

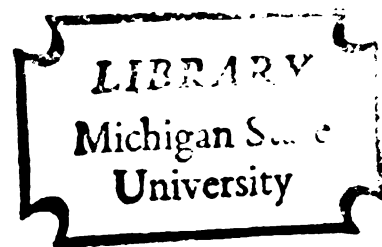
A STUDY OF SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION
IN THE WORK OF
MANUEL GUTIERREZ NAJERA

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF Ph. D.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

TERRY OXFORD TAYLOR

1971



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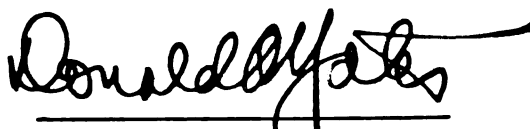
A STUDY OF THE USE OF SYMBOL
IN THE WORK OF
MANUEL GUTIÉRREZ NÁJERA

presented by

Terry Oxford Taylor

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in Spanish



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ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION IN THE WORK OF MANUEL GUTIÉRREZ NÁJERA

By

Terry Oxford Taylor

Gutiérrez Nájera employs a pattern of images and characterizations which symbolically recreate for the reader his personal vision of the world from an aesthetic and idealistic perspective. In part, he was influenced by Positivism which was a philosophic vogue in Mexico throughout the late nineteenth century. Although he denounced the materialistic tendencies of Positivism, he accepted the view that man's existence was finite without the consolation of a Christian afterlife. Motivated by the spiritual vacuum created by Positivism, Gutiérrez Nájera chose art and idealism as a viable means for fulfillment of human spiritual capacities.

As an idealist, Gutiérrez Nájera shows the greatest affinity to the nineteenth century Romantic tradition. This is demonstrated in his criticism, which underscores the idea that man lives in cosmic and social isolation and can find salvation only through individual endeavor premised on a mental ability of the individual subjectively to create value for his actions. Within the nineteenth century Romantic tradition he most resembles the aesthetes (Parnassians, symbolists, decadents, impressionists) of the last decades

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of the century. Art represented to Gutiérrez Nájera the highest possible goal of aesthetic endeavor.

The most important groups of symbols, therefore, are those which serve to create value, or an ennobling experience, through representations of art and ideality. The names of writers, painters, musicians, specific works, musical instruments and finely sculptured objects commonly recur to reinforce an aesthetic ideal. The author's frequent textual references to himself as a writer or the use of artists as central subjects in the stories and poems are conspicuous examples of giving art central importance. Idealism is invoked through an imagery which suggests the ethereal world of pure idea: birds, flowers, precious metals, incense, sky, sea, mist. These items tend to have intangible, fleeting or mysterious qualities which makes them fitting correlatives to spiritual realities.

Gutiérrez Nájera also seeks to make himself, through his writing, into a timeless and universal continuum. Foreign names and places function as symbols of universality throughout Gutiérrez Nájera's writing. He uses references to the past, from ancient literatures to his own memories or those of his characters, with the apparent purpose of invoking an archetype of spiritual perfection that he hopes his own work will measure up to and thus survive eternally. Mythological references are particularly important symbols of Gutiérrez Nájera's dedication to timeless archetypal norms. In myth he saw the ultimate symbol of truth which

negated materialistic chronological time. Myth, therefore, is commonly invoked to give finite personal existence an infinite temporal extension.

Along with the aspiration to universality there is also a concern for national problems. Within his own frame of ideas, Gutiérrez Nájera saw Mexico's historical dilemma as being the same as his own, a struggle between materialism and idealism. The contest between materialism and idealism led in another direction, in addition to social preoccupations, toward a concentration on psychological processes. The will of the individual to survive and achieve spiritual fulfillment is repeatedly portrayed through fantasy and dream. In Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation, dreams functioned either as a revelation of the hellish world of materialism and metaphysical isolation, or of the realm of aesthetic idealism. The most important single contribution to come from his use of dreams and fantasy was the use of color synaesthesia.

Color synaesthesia epitomizes the totality of Gutiérrez Nájera's achievement as an artist. More than mere stylistic device, the use of color as a correlative to emotive states symbolizes a response to the author's immediate environment revealing a particularly fine awareness of psychological processes. Equally important, color synaesthesia symbolizes a spiritual norm in the service of aestheticism and as such becomes a temporal symbol of infinity. Briefly stated, Gutiérrez Nájera, without necessarily having the

rigorous system of a philosopher, did have a consistent world view which he worked into artistic form.

A STUDY OF SYMBOLIC EXPRESSION
IN THE WORK OF
MANUEL GUTIÉRREZ NÁJERA

By

Terry Oxford Taylor

A THESIS

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Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an attempt to define the essential character of the Mexican writer, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, through an analysis of the symbolic world he places before the reader. Although a study of the use of symbol may contribute significantly to the understanding of any creative work, it is especially appropriate for Gutiérrez Nájera's literary achievement. Both his prose and poetry employ carefully chosen allusions, images and stylistic techniques with the evident purpose of artistically recreating the universe as he perceived it. This apprehended universe is constructed from wide-ranging references which are drawn not only from ancient myths and world literature, but also from the poet's immediate social and physical environment.

This essentially symbolic characteristic of his work is not accidental. At the beginning of his career Gutiérrez Nájera elaborated a literary theory which remained fundamentally intact until his death. Although this theory, spelled out in several articles of criticism, does not mention symbol specifically, the concluding generalization he made consistently is that literature is beauty and beauty

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is "la representación de lo infinito en lo finito."¹ In other words, the artist searches for the eternal substance of reality and then gives it a symbolic representation in finite terms. The importance of symbol in Nájera's work cannot be overstressed; in fact, my principal contention is that in the use of symbol lies a key to the understanding of Nájera's work and to what the author sought to communicate.

Since this study concerns itself primarily with symbol, some clarification of the term "symbol" is essential. Definitions of the term are many and the implications it can have differ widely among various disciplines. Psychologists, theologians, scientists and philosophers, for example, each find for it quite different interpretations. Literary critics are simply without a definite norm for its use. Northrop Frye noted that symbol could designate "any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention."² William York Tindall, in a frequently quoted study of symbol, agrees with Frye on the nonspecific properties saying that "analogical embodiment may be a rhythm, a juxtaposition, an action, a proposition, a structure, or a poem"³--by poem, meaning any work taken

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1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Obras: Crítica literaria (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1959), p. 55. This work will be referred to hereafter as Crítica.
 2. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (New York: Atheneum, 1966), p. 71.
 3. William York Tindall, The Literary Symbol (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 13.

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as a whole.

The German philosopher, Ernst Cassirer, has formulated a philosophic system around symbol well-suited to the intentions of this work. Cassirer first discussed his theories in a three volume treatise, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms.¹ Later, while teaching in the United States, he revised and abbreviated his ideas into one volume titled An Essay on Man.² In this last book, Cassirer holds that man's most singular attribute, distinct from other animal species, is not reason but his ability to think in symbolic forms. Man, in fact, has created a symbolic universe where such units as language, myth, religion and art merge.

Cassirer's basic perspective on art is as follows. The place of art in a symbolic universe is that of a cognitive tool employed in search of knowledge. Art is the approach to reality most different from science but at the same time an equally valuable tool of enlightenment. Scientific learning works toward the goal of abstract formulae and a resulting impoverishment of reality. The scientific objective is to gather as much information as possible on a given object and by studied observation and deduction reduce the characteristics to a simplified whole ($e=mc^2$). The

1. Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955).

2. Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

material of artistic observation becomes symbolic mental activity in a radically different way. If science is to simplify and compress reality, art is a reality-expanding activity always moving away from deductive generalization. This is a process of exploration, discovery and description of nature in all its diversity and minuteness. Art then becomes a symbol of what the artist with his special genius sees and recreates for his audience.

While Cassirer thereafter engages in a discussion of beauty and the qualitative aspects of art, these need not be considered, since numerous critics have clearly established Gutiérrez Nájera's eminent position in the world of Hispanic letters. Alfonso Reyes makes repeated mention of the importance he accords Gutiérrez Nájera's poetry, while Octavio Paz states that in his best moments Nájera reveals "that other world, that other reality which is the vision of every true poet."¹ As for the prose, it seems that from the beginning he had a natural feeling for the medium. It is here that "nuestro Manuel formó su estilo, creó su personalidad literaria y llegó a la plena conciencia de su fuerza y de su arte."² This praise accorded by Justo Sierra in 1896 has not been significantly altered by any

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1. Octavio Paz, An Anthology of Mexican Poetry (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), p. 34.
 2. Justo Sierra, "Prólogo" to Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Poesías, Vol. I, 1896, reprinted in Poesías completas, ed. by Francisco González Guerrero, I (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1953), p. 11.

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subsequent critical opinion.

It is not to prove the beauty of Gutiérrez Nájera's work, therefore, that Cassirer's study is useful, but as a means by which to see what the artist sought in his art. The process is one of trying to get inside the author's mind, then to gaze outward and contemplate the world as he would have it eternalized. Given this premise, the symbolic importance of a Hamlet, who occupies a typically central place in Gutiérrez Nájera's world, is not that of a static character who could be studied as an influence. Hamlet, here, is a new creation altogether different from the character Elizabethan audiences knew. The symbolic importance of this view is that a new personage emerges, conceived by an individual temperament which visualizes with the intellectual tools of the late nineteenth century and takes its bearing within a particular society.

Given this internal field of view, the most obvious clue to the writer's symbols are his own consciously expressed beliefs. To avoid arbitrary conjecture in showing relationships between reality as experienced by the author and its incorporation into artistic form, as much emphasis as possible is given to textual statements by Gutiérrez Nájera. The first chapter, therefore, gives a detailed account of the author's literary theories, explaining how he saw literature in relation to life. In practice it is sometimes difficult to separate his criticism from the poetry and creative prose. There are short passages of

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criticism interspersed throughout his fictional writings and poetry and it is not unusual to find impressionistic paragraphs of lyrical or fictional nature in analytical articles of criticism. As a generalization, the principle nexus between the criticism, stories and poetry is an aesthetic idealism, of a kind succinctly defined as:

1. The view that the goal of fine art is an embodiment or reflection of the perfections of archetypal ideas or timeless essences (Platonism).
2. The view of art which emphasizes feeling, sentiment, and idealization (as opposed to "literal reproduction" of fact).
3. The view of art which emphasizes cognitive content (as opposed to abstract feeling, primitive intuition, formal line or structure, mere color or tone).

A basic ideological concern is, to a number of critics, not only the distinguishing mark of Gutiérrez Nájera but of the Modernists as a group. Max Henríquez Ureña referred to this characteristic when he spoke of the Modernists' preoccupation with spiritual problems of the nineteenth century:

El modernismo representaba una nueva sensibilidad, que se originaba en lo que Manuel Díaz Rodríguez llamó 'la violencia de vida de nuestra alma contemporánea, ansiosa y compleja'. Dentro de la complejidad de esa alma inquieta predominaba la angustia del vivir, ese estado morboso mezcla de duda y desencanto, y a veces de hastío, que podemos considerar como característico del siglo XIX, aunque sus antecedentes se remonten al Werther (1775) de Goethe, punto de partida de esa crisis espiritual que ya en la centuria decimonona recibió el nombre de mal del siglo.²

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1. Wilbur Long, "Idealism", Dictionary of Philosophy, ed. by Dagobert D. Runes (Ames, Iowa: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1960), p. 137.
 2. Max Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo (México; Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1962), p. 17.

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Federico de Onís spoke of a unity in ". . .la propia insatisfacción y necesidad interna de renovación. . ." ¹ Juan Ramón Jiménez in like manner denies the limited poetic (i.e., stylistic) definition of Modernism:

. . .las críticas jenerales. . .han sustentado el error de considerar el modernismo como una cuestión poética y no como lo fue y sigue siendo; un movimiento jeneral teológico, científico y literario, . . . ²

Manuel Pedro González in a similar vein wrote: "es una inquietud filosófica y religiosa que añaden una dimensión hasta entonces inédita a la poesía hispana." ³

This ideological explanation of the movement given by critics writing during the past two decades is paralleled by José Enrique Rodó, who, as a leading essayist of the movement, wrote in 1899:

Yo soy un modernista también; yo pertenezco con toda mi alma a la gran reacción que da caracter y sentido a la evolución del pensamiento en las postrimerías de este siglo; a la reacción que, partiendo del naturalismo literario y del positivismo filosófico, los conduce, sin desvirtuarlos en lo que tienen de fecundos, a disolverse en concepciones más altas. . .es en el arte una de las formas personales de nuestro anárquico idealismo contemporáneo. ⁴

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1. Federico de Onís, "Introducción" to the Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana republished as an appendix by Juan Ramón Jiménez, El modernismo: Notas de un curso (Madrid: Aguilar, 1962), p. 274.
 2. Juan Ramón Jiménez, El modernismo: Notas de un curso, p. 50.
 3. Manuel Pedro González, Notas en torno al modernismo (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1958), p. 55.
 4. José Enrique Rodó, "Rubén Darío" in Obras completas, ed. by Emir Rodríguez Monegal (Madrid: Aguilar, 1957), p. 187.

In the case of Gutiérrez Nájera, the development from an ideological view to symbolic expression in art is clearly drawn, as evidenced in his essays on literature and art which underscore an intention to give ideas and the process of idealization a representation in art. Whether engaging in polemics on art versus materialism, excoriating the Mexican Academy, or composing an introductory article for a literary journal, art was always to Gutiérrez Nájera the manifestation of truth through literary form. This basic assumption gives a unity to Gutiérrez Nájera's entire literary production extending from his first poems as a teenager to the brilliant conclusion of his career as editor of the Revista Azul.¹

Utilizing Gutiérrez Nájera's literary theories as a

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1. In essence, the basic facts of Gutiérrez Nájera's life are little more than a record of his career as a journalist and literary figure: ". . . nació en México el 22 de diciembre de 1859. A los 4 años de edad fué su familia a radicarse a Querétaro. . . El año de 63 regresaron a la capital. No estuvo nunca en la escuela, su mamá le enseñó las primeras letras y él solo aprendió a leer. A los 13 años de edad y sin conocimiento de su familia empezó a escribir artículos y poesías en el periódico La Iberia, del que era director don Anselmo de la Portilla; después en el Federalista, del que era director Alfredo Bablot, y después en todos los periódicos políticos y literarios de la época, usando en ellos distintos seudónimos, entre otros el de Monsieur Can Can, Junius, Recamier, Cura de Jalatlaco, Perico de los Palotes y sobre todo Duque Job. Fué fundador, en colaboración con Carlos Díaz Dufío, de la Revista Azul. Nunca quiso coleccionar ni publicar sus obras y sólo a su muerte, . . . se publicaron los dos tomos de prosa y uno de poesías. La inmensa labor literaria acabó con su vida; murió el 3 de febrero de 1895." González Guerrero in Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Poesías completas I, xxiii.



foundation, there emerge three possibilities for categorizing symbolic representation of reality and its expression in his writings: 1) Symbolic representation of value; 2) Symbolic representation of time and universality; 3) Symbolic representation of the writer's immediate experience of himself as a person and his environment.

To anticipate briefly what these three categories involve, it may be said that Gutiérrez Nájera's central desire to give value to life through idealism and aestheticism resulted in a broad grouping of symbols from the fine arts as manifestations of idealized beauty. The high incidence of artists, writers, musicians and actresses as characters in his stories is another manifestation of both idealism and aestheticism. The world of nature provides a further source of material destined to convey an impression of spiritual value. Precious stones and metals, flowers, birds, weather phenomena by their rarity, fragility or intangibility were identified in various ways to visions of ideality.

The second category, a preoccupation with time and space, involves an attempt to recapture the past and arrest the fleeting presence of time as well as to give a timeless, geographically imprecise (therefore universal) norm to human existence through art. Time symbology is achieved through the use of mythological personages, historic personages and literary figures of the past. With respect to symbols of universality, the author frequently evoked foreign names and

countries as a means of giving his work more than a limited national identity.

The third category of symbols revolves around the author's person and his experience of his physical and social environment. Contrary to what might be expected from his aspirations to universality, there is no rejection of Mexico or her national characteristics. Gutiérrez Nájera loved Mexico all the more for comprising part of the universal whole and his willingness to confront her problems was considerably more direct and less escapist than is sometimes thought. Several characters in the stories are readily identifiable as symbols of social concern. Many of the signs¹ Gutiérrez Nájera chose from his national background are used symbolically to portray some aspect of the struggle of materialism versus idealism that he constantly waged. Social events such as the theatre, horse races, formal balls, religious ceremonies, became symbols of aestheticism and idealism. Another aspect of Gutiérrez Nájera's treatment of immediate experience is his concentration on the psychological processes. His idealism logically led to an interest in certain mental phenomena; the role of dreams therefore, is an important aspect of Gutiérrez Nájera's work. In giving attention to dreams and the mental processes, probably the most spectacular and innovative product was the employment of color synaesthesia.

1. According to William York Tindall, "sign" is an "exact reference" which serves as a "pointer" to symbols. Tindall, The Literary Symbol, pp. 5-6.

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This plan for studying Gutiérrez Nájera's use of symbol is directed toward the general thematic meaning of symbols (value, space and time, immediate experience) rather than specific symbols. This is necessitated in part by the nature of Gutiérrez Nájera's use of the symbolic. He preferred that literature--hence symbols--be suggestive, with the result that individual symbols acquire various meanings.

Another consideration which makes a topical approach to symbol useful is the unity of meaning in Gutiérrez Nájera's work. Ideologically, major turning points in his writing are absent, the only exception perhaps being his ambivalent attitude toward orthodox Christian doctrine before 1880. It should be stressed however, that Gutiérrez Nájera in his wavering between faith and doubt, felt a stronger pull toward doubt and that his rejection of orthodoxy was not an abrupt reversal of opinion.

It would be inaccurate to claim that the study of the use of symbol as defined herein and the organization chosen offer the only valid system for understanding Gutiérrez Nájera. Similarly, this work does not attempt to refute or to supplant other excellent studies on the author. I hope that a study from this specific perspective will give new insights into the poetry and fiction of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera.

The editions of Gutiérrez Nájera's works which will be used to complete this study are the two volume collection of his Poesías completas edited by González Guerrero and the

Cuentos completos y otras narraciones edited by E.K. Mapes in 1958. There is no single authoritative edition of Gutiérrez Nájera's criticism; however, recent discoveries by Boyd Carter, contained in Gutiérrez Nájera's Obras: Crítica literaria I, are invaluable sources for studying his theory of literature and will be used extensively in the first chapter.

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CHAPTER I

GUTIÉRREZ NÁJERA AND HIS THEORY OF LITERATURE

The theoretical foundations behind every poem and story Gutiérrez Nájera wrote are contained in an aesthetic theory which by extension and implication embraces a world view. Beauty to Gutiérrez Nájera was a bridge which united finite human beings to absolutes of perfection that could not be known except through special revelations. The object of the artist, it followed, was to search with his special genius for the elusive links which would lead the reader toward contemplation of sublime truths. These ideas were written in the writer's youth and remained essentially the same as long as he wrote. At seventeen, the first elaborate statement on art theory was made in a polemic article, "El arte y el materialismo" intended to combat positivistic notions which he nevertheless later accepted in part. His definition of beauty was:

Para nosotros, lo bello es la representación de lo infinito en lo finito; la manifestación de lo extensivo en lo intensivo; el reflejo de lo absoluto; la revelación de Dios. Para nosotros el sentimiento de lo bello es innato en el hombre; es un destello de la naturaleza angélica, un ideal sublime que Dios presenta al espíritu como el término de sus luchas, como la realización de sus aspiraciones, como el bien supremo. Lo bello tiene que ser necesariamente ontológico: es lo absoluto, es Dios. Dios, que se revela en las sublimes creaciones del poeta, en las dulces melodías de la

música, en los lienzos que con magnífico pincel traza el artista, y en las gigantescas moles que levanta el genio creador del arquitecto. Valiéndonos de una fórmula matemática, pudiéramos decir, que lo bello es al artista como la perfección espiritual es al santo; el anhelado término, la suprema recompensa, la idea sublime.

(Crítica, p. 55)

The importance of this early pronouncement is indicated by Boyd Carter's statement that it offers the first important theoretical document of the literary movement which became known as Modernism.¹

Looking into Gutiérrez Nájera's ideas on literature, one of the most impressive characteristics is the author's awesome variety of references to other writers, both Mexican and foreign. In truth, Gutiérrez Nájera was prominent among the Mexican intelligentsia of his time, in addition to being completely within the mainstream of nineteenth century European and American literary currents. Both of these facts--the author in his intellectual environment and the literary tradition he worked within--give enough additional insight into Gutiérrez Nájera's theory of literature to deserve some presentation before the theories themselves are examined.

Partially, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera's literary outpouring can be described as the final result of a crisis of existence suffered by the author. Everything he wrote

1. Boyd G. Carter, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Estudio y escritos inéditos (Mexico: Ediciones de Andrea, 1956), p. 76.

eventually has its connection with this central and crucial problem. The principal figure in this struggle is the author himself; however, the preoccupation extends beyond mere subjectivism to include an empathetic view of the world, seen as peopled with protagonists sharing the author's metaphysical doubt. With this background, the artist's task is to try to give substance to human existence and somehow come to terms with the mysteries of eternity which oppressed generations of the late nineteenth century so strongly. In exploring the enigma and reaching for answers to man's uncertain place in the universe, Gutiérrez Nájera worked around the functions of the human psyche which is where the struggle had to take place.

The roots of this preoccupation are complex and there is no single source distinguishable as the one influence which caused his metaphysical uncertainty. That Gutiérrez Nájera was fully aware of the problem in all its amplitude there can be no doubt. His writings abound in phrases such as "the chaotic times in which we live", "this age of doubt", "our troubled times". One of the nearest sources of this concept of the world and the epoch is the circumstances of the artist's life.

Having recourse to the writer's life for an explanation of his ideas does not imply that the ideas are in some deterministic manner products of environment. It is more the case of a sensitive genius with a particular education working from the vantage point of a unique society

deciding which parts of the education are useful and what place in that society he could mutually contribute to and profit from. Gutiérrez Nájera's choice of companions, his work, the books he read, all reflect a selection of interests aligned with a concept of what the world is or is not or ideally should be.

According to the author's daughter, her father's life was, with the exception of an inherited disease, a happy one. She particularly singles out for attack several myths which have become commonly accepted parts of her father's biography. The one she goes to the greatest length to refute is his reputed ugliness. According to the Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe, which she quotes, her father was "torcido o corcovado."¹ Such deformity is easily discounted by quotes from close friends and references to seven photographs she had in her possession. Another long-held myth is that his mother intended that the poet should be a priest, causing a rebellion by the son. This is discounted with family reminiscences and scattered autobiographical quotes from her father's work. Two other myths she dispels with plausible explanations are his reputed alcoholism and suicide. To some, notably Torres-Rioseco who conjectured that Gutiérrez Nájera took his own life through excessive alcoholic consumption, his death was a combination of the

1. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo: Biografía anectótica de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera (Mexico, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, 1959), p. 53.

two. According to Juan José Tablada, Gutiérrez Nájera did like to drink but was far from being an alcoholic.¹

However, other rumors are not so easily countered. Miss Gutiérrez Nájera, perhaps out of filial loyalty, takes issue with Blanco Fombona, that her father had an unhappy love affair. It is easy to show the weakness in Blanco Fombona's assertions since he was writing from the distance of Spain with admittedly vague information. Other sources nearer the poet however, give more concrete information:

. . .y conste que el justo temor de ser indiscreto me hace no narrar con todos sus detalles un episodio que pudo ser trágico; una tentativa de suicidio con vulgares cerillas disueltas en una taza de te, que se verificó al romperse los dulces lazos del amor juvenil que ligaron al Duque y a la Duquesa, y que no tuvo fatales consecuencias gracias a la pronta y eficaz intervención de nuestro no olvidado amigo el doctor Juan N. Govantes.²

Although this is only one incident, the depth of unhappiness made obvious by it indicates that Gutiérrez Nájera's existence was not all pleasure.

The great misfortune of Gutiérrez Nájera's life which would make the greatest impact on his literary work however, is indicated by his daughter in elaborating for the first time a detailed account of her father's death. As she makes unquestionably clear by quoting family letters, Gutiérrez Nájera died from a hemorrhage following a tumor operation and not by suicide. The hemorrhage was a result of

1. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 162.

2. Julio Jiménez Rueda, "La Duquesa Job", Revista de la Universidad de Yucatán, II, No. 9, (May, 1960), 40.

hemophilia which had made the author's life a private martyrdom. This physical impairment was undoubtedly uppermost in the author's consciousness throughout his life and generated his concern for eternity, the nature of reality, and the stability of the universe. Speculations on the physical and spiritual characteristics of life and the possibility of eternity were subjects Gutiérrez Nájera could not easily take lightly. In one of his newspaper columns, with a brief mention of the Russian Tzar, Nicolas II, Gutiérrez Nájera probably revealed some of his own anxiety when he said: "¿Sabéis lo que es vivir casi catorce años atado codo con codo con la muerte? ¿Sabéis lo que es nunca decir sin miedo: hasta mañana? De eso se muere."¹ Understandably, death along with love is a leading motif of his writing.

Together with Gutiérrez Nájera's physical condition, there are other biographical determinants that led him to see the world in a certain way. His childhood education in the home, formal education and the friends in whom he sought companionship all left an enduring mark in ideological form. The disturbing problem which arose from his education and from his associations was that everything he learned was not acceptable, such as the traditional beliefs in God so carefully instilled in youth. Yet if faith was rejected, its

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Obras ineditas: Crónicas de "Puck", ed. by E.K. Mapes, (New York: Hispanic Institute, 1943), p. 191. Future references to this work will be noted in the text as Crónicas de "Puck".

pressing need was never ignored. In this case, scientific positivism continually pulled him away from Christian dogma only to receive in the end the same acceptance-rejection relationship. If the tenets of scientific positivism appeared to be true, the implications they held out to man were energetically rejected.

The first opportunity for close attachment to the spiritual emerged in Gutiérrez Nájera's youth from routinely given religious instruction and a formal education with a broad humanistic foundation. Strictly speaking, Gutiérrez Nájera did not attend any one school, his education coming from several tutors and matriculation in different schools for individual courses. Undoubtedly the most noteworthy part of his early education was an introduction to the French language at an early age. Contrary to some biographers, his daughter writes that he did not attend a French secondary school but received private instruction from a tutor, Argel Grosso.¹ Although there are no exact dates, she states that he was "muy niño", more or less agreeing with Justo Sierra who, referring to himself and Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, wrote: "aprendemos el francés al mismo tiempo que el castellano."² The accessibility of French to Sierra, Gutiérrez Nájera and their entire generation gave them a wider outlook on occidental as well as world culture.

1. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 13.

2. Justo Sierra quoted in Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 13.

French, learned in youth, became as important to Gutiérrez Nájera's artistic and intellectual formation as his own native Castilian.

Besides French, he became quite familiar with Latin from classes taken in the capital's Seminario Diocesano under Próspero María Alarcón who was subsequently Archbishop of Mexico. If French provided a more ample view of the modern world, Latin was the bridge to the ancient civilizations. In his formal training, it is Latin and French which left the greatest imprint. From this point his education continued in an autodidactic manner through extensive reading. The father who had carefully planned the formal part of his son's training now provided him with a study and a steady supply of books. A custom of heavy reading begun with paternal encouragement remained as something of a daily ritual with Gutiérrez Nájera until he died. In his own words, "escribo de seis a ocho horas diarias; cuatro empleo en leer, porque no sé todavía cómo puede escribirse sin leer nada" (Crítica, p. 365).

In an article Gutiérrez Nájera left a record of which books most attracted him in the formative years, mentioning especially the Romanticists Lamartine, Zorrilla and Chateaubriand.¹ An intimate acquaintance, Juan José Tablada gives more insight into his friend's literary predilections recalling authors and titles of Gutiérrez

1. Quoted in Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, pp. 18-9.

Nájera's library at the time of his marriage:

Alfredo de Musset, Gautier, Paul de St.-Victor, Janin, Brunetière, Renan, los maestros franceses que más influyeron...y junto a ellos los místicos que nutrieron su espíritu; Las moradas interiores de Santa Teresa, Las Fioretti de San Francisco.¹

What stands out in this enumeration is a preference for the Romantic. Writers in this tradition were his first inspiration and theoretically Gutiérrez Nájera, in youth and through maturity, never really left this movement. His aesthetic taste sharpened, his interests broadened, his own creative work developed, but all within an essentially Romantic context. Another salient characteristic of the reading preferences is a leaning toward French. However, if French titles are in the foreground, there is danger of passing over the fact that his interests extended far beyond French to include not only his own Mexican and Spanish literatures but all occidental literature. An appendix of Gutiérrez Nájera's criticism would be a veritable compendium of world literature from Homer to the author's contemporaries.

Besides Gutiérrez Nájera's early training, schooling and reading interests, his selection of companions gives additional knowledge of how he thought and what influenced him to think the way he did. In describing Gutiérrez Nájera's relations with his companions, the picture widens to encompass the existing thought in Mexico at the time

1. Quoted in Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 19.

and to show how this led Gutiérrez Nájera's generation to look upon themselves and the world. Broadly, the span of Gutiérrez Nájera's writing (1876-1895) is the apogee of positivism in Mexico. To be sure, positivism was introduced earlier with Gabino Barreda's famous Oración cívica given as a speech in 1867, but it was not until the presidency of Porfirio Díaz that positivism became an instrument of official policy covering the years 1876-1910. Gutiérrez Nájera's death came at a time when positivistic ideas and the Porfirio Díaz regime were at a zenith. It is only after the author's death that Díaz was commonly acknowledged as a dictator in the worst sense and that positivism came under attack, partly by the same intellectuals who introduced and propagated its tenets.

The positivism of the period was an attempt to incorporate the ideas of such men as Darwin, Mill, Bain, Huxley, Tyndall, Virchow, Helmholtz, and especially Spencer and Comte into a coherent political and educational format.¹ The generation which attempted this synthesis considered itself practical, non-utopian, evolutionist and scientific. Society was reasoned to be a living organism which could be cured of its ills by a combination of enlightened laws to foster order with progress and an enlightened educational system.

The group to which Gutiérrez Nájera related, which

1. Leopoldo Zea, El positivismo en México (Mexico, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1968), p. 318.

prevailed in shaping positivism into official policy, had as its first platform the newspaper La libertad. Justo Sierra, one of its editors, was the leading theorist of the group which included Telesforo García, Jorge Hammeken and Francisco Bulnes. It was with these men associated with La libertad that Gutiérrez Nájera came of age intellectually. Between 1878 and 1884 he published 404 articles in this newspaper. Writing of these years shortly before his death he fondly recalled the above names in happy association with long days of writing, reading and conversations which molded his spirit, a period he considered as an "escalera" in his life (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 50).

As stated, the ideas which influenced Gutiérrez Nájera and guided his generation had their origin with Gabino Barreda's introduction of positivism into Mexico. In his Oración cívica of 1867, Barreda began with an adaptation of Comtian philosophy to Mexico's unique historical circumstances. Auguste Comte had set forth in his Cours de philosophie positive, published in 1842, that the history of civilization could be divided into three stages: the theological in which everything was explained as motivation of gods; the metaphysical in which reality was explained by rational abstractions; and the positivistic in which the origin and destiny of man is ignored and rational study is limited to what can be observed. Barreda applied this scheme to Mexican history, defining the colonial period with its close church ties as the theological stage of Mexican

history; the independence period with its Romantic utopianist ideologies as the metaphysical and the present and immediate future as the positivistic. This last stage was to be a period of reform; first, educational reform to lead the masses away from the customs inherited from the theological (colonial) and metaphysical (Mexican independence) periods; and secondly, political reform to adjust the nation to its material needs. The motto adopted for this stage of positivistic reform was Liberty, Order, and Progress.

The problem which occupied the minds of the La libertad writers was twofold, national and metaphysical. The national preoccupation was primarily what it had always been from independence--how to organize a nation to govern itself. The split with Spain had been total, leaving an inexperienced bureaucracy without institutions to govern. The resulting chaos produced continuing revolutions and facilitated the occupation of Mexico by the United States (1846-1848) and then by France (1862-1867). With such a confused historical past, the task took on a certain urgency and the positivists came to feel that something more elaborate than political reform alone was needed. The nation had to be educated for a total change of national, racial characteristics which caused chaos and social disintegration. Justo Sierra felt that the innate habits of the Mexican toward anarchy had become a "thousand times more difficult to destroy than domination by the privileged

classes."¹

Consequently, the basic objective became the changing of the country's mentality. Barreda had referred to this task as "emancipación mental". Justo Sierra gave renewed emphasis to the idea: "Mexicans must pass from the military era, the era of revolutions and civil wars, to the industrial era, the era of work. . . quickly, since the giant growing at our side. . . would tend to absorb us."² For Telesforo García, to approach this working and practical industrial era, all ideas of utopia in an educational philosophy had to be abandoned. Metaphysical, idealistically oriented ideologies served only to perpetuate natural defects of a country which is "eminente mente soñador, eminente mente místico".³ The country must be educated along severely scientific lines. This was not intended by García to be a thorough capitulation to scientific thinking but an attempt to augment natural qualities of a people with attributes that were lacking.

In order to reach the pragmatic industrial era, the country must have peace and order. In order to implement these two ideals there must be a strong progressive-minded government. This idea was the initial justification for

1. Leopoldo Zea, The Latin American Mind, trans. by James Abbott and Lowell Dunham (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), p. 283.

2. Zea, The Latin American Mind, p. 272.

3. Leopoldo Zea, El positivismo en México, p. 335.

the Porfirio Díaz dictatorship. Díaz, who had fought under the reformer Juárez, had acceptable liberal attitudes and his control of the army gave him power to provide what Francisco Cosmes said would be a "tiranía honrada".¹ The supporters of the Díaz regime holding these positivistic concepts of progress were known as "científicos".

No account of the ideological side of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera's life is complete without taking this background into account. There is a limit to how involved Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera was in the power configuration of the period and he certainly did not acquire great wealth as many of the científicos did, particularly in the declining days of the regime. He was a member of the national legislature; however, no significant legislation is associated with him, nor is his name commonly given as a científico. It is in the position of a well known journalist that Gutiérrez Nájera fits into the social picture and a perusal of his articles with the superlatives he uses for men who were more involved makes plain that his sympathies were allied with this group. Significantly, it was the three newspapers most closely tied to the Díaz presidency (La libertad, El universal, and El partido liberal) in which Gutiérrez Nájera wrote his largest number of articles. The first two of these newspapers were subsidized by the

1. Patrick Romanell, La formación de la mentalidad mexicana (Mexico: Colegio de México, 1954), p. 64-5.

government. Of Porfirio Díaz himself, Gutiérrez Nájera has left a glowing portrait as "bizarro, vigoroso, rebozando de vida...La gloria sólo es completa cuando la hermosura cautivada por ella arroja flores al paso del vencedor...del triunfante paladín" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 164).

Gutiérrez Nájera was never, however, an overly involved political figure. His foremost concern was art. In his concern for art, social themes did play a component role, as evidenced in occasional sentences such as the following: "los indios. . .en sus lomos de increíble resistencia han traído la pesadumbre de cuatro siglos. Y no puede decirse que tienen familia, ni propiedad, ni patria. Tienen cansancio: lo han heredado. . .casi no han vivido" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 18). He felt drawn to this positivist generation and its dedication to national problems by a sympathy for its social ideals, a respect for its intellectually elite, aristocratic character. He felt that he, as an innovator in art, was a natural complement to those who brought the new to education and politics.

There is another point of positivistic influence in which Gutiérrez Nájera was more than a mere complement to the preoccupations of his time. The focus of his generation as stated above was national and metaphysical. If Gutiérrez Nájera's dedication to art limited his involvement in national matters, there was no escape from the metaphysical issue which made a conspicuous influence on his life and work. It is at this juncture that a rational basis for the

crisis of existence which afflicted the author is centered.

Positivism, with its inclination toward social problems had as its most basic assumption that the only worthwhile reality was that which is scientifically provable. This in a sense was a denial of any metaphysical explanation with the justification that what is not seen is not knowable. The consequence was to prevent man from speculating too broadly on his destiny or beginning if limited by observation and reason. The implication of this philosophy for Christian dogma is practically to destroy it. Comte attempted to create an entirely new religion within the limits of observed reality with its own trinity: the Great Being (humanity), the Great Fetish (the earth) and the Great Way (space). John Stuart Mill, although denying Comte's political and religious absolutism, preserved the principle that religion should be founded on experience and lean toward a "religion of humanity based upon altruistic ethics".¹ The best hope for Christian dogma came from Herbert Spencer who, while describing his own form of evolutionary positivism, urged that science could not take the place of religion but that religion--all religions--had failed to explain the mysteries of the universe and their proper function was to struggle in this direction.

Similarly in Mexico, if positivism offered a ready ideology for social reform the negative effect was to

1. Nicola Abbagnano, "Positivism", The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1st ed., VI, 416.

create a spiritual vacuum. Several of the Mexican positivists insisted on a spiritualizing effect of scientific discovery to prove they had not destroyed spiritual, idealistic criteria. Justo Sierra wrote that "el arco de Volta encierra más poesía que La Ilíada".¹ But the fact remained that the positivists, at least theoretically, had gone far to cut themselves off from the spiritual world. Telesforo García aptly described the impasse in addressing himself to the opposing idealistic philosophy of Kraussism, "¿Cómo va a ser la filosofía ciencia de Dios, si Dios mismo es algo indemostrable?"²

The positivists of Gutiérrez Nájera's time were not only restricted to the physical world, skeptical of Christian doctrine, mistrustful of Romantic idealism, but in their own special development of the philosophy, not really secure in their feelings about the material world. The first generation of Mexican positivists (Barreda, Prieto, Ramírez) followed Comte in that they saw much more certainty in science than the second generation (Sierra, García, Hammeken). This later group, more influenced by Spencer, Mill and Darwin, saw the scientific approach as meaningful but imperfect. What man knows is limited not only to what he sees but also by the fact that his knowledge is relative

1. Agustín Yañez, Don Justo Sierra, su vida, sus ideas y su obra (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1962), p. 98.

2. Leopoldo Zea, El positivismo en México, p. 332.

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to what other men observe. Scientific laws for this reason are not universal but subject to change and, for that matter, man's knowledge even of what he sees is not entirely comprehensible.

The previous paragraphs outline the principal aspects of Gutiérrez Nájera's life which reach over into his creative work. He spent a childhood which was ideally conducive to development as an artist. An early introduction to the journalistic world provided stimulation, an outlet for his ambitions and enlightened acquaintances. All in all, the young journalist found his surroundings well suited to his personal inclinations. The urban elegance of the Porfirio Díaz era was aesthetically to Gutiérrez Nájera's liking; the liberal politics of his associates corresponded to a basic sympathy for the less fortunate; and the metaphysical insecurity of the positivists interacted with feelings caused by the writer's precarious physical condition. This last fact--the sway of positivistic influence and the misfortune of hemophilia--is the most explainable biographical source of his uncertainty-of-life theme. These biographical notes, however, give only partially the background of Gutiérrez Nájera's thinking. A more exact view comes with the biography in connection with a selective description of the Romantic tradition to which he pertained.

Positivism, as noted, was the most widely accepted philosophy of the intellectual circles frequented by

Gutiérrez Nájera. However, this philosophy was not totally responsive to the special needs of the lyrical, impressionistic frame of mind characteristic of the artist. Positivism's greatest point of convergence with Gutiérrez Nájera's inclinations was the uncertainty concerning human destiny. However, this uncertainty and doubt, and for that matter, the entire school of positivism, stemmed from the earlier much more inclusive Romantic movement. This movement, begun in the late eighteenth century, altered man's self-view and caused him to feel deep conflicts within himself and with the world. On the one hand there was a thirst for truth and value and on the other a sense of frustration rooted in presentiments of their unattainability. The repercussions of this conflict in art were as diverse as they were fertile, producing a variety of moods and styles with succeeding schools of writing which attacked a common problem in dissimilar ways. Positivism and its literary counterparts, Realism and Naturalism, were only detached parts of the larger Romantic current. Thus, if Gutiérrez Nájera found the circumference of positivism limiting, there was an infinitely wider field for inspiration in Romanticism which he productively exploited.

To give meaning to the statement that a Romantic current gave Gutiérrez Nájera his literary essence at once involves accounting for a literary term which has consistently resisted the effort. That the term Romanticism may be considered either as a constant of human temperament

recurrently appearing throughout history, a literary vogue of specified traits chronologically placed at the beginning of the nineteenth century, or a post-enlightenment world view that continues to the present moment, indicates the broad usage into which the word has fallen. At least two critics who have written well and sympathetically of Romanticism, Morse Peckham¹ and Jacques Barzun,² dismiss the first two definitions as too vague and narrow for accurate description of what transpired literarily during the last two centuries. Both of these men share a view of the nineteenth century as Romantic, that is, as a period of artistic diversity but unified by a sameness in underlying motivations.

The conclusions of Peckham and Barzun concerning Romanticism and the nineteenth century are interesting when compared to analogous ideas Gutiérrez Nájera unconsciously adhered to in his criticism and which eventually molded his creative work. Peckham and Barzun, each for different motives, detail how a basic nineteenth century assessment of the human condition found its way into expression through a variety of guises. First, a pattern was set by late eighteenth century pre-romanticism, then followed specialized manifestations such as Transcendentalism, Realism,

1. Morse Peckham, Beyond The Tragic Vision (New York: George Braziller, 1962).

2. Jacques Barzun, Classic, Romantic and Modern, Anchor Books (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1961).

Parnassianism, Naturalism, and Impressionism. Gutiérrez Nájera, who denied he followed any literary movement, and in one place or another found a condescending way of referring to representative nineteenth century literary schools ("ciertos decadentistas, simbolistas, teósofos y demás gente menuda" Crónicas de "Puck", p. 97; "a pesar de su romanticismo" Crónicas de "Puck", p. 70; "naturalismo...lo nauseabundo y pornográfico sin arte" Crónicas de "Puck", p. 99), declared himself an eclectic. The implementing of this eclecticism turned out to be a decision to adopt whatever suited his temperament from different literary tendencies, some of which, like naturalism, he had sharply criticized. Therefore, even if Gutiérrez Nájera has a unique personal style, he is also, to varying degrees, a microcosm of every major artistic direction taken in the nineteenth century and his critical assessment of the century had a unified quality similar to that of Peckham and Barzun. He encountered in the major writers of this period a basic Romantic spiritual orientation with which he closely identified his own thinking.

The unity which Gutiérrez Nájera found with other writers of his century revolved around typically fundamental Romantic concepts of reason, emotion, and social roles to be played by man. These concepts were practically forced upon the Romantics as the seventeenth and eighteenth century period of Enlightenment disintegrated.

The Neo-Classicists, inspired by empirical,

mathematical formulas and scientific discoveries, had projected an assumed orderliness of nature into human areas of government, art and everyday life. The rationale was the way to knowledge and knowledge led to orderly geometric patterns of reality. The set rules of Aristotelian poetics with Renaissance modifications gave the Enlightenment an art formula which paralleled its concept of man as a component in the geometric configuration of the universe. Going beyond art, the orderliness of the physical world was used as evidence for the existence of God. As for governments, it was reasoned that rulers and society should work together in patterned concert, each responsive to the needs of the other. If a society could work in harmony this way, then there existed a justification for monarchical absolutism. The surest way to happiness for the individual was a surrender to rational harmony and a constant struggle to bridle emotions, which were considered as inherently pernicious.

The reaction against Enlightenment philosophy began during the late eighteenth century. The Lisbon earthquake and tidal wave of 1755 raised questions throughout Europe concerning the orderliness of the physical world and a harmonious universe designed by God. The decay of the French monarchy undermined Neo-Classical justification of political absolutism. Dissatisfaction extended to include Enlightenment standards of personal behavior. As Jacques Barzun points out, the treatment of emotions was at best inconsistent and arbitrary. Pleasure, amusement, ridicule,

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surprise were acceptable because they seemed consistent demeanor for a rational man; melancholy and vindictiveness were less acceptable, while fervor and eccentricity were unacceptable. During the last half of the eighteenth century these and other arbitrary judgments wore thin, causing a general pessimism which finally ended in the Romantic re-evaluation of the human situation.

The most significant development of late eighteenth century pessimism and the Romantic re-orientation were developments in Germany. Morse Peckham points to new directions taken by two different men who, working independently, nevertheless arrived at similar conclusions. Immanuel Kant and Wolfgang Goethe examined Enlightenment rationalism and suggested different problems which became central for writers from then until the time that Gutiérrez Nájera began publishing. Kant, in his Critique of Pure Reason (1781), provided a vague beginning for Romanticism in his break with total rationalism by denying the provable existence of metaphysical systems and that reality, more than a fixed thing, was a creation of the mind. Goethe gave a practical demonstration of how man was affected by the disintegration of the idea that the human mind was structurally part of a larger order. His novel, The Sorrows of Young Werther (1787) showed how an optimistic, Enlightenment oriented young man fails in pursuit of happiness because his irrational but natural passions would not allow him to perform a socially prescribed role. His attempts to achieve

worldly position were hampered by an inability to accept artificial class distinctions, while an attempted fulfillment through love was frustrated by the heroine's engagement and then marriage to a friend. Rather than give in to the impossible situation with a calm, rational understanding, he submitted to an irrational, incomprehensible side of his character. The culmination of this mysterious, dark, inner drive was suicide.

The alienation of young Werther is the foundation of Romanticism. First came the realization by Goethe and his generation that the mind was not part of nature, that man could not find happiness in a social role or consolation from a cosmic order; then followed an acute feeling of isolation. Salvation for the individual had to come from within. Order, meaning and value had to be created by an assertion of selfhood. To preserve the self from a pernicious social structure, selfhood had to be gained by original creation which automatically made the role an anti-social one.

Gutiérrez Nájera's view of the world was totally colored with this primordial vision of social and metaphysical alienation and fulfillment of selfhood. His literary criticism gives repeated illustrations of how weighted his mind was with these ideas. If a writer post-dates the initial stages of Romanticism, Gutiérrez Nájera characteristically finds some common ground. On the other hand, even when the writer pre-dates the turn of the nineteenth

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century, Gutiérrez Nájera inevitably discovers viewpoints similar to those of Romanticists from Goethe and after.

Among the writings Gutiérrez Nájera mentioned which pre-dated Romanticism, the most salient examples of criticism mirroring the critic's mind were several articles on William Shakespeare.¹ In general, this objectivism was a Romantic pattern for Shakespearean criticism which had existed since the first polemic manifestos in Germany and continued through the nineteenth century.² Shakespeare's non-adherence to classical unities, rules of form and propriety was a vindication of original, intuitive creativeness as a method for writing which had converted Shakespeare into a weapon for use against the Neo-Classicists. The usefulness of Shakespeare did not end with these considerations of form however. Subjective, idealistic characters who peopled a complex world where a moral code did not automatically provide happiness and where legitimate aspirations were truncated by an unfathomable design of Providence were circumstances totally compatible to the nineteenth century

1. Gutiérrez Nájera referred to Shakespeare throughout his life. The most extensive criticism on the English playwright is contained in a series of articles: "William Shakespeare", "Othello", "Othello.--Yago.--Desdemona", "Hamlet", "Romeo y Julieta", Obras de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Prosa, Vol. II (Mexico: Tip. de la Oficina Impresora del Timbre, Palacio Nacional, 1903), 65-92. Hereafter cited in the text as Prosa II.

2. Oswald LeWinter, ed., Shakespeare in Europe: An Anthology of Writings on Shakespeare by Europeans, Meridian Books (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Co., 1963).

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consciousness. Gutiérrez Nájera, in viewing the Shakespearean world and finding common ground with it, was following a well established trend. A list of some of the more prominent men who focused on Shakespeare in a similar way includes Schlegel, Goethe, Schiller, Hegel, Stendhal, Heine, Pushkin, Hugo, Turgenev, Taine, and Tolstoy. In Mexico, Gutiérrez Nájera had contemporary examples in Ignacio Altamirano and Justo Sierra.

Gutiérrez Nájera was not unaware of the tradition of Shakespearean criticism. He mentioned especially Victor Hugo whose statements on the English playwright figured in his defense of Romanticism in France. Gutiérrez Nájera acknowledged, in addition, the possible objection that he was reading his own feelings into the plays of another age, saying this in fact was so and giving a succinct justification: "A veces he llegado a creer que en uno de los apocalipsis de su genio, Shakespeare entrevió nuestro siglo y le dio ser en Hamlet" (Prosa II, p. 85). This "uno de los apocalipsis de su genio" is indicative of the enthusiasm Gutiérrez Nájera felt for Shakespeare's work, and the embodiment of Hamlet as the most representative symbol of a century, by extension, leads the reader to associate Hamlet with the ideas of his critic.

Hamlet emerges in Gutiérrez Nájera's criticism as a model protagonist of the Romanticists. The description in the first sentence sets the tone with a delineation of the protagonist as "la pálida silueta del soñador danés." This

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image came not only from reading the tragedy but was reinforced in the critic's memory with two portraits by different nineteenth century painters, Henry Lehmann's "Hamlet in the Cemetery" and Delacroix's rendition of the same title. Hamlet's role, in Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation, was the important Romantic search for value, inevitably ending in frustration: "vino al mundo cargado de ilusiones (Prosa II, p. 85) . . . (Hamlet) nos conduce a un caos indescifrable en que la virtud y la verdad desaparecen" (Prosa II, p.81). There was no consolation for the protagonist in social mores, in reason or in faith. Society, which should have offered the consolation of its professed mores, was in a diseased state, leaving the Danish dreamer in the position of all truth searchers, victimized by reality which in its most compassionate mood destroyed reason ("mata la razón" Prosa II, p. 85) or with its usual malignancy, killed faith ("se levanta aterrada la imagen espantosa de la duda" Prosa II, p. 81). The terminal effect was a personage who was "tétrico, meditabundo, taciturno con la ironía en los labios y el dolor profundísimo en el alma" (Prosa II, p.81). A love-hate combination was the emotional reaction which sought release in typical Romantic moods of "desprecio al mundo" (Prosa II, p. 82) and a "cólera universal" (Prosa II, p. 82). The last paragraph of the article restates the correlation between Hamlet and the nineteenth century: "Si Hamlet es un loco, también lo es nuestro siglo. La misma duda, el mismo descreimiento, el mismo deseo impaciente del

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suicidio. Nos hemos divorciado de nuestra Ofelia: el sentimiento" (Prosa II, p. 86).

A study of characters from other Shakespearean plays gives insight into the way Gutiérrez Nájera saw himself and his century reflected through that playwright's genius. Othello, for one, received almost as much praise as Hamlet, but the qualities he possessed were different. If Hamlet symbolized doubt, Othello ("aquel hercúleo molde humano" Prosa II, p. 71) represented Romantic constants of strength, energy and glorious triumph in combination with a natural but potent defect: jealousy. This combination in the person of Othello is further complicated by the same hostile Providence which plagued Hamlet, making faith and human reason pointless. Although jealousy was recognized as a defect, it was not equivalent to the orthodox notion of sin which could be cast aside or effortlessly atoned for, nor was human frailty something rationalism could replace. Jealousy was as integral to Othello as adverse fate, and the manner in which Othello struggled against this combination evoked in Gutiérrez Nájera a view of ideal conduct similar to that of other nineteenth century generations. Worthiness of being had to emanate from a kind of individual struggle which can be defined by several observations Gutiérrez Nájera made on Othello.

Othello's strength, energy and nobility ("fiera noble" Prosa II, p. 75) were, by definition, of superlative quality ("el más soberbio león" Prosa II, p. 71). The

attempts of this superior being to impose himself bring forth his own as well as the world's complex reality. In bitter vengeance he kills his wife, whom he believes guilty of adultery, but "no deja de amarla!...Ya está muerta y todavía quiere besarla. Ya es cadáver y aún le parece muy hermosa!" (Prosa II, p. 76). This dialectical complexity of emotions is as striking to Gutiérrez Nájera as the unexplainable fate which cast Othello about. Othello's greatest achievement in the struggle against intricate and nebulous reality is that he triumphs ("Es bello...porque es bello el triunfo" Prosa II, p. 71) and his greatest triumph of strength and nobility was taking his own life after learning of Desdemona's innocence. Even if Othello is guided to his death by mysterious forces and uncontrollable passions, he transcends all of these by a resolute sense of faithfulness: "no se mata; se va con ella" (Prosa II, p. 77).

Among Gutiérrez Nájera's articles on Shakespeare there were isolated but significant comments on several female roles. The three women most discussed were Desdemona, Ophelia and Juliet, each of which incorporated some facet of love which is commonly accepted as a unifying theme used by Gutiérrez Nájera. Although the love of each heroine appears unique to Gutiérrez Nájera, there is a basic interpretation common to all three. Their love provided the material for a Romantic inner fulfillment which compensated for a meaninglessness of the external world. The range of love extended from the childhood innocence of Desdemona and

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the spiritual purity of Ophelia, to the sensuality of Juliet. Love was the equivalent of faith ("Creer es amar" Prosa II, p. 84) which could lessen the pain of doubt; it could temporarily isolate man from his pernicious surroundings; and, although love was not able to postpone death, it constituted the highest essence of life farthest removed from death. Death, in its turn, retained its eternal nearness connected to love and life in these terms: "Ya Julieta y Romeo amaron; ya pueden morir, porque han vivido ya" Prosa II, p. 90). Since they loved, they lived, but both love and life "va derecho y rápido a la muerte" (Prosa II, p. 88).

As Gutiérrez Nájera's comments on Shakespeare accumulate, it becomes more obvious how thoroughly Romantic was his orientation. Whenever his criticism concentrates on men whose work followed the initiation of Romanticism, Gutiérrez Nájera is on home ground, making his remarks all the more pertinent to understanding his own creative processes. As he related himself to immediate predecessors there was always a sameness in the underlying ideas of social and metaphysical isolation with value achieved through individual exertion. However, the similarities can obscure wide differences, such as those between Romanticism and Realism or Naturalism and Symbolism. The way in which Gutiérrez Nájera treats these differences leads to a reasonably accurate definition of his own art. As a critic, he refused on principle to accept or reject the credo of any movement in its totality, believing an original author had

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to be like a house whose windows were open on all sides to every possible influence.

The first generations of Romanticists were given lavish praise similar to that bestowed upon Shakespeare. Representative among those singled out were Goethe, Byron, Poe and Victor Hugo. Hugo was, in Gutiérrez Nájera's estimation, the only author who approached Shakespeare's synthesis of a vast spectrum of human feeling. As a formal technician, Hugo provided a wealth of examples for imitation, such as his fusion of poetry into prose, while his ability to represent the purely ideological sensibility of his age qualified him as "el gran moderno" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 217). Similarly, Goethe received unqualified acceptance although this was directed more to the ideological than technical. Goethe's attempts to fuse the different periods of art, his self assertion through love, and the crises of faith make the "Júpiter de Weimar" ideologically as near to Gutiérrez Nájera as Victor Hugo. The American, Edgar Allan Poe, whose relationship to Gutiérrez Nájera has been explained in a chapter by John Englekirk,¹ was recognized as one of the most direct sources of the fin de siècle malady shared by Gutiérrez Nájera. The English poet Byron, less influential perhaps than others, is equated with Goethe as "aterrador y sombrío" (Crítica, p. 111).

1. John Englekirk, Edgar Allan Poe in Hispanic Literature (New York: Instituto de las Españas, 1934), pp. 240-6.

Among the literary influences emanating from the early Romanticists, that of Germany should be emphasized because of the long-held, exaggerated conception of Gutiérrez Nájera as the author of "pensamientos franceses en versos españoles".¹ This categorization was justified perhaps until the 1950's when the appearance of previously unpublished articles forced a different view. In a volume already cited, the American hispanist, Boyd Carter, uncovered and published several poems and literary articles taken from a Mexican Germanophile newspaper, El Correo Germánico.² The articles, first published in 1876, which dealt largely with aesthetics and literary theory revealed an extensive enough knowledge of German literature that Boyd Carter concluded: "el supuesto afrancesamiento que se le imputa al Duque Job, no se nota del todo en los escritos publicados en el Correo Germánico. Más bien es germanófilo e hispanófilo".³ Carter qualified the conclusion by pointing out that this did not deny a wide inspiration in French letters but that such detailed comments on German writers like Heine and the effusive praise of the German lied made an alleged total dependence on French literature questionable.

Along with positive reactions to the early

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1. Justo Sierra, "Prólogo", p. 8.
 2. Carter, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Estudio y escritos inéditos.
 3. Ibid, p. 75.

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Romanticists an occasional negative response appears. Empty over-expressiveness was one fault which drew his attention. García Gutiérrez, for instance, packed all of the Romantic trappings into his drama but expressed "poca o ninguna verdad" (Prosa II, p. 146). Bad imitations of the Romantic greats were another literary development he found unacceptable. Referring to Victor Hugo's numerous imitators he wrote: "Los Hugos chiquitines son insoportables" (Crítica, p. 319). What cannot be found among criticism of the early Romanticists is a statement which attacks the basic tenets of the movement. García Gutiérrez was not censured because he gave a Romantic frame to his works but because his hollow ideology did not equal the elegant stylistic externals. Imitators of Victor Hugo suffered from the same defect: "imitar la factura me parece facil...pero no el pensamiento" (Crítica, p. 319). The pattern is consistent. A writer was never found lacking because of inherent Romantic traits but for not rising to a level of the movement's best tradition.

After the initial stages of Romanticism expended themselves (a process completed around 1850 according to Barzun), a period of specialized literary trends began.¹ Although a description of the European literary movements of the late nineteenth century does not fit into a rigid pattern, there were two clear tendencies. On the one side were the positivist schools of Realists and Naturalists

1. Barzun, Classic, Romantic and Modern, p. 99.

opposed on the other by the idealistic tendency of decadents and Symbolists. Both groupings still, however, worked around problems introduced by their Romantic predecessors. Gutiérrez Nájera, without rejecting completely the positivist viewpoint, allied himself with the idealists.

Gutiérrez Nájera's major objection to the positivist carry-over into literature was its insistence on natural laws with thematic emphasis on the tangible and physical ("materialismo asqueroso" Crítica, p. 166). Categorizing Realism and Naturalism as strictly limited to the physical however, does a great injustice to what Realism and Naturalism accomplished as a final product. The motivation behind the Realist-Naturalist writer was the same preoccupation shared by his idealistic counterpart: fulfillment of individuality. Those who took their start from positivism typically sought this fulfillment in social reform while the idealists moved into mysticism or aestheticism. The result was that the positivistic literature usually reflected in some way the idealistic motivations of its author as society's guardian.

This conflict of theory and final product did not escape Gutiérrez Nájera. He simply recorded his misgivings about the theories and absorbed the outstanding works in the same manner he would those of Shakespeare, Hugo or Goethe. In reference to Zola, who illustrates the positivistic artistic formula at its purest, he wrote: "Instintivamente huyo de Zola, pero acabo por sentirme en su poder...y sin

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embargo no reniego de mi credo artístico...Zola personifica, generaliza, y el que tanto ha censurado a Victor Hugo."

This personalizing to Gutiérrez Nájera sufficiently disproved the dogma of artistic determinism: "Y esto es un triunfo para los que hemos combatido los preceptos dogmáticos de Zola en lo que tienen de exclusiones, porque precisamente cuando él mismo los conculca, es cuando hace algo bello y perdurable" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 160).

The same concept of European Realism and Naturalism was applied to Mexican positivism. Gutiérrez Nájera looked at the Mexican positivists who had loudly proclaimed their rejection of Romantic idealism and recognized, first, that the motivation which led to the rejection of Romantic idealism was itself idealistic and, secondly, that the positivist unconsciously arrives at what the idealist believed literature must express anyway. To Gutiérrez Nájera, the scientifically oriented articles of Leopoldo Zamora on social and economic problems were not products of science, but of art. Art, by inference, was idealism. Justo Sierra in his poetry was an eloquent advocate of the ideal which denied the validity of science. By means of this interpretation of Realist literature, Gutiérrez Nájera was presented with innumerable avenues of inspiration from authors whose works of social representation did not obscure a suppressed or toned down idealism (Galdós, Pardo Bazán, Balzac, Zola, Maupassant).

Another literary vogue relating to positivism and

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pertinent to Gutiérrez Nájera was the Parnassian movement of poetry in France. Although tied to positivism, this trend was actually quite different from realistic-naturalistic fiction. While the fictional side of positivism leaned toward social portrayal with an eye to criticism and reform, the highest ambition of the Parnassians was a purified aestheticism. These poets shared with the realists a desire to play down the emotional and sought to objectify their works with an elaborateness and precision of form and plastic detail. But they did not restrict their works to contemporary society. Ancient, exotic worlds and primitive societies were as germane to their art as contemporary society was to the realists. In spite of the Parnassian's wish for objectivity, they were not impersonal or impassive, constituting in Henri Peyre's words "un romanticisme assagi et mitigé."¹

The aestheticism, or art for art's sake motivation of the Parnassians, more than any other nineteenth century ideal, describes Gutiérrez Nájera's solution to the Romantic problem of self identity. It would be inaccurate to designate Gutiérrez Nájera's aestheticism as a direct evolution from Parnassian ideas since he was also fully aware of their source in people such as Poe, Goethe, and Schopenhauer. Nevertheless, Parnassianism is the most conspicuous previous

1. Henri Peyre quoted in A. Lytton Sells, "Parnassians", Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. by Alex Preminger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), p. 600.

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example of the Mexican's notion that artistic contemplation and creation give a meaning to life unattainable elsewhere. Beyond the basic idea of aestheticism there are other matters of influence relating to style which left their mark. Gutiérrez Nájera contrasted his fondness of color with the poetry of Theophile Gautier and in another place he mentioned the manipulation of form by Leconte de Lisle to create vivid impressions of music, color and plastic form.

It is not, however, Realism, Naturalism, or Parnassianism which define Gutiérrez Nájera as an artist. He drew inspiration from each (certainly more from the Parnassians), but his emphatic commitment to a subjective revelation of lo bello and lo ideal place him with certain of the Parnassians--Baudelaire more than Leconte de Lisle, for example--and with the decadents, Impressionists and Symbolists. There is a complication here, however, in claiming inspiration. Many of the artists under this category were his contemporaries and there exists a question of whether it would be influence or a parallel development. There is much to suggest both possibilities.

Gutiérrez Nájera's attitudes towards his contemporary European counterparts reveal some strange ambivalences which leave the impression that his resemblance to Impressionism or Symbolism was as much an incidental personal maturation as a direct outgrowth of concurrent European aesthetics. Essentially, the ambivalence is that the

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Mexican frequently writes of decadents and Symbolists with reservation if not outright censorship yet, on the other hand, in his critical theory, prose and verse there are strong resemblances to those he censures. This ambivalence or refusal to accept fully the decadent-Symbolist mode possibly reflects his desire for impartiality toward any work or period of art. Yet it is inescapable that his enthrone-ment of art, mysticism, subjectivity, and especially the nature of his technical innovations places him more solidly within this tradition than he chose to admit.

The decadent-Symbolist tradition to Gutiérrez Nájera was a line beginning with Edgar Allan Poe extending through Baudelaire, Rollinat, Richepin, Verlaine, Ibsen and Maeterlinck. Among the reservations which Gutiérrez Nájera held with respect to this group was his dislike of anything physical, earthy or excessively Naturalistic. Baudelaire's Les fleurs du mal, for this reason, was inferior to Victor Hugo's Les Contemplations. Another fault he found was an excessive zest for innovation: "Dar en ridiculeces y exotismos que a la fin y postre, nada tienen de nuevos, pues antes bien son, propiamente hablando, un salto atrás" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 97). Still another fault was a neurotic spirit ("semilocos" Crítica, p. 463) he saw in the decadents and Symbolists.

Along with the criticism, however, appears an implicit if not acknowledged admiration. Perhaps decadents were "semilocos" but also "de enorme talento" (Crítica, p. 463).

Paul Verlaine is equated with a painter who was "un artista endemoniadamente humano que suele tener somnolencias y ensueños místicos" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 46). These "somnolencias y ensueños místicos", which could characterize Gutiérrez Nájera himself, probably give the reason that he tried to put distance between himself and the decadents. He saw in their work an uncomfortable image of himself. His own obsession with death and its "seducción diabólica" made Gutiérrez Nájera anything but a psychologically well adjusted person. A near self-portrait was given in a statement on Symbolism: "sufre alucinaciones como las de Poe, aspira a creer, sueña en almas...Lo que se siente, lo que se queja, en este minuto secular de crisis, es el nirvana, es la renuncia del ser" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 60). There is an interesting acceptance-rejection in another passage where the somber tone of the decadents is criticized and in the same sentence that Poe, Baudelaire and Rollinat are named, Gutiérrez Nájera, in spite of a reproof, employs the first person pronoun "we". The most eloquent testimony to Gutiérrez Nájera's adhesion to Symbolist ideas is not in his literary criticism but in his prose fiction where uninhibited first person narration, mysticism, lyricism, cosmopolitanism and technical innovations, such as synaesthesia, are characteristic.

The purpose of this short incursion into European literature has been to give some indication of the frame wherein Gutiérrez Nájera defined and interpreted the world

about him. Perhaps a qualification should be made that this is not an attempt to label, but to illuminate basic assumptions necessary for an understanding of the material at hand. For the sake of accuracy, Gutiérrez Nájera was not a Symbolist but a Modernist, which in a sense is a Spanish American counterpart to the European school. If he has not been discussed in terms of Modernism, it is not to deny him this affiliation or to try to make him over into a European, but for a more basic reason. Gutiérrez Nájera, among others, was an initiator of Modernism and, as such, influenced the movement more than the movement affected him.

As stated in the first paragraphs of this chapter, Gutiérrez Nájera's ideas on art were closely keyed to what he thought the world was, was not or ideally should be. His art was a response to a roughly outlined world view chosen eclectically from Positivism and the broader nineteenth century current of Romanticism. With regard to a theory of art, Romanticism was the prevailing influence rather than positivism. In fact, it was a reaction against the claims of positivists upon literature which first motivated Gutiérrez Nájera to hypothesize on the nature and goal of art. With a prefatory statement in "El arte y el materialismo", the negative motivation of his theory is unequivocally presented: "Lo que nosotros combatimos y combatiremos siempre, es esa materialización del arte" (Crítica, p. 53). Other remarks underline the strength of the negation: "asqueroso y repugnante positivismo" (Crítica, p. 50), "atroz

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materialismo" (Crítica, p. 51), and "prostitución del arte" (Crítica, p. 54). Following these disavowals, an affirmative belief was expressed that beauty was contained in the idealistic, spiritual nature of man: ". . .la belleza reside en el orden espiritual y no en la materia, claro es que debemos encontrarla en el idealismo" (Crítica, p. 57).

For Gutiérrez Nájera, idealism served various functions in its relation to art and literature. Foremost perhaps, idealism provided an antidote to disconcerting universal truths. Gutiérrez Nájera and his positivist opponents alike had scant faith in the existence of a universe beyond their visual experience and consequently they relied on their own individual abilities for security. At least on this point there was little disagreement between Gutiérrez Nájera and the positivists, but the best way to utilize individual endeavor in literature was a different question. The positivists preferred to minimize unresolvable metaphysical problems in order to concentrate on the immediate and observable, which usually translated into social reform. Gutiérrez Nájera saw little value in ignoring eternal metaphysical problems which, however unresolvable, remained engraved on the human mind: "Lo que nosotros hemos sostenido es que debe dejarse en eterna libertad al poeta para expresar sus sentimientos ya sean religiosas, ya patrióticos o ya amorosos, en la forma que su inspiración le dicte" (Crítica, p. 53). This was not a denial of the usefulness of social reform but an insistence that art should have a

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more inclusive scope which in no manner would be lacking in usefulness. Simply stated: "El arte purifica al hombre" (Crítica, p. 56), or "...lejos de ser fútil y vana, ha hecho muchos y muy elevados beneficios a la humanidad" (Crítica, p. 51).

Another appeal for idealism to be incorporated into literature originated in the critic's own notion of "realism" concerning the nature of man. Different from the strictly physiological concept of man without a spirit who reacts according to laws, man according to this theory of art, did have a spirit which could not be ignored without reducing humanity to a state of abjection and barbarism. The idea that "...el espíritu no existe, el amor es una quimera, luego la poesía erótica es vana y perjudicial" (Crítica, p. 50) seemed as hypothetical to Gutiérrez Nájera as his own belief in the human spirit. The negation of a spiritual, idealistic quality to human existence was a point he considered too absurd for detailed comment:

Admitamos por un momento que la existencia del espíritu y del amor son simples hipótesis. ¿Podrán ser destruídas por una sola negación? ¿Esta negación no será también una hipótesis, puesto que no viene acompañada de prueba alguna? ...pues hasta con las más conocidas y triviales reglas de la lógica puede probarse la verdad de nuestro aserto.

(Crítica, p. 51)

Furthermore, the patriotic goals of social reform-oriented literature defended by the materialists "...está comprendida en la poesía sentimental. . ." (Crítica, p. 52) and was, as a consequence, idealistic. The restrictions of the

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"mal llamado género realista" (Crítica, p. 53), from any vantage point, were reduced to a philosophically incomplete definition of man and an aesthetically restrictive formula for writing with pernicious exclusions of its own.

If love and sentimental poetry were not a vain dissipation of effort, the problem still remained concerning how to make use of these qualities. Gutiérrez Nájera's solution was an aestheticism, left at liberty to discourse on any subject which obsesses the human spirit. With justification it can be said that beauty became the center of Gutiérrez Nájera's world and encompasses a multiplicity of meanings and purposes. To begin, beauty was the closest approximation for man to eternity: "Lo bello es universal y eterno" (Crítica, p. 113). All other aspects of life and human labor were perishable but ". . . la poesía, es decir, la manifestación de lo bello, es y será siempre igualmente grandiosa porque se deriva de la Divinidad y tiene su dominio en el espíritu" (Crítica, p. 113). This did not solve the problem of certain physical death but at least gave mortals a glimpse of something unperishable.

The concept of beauty deriving from "la Divinidad" was the only part of the theory which eventually underwent a significant change. The statement of divine origin was given in 1876 when the author was seventeen years old and probably originated from Hegel's ontological rationalization for the existence of God. Exactly how directly the source came to Gutiérrez Nájera is uncertain. Both Boyd Carter and

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Porfirio Martínez have acknowledged the Hegelian derivation but disagree about the source from which he derived the idea.¹ Regardless of how he came to use the concept however, it was discarded during the first years of his writing career.

At the time Gutiérrez Nájera gave the divine origin of art explanation ("lo bello tiene que ser necesariamente ontológico: es lo absoluto, es Dios" Crítica, p. 55) in 1876, he was already feeling a crisis of faith. The same year he wrote: "la duda con sus garras destroza mi Creencia."² There are other indications that the equating of beauty and God were less than a pronouncement of orthodox faith, the most conspicuous example being that beauty was described as God and not the reverse. Also, the beauty-God comparison was made to defend erotic poetry which, as Justo Sierra observed, would offer little encouragement to those who hoped for a defender of traditional Christian ideals.³ Another point which places a commitment to orthodoxy in question, even at this early juncture, was the evocation of authors for theoretical support--Goethe, Byron--who were not

1. Boyd Carter, "Gutiérrez Nájera y Martí como Iniciadores del Modernismo", Revista Iberoamericana, XXVIII (July, 1962), 306 and Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza, in the introduction to Crítica, p. 21-2.

2. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Poesías completas, Vol. I, ed. and prologue by Francisco González Guerrero, introduction by Justo Sierra (Mexico, Editorial Porrúa, 1953), p. 107. Hereafter Poesías I or Poesías II will be written into the text.

3. Justo Sierra, "Prólogo", p. 5.

particularly orthodox in their beliefs. Yet another point in the early theorizing which removed the author from a solid orthodox position is that he speaks reprovingly of the positivist's doubt and skepticism, but when the negation is accompanied by his own affirmation, only the spiritual realm is mentioned and never a "Christian" spiritual realm. The obvious inference is that if Gutiérrez Nájera began his literary career from a Christian orientation, it was with wavering faith and that, in the context of "El arte y el materialismo", God appears in a secondary position as a convenient way to explain beauty's superlative nature.

The total deification of beauty occurred simultaneously with a diminishing of faith. God, while he was invoked, now served as an explanation of beauty, but as the writer's faith disappeared, the comparison became metaphoric and when faith was gone, beauty evolved into the highest goal available to man. The transition can be explained as beginning with beauty leading to God then, with the departure of faith, beauty itself undergoes deification. Manuel Pedro González, who studied the trajectory, considers the process completed by the author's twenty-fourth year (1883);¹ however, there is little written after 1880 relevant to Christian doctrine which is not ambiguous and much written before this date which suggests that the battle was

1. Manuel Pedro González, "El conflicto religioso en la vida y en la poesía de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera", Atenea, XXII (August, 1932), 228-36.

already lost. If in 1876 beauty is God, then in 1878 the young critic contrasts a volume of thorough-going orthodox poetry to that of his generation, which is "filosófico, sombrío, con la duda cartesiana en el espíritu y la sonrisa de Voltaire en los labios" (Crítica, p. 173). In the conclusion to the article Gutiérrez Nájera allies himself with the religious skeptics by praising the aesthetic qualities of the religious poetry but withholding approval of the poet's beliefs: ". . .no sé si es un filósofo; sé que es un artista" (Crítica, p. 176). In 1880 the movement toward deification had advanced full cycle in a poem entitled "Solo ante el arte". God is still referred to here as the Creator but, to all appearances, this is purely metaphoric usage since a central theme of the poem is to state that only art is eternal: "es la única grandeza que no muere" (Poesías I, p. 239).

On balance, it is fair to say that, from the outset, beauty was central, soon deified and, as such, reached toward the eternal: "Diríase que el genio y la belleza son en la tierra la imagen de la eternidad" (Crítica, p. 113). Eternality, as it rested on beauty deprived of Christian supernatural assurances of longevity, developed as the counterpoint of death, which drove the author to art for assurances of immortality. The prevalence of a feeling for death's nearness and its consequent motivating force cannot be underemphasized. The following lines, written between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one, illustrate the morbid

propensity that was prevalent in the early years:

1876: "Está mi corazón de muerte herido" ("Página negra"); 1877: ". . .que la inflexible/ sentencia del Eterno nadie borra" ("Sobre el sepulcro de Rafael Martínez de la Torre"); 1879: "compramos el derecho de la vida/ con la triste moneda de la muerte" ("El 25 de junio"); 1880: "Unos se burlan de los sepulcros;/ otro contempla con ansiedad" ("Lapida"); 1880: "Mi cuerpo soñoliento se rinde a la fatiga;/ secreta voz interna me dice que no siga. . ./ . . .aquí, sin agitarme, la muerte esperaré. ("¿Para qué?")

(Poesías I)

These poems with their mixture of death and fear of death are not isolated examples, nor is there a diminution of their thematic presence in any of the poems, stories, chronicles or literary criticism.

Gutiérrez Nájera was fully aware of the fact that death was the force that pushed him toward survival through aestheticism. Art offered a measure of consolation against death in all its implications. The most certain form of death was physical extinction. Art could not offer salvation from this inevitable moment but could offer a consolation through contemplation because art, by its pleasantness, was "muy higiénico, alarga la vida" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 90) or, on the other hand, offered a view of something which escaped the "caos tenebroso de la nada" (Crítica, p. 113). Nothingness and death, however, were more than mere physical extinction. If life were not lived with a certain amount of feeling, human existence became a death in its own right: "el espíritu que no siente la belleza. . . es verdaderamente un repugnante cadáver, dotado tan sólo de un movimiento físico y mecánico" (Crítica, p. 114).

Although death is life's greatest disillusion, it was not the only catalyst which moved the author toward the creative world. Gutiérrez Nájera generalized, saying that pain in any form is a generating impetus for art: "El dolor ha creado el arte en todas sus manifestaciones y sus formas" (Crítica, p. 75).

As beauty allied to life in a struggle against death and prosaic existence embraced the eternal, several considerations of time are automatically implied. If beauty is the route toward eternity, there was no way the author could avoid considering the essence of time which isolated him from death and an everlasting existence. In the most general sense, time possessed for Gutiérrez Nájera two seemingly inconsistent traits. It was a rapidly disappearing chronological phenomenon but at the same time was static and unchangeable. On the one hand "El tiempo no interrumpe su carrera ni un segundo" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 214) and on the opposite extreme: ". . .continúa indivisible como infinita línea recta, que no sabemos ni de donde arranca ni si termina en algún punto" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 214). The undividable, infinite line is a mirror of a reality which endured in an unchangeable state: ". . .vivimos de repeticiones" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 138).

Notwithstanding these contrasting views of time, they are unified to the extent that both are psychological orientations. The idea that time is a speeding phenomenon was concretely related to a death fear, while the static

property of time represented the possibility of unlimited existence. Unlimited existence however, was only a conceivable possibility which, by its uncertainty, created feelings of hopelessness or despair. Consequently, time's unchangeable aspect created a response of tedium:

El mismo sol, la misma luna, las mismas estaciones, los mismos amores, los mismos placeres, los mismos tedios, los mismos pesares, las mismas mujeres, los mismos ministros, los mismos libros con diversos nombres.

(Crónicas de "Puck", p. 138)

or an ominousness: "No hay libro más trágico que el calendario. Es la tragedia de lo desconocido. Cada día es un embozado" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 199). The clock with its equally spaced units of chronology was of little service to Gutiérrez Nájera as he applied the mental yardstick to static time. In a chronicle description of an earthquake, he demonstrated how time was a mental flux rather than a universal numerical standard: "¿Cuántos minutos habían transcurrido? Un segundo o un siglo" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 187).

Within this interpretation there is little that can be said about future time. It is an unknowable certainty which the author entered with a mixture of resignation and dread. The only possibility of survival was the meager one offered by art. If an artist could achieve sublime creations then at least that part of him would endure.

The implication of static time for beauty in its relation to the past however, is a different matter. Here

mortals could survey historically centuries of creative work and find spiritual nourishment by contemplating the cultural attainments which had survived. Once an art work gained a state of eternal grandeur, it possessed a timeless immediacy which made its author a perpetual contemporary to any age:

La Ilíada de Homero como los cantos de Virgilio, la Divina comedia del Dante como la Jerusalem de Torcuato Tasso, la Atala de Chateaubriand como el Rafael de Lamartine y el Fausto de Goethe como las sombrias creaciones de Lord Byron, serán siempre obras grandiosas del pensamiento humano, y a pesar de las revoluciones intelectuales y morales que en el mundo se verifique.

(Crítica, p. 113)

The idea is that in all beauty, all statement of truth, there will always be a kernel of reality which remains universal and constant. On a trivial day to day level of activity, eternal experiences were relived which perish as the physical body will perish, but art because of its transcendent greatness realized by means of genius and talent, enjoyed an everlasting permanence: "¡Privilegio sublime del talento!" (Crítica, p. 113).

In searching the history of man's consciousness to support a personal need to serve beauty and idealism, mythology and ancient legends are the examples farthest removed from Gutiérrez Nájera, in either chronological or cultural development, in which he found an ideal physical-spiritual synthesis. According to Gutiérrez Nájera, the ancients were happy because they knew how to weave harmoniously their mythological fantasies into the pattern of a daily physical

existence. The Greeks achieved a ". . .síntesis suprema en que la vida del hombre y la vida de la naturaleza se confundieron y se identificaron" (Crítica, pp. 175-6).

Other peoples, not necessarily as early in time as the Greeks but of a basic primitive nature, exemplified the same ability to establish a rapport between themselves and a life force of the inanimate world. Such was the case of the early Germans who through their lieder transported the reader to past centuries where the contemporary could witness dialogues of generations long past. Gutiérrez Nájera was fascinated by these poems as the incarnation of what he believed the ancient German people to be--a visionary people who inhabited a misty, fog-filled land of dark, mysterious forests--but more important, he liked the lieder as an example of the universal properties of beauty. In spite of being German cultural manifestations, these songs were above all "la manifestación más simple y sencilla de la poesía" (Crítica, p. 119) which resembled early folk and poetic manifestations of other peoples. The Lydian songs of the ancient rhapsodists, the skaldic poems of the Norsemen, the lais of the minstrels, the songs of the bards, the odes of Sappho, the short compositions of Alcaeus, the popular songs of the Arabs, the cancioneros of Castille, Catalonia and Asturias--all had their points of contact. The pristine idealism of these primitive poems was sought by Gutiérrez Nájera in a uniform way in every great artist. It was the duty of contemporary man to find consolation in all the

world's surviving works of beauty: ". . .nos es preciso vivir en ese mundo creado por la fantasía de los artistas de todos los siglos, de todas las edades" (Crítica, p. 115). Those monuments of mankind which had escaped the chaos of nothingness were all equidistant in time from the author because they were "siempre igualmente grandiosa" (Crítica, p. 113). Static time, in the final analysis, was a museum of history's monuments of beauty beginning with the earliest myths, folk songs and legends, and ending with works of Gutiérrez Nájera's contemporaries whom he judged to be so good as to approach an ideal state of beauty in their works.

The present was opposed to static time as a rapidly disappearing part of man's existence which carried him ever closer to death. As man rapidly passed through time, he was surrounded by the commonality of the material world with all its trivial entanglements. The logical objective was to arrest time through a qualitative endeavor, which to Gutiérrez Nájera's thinking was an aristocratic life style whose foundation and cornerstone was beauty. To relate the fleeting presence of time to literature, the artist's task was to eternalize the passing moment into a form of art.

Emile Zola is a perfect example of this possibility. The Mexican critic, whose ire was continually directed against Zola's theories, praised his "potencia, más que creadora, retentiva" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 160) and the fact that Zola could take common detail and raise it to "las esferas de las supremas generalizaciones" (Crónicas de

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"Puck", p. 160). The Mexican novelist Federico Gamboa was extolled in a similar way for his capability to "atrapar al paso y por medio de la fotografía instantánea" (Crítica, p. 396). The instantly captured moment was not sufficient however; quality (beauty and genius) was equally requisite. The fact was emphasized that Gamboa ". . .retrata con tino y elegancia...es un joven fotógrafo de genio" (Crítica, p. 395). Although these examples are taken from articles on realists and naturalists whose proclaimed objective was to capture the environment of a particular moment, Gutiérrez Nájera made this a criterion for judging all art which was, by definition, the only outlet from the passing moment toward the eternal. The historians of Shakespeare's time were "simples analistas" (Prosa II, p. 68) of an epoch's activity, but Shakespeare, because he was a poet, ". . .era un supremo historiador" (Prosa II, p. 68).

These responses of Gutiérrez Nájera to time are indicative of his approach to reality generally. To begin, reality, like time, is a personal creation or psychological reaction to the outside world. Time as a mental flux which varies according to the impact of stimuli is purely a creation of mental character. Infinite time however, is external to the author who knows it exists but not its source or destination. Not knowing the origin or terminal point of time stimulates a personal response which overrides its importance as something that exists outside of the critic's person. This application of mental processes to time is

just one example of how Gutiérrez Nájera treated reality in its total context.

To explain Gutiérrez Nájera's definition of reality and his application of this concept to art once again involves a comparison with his positivist counterparts. Stripped of broader implication, there is little difference between the reality of the positivists and that of the Modernist theorist. Reality is that which the mind perceives. First there is a mind which has individual properties capable of reflecting stimuli in its own characteristic way, then there is the immediate observable world which provides the stimuli. The individual as he exists as an entity in the universe is practically powerless to control his destiny. Gutiérrez Nájera would not question Taine's biological definition of man as a development of cumulative outer forces like race, milieu and moment. Literature, in Crónicas de "Puck", is described as a good indication of the "medio social en que se desarrolla" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 60). The principal cause of Gutiérrez Nájera's elevation of art is to transcend the fact that life is "finita y limitada" (Crítica, p. 113) and that man is "un movimiento físico y mecánico" (Crítica, p. 114). Nor would he disagree with the realist's formula that art is "la nature vue à travers un tempérament."¹ Again there are repeated assertions by Gutiérrez Nájera that art is the individual artist

1. Karl Uitti, The Concept of Self in the Symbolist Novel (Paris: Mouton, 1961), p. 17.

communicating a reality he has seen. To make this very point, he approvingly quoted a positivist: ". . .lo que constituye el arte--como dice Eugène Véron en su Estética--no es tanto la emoción comunicada, cuanto la intervención de la personalidad humana en la emoción misma" (Crítica, p. 323). There is nothing unusual in these frequent points of contact between a Modernist and positivism. Karl Uitti has explained how the same relation existed with the Symbolists and Naturalists in France¹ and Manuel Pedro González has shown how the Modernist epoch in Spanish America was an outgrowth of a basic positivistic orientation.²

Gutiérrez Nájera gave the basic positivistic tenets his own emphasis which varied enough as to appear that he had a different concept of reality. With Taine and Zola, literature was a cognitive effort to capture the soul of man through enumeration of pertinent data, while for Gutiérrez Nájera art was an effort to know the world as it filtered through mental, emotional processes which would be edifying for man's soul. In short, Gutiérrez Nájera demanded a personal rather than a social literature. He uses several positivistic values to justify his position. He gave to his appeal for personal literature a utilitarian social value:

1. Karl Uitti, The Concept of Self in the Symbolist Novel, pp. 21-2.

2. Manuel Pedro González, Notas en torno al modernismo, (Mexico: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1958), pp. 33-7.

¿Sólo son 'positivos' bienes aquellos que se manifiestan en el orden industrial y político de las naciones? ¿No son bienes mil veces mayores y de más alta trascendencia los que se verifican en el espíritu y tienen por dominio al anchuroso campo de la idea?

(Crítica, p. 113)

The idea is echoed continually that the spiritual side of man needs as much attention as the physical. Zola conceded this temperamental nature of the artist but chose that "the personal feeling of the artist is always subject to the higher law of truth and nature."¹ The possibility that personal sentiments could lead the artist to represent man as standing on his head was absurd to Zola. Gutiérrez Nájera, by contrast, would have said there is an empirical basis for standing a man on his head--in dreams, for example. In a concluding sentence of a review he stated "Es real todo lo que se cuenta en este libro, porque el sueño es una hermosa realidad" (Crítica, p. 308).

The existence of an outer world was recognized but the important goal for art was the communication from the artist's mental reflection of the outside universe. This was not to go so far as to declare the outer world an extension of the mind, but the substantial effect is the same. The true artist looked only to his own feelings:

Ante todo, yo no conozco a la humanidad ni sé lo que desea. Cuando por la exaltación de un sentimiento, me veo obligado a escribir en verso, no pregunto si eso

1. Emile Zola, The Experimental Novel, selections in Literary Criticism: Pope to Croce, ed. by Gay Wilson Allen and Harry Hayden Clark (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1962), p. 596.

mismo sienten otros, sino que digo lo que siento o creo sentir. Los mismos que piensan desprenderse de este personalismo, no pueden lograrlo.

(Crítica, p. 323)

This dealt with the subject of poetry; however, the comment is valid for all literary activity since Gutiérrez Nájera did not recognize a fundamental difference between verse and prose: ". . .en achaques de arte, no hay poetas y prosistas, sino artistas y no artistas" (Crítica, p. 95).

This inward-turning led Gutiérrez Nájera into an idealism which became a confrontation not only with the mysteries of eternity but also of the self. He quoted Schopenhauer to the effect that introspection was the appropriate test of the artist: "¿Conocéis la arcilla de que estáis formados? . . .Aprended a conocerla."¹ The resemblance to, if not actual influence of, Schopenhauer did not end here. The Mexican's idealism shares the same pessimism, the same concept of self governed by a blind will and the same final remedy in love, all of which could find its maximum expression in art.

The pessimism of Gutiérrez Nájera, which has already been touched on in the general description of his Romantic temperament, was rather severe. It is significant that he pointed to Schopenhauer as an originator of modern pessimism. Of the early Romantics it was Schopenhauer, along with Poe, who bore the strongest resemblance to the intensity of the

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, "Leconte de Lisle", La Revista Azul, I (12 de agosto, 1894), p. 234.

late nineteenth century anxiety. Gutiérrez Nájera partook of this generational despair in the fullest measure. In deciding how to write, he was faced with the problem of how to incorporate something into literature as distasteful as utter hopelessness or a disconsolate state bordering on insanity. Even if he felt himself and humanity to be without a bearing, it was a repugnant and unattractive predicament.

The possibility of ignoring the pessimism did not exist; its roots were too deep. For Gutiérrez Nájera as a person and for his generation, despair was an inescapable eventuality. Different critics have described how the decadent mode in literature came about as a logical and progressive breakdown of the Romantic enthronement of selfhood.¹ The typical early Romantic found considerable consolation in ascribing a transcendental value to man per se while deprecating society as an abstract collective. It is difficult to indicate a chronological moment when this idea lost validity. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are commonly given credit for having ended selfhood's existence as intrinsically important. These two were contemporaries of Gutiérrez Nájera and the Modernist epoch and, while it might stretch reality to call the Modernists existentialists, it can safely be said that the idea of transcendent Romantic

1. Two writers who have focused on this problem in book length studies are: Geoffrey Clive, The Romantic Enlightenment, Meridian Books (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1960); Wylie Sypher, Loss of The Self in Modern Literature and Art, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1964).

selfhood was badly shaken within the entire movement. For Gutiérrez Nájera, the lessening importance of selfhood is an important characteristic of his pessimism. Manuel Durán depicted his attitude as a ". . .fenómeno de desaliento vital, de falta de confianza en el hombre. . .Toda idealización mediante la acción de un héroe o lo elevado de las ideas expuestas por un personaje le está prohibida."¹

Since the dark condition of man was an inescapable fact, Gutiérrez Nájera sought to mitigate its unpleasant effect in literature through love. In "El arte y el materialismo", he outlined the relation literature should have to love:

Intentaremos demostrar al crítico del Monitor: 1. Que el arte tiene por objeto la consecución de lo bello; 2. que lo bello no puede encontrarse en la materia, sino con relación al espíritu; 3. que el amor es una inagotable fuente de belleza.

(Crítica, p. 54)

This love, more than a simple physical property, has an extensive range of application, as in this article where it was a "sentimiento purísimo que pudieramos llamar apoteosis de espíritu" (Crítica, p. 54). In love's extension to "apoteosis del espíritu" and "fuente de belleza" it acquired characteristics common to Gutiérrez Nájera's world view generally. Irma Contreras García aptly described his concept of love as "infinito, ilimitado, lleno de vibraciones

1. Manuel Durán, "Gutiérrez Nájera y Teófilo Gautier", Revista de la Universidad de México, (March, 1954), p. 7.

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palpitaciones y en el fondo inalcanzable, abismal."¹ The acceptance of a love force by the author was an attempt to tie himself to an idealistic universe and, at the same time, come to grips with the disconcerting reality of physical existence.

Love was, in a sense, the equivalent of time and infinity, as a comparison of his definitions of time and love demonstrates. Time, as recorded above, was an "infinita línea recta, que no sabemos ni de dónde arranca ni si termina en algún punto" while love ". . .no comienza ni termina, es una línea trazada en lo infinito."² Love stood above the crass reality of everyday life: "El amor vuelve oro todo lo que toca. El amor tiene una breve esponja perfumada que borra las manchas de lodo."³ Tied as closely as love was to art, it shared the same deification: "La humanidad no puede tener más Dios que el amor."⁴ In its most ideal state love created an "encanto místico" as in the case of Desdemona, or provided an opposite polarity to the ice of doubt, bitterness and misanthropy, as with Ophelia. Ideal

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1. Irma García Contreras, Indagaciones sobre Gutiérrez Nájera, (Mexico: Metáfora, 1957), p. 114.
 2. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, "Notas de Amor", La Revista Azul, (16 de diciembre, 1894), cited by Irma García Contreras, p. 114.
 3. Obras inéditas: Crónicas de "Puck", cited by Irma García Contreras, p. 115.
 4. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, "En asno a Jerusalem", La Revista Azul, (marzo, 1890), cited by Irma García Contreras, p. 117.

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love did not preclude a physical love such as existed between Romeo and Juliet; however, physical love predictably led to immediate, perishable, physical considerations which were not exactly heartening to the author. The ideally eternal qualities of love were compromised in the physical encounter. Love brought pain: "El amor muerte" (Crítica, p. 461); or the surest way to suffering was "el terrible encuentro con el amor" (Crítica, p. 461). On a more speculative plane, love was the face of death: "Todo amor da la muerte" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 194). Love as an idealistic quality led the poet back to the dilemma of the decadents; that is, goodness and badness are not separate entities but come in a single package. Eternal love was inextricably bound to death: "Tus ojos ¡oh mujer! ocultan el amor y la muerte" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 194). Love, like art, could only mitigate sorrow but not eradicate it.

The belief that good and bad were inseparable, or that love had an ugly perspective did not stifle the idea that a struggle toward love and beauty was worthwhile. The artist had to accept love, even in a degraded state if necessary, and let it work as a catalyst, moving author and reader toward a purgated, exhilarating state of truth and beauty: "Y en los lechos impuros ¡Cuántas veces ha refugiado un sueño casto, un recuerdo tierno, una memoria de pureza, algo hermoso que fue bueno" (Crítica, p. 457). Once more this is the same reality of the naturalists who wrote to depict the horror of existence, with the difference that the

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horrible existence is sifted through by the author, in order to extract what is elevated. The author began by accepting love in its painful, physical, material aspect and then moved towards transforming it by his genius into the semblance of an absolute norm. Such a movement from physical to pure idea is, of course, thoroughly platonic, as Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza noted in the introduction to Gutiérrez Nájera's criticism: "Gutiérrez Nájera nació platónico."¹

In the tradition of Platonic or neo-Platonic aesthetics, Spain offers an outstanding manifestation through her mystic poets of the formula for transcending the physical to arrive at supreme realms of perfection through the medium of love. Gutiérrez Nájera referred to the Spanish mystics to corroborate his observations in "El arte y el materialismo" and continued to invoke their names until the last important articles in the Revista Azul. He especially liked Teresa de Jesús, whose mysticism came not from the misery of the Book of Job, but from ". . . esa inmensa onda de amor que se llama el 'Cantar de los Cantares' " (Prosa II, p. 199), that is to say, it was based thoroughly on love. Mysticism to Gutiérrez Nájera was an "evaporación de nuestro espíritu" (Crítica, p. 175) and, as such, a "fuente inagotable de Poesía" (Crítica, p. 175). The function Mysticism served is described in a statement on Santa Teresa de Jesús: "la más perfecta encarnación de esa poesía mística que trasciende a los lirios orientales. . . que perdiéndose en

1. Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza, introduction to Crítica, p. 25.

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idealidades hermosísimas, debe subir al cielo como las espirales del incienso" (Crítica, p. 176).

Within the platonic context with which Gutiérrez Nájera viewed the Spanish mystics it would be fair to say that he himself was a mystic, but not exactly in the same way as the Spanish mystics. These relate to the nineteenth century Mexican with the same affinity as Shakespeare. Gutiérrez Nájera adapted from each whatever suited his temperament. In the case of Shakespeare, he adopted certain thematic materials such as doubt, love, madness and disillusion; from the Golden Age Mystics he took an idealized vision of life and art where the corporeal world is invested with value through a process of idealization. While San Juan, Fray Luis and Santa Teresa sought the divine revelation of God, the Mexican secularized the meaning of his search whose objective was truth and, above all, beauty. As such, the mysticism of Gutiérrez Nájera was an aesthetic mysticism.

In the ascension toward beauty, one of the immediate consequences of a mystic aesthetic was Gutiérrez Nájera's concept of diction and stylistics generally. Just as the religious mystic could not give direct communication of his visions except through the symbolic use of language and figurative speech, Gutiérrez Nájera felt that the artist necessarily had to go beyond imitation into figurative language in order to communicate his spiritual feelings: "La belleza, . . .no es una idea, sino la imagen de una

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idea" (Crítica, p. 55). Any attempt on the writer's part to restrict himself to a photographic, non-figurative reality would be to deny a vision of beauty and place the work in a "cárcel mezquina de la servil imitación!" (Crítica, p. 57). In an attempt to communicate visions, however, metaphors and adornments of speech by themselves are insufficient until given form by an artist of talent and genius. The mysterious ability of talent to give words the ability to communicate artistic truth made the artist into a sacerdotal personage. For this reason, Justo Sierra, as a poet, was a "sacerdote" (Crítica, p. 334); Leconte de Lisle ". . . tenía la altivez de un sumo sacerdote";¹ and José Martí was "profeta, apostol, misionero, sacerdote" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 132).

Although any great writer was, by definition, a priest, the question of the sources of beauty for the individual artist was not simply passed off as unexplainable. First, the inspiration had to come from within; then, through a process of conscious manipulation the raw material of inspiration was given form. There were two considerations which operated in the source of an impulse which guided the artist to form a work--one psychological and internal, the other external and mysterious ("yo no escribo mis versos, no los creo;/ viven dentro de mí; vienen de fuera" Poesías II, p. 31).

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, "Leconte de Lisle", La Revista Azul, I (29 de julio, 1894), p. 203.

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The external source which stimulated an aesthetic feeling was by its mysteriousness something incomprehensible to the writer. He explained the nature of this impulse metaphorically in various ways:

El alma del poeta es una lira. . .el lied alemán es la pulsación de alguna de sus cuerdas.

(Crítica, p. 171)

Los poetas. . .son como el arpa eólica que se estremece y vibra y canta en la espesura grata de los bosques, a la merced del viento que la mueve.

(Crítica, p. 212)

Yo oía como un eco lejano, escondido en selvática espesura, la Neniae, el canto orfeónico.

(Crítica, p. 95)

By describing the external motivator as an Orpheic song, Gutiérrez Nájera reinforced the sacerdotal role of the artist who through an epiphany revealed beauty. The lyre and Aeolian harp, as representations of something other than ordinary, corresponded to the idea that art had to derive from talent or genius.

Along with the mysterious outer inspiration, an inner voice operated. This, in effect, was the artist's subconscious. Subconsciousness is, of course, Freudian terminology unknown to Gutiérrez Nájera; however, the total effect of his observations relevant to this point are equivalent to a definition of the Freudian idea. The basic tenet that a poet should give in to the "vuelo libre y espontáneo de su imaginación" (Crítica, p. 112) in practice was an appeal for mental free association as inspiration. In the

Crónicas de "Puck" he pointed out ". . .el valor positivo de ciertos fenómenos de sugestión mental o aparente, lo que llaman los sabios 'fantasía complementaria'. Los testigos de un hecho dado, al referirlo, lo transfiguran involuntariamente embelleciéndolo" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 88). Such, he continued, was the nature of his crónicas where rigorous scientific exactitude could be laid aside ". . .como en estas ligeras crónicas volamos en pleno azul, en plena fantasía, puedo dispensarme de todo rigor científico" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 88). Without any feeling of exaggeration, it can be said that the same method applies to his poetry and fiction.

Distant spiritual voices and unconscious mental forces did not, however, preclude treatment of the external world. As much was implied in the above statement: "Los testigos de un hecho dado, al referirlo, lo transfiguran." To communicate truth as a humanly apprehended experience, the fact that it was refracted through a mental process should be made evident in the work. The resulting product resembles a combination of mental fantasy and empirical concreteness. An introductory paragraph to a story stated the interrelated nature of the internal and external this way: "La distancia que separa un suceso de un sueño es insignificante."¹

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Cuentos completos, ed. by E. K. Mapes (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1958), p. 331. Future references from this volume will be included in the text as Cuentos.

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The role played by the mind in the inspirational state is purely receptive and excluded conscious intellection. Calculated rationalization in inspiration was energetically rejected:

Cuando un poeta me dice: "Estoy haciendo una poesía", me escandalizo como si la tierra me dijera, "estoy haciendo una rosa". Estas cosas no se hacen; aparecen. El poeta es el árbol; la poesía es el ruiseñor. Viene, y se para en una rama y allí canta. Si la rama está seca, el ruiseñor se va.

(Crítica, p. 330)

The exclusion of conscious manipulation to gain an aesthetic stimulus is an important foundation of Gutiérrez Nájera's general theory of beauty. Beauty, if it rose above a hollow artificiality, was intuitive: "Lo bello no se define, se siente" (Crítica, p. 55). Any other approach to the creation of art was erroneous to the Modernist, for any number of reasons. Imitation of nature with mirrored accuracy gave a simplified, false, unsensitive picture of reality which was appreciated only by the vulgar man. Political propaganda that did not derive from a sincere idealism was a miscarriage of good intentions, since art only influenced social events but did not determine them. Art theories which prescribed rigid grammatical and formal rules for writing such as those which emanated from the Mexican Academy were stultifying.

The members of the last group were ridiculed as reactionaries that "pordiosean en el umbral del Diccionario Pidiendo frases de anticuado corte para encubrir la desnudez y la miseria del concepto" (Crítica, p. 252). Any topic

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this group could possibly conceive would have been acceptable material to Gutiérrez Nájera, who was perfectly consistent in his belief that the individual should extol what he believed regardless of opposition from others. However, the Modernist was unwaveringly faithful to his idealistic orientation that if the final product was beautiful it came intuitively or subconsciously, rather than from calculated reason.

The setting aside of reason ended after the process of inspiration was fulfilled. After distant voices or obscure psychic workings submerged into consciousness, their artistic form came from patient, thoughtful craftsmanship. José Peón y Contreras was chided for writing poetry after a laborious workday when his power of concentration was weakened (*este sistema del señor Peón y Contreras es mal, más aún, es pésimo*" Crítica, p. 195). The same author showed the defect of carelessly chosen forms which did not fit the nature of his inspiration. Heroic actions narrated in lyric forms or love complaints expressed through royal octaves was a betrayal of inspiration. The object of reason in art was to search for the best tools for presenting inspiration. Reason was used to select the form which contained the inspiration:

Las formas poéticas no son, según nuestro entender, sino los instrumentos de que el poeta se sirve para producir en el ánimo de sus lectores el efecto de antemano preconcebido; así pues, tienen que guardar una estrechísima conexión con la idea de que el autor se ha propuesto desarrollar.

(Crítica, p. 149)

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The problem which inevitably developed from matching inspiration to literary form was that the Mexican Academy, both in acceptance of new ideas and in allowing new forms for expression, was inhibitive in its role. Gutiérrez Nájera's feelings on the restrictive role of the Academy and its members provoked some of his sharpest criticism:

. . .hombres temerosos de dios y de la gramática;. . . rateros que cercenan retazos de la sotana de fray Luis de León; . . .los neos, jurados enemigos de toda suerte de progresos, sólo cultivan la literatura embalsamada o de imitación; . . .Una corporación de literatos que cierra sus puertas a las ideas nuevas y se enclaustra dentro de murallas infranqueables, ha necesariamente, de corromperse como las aguas estancadas. Es una momia y nada más que una momia.

(Crítica, pp. 248-52)

Gutiérrez Nájera was careful to qualify his dislike, saying that conservatism or liberalism in itself did not confer talent but that, in the final analysis, a liberal attitude was necessary to consider new ideas and to conceive of new modes in which to express them. A continual breaking with the past in a renewal of thought and form was in the very nature of great literature as is shown in the double nature of his attack.

The two fallacies of the Academy were "dogmatismo gramatical y la aversión a las ideas modernas" (Crítica, p. 251). The membership of the Academy was overwhelmingly clerical--if not actually priests, then monarchists and ultraconservatives--and its general attitude was easily a century behind that of the positivists and Modernists. Gutiérrez Nájera compared the Academicians to an extended

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list of nineteenth century greats whose ideas he considered more palatable. The list, which began with Leopardi and Hugo and ended with Justo Sierra, showed the same nineteenth century Romantic preferences explained above. Religious skepticism, eroticism, liberal politics and uninhibited subjectivism were the most common topics which the Academy would not consider, but to Gutiérrez Nájera were "el empuje formidable de la época" (Crítica, p. 251).

In addition to the ideological blindness of the Academicians, Gutiérrez Nájera was equally vexed by their pronouncements on form. Their preferences in style were as devoid of merit as their choice of philosophy because of an emphasis on grammatical correctness. An overzealous concern for commas, pronouns or pedantic points of syntax were insufficient substitutes for talent and inspiration. Good writers were "ateos del diccionario" (Crítica, p. 248) who had to be as adroit in breaking grammatical cannon as in using it. The Academicians in their own poetic imitations of the classics were unable to equal the original inspiration and produced only mummified imitations whose rhetorical flourishes resembled fake jewelry. Because of a backwardness in style and idea, a lack of talent and inspiration, they were incomparable to those like Justo Sierra who could masterfully execute a "connubio de la inspiración y de la forma" (Crítica, p. 255).

If anything comes through forcefully in the article on the Academy, it is that art is not style alone but the

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impulse of a zeitgeist finding its appropriate manner of expression. Innovation in style became peremptorily the task of every generation, since man's thinking was continually changing. In the case of Gutiérrez Nájera it was a question of how to express artistically a late Romantic, partly positivistic, idealistic perspective. In order to give expression to his own personal inspiration there were various ideas on style which he worked out for himself.

Since beauty and truth were supreme absolutes revealed only to men of talent and genius, a special language was needed to recreate aesthetic visions for the reader. The artist in his role as priest had to invest language with a magical quality which would faithfully recreate the experience of his inspiration. In order to convey that language was an instrument of revelation and epiphany, Gutiérrez Nájera frequently applied the word "hechizo" as a signal that he felt a writer was successful. José Martí's short stories were "hechiceroscos" (Crítica, p. 372) and his style was "mágico" (Ibid.); Federico Gamboa ". . . hechiza por su desgaire" (Crítica, p. 395). A good example of how language assumed mysterious, magical characteristics to transport inspiration was a description of the politician Juan Mateos' speeches, which were a "cabalgata histórica, de una mascarada, de un kaleidoscopio, de vistas disolventes, de linterna mágica, de función de títeres, de algo que no puedo cuajar en una sola frase" (Crítica, p. 473).

As well as pointing out the magical function

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language had to perform, Gutiérrez Nájera specified limits wherein language and style in the broader sense, could carry out its intended objective. Above all, diction and style had to conform to intellectual control. Perhaps inspiration came gratuitously, but not expression. Simplicity and clearness is a characteristic of his own poetry and stories and his criticism corroborates his preference for this quality. Far from being an easy accomplishment, simplicity presented more difficulties and complexities than met the eye. The German lieder ". . .por su misma brevedad, por su misma sencillez, presentan muchísimas dificultades y escabrosísimos escollos" (Crítica, p. 122). The greatest danger in simplicity was the facility with which it degenerated into vulgarity. A prime example of ideal simplicity was the lied written by Heine, Uhland, Rückert and Geibel which was, in Gutiérrez Nájera's estimation, the epitome of good poetic execution.

Beyond language there were other areas where simplicity was desirable, if not required. All genres of art should possess a unity of intention in order not to confuse the reader:

. . .una de las reglas que más principalmente deben observarse porque se deriva de un principio filosófico, es evidentemente la de no quebrantar nunca la unidad de pensamiento, ya sea en las composiciones dramáticas, ya en los discursos en prosa o bien en las poesías líricas.

(Crítica, p. 160)

This touch of classic theory extends to other matters of composition where an appropriateness of interrelation

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between form and idea is mandatory to prevent a reaction of distaste or confusion from the reader:

Tan ridícula fuera una composición a César escrita en seguidillas, como una humorística letrilla en la rebusta y levantada entonación de la oda. El asunto de una composición debe indicar desde luego cuál debe ser el metro que en ellas se use.

(Crítica, p. 149)

The romance, since it is a ballad form, should allow only themes propitious in nature to a ballad. A heroic ode should never admit any material that detracts from the greatness of its subject. Royal octaves were inappropriate for love complaints and redondillas and heptasílabas were never to be employed to describe heroic actions.

Not only should there be unity of thought and appropriateness of style, but thought should be consistent with its own intentions. Zorrilla's poetry was beautiful but nevertheless unsuccessful because its author tried to glorify a nation by writing of its dead, medieval past. With sharp humor, Gutiérrez Nájera ridiculed the poetry of the bishop Montes de Oca for portraying elevated personages in the literary guise of lowly characters:

¿Qué andaban haciendo por el bosque y de noche dos obispos? Sería por lo que tienen de pastores: pero hasta los pastores se recogen cuando cierra la noche. No: esa fue verdaderamente una imprudencia.

(Crítica, p. 389)

The desire for simplicity and intellectual control led to a rejection of excessive abstraction. The critic regretted a misunderstanding between himself and another writer because of "una confusión grandísima, engendrada por

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esa fraseología empalagosa, gongórica y oscura" (Crítica, p. 167). In different articles over-abstraction is referred to as "aberraciones del gongorismo" (Crítica, p. 241). Writing on the limits of innovation in Crónicas de "Puck": "Que procuremos hacer algo nuevo, santo y bueno es; pero no algo descabellado o sin pies ni cabeza" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 90). Complexity was a treacherous quality, he said, in Symbolist literature: "Quieren hacer dramas que no sean dramas, sino otra cosa más grande o distinta a lo menos; novelas que no sean novelas; poesía sin ritmo y sin rima; Prosa sin sentido común" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 90).

In the process of enumerating opinions on uniformity, harmony and consistency in theme and form, it appears that Gutiérrez Nájera bears a likeness to the Academicians whose rigidity he thoroughly despised. This, however, was not the case. The fact that the romance form was used primarily for historical narration did not prohibit its employment for other materials. He thought it was equally suitable as a vehicle of philosophical or sentimental material. Most noteworthy are some interesting contradictions in his misgivings about Symbolism. An acceptable conclusion was that he was not against innovation, but was against bad experimentation.

The mixed reaction to Symbolism is especially interesting in light of the Mexican's own innovations. The concentration on mental processes rather than external representation, a feeling that mental images were the only

knowable reality, and that mental images in their natural, unrationalized state did not divide reality into sharp lines of focus was the artistic *modus operandi* of both Gutiérrez Nájera and the Symbolists. Time as a chronological measurement was false, straight measurable lines unbroken by light were unreal, color images are often blurred, sensory perceptions of smell, sound, sight, touch intermingle through mental refraction and association. Given this concept of reality in combination with the belief that art alleviates the dilemma of the finite human condition, the result was a spectacular kind of innovation revolving around psychological oxymoron or synaesthesia. This mingling of the senses incorporated into artistic creation, very appropriately designated by Arqueles Vela as "sentido ecuménico del mundo", ¹ was systematically worked into theory with an early series of articles published in 1876.

He began an attack on measured external reality with a disavowal of imitation:

Si el único principio del arte fuera la imitación, un término supremo consistiría en la completa ilusión de los sentidos, y si tal fuese necesario, sería convenir en que el artista más sublime sería el espejo que con más fidelidad retratase los objetos. ¡Error monstruoso!

(Crítica, p. 58)

There is more to this point in the context from which it is taken than a statement concerning reality. Morality and

1. Arqueles Vela, Teoría literaria del modernismo, (Mexico: Botas, 1949), p. 93.

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value judgment are almost always inextricably involved in every observation Gutiérrez Nájera made on truth or beauty. Nevertheless, the idea is unmistakable that external reality considered alone is an illusion of man's perceptive apparatus--"completa ilusión de los sentidos". Artistic reproductions which depend totally on delineated visual reproductions are received only by insensitive people who delight in paintings of melons, flowers, well depicted trees and panoramic displays of history's dramatic moments. Following a list of examples intended to illustrate the preferences of those who do not understand man's grander spiritual capacity, Gutiérrez Nájera illustrated the contrast between imitation of nature and what he considered truth by describing a work of two hypothetical painters.

The material for both paintings would be the same--a study of Adam and Eve in paradise. In the first painting there was an absolute fidelity of material detail. Adam and Eve appear nude as nothing more or less than a happy couple bathing in the privacy of a garden. The plants and birds could be scientifically classified, a gardener could easily choose flowers for a bouquet, the animals could provide a zoological collection and even insects appear in vivid detail. Gutiérrez Nájera did not deny the existence of all this factuality, but gave it only a partitive relation to art: ". . .este es humus, esto es terreno prima: río terciario o cuaternario" (*Crítica*, p. 59). It was not a true picture of the world's creation nor was the God represented

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in the work anything other than an entity who appeared as a complement to other objects:

En suma, el pintor ha trasladado fielmente todos los ejemplares que ha podido reunir de los tres reinos de la naturaleza; pero Dios que hizo el original, no ha dado una sola pincelada en la copia. Ante este cuadro, nadie se acuerda del Génesis.

(Crítica, p. 60)

The second painting, by contrast, laid the groundwork for a spiritual, idealistic or psychological interpretation of art and truth. In the last painting it is a pure mental process rather than a draftsman's instrument which sets the norm:

No se comprende bien qué árboles son aquéllos; hay acaso algún león con peluca y algún elefante que tiene grandes narices en vez de trompa; hay faltas de corrección en el dibujo y grande escasez de detalles; empero, la composición es grandiosa; los pájaros cortan el aire, los brutos corren por la pradera mostrando su variedad infinita y como negándose a la servil imitación; el aire y la luz lo bañan todo en olas de color y de alegría, modificando y transformando los objetos. El pensamiento herido por aquella apariencia de verdad que encierra el sentimiento de la verdad misma, y como un angel que para llegar con sus alas al cielo toma impulso hiriendo con su pie la tierra, desde la obra del artista se eleva hasta la grandeza de Dios.

He aquí el arte.

(Crítica, p. 60)

On the surface it could appear that an application of the word "psychological" is reading more into the passage than was intended. The use of God appears orthodox and the ability of the artist to be lifted to the level of God's greatness is traditional Christian mysticism. Remembering however, that God is used symbolically as an explanation of beauty and truth, and that Gutiérrez Nájera in other

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passages quoted above had said that his faith was destroyed at the time he was writing these lines (1876), one is left with the idea that God has little relevance other than as a secularized metaphor. With God used as a metaphor for truth, words like "espiritual", "Idealismo" and "sentimiento" are obvious psychological instruments of truth's sublime revelation.

In order to make his art correspond to the variety of mental projections provided through inspiration, Gutiérrez Nájera theorized a fusion of arts to be incorporated into literary form. If there were no real separation between color, light and concrete object, why should there be a rigid classification of the arts? Such a separation, he concluded, was not the case: "Lo que de la pintura hemos dicho en nuestro último artículo se extiende a todos los demás ramos del arte que no son, en rigor de verdad, sino las múltiples y varias manifestaciones de un solo principio" (Crítica, p. 60). Poetry, music and architecture were taxed equally with the objective of leading humanity from rigid materialism to "los rayos del resplandeciente sol de la belleza" (Crítica, p. 60) and the highest form of beauty was a synthesized joining of the three:

. . . las creaciones artísticas, el cuadro, la estatua, la música que dejan enamorado y embellecida el alma humana; y más principalmente que estas artes, el conjunto de todas ellas. . . y que las crea por medio de la palabra.

(Crítica, p. 114)

Essentially, Gutiérrez Nájera spoke of three

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artistic modes: music, plastic (painting and sculpture) and literary. Of the three, music was the highest realization of the spiritual realm: "Convirtamos ahora nuestras miradas al arte más espiritual acaso, a la música" (Crítica, p. 61). The interrelatedness of music to literature was implicit in the assertion that the soul of a poet was a lyre or harp. The primitive poetry which he admired and extolled so much were not only poetry, but songs. There are several ways Gutiérrez Nájera paid homage to music in relation to literature: "La poesía es el ruiseñor" (Crítica, p. 330). The Columbian novel María was "música" (Crítica, p. 217); "el poeta debe cantar su fe" (Crítica, p. 111). As far as his own creative work was concerned there was no doubt concerning Gutiérrez Nájera's wish to give it a musical affinity. He put the question to himself in an article: "--¿Es verso o prosa? --Es la música tiernísima de Gutiérrez Nájera respondi" (Crítica, p. 93).

His praise of various musicians could hardly have been more effusive. Beethoven, more than the voice of man was a god, if not the very soul of creation itself. He possessed the ineffable supernatural qualities which could impose harmony over chaos in the same measure as God in the biblical Genesis (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 19). Of Wagner's Lohengrin, a work often alluded to, Gutiérrez Nájera felt he had never been able to capture more than a little of its greatness for the printed page. Its music evoked in him a profound religious emotion which was a gateway to eternity

(Prosa II, p. 181).

Music, besides being the most perfectly spiritual art, was the one most easily understood by the masses. It was "el arte civilizador por excelencia" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 139). The suggestive possibilities of the medium were infinite:

La música no se impone, no domina; es el lenguaje que se acomoda a todas las pasiones; la lengua del león, que a fuerza de acariciar lamiendo el pie de su señor hace una llaga. En una misma nota, piensa Fausto, solloza Margarita y ríe Mephisto.

(Crítica, p. 73)

Music was capable of eliciting in the listener the synthesis of sensory perception which was the basis of unifying the different mediums of art. The music of Carl María von Weber stimulated a combination of the auditory with the olfactory sense ("trae perfumes desconocidos" Crónicas de "Puck", p. 174) and at the same time the auditory to the visual ("ondula a manera de humo" Crónicas de "Puck", p. 175). If the musician were successful he invested his music with the same magic requisite to the literary medium. The opera Tannhäuser was a "sagrado bosque" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 22), and with Sansón y Dalila "cree uno percibir en esas notas ensortijadas el hechizo" (Crónicas de "Puck", p. 22).

The practical application of music to poetry was contained in the nature of poetry itself as opposed to the uneven pace of prose. Melodious harmony was intrinsic in the nature of each metric line or in the combination of lines with each other. Strophes also had musical potential

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through a process of "armonía imitativa" (Crítica, p. 156) where the sound of syllables suggested the nature of action described by the words. Besides harmony, euphony was another term related to music which Gutiérrez Nájera employed regularly in approval of poetry.

The most abstracted form of music mentioned in connection with poetry was in the thematic material of a work. What the author had to say through meaning alone had to be musical. Metrics and contrived harmony did not automatically create music. Music derived from ". . .la intensa y magnífica melodía que del sentimiento humano y del sentimiento divino forman los grandes poetas" (Crítica, p. 114). In another passage the categorical statement is made that lyric poetry ". . .no consiste en la disposición métrica de las palabras ni en la armonía de la rima" (Crítica, p. 95), which leads back to the fundamental notion that reality, art or otherwise, does not consist of neat separations. Music and poetry are inseparable.

Gutiérrez Nájera's ideas on music in prose were more innovative than his statements on poetry. Traditional concepts of poetry provided him a formula for harmony and euphony which he saw little need to revise. In order to work music into prose, the conventional distinction between prose and poetry had to be set aside. Following the pattern of synthesizing artistic modes, he re-defined prose as inseparable from poetry:

. . .en achaques de arte, no hay poetas y prosistas, sino artistas y no artistas. La prosa tiene su ritmo

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recondito. En Quevedo suena a carcajada; en fray Luis de Granada, a himno sacro; pero una y otra sin que el asceta ni el satírico se propusieran hacerlo, tienen cierta cadencia especial y perceptible. La biblia está escrita casi en verso. . . La prosa de Castelar. . . es en resumen, una sarta de octavas reales agrandadas. En la de Renan abundan versos; y en la profética de Carlyle, más todavía. . . Poco importa que el verso entre; es un aliado. . . es la música del regimiento.

(Crítica, pp. 95-6)

In prose as in poetry, a simple arrangement of words was inadequate to create music unless there was a genuine inspiration: "Las notas son como cápsulas huecas, en las que ponemos la miel de la dicha o el ajeno del dolor" (Crítica, p. 216).

Along with music, the category of plastic art was the other artistic medium that Gutiérrez Nájera sought to mold into verbalized art. In different places he mentioned the relevance of painting, sculpture and architecture to his aesthetic formula. The endeavor to incorporate plastic art into literature was, in essence, an attempt to relate the concrete external world to the mental processes. Gutiérrez Nájera found in plastic art the same suggestive appeal to the mind as in music. Rembrandt's paintings, for example, had the surface aspect of interlocking light and shadow, which on close inspection revealed new silhouettes and strange figures slowly emerging from the dark and hazy background. The experience of observing Rembrandt's art was seeing anew ". . . como surgió el universo del seno del caos a la voz fecundante del Creador" (Crítica, p. 125). In other words, Rembrandt fulfilled the priestly role of

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providing an item of art which, practically as an actor in its own right, displayed a vital force capable of transmitting to the beholder's mind an eternal truth. The tangible character of painting made it ideal for illustrating how to incorporate the perceived world into art.

Ignacio Altamirano was an exemplary model of a writer who had created the same effect in words as a painter who manipulated lines, colors, light and shadow. Gutiérrez Nájera enumerated the qualities that he liked in Altamirano in a review of the latter's Paisajes Y Leyendas. Among the paragraphs of physical description, what impressed the Modernist was the effects of light, coloring and luminous background. The final result was a true copy of "los multi-formes cuadros de la naturaleza" (Crítica, p. 236). Nature's multifaceted reality was more than an intellectualized reproduction. The fact that the author went to the countryside was emphasized. Gutiérrez Nájera felt that for this reason the true nature of the countryside became experienced inspiration rather than a stale memory. The result was a work which could, in turn, carry the reader toward the same vision.

An observation with implied criticism is equally revealing in determining how Gutiérrez Nájera wanted literature to reflect properties which were predominantly the concern of the painter. He felt that colors had been forsaken for lines and that those colors which Altamirano used were dominated by the lines: "Más que el color busca la

línea. Pocas veces o nunca corre tras la frase policroma" (Crítica, p. 237).

There is another way in which Gutiérrez Nájera equated painting and literature in his criticism. If he approved of a writer's characterizations the writer was invariably equated with a painter, even if the characterization did not involve tangible description. With reference to characters' actions alone in Emilio Rabasa's La Bola, the Modernist was moved to write "¡Y con qué habil pincel pinta a los personajes!" (Crítica, p. 303). The connection parallels that between music and the thematic material of literature described above in which a theme, even without direct relation to sound, if sufficiently inspired is music. In this case, intangible aspects of character equalled painting. Reinforced again is the idea that the principles of art are the same, that ideal artistic creation seeks a synthesis of all art forms, with psychological reflection the final norm for expression.

The ultimate dependency of plasticity to mental processes is inherent in several observations on individual characteristics of plastic art. Color as it relates to emotions is the most salient example:

No puedo comparar la sensación que en mí produce el recuerdo del lago (Pátzcuaro) sino con la que me causa la poesía de Lamartine: es una sensación azul. ¿Por qué no atribuir color a las sensaciones si el color es lo que pinta, lo que habla en voz más alta a los ojos, y, por los ojos, al espíritu? Y siento color de rosa cuando recuerdo mi primera mañana en la tierra caliente, la salida del sol contemplada desde el mirador del palacio de Cortés; siento color de plata cuando recuerdo mi noche de luna en el mar, y siento color azul,

cuando vuelvo a ver en mi memoria el lago de Pátzcuaro.¹

Beside relating individual colors to the senses, Gutiérrez Nájera liked the polychromatic interplay of colors among themselves. To achieve color effects in his own work the Modernist sought an affinity with Teophile Gautier and other French writers: "Creemos en Gautier, buscamos la paleta de los Goncourt" (*Crítica*, p. 327). In another passage Gutiérrez Nájera expressed his like of color contrasts:

Me encantan a mí estas oposiciones de colores y, esté usted cierto, al encontrar en mis poesías una gardenia blanca, de que a seguida viene una camelia roja. Quizás por este gusto leo con tanto agrado a los pintores literatos, como el admirable Eugène Fromentin, preocupados siempre en esos efectos de luz y de color. Yo lo hago mal; pero Gautier, nuestro Gautier, lo hacía maravillosamente.

(*Crítica*, p. 318)

Along with color and light, particular attention was given to lines and palpable physical form. Similar to color and light, the ideal treatment of tangible form was to describe it in a way that would reveal a psychological experience: "Leconte de Lisle siente una línea y la burila en el cerebro de los que saben leerle" (*Crítica*, p. 95). In an article addressed to Manuel Puga y Acal, the Modernist related both color and form to an emotional response:

. . .sentimos la voluptuosidad del color y de la línea; nos fascina y encanta por ejemplo este admirable verso de Díaz Mirón: el puro y culminante

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Cuentos color de humo, Prologue by Francisco Monterde (Mexico: Editorial Stylo, 1948), pp. 235-6.

pecho/ hinche y erige su botón de rosa.

(Crítica, pp. 326-7)

After projecting a synaesthesia of music, color and form into verbal art, Gutiérrez Nájera carried the process a step further and projected a combination of styles from various literary movements of different countries and periods. In this way he hoped to escape the tyranny of set molds for reasons explained in the following quote:

¿A qué escuela pertenece el libro de Peón? En rigor a ninguna. . .A mí me encantan estos libros vagabundos, que no se entecan en el pupitre de un colegio, que corren saltan, cazan mariposas y cortan todas las flores que les gustan; estos libros que aman infinitamente amando infinitas cosas; estos libros son como casas con ventanas abiertas; estos libros en cuyas páginas, traviesas y olvidadizas, tan pronto aparece la pintura exacta de una vieja ama de llaves, como la visión de los seres fantásticos. Tener escuela es encerrarse; es recibir la luz por una sola claraboya, como los presos.

(Crítica, p. 306)

The enthusiasm for different schools in this passage reveals the same relation between schools as between arts; all are equally useful to the fullest reproduction of the artist's vision.

The same variegating, spiritual broadening occurred from studying the possibilities of foreign literatures:

Lo que primero se echa de ver en las poesías de Gustavo[Baz], es que el autor conoce y ha estudiado varias literaturas. No es de los que viven y mueren dentro de la española...En el estudio de los grandes poetas extranjeros, se ensancha el espíritu como en los viajes, y se educa y disciplina el gusto. Es lo que verdaderamente desenvuelve, y perfecciona las dotes poéticas, no los tratados de retórica ni los libros de literatura dogmática. Gustavo Baz, por este procedimiento, ha conseguido formarse un estilo propio, que no es como el de otros poetas nuestros,

el indio trabajando para el amo español, sino el estilo independiente que toma lo que necesita y para sí; del inglés la frase concisa; del francés, el giro elegante; del español o el italiano el período rotundo y armonioso.

(Crítica, p. 298)

For these reasons Gutiérrez Nájera declared himself an enemy of literary schools. At the apex of his career in 1894, with the publication of the Revista Azul, Gutiérrez Nájera as director of the publication declared: "nuestro programa se reduce a no tener ninguno."¹

In spite of Gutiérrez Nájera's seeming disclaimer to a manifesto, his statement on the previous page--"El arte es nuestro Príncipe y Señor, porque el arte descifra y lee en voz alta el poema vivificante de la tierra y la armonía del movimiento en el espacio"²--reduces the denial of set program to a promise of avoiding rigidity and bigotry. The exaltation of aestheticism in the Revista Azul was a direct continuation of theories put forth years earlier in "El arte y el materialismo". Boyd Carter synthesized the content of Gutiérrez Nájera's first major article on beauty in the following conclusion:

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera tiene derecho al título de precursor teórico del modernismo en el dominio de lo estético por haber tenido y defendido los siguientes puntos de vista: 1. el arte no es imitación sino creación; 2. el artista debe ser libre de escoger su tema y desenvolverlo a su gusto; 3. el objeto del arte es la belleza; 4. la belleza, no siendo una idea sino

1. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, "Al pie de la escalera", La Revista Azul, I (May 6, 1894), p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 1.

la imagen de una idea, existe y se logra artísticamente en niveles simbólicos, distintos, superiores;
 5. el arte representa el triunfo de lo ideal sobre lo material, es decir, el triunfo de Ariel sobre Calibán;
 6. la propaganda no tiene nada que ver con el arte;
 7. lo utilitario de índole material, es el enemigo implacable del arte; 8. lo bello es útil por ser bello.¹

A comparison of the content of "El arte y el materialismo" with the Revista Azul articles, all of which were written just before the author's death in 1895, underline the unity which exists throughout Gutiérrez Nájera's work. He began his career with very definite notions concerning the human spirit and its precarious existence in a world of scientific values. Motivated by doubt and metaphysical uncertainties, Gutiérrez Nájera saw a solution in aestheticism for the human dilemma. Beauty, in these circumstances, was charged with freeing man from a finite existence and ennobling the sordid realities of human life. In order for beauty to perform such a task, certain modifications of literary expression had to be undertaken. Literary form had to adjust itself to accommodate the writer's vision. This was accomplished by plumbing history for inspiration in the art of all ages, searching the works of foreign literatures for innovative possibilities, and synaesthesizing into literary material the properties of musical and plastic arts. It is in this context, with Gutiérrez Nájera confronting himself and the universe, that an examination of his symbolic system should be undertaken.

1. Boyd G. Carter, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Estudio y escritos inéditos, pp. 78-9.

CHAPTER II

VALUE: AESTHETICISM AND IDEALISM

Although Gutiérrez Nájera seldom used the word "value", this term is a suitable denominator in understanding his aesthetic intentions. Value, as seen in the past chapter, consisted of creating meaning for life in fervent opposition to death and prosaic day-to-day existence. In his personal life he cultivated an aristocratic demeanor in a qualitative urge to remain above the sordidness of material existence, and in his writing he adopted an aesthetic idealism to accomplish the same purpose. The idea appears centrally in his criticism and carries over into the poetry and stories, that art in conjunction with a concentration on idealization creates an ennobling dimension to life for both author and reader.

As a consequence, much of Gutiérrez Nájera's use of symbol, no matter what ultimate meaning it acquires in specific textual instances, derives from a basic motivation of keeping the properties of art and ideality in continual focus. Direct references to the world of art, literature and music, artists as characters or Gutiérrez Nájera's textual references to himself as a writer are characteristic ways in which aestheticism is kept in the foreground.

Idealism is made prominent with an imagery which suggests value as related to the ethereal world of pure idea: birds, flowers, precious metals, incense, objets d'art, smoke, fog. In point of fact, the quest for value extends to the two other major categories of symbolization--time and universality and immediate experience--to be examined in subsequent chapters. The items mentioned above however, are singled out because of their particular aptness in illustrating how Gutiérrez Nájera undertook his personal expression of value.

Among the symbols which directly involve the names of artists, their works, or some textual part of their works, Gutiérrez Nájera chose by far the greatest number of allusions from literature rather than music or the plastic arts. References to music and the plastic arts are frequent and important, but their presence is limited in comparison to those from literature. The quantity of references to literature varies according to the nature of the work. In a poem written to imitate the straightforward nature of the German lieder, for example, there may be no literary analogy whatsoever; in an uncomplicated, humorous prose vignette like "Un quid pro quo" there is only one literary reference (Espronceda, Cuentos, p. 4) and two operatic references (Don Giovanni, Cuentos, p. 3; La Traviata, Cuentos, p. 7). A typical high count of author's names is found on page twenty-two of the Cuentos completos where ten writers are worked into the content of a single page with the following order: Byron, Gerárd de Nerval, Méry, Pedro Antonio

Alarcón, Chateaubriand, Anacharsis, Jules Verne, Flaubert, Gautier and Dante.

Among the sources of literary references taken from the ancient world, Greece was Gutiérrez Nájera's favorite provider of aesthetic allusions. In a brief and unequivocal passage he wrote that Greece was "la madre del amor y el arte" (Poesías II, p. 297). Among Greek writers alluded to, Homer predominates in a variety of metaphoric usages. The quality of Homer as a poet is compared to the calibre of a particular lady's beauty: "Como a Homero la Grecia, de tu cuna disputanse los astros el tesoro" (Poesías I, p. 367). In an ode to Hidalgo, Homer's name is entered twice to correlate the greatness of the two men (Poesías II, pp. 267-70). By joining the Mexican historical personage to the poet, Gutiérrez Nájera was underscoring the theory that Hidalgo, whatever the nature of his calling, was an artist by virtue of his great achievements. Not all references to Homer were of a serious and grave nature. With a note of levity, a personified cockroach appears in a story and excuses his shabby appearance by proclaiming his inner goodness with a comparison between himself and Homer: "¿Piensa Ud. que Homero andaba mejor de ropa?" (Cuentos, p. 335).

Personages from Homer's poems offer certain analogies. In a monologue, the gods from the Iliad are compared to the lost greatness of the imprisoned Frenchman, Lessips, whose aborted effort to construct the Panama Canal brought him into disgrace (Cuentos, p. 364). The episode of Odysseus

and the sirens was a logical analogy to commend the voice of a singer in "A una artista" (Poesías II, p. 291). In the Cuentos a moralizing analogy is given to the sirens when a prostitute in a moment of self deprecation regrets her siren attractiveness in drawing an honorable lover to herself after hiding the truth of her status (Cuentos, p. 406). On a fantasy level, a comet is compared to Odysseus who found a way to resist the sirens as the comet resisted the star Venus (Cuentos, p. 161). Circe, who in Homer's poem turned Odysseus' men into swine, is used in "A Lydia" as a symbol of deceptiveness (Poesías II, p. 275). Penelope was utilized more or less humorously in a farcical story to exaggerate the faithfulness of a wife (Cuentos, p. 138). Cassandra also appears in a humorous prose sketch where textually there is only a physical comparison with the heroine ("sus ojos eran negros como los de Casandra" Cuentos, p. 97). The fact that the heroine cannot inspire confidence in her husband however, implies a broader connection to Homer's Cassandra who could not convince the Trojans of her prophecies. Anacreon, another Greek poet, also draws attention through occasional mention. Gutiérrez Nájera was attracted to Anacreon's poetry of love, wine and happiness which he thought was a refreshing contrast to the metaphysical anguish of late nineteenth century literature. In a poem dedicated to a female acquaintance, Gutiérrez Nájera invokes Anacreon with a rhetorical question: "¿Eres la fresca y joven campesina que Anakreón cantó?" (Poesías II, p. 25). In "A

Justo Sierra" he laments the contemporary absence of a festive spirit seen in Anacreon's poetry (Poesías II, p. 185). In the Cuentos, there is a light-hearted reference to Anacreon in describing a lecherous old man as "absorto en sus ideas anacreónticas" (Cuentos, p. 466).

The examples of Homer and Anacreon typify how other Greek writers as varied as Sophocles, Sappho and Diogenes are inserted into the texture of stories or poems to keep the world of Greek literature before the reader. He also makes use of several Latin writers although Gutiérrez Nájera never felt an affinity for Rome equal to his love of ancient Greece. Vergil, Horace and Ovid, among the Latin authors, predominate. In "A Justo Sierra" Gutiérrez Nájera asserts that the spirits of Horace and Vergil survive in the person of the poem's subject, Justo Sierra:

En él [Sierra] Virgilio, cual un dios, habita
y cuando a Horacio sonriendo llama,
Horacio acude a la sagrada cita.

(Poesías II, p. 186)

These lines go to the heart of Gutiérrez Nájera's artistic credo which took very literally the timelessness of great art. Horace, Vergil and Justo Sierra became one person through their greatness, regardless of the space and time barrier that separated them. In contrast to the above citation, Vergil and Horace appear as instruments of comic exaggeration in a story entitled "Historia de un pantalón". A fatuous Adolfo refuses to pay his tailor on delivery of an order, conveniently forgets the transaction, and is

textually compared to Vergil's Aeneas: "Disculpad, empero, el olvido de este nuevo Eneas. . .no se puede ser fiel eternamente a un pantalón" (Cuentos, p. 370). The last two sentences of the story refer to Horace in an equally light tone: "Horacio dice: 'El hombre pasa la obra queda.' Pues bien, ha sucedido lo contrario: el pantalón pasó, y el sastre queda" (Cuentos, p. 371).

Ovid, like Anacreon, stands as a symbol of physical love in various passages. In "A Justo Sierra" a longing for a spirit akin to "el tierno Ovidio" (Poesías II, p. 185) is voiced. The same longing by a solitary poet appealing for the lost world of Ovid appears in "Las almas huérfanas":

amador de la musa pagana,
tú, nacido a gozar como Ovidio
en el coro gentil de las gracias.

(Poesías II, p. 158)

A relating of Plautus and Cicero to Mexico is worked into "La Guerra Santa". This poem, written in 1879, has an obvious political motivation in sympathy with the social goals of the positivists, who among their objectives, sought the pacification of the country and a cessation of internal wars:

y tras el largo batallar asoma
ejército viril de pensadores
venidos a pacífica jornada:
la grave Atenas sustituye a Roma.

(Poesías I, p. 209)

The last line clearly states a cultural preference for Athens over warlike Rome but the only literary figures

referred to by name in the poem are Romans. All good men, says the poet, must put themselves to a civilizing process like Plautus and Cicero:

se entregan con tesón a la faena,
con Plauto se encaraman a la escena,
suben con Cicerón a la tribuna.

(Poesías I, p. 211)

Gutiérrez Nájera's favorite writer from the middle ages was Dante. Early in his career he expressed feelings of insignificance in comparing himself to the Florentine:

Que si me falta luz para ser Dante
tú eres más grande que Beatriz. . .

(Poesías I, p. 274)

The same poem alludes to Paolo and Francesca, from Dante's Inferno, whose love continually soars away from an unhappy earth toward infinity. Francesca and Paolo also figure as a pivotal reference point in a story which has a setting in Mexico City. Alicia, the heroine of "Una Venganza" receives from the author a lengthy description as a woman of consummate beauty, unhappily married to a banker. The author foretells Alicia's fate with a comparison to Francesca which is followed by a denouement which fulfills the prophecy. Alicia and her lover are murdered by the wealthy husband, a destiny which parallels that of Francesca and Paolo.

Another story, "Pia di Tolomei", has an even stronger dependence on the Inferno through an impressionistic sketch inspired in the last four lines of Canto Five from "Purgatory":

Ricorditi di me, che son la Pia;
 Siena me fe!, disfecemi Maremma;
 Salsi colui, che 'nnanellata pria,
 Disposando, m'avea con la sua gemma.

(Cuentos, p. 22)

The narrator tries to understand why the image of Pia is so strongly imprinted on his mind. As he ruminates on the problem, he elaborates the ethereal qualities of Pia and registers his disbelief of her adultery which had resulted in her murder at the hands of a jealous husband. The names of three different scholars enter into the discussion of Pia's innocence with substantial quotes in Italian from each. The problem of her uncommonly vivid impression is resolved with the recollection by the narrator of a visit to a provincial Mexican vicarage. A painting with a profane motif, mistaken by the priest for a madonna, had been discovered there by the narrator. On the back of the ancient painting was the following inscription: "Ista fuit illa Pia nobilis Domina de Tholomeis de Senis" (Cuentos, p. 25). The story, in its heavy dependence on the Inferno and criticism thereof, constitutes one of the best examples of how Gutiérrez Nájera not only enthroned art theoretically but used it in a very practical way to weave into the fiber of his own composition.

Shakespeare occupies the most prominent position among the list of authors cited. Three poems and a novel fragment manifest a Shakespearean inspiration in the title: "Hamlet a Ofelia", "Con Julieta", "To be" and La mancha de Lady Macbeth, whose plot was not sufficiently developed to

clarify its intended relation to Shakespeare's Macbeth. "To be" is a joining of the hopelessness in Hamlet's monologue to Gutiérrez Nájera's pessimistic assessment of the human condition where the intrinsic flaws of the world render man helpless in the face of timeless human pain:

El dios que crea
es un esclavo de otro dios terrible
que se llama el dolor. . .
¡Y el espacio,
el vivero de soles, lo infinito
son la cárcel inmensa, sin salida
de almas que sufren y morir no pueden!

(Poesías II, p. 106)

Suicide, the poet feels, is useless. The only alleviating hope would be the sterilization of the eternal matrix which gives life to the planet.

"Hamlet a Ofelia" is an imagined monologue of Hamlet which continues in the thematic vein of "To be" with the difference that the former poem centers on the individual rather than humanity generally. Hamlet, representing Gutiérrez Nájera, recognized a loss of his faculties to believe or to love, with a resulting desolation in his soul. He rejects the rumor that he is crazy and asserts that his distracted state is caused by a frustrated search for truth:

¿La verdad? ¡No la sepas! Tetra nube
preñada de relámpagos le envuelve
y el espíritu audaz que a ella sube,
deja su cuerpo en tierra, mas no vuelve.

(Poesías I, pp. 298-9)

"Con Julieta" treats the subject of love with a physical implication. Ophelia usually represents a pure, spiritual love while passages with Juliet abound in images

of sensuality: "náyades desnudas", "la boca enamorada que me besa", "oprimiéndose pecho contra pecho" (Poesías II, p. 84). There is however, no lessening of pessimism:

Estás enfermo como yo, y herido
del imposible amor de que se muere!

(Poesías II, p. 83)

There is another reference to Juliet along with numerous other tragic heroines in the Cuentos. The first paragraph of "Un drama en la sombra" lists a series of dramas involving either tragedy or deep suffering--Oedipus, Phaedra, Héloise y Abélard, and finally Juliet and Romeo--to make the point that tragedy is a general property of humanity which more often than not goes unnoticed in the soul of:

los oscuros nombres de seres ignorados para el mundo,
de seres que vivieron envueltos en los pliegues del
misterio, que jamás fijaron en sí el ojo escrutador de
la sociedad y que sólo la desgracia numera en su mar-
tirologio.

(Cuentos, p. 375)

Rather than concentrate, with an unembellished account, on the horrid existence of "seres ignorados", as would a Naturalist, Gutiérrez Nájera begins the first sentence with a comparison of the common man's lot with that of literary masterpieces:

Hay dramas terribles como la más pavorosa creación de la musa trágica; dolores secretos que superan a cuanto puede idear la fantasía; martirios horribles, que igual no tienen en los remordimientos de Edipo, ni en los celos de Fedra, ni en la desesperación de la infortunada Dido, y que pasan desconocidos para el mundo envueltos en el sudario negro de la más profunda obscuridad.

(Cuentos, p. 375)

The previous examples of correspondence of value and literature have been primarily of implication. His constantly infusing literary allusions into textual material to symbolize any number of given topics, substantiated his belief that man needed the greatness of art because of its intrinsic grandeur. Frequently this intention of keeping before the reader an aura of grandeur by invoking literature is merely suggested, but in the above example the purpose of using art as a tool of ennoblement is explicit.

Numerous other allusions to Shakespeare exist with a variety of meanings and tonalities. In a mock-humorous note, a poem proclaims that Hamlet's "to be" question was inappropriate since man's perennial nature of obesity would require an alteration of the question to "¿comer o no comer?" (Poesías I, p. 220). In "Historia de un peso falso" the tendency of a counterfeit coin to remain in the possession of its unfortunate acquirer is compared to the faithfulness of a dog, then two sentences later the analogy is brought to Shakespeare: ". . .como Cordelia acompañó al rey Lear" (Cuentos, p. 216). In a more somber poem, music is related to Ophelia: "Sobre las olas...ahí flota descolorido y coronado de ranúnculos el cadaver de Ofelia" (Cuentos, p. 254).

Goethe stands beside Homer, Vergil, Dante and Shakespeare as another major literary figure whom Gutiérrez Nájera invoked frequently enough to imply symbolic importance. More often than Goethe's name, his characters are

presented, creating a problem in claiming that Goethe is involved since other nineteenth century writers used the Faust theme. Gutiérrez Nájera had either seen or read several interpretations published after Goethe's Faust. Gounod's Faust, Goito's Mefistófeles and Berlioz' Damnation de Faust were all known to him and the fact that these interpretations were operas which transposed literary material into music was a strong attraction for a Modernist. It is not unusual then that Gounod's opera held as much sway in Gutiérrez Nájera's estimation as Goethe's poem:

Gounod fué más feliz que todos los maestros franceses en empresas tales. Dió vida a "Fausto", pero vida de él, no copiada ni refleja. De modo que tenemos dos Faustos, el de Goethe y el de Gounod, separadas por enormes distancias, uno soberano y otro príncipe de poca fortuna, pero ambos hermosos.

(Prosas II, p. 177)

An early use of Goethe's name unequivocally related Faust and Margarita to Goethe as a symbol of outstanding expressiveness:

Si quieres tu ver descrita,
abre el Fausto inmortal, y pon tu nombre
en donde Goethe puso: Margarita.

(Poesías I, p. 368)

Other references to Faust and Margarita however, are not so clearly taken from Goethe. The passages in which the two are related to Siebel would point to Gounod, since Siebel is more prominent in the Frenchman's opera. In "A Matilde Olavarria" there is no mention of Faust at all, only Siebel and Margarita. Siebel represents Gutiérrez Nájera in

the poem and Margarita corresponds to ideal purity. Margarita as a symbol of ideal purity is the most frequently recalled figure from the Faust theme. Gutiérrez Nájera was perfectly capable of empathizing with Faust as in the following verses:

Quiero entrar... y deténgome callado
cual Fausto en el jardín de Margarita.

(Poesías II, p. 22)

However, the point of emphasis is Margarita. Gutiérrez Nájera much preferred Hamlet as a male protagonist to Faust, which is another indication of how Gutiérrez Nájera saw himself positioned in the world. The crisis of metaphysical uncertainty and preoccupation with death were of such intensity that he could write more often and at greater length on the desperate Hamlet than on Faust. The latter was not happy with life, to be sure, but basically he was more serene in nature than Hamlet.

Textual citation of modern French writers or some aspect of their work account for the largest category of literary symbolization. An extended list includes Boileau, Voltaire, Hugo, Verlaine, Nerval, Balzac, Lamartine, Prudhomme, Halévy, Murger, Houssage, Rob, Vigny, Baudelaire, Saint-Pierre, Zola, Gautier, Dumas and Kock, to name only those which are obvious. In viewing the spectrum of French writers, the question obviously arises concerning whether or not this list and the ways in which Gutiérrez Nájera utilized it casts light on how dependent he was on French

literature. In a sense, an enumeration of foreign authors cited by Gutiérrez Nájera leaves the question unanswered, leaving possibilities for discussion in an only slightly better perspective. Unquestionably, the quantity of French names bears witness to an immense fondness for French literature. But at the same time, none of the French writers receive the lavish praise given either Homer, Vergil, Dante, Shakespeare or Goethe. One is left with the impression that for thought, content, or philosophy Gutiérrez Nájera preferred artists of northern Europe, or this is suggested by parenthetical statements on Shakespeare and Germany. On Shakespeare's work: ". . .en mi frágil barca de vela latina. . .voy a perderme en esa inmensidad" (Prosas II, p. 69). On Germany: "Cuna de los heroes y los genios, madre del saber y de la ciencia" (Crítica, p. 118). Although there is no disrespect for the French mind, Gutiérrez Nájera felt that the French, in the final analysis, excelled over everyone else aesthetically and therefore served as a source of technical innovation:

La poesía francesa es muy coqueta y muy hermosa; cuesta trabajo levantarse de su muelle canapé; pero aunque estoy enamorado de ella, debo confesar a usted que nos va a dañar algo su champagne. . .El excesivo amor a la frase, a los matices de la palabra, ha dado a Francia esa poesía de los "decadentes" que es como un burbujeo de pantanos.

(Crítica, p. 327-8)

Caution, however, should be uppermost in trying to extract a conclusion from statistics in this instance.

References to the German Heine are very scarce, yet the poetry of Heine, just to give one example, is far more important to understanding what Gutiérrez Nájera wanted to do with his art than a word count would indicate. The point that remains constant and unquestionable is that Gutiérrez Nájera could, by constantly infusing literary names from France or any other country into the text in similes and metaphors, symbolically keep art ever present in the reader's mind.

Of the few eighteenth century French writers cited, Voltaire appears with the greatest frequency. In the poem "La misa de las flores" Voltaire and Boileau provide a negative contrast to nature as symbols of stultifying city and parlor life:

Boileau se queda en el aula
y Voltaire en la ciudad.
¡Musa, al campo! ¡Abre la jaula!

(Poesías II, p. 233)

In a more laudatory use of Voltaire's name, but with a touch of humor, an elegant female protagonist is compared to Voltaire: ". . .la escéptica, la desengañada Julia, aquel Voltaire con faldas" (Cuentos, p. 70). With a double reference to Homer and Voltaire, another passage has the Frenchman's name as an adjective: "Chryseis [daughter of Apollo who was given to Agamemnon], menos crédula y algo volteriana. . ."
(Cuentos, p. 444).

A group of Romanticists--Hugo, Vigny, Musset, Nerval,

Lamartine, Gautier, Balzac, Murger--constitutes the most quoted French literary school. Gutiérrez Nájera conspicuously identifies himself with Victor Hugo in "La novela de tranvía". The story, in which a streetcar ride is utilized as the structure for an impressionistic sketch, relates the Mexican author to the French poet in the first sentence: ". . .recorrer las calles, como el anciano Víctor Hugo las recorría, sentado en la imperial de un ómnibus" (Cuentos, p. 154). Another story uses a Hugo character for a simile to portray a protagonist: "Era él como un Hernani, por fuerza de la miseria" (Cuentos, p. 236). Passing to other Romanticists, a scene from Vigny's drama Chatterton, where a poor gentleman throws away a fortune in jewels for a lady is compared to the process of betting on horse races (Cuentos, p. 174). The story "Pia di Tolomei" contains eight lines of poetry in French quoted from Gérard de Nerval concerning an experience of Nerval's in which a memory sensation brings a seemingly supernatural recollection from another life (Cuentos, p. 21). Lamartine is used as a symbol of subjective expression in the preface to the story entitled "En secreto" in which the narrator elaborates on the difference between revealing one's heart to a friend and to a public through print. The public, concludes the narrator, is more sympathetic: "El escuchó las jeremiadas de Lamartine, y escudriñó los misterios de su vida" (Cuentos, p. 288). Except for being a subjective artist, the use of Lamartine's name is obviously arbitrary. Balzac himself is

the protagonist of a mythological fantasy "Balzac y el Dios Proteo", adapted from a story by Banville. Murger's character Mimí metaphorically describes a store clerk: "Y cada vez la rubia grisetita la Mimí de un Murger sin editor, martillea más vivamente las baldosas" (Cuentos, p. 348).

There is a broad sampling of other nineteenth century French writers, although no other literary group is so strikingly represented as the Romanticists. Proudhon's theories on private ownership of property correspond to the blind tendency of lovers to steal affection heedless of the rules of social decorum: "Parece, sin embargo, que la mayor parte de los amantes profesan el principio de Proudhon: la propiedad es el robo" (Cuentos, pp. 289-90). Auguste Vacquérie is invoked to corroborate Gutiérrez Nájera's dislike of government bureaucracy in its mechanized treatment of individuals (Cuentos, p. 241). Baudelaire is called on for a quote to describe a woman as possessing ". . . la gracia infantil de los monos. . ." (Cuentos, p. 176). Verlaine and the Swiss novelist Edouard Rob metaphorically portray a character Gutiérrez Nájera characterized as mystic: "Mi amigo, el místico, a lo Verlaine y a lo Rob, . . ." (Cuentos, p. 246). La duquesa Job is described as a typical grisette from Paul de Kock's novels of middle-class France (Poesías II, p. 19). The novels of Zola are involved in a comparison with Mexico City: "Para vivir ahora en México, como para leer una novela de Zolá, se necesita irremisiblemente llevar cubiertas las narices" (Cuentos, p. 81).

The examples of literary citations which have been described in the previous paragraphs fall far short of a complete examination of the subject. Nevertheless, the scope and use of literary references explained above typify how Gutiérrez Nájera seeks to give his work an aristocratic tone by sharing with the reader his fund of knowledge. The two other types of aesthetic reference (plastic art and music) used in the poetry and stories are more important in a sense than the literary references, although numerically fewer. With literary material his accomplishment was limited to reinforcing a philosophy of value created through aestheticism. With references to music and plastic art, not only is aestheticism reinforced through imagery but the nature of literature as a written medium is changed. It was Gutiérrez Nájera's intention to make literature much more than literature. To briefly recall his literary theory described in the last chapter, he wanted spoken and written art to take on, insofar as the imagination would allow, the properties of painting, sculpture and music. A recurrent invocation of the names of painters and musicians was a partial fulfillment of this desire, in addition to the purpose of creating value through creation and invocation of art.

Almost all of the literary allusions which stand out in the poetry and stories relate to a specific man. Either the author's name (Dante, Homer, Voltaire, etc.) or a character from his work (Hamlet, Beatriz, Circe, or the

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grisettes of Paul de Kock) is placed in the text. With music there is a large body of imagery without relation to a specific artist. The insertion of words like music, notes, lyre, piano, viola, song are as prominent as specific musicians, composers and their work.

In numerous instances the word music or an equivalent is used, as when Gutiérrez Nájera calls his life "una estrofa del himno del dolor" (Poesías I, p. 107). Music in another poem is the soft, ethereal quality of a woman:

Eco dulce y armonioso
de música que se aleja;

(Poesías I, p. 145)

Still another strophe praises the life-giving force of art:

Pero la música blanda,
revive, palpita y anda
sumisa a la voluntad;
está dormida, no muerta;
si queréis verla despierta,
tocad, artistas, tocad!

(Poesías I, p. 314)

The textual insertion of musical instruments is the most frequent means of relating music to literature. The lyre, which in Gutiérrez Nájera's literary theorizing was employed metaphorically to describe poetic inspiration, serves the same function in the creative part of his work.

al consagrarte tiernos mis cantares
las vibraciones de mi tosca lira.

(Poesías I, p. 35)

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mi pobre lira
tan sólo en tu mirada
dulce se inspira

(Poesías I, p. 83)

Numerous other instances of the lyre are correspondences between music and poetic expression: "Mi pobre lira/ sólo exhala sollozos" (Poesías II, p. 309). Occasionally he simply invokes music without a specific symbolic function other than appealing to something aesthetic: "al trovador errante que de su lira arranca/ mil himnos. . ." (Poesías II, p. 305).

The piano is important in its repeated use as a symbol in both poems and stories. In the first of two poems entitled "Efímeras" a piano is the central image which serves the same symbolic function as the lyre which usually represents poetic inspiration. A silent, duster-covered piano is slowly losing its soul from disuse ("...la negra tapa/ tiene la forma de un ataúd" Poesías I, p. 335) after the departure of a beautiful maiden who played it. The piano is then compared to the poet who feels a loss of dreams and poetic inspiration in the same way that the piano longs for music: "como esas notas están mis versos" (Poesías I, p. 336). A piano is also a crucial part of the imagery in "La serenata de Schubert". Here the piano is not only related to art but to life and death. After the last notes of the Sonata have faded away:

¡Y nada existe ya! Calló el piano...
fue sueño, pero inmenso: ¡el de la muerte!

(Poesías II, p. 206)

Actually, life and art are practically identical here, as well as elsewhere since art to Gutiérrez Nájera was genius, quality or a form of value and anyone who lived without aspiration to these qualities was a living cadaver or, simply stated, dead. Another textual use of the piano in the story entitled "La sopecha infundada" contrasts in tone with the above examples which were written in moments of total seriousness. A jealous husband walking through a garden realizes that his wife, in the company of a male friend, is no longer playing the piano and rushes into the parlor, breathing a sigh of relief as he sees his wife and friend innocently conversing; but doubts rush again to the poor husband's mind in the last line of the story: "¡Rayos y centellas. . .! ¡Se había cambiado el traje. . .!" (Cuentos, p. 100). The piano presented in this story without fanfare is a centerpiece of the scene and a turning point of the plot and constitutes one of any number of passages where a piano appears as a small contribution to an atmosphere of artistic refinement.

Other instruments serve in the same manner as the piano and lyre. In the poem "Las almas huérfanas" the harp is an instrument on which solitary man tries to console himself playing love songs (Poesías II, p. 154). In "Musa blanca" the author compares his poetry to the sounds of a lute which is in turn compared to the singing of birds: "¿Hay pájaros que canten cual canta mi laúd?" (Poesías II, p. 62). "Non omnis moriar" relates how poetry contains the

poet's past memories which are accompanied by viola music: "sollozando al compás de las violas..." (Cuentos, p. 302). In "Primera Página" a silver clarinet announces the presence of Greek nobility (Poesías II, p. 305). "Albores primaverales" utilizes a guitar for its ability to evoke memories (Poesías I, p. 150). Organ music in "Acuérdate de mí" corresponds to the poet's heavy mood of gloom (Poesías I, p. 168).

In addition to musical instruments, the names of composers and musical works are recorded. One of the poems most often quoted in anthologies, "La serenata de Schubert", is a tribute to both the composer and his work. The first lines are a tribute to the composer's expressiveness:

¡Oh, que dulce canción! Límpida brota
esparciendo sus blandas armonías,
y parece que lleva en cada nota
muchas tristezas y ternuras mías.

(Poesías II, p. 203)

The next line "¡así hablara mi alma. . .si pudiera!" makes Gutiérrez Nájera a descendant of critics like Poe and Schopenhauer who held that music was the highest form of expression. The entire poem is a catalogue of the suggestive possibilities of the music which produces visions of color, fantasy, emotion and memory recall. The last lines of the poem, already examined above, suggest that the silence which follows the music is of death.

The name of Offenbach, which recurs with a certain frequency, is exclaimed over in a paragraph in which Gutiérrez Nájera departs from a thread of narration to give

this biographical note relevant to Offenbach:

Recuerdo que juntando, ochavo a ochavo, mis pobres economías de colegial, reunía la fabulosa suma necesaria para comprar un billete de paraíso. . .Entonces cursé primero y segundo año de mitología en la Bella Helena. Desde entonces soy duque: ¡Oh! si supierais cómo amé a la Gran Duquesa!

(Cuentos, p. 310)

Although the names of musicians are much less frequent than those of literary figures, their presence in a single passage can be as numerous. In the following lines, for example, the names of four composers are used to describe the beauty in one piano note:

En cada tecla, dormida ahora
vibraba el alma que canta y llora,
Rossini, Thálberg, Gounod, Mozart;

(Poesías I, p. 335)

Painter's names, like those of musicians, occasionally fill a passage. The following paragraph from the story "Mi inglés", written in 1877, not only illustrates the employment of painters and their masterpieces but is important as possibly the first thoroughgoing piece of Modernistic fiction:

¡Qué paisajes, qué grupos, qué figuras! En primer término y como presidiendo aquella aglomeración de obras maestras, veíase a Ticiano, el rey del colorido, aquel que tuvo por musa a una bacante y que ahogó su poesía, su sentimiento en la opulenta cabellera que caía como una lluvia de oro sobre la nívea espalda de su amada; a Giorgione, con la firmeza de sus líneas, la naturalidad y soltura de sus ropajes y el atrevimiento de sus toques; al Tintoretto, aquel que amaba el perfil de Miguel Ángel y el colorido de Ticiano; a Bassano, el gráfico pintor del Arca de Noé; a Boschini con sus cuadros de guerras y matanzas; a Pietro Suzino, a Sebastián del Piombo y a Pablo el Veronés por último,

el gran señor de la pintura, el artista por excelencia,
el rey de los pintores venecianos.

(Cuentos, p. 13)

The psychological or idealistic function this paragraph serves in the story is also important. Considered alone, the temptation would be to view the paragraph as a Parnasian orchestration of form, line, color and evocation of the past from an objective point of view. The context however, is quite different as evidenced in a line from the paragraph: ". . .allí la fantasía volaba como la mariposa. . .". (Cuentos, p. 13). The entire story as it develops in the last scene is a dream from which the narrator has been unexpectedly awakened. The rapid enumeration of painting is intended as a phantasmagoric, almost kaleidoscopic presentation, as is everything described in the story. The mention of London fog on the first page and the description of different effects of light inside Lord Pembroke's mansion throughout the story add to the dream atmosphere. The final distinguishing mark of a personal rather than impersonal viewpoint is the first person narration from the story's beginning to end.

The names of artists are rarely used in a cluster such as that in "Mi inglés". Usually a name appears alone and is unobtrusively recorded as a metaphor, then passed over for other subjects and images. In the story entitled "Aquél era otro López", a man of limited knowledge is compared to Velázquez' idiot of Coria (Cuentos, p. 231). In the poem "Para el album de una hermosa" a lady's beauty is

likened to a canvas by Rubens (Poesías II, p. 25). A story portraying the death of an unknown artist parallels his life with that of the Italian Renaissance artist Sandrea Schiavone (Cuentos, p. 249). The face of Leonardo da Vinci's Gioconda provides an analogy for a beautiful woman:

Ella, sonriente, gozando en las pasiones que inspira
sin participar de ellas, asoma su cabeza de Joconda
por la portezuela del cupé y saluda con la mano
enguantada o con el abanico a los platónicos adora-
dores de su cuerpo.

(Cuentos, p. 137)

The paragraph which follows this passage extends the metaphoric comparison to the Mona Lisa, in that no one can determine from the unrevealing expression on her face a sign of approval or disapproval for her admirers.

A number of images have their origin in the plastic arts but with no connection to the name of a specific artist. The word "gothic", in an implied relation to architecture, is an oft-employed word in this class. In the poem "De blanco" a gothic altar is listed among objects evoked by the color white (Poesías II, p. 167). The poem "Con los muertos" has the image of a woman silhouetted by a gothic window (Poesías II, p. 90). "Gótica vidriera" (Poesías I, p. 225) in "La noche de San Silvestre" provides a combined atmosphere of light, color and ethereal mysticism. Pia di Tolomei in the story was portrayed as a "dama gótica" (Cuentos, p. 24). The poem "Primera página" uses a combination of gothic and Arabic architectural references: "arábiga ventana", "alcázar es tu álbum", "gótico salón"

(Poesías II, pp. 305-7).

In the process of enumerating the names of writers, musicians and painters it would be easy to overlook the name of the artist whose presence is perceived directly or indirectly on every page: Gutiérrez Nájera. Virtually the entire work is written in the first person. The poetry is predominantly lyrical and elegiac. The short stories are either written in first person narration or in a third person narration so strongly subjective in nature that there can be no mistake of the author's nearness to the material. Among the passages with first-person point of view, Gutiérrez Nájera continually keeps the reader conscious of the fact that the story teller or poet is above all an artist who is inviting the reader to participate in an idealistic aesthetic experience by reading what the author, Gutiérrez Nájera, has created. Several of the poems are essentially statements on art and literature. "Solo ante el arte", written in 1880, is important as an early enthronement of aestheticism which took precedence over orthodox Christian ideas of eternality. "Nada es mío" is a description of how the poet composes from an intuitive inspiration. "A Justo Sierra" (1888) is a significant statement of Gutiérrez Nájera's formula of alleviating a fear of nothingness ("la sombra densa") through art. These are only the conspicuous examples of the artist speaking theoretically on art. Parenthetical statements recur in the text to keep the reader reminded that he is being addressed by an artist.

The following quote is typical of the poet's references to himself as an artist and his conscious identification as such:

Busco en mi alma lo más oscuro,
lo más secreto que exista en mí,
la estrofa virgen, el verso puro...
¡y nada encuentro digno de ti!

(Poesías II, p. 77)

The stories, like the poetry, abound in unobtrusive remarks intended to alert the reader to the fact that a work of art is being created or that the narrator is a lover and connoisseur of art. One of several techniques for beginning a story is simply to let the reader know that the author is about to tell a story:

Temí no hallar asunto para escribir mi artículo
de hoy, y he aquí. . .

(Cuentos, p. 32)

Te escribo oyendo el ruido de los últimos carruajes
que vuelven del teatro.

(Cuentos, p. 135)

Esta crónica se debe leer con pararrayos. Mientras
escribo retozan las enormes nubes tempestuosas,
asaltando en tumulto el firmamento.

(Cuentos, p. 198)

Este cuento yo no lo vi; pero creo que lo soñé.

(Cuentos, p. 225)

The first several paragraphs of "Cuento triste" comprise a miniscule statement on art and its place in the author's life. Ostensibly written to the narrator's absent sweetheart who has requested poems as a remembrance, he explains the difficulty of writing verse because his

imagination is left desiccated by the emptiness of his soul. The problems of the soul have been occasioned by the separation, not only of narrator and sweetheart, but also of the narrator from the cosmos. The first disillusion is love, which, in Gutiérrez Nájera's extension of love's meaning, is not a small matter. The sea which separates the lovers is more than physical distance since the narrator's capability for love itself has evaporated: "Hubo un momento en que creí que el amor era absoluto y único" (Cuentos, p. 151). The fact that loss of love is not a problem restricted to the two lovers is underscored. Man generally is hollow and empty: "Toqué a la puerta de muchos corazones y no me abrieron, porque adentro no había nadie" (Cuentos, p. 151). In his isolation from love the author feels he has lost paradise: "Yo vuelvo ya de todos los países azules en que florecen las naranjas color de oro" (Cuentos, p. 151). Giving value to the trivial is suggested in the next paragraph: "Hablemos ambos de las cosas frívolas, esto es, de las cosas serias" (Cuentos, p. 152). The verb form hints at an urgency for artistic creation which in another line is explicit. Speaking of love's inaccessibility the narrator affirms: "Preciso es, sin embargo, que te hable" (Cuentos, p. 151).

A paragraph on the problems of writing is inserted in the middle of "Noche lluviosa":

Vaya Ud. a escribir con esta noche una crónica alegre y retozona! Yo pienso en la vecina que aguarda a su novio, en el poeta que construye castillos en el aire,

en la griseta que va camino de su casa, y en el pobre señor cuyos pobrecitos hijos mueren de hambre y miedo.

(Cuentos, p. 351)

Without the insertion of this paragraph the story is a threading together of mental divagations by the narrator. The paragraph's insertion however, gives an underlying meaning to the story that the action is a result of the author's casting about for material. His art--crónica in this case--is an effort to rise above human problems by portraying something "alegre". The problems which move the narrator range from the metaphysical (the poet and his dreams) to the personal (the young lady's loss of love) and the social (the frightened, starving children). The last paragraph attempts to relate a happy experience from the writer's past but ends nevertheless on a note of emptiness.

Other stories have artists as principal figures. These are Gutiérrez Nájera's most fully realized vehicles for discussing the circumstances surrounding man, art and the world. The aesthetic imagery was of necessity limited in scope of statement and often intended to do little more than suggest ideality. Artist characterizations, by contrast, present a rounded out picture of Gutiérrez Nájera's thoughts on art as value in minute shadings. Eight stories concern artists linked topically to death, love, society, idealism, their art, or some combination of these topics.

"El Alquiler de una casa" is a good beginning point to illustrate Gutiérrez Nájera's treatment of artists and a discussion of their precarious existence. The plot concerns

a young man who inquires about renting a room. That the prospective tenant is an artist is given almost parenthetically: "El inquilino: joven, flaco, muy capaz de hacer versos" (Cuentos, p. 447). The antagonist of the plot is a landlord who obviously symbolizes for Gutiérrez Nájera an insipid and repressive middle class which subjects anyone of worth--an artist in this case--to indignities. The landlord is developed as a good natured, even well-intentioned person whose insensitiveness appears somewhat humorous ("gordo, de buen color, bajo de cuerpo y algo retozón de carácter" Cuentos, p. 447). He begins the interview with a series of impertinent questions and observations. Since the future tenant is a bachelor, the landlord insists that the young man must have a mistress, and brushes aside objections claiming openmindedness with one qualification:

. . .pero, mire Ud. . . .me disgustaría espantosamente que la novia de Ud. fuera morena... . . .Dejemos, pues, sentado que, si la casa le conviene, se obligará Ud. por escrito a que todas sus amigas sean rubias.

(Cuentos, p. 448)

Among other indignities, the future tenant has to undress: ". . .es una formalidad indispensable. No quiero que mis inquilinos sean enfermos." (Cuentos, p. 440). The last article of the rental contract underscores a middle-class disdain of art: "Art. 6º-- Los artistas y los literatos que vengan a visitar al inquilino, subirán por la escalera de la servidumbre" (Cuentos, p. 450). The last question is a routine "¿Por qué dejó su antiguo domicilio?" The poet's nonchalant answer ends the story: "--¡Yo, por nada! Porque

arrojé por el balcón al propietario" (Cuentos, p. 451).

The most significant aspect of the conflict in this story between artist and middle-class mentality is not so much the direct discourse on the subject but the tone of the humor and pessimism. The way Gutiérrez Nájera has the landlord phrase the interview tells more than what the landlord actually says (i.e., I don't like sickly-looking men, artists, brunettes, and I like to have my own way). The nature of the comic exaggeration points out the depth of the author's bitterness. The landlord's unexplainable preference in women, the bizarre act of undressing a prospective tenant and the artist's suggestion that he had killed a former landlord betray more bitterness than the humorous treatment might indicate. Obviously this is comic exaggeration, but its tone unmistakably points to a depth of disillusionment. There is an additional point related to the nature of the humor, which makes criticism of the middle-class existence in this story all the more emphatic. The insensitivity of the landlord is presented with a matter-of-factness which indicates not only that he inhabits a dehumanized world but that, such as it is, the author refuses to identify with it. So opposed is Gutiérrez Nájera to the middle-class modes and values that he gives only a detached and bemused depiction. This matter-of-fact presentation of the outlandish is an early characteristic of what becomes pervasive in twentieth century literature, notably among such writers as Kafka.

A bitter but bemused tonal presentation of a world without values underlies a major attraction to Gutiérrez Nájera as a writer, and the fact that this is much more characteristic of his prose than his poetry partially accounts for the fact that the prose is held in higher critical esteem.

Other stories give more detail to the way in which art was enthroned and the difficulty this entailed. The story "Historia de una corista" is a typical example of the role of an artist in the world. The artist of the story is, as the title suggests a chorus girl who sketches the story of her life in a letter to the author. The nature of her work as chorus girl is not exactly the highest form of artistic aspiration, which she readily admits: "Yo no aspiré jamás a vivir, como artista, del teatro" (Cuentos, p. 59). Yet she still symbolizes artistic perfection because of the beauty of herself as a person: "Mi belleza magnífica y extraordinaria. . ." (Cuentos, p. 59). As a symbol, the chorus girl embodies an aesthetic object itself as much as does her performance.

The letter is written at a point in the actress' life when all illusions have been lost and her physical beauty is fading. Her first sentence shows a preoccupation with this fact: "Con el pie en el estribo del vagón y lo mejor de mi belleza en la maleta, . . ."(Cuentos, p. 57). She also points out the plainness of her surroundings which foreshadows the frustration she is about to describe. The

candle by which she writes is a poor substitute for a star, her roommate is snoring on an iron bunk, and in order to distract herself in her frustration, she writes:

. . .me entretengo en trazar garabatos y renglones como Uds. los periodistas, hombres que, a falta de Champagne y de Borgoña, beben a grandes sorbos ese líquido espeso y tenebroso que se llama tinta.

(Cuentos, p. 57)

Writing represents for the actress what literature is for Gutiérrez Nájera: an opportunity for creating something of worth out of nothingness and at the same time squarely facing the fact of life's restrictions.

The actress' life parallels Gutiérrez Nájera's view of the human condition. To begin, the origin of reality is not knowable and consequently mankind is orphaned. Symbolically, the actress is an orphan: "No sé en dónde nací" (Cuentos, p. 58) and she continues that her parents probably forgot her a few weeks after her birth and assumes that the old lady who adopted and mistreated her could have had little concern for the welfare of others. In this orphaned state, man is without a definite moral norm. The chorus girl admits that she customarily enjoys spending the money of others, that she lacks modesty in showing herself on a stage dressed in ". . .el traje económico del Paraíso" (Cuentos, p. 58) and uses the theatre as a place to market her beauty. Her initiation to a promiscuous sexual life at an early age is mentioned and Gutiérrez Nájera makes her loss of virtue a symbol of mankind generally with a quote from Victor Hugo:

En los zarzales de la vida, deja
 Alguna cosa cada cual; la oveja
 Su blanca lana, el hombre su virtud.

(Cuentos, p. 58)

The loss of virtue however, does not imply a lack of desire for something more meaningful. She likes Mexico City because "Ésta es la primera ciudad en que me tratan como se trata a una señora" (Cuentos, p. 60).

A more practical problem of physical discomfort accompanies the more philosophical dilemma of moral instability and the abandoned state of man. Of course it would be possible to say that the material discomfort of the chorus girl is a symbolic underpinning of her moral state; however, it seems that the fact of hunger and misery is mentioned too often to have only one symbolic level of meaning. The plainness of her present surrounding is recorded in the first paragraph. Her childhood was one of overwork, punishment, lack of food and squalid living accommodations. An entrance into the theatre in order to sell her body was equally unsuccessful: ". . .vivía penosamente, codeada por la miseria y victima de las privaciones" (Cuentos, p. 59). A trip to America was unrewarding. The yankees, with their vast quantities of money, appreciated all good merchandise with the exception of women and the Cubans appreciated women but lacked money. In Mexico she finds a wealth of courteous journalists and elegant dandys but no money.

The possible solution to all of the problems is symbolized by material wealth which, it can be assumed,

represents more than physical comfort since the chorus girl embodies for Gutiérrez Nájera not only a woman, but beauty itself. She describes the attaining of aristocratic status as a culmination of her ambitions but as she is writing her life story realizes that such a future ambition is as nebulous as her origin:

Pero ¡ay! ningún príncipe ruso, ningún lord inglés se puso a la vista en esa larga temporada. Yo supongo que los príncipes rusos son unos entes imaginarios que sólo han existido en el cerebro hueco de los novelistas.

(Cuentos, p. 59)

Any level of meaning which is read into the above quote gives man and his ambitions little comfort unless it be the consolation of a struggle. No matter how long the chorus girl contemplates her unhappiness, total fulfillment is beyond her grasp. Such, it follows, is also the fate of beauty, truth and idealism.

"Stora y las medias parisienses" makes much the same point as "Historia de una corista". The setting of the story is a somewhat exotic Paris during the rainy season when the moisture gives the city an atmosphere like Amsterdam or Venice. Most noteworthy in the confusion caused by the wetness is the effect on Parisian women who, undaunted, refuse the mobile comfort of carriage or omnibus. Irrespective of class ("...ya sea cómica, loca o gran señora..." Cuentos, p. 82) all walk, with the result that in their hurried rhythm, careful steps and jumping small puddles they have to raise their dresses just enough to reveal "...una pierna

esbelta, aprisionada en la tirante media, cuyo tejido espeso ilumina la luz con rayos de oro" (Cuentos, p. 82). Stora, a poor bohemian, falls in love with the Parisian stockings and when it rains takes to the streets to observe them. He is so intent that he comes to recognize all of the feminine legs of Paris at a glance. For hours he wanders in the rain following stockings of one color and then another. Poorly dressed and with worn out shoes, he succumbs to illness which a season in warmer climates does not cure. He returns to Paris neither restored to health nor cured of his desire to look at pretty legs and takes to the wet streets until he falls ill and dies.

Stora in this piece is an artist whose only financial support is the occasional income from his poetry. He explicitly represents the idealistic dreamer and the beautiful legs of Parisian women represent the aesthetic quality of poetry:

Sí, aquel París fangoso es el triunfo de la mujer, que, toda agilidad y luz, cruza las calles, suelta y garbosa, como la estrofa alada de una oda; y por la misma razón, al propio tiempo, es el paraíso del soñador que sigue a las mujeres.

(Cuentos, p. 82)

Poverty and human misery serve to accentuate Stora's dedication to dreams. The misery of his life is dwelled on in a paragraph which, for so short a story, is rather long. In the midst of his solitude, hunger, and general deprivation he cherishes only the wealth of his dreams, stimulated by the stockings, which are compared to material wealth. When

it rained: "Tomaba entonces posesión de París, y creyéndose dueño de un dominio más grande y rico que el de Salomón, . . ." (Cuentos, p. 83). Stora's passion for his dreams made him walk day and night in rain to watch the stockings: ". . .haciendo provisiones de recuerdos para esos días interminables que pasaba componiendo nocturnos para piano" (Cuentos, p. 83). His own ruined shoes caused his feet to bleed and pneumonia almost ended his life when an unexpected event suddenly gave Stora material wealth. Unexpectedly, he gained a fortune on the stock exchange and his doctors sent him off to the south and warmer climates. Poverty with ideals wins over wealth and physical well-being as Stora is irresistibly drawn back to Paris and death. In death, the author pronounces Stora's wealth of imagination superior to riches: "¿Qué príncipe, que millonario, qué Nabab, ha satisfecho sus caprichos como Stora, dueño con la imaginación de aquel París, que su deseo invencible le había conquistado?" (Cuentos, p. 84).

The pessimism and humor in this piece are joined in the same curious mixture explained above. The humor in a bedraggled bohemian stalking the rainy streets of Paris to stare at legs tends to cover a stark pessimism which comes through on closer inspection. The misery of Stora's room, his hunger, illness caused by the cold rain, and his death are dwelled on too extensively for the narration to be only a funny story. Equally important, several statements on the legs and stockings give them more meaning than a mere

instrument of comedy. A description of the pretty feet echoes Gutiérrez Nájera's theory of literature when he says they resemble ". . .hadas milagrosas. . ." (Cuentos, p. 82) and that the ankles ". . .forman una armonía de líneas y colores. . ." (Cuentos, p. 82). The kaleidoscopic display of colors is another characteristic Gutiérrez Nájera is perfectly serious about: ". . .las medias rosas, las medias multicolores rayadas en espiral, o las graciosas medias grises con su violeta bordada en una punta?" (Cuentos, p. 83). Gutiérrez Nájera's idea on the approach to reality most capable of making man happy and independent of his material surrounding is perfectly illustrated in the following quote:

En ocasiones se adelantaba a la mujer que seguía; con una ojeada rápida le miraba los ojos, la boca y el cabello, solamente para cerciorarse de que aquellas gracias correspondían a las que imaginariamente le había dado, y para ver si aquella media, rosa o blanca, estaba bien o mal acompañada. Pero, en rigor de verdad, Stora conocía muy pocas caras.

(Cuentos, p. 83)

Happiness was not in the women, or even in the stockings and legs in their objective reality, but was contained in their idealistic--that is, mental or psychological--reality. The closer the artist can move toward pure idea the better, which is why only a suggestive part of the woman's body is important. If pretty ankles and multicolored stockings stimulate the imagination, then they create the ultimate form of happiness and are beautiful. For this Stora perished willingly and, in Gutiérrez Nájera's estimation, as

a wealthy man.

The death of an artist is also the topic of "Un 14 de julio", except that in this story every shred of humor disappears to emphasize Gutiérrez Nájera's deep preoccupation with death. A starving Parisian artist, his wife, and six children make a suicide agreement to end their misery. The youngest child overhears the conversation and innocently asks the meaning of "to die". The mother explains death as "heaven" which represents the ideal Gutiérrez Nájera's characters reach for but never attain. The children are eager to leave for the paradise filled with toys for everyone but want to wait a day in order to see Bastille Day celebrations, especially the fireworks. The fourteenth of July, with its gayness, represents another emblem of happiness beyond the grasp of the family. The fireworks typify the false hope of the celebration: "Sí, el cohete sube; también resplandeciente, quiere llegar a las estrellas...pero en el aire se apaga" (Cuentos, p. 250). Death, as it turns out, is also an illusion. The family returns from the celebration, closes up the room and then a coal fire is started. Everyone is asphyxiated except the mother who survives: ". . .no la quiso la muerte" (Cuentos, p. 250). Death becomes an ideal on the same plane with heaven and the beauty of fireworks, but is nevertheless just as remote from the mother who is held imprisoned by life.

The symbolism imbedded in this story again has a double level of meaning: one practical and terrestrial, the

other idealistic. There is a stated intention of presenting here not only a spiritual anguish but also a materially deprived family:

Voy a referiros una breve y triste historia, y voy a referirla porque hoy habrá muchos semblantes risueños en las calles, y es bueno que los alegres, los felices, se acuerden de que hay algunos, muchos desgraciados.

(Cuentos, p. 247)

As in other stories, the poverty Gutiérrez Nájera writes of is too vivid to symbolize only the debasement of art. The responsibility of six children is described as a product of poverty: "¡Ya sabéis que la pobreza es muy fecunda!" (Cuentos, p. 24); and the prevalence of the word hunger appears repeatedly in the story. The surviving mother is left with an eternal memory of her children ". . . hambrientas y asfixiadas. . ." (Cuentos, p. 251).

A concern for the survival of art is equally at stake as revealed by the plot. Between the artist-husband and the wife, it is the artist-husband who dies with the children, as if to say suffering and poverty live but art dies. The paintings were unmarketable in spite of the vastness of the city which, in its agitation, buries the human voice: "¡Es tan grande París! ¡Hay en sus calles tanto ruido! ¡Es tan difícil percibir allí la voz de un hombre!" (Cuentos, p. 248). The painter's attempt to sell his last work gains only the gift of some stamps for the children to play with. The stamps remind the artist of his professional ancestor Schiavone who, in the sixteenth century, was recompensed for a masterpiece with a bouquet of roses whose

petals provided his family with their last meal before death.

The oldest daughter, fourteen years old, represents Gutiérrez Nájera's skepticism regarding the satisfactory resolution of man's ambitions. Like the chorus girl but without humor, the daughter is herself an aesthetic symbol: "¡Era hermosa, y se iba sin que el mundo la hubiera conocido!" (Cuentos, p. 249). Of all the family she was the most undeceived by life and understood "la muerte hospedadora" (Cuentos, p. 249). Her disillusionment encompassed art, human festivity, and the promise of heaven: ". . .no engañaron sus ojos los fuegos artificiales; no engañaron su imaginación las promesas del cielo" (Cuentos, p. 249-50). This sentence succinctly covers the range of the author's own assessment of the world. Not only does he not believe in an afterlife, but his one consolation for this life--aestheticism--is in this passage an equally false hope for arriving at a state of happiness.

The problem of death is passed over for love in "Juan el organista". Juan, whose artistic expression is music and painting (" . . .sabía tocar el piano y el órgano; pintaba medianamente; . . ." Cuentos, p. 263) has the same physical limitations of many other characters. He is poor and orphaned. The poverty is accentuated by the fact that his parents were people of means who were able to educate Juan; therefore, in his poverty a knowledge of what life could offer was all the more vivid in his mind. There is no

indication however, that the organist is reaching for monetary comfort so much as love. Love, as was seen in the past chapter, had a meaning far broader than a simple male-female attraction, although a physical attraction is not left out completely: ". . . sintió la punta de los senos de Enriqueta rozando uno de sus brazos" (Cuentos, p. 273). The prevailing force of love is toward a purified idea.

The plot offers two examples of Juan's attempt to gain an ideal love. In the first instance he marries unwisely and loses the purified ideal through his emotional blindness and the human weakness of his wife. The blindness is a direct consequence of his poverty:

. . . los pobres, en materia de amor, son fáciles de contentar, especialmente si tienen ciertas aficiones poéticas y han leído novelas. Al amor que sienten se une la gratitud que les inspira la mujer suficientemente desprendida de las vanidades y pompas mundanas, para decirles: "Te quiero". Creen haber puesto una pica en Flandes, se admiran de su buena suerte. . . y cierran los ojos. . .

(Cuentos, p. 264)

Through this failing, caused by socio-economic status, Juan married the vain and petulant daughter of a wealthy family. Juan's wife, through her own weakness of character, agreed to marry beneath her financial status which placed her in the same impoverishment as Juan. Having known better days, she acutely missed the banquets, theatre, carriages and clothing her husband was unable to provide. The only lasting happiness she offered the musician was a daughter, since she soon began secretly returning to her old social circles with financial aid of friends and finally accepted a lover.

Gutiérrez Nájera is not harsh in his criticism of Rosa because her struggle is essentially the same as that of her husband, i.e., an attempt to bridge the gap between reality and ideality: ". . .el desnivel entre lo soñado y lo real . . ." (Cuentos, p. 266). Her vanity is plainly stated but her frustrations are nonetheless valid and real: ". . .la continua contemplación de la opulencia ajena y las lecturas romanescas. . .produjeron en Rosa un disgusto profundo de la vida. . ." (Cuentos, p. 266). After her husband learns of the adultery, he also looks at his wife with a certain understanding and, without thought of vengeance, leaves Mexico City with his daughter. Rosa dies shortly thereafter.

The second attempt to reach an ideal plane through love has a remote provincial setting where Juan is taken into the employ of a wealthy plantation owner as a tutor for his daughters. Slowly an idyl begins between Juan and the younger daughter, which reawakens in Juan the possibility of realizing the ideal: ". . .la idea de que sus sueños no eran de todo punto irrealizables, como al principio sospechó, fue ganando terreno. . ." (Cuentos, p. 271). The daughter here is more than just a woman--she is the catalyst for something greater. Gutiérrez Nájera's equating her with "sueño" is carried a step further in the next sentence where the verb to believe, "creer", takes the prominent position in the sentence over the words "cariño" and "amor": "Éste interpretaba tales muestras de cariño como prendas de amor,

y hasta llegó a creer. . ." (Cuentos, p. 271). In the next sentence the suggestion that Enriqueta is a finite object which represents an eternal ideal is made by giving the word "ilusiones" prominence over the woman Enriqueta: ". . . Enriqueta le amaba y que tarde o temprano realizaría sus ilusiones" (Cuentos, p. 271).

The sudden appearance of Enriqueta's fiancé and her marriage rudely ends the second possibility for realizing the ideal state. This last disillusion destroys the organist in spite of the fact that he has been portrayed as strong and determined. He steadfastly refused to let his wife receive money from relatives: "Mientras encuentre yo lo necesario para comer, no recibiré limosna de ninguno" (Cuentos, p. 265). His reaction upon learning of Rosa's infidelity was one of fortitude: "tranquilo en su colera" (Cuentos, p. 266); he left the city because "No quería sufrir las risas de unos y las conmisericordias de otros" (Cuentos, p. 266). Before admitting to himself a love for Enriqueta he waited until signs of her affection were undeniable and with the announcement of Enriqueta's marriage, Juan withdrew into himself, hiding his grief. With consistent tenacity, Juan refuses to believe his dreams have been shattered until asked to provide music for the wedding. Playing the music, he poured his grief into the task and with the last note he died, thinking of "ilusiones muertas" and "locos sueños" (Cuentos, p. 276). The ideal is never reached but it can be presumed that the striving continues and is passed on to the

daughter Rosita, who weeps over her father's body in the last sentence.

An unrelenting pessimism again appears in "Aquél era otro López" with a slightly different theme. López has to struggle with a society which is a blind, amorphous, insensitive mass. Specifically, the acceptance by responsible people of simplistic positivistic interpretations of human nature and the sluggishness of government bureaucracy are the two social instruments that destroy López.

Consistent with Gutiérrez Nájera's tendency to give characters a superlative quality, López is an artist and a genius who, in his outer countenance, is not easily identifiable with the majority of people who surround him. An absent-mindedness, slowness to respond and a habit of day-dreaming gave the impression that he lacked intelligence. In the first paragraph:

En efecto, López no sabía nada, y por eso, tal vez, creíanle tonto. . .se le olvidaba comer, se le olvidaba trabajar, se le olvidaba todo. . .Cuando se le preguntaba algo, respondía a la pregunta que otro le había hecho el día anterior;

(Cuentos, p. 231)

The first sentence of the second paragraph clears up the author's attitude toward López: "Así son los tontos; pero dicen algunos que de igual suerte son los sabios" (Cuentos, p. 231). López, even though a brilliant musician, is hopelessly unable to support his family with his talents. Through a chain of unfortunate circumstances, López is linked to the murder of his wife's godfather to whom the

poor musician was appealing for financial help. The trial and imprisonment of López is the occasion taken by society to publicize its simplistic interpretation of an artist and then, through the sluggishness of its bureaucracy, to destroy him.

The trial was so thoroughly a case of an entire society against an artist that the defending attorney was ineffective because of his psychological dependence on the legal bureaucracy: "Ese defensor había sido Agente del Ministerio Público durante muchos años, y conservaba la costumbre, el hábito de husmear y descubrir en todo un crimen" (Cuentos, p. 237). The straightforward, unassuming nature of López only accentuated the difference between López and his surroundings: ". . .le parecía por su desfachatez y por su aplomo, un monstruo" (Cuentos, p. 237). The defending attorney, attracted by López' attractive wife, conjures up in his imagination a sexual involvement between the wife and godfather which serves as his defense argument: ". . . entonces la causa sería muy defendible, hasta simpática. . ." (Cuentos, p. 238).

The prosecutor, by contrast, was enthusiastic about an opportunity to display his theories:

En su elocuente peroración habló de la ley de la herencia, del atavismo, del medio ambiente, de Lombroso, de Maudsley; resultó de sus indagaciones laboriosas que López no era hijo de López, sino de otro López; y allá salieron a danzar la madre, el padre, y toda la familia del presunto reo.

(Cuentos, p. 238)

Rather than describe López' happy and privileged childhood as it was, the prosecutor invented a childhood to accommodate his positivistic theories. A promiscuous mother, an unknown father, a dishonest uncle were linked to a supposedly dissipated life, all working together to produce a given product. The accusation was sprinkled with words like "¡atavismo! ¡medio! ¡Spencer y Lombroso!. . . ¡Un détraqué! ¡Un artista frustrado! ¡Un neurótico!" (Cuentos, p. 238). The eloquence of the prosecution gained a twenty year sentence for López.

The second ordeal of López begins when the actual murderer confesses in a way that leaves no doubt of the artist's innocence. The jailer refuses to release López until given final word from the judge, and the court becomes embroiled in a war over technicalities. In Gutiérrez Nájera's opinion the entire legal system functions on the same level as practitioners of positivism, neither of which represent anything on a practical level resembling truth:

Es decir, era inocente para la verdad, para el sentido común; para el Derecho, para la Justicia, para el Código no lo era. . . .En fin, porque la ley...y porque el Código...y porque Laurent...en fin, ¡que no! El que mató y el que no mató se quedaron en la cárcel.

(Cuentos, p. 240)

López' imprisonment continues indefinitely until his wife has to prostitute herself and the son is imprisoned with his father. When freedom is finally granted to López, he goes into the street and kills the first man who resembles a judge and is, in turn, executed. The last page is a

statement by the author which excoriates society as an entity: "Hay algo más odioso que todos los asesinatos juntos: el asesinato de un solo hombre cometido por toda una nación" (Cuentos, p. 241).

The story obviously has a strong affinity with Naturalism, especially in the basic elements of the plot. The innocent López gradually degenerates in prison until the "bestia humana" (Cuentos, p. 241) motivates him to kill a man. His wife Rosa is slowly reduced under the impact of environment to demeaning manual labor and eventually prostitution. The son, who is a child when López is imprisoned, turns to alcohol and delinquency serious enough to be imprisoned with his father. The plot, with a tinge of irony, shows how the simple, science-oriented philosophy of the prosecutor actually becomes a reality. The final accusation is not so much against the positivist theory as a blind and senseless application of the theory. The important point, however, that López is an artist, overrides an ambiguous treatment of positivism. The first half of the story describes López as an artist, which signifies in the final analysis that not just a man is destroyed, but an artist. The action begins in a village where López is happy, lives in harmony with nature and develops his talent only for the pleasure of himself, his wife and child. His parents had left López orphaned which, in Gutiérrez Nájera's writing, invariably represents a state of mankind deprived of Christian assurances of an afterlife. As a result, he turned all

the more fervently to his art and a love for his small family. The artist's downfall began with his relocation to Mexico City where the artificiality of life--such as studying music in a conservatory for the sake of study rather than pleasure--spoiled the harmony of his peaceful existence. Poverty finally forced the frustrated artist to the fateful encounter with his wife's godfather. His murder, previous to López' arrival, was blamed on the artist because of his circumstantial appearance immediately after the crime. With the eventual execution of López, society is killing an artist and, by implication, art itself.

Most of the stories described above concerned restrictions placed by life and society on art and artists. The impossibility of realizing dreams, love, a fruitful existence, escaping death, or being imprisoned in life have been variously viewed. "El músico de la murga" gives a more constructive picture of what art is and how it serves to lift man above the circumstances of a bland existence. The story is a description of a dance hall musician concentrating on the meaning of his performances to himself and the narrator with brief glimpses into the musician's life.

Approximately the first third of the story is an introduction to what the narrator will say about a violinist whose name is not given. The first sentence in French ("C'git le bruit du vent" Cuentos, p. 254), records the words spoken over Orpheus' tomb: here lies the murmur of the wind. Although the murmurs die, they are still eternal

because "Lo que pasa alzando apenas un rumor muy leve y se extingue cual si otro más recio soplo lo apagara. . ."
 (Cuentos, p. 254). Gutiérrez Nájera's dance hall musician will provide his own murmur in the eternal linkage of sounds. All of the sounds are part of Gutiérrez Nájera's belief in an idealistic cerebral reality which makes all the sounds a ". . .beso rápido de Psiquis. . ." (Cuentos, p. 254). The remainder of the introduction elaborates on these basic truths of art. Three other musicians are described who belong to the chain of ethereality. The first musician, Juventino Rosas, is appropriate because he was a popular musician similar to the unnamed artist of the story. Although he is deceased, Rosas' music is immortal and eternal. A selection of adjectives and nouns used by the narrator to convey the meaning of Juventino Rosas' music illustrates the point:

. . .valeses elegantes y melancólicos. . .dama herida
 de muerte. . .diáfanas. . .camelias inmortales. . .
 rumor de viento. . .tristes como presentimientos. . .
 flota descolorida. . .cierta neblina tenue. . .

(Cuentos, p. 254)

The appearance of a second musician is motivated by the memory of Juventino Rosas. The sadness of Rosas' music brings to the narrator's mind the sad story of Campoamor's "El gaitero de Gijón". Twenty lines of the poem are copied in the text describing the piper's sadness at having to perform after his mother's funeral and emphasizing the happiness he contrives in order to earn a living. The narrator says nothing about the piper after quoting the description

from Campoamor. It can be assumed that he is part of art's timeless existence since his presence is linked to Juventino Rosas and also because the piper stimulates the recall of another musician. The sadness of the piper is linked to Teófilo Pomar, another barroom musician depicted by Federico Gamboa in his Naturalistic sketches Impresiones y recuerdos. Gutiérrez Nájera has taken forty-one lines from different parts of Gamboa's piece which illustrate the aspects of Pomar's life and art which Gutiérrez Nájera wishes to present. The first lines describe the musician in a satisfying relationship of love: ". . .la mujer amada que ríe de nuestras locuras y las comparte y nos arrulla y nos enloquece..." (Cuentos, p. 255). The next quote pictures a stark garret after the affair has ended. Following this, and most important, the longest quote describes the effect of disillusionment on Pomar's music. Gutiérrez Nájera states in the only substantial remark of his own on Pomar that he had to continue performing in order to live. Pomar approaches the piano and plays in an effort to lift himself above "tanta prosa" and "tanta amargura" (Cuentos, p. 255). Rather than playing a discordant arpeggio, his music becomes warm, delicate and voluptuous. In the middle of the barroom Pomar withdraws into himself and the further abstracted he becomes the more absorbing his music is to the listeners. The musician, by his inner dependence, ends in giving a superlative creation: "Y entonces se abstraía por completo, no respondía a nadie; noche hubo en que improvisara una danza

. . ." (Cuentos, pp. 255-6).

Following the short presentation of Juventino Rosas, the piper and Teófilo Pomar the narrator, as part of the story's psychological thread, begins to discuss the principal musician of the story: "Otro músico a quien traté de cerca" (Cuentos, p. 256). The anonymous musician also plays for public dances with the difference that the ballrooms in which he performs are more elegant. Time is imprinted on the musician's face not only by the elementary fact that he is physically old but also by an appearance which suggests he has remote ancestors who were also artists. Like many other Nájera characters, the musician suffers from more than his portion of worldly problems. His poverty is accentuated by the opulence of his audience and he, an old man, has to spend nights far from his young wife who, according to the narrator, gives his jealousy a legitimate foundation. Because of this background, the musician expresses himself through his violin with a consequent suggestiveness which surpasses the other performers. Recalling the effect of the violinist's notes, the narrator describes the music:

. . . esas notas transparentes y frágiles, esas notas que brillan como lágrimas y que suenan como una esquila de cristal herida por la varita de alguna hada, se pierden y se extinguen poco a poco en la obscuridad, al amanecer. El ruiseñor ya no canta; pero el cristal solloza todavía.

(Cuentos, p. 258)

The suggestiveness of the music stimulates the narrator to remember in a short time sequence the principal events of his own life.

After the music ends the artist tells something of his biography. He has to perform as a means of livelihood: ". . .yo necesito dinero para mí y para mis vicios" (Cuentos, p. 258). His vices are not seen in a moral sense but as a condition of life. They are repulsive to the musician, not precisely because they are vices, but because the musician wishes to elevate and give dignity to his weaknesses:

Me repugnan esos vicios, no porque lo son, sino por envilecidos, por canallas. Quisiera dignificarlos, ennoblecerlos, vestirlos de oro, en la copa, en el cuerpo de la mujer, en el albur.

(Cuentos, p. 258)

The possibility of doing away with human weakness and the struggle to create value by rising above his predicament is rejected: ". . .porque ¿qué me quedaría?" (Cuentos, p. 258). Being left without the struggle reminds the musician of death. He renounces the idea of suicide because of uncertainty of the afterlife. This fear is like a touch of incense which remains from childhood when he served as an acolyte and had believed in Christ because he never knew his own father. His music as a consequence, is not just a livelihood, but an instrument to create value: "Por eso, despechado, busco los que llamáis 'paraísos artificiales' " (Cuentos, p. 259). The struggle, however, is inescapable because the music he creates and performs becomes part of the sordid ambience of the ballroom which puts the violinist in a vicious circle that only death can end.

"La odisea de Madame Théo" is the best presentation of the ideological world of art. The story gives a clear

demonstration of how "art" to Gutiérrez Nájera was not just something "nice", but was intimately related to the nature of the universe. In "El arte y el materialismo" he spoke emphatically of the spiritual nature of man as opposed to a physiological interpretation. Art, as the highest manifestation of mental reality, was defined as a representation of eternal spiritual truths. Madame Théo constitutes a superlative embodiment of this theory. The story is pure mental fantasy and, as such, represents truth:

De esta manera, peregrina e inaudita, vino al mundo la encantadora artista de opereta que hoy aplaudimos en el teatro Nacional. Los biógrafos dirán que no es así; pero los biógrafos sesudos se equivocan.

(Cuentos, p. 186)

Madame Théo is a fictional description of the French singer Louise Théo, whose visit to Mexico during the winter of 1882-83 was a spectacular success.¹ Gutiérrez Nájera describes her as mother nature's most beautiful creation. After mother nature finished the creation of Madame Théo, she was uncertain where to place her. On earth her beauty would be destroyed and in heaven her lively charm would prohibit her an entrance. She decided that the safest place was limbo, where she caused such a commotion by her beauty and malicious humor that a guardian angel removed her. The guardian angel was unsure where to place Madame Théo: "Si la

1. Enrique de Olavarria y Ferrari, Reseña histórica del teatro en Mexico, II (Mexico: Editorial Porrúa, 1961), pp. 1059-63.

llevo al infierno, va a aumentar la concurrencia. Si la llevo al Paraíso, trastorna a San Elías" (Cuentos, p. 183). Finally he deposited her on the star Venus. From Venus Madame Théo, in the company of two other French singers, Mary Vallot and Mlle. Buisson, escaped on a train of comets and came to earth. This is truth and a triumph of the spirit. Madame Théo is not a creature of man's imagination but of mother nature who "sabe mucho, más que todos los artistas de la tierra" (Cuentos, p. 180).

The fact of Madame Théo's double reality, artistic and ideological, points out the double nature of Gutiérrez Nájera's drive toward truth and value. Art by itself is the most important consideration because it was given preponderant emphasis. Art is however, a product of the mind and has its foundation in idealism. Much of Gutiérrez Nájera's imagery and symbolism as a consequence, concentrates on idealism presenting art as a tacit partner. For example, a bird, the color blue or a beautiful woman (not necessarily an artist) can be representations of only an idealistic reality but the implication is always present that by presenting them as such, art is also served. Statistically, it is easier to identify imagery which represents the idealistic struggle than the aesthetic impulse, especially in the poems. The names of musical instruments, artists, musicians and the like are numerically small in comparison to the prevalent use of bird or color imagery, both of which invariably carry an implication of idealistic symbol. The same applies to

the stories where, among eighty-eight selections given in the Cuentos completos, ten have artists as the central figure. It can justifiably be said however, that all of Gutiérrez Nájera's characters relate to some aspect of the struggle between idealistic truth and the materialistic limitation of man's possibilities.

Although a complete examination of the imagery which pertains to some aspect of the idealism versus materialism polarity cannot be presented within the framework of the present study, several examples will serve well to illustrate a characteristic diversity of these images and their functions. The underlying idea expressed in the criticism that art was a finite representation of eternal truths suggests the symbolic role of the image: something from the material world used emblematically to convey a picture of ethereal, intangible reality or truth. Gutiérrez Nájera chose his symbolic imagery from what can roughly be outlined in three categories: 1) symbols from nature 2) symbols from material items of value and 3) symbols of color.

Nature, in accordance with Gutiérrez Nájera's Romantic leaning, is a place unspoiled by man where the artist can go for the idealistic imagery in his work. The Modernist's nature is not however, quite so secure as it was for the early Romanticists. Esteban Echeverría could give an unqualified appraisal of nature in the first half of the nineteenth century:

¡Cuántas, cuántas maravillas,
 sublimes y a par sencillas,
 sembró la fecunda mano
 de Dios allí! ¡Cuánto arcano¹
 que no es dado al mundo ver!

Gutiérrez Nájera, typical of late nineteenth century writers, was too isolated from a tidy cosmic order for such a simple unquestioning worship of nature. Happiness had to come from within and nature use was restricted to providing an imagery to create a world of illusion. Nowhere is this stated more clearly than in "Los tigres de Chiapas" with two significant sentences, one at the beginning of the story, the other at the end. The first sentence is practically a formula of typical Romantic nature imagery:

El monte en cuyos cedros se retuerce rugiendo el huracán; la roca suspendida en el vacío; la caserna por cuyas negras soledades se queja el viento de la noche y la ola pujante que se encrespa, azotando rabiosa el maderamen de los barcos, son los grandes y soberanos espectáculos que asiendo el alma con sus garras invisibles la obligan a ponerse de rodillas.

(Cuentos, p. 316)

The last words of the sentence give the clue that this passage is not intended to represent a physical connection between the author and actual trees, wind and mountains. The action following this introductory sentence narrates the capture of a tiger, then in the last paragraph the narrator explains his interest in overcoming the tigers: ". . .me complazco en oír narrar esas aventuras o en leerlas dentro del gabinete acolchonado. . ." (Cuentos, p. 319). In other

1. Esteban Echeverría, La cautiva (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sopena, 1962), p. 14.

words, it is not so much what man does by action that satisfies as much as a spiritual capacity to give meaning to his actions. Another sentence is more explicit: ". . .renuncio al prestigioso cuadro de la naturaleza virgen" (Cuentos, p. 320). The value of action is not denied by these observations on hunting. While the narrator is entranced by the beautiful illusion of the hunt in a region of unspoiled nature, at the same time, he sees the desolate area in its socially deprived reality:

La civilización no ha de pararse y el gobierno tendrá forzosamente que pensar en abrir expeditas vías de comunicación, . . .Entretanto, aunque nos reciban con repiques y cohetes en cada población y ranchería, aunque los indios nos lleven en hombros como a santos, aunque los ayuntamientos nos festejen y los tigres pronuncien discursos de bienvenida en las cercanías de Pedro Ruiz, yo no dejo que me seduzcan tales atractivos. . .

(Cuentos, p. 320)

Nature in general means for Gutiérrez Nájera what "Los tigres de Chiapas" suggests. He is completely undeceived about the ability of man to find absolute happiness anywhere on earth--even in remote, primitive Chiapas--but must turn inward for the pleasures of contemplating the possibility of pure ideality.

The search for material from nature to represent mental visions of ideality commonly centers on objects which suggest the ethereal: sky, clouds, birds, butterflies, the sea, and flowers. Each of these either has a quality which is movable, intangible, or mysterious and can serve as a correlative to pure ideas. Flowers with their ephemeral

existence and supreme beauty correspond to ideality, life or art itself. The most sustained use of flowers for symbolization is in the poem "La misa de las flores" in which flowers fulfill an idealistic function of magically unifying the author, his art, and the world into a single organism. The process could actually be considered a mystic experience in the sense that the author apprehends the flowers and through a process of fantasizing, carries them from the empirical world to the world of pure idea. Nature and flowers are tied specifically to art in the first strophes of the poem:

¡Musa, al campo! ¡Abre la jaula!
 ¡Señores versos, entrad!

. . .

Beba el madrigal coqueto
 en los lirios vino blanco,
 y pensativo el soneto
 descansa en rústico banco.

(Poesías II, p. 233)

Since the author addresses poetry in the second person it can be assumed that the poetry is his own and that the experience he is about to describe passes through his own mind. Nature is given a supernatural characteristic through an elaborate comparison of flowers to church furniture, instruments of the eucharist, vestments, worshipers and priest. Among thirty-four strophes the following flowers are listed: lirio, musgo, malva, jazmín, tulipán, azahar, margarita, araucaria, pasionaria, clavel, heliotropo, trinitaria, azalea, azucena, violeta, dahalia, irídea, orquídea, rosa,

pensamiento, gardenia, trébol, mirto, pervinca, madreselva, and rododendro. A tulip is the priest; doves holding orange blossoms comprise the altar; a rhododendron represents a monseigneur; a daisy serves for a font; lilies are candles and the flames are myrtles; white lilies are novitiates; orchids form temple walls; a gardenia is the host. These are a sampling of the ways in which flowers are used to re-create a mass for the sake of poetry and ultimately, idealism.

Birds are also used with considerable frequency to embody the same idealistic qualities. The word "wing" without mention of a specific bird invariably corresponds to an ascension toward pure idea away from the materially prosaic: "¡todo lo que sube al cielo/ tiene alas!" (Poesías II, p. 176). In the verses "A Virginia Reiter" the last two lines summarize the effect of her musical voice as that of a genius which creates life, spirit and "alas" (Poesías II, p. 215), which by implicit analogy makes "wings" the equivalent of art and idealism. The names of numerous birds are given textually to buttress the idea of a struggle for ennobling ideals. Unattractive birds provide an ominous presence of death in the nightmarish ambiance of "El sueño de Magda":

Únicamente las lechuzas, de ojos amarillos, comenzaron a revolotear en torno de ella. De pronto un cuervo de torcido pico y semejante al ave Rock que habita el Himalaya, le arrancó las pupilas a mordidas.

(Cuentos, p. 202)

In "Tristissima Nox" night is compared to "la muerte aparente de los seres" and "la vida profunda de las cosas"

(Poesías II, p. 36) and the following bird imagery is given to reinforce the idea: aves nictálopes, buho, cuervo, pájaros nocturnos, torvas lechuzas (Poesías II, p. 38, 40). The same poem gives an illustration of bird imagery used for the opposite effect, to portray life, art and illusion, as day dawns and other birds begin to sing:

A la voz de la alondra, en los encinos
los zenzontles contestan; los pinzones
con las tórtolas charlan en los pinos,
y en el fresno rebullen los gorriones.

(Poesías II, pp. 43-4)

Swans and butterflies are two symbols related to wing imagery which fit closely with Gutiérrez Nájera's desire to fuse into his art a feeling of elegance as well as pure idea. The swan was employed by Gutiérrez Nájera early in his career. Pia di Tolomei, in the story given her name (1878), is compared to a swan in the first paragraph: ". . . trae insensiblemente a la memoria a las mujeres--cisnes de las leyendas alemanas!" (Cuentos, p. 20). Two years earlier when Gutiérrez Nájera was seventeen, he compared his soul to a swan (Poesías I, p. 111). The butterfly as a symbol of pure idea is totally appropriate in view of its ancient use as a material representation of Psiquis. Besides being traditionally appropriate, the butterfly by its physical nature easily lends itself to a representation of Gutiérrez Nájera's ideas. Its small body is fragile like life. The comparatively large, brightly colored wings in movement are practically an animated kaleidoscope and the mental association suggested by butterflies is pleasant and aesthetic; flowers,

blue sky, and verdant nature. The poem "Mariposas" uses butterflies as a controlling image which exemplifies the range of their suggestive possibilities. In sundry places they are compared to life ("Una chispa de luz les da vida"); love ("¡Así vuelan y pasan y expiran/ las quimeras de amor ..."); the human soul ("esas alas brillantes del alma"); illusions ("ilusiones que sois. . ."); death ("las que tienen las alas muy negras y se acercan en fúnebre ronda"); and the mysterious nature of a cosmos whose beginning and end are unknowable ("¿Quién conoce sus nidos ocultos?/ ¿En qué sitio de noche reposan?") (Poesías II, pp. 135-7).

Other items of nature or natural phenomena follow the pattern of selecting material which has an intangible characteristic and is suitable as a symbol for ideas. Much of the nature imagery, such as birds and butterflies has a close connection to air. Clouds, fog, light rays, wind, sky, snow, sunrise, smoke, dew, rain and volcanos are common symbols. Perhaps the volcano seems incongruous in this list; however, the volcano, by its height, can be as intangible and majestic as a cloud.

Rain, contrary to what one might expect, was not necessarily an unpleasant phenomenon for Gutiérrez Nájera. His description of Mexico City during the rainy season is interesting in this respect. Rain obviously relates to a somber mood ("las paraguas se abren, como redondas alas de murciélago" Cuentos, p. 155), yet it seems as if the author welcomes a rainy atmosphere as evidenced by a following

comment on the city under the rain: "el delicioso cuadro que la ciudad presenta en ese instante" (Cuentos, p. 155).

Another quote makes the same point but relates rain to art as well as the mysterious world of spirits: "El ruido de la lluvia es el mejor acompañamiento de los versos. Si los duendes tuvieron una orquesta, así sería" (Cuentos, p. 350).

Neblina, niebla, nube, nieve are used in different contexts but invariably with an underlying symbolic intent for portraying something ethereal and pure. In "De blanco" neblina is virginal, niebla is the fiber of a white tunic which covers a feudal tower, nieves are chaste beauty and the white veil which falls on a girl's shoulders is a nube (Poesías II, pp. 167-9). Niebla is the only word in the list which is not tied to an abstract noun; however, fog in this case is the abstract quality which spiritualizes a white tunic. Moving to other nouns of intangibility used as spiritual symbolization, "éter impalpable" (Poesías I, p. 198) represents a love which is unattainable to the poet; the smoke spirals produced as the poet smokes remind him of his solitude (Poesías II, p. 59); cielo is the abode of estrellas which are illusions (Poesías I, p. 98).

A striking example of air-related symbols in the Cuentos is the introduction to "Juan el organista". A three page introduction to the story describes the rustic setting in a remote valley. The most lyrical paragraph describes a volcano whose elevated, snow-covered peaks resemble a sleeping woman (obviously the Mexican volcano Iztaccíhuatl):

La nieve de los volcanes, como el agua del mar, cambia de tintes según el punto en donde está el sol; ya aparece color de rosa, ya con blancura hiperbórea y deslumbrante, ya violada. Muchas veces las nubes, como el cortinaje cadente de un gran tálamo, impiden ver a la mujer blanca y la montaña que humea. Es necesario que la luz, sirviendo de obediente camarera, descorra el pabellón de húmeda gasa para que veamos a los dos colosos.

(Cuentos, p. 262)

This description acquires a special emphasis within the introduction by constituting the most elaborate portrayal of any single part of the valley. The untouchable volcanos which are occasionally hidden by clouds of white lace and the spectacular effects of light all combine to form a symbolic spectacle of the beauty for which mortals continually reach. The "mujer blanca" undergoes two ordeals in the author's eyes: her privacy is lost to prying human eyes and in the afternoon she appears moribund. Something of the same fate befalls the organist in the following narration as he is frustrated in his quest for love and then dies.

A final source of nature symbol which deserves attention because of its prevalent textual appearance is sea imagery. An early poem, "Para qué", written in 1880, employs the sea and a boat as controlling images. The sea is consistently presented as the mysterious cosmos which surrounds life, a boat. This perfectly traditional symbology is invested with Gutiérrez Nájera's own interpretation. There is a reiterated lack of faith in God:

¿Adónde navegamos? ¿quién rige la faena?
¿A qué las inquietudes, las luchas y la pena,

si el capitán maltrata, y el término es ruín?

(Poesías I, p. 292)

There exists the possibility of suicide: ¿. . .es un crimen/ lanzarse desde el mastil al seno de la mar?" (Poesías I, p. 292). Although the option of suicide is rejected, the deep feeling of pessimism remains. In another poem the mysterious, unfathomable sea symbolizes the world of ideas rather than death: "Los mares de la idea/ tienen también sus rudas tempestades" (Poesías II, p. 143). The last section of "A Altamirano" pictures the writer facing the sea:

se acerca el sol y puéblanse las ondas
como de duendes áureos que, traviosos,
luciérnagas acuáticas semejan;

(Poesías II, p. 221)

The glistening light on the sea giving off a supernatural glow is the future path over which South American poetry will voyage:

una joven, la musa americana
llorando se despide en la ventana
del poeta divino.
• • •
y entre besos respóndele el poeta:
- Me voy y vas conmigo: tú eres mía!

(Poesías II, p. 221)

However much the tonality may vary the sea is still the mysterious beyond, on whose nature man can only speculate, prophecy or dread.

In addition to the symbols taken from nature, a considerable body of symbolic imagery is taken from material items of value such as gold, diamonds, linen, silk, urns and chalices. Although this aspect of Gutiérrez Nájera's art

has traditionally been identified as French Parnassian influence, it does not mean that he was partly Parnassian but that he is again searching the world for inspiration adaptable to his idealistic art formula, to which he held with considerable conviction. As a result, the function of this category of image is fundamentally the same as nature imagery. Gutiérrez Nájera chose specific objects which were important as symbols for higher spiritual meaning.

The high monetary value of jewelry and precious metals, plus the common association of these objects with an aesthetic, aristocratic ambience make very appropriate material for representation of exalted spiritual norms. In addition, the bright colors, an ability to reflect light, and the general tendency for a jewel or golden object to stand out give these symbols an ethereal intangibility not unlike birds, flowers and clouds. Typical words used in this symbolic manner are: mármol, oro, marfil, perla, diamante, alabastro, plata, bronce.

Mármol usually appears as a symbol of death. Considering Gutiérrez Nájera's obsession with death, it is not surprising that marble is the most frequently employed symbol in this group. In "Lápida" he wrote:

¡Cuántos amigos en los sepulcros
de blanco mármol o piedra gris!

(Poesías I, p. 269)

In another poem youth's passage and death's approach are separated by a marble gateway:

La juventud se aleja. De mis brazos

desasirse logró con ágil brinco;
y en el umbral de mármol, indecisa,
mirándome con lástima y ternura,
para que más codicie su hermosura
me dirige la última sonrisa.

(Poesías II, p. 285)

Hamlet is portrayed with a face of "blanco mármol" (Poesías I, p. 300). Death however, is not the only correlative suggested by marble. In "A Hidalgo" marble is related to Hellenic art: "la marmórea desnudez helena" (Poesías II, p. 268). Even though marble was an evocation of ancient art for Gutiérrez Nájera, it was still not external and objectified Parnassian marble but marble for subjective feeling and internal illusions:

Solo para mis sueños cobra vida
el mármol de la hermosa Galatea.

(Poesías II, p. 12)

Gold, like marble, also has different implications. Sometimes gold represents some measure of idealism and is favorable; other times it stands for materialism and is reprehensible. A totally idealistic employment is given the following lines written to a lady: ". . .vive mi alma/ entre tus rizos/ como ave prisionera en jaula de oro" (Poesías II, p. 13). In "Mariposas" one of the butterflies--described above as symbols of ideas and illusions--is golden and symbolizes heaven: "la de oro, promesa de gloria" (Poesías II, p. 137). Poetry is metaphorically called golden in "A la Corregidora": "Hay versos de oro" (Poesías II, p. 261). In direct opposition to these exuberant applications of gold an equally somber note is struck in other places. With the

story "La moneda de níquel" gold becomes a false illusion and a symbol of materialism: ". . .del mismo modo pagan tu cariño las monedas de oro y las mujeres rubias" (Cuentos, p. 323). Other passages in the same story are even more pessimistic: ". . .el oro es vampiro; bebe sangre" (Cuentos, p. 324). The second use of gold to embody materialism and finite worldly aspirations is as prevalent as its symbolization of idealistic perspectives. Gold as an equal of money is too ready a symbol of materialism to allow it only an idealistic characteristic. With other objects of material worth this is not particularly the case. Since Gutiérrez Nájera's underlying philosophy defines man as possessing a spirit, and further proposes that the greatest value in life and art comes from ministering to the spirit, the overwhelming majority of symbols are intended to buttress this basic spiritual nature rather than symbolize the opposing forces of materialism which continually pull man downward.

Other valuable material objects symbolizing the drive toward the world of ideality are marfil, perla, diamante, alabastro, and plata. Ivory figures among various objects which suggest whiteness which, in turn, always represents a form of purity. In "De blanco": ". . .brillan las gotas del agua/ en su árabe peine de blanco marfil" (Poesías II, p. 168). Pearls are linked to poetry in "La misa de las flores":

¡Cuántas perlas en el musgo
hay para tu cuello, copla!

(Poesías II, p. 234)

The glistening properties of diamonds are equalled to the intangibility of light in "Primera página": "se truecan en diamantes los átomos de luz" (Poesías II, p. 306). Alabaster is entered metaphorically to describe the back of a beautiful lady ("sobre el terso alabastro de la espalda" Poesías I, p. 224), and converted into more than a cold visual symbol by the use of "terso alabastro", which implies a tactile quality as much as a visual quality. Silver is tied to music in "A la Corregidora": ". . .hay notas de plata" (Poesías II, p. 261). As examples accumulate, the consistency with which Gutiérrez Nájera used material objects of value as an extension of his theory of literature is perfectly demonstrated. Above, for example, each concrete material item is tied one way or another to an abstract noun, a spiritual norm or activity such as writing poetry.

Different cloth and garments deserve mention because of their persistent appearance. The tunic appears as a symbol of spirituality or purity. Frequently the tunic has a color affiliation to whiteness. In "A Vicente Riva Palacio" the tunic is used to relate to children, hence innocence, purity, etc: "Con túnicas blancas se acercan los niños" (Poesías II, p. 251); in "[Mientras ufana la risa. . .]" the human soul is a tunic (Poesías II, p. 177); and in "Mirtos" physical erotic love is given a higher spiritual interpretation when in the first verse the poet appeals to the lady he loves "con blanca túnica cubierta" (Poesías I, p. 271). Among cloth or related material used as symbols

are: seda, lino, gasa and encaje. Silk scarves are juxtaposed with air in "A la Corregidora" ("...¡los pérsicos chales/ de sedas joyantes al aire tended!" Poesías II, p. 262) and a silk knot guards the innocent virginity of a young lady:

No ha tocado jamás mano ninguna
de su corpiño los sedosos nudos.

(Poesías II, p. 17)

Linen is prominent among objects suggested by whiteness in "De blanco":

Entremos al templo; la hostia fulgura
de nieve parecen las canas del cura,
vestido con alba de lino sutil;

(Poesías II, p. 168)

The same poem also uses lace to create an effect of transparent whiteness:

...cual nube de gasa que cae lentamente
y viene en tus hombros su encaje a posar.

(Poesías II, p. 169)

Vessels are another category of images which plays a role in the struggle between materialism and idealism. All of the vessels--cáliz, ánfora, urna, bucaro, and copa--are obvious aesthetic emblems per se in addition to usually relating to a magical world of Christian sacrament or an equivalent of the pagan deities. Gutiérrez Nájera invariably connects vessels to either a magic function or even more commonly, a simple spiritual correlative: love, soul, illusions, art. The chalice, the sacramental vessel, corresponds to purity ("el cáliz que no toca más que la mano pura"

Poesías I, p. 198), or in "A Hidalgo" a chalice is the magic cup which a finite existence prevents the poet from possessing: "¡pasa, Padre, de mí, tu cáliz de oro!" (Poesías II, p. 268). Ánfora is variously the vessel of love ("el ánfora de todos mis amores" Poesías I, p. 273), of dreams (Poesías I, p. 276), or the flowing lines of a woman's body (Poesías II, p. 255). Urns, in a like manner, are containers for spiritual essences or objects which stimulate a spiritual experience. The following is a sampling of words of spiritual significance tied to urn: alma (Poesías I, p. 226), amor (Poesías I, p. 231), verso (Poesías II, p. 301). Conversely, urn relates to death which, along with materialism, is the direct opposite of spirituality: "la delicada urna de mármol en que reposa la que nunca volverá" (Cuentos, p. 207). In another negative reference a broken bucchero signifies the loss of ideality:

Ni una flor en el búcaro roto...
 . . .
 Ya no agitan sus alas de nieve
 despertando a la luz mis ideas;

(Poesías II, p. 150)

Copa is given the most diaphanous, hence ideal or spiritual, characteristic in "A Dionisos" when the poet calls it an "aura copa" (Poesías II, p. 295).

Color symbolism deserves the emphasis of a special category equal to symbols from nature and symbols from material objects of value because of the pervasive employment of color imagery. There are, in effect, two distinguishable kinds of color symbolism used by Gutiérrez Nájera.

One distinguishable tendency is to use colors in a traditional correspondence of meaning and readily fits into a discussion of Gutiérrez Nájera's creation of value through idealism. The second use of color is to correlate color and intuition and will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. Obviously, there are instances where the two functions merge; however, a dual usage is undeniable. The conventional use of colors involves ascribing characteristics to color--purity, spirituality, death, materialism--which are common to Spanish literature, if not the entire Occidental literary tradition. Numerically the colors with a predetermined meaning are few and relatively uncomplicated in symbolic significance. The frequency of their appearance may, nevertheless, be far in excess of whatever a small quantity and uncomplicated function implies.

White and black usually represent a life-death polarity and, by extension, idealism and materialism. Blue, with its obvious connection to mysterious properties of sky and sea or the beauty of flowers acquires a consistent embodiment of aestheticism and spirituality which to Gutiérrez Nájera were the same entity. Yellow is a resemblance of death or illness and consequently materialism.

Of these four colors, white and black are the most common. Several poems and one story have white and black, or words implying whiteness and blackness, in the title. Among the poems are: "Página negra", "Luz y sombra", "Mi casa blanca", "Musa blanca", "De blanco", "Blanco.-Pálido.-

Negro.", "Tan blanca vas por la existencia humana", "A una ultra rubia", "Cayó la blanca nevada"; and the story "El vestido blanco". Black, with variations, is some form of death or spiritual desolation. In "Página negra" black is a night in the poet's life when he realized there was no God and that human illusions were unreachable. With "Luz y sombra" black is the pall which hangs over his soul and luz, or white, is the innocence of his sweetheart: "mi alma negra sombra, la tuya blanca luz" (Poesías I, p. 108). White can occasionally relate to both life and death. In "Blanco.-Pálido.-Negro." white has both meanings in two lines:

pálida y blanca como una muerta...
¡No! ...¡Como un ángel que al cielo va!

(Poesías II, p. 199)

Obviously the poet has trouble deciding to himself whether white should be a deathly pallor when he opts for the eternal whiteness of an angel. Death again assumes the countenance of white in "Cayo la blanca nevada":

Cayo la blanca nevada
sobre el jardincito mío
y mi alondra enamorada,
bajo la nieve enterrada,
quedóse muerta de frío.

(Poesías II, p. 331)

In all of the other pieces where white is a controlling image it has a meaning of life, eternity, light or ideality. For example, "Mi casa blanca" is a domain of doves, dreams and love ("...mansión de palomas,/ que es nido de sueños, morada de amor" Poesías I, p. 137), all of which are

consistent symbols of ideality to Gutiérrez Nájera. "Musa blanca" is an incarnation of poetry which brings hope to the poet and through her ministrations assures him of immortality:

En pie junto a mi lecho, velando mi reposo,
serás como la estatua del ángel silencioso
que sin hablar nos dice: ¡Tu alma es inmortal!

(Poesías II, p. 64)

Blue has long been closely associated with Gutiérrez Nájera, not only because of its appearance in his poetry and fiction, but also because of his editorship of the Revista Azul (1894-5). In the first issue of the Revista Azul an explanation for the title blue was given on the first page:

¿Y por qué azul? Porque en lo azul hay sol, porque en lo azul hay alas, porque en lo azul hay nubes y porque vuelan a lo azul las esperanzas en bandadas. El azul no es sólo un color: es un misterio...una virginidad intacta.

(Crítica, p. 534)

The images associated with blue are readily identifiable as those explained above which serve as emblems of ideas and absolute norms. Sun, wings, clouds, flight are juxtaposed with the unblemished ("virginidad") and also a mysterious reality. Blue, in short, is mind, soul, spirit or life and in Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation a foundation of his aesthetic idealism: "Y bajo el azul imposible. . .brota el verso, como de cuerno de oro el toque de la diana; y corre la prosa, a modo de ancho río" (Crítica, p. 534).

Antecedents for a symbol of mental reality or mysterious intangibility in blue are numerous. Jean Cirlot

notes in his Dictionary of Symbolism several variations on blue.¹ The ancient Egyptians let blue represent truth; to medieval alchemists it represented heaven; and the Hopi Indians let blue in different shadings of light and dark represent day and night. Long before Ruben Darío published Azul (1888), Gutiérrez Nájera gave a spiritual-mental quality to blue. Early in his career (1876) he wove blue into a poem with this observation: "Es blanca tu conciencia y azul tu pensamiento" (Poesías I, p. 108). In the same poem: "tu corazón es puro como el azul del cielo" (Poesías I, p. 107). Thus, in his earliest poetry the symbolic meaning of spirituality for blue was established. This remained a constant until the high point of his career, when he began editorship of the Revista Azul.

A final example of the employment of blue from the Cuentos will serve to illustrate the way in which Gutiérrez Nájera conceived of what this chapter considers symbols of value. In "La mañana de San Juan" the author says in the first sentence: "Pocas mañanas. . .tan azules como esta mañana de San Juan" (Cuentos, p. 141). In other words, this particular day is one of flawless perfection. Nevertheless, the story consists of a minute detailing of how a young boy dies needlessly as a trick of fate: "¡Oh, mañanita de San Juan! ¡Tu blanco traje de novia tiene tambien manchas de sangre!" (Cuentos, p. 145). Blue, and in the last sentence

1. J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1962), pp. 50-4.

white, are possibilities which are not reachable for man. They serve only as indicators of something eminently desirable but forever beyond reach. This has been reflected repeatedly in the way Gutiérrez Nájera uses symbols in this chapter. An aestheticist, he logically uses artists or their creations as symbolic images in his own writing, then in his treatment shows how they inhabit the same materialistically confining world he feels himself to inhabit. Whether portraying Hamlet or a chorus girl, the struggle between imprisonment in materialism and freedom toward art and idealism is always present. Many symbols, other than those from the art world, serve as an attempt to create the unreachable plateau of idealism. Symbols of nature are usually of an intangible, fleeting, fragile quality such as clouds, wings, flowers, water. Other symbols are of a very concrete material property but still consist of things that are not easily attainable: gold, precious stones, delicate art objects. All of the symbols, from artists to colors, were an attempt to create something of value through means of art and ideality.

CHAPTER III

SPACE AND TIME

A major effect on Gutiérrez Nájera's writing, resulting from a decision to make idealistic reality the foundation of his work, was a special concern for space and time. After deciding that true art was not what the eye perceived so much as what the mind reflected, the scope of his writing could expand to encompass everything conceivable. The mind could thus carry the author toward eternity in time and toward universality in space. Concerning time, Gutiérrez Nájera visualized his life and problems in the context of a stream of eternal recurrence. As for space, the mind could make Paris and London as near to the author's person as his own Mexican capital. The first paragraph of "Rip-Rip el aparecido" is a capsule presentation of this idea. The first sentence establishes that the narrative is a totally cerebral rather than a limited visual phenomenon: "Este cuento yo no lo vi; pero creo que lo soñé" (Cuentos, p.225), then follows a statement praising the ability to thus make the mind embrace universality in space and time:

¡Qué cosas ven los ojos cuando están cerrados! Parece imposible que tengamos tanta gente y tantas cosas dentro...porque, cuando los párpados caen, la mirada, como una señora que cierra su balcón, entra a ver lo que hay en su casa. Pues bien, esta casa mía, esta casa de la señora mirada que yo tengo, o que me tiene, es un palacio, es una quinta, es una ciudad, es un

mundo, es el universo..., presente, el pasado y el futuro.

(Cuentos, p. 225)

In considering universal space, Gutiérrez Nájera sought fully to enjoy through a cultivated cosmopolitanism the vastness which could unfold in the mind. Contrary to what might be supposed, this did not imply a rejection of Mexico but a more enthusiastic acceptance since he loved his native country and city all the more for comprising a part of the universal whole.

Generally, the universe was seen as an extension of the battleground for the struggle between spirituality and materialism. A foreign country seen in this light is usually somewhat idealized and the question arises as to whether or not an idealized Paris really has a foothold in reality. To Gutiérrez Nájera it did if this was what the mind found there, but at the same time he recognized that foreigners were subject to the same limitations of finite existence that he was. As a consequence, foreign and exotic places are not automatically given a value status by virtue of being foreign or exotic.

The exact manner in which Gutiérrez Nájera viewed exotic places is illustrated in a story which does not correlate Mexico and a foreign country but a small village and the Mexican capital. The topic of the story is a young girl who dreams of visiting Mexico City. According to Gutiérrez Nájera there are two ways in which a hypothetical young lady dreams of the city. If she has not visited the

capital before, it exists in her mind as returning friends and novelists have described it: "Es un maridaje de las narraciones exageradas y los cuentos fantásticos" (Cuentos, p. 39). On the other hand, if the young lady has already visited the city at the proper time, such as during Holy Week festivities, ". . .no son estas diversiones fabulosas, sino perfectamente reales. . ." (Cuentos, p. 39). It can be assumed that fog-filled London is to Gutiérrez Nájera what Mexico City is to the village dreamer, which suggests a more somber interpretation of the story. Mexico City is a dream to the girl because of its rarity and newness in her experience and also the hypothetical young lady arrives at a moment of festivity which may not be common. Gutiérrez Nájera reminds the reader of the tenuousness and unreachability of total happiness when in the last lines the girl is awakened from her reverie by the common reality of her village environment. It can be concluded that the polarization of happiness in a world of pure idea and misery caused by physical limitations was not resolved through cosmopolitanism. Gutiérrez Nájera had to be content with the modest advantage that, in cosmopolitanism, he could expand himself somewhat as a finite person, he could find idealistic support in the laudable qualities of other cultures and, of no less significance, he could take satisfaction that he was paying homage to the true universal nature of man. In the final analysis, universals of human character rang truer to Gutiérrez Nájera than limited national aspects.

Working from this perspective, Gutiérrez Nájera filled his pages with names of foreigners, quotes from foreign literature, imitations and adaptations of foreign authors, foreign settings for stories and continuous correlations between Mexico and foreign countries. An example of the range of Gutiérrez Nájera's personalized universe is given in "Pia di Tolomei" in a long digression on travel. The narrator begins by first establishing that it is a mentally conceived world that interests him and to gain this world he need not go a step beyond his library where, in an easy chair with a cigar, cup of coffee and a travel book, he can travel the whole world "en alas de la invisible locomotora de la fantasía" (Cuentos, p. 21). An inventory of authors who assisted and places he has mentally visited follows: Gautier led the narrator through Italy, Rome with its museums, the catacombs, the Vatican, Florence and Naples; Dumas, Lamartine, Stendhal and Taine also assisted with travel accounts. He singles out for praise the philosophic tone of Taine and the colorful descriptions of Gautier, whom Gutiérrez Nájera fondly refers to as "Théo" (Cuentos, p.21). Arsène Houssaye was his guide to Venice, Lord Byron the Adriatic Sea, Gérard de Nerval the mysteries of the Orient, Méry led him to India, Chateaubriand to North America, Flaubert to Carthage and lastly, Gautier is listed again as a guide to Egypt. The talent of these authors offer the narrator, he contends, a universal experience ("el universo todo ha pasado como visión kaleidoscópica a mi vista"

Cuentos, p. 22) without the bothersome experience of indigestion from the food of different places, uncomfortable trains, prosaic coaches and the economic exploitation generally practiced on tourists. It is noteworthy that all of the writers enumerated are literary figures, making them a conspicuous illustration that whatever interest Gutiérrez Nájera has in cosmopolitanism, it is always going to have a close relation to art.

In describing how cosmopolitanism is incorporated into Gutiérrez Nájera's writing, a measure of its importance is indicated by the number of stories which are permeated by a foreign ambience. "Mi inglés" is not only one of these stories but is doubly important for its early date, 1877, which makes it one of the earliest examples of thoroughly Modernist prose. The story acquires an idealistic foundation through the narrator's presentation of the piece as a dream. There are two characters who figure in the story, Milord Pembroke who is the center of the narration, and his Andalusian wife who never appears, in spite of the storyteller's strong desire to behold her famed beauty.

Pembroke, who is linked to the narrator in the first words of the story ("Milord Pembroke, mi amigo" Cuentos, p. 9), shares the same value system with his author. The Englishman strongly feels the confinement of his London environment and decides to travel. A description of the aspects of London which are confining to Pembroke underlies the idea that a foreign or exotic country does not acquire

value just because it is exotic. Pembroke's English life and surroundings consist of those objects Gutiérrez Nájera uses repeatedly as symbols of ineffable plateaus of idealistic beauty. Among Pembroke's possessions and environment are his vast estates whose rents give him the life of a prince, his purebred horses, membership in a club, a theatre box, the London fog, the English girls, and the soot and smoke from the factories. Except for the factory smoke and soot, Milord Pembroke's surroundings are practically an itemized list of the symbolic material employed by Gutiérrez Nájera to represent his mental visions and aesthetic experiences. Yet to Pembroke, his routine was tiresome and his surroundings ugly and monotonous so he set out to see other lands.

Pembroke's journey around the world is described in a paragraph and is of more than casual interest because of its resemblance to Jules Verne's Around The World in Eighty Days (1873):

En París se enamoró de una discípula de la Taglioni. En Alemania estuvo a punto de batirse por sostener la prioridad del vino sobre la cerveza. En Italia iba a ser víctima de una vendetta corsa. Cayó en las redes de un marido celoso en Portugal. En la India se salvó por accidente de las garras de un tigre que le había atrapado en cierta cacería, y en China estuvo a punto de casarse con una viuda malabar, renuente a morir en la hoguera por su esposo.

(Cuentos, p. 10)

Continuing in the same tone of light humor, the narrator relates another incident of the Englishman's life which points up Gutiérrez Nájera's acknowledgement that

foreign people and things have their limitations. The story-teller had been impressed with the serene calm with which Pembroke had undergone the series of travel ordeals. Unfortunately, the Englishman's composure was put to a test which shattered any notion that he was "formado de granito" (Cuentos, p. 10). In the course of a calm discussion in a circle of friends, the question arose whether or not an unfaithful wife should be punished. Everyone had expressed himself except the normally reserved Pembroke, who finally gave his opinion which shattered the image of calm serenity: "Es que yo hubiera descuartizado al amante, a vista de la esposa, y después hubiera sacado a ésta los ojos en presencia de sus hijos" (Cuentos, p. 11).

The remainder of the story concerns a visit to Milord's estate and presents the Englishman in a more favorable perspective with an elaboration of how he has decorated his estate to suit his cosmopolitan interests, totally in harmony with the narrator's feelings. First the house and its surroundings are described. In the narrator's words only a Venetian painter could justly depict the beauty of the gardens and architecture. Pembroke has formed his gardens on a universal rather than on a narrow English standard:

En aquel jardín se han reunido, por un esfuerzo poderoso del dinero, los árboles y plantas de más extraños climas y más remotas tierras. El cedro del Líbano y el cactus de la India se entrelazan y juntan a los perfumados bosquecillos de naranjos. El floripondio de alabastro y el nenúfar de flexible tallo crecen al lado de la camelia aristocrática y del plebeyo nardo.

(Cuentos, p. 12)

The interior of the house maintained the same cosmopolitan air. Among the tapestries, crystals and finely upholstered furniture were: "Mueblaje de madera china", "grabados representando escenas y paisajes suizos", and "un bosquecillo artificial de plantas exóticas y rarísimas flores" (Cuentos, pp. 12-3). The room where Pembroke read was a "salón chino con sus abigarrados tápices, sus jeroglíficos extraños" (Cuentos, p. 13); the dining room was a "comedor indio" (Cuentos, p. 13); but perhaps the most spectacular part of the exotic collection was the collection of Venetian paintings which were worthy of a museum. After admiring the good taste of Milord Pembroke's palace, the narrator is offered an introduction to the most prized part of the estate--Pembroke's Andalusian wife. Just as she is about to appear the narrator is awakened from his dream by the inopportune entrance of a servant with a breakfast tray. The piece ends with a series of imprecations, objects thrown at the servant, and the unpleasantness of an overturned breakfast tray. For the few happy moments of the dream, the narrator was able to do as Pembroke when he tired of his London surroundings--to encircle the world and bring part of it back to vary the routine of his existence.

"Mi inglés" makes the point rather plainly that a man of universal interests is more in harmony with himself and hence with reality than someone who restricts himself to the circle of his immediate environment. Other stories with foreign settings are less direct and homage to

cosmopolitanism has to be either assumed or stated secondarily alongside a more prominent theme. "Elisa la écuyère" is an example of a foreign setting whose primary objective is not necessarily cosmopolitanism but nevertheless a certain value on universality is stated or implied in several digressions. Essentially, the story concerns a female circus rider who symbolizes the possibility of attaining a status above common materiality. The fact of her foreignness and international fame become an integral part of the ascension to pure ideality.

The piece begins, much as "Mi inglés", with Gutiérrez Nájera establishing a link between himself, Mexico and, in this case, Europe. The narrator has attended the performances of a circus in Mexico and through a French acquaintance, is told of the marvelous splendor of the circuses in Paris. To illustrate, the Parisian tells the history of the particular performer Elisa la écuyère. The foreign scope of the story immediately extends to the rest of Europe. Mlle. Elisa is by birth Austrian and at the same time a talented individual who transcended her native country through her art. Elisa's Austrian parentage and the advantages this bestows on her are dwelt on at some length: "Era austríaca, romántica y nieta de un gran fabricante de jabones". . . "Como austríaca, tenía el hechizo de sus compatriotas, la sangre hirviente y el diablo en la mirada" (Cuentos, p. 102). Being Austrian and Romantic gave her a quality which ranked high in Gutiérrez Nájera's value

system: "Romántica, dejábase arrastrar por el vuelo huracanado de un sueño infatigable" (Cuentos, p. 102). The gracefulness of Elisa's conversation resembled "esa seda fin de la poética Alemania" (Cuentos, p. 102). The implication of speaking with the smoothness of German poetry amounts to a description of Gutiérrez Nájera's own theory of art:

. . .dejaba correr su palabra de fiebre; todo pasaba allí, por entre aquellos labios que pronto se ponían secos, todo; rápidas visiones, dramas minúsculos, reyes y reinas con suntuosos trajes de oro, mundos enteros vestidos de claridad. Sin contar lo que saltaba, de vez en cuando, de su cabeza loca a su boca grave: improvisaciones de deseos, concepciones de realidades sobrenaturales, un chorro de grandiosidades cómicas, todo esto semejante a girones de púrpura, remendados, valiere lo que valiere, pero con esa seda fina de la poética Alemania.

(Cuentos, p. 102)

These characteristics attributed to Austrian and German literature and their close connection to Gutiérrez Nájera's theories, are yet another indication that of the foreign literatures which influenced the Mexican, it is German Romantic idealism which emerges as the basis of his art.

Elisa's Austrian background however, was not all that defined her. Being a person of higher caliber ("una alma elevada" Cuentos, p. 101), she felt a vocation for the circus. This, of course, entailed a struggle with family and middle-class mores. After a year's confinement in a convent, Elisa's family capitulates and allows her to follow her inclinations. After describing her entrance and success as a circus performer the narrator emphasizes that, by following her superior vocation, she has acquired the

stature of a person who surpasses the boundaries of one country or one language.

The morality and appropriateness of following an inner voice is sanctioned when Elisa, after becoming famous, returns to the city and the convent to encounter her confessor and mother superior. Both priest and mother superior give approbation in almost the same words with the difference that the nun is more emphatic. Confessor: "¿Por qué estás en el Circo? Pero no hay necesidad de decírselo..." (Cuentos, p. 105). Mother Superior: "-¿Qué es lo que has ido a buscar al Circo? Sí, ya sé...pero querida niña, sé también que siempre eres la misma, y que en todas partes puede uno conservar su noble corazón..." (Cuentos, pp.105-6).

An international value is placed on Elisa's talent and nobility through a wide acceptance by foreign audiences. This is made more or less explicit in a passage describing the farewells as Elisa departs from different countries:

letanías de adioses, balbucidas entre sollozos, en francés, en alemán, y sobre todo, en esa lengua universal tan bien comprendida, de las lágrimas.

En Viena, en Berlín, en Pestto, en Breslau, en Hamburgo, en Dresde, en todas partes. . .

(Cuentos, p. 104)

The last two paragraphs of the story detail how Elisa has been accepted by the cream of her native Austrian society ("la emperatriz de Austria. . .los Metternich, los Esterhazy, el barón Orzy, el príncipe de Lichtenstein, el barón de Edelsheim" Cuentos, p. 106) and an international Paris circle ("la baronesa de Rothvillers. . .la duquesa de

Fitz-James, la baronesa Alphonse de Rothschild. . .la baronesa de Ruthenstein. . .Mackenzie Grives, el conde de Módena, los Esphrussi, el conde de Barri, el general Iparaguerra, Basily, Frogonard, d'Etreillis" (Cuentos, pp. 106-7).

The story entitled "Cinco años de prisión" is interesting not only as a manifestation of universality but also as a linkage of idealism to activity completely removed from the world of art--in this case, diplomacy and engineering. The short piece consists of a fictionalized account of how the Frenchman, Ferdinand de Lesseps, might have reacted after the failure of his project to construct a Panama canal. Divided into two sections, the first describes the aged Lesseps defending himself, recounting his past glories as diplomat and builder of the Suez canal; the second portrays the defeated Lesseps sentenced to five years of prison and begging for mercy.

The account is obviously fictionalized and representative of Gutiérrez Nájera's own feelings since it clearly departs from the actual facts of the incident. Lesseps, in fact, passed into senility and died before he could know of the sentence. According to a note by E. K. Mapes:

En febrero (de 1893) el Tribunal de París condenó a Lesseps y a su hijo Carlos (su colaborador) a cinco años de prisión y a una multa de 3,000 francos. Sólo éste último compareció ante el tribunal, pues Fernando Lesseps, anonadado ante la magnitud del desastre de su obra, fue víctima de una somnolencia senil (que permitió a su familia ocultarle su condena), muriendo al poco tiempo...a los 89 años de edad.

(Cuentos, p. 363)

Lesseps is presented in the first section as a vehicle for various ideas, among which are the notion that Lesseps is not just a Frenchman but also a citizen of the world: "Mi querida fue Francia. Mi enamorada, la humanidad" (Cuentos, p. 363). Several paragraphs later Lesseps' monologue returns to the same theme of uniting himself to his country and the world: "Gloria para mí, gloria para Francia, gloria para el mundo" (Cuentos, p. 364). This treatment of Lesseps contributes to the pattern which began with "Mi inglés" and "Elisa la écuyère". Gutiérrez Nájera chooses a foreigner for characterization then, by statement or implications, links himself to the character and as a final step causes the personage to adopt a universal perspective.

In "Cinco años de prisión", like the other stories, cosmopolitanism is an integral part of a general idealistic scheme of values. Lesseps says, "yo me llamo la gloria" (Cuentos, p. 363) and the rest of the monologue, including the claim to universality, becomes an interpretation of what he means by glory. Although Lesseps is not an artist he is a genius ("Yo me llamo el Genio" Cuentos, p. 343) which, to Gutiérrez Nájera, is the same since art is genius. Lesseps feels that his work should magically, like a work of art, possess the intangible characteristic of glory which transcends their material nature: "Iba[yo]a la inmortalidad para decirle a Homero: cantadme" (Cuentos, p. 363). In one way or another the condemned old man returns obsessively to what he feels was the effect of his work and his glory. His

engineering feats were conceived in altruism, "di tanto a la humanidad y más a Francia" (Cuentos, p. 364) and a priestly spiritual fortitude:

Tuve fe en mi destino, fe oriental, fe con alma de sol, fe con médula de león. Había unido dos mares, como sumo sacerdote que une las manos de dos novios. Y anhelaba officiar de nuevo en otras nupcias inmortales.

(Cuentos, p. 364)

Brokenheartedly, Lesseps reminds his accusers that they allowed him the luxury of believing himself spiritually immortal, and in doing so makes the connection between himself and the properties of religious rites: "Como había de ver si quemabais incienso en torno mío e iba yo por el mundo, como los dioses de la Ilíada, envuelto en una nube" (Cuentos, p. 364). While enjoying his idealistic glory Lesseps describes his position with images of height and loftiness and, in disgrace, with images of dirt and lowly creatures:

¿Qué sabéis vosotros de esos aturdimientos, de esos vahidos, de esos vértigos que se sienten en las cimas? Veo delante de mí la toga oscura que parece tiznada y huele a hollín; veo ratones que corren, gatos que atisban; yo he sido águila.

(Cuentos, p. 364)

References to contemporary foreign countries are fewer in Gutiérrez Nájera's poetry than in his fiction. Mention of ancient Greece, Rome and the literary past of modern European countries is common and corroborates an interest in universality; however, references to past civilizations, histories and literatures imply an additional interest in time and so will be discussed later. The reason

for the difference of attention for foreign countries between verse and prose is not difficult to explain. Poetry is usually employed by Nájera as a direct expression of his own emotions while the stories arrive at the same objective allegorically. The author, by symbolically explaining his own feelings in the person of a fictionalized character, has more freedom of location and consequently Gutiérrez Nájera's interest in foreign countries is more fully developed in the stories than the poetry.

Although the treatment of foreign countries is more predominant in the fiction, there are several noteworthy examples in the poetry. Such is the poem entitled "Francia y México" which is filled with hyperbolic praise of France. The first of three parts is addressed to France and extols her spiritual contribution to humanity:

Francia, Francia, la urna transparente
 en que el humano espíritu se agita;
 ...
 inmenso, eterno corazón, en donde
 toda la vida universal palpita!
 Eres la madre de los pueblos, eres
 como ánfora de amor inagotable,
 ...
 música que deleita los oídos,
 ...
 y el ala para todo lo que vuela!

(Poesías II, p. 351)

It is obvious that the author's eyes are not fixed on France alone but France in relation to the rest of the world and, furthermore, he sees the same idealistic virtues in France that he found in Austria or would find in England, Spain and Italy. The ultimate contribution of France, expressed in the

last two lines, is to philosophy and, more important, to art:

para el grave filósofo la forma,
para el artista y el cantor la idea!

(Poesías II, p. 352)

In the second part Gutiérrez Nájera describes aspects of nineteenth century French history and speaks of France in relation to himself and Mexico. He first establishes his connection with France and a common Latin brotherhood:

¡Ah! no seré yo nunca quien te injurie
mofa haciendo y baldón de tus tristezas,
siento el hervor del corazón latino
y si me duele, a veces, tu destino,
convierto la mirada a tu grandeza.

(Poesías II, p. 352)

Nevertheless, Gutiérrez Nájera qualifies his admiration for France. He is particularly critical of her imperialistic ambitions, which he contends are not in the true spirit of French greatness but of an internal sickness: "la pobre enferma devorada por la lepra de viles ambiciones" (Poesías II, p. 352). A combination of greatness and lowly ambitions gives France a choice of destinies. Her spiritual greatness is equivalent to life or eternity and her imperialist ambitions lead to "las aguas plomizas de la muerte" (Poesías II, p. 353). The decline of French power in the nineteenth century at the hands of various countries is justified and represents: "las grandes represalias del derecho" (Poesías II, p. 353). The poet points out especially the ill-fated French attempt to dominate Mexico through Maximilian. The

last two lines of the second section emphatically admonish France that the world has changed, thus implying that she also must reform:

ya no hay Césares, Francia, en el palacio,
ni planta de invasor en nuestra tierra!

(Poesías II, p. 353)

The third section, which begins with a proclamation of universality, is addressed to Mexico and upholds the pattern already seen in the fiction. Gutiérrez Nájera sees himself as a Mexican, but only a Mexican in relation to universal norms. He begins:

Los pueblos son hermanos; Dios no quiere
este odio universal, esta locura,
esta guerra implacable que convierte
al mundo en un tablado en que pasea
esa terrible trágica; la muerte.

(Poesías II, p. 353)

This quote probably contains the key to the poem. Published on May 5, 1882, Gutiérrez Nájera in writing "esta guerra implacable que convierte al mundo en un tablado" is probably alluding to the fact that in the previous months France was engaged militarily in imperialist expansion in Indochina, Tunisia and West Africa.¹ The materialistic motivation of France's expansion reminds the poet of Mexico's chronic civil wars and again he states the problem in universal terms:

Es preciso arrojar del santuario

1. Guy Chapman, The Third Republic of France: The First Phase 1871-1894 (London: St. Martin's Press, 1962), pp. 212-3, 246-59.

a aquellos mercaderes de la tierra
que juegan a los pueblos y si pierden
pagan con la moneda de la guerra.

(Poesías II, p. 354)

War, civil or international, is not blamed on ethnic differences but the same inherent condition of man that makes him capitulate to the unconscionable drive for materialistic satisfaction. "Francia y México" makes universality an integral part of the thematic material. No other poem is quite so direct on the subject.

Certainly the most novel way Gutiérrez Nájera established a cosmopolitan standard for himself and his art is in the series of fourteen prose selections which E. K. Mapes, in his edition of the Cuentos placed under the heading "Adaptaciones e imitaciones". Each selection has a foreign setting and the way in which the adaptations incorporate Gutiérrez Nájera's own predilections with the material of foreign writers gives a meaning to the adaptations altogether consistent with his universal standard of reality.

The possibility of plagiarism is somewhat blunted by the fact that Gutiérrez Nájera usually states in the text that he is relating a story of another author. In each case he picks a foreign author and the acknowledgement generally contains a laudatory remark about the author or the source. The following acknowledgements, contained in the first lines, are typical:

Catulo M. lo refiere, y Catulo M. es un hombre
a quien es cuerdo creer bajo su palabra. . .

(Cuentos, p. 415)

De un curioso y ameno libro que, con el título de La historia natural en acción, acaba de publicar en París el marqués de Cherville, . . .

(Cuentos, p. 421)

Yo sé de una leyenda que Alphonse Daudet ha recogido en una de sus obras, y que hace abrir desmesuradamente los ojos. . .

(Cuentos, p. 435)

In a few instances a source is not cited but Professor Mapes could reasonably conjecture adaptations by the nature of the piece, such as "Las desventuras de Mr. Chucker" where an elaborate description of London and the surrounding area make a secondary source inevitable. "La inundación", another adapted story which does not cite the source, has been studied at length by Boyd Carter.¹ Professor Carter in his investigation uncovered a number of possible sources including poems, news items, a historical essay, and short stories, all on floods, which show slight resemblances to Gutiérrez Nájera's own story. The possible correspondence between these sources and "La inundación" are minor however, in comparison to a story by Zola: "Les quatre journées de Jean Gourdon" taken from Nouveau contes à Ninon, 1874. In his concluding paragraph Boyd Carter expressed a certain surprise at the extensiveness of Gutiérrez Nájera's borrowings:

Sin embargo, encierra el escrito de Manuel tantas semejanzas con el de Zola que no puede menos de extrañar que el poeta no se lo atribuyera abiertamente al jefe del naturalismo literario. ¿Por qué

1. Boyd G. Carter, En torno a Gutiérrez Nájera (Mexico: Ediciones Botas, 1960), pp. 177-204.

tal descuido? ¿Por qué no pensó ni por un instante que al usar los mismos nombres de los personajes de Zola y otros detalles de cuento tan bien conocido, no se le pudiera acusar de tratar de tomar la propiedad literaria de otro? ¿No había mencionado a Zola cuando adaptó "Les fraises", cuento que se publicó en el mismo libro que "Les quatre journées"? Además, ¿era probable que en mero labriego hablara como hace hablar el poeta a aquel personaje? ¿No encierra el poeta con comillas la entera narración del labriego? ¿Habría hecho eso con el propósito deliberado de prevenir a sus lectores de que era una adaptación lo que leían? ¿Estimaba el poeta que sus propias contribuciones al cuento fueran tantas que le tocaba el derecho de firmarlo? En suma, de lo que más se puede acusar a Gutiérrez Nájera es de un descuido y no de plagio.¹

The obviousness with which Gutiérrez Nájera takes other people's material and embues it with his own interests makes the adaptation a literal implementation of his theoretical statement: ". . .nos es preciso vivir en ese mundo creado por la fantasía de los artistas de todos los siglos, de todas las edades. . ." (Crítica, p. 115). There are undeniable practical reasons such as the mechanical rush of newspaper production and new possibilities for technical innovation he wrote of in "El cruzamiento en la literatura" where it was theorized that national literatures remained alive and vigorous only when receiving fresh inspiration from the vantage point of other countries. The present examples, nevertheless, achieve a meaning considerably more important than these limited practical goals. Gutiérrez Nájera, in his enthronement of art, could fuse his creativeness with that of someone else such as Émile Zola and in

1. Boyd G. Carter, En torno a Gutiérrez Nájera, pp. 203-4.

the process become one with Zola. Through this means he expanded himself beyond his person and country toward a universal norm.

"Las misas de Navidad" illustrates how Gutiérrez Nájera could join himself through his work to another author--in this instance a Frenchman, Alphonse Daudet--by giving an adaptation of another writer's short story which is connected to several original paragraphs of his own work. The first part of the story is Gutiérrez Nájera's own and by means of an impressionistic sketch of a Christmas Eve street scene, he lets the narrative thread develop until it introduces a topic which reminds the narrator of Daudet's story. The last part of the story consists of Gutiérrez Nájera's adaptation of the French tale.

The first paragraphs by Gutiérrez Nájera contain several characteristics which readily mark it as his own creation. Not least among these traits, and especially pertinent in discussing his cosmopolitanism, is the foreign setting. Although a specific country is not mentioned, the cold weather and falling snow eliminate Mexico as the place. The opening scene is a detailed description of city streets the afternoon before Christmas. In the description, color and the effect of lighting are recorded in various places to give the impression of more than a dimensional material quality. Typical is the following: "La luz de las hogueras y de los hachones, llameando velozmente, comunica a las fisonomías ese reflejo purpúreo que ilumina las pinturas

venecianas" (Cuentos, p. 433). Immediately following the sentence on light an aesthetic symbol is recorded. Among the crowd the narrator singles out the aristocratic presence of "señorita C." with a child at her side: "Es la Diana de Juan Goujon en el mercado" (Cuentos, p. 433). As night closes over the city, the narrator begins to ruminate on the mysterious nature of Christmas Eve, a night of memories and resurrections. Christmas Eve customs of different countries are briefly mentioned. These customs serve to remind the narrator of a French tale by Daudet which describes a supernatural event of Christmas Eve. In this way a perfectly natural transition is made from Gutiérrez Nájera's own writing to the adaptation from Daudet. Gutiérrez Nájera has allowed his narration to follow a natural train of thought until suddenly the appropriate moment comes to introduce Daudet's "Les Trois Messes Basses".

The French tale is given in almost identical form as the original. Daudet's story in its most basic plot structure of a mysterious event is adapted to Gutiérrez Nájera's own section. There is another unity--that of language--which Gutiérrez Nájera has maintained with his own section. Even though Gutiérrez Nájera copies the original piece almost sentence for sentence, the language is markedly his own, as shown in the following comparison:

--Oui, mon révérend, deux dindes magnifiques bourrées de truffes. J'en sais quelque chose, puisque c'est moi qui ai aidé à les remplir. On aurait dit que leur peau allait craquer en rôtissant, tellement elle était tendue...

--Jésus-Maria! moi que aime tant les truffes...
Donne-moi vite mon surplis, Garrigou...Et avec les
dindes, qu'est-ce que tu as encore aperçu à la
cuisine?...

--Oh! toutes sortes de bonnes choses...Depuis
midi nous n'avons que fait plumer des faisans, des
huppés, des gelinottes, des coqs de bruyère. La
plume en volait partout...Puis de l'étang on a apporté¹
des anguilles, des carpes dorées, des truites, des...

--Sí, reverendo padre, dos cabritos; dos cabritos
llenísimos de trufas. Yo mismo he ayudado a rellenar-
los. Su piel, fuertemente estirada, daba traquidos de
angustia al entrar al horno.

--Garrigú...el sobrepelliz! ¡Dios mío! ¡Yo que
deliro por las trufas! ¿Dos cabritos, eh? ¿Y qué más?

--Lo más apetitoso y exquisito. Desde en la mañana
nos hemos ocupado solamente en desplumar faisanes,
pavos y pichones. Una nube de plumas, danzando por el
aire, nos rodeaba constantemente. En seguida vinieron
las anguilas, las doradas carpas y las truchas.

(Cuentos, p. 435)

A more literal transference of French to Spanish is easily possible. Gutiérrez Nájera chose his own style with its indefinable gracia to which almost every critic who has written on Nájera refers. This conscious fusion of a foreign author's material into the Mexican's writing is probably the most explicit way of implementing his ideas on universality in art.

Much the same pattern is followed in the poetic adaptations, perhaps more so, since metric adaptation required more radical changes from French than prose. "Versos de oro" adapted from François Coppée's "Ritournelle" shows how Gutiérrez Nájera had to make the poems more uniquely his

1. Alphonse Daudet, "Les Trois Messes Basses: Conte de Noël", in French Short Stories, ed. by Douglas Labaree Buffum (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1927) p. 124.

own than the stories. Following are the Spanish and French original:

Por rubios trigales de espigas doradas
al soplo primero del mes tentador,
iremos buscando las cosas aladas,
las áureas abejas, los versos de amor.

Los pinos enhiestos sus copas levantan,
yo ciño tu talle de esbelto bambú;
oigamos, mi vida, las cosas que cantan:
yo ritmos sonoros y pájaros tú.

Siguiendo el arroyo donde ávidas toman
frescura las aves después de volar,
iremos buscando las cosas que aroman
y versos y rosas podremos hallar.

Amor, si lo quieres, haré que ese día
la luz resplandezca cual nunca lució.
Seré yo poeta, y tú poesía,
tú serás más bella, más amante yo!

(Poesías II, pp. 395-6)

Dans la plaine blonde et sous les allés,
Pour mieux faire accueil au doux messidor,
Nous irons chasser les choses ailées,
Moi, la strophe, et toi, le papillon d'or.

Et nous choisirons les routes tentantes,
Sous les saules gris et près des roseaux
Pour mieux écouter les choses chantantes,
Moi, le rythme, et toi, le chœur des oiseaux.

Suivant tous les deux les rives charmées
Que le fleuve bat de ses flots parleurs,
Nous vous trouverons, choses parfumées,
Moi, glanant des vers, toi, cueillant des fleurs.

Et l'amour, servant notre fantaisie,
Fera ce jour-là l'été plus charmant;
Je serai poète, et toi poésie.¹
Tu seras plus belle, et moi plus aimant.

Although the indebtedness of the Spanish version is obvious, Gutierrez Nájera's interpretation is patently his own

1. François Coppée, Poésies de François Coppée
(Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1873) pp. 51-2.

expression. The deviations from the original are made consistently within the framework of the Mexican's thought patterns. Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza, commenting on the poetic adaptations, noted that "salta a la vista la diferencia".¹ The title "Versos de oro" is a color synaesthesia typical of the Mexican; "soplo primero del mes" as an image of intangibility would also be common; "pinos enhiestos" very possibly is there because the pine tree is common in the Mexico City valley; "yo ciño tu talle" makes the Spanish poem more suggestive of eroticism than the French and again eroticism is a motif which recurrently appears in the Mexican's work. A deviation in the third verse adds bird imagery to the scene which constitutes another symbol of intangibility or idealism. The deviations do not have to imply a rejection of Coppée's images or thoughts. Certainly Coppée's intention of identifying woman with nature and a consummate source of poetic inspiration would be heartily approved by Gutiérrez Nájera. However, by taking the poem and minimizing this central theme and allowing his own characteristic thoughts and imagery to enter, Gutiérrez Nájera could assert himself as a person and an artist in a way that transcended his limited physical and national surroundings.

This continuous struggle by Gutiérrez Nájera to project outward into space is basically the same motivation

1. Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza, quoted from Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 86.

behind his concern with time. Both are something infinite into which the author struggles to extend himself as a person. With space an attempt was made to achieve infinity through universality in art. The same goal is the object of a preoccupation with time. The author wants, through his art, to survive into the future and at the same time become a segment of the past. If art is sufficiently founded on talent and inspiration it becomes a truth which is integral to a direct continuing line of posterity's great accomplishments and consequently makes the author as much a part of the past as the future. This, briefly, is the same idea which was seen in his criticism and finds embodiment in his fiction and poetry.

Time is generally more problematic for Gutiérrez Nájera because of its abstract nature and the arbitrariness of its measured chronology which nevertheless reminds the author that his physical existence is perishable. Space and universality were not without complications; however, the threat to the author's physical existence was not so severe as with the question of time. Gutiérrez Nájera was unsatisfied with his limited physical environment but the possibility of giving his writing a universal character was simple in comparison to ascertaining that his works would survive chronological time and his personal demise. Numerous parenthetical remarks in the fiction and the poetry attest to the measure and complexity of Gutiérrez Nájera's comprehension of what time was, its effect on him, and how this relates to

his art.

As mentioned in the first chapter, there is little Gutiérrez Nájera could say about the future except that its unknowable character oppressed him. In his creative writing some of the most beautiful lines give expression to this concern. One of his most frequently quoted odes, "Non omnis moriar", addresses itself to this problem. Ostensibly based on Horace's Ode XXX from Book Three, it does in fact take its point of departure from a central theme of the ode:

non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei
vitabit Libitinam: usque ego postera
crescam laude recens, . . .
. . .
. . . ex humili potens
princeps Aeolium carmen ad Italos
deduxisse modos. ¹

Gutiérrez Nájera gives an analogous statement in the first verse:

¡No moriré del todo, amiga mía!
De mi ondulante espíritu disperso,
algo en la urna diáfana del verso,
piadosa guardará la poesía.

(Poesías II, p. 301)

At the same time the poet proclaims his survival through poetry, he defines the essence of what he wants to survive as: "Hondos recuerdos de fugaces días" (Poesías II, p. 301). It is from the double aspect of "Hondos recuerdos" and "fugaces días" that most of the symbolic material derives. Although "hondos recuerdos" by its textual meaning refers to

1. Quintus Horatius Flaccus, The Odes of Horace, trans. by James Michie (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1964), p. 216.

the poet's life, in other poems Gutiérrez Nájera's desire to keep the past alive goes beyond his personal experience in order to capture from the past's broad historical spectrum anything worth keeping alive. His attitude to ancient Greece typifies the nature of how the remote past was sought after:

Mas también, ¡oh, poeta!, sentías
de otra luz, de otra fe la nostalgia;
eras tú para Grecia; en las naves
de la Chipre riente soñabas,
• • •
y también sollozando decías:
¡Oh mis dioses, mi Atenas, mi patria!

(Poesías II, p. 158)

The "fugaces días" or the quickly passing characteristic of time is the other side of Gutiérrez Nájera's concern for time which is given symbolic embodiment in various ways. In a poem: "¡Huyen los años como raudos naves! / rápidos huyen..." (Poesías II, p. 287). As the author views time a feeling of desperation appears:

¡Oh ven! es tiempo aún; yo haré que guarde
mi corazón tu amor y lo sujete...
Yo quiero amar, vivir...es tarde, es tarde,...

(Poesías I, p. 230)

An effect of tedium can also result from the pressure of passing time:

El tedio, del dolor hijo bastardo,
en mi espíritu habita como dueño,
• • •
Ven pronto...con los últimos claveles
se fueron las postreras mariposas.

(Poesías II, p. 51)

Although static eternal time is described here as

distinct from fleeting time, the two in practice are not necessarily separate entities since a concern for the serene stillness of a great work of art from the past is in itself an attempt to arrest the fleeting moment. If all great art works are products of idealism, idealism lifts them automatically away from finite chronology. The artist from the story entitled "Aquél era otro López" illustrates the way true idealism loses track of measured time:

. . .se le olvidaba comer, se le olvidaba trabajar, se le olvidaba todo, y en contemplar las patas de un insecto, las hojas de una planta o el correr de las aguas, perdía el tiempo, sin darse cuenta de la pérdida.

(Cuentos, p. 231)

In this light, a reference in Gutiérrez Nájera's writing to a historical or personal past automatically implies a desire to rise above moving chronology.

All of the artists, musicians, and literary figures or aspects of art works enumerated in the last chapter take on an additional meaning. They were described as symbols of aestheticism but it can be easily demonstrated that they also constitute a wall against time. Succinctly stated, poetry in the poem "A Justo Sierra" is defined as a "consuelo inmortal" (Poesías II, p. 184).

To survive and diminish the importance of measured clock time is only part of Gutiérrez Nájera's concern for past time. Equally important, the idea is embedded in his thinking that he is not only coming to terms with the clock, but also that a psychological, idealistic view of time and

eternal recurrence is in fact reality. The situation is parallel to his attitude toward idealism generally. Idealism is two things: it is value, and constitutes value by virtue of the fact that it is also reality. His view of time is likewise an interpretation of reality and at the same time a route to eternality.

Some of the digressive, parenthetical statements in the stories and poetry are as explicit on time's nature as in the criticism. Speaking of the eternal duration of truth which finds recurring embodiment in different people, Gutiérrez Nájera addresses a young lady in a story to this effect: "-Cuando miro esos ojos y esa boca, creo en la transmigración de los espíritus. Vive en Ud. el alma de Cleopatra" (Cuentos, p. 147). The idea of time's true nature consisting of a spiritual-psychological manifestation is given in a definition of the human heart: "el corazón es un reloj humano" (Poesías I, p. 256). Two following lines of the same page reinforce the idea that time is psychological rather than measured units:

Hace un año, dos, tres...; Yo no sé cuántos!
Un siglo me parece todavía!

(Poesías I, p. 256)

Perhaps the best statement on time however, is the one given at the beginning of the chapter where the statement is made that the different tenses of time--past, present, and future--are indistinguishable in addition to being part of an idealistic universe which is unbounded by finite space.

In order to summarize and give the above paragraphs some utility for describing how time is concretely symbolized in literary material, it can be said that anything Gutiérrez Nájera incorporates into his writing which has a relation to the past (mythological figures, literary characters, authors, historical personages, memories from the author's own life or the life of his character creations) becomes a symbol of idealistic eternal time which the author yearns to attain through art. The possibilities for illustrating this time symbology are almost as vast as the author's work itself; therefore, only a representative selection follows which most aptly shows how time is symbolized.

One outstanding manifestation of material taken from the past for expression of timeless reality is the employment of mythological references. The mythological figures were very much a part of the ancient Greece which Gutiérrez Nájera wanted to keep alive. He saw her glory not only in her art but also:

. . .en las ninfas
que desnudas riendo besaban;
en los dioses que fueron tan bellos,
en lo vivo que ahora es estatua,

(Poesías II, p. 158)

Although mythological allusions are minor in quantity compared to other types of imagery and symbolic material such as bird, flower and color imagery or literary allusion, references are frequent enough to create for themselves a certain importance. Use of myth is particularly consistent with the literary theory which laid a heavy emphasis on the

magical quality of art. In fact, with a magical view of art it is sustainable that myth does not end with a mention of ancient gods but that many more references are intended to serve the same function as theological references. Homer himself as a symbol of a certain type of truth acquiring magical characteristics through art, is as integral to Gutiérrez Nájera's view of myth as the gods he portrays. Among the stories, mythology figures prominently in several titles: "La odisea de Madame Théo", "Madame Venus" and "Balzac y el dios Proteo". Among the poems, excepting the Odes, there are two instances of reference by title to pagan mythology: "Princesita de cuentos de hadas" and "El hada verde". A particular section of the poetic work, the Odes, has such a quantity of material taken from myth that mythology in these fifteen poems is a foremost characteristic of their texture.

In the stories there are scattered examples of mythological reference besides the ones mentioned above by title. In "Historia de una corista" the chorus girl protagonist addresses the reader to ask for his attention and at the same time metaphorically corresponds modern Paris to the world of ancient myth: "Si tiene Ud. el hilo de Ariadna, sígame como pueda en el gran laberinto parisiense" (Cuentos, p. 58). Paris, in other words, is not just a modern, noisy, urban center but something whose nature is as remote as the mythological consciousness of mankind. A few lines further, in a moment of self deprecation, the corista describes her

own entrance into the music hall world in terms of Mohammedan as well as Greek mythology:

Los que nada conocen ni saben de los bastidores, se figuran que la puerta de ese jardín de las Hespérides está muy bien guardada por dragones y endriagos fabulosos. En ese paraíso...de Mahoma, por supuesto, al revés de todo otro paraíso, es libre la entrada para los pecadores.

(Cuentos, p. 59)

Similar to the first statement on Paris, the young lady sees herself in a world far different from one where her entrance in and out of the theatre is only measurable by dates. A correspondence between her life and the mythological past, however, is very real. Her final worldly disillusionment calls forth another mythological prop: "Me esperaba ver correr arenas de oro por las calles, como corrían entre las ondas del Pactolo" (Cuentos, p. 60). Her disillusion is obviously that of Gutiérrez Nájera.

Mythology provides a significant background for another story entitled "El baño de Julia". Briefly, the story treats of a haughty young lady who disdains men but nevertheless falls in love. Written in a light, humorous vein, it ends on a rather erotic note when in a last moonlight scene Julia, outwitted, finds herself nude and bathing in a pond with a similarly undressed young man. Unwilling to leave the water in the moonlight and be seen, she has to listen to the young man's conversation which slowly seduces her. The story ends as she falls into his arms.

The setting of the story as it is corresponded to legendary places and things gives the action an additional

meaning of something which does not happen in a chronological time vacuum but is part of an eternal recurrence. The setting is on a country estate of Julia's aunt. In a curious paragraph, Gutiérrez Nájera uses the better part of a page explaining how the physical aspect of the estate has nothing to do with the ancient world. A selection from the paragraph is ample illustration:

No te diré yo que aquella quinta sea una especie de palacio de Armida, ni que sus jardines puedan compararse con los de las Hespérides, ni con los de Alcinoús en la famosa isla de Corcyra, ni con los jardines colgantes, que según cuentan, existían en Babilonia, ni aun siquiera con los de Academus y Epicuro en Atenas, o los de Lafa, la encantadora Laís, en Corinto.

(Cuentos, p. 71)

If the estate is not all of these things, why the lengthy negation? The answer is suggested on the next two pages. The narrator begins: "Pero en cambio tienes allí una verdadera posesión de la edad media, una especie de ruina legendaria" (Cuentos, pp. 71-2). The estate still exists in a magical, idealistic time continuum, since it resembles medieval legend rather than ancient. The mode in which the estate is medieval however, is further qualified as being medieval in the nineteenth century Romantic conception which signifies an interpretation of the Middle Ages which does not necessarily correspond to a strictly historical reality. Since the estate is a Romantic-medieval conception, Gutiérrez Nájera is free to add classical decoration, which he does:

. . .al recorrer a solas los intricandos laberintos

del parque, he sentido algo como un estremecimiento de inexplicable miedo; he imaginado que aquellas Dianas, aquellos Amores, aquellos Hércules de piedra, iban de súbito a arrancarse de sus pedestales, a correr por los senderos escondidos,. . .

(Cuentos, pp. 72-3)

If the ancient world is denied it is only partially denied to give a more expanded time spectrum from ancient to medieval to nineteenth century. The fact of Julia's love fulfilling a recurrent time pattern is subtly predicted in the passage which states that gardens still harbored the exciting odor of the love fulfillments from other ages: ". . . guarda todavía el excitante olor de los amores de otro tiempo" (Cuentos, p. 73). Additional weight is given to the idea in the last line of the story when the nude Julia has fallen into Octavio's arms and one of the statues laughs: "¡Y la luna se puso detrás de aquellos árboles, y el amor de mármol soltó una estrepitosa carcajada!" (Cuentos, p. 80).

The stories which contain mythological allusion in the title show the same tendency to give something contemporary an eternal significance. "La odisea de Madame Théo" represents something of a myth-making attempt in itself and, in the process, Gutiérrez Nájera is careful to suppress chronological time as much as possible. Limbo, the first abode of Madame Théo, is described as a perfectly idealistic paradise far removed from the earth and one of the major attributes of this paradise is an absence of clocks: "A ningún transeúnte le roban el reloj, porque no hay relojes. Los niños habitantes de ese cielo sin Dios cuentan los segundos

por los besos que dan a sus novias las rosas" (Cuentos, p. 179). From Limbo, Madame Théo is transferred to Venus where time seems to be equally immeasurable: "¿Cuántos días, cuántos meses, cuántos años pasó Théo en aquel planeta? El duende que me ha referido todos estos pormenores y detalles, no me supo decir la cifra exacta" (Cuentos, pp. 184-5). These two quotes, tied as they are to the mythological properties of Madame Théo, make her, among other possible meanings, another of the author's symbols of timelessness.

"Madame Venus" is another story whose title implicates myth with a meaning relevant to time. The story essentially is a plotless account by the narrator of a certain type of woman. The author is uncertain whether she is from Mount Olympus or Hades. On the one hand, she is the epitome of beauty ("divinamente hermosa" Cuentos, p. 203), and on the other she is a thief who takes advantage of all her lovers without pity. The narrator summarizes his estimation of her in the sentence "es una forma bella de la muerte" (Cuentos, p. 203). He is much more certain however, of her divine nature: "Ella es la diosa, el sacerdote y el creyente" (Cuentos, p. 204). There are two isolated indications that the people around Madame Venus have to worry about chronological time. Her poor admirers and the honest wives of her victims are left waiting and at the end of the piece the narrator feels the rush of time from which the memory of Madame Venus had lifted him: "Pero aguarda...Tengo que dejarte. Han dado ya las seis en el reloj de la sala de

mi novia" (Cuentos, p. 206). Madame Venus is beyond finite space and above time however. With relation to space, she is of an indefinite origin: "No se sabe a punto fijo en qué parte nació. Es una mujer internacional" (Cuentos, p. 203). As for time, she is of a timelessness whose origin the author feels is impossible to determine:

Más ¿a qué remontarse a los comienzos de su vida? Las fuentes del Nilo son ignotas. . . Hay mujeres que nacen de treinta años.

¿Los ha cumplido Madame Venus? La edad de las estatuas no puede determinarse a primera vista con absoluta precisión. Y Madame Venus es una escultura de carne.

(Cuentos, p. 204)

The short piece "Balzac y el dios Proteo" does not make the point of truth as an eternal time which is related to myth in a direct statement as have previous examples. However, enough examples of mythological figures representing eternal truths have been given that it can be easily postulated that the final paragraph of the story is intended, among other things, as a statement on eternal time. Briefly, the god Prometheus has expounded all he knows about women to the novelist Balzac who is about to walk away with a mental plan for several hundred novels inspired by the interview. As he leaves Prometheus admonishes him:

Ten por sabido que las novelas son quiméricas, . . . y que los hombres negarán la existencia de tus heroínas, como han negado la verdad de Zeus tempestuoso, y de Hera, la venerable que camina calzada con sandalias de oro puro!

(Cuentos, p. 446)

Without direct statement, the idea is still embedded that

Balzac's novelistic descriptions of contemporary life have archetypal roots as deep as Greek myth and are, in a way, a continuation of myth.

Myth is not however, an invariable prop for discussing time. Occasionally personages in the stories may symbolize some aspect of time without a specific historical counterpart. Without reference to the past through mythological or literary figure, two characters are juxtaposed in "Una venganza" to emphasize that reality is repetitive temporal extension. The story concerns a beautiful lady, Alicia, whom the narrator had frequently admired as she sat in her theatre. Like Madame Venus, she is of an indeterminate age because her beauty somehow lifts her above a chronological count: "¿Cuántos años tiene? Ha cumplido veinticinco; no sé cuántas semanas, meses or años hace" (Cuentos, p. 137). Alicia's beauty drew many admirers which eventually led to her seduction by a lover and murder at the hands of her husband. In the last sentences, after the narrator has finished his reminiscence to a companion during a theatre intermission, he turns in his seat to be startled by the appearance of a woman who resembles Alicia but "No, no es Alicia la que miro en aquel palco. Alicia duerme ya en el camposanto. Es una mujer que se le parece mucho y morirá tan desastrosamente como ella" (Cuentos, p. 140).

The most conspicuous employment of mythological references among the poems are found in the odes which emphasize not only the ancient pagan gods but the ancient

world generally. The first ode, "A Hidalgo" is perhaps the best for illustrating an attempt by Gutiérrez Nájera to connect himself to the past. Although written in honor of Mexico's independence hero, the principal import of the poem's statement is that the author desires to write a poem which will equal Hidalgo's greatness and feels unqualified for the task:

Yo sé bien que la excelsa poesía,
del encumbrado Olimpo guardadora,
no ha prorrumpido en cantos seculares
dignos de resonar en tus altares;
dulces panales de estival colmena
son nuestros cantos, hálitos de flores;
y nuestra inspiración, vana o beoda,
sujeta siempre a femenil tarea,
no sube a los espacios de la idea
en las alas frementes de la Oda.

(Poesías II, p. 268)

These lines synthesize the philosophical dilemma which colors most of Gutiérrez Nájera's writing. He recognizes a Romantic absolute in "los espacios de la idea", "las alas frementes de la Oda", and the person of Father Hidalgo, each of which constitutes an absolute value for which the poet strives. At the same time, he acknowledges that the poetry of his generation has been unable to equal the inspiration offered by Hidalgo. In the above quote it appears that Gutiérrez Nájera is merely being modest about the quality of contemporary verse with words like "vana", "beoda" and "femenil". Other lines, however, suggest that the problem is more fundamental. "Pequeños somos para empresa tanta" (Poesías II, p. 269), he continues a few lines further and then gives an additional appraisal of contemporary poetry:

Nuestra Musa, pueril, y desmedrada
la débil Musa del placer y el llanto,
blandir no puede la terrible espada,

(Poesías II, p. 269)

The two words "placer" and "llanto" characterize late nineteenth century decadent--or, in this case, Modernist--poets who, under the influence of the positivists felt themselves metaphysically isolated in the realm of personal experience. "Llanto" expresses sorrow because of this predicament, and "placer" expresses a desire to fill a limited existence with as much feeling and life as possible. It is his desire to reach into eternal time that makes Gutiérrez Nájera so obsessed with the fact that his poetry cannot rise to a level worthy of Hidalgo. The fact of the poet's wanting to establish a linkage to Hidalgo is expressed in the first lines: "Mil veces, Padre, . . . / . . . tu alma/ habló calladamente con la mía" (Poesías II, p. 267). Not only does the poet feel a communion with Father Hidalgo but the patriot, through his greatness, has a spiritual ancestry which descends from Greek mythology:

como la sombra de Elfenor el griego
te he visto descender del horizonte.

(Poesías II, p. 267)

Only a poet like Homer or Tyrtæus, he concludes, could compose an ode worthy of Hidalgo or, if not these two, the mythological poet, Orpheus. Gutiérrez Nájera, in addition to relating himself to Hidalgo and then Hidalgo to the ancient Greek world with its gods, ends by claiming to be a Greek himself who worships Hidalgo as one of the young

1

ephebi:

Nosotros, los efebos sonrientes,
llevaremos cantando a tus altares
los jonios mirtos y las rosas sueltas,
como íban las canéforas esbeltas
a los templos olímpicos de Ares.

(Poesías II, p. 270)

Gutiérrez Nájera, the poet of love and death, or in his own modest wording "llanto" and "placer", has attempted in "A Hidalgo" to transcend himself temporally by aligning himself not only with Hidalgo but also with the remote poets and myths which he felt Hidalgo's greatness resembled.

The use of myth in "A Hidalgo" as a symbol of infinite duration and greatness is the pattern for the other odes. In "A un amigo" mythological reference is employed by the poet to state his preference of love and beauty to commerce:

. . .En vano quieres
que del templo de Venus me desvíe
y que a Hermes fecundo me consagre;

(Poesías II, p. 271)

In "[¿A quién la palma de hermosura...?]" the beautiful voice of a young lady has its equal among certain goddesses: "al canto de las Piérides iguala" (Poesías II, p. 273).

Essentially, the same idea is expressed in "A Kamer". The beautiful woman, to whom the poem is addressed, has a beauty which only the ancient Greek language can capture. The Greek language in its own turn is compared to a goddess:

. . .la griega lengua
sobria y hermosa, y juvenil y fuerte,
como la Diana Cazadora, . . .

(Poesías II, p. 277)

The poem "[Jamás la forma que el poeta admira]" illustrates the very subjective manner in which Gutiérrez Nájera connects himself and his contemporary environment to the ancient world with its myths. With an explanation of Venus' beauty he states:

Sed insaciable de hermosura lleva
mi voluntad a ti; tu forma veo,
y con espasmos de placer se abreva
en tu mórbido encanto mi deseo.

(Poesías II, p. 279)

Four of the odes, "A una tímida", "[Parad el vuelo, taciturnas horas]", "Ultima neocat" and "A un triste" emphasize the fact of time's fleeting presence ("¡Huyen los años como raudas naves! / ¡rápidos huyen! . . ." Poesías II, p. 287) and in each poem the contrast is made between disappearing time and the calm eternality of the gods. In their eternalness the gods become a consolation:

Deja, por fin, la solitaria playa,
y coronado de fragantes flores
descansa en la barquilla de las diosas!

(Poesías II, p. 290)

Love and sensual feeling, which Gutiérrez Nájera used to fill life with as much sensory experience as possible to ward off death, are prominent in two of the odes--"¡Bacante!" and "A Dyonisos". Greek myth is used throughout both poems to convey an atmosphere of eroticism and, as in other examples, the author emphasizes that ancient Greece, spiritually, is a direct temporal extension to his own finite personal existence: "Es patria nuestra. . .ella/ intacta y pura en nuestras almas vive" (Poesías II, pp. 297-8). Among the

female references are Venus, Erigone, nymphs of sea and forests, and Aphrodite. The slender and playful nymphs dance; Erigone, who was known for her virtues, gives love to Dionysius; and Venus

vencida al fin en amorosa lucha
las cintas de su túnica desata.

(Poesías II, p. 295)

Wine is served by Zeus' personal cupbearer, Ganymedes, while in the last verse the poet invokes other poets to sing tribute to Zeus and the god and goddess of love, Poseidon and Aphrodite. Above all, he appeals to the Greek poet of festive drinking songs, Anacreon: "¡Oh, padre Anakreón, canta a Dyonisos!" (Poesías II, p. 296).

"¡Bacante!", addressed to a priestess of Bacchus, absolves her from fault in leading man away from traditional concepts of virtue because she serves as an instrument of Venus to spread love:

. . .¿Quién, ¡Oh diosa!
no olvida al hijo y a la amante esposa
en tus brazos nerviosos de bacante?
Culpa tuya no es: ¡Venus lo quiso!
Cumple, pues, los mandatos inmortales,
y sin temer las sombras de la Estigia
pasa por la existencia, blanca Higia,
escanciando el amor a los mortales.

(Poesías II, p. 299)

As a result of serving Venus, the priestess of Bacchus becomes Hygeia the goddess of health, who need not fear the gloomy waters of the river Styx which was the chief tributary of the netherworld. Numerous other attributes are conceded to the bacchante throughout the poem. As a symbol of

love and hence idealism, the priestess is contrasted to the materialistic hordes from the north who subjugate the world through their indomitable will. Her spirit is that of ancient Greece which contrasts with the materialistic "turba plebeya" (Poesías II, p. 298) of contemporary life. Her destiny is holy and at the same time she gives man the one thing Gutiérrez Nájera is seeking to uphold--life:

¡La sacra voluntad cumple sumisa
y el ígneo foco del vivir mantiene!

(Poesías II, p. 298)

The other aspect of Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation of time, the personal and psychological, results from the practical effect of going inside the author's mind as a medium of narration. Time is seen as mental flux and duration in the Bergsonian sense or emotional, interior distance, to use the words of a contemporary critic. Hans Meyerhoff, who has written a general study on time in literature, concluded that "literary treatment of time has always been 'Bergsonian' in the sense of analyzing time as an immediate datum of consciousness and as it enters into human lives and actions rather than 'into mechanics and physics'."¹ This is especially true in the case of Gutiérrez Nájera who, by declaring man to be spiritual and insisting that he inhabit a spiritual world, automatically invokes "consciousness". Mariano Azuela, in an interesting evaluation,

1. Hans Meyerhoff, Time in Literature (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), p. 10.

recognized in Gutiérrez Nájera a psychological use of time which closely approximated that of the twentieth century writer Proust:

Su cuento Rip-Rip, . . .tiene el tema eterno del tiempo reencontrado que Marcel Proust desarrolló en quince portentosos volúmenes y nuestro Duque Job en tres or cuatro páginas.¹

In "Rip-Rip" Gutiérrez Nájera shows how measured chronological time interacts with idealistic or conscious time to oppress man. As a symbolic representation of timeless idealism, Rip-Rip is above time, not only in the eternal significance of Madame Venus but on a practical day to day level. According to the storyteller, he is like the German monk Alfeo who "pasó cien años, sin sentirlos, oyendo el canto de un pájaro" (Cuentos, p. 225). The absence of mechanical time from Rip-Rip's life first separates him from his surroundings and then, in a re-encounter with his family and friends from whom he has been separated by an uncertain amount of clock time, he suffers a deep hurt from the effect of chronological time on his past relationships. The separation of Rip-Rip from physical time comes about through his sleep of indeterminate length:

Pero no durmió tanto como el Rip-Rip de la leyenda. Creo que durmió diez años...tal vez cinco... acaso uno... en fin, su sueño fue bastante corto; durmió mal. Pero el caso es que envejeció dormido, porque eso pasa a los que sueñan mucho. Y como Rip-Rip no tenía reloj, y como aunque lo hubiese tenido no le habría dado cuerda cada veinticuatro horas; como

1. Mariano Azuela, "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera" in Obras completas, III (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), p. 725.

no se habían inventado aún los calendarios, y como en los bosques no hay espejos, Rip-Rip no pudo darse cuenta de las horas, los días o los meses que habían pasado mientras él dormía, ni enterarse de que ya era anciano.

(Cuentos, p. 226)

After the separation is effected, Rip-Rip awakens and returns to his village for an encounter with the priest, his wife, his best friend and his daughter, all of whom are outside of Rip's timeless character and still influenced by mechanical time. In Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation mechanical time is equivalent to forgetfulness and the time factor which was insignificant to Rip-Rip was sufficient for his personal image to fade from the memory of those whose criterion of time was the clock:

¿Cuánto tiempo durmió? ¿Cuánto tiempo se necesita para que los seres que amamos y que nos aman nos olviden? ¿Olvidar es delito? ¿Los que olvidan son malos?

(Cuentos, p. 229)

The priest, who had been a close friend, failed to recognize Rip-Rip: "Ve a otra parte, porque aquí sobran limosneros" (Cuentos, p. 227). His best friend and wife had betrayed him: "Juan--el del molino--la besaba en los labios" (Cuentos, p. 227). The words of his daughter revealed a complete lack of recognition: "-¡Qué feo, mamá! ¡Qué miedo! ¡Es como el coco!" (Cuentos, p. 228). In the last lines of the story, Gutiérrez Nájera mitigates his criticism of Rip-Rip's family and friends by implying that they were merely victims of time since they forgot. Rip-Rip however, whose spiritual character is given repeated emphasis, acquires in death an

ethereal eternality. After his disillusionment, he flees the village and finally stops to look at his image reflected in a stream. His image represents death, but a special kind of death which becomes eternity. The textual description of the transformation is as follows:

Acercóse al arroyo, y allí, a la superficie, salió la muerte a recibirlo. ¡Sí; porque era la muerte, en figura de hombre, la imagen de aquel decrepito que se asomaba en el cristal de la onda! Sin duda, venía por el ese lívido espectro. No era de carne y hueso, ciertamente; no era un hombre, porque se movía a la vez que Rip, y esos movimientos no agitaban el agua. No era un cadáver, porque sus manos y sus brazos se torcían y retorcían. ¡Y no era Rip, no era él! Era como uno de sus abuelos, que se le aparecía para llevarlo con el padre muerto. "Pero ¿y mi sombra?" pensaba Rip. "¿Por qué no se retrata mi cuerpo en ese espejo? ¿Por qué veo y grito, y el eco de esa montaña no repite mi voz, sino otra voz desconocida?"

¡Y allá fue Rip a buscarse en el seno de las ondas! ¡Y el viejo, seguramente, se lo llevó con el padre muerto, porque Rip no ha vuelto!

(Cuentos, p. 229)

Rip, through the process described above, sees himself transformed in the water from a living creature who looks at his reflection to the personification of death and finally he becomes one and the same as his ancestors. In this way an ancestry of infinite origin is established. Perhaps Mariano Azuela's comparison to Proust is hyperbolic but the basic idea is correct that Gutiérrez Nájera has said much on time in a very short space.

In Rip-Rip the temporal projection backward has two aspects, an encounter with his ancestors which ultimately concerns eternity and a confrontation with his past life which reveals a contrast to define Rip as a person. The

most important of the two, within this particular story, is the definition of Rip as a person. Several other stories show varying aspects of the same backward projection into the author's life, or that of a character's for the purpose of keeping a fragile present existence alive by filling it with memories of the past. If reality is mental, then existence is consciousness and the only means of survival is memory of one's own life and that of others. Rip's family and friends, by forgetting him, in effect condemned Rip to death; therefore, their lack of memory was a "delito" and they were "malos" (Cuentos, p. 229). Gutiérrez Nájera was willing to forgive them as victims of time but their fault was nevertheless real. As a consequence, searching the past for its meaningful moments acquires a prominent goal in many of Gutiérrez Nájera's stories.

Another example of backward projection into life in order to give substance to the present moment which swiftly flies by is contained in "La carta que no se dio". The entire piece consists of mental ruminations on a lady provoked by an unmailed letter which the narrator discovers among the long forgotten contents of a desk drawer. In this instance the narrator is guilty himself of forgetting: "el tiempo corre y el soplo del olvido desvanece en el aire aquellas leves columnitas de humo" (Cuentos, p. 328). The fact that the storyteller has forgotten raises serious questions about the identity of the girl whose name and address were not on the envelope. The loss from memory of all facts

concerning the addressee signifies a possible hurt inflicted on the young lady when the letter was written and equally the possibility that the narrator overlooked and lost a fund of happiness for himself.

The opposite of forgetfulness and death is presented in "La que nunca volverá" in an instance where the narrator and a select character preserve a crystal memory of the past and thus are able to sustain a semblance of life, although the persons they remember are dead. The narrator sits alone at night somberly recalling two friends who have died--"a mis amigos silenciosos de la 'Undiscovered country' como dice Shakespeare" (Cuentos, p. 353)--silently planning to carry wreaths to their graves the following Holy Friday. The presence of death and memory's partial capacity to thwart extinction are in the first lines of the story. Memory in this particular piece has two dimensions. First the narrator thinks back to the friends who were engaged to marry. His memory is aided by the possession of the male friend's diary. The second level of memory derives from a quote within the diary in which the friend recalls his sweetheart who preceded him in death. In the first lines of the quote the lover tries to recover the memory of his dead fiancée through revisiting the scene of their idyl:

Todavía me parece estarla viendo. . .

¡Pobrecilla! Yo he vuelto a visitar esos lugares que fueron mudos confidentes de mi amor. Las cosas permanecen impasibles y no se curan del dolor humano. Somos como errabundos comediantes que pernoctan en este o ese pueblo, y al día siguiente continúan la marcha

sin que sus voces dejen eco alguno en las polvosas bambalinas del teatro.

(Cuentos, p. 353)

Slowly the quote continues descriptively to pass over everything which could help recall the missing person--halls, servants, tennis court, books, chess table, piano. The narrator breaks off the quote and in a final statement, reaffirms his dead friend's observation on the efficacy of objects in recalling missing persons to a second life of sorts:

¡Ah! creemos haber olvidado; pasan muchos años, y al ver una flor seca, un jardín desierto, un pequeño tablero de ajedrez, la herida se abre, el pensamiento retrocede, y la novia que nunca volverá. . .se acerca a nosotros y nos dice. . . '¡No te asustes, soy yo!'

(Cuentos, p. 355)

In summary, Gutiérrez Nájera himself synthesized in a few words what has been said on his use of space and time in the previous pages, when he wrote:

Si entre esos maravillosos aparatos que suprimen la distancia, el tiempo y el espacio, hubiera descubierto Edison alguno que acercara a nuestra vista las cosas lejanas, yo estaría de enhorabuena.

(Cuentos, p. 295)

CHAPTER IV

IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

In order to examine symbolic embodiment, the two previous chapters have detailed the more abstract parts of Gutiérrez Nájera's world view. Part of his symbolic material is employed to reveal the idealistic, spiritual side of man which finds its highest manifestation in aesthetic endeavor and struggles against a surrender to finite materialism. Another major category of symbols derives from a practical application of these theories. Since man is a spiritual being who craves eternity and seeks to transcend his immediate physical surroundings, a considerable amount of material is concerned with symbols of time and universality. A final category which remains involves the author's immediate physical surroundings and the "signs" he chooses to designate symbolically the way in which he sees himself in relation to his immediate environment.

The question of the depiction of the external surrounding world is the most controversial feature of Gutiérrez Nájera's writing as well as of Modernism in general. Detractors of Modernism traditionally have considered the movement insensitive to the real external world and labeled the members "escapists". Juan Marinello, the most recent major critic to make the charge, wrote:

. . .el Modernismo fue, en su fundamental significación, un movimiento alejado de toda preocupación ética, de toda intención política y esencialmente absentista..
 . . .Julían del Casal delira con japonerías pasadas por París y por París mismo; Gutiérrez Nájera, en sus versos como en sus artículos, vive prendado y prendido del bulevar; . . .¹

A more generous critic, Mauricio Magdaleno, shares the same misgivings as Marinello, but concedes that Gutiérrez Nájera's writings were "profundamente revolucionarias en el orden de su imperio sentimental",² as if to excuse his conviction that the Modernist docilely served as an "hijo magnífico"³ to the Díaz dictatorship. In essence, Gutiérrez Nájera is relegated to the position of a stylist: "su subversión, sin embargo afectaba planos muchísimo más fundamentales: los del lenguaje".⁴ With all respect to Mauricio Magdaleno, whose article is an adequate summation of the author's "revolutionary" style, the reality is more complicated.

Although Gutiérrez Nájera refrained from taking an active role in political activity, he did passively occupy a seat in the national legislature, watching the proceedings with interest and in his crónicas expressed his feelings.

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1. Juan Marinello, José Martí, escritor americano; Martí y el modernismo (Mexico: Editorial Grijalbo, 1958), p. 26.
 2. Mauricio Magdaleno, "Gutiérrez Nájera en el alma de su prosa", Cuadernos americanos, CVII (noviembre-diciembre, 1959), 179.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.

His support of Porfirio Díaz' presidency tells very little of his social views since the dictator entered office championed by the liberals and allowed a wide range of viewpoints within his government, at least until Gutiérrez Nájera's death in 1895. The years preceding the dictatorship had been characterized by considerable anarchy, rebellion, and widespread banditry and when a strong military figure took power in 1876 through a coup and established order, his popularity was genuine. According to one historian it was only after 1900 that the dictatorship ossified into a tyranny beyond salvation.¹ Gutiérrez Nájera, like many others (and some of quite radical views), supported Díaz. When, in 1879, there were several rebellions he wrote the following lines acclaiming the peaceful epoch promised by General Díaz:

No basta conquistar independencia
a pueblos que persiguen ideales;
ellos buscan en cien evoluciones
libertar del error su inteligencia,
libertar su país de rebeliones.

(Poesías I, p. 209)

Notwithstanding this support, when Díaz ordered the execution of rebels in Veracruz without a trial, the young poet reacted vehemently:

¡Caín...Caín...! la chispa prometea
dióle vigor al mármol esquiliano;
he ahí tu rota estatua, que gotea

1. Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico 1857-1929 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1931), pp. 153-4.

la sangre, aún caliente de tu hermano;

. . .
 . . .: no importa
 que la verdad con el error combata;
 si un brazo se levanta... se le corta;
 si un cerebro piensa... ¡se le mata!

(Poesías I, p. 217)

Within the columns of his articles Gutiérrez Nájera gave more specific indications of his interest in contemporary social conditions. Contrary to the usual idea that he was an escapist, what appears is an attitude somewhat more direct and outspoken than traditionally presented.

To some degree a position on social questions is implied through his associations. Justo Sierra, a friend whose closeness to Gutiérrez Nájera is well established, contended in the 1870's that chronic rural poverty should be remedied by a better distribution of land and, if necessary, expropriation of land without immediate indemnization.¹ Although Justo Sierra supported Díaz' prolonged re-elections, his recognition of the mistake in a speech after Gutiérrez Nájera's death was a major turning point against the dictator. There is little reason to believe that Gutiérrez Nájera would not have followed the same path.

Perhaps more revealing of Gutiérrez Nájera's attitudes concerning social organization are some observations he wrote about the legislator Juan A. Mateos in December of

1. Moisés González Navarro, El Porfiriato: La vida social, Vol. IV of Historia moderna de México, ed. by Daniel Cosío Villegas (5 vols.; Mexico: Editorial Hermes, 1957), p. 277.

1892. During the course of that year Mateos offered in the legislature a specific plan for the redistribution throughout the country of land and livestock.¹ Gutiérrez Nájera's article concentrates on the locution of Mateo's speech and, as such, constitutes an excellent example of what he considered good prose. However, in the course of praising and explaining Mateo's prowess with language, the critic became an apologist for his ideas. Occasional mistakes of historical fact did not diminish an ability to "dar la vuelta al mundo en ochenta frases" (Crítica, p. 475) or "en su defensa o descargo puede bien decir que los hechos le conceden a menudo la razón" (Crítica, p. 475).

Several of Gutiérrez Nájera's own articles show the same attitude of Sierra and Mateos to social problems, that the poor needed land and money rather than piecemeal charity. It is at this juncture that Gutiérrez Nájera clashes with some aspects of positivist social theory just as he had disagreed with positivists' claims on literature. He disapproved of scientific intrusions into art because it leveled man to a spiritless physical entity. The practical application of positivist theory in Mexico had something of the same effect for him. During the Díaz period an attempt was made by positivist theorists, called científicos, to explain away poverty by defining the poor as hopelessly downtrodden because they were products of their unfortunate

1. Moisés González Navarro, El Porfiriato, pp. 277-8.

environment and ancestry. Among this group Telésforo García, following a social Darwinist interpretation,

justified night work in cotton mills on the ground that such work kept the laborers out of the pulquerías, and then went on to prove, to his own satisfaction, that at the prevailing wage any worthwhile millworker could save enough in ten years to retire. He then concluded that if the workers were chronically out of money it was their own fault.¹

Among the collection of Hojas sueltas² published posthumously there are two articles which unequivocally attack this position.

The first article, "Deber y haber" written under the pseudonym Junius, was an answer to a polemic provoked by a previous article in which Gutiérrez Nájera had complained that "el progreso nos ha traído los ferrocarriles y nos ha elevado el alquiler de las casas" (Hojas, p. 111). The unnamed adversary who had defended the difficulties of capitalist entrepreneurs offered Gutiérrez Nájera consolation: "¡Tranquilizaos socialistas! ¡el porvenir es de los pobres!" to which Junius countered:

Yo no soy socialista, pero aunque lo fuera, no me tranquilizaría. Ese mismo porvenir nos están prometiendo desde los siglos más remotos. Es el "vuelva usted mañana", de deudor insolvente.

(Hojas, p. 112)

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1. Charles Curtis Cumberland, Mexico: The Struggle for Modernity (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 193.
 2. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Hojas sueltas "Prólogo" by Carlos Díaz Dufío (Mexico: Antigua Imprenta de la Murguía, 1912). Future references will be written in the text as Hojas.

Gutiérrez Nájera's final summation was that his adversary "querrá afiliarse en la escuela económico humorística de que es jefe y maestro el señor Bulnes" (Hojas, p. 116). The first article, "Deber y haber", by its pointedly satirical tone firmly places Gutiérrez Nájera opposite científico supporters of Díaz. The second piece written under the pseudonym Perico el de los Palotes, is a more direct refutation of social myths cultivated by the científicos. The rich, to Gutiérrez Nájera, were privileged not through constituting a superior class which had evolved along Darwinian lines, but because they had money to begin with or lacked scruples:

Conque ya lo veis: los ricos son todo y todo lo pueden. Por eso muchos, para llegar á serlo, no omiten medio ni artificio alguno, cualquiera que sea su naturaleza. ¿Hay que ir en busca de las concesiones, los empleos, los buenos negocios y de todo lo que produzca dinero? pues bien, se irá, y no hay que pensar en la licitud de los medios adecuados para conseguirlo.

(Hojas, pp. 159-60)

Similarly, the poor were not impoverished because of laziness, villainy, or bad environment, but for the more fundamental reason stated in the title to the essay: "Cosas que hacen falta: el dinero" (Hojas, p. 156). Before giving his own characterization of the poor the author first claims an affinity: "a éstos los trato íntimamente, los tengo cerca de mí, estoy identificado con ellos" (Hojas, p. 160). Then follows an ironic disclaimer to proposing a solution to poverty, the plight of Indians, or positivistic theories:

No hablaré, sin embargo, de los cinco millones de indígenas que viven sumergidos en la miseria mas lastimosa; ni es mi ánimo abordar los difíciles problemas del pauperismo y del salario; dejo lo primero en manos

del ilustrado autor de los Ensayos sobre estudios sociales, y cedo la palabra para lo segundo a los que cultivan con provecho la ciencia económico-política.

(Hojas, pp. 160-1)

The poor man to Gutiérrez Nájera is a veritable dynamo:

Es vivaz, inquieto y nervioso; revela en su aspecto una febril actividad; brilla en sus ojos el entusiasmo juvenil, llevado hasta el atrevimiento y la audacia. Para él las dificultades no existen; sólo una cosa le exaspera: el imposible.

(Hojas, p. 161)

The only thing the poor need is money. Among the examples of poor whose ambitions are truncated for lack of money is a spectrum of manual laborers and intellectuals. A striking quality of this critique is its bitter tone, whether portraying the moneyed or the moneyless. Judging from the pseudonym, Perico el de los Palotes, a satire or something mildly humorous was intended; the result however is a humorless statement. The article's final sentences amount to a recognition by the writer that he feels too seriously about the subject for levity:

Pero... ¡qué torpe soy! ¡He acabado por dar colorido de tragedia a lo que no debió ser sino sainete!

. . .

Pido perdón y prometo la enmienda.

PERICO EL DE LOS PALOTES.

(Hojas, p. 165)

A further examination of precisely what damage Gutiérrez Nájera feels is brought to man by poverty gives the key to how poverty functions symbolically as a partial

representation of the human condition. Consistent with his literary theory, and the spiritual, idealistic, psychological definition of man, it is here where poverty most impinges and curtails human ability. Physical misery is not ignored but spiritual and psychological emphasis is predominant. The following passages are a fair sampling of the impairments of poverty on mankind:

Siente que hay algo grande en su cerebro: un semillero, un nido de gérmenes innumerables que pugnan por desarrollarse y tomar forma. . . .es desdichado porque es pobre.

(Hojas, p. 161)

Obligado a vivir pobremente de su trabajo personal, es una mariposa atada, una luciérnaga aprisionada en el tocado de una dama: brilla, pero siente morir se lentamente.

(Hojas, p. 162)

. . .viven entregados a penosos trabajos, y se revela en su semblante la tristeza que llevan en su alma.

(Hojas, p. 163)

Podría creérsele un misántropo, y sin embargo, sufre por las desgracias ajenas, como las propias.

Su vida ha sido una cadena de sufrimientos físicos y morales. Vive pensando y sintiendo; ni su cerebro ni su corazón descansan jamás.

(Hojas, p. 163)

Su salud se va minando lentamente; su cerebro está fatigado, aniquilado casi, y su corazón adolorido y sangrado.

(Hojas, p. 164)

The first example constitutes pure mental suffering; the second is presumably an idealistic impairment since winged and light images are commonly used by Nájera to symbolize idealism; the third, fourth and fifth are instances of poor

physical conditions affecting the human spirit adversely.

This position is easily misunderstood, as evidenced in a highly ambiguous passage by Carlos Díaz Dufóo who edited and wrote the preface to the volume containing all of the above quotes:

¡Huir! ¡Evadirse! ¡Qué obstinadamente le ateneceaba esta obsesión! ¡Cómo había echado en él raíces el anhelo de redimirse de aquella brega de forzado, remando, remando siempre, en la triunfal galera coronada de flores! Ganar la hospitalaria orilla, internarse tierra adentro, por entre senderos zigzagueantes, al abrigo de viejas frondas; ir libremente, el alma franca a todos los sueños, el corazón vibrante a todos los ritmos, ser eteramente de uno mismo, intimamente de uno mismo, hacer la plena conquista de su personalidad, y ostentarla, imponerla, por derecho de supremacía mental, por superioridad de espíritu.¹

If Gutiérrez Nájera is motivated to redeem himself as a person (¡Cómo había echado en él raíces el anhelo de redimirse de forzado. . .), how can his efforts be equated to escapism (¡Huir! ¡Evadirse!)? "Huir" and "ganar", "Evadirse" and "triunfal galera" are words with mutually exclusive meanings. Probably the paragraph's first two words were not intended to convey a pejorative impression but unfortunately it is the negative characterization--undeniable in the case of Juan Marinello--which has been used against the Modernists and, in the case of Gutiérrez Nájera, has had the effect of misrepresenting the nature of his work.

The fact is that if Gutiérrez Nájera was led to theoretically redefine the relationship of utile to dulce,

1. Carlos Díaz Dufóo, "Prólogo" to Hojas sueltas, p. ix.

his literature as well as that of other Modernists retained a strong moralistic view without a blind spot for injustice or physical deprivation. Art by itself had a moral value ("lejos de ser fútil y vana ha hecho muchos y elevados beneficios a la humanidad" Críticas, p. 51), consequently anything which prevented man from enjoying spiritual attainments such as art was open to censure. Poverty, thus interpreted, is in the background in many stories and in some instances of predominant importance.

The story "En secreto" is an example of how closely Gutiérrez Nájera could interweave spiritual conflict with an idea of social justice. The dominant thematic concern of the sketch is love. The story, in the form of a letter, is the retelling by an elderly gentleman of how his daughter's affection has been taken from him by her young lover. The father discusses his love in a lengthy introductory passage which is Gutiérrez Nájera's way of emphasizing a theme as dear to him as art. The author's ability to empathize with the father however, is curtailed by the father's attitude and the additional circumstance that the feelings of the daughter and her lover are involved. The father, in a very emphatic way, hoards the affection of his daughter as if it were property. Gutiérrez Nájera's manner in which he allows the father to state his case brings the question of socialism and the right to possession of property into the narration as an ancillary to the topic of love:

Yo soy un hombre montado a la antigua, como hoy se dice. Tengo en olor de herejía a los socialistas,

y mis nervios se crispan cuando pienso en las doctrinas anárquicas de la Comuna. Será por mis cortos alcances, cúlpese en buena hora el raquitismo de mi inteligencia, pero ello es que entre el sectario de un sistema social que aspira a arrebatarme mis haciendas, y el bandido que exponiendo su existencia acecha en la encrucijada de un camino, sólo encuentro la grave diferencia de que el primero es un ladrón cobarde, mientras que el otro es un ladrón bizarro. Dados estos datos, Ud. no extraña que crea tener una propiedad innegable en mi hija. Parece, sin embargo, que la mayor parte de los amantes profesan el principio de Proudhon: la propiedad es el robo.

(Cuentos, pp.289-90)

Soon the question of government authority enters the discussion:

¿Por qué la venia del gobernador viene a hacer inútil mi consentimiento? Dado que mi oposición pecara de tenaz e impertinente, ¿no tengo yo el derecho de mandar, como señor único en mi hija, hasta que la edad de emancipación forzosa llegue para ella? El estado debe lavarse las manos en casos como éste.

(Cuentos, p. 291)

The story's final paragraph attempts an answer:

Hasta aquí la carta. Diez días hace que la tengo en el cajón de mi bufete, sin poder acertar a contestarla. Porque, en efecto, cuando los lazos del amor se rompen, ¿qué otros sujetarán en el hogar a la hija que quiere abandonarlo?

(Cuentos, p. 292)

This conclusion is far from categorically saying the father is wrong, probably because his fervence obscured the question. The list of grievances against the pretender was serious but at the same time the older man's emotional involvement cast a shadow over the accusations. Notwithstanding doubts and hesitation by the author, however, the final judgment leans toward the daughter and, by inference, socialism.

Care should be taken not to overinterpret an inferential approval of socialism, especially since this one example is unique to the stories and poetry. Similarly, in his other writings, there is little more than a willingness to sympathize with socialism as in the above quote from a crónica: "Yo no soy socialista, pero aunque lo fuera no me tranquilizaría". The interest which does generate from these isolated comments is the force they give in support of the physically deprived.

Among numerous stories which show a marked sensitivity for poverty, "Las botitas de Año Nuevo" is typical. Written as a sequence of reflections stimulated by the thought of children's shoes, which by custom are placed by the door on New Year's Eve to receive gifts, Gutiérrez Nájera discusses the shoes in two groups, those of the children whose parents are comfortably stationed in life and those of the poor: "Unos son felices; huelen a taloncitos color de rosa, a medias de seda. Otros han sufrido mucho" (Cuentos, p. 366). The shoes of the well-to-do children are presented with images of material value used, as in countless other instances, as symbols of spiritualism or beauty. The author's concern for these is their beauty and the nearness of death, which has claimed the owner of one pair.

The discussion of poor children's shoes occupies approximately half of the piece. The first pair belongs to a young beggar whose father was rich but whose mother was poor, implying birth out of wedlock. On the coldest New

Year's Eve of the child's life he received his first New Year's gift: death. A rapid description of other shoes follows in which the narrator attempts to balance the sadness of the previous example with humor: "El de más allá-- ¡glotonísimo!--se ha comido los tacones" (Cuentos, p. 367). These are the shoes of which the author says, ". . .miro con cariño" (Cuentos, p. 367).

Similarly, "En la calle" portrays the marked differences between poverty and wealth, emphasizing the effect of poverty on the soul. The story is essentially a description of two sisters, one poor and tubercular in a wheel chair in her sparsely furnished house, the other wealthy and comfortable as she passes by her sister's window in an elegant coach. Both women in varying degrees represent a form of beauty. The tubercular sister is: ". . .casi una niña, flaca, pálida, de cutis trasparente como las hojas delgadas de la porcelana china" (Cuentos, p. 132), and Cecilia in her coach is described in a multiplicity of color hues as a woman whose champagne glass is an "ánfora", her coach a "góndola", the horse's mane "bronce florentino" (Cuentos, pp. 133-4). Obviously Gutiérrez Nájera approves of the beauty and comfort that surround Cecilia but her character itself is put into some question. Cecilia's face is "picaresca" (Cuentos, p. 134) and a pedestrian makes a wry comment concerning her appearance in the grandiose coach: "--Una duquesa o una prostituta" (Cuentos, p. 134). A paragraph which followed this pronouncement in an earlier newspaper

edition and which was deleted in the Cuentos fragiles (1883) collection elaborated on the "Una duquesa o una prostituta: "no es ni lo uno ni lo otro; es la mujer de un comerciante deshonorado que se ha enriquecido a fuerza de hacer ban-carrota" (Cuentos, p. 131).

Without entering into a heavy handed didactic pattern the author allows Cecilia to unconcernedly ride past the home of her dying sister, gingerly shading the sun from her eyes. Indirectly she is condemned for her unconcern. The moribund sister, by contrast, was distinguished for her good taste and cleanliness: "Todo aquello respiraba pobreza, pero pobreza limpia; todo parecía arreglado primorosamente por manos sin guante, pero lavadas con jabón de almendra" (Cuentos, p. 132). As a result of poverty her soul is: "el alma que penase en los calados de una cerradura" (Cuentos, p. 133). Poverty has separated her from beauty (aesthetic objects) and love: "¿Qué sabes de las fiestas en que choca el cristal de las delgadas copas y se murmuran las palabras amorosas? Tú has vivido sola y pobre, . . ." (Cuentos, p. 133). As is frequently the case with Gutiérrez Nájera's poor, her only consolation is death.

The same idea of juxtaposing wealth and privation to reveal the effect on the latter is carried out in "Berta y Manón". Like "En la calle" the instrument of presentation is two women. Berta, with her wealth, is beauty personified: "porcelana quebradiza" (Cuentos, p. 167). Criticism of her character, however, is almost nonexistent. In

contrast to Cecilia, who ignored her sister, Berta and her family accepted into their home an orphaned seamstress whose parents had been rich. This seeming kindness nevertheless has an effect of cruelty on the seamstress. The most revealing paragraph is the description of a family outing to the horse races:

Aquella tarde, Manón había asistido a las carreras. La dejaron adentro del carruaje, porque no sienta bien a una familia aristocrática andarse de paseo con las criadas; . . . Manón, pegada a los cristales del carruaje, espiaba por allí la pista y las tribunas, tal como ve una pobrecita enferma, a través de los vidrios del balcón, la vida y movimiento de los transeúntes.

(Cuentos, p. 168)

Poverty in this story, as in others, results in a kind of imprisonment, except with Manón the feeling of imprisonment is exacerbated by her nearness to physical comfort and spiritual satisfactions as well as awareness of her former social position.

"Berta y Manón", "En la calle" and the other stories used here to show Gutiérrez Nájera's attitude to poverty are unusual in that the problem of penury is more or less a central topic of each story. The more common treatment is to bring poverty into the action as incidental to other concerns. The following paragraph inserted into the narration of "La novela de tranvía" to describe a not so elegant suburb of Mexico City is illustrative:

Más allá de la peluquería de Micoló, hay un pueblo que habita barrios extravagantes, cuyos nombres son esencialmente antiaperitivos. Hay hombres muy honrados que viven en la plazuela del tequesquite y señoras de invencible virtud cuya casa está situada en el callejón

de Salsipuedes. No es verdad que los indios bárbaros estén acampados en esas calles exóticas, ni es tampoco cierto que los pieles rojas hagan frecuentes excursiones a la plazuela de Regina. La mano providente de la policía ha colocado un gendarme en cada esquina. Las casas de esos barrios no están hechas de lodo ni tapizadas por dentro de pieles sin curtir. En ellas viven muy discretos caballeros y señoras muy respetables y señoritas muy lindas. Estas señoritas suelen tener novios, como las que tienen balcón y cara a la calle, en el centro de la ciudad.

(Cuentos, p. 155)

Other than being one of the narrator's random thought processes as he passes through the city on a tram, this paragraph has little relevance to the other parts of the story. On the surface this passage seems to harbor little that could have social or political implication. As in other places though, this is simply because the author wants to let a totality of experience, a reflection of the artist's total mental thought processes, flow onto the page without specifically or intentionally sermonizing. In this case, what Gutiérrez Nájera has put into essay is crucial to understanding his artistic form. Using "Deber and haber" and "Cosas que hacen falta; el dinero" for comparison, the paragraph recorded above gains considerably in meaning. The middle class rationale for a privileged social position without didactic elaboration is refuted. The poor here are poor for the reason they were poor in the essay, a lack of opportunity. They are not victims of social determinism nor miscarried products of the Darwinian evolutionary chain.

Further discussion of Gutiérrez Nájera's views on class structure in the context of the present study would be

unjustified since, in fact, they are part of a larger scheme of ideas. If his designation as an "escapist" has been diminished an essential block to understanding part of his work is overcome. Since poverty, to recapitulate briefly, was an impediment to human fulfillment of a spiritual capacity, the remaining aspects of how Gutiérrez Nájera saw himself in relation to society and his immediate surroundings illustrates how the author tried to live up to his own spiritual nature. Besides examples of impoverishment, Gutiérrez Nájera worked into his writing other aspects of Mexico and its capital city which symbolically represent an assessment of the human condition or an effort to come to terms with the condition.

Something of a key to how Gutiérrez Nájera chooses symbolic material of a national origin is given in an observation one of his narrators makes in the introduction to "Cuento triste". After the narrator has pondered his composition problems for several paragraphs he concludes: "Hablemos ambos de las cosas frívolas, esto es, de las cosas serias" (Cuentos, p. 152). It is not the blatantly important things which are the most telling symbols of human existence but the subtly insignificant. As such, women, children, and social events occupy a prominent position among "signs" the author has chosen from his environment and endowed with symbolic meaning. Partly this is an extension of Platonic theories reviewed in past chapters where objects like wings, gold and ladies' stockings have meaning

extending beyond their immediate nature. In some measure frivolous or insignificant material is used because it more easily corresponds to the author's very finite position in the universe of which he was acutely aware. In short, the interpretation Gutiérrez Nájera gave to his observable immediate environment has a consistent relation to his more abstract ideas on beauty and time.

An attraction to the social life of the capital resulted in the inclusion of a type of material--horse races, theatre scenes, ballrooms, the circus--which, taken at face value, would belie the interest in the downtrodden explained above. The inconsistency is only apparent, however. Gutiérrez Nájera placed a symbolic spiritual value on what he saw and was not in the least deceived by the implications of Mexico City's affluence. His observations on the horse races in "Berta y Manón" show the relation between symbol and empiric sign. As the orphaned Manón watches the ceremonies from a carriage, the narrator gives the race a spiritual assignation:

. . .ese placer, mitad espiritual y mitad físico, que se experimenta al atravesar a galope una avenida enarenada. La sangre corre más aprisa y el aire azota como si estuviera enojado. El cuerpo siente la juventud y el alma cree que ha recobrado sus alas.

(Cuentos, p. 169)

Then after a paragraph of glowing description as the above, the race's purely symbolic importance is further advanced by a negative observation on the materiality of the occasion: "La seda se desgarrá, el terciopelo se chafa, la

epidermis se arruga con los años. Bajo la azul superficie de ese lago hay mucho lodo" (Cuentos, p. 169).

This search for the uplifting with an accompanying awareness of futility is behind most of Gutiérrez Nájera's writing on his contemporary society. "El desertor del cementerio" presents such a case with a fictionalized description of the capital's most beautiful ladies. The piece begins with a paragraph on the sadness of October and the autumn season. Within a frame of related ideas, autumn leaves fall, souls depart, and in the theatres Don Juan Tenorio is being represented with its funeral scenes. October "es la época en que todo resucita, menos los corazones que se han muerto y las bellezas que han pasado" (Cuentos, p. 45). With this beginning note of hopelessness a Don Juan type of character--Duke of Parisi, borrowed from Arsène Houssaye--arrives from the grave and asks the narrator for an introduction to the most beautiful women of the city. The narrator, lifted from his state of melancholy by such an exotic apparition, is delighted to invite the Duke of Parisi to a ball in Chapultepec Palace.

Although the fictional character of the writing is obvious from the above description, the names Gutiérrez Nájera chooses to describe for the Duke of Parisi reads like a social register of the epoch. Among the married ladies are Jayas de Guzmán, Quintana de Goríbar, Idaroff de Iturbe, Espinosa de Castañeda y Nájera, Rivas de Adalid, de Camarena, de Mariscal, Lebrija de Hammeken, de Bourgeaud,

and among the unmarried were Paz García Tervel, Memé García Tervel, Elena Fuentes, Ester Guzmán, las Sritas. Sevilla, las Sritas. Cervantes, las Sritas. Trinidad Osío and María Luisa Daclós, Julia Kern, Srita. Cortina, Lupe Rondero and Romero Rubio who was later to become the wife of the president, Porfirio Díaz. Some of the names are merely listed in a series; other names receive several sentences of praise. It may be said, however, that all function as aesthetic symbols:

. . .La Sra. Zayas de Guzmán. Las líneas de su figura, blancas y armoniosas, cantan como una melodía de Gounod. Es la hermosura en toda su fuerza y en todo su esplendor. Una Cibeles, pródiga de vida, menos robusta que si hubiera salido de las manos de Fidias; pero más divina, precisamente por ser más humana.

(Cuentos, p. 48)

Almost the entire body of Gutiérrez Nájera's critical theory can be found in this short quote. Beauty in its relation to magic, time and mythology, sound and color are present. It is plainly on an abstract and aesthetic level of meaning that Sra. de Guzmán is utilized by Gutiérrez Nájera to find a transcendental bulwark against materialism.

In other instances where some aspect of the capital's social life is involved the relation between the beautiful and the degrading is written into the same symbol. The child performer in "La hija del aire", for example, is both an ethereal spiritual symbol and one of material degradation. Her frail, nimble body is variously compared to a lirio, Ofelia and luciérnaga (Cuentos, p. 120). Her ability

to perform gives her a magical extramundane origin (" . . . viniste a la tierra en un pálido rayo de la luna" Cuentos, p. 121), but unfortunately, she is human which means that an absolute norm of goodness is as removed from her as the author: "Te llaman hija del aire, si lo fueras, tendrías alas; y si tuvieras alas, volverías al cielo" (Cuentos, p. 121). Also, like many other characters which symbolize the human condition, she is orphaned. At the same time the young performer is a victim of material exploitation. In fact, as a vehicle of meaning this seems to be the primary focus of the story. The story begins with a blunt admonishment: "Todo espectáculo en que miro la abyección humana, ya sea moral o física, me repugna grandemente" (Cuentos, p. 119). The shamelessness of circus entrepreneurs, the physical harm done to the child's body, the memory of a child performer who had fallen, the villainy of a crowd hoping for an accident, and finally the hypocrisy of a society which organizes an animal protection association but ignores human misery are emphasized. The last words of the story enumerate the ills from which Gutiérrez Nájera says man needs liberation--". . . los tres grandes infiernos de la vida--la Enfermedad y el Hambre y el Vicio" (Cuentos, p. 122). With these social views very much in the foreground, the young lady fully unifies a symbolism of elevated spirituality and degrading materialism.

A point which should be underscored about "La hija del aire" is that the symbolic unification of spirituality

and social criticism remains true to Gutiérrez Nájera's idealistic perspective. The inclusion of social criticism into his writing does not detract from the basic conviction that the world is what a particular individual's mind observes. The inclusion of material which superficially would please an advocate of scientific determinism does not indicate that Gutiérrez Nájera is a Modernist or idealist in one story and an objectivist in another. In "La hija del aire" a personal viewpoint is firmly upheld through the narration which records the author's experiences in a way that removes any possibility of the interpersonal objectivity desired by Naturalists.

"El músico de la murga" is another story whose background in a barroom invited comparison with Naturalism. The musician is impoverished, the female singer is sexually provocative and the spectators are bourgeois revelers. The accumulation of detail which resembles a Naturalistic work, it turns out, is intentional since the narrator states that the story's inspiration derived from a story by Mexico's foremost Naturalist, Federico Gamboa (Cuentos, p. 255). As for social criticism, it appears that Gutiérrez Nájera was willing to go much further than Gamboa.¹ Several sentences placed by the author into the musician's mouth are an unmistakable attack on an unfair economic social pattern:

1. Federico Gamboa does not state the problem of social inequalities so bluntly in the chapter on Pomar entitled "Ignorado" from Impresiones y recuerdos (Mexico: E. Gómez de la Puente, 1922), pp. 91-105.

Vosotros no sabéis lo que se sufre tocando con hambre y sed ante los que comen y beben. . .Me enseñan... casi me obligan a embriagarme...y a desear, ¡ah, sí! ¡a desear mucho! Vivo mirando muy de cerca el esplendor de la opulencia y oyendo las promesas y las mentiras de los sueños...Pobre música mía, . . .¡Cortesana de bajezas! ¡No saliste de mi alma para eso!

(Cuentos, p. 259)

The brief foray into social criticism through the musician's conversation does not belie an idealistic premise in "El músico" any more than with "La hija del aire". The story's central figure is an artist whose symbolic representation of idealism needs little elaboration. The form of the story, written in a patchwork of reflections by the narrator and the musician, create a reflection of mental perception altogether different from what a realist would attempt. And, lastly, the suffering caused by material deprivation is spiritual, not physical. As the narrator states in the story's last sentence: "Ahora que lo recuerdo, siento pena, como si hubiera maltratado a un niño sin darme cuenta de lo que hacía... ¡como si hubiera hollado frescos pétalos de alma!" (Cuentos, p. 260).

Religious ceremonies are another social event which Gutiérrez Nájera uses as an instrument to explore certain notions. Four stories, "El vestido blanco", "La primera comunión", "Abuelita ya no hay corpus", and "La fiesta de la virgen", each examine some trait of the metaphysical crisis which absorbed the author after his youthful loss of faith. Each nevertheless differs somewhat in emphasis. The first, "La primera comunión", is obviously a fictionalized account

of the author's early memories of the church and especially his first communion. Written in 1882 at a time when Gutiérrez Nájera had lost faith in traditional Christian doctrine, his attitude to the church is generous and void of rancor. This early age was ". . . la vida paradisíaca de la infancia" (Cuentos, p. 114). By evoking from his memory the happy innocence of his former faith, Gutiérrez Nájera could recapture from the church a certain tranquility. This charitable picture of the church remained with the author until his death. His loss of faith cannot be equated to anticlericalism, at least in his creative writing. In his literary criticism there are some bitter words for priests, such as his resentment at clerical domination of the Mexican Academy of the Language. The stories however, present the church as something aesthetic and spiritual, whose reassuring claim of an afterlife can be amusing. The most extensive example of Gutiérrez Nájera's bemusement with the church is not in the stories but in a series of mock sermons he published under the title of "Cuaresmas del Duque Job". The fifteen pieces, written in imitation of pulpit rhetoric, present the entire range of Gutiérrez Nájera's thought in a generally spoofing tone. Some of this comes forth in the stories, as in the above story where the faithful are depicted: "La multitud se refugia en los templos, como una parvada de polluelos bajo el ala de la madre" (Cuentos, p. 113).

"La fiesta de la virgen" (1881), written during the

same period as "La primera comunión" (1883), shows an amusement with the legal implications of laws restricting religious processions. The locus of the story is a village whose Christian convictions are of a caliber which, according to the narrator, antedate Luther. The Mexican leyes de Reforma, very much a nineteenth century product, attempted to limit excessive public influence on the part of the church which would include such events as the religious procession described in the story. The central incident of the piece comes as the narrator meets the village mayor hastily proceeding in an opposite direction from the procession with the following excuse: "Voy por aquí. Yo no quiero saber que hay procesiones. No puedo permitir esta infracción escandalosa de las leyes" (Cuentos, p. 299). Gutiérrez Nájera accepts that the villager's faith will disappear ("...los cirios. . .que simbolizan la fe, estaban casi todos apagados. . ." Cuentos, p. 299) but cannot bring himself to condemn outright that which was represented by the procession. For this reason, the parade is described with profuse detail and the mayor is depicted as somewhat farcical.

Yet another story written in the same period, "¡Abuelita ya no hay corpus!" (1882), punctuates the fact that in spite of Gutiérrez Nájera's sympathy and cherished memories, his faith is gone. Somber, but still with a touch of humor, he recalls his childhood experience of seeing how doves were used during a service:

En ese instante muchos pájaros cantaron. Por aquel entonces, creía yo que era éste un hosanna de las aves

al Creador. Más tarde supe que los sacristanes tenían las jaulas ya dispuestas, y a la hora precisa las sacaban por las ventanas de la cúpula.

(Cuentos, p. 306)

"El vestido blanco" written two years before the author's death, reflects the same attitudes of the early stories. The subject of the story is the first communion of a friend's daughter. The friend, who was "un místico; pero no es en rigor un creyente" (Cuentos, p. 243), synthesized the author's own attitude to the church. He admires "la pompa del culto católica en los grandes días de la Iglesia; tierna vívida, pura, esta angélica procesión de almas intactas que lleva flores a la Virgen" (Cuentos, p. 244); but by the writing of this story in 1893 Gutiérrez Nájera was clearly somewhat embittered by the falsity of eternal life and humor is entirely lacking: ". . .la luz de los cirios inflama los ojos, se nos saltan algunas lágrimas. . ."
(Cuentos, p. 245).

After examining the treatment of social events in several stories, it becomes clear that Gutiérrez Nájera's choice of social functions is made to facilitate the working out of personal conflicts, viewpoints and ideals. Horse races, balls, circuses, brothels and religious services lend themselves as tools to express ideas on spiritualization, beauty and the opposing force of materialism. Such also, is the case with other items of Gutiérrez Nájera's immediate surroundings which he uses symbolically. Women, children, and the author's personal friends are each used with

sufficient frequency and variety to justify special attention.

The recurrent inclusion of children allows the author to make a nearly complete statement on his view of the human predicament. In a sense, mankind was considered a sort of orphaned, childlike mass in its innocence, vulnerability, and abandoned state. In "Carta de un suicida" the pronouncement of Jean-Paul Richter--"Hijos de siglo, todos somos huérfanos" (Cuentos, p. 44)--is invoked, specifically tying narrator, adult, suicide victim and reader to children. The story's last scene describes a graveyard full of children:

Despertaron los niños, y alzando sus manecitas
exclamaron:
--Jesús, Jesús, ¿ya no tenemos padre?
Y Cristo, cerrando sus exangües brazos, exclamó severo:
--Hijos del siglo, vosotros y yo todos somos huérfanos!
. . .y la terrible noche tendió su ala de cuervo sobre
el mundo.
--¡Hijos del siglo, todos somos huérfanos!

(Cuentos, p. 44)

Consistently following this gloomy appraisal, children in Gutiérrez Nájera's stories are orphaned. The circus performer in "La hija del aire" has no knowledge of her parents. Margarita in "La familia Estrada" has parents who have spiritually abandoned her. The father of Pasionaria of "La pasión de Pasionaria" transfers his love to her step-mother, leaving her in total neglect. The young newspaper vendor in "Historia de un peso falso" has no father and supports his mother and sister. The daughter Rosita of "Juan el organista" loses her father in the last scene. Typical

adult characters also were orphaned in childhood. Such was commonly the background of the artists described in a previous chapter.

As if to intensify the precariousness of existence, childrens' death is frequently described in lengthy passages the somber tone of which show a marked absence of the graceful mock humor for which the author is famous. "La balada del año nuevo" and "La mañana de San Juan" both give an extended representation of the death scene, the latter by drowning and the former by some mysterious disease. The protraction of death's arrival in these stories shows how strongly the idea held that death was the unseen assailant of man. The narrator could do nothing more for the children than coldly observe the dying process. Helplessness and dismay are sufficiently powerful in fact, to become a kind of guilt feeling. The two, despair and guilt, are perfectly united by a mother's exclamation on her child's suffering: "¡Lo escucho y no puedo defenderlo: veo que lo están matando y lo consiento!" (Cuentos, p. 109). Although the dominant concern of the stories is death's finality, Gutiérrez Nájera's distrust of the self's power was associated with a broader skepticism in the final paragraphs of each story. In "La balada": ". . . ruegan a Dios, suplican. . . ¡Todo en vano!" (Cuentos, p. 111). In "La mañana de San Juan", the religious feast day: "¡Oh mañanita de San Juan! ¡Tu blanco traje de novia tiene también manchas de sangre!" (Cuentos, p. 145).

The fragility of children was also a useful tool to expound on ideal day to day manners of living which would buttress the human spirit and mitigate the effect of death and cosmic isolation. In "La familia Estrada" the death of two children is examined to show what was lacking in their lives and, conversely, what should have been present. In pursuing this point the narrator goes to some length to establish that childhood is not the ideal age dreamed of by adults:

La infancia, cuya felicidad envidiamos, es con harta frecuencia en extremo desgraciada. El niño siente la perdida de un juguete, con la misma desesperación que un hombre la de su fortuna.

(Cuentos, p. 65)

After a several paragraph elaboration of this idea, Gutiérrez Nájera summarizes that children symbolize mankind generally: "En su corazon llevan el germen de todas las pasiones, y el germen también de todas las virtudes" (Cuentos, p. 66).

From this extended generalization, the narrator keeps attention on four children and their parents for the remainder of the piece and particularizes the evil which befell the children. The burden of guilt fell on the parents who, innocently perhaps, were an embodiment of materialism. Both were factory workers with a simple, materialistic outlook on life. In their innocent narrowness the father and mother set into process a series of psychological conflicts among their four children which caused the death of two and broke the spirit of the survivors. The father

with his love of hard work and honor applied undue harshness to make the children measure to his ideals, while the mother reacted to her husband's ill temper and economic difficulties by becoming irascible and hard. The mother's ignorance of the ideals of motherhood, with her husband's inability to externalize feelings of warmth inherent in all, himself included, inevitably caused a lessening of affectionate attention for the children, especially the second and third child whose anguish was reflected in their gradually failing health and death. The absence of intangible qualities such as sympathy and affection were directly responsible. In this way the physical possibilities for human comfort are concretely tied to man's spiritual capacity.

Essentially, the Estrada children symbolize a struggle for love. To varying degrees this meaning is found in Gutiérrez Nájera's other children; however, his most poignant vehicle for discussing love is not children but women. With women, logically enough, there exists ample material to pursue the topic in all its nuances. The correlation of women and love, contrary to what might be supposed, has ramifications and implications which go far beyond whatever common meaning the word "love" possesses. Love, to Gutiérrez Nájera, is like the word "beauty", supercharged with meaning and potentiality. Early in his career, with "El arte y el materialismo", he established that for him beauty and love were coordinates, if not the same quality. Beauty in its elaborateness is a deity capable of redeeming

man, while love was the ultimate manifestation of art. There is no reason to feel, therefore, that in designating women as symbols of love an unreasonably narrow category is created. It would also be appropriate to speak of women as aesthetic correspondences, as is notably the case in most instances, but by bringing in the word "love", the same ground is covered with a term which, by its application and inclusiveness, seems more accurate.

The issue of how broad a meaning woman can acquire in Gutiérrez Nájera's writing is evidenced by the number of times in this study women have already been taken into account. In the presentation of his literary theory, the integral part of woman, love and art was central, his representation of value through aestheticism and idealism frequently found its symbolic form in the person of women artists ("Historia de una corista", "Elisa la écuyère"), and attitudes toward space and time were given literary form through different women ("Madame Venus" as universality, or "La odisea de Madame Théo" as either timelessness or universality). It is doubtful that a single facet of Gutiérrez Nájera's thinking can be examined without seeing a connection with a symbolic use of women. The presentation of women from the author's immediate experience in their continual relation to love and art are, it follows, never very distant from his innermost feelings.

Two particularly good examples of women who were near the author and serve symbolically as manifestations of

spirituality through love are seen in the youthful poems addressed to Lola and the somewhat later poems addressed to Cecilia. Lola, as described by Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, was a first cousin with whom the poet fell in love in his teens.¹ Four poems, "Serenata" (1875), "[Niña de ardientes ojos]" (1876), "Mi casa blanca" (1877), and "Del libro de Lola" (1877) are either addressed to Lola or speak of her. In the first two poems (1876 and 1877) the poet is very much in love and his tone implies a corresponding affection from Lola. The last two poems record the poet's nostalgia after the idyl has ended. The nostalgic "Del libro de Lola" categorized his love for Lola as "castos amores" and "eres cadencia y poesía" (Poesías I, p. 146) which, in a way, sums up his predominantly spiritual feelings for Lola. A typical strophe from "Del libro de Lola" illustrates the imagery which is used to uphold the spirituality of his feelings throughout the four poems:

Eco dulce y armonioso
de música que se aleja;
rayo de luz que refleja
el océano proceloso;
ritmo suave y melodioso
de tórtola enamorada;
blanca brisa perfumada,
de fuente lánguido arrullo;
eres ola, eres murmullo,
estrella, flor y alborada.

(Poesías I, p. 145)

The images of ethereality are pervasive in the intangible qualities of sound, light, breeze, color and odor, while

1. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, pp. 27-8.

the tangibles still tend to be inaccessible, movable or mysterious--star, ocean, wave, bird, flower--in an attempt to represent spirituality.

The same pattern emerges where Gutiérrez Nájera sees infinitely more in a particular woman than a sweetheart or fiancée, as shown among the poems dedicated to Cecilia, his wife, dating from the period of their courtship (1886-88).¹ Here, as in the poems to Lola, the struggle continues to fuse value into human existence through spiritualism, idealization and art, all of which find their ultimate manifestation through love. The illustration of this point from texts would amount to a repetition of the previous paragraph, if not the entire chapter on value. A reading of these poems illustrates how deeply the desire ran in Gutiérrez Nájera's consciousness to relate externally. When portraying social problems, the author seemed more capable of surrendering to pessimism and satire, but since the question of love was the most basic denominator for human survival, its attainment is more crucial. The crucial urge is exacerbated by a conviction of the ultimate unattainability of love. Love was not a given starting point but an end, the goal of a journey from non-being and darkness to being and light.²

As Cecilia stands before the poet, what is deeply

1. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, pp. 63-100.

2. Joseph Chiari, Symbolism from Poe to Mallarmé, selections in Literary Modernism, ed. by Irving Howe (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1967), p. 191.

embedded within his emotions is projected onto her being as something worthy of reaching. Thus, worthiness and the striving to reach it take on several characteristics. One of the most fundamental is articulation and aesthetic fulfillment:

Busco en mi alma lo más obscuro,
lo más secreto que exista en mí,
la estrofa virgen, el verso puro...
¡y nada encuentro digno de ti!

(Poesías II, p. 77)

The poet's trying to claim his sweetheart's attention takes on a Faustian desire to fathom the unknowable:

Quiero entrar... y deténgome callado
cual Fausto en el jardín de Margarita.

(Poesías II, p. 27)

In spite of Gutiérrez Nájera's continual preoccupation with life, living and eternalty, he cannot suppress a curiosity about, if not a desire for, death when he compares love to death:

su negro seno la mar entreabre,
¡pero más negros tus ojos son!

(Poesías I, p. 289)

Flowers are employed in another passage to show an ambiguous life-death urge:

Si me muero, dormir quiero
bajo flores compasivas...
¡Si me muero, si me muero,
dadme muchas siemprevivas!

(Poesías II, p. 125)

Or, in other lines, the weight of interest is on eternalty:

Puede romperse nuestra fragil vida,
pero tu nombre pasará a los siglos:

¡a quien ama el poeta nadie olvida!

(Poesías II, p. 50)

Although the poet avoids posturing in a heroic tone, a firm and intense determination to gain love persists. Love, in the final count, is more than a correlative to art or a triumph over death--it is a day to day struggle to break away from routine physical existence in which the poet as an individual is imprisoned in the body. The urge to escape the merely protoplasmic at times borders on the desperate. In "Resucitarán" he speaks of the difficulty that kisses, i.e., love, have in transcending the body in order to reach his sweetheart:

¡Qué labios tan carceleros!
Con cadenas y cerrojos
los aprisionan severos
y apenas los prisioneros
se me asoman a los ojos!

(Poesías II, p. 82)

The varying aspects of the poems dedicated to Cecilia remain tactfully on a spiritual plane. Other poems of love not addressed to Cecilia take on more erotic overtones illustrating how a solution to physical imprisonment was sought through utilization of the body's physical properties to achieve an extreme height of sensual feeling. In "Con Julieta" he praises "¡. . .los que cantan himnos de terneza/ oprimiéndose pecho contra pecho!" (Poesías II, p. 84), and Julieta's sensual love as "imposible amor de que se muere" (Poesías II, p. 83). Sensual feeling, since it is mental in nature, can easily coalesce with spiritual considerations as

with "Musa Blanca": "Sobre sus blancos senos, erguidos y redondos,/ ¡. . .vestida de si misma, mi espíritu la ve!" (Poesías II, p. 61).

As frequently happens, when Gutiérrez Nájera dwells on the spiritual he automatically ends by considering the finely psychological. The narrative poem "Pecar en sueños" shows this possibility through the dialogue an unhappily married lady has with her confessor. Her sexual frustrations, which to Gutiérrez Nájera are stated in more elevated words ("una sed insaciable de terneza" Poesías I, p. 247), have made Beatriz' life a form of misery and eventually caused her death. To her confessor she pours out the fears brought on by the handsome man who presents himself in her dreams. At various points in the confession she touches on her guilt feelings, fear of sin and criminality, and physical discomfort occasioned by the "fantástico novio" who stimulates "¡no sé qué goces ignorados" (Poesías I, p. 249). The conclusion Gutiérrez Nájera draws toward the end of the poem concerning Beatriz' removal from sexual fulfillment is the same as if he were discussing art and ideality. Either man must dream or he must surrender to passive formlessness and the choice is made difficult by the certainty that the dream cannot be fulfilled:

Si quieres ser feliz en esta tierra,
sin soñar en la dicha que no viene,
has de ser como el agua que se aviene
al molde de la taza que la encierra!

(Poesías I, p. 252)

These examples of how a cycle of love is formulated using woman as the vehicle of presentation underline the closeness of Gutiérrez Nájera's treatment of the external world with the processes of his own mind. In particular, woman with her various symbolic trappings motivates the author more than anything else to desire a breaking forth from his body's material chains as indicated by the persistence of a struggle toward love.

A symbolic presence of the author's friends, prevalent in both the stories and poems, generally admits a broader spectrum of meaning. One general significance in the textual citing of acquaintances relates to the previous section on space and time. There it was mentioned briefly that Gutiérrez Nájera's ambition for universality was not a reflection of Mexico but rather that he saw native country and city as part of the universal whole, cherishing it all the more. His words about Mexico City ("el delicioso cuadro que la ciudad presenta" Cuentos, p. 155) with which "La novela de tranvía" begins, are indicative of this. Whatever misgivings Gutiérrez Nájera had about Mexico's social structure, its value system and its future, his fondness for the country and particularly the capital city was unceasing. In the stories this national attachment manifests itself most commonly in using friend's names as a kind of image or metaphor in countless passages. The description of Mexico City's most beautiful woman in "El desertor del cementerio" mentioned above is a slightly exaggerated illustration of

the technique. According to several contemporaries of el Duque Job, the inclusion of names in his columns created a popular following. José Juan Tablada wrote, for example:

Cuando Gutiérrez Nájera cruzaba el boulevard con su puro en la boca y su gardenia en el ojal, vi a muchos acercársele como devotos triunferarios, como cortesanos ávidos de que su oscuro nombre surgiera sonoramente de la boca del rey. . . . Algunos agasajaban al Duque para que los citara en sus crónicas; otros pretendían que el insigne orfebre colocara su nombre junto a una de sus luminosas poesías.¹

Gutiérrez Nájera's fondness, however, strikes a deeper chord than a simple expression of pleasure or possible desire for popularity. His daughter closely approaches a meaning for employing acquaintances' names when she observes that her father was "un poeta-periodista y un periodista-poeta".²

A prologue by González Guerrero also touches on this in saying that the stories "mezclan concertadamente los elementos tomados a la realidad y los que brinda la imaginación".³ Perhaps Goldberg is closest with "he looks... as much inward as outward".⁴ All of these seem to be attempts to say that Gutiérrez Nájera has the perspective of an aestheticist and idealist. He is certain that his mind consciously dominates the world it sees and that the best true

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1. José Juan Tablada quoted from Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, pp. 48-9.
 2. Margarita Gutiérrez Nájera, Reflejo, p. 42.
 3. González Guerrero, "Estudio Preliminar" in the Cuentos, p. xxxiv.
 4. Isaac Goldberg, Studies in Spanish American Literature (New York: Brentanos, 1920) p. 41.

representation will be poetic in character. Thus, with the incorporation of names, reality begins to impinge on art just as he believes it should. To Gutiérrez Nájera there was no actual dichotomy between the outer and inner world--the outer was merely an extension of the inner. The names of his acquaintances, if "realistically" portrayed, were not separate entities for rational study but part of a mental configuration which could be invoked and mixed with or juxtaposed to any number of topics. It follows then, that the use of contemporaries for purposes of simile, image or metaphor was especially appropriate.

The following quotes illustrate typical instances of how names were used. In describing the inhabitants of limbo, he writes that "Van al limbo los pequeñitos que se mueren porque sus padres no llamaron al Dr. Liceaga" (Cuentos, p. 179). In the same paragraph the author notes that the entrance door to limbo is low because no one there "es de la talla de D. Francisco Gómez del Palacio" (Cuentos, p. 179). In the same story it is claimed that the inhabitants of limbo speak Greek because "conviene a saber que en el limbo se habla el griego, gracias a la influencia del ilustrísimo señor obispo Montes de Oca" (Cuentos, p. 181). A character's lack of memory is excused because everyone is not blessed with "una memoria tan gruesa, tan resistente, tan voluminosa como las Memorias de D. Matías Romero, a quien envió muy atentamente mis recuerdos" (Cuentos, p. 371). In a novel fragment the procrastination of a mailman is described: "Sedujo el diablo al cartero, como el pintor

mexicano Flores sedujo a Jesucristo, en el cuadro de la Tentación" (Cuentos, p. 382). In "La primera comunión" Gutiérrez Nájera suddenly recalls a quote by Manuel Carpio: "como dice Carpio, distraemos el pensamiento con la contemplación de hechos pasados" (Cuentos, p. 114). Not all references are flattering. The monetary crisis of 1882-1884 for example, provoked such a sharp observation that Gutiérrez Nájera diplomatically omitted the name: "El valor del peso es distinto del valor de Cuauhtémoc. El peso, como algunos generales, vale más mientras más corre" (Cuentos, p. 361). In an interesting passage from "El diputado" Gutiérrez Nájera himself appears. The piece is written in the form of a letter from a young provincial dunce who has been elected to the national legislature. A certain amount of scorn is unquestionably directed at inane speeches emanating from the lawmakers as evidenced in a remark preceding the letter:

Vamos chico, tiene Ud. más talento que D. Jaime Balmes. El discurso de Ud. sobre la conversión de la deuda me ha gustado mucho. Aquel pasaje en que habla Ud. de Moisés sacando aguas de las peñas, dejó pasmada y boquiabierta a media Cámara.

(Cuentos, p. 340)

The passage in which the bumpkin speaks of Gutiérrez Nájera in relation to Porfirio Díaz and other notables is less scornful but still mildly satirical:

El lunes, fui con varios amigos a un banquete. Allí miré de cerca a todos los prohombres de la política y la prensa. Vi al señor general Díaz, a D. Ramón Fernández, a Pacheco, Naranjo, Romero Rubio y Diez Gutiérrez. ¡. . .Sirvieron un carnero a la "duquesa", del

que tomó naturalmente, el duque Job, y muchas otras cosas cuyos nombres ni siquiera de oídas conocía. Nos retrataron en grupo, antes del almuerzo, y como ya era tarde, es muy posible que esa fotografía pase a las edades venideras con el título de "Nuevo cuadro del Hambre.

(Cuentos, p. 346)

Besides the names of friends, place references often intrude in the same way as names of contemporaries. For example, the two quotes above, taken from "El diputado", are part of a lengthy description of Mexico City during Independence Day celebrations of September 16th. Several streets, parks, and buildings are mentioned including la calle Humboldt, la calle del Empedradillo, la calle de la Palma, the central plaza and Alameda park. The deputy takes a street-car ride to see the suburbs, stays at the Hotel Iturbide, eats at the restaurant Concordia (a favorite of Gutiérrez Nájera) and sees a representation at the Hidalgo Theatre. Although the topographical description, like the citation of contemporaries, derives from the desire to tie the external world into an artistic pattern of idealization, a temporary problem arises in claiming symbolic motivation for places which actually existed. The inclusion of actual names is fairly unique while the use of actual place description is practically a staple of nineteenth century fiction, especially in Realism. Nonetheless, the employment of places considered beside person's names gives local color the same symbolic meaning of the names.

An additional indication of how concretely thought out the merging of actual people with fiction was, is borne

out by a closer look at the technique. In the carefully prepared text of E.K. Mapes' edition of the Cuentos, the material is divided into what, in his own judgment, is the best of four categories: "Cuentos completos", "Otras narraciones", "Fragmentos de novela" and "Adaptaciones e imitaciones". The "Fragmentos" and "Adaptaciones e imitaciones" are obvious distinctions but the other two, "Cuentos" and "Otras narraciones", according to Mapes were problematic. The first group he felt "pertenecen al tipo de literatura denominado 'cuento' en el sentido estricto de la palabra",¹ but the "Otras narraciones" were a collection in which "falta alguna de las características del 'cuento' propiamente dicho, pero que muestran sin embargo un elemento claramente narrativo".² In another part of the prologue Mapes indicated the source of the problem: "publicaba un cuento como un artículo".³ A comparison of the selections in the two categories underlines why Mapes encountered difficulties. While the "Otras narraciones" tend to be plotless, so do several of the cuentos. "Rataplán", "El vestido blanco", "Historia de un dominó", "En la calle", "La hija del aire", "Carta de un suicida" all have weak plots at best. Many of the other "Cuentos" are deficient in a particular plot characteristic. Basic ingredients are lacking,

1. E.K. Mapes, "Prólogo" to the Cuentos, p. L.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., p. xlvii.

such as a dénouement ("Después del cinco de mayo"), a progression of interrelated actions ("La odisea de Madame Théo") or climax ("Los amores del cometa"). Some stories show curious combinations of plots within a formless narration. The famous "La novela del tranvía" achieves this feat through a string of open-ended ruminations, two of which develop into miniature plots with sketchy conflicts, climax and resolutions. In taking Gutiérrez Nájera's original articles from the newspapers, Professor Mapes faced a gradation of stories beginning with a few which could comfortably fit Poe's famous "unity of effect or impression" dictum,¹ to others which were journalistic sketches that were, as Mapes suggests, "claramente narrativo" but given by the author the form of a "cuento como un artículo". The history of each story's publication, which Mapes inserted with a footnote at the beginning of each selection, substantiates the difficulties he wrote of in the introduction. The author himself gave enough variation to the titles to make it plain that he did not conceive of his work as two opposing polarities of objective and imaginative writing. The two were quite intentionally fused by Gutiérrez Nájera, which again removes distinctions between art, mental processes and the outer world.

Among forty-eight of the "Cuentos" which are "stories in the strict sense" nineteen were published at different

1. Edgar Allan Poe, "Review of Twice Told Tales", in Discussions of the Short Story, ed. by Hollis Summers (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1963), p. 2.

times by the author as crónicas which Mapes defined in another place as "un comentario sobre acontecimientos del día o sobre cualesquiera otras materias de interés general, cultivado conscientemente como una forma especial de prosa artística".¹ This apparent contradiction between what a crónica is by definition and what Gutiérrez Nájera made it in practice vanishes once it is realized that the author's concept of reality entails an idealism that refuses to make compartmentalizations between the several functions of the mind.

The explanation of how Gutiérrez Nájera relates art, mind and immediate surroundings in his prose is facilitated by the relative uniqueness of using contemporaries for imagistic purposes, and the obvious fusing of journalistic and fictional technique. This carries over into his poetry in a way which is not so obvious, if the prose is not held up as proof of the pattern which has emerged. Several of Gutiérrez Nájera's poems were written or dedicated to friends. At least ten mention a contemporary in the title and thirty-eight are dedicated to friends. On the surface, the writing of poetry about friends offers little novelty in the history of literature. Closely comparing these poems however, it becomes apparent that a pattern exists in which his comments about his friends are related to their use in the stories. Without being unfaithful to how a rigorously

1. E.K. Mapes, "Introducción" to Obras ineditas: Crónicas de "Puck", p. 5.

objective historian would present Díaz Mirón, Justo Sierra, Riva Palacio or Ignacio Altamirano, Gutiérrez Nájera describes them in a manner which makes it clear to the reader that his friends are depicted through his own ideological framework. In the fiction the friend was usually related to the overall piece through a parenthetical comment while in the poems a contemporary becomes the principal object of an artistic statement.

Starting from this basic approach of depicting contemporaries with the author's own individualistic coloration, a series of portraits was created which attempted to capture the essence of each person in a manner which remained true to Gutiérrez Nájera's broader concept of what constituted truth. Two of the earliest examples of this procedure are the poems "Sobre el sepulcro de Rafael Martínez de la Torre" (1877) and "En memoria de D. Anselmo de la Portilla" (1879). The first of these poems, written on the death of a prominent figure in the capital's cultural life, was about a man with whom the young poet was not too well acquainted. The resulting sixty lines betray a lack of inspiration in a style which is pompous and high flown. This does not destroy the poem's significance, however. What inevitably occurs in such an instance is a poem more revealing of the author's mind than the subject. Mention of the subject's accomplishments are sparse and vague ("noble corazón" or "herencia de virtud y beneficios" Poesías I, p. 201), while an obsessive concentration on death ("cuanto tu muerte

de dolor me inspira" Poesías I, p. 202) underscores a pre-occupation and a strong skepticism about an afterlife, which probably explains why the religious poems he was writing at the time also have a hollow ring.

The other poem about Anselmo de la Portilla involves a close acquaintance and consequently provides a more appropriate example of how Gutiérrez Nájera sought to make immediate experience--in this case the person of Anselmo de la Portilla--an integral part of his life and art. In fact, part of the poem can be interpreted as a statement on the subject of Gutiérrez Nájera's feeling of a mental tie to don Anselmo:

Tus átomos entraron a la vida
del torbellino cósmico; la idea
que albergó tu cerebro, fructifica
en todas las conciencias; se transforma,
y si perdiste la terrena forma
la muerte tu victoria centuplica.

(Poesías I, p. 215)

As an empirical sign Gutiérrez Nájera has elevated Anselmo de la Portilla into a poetic symbol of universal idealism. Although this is a generalized statement, in another part of the poem he personalizes the intention when he writes "yo miré...y yo le vi. . ." and follows each first person verb with imagery of ideality (espíritu, soplo, lira, poeta, Poesías I, p. 213). The deliberate combination of the universal and the personal in this poem was necessitated by the facts of the subject's life. Anselmo de la Portilla was a Spanish journalist who immigrated to Mexico and there exerted considerable energy to reconciling differences between

the two countries. Gutiérrez Nájera's willingness to defend Spanish literature throughout his career was very possibly influenced by his close friendship with the Spaniard during his formative years. In consideration of the immediate point however, Anselmo de la Portilla was not just a part of Gutiérrez Nájera's personal experience but also a representative of another country and hence a symbol of universality:

Yo no sé si esa tumba es española
o si es una tumba mexicana.

(Poesías I, p. 215)

The examples of these first two early poems begin a pattern which continues through the remaining poems whose titles signify a contemporary. With one exception, all are individuals closely related to Mexican art and literature. Although actual statement of how the person exists within the poet's consciousness may not conspicuously exist, as happened in the poem to Anselmo de la Portilla, in one way or another the idea is made manifest. In "A Salvador Díaz Mirón" the connection is created with a juxtaposing of the author's own poetic theory and a perfectly objective statement on the nature of the subject's poetry:

Tienes en tu laúd cuerdas de oro
que el soplo del espíritu estremece,
• • •
El mar es como tú; con su rúido
de tus estrofas la cadencia iguala.

(Poesías II, p. 89)

The first two lines are an expression of the poet's theory of artistic inspiration, while the lines taken from the last

strophe are an objective statement on the vigorous style of Díaz Mirón's early verse. Without entering into lengthy explanations, a relating of the author's own literary theory with the poem's subject is Gutiérrez Nájera's most usual method of relating contemporary artists to himself. The subjects do not, of necessity, have to be a writer however. In the poem "A Virginia Reiter" for example, attributes normally given to writers are extended to an actress: ". . .tu voz es una lira" (Poesías II, p. 215). The Aeolian lyre, it will be remembered, was Gutiérrez Nájera's symbol for poetic inspiration. In "De mago es tu pincel" the title itself signifies that Arturo Inchaurregui's paintings possess the same magical power of epiphany that good literature should have according to the literary theory examined above. The most elaborate exposition of a personal theory of art related to a contemporary is contained in "A Justo Sierra". Justo Sierra, who is primarily known as a positivist, later responded to Gutiérrez Nájera's statement on idealism in art theory expressing a basic agreement.

La forma de las obras realistas es la que ha influido sobre nosotros, no la tendencia, el espíritu no, . . .No hemos logrado nunca hacer poesía puramente objetiva en cada uno de nuestros versos vaciamos todo sentimiento, toda nuestra personalidad, no hemos hecho más que poesía subjetiva.¹

Although some aspect of literary theory is the usual nexus between poet and contemporary, there are noteworthy exceptions. The poem "A Benjamin Bolaños" was occasioned by

1. Justo Sierra, "Prólogo" to Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Poesías completas, I, p. 12-3.

the death of Bolaños' son and addresses itself to that event. In "A Riva Palacio" as much interest is expressed in Riva Palacio as a politician and a general as the fact that he was a novelist.

In one notable instance--"A Altamirano"--all pretense of direct poetic statement is put aside simply to record the effect Altamirano's poems and novels have produced in the writer's mind:

Los Naranjos están tristes,
y las Amapolas secas;
en el aire no retozan
bulliciosas las Abejas.
En el monte no hay lumbradas
de festiva Noche Buena,
y mirando al horizonte
pensativa está Clemencia
¿Por qué todo está tan triste?
 ¿Quién nos deja?
Atoyac de zarcas ondas
que entre quijas serpenteas,
¿por qué pasas, por qué huyes
 y te quejas?

(Poesías II, p. 217)

The inclusion of titles of literary works in "A Altamirano" is a symbolization process which has received several explanations up to this point. Writers and their works have been examined as symbols of value and as a means of consciousness extension in space and time. Here an attempt is made to absorb as much as possible of the author's native country in the person of Altamirano for artistic purposes. This by no means negates other symbolic meanings which, in fact, are clearly present. Altamirano is no less a symbol of idealization than Shakespeare.

Discussion of Gutiérrez Nájera's employment of the

external world in his art thus far has dealt with people whether in the form of society, social events, women, children, or contemporary artists. It has been noted how the author never allowed himself to depart from an idealistic interpretation of whatever he discussed. Any statement on the human condition or social predicament is always integral to a technique or actual statement which makes clear indication of the material's origin in mental refractions and spiritual realities. This, beyond question, is the most distinctive feature of Gutiérrez Nájera's use of his immediate world. A dependence on the psychological process as the only true means for perceiving the world was described several times in his criticism and repeated statements are made in the poems and stories to that effect. In a crónica Gutiérrez Nájera invoked use of the unconscious for artistic purposes when he wrote:

el valor positivo de ciertos fenómenos de sugestión mental o aparente, lo que llaman los sabios 'fantasía complementaria'. Los testigos de un hecho dado, al referirlo, lo transfiguran involuntariamente embelleciéndolo.

(Crónicas de "Puck", p. 88)

In another passage he wrote that a writer should follow "el vuelo libre y espontaneo de su imaginación" (Crítica, p. 112). Again, he spoke in general terms saying that beauty itself was feeling not rationality: "lo bello no se define, se siente" (Crítica, p. 55). The effect of giving such importance to sensory perception affects Gutiérrez Nájera's utilization of his external surroundings significantly, the

most obvious being the inclusion of objects for their suggestive or evocative potentiality rather than purely mimetic functions. Underlying the inclusion of objects for evocative purposes there is frequently an accompanying presence of fantasy or dream. In some instances the dream world itself predominates and, since its use is so basic, these passages will be examined first.

To begin with, it should be established that the word "dream" has at least two different significances for the author. On the one hand, a dream is an unreachable ideal state closely identifiable with other terms like art, love, beauty and illusion which constitute the normative goal Gutiérrez Nájera always struggled to reach. In this significance a dream is part of a system of ethereal values examined in a previous chapter. At the same time, dreams are a day to day experience which are an integral part of the author's physical body and material surroundings. Within an idealistic interpretation of the world the two, dream and material world, become fused:

¿Será verdad o sueño? Nada importa
 . . .
 Pero, ¿recuerdo sólo lo que he visto,
 o recuerdo también lo que he soñado?

(Poesías I, pp. 253-4)

In the story entitled "La cucaracha" dream and reality were related in the following terms:

No sé si lo que voy a referir es un hecho real, o si el café, cuya rica esencia había tomado, lo dibujó en el cristal de mi imaginación. La distancia que separa un suceso de un sueño es insignificante; la diferencia estriba únicamente en que el suceso puede verse a todas

horas y el sueño se percibe nada más en medio de las sombras y con los ojos cerrados.

(Cuentos, p. 331)

To generalize, the second meaning of "sueño" is a thought process equivalent to idea, vision or sensory apparatus, or part of a statement on what reality is as opposed to what constitutes value.

Dreams, considered in the second instance as a fact of existence, are not necessarily pleasant; in fact, they are a confrontation with unpleasant realities: ". . . Los mares de la idea/ tienen también sus rudas tempestades" (Poesías II, p. 143), or more specifically:

A veces el espíritu pasea
por limbos tan oscuros y escondidos,
que sufre, como todos los sentidos,
una total parálisis la idea.
¿Puede el alma del cuerpo desprenderse?
¿Qué remotos países visitamos,
sin que pueda la carne ni moverse?
¿En que pensamos cuando no pensamos?

(Poesías I, p. 255)

At least four poems ("Noche de San Silvestre", "Jugar con la ceniza", "Tristissima Nox", "Las almas huérfanas") stand out as an attempt to sound out the mysterious inner world which Torres Bodet saw in Gutiérrez Nájera as a "soplo cósmico. . . soplo de un mundo oculto[y]. . . lírica de la noche".¹ Chronologically, the four poems are more or less evenly spread through his writing career. The first, published in 1879, begins a pattern in which the poet, as he

1. Jaime Torres Bodet, Obras escogidas (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961), p. 759.

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sleeps, becomes alive to another world of phantoms whose presence may or may not be welcome: "la fantasma del mal que no concluye" or "el amor que viene, pasa y huye" (Poesías I, p. 227).

In the second poem, "Jugar con la ceniza" (1881), dreams are specifically tied to other preoccupations such as memory, time and the infusion of life with a vitality of feeling:

Si sólo porque pienso sé que existo,
recordando demuestro lo pasado...
Pero, ¿recuerdo sólo lo que he visto,
o recuerdo también lo que he soñado?

(Poesías I, p. 254)

There is no intention here to deny an independent external world; however, the mind alone has the capability of signaling its presence which exists in a time continuum where the past is part of the present and both are influenced by dreams. If the temptation should exist to consider Gutiérrez Nájera's inward projections as a form of Freudian unconsciousness, the above quote indicates that he was much nearer to Bergson's flux than the psychologist's static definition. Gutiérrez Nájera's interest in dreams is a quest for a vitalism in which the poet goes inside himself to keep alive worthy moments of the past. Following the above quote the poet tries to remember a past love:

Era preciso hablarla, sin embargo;
mas, entre un yo te quiero y un me quieres,
abrí largo paréntesis, tan largo,
que hasta pude pensar en diez mujeres.
Y mientras ella con audacia loca
hablaba sin reparo ni tropiezo,

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yo pude nada más abrir la boca
para trazar el arco de un bostezo.

(Poesías I, p. 255)

His inability to remember brings up the inevitable question of death and the limits of human existence ("¿Se hace en el espíritu el vacío?" Poesías I, p. 255) and inevitably concludes that death is not just a physical breakdown but an "hermana gemela de la vida" (Poesías I, p. 258). Thus the dream is revealed in its double nature as a source of happiness and a glimpse into the harsh reality of existence.

"Tristissima Nox" (1884), the third poem chronologically, is the most protracted statement on dreams. Dream in this poem is both life and death:

es la muerte aparente de los seres,
es la vida profunda de las cosas.

(Poesías II, p. 36)

The principal addition to this poem is the relation of dream to a world of magic, the "diábolica bruja, el ágil duende" (Poesías II, p. 36). The air is filled with "gritos estridentes", "trote de caballos invisibles", "plegarias, maldiciones y sollozos", "el grito agudo/ de las aves nictálopes" (Poesías II, p. 36). The author's indebtedness to the Romantics is obvious but at the same time the mysterious element moves in a giant stride toward the vanguard movements of the twentieth century. Passages like the following, for example, are close approximations to surrealism and expressionism:

trazan, a veces, los traviesos duendes
grotesca historia, lances inconexos,

figuras que parecen retratadas
en espejos convexos.

(Poesías II, p. 41)

The same world of magic is present in the dream atmosphere of "Las almas huérfanas". As in the other poems, Gutiérrez Nájera does not use dreams as mere decoration but as an instrument of self knowledge which finally becomes an attempt to fathom the riddle of existence. The poet calls the night "la sombra infinita de mi alma" (Poesías II, p. 153). The nocturnal world is populated with strange faces, voices and places. Memories intrude to torment the sleeper with thoughts of a happy and secure past. The physical comfort of childhood is associated with a simple believing faith in God which, in retrospect, seems like a dream itself: "Será sueño? ¿Fue cierto. . ." (Poesías I, p. 154). The past is juxtaposed with the present dream in which a horde of strange beings appear. These are the orphaned souls who, like the author, have lost their god. In this way the transition is made from the personal to the universal. Each disinherited soul is, like the author, a "parte doliente del Todo" (Poesías II, p. 156) whom God has abandoned.

The story entitled "El sueño de Magda" resembles the dream world of the poems and also illustrates how a dream is not just a pleasant experience but often plunges into nightmarish spheres of uncertainty. Briefly, the piece recounts Magda's dream of a storm which inundated the world. She climbed away from the rising waters until safe on the

uppermost stone cross of a church. At this point the waters receded and the earth far below suddenly resumed its normal activity with people hurrying to and fro. Magda's screams for assistance went unheard and finally she lost strength, fell, and was impaled on a lower spire of the church. Without belaboring the point, the story follows the same path of cosmic isolation and abandonment by God (alone on the cross, impalement on a church spire) as in the poems. The dream becomes an instant and personal apprehension of a world which is meaningless and punitive.

In "El sueño de Magda" and the four poems, dreams, given a general symbolic designation, stand as tools available for the author to experience universal realities. In each case dream is specifically alluded to, which contrasts to his overall work where dreamlike perception is Gutiérrez Nájera's common mode of perception. A tree is never just a tree with specific measurements and colors; it also reflects a physical environment in continual flux, such as changing light, shading and movement. Its true reality is also determined by the author's emotional frame which projects onto the tree a suggested meaning which in the end is as inseparable from the tree as the changing light reflections. The total effect is a world which is not unlike what is seen in dreams. One conspicuous manifestation of this mode of perception is created through a specific use of the narrator.

A discussion of how this process is effected would extend to the entire collection of poems, since their

predominantly lyrical orientation presupposes flights of fantasy. Notwithstanding the subjectivity of the poems, however, the best illustrations of how the narrator relates the outer world to the inner are contained in various stories which detail the mechanism of how the two fuse.

The story, written as an article "La vida en México", and given the title "La cucaracha" by E.K. Mapes in the Cuentos is an exemplary model. In fact, the first paragraph is an explanation of the overlapping between dreams and actual events: "La diferencia estriba únicamente en que el suceso puede verse a todas horas y el sueño se percibe nada más en medio de las sombras y con los ojos cerrados" (Cuentos, p. 331). Then follows a prefatory statement in which the narrator tells the circumstances of his life as he prepares to recount the story. In this case the narrator walks through the city streets after everything is closed except the billiard halls. Although mimesis dominates the depiction with fantasy in abeyance for the moment, the individualistic imagery keeps the street from existing as an object apart from the author's mind. For example:

. . .cuando la luz eléctrica se apaga, es el aspecto de la calle de un ataúd negro y sin capa. . .El rumor de los pasos crece en fuerza, como si algunos duendes fueron remando a los transeúntes, por debajo de la acera. . .Parece que están ciega la luz y muertos los sonidos, o que, entretanto reinan las tinieblas, la vida, como el sol, se ha ido a otra parte.

(Cuentos, p. 331)

After five paragraphs of description and chatty bantering with the readers about the nature of the story, the narrator

begins. After the walk, he arrived home and promptly went to bed and, upon reclining, felt the disagreeable movement of a cockroach upon his back. He jumped from the bed, lit a candle, and removed the insect with a walking cane. From this point fantasy takes over as the cockroach furiously attacks the narrator who tries to kill the intruder. The following sentences mark the beginning of a transition from common occurrence to supernatural as the bug shows unusual resilience:

Había que exterminarlo o perecer en el combate; defendíase con bríos inusitados, girando alrededor de mi cabeza y queriendo por fuerza entrarse adentro de mi boca. Una vez llegué a sentir el aspero contacto de sus alas en el sensible cutis de mis labios.

(Cuentos, p. 333)

Several window panes and delicate pieces of furniture were broken before the narrator subdued the cockroach. Infuriated, the narrator collected the agonizing bug between a fire tong and held him over the burning hearth. The cockroach only partially burns and to the narrator's astonishment, its eyes metamorphose into a man ("un perfecto caballero, con corbata, reloj y todo" Cuentos, p. 334) more polite than an English diplomat.

The tone changes from nightmarish to one of levity as the gentleman excuses himself:

-Tenga Ud. la bondad de no alarmarse. . . .
 -Hombre, sobre todo, eso de haberse metido en mi cama...!
 -Mil perdones; estaba cansadísimo.

(Cuentos, p. 334)

The newly formed man explains his magic process of

transformation from cockroach and in no time convinces the narrator to undergo the same metamorphosis and tour the city as a cockroach. The tour lasts two days and occupies as much space in the story as the introduction, which gives the metamorphosis a foremost significance in the story.

This, to Gutiérrez Nájera, is a "realism" truer than the copious description of a Naturalist. His first paragraph assertion that the distance between dream and event is insignificant effectively substantiates his intention that the supernatural be given the category of reality. A closer examination of different components of the story illustrates the nearness of the story's execution to the initial idea. The first pages intentionally contrast objective description with the reality of fantasy. As the narrator recalls the city at night an objective description, excepting a few images, is employed:

Ya casi todos los cafés habían cerrado sus puertas. Nada más los billares permanecían iluminados, siendo como son el último refugio de trasnochados y noctámbulos. En la Concordia, algunos mozos regaban y barrían el suelo, mientras contaban otros las propinas de la noche; arriba, en dos cerrados gabinetes, brillaba aún. . . etc., etc., etc.

(Cuentos, p. 331)

The description continues until the narrator feels he is boring the reader with enumeration of detail and begins to excuse himself: "El preámbulo sirve únicamente para disponer el ánimo de mis lectores a la audición de lo maravilloso" (Cuentos, p. 332). The excuse, in effect, unites the objectively presented introduction to the fantasy of

metamorphosis which gives more weight to the first paragraph's thesis of not completely separating dream from common event. As if to further tie the objective introduction to fantasy he concludes the excuse with the following admonition: "Por lo demás, quien crea en conciencia que es inútil, puede hacer lo que yo: no volver a leerlo" (Cuentos, p. 332).

Within the description of the metamorphosis itself there are additional indications that a supernatural occurrence is not a divorce from "reality". The two, gentleman and narrator, discuss why a cockroach presents the most ideal animal for reincarnation. Through the gentleman's explanation Gutiérrez Nájera is able to illustrate how dream fantasy constitutes the reality of emotive responses to what exists externally to an individual. The gentleman's search for the inner world of fantasy began with a common trauma of human experience, he lost his employment: "Estuve empleado en varias oficinas, pero al caer D. Sebastián quedé cesante. . ." (Cuentos, p. 334). The reason he chose to be a cockroach then, is a choice made because he felt that life had limited him to this inferior position. The gentleman, to himself, was a cockroach because, unemployed, he did not possess money to become something exotic: "un mago pobre tiene que conformarse con su suerte" (Cuentos, pp. 334-5). The narrator soon extends his identity as cockroach to include a whole class which lives a cockroach condition. Referring to himself as cockroach, the verb number changes

to first person plural: "no nos viste Sarre, ni nos perfuma Micoló" (Cuentos, pp. 335-6). The tailor and the barber-shop, like don Sebastian (former president of Mexico), are a few of several actual names and places which keep the idea current with the reader that the fantasy is an internal response to the external world. A class of people considered as cockroaches is described in another passage which mentions what must be an actual place: "Hay cucarachas apreciables como hay pensionistas del Erario, más honradas, inteligentes y virtuosas que las damitas de la aristocracia" (Cuentos, p. 336).

When Duque Job undergoes the change to cockroach, he modestly limits his self pity to keep his social identity: ". . .tenía la conciencia de que mi yo permanecía inmutable y de que era siempre el Duque Job. . ." (Cuentos, p. 337), but shows how Mexico City must appear to a cockroach class:

. . .el cafe terrible de Barómetro, y ni aun transformado en cucaracha se puede entrar. . .

(Cuentos, p. 336)

el temor, muy racional, de que acabasen con nosotros a porrazos. . .

(Cuentos, pp. 336-7)

Estos desconocidos animales, cuya existencia ni siquiera sospechabamos. . .

(Cuentos, p. 337)

¡Y qué penosa fue mi compunción, cuando pasando por encima de Palacio[Nacional], vi centenares de bacterias muertas!

(Cuentos, p. 337)

These comments show a way of artistically portraying immediate experience and also underline how far astray some critics like Juan Marinello go in calling the Modernists insensitive.¹

The use of "sueño" in the first paragraph obviously is an extension of meaning from the sleeping dream since the narrator does not actually fall asleep. Dream is expanded from a subliminal state to a conscious mode of perception. Using the pattern of how this perception is effected in "La cucaracha" as external evidence, several other stories stand out as similar examples. In "La odisea de Madame Théo" Gutiérrez Nájera claims that the French actress Louise Théo came to Mexico via limbo, heaven and the star Venus, rather than on a steamer and train. This piece has already been examined as symbolic of value through idealization and equally serves as a symbolic manifestation of a manner of recording reality. After hearing Madame Théo sing Gutiérrez Nájera felt it was an error of fact to say she arrived on a boat and the story becomes the author's emotive definition of how she arrived. The piece, by its pleasantness, is a total contrast in tone with "La cucaracha" but the reality is the same. This is underlined in the last sentence when

1. Apparently the French decadents and Symbolists have to undergo the same exoneration from time to time as evidenced by the article of Pierre Aubery ("The Anarchism of the Literati of the Symbolist Period, The French Review, XLII (October, 1968), 39-47.) which enumerates points of contact between Symbolists and Anarchists in matters of social protest.

Gutiérrez Nájera states: "Los biógrafos dirán que no es así; pero los biógrafos sesudos se equivocan" (Cuentos, p. 186).

Although the stories about the cockroach and Louise Théo are excellent illustrations of the mechanism for artistically employing an object of external stimuli to record an ultimate inner reaction, the most recurrent category of signs employed as stimuli are not animate objects but inanimate ones. The stories "Los amores del cometa", "Historia de un dominó", "Memorias de un paraguas", "Historia de un peso falso", "El vestido blanco", "La moneda de níquel", "Historia de un peso bueno", and "Las botitas de Año Nuevo" each present an example of the author selecting a relatively insignificant object at hand and allowing it through suggestion to stimulate the faculties of the writer's mind until a story is completed.

Among the stories mentioned above "Los amores del cometa" is the most extreme in use of fantasy. An object is chosen--here a comet--which in itself may be of slight importance, but is then made to serve as a central symbol in the author's typical metaphoric statement of what at the moment of writing he perceives the world to be. Part of the statement is a reiteration of matters already touched on in previous chapters. The comet is an ethereal aesthetic as well as spatial and temporal symbol. It is made of gold with crystal points, comes from "inmensas profundidades del espacio" (Cuentos, p. 161) and, although a specific relation to time is absent, the implication existed that the comet is

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without temporal origin. The story is also a record of immediate experience. As the narrator observes the comet and describes its assumed characteristics, he contrapuntally talks about himself and the society around him. The first reports of himself and his contemporaries vis-à-vis the comet are conscious attempts to entertain: the ridiculous figure the author cuts, waiting in robe for a comet at 4:30 a.m. ("...como aguarda un celoso al amante de su mujer, para darle, al pasar, las buenas noches" Cuentos, p. 163); the possibility of what would happen if the comet should slam into the earth ("el tenor Prats llegaría a la luna en cuatro minutos" Cuentos, p. 163); or if the comet's tail should fall into the earth's atmosphere and suck out the oxygen everyone would first experience the heavy feeling of eating in Mexico City's Recamier restaurant, then nervous stimulation and rapid blood circulation would cause laughter ("...nos moriríamos a carcajadas! Servín abrazaría a Joaquín Moreno, y García de la Cadena al general Aréchiga" Cuentos, p. 164).

Although the story exists without a time continuum or series of related actions building toward a climax, there is a progressive intensification of emotional tenseness. The author waiting in a robe is merely humorous, as is the mention of a local restaurant; then the entrance of partisan strife in national events begins to give the humor a heavier tone. Finally, humor is dropped altogether in a final bitter statement on poverty with an ironic invitation to

festivity: "Cuando estés en un baile, no pienses nunca en la diana del alba. . .La espuma brilla, y hay mucha luz en los espejos, en los diamantes y en los ojos" (Cuentos, p. 164). The sentences after this exhortation are too stark for Gutiérrez Nájera to intend any interpretation other than an ironic one: "Afuera sopla un viento frío que rasga las desnudas carnes de esas pobres gentes que han pasado la noche mendigando y vuelven a sus casas sin un solo mendrugo de pan negro" (Cuentos, p. 164). Appropriately, the narrator changes focus to the comet in the story's last paragraph to end in a highly poeticized description of dawn. In this way Gutiérrez Nájera has made the comet take on a multiplicity of significances and prominent among them is a disillusioned reflection of his own assessment of the society in which he moved.

In "Historia de un dominó" a domino serves to metaphorically describe the fall of a prostitute. This piece is another example of the overlapping of topical interests with the Naturalists, the difference existing largely in the Modernists' idealistic way of viewing what happens. Neither the prostitute nor the domino exist independently of each other, both becoming a fused entity in the narrator's mind. The major correlation between the two is their similar trajectory from the top to the bottom of the social scale. The domino, when new, begins its existence in the most elegant barbershop as does the young prostitute in a fashionable bordello. Both are soon in the hands of more common men and

finally end in the dirtiest taverns and cafés. The idea that the two are inseparable is intensified by relating the details of the domino's fall and speaking of the prostitute only tangentially in the first and last paragraphs, both of which begin: "¡Pobre mujer! Tu suerte es parecida a la de aquellos dominós. . .(Cuentos, pp. 187, 188). "Memorias de un paraguas" similarly involves an object which has fallen into disuse like the domino and is used suggestively to say something more important than what its actual inanimate history would offer. Obviously a mouthpiece for Gutiérrez Nájera's own thoughts, the umbrella speaks of the falsity of arbitrary class distinctions, gives a satirical lecture on Mexican journalism, discusses the theatre and recounts an attempt by the owner to flirt with a young lady, using the umbrella in a rainstorm as an excuse for joining her.

Most of these stories, like "Memorias de un paraguas", are combinations of light humor and bitter pessimism over human misery and social inequities. Essentially, this is an oscillation between the poles of spiritualism and materialism. Occasionally one concern or the other will dominate in a single story. "La moneda de níquel" exemplifies a preponderance of interest on fighting materialism. The story's inspiration derives from a historical fact. In 1883 Porfirio Díaz' proxy government headed by Manuel González attempted to alleviate the national debt by issuing a nickel

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coinage whose value dropped disastrously.¹ Gutiérrez Nájera, it may be assumed, suffered some loss or at least strongly sympathized with those who did. His history of a nickel coin becomes a history of the event from the author's reaction. Ironically, he says the nickel coin is decent because it originated in the National Chamber of Deputies where it rubbed elbows with Carbajal and Pancho Bulnes. Francisco Bulnes in particular was the positivist economist for whom Gutiérrez Nájera held nothing but contempt. When the coin is related to foreign entrepreneurs irony is dropped and the sarcasm is open: ". . . los indios y asnos que representan el Banco de Londres. . ." (Cuentos, p. 323). Blunt annoyance is not reserved just for foreigners however: ". . . D. Pedro Romero de Terreros es voluble como la pluma en el viento. . ." (Cuentos, p. 323). Opposite the moneyed class are those who usually are in possession of the nickel coin, those with "bolsillos rotos", "camas sin colchones", and "todos los nombres bajos y plebeyos" (Cuentos, p. 325). In short, the coin's history underscores how tenuous was Gutiérrez Nájera's affection for the political governance of the period and also provides an example of his artistic method for visualizing the epoch.

"El vestido blanco" shows an overwhelming interest in the opposite direction from materialism toward

1. Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico, p. 113.

spiritualism. This story introduces a new category of sign used for idealistic perception, that of color. Use of color has already been cited in the chapter on value where it was pointed out that certain colors are employed with enough consistency of meaning to warrant giving them a fixed symbolic interpretation. Blue and white represented spiritual norms and black and yellow were materialistic. It is not in a fixed symbolic meaning that the colors are best accounted for however, but in a mode of sensory perception which in essence "es la expresión de un estado de ánimo, de una actitud básica."¹ Even in those cases where color meaning is without variance, e.g., blue, Gutiérrez Nájera was emphatic in asserting that the significance derived from a personal mental association. White, whose symbolic function is commonly spiritual, is occasionally used to signal the presence of death, as in "De mis versos viejos":

Blancura sin sangre, blancura nevada,
de estatua yacente blancura callada,

(Poesías II, p. 53)

But, even in its most consistent meaning of purified ideality, Gutiérrez Nájera stated within the text of a story that suggestion provided the meaning:

¿Verdad que el vestido blanco es sugestivo? Ser novia... ser mamá... pedir de veras a la Virgen... saber lo que es la vida... ¡Ya el traje blanco se vistió de luto!

(Cuentos, p. 245)

1. Ivan A. Schulman, Génesis del modernismo (Mexico: El Colegio de México and Washington University Press, 1966), p. 151.

Within this function color stands integrally beside the numerous objects--coins, umbrellas, cockroach, etc.--which suggestively mirror and reflect much broader realities. To paraphrase Schulman, color is an "estado anímico" which becomes in the final analysis a philosophy of life.¹

Critics, in attempting to explain Gutiérrez Nájera's employment of color, have traditionally presented its use as an eclectic joining of literary influences, principally Parnassian and Symbolist. Without necessarily being inaccurate, this explanation has led to blurry if not inaccurate conclusions. The principal difficulty seems to lie in deciding exactly what constitutes Parnassianism and Symbolism. The manuals of literature agree that the Parnassians were interested in plasticity and, hence, color. Gutiérrez Nájera himself, as noted in his theory of literature, gave ample evidence of his appreciation of their efforts in this respect. Two different studies have attributed Gutiérrez Nájera's color predilection to Parnassian inspiration.²

Schulman, in the study quoted above, lists Gautier, François Coppée, Baudelaire, Rimbaud and Verlaine as possible lines of influence. The first two can in fact be considered Parnassians without stretching the point. Yet, at the same

1. Schulman, Génesis del modernismo, p. 151.

2. Schulman, Génesis del modernismo, pp. 139-52; and D. M. Kress, "The Weight of French Parnassian Influence in the Modernista Poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera", Revue de Littérature Comparée, XVII (1937), 555-71.

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time he mentions Gautier, Schulman also acknowledges that the Mexican is far removed from Gautier's "impasibilidad".¹ Although Schulman does not elaborate, the same would apply to Coppée as evidenced in a Gutiérrez Nájera adaptation from Coppée ("Versos de oro") where strong emotional tone and subjective imagery dominate. With Baudelaire the question is very much open as to whether he was a Parnassian, a Symbolist, or a one man school. Baudelaire himself claimed to be a Romantic. At one point Schulman notes that "El año de 1882 es significativo en la poética najeriana porque marca su iniciación definitiva en la técnica cromática parnasiana."² Although the article does not document why 1882 is important, a markedly new manner of entitling articles with color imagery begins in that year. Typical of the articles published in 1882 are Crónicas color de rosa, Crónicas color de humo, Crónicas color de Rubia, Crónicas color de lluvia, Crónicas color de Roederer, Crónicas color de Papel La Croix, Crónicas color de sangre, "Crónica color de Pólvora", "Crónica color de... Qué?", Crónicas color de oro. Other colors are: de Libra Esterlina, de Otoño, de Tivoli de Asilo, de Tinta, de Muertos, de Caracol, de Aguila, de Orrin, de Venus and finally, Crónicas color de Théo.³ This

1. Schulman, Génesis del modernismo, p. 144.

2. Ibid.

3. E. K. Mapes, "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera; seudónimos y bibliografía periodística", La Revista Hispánica Moderna, XIX (enero-dic., 1953), 165-7.

display of color synaesthesia to some critics would not constitute a Parnassian character but a Symbolist fusion of abstract and concrete qualities.¹

D. M. Kress, like Schulman, attributes Parnassian traits to Gutiérrez Nájera, then neutralizes the value of his observations with qualifications: "As we have seen, he [Gutiérrez Nájera] was not ignorant of the doctrine of impassivity" but found "such suppression of his personal emotions impossible".² On the other hand, he attributes characteristics which are predominantly Symbolist to Parnassian inspiration. The fusion of arts, which includes color through painting, he found to derive from the "Baudelairian wing of the Parnassian movement".³ This is accurate enough; however, Baudelaire is not considered typically Parnassian for developing this trait as much as Symbolist.

Everything seems to point in the direction of an affinity to Symbolism. The use of synaesthesia resembles the formula of Baudelaire's "Correspondences" or Rimbaud's poem "Vayelles". Also Verlaine's "Art poétique" where he writes "Car nous voulons la nuance encore,/ Pas la Couleur, rien que la nuance" is relevant.⁴ Caution should be

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1. Anna Balakian, The Symbolist Movement (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 104.
 2. D.M. Kress, "The Weight of French Parnassian Influence in the Modernista Poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera", p. 558.
 3. Ibid., p. 563.
 4. Paul Verlaine, Oeuvres Poétiques Complètes (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), p. 327.

exercised however, since it is not certain that Gutiérrez Nájera ever knew of Rimbaud or the specific writings of Baudelaire and Verlaine. There is also a danger in conceding too much to French influence alone. Boyd Carter has detailed several plausible sources in Mexican literature.¹ Lastly, there is a possibility of explaining away the actual nature of artistic creation with an excessive concern for lines of influence. As shown in the first chapter Gutiérrez Nájera had well developed ideas of his own concerning what art was and should be. Given the idealistic frame elaborated in "El arte y el materialismo" and the impressionistic direction it took, it would be a completely logical development that the author should, on his own, acquire a preference for color nuances and symbolic meaning through psychological correspondences.

What characterizes Gutiérrez Nájera's employment of color is an application of his own personally derived philosophy which, like his literary theory, generally shared certain Parnassian predilections but more resembles Symbolism and Impressionism or, to use the correct term, pan-impressionism.² Pan-impressionism (a combination of Symbolism, Impressionism and decadence) by its inclusiveness, avoids

1. Boyd G. Carter, "Gutiérrez Nájera y Martí como Iniciadores del Modernismo", Revista Iberoamericana, XXVIII (julio-diciembre, 1962), 299, 302.

2. Wylie Sypher, Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature, Vintage Books (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 190.

narrow distinctions which in the case of Gutiérrez Nájera would be inappropriate.

Questions of influence aside, much of Gutiérrez Nájera's chromatic language parallels certain effects sought by Impressionist painters. Speaking generally of the Impressionist movement, Wylie Sypher writes that it sought "to transvalue sensation to perception" which resulted in "a new sense of atmosphere".¹ This is the basic denominator of Gutiérrez Nájera's intuitive art. The Larousse Encyclopedia Of Modern Art explains further that the Impressionists in a quest for tactile values

turned to attempting the impossible--to capture that which was fugitive, fluid, impalpable and moving. . . . They preferred moments of transformation, vapour rising in the warm glow of the setting sun, or the freezing of the water in midwinter; and they always enjoyed painting mists. . . .The reality of the Impressionists was a solution of liquid and of light in which everything was plunged.²

In reference to color, the above quote explains the principal manifestation of the theory. Color is affected by light, especially the fleeting, changing light, and many objects which reflect changing light--clouds, mist, waves--are important as reflectors of color and light. Images abound throughout Gutiérrez Nájera's writing with functions primarily intended to serve this fundamental Impressionist tenet.

1. Wylie Sypher, Rococo to Cubism, p. 171.

2. Michel Florisoone, "Impressionism and Symbolism", in Larousse Encyclopedia of Modern Art, ed. by René Huyghe (New York: Prometheus Press, 1965), p. 178.

The following quotes are arranged chronologically to illustrate how evenly this specific light imagery prevailed through the course of his writing career:

- 1875: la blanca luna
 riela en la onda azulada
 de la laguna,
- (Poesías I, p. 82)
- 1877: . . .yo miraba a la espléndida luz del
 medío día....rarísimas flores, rodeadas por
 un hilo luminoso. . .
- (Cuentos, pp. 12-3)
- 1880: . . .mientras tibia la luz se aleja.
- (Poesías I, p. 289)
- 1882: . . .la franja de oro que precede el sol
 apareció en los horizontes. . .
- (Cuentos, p. 118)
- 1884: . . .la luz, entrando brusca por las puertas
 emparejadas del balcón, fue a retratarla en
 el espejo. . .
- (Cuentos, p. 210)
- 1887: Morir cuando la luz, triste, retira sus
 aúreas redes de la onda verde,
- (Poesías II, p. 188)
- 1890: . . .una gran mata de cabellos rubios,
 flotando en las tinieblas de la noche como
 sobre las ondas de un mar negro.
- (Cuentos, p. 410)
- 1895: ¡Ola azul, de luceros salpicada!
- (Poesías II, p. 259)

Closely related to a fondness for atmospheric effect, Gutiérrez Nájera developed a special affinity for the color white. Schulman, with an exaggeration that

nevertheless seems true, noted that "Casi no hay estrofa en que no se mencione el color blanco."¹ Although the desire to create atmosphere does not fully account for the employment of white, several passages reveal its use to create an ambiance of misty whiteness:

. . .la blanca aurora que el horizonte baña

(Poesías I, p. 105)

¡Qué bella se mira mi blanca casita
a orillas de un lago de límpido azul!
Parece paloma que oculta dormita
en nido amoroso de gasas y tul.

(Poesías I, p. 138)

De blancas palomas el aire se puebla;
con túnica blanca, tejida de niebla

(Poesías II, p. 167)

Many other colors are used for an instantaneous arrest of light in motion. Particularly striking are the combinations of colors captured in a multiplicity of nuances with a complex fusion:

Tiñe de azul y rosa
temblando el alba
los vidrios de colores
de tu ventana.

(Poesías I, p. 85)

mirando deshacerse los celajes,
caleidoscopio inmenso del espacio.

(Poesías I, p. 184)

Ora blancas cual copos de nieve,
ora negras, azules o rojas,

1. Schulman, Génesis del modernismo, p. 142.

en miriadas esmaltan el aire.

(Poesías II, p. 135)

. . .seguí constante a las mujeres. . .Clavada la pupila en su calzado. . .dejando una media azul por una media gris, o una botita de cabritilla negra por un garboso botín de piel dorada. . .ora siguiendo a ésta u ora a aquélla, tal como la abeja de flor en flor,

(Cuentos, p. 83)

In the above quote the movement of the legs creates a kaleidoscopic movement of colors. In other places colors, or the suggestion of colors, are juxtaposed in such a profuse manner that almost the same end is gained:

Grandes salones, llenos de graderías y corredores, guardaban en vistosa muchedumbre un número incalculable de mercancías; tapetes de finísimo tejido, colgados de altos barandales; hules brillantes de distintos dibujos y colores cubriendo una gran parte de los muros; grandes rollos de alfombras, en forma de pirámides y torres; y en vidrieras, aparadores y anaqueles, multitud de paraguas y sombrillas, preciosas cajas policromas, encerrando corbatas, guantes finos, medias de seda, cintas y pañuelos.

(Cuentos, p. 190)

Factually, the description is without movement. Movement is nevertheless created by the method of enumeration that gives the feeling of quickly passing the eye from object to object.

Another correlation between Gutiérrez Nájera and the Impressionists was the choice of colors to emphasize. "They preferred to limit their range more or less to the spectrum colors, and chose yellow, orange, vermilion, crimson,

violet, blue and green."¹ In the case of Gutiérrez Nájera, there is an exception to this tendency that will be examined below; however, there is no question of a predilection for a wide variety of hues rather than limiting himself to darker primary colors. This is partially accomplished through the imagistic association which accompanies the color. For example, in "Mariposas" the primary colors blue and red are mentioned; however, since butterflies are the objects referred to, it is more than plausible that the darker hues of red and blue are excluded. At least one poem, "[De mago es tu pincel]", suggests that butterflies were important for color shadings: "¿Sus matices te dan las mariposas?" (Poesías II, p. 253). The most frequent association with blue is sky which creates a soft illusion: "Pocas mañanas hay tan alegres, tan frescas, tan azules, como esta mañana de San Juan" (Cuentos, p. 141). The allusion to flowers would also imply a pastel configuration ("La misa de las flores") since the petals are frequently secondary colors.

Although the tendency toward secondary colors exists, there clearly are exceptions. The most singular exception would be the heavy use of black and darkness. It is here that the analogy with the Impressionists breaks and another appears, that of the decadents. Gutiérrez Nájera shared with the decadents a strong sense of death which he

1. Michel Florisoone, "Impressionism and Symbolism", p. 179.

symbolically presented through pervasive use of blackness, shadow and darkness. As a datum of immediate experience this is frequently a complete inner experience which often relates to the world of dream. Such is the case in:

"Ondas muertas": En la sombra debajo de la tierra
donde nunca llegó la mirada

(Poesías II, p. 131)

"Las almas huérfanas":
Ennegrece los aires el humo
que en columnas despiden las fá-
bricas.

(Poesías II, p. 153)

"Mis enlutadas": . . ., haraposas brujas
con uñas negras
mi vida escarban.

(Poesías II, p. 161)

The most innovative use of color, however, is the Symbolist technique of synaesthesia or correspondences. Baudelaire was the principal initiator of the technique of intersensory relationships such as expounded in his poem entitled "Correspondences", where he wrote:

Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se
répondent.

Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs
d'enfants,
Doux comme les hautbois, vert comme les prairies,
-Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,¹

With Gutiérrez Nájera colors predominate in whatever application of synaesthetic imagery he makes. Smell and sound are present but always in a lesser quantity. Following are

1. Charles Baudelaire, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), p. 11.

examples where either smell or sound coalesce with color; "blanca brisa perfumada" (Poesías I, p. 145); "luces, perfumes y sonos/ van al mismo panteón" (Poesías I, p. 314); ". . .el secreto,/ de luz, de aroma, de briza y flor" (Poesías I, p. 285). By far the most common use of synaesthesia is the correlation of color and abstract concept. Svend Johansen defined this mingling of thought and sensory stimuli as abstract synaesthesia.¹ This abstract synaesthesia was used throughout his career:

1876: Es blanca tu conciencia y azul tu pensamiento
(Poesías I, p. 108)

1877: . . .debía iluminar con voluptuosa luz. . .
(Cuentos, p. 12)

1879: . . .estos sueños de oro eran. . .
(Cuentos, p. 290)

1880: . . .estas ilusiones color de rosa. . .
(Cuentos, p. 33)

1881: . . .es todo un cuento azul. . .
(Cuentos, p. 70)

1882: Yo vuelvo de todos los países azules. . .
(Cuentos, p. 151)

1883: . . .la Primavera es color de rosa, el Estío,
color de oro; el Otoño, azul, y el Invierno,
blanco.

(Cuentos, p. 179)

1. Svend Johansen, Le symbolisme: Étude sur le style des symbolistes français (Copenhagen: E. Munhsgaard, 1945), p. 65.

- 1885: la blanca mariposa que llaman la virtud
(Poesías II, p. 58)
- 1887: ¡En tus abismos, negros y rojos
 fiebre implacable, mi alma se pierde;
(Poesías II, p. 117)
- 1893: Primavera azul y hermosa
(Poesías II, p. 248)
- 1895: Tan blanca vas por la existencia humana,
 tanta virtud tu espíritu atesora.
(Poesías II, p. 259)
- 1895: Hay versos de oro y hay notas de plata
(Poesías II, p. 261)

In addition to the above imagery taken from texts, Gutiérrez Nájera customarily used color synaesthesia in the titles of his crónicas. Several of the stories were originally published as crónicas with color in the title. Typical of the titles are Crónicas color de rosa, de humo, caleidoscopicos, and de mil colores. The most unique of the titles are those which omit the mention of a specific color to evoke it through naming an object. "En la calle" was published as "Crónica color de muertos"; "La novela de tranvía" as "Crónica color de lluvia"; "En el Hipódromo" as "Crónica color de Águila"; "Historia de un dominó" as "Crónica color de [Louise] Théo"; "Berta y Manón" as "Crónica color de Caracole".

Gutiérrez Nájera's use of synaesthesia epitomizes, in a way, the entire scope of his view of himself in relation to his surroundings. He does not seek to escape the

world but probes to know its innermost nature. Whether viewing a social event or delving into the mysteries of synaesthesia, the basic idea is usually present that the world is what the mind perceives. Also the idea is never distant that the world's problems are essentially the same as those of the author, a struggle against death and toward art and spiritual values. Finding transcendental values in blue is essentially the same activity as detailing the beauty of Mexico City's beautiful women; or, feeling the presence of death in black is the same as showing the limitations of deterministic psychology. The result is a unified view of self and society.

CONCLUSION

The previous pages show how Gutiérrez Nájera used a pattern of symbols to record artistically his personal vision of the world. Mariano Azuela, in a short article on Gutiérrez Nájera, made several observations which briefly summarize the technique and content of Gutiérrez Nájera's symbols. Azuela wrote in three different sentences:

Una nada¹ le basta para dar vida a un personaje o a un cuadro.

Veo el proceso del verdadero novelista, el del gran Honorato de Balzac que con una partícula tomada al azar, un rasgo, un gesto, un ademán, una prenda de vestir, recrea un personaje,² una familia, una clase social, un pueblo, un mundo.

. . .de una nadería sabe sacar sartas de perlas,³ pendientes de brillantes, collares de corales.

Gutiérrez Nájera begins, as Azuela suggests, with nothingness and works toward fulfillment which consists of bringing oneself into harmony with universal spiritual qualities whose highest manifestation is art. The author makes component parts of his writing, such as images and characters, into representations which he hopes will magically capture

1. Mariano Azuela, "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera" in Obras completas, III (Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1960), p. 725.

2. Ibid., p. 726.

3. Ibid.

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absolutes of truth and beauty.

During the course of his career, Gutiérrez Nájera gave a comprehensive theoretical foundation to his assumptions on art in numerous critical writings. Positivism and scientific determinism were very much a part of Gutiérrez Nájera's intellectual environment and their effect on him was profound. On the one hand, he turned energetically away from positivism, very much repelled by the idea that man was only a material object. On the other hand, there was a tacit acceptance of positivism since he was driven to art by the possibility that man might be nothing more than protoplasm.

This conflict was more than a distaste for positivism. It was, in short, the Romantic dilemma of the nineteenth century and Gutiérrez Nájera's position in the broad current of Romantic thought is easily demonstrated. Within this movement, he is distinguishable from the early Romantics by much less confidence in the individual's ability to direct his destiny, less faith in absolute ideals, and a stronger tie to aestheticism. Art, however, as can be seen in his ideas on literature, is a very uncertain absolute, more of a medium for struggle than a tangible alleviation. This is close enough to Existentialism to warrant a disclaimer. An Existentialist typically would place emphasis on struggle rather than art. Gutiérrez Nájera consistently upholds art as the final truth, however prevalent the notion of struggle. Either man struggled toward art and idealism

or surrendered to materialism, which was equivalent to death.

Gutiérrez Nájera saw human life and history as a metaphysical struggle between life (spirit) and death (materialism). Many symbols are used either to portray this struggle or to function as a stopgap against materialism. The ultimate goal of these symbols is to give vital meaning and value to the artist and his audience through art by providing representations of ideality. Since artistic expression was the highest manifestation of ideality many symbols are taken directly from the arts. The names of writers, painters, musicians, specific works and musical instruments commonly recur to reinforce an aesthetic ideal. The author's frequent textual references to himself as a writer or the use of artists as central subjects in the stories and poems are conspicuous examples of giving art and ideality central importance. Idealism is also invoked through an imagery which suggests the ethereal world of pure idea: birds, flowers, precious metals, incense, sky, sea, objets d'art, fog. These items tend to have intangible, fleeting or mysterious qualities which makes them fitting correlates to spiritual realities.

He did not stop, however, by merely trying to represent value through ideality. He also tries to make himself, through his writing, into a timeless and universal continuum. Foreign names and places occur throughout Gutiérrez Nájera's writing and function as symbols of universality.

References to the past, from ancient literatures to the memories of the author or his characters, are usually attempts to invoke an archetype of spiritual perfection in the hope that the author's work will measure up to the archetype and survive eternally. Mythological references are particularly important symbols of Gutiérrez Nájera's dedication to timeless archetypal norms. In myth he saw the ultimate symbol of truth which negated materialistic chronological time. Myth, therefore, is commonly invoked to give finite personal existence an infinite temporal extension. Whether the author is directly addressing the reader from first person narration or indirectly through the voice of a character, myth invariably symbolizes a timeless counterpoint to material finiteness and death.

Against the background of universality there is also a concern for national problems. Contrary to a universal tendency in literary criticism to catalogue literary figures either as redeemers of society or as seekers after a personalized grail, the distinction in the case of Gutiérrez Nájera is blurred. He was, to concede a limited validity to generalizations, more interested in broader human problems than in limited social issues, but the latter nevertheless functioned organically as part of the former and Gutiérrez Nájera was not blind to human injustice or unconcerned about Mexico's welfare. Within his own frame of ideas, Gutiérrez Nájera saw Mexico's historical dilemma as being the same as his own, a struggle between materialism

and idealism. The contest between materialism and idealism led in another direction, in addition to social preoccupations, toward a concentration on psychological processes. The will of the individual to survive and achieve spiritual fulfillment is repeatedly portrayed through fantasy and dream. In Gutiérrez Nájera's interpretation, dreams functioned either as a revelation of the hellish world of materialism and metaphysical isolation, or of the realm of aesthetic idealism. The most important single contribution to come from his use of dreams and fantasy was the use of color synaesthesia.

Color synaesthesia epitomizes, in a way, the totality of Gutiérrez Nájera's achievement as an artist. More than mere form, the use of color as a correlative to emotive states symbolizes a response to the author's immediate environment as it filters through his mind with a particularly fine awareness of psychological processes. Equally important, color synaesthesia symbolizes a spiritual norm in the service of aestheticism and as such becomes a temporal symbol of infinity. Briefly stated, Gutiérrez Nájera, without necessarily having the rigorous system of a philosopher, did have a consistent world view which he worked into artistic form. The consistency of his views is underscored by the evenness with which color synaesthesia was used throughout his career. As stated in the chapter on his literary theory, Gutiérrez Nájera began his career with the publication of a literary manifesto--"El arte y el materialismo"--

which remained the foundation of his literary activity until he died.

The question which naturally arises in the conclusion to a study such as this is, did the author really succeed in communicating a world view? Did he express something more substantial than subjectivism or inward escapism? The previous pages have established with sufficient quotes from the author that undoubtedly the expression of a world view was intended; however, the success with which the intention was executed is best attested to by others. For this purpose, Mariano Azuela is a particularly appropriate evaluator since his own socially oriented novels are a pole apart from Gutiérrez Nájera's poems and stories. Azuela answers emphatically that Gutiérrez Nájera did succeed. In the novelist's article, quoted above, Azuela gave the highest possible affirmation when he concluded that ". . .de esta clase de escritor como Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera es de donde debe surgir el gran novelista mexicano."¹

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Mariano Azuela, Obras, III, p. 729.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Titles of articles by Gutiérrez Nájera used in Chapter I:

Cuentos color de humo

"Mañanas de abril y mayo", n.d.

Obras de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Prosa, II

"William Shakespeare", n.d.

"Otelo", n.d.

"Otelo.-Yago.-Desdémona", n.d.

"Hamlet", n.d.

"Romeo y Julieta", n.d.

"El teatro español contemporáneo", n.d.

"Campoamor sin corona", n.d.

Obras: Crítica literaria

"El arte y el materialismo", August 5,8,17,26 of 1876.

"Barba azul", February 5, 1882.

"Carta abierta al señor Angel Franco", March 19, 1893.

"Páginas sueltas, de Agapito Silva", May 10,11,12,13
14 of 1876.

"Romances, de Francisco de A. Lerdo", September 19,1876.

"Un certamen literario", September 28 and October 3,5,
10 of 1876.

"Los Ensueños, de Pedro Castera", March 17,27 of 1877.

"Ocios poéticos, de Ipanandro Acaico", October 6, 1878.

"Trovas colombinas, de José Peón y Contreras", June 30,
1881.

"El Ateneo mexicano de 1882", June 20, 1882.

"Una edición mexicana de María", November 23, 1882.

"Paisajes y leyendas, de Ignacio Manuel Altamirano",
June 18, 1884.

"La Academia Mexicana", July 29, 1884; August 1,14,15
of 1884.

"Poesías, nueva serie, de Gustavo A. Baz", June 19,
1887.

"La bola, de Sancho Polo[Emilio Rabasa]", July 31,
1887.

"Taide, de José Mérida [José Peón y Contreras]",
November 20, 1887.

"Tristissima nox", April 1,8,15 of 1888.

"Pequeños dramas, de José Peón y Contreras", August 26,
1888.

"Al autor de los 'Murmurios de la selva'", epistola de Justo Sierra", September 8, 1888.

"Un banqueta al maestro Altamirano", August 13, 1889.

"Literatura episcopal", December 11, 1889.

"Del natural", de Federico Gamboa", February 2, 1890.

"Veleidosa", de José Peón y Contreras", July 19, 1891.

"El libro del amor", de Adalberto A. Esteva", August 23, 1891.

"La oratoria de Mateos", December 11, 1892.

Obras inéditas: Crónicas de "Puck"

December 2, 1893; December 18, 1893; December 24, 1893;

February 25, 1894; March 18, 1894; April 1, 1894;

April 29, 1894; May 13, 1894; June 10, 1894; July 22,

1894; July 29, 1894; August 5, 1894; September 9, 1894;

September 16, 1894; October 7, 1894; November 4, 1894;

November 18, 1894; December 2, 1894.

La Revista Azul

"Al pie de la escalera", May 6, 1894.

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