

A STUDY OF THE REVISTA AZUL

by

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PREFACE

The Revista Azul, published in Mexico City during the last decade of the nineteenth century, has been considered by literary critics as one of the outstanding literary reviews of the modernist movement. It was the focal point of an important group of young writers who, under the leadership of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, produced some of the first important works of modernism in Mexico. The periodical was, however, thoroughly cosmopolitan and reprinted many compositions by contemporary Spanish American, European, and American writers. These foreign authors, all greatly appreciated by the reading public of Mexico, in turn had considerable influence on the writers of the generation of the Revista Azul.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to present a comprehensive journalistic history of the Revista Azul and a critical study of its contents. The periodical will be studied in relation to the historical period during which it was published as well as in relation to other nineteenth century Mexican literary periodicals and newspapers. In the analysis of its contents special emphasis will be given to those compositions written by the modernists in an attempt to draw specific conclusions regarding their esthetic and stylistic principles.

Previous research on the Revista Azul is not extensive. While its importance is mentioned by almost every literary historian of the period including such well-known critics as Blanco-Fombona, Coester, Jiménez Rueda, González Peña, Max Henríquez Ureña, and Torres-Rioseco, extensive studies of its contents are limited to a series of articles by Dorothy

Kress and an unpublished thesis by Mary Louise Wildenthal. The articles by Kress deal almost exclusively with the French influence on the periodical but also contain a brief survey of the contributions of other European writers. Wildenthal's study deals primarily with the better-known compositions of the modernists which appear in its pages. Although the studies by these two critics reveal valuable data concerning the Revista Azul, there are still many important lacunae which this dissertation attempts to fill.

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. The first two are introductory and present a general survey of modernism and the historical period during which the Revista was published. Chapter three is a detailed journalistic history of the periodical, and the next three chapters contain an analysis of the contents of the journal. This analysis begins with an evaluation of the contributions of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and is followed by studies of the contributions of the generation of the Revista Azul and of other writers from outside Mexico. Following the concluding chapter, a complete index to the periodical and a special index of articles of literary criticism which appear in its pages are included as an aid to further research on this period.

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CHAPTER I

A GENERAL SURVEY OF MODERNISM

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century the literature of Spanish America underwent a period of renovation which brought about important stylistic changes in both prose and poetry. Modernism is the term generally applied to this entire literary movement. After modernism had become well established in the New World, it reached Spain where certain members of the "Generación del '98" made use of its artistic style in an effort to solve Spain's own problems of literary art.

The movement of modernism was part of a general tendency toward renovation of art and literature in western Europe during the last part of the nineteenth century. Such artistic movements as impressionism, symbolism, Parnassianism, and Preraphaelitism all show many of the same characteristics which the modernists incorporated into their works. At the beginning modernism was a reaction against the excesses of romanticism, but at the same time it conserved the romantic traits of exoticism, pessimism, and melancholy. Many of the early modernists including Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Rubén Darío, José Asunción Silva, and Julián del Casal, had been admirers and to a certain degree followers of Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, and José Zorrilla. The modernist reaction was against the romantics' excessive sentimentality, exalted passion, and abuse of clichés and stereotyped images. The modernists attempted to introduce a more subtle beauty and elegance

into the language. Their initial reaction has been described by Max Henríquez Ureña in the following words: "El impulso inicial del modernismo se tradujo, por lo tanto, en un ansia de novedad y de superación en cuanto a la forma."¹

The inspiration of the early modernists was found principally in nineteenth century French literature. From the Parnassians the modernists inherited the desire for perfection of form. Rubén Darío praised the work of Leconte de Lisle and Catulle Mendès in Azul..., and Julián del Casal was inspired by certain sonnets of José María de Heredia. The Parnassian influence was also responsible for much of the interest which the modernists showed in ancient Greek culture. The modernists likewise turned to French letters in their quest for novelty of expression. In the works of the symbolists they found a new poetry liberated from many ancient rhetorical restraints. In both the prose and the poetry of the symbolists there were new musical qualities, and the great emotional sensitivity so evident in the verses of Paul Verlaine, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Arthur Rimbaud was reflected in the lines of the modernists. Both the symbolists and the modernists sought to express this emotional sensitivity by choosing words and combinations of words which had great visual and acoustic values. They sought to appeal to as many of the senses as possible and, as Baudelaire had done, to exploit all possible interrelations of the senses. In an attempt to express as many overtones as possible in their works, the modernists were prone to use an abundance of adjectives. It has been pointed out that the modernists used many more adjectives than the romantics.² They were more precise than the romantics in their poetic expression and in their choice of adjectives.

The importance of colors in the whole movement of modernism was also significant. The experiments with colors of Théophile Gautier and Arthur Rimbaud as well as those of earlier figures like Victor Hugo, Lord Byron, and Edgar Allan Poe were emulated by the early modernists. Gutiérrez Nájera and Rubén Darío were the first modernists in whose works the effects of color can be seen, and Darío's first important volume bore the title Azul.... In Ricardo Jaimes Freyre's Castalia bárbara the constant use of the colors red and white supports the barbaric, Nordic tone of the whole volume. It must be remembered that the modernists used colors not only to create impressionistic word pictures but also to provoke certain moods and feelings.

Apart from the theoretical and the technical aspects of the modernist movement, it is necessary to consider the backgrounds and settings which the modernists employed. Exoticism in both time and place was characteristic of the entire movement. The interest in ancient Greece and Jaimes Freyre's use of Nordic motifs have already been mentioned. Another modernist, Guillermo Valencia of Colombia, turned back to the early Christian era for inspiration and themes. One of the most frequently utilized settings was France during the reign of the Bourbons, especially the eighteenth century. This influence reached Spanish America through the works of Verlaine and other poets and through the Goncourts' studies of the painting of Watteau and other aspects of eighteenth century court life. This French spirit of early modernism was summarized by Rubén Darío in the prelude to the volume Cantos de vida y esperanza in the following lines:

y muy siglo diez y ocho y muy antiguo
y muy moderno; audaz, cosmopolita;
con Hugo fuerte y con Verlaine ambiguo,
y una sed de ilusiones infinita.

Modernism also turned to the Orient for settings, themes, and even verse forms. Many nineteenth century French writers had paved the way for such modernists as Rubén Darío, Julián del Casal, and Guillermo Valencia who used oriental themes from time to time. Two of the most fervent orientalist were the Mexican poets, José Juan Tablada and Efrén Rebolledo. The former introduced the hai-kai, a Japanese verse form, into Spanish poetry. Other enthusiasts of oriental art were the Cuban brothers Carlos Pío and Federico Urbach.

In their desire for renovation of poetic expression the modernists turned their attention to the form of Spanish verse. Following the example of the symbolists, they elected to depart from the paths of contemporary verse patterns in search of other forms with greater rhythmic and musical appeal. Often they used classical Spanish verse forms such as the pie quebrado or the monorime of Gonzalo de Berceo. Frequently they also employed elaborate techniques similar to those used by Góngora and his followers. Other times they imitated French forms or invented new combinations based on traditional Spanish models. Jaimes Freyre was one of the greatest experimenters in new verse forms, and in 1912 he attempted to theorize a new system of versification. Coester describes the primary consequences of the modernists' system of versification in the following manner: "The first consequences of the modernista break with tradition were irregular length of lines and new combinations of lines of different length; but the lines were usually based on a metrical

unit consisting of a given number of syllables with the rhythmic accent on the same syllable of each unit, as in Silva's 'Nocturno.' . . . Rubén Darío proclaimed the all-important thing to be the internal harmony of the verse. . . ."⁵

Another characteristic of modernism was its use of symbols of plastic elegance. The swan was the principal one used, but the fleur-de-lis and the peacock also appeared as decorative motifs of beauty and elegance. The swan had appeared throughout the poetry of the Farnassians and the symbolists, and through them it was passed on to the modernists. In Gutiérrez Nájera the swan was used principally as a decorative element, but in the lines of Rubén Darío it became a symbol of grace and poetic beauty. The swan appears in twenty-seven compositions of Rubén Darío and in at least nine poems of Julián del Casal. José Santos Chocano and Casal both devoted poems to the peacock. These plastic motifs were often utilized by the modernists not only for their elegance and grace but also for the color which they added to their compositions.

Within the modernist movement it is possible to distinguish two periods. The first period lasted until about 1898 and was characterized by highly stylized compositions inspired principally by French romantics, Farnassians, and symbolists. This ivory tower type of art of the first period can readily be seen in the first two outstanding works of Rubén Darío, Azul... and Prosas profanas. With the war between Spain and the United States a feeling of uneasiness began to spread throughout Spanish America, and the threat of the colossus of the north caused the former colonies to turn in sympathy toward Spain. Modernist literature began to seek inspiration in Castilian sources. The war hastened the end of

the first period of escapism and preciosity and indirectly brought about the second period of modernism during which the movement lost its rigid formalism and became more personal. Attention now shifted to the important problems of Spanish America. The full effects of the second period of modernism are seen in Darfo's Cantos de vida y esperanza and El canto errante.

The influence of modernism reached Spain late in the nineteenth century.⁴ Poets such as Salvador Rueda and Francisco Villaespesa were close friends of the modernists and maintained correspondence with them. Juan Ramón Jiménez avidly read the early works of Guillermo Valencia, Jaimes Freyre, Manuel Díaz Rodríguez, Leopoldo Lugones, and Amado Nervo. The many literary reviews published by the modernists in the New World were widely read by Spanish literati, and Rubén Darfo was introduced to Spain through the Cartas americanas of Juan Valera. However, it was the "Generación del '98" that most generally accepted the principles of modernism and reshaped them in an attempt to solve the problems of literary art in Spain. Besides their attempt to define Spain and the problem of being a Spaniard, the members of this generation were concerned with the problem of renovating what they considered unartistic realism. It was in the solution of this problem that literary figures such as Ramón del Valle-Inclán found themselves closely allied with the modernists. The influence of modernism in Spain was widespread. It has been described by Max Henríquez Ureña in the following words: ". . . el impulso renovador del modernismo en América encontró unánime acogida entre los escritores y poetas que florecieron en España en los últimos años del siglo XIX y los primeros del XX; y la gran mayoría de ellos hizo suyo el nuevo lenguaje que el modernismo representaba."⁵

While the stylistic innovations of modernism were becoming accepted in Spain, the movement itself had reached its maturity in the New World. Modernism had made lasting changes in the style of Spanish prose and poetry, but the literary figures of Spanish America were seeking new paths of expression. Enrique González Martínez, the Mexican poet, sought meditative serenity in his poetry. His famous sonnet, "Tuércele el cuello al cisne. . .," indicates the end of the momento preciosista of modernism. The work of González Martínez is the symbolic expression of the mature period of the movement which had begun in 1905 with the publication of Rubén Darío's Cantos de vida y esperanza. It also represents a link between modernism and the contemporary period.

Modern critics generally consider José Martí, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Julián del Casal, José Asunción Silva, Rubén Darío, Amado Nervo, Ricardo Jaimes Freyre, and José Santos Chocano as the initiators and leaders of the movement of modernism. Only Martí entered the field of politics; Gutiérrez Nájera, Casal, and Darío were journalists, and Silva lived on the wealth of his family. Ruben Darío is considered the mentor of the entire movement and Spanish America's most cosmopolitan poet.

The great Cuban patriot, José Martí, was the direct precursor of modernism. Although he is best known for his efforts in behalf of Cuban independence, his importance to the modernist movement is primordial. The year 1882, when Martí's Ismaelillo was published, is generally considered the date of the beginning of modernism. The novelty of this collection of poetry was in the general tone of its poetic expression: simple and natural, filled with great emotional sensitivity, and yet containing new and delicately wrought images. Simplicity is also the keynote of Versos sencillos (1891). In prose Martí was an outstanding

writer of short essays dealing with contemporary figures and events. His style was consciously artistic with constant rhythmic variations and brilliant effects of color and light. He was an innovator in both prose and poetry, and with his efforts Spanish verse broke the restraints of the ages and received new freshness and life.

In Mexico the new literary movement found an early leader in Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, a journalist par excellence and founder of the Revista Azul. Writing both prose and poetry, Gutiérrez Nájera contributed to the principal periodicals of Mexico City until his death in 1895. His entire life was dedicated to letters and journalism. His contribution has been described by Henríquez Ureña in the following words: "Constante y metódico en su labor periodística, de su pluma brotaban a diario, aparte de múltiples sueltos y trabajos ocasionales sin firma, impresiones de teatro y apuntes sobre libros recientes o sobre acontecimientos de la vida literaria . . ."6 While the French influence is always evident in both his prose and poetry, it is the gracia natural of his style that distinguishes his literary production. In his verse he communicates a spontaneous feeling of tenderness, of graceful and skeptical humor; in his elegiac poems he passes through a period of great spiritual doubt and finally achieves a feeling of serenity and resigned melancholy. The importance of his poetry was great, but it was in his prose writings--the crónicas, impressions of the theater, literary and social criticisms, travel notes, fantasies, and short stories--that Gutiérrez Nájera's contribution to modernism was most decisive. In his prose the influence of his friend Martí can often be seen, but Gutiérrez Nájera's elegant, melancholy style was itself emulated by a whole generation of young modernists, many of whom contributed to his Revista Azul.

Julían del Casal was one of these young writers whose poetry appeared frequently in the Revista Azul. A compatriot of Martí, Casal was a leader of the small circle of early modernists in Havana. He was thoroughly acquainted with the poetry of the French Parnassians and a deep admirer of Baudelaire. Many of his verses show a definite relationship to the poetry of José Maria de Heredia and Leconte de Lisle. Many of Casal's poems are based on classical or Biblical subjects, but a number of his compositions are inspired by themes of Spanish or Cuban origin. He was a great lover of exoticism and a connoisseur of Japanese art. In other verses of a more personal and somewhat romantic nature he expresses feelings of pessimism, nostalgia, and sadness. Much of this sadness in his poetry was caused by an unhappy, sickly childhood. A severe tubercular condition caused his death at the age of thirty.

Equally pessimistic and somewhat romantic in spirit was José Asunción Silva. Two years before his death in 1898 he caused a stir in literary circles in Bogotá with an elegiac poem entitled "Nocturno." The poem was an outstanding example of rhythmic verse applied to a melancholic theme, and it was revolutionary in its use of unusual metrical combinations. Except for "Nocturno," Silva's other poems and his prose were scarcely known outside of Colombia at the time of his death. His posthumous fame as a modernist is based on the great variety of metrical innovations which he used and on the deep lyrical quality of his lines. Silva is known as one of the greatest representatives of the pessimistic spirit which prevailed in modernism. Like many other young authors of this generation, his pessimism was caused by a series of personal tragedies which gave his poetry a feeling of sadness and morose

melancholy. Silva had an obsession for death which was evident in many of his verses, and in 1896 he committed suicide. Silva, however, left the world a legacy of delicate prose and rhythmic, musical verse.

By the year 1896, Martí, Gutiérrez Nájera, Casal, and Silva all had died. The first period of modernism with its highly stylized compositions and esprit français was drawing to a close. Of the initiators of modernism only Rubén Darío was still alive. But scores of young writers in the cosmopolitan capitals of the New World were eagerly following the examples which the initiators of the movement had provided, and Rubén Darío had become the leader of Spanish American letters.

"Todo el proceso del modernismo está íntegro en la obra de Rubén Darío."⁷ The history of modernism is so closely entwined with the life of Darío that it is almost impossible to separate them. Such a cosmopolitan soul as Rubén Darío could not long be confined within the boundaries of his native Nicaragua. Before the age of twenty the young journalist sought new horizons in Chile where he published Azul... in 1888. In subsequent years he traveled as a journalist or a diplomat to many countries in Europe and the New World. Of special importance were his visits to France, Argentina, and Spain. In Paris he made the acquaintance of many of the symbolists whose influence was especially significant in certain of his works. While in Buenos Aires he was the leader of the circle of modernists there, and during the years of his residency in the Argentine capital (from 1893 to 1898), it became the indisputable center of modernism in Spanish America. Darío's visits to Spain did much to draw the modernists and the young Spanish writers together.

Through the efforts of Rubén Darío, Hispanic poetry was born anew. The significance of his publications, Azul..., Prosas profanas, and Cantos de vida y esperanza, has already been discussed. With the publication of the latter volume in 1905 the poeta de América rejects in part the superficiality and preciosity of Azul... and Prosas profanas. The more mature, sincere poetry of Cantos de vida y esperanza is seen again in El canto errante and Canto a la Argentina. In these latter works Darío successfully achieves the fusion of a myriad of sources and inspirations with a genuine New World spirit. But the dominant note throughout these volumes is one of autumnal melancholy. Darío was in ill health during these years of his life, and the World War had caused him to become somewhat pessimistic. But his literary mission had been accomplished successfully. Hispanic letters had gained new vigor and freshness through his efforts. In 1916, his health broken, he returned to his native Nicaragua where he died on February 6. Modernism likewise had completed its mission, and the graceful swan of elegance and beauty was interred with its master.

Of great significance in the whole movement of modernism was the influence of these initiators on the many young writers who congregated in the cosmopolitan capitals of the New World. After 1896 new leaders in the movement of literary renovation began to rise from the ranks of this young generation. Many of these new figures, including Leopoldo Lugones, José Enrique Rodó, and José Santos Chocano, consciously attempted to fuse the new trends in creative literature with native American themes. In the larger capital cities they began to publish literary journals which served as vehicles for the dissemination of both their own compositions as well as the latest productions of European writers. Many of

these journals had an ephemeral life, but a select few lasted a number of years and had a decided effect on Spanish American letters.

Until the late 1890's Buenos Aires was the center of modernism in Spanish America. The young modernists in the Argentine capital looked to Rubén Darío for leadership. One of the outstanding figures of the group was the Bolivian, Ricardo Jaimes Freyre, a man of vast culture and poetic aptitude. Together with Rubén Darío he founded La Revista de América, a journal of secondary importance in comparison with the excellent La Biblioteca and El Mercurio de América, both significant reviews in Argentine modernism. Other important figures in the Buenos Aires group were Leopoldo Lugones and Enrique Rodríguez Larreta. In Lugones' first important volume, Las montañas de oro (1897), he showed himself to be the prophet of a new humanity, an American Hugo. In later works he became more refined and précieux with occasional reappearances of the heroic, epic tone. Rodríguez Larreta was primarily a novelist whose masterpiece, La gloria de Don Ramiro, achieved extensive popularity. Other writers in the Buenos Aires group included Leopoldo Díaz, Angel de Estrada, and Darío Herrera, a native of Panama. When Rubén Darío left Buenos Aires for Spain in 1898, it marked the end of the organized group of modernists in the Argentine capital. The modernist periodicals soon ceased publication, and the center of the movement shifted to other capitals.

The appearance of the Revista Nacional de Literatura y Ciencias Sociales in Montevideo in 1895 marked the arrival of the modernist movement in Uruguay. The influence of Rodó on the Revista Nacional group and on Uruguayan modernism was strong. With his publication of Motivos de

Proteo (1909) and Ariel (1910) Rodó established himself as the philosopher of modernism and one of its most talented prose writers. Uruguay produced two other important prose writers, Horacio Quiroga and Carlos Reyles, who show definite modernist tendencies in certain of their works. Quiroga specialized in artistic short stories describing the jungle province of Misiones in northern Argentina. He organized a modernist literary group in Montevideo known as the "Consistorio del Gay Saber." Reyles wrote both short stories and novels, many of them frankly realistic or naturalistic, but in novels such as El embrujo de Sevilla his style is comparable to that of other modernist novelists. The outstanding leader of the modernist poets of Montevideo was Julio Herrera y Reissig. The scion of a wealthy and influential Uruguayan family, Herrera y Reissig had a tremendous influence on the many young Uruguayan poets who formed the literary society known as the "Torre de los Panoramas." He died in 1917 at the age of thirty-five. His poetic production consisted principally of intricate sonnets devoted to the theme of peaceful rustic life. In his verse modernist poetry reached its most daring and complex expression.

While modernism was reaching its zenith in Buenos Aires and Montevideo in the mid 1890's, it was only beginning in Caracas and Bogotá. In Caracas the influence of José Martí was especially strong. Venezuelan modernists produced most of their work in prose. On the other hand, Colombia, where the memory of José Asunción Silva was still vivid, produced a whole generation of poets. In both countries the modernists issued a series of literary journals similar to those published in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. In Caracas the first modernist journal was

Cosmópolis, published between the years of 1894 and 1898 by Pedro Emilio Coll, Pedro César Domínguez, and Luis Manuel Urbaneja Achelpohl. All three of the editors were authors of novels and short stories, and Urbaneja Achelpohl also contributed to the excellent journal, El Cojo Ilustrado, which continued the work of Cosmópolis. Venezuelan modernism reached its zenith with Manuel Díaz Rodríguez and Rufino Blanco-Fombona. Díaz Rodríguez was one of the outstanding novelists of modernism, and Blanco-Fombona excelled in almost every form of prose literature and wrote superb verse as well. Meanwhile, in Bogotá a large group of poets undertook the publication of the Revista Gris, the principal organ of modernism in Colombia. Guillermo Valencia, a young politician from Popayán, became the leader of the Revista Gris circle of poets, and the mastery with which he wielded his pen soon caused his fame to spread beyond Colombia. His poetry, alternately full of melancholy, hope, music, and color, was of a very different tone from that of Silva to whom he pays homage in his famous poem, "Leyendo a Silva." In many ways Valencia's culture is typical of the classical and humanistic learning which had persisted through the nineteenth century in the relatively isolated Colombian capital, but his classicism is tempered by a deep sensitivity to human feelings and emotions.

Buenos Aires, Montevideo, Caracas, and Bogotá were the centers of modernism in South America. While the other Spanish American republics produced important figures in the movement of literary renovation, none except Mexico produced the abundance of literary artists and literary reviews which existed in these four principal centers of the movement. Peru, however, can claim Manuel González Prada as a direct precursor of

the movement as well as José Santos Chocano, one of its greatest poets. González Prada's Minúsculas has been called the most authentic pre-modernistic work.⁸ González Prada's direct follower was the polished yet bombastic Chocano, the champion of the Indian, leader of the revolt against North American imperialism, and painter of tropical splendor and beauty. He is one of the best representatives of the mature period of modernism. In Central America and the Antilles there were many other figures of modernism, many of whom contributed to the Revista Azul. The outstanding modernist in Central America was the Guatemalan, Enrique Gómez Carrillo, a cosmopolitan author of novels and crónicas. Although Cuba had produced two of the important figures of early modernism in Martí and Casal, in later years the struggle for independence precluded extensive literary activity. However, Juana Borrero and the brothers Carlos Pío and Federico Urbach, all close companions of Casal, continued writing poetry during the war years, and a poetic renaissance following the conclusion of the war resulted in the formation of a new generation of modernists.

Near the end of the nineteenth century the center of the most intense modernist activity was Mexico City. With the departure of Rubén Darío from Buenos Aires in 1898 the Argentine capital's importance in modernism began to decline rapidly in favor of Mexico City. Interest in literary renovation was not new in Mexico; Gutiérrez, Nájera and Salvador Díaz Mirón had been among the principal initiators of the movement. In 1894 Gutiérrez Nájera had founded the famous Revista Azul in conjunction with Carlos Díaz Dufío and Luis G. Urbina. The Revista Azul was the first important literary review of modernism published in the Mexican capital, and it aided many young writers by publishing their first works.

Many of these young authors continued to write for the Revista Moderna which began publication in 1898, a year after the Revista Azul had ceased to exist. The Revista Moderna, which became the vocero of the modernist movement throughout all Spanish America, was founded by Jesús E. Valenzuela in close association with Amado Nervo. Both Valenzuela and Nervo had contributed to Gutiérrez Nájera's Revista Azul, and Nervo became a leading figure in the movement of modernism. His complete works fill twenty-eight volumes, sixteen of which are in prose. The general tone of his poetry is one of pantheism, mystic serenity, and deep religious conviction despite the constant presence of a disturbing skepticism. In his poetry he gradually progresses from an early period of overadornment to a mature period of deep simplicity. Nervo's total work lacks the preciousness of Gutiérrez Nájera. His charm lies in his sensitivity to his environment and his ability to capture this sensitivity with a minimum of words and phrases.

Other important contributors to both the Revista Azul and the Revista Moderna were Luis G. Urbina, José Juan Tablada, and Jesús Urueta. Of the three Urbina's style most closely parallels that of Gutiérrez Nájera. He demonstrates the same spontaneity, sentimentality, personal intimacy, and humorismo triste, and throughout his work overtones of romanticism persist. Tablada was an enthusiast of Japanese culture and added an Oriental flavor to Mexican modernism. One of the most distinguished prose writers who contributed to both revistas was Jesús Urueta. An exceptional orator, Urueta was a Greek scholar and a politician in the party which opposed Porfirio Díaz. There were many secondary and tertiary figures in Mexican modernism. This group included Efrén

Rebolledo, Balbino Dávalos, Francisco Manuel de Olaguibal, Rubén M. Campos, Luis Rosado Vega, Bernardo Couto Castillo, and María Enriqueta Camarillo de Pereyra. This whole generation of writers considered Justo Sierra as their maestro. Sierra lent his support to the Revista Azul where he published his translation of some sonnets of Heredia. His interest and good will were also extended to the Revista Moderna.

With the appearance of the poetry of Enrique González Martínez in the first decade of the twentieth century Mexican modernism entered a more mature period of meditative serenity. "Busca en todas las cosas un alma y un sentido / oculto," he wrote in Los senderos ocultos. In 1911 González Martínez went to Mexico City and immediately became the leader of a circle of young writers who had formed a literary organization called the Ateneo de México. Organized under the influence of modernism, the Ateneo de México was to bridge the span between modernism and the period of postmodernism. An excellent but short-lived literary review, Savia Moderna, was issued by the Ateneo. Among the many activities undertaken by this group was the suppression in 1907 of a spurious Revista Azul, issued by a mediocre rimester, Manuel Caballero. The Ateneo represented the beginning of the contemporary period in Mexican letters, for it produced such outstanding figures as Alfonso Reyes, José Vasconcelos, and Carlos González Peña who, having begun their literary activities during the last years of modernism, have turned their mature literary productions in other directions.

With the outbreak of the revolution in 1910 modernism as an organized literary movement ceased to exist in Mexico. Writers in other Spanish American nations were already experimenting with new themes and literary

styles. However, the influence of modernism has persisted up to the present day. Contemporary authors have produced a vast amount of musical poetry and graceful, brilliant prose inspired, at least in part, by the modernist generation.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Max Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1954), p. 14.
- 2 Edmundo García-Girón, "'La azul sonrisa' Disquisición sobre la adjetivación modernista," Revista Iberoamericana, XX (March 1955), 113.
- 3 Alfred L. Coester, An Anthology of the Modernista Movement in Spanish America (Boston, New York: Ginn and Co., 1924), p. xxiii.
- 4 For an extensive study of modernism in Spain see Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho by Guillermo Díaz-Flaja.
- 5 Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo, p. 522.
- 6 Ibid., p. 67.
- 7 Ibid., p. 112.
- 8 Robert G. Mead, Jr., "Panorama poético de Manuel González Prada," Revista Iberoamericana, XX (March 1955), 50.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE AGE OF MODERNISM

A study of the literary production of any generation can best be essayed after the completion of a background study of the historical, social, and political forces which either overtly or indirectly shaped the thinking of the generation in question. No cohesive group of literati exists in a vacuum apart from the environmental pressures of its age. Likewise, the individual literary artist is constantly subjected to similar pressures. He may tacitly accept the dictates of contemporary society, or he may choose to protest and disavow the will of the majority. The alert critic, therefore, will wisely study the background of an age before embarking upon a detailed evaluation of its literature.

The Revista Azul was published during the last decade of the nineteenth century when modernism was reaching its zenith in Spanish American letters. It was during this decade that certain political and economic movements of European origin reached their peaks. This was the century during which the Europeanization of the world for all practical purposes was completed.

As far back as the mid-eighteenth century the industrial revolution had given birth to a new middle class which demanded territorial expansion to secure goods for home industries as well as to provide potential

consumers for excess produce from their factories. Colonies were considered as potential sources of manpower and vital raw materials in a national emergency. By the second half of the nineteenth century industrialization had reached certain areas of Europe and North America. This was made possible by improved methods of communication, the rapid expansion of the railroads, and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. These improvements in communication made it possible to organize industry and business on a world-wide basis, and the resulting industrial expansion produced a surplus of goods, money, and energy which led inevitably to the exploitation of such underdeveloped areas as Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

At the same time the influence of Europe was spreading to distant parts of the world through other channels. The missionary spirit of western Christianity became more intense in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but lagged noticeably in the Age of Reason. A renewed interest in this field led to the expansion of missions which was frequently not without certain economic, and often political rather than religious significance.

Another factor contributing to continued imperialistic expansion was the phenomenal growth of Europe's population which reached a total of 220 million by the end of the nineteenth century. The problems caused by this great population increase were partially solved by securing raw materials and foodstuffs from colonies and by immigration to the New World and other areas.

With the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 western Europe enjoyed a period of comparative peace which was not broken until the First World War. This period of peace and material prosperity was conducive to the flourishing of literature and the fine arts all over the western world. In England this was the period of Queen Victoria and of such outstanding literary figures as Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, and Oscar Wilde. It was also the period during which the pre-Raphaelites sought a return to the simplicity and naturalness of fifteenth century Italian painters. This was the time of the Third Republic in France and a period during which art, music, and literature were seeking new paths of expression. French prose since the middle of the nineteenth century had been dominated by the realists and naturalists but toward the end of the century sought new expression in the works of Anatole France, Pierre Loti, and Maurice Barrès. At the same time a similar reaction in poetry produced the symbolists led by Verlaine, Rimbaud, and Mallarmé. While England and France were enjoying this period of peace and prosperity, Germany and Russia were making strides toward achieving closer national unity. Under Bismark's iron fist greater German unity was accomplished through a series of wars accompanied by rapid industrialization. The strong-arm tactics employed by Bismark in Germany were also used by the Russian tsars in an attempt to weld the heterogeneous elements of a vast empire into a cohesive nation. Some measures of national unity and industrial development were achieved in spite of widespread poverty and scanty education for the masses.

While the other nations of western Europe were engaged in outward expansion during the last half of the nineteenth century, Spain was

seeking a peaceful solution to the Carlist Wars and to the chaotic period following "la revolución gloriosa" of 1868. Finally tranquility was restored in 1874 when General Martínez Campos effected the return of the Bourbon line in the person of Alfonso XIII, the son of Isabel II. With the establishment of Alfonso on the Spanish throne Spain began an era of peace after decades of internal turmoil and strife. This era of peace was to persist after Alfonso's death in 1885 and through the years of his widow's regency until the war with the United States in 1898.

During these years of peace the Spanish novel reached its greatest heights since the time of Cervantes. Two generations of outstanding novelists were producing some of their greatest works. Pedro Antonio de Alarcón, Juan Valera, and José María de Pereda were writing regionalistic and realistic novels. A new generation of more liberal novelists kept pace with changing world trends in literature. The influence of naturalism is seen in varying degrees in certain novels of Benito Pérez Galdós, Pardo Bazán, Clarín, Armando Palacio Valdés, and Vicente Elasco Ibáñez.

The war of 1898 with the United States was a disaster for Spain. Although internal conditions in the country were scarcely affected, the loss of the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico marked the end of the once great world empire. The war was of short duration but of transcendent importance in the Hispanic world. The sudden loss came as a surprise. A small minority of the intelligentsia within Spain saw more in the disaster than the mere loss of distant colonies. They considered the loss from both a spiritual and a historic standpoint. Azorín christened these introspective thinkers the "Generación del '98," a term which embraces a group of writers of vastly different temperaments and con-

victions: Unamuno, Baroja, Azorín, Valle-Inclán, Benavente, Maeztu, and other lesser figures. Their principal preoccupation was an attempt to find the essence of the Spanish soul. Besides being merely a political or even a spiritual problem, the enigma of Spain also became an artistic problem. This individual soul-searching is interpreted by Angel del Río in the following manner: "Además, esta confluencia entre la inquietud individual y la inquietud patriótica, o entre lo nacional y lo universal, se da entonces en casi todos los países y casi todas las literaturas: Rusia, Italia, Francia, los países escandinavos. Es un signo de los tiempos."¹ It is their concern for beauty of expression in literature that closely links certain members of this generation, especially Valle-Inclán, with the Spanish American modernists.

While the Spanish American War signified the end of Spain as a world power, it also marked the full emergence of the United States in world affairs. The end of the nineteenth century found the United States enjoying a period of unparalleled material prosperity and imperialistic expansion. While within the country the consolidation of small business enterprises led to the growth of trusts and to the era of "big business," in world affairs the United States began to assert itself in a position of leadership. This was especially evident in Latin America,

The influence of the United States on the countries of Latin America began with the realization of their independence from Spain at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Most of the national constitutions were patterned after that of the United States, and there were great expectations that a republican form of government might be realized throughout Latin America. However, no groundwork for such a system of government had been prepared during the three centuries of Spanish

colonial rule. The result was a long period of instability punctuated by a series of revolutions and coups d'état. Nevertheless, certain Spanish American countries were able to reach great material prosperity toward the end of the century. Modernism flourished in those countries where there prevailed similar political and social conditions to those found in Europe and the United States. It was especially in the capitals of these countries where the major contributors to the Revista Azul lived and wrote. These large, cosmopolitan capitals often attracted young modernists from backward areas and war-torn countries who took up residence in these cities where art and literature were flourishing.

The countries in the southern part of South America where this material prosperity was most evident were Argentina and Uruguay. There was much commercial and literary activity in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, and both were great centers of modernism. Under president Roca (1880-88) Argentina became a modern and prosperous nation. This transformation was due principally to the great amount of railroad construction and to improved methods of raising cattle and sheep. The period of great prosperity continued briefly under Roca's successor, Juárez Celman, but reckless government policy and unstable business conditions led to a financial crisis followed by a revolt of radicals in 1890. However, by 1892 the economic crisis had passed. Although political conditions were unstable for a number of years, economic conditions rapidly improved. Similar conditions prevailed in Uruguay where a prosperous economy was likewise effected by railroad construction and improved methods of stock raising. Political tranquility was achieved in 1890 with the election of Herrera y Obes, Uruguay's first civilian president in two

decades. However, in 1897 this tranquility was broken by a civil war which brought about a much needed electoral reform.

At the same time that Argentina and Uruguay were enjoying years of material prosperity, Chile was emerging as an equally prosperous nation at the expense of its northern neighbors. In 1883 the War of the Pacific ended with Chile victorious over Peru and Bolivia. Chile now controlled the northern nitrate and copper provinces of Atacama and Tarapacá and was able to collect enough export taxes on nitrate alone to provide the government with a large part of its revenue. These fortuitous conditions were temporarily checked in 1891 by Chile's most costly civil war between liberals and conservatives, but by the end of the century foreign trade was increasing at a phenomenal rate, and nitrate export taxes were again providing the bulk of the government's revenue. The situation in neighboring Peru was exactly the opposite. Much of the nation had been laid waste in the conflict with Chile, and heavy contributions had been assessed against the people of the occupied districts. It was not until 1895, eleven years after the withdrawal of the Chilean army, that the country was able to install a stable civilian government under Nicolás Piérola. Bolivia had withdrawn early from the conflict with Chile and was able to reach a degree of stability much sooner than Peru. But both in Peru and Bolivia literary activity was greatly impeded by unsettled conditions following the war, and in Paraguay, which still had not recovered from its disastrous war with Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay in the 1860's, literary activity was almost nil.

Politics in the northern countries of South America during these last decades of the nineteenth century were dominated by presidents who

frequently used strong-arm, dictatorial methods. Ecuador's dictator, García Moreno, was assassinated in 1875, and the nation was plunged into a series of revolutions and counter-revolutions which lasted well into the twentieth century. Conditions in Colombia meanwhile were much more settled. Political affairs from 1880 to 1894 were dominated by the figure of Rafael Núñez, Colombia's president who also ranked high as a poet, political writer, and statesman. A firm believer in a strong central government, he was able to give the nation a spirit of unity and progress. After his death in 1894 he was succeeded by Miguel A. Caro, also a poet and humanist, but without the strength of Núñez to direct the country. National affairs soon fell into disorder which precipitated a disastrous civil war in 1899. In Venezuela, Guzmán Blanco, a politician of the stature of Rafael Núñez, was able in 1872 to bring about a period of peace after fourteen years of civil strife and disorder. He or his dictated successors ruled until 1889. During this period roads and railroads were built, seaports were improved, the larger cities were modernized, and Caracas became a leading literary and artistic center. Except for brief disorders in the early 1890's, comparative peace and tranquility continued in Venezuela until 1898.

Although most of the nations of Central America were relatively prosperous at this time, these countries failed to reach the level of intellectual activity seen in Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, and Venezuela. Many of their greatest literary artists chose to live and write in the cosmopolitan capitals of Europe and South America. In Guatemala prosperity and political tranquility continued after the death in 1885 of the liberal dictator, Justo Rufino Barrios. Similar conditions were

evident in El Salvador, but Honduras with less productive land remained comparatively poor and backward. Nicaragua had made progress under conservative leaders, but the year 1893 marked a liberal revolt which led to the sixteen year personal dictatorship of José Santos Zelaya. Costa Rica had made more material progress than its northern neighbors. Under a series of liberal presidents it had become a peaceful community where intelligent public opinion was beginning more and more to demand a truly republican government.

Across the Caribbean Sea in Cuba and the Dominican Republic the exportation of sugar provided the basis of a sound economy. But in 1894 the United States restored a heavy duty on sugar imports, and trade with the islands suffered greatly. Poverty and unemployment in Cuba fanned latent desires for freedom from Spain into open rebellion. In 1898 the United States joined the conflict, and Cuban independence was quickly achieved.

This era of great material prosperity throughout most of Spanish America during the last decades of the nineteenth century was evident to an even greater degree in Mexico. This was the height of Porfirian Peace which, however, was not accomplished overnight nor without bloodshed and the sacrifice of civil liberties. While prosperity and material wealth were evident in the great urban centers, a type of semi-feudalism prevailed in the countryside.

With the rise to power of Porfirio Díaz in 1876 Mexico began its first prolonged period of peace and tranquility since before the War of Independence. The age of Díaz is paradoxically considered as the best and the worst in Mexican history. The contemporary historical accounts

of the period and most of the biographies of the general were written from highly subjective viewpoints. It has not been until recent years that Mexican critics and historians, and frequently foreign observers as well, have been able to discuss the man and his era objectively. All must admit, as does Hudson Strode,² that Díaz did what no one else had been able to do successfully since 1810: he maintained the peace. And at this time Mexico needed peace above all else. However, during the next thirty-four years, except for a four year period during which the hand-picked Manuel González was president, Mexico was to have a powerful master who furthered Mexico's economic development at the expense of democracy.

The Porfirian era is generally divided into three periods: the period of pacification, the triumphant era of prosperity, and the final period of growing political agitation and discontent. Just when Porfirianism triumphed cannot be arbitrarily established. Callcott in his study of liberalism in Mexico fixes the date at 1884 when Díaz was elected a second time,³ while Bravo Ugarte places the time as late as 1896 when his fifth term began.⁴ In reality the height of Porfirian grandeur falls somewhere between these two poles or roughly near the beginning of the last decade of the century. This coincides with a great increase in literary and journalistic activity which was to reach its culmination in the modernista movement.

During Díaz's first term Mexico, after many decades of war, was able to turn its attention to economic development. The peace was enforced. Díaz was able to weld many of the discontented groups into faithful adherents to the new regime. Elements within his own administra-

tion were played one against another to prevent any possible coup d'état, and therefore the position of the administration was never threatened. During this period Mexico's natural resources were given freely to foreign investors, and industrialism was "imposed" upon the country without logical plan or forethought. The ancient Indian ejidos were incorporated into large haciendas. All the while there was outward evidence of material prosperity and an increased national income. The various elements of the liberal party were united, and army generals and caciques were neutralized in the old game of playing one against the other.

At the end of his first term Díaz was able to pick his successor, and he chose Manuel González, a veteran of the war against the French. The ensuing four years were reckless and corrupt. Expropriation of the ejidos and the concentration of public lands in the hands of the military continued at a rapid pace. Mineral rights were taken from the state and transferred to the owners of the surface land. There was general joy and celebration at the end of his term when the tottering government was transferred back to Porfirio Díaz in 1884. A new political figure during this second term was Romero Rubio who had become Díaz's father-in-law in 1881. The influence of his new wife, Carmelita, did much to help the dictator lose his crude habits and at the same time helped bring the Church back into favor. Under the influence of Carmelita, Díaz allowed monasteries and nunneries to be established again and permitted the Church to accumulate property. In exchange the clerical elements preached loyalty to the dictator as added insurance against the enforcement of the Reform laws.

After 1884 the control of the Díaz party over Mexico was so strong that opposition was almost impossible. The celebrated rurales, bandits transformed into policemen, made Mexico one of the safest countries in the world for foreigners. Feudalism reached a peak as the lands of the Indian villages were gradually confiscated and delivered into the hands of the hacendados. Revolts of the Indians were ruthlessly suppressed, and the Yaquis of Sonora, after defeat by starvation, were sent as plantation workers to Quintana Roo while their fertile lands were reassigned to haciendas. All of Mexico was under the domination of local political caciques and state governors. By contrast with these ignoble characters Porfirio Díaz was a model of honesty.

Díaz's succeeding terms of office were marked by an unparalleled progress in economic, financial, literary, and cultural affairs. Treaties of friendship, commerce, and navigation were signed with Sweden, Norway, France, Great Britain, and Japan. By 1892 diplomatic or consular relations had been opened with all the European powers except Austria and Turkey.⁵ From all parts of Europe and the United States capital was pouring into Mexico. In 1896 there were 11,500 kilometers of railroads throughout the nation which facilitated the movement of goods to markets hitherto unavailable.⁶ In 1893 a financial genius, José Ives Limantour, was transferred to the treasury department, and the following year Mexico for the first time as an independent country achieved a balanced budget. This was a period of construction of harbors, government buildings, theaters, telegraph and telephone lines, and broad avenues and palatial residences in the capital city.

Limantour, the new director of the treasury, was a leader of the exclusive científico clique that came to dominate the government in the

1890's. The cientificos were positivists, disciples of Auguste Comte and Herbert Spencer, who came into prominence at a time when positivism was on the decline in Europe. For them the measure of progress was the number of railroads and telegraph lines constructed, the output of the country's mines, and the number of public buildings completed. They were materialists devoted to honesty and scientific efficiency in government. Obviously a wide vacuum separated this exclusive circle from the population as a whole. Indeed, they considered the Mexican people a barbarous race which had to be directed along the paths of civilization. Porfirio Díaz, although he himself was a mestizo, was gradually led by the cientificos to include in his government more persons of European ancestry.

At about the same time that the Revista Azul was published (1894-96) there were some twenty daily newspapers in Mexico City.⁷ This upsurge in journalistic activity reflects an increase in national literacy. At the same time an opposition press was beginning to appear, leading the government to sponsor its own newspaper. From 1885 to 1896 El Partido Liberal, owned by Romero Rubio, Díaz's father-in-law, was the semi-official government organ. It was this same newspaper that published the Revista Azul as a Sunday supplement. In 1896 the government subsidized its own paper, El Imparcial, which continued until 1914. The opposition press was soon silenced by strong-arm methods, and after 1892 the restrictions on the free press were so stringently enforced that at one time the entire staff of El Universal was arrested.

The renewed journalistic activity was matched by renewed interest in literature and the fine arts.⁸ This golden age of Mexican letters

under Porfirio Díaz has been excellently described by Parkes in the following manner:

Nor was the achievement merely material. The prolonged peace and the growth of the middle classes led, in spite of the lack of freedom, to a cultural development. Nothing disturbed the feudal stagnation of rural Mexico, but in the towns the dictatorship continued to build schools and illiteracy decreased. There was a vast increase in the circulation of newspapers. The age of Díaz was an Augustan period in Mexican literature . . . literature began to lose its social consciousness and its Mexican nationalism; it became pessimistic and cosmopolitan; but it acquired a new technical perfection. Throughout Latin America this was the age of modernist poetry, a style of which the greatest master was the Nicaraguan, Rubén Darío, and of which the Mexican exemplars were Gutiérrez Nájera and Amado Nervo . . . modernism marked the highest literary achievement of the Indo-Hispanic peoples. Yet it was a kind of poetry which could have developed only at a time when all idealism had departed from politics and when sensitive persons were driven to look for their ideal not in a reformed society but in mystical contemplation and self-discipline.⁹

The renaissance in the non-literary arts was not without frequent examples of poor taste and slavish imitation of European masters. As in the movement of the early days of modernism, the indigenous and native elements were absent from artistic creations. In plazas throughout the cities and towns were erected statues in the strict Victorian manner. Painting sought to follow the French salon style. The genius with which many of the modernists adapted European literary trends to meet the needs of the New World was frequently absent from late nineteenth century Mexican painters, sculptors, and architects whose works were largely imitative and uninspired.

In the final analysis the Mexico of Porfirio Díaz was a Mexico which for the first time in centuries was able to devote its energies to economic development and industrial expansion. As in western Europe

and the United States, it was a period of peace and tranquility. During such a propitious time the fine arts flourished and reached new heights throughout the western world. Modernism was the great literary contribution of the Hispanic peoples. Born in the New World, but with definite European contributions, modernism was to flourish in the great cities of Spanish America and eventually reach Spain where it was modified and interpreted in terms of its significance to the problems of twentieth century Spanish literary art.

But in Mexico the glittering external veneer of progress hid a hollow and decaying core of semi-feudalism which undermined the foundations of national stability. In a word, the foundation of the state was unable to support the weight of material progress. Callcott believes that Díaz was a benevolent despot who could have done great things for his people, but he was living in an age when modern inventions and economic life were developing his people at such a rate that before his death they had swept beyond their leader and cast him aside.¹⁰ The fact that nearly half of Mexico in 1910 belonged to three thousand families was cause enough for revolution. Nine and one half million of the ten million agricultural workers in the nation were without land. But the spark was provided by an emerging proletarian class. Socialism had reached the New World; labor unions were organized, and strikes began to disrupt industrial tranquility. The results of Porfirio Díaz's reckless expropriation of communal land, his exploitation of industrial workers, and the favorable concessions granted to foreign investors were to lead Mexico into a cataclysmic social revolution. The graceful swan of poetic elegance which had characterized the literary efforts of the epoch of

Porfirio Díaz was a victim of the mayhem which destroyed the great Porfirian monuments of material and economic progress.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

- 1 Angel del Rfo, Historia de la literatura española, II (New York: The Dryden Press, 1948), 171.
- 2 Hudson Strode, Timeless Mexico (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1944), p. 198.
- 3 Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, Liberalism in Mexico 1857-1929 (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1931), p. 120.
- 4 José Bravo Ugarte, Compendio de historia de México (México: Editorial Jus, 1948), p. 244.
- 5 Callcott, p. 121.
- 6 Ibid., p. 133.
- 7 Bravo Ugarte, p. 255.
- 8 An excellent study of this aspect of the Porfirian era is Julio Sesto, El México de Porfirio Díaz (Valencia, 1910).
- 9 Henry Bamford Parkes, A History of Mexico (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938), pp. 302-303.
- 10 Callcott, p. 121.

CHAPTER III

A JOURNALISTIC HISTORY OF THE REVISTA AZUL

The Mexican Revolution which began in 1910 temporarily checked the rapid progress which journalism had made in the country during the nineteenth century. During this century the newspaper and the literary periodical became increasingly important in the country's cultural and intellectual life. Journalistic techniques were noticeably improved, and advances in the actual mechanics of printing toward the end of the century made possible a wider circulation of periodicals than ever before. To separate the history of the nineteenth-century Mexican newspaper from that of the literary review is an almost impossible task due to the fact that the same journalists wrote for both types of publications.

It has been pointed out that a vast amount of Mexican literature today lies forgotten in dusty newspaper and periodical files.¹ Large numbers of Gutiérrez Nájera's many articles and notes have remained for decades in the newspaper files of Mexico City, and only in recent years have efforts been made to organize a complete bibliography of his work and to begin its publication. The same is also true for a number of Mexico's other most distinguished writers. McLean indicates several reasons why newspapers and periodicals have until recently been more popular vehicles for the publication of Mexican literature than books.² The first printing press in the Americas, established in 1536 in Mexico City, began this tradition of short periodical publications with its series of hojas volantes. Other reasons for the primacy of periodicals was the lack of an adequate supply of paper for book publishers and the

rigid censorship of all books imposed by the Church until well into the nineteenth century. Within the pages of the Revista Azul itself the following comment on this situation is proffered: "Nuestros escritores son poco afectos á publicar libros; dispersos y perdidos en la labor diaria andan los frutos del ingenio de nuestros prosistas y poetas, sin que los autores se decidan á edificar una morada para estos abandonados del cariño paterno."³ A definitive history of Mexican literature, therefore, must certainly consider the fact that a myriad of its pages are extant only in newspaper and periodical files.

Some one hundred and twenty-three literary periodicals or literary supplements to newspapers existed in nineteenth century Mexico.⁴ Of these only about twenty-four are considered of high literary merit. Although the first Mexican periodical of literary importance was the newspaper, El Diario de México (1805-1817), it was not until the 1840's that any great number of journals were published. Between 1840 and 1849 twenty-two literary periodicals were issued, principally in Mexico City, but none survived the decade. During the two succeeding decades many of the literary periodicals reflected the highly partisan attitudes of their editors who either supported the liberals or the conservatives in their struggle for power. During the French intervention (1862-1867) literary activity was greatly curtailed, yet a number of magazines of wit and satire against the French and Mexican monarchists existed. The comparative period of peace and tranquility that followed under Juárez permitted a revival of literary interests and activities. The renaissance of letters in the late 1860's and the following decade is best observed in Altamirano's periodical, El Renacimiento (series I, 1869; series II,

1894). It is easily the most outstanding literary journal of the immediate post-monarchical period. In the last issue of the second series (June 24, 1894) the suspension of the publication was announced as well as the fact that it would be continued by the Revista Azul. Literary periodicals of the 1880's were numerous but highly ephemeral. Periodicals for women were increasing in number, and the names of some of Mexico's most gifted writers began to appear in the literary supplements of daily newspapers. La Juventud Literaria was the most worthy publication of the decade and of importance due to the fact that the literary currents set in motion by Altamirano were here merged with late romantic and incipient modernist tendencies.

By the last decade of the century, before the triumph of modern journalism, the press of Mexico showed a marked development from its status at the beginning of the polemical period of 1810.⁵ The number of daily newspapers in the capital had increased to twenty by 1892. Literary reviews were principally of two classes: those which maintained classical and romantic tendencies of earlier publications and the modernist journals. Of the latter group six were published in Mexico City.⁶ Spell feels that the Revista Azul and the Revista Moderna are "of outstanding excellence, above any others discussed."⁷ Since the life of the Revista Azul was closely linked with that of the parent newspaper, El Partido Liberal, it is necessary to consider at this point the status of Mexican newspapers during this period.

McCaleb feels that prior to the Díaz regime there existed in Mexico no press in the true sense of the word.⁸ During the years of great political agitation newspapers were more doctrinal than informative.

This situation did not change to any degree until the very end of the century. During the 1890's the press was divided into two camps: the official (or semi-official) press of Díaz and the opposition press. There were few newspapers that caused a great sensation in their opposition to the dictator, but during the year 1893 a great many opposition journalists were imprisoned and their newspaper offices and equipment confiscated. Certain large dailies, however, actively supported the Díaz government. These included El Universal, edited by Rafael Reyes Spíndola, and El Partido Liberal, owned by Romero Rubio, Díaz's father-in-law. El Partido Liberal, which published the Revista Azul as a Sunday supplement, was edited first by José Vicente Villada and later by Apolinar Castillo. Its avowed intention was to be the most solid support of the Liberal Party and at the same time a defender of the government.⁹ Established in 1885, El Partido Liberal continued publication for eleven years. Its demise in 1896 was occasioned by the appearance of the most important newspaper of the nineteenth century in Mexico, El Imparcial.

According to Lepidus and others the appearance of El Imparcial marks the beginning of modern journalism in Mexico.¹⁰ It was organized and partially financed by the government for the express purpose of annihilating the independent press. Its effect on the nation's journals was immediate and devastating. Because of the government subsidy, it was sold for the price of the paper on which it was printed. The reduced price, as well as the fact that it was dedicated to general news, contributed to its rapid growth. Only a few days later El Partido Liberal and the Revista Azul ceased publication. Other newspapers including El Siglo XIX and El Monitor Republicano, the latter for years the organ of inde-

pendent liberal circles, soon followed suit. Rafael Reyes Spíndola, who had earlier directed El Universal, was chosen as director of the new standard-bearer of "Porfirismo." Former contributors to El Partido Liberal and the Revista Azul, including Luis G. Urbina, Carlos Díaz Dufó, and Francisco M. de Olaguibel, began writing for the newly organized paper. While earlier newspapers in Mexico had been printed on flat presses which slowed the printing process, limited the circulation, and resulted in high subscription rates, El Imparcial was printed on rotary presses which greatly speeded operations and reduced overhead expenses. In his study of Mexican journalism Torres makes the following conclusions regarding this newspaper: ". . . pagó buenos sueldos a los redactores . . . abarató el precio del papel impreso, se hizo ameno, popular, y al mismo tiempo moderno, interesante, oportuno."¹¹

The Revista Azul and the Revista Moderna, however, had already proven themselves to be the most outstanding literary reviews of the century. "La Revista Azul tiene para el Modernismo tanta importancia como el libro de Darío de este mismo nombre, porque, amplia y tolerante como el espíritu de su fundador, alentaba todo impulso de novedad literario, por insignificante que fuese."¹² The renowned Mexican critic, Julio Jiménez Rueda, considers the year 1894 when the Revista Azul first appeared a most significant date in the history of Mexican literature because of the fundamental change which it effected in the organization of Mexico's men of letters.¹³ Earlier poets and literati had grouped themselves in academias, liceos, or sundry literary societies; now it was a periodical "que se constituye en exponente de una escuela literaria:

el 'Modernismo.' Los que escriben en La Revista Azul saben que en sus páginas tienen cabida todos los que, siguiendo una nueva moda literaria, escriben en prosa o en verso, no para las masas, sino para los pequeños grupos que constituyen la capilla. Las 'torres de marfil' se yerguen orgullosas en el campo de la literatura nacional."¹⁴ The Revista Azul, in the opinion of Julio A. Leguizamón, discovered new literary values and talents which developed and matured in the Revista Moderna cenacle.¹⁵

Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and Carlos Díaz Dufó were the founders and owners of the Revista Azul, and Luis G. Urbina was the secretario de redacción. In consideration of their numerous literary contributions as well as their editorial influence these three were the most important men of letters associated with the periodical. Lázaro Pavía, the manager, and Apolinar Castillo, editor of El Partido Liberal, did not contribute articles to the review, but there is much evidence which indicates that the latter provided the financial security necessary for starting the publication. In an article by Gutiérrez Nájera entitled El bautismo de la "Revista Azul" there is an indication that the idea of such a periodical was conceived by himself and Carlos Díaz Dufó but that Castillo financed the project and turned the periodical over to the originators. "Ese varón justo y magnánimo, levantó la idea desnuda, la vistió, (de azul como queríamos), la puso casa, y cuando nos retirábamos vergonzosos, creyendo que la criatura era de él, de Apolinar Castillo, nos dijo: reconocedlo, es la de ustedes."¹⁶ Later in the same volume there is a list of some twenty of Mexico's greatest literary figures of the day who attended this "baptism" where Apolinar Castillo served as padrino.¹⁷ Further proof that the Revista Azul could not have existed

without Castillo's aid is given in the statement, "á sus esfuerzos y á sus consejos se debe esta Revista."¹⁸

A product of artistic philanthropy, the Revista Azul sought contributions only from those writers who were willing to have their works published gratis for the sake of art. None were paid, not even those whose fame was widespread. "Y como la Revista Azul no es precisamente de oro ni puede pagar los trabajos literarios de escritores y poetas mexicanos afamados, no se dirigió á ellos solicitando su colaboración. Así, pues, no ha hecho excepciones como creen algunos; no pertenece á un grupo exclusivista de cultivadores del arte; es de los que aparecen como dueños de ella y de nadie más."¹⁹

Much has been written regarding the origin of the name of the Revista Azul. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera offers this explanation in the very first article of the periodical: "Azul.....! ¿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 á lo azul las esperanzas en bandadas. El azul no es solo un color: es un misterio.....una virginidad intacta."²⁰ The special interest in the color blue goes back to Hugo's famous line, "L'art c'est l'azur," and was popularized in Spanish by Rubén Darío's famous book. Many have felt that it was Darío's book that furnished the title for Gutiérrez Nájera's publication, but it has been suggested and later confirmed by Walker in interviews with Urbina and Díaz Dufoo that the title was suggested by a French journal of that period published in Paris and called Revue Bleue.²¹

Once a name had been chosen for the new journal, it was necessary to submit a prospectus to the printer. A memorandum was soon returned to Gutiérrez Nájera with the words, "falta el programa." And indeed no

formal program or policy for the publication had been submitted. The oversight was intentional, for the founders of the Revista Azul did not wish to restrict the publication by a narrow editorial policy. Gutiérrez Nájera wrote, "Nuestro programa se reduce á no tener ninguno."²² A kindly reception was accorded all attempts at literary novelty, and since the ideals of modernism were not narrowly nationalistic or dogmatic but thoroughly cosmopolitan, the door was open to all who cultivated literary art with skill and mastery.

The first appearance of the heralded Revista Azul occurred on May 6, 1894, and from all indications there was immediate and widespread interest in it on the part of the intelligentsia of the capital. Only a little over a month later, on June 17, it was announced that all issues of number one had been sold and that a reprint was planned as soon as the numerous requests for the first issue had ceased. It was not until August 12 that sufficient reprints were available to meet the demand. The life of the Revista was vigorous even after the premature death of its mentor, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, on February 3, 1895. A total of 128 issues appeared until October 11, 1896, the date on which El Partido Liberal fell victim to the government-sponsored El Imparcial.

The periodical was issued in five volumes of twenty-six issues each. Volume five, however, lacks two issues because of the abrupt and unexpected closing down of the newspaper. An index follows each of the first four volumes, but the index fails to distinguish between prose and poetry, and there frequently is no system of cross-reference between individual authors and their pseudonyms. Usually there appeared a notice in each issue indicating that the Revista Azul would appear every Sunday and sell

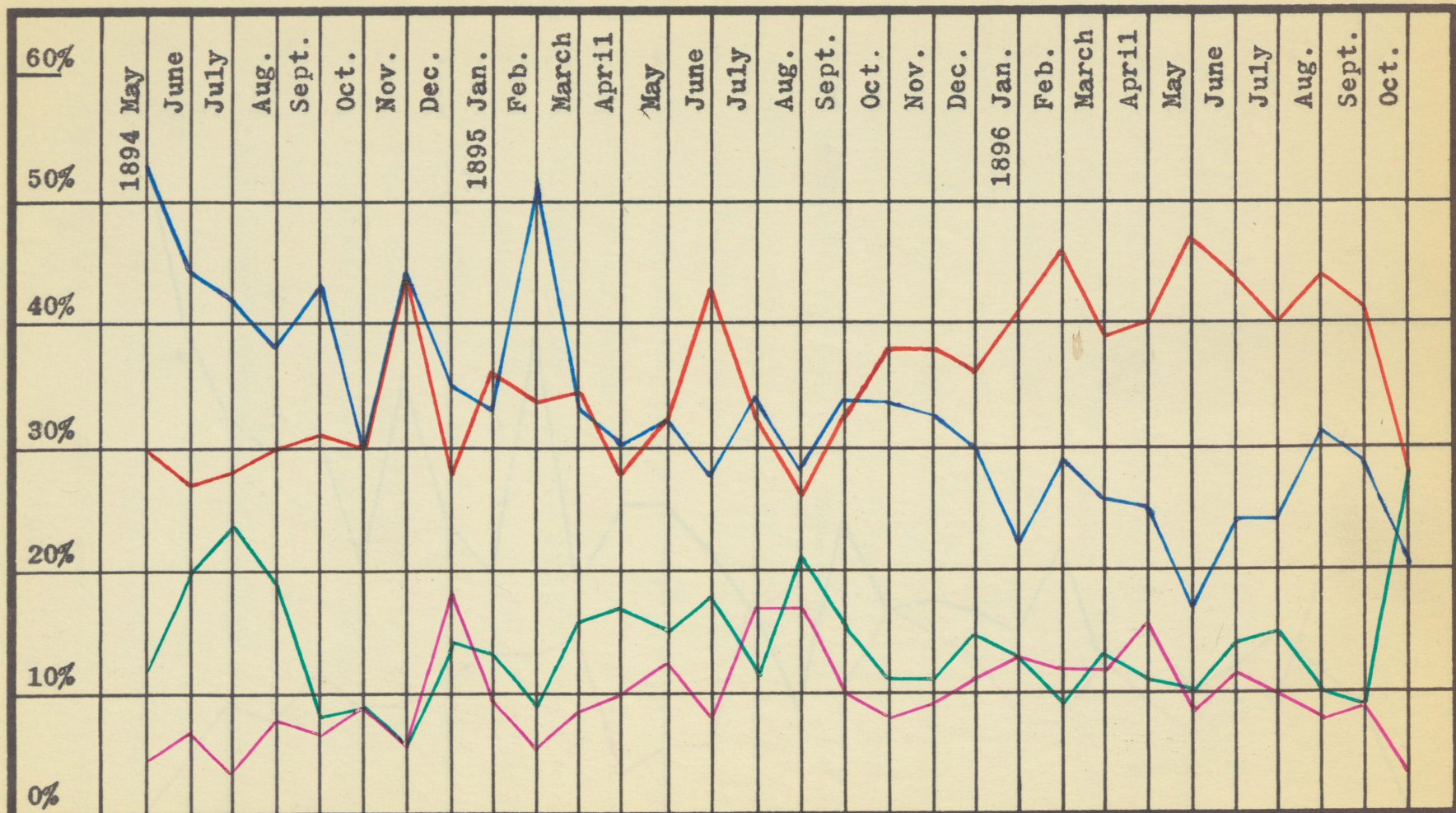
at the rate of twelve and one-half centavos per copy or at a monthly subscription rate of fifty centavos. The magazine received no subsidy from advertising until September 1, 1895, at which time a continuous advertisement for La Mutua life insurance company was inserted.

A typical issue of the Revista Azul contained about twelve passages of prose or poetry, each usually signed; a group of from three to six epigrammatic quotations of famous writers and philosophers which served as filler material; and a final editorial section, signed with the pseudonym "Petit Bleu," which dealt with literature, the theater, or current events in Mexican intellectual circles. This general plan, however, was subject to frequent change, for there are as few as two entries and as many as twenty-one in a single issue.²³ Also each issue was accompanied by a special feature in the form of a separate sheet which in the first issue was called "Crónica General" but thereafter the "Boletín de Noticias de 'El Partido Liberal.'" Its purpose was described in the first issue with the following words: "Juntamente con la Revista Azul, recibirán los domingos un pliego como éste, conteniendo las noticias más oportunas é interesantes de la capital y de la República. No carecerán por lo mismo, nuestros lectores, de los informes diarios á que están acostumbrados."²⁴ Since this section is a separate entity with no great literary value, it will not be considered in detail in this study. Other special features included the printing of a full page photograph of Gutiérrez Nájera on the first anniversary of his death and the printing from time to time of photoengravings.

Almost without exception the lead article of the magazine was a prose selection, often in the nature of literary criticism on a recent

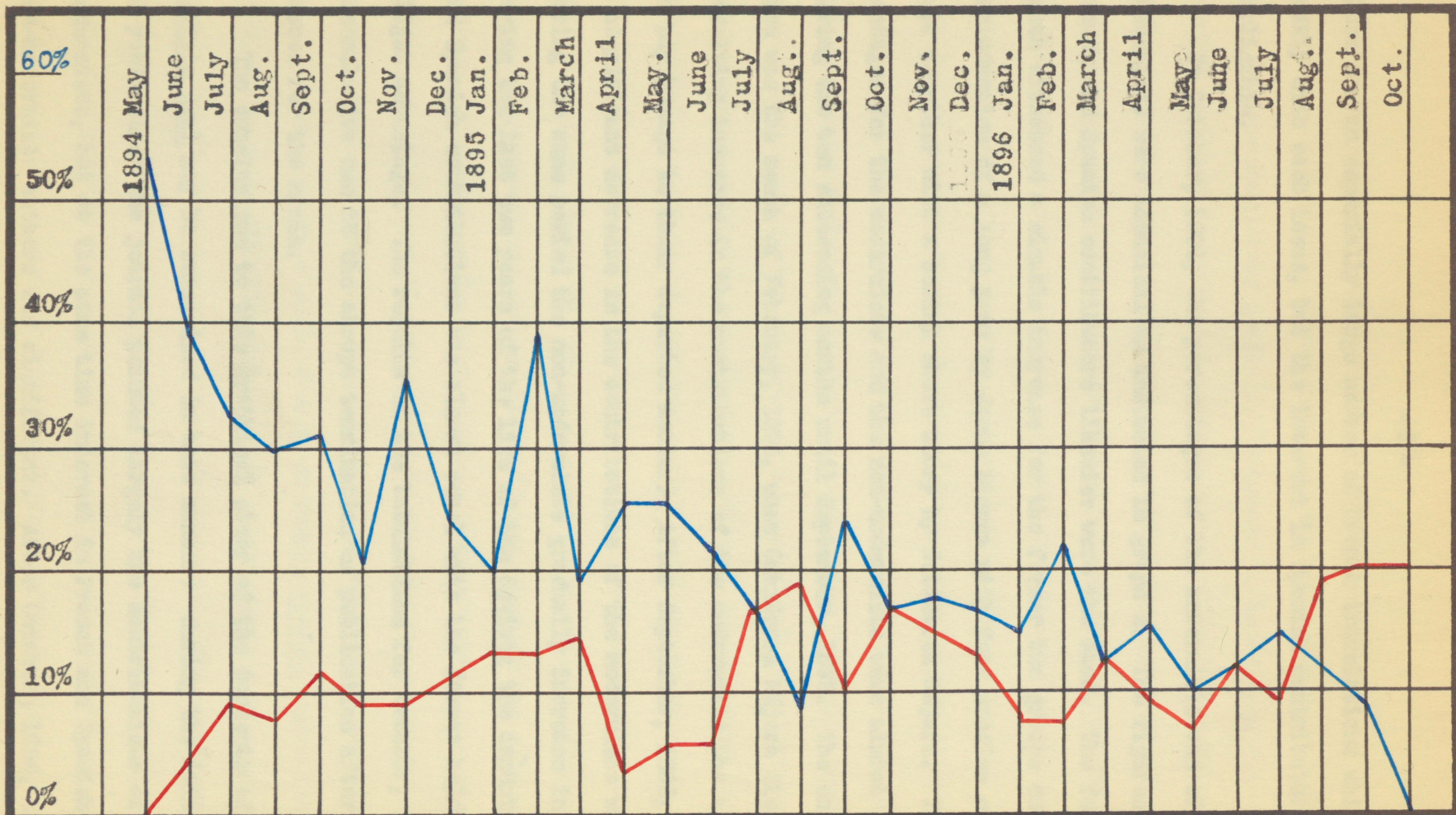
composition by a well-known author. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera before his death was usually the writer of this article. He contributed twenty-eight such articles (or seventy per cent) in the forty issues which appeared before his death. While his percentage of lead articles drops to thirty-five in the eighty-eight issues after his death, these posthumous reprints of his earlier compositions still far outnumber the lead articles contributed by living authors. Carlos Díaz Dufío and "Micrós" (Angel de Campo) wrote most of the other lead articles. Regarding the other selections in each issue, about the only thing of a general nature that can be said is that there usually was an attempt to keep a balance between the number of prose articles and the selections of poetry.

As far as the literary affiliation and nationality of the contributors is concerned, a tabulation of the some 1400 literary compositions in the 128 issues of the Revista Azul yields the results indicated in graph A. The journal's contents were studied by monthly periods, and the percentage of compositions by modernist, non-modernist, French, and Spanish authors was accordingly graphed. The resulting curves representing the modernists and the non-modernists are especially significant. During the first five months of publication, the Revista Azul relied heavily on contributions of the modernists to fill its pages. Most of these authors resided in Mexico, and it was not until September, 1894, that significant numbers of modernists from other Spanish American countries began to appear in its pages. As the Revista became better known throughout Spanish America, more and more modernist writers from these countries began contributing articles and poems. This increase and the corresponding decrease in the number of contributions by Mexican modernists are seen in graph B. During the first five months of publication



GRAPH A: DISTRIBUTION OF CONTRIBUTORS TO THE REVISTA AZUL

— Spanish Amer. Modernists — Spanish Amer. Non-Mod. — French — Spanish



GRAPH B: DISTRIBUTION OF MODERNIST CONTRIBUTORS TO THE REVISTA AZUL

— Mexican Modernists

— Other Modernists

there was an especially large number of French translations which appeared weekly with each issue, but the interest in Spanish contributors was negligible.

By October, 1894, the percentages of the modernists and of the non-modernists were identical as indicated in graph A. The figures for French and Spanish contributors likewise were the same. The following month witnessed a sizable increase for the former two groups due to the reproduction of a long poem by Justo Sierra with four studies of Sierra's work together with a serial short story by Gutiérrez Nájera. The percentages for the modernists and the non-modernists were almost equal during the ten succeeding months until September, 1895. The one exception was the month of February, 1895, when Gutiérrez Nájera died with a resulting increase in the contributions of the modernists who were eager to pay homage to their departed mentor. After September, 1895, there is a significant decrease in the contributions of the modernists while during the same period the non-modernists gradually increase in numbers. During the last two years of the life of the Revista the amount of French and Spanish contributions was almost equal with the former holding a slight advantage. The results of the tabulations for October, 1896, are inconclusive due to the abrupt termination of publication after only two issues for the month.

The conclusions to this graphical study of the contents of the Revista Azul may be summarized in this manner: during the initial months of publication the journal printed largely the contributions of Mexican modernists, but at the same time interest in French and Spanish American non-modernist authors was significant. After October, 1894, there

followed a ten month period during which the modernists and non-modernists were almost parallel in importance, but during the last year of publication the non-modernists gradually increased in importance with a corresponding decrease in modernist contributions. This last conclusion is of prime importance in the analysis of modernism as represented in the Revista Azul and by extension in Mexico between the years 1894 and 1896. As the movement grew, it became more cosmopolitan and sought contributions from many varied sources. Specifically, in the Revista Azul this decrease in the percentage of modernist contributions is also a result of the termination, except for a few verses, of the reprints of Gutiérrez Nájera's works during the last six months of the journal's publication.

A great deal of the history of the periodical as well as significant comments about its contributors and about contemporary events in the social, intellectual, and theatrical world can be found in the section entitled "Azul pálido" which appears at the conclusion of each issue until volume V, number 31, at which point it disappears without explanation. Its purpose was defined in the first issue in the following manner: "El aniversario de un glorioso hecho de armas, una fiesta de flores, un matrimonio elegante, la presentación de un artista, viejo amigo, admirador nuestro.....He aquí el pedestal en que descansa esta frágil columna,alzada, á modo de remate rococó, sobre las esbelteces de la casa."²⁵ Although each of these sections was signed by "Petit Bleu," it appears that they were the work of several authors, principally Gutiérrez Nájera, Díaz Dufóo, and Urbina. Stylistic analysis indicates that they probably are not the work of one person. At one point it is mentioned that a friend of "Petit Bleu" has just

completed a study of Pérez Galdós as a dramatic author.²⁶ This friend is Gutiérrez Nájera whose study appears in later issues, but there are many indications in the first forty issues of the periodical that Gutiérrez Nájera frequently contributed to the "Azul pálido" section before his death. In the last eighty-eight issues, however, it seems that Díaz Dufío, Urbina, and possibly Ángel de Campo were the authors of this section. Regardless of the identity of the authors, these sections are valuable for their comments on almost every theatrical and operatic production in the capital during the years 1894 to 1896. Critical evaluations of new books often appear here as well as death notices of celebrated world figures. The fact that the Revista Azul was first directed toward women can be found in this section where the reader is frequently addressed as "señorita." If there were few cultural activities to report, the authors of this section would frequently engage in rambling poetic descriptions of the seasons or the weather in Mexico City.

Within the regular articles of the periodical there also is a great deal of information about the history of the magazine and about cultural and literary activities of the capital. The first six months of the journal's publication were observed with the following comment: "La Revista Azul cumple hoy seis meses de edad, es casi una señorita. Ha sido esta rubita de ojos color de cielo niña mimada por la fortuna: hija de padres pobres pero honrados, manos carifosas le han ayudado á dar los primeros pasos del camino de la vida."²⁷ But the first anniversary was observed under less propitious circumstances; its founder had died. "Cumple la Revista Azul el primer año de su existencia y lleva ya la

pequeñuela un intenso dolor."²⁸ Gutiérrez Nájera had died, but the policy of the magazine would remain the same: "Hoy como ayer--decimos como el amado fundador de la Revista Azul en el artículo de introducción al número: 'No tenemos programa.'"²⁹ In the "Azul pálido" section of volume V, number 11, a typical literary gathering in Mexico City is described. Gutiérrez Nájera is the central figure of the group which reads new poems of famous literary personages. Critical discussions follow and last all afternoon. Other passages describe the scene of busy disorder within the offices of the Revista Azul as the editorial staff frantically attempted to meet the printer's deadline,³⁰ and the savage attacks of a press hostile to the early journalistic innovations of Gutiérrez Nájera, "un exótico del periodismo."³¹

Of great importance are the indications of the relationship between the Revista Azul and other reviews of literary innovation, for here one has an indication of the degree of communication that existed between the modernists of Mexico City with those in the provinces and with those in other Spanish American countries. From all indications the relations between the Revista Azul and the Mexican press were very cordial from the beginning. The following statement is taken from the second issue:

". . . la Revista Azul tiene que hablar de sí misma, para dar las gracias á los diarios que tan benévolas frases la dedican. Casi, casi, la Revista Azul está obligada á ponerse colorada."³² Later, when the Revista Azul had made a name for itself, it reciprocated by printing kind words of welcome for La Pluma of Querétaro and by marking the one hundredth week of publication of Pimienta y Mostaza of Mérida. Since Mexico City was the intellectual as well as the political capital of the

nation, many of the provincial writers who wrote for their own local periodicals often sought a wider audience for their work by contributing to publications of the capital. Thus it was that the Revista Azul printed a large number of selections from writers living in Guadalajara, San Luis Potosí, Querétaro, Colima, Mérida, and other cities. Specific references linking Gutiérrez Nájera's review with other similar publications in Spanish America are numerous. Ventura García Calderón mentions a relationship with the Revista de América of Jaimes Freyre and Rubén Darío in Buenos Aires.³³ The Figaro of El Salvador and Pensamiento of Honduras both devoted issues to the memory of Gutiérrez Nájera, selections from which were reprinted in the Revista Azul. More evidence that the editors of the Revista Azul knew and read other modernist reviews is contained in the following passages: "Vienen las revistas literarias sudamericanas impregnadas de la nueva fórmula decadentista . . . La Revista Azul ha tenido la buena suerte de ser visitada por algunas excelentes amigas. He hojeado 'Cosmópolis,' de Caracas, 'Ciencias y Letras' y 'La Pluma.'"³⁴ But in the issue of December 30, 1894, it seems that most of the generation of modernists in Mexico knew their foreign counterparts only via the printed word. The occasion was a visit of two Cuban journalists to Mexico: "Vienen los periodistas cubanos á estrechar los lazos de esta disgregada familia latino-americana. Extraño destino el nuestro: amarnos sin conocernos, estar comunicados por la vida del espíritu y lejos, muy lejos, por la falta de esfuerzo en unirnos."³⁵ It may be concluded, therefore, that at this time many avenues of communication existed between the modernists of Mexico City and those of the provincial capitals. Likewise, these writers were acquainted with

literary activities in other capitals of the Spanish American republics, but this acquaintance was largely through the medium of the printed word.

Concerning the relations that existed between the Revista Azul and the political regime of Porfirio Díaz, it can be stated that nothing but the most cordial exchanges existed. While the Revista was only slightly concerned with political matters, there were at least four occasions on which greetings were extended to some member of the Díaz family. This is to be expected in consideration of the fact that Romero Rubio, Díaz's father-in-law, was the owner of El Partido Liberal. Torres indicates that after the Revista Azul stopped publication, Carlos Díaz Dufó and Luis G. Urbina were two of the staunch Díaz supporters who contributed to El Imparcial.³⁶

The most important single event covered in the pages of the Revista Azul was the illness and subsequent death of Gutiérrez Nájera. While entire issues were devoted to reproductions and analyses of certain works of Justo Sierra and Luis G. Urbina, they do not begin to compare with the coverage given the death of the founder. The illness of Gutiérrez Nájera was first reported in a one page article in the Revista Azul on January 27, 1895, some ten days before the time of his death. Apparently his illness was quite advanced and the subject of widespread newspaper comment before it was reported in the pages of his own periodical. The first line of the article begins, "Llegamos tarde para hablar de la enfermedad de nuestro director: ya la prensa diaria ha seguido paso á paso esta terrible crisis del excelsa artista, del alma buena."³⁷ Further indications of the gravity of the situation appear later on the same page: "Nosotros no hemos querido creer en la muerte de

Manuel: no nos hemos resignado á que se apartase de nuestro lado. . . ."

The February 3 issue, which appeared on the day of his death, reports little progress and describes the hours of anguish spent by his many relatives and friends at the bedside of the beloved journalist. The entire issue of February 10 is devoted to a series of articles and eulogies to the departed "Duque Job." A heavy black line is printed across the top of the first page and at the bottom of the last one. Much of the poetry reproduced here is by Gutiérrez Nájera himself. Especially significant is the well-known "Non omnis moriar," printed with a concluding comment: "No, pobre amigo mío, no morirás del todo para tu enlutada y pálida Revista Azul!"⁵⁹

Although the premature death of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera can only be described as tragic both for Mexican letters and the Revista Azul, the fact remains that succeeding generations of literary critics have profited greatly from the many articles of a critical or eulogistic nature that were published about him in this periodical during the following year. In almost every issue either a critical article or a reprint of some work of Gutiérrez Nájera appears. It has been indicated earlier that the policy of the magazine remained the same after his death.⁵⁹ The most notable change, however, is the great increase of these critical articles just described. A year after his death the anniversary is commemorated by a special edition, again outlined with heavy black lines, which prints a number of his poems soon to appear in a volume of his poetic works as well as eulogistic poems by other poets.

Within the year 1895 another individual closely related to the Revista Azul died. He was Manuel Romero Rubio, father-in-law of Díaz

and owner of El Partido Liberal. Only about fifteen lines in the October 6 issue are devoted to the death of the once powerful ministro de gobernación. Sympathy is extended to the widow and to the president and his wife in memory of the "Distinguida personalidad política, figura de alto relieve en la buena sociedad mexicana."⁴⁰ García Granados reports that the government press attempted to make Romero Rubio a great national hero but that the independent press either refrained from comment or announced the death with great reserve.⁴¹ A few years earlier his death would have been a national event, but by 1895 his influence had decreased. Few people mourned Romero Rubio who was known to be a man without conscience who exploited politics for personal gain and who had been a cruel persecutor of the press, a corruptor of justice, and a party to despotism. Even the Revista Azul reported his death with some reserve, yet it could hardly be expected to remain silent in light of its close ties with the government and policies of Don Porfirio. It was not until slightly more than a year later that the publications of Romero Rubio ceased to exist.

Neither the death of Gutiérrez Nájera nor that of Romero Rubio affected to any great degree the nature of the contents or the policy of the Revista Azul. The types of prose and poetry published in its pages remained fairly constant throughout its nearly two and one-half years of existence. While these elements will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, the general statements here will serve to give a better over-all picture of the magazine's contents. The metric innovations of the modernists' poetry appear in the Revista Azul only to an extremely limited extent. Pedro Henríquez Ureña indicates that it is with Rubén

Dario's Prosas profanas in 1896, the year that the Revista Azul ceased publication, that the first important metric innovations occur.⁴² It was not until 1912 that Jaimes Freyre attempted to theorize on the new versification. Most of the traditional verse forms of Spanish poetry appear in the Revista Azul, but there is a decided preference for the sonnet. There are innovations, however, in the theme and to a degree in the style of certain poems of the Revista. Typical of early modernism is the great interest of the contributors to this journal in France and French culture. A number of poems by the Parnassian poets are reproduced in the original French, and there are many poems by Spanish American poets which are direct imitations of Gautier and Leconte de Lisle. Themes of decadence as seen in Claudel and some of the early symbolists are quite common. The death of Gutiérrez Nájera inspired a rather large collection of poetry dealing with various aspects of death. There are even some poems inspired by native American themes, something characteristic of the later modernists. Innovations in the modernist poetry of the Revista Azul frequently follow the style set by Gutiérrez Nájera. This is especially true of the Mexican poets who attempted to imitate his gracia and use of colors and rhythmic, musical verse. A great variety and a more precise usage of adjectives can also be observed.

The modernists' innovations in prose have often been overlooked due to the great emphasis that has always been placed on their poetic innovations. In the Revista Azul, however, it is impossible to overlook the changes that were taking place in prose. A counting of the pages reveals that pages of prose outnumber pages of poetry by over three to one. A polished, poetic style was the objective of the modernists. In discussing

the origin of such a poetic style Anderson Imbert mentions writers as early as Fénelon and Montesquieu who sought more than a mere narrative style.⁴³ Among writers of the nineteenth century he includes Chateaubriand, Heine, Gautier, Poe, Baudelaire, Flaubert, Bécquer, Wilde, Daudet, the Goncourts, Mendès, Coppée, and Arsène Houssaye. Works by almost all of these writers appear either in the original or in translation in the Revista Azul. Prose genres represented in this periodical include the short story, the crónica, literary criticism of novels, plays, and poetry, impressionistic prose descriptions, diaries and travel notes, and epigrammatic filler material. The crónica, "el sutil comentario del suceso notorio . . . importado directamente de Francia,"⁴⁴ was the special contribution of Gutiérrez Nájera which was later used extensively by Díaz Dufó and Urbina. It is in the study of the prose of the Revista Azul that a great deal of the history of the modernists' stylistic innovations can be discovered.

The great accomplishments which the modernists realized in the Revista Azul were not forgotten after it ceased publication in 1896 but were carried on and developed to new degrees of perfection by the generation of the Revista Moderna. Spell describes this whole period in the following terms: "No period in the history of Mexican journalistic literature is more brilliant than that extending from 1894, the date of the establishment of the Revista Azul, to 1911, which witnessed the demise of the Revista Moderna--the two best literary periodicals Mexico has known" ⁴⁵ Founded in 1898 by Jesús E. Valenzuela in association with Amado Nervo, the Revista Moderna was the successor to Gutiérrez Nájera's publication. While many of the contributors to both periodicals were the same, many younger writers who either did not appear or wrote

only a few items in the Revista Azul contributed a number of works to Valenzuela's review. The Revista Moderna continued to publish a large number of translations from French writers of the Parnassian generation and also included much of the work of Verlaine and the other symbolists. Translations of recent English poets were also frequently published. While the Revista Azul had published works of the nineteenth century Spanish poets as well as those of the realists Valera, Pardo Bazán, and Pérez Galdós, the Revista Moderna was able to find kindred spirits in a new generation of Spanish writers which included Valle-Inclán, Eduardo Marquina, and the two Machado brothers. In Spanish America the growing reputation of Rubén Darío is seen in an increased number of his works published in the Revista Moderna. Other modernists who have a more important role in Valenzuela's publication include José Enrique Rodó, Manuel Ugarte, Leopoldo Lugones, Leopoldo Díaz, and Enrique González Martínez. The Revista Moderna became the vocero of modernism for the entire continent. It was thoroughly cosmopolitan in tone and in the greater variety of its articles was truly representative of the mature period of modernism. Its discontinuance in 1911 was not due to the civil strife but rather to the death of its editor, Jesús E. Valenzuela, who personally financed the publication.

Within the cenacle formed about the Revista Azul and the Revista Moderna, there were, according to Spall, certain of the younger adherents of free art who were dissatisfied with the narrowness of the older members of the group and yet differed considerably in their own ideals and tendencies.⁴⁶ González Martínez was the nucleus of this group, first called Sociedad de Conferencias and later the Ateneo de la juventud or

the Ateneo de México. In 1906 they organized and sponsored a monthly publication, Savia Moderna, of which only five issues appeared. In appearance and content it resembled the Revista Moderna and was the organ of the new generation. This group met on Sundays, discussed art and literature, and greeted famous literati who were passing through Mexico.

Among their varied activities one of the most significant was the organization in 1907 of a protest meeting against a new Revista Azul, resuscitated inopportunistly by the journalist Manuel Caballero for the purpose of attacking the modernists and the sponsors of Savia Moderna. Gutiérrez Nájera had spoken of the journalist as "mi buen amigo Manuel Caballero"⁴⁷ when he urged the staff of his Revista Azul to contribute to a new publication which Caballero was planning. Yet in 1907 he purloined the name of Gutiérrez Nájera's publication and numbered his first issue volume six, probably to make it appear as a continuation of the famous Revista Azul of which there were five volumes. The younger generation which included men like Alfonso Reyes, José Vasconcelos, and Antonio Caso felt that Caballero, an ordinary reporter, was entirely unworthy of assuming the role and of carrying on the literary traditions of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera. Max Henríquez Ureña, himself a member of the Ateneo de la juventud, describes the protest in the following vivid manner: "El desagravio frente a ese contrasentido consistió en una protesta que circuló en hoja suelta, firmada por todos los componentes del grupo, y se reprodujo en la prensa; y en dos actos públicos que alcanzaron no poca resonancia: una manifestación que recorrió las principales calles, en la tarde del 16 de abril de 1907, portando un estandarte con el lema 'Arte libre,' para terminar en la Alameda, donde hubo dis-

cursos y poesías; y una velada, esa misma noche, en el Teatro Arbeu, donde a instancia de la juventud, Jesús Urueta se encargó del discurso de orden. La Revista Azul de Caballero no pudo subsistir después de esta pública repudiación."⁴⁸

There was a third Revista Azul, of which only three issues have been found by Spell in the Biblioteca del Museo Nacional in Mexico City.⁴⁹ They are dated July, August, and September of the year 1913 but are of slight interest except for a story, Luz de rayo, by López Portillo y Rojas. This last attempt to use the name of the famous Revista Azul came at a time when the intellectual life of Mexico was beginning to feel the effects of the civil strife. Until 1914 literary activity in the capital was relatively unharmed by the revolution. During the first fourteen years of the twentieth century there were at least twenty-three literary publications in Mexico City alone, and the Ateneo de la juventud contained the names of some of Mexico's most famous men of letters of the present generation. But literary activities came to a standstill as the Revolution swept away the Porfirian society, during whose peaceful reign Gutiérrez Nájera's Revista Azul had attained such prominence.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Malcolm Dallas McLean, El contenido literario de "El Siglo Diez y Nueve" (Washington: Inter-American Bibliographical and Library Association, 1940), p. 13.
- 2 Ibid., pp. 14-18.
- 3 RA II, 132.
- 4 For much of the following information the author of this dissertation is indebted to Professor Jefferson Rea Spell of the University of Texas.
- 5 Henry Lepidus, "The History of Mexican Journalism," The University of Missouri Bulletin, Vol. 29, No. 4 (January 1928), 63.
- 6 Their titles and dates are: México, Revista de Sociedad, Artes y Letras (1892), Revista Azul (1894-96), El Mundo Ilustrado (1894-1908), El Figaro Mexicano (1896-97), El Periódico de las Señoras (1896), and Revista Moderna (1898-1903; 1903-1911). Other periodicals of modernist tendencies included Flor de Lis (1896-97) of Guadalajara and Bohemia Sinalcense (1897-99) of Culiacán.
- 7 Jefferson Rea Spell, "Mexican Literary Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century," PMLA, LII (March 1937), 293.
- 8 Walter Flavius McCaleb, "The Press of Mexico," HAHR, III (1920), 443.
- 9 Lepidus, p. 57.
- 10 Ibid., p. 64.
- 11 Teodoro Torres, Periodismo (México: Ediciones Botas, 1937), p. 129.
- 12 Arturo Torres-Rioseco, Precursores del modernismo (Madrid: Talleres Calpe, 1925), p. 53.
- 13 Julio Jiménez Rueda, Historia de la literatura mexicana (México: Ediciones Botas, 1946), p. 229.
- 14 Ibid., p. 229.
- 15 Julio A. Leguizamón, Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana, II (Buenos Aires: Editoriales Reunidas, S.A., 1945), 261.
- 16 RA I, 98.
- 17 RA I, 111-112.
- 18 RA I, 379.

- 19 RA I, 31.
- 20 RA I, 1.
- 21 Nell Walker, "The Life and Works of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," University of Missouri Studies, II, No. 2 (1927), 21.
- 22 RA I, 2.
- 23 See RA II, number 1; III, number 23.
- 24 RA I, number 1; Crónica General.
- 25 RA I, 16.
- 26 RA I, 32.
- 27 RA I, 412.
- 28 RA III, 1.
- 29 RA III, 1.
- 30 RA III, 110-111.
- 31 RA IV, 221.
- 32 RA I, 31.
- 33 Ventura García Calderón, Semblanzas de América (n.p., Editada por la Revista Hispanoamericana, n.d.), p. 69.
- 34 RA I, 175.
- 35 RA II, 148.
- 36 Torres, p. 126.
- 37 RA II, 205.
- 38 RA II, 230.
- 39 See page 52 of this chapter.
- 40 RA III, 367.
- 41 Ricardo García Granados, Historia de México desde la restauración de la república en 1867, hasta la caída de Porfirio Díaz, II (México: Librería editorial de Andrés Botos e Hijo, n.d.), 269-271.
- 42 Pedro Henríquez Ureña, La versificación irregular en la poesía castellana (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Históricos, 1920), p. 280.

- 43 Enrique Anderson Imbert, "Comienzos del modernismo en la novela," NRFH, VII (1955), p. 517.
- 44 Jiménez Rueda, Historia de la literatura mexicana, p. 249.
- 45 Spell, "Mexican Literary Periodicals of the Twentieth Century," FMLA, LIV (September 1939), 835.
- 46 Ibid., p. 836.
- 47 RA I, 253.
- 48 Max Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo, p. 495.
- 49 Spell, op. cit., p. 837.

CHAPTER IV

MANUEL GUTIERREZ NAJERA AND THE REVISTA AZUL

Considering the fact that Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera died almost nine months from the date on which the Revista Azul first appeared and that scarcely any of his works were reprinted during the last six months of the journal's publication, it is indeed remarkable that his influence on the journal should have been so pronounced. The lingering presence of his spirit and inspiration coincide with the theme of the opening stanza of the well-known "Non omnis moriar":

No moriré del todo, amiga mía!
De mi ondulante espíritu disperso,
Algo en la urna diáfana del verso,
Piadosa guardará la poesía.¹

Born in Mexico City on December 22, 1859, Gutiérrez Nájera was the son of educated, devout parents. He received much of his early education from his parents and from the private tutelage of the archbishop of Mexico, the latter giving him a firm foundation in Latin for a possible career as a priest. Luis G. Urbina lists among his early readings the religious and mystic writers including Juan de Avila, the two Luises, San Juan de la Cruz, Santa Teresa, and Malón de Chaide.² As a youth Gutiérrez Nájera had learned French and had begun a study of French poets of the romantic, Parnassian, and symbolist schools. While his principal interest in European literature was centered in France, he also read widely from the works of contemporary Spanish writers including Castelar, Bécquer, Campoamor, Echegaray, and Núñez de Arce. As will be indicated

later, his reading of the mystics and of these French and Spanish literati was to influence both his prose and poetry of later years and even determine to a degree the contents of the Revista Azul.

Gutiérrez Nájera's life was not at all eventful. He is always described as physically unattractive--with a rather large head, a small body, a broad and asymmetrical forehead, a mis-shapen nose--but a person of an aristocratic and gracious mien. In 1888 he married Cecilia Maillefert, a lady of French and Spanish descent, and two daughters were born to this union before the untimely death of the father on February 3, 1895. His life was dedicated to literature and to the press, and in the final analysis it was his extreme assiduity to the task of producing daily articles for the press coupled with an abnormal consumption of alcohol that caused his death.

The greatest monument to the life of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera is his vast literary production, a large part of which can still be found only in the newspaper files of Mexico City. Most of his poetry has been edited, but only some five volumes of his prose which in toto would fill almost fifty volumes have appeared. In his great mass of journalistic production, Jerónimo Mallo compares him with other contemporary journalists such as Juan Valera, Rubén Darío, and Enrique Gómez Carrillo.³ He lived exclusively by his pen, hence for variety he used a series of pen names and sometimes published a work as many as five times under different pseudonyms. "El Duque Job" was the most famous and best known pseudonym and the only one used in the Revista Azul. Mapes explains that "El Duque Job" was taken from the title of an obscure French play, Le Duc Job by León Laya, which had greatly pleased Gutiérrez Nájera.⁴ In the

same article Mapes lists twenty other pseudonyms which Gutiérrez Nájera used at some time during his career.⁵

Of his poetry in general Arturo Torres-Rioseco makes the following comment: "Elegiaco, filósofo, erótico, cínico, pagano y cristiano, Gutiérrez Nájera se reduce siempre a una máxima claridad de expresión. Cultiva la forma esmeradamente porque mejor forma indica mayor perfección. Al intelectualismo que aprendió de los poetas franceses opone siempre su candor y suavidad mejicanas."⁶ Much the same might be written about his prose. In the some five volumes which have appeared since his death the compositions are somewhat arbitrarily classified under various headings such as: Cuentos frágiles, Cuentos color de humo, Crónicas y Fantasías, Humoradas dominicales, Primera and Segunda Cuaresma del Duque Job, Impresiones del teatro, Crítica literaria, and Crítica social. These titles give an excellent idea of the variety of Gutiérrez Nájera's prose, but there are many instances where the same composition has been placed in several categories by different critics, all due to the fact that there is a mixture of genres and themes in many of his works.

In the Revista Azul itself there are eighty-two compositions of Gutiérrez Nájera, fourteen in verse and the other sixty-eight in prose. As has already been mentioned, the only pseudonym employed here was "El Duque Job," used forty-six times as a signature to prose compositions. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, M. Gutiérrez Nájera, and M. G. N. are used as signatures on the other thirty-six items. A general analysis of these eighty-two compositions reveals the following classifications: crónicas, forty-six; literary criticism, fifteen; verse, fourteen; and short stories, seven.

A bibliography of the journalistic writings of Gutiérrez Nájera has been published by Mapes in the Revista Hispánica Moderna.⁷ It lists twenty-nine compositions that were first published in the Revista Azul.⁸ These include seventeen crónicas, six articles of literary criticism, four short stories, and two poems. In the analysis that follows these twenty-nine items will be considered in more detail than the others due to the fact that they are Revista Azul originals and not reprints from earlier newspapers and magazines. Of the fifty-three other items not published first in the Revista Azul, thirty-six can readily be found in the Mapes bibliography as reprints from various Mexican newspapers and literary journals,⁹ and, since the Mapes bibliography does not go beyond the date of Gutiérrez Nájera's death, the other seventeen compositions were probably published posthumously and later reprinted by the Revista Azul.

The contributions of Gutiérrez Nájera to the Revista Azul stand as the high point of his total work. It was here more than in any other place that he took special care to polish the literary gems that would adorn "esta rubita de ojos color de cielo," as he fondly called his Revista. The Revista Azul introduced modernism to Mexico; it is a liaison between earlier romanticism and the refined literature of the modernists. Considering the place of Gutiérrez Nájera in Mexican literature, Arturo Capdevila makes the following significant commentary: "No se pasa de un orden dado a otro, de una escuela literaria a otra de muy diferentes principios y normas, sin que antes se haya producido entre la primera y la segunda un previo estado de simpatía; en tal forma que de la una parezca venir la siguiente, y de manera tal, que las nuevas tintas y

luzes dal cielo se muestran como si y de antemano hubieran asomado."¹⁰ It is in the person of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and in the pages of his Revista Azul that one finds the "estado de simpatía" that made possible the smooth transition from romanticism to early modernism. It likewise points the way for the mature period of modernism of the Revista Moderna generation.

It is possible, therefore, to find many elements of both romanticism and modernism in the lines of Gutiérrez Nájera's prose and poetry. At times the two movements coincide in the same work, but in other works the style can be classified more definitely as either romantic or modernistic. There are traces of romanticism, however, in almost every one of his compositions, even in those written during his last years. Max Henríquez Ureña points out that "en su obra personal puede seguirse el proceso de las principales influencias que prevalecieron durante el período de transición entre el romanticismo y las nuevas tendencias."¹¹ The personal elements of his work are more obvious in his poetry than in his prose, yet there are a number of instances in his prose, especially in the crónicas, where he reveals intimate feelings and attitudes. But the romanticism which appears in the work of "El Duque Job" is never bombastic or declamatory, but, in the opinion of Onís, "es un romanticismo depurado y selecto, que sigue las huellas de Bécquer o Musset, que recoge de la corriente romántica lo que es íntimo, delicado y personal, y rechaza lo exterior, lo aparatoso y lo brillante."¹² While melancholy, bitterness, and skepticism are not absent from his works, they are always tempered by the gracia of his style.

Of all of the discussions regarding the romanticism of Gutiérrez Nájera one of the most interesting is that of another distinguished Mexican modernist of a later period, Enrique González Martínez. He feels that Gutiérrez Nájera "introdujo el elemento prócer de la distinción. Lo que en sus predecesores fué desnudez autobiográfica y confesión impudente, en él fué confidencia velada y sugerencia íntima. . . . La estridencia del viejo lloro romántico cedía el paso a la queja en sordina, al sollozo refrenado, al suspiro recóndito que apenas se oye en el sagrado recinto del silencio."¹³

It is possible to see this transition from romanticism to modernism in certain reprints of Gutiérrez Nájera's poetry published in volume four of the Revista Azul. "Calicot," which describes the anguish suffered by a young Spaniard in America upon receiving a letter telling of his mother's death, is openly romantic in its style and treatment of a lachrymose theme:

Diez años hace, diez años
Salió á buscarse la vida
Bajo los altos castaños
¡Qué triste es la despedida!
La madre le dió un rosario,
El padre un abrazo estrecho.....
Y hoy al verse solitario,
Con qué ansia el pobre rosario
Oprime contra su pecho!¹⁴

But in "Pax animae" the tone is more restrained. The attitude is one of calm and fortitude in the face of misfortune. The tears and the "alma desnuda" of the romantic poet are suppressed in the following lines:

Ni una palabra de dolor, blasfemo!
Sé altivo, sé gallardo en la caída,
Y ve, poeta, con desdén supremo
Todas las injusticias de la vida!¹⁵

And in the well-known "La serenata de Schubert" the theme of sadness is treated with an attitude of tranquility and beauty:

Hay ternura y dolor en ese canto,
y tiene esa amorosa despedida
la transparencia nítida del llanto,
y la inmensa tristeza de la vida!¹⁶

The prose of the Revista Azul does not offer many concrete stylistic examples of Gutiérrez Nájera's romanticism. It is rather in his choice of themes that one finds traces of the romantics. Interest in local color, in the immediate environment, had developed in Spanish romantic literature. In conjunction with this there was a greater interest in the presentation of persons of the lower strata of society, and in the romantic theater the speech of this level of society was accurately reproduced. It is even possible to trace the beginnings of the interest of later nineteenth century writers in social problems back to the romantic period. All of these romantic themes occur throughout the crónicas of Gutiérrez Nájera that are printed in his Revista. His descriptions of Holy Week and of the Christmas season reveal a great interest in local color and a sensitivity to his environment. Noël is an excellent description of the colors, sounds, and odors associated with the celebration of Christmas in Mexico City. Frequent references to the poor and to their problems, to beggars, prostitutes, alcoholics, and drug addicts indicate his awareness of social problems. But when he laments the death of Julián del Casal,¹⁷ he allows his prose style to become more unrestrained and free. This also occurs on other occasions, usually in eulogistic articles to persons recently deceased.

The various authors that Gutiérrez Nájera read as a child left an indelible mark on his own writings. These authors fall into three categories: French, Spanish, and religious. The influence of French authors has been studied in a series of articles and theses.¹⁸ Speaking of this influence on the Mexican modernist, Francisco A. de Icaza comments that "alguna vez una producción ajena le dió el molde del vaso, pero la esencia fué suya."¹⁹ Most critics agree that the French influence in his work was always tempered by his own personality. The influence of Banville on his poetry has frequently been mentioned, but Santiago Argüello hastens to point out that "la influencia de Banville . . . corrió la propia suerte de las otras presuntas o reales influencias: la suerte de todas las influencias en las almas de personalidad bien definida: se personalizan."²⁰ The influence of François Coppée has been studied by Patricia R. Grant.²¹ She finds a parallel in the great realism of the verse of both poets and in other stylistic aspects such as the attempt by both at different times to create a perfumed atmosphere as a background for a poem. The adaptation of Spanish expression to French thought is the most important aspect of the French influence on his prose. The clear-cut, direct style of his prose is a Gallic importation which replaced the rhetorical style of Mexican romanticism. Examples of this style will be seen later in an analysis of certain crónicas. The influence of French literature was clearly recognized by Gutiérrez Nájera in the following comment about himself and Carlos Díaz Dufoo: ". . . éramos, literalmente hablando, espíritus franceses deportados á tierra mexicana."²² An excellent summary of the French influence on "El Duque Job" can be found in the following comments of Enrique González Martínez:

"Se le tachaba de afrancesado, y como su espíritu era blando en extremo para recibir la impresión de las últimas lecturas, se le llamaba imitador sin originalidad; y como rompía los moldes de la métrica al uso, sin extravagancia, pero con firmeza consciente y sistemática, se le trataba de peligroso innovador. En verdad, su arte delataba influencias francesas y al través de Hugo, Vigny, Lamartine, y Musset, recordaba a Eanville, Gautier y Baudelaire. No llegó a Verlaine porque en aquel entonces el poeta de 'Sagesse' no privaba aún entre los lectores americanos; pero no sé qué habrá de Verlaine en aquellos tintes melancólicos y en aquella poesía íntima de nuestro poeta. . ."²³

The influence of nineteenth century Spanish authors on Gutiérrez Nájera has not been studied as extensively as the French influence. The authors of Spain whom Gutiérrez Nájera read and enjoyed have already been indicated. It was Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer and to a much lesser degree Ramón de Campoamor who were to make the most lasting impression on the Mexican. R. Anthony Castagnaro has made a general study of the similarities between Bécquer and Gutiérrez Nájera.²⁴ He mentions two compositions in the Revista Azul which he relates to Bécquer: "Salmo de vida" which uses the well-known theme of the return of the swallows, and Juan el organista which has striking parallels to Bécquer's Maese Pérez el organista. This parallelism will be considered in more detail in the study of the short stories of Gutiérrez Nájera in the Revista Azul.

Castagnaro concludes that there is a high degree of tonal, spiritual, and stylistic similarity between the pair but finds no direct evidence that Gutiérrez Nájera read his Spanish counterpart. But within the pages of the Revista Azul there are two little-known crónicas which offer

definite proof of the fact that he was familiar with the work of Bécquer. Viendo volar golondrinas is also based on the Bécquer theme of the famous "Rima LIII." Gutiérrez Nájera borrows the theme giving due credit to Bécquer and changes the basic application: it is the swallows who return to find the human element forever changing. In another crónica, A los ausentes, he again uses a quote from Bécquer as the theme of the composition. Hence there is sufficient proof within the Revista Azul that "El Duque Job" was familiar with the Spanish author of the Leyendas and Rimas, but Santiago Argüello indicates in the following statement that both were products of similar literary currents: "Más que una influencia, fué una confluencia. Ambos, el mexicano y el hispano, se anticipan en eso al modernismo."²⁵

Much has been written concerning the religious influence in the works of Gutiérrez Nájera, especially in his poetry. As a child he was exposed to the careful training of a pious mother and the tutelage of the archbishop of Mexico. But it was the reading of the mystics that was to be the greatest influence of his religious education on his later compositions. The Mexico of Gutiérrez Nájera's childhood was not a very propitious place for orthodox religion. At the year of his birth the reform laws had been promulgated and lay education had begun in government schools. At about the same time positivism had begun to spread through Mexico, and the reading of Comte and Renan somewhat shook his deep religious faith. Although his early poetry shows a sincere religious conviction, he was later overtaken by doubt and skepticism. Max Henríquez Ureña writes: "Son los cantos elegíacos de Gutiérrez Nájera los que reflejan el drama interior de la duda que torturaba su espíritu-- casi todos anteriores a 1890 . . . Después, el espíritu de Gutiérrez

Nájera se manifiesta en otro tono, lleno de serenidad, y alcanza la expresión más elevada en composiciones como 'Pax animae' (1890). La melancolía resignada reemplaza al lirismo desgarrador de otro tiempo."²⁶ However, before reaching this period of serenity he becomes frankly pessimistic. Arqueles Vela writes: "El pesimismo de Gutiérrez Nájera se nutre de energías opuestas: de la esperanza en el más allá, y de la desesperanza de sus prestaciones personales en la tierra."²⁷ This struggle between earthly realities and idealistic aspirations has produced some of the greatest works of literature.

Evidence of these various religious stages of Gutiérrez Nájera's work can be found in the Revista Azul. In the crónicas he remarks that all religions demand an attitude of resignation to all events on the part of the believer, and in El vestido blanco he attempts to describe a non-believing mystic à la Verlaine. But the best example of his religious attitude is La virgen de Guadalupe, a crónica first published in the Revista Azul on December 9, 1894. The history of the Mexican saint is treated objectively. The Indian masses needed a saint of their own race and color, one in whom they could believe unconditionally. Guadalupe was the product of this racial necessity. He continues with a description of the historical role played by the Virgin in the War of Independence and concludes that even the incredulous allow some legends to persist, and the legend of Guadalupe is one of those. Such a crónica is not the product of a devout believer, nor is it the product of an atheist. Quite clearly it is the work of an analytical mind, one assailed by certain doubts yet unable to escape from the basic tenets of an early religious training.

There are only three poems in the Revista Azul which bear directly on the religious aspect of Gutiérrez Nájera's work. "Pax animae" and "Mis enlutadas" are both reprints from El Universal of the 1890-1891 period. The calm serenity of the former is in direct contrast with the abject sadness and melancholy of the latter. The only poem on this theme published for the first time in this journal was "Non omnis moriar" which appeared in the first issue with the year 1893 listed as the date of composition. In this study a number of allusions have already been made to its theme of the eternal existence of the poet through his verse. There are no direct references to religion in this composition, yet the tone of serenity conveys a certain spiritual, mystical feeling as seen in the following stanzas:

Y porque alzo en tu recuerdo notas
Del coro universal, vivido y almo;
Y porque brillan lágrimas ignotas
En el amargo cáliz de mi salmo;

Porque existe la Santa Poesía
Y en ella irradas tú, mientras disperso
Atomo de mi ser esconda el verso,
No moriré del todo, amiga mía.²⁸

Composed only two years before the death of the poet, this poem may be considered exemplary of the final stage of resigned melancholy which Gutiérrez Nájera reached in his religious experiences.

A general consideration of the poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera which appeared in the Revista Azul leads one to conclude immediately that the fourteen poems which appear in its pages are hardly representative of his poetic production which totals about 160 poems. All evidence points to the fact that only two poems, "Non omnis moriar" and "Versos de album," appeared first in the Revista Azul. Four of his poems were

published in the issue following his death, and four more appeared a year later in a commemorative issue. Besides the six poems already mentioned in this chapter, the Revista Azul included "A Vicente Riva Palacios," "Salmo de vida," "La cena de nochebuena," "Del libro azul," "De mis 'Versos viejos,'" "Mariposas," "Tras los montes," and "Versos no coleccionados." Most of these were reprinted from various newspapers dating from 1879 to 1892. "Del libro azul" was reprinted from El Nacional (Literario) of August 19, 1880, and has been cited as evidence of Gutiérrez Nájera's interest in the color blue some eight years before Rubén Darío's book appeared. "La cena de nochebuena" is a good example of what Mapes describes as Gutiérrez Nájera's "tendency to philosophize, at Christmas and New Year's, on the swift passage of time and the changes it brings."²⁹

One of the outstanding characteristics of the poetry of "El Duque Job" is its musicality. Vela describes how this is produced:

". . . estructura su verso con las modalidades modernistas: fluencia musical de la palabra y plasticidad de la materia sonora."³⁰ Perhaps the best example of this in the Revista Azul is found in the following lines from "De mis 'Versos viejos'":

Recuerdas de Richter, de Richter sombrío
El verso tan triste, tan triste, tan frío,
En que habla del mártir clavado en la cruz?
Blancura sin sangre, blancura nevada;
De estatua yacente blancura callada
Entreabre en el verso sus ojos sin luz.³¹

Here Gutiérrez Nájera has used twelve-syllable verse with a regular hiatus at the end of each six-syllable hemistich and a regular accent on the second and fifth syllables of each hemistich. Thus the first element

of this "musical" composition is a regular, recurring rhythm. Consonantal rime throughout allows for the greatest possible harmony of tone. There is yet another element to consider. In lines one, two, five and six there are repeated occurrences of the letters "s" and "t" which give an added rhythmic, staccato effect. This stanza also is an example of the combinative nature of his literary art, for the use of color is equally important. White is the only color used--whiteness without blood, snowy whiteness, a serene whiteness--these are the qualities of the martyr on the cross. Color and music are combined here with a mood of extreme sadness and frigidity, heightened by the adjectives triste, sombrío, frío, and nevada. It is in the combination of these elements that the poet achieves the total effect of his verse.

The versification of the poetry in the Revista Azul ranges from the twelve-syllable verse of the section just studied to the traditional eight-syllable verse. There is a predominance, however, of the eleven- and eight-syllable line, two of Gutiérrez Nájera's favorites. In "Mariposas" and "Versos de album" he demonstrates his special interest in the ten-syllable line, used so artistically in the famous "La Duquesa Job," but in these two poems he employs hemistichs of four and six syllables instead of the five-five combination of "La Duquesa Job." There are also examples of the use of short four-, five-, and seven-syllable lines, in contrast with longer regular lines in a pie quebrado fashion. The versification of Gutiérrez Nájera in the fourteen poems printed in the Revista Azul offers none of the dynamic innovations of a Rubén Darío or a Jaimes Freyre, but in the words of Carlos Villegas, "Después de Gutiérrez Nájera el verso fluye más suave y musical . . . ya no está sobrecargado del sentimentalismo."⁵² And this in itself was a

much needed innovation.

Even though the few poems of Gutiérrez Nájera published in the Revista Azul are not truly representative, the sixty-eight prose selections which appear are an excellent sampling of his total production. Twenty-seven of these selections appear here for the first time, and some of them are among the best he ever produced. Although his influence on modernism was more decisive in his prose writings, it is his poetry that has received greater attention from the critics. This is certainly caused in part by the greater accessibility of his poetry. But in the renovation of prose style Gutiérrez Nájera was second only to José Martí, recognized generally as the initiator of the movement. Together they loosened the bonds of rhetoric which had fettered the language for years, and their success was imitated by not a few young writers of the next generation. But Martí's life was divided between the pen and the sword, and the position as leader of the prose innovators soon fell to the Mexican. "'Escribir a la manera de Gutiérrez Nájera' fué casi una moda," writes Max Henríquez Ureña.³³ Villegas concisely describes this prose style that was imitated far and wide in the following words: "La prosa, por otra parte, fué dotada por él de una especie de rima interna . . . que produce en él que lee la impresión de que el escritor hace la confesión de algo que guardaba escondido tiempo atrás."³⁴

There are three categories into which the prose of Gutiérrez Nájera printed in the Revista Azul falls: the crónica, literary criticism, and the short story. The most important category is the crónica, of which there are forty-six or fifty-five percent of the total contribution of Gutiérrez Nájera to the journal. There are fifteen articles of literary criticism and seven short stories.

Mapes defines a crónica in the following manner: ". . . un comentario sobre acontecimientos del día o sobre cualesquiera otras materias de interés general, cultivado conscientemente como una forma especial de prosa artística."³⁵ This definition indicates the very flexible nature of the crónica. Often the theme is something of local importance without lasting interest, and other times a local incident is used to develop a philosophical commentary of a general, universal application. Frequently the crónicas are based on some special occasion such as Christmas or Holy Week, the anniversary of the death of a national hero, or the occasion of a national holiday. The theme of the crónica is always obvious in the opening paragraph, but beyond that point there is complete freedom in the development of the composition. Luis G. Urbina, the close friend of "El Duque Job" in his literary career, describes the very ephemeral purpose of the crónicas in the following lines: "No lo parecen; nadie lo creería; estaban destinadas a ser efímeras, a pasar al olvido en unas cuantas horas . . . no quiso darles más luz que la que necesitaran para entretener y deslumbrar un momento a la multitud, como los fuegos artificiales."³⁶ But many of the crónicas, although destined only as passing entertainment for the readers of the daily press, are now considered gems of modern Mexican literature.

One of the larger groups of crónicas in the Revista Azul includes those whose theme is a special occasion. Often a person connected with the occasion is described in detail as the central portion of the crónica. Such a crónica is Carmen Romero Rubio de Díaz, first printed in the Revista Azul on July 15, 1894. It is a baroque description of the wife of president Díaz. The opening paragraph uses a myriad of colors to describe a landscape, first during a rain storm, then as the

afternoon sun bathes the glistening panorama. The same colorful style persists throughout the crónica as the following descriptive terms demonstrate: "belleza de lilial blancura, esmalte de concha nácar, paredes de porcelana transparente, princesas . . . vestidas de oro, de zafir y de granate."³⁷ The author likewise attempts to create a perfumed atmosphere à la Coppée in these terms: "nube de incienso, fragancia de violetas, las fragantes ramas, alientos de frescura virginal, recuerdos que perfuman."³⁸ In fact, the concern for expressions of color and odor sometimes obscures the faint sketch of Señora Díaz. In El árbol de navidad a less ornate use of colors can be observed. The beauty of this passage lies in the simplicity of the images. A Christmas tree is described as "cuajado de flores como los naranjos . . . esas flores muy blancas, unas como el alba; azules, otras, como la ya desfalleciente madrugada; y de color de rosa, las más vivas. . . ." ³⁹ Later in the same crónica an excellent example of rapid movement can be found in the description of the ringing of church bells on Christmas Eve. Gutiérrez Nájera writes: "Las campanas se echan la capucha para atrás, alzan la cara para ver el firmamento, la ocultan luego, agazapándose, y juegan á escondidillas con los astros."⁴⁰

In a third crónica of this category, written especially for the Revista Azul, a combination of these various elements can be found. The following extensive quotation is from the first page of Gloria: A Justo Sierra, written on the occasion of the death of Sierra's daughter:

Es Mayo, "mes de rosas, mes de rimas." Tiene el cielo la brillantez de los ojos azules que se abren tras de sueño muy largo y muy tranquilo; de los ojos azules que no han visto nada malo; de los ojos azules que están húmedos siempre, porque hay una madre, joven y amorosa, que los besa á cada instante. Acaban de pasar las estrellas por ese cielo;

aun conserva la visible frescura de los cabrilleos de oro y de plata. En la iglesia llaman á misa. Más lejos, suena un repique. Aire sano, aire puro, aire que gozó la libertad de la noche,--de la noche sin humo, sin nubes de polvo, sin calor, sin bullicio,--entra vivificante á mis pulmones. Oigo el ruido de la bomba que eleva el agua á la azotea de la casa, y el de la bomba de mano con que riega el mozo los tiestos del corredor. En sus jaulas los pájaros se bañan y cantan; salpican gotas de agua y trinos. En el cuartel próximo suenan toques de corneta.⁴¹

The external structure of this passage warrants special consideration, for in it one can see the rhythm of Gutiérrez Nájera's prose. This section is written "geometrically;" it opens with a short, simple sentence giving the basic setting. Two complex sentences follow, and then contrast is obtained in two extremely short ones. The pattern of complex sentences follows with another short simple sentence as a conclusion. The rhythmic parallelism is further accented by the repetition of these words and phrases: "mes, de los ojos azules, aire, sin . . . , de la noche."

Within these few lines there are at least six words that directly suggest color and several others which do so indirectly. Seven words suggest sound, and three odors are suggested in the description of air. This, then, is an excellent example of the poetic prose of Gutiérrez Nájera and of his ability to combine harmoniously various sensations within a brief passage.

There are fifteen other crónicas in the Revista Azul which were written for special occasions. All except three are reprints, principally from El Partido Liberal. There are eight written in conjunction with the celebration of some religious occasion such as Holy Week, All Souls' Day, or Lent. Three are personal sketches of Hidalgo, Juárez, and Sadi Carnot, the president of France who had recently been murdered

by an Italian anarchist. Others mark the celebration of New Year's Day and Bastille Day or concern themselves with purely local events.

A second category of crónicas in the Revista Azul contains fifteen of a philosophical or analytical nature. While the use of stylistic devices to produce visual and audible effects is not completely absent from this group of crónicas, the style in general is far different from that of the first category considered. This is due principally to the nature of these crónicas where a highly baroque style would not be in order. The great variety of subject matter includes studies on religious problems, social problems, the excessive use of alcohol and drugs, the rapid passing of time, dueling, and the problem of death.

In two of these crónicas written for the Revista Azul it is possible to find excellent examples of a more sober style. In Notas de amor the following lines are precise and clear-cut, more so than in almost all of the works of the later modernists with the possible exception of certain passages of Rodó: "El amor no comienza ni termina. Es una línea trazada en lo infinito. Los que se quieren, se han querido siempre. Son mitades que aspiran á juntarse y no lo logran porque á modo de dos cuerpos elásticos, chocan, y el mismo choque los separa."⁴² Further proof that Gutiérrez Nájera made his style suit his subject can be found in Asunción where he describes both Venus and the Virgin Mary, one in cold--almost Parnassian--terms and the other with emotional outbursts reminiscent of romanticism.

One of the best crónicas of this group is Viendo volar golondrinas, based on the Bécquer theme of the return of the swallows. The skill with which Gutiérrez Nájera constructs this masterpiece makes it one of

the best crónicas appearing in the Revista Azul. The subject is introduced in the opening sentences: "Después de todo, estas golondrinas tan amadas que oigo cuchichear mientras escribo, son egoístas. Se van cuando tenemos frío; no cenan con nosotros en la Nochebuena; no quieren acompañarnos á visitar las tumbas de nuestros muertecitos en Noviembre"⁴³ In spring they return, from Africa, some say, but Gutiérrez Nájera does not believe it. He has his own theory: ". . . presumo que se mueren en una azul tarde de Octubre y que al venir la primavera resucitan, ¿Morir no es dormir? ¿Nacer no es despertar?"⁴⁴

"El Duque Job" further observes that new swallows never appear-- the same ones always return. This leads him to the following conclusion: "Si se fueran de viaje, unas se quedarían en París; otras se casarían con algún pájaro rico de los Estados Unidos; naufragarían tal vez algunas; morirían otras . . . y nada de eso pasa! Las golondrinas que vienen siempre son las mismas."⁴⁵ He now takes issue with Bécquer's famous statement, "¡Esas no volverán!" Yes, the same swallows always return only to find human beings changed. Scientifically he demonstrates this fact by citing the ever-changing arrangement of the molecules of the human body. Spiritually we are also multiple. Our personality is never constant from one day to the next. "La vida es una estación de ferrocarril en que todos vamos á despedirnos diariamente de nosotros mismos. El yo de hoy le da en esa estación un abrazo muy estrecho al yo de ayer.....y se queda esperando al de mañana."⁴⁶ The chronicler then reaches the following conclusions: "Todos morimos muchas veces. En una misma persona se muere el niño, se muere el joven, se muere el pensador, se muere el poeta, se muere el amante; se muere hasta él que

ya nada creía, nada esperaba. Por eso creo que se equivoca Bécquer: las golondrinas vuelven siempre. Pero no nos encuentran. ¡Ya nos fuimos!"⁴⁷

The great mastery with which this crónica is presented certainly gives no indication of the rapidity with which Gutiérrez Nájera wrote these daily compositions for the press. This daily production of masterpieces was no less surprising to his contemporaries. Luis G. Urbina writes the following in the preface to the 1898 edition of his Obras: "Y cuando por la tarde tomábamos el periódico, húmedo aún y sin doblar, atraídos por una curiosa manía, y leíamos el artículo del Duque, no ocultábamos la sorpresa--¡la diaria sorpresa!--compuesta, por mitad, de admiración y de cariño. ¿Qué hacía este muchacho charlador para escribir, en medio de nuestras escandalosas travesuras, esas páginas admirables, de estilo terso y blanco como una placa de mármol, repletas de alusiones literarias, con períodos eruditos, citas raras y hermosas, frases coloridas y arrulladoras, y tropos nuevos y delicadas alegorías?"⁴⁸ But in the next paragraph the question is still unanswered: "Se llevó a la tumba el secreto de su prodigio."

There remain in the Revista Azul eight crónicas which belong neither to the special occasion nor to the philosophical categories. All are reprints from other sources. Five of these may be classified as descriptive; three describe scenes in nature, one a street vendor, and the other the legends of the Holy Grail and of Lohengrin. There are three others which combine the descriptive element with travel notes. Lake Pátzcuaro is twice described, and the other is concerned with a description of the especially hot weather encountered in Cuernavaca.

The crónicas stand as the major prose contribution of Gutiérrez Nájera to the Revista Azul. A second prose category includes the fifteen articles of literary criticism which appear in its pages. Eleven of these were reprinted from other sources, and the remaining four were published here for the first time.⁴⁹

All but two of the articles of criticism deal with some phase of European literature. There are two studies of Leconte de Lisle and one each of Lamartine, Dumas fils, and Heredia. Of the Spanish studies there are three--one of Pérez Galdós as a dramatist, a survey of the Spanish theater, and a study of Zorrilla. Gutiérrez Nájera's interest in Shakespeare is reflected in three studies of his plays. In Mexican literature there is a study of Justo Sierra's poem, "El beato Calasanz," and a long discussion of Urbina's literary work. Of extreme importance, however, is his analysis of the contemporary currents of European literature in the article El cruzamiento en literatura. Since he makes direct references to the influence of French and Spanish literature on modernism and the Revista Azul, this article will be considered in detail in chapter six of this study.

The last category of Gutiérrez Nájera's prose to be considered is the short story of which there are seven in the Revista Azul. Here, as in the short crónicas, "El Duque Job" is in his favorite ambiente literario. An excellent study of the short story of Gutiérrez Nájera has been made by Kosloff.⁵⁰ His conclusions are of interest in considering the seven short stories in the Revista Azul.

Four of the short stories were printed for the first time in Gutiérrez Nájera's own publication. El músico de la murga is an

interesting combination of a crónica with an appended short story. It begins with a rambling account of musicians and the difficult life many of them follow. These observations are illustrated by the story of an unnamed musician who dies from excessive use of alcohol. Here one should note Gutiérrez Nájera's unfavorable attitude toward the use of alcohol for purposes of artistic stimulation, remembering that this was one of the principal causes of his own death. The second of the short stories first published in the Revista Azul is the well-known Rip-Rip el aparecido, often reprinted simply as Rip-Rip. Based on the Washington Irving legend, Gutiérrez Nájera adds his own philosophical interpretations to the story. By far the longest of his short stories in the Revista Azul is Juan el organista which appeared in two installments in volume one and in three installments in the second volume. It uses the theme of the organist who, betrayed by his late wife, falls in love with one of his charges, the daughter of his wealthy benefactor. But his love is for naught as the girl is already betrothed. He consents when asked to play at her wedding, but as the organ swells to a climax in a roaring crescendo, he falls to the floor in a fatal swoon as his young daughter's scream resounds through the chapel. Dame de coeur has an equally tragic ending. Rosa-Thé, beautiful and charming, marries an incurable gambler who quickly loses their vast wealth at cards. Rosa-Thé becomes seriously ill. Only then does her husband show any remorse and attempt a reform. Yet when she has recovered and they again have a few pesos, he reverts to his former vices. Rosa-Thé, cognizant of the fact that she can possess his love only from the sick bed, allows herself to have a relapse and refuses all medicine in the hope that her condition will

effect a permanent reform on the part of her errant husband. Her death is the end result, and the author of the story sadly sits in the Panteón Francés to mourn at her grave. For he once loved her, but she married another.

La balada de año nuevo is a reprint from the January 1, 1882, issue of El Nacional (Semanario). It is a poignantly sad tale of the death of a child on New Year's Day. Una venganza⁵¹ is an epistolary account of a betrayed husband who murders his wife and her lover as they ride through Chapultepec Park. Un día de carreras, the last of the reprinted stories, is a rambling, stream of consciousness account of the thoughts of a lady and her servant after returning from a day at the races.

As indicated by Kosloff, the themes of these short stories appeal to the heart rather than to the intellect.⁵² Six of the seven stories here end in the violent death of one or more of the characters. Except for Rip-Rip, all of the characters that die are relatively young; in La balada de año nuevo the child is but four years old. With regard to the style, it should be noted that narrative passages have a greater importance than descriptive sections. Unity of place is carefully observed, and the period of time covered by the action is usually relatively brief.

In all of these stories Gutiérrez Nájera has chosen characters and situations which evoke a great degree of emotion. Rather than describe the physical characteristics of his characters in detail, he chooses to present their emotional side. This results in short stories in which the mood and the subjective feelings evoked in the reader are the most significant elements of the composition, hence the comparison of

Gutiérrez Nájera's short stories with the Leyendas of Bécquer. The descriptive terms used by Angel del Río to describe the Leyendas could be applied equally well to the prose of Gutiérrez Nájera: "vaporosa, delicada, rítmica, abundante en imágenes y sensaciones, prosa, en una palabra, de poeta."⁵³

The humor as well as the philosophical observations of "El Duque Job" can be seen in Rip-Rip el aparecido. Commenting on the problem of old age, he humorously states: "Sucede casi siempre: mucho tiempo antes de que uno sepa que es viejo, los demás lo saben y lo dicen."⁵⁴ The problem concerning the author, however, is the fact that Rip-Rip was not recognized by his family upon his belated return. "¿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?"⁵⁵ No, the family was innocent; they had only forgotten. And the questions remain unanswered, yet the author concludes "sin embargo, todo esto da mucha tristeza."⁵⁶

The artistry of "El Duque Job" is apparent in the excellent conclusion to Juan el organista, where the mood of Juan the organist and the tone of his instrument are blended into a single, emotional outburst. The scene is the wedding of Juan's charge where he must endure the torture of seeing her marry another. "Era una armonía solemne, casi guerrera, un arco de triunfo hecho con sonidos, bajo el cual pasaban los arrogantes desposados. . . . En esa melodía fugitiva y doliente se revelaba la aflicción de Juan [sic], semejante á un enorme depósito de agua del que sólo se escapa un tenue chorro. . . . Y entonces la melodía se fué suavizando: era un mar, pero un mar tranquilo, un mar de lágrimas.

Sobre esa tersa superficie, flotaba el alma dolorida de Juan."⁵⁷ Then the tempo and pitch rise to new heights. "Mas, á poco, la música, azotada por la mano colérica del amo, volvió á sonar más melancólica que antes. Hasta el fin, cuando la misa concluía, las notas conjuradas y rabiosas, estallaron de nuevo en una inmensa explosión de cólera. Y en medio de esa confusión, en el tumulto de aquel escape de armonías mutiladas y notas heridas, se oyó un grito. . . . y en vez de melodías ó himnos triunfales, se oyeron los sollozos de una niña. Era Rosita que lloraba sin consuelo abrazada al cadáver de su padre."⁵⁸

This survey of the prose and poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera reveals the fact that all of the influences which at some time shaped his literary production are reflected in the eighty-two compositions of his which appeared in the Revista Azul. These many currents at times seem contradictory, but in the words of José Attolini, "Gutiérrez Nájera es el lugar de cita de todas las contradicciones poéticas; contradicciones que él soluciona y vuelve congruentes. Encuentra la razón de la sinrazón."⁵⁹ Poetic contradictions, Attolini calls them, for even when writing prose, Gutiérrez Nájera is still fundamentally a poet.

In the Revista Azul one can see the transition from romanticism to modernism in the style of his poetry and in the themes of his crónicas and short stories. At the same time it is possible to observe the influence of nineteenth century Spanish writers, especially Bécquer. The religious training of his childhood is especially evident in his poetry but certainly not absent from some of the crónicas. The grace and charm of his prose is at its best in the short stories and crónicas of the Revista Azul, both genres especially suited to his talents.

The secret of his special charm has never completely been discovered. However, at a banquet attended by some of his closest friends he once gave a somewhat enigmatic explanation of the manner in which he wrote. Luis G. Urbina records the remarks in the introduction to the first volume of the works of Gutiérrez Nájera: "La memoria le ayudaba mucho en esta carrera desenfrenada, sin rumbo--vuelo de cinglo--por interminables horizontes. La memoria arrancaba de aquí y de allá, en las orillas del sendero recorrido, la flora exótica, los cálices de acre aroma y los pétalos de enarcado contorno, que picaban las brumas del recuerdo. La plasticidad y la flexibilidad de su estilo, dependían, según él afirmaba, de una caja de música que, en el interior del oído, marcábale constantemente los ritmos a que debía ajustar el idioma. Las voces salían, como evocadas por el canto interno, y formaban guirnaldas, armoniosas combinaciones, inesperados juegos de sonidos, dentro de los cuales vibraba la nota perenne de una queja muy honda y muy doliente."⁶¹

The musical verse and the poetic prose of Gutiérrez Nájera are products, therefore, of an internal music box which, aided by the vivid memory of the artist, gave early modernism the charming and delicate compositions of the Revista Azul.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 RA I, 8.
- 2 Luis G. Urbina, La vida literaria de México (México: Editorial Porrúa, 1946), p. 153.
- 3 Jerónimo Mallo, "La obra periodística de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," Carta Semanal, XIV, No. 707 (December 1950), 9-10.
- 4 E. K. Mapes, "The Pseudonyms of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," PMLA, LXIV (1949), 680.
- 5 These are the other twenty pseudonyms listed by Mapes: "Can-Can," "Croix-Dieu," "El Cura de Jalatlaco," "Etincelle," "Fritz," "Frí-Frí," "Gil Blas," "Ignotus," "Juan Lanas," "Junius," "Junius (Senior)," "M. Can-Can," "Nemo," "Omega," "Perico de los Palotas," "Pomponnet," "Puck," "Rafael," "Recamier," and "X.X." In the prologue to Boyd Carter's book, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera Estudio y escritos inéditos, Mapes reverses a previous opinion and agrees that "M. Gutiérrez" was used by Gutiérrez Nájera (and also several other writers) as a signature for certain poems and prose selections.
- 6 Torres-Rioseco, Precursores del modernismo (Madrid: Talleres Calpe, 1935), p. 72.
- 7 E. K. Mapes, "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Seudónimos y bibliografía periodística," RHM, XIX (January-December 1953), 161-204.
- 8 Although thirty-four entries are listed, several are serial continuations of the same composition.
- 9 These newspapers and literary journals are listed as follows with the number found in each indicated. El Partido Liberal, twenty-six; El Universal, two; La Libertad, two; and one in each of the following: El Nacional (Literario), El Nacional (Semanao), El Nacional (Diario), La Familia, El Siglo XIX, and El Liceo Mexicano.
- 10 Arturo Capdevila, "El poeta Gutiérrez Nájera y el estado de simpatía," La Prensa, October 31, 1943.
- 11 Henríquez Ureña, "Las influencias francesas en la poesía hispano-americana," Revista Iberoamericana, II (1940), 408.
- 12 Federico de Onís, España en América (Madrid: Librería Villegas, 1955), p. 192.

- 13 Antonio Acevedo Escobedo (ed.), Los cuatro poetas: Gutiérrez Nájera, Urbina, Icaza, Tablada (México: Ediciones de la Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1944), the chapter on Gutiérrez Nájera by Enrique González Martínez, p. 18.
- 14 RA IV, 218.
- 15 RA IV, 211.
- 16 RA IV, 209.
- 17 RA II, 246.
- 18 The following theses are devoted to some aspects of the French influence on Gutiérrez Nájera: Alberto I. Altamirano, Influencia de la literatura francesa sobre la literatura mexicana, Maestro de Letras, Universidad Nacional de México, 1935; Arthur B. Conner, Indications in the Writings of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera of his Reading of French Literature, unpublished Ph.D dissertation, University of Iowa, 1952; Gladys D. Lucas, Influences in the Work of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, with Special Reference to the French, unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Southern California, 1934; M. Ramos Arce, Estudio de la influencia francesa en la vida y en la obra de Gutiérrez Nájera, Maestro de Letras, Universidad Nacional de México, 1942. Many of the articles regarding this aspect of his writings are cited in the present work.
- 19 Francisco A. de Icaza, "Poesía: Letras americanas," Revista de Libros, II (1914), 37.
- 20 Santiago Argüello, Modernismo y modernistas, I (Guatemala: Ediciones de Santiago Argüello, 1935), 221.
- 21 Patricia R. Grant, "The Poetry of François Coppée and Gutiérrez Nájera," Hispanic Review, XII (1945), 67-71.
- 22 RA I, 97.
- 23 Enrique González Martínez, op. cit., p. 15.
- 24 R. Anthony Castagnaro, "Bécquer and Gutiérrez Nájera--Some Literary Similarities," Hispania, XXVII (1944), 160-163.
- 25 Argüello, op. cit., p. 219.
- 26 Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo, p. 74.
- 27 Arqueles Vela, Teoría literaria del modernismo (México: Ediciones Botas, 1949), p. 83.
- 28 RA I, 8.
- 29 Mapes, "The First Published Writings of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," Hispanic Review, V (1937), 238.

- 30 Vela, op. cit., p. 75.
- 31 RA II, 233.
- 32 Carlos Villegas, "La poesia de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," Universidad, No. 5 (1945), 92.
- 33 Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo, p. 74.
- 34 Villegas, op. cit., p. 93.
- 35 Mapes, "Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera: Obras inéditas recogidas de periódicos de México," Revista Hispánica Moderna, III, No. 4 (July 1937), 292.
- 36 Urbina, Introduction to volume one of Obras de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera (México: Tip. de la Oficina Impresora del Timbre, 1897), p. v.
- 37 RA I, 161-163.
- 38 RA I, 161, 163.
- 39 RA II, 125.
- 40 RA II, 125.
- 41 RA I, 49.
- 42 RA II, 101.
- 43 RA I, 81.
- 44 RA I, 81.
- 45 RA I, 81.
- 46 RA I, 82.
- 47 RA I, 82.
- 48 Urbina, op. cit., p. ix.
- 49 For a complete bibliography of the articles of literary criticism in the Revista Azul see the appendix to this dissertation.
- 50 Alexander Kosloff, "Técnica de los cuentos de Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," Revista Iberoamericana, XIX, No. 38 (September 1954), 333-358, and XX, No. 39 (March 1955), 65-93.
- 51 This title is a variant of the more common title, La venganza de Milord. Un día de carreras is more commonly known as Después de las carreras.

- 52 Kosloff, op. cit., p. 338.
- 53 Del Rio, Historia de la literatura española, II, 104-105.
- 54 RA I, 347.
- 55 RA I, 349.
- 56 RA I, 349.
- 57 RA II, 60.
- 58 RA II, 60.
- 59 José Attolini, "Gutiérrez Nájera y su tristeza," Repertorio Americano, March 20, 1937.
- 60 Dorothy M. Kress, "The Weight of French Parnassian Influence in the Modernista Poetry of Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera," Revue de Littérature Comparée, No. 3 (1937), p. 589.
- 61 Urbina, op. cit., pp. ix-x.

CHAPTER V

THE GENERATION OF THE REVISTA AZUL

Mamuel Gutiérrez Nájera was the leader of the brilliant group of Mexican literary artists who contributed to his journal and who commonly have been called the generation of the Revista Azul by later critics. While the bonds which held this group together were never tight, the emergence of this association was unique and significant in Mexican literature. Never before had a literary journal been the focal point for a group of literati. The Revista Azul consolidated the new generation of modernists and prepared the way for the subsequent generations of the Revista Moderna and Savia Moderna. The only journal of earlier Mexican literature comparable to the Revista Azul was Altamirano's El Renacimiento (1869, 1894) which published articles by leading literary figures of widely divergent viewpoints, but Altamirano's publication was a forum where various attitudes could be expressed and not a unifying, consolidating force as was the Revista Azul.

The Mexican modernists of the Revista Azul were by all measures the most significant group of contributors to Gutiérrez Nájera's journal. In the organization and publication of the first issues of the periodical about twenty of the leading literary and political figures of late nineteenth century Mexico participated. Many of these figures were themselves romantics or neo-classics who became associated with the movement but who never really adapted their style to the new esthetic principles. Other supporters of the new movement were certain journalists and political figures.

These new writers of Mexico considered Justo Sierra their maestro in much the same way that the writers of the 1870's had looked to Altamirano for leadership. Poet, orator, historian, critic, Sierra was one of Mexico's most esteemed figures during one of its most brilliant literary periods. Earlier he had contributed freely to El Renacimiento, and in 1894 he likewise gave his full support to Gutiérrez Nájera's Revista Azul where one of his best poems, "El besto Calasanz," was first published.¹ Although Justo Sierra was never considered a genuine modernist, his interest in this movement of literary renovation was very strong. He was a figure too great and universal to be restricted to the narrow confines of dogmatic literary theory, yet in the delicacy of his poetic expression and in the artistic perfection of certain prose compositions he heralds the innovations which younger writers were to put into practice.

While Justo Sierra was the maestro of this new generation, it was Gutiérrez Nájera to whom the younger poets turned directly for leadership and critical analysis of their earliest works in the new style. From time to time they would hold afternoon meetings where they would read their latest efforts, and "El Duque Job" would lead the discussion that followed. In the "Azul pálido" section of volume five, number eleven, there is a description of such a meeting where José Peón y Contreras read his latest poetry and a long discussion followed. "Y pronto, cuando las estrellitas de luz eléctrica tiemblen allí abajo, en el esqueleto de la ciudad, las manos se tenderán, la banda se disolverá, y luego pasarán días y días, sin volver á encontrarnos, ignorados unos de otros, como viajeros que han perdido la vereda de la casa."² Thus one can see that this generation was individualistic, united only in their mutual love for "el verso azul." Many days would pass between meetings,

but on some afternoon later "volveremos á reunirnos--quizás no estemos ya todos--y de nuevo el Maestro estará allí con su prosa musical é irónica, su frase vigorosa, mientras los martillos formarán un coro épico á la vigorosa página del arte."³

The young writers of this emerging generation whose contributions to the Revista Azul were most numerous included Carlos Díaz Dufío, Luis G. Urbina, Jesús Valenzuela, José Juan Tablada, Jesús Urueta, Angel de Campo, and later Amado Nervo. The first two authors were, of course, closely associated with Gutiérrez Nájera in the enterprise and were largely responsible for the editorial policy of the publication, especially after the death of "El Duque Job." Another of Mexico's great modernists, Salvador Díaz Mirón, is the author of seven compositions published in the Revista Azul, all of which are reprints of lesser-known works. There is no evidence that he was directly associated with the magazine in any way. All available information seems to indicate that Díaz Mirón was especially hostile to such literary journals. Irving Ormond makes the following comment regarding this matter: "Díaz Mirón would be far better known had he not conceived a violent prejudice against appearing in columns of periodicals. This decision was taken in reprisal for the early pirating of his verse."⁴ This observation is substantiated in the Revista Azul by a number of references to pirated editions of his works which appeared in the United States. Other Mexican modernists of note who contributed fewer compositions than those noted above include Francisco M. de Olaguibel, Bernardo Couto Castillo, Francisco A. de Icaza, and Balbino Dávalos. The latter was important to the Revista Azul principally for his translations of works by the French Parnassians.

From the mere standpoint of numbers Carlos Díaz Dufío contributed far more articles to the Revista Azul than any other writer, even more than Gutiérrez Nájera. His signed compositions total nearly a hundred, but he was also the author of a vast number of unsigned editorial sketches in the "Azul pálido" sections and of numerous articles which he signed with the pseudonym "Monaguillo." It is indeed remarkable that such a prolific contributor to Mexico's leading modernist journal of the day should not be considered by most critics as even a member of the modernists' ranks. He frequently is mentioned as the co-founder of the Revista Azul, but his greatest claim to fame is as an economist and contributor to the editorial pages of some of Mexico City's leading newspapers. His artistic prose and literary criticism have been neglected for years, very possibly due to the fact that he wrote most of these compositions during the last decade of the nineteenth century when Gutiérrez Nájera was at the height of his popularity. Díaz Dufío lived until 1941, but during his later life his journalistic prose was far less artistic than that which appeared in the Revista Azul.

Prose sketches, crónicas, critical articles, essays, and short stories by Díaz Dufío can be found in profusion throughout all five volumes of the Revista. He quite obviously seeks to emulate the style of Gutiérrez Nájera in a number of his crónicas in order to keep the same mood and tone which pervaded the Revista Azul in its first year of publication. It must be admitted, however, that his style quite frequently suffers in comparison with that of his master whose innate gracia was inimitable. In crónicas such as Fin de año the tendency to philosophize at the end of the year, a characteristic of several of

Gutiérrez Nájera's compositions, can be observed. "¿Por qué al concluir el año recordamos á nuestros muertos--á nuestros muertecitos, como decía Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, ¡ay! arrebatado en la túnica de ese pérfido anciano que ya comienza su agonía?"⁵ Imitations of the style of "El Duque Job" are not limited to a similarity of themes, for in such prose fragments as Nocturno it is possible to see the influence of such works as "La serenata de Schubert." The opening sentences serve as an excellent example of an attempt to emulate the slow, even rhythm and the mood of serenity seen in the poem of Gutiérrez Nájera: "La sombra se ha ido arrastrando, poco á poco, absorbiendo luz, devorando reflejos, lentamente, perezosamente, en asecho de los colores, haciendo flotar sus átomos oscuros, inundándolo todo en su oleada negra. Hasta mí llegan los acordes lejanos de una vaga melodía de Chopin. El piano solloza sus lágrimas musicales que caen en el silencio de la noche como gotas de lluvia sobre una bandeja de plata."⁶ Identical in theme and in style is La serenata. Díaz Dufoo follows the traditional devices employed by the modernists in such compositions: an opening passage describing the scene, the gradual introduction of the musical passage with a description of the music's effect on the listener, and a conclusion in which the last note fades away into the distance.

In compositions such as the ones just discussed Carlos Díaz Dufoo seems to be experimenting with the esthetic principles recently introduced by the young modernists. However, such a style certainly is not typical of the majority of his journalistic articles where he deals with contemporary problems of society: the excesses of positivism, the theories of naturalism, and the unconventional characteristics of certain Bohemian artists and writers. A severe criticism of the mal du siècle

attitude can be found in Un problema fin de siglo, and in Los tristes he challenges the men of the nineteenth century who, educated in the principles of Christianity, have substituted for belief in God a belief in liberty, science, and democracy. His theories are sometimes supplemented with a narrative to illustrate a point as in Una duda where the problem of the impact of evil on humanity is illustrated by an account of a shipwreck. At times these narratives become almost surrealistic as the author probes beyond common truisms for the causes of world phenomena. Carlos Díaz Dufó is always conscious of contemporary problems and currents of thought. The compositions of his that can be termed modernistic are relatively few, and his position in the Revista Azul is more that of the journalist who is constantly analyzing and evaluating the problems of his generation.

Luis G. Urbina was the third member of the group closely associated with the Revista Azul. As secretario de redacción Urbina exercised considerable influence in the determination of the journal's contents, but of his own compositions there are included only sixteen prose articles and four poems. These are his earliest writings, for Urbina was only twenty-five when the periodical began publication. According to Max Henríquez Ureña, at this period in his life Urbina was still a romantic,⁷ and Torres-Rioseco adds that "Luis Urbina (1868) ha tenido el valor de permanecer siempre romántico."⁸ It is no wonder, therefore, that Urbina is mentioned most often as the continuer of the romantic-modernistic style of Gutiérrez Nájera. It was "El Duque Job" himself who wrote an extensive criticism of Urbina's poetry for the June 16, 1895, issue of the Revista Azul. The entire issue is devoted to a study of Urbina and

contains other critical articles on his work by Justo Sierra, Angel de Campo, and Díaz Dufó. The following lines by Gutiérrez Nájera, reprinted in this issue from La Revista Ilustrada of New York, most clearly indicate the type of poetry that young Urbina was writing: "Urbina es muy joven. Dice que ya conoce el dolor; pero no es cierto: á la que conoce es á la primera novia del poeta: á la Melancolía. Tienen sus versos la tristeza apacible de la madrugada. Los envuelve, por decirlo así, una obscuridad azul. . . . Porque la poesía de Urbina se inclina á la tristeza, como si en hermosa y soñolienta que busca el hombre de la buena amiga. Hay poetas así, que nacen enamorados de lo pálido y Urbina es uno de ellos."⁹ The statement on the same page that "Urbina es rico en verso y pobre en prosa" cannot be verified in the Revista Azul where only four of his poems appear, and all except "En un álbum" are reprinted from other sources.

Urbina's prose in the Revista consists of a series of crónicas, literary criticisms, and reviews of important musical events. His crónicas show a definite stylistic and thematic similarity to those of Gutiérrez Nájera, but he often loses himself in verbosity and highly complicated imagery as in the following description of a sunset: "La luz amarilla loqueaba en el muro ruinoso, encendiendo á rojo de fragua, los ladrillos descubiertos, plateando las piedras ensalitradas, incrustando polvo de diamantes en las cuarteaduras, y prendiendo agujetas de oro en la cabezada leonada y soñolienta de un gato que dormía en el muñón de cantera ennegrecida de un canal sin tubo."¹⁰ Such a sentence clearly indicates an interest in a more highly developed use of the adjective, a characteristic of the modernists, yet Urbina lacks the precision and clarity seen in Gutiérrez Nájera.

Throughout much of his prose there is a certain romantic nostalgia reminiscent of "El Duque Job." In Almas solas y casas vacías the author revisits a solitary plaza, the scene of many of his romantic escapades as a youth. Stimulated by strains of familiar music, the past is suddenly reconstructed. "Toca tu vals, memoria, pero no tan aprisa! ¡Quiero contemplar esos deslumbrantes minutos de gloria que llevan palmas; ese instante de dicha que cruza sonando besos, ese rato de meditación que pasa cantando estrofas, esas noches azules de citas, esa puesta de sol de los juramentos!"¹¹ Such a passage is much more effective than the verbose description previously cited. He has taken more care to select "le mot juste" in his images; they are less complex and more comprehensible to the reader. Gutiérrez Nájera often wrote similar nostalgic passages in which a happier past was recalled in a not-so-happy present, and it is in such crónicas that the close parallels between the two contemporaries can readily be observed.

While Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Carlos Díaz Dufío, and Luis G. Urbina are the Mexican modernists whose literary personalities are best defined in the pages of the Revista Azul, there are three other poets represented who were to become the leaders of the Revista Moderna generation. These poets were Amado Nervo, Jesús E. Valenzuela, and José Juan Tablada; the former two were founders of the Revista Moderna, and Tablada was one of its outstanding contributors. Both Nervo and Tablada were in their early twenties when the Revista Azul first appeared, but Valenzuela was some fifteen years older. Nervo had just arrived in Mexico City from Mazatlán where he had begun a career as a journalist. He had just started to write poetry and many of his first efforts were reprinted by the editors of the Revista Azul. His reputation as a poet

was steadily growing, and in 1898, according to González Peña, a poem of his recited on the first anniversary of the death of Gutiérrez Nájera increased his popularity tremendously.¹² This was the famous "In memoriam" with the familiar opening lines:

Era un ritmo: el que vibra en el espacio
Como queja inmortal y se levanta
Y llega del Señor hasta el palacio
Un ritmo: y en el cielo de topacio
Se perdió: como todo lo que canta!¹³

Even in this early work the mystical, religious tendency of Nervo's poetry is clearly seen. Likewise, in contrast with Gutiérrez Nájera and Urbina, his preoccupation with the central idea of the passage is paramount. Any attempt to stimulate the visual senses is subordinate to the ideas expressed in the lines. A somewhat different mood dominates the conclusion to "Ojos negros," a poem written especially for the Revista Azul.

Oh noche! ven á mí llena de encanto;
Mientras con vuelo misterioso avanzas,
Nada más para ti será mi canto,
Y en los brumos repliegues de tu manto,
Su cálido abrirán mis esperanzas.....¹⁴

Whether the theme is religious or not, there is a kind of mysterious mysticism already obvious here that was to dominate much of his later poetry. Also it should be pointed out that Nervo relies heavily on nouns and verbs in the creation of his images whereas most of the other modernists of this period were using a plethora of adjectives.

An excellent example of this extensive use of adjectives for purposes of ornateness can be seen in the lines of José Juan Tablada, a

poet whose work reflects a deep skepticism and contains frequent outbursts of irony and sarcasm. A connoisseur of Japanese art and culture, Tablada often chose exotic settings for backgrounds to his verse and prose. Max Henríquez Ureña sees a Parnassian influence in his poetry, and parallels with Baudelaire can be found both in his literary art and his personal life.¹⁵ The French Parnassian style is apparent in "Abanico Luis XV" where images of plastic beauty occur in almost every stanza: "Su amplia falda de albos satines," "los rayos del áureo sol," "la ovija llena de esmaltes."¹⁶ Of all of Tablada's poems in the Revista Azul, "Venecia" is one which best reveals the above characteristics. The first two stanzas set the mood for the entire work.

¡Oh, la ciudad de las palomas blancas,
De las góndolas negras!
Ciudad de las ruidosas mascaradas,
¡Oh soñadora y lánguida Venecia!

Poética imagen de mi triste vida!
El lóbrego canal de mi existencia
Cual cortejo de góndolas sombrías
Surcan también mis fúnebres tristezas!¹⁷

Sadness, even an occasional tone of bitterness, permeates the constant flow of plastic, colorful images. The use of contrasting colors and moods creates a feeling of duality which is always left unresolved. At times Tablada allows the ugly and the morose to dominate his work to such a degree that he assumes a Baudelairean style as in the following prose passage: "El árbol siniestro, el árbol fetiche, donde el vampiro venerado se resguarda, un país de canibalismo y de fanatismo, de sol caliginoso y ardiente, una horda de zoulous que aulla y se entrega al rito hierático y brutal . . ."¹⁸

Both Nervo and Tablada contributed only nine poems each to the Revista Azul. While Nervo already showed indications of the direction his poetry was to take in later years, Tablada had not yet developed his interest in Japanese culture. Jesús E. Valenzuela, on the other hand, was considerably older than both Nervo and Tablada, yet he never was able to develop his poetic skill to as high a degree of mastery. His greatest claim to literary fame is the Revista Moderna which he founded with Amado Nervo and financed until his death in 1911. While he contributed sixteen poems and one prose crónica to the Revista Azul, he failed to distinguish himself as an accomplished poet of the modernist style. Quite frequently his verse is rather prosaic and closely parallels the work of Núñez de Arce. "Credo....." is a long treatise on the inability of science to penetrate the mysteries of God. "Dura lex" is a shorter work in two parts which deals with alcoholism as a malady inherited by a son from his father. The overtones of naturalism are unmistakable, and Valenzuela uses this poem as the framework for the study of a social problem. The following lines taken from an elegy to Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera show a greater sense of poetic rhythm than the two poems previously cited, but even here there is a dearth of spontaneous music and natural poetic images which his contemporaries were incorporating into their lines:

Poeta de luz y de las flores,
del bien y de los santos ideales,
que bordaste tus versos de colores
para hacerte un sudario de sus chales;

.

A tu sepulcro, altar para los fieles,
por siempre irá la joven Poesía
como á Tempé, por ramos de laureles,
de Delfos la sagrada Teoría.¹⁹

Throughout the pages of the Revista Azul Valenzuela demonstrates that he is a man of considerable culture, one well-read in the works of classical literature, yet when he attempts to mingle the ancient with modern esthetic principles, the resulting lines often seem forced and somewhat artificial. His unlimited generosity in supporting the Revista Moderna won him high esteem in Mexico, but later critics have assigned him only a secondary literary role in the movement he so eagerly supported.

Also closely connected to the Revista Azul generation and later an affiliate of the Revista Moderna writers was Jesús Urueta, one of the great Mexican orators of his day. His ability is aptly described by González Peña in the following terms: "La palabra se convertía en música en sus labios, y tenían sus cláusulas la gracia y la armonía de un mármol antiguo."²⁰ While he is not generally considered among the leaders of modernism in Mexico, he did contribute ten prose articles to the Revista Azul. Many of them reflect his interest in current literary theories and in sociological problems of the late nineteenth century. His article on Taine²¹ is an attempt to apply to José Zorrilla and Guillermo Frieto the theory that an author reveals himself in his works, which are the products of heredity, environment, and historical time. Certain crónicas explore in detail the theories of naturalism, but it is in a series of extremely short prose sketches that one sees certain modernist tendencies. Del caballete is a group of five word paintings of which an excellent example is Indolente: "La tarde. El remanso oculto por un cortinaje de espesas frondas. Bulle el agua en remolinos

de cristal agitando las arenas de oro, y oscila en el fondo un pedazo de cielo azul, desgarrado por el tejido de las ramas."²² It should be noted that the first two sentences, both of which lack verbs, set the stage for the rest of the sketch. In the third sentence movement begins, and a series of words suggesting brilliant color are added. The sketch that follows describes in detail a young girl stretched out on a green blanket. Again he uses no verbs in the first lines describing the girl, but he gradually introduces action toward the end of the sketch as the girl slowly rolls from side to side on the blanket. In Viñetas a similar opening is used effectively in a description of downtown Mexico City: "La calle de Flateros. Domingo. Medio día. Grupos, carruajes.....En una esquina, el poeta: pantalón claro, levita negra con un clavel rojo en el ojal, narigudo, algo más que narigudo; un porfirista apagado en el rincón de la boca: bigote de eléctricas púas . . ."²³ The detail and precision of this sketch reveal a great power of observation. While there is nothing in Viñetas that could not have been written by a confirmed realist, one must conclude that it was his ability to choose "le mot juste" and his ability to write polished, colorful prose that won for him a small niche in the Revista Azul. Díaz Dufóo, Urbina, Valenzuela, Nervo, Tablada, Urueta--these were the principal followers of Gutiérrez Nájera who were associated in varying degrees with the Revista Azul. But there were many other contributors from within Mexico whose works generally are not considered strictly modernistic but who found nevertheless a place in Gutiérrez Nájera's publication for many of their compositions. It is beyond the scope of the present work to study in detail the contributions of these

literary figures, but for the sake of a total picture of the journal it is necessary to comment at some length on the outstanding contribution of Angel de Campo, considered a leading costumbrista by most literary critics yet a writer closely associated with the modernists of the Revista Azul generation.

A product of his environment, "Micrós," as Angel de Campo signed all seventy-eight of his prose articles in the Revista Azul, was able to sketch vividly and accurately the everyday activities of the middle and lower classes of society for the readers of the daily press. While he is often critical, he tempers his judgment with feelings of deep tenderness and pity for the sufferings of the humble and the unfortunate. At times he is even humorous, but above all he is an admirable literary artist who is able to reproduce with keen understanding the panorama unfolding before his eyes. No doubt it was the color and the brilliance of his style which won the admiration of the Mexican modernists.

"Micrós'" contribution to the Revista Azul was extensive. His seventy-eight prose articles and three poems almost equal the number of entries by Gutiérrez Nájera. Although his poetry is negligible, his influence as a prose writer can be seen throughout all five volumes. While he is best known for his copious articles on everyday themes, he also wrote for the Revista Azul several short stories and articles of literary criticism.

In many of his prose articles and sketches "Micrós" describes in a realistic style the many activities he observes about him. Such a realistic sketch is En un día de fiesta where he relates a quarrel between a man and woman as they walk down the highway. Careful attention is given

to details of the rustic setting with special emphasis on the description of the various sounds connected with the harvesting of grain. Only the beginning of the quarrel is recorded directly, for as the couple move along the highway, their gestures alone are described, and the rest of the dialogue is a matter of supposition. In other crónicas such as Misa de siete Angel de Campo writes with a more elaborate descriptive technique closely paralleling some of the crónicas of Gutiérrez Nájera and Urbina. Here he paints a comprehensive picture of a church and the surrounding neighborhood shortly before seven o'clock mass. The ringing of the church bell opens the scene, and the sound of the bell mixes pleasantly with the whistling of the wind. There is a minute description of the church and of the people moving in the street in front of the façade. There are bricklayers, street sweepers, an old lady going to mass, and a "pobre ciego con cortinas verdes en los ojos."²⁴ In the conclusion the author listens to the conversations of these various people and notes how sad most of them are in contrast to the gaiety expressed by the bell "que canta á la diafanidad azul de la mañana."²⁵

In one of his famous Cartones called Al pasar "Micros" sets the scene in a neighborhood similar to the one of Misa de siete, and the time is again early morning. His principal interest is a minute description of the scene--the crystal drops of rain on the telephone wires, the passenger vehicles coming and going through the streets, the many articles of religious paraphernalia and the various types of food for sale in the sidewalk puestos. The detailed realism of the first section of Al pasar is continued in the conclusion where he describes a flower market, but here the descriptive metaphors are more ornate and elaborate

as can be seen in the following lines: "Capullos acabados de bañar, amapolas chillantes, sombríos pensamientos de terciopelo casi negro, con su viva gota de oro en el centro, claveles amarillos disciplinados de rojo--salpique de sangre en carne japonesa--y mosquetas color de marfil, urnas perfumadas con gránulos amarillos en el fondo . . ."26

Such a descriptive passage could well have been written by any of the modernists of the Revista Azul generation, and it is in passages similar to this one that the stylistic relationship of Angel de Campo with the modernists can most readily be observed.

There were many other literary figures who, like Angel de Campo, have never been considered among the principal adherents to modernism but who for various reasons were welcomed as contributors to the Revista Azul. Two of these contributors, Juan de Dios Feza and José M. Bustillos, were direct followers of Altamirano. Many of the poets generally considered romantics, including Guillermo Prieto, Laura Méndez de Cuenca, José I. Novelo, Adalberto A. Esteva, Antonio Zaragoza, José Peón del Valle, and Luis Gonzaga Ortiz, had several of their poems published within the pages of Gutiérrez Nájera's Revista. This is not surprising in consideration of the fact that the roots of modernism in Mexico go directly back to romanticism via many of the works of "El Duque Job" and Urbina. Other poets whom most critics consider neo-classics likewise contributed a number of compositions, many of which displayed a Parnassian perfection of form. The poetry of Manuel José Othón is an excellent example of this quality. Other poets whose lines show a definite classic influence include José M. Roa Bárcena, Joaquín Arcadio Pagaza, Enrique Fernández Granados ("Fernangrana"), and Juan B. Delgado.

The editors of the Revista Azul also chose to include selections written by some of the leading Mexican literati, who, although they wrote in the late nineteenth century, were principally identified with realism or naturalism. Among these were the two outstanding novelists Rafael Delgado and Federico Gamboa. Another contributor was a distinguished critic, educator, and prose writer: Doctor Manuel Flores.

It should be pointed out in conclusion that there is still another group of poets sometimes considered as minor modernists or as poets related to the movement of modernism who were beginning to write during the period between 1894 and 1896. None of these figures wrote extensively for the Revista Azul, and some never succeeded in rising above the depths of literary obscurity. María Enriqueta Camarillo de Pereyra, better known simply as María Enriqueta, hardly belongs to any literary school. Related to the modernists somewhat more closely were the poets Francisco M. de Olaguibel, Francisco A. de Icaza, Manuel Fuga y Acal, and Manuel Larrañaga Portugal.

However, in spite of the fact that none of these secondary literary figures radically altered the general composition of the Revista Azul with their poems and articles, without them the journal would have lacked variety, something vitally important in a weekly publication. By including prose and poetry from so many heterogeneous sources the editors were able to give their publication a more cosmopolitan spirit and free it from the narrow bonds of being the portavoz of a single literary movement. The Revista Azul, in addition to being the leading modernist publication of its day, was also truly representative of Mexican literature at the end of the nineteenth century. The great

variety of authors included in its pages is aptly characterized by Genaro Estrada in the following terms: ". . . aunque no fué un periódico de rigurosa selección de los escritos, sí lo fué de escritores selectos."²⁷

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 RA II, 8-20.
- 2 RA V, 176.
- 3 RA V, 176.
- 4 Irving Ormond, "Mexico's New Poets," The Bookman, XLIX, No. 1 (March 1919), 104.
- 5 RA IV, 130.
- 6 RA III, 248.
- 7 Henríquez Ureña, Breve historia del modernismo, p. 470.
- 8 Torres-Rioseco, Bibliografía de la poesía mexicana, p. xxiv.
- 9 RA III, 99.
- 10 RA I, 4.
- 11 RA I, 47.
- 12 Carlos González Peña, Historia de la literatura mexicana, p. 324.
- 13 RA IV, 237.
- 14 RA II, 302.
- 15 Henríquez Ureña, "Las influencias francesas en la poesía hispano-americana," Revista Iberoamericana, II (1940), 411.
- 16 RA I, 245.
- 17 RA II, 327.
- 18 RA III, 318.
- 19 RA IV, 215.
- 20 González Peña, p. 384.
- 21 RA V, 321-323.
- 22 RA I, 6.
- 23 RA I, 109.

24 RA V, 139.

25 RA V, 140.

26 RA I, 31.

27 Genaro Estrada, Poetas nuevos de México (México: Ediciones Ferría, 1916), p. ix.

CHAPTER VI

FOREIGN CONTRIBUTORS TO THE REVISTA AZUL

A large number of the writers whose works appear in the Revista Azul lived outside of Mexico. Many of these authors were Spanish Americans who either were modernists or were associated with the movement of literary renovation, but many others were nineteenth century French or Spanish literati who for one reason or another were admired by the editors of the Revista Azul. This great variety of writers gave Gutiérrez Nájera's publication a more cosmopolitan spirit and provides literary critics with valuable data regarding the foreign literary figures that the generation of the Revista Azul preferred.

At least ninety Spanish Americans who lived outside of Mexico appear in the publication. The largest national groups represented are Cubans, Venezuelans, and Colombians, but every Spanish American republic except Paraguay has at least one contributor. The large representations from Cuba, Venezuela, and Colombia are due principally to the great amount of modernist literary activity in the capitals of these countries and to their relative proximity to Mexico. There are comparatively few writers from the Buenos Aires and Montevideo circles of modernists.

The number of European writers in the pages of the Revista is almost equal to the number of Spanish Americans. France, where the Parnassians and early symbolists had paved the way for literary renovation, is represented by sixty-two writers, while Spanish writers number about thirty. There are also small groups of German, Russian, Italian, English, and American contributors whose works in some way conform to

the renovating tendencies of the late nineteenth century. Dorothy Kress, however, believes that the compositions of most of these writers were available to the editors of the Revista Azul principally through French translations.¹ This conclusion is based on the fact that research regarding the personal libraries of the modernists has revealed that most Russian, German, and other European works which these libraries contained were in French translations.

Most of the selections appearing in the Revista Azul which were written by authors living outside of Mexico were reprinted from the various literary revistas which were received in Mexico City from other Spanish American countries and from Spain. There are many casual references to these journals in the editorial sections of the Revista, but only rarely is there an acknowledgment made to indicate the source of specific reprints. Frequently chapters or passages from published books were reprinted with appropriate bibliographical references given, but this was not generally the case with periodicals and newspapers. The identification of a specific reprint is sometimes made more difficult because the editors of the Revista either altered or completely changed the title of the work.

A survey of this vast amount of reprinted material reveals that Rubén Darío, generally considered the leader of the modernist movement, was the author of fifty poems and prose selections in the Revista Azul, far more than the number of reprints of any other author's work in this category. From his earliest publications, Abrojos and Rimas, there is in the Revista Azul a total of only three reprints. Azul..., on the other hand, was the source of ten reprinted compositions. "Estival" was

the only poem from this work, but three short stories and six prose sketches appear.² The prose of Azul..., described by George W. Umphrey as short sentences with rhythmic phrasing and delicate shading and precision,³ was stylistically closer to contemporary French literature than to the cumbersome, oratorical style of many Spanish writers of the time. Regarding this same point, Juan Valera wrote the following comment in his famous prologue to the second edition of Azul...: "Lo primero que se nota es que está usted saturado de toda la más flamante literatura francesa."⁴ The stylistic novelty of the prose of Azul... made it at once a success. The influence of French authors was readily apparent, and much later Darío confessed that Catulle Mendès, Victor Hugo, Armand Silvestre, and René Maizeroy had inspired certain of the short stories in the volume. While the themes and stylistic technique of Azul... were unique, the general tone of the work had already appeared in certain compositions of earlier modernists. Jorge Campos feels that Gutiérrez Nájera had already approached the style of Azul... in his Cuentos frágiles, published some five years before 1888.⁵ By 1894 when the Revista Azul first appeared, short stories in the manner of Azul... and the Cuentos frágiles were being written by many young authors including Urbina, Díaz Dufío, and Angel de Campo.

While the poetry of Azul... offered no important metrical innovations, Prosas profanas, published eight years later, is a landmark in the study of Spanish versification. Darío here sought to introduce a variety of rhythmic verse into Spanish prosody and to make traditional verse forms more flexible. Prosas profanas was not published until 1896, the last year of the Revista Azul, but many of the poems in this

edition had appeared earlier in newspapers. Seven of these poems appeared in the Revista, and it is in them that one can see the first evidences of the changes in technique and in versification that were to become the trademark of later modernists.

One of these new techniques was the use of internal rime. "Era un aire suave" and "Canto a la sangre" are both examples of this innovation. The former is one of Darío's masterpieces in which the musical qualities seen in the poetry of the French symbolists appears in Spanish verse.

la orquesta perlaba sus mágicas notas,
un coro de sonos alados se oía;
galantes pавanas, fugaces gavotas
cantaban los dulces violines de Hungría.⁶

The repetition of word endings in the third verse--galantes pавanas, fugaces gavotas--gives internal rime to reinforce the regular abab rime pattern. Throughout "Era un aire suave" Darío shifts the accent of the twelve-syllable lines at will to give the lines greater flexibility. "Canto a la sangre" likewise makes use of internal rime as in the following line: "Las almas se abreven del vino divino."⁷

There were other significant innovations in the poetry of Prosas profanas which was reprinted in the Revista Azul. One of these poems was "Elogio de la seguidilla" in which the dodecasilabo is composed of seven- and five-syllable units. "Pórtico," written as a prologue to Salvador Rueda's volume of poetry entitled En tropel, is another excellent poem in which Darío attempts to trace the history of Spanish lyric poetry, especially Andalusian poetry. Filled with local color and the music of southern Spain, "Pórtico" is written in eleven-syllable verse but has an obligatory accent only on the fourth syllable. This gave

rise to a long polemic as to whether Darío had used a new endecasílabo or had merely written lines with eleven syllables. The dispute was resolved somewhat when it was pointed out that Darío had used the ancient verso de gaita gallega, but the long dispute over this poem indicates the interest which Prosas profanas aroused.

Except for certain of the poems from Prosas profanas, the influence of Rubén Darío on the Revista Azul was not of special significance. While a large number of his compositions were reprinted, their style was not greatly different from that of the modernists who were actively engaged in the publication of the Revista. It must be remembered, however, that many of these compositions had been written some four or five years earlier while Rubén Darío was still in Chile. At the time of their composition they were the avant-garde of modernism, but by 1894 the innovations which they contained had generally been accepted by other modernists who were using them in their own works.

There were a number of other Central Americans besides Rubén Darío who appeared in the pages of the Revista Azul. These writers were much more closely associated with activities in their native countries than was Darío whose Nicaraguan origin could hardly be discerned in his early works. There are thirteen prose sketches by Arturo A. Ambrogi of El Salvador who was closely associated with the modernist journal called El Figaro. He was a great admirer of Gutiérrez Nájera and shared his interest in the music of Schubert. His reactions to the death of "El Duque Job" are reprinted from an edition of El Figaro which was completely devoted to the memory of Gutiérrez Nájera. The Nicaraguan poet, Vicente Acosta, was the author of a dozen short poems which generally have either

a tropical or an oriental setting. The ten poems of Justo A. Facio, who wrote both in Panama and Costa Rica, are Parnassian in tone. Other Central Americans who contributed several compositions include R. Fernández Guardia of Costa Rica, Froilán Turcios of Honduras, and the well-known modernist from Guatemala, Enrique Gómez Carrillo.

Although the development of modernism in the Central American countries was sporadic and limited to a few outstanding authors, in Cuba there was a large number of writers who had begun to publish modernist reviews and whose works had won the acclaim of critics in other lands. Cuba could claim one of the precursors of the movement in José Martí and one of modernism's most talented literary artists in Julián del Casal. Martí was actively engaged in the struggle for Cuban independence when he was killed in 1895. Casal, whose health had always been delicate, died in 1893. Both writers, nevertheless, were represented in the Revista Azul.

In his history of Cuban literature, Remos y Rubio describes the influence of Martí in the following terms: "La personalidad intelectual de José Martí, ha trascendido hasta convertirse en una verdadera figura continental. En toda la América se admira su genio, se venera su memoria, se ama su obra."⁸ His entire life was devoted to literature and to the cause of Cuban independence. A man of vast energy, Martí wrote prolifically for the daily newspapers and for journals. His style, meanwhile, was slowly becoming more polished and brilliant. Gutiérrez Nájera comments on the evolution of his style in an article written in 1889 and reprinted in the Revista Azul. He discusses La Edad de Oro, a journal for children edited by Martí. "Martí, cuyas ideas no podemos seguir á veces, porque sus ideas tienen las alas recias,

fuerte el pulmón y suben mucho . . . Martí, para escribir La Edad de Oro, ha dejado de ser río y se ha hecho lago, terso, transparente, límpido. Lo diré en una frase: se ha hecho niño....."⁹ The same could well have been written concerning his first volume of poetry, Ismaelillo, published in 1882 and considered the first important work of modernism. Three selections from Ismaelillo appear in the Revista Azul, and a series of compositions from Versos sencillos (1891) were also reprinted. Four other short poems and a critical study of Antonio Fernández Grilo make up the rest of Martí's contribution to the Revista.

A compatriot of Martí, Julián del Casal, was the Cuban writer who contributed the most selections to Gutiérrez Nájera's publication. Since he had died in 1893, all of these compositions were reprinted from other sources. These reprints include sixteen poems and two prose sketches. Casal also was the subject of numerous critical articles and eulogies printed in the Revista. Both the first and second anniversaries of his death were observed by the Revista Azul with appropriate commentaries. The following paragraph from the "Azul pálido" section of the October 20, 1895, issue demonstrates the feelings of the editorial staff for Casal: "El día 21 se cumplen los dos años de la muerte de Julián del Casal, del buen amigo que 'viene de la poesía como de una patria lejana,' según la frase de un amado poeta nuestro. No olvida la Revista á este espíritu ausente, á este excelso compañero que partió, como Gutiérrez Nájera, cuando aún había rumor de besos y batir de alas en los tibios nidos."¹⁰ José María Monner Sans believes that Casal was "emparentado poéticamente con Gutiérrez Nájera."¹¹ Both were imbued with an esprit français, but Casal showed a more definite preference for the

macabre themes of Baudelaire from whom he inherited "pesimismo, la belleza, misticismo."¹²

The poetry of Casal reprinted in the Revista Azul provides a survey of his total work in which one can see the many facets of his poetic genius: a desire for perfection, the use of unusual meters, a deep poetic sensitivity, exoticism, and the use of symbols of plastic elegance. Casal was the maestro of the many young Cuban poets who were just beginning to write at the time of his death. Max Henríquez Ureña describes this generation in the following manner: "En Cuba siguieron las huellas de Casal los hermanos Carlos Pío y Federico Uhrbach (Gemelas, 1894) y Juanita Borrero (Rimas, 1895), la niña extraordinaria que en el rostro llevaba 'la honda tristeza de los seres que deben morir temprano.'¹³ Juana Borrero, one of Cuba's great feminine poets, died only three years after Casal whom she had loved intensely. Her nine poems in the Revista Azul reflect an intense love of nature and a certain melancholic sadness. In "Sol poniente" the author weeps in silence as she recalls the vision of her lover who is now departed. As the author watches the last rays of the sun, a feeling of spiritual closeness to him overcomes her. The poem is dated 1895, two years after the death of Casal to whom it undoubtedly refers. In "Vorrei morir" Borrero obviously imitates the well-known "Para entonces" of Gutiérrez Nájera.

Quiero morir cuando al nacer la aurora
Su clara lumbre sobre el mundo vierte,
Cuando por vez postrera me despierte
La canción del Sol abracadora.

Quiero, al finalizar mi última hora,
Cuando me invada el hielo de la muerte,
Sentir que se doblaga el cuerpo inerte
Inundado de luz deslumbradora.

Morir entonces! Cuando el Sol naciente
Con su fecundo resplandor ahuyente
De la fúnebre noche la tristeza;

Quando radiante de hermosura y vida,
Al cerrarme los ojos, me despida,
Con un grito de amor Naturaleza!¹⁴

The only major change which Borrero has made from the theme used by Gutiérrez Nájera is to give the poem a morning setting. Compare the opening lines of Gutiérrez Nájera's poem—"Quiero morir cuando decline el día"—with the beginning of "Vorrei morir." Except for the time element, there is little difference between the two compositions.

In a study of the role of Cuban writers in the development of modernism Dulce María de Loyzaga makes the following evaluation of Juana Borrero: "Voy a atreverme a decir que, de no haber muerto esta niña como murió, a los dieciocho años, y casi al mismo tiempo que aquél, [i. e., Casal] hubiera constituido ella sola acaso el mejor aporte de la poesía cubana al modernismo."¹⁵ Borrero and the brothers Carlos Pío and Federico Urbach represent the first generation of modernists in Cuba. Examples of their work in the Revista Azul are limited to only a few compositions, yet their relationship to Martí and Casal is unmistakable. Other Cuban writers who appear in the Revista include Francisco García Cisneros, Enrique Hernández Miyares, Raoul J. Cay, and Bonifacio Byrne. García Cisneros and Hernández Miyares were directors of the reviews La Opinión and La Habana Elegante respectively. The latter publication was a leading Cuban literary review which published many of the works of the early Cuban modernists. Cay was a writer for El Figaro, another literary journal of this period published in Havana. Byrne was principally a writer of patriotic poetry advocating Cuban

independence, and because of this he was forced to live in exile in Florida for a period of several years. He nevertheless found time to write a number of works in a style similar to that of the modernists. The following lines reprinted from Excéntricas (1893) clearly show this relationship:

Yo quisiera escribir en un idioma
en que cada palabra fuera azul.
Cada sílaba música y aroma,
Y cada frase un manantial de luz.¹⁶

By 1895 political conditions in Cuba were in such a state of confusion that literary activities were sharply curtailed. Martí was killed in that same year; Borrero died in 1896 and Carlos Pío Uhrbach a year later. Nevertheless, they had already become well-known to Mexican literati through their contributions to the Revista Azul.

Although in the Revista there are more authors from Venezuela than from Cuba, only Nicanor Bolet Peraza and Andrés A. Mata contributed a significant number of selections. Bolet Peraza is not usually considered a modernist but rather a costumbrista whose style is described by Mariano Picón-Salas in these terms: "Su prosa plástica y movida sabe dar no solo el paisaje y el ambiente, el inventario casi naturalista de las cosas, sino la individualización rigurosa de los personajes y hasta el dialectismo y la fonética regional."¹⁷ The great literary reputation which Bolet Peraza had at the time was the reason why the editors of the Revista Azul chose to reprint a number of his compositions. He was also the editor of two periodicals in New York City which published the works of many modernists and writers related to modernism. These two publications, Las Tres Américas and La Revista Ilustrada, are frequently cited

in the Revista Azul and were the source of many of its reprints.

Andrés A. Mata, on the other hand, is more closely related to the modernists. Four of his poems reprinted in the Revista are from Pentélicas, an early work in obvious imitation of the Parnassians. His later poetry is quite similar to Gutiérrez Nájera's musical and rhythmic verse, but examples of this type of poetry do not appear in the Revista. Mata is a direct precursor of the modernist generation of Venezuela, which is described by Picón-Salas in the following manner: "Así nuestro Modernismo contiene desde el cuento nativista a la manera de un Urbaneja Alchepohl hasta el análisis filosófico de un Pedro Emilio Coll, el estilizado arte de un Díaz Rodríguez, la oratoria de un Eloy G. González, la poesía de un Blanco Fombona."¹⁸ All of these modernists appear at least one time in the Revista Azul. In Venezuela as in Mexico most of the modernists published their compositions in literary reviews. El Cojo Ilustrado (1892-1915), the most distinguished periodical of this group, was for twenty-three years the register of literary activities in Caracas. In 1894 another periodical, Cosmópolis, began publication. Although it appeared for a relatively short period of time, it was a significant journal in the development of Venezuelan modernism. It was through these two journals that the generation of the Revista Azul maintained contact with the modernists of Venezuela.

In neighboring Colombia the prose and poetry of the modernists was being published in the Revista Gris. About a dozen Colombians of this period appear in the Revista Azul, but none is represented by a large number of compositions. F. Rivas Frade, Ismael Enrique Arciniegas, Abraham Z. López Penha, and Julio Flórez each contributed some half-

dozen compositions to the Mexican Revista, but one of Colombia's greatest modernists, José Asunción Silva, appears only twice due to the fact that a large portion of his work was not published until after his death in 1896.

To complete this survey of the South American contributors to the Revista Azul one must mention two Peruvians, Clemente Palma and José Santos Chocano. Palma, the son of the famous author of the Tradiciones peruanas, contributed seven prose articles and two poems. Although his work shows the influence of contemporary European authors, especially French, he is generally considered a cuenterista in the tradition of his father rather than a modernist. However, in the following passage from Los funerales del sol the stylistic similarities to the works of Gutiérrez Nájera and the other early Mexican modernists is evident in the short phrases and rhythmic pace of the prose: "El crepúsculo. Honda melancolía acongoja á los cielos: ha muerto el Sol . . . Empieza la fúnebre ceremonia. El mar con enraquecida voz canta el Miserere."¹⁹

Chocano, one of the most bombastic of the modernists, was the author of nineteen poems in the Revista Azul. Two of these poems were written especially for the Revista and many of the other seventeen probably reached Mexico either in El Perú Ilustrado or La Neblina, two literary journals which he was editing during this period. Chocano was in his early twenties when he wrote the compositions which appear in the Revista Azul, but the epic, continental tone of his later Alma América is not yet apparent. His verse, nevertheless, shows the strength and vigor that was later to be a dominant characteristic of his work. In "Submarina," one of the poems written for the Revista Azul, he experi-

ments with a cumbersome seventeen-syllable line as he describes the beauties of the ocean's depths.

Debajo de esas espumas que se estremecen, como si de ellas
Quisiera surgir [sic] Venus, quizás un banco yace escondido,²⁰
De corales tan rojos como los labios de las doncellas.....

The poetic imagery of these lines is somewhat obscured by the prosaic nature of the verse and the somewhat forced use of the enjambement, possible in imitation of the symbolists. In contrast to the above lines is the following passage from "En el salón":

Cefido el cuello de espumoso encaje,
surgió ella, leve, vaporosa, á prisa,
ahogando el taconeo con que pisa
en el frufú de su sedoso traje.....²¹

The adjectives espumoso, vaporosa, and sedoso give the passage a soft, delicate touch which is reinforced by the light rhythm of the recurring -so and -sa word endings. The pianissimo tone of this composition gives way to a tremendous crescendo of vigorous rhythms and chromatic cacophony in "Para piano." Chocano runs the complete gamut of the musical scale in his verses. His usual vigor is sometimes contrasted with a soft delicacy. The philosophy of his poetry is expressed in "Sur la brèche" where he states that all verse must be strong and purposeful and concludes with the statement that "los versos sin espinas no son rosas."²²

Not all the foreign authors represented in the Revista Azul were Spanish Americans. Many selections were the products of European writers. These selections reached the hands of the editors of the Revista through European literary journals or in book form and were translated, if necessary, into Spanish, and reprinted from time to time.

The influence of French literature and thought on the Revista Azul extends far beyond the compositions of the some sixty French writers that appear in its pages. Of these authors more than two-thirds contributed fewer than four compositions. Of the remaining group the principal contributors were contemporary writers of prose fiction, many of whom are relatively minor figures. The great interest of the modernists in the poetry of the Parnassians and the symbolists is not apparent. This is due, of course, to the obvious difficulties involved in the translation of verse. But the inspiration of French literature and culture falls into true perspective when one considers their effect on the thought and style of such modernists as Gutiérrez Nájera, Urbina, Casal, and Darío. Genaro Estrada substantiates this observation in the following statement: "La Revista Azul acogió y propagó las primeras manifestaciones de la influencia francesa en nuestros escritores y las mejores producciones de los poetas autónomos de la época (1894-1896)."²³ In an article in the Revista Azul of September 9, 1894, Gutiérrez Nájera defends the apparent afrancesamiento of his review with this statement: "Hoy toda publicación artística, así como toda publicación vulgarizadora de conocimientos, tiene de hacer en Francia su principal acopio de provisiones, porque en Francia, hoy por hoy, el arte vive más intensa vida que en ningún otro pueblo, y porque es Francia la nación propagandista por excelencia."²⁴ Thus the Revista Azul turned to French letters not only for a variety of material to reprint in its pages but also for inspiration, stylistic technique, and new themes.

In their enthusiasm for all things French the early modernists did not carefully distinguish between romanticism, Parnassianism, and

symbolism. They gathered scattered elements from these three major literary currents and attempted to achieve a harmonious mixture. Thus it is that such a variety of figures as Hugo, Baudelaire, Gautier, and Verlaine all were reprinted in the Revista. Almost every well-known French author of the last half of the nineteenth century appears at least one time. Brief quotations from French literature were frequently used as filler material in the first three volumes.²⁵ Those who appear most frequently as the authors of filler material include the Goncourt brothers, Paul Bourget, Alfred de Musset, Victor Hugo, Hippolyte Taine, and Emile Zola. This almost indiscriminate reprinting of translations from French literature was a characteristic not only of the Revista Azul but also of El Mercurio de América of Buenos Aires and Cosmópolis of Caracas, two other leading journals of early modernism. Blanco-Fombona believes that this variety of literary figures is an indication of "la desorientación de los comienzos del modernismo y las influencias parciales más eficaces en aquellas tres zonas."²⁶

In Mexico the generation of the Revista Azul was influenced principally by the French Parnassians and to a lesser degree by the Romantics and the symbolists. The influence of the symbolists, except for Verlaine, was limited due to the fact that early modernism and symbolism were contemporary movements, both more or less rising from a common origin. Catulle Mendès, one of the leaders of the French "Parnasse," was the author of thirteen prose selections in the Revista Azul, more than any other French author in spite of the fact that it was his verse that had won the admiration of the modernists. "Leo deleitosamente las poesías de Catulle Mendès. ¡Qué encajes de aire! ¡Qué filigranas de

sonidos! ¡Qué sinfonías de color!" wrote Gutiérrez Nájera in the Revista Azul.²⁷ In the same article Gutiérrez Nájera points out that he is able to understand the poetry of Mendès because they both speak a common language, "una lengua extraña, artificial y que no tiene nombre."

Paul Bourget, the author of psychological novels, appears ten times in the Revista. Other writers who appear with some frequency include Alphonse Daudet, Pierre Loti, and René Maizeroy, the latter a direct follower of Mendès. Daudet's picturesque style and the vivid exoticism of Loti's prose were characteristics admired and often emulated by the generation of the Revista Azul. Although the members of this generation were great admirers of contemporary French poetry, they were able to include only a relatively limited number of selections due to the fact that many of their readers did not know French. Consequently the editors were limited to the publication of assorted prose sketches in translation by some of the outstanding nineteenth century poets such as François Coppée, Charles Baudelaire, and Théophile Gautier. Also included were three sonnets of José Maria de Heredia translated by Justo Sierra, a prose translation of Gautier's "Symphonie en blanc majeur," and a translation of a Chénier poem by Menéndez y Pelayo. Three poems in French by Leconte de Lisle were printed along with a Spanish version of another of his poems by the Mexican Balbino Dávalos who also did Spanish versions of certain works of Coppée, Gautier, and Jean Lahor.

The influence of French authors on the Revista Azul and the Revista Moderna has been studied extensively by Dorothy M. Kress in a series of articles.²⁸ She concludes that it is not surprising that the

Mexican modernists developed an estilo afrancesado through the process of translating so many works of French literature into Spanish for publication in their literary journals. She believes that from the French the modernists learned the process of using the adjective to suggest the sensation of the poet, the momentary reaction rather than the lasting emotion. Furthermore, there is a series of stylistic traits which Kress notes in the compositions which were translated from French for the two Mexican journals. These traits are summarized in the following statement: ". . . el uso del nombre abstracto, el uso del adjetivo en el caso neutro con el artículo, las transiciones fuertes en el uso del adjetivo, la vaguedad en las imágenes por lo indeterminado e inacabado que dejan las metáforas, el suprimir todas las palabras intermediarias, hasta el verbo, y no dejar más que los elementos positivos del estilo artístico, se acentúan en las selecciones francesas insertadas en la Revista Azul y la Revista Moderna. Pero lo que más salta a la vista en estos trozos es como la subordinación de la exactitud gramatical a la intensidad pintoresca o poética, da un nuevo valor a la musicalidad de la frase . . ."29 Many of these stylistic elements studied by Kress were incorporated into the compositions of the generation of the Revista Azul and subsequently appeared in the prose and poetry of the Revista Moderna generation. The French influence on Gutiérrez Nájera's publication, therefore, is not limited to the French selections printed in translation but extends to the basic elements of linguistic style and to the inspiration of many of the journal's masterpieces. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera quite accurately described himself and Carlos Díaz Dufó as "espíritus franceses deportados á tierra americana."⁵⁰

The preponderance of French literature in the Revista Azul was criticized by many who felt that Gutiérrez Nájera and his followers did not properly respect the great literary traditions of Spain. This attitude, however, was incorrect. Gutiérrez Nájera discusses the matter in a significant article called El cruzamiento en literatura published in the September 9, 1894, issue of the Revista. He defends the position of the Mexican modernists with this statement: ". . . no significa menosprecio á la literatura española cuyos grandes, impercederos monumentos, ha de estudiar ahincadamente todo aquel que aspire á ser literato ó, cuando menos, á cultivar su gusto. Nuestra Revista no tiene carácter doctrinario ni se propone presentar modelos de belleza arcaica, espigando en las obras de los clásicos; es sustancialmente moderna, y por lo tanto, busca las expresiones de la vida moderna en donde más acentuadas y coloridas aparecen."³¹ He continues his defense with the following explanation of why his generation turned to France rather than to Spain for inspiration: "La literatura contemporánea francesa es ahora la más 'sugestiva,' la más abundante, la más de 'hoy,' y los españoles mismos, á pesar de su apego á la tierra, trasponen los Pirineos en busca de 'moldes nuevos' para sus ideas é inspiraciones."³²

Gutiérrez Nájera continues his evaluation of contemporary Spanish literature with the observation that most of the late nineteenth century Spanish novelists were better acquainted with contemporary literary trends outside of Spain than were the poets of the same period. Although Gutiérrez Nájera admired the work of such novelists as Pérez Galdós, and Valera, it was possible to reprint only fragments or short chapters of such well-known novels as Halma, Nazarín, and Juanita la larga.

Pardo Bazán, whose literary art had made a successful cruzamiento to France and Russia, appeared with greater frequency than any other Spanish prose writer. Fragments of such Echegaray's plays as Mancha que limpia and El estigma were about the only examples of the contemporary Spanish theater which the Revista reprinted.

Certain contemporary Spanish poets, in the opinion of Cutiérriz Nájera, had explored not only the Spanish classics but also the verses of the better French, English, and German poets of the nineteenth century. In this group he includes Salvador Rueda, Ramón de Campoamor, and Gaspar Núñez de Arce. These poets together with Manuel Reina and Federico Balart all appeared in the Revista Azul, but the thirty-three compositions of Rueda almost number as many as all the compositions of the other four poets together. The prosaic, ideological verses of Campoamor and Núñez de Arce had little in common with the poetry of the modernists, but the verses of Rueda, Reina, and Balart were compositions filled with color, music, and brilliant descriptions. Angel del Río lists these three poets as direct precursors of Spanish modernism.⁵³

Salvador Rueda maintained close contact with many of the modernists in Spanish America, and in the late nineteenth century he was the greatest Spanish innovator of meter. This variety of meters is reflected in the compositions of his reprinted in the Revista Azul. In "Sinfonia del año" the length of the lines varies from six to fourteen syllables. He quite commonly would mix lines of various lengths in a relatively short composition. In later years Rueda borrowed the metrical innovations of Rubén Darío and other modernists and employed them successfully in his own poetry. He likewise imitated the modernists in his use of

vivid colors and unique poetic images. The first stanza of "El anoche-
cer" demonstrates both of these elements:

La tarde huyó como invertida aurora
arrastrando su túnica de fuego,
y fué extendiendo por los campos luego
el crespón de la noche soñadora.³⁴

Manuel Reina and Federico Balart both contributed compositions in
which the use of brilliant colors was the most outstanding feature. The
following lines are from Reina's "La canción de las estrellas":

¡Oh sol, oh regio sol! de Andalucía,
Besa mi frente y con tus rayos de oro
Corona mi laúd! ¡Oh frescas rosas
De los jardines béticos, perfumes
Y colores prestad á mi poesía!³⁵

Compare these lines with the following quotation from "Puntos de vista"
by Balart:

Sepulta el sol su resplandor escaso
Que extinguiéndose va de loma en loma,
Nuevo fulgor por el Oriente asoma,
Sus rayos extendiendo por la duna
Como blanco cendal de mielle cuna.³⁶

Vivid colors dominate both of these passages. Neither Reina nor Balart
experimented extensively with metrical innovations, but both were capable
descriptive poets whose verses had much in common with those of the early
modernists.

At the time of the Revista Azul modernism had not yet reached Spain.
"Fué, sólo más tarde, cuando el modernismo español conoció el genio de
Rubén Darío y el tesoro lírico de Silva, Casal y otros poetas americanos,
que cesó de creer en Rueda, en Manuel Reina . . . y fijó los ojos en las

noches estrelladas del trópico y en la estelar Cruz del Sur," writes Blanco-Fombona.³⁷ The influence of Darío on Salvador Rueda has already been mentioned. The members of the subsequent "Generación del '98" were likewise influenced by the innovations of Darío and the other modernists, but they reshaped the principles of literary renovation in an attempt to solve the particular problems of literary art with which they were faced. The influence of the modernists, clearly seen in the writers of the "Generación del '98," persisted in a less obvious manner in later Spanish literature. The Machado brothers, Francisco Villaespesa, Emilio Carrere, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Eduardo Marquina, Gregorio Martínez Sierra, and Ramón Pérez de Ayala were all to a degree products of the movement of literary renovation which had begun in Spanish America and later reached Spain.

In addition to the various Spanish American, French, and Spanish writers, the Revista Azul published a number of selections by Italian, Russian, German, English, and American authors. Most of these selections were available in Mexico only in French translations. Although the number of selections in this category is relatively small, eleven prose compositions by the Russian novelist Ivan Turguenev and four works by the Italian, Gabriele D'Annunzio, were reprinted. D'Annunzio's unusual descriptive ability and great rhetorical skill were admired by the modernists who often emulated his colorful style. English authors were represented by a few translated fragments from Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, Edward Gibbon, and Oscar Wilde, and a few translations of poems by William Cullen Bryant, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Edgar Allan Poe were the principal contributions by American writers.

By printing compositions from such a great variety of talented authors, the editors of the Revista Azul demonstrated the truly cosmopolitan nature of modernism and made their periodical the standard-bearer of the entire literary movement. In much the same way that the spirit of Gutiérrez Nájera persisted in the pages of his periodical even after his premature death, the influence of the Revista lasted for years into the twentieth century as the movement of modernism reached new heights in the Mexican capital.

NOTES TO CHAPTER SIX

- 1 Dorothy Kress, "El peso de la influencia francesa en la renovación de la prosa hispanoamericana," Hispania, XX (1937), 131.
- 2 The titles of the short stories are La muerte de la emperatriz de China, El velo de la reina Mab, and El sítiro sordo. The prose sketches are Un retrato de Watteau, Acuarela, Paisaje, Al carbón, Naturaleza muerta, and El ideal.
- 3 George W. Umphrey, "Fifty Years of Modernism in Spanish-American Poetry," Modern Language Quarterly, I (1940), 106.
- 4 Juan Valera, Cartas americanas, I (Madrid: Imprenta Alemana, 1915), 273.
- 5 Jorge Campos, "La literatura hispanoamericana en el siglo XIX," Saitabi, VI, No. 29-30 (July, December 1948), 218.
- 6 RA V, 284.
- 7 RA II, 141.
- 8 Juan J. Remos y Rubio, Resumen de historia de la literatura cubana (Havana: Tipos.-Molina y Cía., 1930), p. 251.
- 9 RA III, 291.
- 10 RA III, 400.
- 11 José María Monner Sans, Julián del Casal y el modernismo hispanoamericano (México: El Colegio de México, 1952), p. 118.
- 12 Margaret Robinson Berger, "The Influence of Baudelaire on the Poetry of Julián del Casal," The Romanic Review, XXXVII (1946), 177.
- 13 Henríquez Ureña, "El intercambio de influencias literarias entre España y América durante los últimos cincuenta años (1875-1925)," Cuba Contemporánea, XLI, No. 161 (May 1926), 22.
- 14 RA V, 101.
- 15 Dulce María de Loynaz, "Influencia de los poetas cubanos en el modernismo," Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, XVIII, No. 49 (1945), 65.
- 16 RA V, 125.
- 17 Mariano Picón-Salas, Formación y proceso de la literatura venezolana, (Caracas: Impresores Unidos, 1941), p. 131.

- 18 Ibid., p. 186.
- 19 RA III, 94.
- 20 RA II, 274.
- 21 RA III, 324.
- 22 RA V, 361.
- 23 Estrada, Poetas nuevos de México, p. ix.
- 24 RA I, 289.
- 25 The practice of using short filler material was discontinued after volume three.
- 26 Blanco-Fombona, El modernismo y los poetas modernistas, pp. 19-20.
- 27 RA I, 178.
- 28 See the bibliography of this dissertation.
- 29 Kress, "El peso de la influencia francesa en la renovación de la prosa hispanoamericana," Hispania, XX (1937), 128.
- 30 RA I, 97.
- 31 RA I, 289.
- 32 RA I, 289.
- 33 Del Río, Historia de la literatura española, II, 99-100.
- 34 RA I, 253.
- 35 RA III, 172.
- 36 RA II, 81.
- 37 Blanco-Fombona, El modernismo y los poetas modernistas, p. 17.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

This study constitutes a comprehensive history and a systematic analysis of the Revista Azul, considered the outstanding literary review of nineteenth century Mexico. Published during the last decade of the century, it quickly became one of the leading modernist periodicals of Spanish America. The date of its founding, 1894, is considered of transcendental importance due to the fact that it marked the first time in the history of Mexican literature that a group of literati had made a periodical the focal point of their literary efforts. Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, one of the founders of the periodical, was the leader of this generation of young modernists which included such well-known figures as Carlos Díaz Dufó, Luis G. Urbina, Amado Nervo, Jesús Urqueta, José Juan Tablada, Jesús Valenzuela, and Angel de Campo. The Revista Azul not only published a variety of compositions by these young writers but also introduced into Mexico the works of many foreign authors, principally French and Spanish, which were appreciated by the general reading public and which exercised a considerable influence on the Mexican writers of this generation.

An analysis of the contents of the periodical reveals the fact that it was more purely literary than some of the other leading modernist journals like the Revista Moderna. Although every issue of the Revista Azul contained a number of poems, the importance of prose was considerably greater, and the technical innovations employed by the writers

of this generation were much more evident in prose than in verse. The prose genre most frequently used was the crónica, a short commentary on some contemporary event or on a subject of general interest. Some of these crónicas dealt with special occasions or were descriptive travel sketches while others were more philosophical in nature. The theme usually appears in the first paragraph, but beyond that point there is complete freedom in the development of the subject. Most of the crónicas in the Revista were written by Gutiérrez Nájera, Urbina, and Carlos Díaz Dufío.

Closely related to the crónica were short articles in the form of prose sketches. The principal difference between these two genres was that in the prose sketch no specific theme was developed. The author usually chose a setting for the sketch and then would paint successive changes of scenery over a period of time. Sometimes the author would describe the same scene as it appeared during different seasons of the year or under a variety of weather conditions. Along with the visual descriptions there also were frequent descriptions of sounds and odors. While almost all of the modernists of this generation contributed prose sketches to the Revista, it was Angel de Campo who wrote some of the best ones.

Another type of prose which appeared less frequently was the short story. While many of the sketches and crónicas resembled the short story somewhat, true examples of this genre appeared in the Revista Azul only occasionally. Most of them were written by Gutiérrez Nájera or Díaz Dufío, but the short stories of the latter were not modernistic but rather realistic with a didactic purpose. Gutiérrez Nájera's short

stories, on the other hand, were more sentimental. He preferred to concentrate on presenting the emotional aspect of his characters without dwelling on their environment.

Essays and literary criticism form another important category which appeared in the Revista. These two literary genres were cultivated by a number of writers, but stylistically they show few of the traits of modernism seen in other prose selections in the journal. Their style is usually terse and to the point with no time lost in elaborate descriptive phrases. The writers of these articles criticized the literary productions and the social customs of their own day as well as those of earlier generations. While many of these articles dealt with internationally known literary figures, others were concerned with less famous writers whose reputation was limited to Mexico or to certain areas of Spanish America. An awareness of social problems is evident in many of the essays in the Revista while others display a keen insight into the currents which were shaping contemporary literature. These articles and essays, many of which were written by Gutiérrez Nájera, Díaz Dufóo, Urbina, and Urueta, provide valuable data concerning literary and sociological problems of the late nineteenth century.

Although the Revista Azul contained a variety of poetic forms, the most common type was the sonnet which was employed in well over half of the poems in the periodical. The many metrical innovations for which the modernists were famous do not appear except in certain selections of Darío which were later published in Frosas profanas and in some of Chocano's early experimental verse. Gutiérrez Nájera and his generation did not experiment extensively with metrical combinations but rather

sought new themes, descriptive techniques, and musical qualities which they could adapt to traditional patterns of versification.

Within the pages of the Revista Azul it is possible to observe certain general stylistic characteristics, many of which can be traced to other nineteenth century literary movements. In much of the prose and poetry there lingers a certain melancholic nostalgia reminiscent of romanticism. Other evidence of the romantic origins of modernism can be found in the great amount of local color and interest in the immediate environment seen especially in the crónicas and prose sketches. But the influence of romanticism on the Revista was secondary to that of the French Parnassians from whom the modernists of this generation had learned the value of carefully selected descriptive words and the importance of structure in literary compositions. While there were frequent examples of the excessive use of adjectives for purposes of ornateness, the leading writers of this generation were more concerned with the quality rather than the quantity of their adjectives. However, the objective, impersonal quality of many of the Parnassians' compositions was a characteristic not generally found in the works of this generation.

There are other general tendencies which appear in the compositions of the Revista Azul. Attempts to create music and rhythm with words is common to both prose and poetry. Often there is an attempt to suggest an emotion without stating it concretely. Sentences without verbs sometimes appear. Such a technique gives a composition the static quality of an impressionistic painting. Other times a reversal of this technique results in the expression only of a series of verbal elements.

Many of these same techniques were being developed by the symbolists in France at the same time.

These general principles of style can be seen in almost all of the modernist compositions in the Revista, yet each author conserves his own individuality to a high degree. The writers of this generation borrowed a great deal from European literature, reshaped what they had taken, and gave it new life and vitality.

In its relatively brief two and one-half years of existence the Revista Azul made an indelible mark on the literature of Mexico and Spanish America. During this period the importance of Mexico as a center of modernist activity became increasingly greater, and near the end of the century Mexico City had become the undisputed capital of the movement. The Revista Azul was important not only to its generation, but it has continued to exercise influence on succeeding generations of Mexican authors. At the present time critics are only beginning to realize the importance of Gutiérrez Nájera and his generation to the development of Mexican literature. It is hoped that the bibliographical data contained in the indices to this dissertation will provide a stimulus for further studies of this period.

APPENDIX A

AN INDEX TO THE REVISTA AZUL

The index which follows is a compilation of all the compositions appearing in the five volumes of the Revista Azul. In cases where an author used a pseudonym or a variant of his regular name, all compositions appear under the form by which the writer is most commonly known. Translated articles and poems appear under the name of the original writer, and, whenever possible, a second entry has been made under the name of the translator. In general all poems are enclosed in quotation marks, and all prose compositions are underlined. However, the title of some prose selections taken from longer works were enclosed in quotation marks when reprinted in the Revista Azul. The same was also true of articles of literary criticism in which the name of the work in question was mentioned in the title. This practice has been continued in the following index; an example is "Degenerescencia," a critical study of the book by Max Nordau.

The Revista Azul is available in the libraries of the following institutions in the United States. All files are complete unless exceptions are noted.

Library of Congress (Call number: AP63.R495)

Duke University

University of California at Los Angeles

University of Iowa

University of Kansas (Volume I, No. 8, and Volume III, No. 10 are wanting. Volume IV, No. 23, through Volume V, No. 24, are on microfilm.)

University of Southern California (Only numbers available are for the years 1895 and 1896; all numbers are on microfilm.)

University of Texas, Latin American Collection (Volume VI, No. 6, of Manuel Caballero's unauthorized continuation of the Revista Azul is also available.)

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