of this type to the extent that someone in the epoch accused tacitism of attracting those who sought "to plan attacks and uprisings against their princes."[153] And in the seventeenth-century crisis there was no lack of individuals in Spain who, confronted with the threatening state of affairs emerging at a moment's notice, demanded a more severe repression (something not unknown to us today): many presumably intelligent individuals said that to remedy the situation there would have to be harsh punishments. In a report denouncing Martínez de Mata, an irascible and brutal "twenty-four" of Seville made a statement that well reveals the state of mind of a certain irresolutely conservative social sector that was caught in the middle of the epoch's restlessness. This person, Martín de Ulloa, referred to the agitations promoted by M. de Mata, some of his friends and followers, and other individuals, thereby putting the cities "in danger of turmoils." Ulloa added: "This is a word that when I hear it pronounced in public by someone who is impudent, although it may be in passing or dealing with events of another order, I would like to pull out his tongue and string him up."[154] Many let themselves be carried away with the passion and necessities or the fears they are experiencing. But then there were also comments (as there are today) like: "When a remedy is requested of everyone, no one has to be punished."[155]

Faced with such a serious, threatening situation (remember that at the height of the baroque the first beheading of a king took place in England, and a minister was beheaded in Spain),[156] the monarchy and its instruments of physical repression responded by encouraging the means of social integration, putting into play a series of technical resources designed to win over adherents, thereby constituting baroque culture. I emphasize what I have advanced above, because for me this is the key to the question.

Two objections have been made to the points I have just outlined. First, the role here given to dissent against the sociopolitical regime of absolutism has been contested; on the contrary, it has been argued that the people accepted with their own free will the values of the traditional system of integration, as would be proven by the small number of repressive agents at the absolute monarch's disposal. This observation turns out to be completely indefensible: even without making recourse to the strategic location of "citadels" capable of dominating a city militarily,[157] to exceptional intervention by the royal armies (mentioned by Tapié in the text previously cited), there was frequent repressive intervention by seignorial troops (which still existed in the seventeenth century) allied with the king. From accounts of the epoch, we know that in every sort of town of a certain level, whenever the people showed the least activity, the nobles and caballeros with their retinues rushed into the street to subdue them. The seigniors, said Castillo de Bobadilla, "keep things within their proper boundaries [*policía*], in proper order and harmony."[158] In addition, absolutism in Spain relied on a means for the exercise of power to find its way into consciousness that closely approximated totalitarianism. I am alluding to the activity of the Inquisition, whose courts punished the attacks and even the simple improprieties against the established social system. This is how Pellicer can tell us that the Inquisition ordered the confiscation of the writing against the Count-Duke entitled *Nican-*

dro[159] and also sequestered and ordered the expurgation of a sentence hostile to the whole of Spanish nobility from Ferrer de Valdecebro's *Gobierno General, moral y político hallado en las aves más generosas y nobles*.[160]

These facets of absolutism can be related to a personal and curious observation by Augustín de Rojas: in praising Seville, he confessed that two things about it astonished him above all others, one of which was the jail, "with such an infinity of prisoners there for such strange crimes."[161] Some years before, Cristóbal de Chaves, a lawyer from Seville, also marveled at the size of this jail, in which the prisoners "were generally more than eighteen hundred in number, not counting those in the jails of Audiencia, Hermandad, Arzobispal and Contratación."[162] Similar comments were made about Madrid, leading one to think that it was a phenomenon linked to large cities with a crowded population and corroborating the extensive urban character we have attributed to the baroque. Moreover, it necessarily manifested an aspect of seventeenth-century Spanish society under the baroque monarchy. In Madrid, Barrionuevo related, they arrested so many thieves that "they don't fit into the jails standing up, and one person cannot be told from another; [so many thieves] that necessity finds no other occupation on hand." That is already revealing of the social and economic circumstances of the Spain of the Hapsburgs; but there is more. "The women's prison is so crammed full that they no longer fit standing up" filled with women arrested for leading a life of ill repute and various other things (let us not fail to stress the undifferentiated variety that was mentioned). This had been the case for some time. Barrionuevo's references were from the years 1654 and 1656, but already in a document of (approximately) 1621 the Sala de Alcaldes de Casa y Corte had said to Philip IV: "the Court jail is very closed in and there is often some contagious disease, because of the many people and the little interest in cleaning; and the Council has purchased the houses next to the jail which consist of the entire block, and the building of a jail has been ordered; the plans are done, and because of a lack of money it is not being built."[163] But Barrionuevo informs us (just as he completed his reference to the origin of those who would populate such an inhospitable place by force) that in Madrid, on the Calle de las Premonstratenses or Calle del Almirante, at the entrance to the little plaza of Santo Domingo, "they are purposefully constructing a jail very quickly, one able to hold as many people as daily fall into the rat trap"[164] (he refers specifically to the Inquisition). Perhaps the pressures deriving from the abundant penitentiary population in Spanish society under the Austrians (and the damaging problem it could cause in anyone susceptible to them) prompted the early appearance in Spain of a book describing itself as about "the matter of the jail," that is, on its moral and material problems. The lawyer Tomás Cerdán de Tallada effectively dealt with these problems in a work entitled *Visita de la cárcel*, written before these last documents I have cited; therefore, it was written in the initial years

when the situation of the epoch we are studying was already being articulated in one of its more somber aspects.[165]

The second objection is directed against that interpretation that, like ours, refers the culture characteristic of the seventeenth-century regimes, what we call the baroque, to the situation of those very regimes that made it necessary for them to rely on resources that would create a mental state favorable to the prevailing system. In this view, the baroque appeared in connection with the interests of the state and of its prince, in support of the social organization culminating in the sovereign. In contradiction to this thesis, it has been insisted that the baroque was a provincial art that was more or less spontaneous, without organization, and produced in places removed from the capital of the state — from Paris, in this case, thereby running counter to its rationalist and centralizing policy.[166] We shall soon discuss the presence or absence of rationalism in the baroque or in the absolute monarchy; but let us say right now that speaking of centralism is completely inappropriate, at least until the last years of the seventeenth century, when the baroque had already ended; consequently, it would scarcely be possible to invoke the baroque as opposed to centralization. This same monarchy, however, which was far from exhibiting the characteristics of rationalization and centralization attributed to it — characteristics that, to the extent that they were possessed, were not opposed to being used in a baroque sense in any case — assembled this great campaign of guidance and integration in which baroque artists, politicians, and writers collaborated. Undoubtedly there existed a relationship between the baroque and social crisis. We are faced — not only in Spain, but in all of Europe — with an epoch that, in all spheres of collective life, saw itself dragged along by irrational forces, by appeals to violence, the multiplying of crimes, moral laxity, and hallucinating forms of devotion. All these aspects resulted from the situation of pathos wherein the underlying social crisis was exteriorized and expressed in manifestations of the epoch's general mentality.

The social crisis and (with some auspicious intervals) the economic crisis (that is, a complex of social agitations encompassing the period from before 1590 to after 1660, approximately) helped to create the psychological climate from which the baroque emerged and nourished itself, inspiring its development into the most varied areas of culture.[167]