ments; with this in view, a utilization of the effectiveness possessed by the technique of suspension; the tendency to extremeness; and the use of the pedagogical force offered by the "challenge" of difficulty. Above all, however, the art and politics of the baroque were a *decipherment*, which evidently presupposed an interplay with difficulty and obscurity. Thus arose the role that in the baroque must inevitably be attributed to the series of elements entering into play — that is, the group of factors organized around the concept of artifice.

Chapter 9
The Social Role of Artifice

The taste for the difficult occupied a preferential position in baroque mentality; in judging any work whatsoever, it gave a prominent role to the qualities of novelty, rarity, outlandishness, the breaking of norms. All these traits (as present in the conceptions of seventeenth-century individuals) were connected in that they each derived from a longing for novelty, just as this longing in turn originated from the tendency to seek out difficulty.

"Whatever amazes brings novelty" is a sentence we read in Céspedes y Meneses, but we could find similar statements in any other writer of the baroque century.[1] In the eyes of these writers, there is a natural, innate inclination that pulls the human being toward the new. Lope's Dorotea, in the work that bears her name, relates that "difference causes novelty and awakens desire," which for Tirso was "the property of all that is new, for our changing inclination ordinarily holds the newly arrived in higher esteem."[2] The tendency to consider whatever one wants to encourage as a product of nature clearly shows itself on this point: "The desire to know about new, strange, amazing and diverse things, and inquire into their causes, is natural in everyone."[3] The chain of adjectives linked in this text is typically baroque. Examination of all sorts of things (since mannerism, although it becomes accentuated in the baroque) used words such as *new*, *original*, *capricious*, *rare*, and *outlandish*, and they all represented a highly positive judgment; this is not to be seen as a manifestation of Spanish taste but as a phenomenon common to broad sectors of the European seventeenth century, as Wölfflin already showed.[4] In an extensive study regarding the meaning of history principally in the Spanish Renaissance, I examined at length the role

played by this interest in novelty. There I pursued the formation of a topos that the seventeenth century inherited and strengthened as a condensed formula for expressing one of its deepest tendencies: "Everything new gives pleasure."[5] To the numerous references given there about this aphorism's presence in texts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I can add still another, this one taken from one of María de Zayas y Sotomayor's novels: "As the common people say, the new gives pleasure";[6] a passage from Agustín de Rojas confirms its trivialization in the form of a proverb.[7]

The role of novelty underwent profound change from the sixteenth to the seventeenth century. During the Renaissance century it gave impetus to social life in numerous aspects, and although it was only found in certain strata of the urban population (never among the rural population, nor in many sectors of the cities), it came to be a vital principle that stimulated the ascendant social groups. When monarchical absolutism firmly closed its ranks in defense of a privileged social order, it saw itself threatened with collapse by the changes coming in the wake of the sixteenth-century spirit and its economic and demographic boom. That provoked, in this second phase we are indicating, a serious distrust vis-à-vis novelty. It was excluded from all manifestations of collective life that might affect the fundamental order and was confined to those areas judged to be innocuous or at least of no consequence for the political order. That practice came to be adopted by all regimes of force occupying the government of peoples (as we have occasion to see even nowadays). Perhaps one has to view this reaction as indicative of the state of anxiety in the face of change that threatened to break up the traditionally organized social life, an anxiety awakened at the time by a general feeling of crisis. A rejection of the new that was threatening everywhere emerged in those who feared possible damage to their privileged positions. "Everything is calm," Pellicer warned his readers (8 March 1644), "and time is very much pregnant with novelties that they say will soon be born."[8] In his gazetteer tone, Barrionuevo translated what we have just described with the following words: "Monstrosities are seen and heard every day in Madrid";[9] at the very least, his news sheets on the whole indicated overwhelming confusion, both when it occurred and when it was corrected.

Thus the seventeenth-century individual, and particularly the Spaniard, did not expect anything favorable (I refer, of course, to those integrated in the system). Consequently, for them it was a matter of blocking the way to all novelty (in politics, religion, philosophy, and morality) precisely because of the fact that, even though undesirable, it appeared by virtue of the disorder of the times. "In politics there are novelties every day," commented a letter of the Jesuits (2 March 1638),[10] and Barrionuevo informed his public that "in this place we see new things every day" (19 August 1654).[11] Therefore, this was what the sector of those integrated into the system, who mounted the "propaganda campaign" in its baroque rendition, wanted to avoid or at least to neutralize in terms

of its possibilities for revolt. But since, after the Renaissance experience and after hearing how much had been said in its favor for more than a century, the public spirit would not so easily reject the attraction of the new, free reign was now given to those areas where the accompanying threat to the order would not be serious or would turn out to be so remote that there would be no problem in stifling its excesses in time. Art, literature, and poetry continued exalting novelty, and certain social groups' taste for the new could be siphoned off by these activities. (However, if a ten-line ballad or any minimal stanza contained a suspicious allusion to the dealings of any minister, it would suffice for the author to be jailed without charge for years; such was the case of Adam de la Parra.)[12]

The baroque proclaimed, cultivated and exalted novelty. It recommended it: "According to this it will be good for us to follow another path abounding with novelty, so that benefit might be gained."[13] There was the desire to maintain it as a universally valid principle: "everything in this world is novelty," said Fernández de Ribera, although in universalizing it in such a way he obviously made it lose all of its virulence.[14] Baroque declarations in favor of the new were no less fervent than those of the sixteenth century, but to the extent that they were permitted they were be limited to poetic game playing, literary outlandishness, and trick effects machinated on stage, which evoked wonder in and suspended the depressed psyche of the seventeenth-century urban inhabitant. Nothing of novelty, let me repeat, so far as the sociopolitical order was concerned; but, on the other hand, there was an outspoken utilization of the new in secondary, external aspects (and, with respect to the order of power, nontransferable ones) that allowed for a curious interplay: the appearance of a daring novelty that enveloped the creation on the outside concealed a doctrine — here the word *ideology* would not be out of hand — that was inflexibly anti-innovation, conservative. A force reconstitutive of traditional interests was smuggled in by means of the novelty that one was attracted to for enjoyment.

Because of this, the baroque writer was very interested in novelty. It was a way to provide for the smooth ingestion ("pleasing," according to the norm of the sempiternal Horacian precept) of an entire system reinforcing the monarchical-seignorial tradition. Because in the baroque the pedagogy and all modes of directing human behavior endeavored to reach the individuals' extrarational levels and from there to move them and integrate them into the supporting groups of the prevailing social system, one of the most important means was attracting attention through the *suspense* of novelty whenever no risk was involved. The new pleased, the never-before-seen attracted, the invention making its debut fascinated; but this would only be permitted in apparent challenges that would not affect the underlying foundation of beliefs holding up the absolute monarchy's social framework. On the contrary, in making use of these novelties as a vehicle, the persuasive propaganda in favor of the established order was more easily introduced.

We already know that the baroque placed little trust in strictly intellectual arguments, in Scholastic thought shaped by traditional society, which criticism had eroded in many spheres during the preceding three hundred years. It preferred to appeal to extrarational means that moved the will. And novelty is a very forceful means: it charms one's taste and will into following it. "Novelty draws one's eyes and they, one's will," said Céspedes y Meneses.[15]

Thus preceptists and practitioners of different arts were in agreement about seeking novelty in one fashion or another because without obtaining it nothing would be successful (with the understanding that it was a question of arts that were in themselves inoffensive). Carballo requested that the poet make an effort to invent "rarer and more amazing" things.[16] When an author's work was praised, as Setanti did with that of J. Merola, its positive quality resulted from "its rarer invention,"[17] and the author himself very inappropriately boasted about it. A theoretician of history, Jerónimo de San José, would admiringly inform us about "the grace of innovation which is rarity."[18] Even in those arts characterized not by verisimilitude but by truth (above all, history), where the truth was always demanded of whoever practiced it, we now find that this advice to follow truth was curiously nuanced. In effect, Cabrera de Córdoba clearly recommended the baroque writer's subordination to the demands of the new: "The truth must be about what is noteworthy, to teach and delight because of its singularity and strangeness."[19]

This path toward captivating the will, toward making use of the new, thus gave force to the unique, to what remained outside of the norm. It related to the tendency toward a greater freedom from precepts, a freedom characterizing authors and the public in baroque society; at the same time, this society saw the reinforcement of the absolute power with which the prince could impose his mandate on collective life. All the authority withdrawn from Aristotle was given in manifold to the absolute king.[20] When Lope proposed a disavowal of the laws of classical poetics (never mind that he, without saying so, came to set up another system of precepts), it was to assure that whatever the king wanted was law and that if everybody could make the literary norm an object of personal judgment and rejection, on the other hand nobody had the capacity to examine critically the royal mandate before which nothing was possible but blind obedience.

To the extent that the area of novelty, of the extraordinary and the strange, was so severely curtailed, thereby restricting the area accessible to personal examination and taste, and to the extent that in other spheres personal evaluation remained subject to an indisputable authority, the free energies accompanying the desire for the new were unleashed more forcefully in the realm allotted to them. Whatever this culture had of a gesticulating or capricious quality emerged from this interplay of harsh constriction and permitted expansion, depending on which realm one was dealing with, a duality that we find at the base of baroque society. This led to the out-of-the-ordinary and free enthusiasm for outlandishness, a final and unhealthy manifestation in the exercise of freedom that, for the individuals of the seventeenth century, remained possible in one sector of existence.

Even those who would seek other paths, for reasons of personal preference, displayed a tendency to give themselves over to outlandish novelties. The seventeenth-century writer had to recognize (as López de Vega noted, although not without a certain personal ill humor) that "given the general corruption of our century the realm of the outlandish still retains a greater appearance of virtue than blame."[21] Therefore, he confessed that "being determined to introduce something new into the light of the public, I made a unique selection of paradoxes." To secure a "good sale" [*buen despacho*] for what was printed, it was necessary "to attract the readers' attention with something outlandish."[22] But there were those who not only recognized that taste for the outlandish was widespread in the public, but also admitted it in the system of precepts, although with certain requisites. In effect, one of the defenders of the new theater (that is, of baroque theater proper), González de Salas, admitted the outlandish in extraordinary cases as a manifestation of superior genius — "the novelty, the outlandishness and even the temerity that the genius can be permitted."[23]

This state of mind invaded all of life. And passion for the outlandish, where it was permitted, developed monstrously among peoples who found their ways blocked to a rational criticism of social life. Ortega, in his essay on Velázquez, made an inventory of outlandish events taking place in the Spanish seventeenth century; they were attested to in the epoch, and we have no recourse but to accept them. But in commenting on these pages from Ortega, Mandrou made it clear that, once again, it was not an exclusively Spanish event. The outlandishness, the frenzy that went from inconceivable crime to the most nonsensical tales of miracles, was common to all of Europe in the seventeenth century, whose first newspapers (such as the *Mercure français* or, certainly, the Spanish *avisos*) included the most outlandish or unlikely stories about apparitions, violence, death, miracles, all corresponding to a mental atmosphere that was the same everywhere.[24] Beyond its basic accounts of the continuous construction of convents and churches, enthronements of religious images, and processions, León Pinelo's *Anales de Madrid* are full of stories about martyrdoms, miracles, and absurd events.[25] "In this monarchy prodigious things have happened," said Almansa, and he was referring to some genuine hallucinations.[26] "Miracles and rare prodigies have recently been seen," recounted Pellicer (7 May 1641).[27] "One sees portents and what are almost miracles," Barrionuevo said (12 September 1654), but all in all he was more prudent in introducing the adverb *almost*.[28] As in Spain, people all over Europe were inclined to hope for magical effects, for extranatural events to bring them hope or confirm its loss.[29] A Jesuit told how people felt themselves drawn to hope for magical novelties by the appearance of some "reddish clouds" (perhaps an aurora borealis). In telling his

correspondent about it, he included this explanation: "The house mathematicians have not made it out to be anything new, nor do they reveal that there is any particular mystery"; but he, who must not have been very knowledgeable in the natural sciences, added as his personal impression: "It could be more than it seems."[30] The renewal of magical forms of thought, fomented by the most characteristic instruments of baroque culture, was universal at this time. It was something that L. Febvre had already seen beginning, in a rising tide, at the end of the sixteenth century, but in the seventeenth century it acquired an unusual vitality and diffusion, giving rise to the transformation of novelty into an unimaginable outlandishness when novelty found the channels for reasonable development cut off.[31]

Of course, despite all the mechanisms of control that were used to contain this eagerness for new, surprising and extranatural effects, such an exceptional state of mind was created that it gave rise to the unrestrained development and substantial alteration of a phenomenon that in the Renaissance had been encouraged by the impulse to dominate nature: magic.[32] I am referring now to the new transformation of magic or sorcery into witchcraft and to the enormous development of witchcraft in all of Europe beginning with the final years of the sixteenth century.[33] An increase in witchcraft trials occurred in France,[34] in Italy,[35] and in England, where Trevor-Roper has spoken of a witchcraft epidemic.[36] Its presence in Spain is well known, above all after the studies of Caro Baroja.[37] In Spain, the auto-da-fé of the witches of Logroño made history and incited the indignant protest and severe rational criticism of Pedro de Valencia.[38] In 1632, León Pinelo told about a burning of thirty-two condemned by the Inquisition and seven backsliders [*relajados*].[39] In France, phenomena that were equal in number or even more numerous are not as well known; nevertheless, it is possible to cite them, and it is an aspect that should not be overlooked in speaking of France in the early modern centuries. F. Buisson has given some striking references in this respect.[40]

Despite the mechanisms of repression that were set in place (sentences from Inquisition tribunals, deaths from torture, civil executions by royal order and without a trial), it was unavoidable that the passion for the unknown, for the new and extraordinary, and, finally, for its corruption in the outlandish would go to such extremes, already beyond the permitted limits — limits that would also be broken by mystics and heretics on the one hand (recall Miguel de Molinos) and those rebelling against political authority on the other (the movements of revolt and of separatism in Andalusia). The case of Quevedo is exemplary: not being satisfied with his "rarities," with his novelties or freedoms on the literary plane, he ultimately tried to use his freedom to criticize the government. This attempt was already a step outside of what was permitted, and as a consequence he had to undergo a long imprisonment.[41]

There is a seemingly insignificant example that because of its very limitations

renders an eloquent account of the changes of sensibility occurring in seventeenth-century society (changes given impetus and encouraged by the rulers of baroque culture; changes that expressed the new direction taken by taste for the "rare invention"). Since the end of the sixteenth century, many passages in Spanish literature had offered a judgment on Bosch. This judgment was generally positive and refined, but in the sixteenth century his work had been viewed as a complex of symbols that allowed one to read the world of nature (symbols that for the most part continued to prevail in the following century; for example, Suárez de Figueroa's mention of hay, which was the protagonist of one of Bosch's paintings).[42] But in this later time period, what excited enthusiasm were the strange elements. Although a French neoclassical writer such as Félibien viewed Bosch as the author of "figures boufonnes,"[43] in the baroque epoch he was viewed in a very different way: José de Sigüenza admired him as a "strange man in painting";[44] Quevedo was interested in him because of his "strange postures";[45] Lope was enthused with him, holding him to be "a really excellent and inimitable painter";[46] and Jusepe Martínez (who deemed it necessary to write an entire book on such an original painter) related his ingenuities to those of Quevedo's *Sueños*.[47]

At times novelty, which was liable to outlandishness by dint of being pursued by the seventeenth-century public, turned into the most banal caprice. To that would correspond the introduction of exotic and ephemeral vogues in men's and women's clothes and in their personal appearance: beards and long hair for men, uncommonly high shoes for women, and many other novelties in their dress — even extending to the capricious taste for lap dogs, which around that time were introduced in feminine circles, something criticized by Francisco Santos.[48]

This widespread expansion of the expedients that baroque culture utilized to reach vast strata of the population, including the lower social levels, is further confirmation of the mass urban character (appealing to the numerous common people of the city was normal) in the culture's products. Jerónimo de San José's reference is very clear: "It is something to be considered that the strangeness or outlandishness of style that used to be of interest to odd persons and scholars, is today not as interesting for them as for the multitude at large and the ignorant common people."[49] Let us not forget that in reference to the theater, Racine would say, without excluding his own exquisite tragedies, that it was written for the "vile populace."[50] There is no doubt that utilization of such expedients would have to be found in close congruence with the conditions of baroque society.

Interest in novelty translated into genuine — although superficial — enthusiasm for invention. The baroque individual, who always preferred nature transformed by art to simple nature, would agree with the words Martínez de Mata used to close his *Discurso VIII*: "Nature never produces anything for the benefit of man that is not in need of his art and ingenuity to perfect it."[51] Martínez de Mata

was an economist who exalted manufacturing and foresaw an age when industry would predominate, something that almost none of the Spanish writers imagined. But whether giving the expression a serious or banal meaning, all of them were nevertheless inclined to prefer the products of art or technique — that is, the work of human invention. The appearance of a new product of human invention enthused many people, and when nothing better could be obtained, this enthusiasm was placed in the banal invention of, for example, a new stanza form. León Pinelo tells us that in public fiestas, other "inventions" were seen together with comedias, costumes, and dances.[52]

Clearly the heritage of the Renaissance was not dead, although it was diverted and subjected to an energetic control; thus the conception of nature retained a basis of confused mechanistic inspiration (not incompatible with the continued existence of a strong magical conception). This underlay the general satisfaction awakened in active groups of seventeenth-century culture by the appearance of any mechanical invention showing itself to be a copy of the natural world, as recreated by the human being. The presence of this mental attitude would be much stronger in France and Italy because the controls opposed to the rational development of knowledge, while existing, did not succeed there in imposing themselves with indisputable superiority. In Spain the contrary happened, although the continuation of the spirit revealed by Huarte de San Juan[53] was not completely interrupted, as we can see in Gallego de la Serna[54] and others who had started preparing the way for the reception of modern science in Spain in the second half of the seventeenth century.[55] At the least, there was admiration for what was done outside of Spain. With respect to an innovation he had heard about, which the English had introduced on their ships to make them unassailable, Barrionuevo commented that "human ingenuity can do anything."[56] But while, in Italy, Torricelli invented the barometer; in France, Pascal established the principles of the hydraulic press; and in England, the epoch of mechanization was set underway: in Spain, José de Zaragoza — who could have been a valuable man of science — had to limit himself to using his ingenuity for the construction of some mechanical toys that, placed in a luxurious box, would serve as a gift offered to entertain the child king Charles II on the occasion of his birthday.[57]

The diffusion of the word *engineer* (which I have dealt with on another occasion)[58] continued in the decades of the baroque. The myth of Vulcan was interpreted in terms of this new concept, becoming the "greatest engineer of the gods," according to B. de Vitoria.[59] Calderón expressed the value of possessing "artifice" (to which was given the name of "science") in the myth of Prometheus: "that whoever gives light to people / is the one giving them science / . . . that whoever gives sciences, gives / voice to the dust and light to the soul" (*La estatua de Prometeo*).

The clock represented that mechanical ingenuity admired by the baroque human being and also symbolized inexorable time, thereby uniting two decisive aspects

of baroque culture. Calderón made the clock the most complete image of mechanization (in *De un castigo tres venganzas*), and Bances Candamo admired it for the same reason.[60] Other examples where technical inventions were valorized occurred in relation to printing, the mariner's compass, and artillery.[61] Nevertheless, we have already shown how the situation of Spanish society, with the economic interests of the new classes and their new industrial activities being choked off, was accompanied by a redirection of the innovative capacity; simultaneously, the taste for human artifice was limited to banal manifestations of a capricious curiosity. I don't know if the word *tracista* [designer], which in the epoch became equivalent to "engineer," translates this minimum degree of technical development.

In any case, the Spanish mentality of the baroque epoch had the general quality of deriving satisfaction from all artifice, from whatever ingenious invention of human art that appeared, in terms of the novelty it offered. What Céspedes y Meneses said about his able character could be said about anybody capable of such achievement: "His skill and artifice suspended them and evoked their wonder," a sentence in which novelty and suspension once again appear intertwined.[62] The same author gives us a curious example of how a construction of this type amazed: "Thus this awesome and secret artifice was endowed with such rare ingenuity, with so much subtlety, that no one without particular knowledge of it would fathom its working; it was a scheme from a German engineer."[63]

One of the reasons for the theater being a seventeenth-century spectacle was its artifice, and as such it was specifically adaptable to the baroque's objectives. References to theatrical activities that could be cited in this connection are practically inexhaustible in the collections of writings that circulated during the epoch. As much in the *Cartas de jesuitas* as in the sheets of the *avisos*, one can find mention of comedies staged to celebrate all sorts of events, because the theater offered multiple possibilities for obtaining the expected effects in accordance with the varied nature of the events. Its role in seventeenth-century society could not be any greater. Almansa provides us with a curious fact: among the numerous properties that Rodrigo Calderón possessed at the moment of his fall (titles, public offices, honors, jewels, and money) it was recorded that "he had a lifetime theater box in Valladolid's houses of comedy, and another in the open-air theater of the Cruz de Madrid."[64] Premieres were announced, texts were sent back and forth; the "mounting" of a comedy (as it was then called) always awaited great fiestas, much talked about events (Carnival, Shrovetide, the Night of St. John, Corpus Christi, visits of great personages to Madrid), the days for celebrating saints and birthdays of royal persons, or other days of special significance. "Two great comedies of majestic ostentation" were given for the king's birthday (1622); in hopes that the queen would rapidly recover her health, a comedy about the fable of Perseus was presented (1653) in the Buen Retiro.[65] Barrionuevo tells us (24 November 1655) that the marquis de Heliche had

twenty-two new comedies prepared and divided them among eight companies to celebrate when the queen gave birth.[66] "They are already putting the stage machinery in order for a grand and festive comedy that is ordered for when the Queen gives birth," announced the same Barrionuevo on a later occasion (the reader was informed about this one on 28 November 1657) for the arrival of the Prince of Wales, the duchess of Mantua, and the duchess of la Chevreuse.[67] The Jesuits spoke about comedias in the palace, in the Buen Retiro, and about the new theaters being constructed. Comedies were also performed in the houses of seigniors; according to a Jesuit, the cardinal of Borja offered one in his palace, and León Pinelo mentioned one that was performed in honor of an aristocrat's anniversary. They were also put on in convents and schools, such as the comedies that the Jesuits organized in the fiestas commemorating the founding of the Society, which the king attended.[68]

Every year during the days of Shrovetide there was much theatrical activity, as in the year 1632 when León Pinelo related that there were three comedies repeated every day at the palace.[69] The Night of St. John was another a propitious occasion: in reference to 1640, the writer tells us that he himself prepared "a comedy presented on the large pond, with machines, stage props, canopies and lights, all resting on boats."[70] Plays were also put on in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao, and Seville.[71] There was ultimately no more visible or influential way to take a greater part in baroque social principles than in theatrical representations. There was no better way to emphasize the grandeur, the splendor, and the power, and this was already an expedient of effective psychological action on the multitude. Therefore, this effect was the essential aim of the use of the theater, and the fact that on consecutive days the people were allowed to enter royal locations to attend comedies did not correspond to democratic inclinations of the Austrian monarchs. In a way, the performances were done for the purpose of their attending. When a Jesuit tells us that "stage machinations and comedies of the Retiro communicated freely with the people because of the generosity of His Majesty," it indicates the major objective of this animated stage life.[72]

Díez Borques has studied the structure of theater locales — that is, of the permanent theaters at the beginning of the seventeenth century — with their highly differentiated range of tickets and prices. The mass character of the spectacle becomes obvious in his study; in considering how inexpensive tickets were for people of the lower class, while those destined for the elite public remained high, he wrote: "Keeping this price was undoubtedly a concern so as to make the theater accessible for the great majority, in accordance with its function as a mass spectacle destined not for reflection but to disseminate ideals that were intended as collective ideals."[73] Barrionuevo offered a curious news item: "Every day the comedy has been put on it has earned one thousand ducats...and every day the comedy was put on in the Retiro the king earned five thousand reales,

the coliseum or pantheon being filled by five o'clock in the morning."[74] In this way it helped allay the expenses, sometimes nonsensical, entailed by the stage set, expenses whose total corresponded to the dominant principle of ostentation typical of baroque society: as one approached majesty, it was necessary to raise expenses to totals worthy of all the people's admiration. Barrionuevo (23 January 1655) recounted that the comedy under preparation in the theater for the king would cost fifty thousand ducats; two years later (23 January 1657) he wrote about another comedy in La Zarzuela, at a cost of sixteen thousand ducats. On 26 December 1657, he said that the grand comedy of the Retiro, prepared in honor of the queen's giving birth (which in his news sheets had been announced for months), would cost, with all its complements, 600,000 ducats. The political plan behind the theater campaign counted on the fact that these things would be said, without a doubt; but in the midst of baroque society such a plan also had to assume that some, like Barrionuevo himself, would make further comments: "All this comes about very purposely designed for the present misfortunes and calamities."[75]

Probably one must consider that this unrestrained activity in stage representations (the commentators never spoke of their literary value but of their magnitude, cost, the almost insuperable difficulty of setting them up, and so on) was not developed to satisfy the tastes or personal frivolities of kings and rulers, but to stun and attract the public mass. Barrionuevo again tells us that because of some serious political difficulties to be overcome, "there has been put together a grand comedy of San Gaetano, using all of the Court's best ingenuities, with trick stage machinery and devices." Given the circumstances, and full of suspicion about what might be said in such a comedy, the Inquisition requested it for review and retained it until finally, because of the queen's support, it was staged in an amended version. Hence on this occasion the gazetteer commented: "the assembly of the people is a day of judgment and there were so many people who went to see it at the prince's open-air theater that as they left one man was caught underfoot and smothered to death."[76] In response to the announcement about a comedy's public opening in the Retiro, so that everybody might see it in the following days, Barrionuevo predicted that the "uproar of people going will be infinite."[77]

Aubrun has written something in this regard that we must take into account. According to him, "when someone from Madrid crosses the threshold of an open-air theater, he or she loses his or her qualification in society as a merchant, servant, son or daughter, adventuress or picaro; they are transformed into a spectator with the same title as their neighbors and along with them share the same demands, the same mentality, the same *morality* of the theater."[78] One must add, however, that such procedure would serve precisely to ensure that on leaving each one would feel more in one's own social status, judging oneself to be in agreement with nature and thus able to function with confidence. We might

also ask whether this "estatist promiscuity" elevated the laborer or downgraded royalty, as we might assume by some of the crude diversions to which royalty devoted itself.[79]

One of the things having the greatest influence on this development of dramatic art (unprecedented perhaps since ancient Greece) is the fact that — apart from other motivations — the stage setting of theater allowed recourse to the use of surprising artifices. At the end of the baroque's experience of theater, Bances Candamo admired the stage poem or comedy for its "manufacture," its "interior artifice," for the "ingenious machine of its contexture":[80] the theater satisfied the quotidian and banal taste for invention. In a short and packed study, Alewyn showed how the stage representation of baroque theater was based on the broadest utilization of sensible expedients: "the arts of the mimic, the painter, the musician, the set designer, and the machinist are joined here to assault all the senses simultaneously, so that the public cannot escape." The development of means of lighting, allowing stage representations to abandon the day for the night, added the effects of illumination to the repertory of theatrical representation, thereby multiplying its possibilities.[81]

Here occurred a seeming historical contradiction of the baroque. In one aspect there was an apparent instance of medievalization, even in the theater that had the pretense of being one of its most modern creations (and baroque individuals presumed themselves to be modern). Like the theater of the Middle Ages, the baroque theater again incorporated the upper parts of the scenic space; it unfolded in a vertical sense, trying to take over that part of the world that is nearest to heaven. But although this continued to give them cause to exalt their feelings about the otherworld, the individuals of the seventeenth century used such means to demonstrate a domination of nature whereby these effects of wonder are achieved. The technical difficulty of artifice was alien to the medieval human being, whereas its appreciation was decisive for the baroque: whoever manifested this type of domination succeeded in persuading, attracting with regard to what was proposed. By virtue of technical resources, such as the more skillful and calculated use of pulleys, the seventeenth-century individual was successful in having the public see actors representing divine persons, saints, the kings and their allegories, and superior beings who colonized the upper spaces;[82] in the eyes of the public, this artifice produced a sensible verification of their superiority.

The lighting effects were of great importance for achieving surprise and collective reaction, that is, for moving the public extrarationally, which was their purpose; without them, the other expedients could not have been manipulated, at least could not have attained the force they were acknowledged to have. The light itself, with all of its changes, frequently performed the action. Barrionuevo commented on a comedy using stage machinery that was presented before the king and queen: "The apparatus is superb, even the lights are exquisite."[83] The light medium expressed what the artist predominantly made use of in the epoch.

The successes of artifice were probably greater in this realm (correlative to the development of the science of optics, despite the great distance separating the artist or stage designer from a knowledge of optics). The effects that one can attain with light when it is ingeniously manipulated were taken into account, including its entire technical basis, in the theater. A similar development took place in painting, and — metaphorically at least — in poetry; I would even add, allegorically, in politics, around the image of majesty. Caravaggio praised Jusepe Martínez for being a "great naturalist" (that is, for dominating the effects of nature); in his paintings "the figures received a fierce light of great rigor."[84] With a light such as this in so many of the epoch's paintings, in many theatrical representations that were put together, the illuminated object came to be a pretext or support for the resplendent and dazzling effects of illumination itself.

Lighting, along with so many other expedients acting upon the senses, activated the changing and wondrous play of effects in the theater and, to a different extent, in painting and the other figurative arts, whose relation with baroque theater has been pointed out by Tintelnot.[85] The idea of a similar play of effects combined with the basic aspects of the baroque world view. In a changing, varied, reformable world, the taste for changes and for the metamorphoses was satisfied in stage effects and the enthusiastic interest in artifice by recourse to stage machinations.[86] There was a genuine development of stage engineering; admiration for it is reflected in many pamphlets dedicated to describing the dazzling effects of certain representations that became famous.

From the first decades of the seventeenth century, the English public sought ingenious productions in the theater. The role of the *metteur en scène* took on great importance, as demonstrated by the preserving of an infinity of drawings and projects, and the important artist Inigo Jones made drawings for sets during the second period of Shakespeare. There were Shakespearean works, such as *The Winter's Tale*, in which surprising set effects played a great role from the time of its first presentations: when the protagonist, turned into a statue, suddenly appears before the spectators, she begins to come to life, impressing them with the "trick theatricality" of the stage director.[87] In Spain it has been observed that Lope was against the use of artifice in the theater;[88] but, despite some irony on his part, it is certain that *artifice*, *inventions*, *appearances*, or (according to the new word that began to be used at that time) *tramoyas* [stage machinery] were acquiring an always greater portion of the stage and having greater importance in the presentations.[89] There is information about the great engineering apparatus used in staging Lope's *La selva sin amor* and also about the performance of the great "machinist" Cosme Loti in the theater established on the royal site of the Buen Retiro.[90] Let us observe that references to stage effects in the margins of manuscripts began to multiply and become more complicated. A large study now underway will undoubtedly reveal the great wealth of set inventions in the Spanish theater of the seventeenth century.[91] Certainly, from Cervantes's *La*

Numancia to so many works of Calderón (citing no more than the chronological extremes of interest), stage machinations reached a great sophistication, with instances of mechanical apparitions, strange illuminations, rocks that opened up, palaces that were contemplated in vast overviews, transformed landscapes, meteors, and serious accidents of nature that were imitated to the astonishment of the spectator — not to mention the ships, horses, and wild animals that move on stage, all showing the complex development of theatrical techniques. Blanco White referred to his still having seen an ancient comedy on a religious subject in exaltation of the Franciscan order; it was so bizarre and full of nonsensical effects machinated by the stage machines that the Inquisition prohibited it by 1804. It was a work by Luis Belmonte, *El diablo predicador*, which was presented in Madrid in 1623 before Philip IV.[92] To all this must be added the means used for the realization of allegory and ideas (which are discussed in the appendix to this work).[93]

But for us it is of interest to confirm the consciousness of the role of technical artifice in the theater, of its importance and extent, which gave rise to the linguistic phenomenon that the words *comedia* and *tramoya* were frequently used together; in many cases, the second term served to express the idea of the first. We have read the reference to *tramoyas* and *comedias* in a passage from León Pinelo and in the paragraph cited earlier from one of the Jesuit letters. In taking note of a comedy in the Teatro Nuevo del Retiro, another Jesuit letter related: "They say that the stage machines [*tramoyas*] it has are huge." Both are references to the years 1639 and 1640. Around the same time, Pellicer also informed his public about comedies in the Retiro, commenting about them only that they had "many stage machines."[94] In later years, Barrionuevo included items that were roughly equivalent: "a comedy of stage machines" in the Retiro; days later he gives this curious reference yet again: "It is all stage machinery"; and still later: "It is said that the apparatus of the Retiro comedy is huge and exquisite." "The industry can do anything,"[95] he commented, as if it were a matter of some of those industrial inventions that were appearing, above all in England — those that were going to revolutionize the world and, along with it, its distribution of power. Let us notice that in the way of "literary" comments there is not even a word on this, nor on hundreds of other examples. The Jesuits and, later, Barrionuevo continued to give accounts of works having stage machinery and apparatuses.[96] Barrionuevo tells us that the marquis de Heliche, who was very familiar with the subject, dealt with such machinery and was assisted by a person called "Bacho the 'tramoyista.'"[97] Let us recall that passage from Fontenelle where the philosopher explains to the marquise, his interlocutor, why Phaeton in the theater rises to the upper reaches of the stage set. If a scholastic, he says, were to treat the matter, he would maintain that it is because the end of occupying the upper regions of space belongs to Phaeton's essence; but a modern, Cartesian physicist knows that if Phaeton is ascending on stage it is because behind the

backdrop some weights are falling. Thus although the marquis de Heliche was not a profound Cartesian physicist but only a baroque engineer of stage machinery, he was acquainted with the secret and knew how to make clouds, horses, or saints ascend and descend: Barrionuevo said that to prepare his work "the Marquis de Heliche summoned Diego Felipe de Quadros, a lead contractor, and requested 300 hundredweights for the machinery's counterweight."[98] Here is one more instance of the "rationalization" of the baroque mind.

People of their time, the Jesuits also took an interest in this type of theatrical representation, wherein the motives of mechanically producing wonder predominated. They tell us that for the fiestas of the Centennial, several suggestive comedies and dialogues were put on in Madrid and Guipúzcoa. We have information about a work written by Valentín de Céspedes with the title — very indicative of an inflated confidence for the purposes of integration and propaganda — *Las glorias del mejor siglo*. What we know about others can be summarized in a commentary of this type: "It is an extraordinary thing because of the excellence of the stage and the multitude of the machines."[99] The Jesuits used mechanical devices to call forth strong emotions, as when, in the middle of a sermon, a curtain is unexpectedly drawn that reveals a dramatic religious scene in real life and makes those in the congregation break out in wailing and crying.[100] And there were still more examples, everywhere: according to Pellicer, the count of Lemos financed a fiesta in the parish of Santiago that had many apparatuses "of clouds and other machines."[101]

We have at our disposal several very interesting examples in France that incidentally serve to confirm the extent of baroque culture in the country. In a comedy about St. Ignatius's vocation, which was staged in a French Jesuit school, many fantastic elements were presented, among them apparitions and transformations, ascensions and falls, explosions, and other effects provoked by all kinds of devices. Nevertheless, in the play's text this annotation figures in at the end: "The saint appeared above the adjoining roof and was descending with the help of machines as if he descended from heaven."[102] We see that a similar machinery, a perfect piece of engineering, served to obtain apologetic effects. Of course the hundredweights of lead were destined to be used as counterweights or in similar mechanical effects, as we saw in the case of the aristocrat who directed the royal theater in Madrid. The first French journalist of the seventeenth century was T. Renaudot, who, like his contemporaries, felt a great passion for the theater. He recounted a presentation of *Orpheus* for the king and queen in which Victory was seen slowly descending from the sky in her chariot; while the spectators were wondrously asking how she could remain so long suspended in air, she sang verses in honor of the king's weapons and the queen's virtues.[103]

To accentuate these effects before a public of courtiers and even on occasion a broader public, the royal persons themselves or persons of high status participated in the theater — no longer for the enjoyment of confusing illusion and

reality, but to attract to human grandeur all the possibilities of admiration and captivation at the disposal of artistic effects. These stage diversions of the grandees are well known. Rennert has related data about them, even regarding the participation of the king himself.[104] Deleyto mentioned theatrical representations, first in chambers in the royal palace designed for effect, then around 1630 in the palace of the Buen Retiro in rooms constructed, precisely for the interplay of machines and stage machinations, where such "tramoyistas" as the Italian Cosme Loti, the Valencian Candi, and others stood out.[105] Tintelnot collected similar information about Versailles, Vienna, and the Polish court.[106] The presentation of Bocángel's *El nuevo Olimpo* — one instance among many (and more could be drawn from the French court) — reveals their utilization to deify the grandees. In the play, which was performed to celebrate the queen's birthday, the infanta was given the role of the Mind of Jupiter presiding over the fiesta that was presented on stage, and all the other roles were distributed among persons of the nobility (the work was published in 1649). Let us recall that Tirso boasted that "the greatest powers of Castile" themselves liked to play the role of the principal character of *El vergonzoso en Palacio*.[107] All of this came to create, on the level of reality, the amazing effects that the theater's mechanical, verbal, and optical resources unfolded before the suspended attention of the spectator.[108]

With respect to an epoch that was about the same as the one here under consideration, it has been said that mercantilism was liable to contradictions within its own system: it accepted machines and the introduction in general of technical inventions even though in the economic realm this was opposed to its policy of creating possibilities of employment. In doing so it was responding to the taste for the new, typical of the Renaissance mentality that mercantilism had in part — like the individuals of the baroque — assimilated and that influenced its attitude toward manufacturing. "Put in other terms," added Heckscher, "mercantilism had opted for technical inventions, affected by its general conception of society."[109] In the middle of the seventeenth-century crisis in Spain, this opting for machines would not apply to the exploitation of agriculture, nor to the textile industry or others, despite the outcries of Sancho de Moncada, Martínez de Mata, Álvarez Ossorio, and others for factories. In some cases the very word *fábrica* [factory] attains, in the Castilian linguistic area, its modern meaning. But although modern manufacturing establishments were built on peninsular soil only by way of exception, and although according to Cellorigo "every kind of manufacture necessary to the kingdom" was lacking, the machinated effects set up for the plays of Calderón or of many others corresponded in part to a similar inspiration that was related to the general movement of society even though it was incapable of affirming its new ends. But neither did the activity of manufacturers gather momentum in France or Italy under the weight of a crisis we discussed in preceding chapters. It is explicable that a country with a vigorous baroque, inasmuch as this must develop under the pressure of conservative

interests, would have a belated industrial takeoff; but it is also comprehensible that the baroque was not in itself what stifled the voices of those economists who, like Sancho de Moncada or Martínez de Mata, did not tire of demanding what we today call "industrial activity."

All the myths containing an exaltation of the creative or transforming capacity of the human being, which at bottom were linked to the preference for novelty and artifice, were extensively developed in the baroque. Such was the case of the myth of Prometheus, which has resonances in Gracián's work and, among other examples, gives us Calderón's comedy *La estatua de Prometeo*.[110] The myth of Circe must also be mentioned: Lope devoted one of his major poems to her, and frequent reference to her is found in many other works, even to the point of producing allusions of a humorous sort.[111] Besides some partial approximations, the figure of Faust emerged in the works of both Marlowe and Calderón.[112] The myth of Proteus, of Adam (this above all), and of others also awakened special interest during the epoch.[113]

Within this area of problems related to the transforming enthusiasm of the baroque, one would have to make a final reference to fiestas. To understand the importance of the theme, let us begin by recalling that Quevedo cried out against the fiesta and diversion, preaching to the prince a professional morality that Aranguren has called "the absolutism of concern" — that is, surrendering all of one's living hours to being preoccupied with and concerned about governing well.[114] Fiestas became so widespread in baroque society, especially in Spain, that they threatened to lead to the abandonment of the most urgent and indispensable public obligations.

Burckhardt drew attention to the role of fiestas in the Renaissance, and even in his writings we can verify that the Renaissance fiesta was a resplendent manifestation of the pleasure of life. Yet because the seventeenth century was in general a time of sadness and crisis, and although despite this the baroque retained an element of pleasure (the Jesuit conformists commented that the great amount of work demanded the rest of the pleasing fiesta), other aspects predominated in the baroque fiesta. Its show of wealth and artifice was proof of the grandeur and social power of whoever gave it and at the same time proof of his or her power over nature, whose course one is always striving to change in some way. Baroque fiestas were held for ostentation and for evoking admiration. They had to be celebrated in urban population centers and were prepared "so that everyone may view them," as the *Noticias de Madrid* observed on one occasion (referring to the fiestas that were organized in September 1627 to celebrate the cure of the king). The motives varied greatly. These social manifestations of the baroque fiesta were prominent in themselves, and together they served as a measure of the power of whoever made it possible.

To strive for certain effects — a momentary pleasure or surprise — those staging fiestas used abundant and costly means, expended a vast effort, made large-scale

preparations, and set up a complicated apparatus. In wonder, the spectators asked themselves what would be beyond the power of whoever did all this to achieve what was apparently such a small thing, for a few instants of pleasure.[115] Regarding one of the imagined fiestas that he liked to recount, Tirso commented that "the fiesta had been interesting and ostentatious" and that its visual aspect was worthy of "the abundant wealth" of the person who gave it.[116] This type of commentary was probably the one that whoever organized such an ostentatious manifestation was trying to obtain. It happened this way even in religious fiestas: Almansa never emphasized their devotion but admired that "in them one has seen countless riches."[117] On the occasion of a procession that the Jesuits organized in honor of their new saints, the *Noticias de Madrid* told its readers that the Jesuits went "richly adorned with many jewels."[118] With respect to processions or the Way of the Cross, León Pinelo related that the multitude "has converted what is penitence into a fiesta." In this way they evoked greater admiration. During the stay of the Prince of Wales in Madrid, Pinelo said of the procession of Corpus Christi that it was "the greatest, most grave and ostentatious procession that has been seen in Madrid and in Castile." About the fiestas on the occasion of the choice of the king of Romanos (1637), he related that they were so extremely solemn that "in the Court they have never been equaled by any fiesta of their kind"; in them a construction was erected that "evoked amazement that in one month could be assembled in Madrid as much wood as contained in this grandiose building, which was made of nothing else."[119] And this took place in a country where for lack of wood, among other reasons, the navy found itself suicidally incapacitated.

In Spain and in all of Europe, the procession played a large role in the epoch's fiestas because it conjoined its mass character with the fact that it was an appropriate occasion for the display of grandeur. Whether for giving thanks, for supplication, or for making amends, the processions' devotion, unction or internal religious sentiment was never emphasized; rather, they were noted for their rich splendor, which was increased by the custom of erecting costly altars in the street to evoke people's wonder. In one case, León Pinelo tells us that there were "seven very rich and lavish altars," "there were fourteen altars of great riches, curiosity and ornamentation," "there were many rich altars, costly ornamentation in the streets and a great crowd":[120] both the divine power and the civil power that supported and honored it on earth remained sublimated.

Manifestations whose goals were to suspend and attract became general and frequent in the baroque. "These diversions are really necessary to be able to withstand so many adversities," Barrionuevo sarcastically commented.[121] The same Barrionuevo criticized the "thousand diversions in Madrid, whether at the highest or lowest levels" that one saw every day.[122] In the *Cartas de jesuitas* there are constant references to them: entertainments, comedies, contests, public tauntings, games, light shows, and so on. "Today there is a masquerade of all the seigniors and among others the admiral comes out dressed as a woman," said one letter.[123] Pellicer, who was always cautious, dared to call attention to the fact that fiestas of great pomp were being organized (in the year 1640) with so many people and such festive dress, as if there were not a war knocking at the door; on a similar occasion, he repeated "that it seemed as though there were no unrest and no war movement anywhere in Spain."[124] The companies of nobles formed in Madrid to go to the war in Catalonia entertained themselves with galas, banquets, and parties at night.[125] "Around here it is a question of nothing but enjoyments and pleasures," Barrionuevo said harshly; "they spend their time doing this while our enemies refine the gunpowder of their grievance to blow us away." This comment is from 1655.[126] The following year he would repeat: "Given that there are always fiestas, they get roused up about this and not about seeing how we have to defend ourselves from so many demonic enemies who will not let us alone."[127] When the year 1657 arrived he painted a serious picture and showed how broadly it applied: after speaking about the distressing situation in Seville, he said that on Saturday and Sunday of Shrovetide the king and queen had three or four meals, made more amenable with one-act farces, intermezzos, dances, music, and witticisms; on Monday there was a great comedy and, after dining, more entertainment until dawn; on Tuesday other diversions continued. Speaking of fiesta after fiesta, he commented that the king was present at some of them, accompanied by grand seigniors and those of less prestige, "with so many people present that the streets could not hold them."[128] In 1658 he insisted again and again: "great festivities," "everthing is fiesta and rejoicing," and with rancor toward the situation he commented that "the fiestas become grand at the expense of our flesh."[129] Nevertheless, he pointed out more than once, in passing and with respect to diverse occasions, the affluence of the public.

For the monarchy perhaps the most important thing was to be shielded in the face of the discussions and hostilities that so many critics stirred up from within. Against these critics it made use of the means for producing the irresponsible, stunned, and blind adherence of the masses. One of the best means was to maintain that adherence in fiestas; we know that for this reason the public was allowed to enter the fiestas of the Retiro. If elaborate fiestas already characterized the epoch of the Renaissance, now, at the same time that they were more costly and surprising, they were displayed before a greater mass of spectators, although those who took an active part continued to be a limited group. Perhaps, however, it was not the spectators' diversion that counted so much as the people's wonder in the face of the "magnificence" of the rich and powerful. Let us say with Barrionuevo that "all is fiestas and rejoicing," but the historian who would interpret this as a mere manifestation of frivolity would be committing a serious error. "There was never in Spain such an intense and prolonged fever for spectacles and merrymaking," commented Deleyto, "as during the forty-four years of the reign of the poet king."[130] To the grand fiestas of the court must be added

the saints' festivals, the dances, mock war games on horseback, the bulls, and masquerades:[131] the organization of festivities represented an attempt to distract the people from their ills and to stun them into admiring those who were able to command such splendor or such enjoyable entertainment. The fiesta was a diversion that stunned both those who commanded and those who obeyed: it made the latter believe, whereas for the former it created the illusion that wealth and power still remained.

In the monarchy of the Spanish baroque, the fiesta was thus converted into an institutionalized celebration. Attending a fiesta and receiving an appropriate gift there became part of the stipend and perquisites of certain public employees. In the times of Philip III and Philip IV, the Royal Council, the Juntas of Reform and other special juntas, the personal reports of experts, the petitions of judicial boards, and other local authorities spoke out against fiestas and bestowals that were distributed in them. In 1619, the Junta of Reform proposed that the king do away with the custom introduced in the councils that consisted of "distributing among themselves certain benefits at Church festivals and bullfight fiestas," and the Sala de Alcaldes de Casa y Corte warned Philip IV that the assets of the ministries of justice and treasury "are eaten away little by little in the tribunals and juntas because every judge receives thirty thousand maravedis and more at every bullfight fiesta and others, and another large quantity goes to the ministers and officials, which comes to be a great sum of money because they are so numerous."[132] This institutionalization of the fiesta reveals its linkages with the social system and with the means of integration on which the baroque monarchy was based.

Thus fiestas were a characteristic aspect of baroque society. Poets versified about them and other writers recounted them, praising their magnificence and exalting the power of the seigniors and the glory of the monarchy. "The poets, players, dancers, comedians and the actors of farces are very eager to show off the beauties of their professions," related one of the *Cartas de jesuitas*.[133] Poets and writers of prose celebrated some of these manifestations from the literary point of view, usually in deplorable writings.[134] The most important writers cultivated this genre. Their occasions were marriages, births, victories, peacemaking, canonizations, and even the deaths of royal personages, which were treated with glorifying circumstance. Argensola, Lope, Bocángel, Góngora, Calderón, and others contributed to this occasional literature, which also occurred in other countries. It is curious that in his *Gazette* Renaudot also included accounts about fiestas in honor of illustrious personalities, undoubtedly because this reflected public taste.[135] In reference to the very baroque characters of the novels in which Céspedes liked so much to describe fiestas, Fonquerne pointed out that individuals of the noble and rich class were moved by a taste for luxury, ostentation, and the fiesta;[136] but let us note that this always required a numerous surrounding public to contemplate it, a public to whom his admiring narrative

was addressed. Because of this, the fiesta — even when realized in a nearby country setting, as Tirso or Céspedes imagined it — nevertheless assumed a connection with an urban milieu that corresponded to the baroque's social aspects that have been brought out above.[137]

As with all products of baroque culture, fiestas were an instrument, even a weapon, of a political nature. Kings and ministers were aware of this; they spent more on fiestas than they could afford. The political and economic writer Martínez de Mata explicitly formulated it when he recorded that "the statesmen counsel that the prince have means for the people to divert themselves because melancholy does not give rise to producing novelty in the psyches." And Pascal, who devoted several pages to considerations regarding the possibilities of divertissement, understood to what extent it could be used to make human beings avoid thinking about themselves and their problematic surroundings. La Bruyère knew well that the governments (those he defined) were interested in "letting the people benumb themselves in fiestas, spectacles, luxury";[138] if they did not enjoy such diversions directly, they dreamily contemplated them, even though in others. Moreover, if in producing merriment the fiesta could simultaneously fill the spectator with admiration regarding the magnificence of whoever gave it or whomever it was dedicated to, it could be a means not only of distraction but also of attraction. The rulers of Spanish baroque society made use of precisely this aspect, not always with the results they desired.

The seventeenth-century fiesta had to count on some invention, an ingenious mechanism, an unusual artifact, an architectonic construction that, with pasteboard and wood or similar materials, resembled an impressive grandioseness (the more fragile the materials, the more amazing the effects obtained with them). To this notion corresponded the construction of pools and canals in the gardens of the Buen Retiro so that aquatic fiestas could be organized there in imitation of the Romans (Pellicer called them *naumachias*, as did the Romans)[139] to signify that the Spanish monarchy was about to equal or surpass the historical greatness of Rome. These fiestas were also repeated so that the people could attend. At one time the absurdity included the construction of an armed galley, a ship, and other small vessels. Barrionuevo, with a strong dose of irony, related that the king and queen relaxed in the galley: "The gondolas and a ship go in front, it appears to be an armada, and in the stern, seated on a rug, the favorite and his son at the royal feet. They pretend to be battling, artillery and muskets go off, they go around three or four times, night falls and everything is over." This item comes from 18 July 1657. On 13 February of the following year, he reported that the king had gone to the Retiro "where they gave him a royal salute with the artillery of the galley and ship of the pools." Months went by and the king and queen continued to relax, sailing in the pools of the Retiro in the galley and ship (the galley was apparently called "La Real de España"). Barrionuevo could do nothing more than write paragraphs full of bitter desperation: there was no

money to arm the ships and endow them with artillery and ammunition; there was no money to pay the soldiers; the fleet or solitary ships that came from America or traveled the coasts of the peninsula were seized by enemies; England claimed to have placed a permanent maritime blockade around Spain. In the Retiro, meantime, as a means of diversion for the king and queen and their retinue, the pools and canals were made longer and bigger, a new galley that was "a big thing," carried artillery and musicians; other vessels accompanied them, and the king, queen, grand seigniors, and courtiers took their place in this sad entourage and played war.[140]

But probably a mass — at least between explosions of emotion — gullibly admired the king's taste for the things of war, his gallantry in the midst of armed fire that baroque rhetoric would call "terrifying," and the magnificence of power that could so transform nature as to pretend that there was a sea at the court's back door. An entire system to stimulate admiration and adherence was set at play in this ridiculous (for us as well as for lucid and liberal minds in the seventeenth century) masquerade of the galley of the Buen Retiro.

Still another aspect of the fiestas fulfilled perfectly the required conditions of wealth, ingenuity, surprise, and brevity. Fireworks [*fuegos de artificio*] were a very adequate sign of the splendor of whoever ordered them because of their very artifice, their difficulty, the expense in human labor and in money that they implied (which the rich and powerful had at their disposal for nonproductive purposes); at the same time, they corresponded to what we already know as a taste for invented artifice ("inventions of fire," said Tárrega, recounting the great fiestas in Valencia).[141] They constituted a characteristic manifestation of the baroque fiesta.[142] It was an adequate spectacle for display before the wonder of the public, "with the festive uneasiness of the plebeian people," said Tirso.[143] We know that the Spanish court was very much taken with fireworks, whose art, wondrous in the epoch because of its technical complication and no less because of the costly transitoriness of its performance, was admired by the duke of Saint Simon in his day. The *Noticias de Madrid* give us copious references: in the fiestas of the Carmelites in honor of St. Teresa, there were "great fire inventions" (June 1622); when the Prince of Wales passed a night in Segovia, the same thing happened, and also when he arrived in Santander, on the way back to his country they set up "fire inventions"; when the king visited Seville, "the whole city burned with great fire inventions" (March 1624); in the fiestas for the health of the king, the Council of the Indies "spent many ducats on fire[works]" (September 1627); the laying of the first stone of the Almudena could not happen without them.[144] The *Cartas de jesuitas* speak about fiestas with "engines of gunpowder and rockets";[145] Pellicer rendered an account of fires and fiestas with rockets and gunpowder inventions;[146] Barrionuevo repeatedly mentioned fiestas with light shows and fireworks,[147] and one can also find mention of this in León Pinelo.[148] Let us recall that when Campanella, a

typical writer of the baroque mentality and of the world of the Hispanic monarchy, exalted the power of the human being, he did not do it, as did another Renaissance thinker, because of the creative power of human hands (Campanella noted that monkeys and bears also have hands); rather, he cited human knowledge and the human capacity to dominate the arts of fire: "The art of fire is unique to man."[149] With their illumination, the arts of fire were the answer to the zeal to replace night with day, overcoming the night's obscurity by means of pure human artifice. The subject took the form of a genuine topos.

Let us examine how the theme is presented in three representative novelists whose stories tell us what the epoch's public opinion expected and admired. Pérez de Montalbán, recounting a fiesta in the context of one of his novels, said: "Night came or, rather, did not come because the ladies and lights were so numerous they were able to deny it."[150] In a story from one of the episodes on the outskirts of Toledo, Tirso remarked positively about "the night so well protected by lights that in Toledo the light of the sun was missed but little."[151] Céspedes exalted the marvelous fiestas that took place at an imagined anniversary in his novelesque world, "making the darkest night over into day."[152] The *Noticias de Madrid* tell about a costume festival organized by the admiral that ran through the streets of the capital; the lights in it were so numerous that the night seemed like broad daylight.[153] Later, in reference to a fiesta in the Retiro (this time a royal fiesta, thus implying its grandeur), one Jesuit wrote to another: "It seemed more like the light of day than the dark of night."[154] This capacity to transform the order of the universe, however fleeting it might have been, showed overwhelmingly the greatness of whoever had so much power over natural and human resources as to achieve such effects.[155] In a world like that of the baroque, ruled by prudence, those effects were sufficient to make people reflect on the advantage of continuing to adhere to such a powerful personality.

Appendix
Sociopolitical Objectives of the Use of Visual Media

Given the objectives of dissemination and effective action sought by baroque culture (though in saying this I am not irrevocably affirming that it succeeded), one can understand the interest in the manipulation of visual elements, the preponderant role granted to the optical function within the scope of the culture. On the other hand, appealing to the efficacy of the visual image is typical of societies where a guided mass culture develops. From both perspectives, then, the baroque had to be a culture of the sensible image, as it effectively was. In paraphrasing a fragment from Aristotles's *Poetics*, when an author as intellectualized as Racine articulated the necessary components of a tragedy, alongside decoration he would include "everything that is for one's eyes."[1]

By utilizing artistic media, seventeenth-century culture could more fittingly accomplish its propagandistic ends. Once again it is essential to refer to these ends to understand the aspects here under consideration. If the epoch's art was animated by a spirit of propaganda and if it took its point of departure from the fact that the image was an effective means for obtaining its objective, then one can maintain with Argan that "there is no attempt to conceptualize the image but to offer the concept made into an image"—that is, to provide the concept with a force that is no longer demonstrative but of practical application, a force typical of the image.[2] In reality, all of the preceding is valid not only for art but for all the manifestations of culture that address a public with the intention of captivating it; therefore, the same thing said about art can be said about politics, morality, and religion. Elsewhere I have written about the role of emblems from a point of view coinciding with what I have just put forth, in particular their

mixture of doctrine and plasticity in didactic baroque literature.[3] In baroque cities, triumphal arches, tombs, altars, and artificial fountains were built to celebrate or commemorate an event, to highlight its importance; as with the widely diffused emblems, this was a product of the collaboration of the plastic arts to achieve effects of social significance. Complementing the magnificence of those monuments of a provisional architecture (no less praised as instructive because of this) were the hieroglyphics and other pictures that were drawn on their surfaces. Even sermons used printed or etched hieroglyphics, pictures to be deciphered, all of which reinforced the call addressed to the spectator or listening public, and opened up a channel in their attention for the penetration of a doctrine or feeling of amazement, suspension, or stupor that would facilitate the public's captivation.[4]

Calderón's method was to make visible, with all the force that the evident has within the field of vision, the principles and precepts of the doctrines—or at least of those that pragmatically appeal to human behavior and strive to guide it. That doctrinal content, inasmuch as it shares in the "truth" (in an Aristotelian sense), possesses a certain permanence. But unlike the person of the Middle Ages, the baroque person had insufficient confidence in the attracting force of the pure intellectual essence and thus strove to coat it with those sensible elements that indelibly engrave it in the imagination. Such a formulation was based on a recognition of the method indicated by the following verses from Calderón:

> Y pues lo caduco no
> puede comprehender lo eterno
> y es necesario que para
> venir en conocimiento
> suyo, haya un medio visible. . .
> *(Suenõs hay que verdad son)*
>
> [And thus the transitory cannot comprehend the eternal, and to come into its knowledge, one needs a visible means.]

Concerning this assumption, the entire question — for Calderón as well as for all baroque artists (and also for politicians and moralists)—resided in how one succeeded in passing from one plane to another, in what means one used for a given doctrinal content "to pass over into a practical concept / from an imagined one," as the work above puts it.

The value of the efficacy of visual resources was unquestioned in the epoch. The dispute about the superiority of the eye versus the ear in communicating knowledge to others had a medieval foundation. Whereas the Middle Ages opted for the second method, modernity has sided with the first, that is, with the method of seeing.[5] In the Renaissance, this was completely confirmed; on one occasion, we have referred to the defense that Galileo, among others, made of seeing. This dispute was reproduced and even intensified during the baroque. It was widespread among French writers of the time,[6] and in Spain Suárez de

Figueroa made a declaration that conforms perfectly to our point of view, considerably reinforcing it: according to him, both the eyes and ears are valid modes of access for knowing things, but "in sum, among the senses that serve the soul, it is the eyes through which many affects enter and exit."[7] Let us note that in this preference for the sense of sight, the role performed by the eyes in the constitution of experience was very much involved; ultimately, the theme was linked to the transformation of the concept of experience that took place with modernity (and which we discussed in chapter 7). The baroque considered that even our eyes can deceive us. In the seventeenth century, this theme came to infiltrate the everyday stream of commentary. Pellicer counseled "believing only what we see with our eyes, and they should not always be wholly believed."[8] This was written in one of the journalistic *avisos* of the time. Such advice to individuals who, then, already belonged to modernity, advanced the notion of not placing total, limitless confidence in the testimony of sight; but it also implied that since we do believe in something, and insofar as we have access to reality, this object of belief cannot be recognized except by way of our eyes.

But to this aspect of physical experience the baroque added what we might call the aspect of psychological experience: the eyes are the most direct and effective means that we can make use of in questions of affections. They are linked to feelings, as feelings are linked to them. To move the psyche, which we have seen to be what the baroque strove for, the most effective means are visual.

Individuals of the baroque thus knew that direct vision of things was important beyond measure. Igniting movements of affection, adherence, and surrender depended upon it. Direct presence—or at least the presence of symbolic representations most faithfully united in repeating the represented—had an incomparable force. To have certainty of things "seen and not things heard" was, therefore, what they strove for. For this reason, a typically baroque person, the Count-Duke of Olivares, achieved the effects of captivating people by resorting to direct, visual media whenever possible and, when not possible, to effects of faithful plastic representation. A Jesuit letter tells us that Olivares was trying to assure the public dissemination of his image as a pious ruler, able to attract the benefits of heaven because of his religiosity, which was how he wanted to appear before the small world of the court and before the opinion of the general public. He sought, then, to obtain a visual image of himself in others, one formed by the testimonies derived from those who had in some way or another viewed him in person: "Every morning, from five until six, he is most devotedly on the dais of Nuestra Señora de Atocha and, in effect, he is so great, as manifest by his pious and loud words and his sobs while hearing mass, that those who hear him, and there are many, leave very edified." This was how one Jesuit referred to it in a letter from 6 August 1639.[9] When Olivares, on the other hand, wanted to be viewed as a victorious general, since it is not easy to have recourse to people

who were directly present at military scenes in Fuenterrabía, he had himself represented with all the visually convincing, impressive force that derived from painting in the specific way it was being cultivated by the great baroque artists—in this case, no less than Velaźquez.

Of course this use of the visual did not stand in the way of baroque writers (especially those dedicated to the theater) who did not want to reject the possibilities that hearing also offered, comprehending what voice and music could contribute toward successfully moving the feelings. This explains why the musical factor was being more and more incorporated, above all in works that, perhaps because of their strong allegorical nature, called for a heightened action of extrarational elements on the public.[10]

Returning to our point of departure, there is no doubt that utilizing the plastic arts for the effects of teaching had a very remote origin: the tympana, the capitals, the stained glass of medieval churches, with their iconographic totalities, are examples. Many centuries before, in the ancient sculptured remains of the civilizations of the Near East, elements of this type were present.[11] In the sixteenth century, painting and sculpture having a heavy symbolic charge were still considered to be an appropriate language for those who did not know how to read.[12] Because of this, the art of the retables, which had reached its early splendor in the fifteenth century, continued to be cultivated in the sixteenth century and underwent an expansion in the seventeenth; in this phase, however, instead of anecdotal elements that were figuratively represented to be "read," the aspects of grandioseness predominated (the dynamism of the lines, the reflections of gold, the dramatics of the gestures, and so forth).

On the one hand, not only did the Church make use of these resources, but they were also utilized in civil society by politicians and others who strove to attract a mass to their ideological positions, implying such a quantitative change that it presupposed a transformation in the very nature of the method. But on the other hand it was not solely a matter of teaching but rather of reaching what we have seen the baroque writer calling a "practical concept," that is, a concept that embodies action. Around the turn of the seventeenth century, those who were beginning to reformulate the question in the way we are indicating were also writers close to the Church and artists working for it, reflecting about the way (given the conditions of the epoch) in which a work can develop with the greatest efficacy.[13] But their discovery would immediately come to be generalized in all realms of culture. One of the ultimate representatives of baroque pedagogy, Comenius, would conceive his work as the result of a method of plastic representation: such was the significance of his work *Orbis sensualium pictus* (1657).[14] Thereby, those who are taught not only are provided with certain knowledge but are also captivated and effectively driven toward the actions expected of them.

In the baroque, the tendency developed for certain scenes—the viewing of

which could awaken religious or political feelings (or both at the same time, since they are so intertwined), attracting the viewer toward the subject provoking these feelings—to unfold in the street for a greater public viewing. Not only the taste for the anonymous parade, as we saw earlier in the words of L. Febvre, but the interest in its plastic force for shaping behavior by means of the emotions it awakened was one of the reasons why the procession was so widespread in Spain and from there went abroad. Moreover, when these street manifestations passed by the monasteries or even in other places, artistic tableaux were set up that, in the much more frequent case of events or fiestas having a religious character, were richly adorned altars incorporating an entire representation of doctrinal scope (whose meaning was more or less explicit or hidden, as in the figures of literature or emblems). The altars represented a collaboration of the plastic arts of painting and sculpture, of course, but also of architecture, which in these cases took on a greater importance. During a a fiesta oriented just as much toward the Church as the palace, a Jesuit related (15 March 1638) that of the monuments set up in the various places of Madrid (on this occasion, by monks and nuns), "the architecture of all of them was good, although ours surpassed the others," along with an enthusiastic comment about the one prepared in the convent of the Descalzas Reales,[15] whose significance in baroque Madrid has been mentioned above. In chapter 9 we saw these altars praised for their wealth and ostentation. But it was a question of obtaining the infiltration of a doctrinal content by means of every type of plastic representation.

Nevertheless, it is significant that painting predominated within the whole of the arts. Even the political writer, to render account of his work, made use of terms of comparison with the work of the painter. The other forms of expression were subordinated (or at least this was the intention) to the laws of painting. We can compare the different position it occupied in the Renaissance to understand better the novelty that was introduced afterward. In effect, sixteenth-century preceptists maintained that painting ought to be subject to the work of the architect; because of this, painting was often accomplished in black and white "so as not to injure the order of Architecture." But if one wanted to use colors and other media, they had to conform with the external environment so that "one copies and naturally simulates [*finja*] everything outside of the building that can be seen through any openings or windows."[16] It was precisely this formulation that changed decades later. Among baroque writers like Paravicino and many others, painting was deemed to be first among the arts and those who were learned in it gained in social prestige;[17] yet in the common opinion of the seventeenth century, painting was also held up as a role model for all the other arts (including literature), which all tried to approximate it. This becomes manifest in noting the scope of the use of the neologism *pintoresco* [*picturesque*], a word that was introduced around that time in the Romance languages. This word, which expressed the mere fact that something pertained to painting, turned into

an attribute of quality as much for painting itself as for any other artistic form.[18] It served to qualify in terms of praise that which deserved to be treated by painting or that which was effectively treated in the mode of painting by other arts or by literature: it helped in referring to a greater animation and a freer interplay of lights and shadows, with a very suitable condition for rendering movement.[19]

It is not happenstance that the attention to painting and to the work of the painters of their time took up so much space in the pages of writers from Galileo to Huyghens. Among Spanish baroque writers, let us recall Sigüenza, Góngora, Paravicino, López de Úbeda, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, Gracián, Calderón, and Saavedra Fajardo. It has been said that the poems of some French baroque writers constitute a poetic version of Poussin's paintings.[20] The connection—with respect to themes, problems, and procedures—between Velázquez and Calderón has been observed by E. W. Hesse.[21]

In reality, this "picturesque" transformation of poetry and the other forms of expression proceeded from the consequences of mannerism. In Spain it was announced, with the coming to fruition of Michelangelo's influence and at the same time as its general Renaissance formulation, in a passage from Francisco de Holanda, who manifested many pre-baroque elements: painting is of greater efficacy than poetry to the extent that its nature is "to cause greater effects and to have much greater force and vehemence, so as to move the spirit and soul to happiness and rejoicing, as well as to sadness and tears, with the most effective eloquence."[22]

It was in the baroque when the topos *ut pictura poesis* would find its fullest meaning and also when it would become most widely diffused.[23] Lope became its proclaimer in many well-known passages from his comedies of a popular scope and no less in his learned poems.[24] The application of such a topos, broadened in general to all written expression, had a curious manifestation at the beginning of the original edition of Saavedra Fajardo's *Idea de un príncipe político y christiano*, where a letter was published (and reproduced in the following editions) from a Fleming praising the work of Saavedra in these terms: "Cedant picturae aliae, hic nobis Apelles est, qui ingenio et lineas et colores omnes vincit." The work's author in turn responded to the words in praise of his friend's quill, the painter of his ingenuity.[25] Salas Barbadillo, playing with the metaphor in baroque fashion, would tell us that he painted or wrote his figures in his novels with "the lines from this brush and the lines of words from this quill."[26] In the seventeenth century, similar texts were very numerous.

What was the source of this interest in painting and the recognition of its predominance? Why did the moralist, the politician, the pedagogue, and the poet want to approximate the way in which a painter operated? I believe that once again this phenomenon must be referred to the conditions of society that we have already put forward: a society that, in view of the situation, found that its

ruling classes needed to attract and act upon mass opinion by means of extrarational channels; in such circumstances, it made use of painting and granted it a preeminent place because of the efficacy with which it was thought to affect the psyche's motivations [*resortes del ánimo*], impressing it directly by means of the sense of sight. One writer said it admirably at the very threshold of the epoch: "There is nothing better than painting to give delight and make something slip more smoothly into one's psyche [*âme*], nor to engrave it more deeply in one's memory, or more effectively prompt the will to set it going and energetically move it."[27] Fernández de Ribera tells us about a monseigneur who "had many animated inducements painted, for they customarily penetrate better when painted than when heard."[28] There is no doubt that this person must have been a good representative of baroque mentality.

The first demand that the preceptists postulated for painters (and that they demanded from those who imitated them in their labor) was to cultivate this aspect of their art. And thus Carducho would say that painting "must teach, move, speak and delight always and with all types of people," to the point that, although one must respect the substantial facts of reality, it was possible to introduce alterations in the modes and circumstances in order to accentuate this capacity to move.[29] The role that baroque thinkers recognized for painting was grounded in its capacity to work on a broad public in this way: that was what was most characteristic about it, its "efficacy and force," as Jáuregui wrote.[30] The numerous topoi and oft-repeated anecdotes relative to the efficacy of painting's psychological and moral action—capable as a consequence of having a decisive influence on human behavior—were gathered together in a curious work that Félix de Lucio Espinosa published under the title *El pince* [*The Paintbrush*] near the end of the epoch under consideration.[31]

Baroque writers insisted that the force of painting was in its possibility to grasp life. The reality that the baroque was concerned about penetrating and dominating was not to be found in the Platonic realm of the essences but in the dramatic and changing sphere of life. Painting, Jáuregui would also say, "does not strive only for breadth of body, but for lives and spirits."[32] The reference to the "living image" as the object that an art tries to maintain became common;[33] the portrait came to be its preferred manifestation. We cannot omit the reference in Lope: "You will see a great painter, / manifesting his ingenuity, / make a living image" [*El perro del hortelano*].

If in the Renaissance a profound antinomy occurred between its severe precept of the imitation of nature and its aesthetic of beauty, given that it is possible for the natural not to be beautiful,[34] in the baroque we find an even greater antinomy between the struggle to grasp living reality and the weight that the aesthetic placed on ideal representations based on an abstract conception of the social hierarchies. Despite its apparent and violent naturalism, what the baroque offers us never remains a pure and simple realism. Even the portraits themselves share

an entire gamut of generalized, typical elements, and they reflect group characteristics that were considered to affect the beings not because of their real individuality but because of their social position as doctrinally defined. Accordingly, some are distinguished, others common, some beautiful, others ugly, others well proportioned, others deformed—not in their individual being, but by necessary derivation from their hierarchical place on the social scale, a scale that was conceptually considered to be natural. But by keeping within a general conception of estatist nature, the baroque, rather than rendering this conceptually, made attentive use of an entire series of ornamental elements; the role of these elements was to make evident before one's eyes the magnificence of the personages who appeared in their midst and, at the same time, to present as an unquestionable, positive fact their possession of the appropriate qualities, given their social status. This has been verified in Bernini himself and was common to baroque artists, politicians, and writers.[35] It was not a question, then, of pure realism. The remains of idealism, of Neoplatonism appeared everywhere (they are easy to confirm in Lope, for example). The Renaissance had accentuated the traits of idealism; now, in the baroque, they would join with the mental heritage of an estatist conception of society (corresponding to the strongly conservative character of Platonism), encouraging it, permitting it to be extended to eighteenth-century classicism, up to the eve of the social crisis of the French Revolution.

But, in conjunction with what we have said, the baroque artist and writer knew that the world was not ruled by the mental schemata of a reason understood in the way of Scholasticism; nor did they share in the *esprit de géométrie* (closer to the former than it perhaps appears), although it was possible to make occasional use of the possibilities of calculation, as did the merchant, the soldier, and the artist and politician as well. The world and society could continue to be maintained within a final rational order whose law could be expressed in terms of a teleological conception of nature in the Scholastic-Aristotelian mode or (in mathematical terms) in accordance with the well-known words of Galileo; nevertheless, to operate among human beings it was necessary to accede to a specific concrete reality, full of dramatics, charged with passions, and affected by psychological motivations [*resortes*] that had to be recognized in order to dominate and channel them.

Beyond any set of precepts of Aristotelian inspiration, the portrait would then be considered not as a document of beauty nor as the contrary, according to established aesthetic values, but rather as an attestation of psychology, an object of observation for knowledge of the profound and multiform human being. The broad gamut of the portrait corresponded to this transformation: previously it was only of principal and heroic figures (Calderón still commented with irony that some common women aspired to being portrayed), whereas now the repertory of persons was wide-ranging, a crowded and moving world of superiors and inferiors that swarmed before the spectator, even changing their relative position—perhaps placing those from the lower levels in the foreground as the protagonist, as in *Las hilanderas*, or inverting their roles, as in *Los borrachos*.

But in reducing human subject matter to a painting object and subjecting it to techniques so it could be captured did not imply a direct, ingenuous, "copying" realism; it constituted instead an opening to reality by a knowingly manipulated technique of access, by an indirect means or to the second degree. In praising painting, one had said before that it exactly reproduced what was delimited (thus the anecdotes about confusions between the picture and the real object). Now that was not the case. A painting was painting, that is, a medium of access to the world that was knowingly used, that was ostensibly situated between the eye and the representation. Relying on this distance between the eye and the representation, one took a leap to the real, which was always a version, a study, a manipulation.

This is how painting, for the people of the baroque, became an especially apt medium for rendering an account of the experiences of human reality, of the living.[36] Despite the aesthetic symbolism preserved in the thought of the epoch, and in the midst of the ancient Hellenic heritage weighing upon painters and their critics,[37] a treatment of new themes and a new manner of confronting them nevertheless forced its way in: a new manner that neither strove to beautify them nor was resigned to imitation. Painters sought to study them and to offer them up to be recognized as testimony of the real. They they gave themselves over to an enthusiastic and repeated investigation of those aspects of the real that were uniquely present in the ugly, the deformed, the distorted. In the baroque, individuals' interest in this obscure side of things was undoubtedly prepared for by their own violated position, which in the society of the epoch was subject to a deforming pressure. From this level a consciousness of the grotesque and twisted could be acquired, and the minds of the epoch exercised their possibilities in grasping it. They learned that the real was much more complex than their received intellectual inheritance would have them believe. And it was possible in this way to note that, contemplating things in a foreshortened perspective, from the violated point of view of the irregular, the outlandish, or the abnormal, one ended up obtaining an enriched view of reality that the baroque mind came to judge as varied and changing.

From the visual angle of what we have just described, it would be interesting to consider one of the more specific characteristics of baroque painting: its procedure of "distant splotches," of the "smears" or "thick brush strokes," in the diverse terminology of the epoch, a procedure whose invention was at that time attributed to Titian. There are many texts that describe this. Let us select that by Jerónimo de San José because it already gives us an interpretation of the matter: "Since Titian was weary of the ordinary way of painting in the sweet and subtle fashion, he invented another way, so strange and lofty, of painting in thick brush strokes, as if they were carelessly done smears."[38] We

ask ourselves what reasons sustained the general opinion in the seventeenth century toward this Titianesque manner of painting:[39] it was judged that this way alone gave an authentic rendering of the living. It was a painting of what was incomplete, shifting, and unstable, a painting adequate for grasping the human being and life. Such an adaptation is explained by saying that the human does not possess a being that has become, but a being becoming—a *fieri*, not a *factum*;[40] consquently, a being incomplete and in continuous change.

This, then, proceeded from the baroque's interest in obtaining a more fitting way to penetrate the real so as to ensure its directive grasp. These attempts frequently had a technical basis; in terms of their being an experiment, they implied a mechanization. In the preceding instance we see that by a physical (and easily disseminated) procedure—such as applying paintbrushes in a certain manner, that is, in a "thick" and careless manner—one discovered that painting necessarily increased the capacity to apprehend the living world.[41] In the realm of painting, the interest in what it is proper to call *experimentations*, with mirrors, plays of perspective, and light and color corresponded to what we have indicated. The same distortions that these studied combinations were able to provoke in the view of things came to constitute a method (or way of access) to approach the real. In his *Vite*,[42] Vasari recounted that Parmigianino took hold of a barber's mirror to make a self-portrait, contemplating himself reflected in it and noting the strange distortions of things because of the roundness of the mirror. "Gli venne voglia di contrafare per suo capriccio ogni cosa" [There came to him the desire to make a counterimage of everything through his caprice], and this aspiration to recreate the real made him reach a new verism: the truth of a reality whose most proper condition was that of changing—for example, the fact that an object increased or diminished as it neared or became farther from the mirror. In this way, forcing himself "to investigate the subtleties of art," the painter succeeded in ascertaining new aspects of the real that could be attested to in the painting, giving form to his personal experience in it.

If the cultivation of painting aroused the interest of baroque individuals up to such a point, it was not because using paintbrushes made it possible for one to acquire a capacity to imitate nature; rather, in manipulating them the artist obtained the ability to re-form and remake that which was given in nature. This theory, which once again manifested the manufacturing basis inspiring the baroque work, was articulated by one of the most representative of Spain's seventeenth-century poets and preceptists: Jáuregui.[43] It was necessary to take one's point of departure from the fact that what in art is superficially called "imitating" never becomes limited to a mere reproducing: "Art can hardly form / the very being of the thing." We must always take into account the constitutive limitation that art cannot go beyond a mode of fiction: "Sculpting or painting / must inevitably be fiction."

Certainly their role "is to simulate [*fingir*] the natural," but that cannot be

understood as copying. Not only is it impossible to copy a natural model, but the intervention of the artist always has an active character as well, introducing a new element, making the model other than what was offered up to personal observation. The object cannot be grasped "unless the paintbrush re-forms it." It is necessary for the painter's operation to transform the object so as to introduce it into the world of art.

The baroque century repeatedly defined painting as a poetic activity in the etymological sense of the word, that is, as a creative activity. This qualification was what proved attractive for those writing about it in the seventeenth century and what they emphasized above all: its possibility of creating a world of beings who live the life of art correlatively to the world of natural beings. The preference for painting was based on the fact that this activity is more in the foreground. Painting has fewer means than sculpture or architecture because it cannot rely on the third dimension of the natural world, that is, it cannot physically make use of bulk; neverthless, it better demonstrates the reach of the human creative force. By finding itself further removed than other arts with respect to nature, it is able to imitate it better than any other. This estimation reveals the significance of the preference that human beings of baroque mentality showed for pictorial art, to the extent that it was a human activity capable of remaking its natural models. Galileo's remark is the most interesting in this respect: he succeeded in formulating the estimation underlying the baroque preference for painting. "Nature itself gives light and shade to sculpture, and art gives it to painting; for that reason, therefore, an excellent painting is more worthy of admiration than an excellent sculpture." The reason for this recognition of excellence is found in the principle that "the greater the distance separating the means with which one imitates from the things being imitated, the more awe the imitation evokes."[44]

Thus painting remakes and re-forms nature, but in turn painting itself becomes the object of a similar process: painting is a re-forming instrument of what is naturally given because it rectifies and re-forms itself. The possibility of moving on this double plane of correction, multiplying the knowing and calculated action of the human being, ends up bestowing on painting the highest degree of superiority. Now a politician and political writer (many of whom dealt with painting in the seventeenth century) tells us that for him a painter is great because he "corrects a flawed painting with four brush strokes and a couple of shadows."[45]

I am going to refer to a final question that I dealt with years ago while trying to explain certain "modern" aspects in baroque mentality, a question that does not contradict but rather nuances the recognition of the fundamentally conservative character of the objectives that such a mentality exhibited. There was an attempt to reach certain socially conservative results, operating within circumstances of a modern character. In relation to this, I now want to show that the baroque painter and public came to a significant reformulation of the debate over preference for color or drawing.[46] A. Hauser was absolutely correct in

attributing an immediate and direct political meaning to this theme, but he was completely mistaken in trying to interpret it because in his book Hauser practically neglected to study the baroque. In effect, Hauser assumed that at the high point of the baroque (which he confused with the Colbert era under Louis XIV) there was a choice made in favor of the drawing, whereas "the decision for coloring implied a stand against the spirit of absolutism, rigid authority, and the rational regimentation of life."[47] Hauser listed Watteau and Chardin as representatives of this new attitude, but he neglected to bring out sufficiently what had already been done much earlier by Rubens, Velázquez, Poussin, and others. I have no intention of composing a history of art, but rather a history of the mentality of the baroque epoch. Therefore, rather than what the painters did (something that is otherwise very evident), what is of interest here is to inquire into how the polemic concerning drawing and color really developed in the seventeenth century.

In my study of Velázquez I cited the explicit remark of El Greco, who denied that Michelangelo knew how to paint because he was unaware of color. Now let us note a few additional facts. Already in the sixteenth century, in a work of Celestina literature (which as such was representative of the mental change that was underway) we discover a solid choice in favor of color over line.[48] At the beginning of the new epoch, when one spoke about the painter's instruments it would be normal to mention nothing more than paintbrushes and colors.[49] It is symptomatic that great Spanish baroque poetry opened with someone like Góngora, about whom D. Alonso (the one most knowledgeable about him) has written: "If one were to make a tally of all the adjectives referring to color occurring in his poetry, one would be amazed to see that there is no stanza, and scarcely a line, that does not offer some hint of a color."[50] Jáuregui, realizing the common preference for color, would also attempt to offer an explanation. He referred to the sensibility he found in his surroundings, to the values that baroque artists and writers wanted to record in their works: the reason for the primacy of color and for the superiority granted to painting because of its use, did not derive from an increased capacity to copy what was natural, external, but from the fact that it allowed translation of "a thousand internal passions."[51] Color and movement of the soul went together; therefore Bocángel would say — in his work the attention to painting is also relevant—that the goal of the great portraitist was "to color the soul with passions."[52]

One more name has special relevance because it is of a political writer, perhaps the one of greatest significance in the culture of the Spanish baroque: Saavedra Fajardo posed the question of the dispute regarding color and drawing, deciding in favor of the first, as was normal in seventeenth-century Spain. Saavedra Fajardo, an author who utilized artistic elements in his work, a baroque writer who liked painting and introduced appraisals of it in his diverse writings (that is, a good representative of seventeenth-century culture, who drew prestige from

his understanding of painting), would express this opinion: color "is what gives things their ultimate being and what most reveals the movements of the psyche."[53] It had to be a politician who made manifest this final and definitive aspect of the question.

This lyrical engineering of the human world culminated here—the engineering that the individuals of the baroque expectantly strove to cultivate, despite the insurmountable contradiction entailed in its own terms. The opinions regarding painting express everything at issue in this epoch with respect to knowing how to penetrate psyches and wills and, as a consequence, with respect to knowing how to move and guide the anonymous multitudes of people. It would seem that by virture of painting, all of those whose concern with human modes of behavior related to the practical end of governing it (that is, politicians, moralists, pedagogues) would be able to succeed in their objectives. The key to adapting to the internal motivations [*resortes*] that affected individuals, in pursuing their mass integration in the social system, resided in the manipulation of painting's resources. The desired direction to impress on those groups bearing the brunt of this operation undoubtedly pointed toward the restoration and preservation of values that came from the seignorial tradition; but in the sixteenth century, the modern and individualist experience undergone by European societies was not in vain. Instruments of greater efficacy would have to be used, instruments capable of influencing individuals who recognized their freedom; a complex regime of social control, organized in the shadow of the absolute monarchy, strove to maintain these individuals actively integrated in a conservative society of traditional privileges.

In this way, the society of the seventeenth century—biting its own tail—revealed the grounds of its own crisis: a process of modernization that was contradictorily set in place to preserve inherited structures. This way of posing the question explains that relationship in the mode of a historical law: if a society in the seventeenth century showed itself to be well adapted to baroque culture, whenever we consider its baroque richer, we shall necessarily discover that such a society's future would also be more closed.