FRENCH REFERENCES IN THE TEATRO CRITICO
OF PADRE FEIJOO

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FRENCH REFERENCES IN THE TEATRO CRITICO
OF PADRE FEIJOO

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By

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CHAPTER I

THE MAN AND THE TIMES

Biographical Note

Benito Jerónimo Feijóo y Montenegro, the man who was to become the most famous writer of eighteenth century Spain, was born of noble parents in Casdemiro, Orense, the eighth of October, 1676. Though far removed from Madrid, the literary and political center of the country, he was educated in theology and letters at the colegios of Lérez and Salamanca, having entered the Benedictine order at the age of fourteen. He received the licenciate and doctorate in theology at the University of Oviedo and was a professor there for forty years. His Teatro Crítico Universal was written during the latter years of that professorship, and the four volumes of Cartas Eruditas followed in retirement. He remained active mentally and physically until a few months before his death in 1764 at the age of eighty-seven. He was sincerely mourned and buried with full honors at the foot of the main altar of his beloved monastery church San Vicente. The inscription he requested was to read:

Aquí yace un estudiante de mediana pluma y labio que trabajó por ser sabio y murió al fin ignorante.¹

¹"Feijóo y Montenegro (Benito Jerónimo)," Enciclopedia Universal Ilustrada, Vol. XXIII (Madrid, 1924).
The Century: Decadence

While his "average writing and speaking ability" judgment may be considered valid in today's light, in his own era of decadence he was a giant of letters. Contradicting Menéndez-Pelayo's arguments against the decadence of art and letters in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Marañón speaks clearly and succinctly of a society "ignorante, crédula de las más necias fantasías, sin centros eficaces de enseñanza, hostil a toda luz que turbase la vanidad con que se defendía de su propia miseria." Bolstering his argument with documentary references, he says further,

La pintura de Feijóo del atraso español no está deformada por él con intenciones egofistas: es la misma pintura de casi todos sus compatriotas contemporáneos; la misma de los viajeros de la época, muchos hostiles a España, pero otros imparciales o francamente benévolos; la misma de los historiadores nacionales y forasteros del siglo siguiente; y la misma, en fin, de los grandes políticos de los reinados de Fernando VI y de Carlos III, que acongojados por este atraso emprendieron su admirable obra de resurrección nacional.  

César Barja also declares the worth of Feijóo's work in the light of his era:

Hay que distinguir dos aspectos en la obra del fraile benedictino: lo que en ella dice y la época en que lo dice. Lo que Feijóo dice puede pasarse hoy por alto. En la época en que lo dice, en la España de la primera mitad del siglo XVIII, lo que Feijóo dice era nuevo, original, grande. Nuevo, original y

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3 Ibid., pp. xxii-xxiii.
Jorge Barja cites the famous Azorín’s estimate of Feijóo as "una inteligencia en lucha contra preocupaciones, perjuicios, supersticiones, corrupciones, convencionalismos de su tiempo y de su pueblo," and he quotes from Morayta’s introduction to his book, El Padre Feijóo y sus Obras:

Buena parte de los escritos de Feijóo apenas si valen hoy el trabajo de leerlos; mas examinándolos a la par que a su época, merecen conservarse, como Alejandro guardaba la Ilíada, en caja de oro y piedras preciosas.6

Feijóo’s Aims and Ideals

Feijóo’s one aim was to shine light into this darkness; specifically, to preach truth and to "impugnar errores comunes," as he said clearly in his prologue to the reader. Though the subject matter would vary, the aim would remain constant: "El objeto formal será siempre uno. Los materiales precisamente han de ser muy diversos." He sought to dislodge error, whatever its form and regardless of who might hold it:

4Cesar Barja, Libros y Autores Modernos (New York, 1924), p. 20.
5Ibid.
6Ibid., p. 19.
7Benito Jerónimo Feijóo, Obras Escogidas (Madrid, 1952), I, 1.
8Ibid.
Digo, pues, que error, como aquí le tomo, no significa otra cosa que una opinión que tengo por falsa, prescindiendo de si la juzgo o no probable.

No debajo del nombre de errores comunes quiero significar que los que impugno sean trascendentes a todos los hombres. Bastame para darles ese nombre, que estén admitidos en el común del vulgo, o tengan entre los literatos más que ordinario séquito.9

Speaking of his broader aims, Brenan says that he received

... principal inspiration from Luis Vives, the Catalan humanist who had been the greatest of Erasmus' disciples. One may say that his aim was to lead Spain back to the state of intellectual activity and participation in the life of Europe that she had possessed before the Inquisition and the struggle with the Protestants had isolated her.10

The French critic Paul Merimée, in his study of French influence in eighteenth century Spain, introduces his work with a reference to Feijóo's part in initiating this movement back toward France and Europe:

Puis les premiers signes épars d'un rapprochement intellectuel avec la France, et, par elle, avec l'Europe, aboutissent à ce <<mouvement préalable de direction méthodique>> que signale M. Castro, et qui est essentiellement représenté par le polygraphe bénédictin Feijóo... La Poétique néo-classique de Luzan et le Journal des Lettres, tous deux parus en 1737, accusent, dans le domain littéraire, l'orientation donnée par le moine galicien.11

Merimée cites another of Feijóo's ideals, literary and scientific liberty, and shows how this placed him among

9Ibid., pp. 1-2.


those Spaniards who were wisely selective in their appropriation of French ideas.

Les uns se livraient entièrement et trouvaient bon tout ce qui venait de France; d'autres prétendaient choisir et adapter: ils jugeaient une rénovation nécessaire, un complet abandon déplorable. Parmi ces derniers se placent les plus sages, les rédacteurs du Journal des Lettrés; le P. Feijóo, qui, en matière littéraire, est partisan de la liberté et pourrait être considéré comme le chef de l'école hostile aux théories néo-classiques de Luzán; il résistait donc à l'influence française sur ce point, lui qui, pour toutes les autres questions, contribuait largement à la répandre.¹²

Menéndez-Pelayo also makes this distinction and pays glowing tribute to his preoccupation with liberty in these words, which follow a quote from Feijóo's famous and delightful essay, "El no sé qué":

Con letras de oro debe estamparse, para honra de nuestra ciencia, esta profesion de libertad estética, la más amplia y la más solemne del siglo XVIII, no enervada como otras por restricciones y distingos, e impresa (y esto es muy de notar) casi treinta años antes de que Diderot divulgase sus mayores y más felices arrojos.¹³

Feijóo was willing to combat error because he believed in the power of truth. He fought for liberty so that truth might prevail and man, especially eighteenth century Spanish man, might be lifted by that truth. Speaking of Feijóo's ideals and fundamental optimism, Barja notes that 

"[él] cree en la virtud y eficacia de la ciencia y del arte,

¹²Ibid., p. 109.

¹³Marcelino Menéndez-Pelayo, Obras Completas (Santander, 1947), III, 109.
crece en el progreso y perfeccionamiento de la humanidad, y porque cree, trata de estimularlos."14

Success and Shortcomings

Whether success is viewed as volumes published or as influence gained, Feijóo was eminently successful in his lifetime and his century. In sheer volume of publication alone, he far exceeded anything or anyone else of his time. Richard Herr sums up this part of Feijóo's success.

The number of editions of his works testifies to their popularity. Within six years, the first volume of his Teatro Crítico had been reprinted four times. The first editions of the fifth and sixth volumes were of 3000 copies, a tremendous issue for Spain at this time. Fifteen editions of the Teatro Crítico and the Cartas Eruditas were made before 1786, in a period when it was unusual for a book to be reprinted at all. Only one work rivalled Feijóo's in popularity, and that was the ever-loved Don Quijote.

Don Vicente de la Fuente wrote the introduction to Feijóo's Obras Escogidas for the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, and he calculated the total number of volumes printed, ending with an allusion to the famous nineteenth century estimation of Feijóo by Lista, which he had earlier quoted, "Al padre Feijóo se le debiera erigir una estatua, y al pie de ella quemar sus escritos:"

Si se calculan unas con otras las quince ediciones a 2,000 ejemplares (pues de algunos tomos ya se sabe

14 Barja, p. 25.

se imprimieron más), resultan impresos 420,000 volúmenes, y si a estos se añaden las apologías, demostraciones y otros escritos sueltos, podrán calcularse los tomos impresos de los escritos del Padre Feijóo en medio millón de volúmenes aproximadamente, y de bastante grueso, en 4º y de letra compacta.

Mucho había que quemar al pie de la estatua!16

His success in influencing his century was equal to or greater than his publishing success. Merimée has mentioned Feijóo's role in initiating a movement back toward France and the rest of Europe; Del Río goes further to mark the orientation of the century with Feijóo's outlook:

El carácter del siglo no empieza a definirse hasta su tercera década. Concretamente podría elegirse el año de 1726, cuando el padre Feijóo publica el primer tomo del Teatro Crítico, como la fecha que marca la aparición de una nueva mentalidad.17

Even Menéndez-Pelayo, who is often critical of Padre Feijóo, in his Ideas Estéticas admits that the century should carry his name, "siglo del padre Feijóo," because he opened up a whole new scientific era.18

Various authors credit Feijóo with creating the modern essay and Pedro Salinas, himself an essayist, explains in detail how Feijóo developed a new prose style:

Feijóo realiza la conversión del tratado doctrinal, tipo extenso de libro al modo del XVII, en el ensayo de tipo de revista. Es padre de


17Angel Del Río, Historia de la Literatura Española (New York, 1948), II, 7.

18Menéndez-Pelayo, III, 613.
ensayistas, y no pueden por menos de reconocerlo.

... esos escritores que blanden con tanto favor el ensayo.

Su prosa rompe la tradición del siglo XVII y pierde el color, la abundancia y animación vital de Quevedo y el ondulado movimiento de Gracían. No podía Feijóo históricamente hacer otra cosa. Dos principales soluciones le ofrecen los primeros años del XVIII: una, la prosa culterana, afectación, oscuridad, clave para pocos. Feijóo, amigo de la sencillez y claridad, deseoso de hacerse comprender por muchos, no la puede aceptar. Ni tampoco la otra solución, el habla tal como la aprendió Torres Villarroel, familiar y vulgarota, en los mesones, en los caminos y posadas. No la quiere Feijóo, porque el es hombre de celda y no de vagar, un intelectual que defiende contra el vulgo lo que él llama la "nobleza literaria." Así en los libros que lee, latín y francés, para el público a quien se dirige, un público medio, se modela Feijóo una prosa ni muy castiza ni muy afrancesada por mutuo freno; prosa de clase media literaria, sin hechizo y sin tropiezos, la prosa dominante del XVIII.19

From the beginning, Feijóo attacked the irrelevant scholasticism of the schools and universities, seeking to replace it with the observation of nature according to the scientific method. Del Río testifies to his enormous influence, both in Spain and overseas, proven by the multitude of disciples who followed him and by the recommendation made by the cabildo of Buenos Aires to Viceroy Vertiz, "... que las inútiles especulaciones sean reemplazadas por el estudio de la naturaleza ... para que seamos guiados por la sabia y prudente mano del ilustre Feijóo."20


20Del Río, p. 12.
Regardless of success, no writer is lacking in shortcomings, least of all Feijóo. Most would call him a scholarly journalist rather than a true litterateur. Other than a few mediocre attempts at poetry, his entire output is the wide-ranging, didactic and exploratory essay for which he is famous. Pellissier, without criticizing, refers to his style "halfway between ... essay and ... newspaper article," and Menéndez-Pelayo apologizes as he assesses Feijóo's style (or lack of it): "No quiero hacerle la afrenta de llamarle periodista, aunque algo tiene de eso en sus peores momentos, sobre todo por el abandono del estilo y la copia de galicismos."  

De la Fuente also considers him one of the inaugurators of journalism among the Spanish while recognizing his poor style and language:

El lenguage es peor [que el estilo], mucho peor; plagado de galicismos, latinismos y de idiotismos peculiares de las dos provincias donde pasó su vida, Asturias y Galicia.

Feijóo often translated literally from Latin and French, without bothering to recast his thoughts in Castilian structure and vocabulary. De la Fuente acknowledges this, but justifies his inclusion in the Biblioteca de Autores

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22 Menéndez-Pelayo, VI, 92.

23 De la Fuente, p. xxviii.
Españoles as the best representative of his period, "la transición y el principio del renacimiento de nuestra literatura."\textsuperscript{24}

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., p. xl.
CHAPTER II

THE TEATRO CRÍTICO UNIVERSAL

Inspiration and Inception

Padre Feijóo was fifty years old and had completed almost three of his four decades of teaching when he burst upon the literary scene. He lived and taught in Oviedo, not in Madrid. The sequence of events which brought this late entry and astounding success in literary endeavor has both personal and national factors. The decline in letters and art has already been revealed. Sparks of light were apparent, however, in the founding of the Royal Academy of the language in 1714 and the publishing of its Diccionario in 1723. A period of transition had begun, and Benito Feijóo was totally sympathetic with the spirit of that period. Marañón imagines Feijóo's feelings and quotes him:

> Para mí, en esta preocupación patética de su España . . . sumida en error, está la grandeza de Feijóo. Me lo imagino torturado por el obsesionante pensamiento en las noches de su celda y en su vagar por los campos risueños de Asturias. «La mayor parte de mi vida»—escribe una vez—«he estado lidiando con estas sombras, porque muy temprano comencé a conocer que lo eran.»

Feijóo's master weapon in his "struggle against these shadows" was the encyclopedic Teatro Crítico Universal para

1Marañón, p. xxv.
desengaño de errores comunes, whose first volume appeared "al cumplir su autor los cincuenta años, la edad de Don Quijote cuando salió también a deshacer entuertos por los mismos campos de España." But one literary shot had already been fired before that first volume of the Teatro Crítico appeared. Feijóo's good friend, the eminent doctor Martín Martínez had published his critical and progressive Medicina Scéptica, which was immediately attacked by Araujo, another Madrid doctor, as heresy against scholasticism and its founder, St. Thomas Aquinas. Del Río describes Feijóo's reaction:

Entonces fue cuando . . . [Feijóo] sale por primera vez a la palestra a defender a Martín Martínez para lo cual publica su Aprobación apolgética del escepticismo médico. Demuestra la mala fe de Araujo y asienta las dos premisas de todo lo que va a ser su crítica: que combatir a Aristóteles y la escolástica no era herejía contra la iglesia; y que la escolástica en la forma degenerada en que se practicaba en las universidades era un medio inútil y contraproducente para descubrir la verdad.  

This apology was published in 1725, just one year before the appearance of the first volume of the Teatro Crítico.

**Literary Battles**

With the appearance of the Teatro Crítico, full-scale literary war broke out. De la Fuente relates that such tract wars had often been fought in other countries, and even in Spain over matters of doctrine and theology, but

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2Ibid., p. xxvi.  
3Del Río, p. 9.
this was the first battle of its kind in Spain over literary matters. He quotes from Feijóo's anonymous biographer, mentioning in a footnote that he has heard the biographer was the conde de Campomanes:

«Apenas en 1726 salió el primer tomo del Teatro Crítico, cuando nuestro ilustre escritor vio descargarse sobre sus discursos un nublado de impugnaciones, que le obligaron a pensar en sí mismo. La variedad de los asuntos presentaba un campo abierto a la lucha. Por otro lado, el mal método y las preocupaciones no eran menores en los demás estudios que en el de la física y medicina; y de consiguiente, era forzoso que no cediesen los profesores menos hábiles en la obstinación de combatir toda novedad opuesta al estado actual de la literatura.>>

The war was long and hot. One author, Mañer, wrote five volumes of Antiteatro crítico and Crisol crítico in the years 1729 to 1734 before he finally surrendered and became an admirer of Feijóo. The battle was then taken up by a particularly hostile theologian, Francisco de Soto y Marne, who published two volumes of Reflexiones crítico-apologéticos in 1748. Feijóo had replied to Mañer in 1729 with his Ilustración apologética to volumes one and two, while continuing to issue more volumes of the Teatro Crítico. In 1749 he replied to Soto y Marne with a Justa repulsa de inicuas acusaciones and brought a temporary halt to the war with a royal order prohibiting further attacks:

\[\text{De la Fuente, p. xxvii.}\]
\[\text{Ibid.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., pp. xxviii-xxix.}\]
Soto y Marne and the Franciscans were silenced for the present, but controversy broke out anew as volumes of the *Cartas Eruditas* appeared, and Feijóo was not without adversaries and defenders as long as he lived and wrote. Most critics dismiss Feijóo’s attackers as unworthy of memory or reply, and Marañón regrets having wasted his time reading them:

> He leído, no sin angustia de mi atención, la mayor parte de los documentos de las disputas feijonianas y, en verdad, me remuerde, a veces, la conciencia del tiempo que he perdido en asomarme a esos pequeños charcos del alma de los intelectuales españoles del siglo XVIII.⁸

**Structure and Extension**

The first volume of the *Teatro Crítico Universal* in 1726 was followed by volumes II and III in 1728. Then the *Ilustración apologetica* to volumes I and II appeared late in 1729 in reply to Mañer's *Antiteatro Crítico*. The *Ilustración apologetica* was a point-by-point answer to many of Mañer's criticisms, giving further documentation and arguments while pointing out errors and inconsistencies in Mañer's work.

Volume IV came out in 1730, volume V in 1733, and volume VI in 1734. Each volume was prefaced by a dedicatory

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⁷Ibid., p. xxx. ⁸Marañón, p. cxxxii.
epistle in the customary florid style, and a prologue to the reader. From thirteen to seventeen discursos followed, varying in length from a page or two to over fifty pages. Volume VII appeared in 1736 and volume VIII in 1739. In 1740 Feijóo published a ninth and final volume, entitled Suplemento, con Correcciones y Adiciones, a los ocho tomos del Teatro Crítico Universal. In a short prologue he confessed the awkwardness of issuing corrections and additions separately from the main work, but asked the reader's blessing for at least admitting his errors and trying to correct them, something seldom done by others: "Son muy pocos los autores que conocen los propios [errores], y muy raro el que, aunque los conozca, los confiese." 9

Commenting on the vast extent of Feijóo's knowledge and interest, De la Fuente says he may be considered... como crítico, como filósofo y como erudito y escritor polígrafo. Puede considerarse también como gramático y filólogo, y además como tipo del periodista en el siglo [XVIII].

It is particularly as a journalist and polygraph that de la Fuente considers Feijóo. He totals his output of discursos at over 300, or approximately one a month for over thirty years, not much for a columnist or critic of today, but a tremendous amount for his time, especially when the articles ranged over so many areas of human endeavor. He concludes that

9Feijóo, IV, 331.

10De la Fuente, p. xxxiii.
... bien puede considerarse a Feijóo como uno de nuestros antiguos periodistas en la primera mitad del siglo pasado, y como el primer polígrafo español, que es el concepto principal bajo el que se le debe mirar, pues ni antes ni después hubo en España quien escribiera sobre tan varias materias, y con tanto tino por lo común.  

This polygraphic principle is very apparent in any classification of the discurcos contained in the Teatro Crítico. De la Fuente reduces the discurcos to twelve basic groupings:

Artes.
Astronomía y geografía.
Economía y derecho político.
Filosofía y metafísica.
Filología general y particular de España.
Física y matemáticas.
Historia natural.
Literatura y estética.
Moral cristiana y filosófica.
Medicina.
Historia y crítica histórica.
Supersticiones.

The extent of Feijóo's interest in one of these fields, medicine, is displayed in Marañón's careful and critical work, "Las ideas biológicas del padre Feijóo." He is convinced that Feijóo was a "frustrated doctor," and he details Feijóo's medical ideas in fourteen of the thirty-eight chapters of his work, as evidenced in the following list of chapter headings:

Ibid., p. xxxvi.
Ibid., p. xl.
Marañón, p. 1.
Las ideas médicas de Feijóo. Falsibilidad de la Medicina.

La experimentación contra el dogmatismo médico.

Importancia del temperamento y de las reacciones instintivas del enfermo.

La enfermedad pasajera y la enfermedad incurable. El respeto a la fuerza curativa de la naturaleza.

Actitud de Feijóo contra las drogas. Las llagas de la terapéutica.

Erudición e intuiciones de Feijóo sobre los métodos curativos.

Feijóo en el pleito del agua. Un Rinconete de la Medicina: Don Vicente Pérez.

La sangría y la purga.

Ideas naturalistas de Feijóo sobre el régimen alimenticio.

La reforma de la enseñanza médica.

Crítica del profesionalismo médico y del prestigio de los clínicos.

Ideas de Feijóo sobre las infecciones y otros problemas patológicos.

Ideas sobre la Teratología, la muerte aparente, la Higiene y los problemas de la Psicología sexual.

La herencia. Los sentidos. La transformación de las especies. El problema de la Fisionómica. Las Batuecas.1

^Ibid., p. 391.
CHAPTER III

MAJOR FRENCH REFERENCES IN THE TEATRO CRITICO

Feijóo the polygraph and essayist would naturally choose sources which matched his own encyclopedic, science-oriented interests and approximated his journalistic style. The fact that he read French, and that France in his day led Europe in scientific experimentation, discovery and innovation, dictated that his major sources be French. Some of these sources were at hand in his ever-growing personal library; many he knew of only through references to them in the journals and dictionaries he so carefully and continually studied. Merimée repeats Castro's observation that Feijóo daily perused Bayle's Dictionnaire, the Mémoirs de Trévoux, and Fontenelle's work.¹ Both Bayle's encyclopedic dictionary and its principal predecessor, that of Moréri, were undoubtedly in his library, as well as the Trévoux journal and dictionary and Fontenelle's Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences. These major reference works, encyclopedic in nature and oriented toward modern experimental science rather than medieval philosophic speculation, formed the broad base of source material for his Teatro Crítico Universal. More references in the Teatro come from these works than from

¹Merimée, p. 89.
any other, and many references to other works are cited from the pages of Moréri, Bayle, Fontenelle and Trévoux.

Fontenelle: l'Histoire de l'Académie des sciences

The French reference work Feijóo most often quoted and cited in the Teatro Crítico was the history of the French Academy of Sciences, issued annually by its perpetual secretary, Fontenelle, who, like Feijóo, was least successful as a literary writer and most effective as a popularizer of scientific discovery. Over one hundred ten individual references to what Feijóo calls the Historia or Memorias de la Academia Real de Ciencias and its related publications can be found in the Teatro Crítico. Staubach tells us that "Feijóo had the Histoire de l'Académie up to 1738, including the indices and the eleven supplementary volumes which cover the period from 1666 to 1699."² Feijóo reports scientific discoveries, backs up his own arguments, and debunks popular myth by citing the annual volumes of the Histoire. Sometimes only the name of the scientist involved is given, while at other times detailed information on volume and page appears.

Feijóo never forgot his original aim of dislodging error, and he sought to achieve it by insisting upon the scientific method as the only approach to valid scientific discussion and discovery. The history of the academy, with its detailed

² Charles N. Staubach, "Fontenelle in the Writings of Feijóo," Hispanic Review, VIII (1940), 46.
reporting of scientific observation and experimentation, served him well in this respect. Of the experimental method and of its treatment in the *Histoire*, Feijôo says in volume I of the *Teatro Crítico*:

> De la física experimental, que es la única que puede ser útil, se han escrito en el idioma francés muchos y curiosos libros, cuyas noticias no se hallan en otros. La *Historia de la Academia Real de Las Ciencias* es muy singular en este género, como también en infinitas observaciones astronómicas, químicas y botánicas, cuyo cúmulo no se encontrará, ni su equivalente en libro alguno latino, mucho menos en castellano.  

In Staubach's study of Fontenelle's influence on Feijôo, which covered all of Feijôo's writings rather than just the *Teatro Crítico*, he found "that the publications of the Académie des Sciences are cited by Feijôo more often than any other single title except the *Journal de Trévoux*."

The *Journal* and *Dictionnaire de Trévoux*

Second only to the *Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences* of Fontenelle as a major source in Feijôo's *Teatro Crítico* is the *Journal* or *Mémoires de Trévoux* and its accompanying *Dictionnaire*. Although Staubach, as related above, found the *Journal de Trévoux* the leading source in his study of all of Feijôo's writings, in the *Teatro Crítico* the *Journal* is definitely identified (either as *Journal*, *Memorias*, or simply *Trevoux*) only about seventy-five times. (This compares

3Feijôo, I, 45.
4Staubach, "Fontenelle," p. 47.
to approximately one hundred ten references to the *Histoire*
and allied publications.) The companion *Dictionnaire de
Trévoux* is cited twenty-five times, twenty times by its
usual title and five times as the *Dizcionario de Dombes.*
(Dombes was the name of the old French region of which Trévoux
was the capital city.)

The journal, among the earliest in France, was founded
by the Jesuits in 1701 at the century-old and already famous
imprimerie de Trévoux. Of the journal the *Nouveau Larousse
Illustré* says:

Fondé et rédigé par les membres de la compagnie
de Jésus, pour imiter le *Journal des Savants*, et
combattre l'école philosophique, imprimé à Trévoux
sous le nom de *Mémoires*, mais plus connu sous celui
de *Journal*, il survécut à la dispersion des jésuites
en 1762 et, sous ces titres divers, fut continué
jusque vers 1782. C'est une source très importante
de documents pour l'histoire littéraire.5

The dictionary was begun by the same authors in 1704 and
continued to be issued until 1771. One of the earliest and
best French dictionaries,

... il a joui longtemps d'un très grand crédit
auprès des lexicographes français et étrangers. On
y trouve quantité de mots anciens ... qui sont
utiles pour l'intelligence des vieux auteurs.6

Feijóo greatly admired the editors of Trévoux, to whom
he once referred as "los doctísimos jesuitas autores de las

5"Trévoux (Journal ou Mémoires de)," *Nouveau Larousse

6"Dictionnaire," *Nouveau Larousse Illustré*, Vol. III.
Memorias de Trevoux." He had in his own library over one hundred volumes of the journal. He tells us in the Prólogo to volume III of the Teatro Crítico: "De las Memorias de Trevoux tengo la cantidad de cien tomos, esto es, hasta el año de 25 inclusive." Later on in volume V he mentions that "llegaron a mis manos los ocho tomos de las Memorias de Trevoux, correspondientes a los años 30 y 31. . . ." He continually referred to the journal as a source of literary and scientific information, while firmly denying at least once that the Mémoires served as a basis for his own Teatro Crítico.

Moréni's Dictionnaire historique

The reference work third in order of actual citations in the Teatro Crítico is the Grand dictionnaire historique of Louis Moréri. This dictionary of history and mythology, authored by a French bishop who abandoned his religious activities in order to develop it, first appeared in 1674 and was immediately successful. It went through twenty editions, the last and best being the Paris edition of 1759 in ten volumes. Moréri (Louis)," Nouveau Larousse Illustré, Vol. VI.
cited him by name forty-two times in the Teatro Crítico. In a discussion of reliable historical sources, contained in his famous essay "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa," he says that "para la historia sagrada y profana no hay en otra lengua prontuario equivalente al gran Diccionario histórico de Moreri." \(^{12}\)

As with other reference works, Feijóo used the Dictionnaire to prove his points, buttress his arguments, and demolish his opponents. A key to his own personal edition of Moréry may be found in his reply to one of Mañer's inane criticisms. Replying to Mañer in the Ilustración apologética, Feijóo says,

La especie del embeleso de Francisco Vieta la hallará en la vida que anda con sus obras, sacada de Jacob Agustín Thuano, y en el Diccionario de Moreri de la impresión de París del año 1712. v. Vieta. \(^{13}\)

He also refers more than once to the edition of 1725 and to the supplements of 1732 and 1735.

Although Feijóo usually hispanicized and translated when taking material from his sources, he occasionally quoted directly from French and Latin sources to make his point more powerfully. He did this on two occasions with Moréry, and both were quoted from the same dictionary entry. In his essay "Demoníacos" in volume VIII of the Teatro Crítico, as well as in the volume IX Suplemento, he says,

\(^{12}\)Feijóo, I, 45.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., IV, 232.
"Así, en el Diccionario de Moreri, explicando la voz exorcismes, se dice: ce sont de certains oraisons ou bénédictions."  

Bayle: Dictionnaire historique et critique

The fourth most often cited reference work in Feijóo's Teatro Crítico is the Dictionnaire historique et critique of Pierre Bayle. A Protestant teacher, thinker and critic, Bayle began his dictionary with the intention of completing Moréri; the finished work actually became a great deal more:

... il a fait une oeuvre bien supérieure à celle de son devancier, une oeuvre qui a marqué dans l'histoire et qui a exercé une immense influence sur la direction des idées au XVIIIe siècle.  

In the Teatro Crítico Feijóo cites Bayle by name more than twenty times, carefully defending his use of a Protestant source by explaining Bayle's honesty and impartiality.

There is also reason to believe that Feijóo referred to Bayle more than he admitted, such reticence being possibly due to a combination of religious prejudice and editorial carelessness or caution. Staubach's study of Bayle's influence on Feijóo reveals at least two definite cases of editorial omission:

Feijóo later drives home his thesis with regard to astrology by presenting to Spanish readers an analysis of the prophecies of the famous Jean-Baptiste Morin. His letter is a point-by-point abridgement of an article of the Dictionnaire Critique; Feijóo does

1⁴Feijóo, IV, 51, 507.  
15"Dictionnaire," Nouveau Larousse Illustré, Vol. III.
not mention his source.

These two famous cases [of exorcism] are transcribed, abridged but with full detail, from the *Dictionnaire Critique*, without reference to the source.  

Staubach also felt that Feijoo's many references to Descartes and others associated with his philosophy were drawn, at least in part, from Bayle:

It is very possible that Feijoo derived a large part of his knowledge of the history of Cartesian controversy from Bayle. No definite statement can be made, however, for despite an occasional citation or parallel, Feijoo's references to these matters are usually too oblique to be conclusive.

Regardless of the paucity of actual citations, and for whatever reason, Pierre Bayle greatly influenced Benito Feijoo! Their attitudes, motives, and methods often coincided, and both were men of the eighteenth century in which they died rather than the seventeenth in which they were born. Others have called Feijoo a Spanish Voltaire; Staubach's conclusion is, however, far more apt:

... Bayle seems to have been the source of some of the most typical and fundamental critical ideas of Feijoo, especially with regard to tradition, superstition, miracles and history, subjects which make up somewhere near half of Feijoo's writings, and one of the most characteristic parts.

... If Feijoo is to be compared to any French writer of his century, he might be called ... a Spanish and Catholic Bayle.

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17 Ibid., p. 90.

18 Ibid., p. 92.
CHAPTER IV

MINOR FRENCH REFERENCES IN THE TEATRO CRÍTICO

A second set of French sources, cited less often than Fontenelle, Trévoux, Moréri and Bayle but nevertheless significant, appears in the Teatro Crítico. These sources, each clearly referred to more than ten times in the nine volumes, again are reference works, most of which very likely were at hand in Feijóo's library.

Regnault: *Entretiens physiques*

Feijóo referred twenty times or more to one work of the French Jesuit physicist Regnault. Originally published in Paris in 1729, the full title was *Entretiens physiques d'Ariste et d'Eudoxe qui n'enferment ce qui s'est découvert de plus curieux et de plus utile dans la nature.*¹ Feijóo referred to it as the *Colóquios físicos* or *Conversaciones físicas,* and he warmly recommended its author as a reliable modern writer on physical science, unencumbered by the useless speculations of scholasticism. He sealed his own praise with that of the ubiquitous Trévoux editors:

Así el padre Regnault como el padre Bougeant se hallan aplaudidos y celebrados (aunque más y con más

justicia el primero) por los doctos jesuitas, autores de las Memorias de Trevoux.  

St. Aubin: Traité de l'Opinion

Another favorite source of Feijoo's, referred to seventeen times specifically in the Teatro Crítico, was the Traité de l'Opinion by Gilbert Charles Legendre, Marquis de St. Aubin. Feijoo quoted St. Aubin several times, and in most references he carefully gave volume, book and chapter number. St. Aubin was a lawyer turned historian, and the six volume Traité, published in Paris in 1735, bore the subtitle, Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire. Pierre Larousse, the great French lexicographer, in his Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe siècle, says of the works of St. Aubin, "Ces ouvrages attestent beaucoup de recherche et d'erudition."  

Thomas Corneille: Dictionnaire géographique

Thomas Corneille was the younger brother of the great playwright Pierre Corneille. Feijoo recommended his Dictionnaire géographique et historique, published in 1708, in volume I of the Teatro Crítico, and he referred to it sixteen times in the nine volumes. He discusses places as diverse as the Nile river, the Philippines, China, and Mt. Olympus in his references to Corneille's Dictionnaire géographique.

2Feijoo, III, 458.

Jean Regnauld de Segrais: Anecdotes

Feijóo's interests were polygraphic and journalistic rather than strictly literary, and he usually used sources little esteemed today for their enduring literary value. Jean Regnauld de Segrais was a minor poet seldom mentioned beyond his own century, and then only for his bucolic poetry. Yet Feijóo referred to Segrais' memoirs, which he called Memorias anécdotas, sixteen times in the Teatro Crítico. Of this author and his memoirs, which Feijóo very likely had in his personal library, W. A. Sylvester tells us,

Jean Regnault Segrais (1624-1701) is known today chiefly for a slim collection of pastoral poetry—charming, graceful, flute-like. Little has been written about him, and his personal recollections, called "Anecdotes," exist in only two relatively accessible editions. The "Anecdotes" . . . are a hodge-podge of views, criticisms, complaints and memoirs, thrown together in a haphazard fashion.

Nouvelles de la république des lettres

The influence of Pierre Bayle on Feijóo has already been discussed. A further aspect of that influence can be seen in Feijóo's use of the monthly literary journal, Nouvelles de la république des lettres, started by Bayle in 1684. Feijóo specifically referred to the Noticias de la república de las letras sixteen times in the Teatro Crítico, and he referred to himself repeatedly as a ciudadano libre de la república de las letras. He mentions by number

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volumes I, II, XV, XVI, XXII, and XXXI of the journal, reinforcing the presumption that the individual volumes were at his disposal, but he makes no distinction between the work of Bayle and that of later editors of the journal.  

Gayot de Pitaval: Causes célèbres  
An obscure Paris lawyer, unknown today, was the author of another of Feijóo's minor sources. The references begin only in volume V of the Teatro Crítico and total eleven specific mentions by the end of volume IX. The reason for this late entry is explained by Feijóo himself in the beginning of volume VIII of the Teatro Crítico: "Poco ha se añadieron a mi librería, en once tomos, las Causas célèbres, escritas por Gayot de Pitaval, Abogado del Parlamento de París."  

The Nouveau Larousse Illustré defines the term, "cause célèbre," in these words: "Proces, et, le plus souvent, Proces criminel qui fait grand bruit dans le monde."  

In the preface to her book, the eighteenth century English-woman who translated and adapted Pitaval's work tells us that the original was voluminous, disconnected, and in general very poorly written. It nevertheless contained much material useful to her moralistic purpose, and she entitled her English  

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6Feijóo, IV, 13.  
7"Cause," Nouveau Larousse Illustré, Vol. II.
adaptation The Romance of Real Life. Feijôo made no such judgment of Pitaval's prose style, but he too found helpful material in the eleven volumes of famous court cases. Especially in the matters of magic, enchantments, and supposed possession by evil spirits, Feijôo referred to Pitaval's work.

Claude-François Millet de Challes

Just as Feijôo recommended the French Jesuit physicist Regnault as a reliable modern writer free of empty scholastic speculations, he in the same discurso recommended the various works of the French Jesuit mathematician Dechales. A sometime missionary to Turkey, professor of philosophy and theology as well as mathematics and royal hydrography professor at Marseille, he was naturally drawn toward mathematics. He wrote many works in Latin and French, including a course, Cursus seu Mundus mathematicus (Lyon, 1674), more complete than anything known up to that time. His Latin edition of Euclid was published in 1660, translated into French in 1672, and often reprinted,9 becoming a classic in its field.10 Feijôo refers to De Challes fourteen times in the Teatro Crítico, using the spelling "Dechales." He refers specifically


10"Dechales (Claude-François Milllet)," Nouveau Larousse Illustré, Vol. III.
to books I and II of Dechales' work *De Magnete* in volume II of the *Teatro Crítico* and to the work he calls *Estática* in volume III. And in volume III, Feijóo refers to the first book of Dechales' above-mentioned *Cursus, Tractatus proemialis de progressu matheseos*, which sought to give an abridged history of mathematics.11 Citing the *Tractatus* Feijóo strikes a blow against his scholastic opponents and their empty jargon: "Por eso dijo el muy sabio jesuita Claudio Francisco Dechales que nuestra física nada contiene, sino un idioma particular, el cual no da conocimiento cierto de cosa alguna."12

**René Descartes and his philosophy**

As noted above, Staubach contends that Feijóo's knowledge of Descartes and Cartesian philosophy may have been derived in large part from Bayle, proof being lacking due to Feijóo's inconclusive references. Feijóo indeed does refer to Descartes by name thirteen times in the nine volumes of the *Teatro Crítico*, but in none of these references does he cite a particular work. Sometimes he strongly disagrees with Descartes' speculations, arrived at without reference to the scientific method; sometimes he applauds the philosopher's attacks on Aristotle and the ancients in general.


12Feijóo, II, 368.
He discusses Descartes at length, but nowhere does he cite a definite reference or source. This certainly raises the suspicion that his knowledge of Cartesianism was gained from secondary rather than primary sources, but nothing can be proved since no secondary sources are cited either.

Gassendi and his philosophy

A principal adversary of Descartes and his philosophy was Pierre Gassend or Gassendi. Feijóo referred to him as Gassendi or Gasendo, citing him ten times in the Teatro Crítico. As he did with Descartes, Feijóo used his name without reference to specific works, except for one mention in volume VIII of the second volume of his Filosofía. This may refer to the Abregé de la philosophie de Gassendi, published in 1678 by Bernier or to his own Syntagma philosophicum, published in 1658 after his death.¹³

Feijóo was not so strong in his disagreement with Gassendi as with Descartes, and as he had done with Descartes, he referred to him as an anti-Aristotelian. But Feijóo was impatient with philosophers in general, and he very likely would have referred to Descartes and Gassendi even less had they not been interested in science and scientific observation as well as philosophic speculation.

¹³"Gassendi (Pierre)," Nouveau Larousse Illustré, Vol. IV.
CHAPTER V

THE LESSER REFERENCES

The major French reference works Feijóo consulted in writing his encyclopedic Teatro Crítico Universal para desengaño de errores comunes were Fontenelle's Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences, the Journal and Dictionnaire de Trévoux, Moréri's Grand Dictionnaire historique and its successor, Bayle's Dictionnaire historique et critique. As has been noted, these works were constantly in his hands. They were, in effect, like a circle of old friends whose opinions he trusted and whose advice he sought at every turn. The minor references were less professional and significant works, more restricted in scope and more popular in orientation and interest. Most of them, such as the Anecdotes of Segrais, the Traité de l'Opinion of St. Aubin and the Causes célèbres of Pitaval, are now forgotten curiosities of a former age.

A third group of references, which Feijóo mentioned less than ten times each, is also significant even though cited less often. Among this group are Feijóo's favorite writers of theology, history, travel and philosophy. Some of them were undoubtedly in his personal library; others he probably knew well from repeated and extensive mentions and quotations in the major and minor sources already discussed.
Nicholas de Malebranche: *Recherche de la vérité*

It has been noted that Feijóo had little patience with philosophers as such and referred to them only when their views and/or interests paralleled his own. This is exactly the case with Nicholas de Malebranche, the most famous French disciple and popularizer of Descartes. Feijóo's interest in Malebranche and his principal work, *De la Recherche de la vérité*, is not in philosophy but in the search for truth and the battle against error, which were the express aims of Feijóo and his *Teatro Crítico*. In his study of Feijóo and Malebranche, Staubach notes these similarities and differences:

Of the writers cited by Feijóo as Cartesians or anti-Cartesians, one especially seems to have had a positive influence on the author of the *Teatro Crítico Universal*. This is the leading French follower of Descartes, Nicholas Malebranche. It is not as a Cartesian nor as a metaphysician that Malebranche interests Feijóo primarily, however; it is as a seeker after the common causes of error.¹

This common search for truth brought the two authors together and undoubtedly endeared to Feijóo a philosopher and metaphysician to whom he might have otherwise been hostile. Malebranche was, in fact, the very first author cited by Feijóo in the *Teatro Crítico*; in the "Prólogo al lector" of volume I, Feijóo both expresses his purpose and wisely prepares for his defense by citing Malebranche:

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¹Charles N. Staubach, "Feijóo and Malebranche," *Hispanic Review*, IX (1941), 287.
Dijo bien el padre Malebranche, que aquellos autores que escriben para desterrar preocupaciones comunes, no deben poner duda en que recibirá el público con desagrado sus libros."

Beginning with this first citation, Feijóo referred to Malebranche by name nine times in the Teatro Crítico, including a quotation on the senses which he cited as coming from the first book of the Recherche. Feijóo's copy was in Latin rather than French, however; all his references are to the Latin, not the French, title of the book. This Latin translation was made from the fourth edition (1678) by the abbe Lenfant and appeared in 1712. Staubach notes that all Feijóo's citations are from this one work and that he handles the references in such a way as to prove his familiarity with the book. This would presume his having had access to the book itself rather than just to references to it in other sources.

Staubach closes his article by reiterating the basis of Feijóo's interest in Malebranche and of the latter's influence on Feijóo:

"It is not, then, as a philosoper that Malebranche interests Feijóo. It is as a destroyer of superstition and prejudice and as an enemy of learned and popular

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2Feijóo, I, 1.
3"Malebranche (Nicholas)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXVI (Paris, 1854-65).
4Staubach, "Feijóo and Malebranche," p. 287.
5Ibid., p. 297.
errors, that Malebranche had an early and important influence on the writings of Feijóo. 6

Du Halde, Tavernier, Bougeant and Grozelier

Three other authors and/or works which Feijóo cited at least nine times in the Teatro Crítico are the French Jesuit Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, writer of an important history of China, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, a writer of travel books, and Guillaume-Hyacinthe Bougeant, a French Jesuit author in several fields whose Observations curieuses sur toutes les parties de la physique Feijóo recommended.

Father Du Halde, whose works Feijóo may or may not have had at hand, was chosen by his superiors in the order to collect and classify the letters received from Jesuit missionaries in foreign countries. 7 Two important works, both of which Feijóo cites, arose out of this careful labor. In 1735 Du Halde published his Description géographique, historique chronologique, politique et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise in four volumes and an accompanying forty-two map atlas. 8 Feijóo referred to Du Halde and this work nine times in the Teatro Crítico. These references include long quotations and citations of various volumes (both volumes III and IV are mentioned by

6 Ibid.

7 "Du Halde (Jean-Baptiste)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XI.

8 Ibid.
number), possibly implying that the work was in his hand. Du Halde also continued the publishing of the letters themselves (Lettres édifiantes . . . ), which will be discussed later.

Jean-Baptiste Tavernier was one of the most famous travelers of the seventeenth century. The son of a Protestant map maker from the Low Countries, he spent his life in travel and trade, dying in Moscow on his last voyage. His Voyages en Turquie, en Perse et aux Indes was reprinted seven or eight times and translated into English, Dutch and German. Of his writing, however, Bayle says flatly that "il n'avait guère apris ni à parler, ni à écrire en français, et ce n'est point lui qui a dressé les Relations qu' il nous a données." He follows up this assertion with a characteristically long footnote detailing the complaints of Chappuzeau, who was forced to edit the first two volumes of the Voyages.

Feijóo referred to Tavernier (which he regularly spelled Tabernier) nine times in the Teatro Crítico, beginning with a recommendation of his works as books of travel in volume I. He referred by name to Viaje de Indias and Viaje en Turno del mundo, as usual making no judgment on the literary worth of the author.

9"Tavernier (Jean-Baptiste)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XLI.

10"Tavernier (Jean Baptiste)," Dictionnaire historique et critique par M. Pierre Bayle, Vol. V (Amsterdam, 1734).
In discussing the French Jesuit physicist Regnault, it has been noted that Feijóo recommended both him and another Jesuit, Bougeant, as valuable current writers on physical science. Bougeant was a historian and writer on various subjects, but it was only his Observations curieuses sur toutes les parties de la physique that Feijóo mentioned. Bougeant wrote the first volume; Grozelier added the second and third volumes later, a fact which Feijóo did not fail to mention in his recommendation of Bougeant and the Observaciones curiosas, which he cited a total of nine times in the Teatro Crítico.

Fénelon and Calmet

Two more French priests, one an aristocratic but liberal prelate and littérateur, the other a historian and Bible commentator, earned Feijóo's praise and were mentioned eight times in the Teatro Crítico. François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon, archbishop of Cambrai and author of the Aventures de Télémaque, was one of his favorites. In his famous discurso, "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa," Feijóo recommends a number of French writers and reference works, as has been stated. In that same essay Feijóo commends Fénelon, along with Magdeleine de Scudéry, for naturalness of expression, in contrast with the affected style then current in Spain!

Aún en aquellos franceses que más sublimaron el estilo, como el arzobispo de Cambray, autor del
Telémaco, y Madalena Scudéri, se ve que el arte está amigablemente unido con la naturaleza.\textsuperscript{11}

Feijôo also speaks admiringly of Fénélon's other writings, and he quotes his Lettre sur les occupations de l'Académie française when discussing historians in volume IV.

The famous Benedictine, dom Augustin Calmet, was another of Feijôo's favorite writers. He, too, is recommended in the "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa," where Feijôo makes mention of him as a scriptural expositor. Calmet was a devout, modest, and careful scholar; and his works, written in both French and Latin, were many and well received. Feijôo mentions four times by name his Diccionario bíblico, published in Paris in 1722 as the Dictionnaire historique, critique, chronologique, géographique et littéral de la Bible and reprinted and translated several times.\textsuperscript{12} He also refers to Calmet's Comentario sobre el octavo capítulo del Génesis and his Disertaciones Bíblicas, for a total of eight mentions in the Teatro Crítico.

Journal des Savants and Lettres édifiantes

Feijôo's carelessness and inconsistency in handling references has already been noted, and many times one can only suppose the degree of his familiarity with a particular

\textsuperscript{11}Feijôo, I, 46.

\textsuperscript{12}"Calmet (dom Augustin)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. VI.
publication, especially if it is a minor reference. This is not the case, however, with the famous literary periodical, the *Journal des Savants*. Feijóo referred to it by name seven times in the *Teatro Crítico*, and there is little if any doubt that it was accessible to him. Refuting critics who claimed that his *Teatro* was merely a rehashing of the Trévoux and Savants journals, Feijóo says in the prologue to volume III:

> Del *Journal des Savans* (o hablando en castellano, *Diario de los Sabios*) no tengo ni he visto jamás sino un tomito en dozavo, que es el décimo; y aun éste le adquirí después de impreso mi primer tomo, porque me lo dió en Madrid por el mes de agosto del año de 26 el hermano fray Andrés Gómez . . . edición de Amsterdam de 1683.13

Since he was personally acquainted with only one of the volumes of this oldest of French literary journals, his references to it were very likely drawn at least in part from the Trévoux journal, which was modeled on the *Journal des Savants*.

Another serially-released publication which Feijóo referred to seven times in the *Teatro Crítico* was the *Cartas edificantes* or *Lettres Edifiantes et curieuses écrites des missions étrangères*, mentioned previously under one of its editors, Du Halde. Though Feijóo mentions only Du Halde, the series was begun by the Jesuit historian Charles Legobien in 1702 as *Lettres de quelques missionnaires de la*

13Feijóo, II, 261.
compagnie de Jésus, écrits de la Chine et des Indes orientales. The favorable reception of this first volume caused the author to issue a second collection, using the Lettres édifiantes... title. Legobien edited eight volumes before the work was taken over by Du Halde, who issued volumes IX through XXVI. Feijóo mentions by number volumes IV, XVIII and XXI, but he adds, in reference to a letter contained in volume XVIII of the collection, that "yo sólo tengo presente su extracto en el tomo II de las Memorias de Trevoux del año 1728." Scudéry, Huet, Maignan

A précieuse-novelist and a philosopher-cleric, both members of the famous Rambouillet salon, and another priest-physicist-mathematician comprise a third group of lesser references cited seven times each by Feijóo.

Magdeleine de Scudéry (or Scudéri) was another of Feijóo's favorite literary writers, and he recommended her as such in the "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa" in volume I of the Teatro. He mentioned her masterpiece, Artamène ou le Grand Cyrus, four times in the Teatro.

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14"Legobien (Charles)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXIII.

15Ibid.

16"Du Halde (Jean-Baptiste)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XI.

17Feijóo, I, 281.
including a quotation from volume IV on inherent traits, and he also referred to her *Conversaciones morales*.

Pierre-Daniel Huet was a French prelate and writer of science, philosophy, language and religion. Of his various works in French and Latin, Feijóo names only the Latin works *Censura de la filosofía cartesiana*, published in 1689, and *Demonstración evangélica*, published in 1679. He does, however, quote the latter in defense of his definition of the word "Brahmin."

Feijóo refers to the physicist and mathematician Emmanuel Maignan basically in two ways: as a commentator on the philosophy of Gassendi and as an anti-Aristotelian theologian. He mentions by name none of his various Latin works and was very likely acquainted with him only through other reference works.

Naudé, *Inscriptions*, Bossuet, St.-Evremont

Four more references, each cited at least five times by Feijóo, constitute a final group of lesser references. These include the librarian and historian Gabriel Naudé, the *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions*, the prelate Bossuet and the man-of-letters St.-Evremont.

Feijóo refers six times to the scholarly doctor and librarian Gabriel Naudé. He mentions by name only the

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18"Huet (Pierre-Daniel)," *Nouveau Larousse Illustré*, Vol. V.
Considérations politiques sur les coups d'État (Rome, 1639),

although he alludes to the 1712 Amsterdam edition of

Apologie pour les grands hommes faussement soupçonnés de magic, saying he has seen it. He also refers to Naudé (Paris, 1701, Amsterdam, 1703), a collection of anecdotes taken from the conversations of Naudé.

Feijóo also referred six times to the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres. He mentioned by name three members: M. Hardoin (twice), "abad Anselmo" and "abad Sallier," and he referred to volumes one and six of the history or Mémoires de l'Académie. Of this lesser-known official academy, the Nouveau Larousse Illustré says,

La compagnie eut à s'occuper de toute l'histoire de France, a composer des médailles sur les principaux événements; à expliquer les médailles, médaillons, pierres, inscriptions et autres raretés antiques ou modernes du Cabinet du roi; en même temps, elle dut rechercher, expliquer et commenter les anciens monuments, de même que les antiquités de tous genres, existant en France. Un edit de 1716 rendit officielle la désignation d'Académie royale des inscriptions et belles-lettres.

A dater de cette époque sont rédigés les Mémoires de l'Académie (1717), comprenant des études d'histoire, d'archéologie, de linguistique. ...

Another of Feijóo's favorite writers, recommended in the "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa," is the

19"Naudé (Gabriel)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXX.

20Feijóo, II, 261.

21"Naudé (Gabriel)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXX.

famous French bishop, preacher, and polemicist Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet. Bossuet was the second author cited in the *Teatro Crítico*, and in the "Paralelo" discourse Feijóo commends by name his *Histoires des variations des Églises protestantes* and his *Exposition de la doctrine de l'Église catholique sur les matières de controverse*, calling him simply "[el] insigne obispo meldense."23 He refers to the *Variaciones* three times, and total citations to Bossuet amount to six.

A final French author, cited five times by Feijóo, is Charles de Marguetel de Saint-Denis, seigneur de Saint-Evremond (or Evremont). St.-Evremont was a military officer turned man-of-letters who spent the last forty of his ninety-plus years in exile in England.24 Feijóo mentions none of his various works by name, though he quotes him on French fashions in volume I of the *Teatro Crítico*.

23Feijóo, I, 45.

24"Saint-Evremond (Charles de Marguetel de Saint-Denys de)," *Nouveau Larousse Illustré*, Vol. VII.
CHAPTER VI

THE MISCELLANEOUS REFERENCES

A final group of miscellaneous references, mentioned less than five times each but more than twice, concludes this study of French references in the Teatro Crítico Universal of Father Feijôo. A few retain their fame and usefulness today; most have faded into oblivion. Most, though not all, Feijôo knew not by personal acquaintance but from mentions in the major and minor references which he consulted regularly.

Vanière, Larrey, Herbelot

A Latin poet, a Protestant historian and a prodigious orientalist form a group of sources mentioned by Feijôo four times each in the Teatro Crítico.

Jacques Vanière was a French Jesuit and pastoral poet. His principal work was the Proedium rusticum, a description of country life and labor\(^1\) which Feijôo cited by name in volume IV of the Teatro Crítico. Feijôo also mentioned by name Vanière's poem "Apes" in connection with Miraldi's research on bees:

\(^1\)"Vanière (Jacques)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XLII.
. . . las recientes observaciones del sabio francés Mr. Miraldi, que redujo a dulce armonía otro docto francés, el padre Jacobo Vanière, de la compañía de Jesús, en su poema latino intitulado *Apes*...  

He later concluded his discussion of bees with a four-line quotation from "Apes."

Along with Vanière, Feijão refers four times to Isaac de Larrey, a Protestant historian who lived and died in Berlin after escaping from France. He mentions by name Larrey's *Histoire d'Angleterre, d'Ecosse et d'Irlande* (Rotterdam, 1707-13) as well as his *Histoire de France sous le règne de Louis XIV*. In citing this latter work, Feijão was more explicit than usual, giving volume and page number: "Refiere estos dos casos Larrey, Historiador de Francia, el primero en el tomo 6, página 299, el segundo, tomo 7, página 203." This may imply a familiarity with the work itself, but it more than likely stems from a well documented reference in Feijão's primary source.

Although it is cited only four times in the *Teatro Crítico* and probably was not in Feijão's personal library, the *Bibliothèque orientale* of Herbelot was nevertheless recommended as a valuable French reference work in the "Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa" discourse.

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2Feijão, III, 208.

3"Larrey (Isaac de)," *Biographie Universelle* (Michaud), Vol. XXIII.

4Ibid.

5Feijão, IV, 339.
in volume I. Barthélemy d'Herbelot dedicated himself early
to the study of oriental languages and literature, and his
entire life was spent in that study. His one major work was
the Bibliothèque Orientale or Dictionnaire universel,
contenant généralement tout ce qui regarde la connaissance
des peuples de l'Orient, published in Paris in 1697, two
years after his death. In his three citations (volumes VI
and VII) as well as in the volume I recommendation, Feijóo
carefully gave the name of the work, translating it as is
customary into the Spanish equivalent, Biblioteca Oriental.

Molière, Montaigne, Perrault

Three French authors still read and appreciated today
lead the list of citations appearing three times in the
Teatro Crítico. Both Montaigne and Molière were cited in
volume I among great writers who have decried doctors and
medicine: "¡Cuánto declamaron contra médicos y medicina y
pasando mucho a la verdad, la raya de lo justo, en España,
Quevedo; en Italia, Petrarca; en Francia, primero Montaña y
después Molière!" Molière's Malade Imaginaire was cited by
name later on in the same discurso, entitled "Medicina," and
in volume IX Feijóo defended his use of the same comedy against
the clumsy criticism of Mañer.

6"Herbelot (Barthélemy d')," Biographie Universelle
(Michaud), Vol. XIX.
7Feijóo, I, 49. 8Ibid., IV, 225.
Besides the initial citing of Montaigne as a critic of medicine, Feijóo referred twice more to the sixteenth century essayist and moralist. In volume III he mentioned Montaigne's *Pensées morales*, and in one of his many humorous illustrations he referred to Montaigne in relation to gravity as an aspect of feigned wisdom: "El ingenioso francés Miguel de Montaña dice con gracia, que entre todas las especies de brutos, ninguno vió tan serio como el asno." 9

Feijóo cites Charles Perrault three times in the *Teatro Crítico*. The two latter references are without further elaboration, but in the first Feijóo clearly cites the 1725 edition of Moréri's *Dictionnaire* as the source for his mention of Perrault.

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**Dorléans, Vallemont, Savary**

A Jesuit historian, a theologian-numismatist and a successful merchant family produced three more of Feijóo's miscellaneous references, each cited three times in the *Teatro Crítico*.

Pierre-Joseph Dorléans (or, d'Orléans--Feijóo each time called him "el padre Orleans") was a Jesuit professor and preacher who late in life wrote two excellent histories of revolution. Feijóo mentioned only his *Histoire des révolutions d'Angleterre* (Paris, 1693), 10 which he cited by author and

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9Feijóo, I, 78.

10"Dorléans (Pierre-Joseph)," *Biographic Universelle* (Michaud), Vol. XI.
Title three times; the *Histoire des révolutions d'Espagne* was published in 1734. Of these two works the *Biographie Universelle* (Michaud) says:

Voltaire a remarqué que le P. Dorléans est le premier qui ait choisi dans l'histoire les révolutions pour son seul objet. L'idée était heureuse et l'exécution y répondit. *L'Histoire des révolutions d'Angleterre* a conservé l'estime des critiques les plus délicats. *... L'Histoire des révolutions d'Espagne* n'eut pas le même succès; mais ce fut moins la faute de l'auteur que celle du sujet, qui n'est pas à beaucoup près aussi intéressant. On s'accorde à trouver dans ces deux ouvrages une narration vivante et piquante, un style clair et abondant, l'art de discerner les objets vraiment dignes d'attention, et celui de les présenter sous le point de vue le plus frappant.

Pierre de Lorraine, abbé de Vallémont, was a far more superficial and mediocre writer than Dorléans, but he wrote on subjects which interested Feijóo. And as with Dorléans, Feijóo cited only one of his works, *Curiosités de la Nature et de l'Art par la végétation, ou l'Agriculture et le jardinage dans leur perfection*, published in 1705. Feijóo cited volume I of this work twice in volume II of his *Teatro*, and he cited the two volume work as a whole in volume V. The first citation is a quotation "que traduzco fielmente del idioma francés, como las cita el abad de Vallémont," and he carefully documents it with a footnote citing volume I.

11Ibid. 12Ibid. 13"Vallemont (Pierre le Lorrain, abbé de)," *Biographie Universelle* (Michaud), Vol. XLII. 14Feijóo, I, 59.
Feijóo may have had in his library the Dictionnaire universel de commerce, begun by the French businessman and merchant Jacques Savary des Brulons and completed by his brother, Louis-Philémon Savary. Their father had been a successful merchant of noble birth and a writer on business subjects, and they followed in his footsteps, although Louis became a priest. Jacques began the Dictionnaire as a personal list of all merchandise subject to taxes (he was inspecteur général de la douane à Paris), and he was later asked to publish it for general use. His brother Louis helped him in the editing and published the work in 1723 after Jacques' death. This standard business reference was augmented and reprinted several times, including an English translation in 1757.

Feijóo handled the Dictionnaire de commerce as if he might have had access to it. In volume IV he comments on Savary's interest in porcelain and the quality of western versus eastern ware, and later in the same volume he refers by name to Savary's article "Comerce d'Espagne" as well as to another part of the dictionary. Then in

15 "Savary (Jacques)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXXVIII.
16 "Savary des Brulons (Jacques)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XXXVIII.
17 Feijóo, III, 125.
18 Ibid., I, 196.
volume VI he mentions the "Diccionario de Comercio de Jacobo Savari" along with the Trévoux dictionary as authorities. These mentions may all come from other sources, but it is also possible that this well-known non-literary reference work was in his personal library.

Haillan, Jovet, Caprices d'imagination

Two historians and an anonymous letter writer provide the three final miscellaneous references, each of which Feijóo cites three times in the Teatro Crítico Universal.

Bernard De Girard, seigneur du Haillan, wrote the first real history of France, Histoire générale des rois de France, depuis Pharamond jusqu'à Charles VII (Paris, 1576, 1584), and he was appointed a royal historiographer. Feijóo's three references to du Haillan are all in one discurso, "Reflexiones sobre la historia," in volume IV of the Teatro. The first citation is a quotation on the wisdom of not writing contemporary history, and the other two deal with earlier French history. All of this material is very likely taken from Bayle's dictionary. Feijóo mentions the items in the same order that Bayle does, including some minor illustrative material, and Bayle's

19Ibid., III, 312.

20"Haillan (Bernard de Girard, seigneur du)," Biographie Universelle (Michaud), Vol. XVIII.
quotation, though more extensive than Feijóo's, begins at exactly the same point in du Haillon's Préface.²¹

Feijóo also refers three times to another historian unknown today, Jovet, and his work, Historia de las religiones de todo el mundo. The first reference is in volume IV and the other two are in volume IX, where he cites volume and page numbers in the work, defending himself and his arguments against the criticisms of Maner's Antiteatro Crítico.

A final miscellaneous reference, likewise unknown today, is cited three times by Feijóo, and in this case we have his own testimony as to its place in his library. His first reference to the anonymous collection of letters entitled Caprices d'imagination is in a long footnote in volume VII, where he gives the name of the work and relates one incident from it. Then in the Suplemento del Teatro Crítico which became volume IX he clearly states his possession of the book: "Llegó poco ha a mi mano un libro francés modernísimo, cuyo título es: Caprices d'imagination: o Cartas sobre diferentes asuntos de Historia Moral, Crítica, Historia Natural etc."²² He then proceeds to relate stories from the third letter, mentioning that the author is anonymous.

²¹"Haillon (Bernard de Girard, Seigneur du)," Dictionnaire historique et critique par M. Pierre Bayle, Vol. III (Amsterdam, 1734).
²²Feijóo, IV, 464.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to isolate and identify the French references cited by Father Feijöo in his nine-volume *Teatro Crítico Universal*, and they have been listed and discussed in descending order of total mentions. No attempt has been made to assess their relative importance in relation to non-French references, of which there were certainly a few, especially German and Italian. Nor has the large question of French influence on Feijöo been treated except cursorily; such a treatment was considered as going beyond the scope of this work. This conclusion then necessarily takes the form of a summary of the references themselves and a note on Feijöo's importance and contributions.

The three final miscellaneous references cited are in many ways characteristic of all the references: Du Haillan was an important historian, and Feijöo's information on him came very likely from Bayle rather than from the historian himself; Jovet was a minor religious historian unworthy of mention today; the *Caprices d'imagination* was an anonymous collection of letters about miscellaneous historical items, and Feijöo had it in his library.
Du Haillan is characteristic of many of Feijôo's references in two ways. First, he was a historian of significance, seeking to "set the record straight," to sift fact from fable in the mists of early history, to report without fear or favoritism. Feijôo himself aspired to this type of factual, fable-dispelling reporting, and his references in general reflected this philosophy. Second, Feijôo most likely knew him second-hand, through Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique*. This is characteristic of many of Feijôo's references beyond the majors and minors. The very encyclopedic nature of the major references made them storehouses of knowledge from which he continually drew information, illustration and encouragement. The fact that he failed to cite Bayle as the source of his information, if indeed Bayle was the source, is also somewhat characteristic. In the case of many references, one can only presume, sometimes even after careful study and comparison, that the source is secondary rather than primary.

The unknown religious historian Jovet is characteristic in that most of Feijôo's references are no longer read today, and many are unknown. The same thing can be said, and has been, of his *discursos* themselves; their very timeliness in their own day makes most of them hopelessly dated today.

The *Caprices d'imagination* is characteristic of the other references in that it was evidently a collection of miscellany, and it was in Feijôo's library. Because he
sought to dispel error wherever it might reside, his field of labor was as large as the world. Works of a broad nature thus served him better than specialized ones, unless they specialized in one of his fields of particular interest, such as medicine and scientific experimentation. The fact that this work, though only a miscellaneous reference, was a part of his personal library, is also significant. His library, amassed over a lifetime of assiduous study, was undoubtedly large and continually growing. New works are regularly cited as being added in the various volumes of the Teatro Crítico, and his biographers mention books being sent or taken to him constantly.

The fact that none of these works were essentially literary (in the creative, belles-lettres sense) is also characteristic. Feijóo was basically a scholarly journalist rather than a littérature, and the same can be said for the vast majority of his references. The literary names among them are few and quickly dispensed with: Molière and Montaigne, Fénelon and Scudéry, Thomas Corneille and Charles Perrault; and the greatest of these figure least in the Teatro Crítico.

In some other respects, the three last miscellaneous references were not characteristic, especially of the major and minor references. None of them was encyclopedic or serial in nature, and none was oriented toward medicine and science.
The encyclopedic nature of Feijóo's field of action necessitated reference works which were so conceived and executed. He had for his task some of the first such works ever written in French: the Moréri, Bayle and Trévoux encyclopedic dictionaries; and all evidence points to his continual use of them to discredit popular myth, report interesting happenings and support his continual attacks against scholasticism and for the scientific method.

The continuing, serial nature of Feijóo's most cited references is characteristic of them, if not of the miscellaneous ones. The volumes of Fontenelle's *Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences* were issued annually, and Feijóo evidently had them all. The *Mémoires de Trévoux* was issued several times a year, and early in the *Teatro Crítico* he had already amassed more than one hundred volumes of this Jesuit journal. He may have subscribed as well to the *Nouvelles de la république des lettres* journal. The encyclopedic dictionaries were regularly supplemented and reprinted, and he undoubtedly had some of these supplements and later editions in his possession. The serial nature of these publications allowed Feijóo to stay abreast of developments in a multitude of fields, following arguments and experiments and reporting significant occurrences to his avid readers.

The miscellaneous references were also atypical of the major references with regard to science and medicine.
This field, or two related fields, was the largest and most significant in Feijôo's theatre of interest. The leading major reference was Fontenelle's *Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences* and the leading minor reference was Regnault's *Entretiens physiques*. These and other specialized scientific works provided a continuous supply of ammunition in Feijôo's battle to dislodge speculative philosophy from its pinnacle of influence among his countrymen and enthrone in its place the scientific method as a means of gaining knowledge. He hoped to replace the medieval emphasis on rhetoric, debate, speculation and presumption with the concrete observation and classification of natural phenomena. He sought to replace ignorance, fear and superstition with positive and confident knowledge.

Feijôo was an above-average man in a below-average age, at least by our standards today. If he is not now so remembered, it is at least partly because, as some have said, he was so successful in banishing that age that we no longer remember him or it. The very fact that many of his arguments need no longer be made is a tribute to the man who first began to voice them in his country and century. If many of his ideas still bore the stamp of medieval monasticism, many others heralded the scientific, political and industrial revolutions which men following in his footsteps were to bring. If his literary style was provincial and careless, still no one can deny him the place accorded him,
as has been noted previously (Chapter I, note 24), by don Vicente de la Fuente as the best representative of his period, "la transición y el principio del renacimiento de nuestra literatura."
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