



# LOVE, HONOR AND RACE IN *DON ÁLVARO OR THE FORCE OF FATE* BY DUQUE DE RIVAS

Dr. Saliha Seniz Coşkun Adıgüzel<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Research Assistant Dr., Faculty of Letters, Dpt. of Spanish Language and Literature, University of Istanbul, Turkey

## Abstract

This article aims to analyze the themes of love, honor and race in the Spanish romantic drama *Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino* (*Don Álvaro or The Force of Fate*) written by Duque de Rivas in 1835. First, a general overview on historical and philosophical background of Europe is provided to help the understanding of the arrival of the Romantic Movement in Spain and the main aspects thereof. Then, a brief information is given about the author and finally, the work is analyzed on the basis of the three abovementioned themes and the results are specified. The analysis is based on the main characteristics of the Romantic Movement and its reflections on the Spanish society as well as on human relations. The text is woven through the love story of the main character, which is a romantic hero trying to integrate into the Spanish society with his unknown origins. The drama is considered as the triumph of romanticism in Spain and is significant in terms of providing insights into the 19th century Spanish society.

## Keywords

Spanish Romanticism, Spanish Literature, *Don Álvaro or The Force of Fate*, Duque de Rivas, Love, Honor, Race, Romantic Literary Character, 19th Century Spanish Society

## HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF EUROPE

It would be helpful to take a general look at the historical and philosophical background in Europe at that time before the analysis of the work in question. The period prior to Romanticism in Europe witnessed the dominance<sup>1</sup> of the Enlightenment, or Illustration, a movement which was based on reason as a means of challenging traditional and religious ideas and moving knowledge further through science. Descartes, who was one of the precursors together with Locke, taught people to distinguish between true and false through logical reflection. Locke stated the importance of senses as an instrument of knowledge. All this raised doubts about theology and scholasticism as sources of knowledge. With Newton physical and experimental science gained a lot of importance. Man in the 18th century launched the conquest of nature and he had to investigate, systematize and obey physical phenomena to this end; he also had a lot of curiosity about other cultures, countries and people. There was an increase in travels and international exchanges. He was interested in every field of knowledge. The concept of culture expanded to cover history, politics, economy, literature, arts, mathematical and experimental sciences, etc. For the first time it is declared that all men are equal and human rights are inherent to all human beings. It is conceived that man is a social being and he can benefit from what other men mutually offer him. In the 18th century thought it is observed that the politic and social predominate over the individual. In other words, common good was the basic concept.

One of the most significant events caused by scientific progress in the 18th century was Industrial Revolution, which started in England and spread throughout Europe and America. This revolution paved the way for a settled capitalism, which meant rationalization, bureaucratization, urbanization or in other words, the use of wealth for more wealth with more workers, forcing them to move to cities from rural areas and leaving them with no means to grow their own food or make their own clothing but making them dependent on their employers for wages to cover their needs and exposing them to work under harsh conditions. It conducted to dehumanization of human life, transforming of human relations into relations among things, inert objects. Capitalism led to some deficiencies in the society such as the decline of all social and religious values, the death of the imagination, the tedious uniformization of life, utilitarian relations of human beings with each other and with nature, etc.

Another significant event of the 18th century was the French Revolution started by the French bourgeoisie influenced by the new enlightened spirit, in search of social, political and economic equality against royal absolutism, against privileges granted to the nobility and the Catholic Church's influence over public policy and

institutions. The revolution resulted in the development of liberal ideology, which was consolidated with the Industrial Revolution, and it created a certain conception of world and defence of interests concentrated on individual rights. Liberty to fabricate, trade and expand the market. Liberty to elect the appropriate government for the interest of each individual and vote for the desired laws. The State would always be the protector of the liberty and rights of people without intervening in economic or social relations. However, in many cases the liberals (composed of bourgeois, liberal professionals such as lawyers, doctors and civil servants, and traders) limited the capacity of voting or electing to those who had a certain economic level or a high level of intellectual formation. They were considered as the ones who made the nation progress and therefore, only they deserved to exercise sovereignty. The rest of the population had to confine themselves to work and enjoy the wealth created by businessmen or agricultural landowners. This was contradictory to what liberty promised as most of the citizens were excluded from it.

### **THE ROMANTIC MOVEMENT IN EUROPE**

Under the abovementioned circumstances, a tragedy written by a German writer<sup>ii</sup> served to denominate a literary movement in which defence of the individual against the uniformity of the society was praised. The Romantic movement, which emerged in Europe towards the end of the 18th century and continued well into the 19th century, was a response to a profound economic, political and social transformation caused by the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. As Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre state, “It represents a critique of modernity, that is, of modern capitalist civilization, in the name of values and ideals drawn from the past (the precapitalist, premodern past)” (Löwy&Sayre 2001: 17). It is a rebellion against the society, classicism, the Church, aristocracy, absolutism, behaviours of the bourgeoisie and the way of life in capitalist societies. Works of many artists, who were faithful witnesses of their time, were conditioned by the impact of the changes and they managed to handle the contradictions of an era which did not seem to be understood by sole means of reason and science. “Many romantics considered the modern state, based on individualism, property, contracts, and a rational bureaucratic administration, to be as mechanical, cold and impersonal a system as a factory” (Löwy&Sayre 2001: 39). All these resulted in the isolation of the individual within the society, or solitude in society, which constitutes one of the major themes in literary works. The romantic hero is disappointed by the reality, which does not fit the soul because the soul is larger and more profound than the destinies to be offered by life.

The soul wants to go home again, to return to its homeland, in the spiritual sense, where the harmful characteristics of modernity do not exist. So, the romantic vision selects a moment from the past in which modern alienations did not exist and transforms it into a utopia. The romantic hero is convinced that in modern reality something precious has been lost, both at the level of individuals and humanity. In an attempt to find or to re-create the ideal past state, the lost paradise can be recreated in the here and now on the imaginary level through poeticization or aestheticization of the present applying to the supernatural, the fantastic, the oniric or by the tonality of the sublime. The lost paradise can also be created in present reality. One’s immediate environment and own life can be transformed while remaining within bourgeois society by the creation of a community of like-minded individuals or simply falling in love. Love is a way of expression of the Romantic opposition to rational abstraction as it is a nonrational behaviour, a pure emotion, a spontaneous attraction that cannot be reduced to any calculation. Being against rationality can also manifest itself as irrationalism, religious fanaticism, intolerance, irrational cult of a nation, race, etc. (Löwy&Sayre 2001: 19-23)

### **SPANISH HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE EMERGENCE OF SPANISH ROMANTICISM**

In the Spanish romantic drama “Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino” written by Duque<sup>iii</sup> de Rivas, being against rationality also manifests itself through the themes of love and race, together with honor, reflecting the 19th century Spanish society. In order to facilitate the understanding of the Spanish society, it would be useful to consider the political conditions of the time. The chaotic situation in Spain in the beginning of the 19th century stemmed from political events such as the captivity of the legitimate monarch Charles IV, Napoleonic invasion and consequent improvisation of the army and the war of independence. These events announced the political instability during the 19th century. Some reductions and attempts related to application of some laws of liberal tendency (the Constitution of Cádiz in 1812, roots of which can be encountered in reforms made by Charles III and in the influence caused by liberal French ideology) fell through rapidly when Ferdinand VII returned to Spain in 1814. In this way the absolutist period started, running parallel to the restoration of the Ancient Regime in Europe, as Ferdinand VII repealed the Constitution of Cádiz. As a result, writers and intellectuals were exiled abroad. After a short period of liberalism between 1820-1823, absolutism ruled until the death of the king in 1833. With the return of the exiled intellectuals, the conflictive liberal period begins<sup>iv</sup> and it ends in 1868<sup>v</sup>, the power being divided

between two liberal groups: moderate liberals and progresist liberals<sup>vi</sup>. Meanwhile, the Spanish colonies, except for Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philipinnes, declared their independence, which added to the political instability of Spain in the 19th century (Barroso, et.al 1991: 136).

Due to the above-mentioned instabilities in the country, romanticism arrived in Spain later than it did in the rest of Europe. The writers and intellectuals who were exiled during the reign of Ferdinand VII got into contact with romantic movements in the rest of Europe and they brought the influence thereof when they came back to their country. It was the German consul in Cádiz, Juan Nicolas Böhl de Faber, who introduced romantic German ideas in Spain, especially the exaltation of the Golden Age Spanish theatre against strict neoclassical norms. Romanticism peaks in Spain with the return of the exiled intellectuals and two different ideological attitudes appear among the romantics: conservative romanticism, which is of religious and patriotic, yet reactionary character, pretending to regain christian, chivalric and traditional values of the Middle Age, and liberal romanticism, which defends the idea of progress and revolution against the established order, with the intention of creating a new scale of values on the fringes of order, hierarchy and social conventions (García, et. al 2006: 195-196).

### **DUQUE DE RIVAS: AN OUTSTANDING ROMANTIC SPANISH WRITER**

Duque de Rivas (1791-1865) was one of those exiled writers who defended conservative romanticism. Born in a noble family, he enjoyed some privileges given to the nobles: he was appointed as captain at the age of six, the habit of Santiago was granted to him at the age of eight, at the age of eleven he entered the Seminary of the Nobles, where he stayed until 1806. He started his military service in the same year in the royal army and after the outbreak of Spanish War of Independence he changed to the ranks of the Independence. He began his political career as a deputy and he remained a fanatic liberal until 1823, the year which he was exiled by the King Ferdinand VII, after the death of whom in 1834 he returned to his homeland (Caldera, 1986). After a long period of exile in London, Italy, Paris he tended to be more conservative<sup>vii</sup>, apart from 1834 until his death in 1865 (Barroso, et.al 1991: 151).

Despite his tendency to conservatism in the second half of his life, he always defended liberalism. The ideals he defended in the Courts of Cádiz (the incapacity of the monarch Ferdinand VII) are the same that appear in his poetry. The idea of liberty and dignity of man, which are personified in the characters in his works, accompanied him through his life. Traces of neoclassicism are observed in his early poems themes of which are mostly love for woman and homeland. There occurs a change in his direction towards a more directly expression of emotions with the exile. His reference to national legends, mixing it with orientalist exotism and middle age chivalry, his spirit of love and revenge made him perfectly a romantic. In 1841 he published "Romances históricos", which he composed with the inspiration derived from the works of the Grimm, Wolf, Böhl and Durán, and which converted him one of the monuments of romantic poetry. As a playwright, he started with some neoclassical tragedies such as *Aliatar* (1816) and *El Duque de Aquitania* (1817) and continued with *Malek-Adhel* (1818), which differed from the previous ones in terms of having some romantic aspects such as the main character being marginalized, desperate, feeling crushed by a predestined unhappiness and living in a continuous struggle against the time which pursues him. Influenced by the manifestations of the romanticism in Europe, he held the premiere of his peak work *Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino* in 1835. After *Don Álvaro*, he tried to take different routes as a playwright such as writing a historical drama mixed with sentimental comedy, a costumbrist comedy and a fantastic drama. However, among all his works, *Don Álvaro* marked the triumph of romanticism in Spain (Caldera, 1986).

### **ANALYSIS OF DON ÁLVARO OR THE FORCE OF FATE**

According to the plot, Don Álvaro is the son of a Spanish viceroy and an Incan princess, who came to Spain with the intention of obtaining indulgence for his parents prisoned for having rebelled against the authority of the mother country. This particular situation impels him to keep his identity a secret (which the reader gets to know at the end of the drama), which makes him seem mysterious and enigmatic to the eyes of the habitants of Seville, where he resides in the beginning of the play. That is also the reason for his being rejected by the Marquis of Calatrava to marry his daughter Leonor, with whom he is passionately in love. He intends to abduct his lover, but he kills her father by mistake shooting with the gun he loaded to defend himself against the servants who would attack him, as the plan was discovered by the father. The two lovers separate from each other during the scuffle with the servants and escape ignoring each other's destiny. Leonor hides a year moving away to a monastery near the convent of Los Ángeles in the land of Hornachuelos. Don Álvaro searches for a new life and identity in the army which fights in Italy. He saves the life of the eldest son of the deceased Marquis, Don Carlos, who is in search of Don Álvaro's traces under a fake name. When Don Carlos recognizes him, he challenges Don Álvaro and gets killed by him. For this reason, he is sentenced to death, but he is freed by the unexpected attack of the enemies, therefore given another chance of escape. He shelters in the monastery of Los Ángeles, where with the name Father Rafael he is a model of holiness. He is caught by the youngest son of the Marquis, Don Alfonso, who manages to cause despair in him and a new duel from which Don Álvaro comes the winner once again. As he is dying, he

wants to make confessions and Don Álvaro goes to the monastery where he expects to find a monk which turns out to be Leonor. Don Alfonso thinks they planned all this as a part of their love affair and before he dies he stabs his sister. Don Álvaro, taken in extreme despair, jumps off the cliff and dies.

Don Álvaro is a *mestizo*<sup>viii</sup> who can never enter the aristocratic world, though he comes from a noble family. He is in love with a white noble-woman, Leonor, who is not let to marry him by her aristocratic father, the Marquis of Calatrava and by her two aristocratic brothers Don Alfonso and Don Carlos. As Pattison states, "Don Alvaro's tragic flaw lies in his desire to be accepted as a great noble by the hidebound society of Seville and to marry the daughter of one of the most conservative families" (Pattison 1967: 70). Rivas shows the contrast between love and social rules as an opposition between a conservative conception of the world, which does not approve marriage between different social classes and a liberal one, which interprets marriage as a free and sentimental election.

Love of Don Álvaro is typical in terms of romanticism; a superior and ideal feeling which takes control of man's personality and it is, in fact, a revolution as "it not only destroys the barriers which artificially separate people, but also converts them into autonomous subjects and revives pieces of the individual, such as the world of feelings without which he would be incomprehensible"<sup>ix</sup> (Hermosa, 2001). In case of Don Álvaro it cannot be realized because of the hostility of the social environment in which the lovers live.

1st Habitant: My friend, Marquis of Calatrava is much too upper-crust and much too vain to permit a parvenu to be his son-in-law. (...)

(...) Officer: And why isn't Don Álvaro going to suit him? Because he wasn't born in Seville? Gentlemen are also born outside of Seville.

Canon: Gentlemen are also born outside of Seville, that's true, but... is this Don Álvaro a gentleman? We only know that he came here from America two months ago and that he brought two black retainers and a great deal of Money. But who is he? (Saavedra 1835 [2005]: 9-10)

In the conversation among the 1st habitant, officer and canon, Don Álvaro is not considered a suitable husband for the daughter of the Marquis on the grounds of class difference and mystery about the origins of Don Álvaro. There are doubts about his being a gentleman though it is known that he is wealthy and the probable owner of two black retainers.

The society do not let the lovers be together. When the canon discovers the escape plan of the lovers he wants to spy it on to Marquis as soon as possible.

Canon: Good evening, gentlemen. I'm off because it's getting late. (Leaving and saying in an aside) I'd be remiss in my friendship if I didn't warn the marquis at once that Don Álvaro is lurking about his estate. Perhaps we can prevent a tragedy. (Saavedra: 14)

Two incommunicable worlds offer the lector a rigid division of the good and the bad: on one hand Don Álvaro and Doña Leonor, on the other the two brothers and the father. Each group has its own language which the others do not comprehend. Don Álvaro and Doña Leonor want and offer a love which is not egoist, which intends to overcome lack of communication forcing themselves to understand others' way of thinking. Doña Leonor thinks of sacrificing her love for the happiness of her father. Don Álvaro is ready to leave his pride aside and say sorry to establish a relationship of affection with his enemies. When Don Carlos (under the fake name of Don Felix) finds out that the one who saved his life and the one whose life he saved is Don Álvaro, he does not care about their friendship and asks for a duel. He shows no mercy. Since Rivas lived many years of exile for being a liberal, he tends to identify the old regime with evil and hatred, and the new one with love. However, the rule of honor opposes this rule of universal love.

Members of superior class converted honor into a symbol of identity which confronts them rather than unite them. It determines the boundaries of aristocrats to such an extent that it becomes their tradition. It is a social prestige which means he is recognized by the public. Aristocrats created a strict and exclusive order, a society which lacks common links with the inferior. Their families generally consist of father, son/daughter and servants. The father is monarch, as long as he is alive and the sons are the ones who are supposed to continue the tradition. Daughters respect traditions and live under paternal domination. The sense of honor transforms this group into a single subject, gives a meaning to their lives and is their principal virtue. Effects of this kind of an order manifest themselves later in feelings and in interpersonal relations. In case of the first one, love means to reject different scales of inequality and therefore poses a risk with respect to familiar ties and paternal authority. Hence, it is taken as a challenge and the one who violates the rule of honor is punished. In case of the aristocratic family Vargas (the Marquis, two sons and the daughter) the situation is not different.

According to the brothers of Leonor, Don Álvaro has to be killed because killing the father, being in love with the sister are dishonored actions and death becomes a universal avenging in a society where the rule of honor reigns. Although Don Carlos and Don Álvaro owe each other their lives for saving one another in a battle without knowing each other's real identities, the ecstasy of the aristocrat shows up immediately when he recognizes Don Álvaro's name while inquiring for his identity. The way which he finds out about the reality is in fact violence of honor as Don Carlos promises at first to burn the papers kept by Don Álvaro in his suitcase without having a look at them, but he does not do so.

Don CARLOS. You dare to think ??? I respected your sealed papers, because the honorably born conduct themselves as I have. The portrait of that ignominious woman, your accomplice, played you false, and it silently beseeched me to reclaim my honor and hers. I am Don Carlos de Vargas, Marquis of Calatrava because of your crime. Tremble, for I stand before you. (Saavedra: 89-90)

At this point honor of the family gets a step further than friendship and promises made on their friendship lose validity.

D. Carlos. Such a dashing soldier has to die? How unfair! Inasmuch as he saved me, my grief will be eternal if I cannot save him. And from the moment that he preserved my life, I undertook to preserve his. (Pause.) I've never seen such skill at arms, and never seen another person possessed of more pride and gallantry. But he is a peculiar man, and in the short time I've known him I've noticed that he exhibits strange traits indeed. (Pause.) And why did it horrify him so when he heard me say Calatrava? What can there be in the name that excites fear in him? Perhaps he knows it's dishonored ...! Perhaps he's an Andalusian nobleman... Heavens! What a ray of light you've shed on me at this moment! Yes. Can he be the traitor who dishonored my family, the one I came here to seek? (Furious and clutching his sword.) And he still breathes? No, right now at my hands.... (He runs toward the bedroom and stops.) What am I doing? Am I going to throw myself blindly into the abyss of infamy? Can a gentleman like me kill the man who saved his life, a man who's defenseless and dying? (...) Oh heavens! What am I going to do? And the word that I gave? But if fate affords me such an unexpected way to redress my honor am I not to avail myself of it? If I've come to Italy only to search for the killer of my father and destroyer of my honor and have done so under a false name and calling, what does it matter if I open the sealed envelope only to find what I came to Italy to search for. But, no, I gave my word... Nobody, nobody here sees it... Heavens above, I do! I see it! But if he saved my life, I also saved his. And if he is the infamous Indian, the murderous seducer (...) (Saavedra: 81-83)

D. CARLOS. Are you mad, Don Álvaro? What is it that you dare to think? What plans do you entertain? Do you think so little of me? A sea of blood roars between us. Could I call the killer of my father and destroyer of my honor brother? Oh, you affront me! Even if you were the king! Nor will my infamous sister live. No, after you, she too will die, because my revenge demands it. If you do not kill me, I will search for her at once, and I will plunge the same sword stained with your blood into her heart. (Saavedra: 95)

Honor is also the reason for Leonor to decide to lead her life in monastery. She was educated in accordance with the religion of obedience, which taught her ignorance, obedience and inequality because she had paternalism as the kindest model in front of her. Therefore, she thinks of the society as a bigger model of her family and in this way her borderlines are sealed. Knowing that the society does not offer any shelter against honor she finds no way out but to refuge in the monastery disguised as a man.

Doña Leonor. I'm ready to drop. But at last I am here, dear God, and I give you thanks (She kneels upon seeing the monastery.) I trust in you, most Holy Virgin; be the refuge of my bitter life. This sanctuary is the only one I can have in the whole wide world. The sole asylum and haven left to me on earth are the arid crags of this mountain. The sole asylum and haven left to me on earth are the arid crags of this mountain. I am here .l.l. but I still tremble and quail? (She looks back at the route she took.) Ah! Nobody has followed me nor has my hasty flight been noticed. I wasn't mistaken. I heard my horrendous story being told at the inn. And who in God's name could have been the one telling it? How wretched I am! He said he was a friend of my brothers. Oh heavens above! Am I going to be found out? I'm scared to death and exhausted. (She sits down.) What rough land! What a beautiful, clear moon! The same one that a year ago saw the awful change in my fortune and saw hell open up to consume me (...) (Saavedra: 43-44)

It is observed in the text that the way Don Álvaro takes “honor” is not as horrible as to the other characters in the play. Coming from a noble family, Don Álvaro is a man of honor of his society as well, but death and revenge are the last resort for him when it is violated. He keeps two secret weapons with whose magic he hopes to beat noble honor: love and friendship. He expects that he will remove the cyst, in this case honor, which covers the heart of the antagonist and that he will change him into his brother-in-law and a friend (Hermosa 2001); he is more attracted by the uniting power of love and friendship:

D.Álvaro: Yes, Don Félix, my friend. Since your sister lives, the satisfaction that you must exact from me is clear. Let us search for her together; we will find her very soon, and through the holy bond of matrimony let us cement the friendship that we swore to each other. Oh! I assure you, I promise you that you will not regret it when you learn of my pure and exalted origin (...). (Saavedra: 94,95)

As mentioned before, the sons of an aristocratic family are supposed to continue the tradition of honor, just as Don Alfonso does, after his father and brother are killed by Don Álvaro. Now it is his reason for existence to take revenge of them.

D. ALFONSO. Enough! Everything’s been said! The blood of my brother and my father is crying out to me for revenge. For five years I have been roaming the world, journey after long journey, searching for you, and although it has all been in vain, heaven (which never leaves unpunished the atrocities of a monster, of a murderer, of a seducer, of a villain), wished, through a chance occurrence, to finally show me the refuge where you thought yourself safe from my fury. Killing you unarmed would have been unworthy of my lineage. You were valiant, and you are still strong for a fight. I see that you have no arms, but I bring with me two like swords: these. DON ÁLVARO. (He removes his cloak and draws two swords.) Choose the one you please. (Saavedra: 121-122)

Don Álvaro comes the winner in this fight, but the old christian Don Alfonso stabs his sister Leonor just as he is dying. He, then, does not die as a christian, but with honor, as this is what he needs.

Another point in the play which provides an insight into the society is “race”. Like all modern Western nations did in the early 19th century, Spain was about to define itself as homogenous and white. Without taking into consideration the American population, Spanish politician Agustín Argüelles pointed out that Spain racially has one identity, that is Spanish (Surwillo 2010: 53).

Born as the son of a Spanish viceroy and an Incan princess, in other words being the fruit of an interracial marriage, Don Álvaro is refused as different throughout the play, and his integration into Spanish society is impossible. People of Seville start gossiping about his origins just as he arrives in the province:

1ST INHABITANT. So many different things are said about him.

2ND INHABITANT. He’s a very mysterious sort.

TÍO PACO. The other afternoon there were a few gentlemen here talking about the same thing, and one of them said that this Don Álvaro came by his riches as a pirate.

MAJO. Good Lord!

TÍO PACO. And another said that Don Álvaro was the bastard son of a Spanish grandee and a Moorish queen.

OFFICER. What rubbish!

TÍO PACO. And then they said no, that he was a... I don’t remember exactly. A Finca... or a Brinca... something like that. Something really big over there in America.

OFFICER. Inca?

TÍO PACO. Yes, Señor! That’s it! Inca. Inca.

CANON. Hold your tongue, Tío Paco. Don’t spout nonsense. (Saavedra: 10-11)

Being a *mestizo* is something which cannot be accepted, which sounds ridiculous according to the people of Seville. It is that unfamiliar to them that some do not even know the word “Inca” well. When Leonor’s father discovers their escape plan and comes face to face with Don Álvaro, he declares him to be an upstart, low and regards him as someone even lower than his servants:

MARQUIS. I am not your father! Away with you! And you, you despicable upstart! (Saavedra: 28)

MARQUIS. Your abject submission betrays your lowly origin. (Saavedra:29)

DON ÁLVARO. If your servants move, they'll be sorry! Only you have the right to run me through.

MARQUIS. You? Die at the hands of a gentleman? No. You will die at the hands of the executioner. (Saavedra:29)

He is not considered by them as a nobleman, but a *mestizo*, and a *mestizo* does not stand a chance to enter the "homogenous" Spanish society, especially when he breaks the rule of honor of an aristocratic family, just like in the case of Don Álvaro. Fighting in a battle he saves Don Carlos's life and they become friends but when Don Carlos discovers that he is Don Álvaro, that noble friend turns into an enemy to be killed, a dishonored to be destroyed. Don Álvaro insists on his nobility and honor, hence does not want a duel, but Don Carlos starts to insult him:

D.Álvaro. Do you fear that your valor will be diminished and astonished if it finds in its adversary a man of nobility and honor?

D.Carlos. Nobility, an adventurer?

Honor, an unknown?

With neither a father nor a name, upstart and arrogant. (Saavedra: 91)

Likewise in the duel with Don Alfonso, Don Álvaro is humiliated for his origins and taken as a man of impure blood.

D.Alfonso. (...) Your attitude clearly proclaims who you are, as does the vile stain on your coat of arms.

D. Álvaro. Stain? And what...? What?

D.Alfonso. Does it frighten you?

D.Álvaro. My coat of arms is as unsullied as the sun.

D.Alfonso. And the mixed, impure blood of a mulatto does not cloud one of its quarters? (Saavedra: 125-126)

Don Álvaro's origin is discovered by Don Alfonso and in a quarrel between the two Don Alfonso reminds him of his family's background and looking down on his being a *mestizo*:

D.Alfonso. (...) You grew up among the Indians and were educated like a wild animal, and then as a young man you came with gold and great patronage to seek a complete pardon for your traitorous parents. (...) (Saavedra: 132)

D. Alfonso. (...) I tell you not to boast of being noble. You are the half-breed, the fruit of betrayal. (Saavedra: 134)

As Susan Kirkpatrick pointed out Don Álvaro "embraces the role his antagonists – the Calatravas and traditional social hierarchy – assign him: he becomes society's other" (Kirkpatrick 1989: 116).

## CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that, in line with the characteristics of Romanticism, the attempts of the brave, kind and rich young man to integrate into the Spanish society marks his tragic end. It can be observed in the text that Don Álvaro dies because the structural injustice of his society kills his love and the death of his love leads to death of his world. Love as a passion for equality and feelings burst into the hierarchical society as a medieval weapon against the established social order, which forbids the heart from following its rhythm. Hence, a conflict appears between the new order of love and the old traditional one. In a hierarchical and unequal society, depredators of soul, such as honor, restrict the natural flow of emotions and result in misfortunes, as it is pointed out in the text. It follows the one who violates it and does not stop until its desire for revenge is satisfied. It can be uttered that Don Álvaro is the symbol of the humanity suffering. It can be said that his conflict with his lover's family represents the ideological struggle between two world orders, that is new liberal conception of the world and the ancient regime.

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<sup>i</sup> Four cultural movements are observed during the century: Baroque (proceeds from the previous century), Illustration, Preromanticism and Neoclassicism. "Dominance" does not necessarily refer to the duration of the movement, but duration of its effects and its importance for the following movements.

<sup>ii</sup> It is referred to the tragedy called Sturm und Drang (Storm and Stress) written by Klinger in 1777.

<sup>iii</sup> When his brother dies shortly after his return he inherits the title of Duque de Rivas, by which he is known in the history of letters (Valbuena Prat, 1974: 141).

<sup>iv</sup> The conflict between Charles (the brother of Ferdinand VII) and Isabel II (daughter of Ferdinand VII) results in the first Carlist war during which the mother of Isabel, Maria Cristina, supported by the liberals, acts as a regent.

<sup>v</sup> 1868, in which Isabel II was dethroned, is known as Glorious Revolution, which later gave birth to the proclamation of the first Republic of Spain.

<sup>vi</sup> Moderate liberals defended doctrinal liberalism and the progresists defended revolutionary political changes.

<sup>vii</sup> Conservative, yet defending liberalism; in other words, moderate liberal.

<sup>viii</sup> Of mixed-race

<sup>ix</sup> Translated from the original Spanish text by me.