AN ANALYSIS OF THE HERO
IN THE NOVELS OF BENJAMIN JARNES

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the characterization of the hero in the novels of Benjamín Jarnés. The novels considered are those written and published in Spain before the author's emigration at the time of the Civil War. The method used is direct analysis of the novels combined with reference to Jarnés' writing in other genres, particularly his criticism.

The first part of the thesis introduces Jarnés and his background. The main influences were his classical and theological education, the avant-garde movements of the 1920's, and the ideas of Ortega and Gasset. Jarnés rejected religion, metaphysics, puritanical morality, Romantic abstractions, and sentimentality in favour of humanism, sensual enjoyment, and a desire for lucidity and precision in intellectual activity and art. He was interested in psychoanalysis as a literary device for revealing character, and proposed that fiction should deal with all levels of consciousness.

In presenting his characters Jarnés uses both an objective approach, which shows man's appearance and external behaviour, and a subjective approach, which penetrates inside the mind of individual characters. The psychological revelation is usually reserved for the main character of the novel for reasons of authenticity: the hero thus reflects everyone's inability to know others more than superficially.

In Chapters III, IV, and V the main characters are studied
in relation to three themes: love, intellectual activity, and the insignificance of the individual. Love is treated without sentimental idealization. Relationships are often temporary and never perfect. The lover has two distinct attitudes to his mistress's body -- sexual and aesthetic; he derives pleasure both from detached, cerebral contemplation and from renunciation of the self in sexual passion.

Intellectual activity is of great importance but it should be used in the service of vitality, not as the negation of it. James deplores pedantry. Introspection is necessary for discovering one's true self and remaining faithful to it, but if it leads to despair the mind must be diverted into more positive channels, or the senses must take over. The intellect becomes sterile unless combined with full use of other human attributes, for example, in a love affair. Reason has limitations, which must be admitted.

James' heroes are threatened with standardization and loss of individuality as their circumstances urge them to conform to set patterns. They resist by withdrawal into the self, but this is only a partial solution: true vitality requires positive interaction with one's environment.

James uses various techniques for showing people's impotence or insignificance, for example, humour, irony, dehumanization. In Locura y muerte de nadie he takes as main character "someone or other" instead of a defined individual.
The last chapter summarizes the characteristics of Jarnés' heroes. They have in common a desire for freedom, a determination to make their own way independently of established customs and institutions. As well as rejecting tradition they struggle to retain their individuality in contemporary society, which relies more and more on mass culture and automation. They seek to avoid identification with the crowd but are not misanthropic or cynical: they favour intimate contact with other individuals.

Although these characters are insignificant in a worldly sense and although, even within their novels, they may enjoy a marginal pre-eminence over their fellows, they do emerge as heroes of a kind, distinguished by their tenacious affirmation of the spiritual values of liberty, generosity, and vitality.
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INTRODUCTION

At the time of the Spanish Civil War, Benjamín Jarnés (1880-1950) left Spain and went to live in Mexico. This study is confined to his pre-war writing and is principally concerned with his novels, which are listed below in order of publication:

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The novels are examined from the point of view of the conception and portrayal of their main characters. The approach may be summarized as follows: first, the features which Jarnés' characterization may be expected to show are postulated from his literary background and from some of his critical remarks. Secondly, in the light of these general considerations and with frequent reference still to the author's writing in genres other than the novel, the main characters are analysed in the context of three themes, themselves suggested by subjects of fundamental importance.
in the novels: love, intellectual activity, and insignificance. These correspond to the chapter headings "The Lover," "The Intellectual," and "The Nobody." A constant attempt is made to indicate the relation between the aesthetic side of Jarnés' thought and writing and his ideas on human nature. The main characters are therefore considered both as fictional creations in the context of their novels, and as people transcending their specific roles and representing Jarnés' view of the human condition.

Finally, in the chapter called "The Hero", the main characters' qualities are summarized to show how they may be regarded as heroes both in their capacity as novelistic protagonists and as exceptional human beings.
CHAPTER I: JARNÉS AND HIS BACKGROUND

Benjamin Jarnés deplored the kind of literary criticism which situates writers historically, labels them, and groups them in schools and movements. He would doubtless be gratified by the lack of agreement among critics about the classification and value of his work. Although little has been written about him apart from brief comments in literary manuals, he has been variously assigned to the generations of 1923, 1925, and 1927. He has passed from international repute in the 1930's -- "Probablemente son pocos los países de Europa en que Jarnés y su obra no sean conocidos"\(^1\) -- to an obscurity lamented in 1968 by Paul Ilie, who considers him to be "a more consummate novelist and stylist"\(^2\) than Ramón Gómez de la Serna, whose books are well known and readily available.

Jarnés has been described as an \textit{ísta subversivo}, a prose-writing by-product of \textit{ultraismo}, a surrealist, a dehumanizer, a stylist, an excessive stylist. . . . Many comments are unenthusiastic or even hostile. A particularly damning assessment comes from Torrente Ballester: "su obra, por su excesiva vinculación a lo más transitorio de un periodo, está condenada a que se le recuerde como puro documento."\(^3\) From Jarnés' point of view there could be few worse fates than that: if his work were indeed no more than a museum-piece he would wish it to be washed away by the Ebro along with all lifeless erudition and irrelevant impedimenta from the past. Fortunately one may dismiss the judgment as unfair. Unfair, that
is, according to Jarnés own critical standards which call for flexible ad hoc criteria and in particular the measurement of an author's achievement against his own intentions and limitations: "Compara la obra con la intención del autor, al autor con el arro que en torno suyo ha abierto o pretendido abrir." Two critics who do approach his works in this way are Paul Ilie, in his study of the theories and techniques used in _Locura y muerte de nadie_ and _Teoría del zumbido_, and Víctor Fuentes, in his short but profound summary of Jarnés' personality and literary achievement. Neither of these critics considers Jarnés' works to have dated; in fact Fuentes' article, written in 1967, concludes with the opinion that they are highly relevant to present day man.

To reproach Jarnés with having embraced "lo más transitorio" of his time is to disregard the importance he attaches to the vindication of the ephemeral as opposed to the static, the over-serious, and the transcendental. The same attitude prompted Guillermo de Torre to quote Quevedo -- "Lo fugitivo permanece y dura" -- to support his rallying-cry: "¡Obras vivas y artistas más vivos adn!"5

To be fair to a writer like Jarnés, one must bear in mind the trends and commonplaces of his time, but ultimately assess him on his own terms as revealed in his works; for association with a group, even with an effervescent ismo, does not necessarily imply identification with it. Jarnés himself makes this point: writing in 1939 of his early literary career, at sufficient distance to
see it in perspective, he conveys succinctly the mood and
achievement of his generation and indicates his own position in
relation to it:

Un ímpetu rebelde corrió entonces por las filas
juveniles de la literatura y de todas las artes. . . .
He aquí una generación de arriscados jóvenes que
supieron remover alegremente el campo de las letras, la
zona espiritual de España y de estos pueblos de
América. Con todos sus errores, con todos sus retozos,
con todas sus profanaciones del augusto clasicismo,
siempre la creí -- y la creo -- necesaria para el pleno
desarrollo del espíritu español, anquilosado bajo muchos
fríos montones de hojarasca retórica.

Pero. . . . yo fui el menos rebelde. Comencé...
con mi edad de ahora. O poco menos. ¿Nací ya viejo
a las letras? No sé. Muchos años de serenidad
claustral, muchos años de disciplina de todo orden, me
limaron las uñas. Soy de mi generación, pero mi
generación sólo en parte me ha formado. (Cartas, p. 8)

The passage shows a nostalgic affection for those years of
creative vitality, innovation, irreverence; years of confidence,
self-assertion, and a sense of fun. It stresses the importance of
the iconoclastic activities of the young artists: perhaps they
went too far, perhaps their demolition out-weighed their re-
construction, but they did contribute to the essential task of
liberating the arts from outworn themes and conventions. All over
Europe a similar upheaval was taking place, particularly just after
the First World War. Guillermo de Torre calls its Spanish
manifestation _ultraísmo_, a primarily poetic movement initiated
by Cansinos-Asséns' manifesto _Ultra_ in 1918. Torre situates
Jarnés as one of "algunos prosistas de la época inmediata subsiguiente" who were influenced by ultralismo but not of it, in spite of their close association with its adherents and their collaboration on some of its reviews.

Jarnés, then, is seen by both Torre and himself to be on the edge of avant-garde activity, infected by it but not wholly committed to it. Jarnés perceives in himself an incapacity for thorough-going rebellion which we shall find inherited by some of his fictional characters. His own hesitation before the aesthetic revolution he attributes tentatively to his age and conditioning.

One may answer "No" to his question "¿Naci viejo a las letras?" in spite of the fact that when his first book (Mosen Pedro) was published, he was aged thirty-six. The scant biographical information available tells us that he spent ten years in a seminary (aged ten to twenty), some years in the army and some "dando tumbos" and scraping a living. But the idea that he suddenly took to writing, as is suggested by Torrente Ballester's phrase "su tropiezo con la literatura," is invalidated by his autobiographical note called "Años de aprendizaje y alegría." He recalls that as an adolescent he was forbidden by his jealous father to write verses, after being commended at school for his talent in this direction, which, therefore, went underground:

Y yo, con mis décimas al Ebro o al Moncayo, bajé mi cabecita a pájaros y escondí desde entonces, en mi casa y fuera de ella, mi presumida calidad de escritor. Y esto, durante muchos años, durante muchos años, durante muchos años.
He evidently had a writer's vocation from an early age, even if it did not manifest itself until much later. On the other hand, a discovery of modern literature may have come comparatively late to Jarnés. His formal education emphasized theology and the classical authors. One may assume that like his seminarist Julio he found an opportunity to read Stendhal and Chateaubriand. But it seems likely that his adolescence and early adulthood may have passed by without his being familiar with modern authors. Certainly he was past his first youth when he joined their ranks.

Jarnés' long gestation period as a writer gave him the opportunity to assimilate a wide variety of ideas, both new and not so new. While he had no patience with veneration for the old just because it was old, he owed and acknowledged an enormous debt to the culture of the past, as his extensive use of myth and legend demonstrate. At the same time he was receptive to modern ideas, so that he built up rich resources on which to draw as a writer. The quest for new directions for the novel required an open mind and a readiness to experiment. The writer with the best hope of discovering fresh seams in what Ortega y Gasset saw as the failing quarry of fictional themes would be one situated, as Jarnés says, "en medio del mundo, sometido a todas las corrientes, empujado y limitado por ellas." Jarnés protects his artistic freedom and individualism by maintaining an eclectic position. Thus he has at his disposal a whole range of topics, whether original or not, and, more important, various ways of treating them. An object has as many facets as
these are angles from which to view it, or, in Ortega's words,
"...una misma realidad se quiebra en muchas realidades divergentes
cuando es mirada desde puntos de vista distintos."\textsuperscript{11}

The use of differing viewpoints not only offers vast artistic possibilities compared with the single one, supposedly factual and impartial, of the "realist" writer; the concept of reality itself is placed in question, and therefore the integrity of anyone claiming to present it objectively. Who has the right to pronounce upon reality? The most scrupulous observer is still biased, his testimony modified by his senses, his memory, his past experience, his whole personality.

The precarious tyranny of realism had, of course, been defied by many writers before Jarnés. A literary personality depends on two main factors: the material at the writer's disposal, and what he does with it. Jarnés is of the opinion that no matter what the subject matter, the artist's presentation of it should be utterly personal. In the "Nota preliminar" to \textit{Teoría del zumbel} he deplores the gregarious tendencies of young artists of his time:

"No posee a estos jóvenes la ambición de navegar en personales balandros, sino en un transatlántico colectivo. . . . La 'escuela,' el 'ismo' en arte, es un callejón sin salida."\textsuperscript{12} He adds: "Hay que ver el mundo desde el balcón que nos quepa en suerte." As regards subject matter, Jarnés sounds ambitious: he calls for \textit{integralismo} the fullest possible portrayal of man at all his levels of consciousness:
El hombre—artista, filósofo, científico—para quien la verdad y la belleza no se presentan nunca de cara, o se presentan con muchas. A quien las prolongaciones subterráneas y los penachos románticos interesan igualmente. El hombre triple, integral, gavilla de ímpetus. (Teoría, p. 31)

The recipe, then, is integral man interpreted and presented by an integral man. A fictional character is permitted to exploit his "real" life, his fantasy world and his dreams, but at the same time the author is also subject to fluctuations in his state of consciousness, so that the focus of his vision and his attitude to his creation are always liable to change. With so many variables the possibilities are innumerable, and potentially anarchistic, but Jarnés is constantly aware of the dangers, even if he perhaps does not always manage to escape them. Faced with an overwhelmingly vast field of operations he is insistent upon the need for limitations and selection, for balance and discipline. He is consistently opposed to grandiose schemes, unrealistic projects, and great abstractions. He advocates the use of a magnifying glass or microscope for close scrutiny of the small and accessible; there is ample material within man's reach, so why should be bother himself with infinity, eternity, perfection, or any other abstraction beyond his apprehension? The instruments of human knowledge are the senses, and man's habitat the earth, but too often he has conceived himself instead with metaphysical speculations which, fortunately, are increasingly discredited. Modern art, at least, can follow the example of its new medium, the cinema, and discover new perspectives in the familiar
territory of man's environment: "Es hoy cuando el arte, con su cinematico microscopio, puede obrar verdaderos milagros." Refusal to accept the "tijeretazo a lo infinito" (Rubricas, p. 74) is absurdly anachronistic: "Disponerse en serio, con toda gravedad, a realizar una obra perfecta, eterna, impecable, es alistarse para tomar parte en la Guerra de los Treinta Años" (Rubricas, p. 77). Equally inappropriate are ulterior motives in art -- propaganda, didacticism, moralizing -- though any topic may be utilized as raw material.

The results of Jarnés' integralismo could be chaotic if he did indeed give full rein to his own capriciousness as well as to that of his characters. In fact, of course, a writer retains control of his creation even when claiming to renounce it, so that if he affects indifference towards his characters, or disclaims responsibility for their behaviour, he is adopting a pose and aligning himself with his genuinely fictitious creatures. The success or failure of such a manoeuvre still depends on the creator's skill; he must decide, for example, how much apparent autonomy his characters may enjoy. Jarnés is far from advocating reliance on intuition: the point of departure may be intuitive but the act of creation must be attended throughout by intelligence and balanced judgment. He defines art as follows: "Arte es un coger un trozo de nuestra vida interior o exterior y lanzarlo a los demás bien embalado en una forma" (Cartas, p. 120). A prerequisite for artistic creation is mastery of its mechanical skills: "... no
The more subjective art becomes, and the more arbitrary its structure, the more likely does it become that the reader or spectator will be disorientated. This situation may reach the point where too many people the artist's meaning is obscure or even totally incomprehensible. This may not matter in the case of poetry or the plastic arts, for appreciation of an image or of harmony of shape and colour do not necessarily depend on rational comprehension; but obscurity is likely to be fatal to a novel on account of its length. There is no indication that Jarnés ever tried deliberately to be obscure, nor that he directed himself to an élite, though it is equally true that he made no effort to appeal to the masses. He appears to have aimed at achieving a balance between a subjective approach and the traditional stock-in-trade of the novelist. He frequently stresses the extreme importance of clarity in all art forms and condemns subjectivity when it reaches the point of "ciertas reminiscencias de sueños, imposibles de coordinar por el espectador, aún por el más... freudiano" (Cartas, p. 124).

To return to a phrase already quoted: "Hay que ver el mundo desde el balcón que nos quepa en suerte" (above, p. 7), one might elaborate a little on Jarnés' metaphor. There is another factor besides the man on the balcony and the world beneath him: there is the effect on both the observer and the observed of the
wind and weather prevailing at the time. However irrelevant many labels — schools, movements, generations, ismos — may be, and none seems particularly helpful in the consideration of Jarnés, he was nevertheless clearly influenced by what Guillermo de Torre calls the "aire del tiempo" described by him in 1924 as "el común denominador espiritual de una serie de fenómenos contemporáneos, que comprenden desde el psicoanálisis a la teoría de la relatividad, pasando por la deshumanización del arte, el monólogo interior, el subconsciente freudiano y la risa de Chaplin."15

Perhaps the common denominator of these widely differing phenomena is their defiance of traditional ways of looking at things, their departure from well trodden paths in search of something new and unexplored. Radical questioning and an experimental approach are always in evidence in Jarnés, but his use of the individual ingredients listed by Torre is tempered with a certain detachment and irony. Thus although he uses psychoanalytical techniques in Teoría del zumbel, in the same novel he caricatures a psychiatrist. And although he often uses dehumanizing terminology in describing people, their humanity is lost only momentarily and it usually re­appears with intensified vitality.

Ortega's famous analysis of dehumanized art appeared in 1925. It lists as follows the characteristics of modern art:

Tiende: 1., a la deshumanización del arte; 2., a evitar las formas vivas; 3., a hacer que la obra de arte no sea sino obra de arte; 4., a considerar el arte como juego y nada más; 5., a una esencial ironía; 6., a eludir toda falsedad, y, por tanto, a una escrupulosa realización. En fin, 7., el arte, según los artistas jóvenes, es una cosa sin trascendencia alguna.16
While Jarnés' works do demonstrate these tendencies, an essay he wrote the following year (1926) shows that he considered dehumanization to be an artistic technique, not an objective. It is one of the ways in which an artist can flee from boring, photographic reality, but it is the flight itself which counts, not total escape, which would give not art but geometry or theology. Jarnés laments the way Ortega's essay has been misunderstood: "Lo que sólo es un diagnóstico, se ha tomado-- y ¡con qué precipitación! -- por una receta" (Cartas, p. 31).

There may be less justification for saying that Jarnés was influenced by La deshumanización del arte than that certain of his literary methods coincide with Ortega's findings. But Ortega's philosophy in general is undoubtedly a major influence on his thought, as he implies himself in numerous tributes. He speaks, for example, of his "excepcional e inquebrantable devoción hacia las ideas y hacia la persona del maestro Ortega y Gasset" (Viviana, p. 23). Perspectivism, vital reason, life as a perpetual struggle for security... these and many more themes are of fundamental importance in his novels.

His discovery of Ortega, however, did not take place very early in his life. There was, after all, a difference of only five years in the two men's ages. Jarnés was nearly thirty when, as he recalls, the first volume of El Espectador appeared like a miracle to disseminate European thought in the cultural desert of provincial Spain; his personality must have been substantially formed
already. It is likely therefore that a large measure of his devotion to Ortega was due to his finding a kindred spirit who drew into a cohesive pattern ideas partially formulated by himself, from his own experience. Jarnés claims on several occasions that the artist's only authentic resources are in himself. It is unlikely that he would deliberately apply someone else's ideas in his books. Ortega's ideas must have come as a corroboration of his own for such a complete assimilation to take place.

The "aire del tiempo" is constantly changing. In the two decades during which Jarnés was writing there was a drastic change of climate. The general feeling of newness and liberation following the First World War was soon overtaken by growing anxiety about political developments all over Europe. Jarnés was not a political writer; in fact he was anti-political in the sense that he deplored the tendency of people to divide into opposing camps rather than to co-operate in groups transcending Right and Left. But the political elements present in the "aire del tiempo" affected his writing which, from 1930 onwards, changes its emphasis from the novel with "art for art's sake" tendencies to biography, criticism, and social comment. The later novels show a growing concern about cultural as well as personal values. This change reflects the general literary shift of the 1930's towards social involvement. Jarnés retains, however, his faith and optimism in the spiritual power of individuals; authentic communal values can be based only on personal integrity and good will. Each person, as well as being...
a social animal, has the problem of his own life to solve, and this remains true whatever particular straws the "aire del tiempo" blows his way. All Jarnés' novels, therefore, introduce individuals who, in different circumstances, have a unique self to discover and affirm.
FOOTNOTES


3 G. Torrente Ballester, Panorama de la literatura española contemporánea, 2nd ed. (Madrid, 1961), I, 346.

4 Benjamín Jarnés, Cartas al Ebro (Biografía y Crítica (Mexico, 1940), p. 156. Subsequent quotations will be indicated by "Cartas" in the text.

5 Guillermo de Torre, "Prólogo a la primera edición" (1924), Historia de las literaturas de vanguardia (Madrid, 1965), p. 89.

6 Torre, pp. 570-571.


8 Torrente Ballester, p. 344.


13 Benjamín Jarnés, Rúbricas (Nuevos ejercicios) (Madrid, 1931), p. 70.


15 Torre, pp. 78-79.

16 Ortega y Gasset, op. cit., p. 360.
CHAPTER II: CHARACTERIZATION

From the foregoing remarks one may make certain suppositions about Jarnés’ approach to creating fictional characters. Since he is deeply concerned with seeing things exactly as they are, he may be expected to treat people in the same way and to present them without illusions or idealization. He may also be expected to present them from unusual angles and to vary his perspective. If he himself rejects the great Romantic abstractions and limits himself to investigating what is knowable, then his characters must either share his attitudes or, alternatively, their presumption and self-delusion must be shown for what they are.

One effect of a rejection of metaphysical illusions about man’s place in the universe is that attention will be concentrated on the senses. If belief in heaven is denied, one has the earth to explore. If love is deprived of its mystical and sentimental trappings, sex and aesthetic enjoyment remain. Aesthetic contemplation requires detachment and the suspension of irrelevant criteria and preconceptions, and bears therefore a certain resemblance to scientific observation. Both artist and scientist may regard their fellow men objectively, as a phenomenon among others, and such observation is a valid source of knowledge. Jarnés’ characters are often presented in geometric, architectural, or mechanistic terms, particularly when one character is watching or describing another. Knowledge of other people is necessarily limited, and
often superficial, but it can still be accurate.

Another, equally objective, way of looking at people is to occupy a vantage point and look down at them en masse. People will then appear as animals or dolls or cogs in wheels. The members of the crowd can be classified as types but will have no individuality, and their behaviour, if bizarre, will follow set patterns and, after observation, be predictable. The number of situations confronting human beings and the number of their possible reactions in those situations are finite and the basic patterns have become stylized in the form of myths and legends. People cannot hope to behave in a unique, original manner: everything has been done before. One may expect to find among Jarnés' characters new versions of familiar figures, and this is the case, though the originals may be scarcely recognizable. In addition to modernizing myths, Jarnés fancifully combines characters from past and present, fact and fiction.

There are a number of cases in Jarnés' works where either he or one of his characters places himself above the herd and observes it dispassionately, or at least, as dispassionately as possible, for such a view is not likely to increase one's faith in human potential. The observer cannot detach himself permanently or completely and is still subject to some emotional response to what he sees. This response may take the form of despair, or a desire to intervene, or a voluntary renunciation of one's individuality and immersion of the self in cosmic anonymity.
Occasionally such a detached look at mankind is salutary. In the foreward to *Fauna contemporánea*, Jarnés defends the attitude of Zacchaeus, the Biblical character who climbed up into a tree to watch Jesus pass. What Zacchaeus does is "utilizar lo más puro del hombre, la mirada, y dejar en huelga lo que hace del hombre una bestia más, las uñas." The withdrawal, however, can be only temporary, and sooner or later the observer must abandon his look out position and rejoin the crowd. Jarnés considers that if an artist wishes to be truly creative he must abandon his position of superiority and function as an integral human being: "... el artista nada ha de mirar desde la cumbre. Aunque en la lejanía, todo debe quedar a la altura del pecho" (*Ejercicios*, p. 65). The principle is carried furthest in *Teoría del Zumbel*, in which the author, far from controlling his creation from above, enters into it and discusses, even disagrees, with his characters. In the other novels his humility is less obvious, but still present is a certain rejection of omnipotence and imposed logic.

A strict adherence to what can be perceived by the senses, along with minimal interpretation by the author, would produce a kind of novel quite different from Jarnés'. The objective approach is relieved in Jarnés by the addition of another dimension, the mind, including the unconscious mind. This is justified by the fact that he regards psychology as a science and the dark recesses of the mind as capable of accurate elucidation. As Paul Ilie has
pointed out, Jarnés was perhaps naive and idealistic about the scientific exactitude of psycho-analysis; nevertheless the workings of the mind are more accessible to scientific investigation than are metaphysics and theology. The psychological presentation of a character can be accomplished either by introspection and self-analysis or by the use of fantasy and dream. Jarnés uses both methods. Characters reveal themselves in dialogue and monologue and compensate for limited action by dreams and imagination. Within the context of a person's mind dreams are as "real" as physical actions. The person can act out roles and legitimately be leader, handsome hero or star. Jarnés takes advantage of the similarity between the dream and the motion picture and sometimes includes film sequences.

Balanced against the metaphor of Zacchaeus in the tree is another recurring image, that of el buzo (the diver) who brings to light submerged treasure. Psycho-analytical techniques can externalize the contents of the unconscious mind. Jarnés was particularly interested in Jung's psychology, which distinguishes between the individual and the collective unconscious. The latter manifests itself in the use of myths and legends, but a person's uniqueness lies in his conscious thought and his personal unconscious. The individualist will therefore treasure and cultivate these properties of himself, the more so if he is aware of his insignificance when measured against time and space. He will tend to be intensely self-analytical and self-critical, and contemplative rather than active.
We therefore find Jarnés treasuring above all human characteristics the intimidad, a person's private personality, which is not a spontaneous creation but which demands deliberate self-knowledge.

La intimidad--y su fruición--es el don más alto concedido al hombre. Cuando un hombre puede encerrarse en el sótano de sí mismo, ya puede darse por bien logrado un espíritu. (Cartas, p. 135)

Although from the outside human activity may appear predictable and governed by fixed laws and patterns, from the inside life is often perplexing, arbitrary, and unfair. Logic at one level may be chaos at another. The individual has to face and solve problems, even if his ability to choose is illusory. But human reason is inadequate; although it can go a long way towards "descubrir en el caos de los casos individuales desordenados del universo un orden" (Jung, quoted by Jarnés, Teoría, p. 15), much will remain irrational and inexplicable. As the author is as beset by this haphazard messiness as anyone else, he has no right to contrive neat, logical stories for his characters. He says in El profesor imutil: "... yo prefiero la novela donde--como en la vida--no hay prólogo ni epílogo, sino ciertos jalones de partida o de término."2

His characters, therefore, tend to drift along and eventually wander off to fresh pastures. Alternatively, where death occurs, it is shown to be incongruous and ill-timed.

A belief that man has little power to act and limited control even of his own fate is pessimistic but it also has humorous possibilities. If there is no point in worrying about major
problems or in attempting any reform or progress, one may as well revert to playfulness and an enjoyment of simple things:

Será preciso que volvamos a enamorarnos del mundo, risueñamente, como niños. Que intimemos con él. Que le perdamos el respeto. Que le tiremos de las greñas como a un león domesticado.

In Teoría del zumbel even God is represented as playful: To take things too seriously is to invite punishment for hubris. Thus Julio's political involvement in Lo rojo y lo azul ends in the appalling firing-squad incident and Julio's nervous breakdown.

Jarnés shows great admiration and affection for Charlie Chaplin, whose art he places on a level with that of Stravinsky and Picasso. All three, he says, perform a miracle of transubstantiation, using everyday reality as their basic material. Chaplin's films provoke both laughter and tears, laughter at the discrepancy between his aspirations and his attainments and tears for the "hombre desplazado, . . . niño perdido entre la turba" (Ejercicios, p. 44). But laughter has to prevail over the pathos. As Jarnés says in the prologue to Locura y Muerte de nadie: "... es muy duro invitar al transeúnte a que medite unas horas con su propia calavera entre las manos." The Chaplinesque character, pathetic, humiliated, absurd, for whom many things remain out of reach but who will console himself with what is available (the bread rolls, for example, as a substitute for a dancing partner) finds many echoes in Jarnés' novels.
Turning now to Jarnés' main characters, we find that in each novel there is one male character whose personality and experiences are developed in greater detail and depth than those of the remaining characters. This one character is the axis on which the rest of the novel turns. Usually, the other characters are presented through his eyes and are two-dimensional, whereas he has the extra dimension of intimidad (private thoughts, dreams, etc.). While it would not be practicable to reveal numerous characters in intimate depth, more than one could be so revealed, but a desire for authenticity apparently requires Jarnés to admit that he cannot know in detail how other people's mental processes work:

Es en vano querer cosechar fuera de nosotros.

. . . Tientan nuestro afán creador muchos caminos,
pero sólo hay uno nuestro, aunque después se bifurque:
El del hallazgo del propio autor. (Ejercicios, p. 63)

This does not mean that his novels have to be autobiographical,
simply that the mental process at work are the author's and therefore of limited application. There is an implied restriction to what he can imagine himself doing:

Yo soy algo más, quiero ser algo más, que un hombre;
quiero ser un artista. Y el artista es libre para elegir su tema. Como el de mi propia vida no me sirve, le desecho; . . . Prefiero decir lo que no he sido y lo que no voy a ser, en vez de decir lo que fui y seré. (Viviana, p. 18)

Jarnés will not attempt to get under the skin of many different types of person, so it is not surprising to find the
same or similar characters recurring in several novels. The emphasis, however, may shift, just as the rôle of the frequently used first-person narrator varies from that of identification with the hero (El profesor inútil; Escenas junto a la muerte) to that of a marginal character (Tántalo). One is clearly not intended to take too literally the identification either of the author with any character of of characters with each other. Even when Jarnés includes himself as the author, in Teoría del Zumbel, he hides behind an ironic mask, that of the writer of "novelas blancas", concerned with his popularity and success.

On reading Jarnés' novels one is struck by the number of times he uses the name Julio. Without trying to push the identification too far, one can see connections between the various Julios and even piece together certain "facts" about the biography of a single person. Julio came from a poor family, was educated in a seminary, escaped from it, drifted for a while, and was conscripted into the army. (El convidado de papel; Lo rojo y lo azul). These experiences appear to be based on Jarnés' own life. In Lo rojo y lo azul Julio, here given the surname Aznar, takes lessons in surveying from don Braulio. He is uninterested in the subject and soon drops the course, but in "Andrómeda", in Salón de Estío, the hero, again called Julio, is a qualified surveyor. In Paula y Paulita he is again described as a surveyor, who also gives lessons in accountancy. Lastly, Julio appears as a literary figure: in El profesor inútil, the profesor refers to "Julio Aznar, mi gran amigo" (p. 247), and quotes at
length from his latest novel. The supposed writer of the Cartas al Ebro is likewise called Aznar, and in Tántalo, Julio has an unsuccessful play performed, a version of "Viviana y Merlín", and thereafter becomes a promoter of other people's plays, with a careful eye on the box office. In the works mentioned, Julio is not always the hero: in Tántalo he appears as the friend of the narrator Arturo, and both are subordinate to the sickly author of "Niobe". Arturo is another recurring name. Although the Arturo of Tántalo is an insurance agent and the Arturo of Locuna y muerte de nadie investigates fire insurance claims, there is really little connection between the two, and still less with the Arturo of Lo rojo y lo azul, who is a veteran soldier and violinist. Nevertheless, in each case Arturo accompanies the hero and acts as something of a foil and challenge to his ideas.

Most of the manifestations of Julio share two characteristics: a susceptibility for women and a role as some kind of intellectual or teacher. These features are also shared by the first-person hero of El profesor inútil and Escenas junto a la muerte. The roles of lover and intellectual continually cross, become confused, diverge again. The intellectual or teacher is often a learner in love. The "Viviana y Merlín" theme runs through all these novels; that is, the conflict between reason and instincts, which Jarnés prefers to call sabiduría and gracia. Reason prevails only in isolation, and even then instincts intrude. Viviana sneaks into Merlín's ivory tower, into the seminary, into the opositor's
study... until the intellectual, no longer satisfied with the
women in his books, breaks out in search of the real thing. In so
doing he sacrifices a certain control over his own fate: the
opositor forgets about his imminent examination, the seminarist
wrecks his ecclesiastical career, the profesor becomes inútil.
But the renunciation of intellectual or rational control may in
the long run lead to greater concentration and understanding when
the instincts have been satisfied and their lessons learnt. The
objective is a harmonious balance of sabiduría and gracia:
"... sustituir el deseo por el hastío; la tenaz espuela del
deleite--vibración sorda que oscurece la verdadera vida del
espíritu--, por el filosófico reposo del sexo en calma, ya saciado"5
and, "... a la serenidad contemplativa se llega mejor por
veredas locas de placer que por rectilíneos caminos de abstención"
(Convidado, p. 188).

Until now I have used the word "hero" as meaning the main
character, but it has also the connotation of an exceptional, even
superhuman, man. As already stated, Jarnés will not idealize
his characters or allow them to deviate far from the human norm.
In any case heroism, and even individualism, have practically
disappeared from the world. The forces at work in the twentieth
century -- mechanization, collectivism, mass movements, speeded up
communication media -- tend to minimize the significance of
individual action. Arturo, in Locura y muerte, remarks: "Pronto,
si algún héroe surge, se sonreirá aburridamente de su propio
heroísmo" (p. 165). Similarly the narrator of Escenas junto a la muerte comments on the lack of impact even of remarkable individuals: "Escritores, hombres de ciencia, de negocios, de vida social profunda, apenas logran ser conocidos por algún guño más saliente, por algún relieve más vistoso, quizá el menos profundo." Self-assertion has become almost impossible.

One would not expect, then, to find conventionally heroic heroes in Jarnés' novels. Old-fashioned heroism he reserves for his biographical writing. But he does not bid farewell to heroism without regret or without comment on the demoralizing effect its disappearance may have on contemporary youth. He urges the reading of biographies of great men of the past and warns against accepting the degrading role of puppet or machine. The standardization of man should not be accomplished without protest. In this light resistance, even futile resistance, may be heroic. Heroism would lie more in the struggle than in what it achieved.
FOOTNOTES


CHAPTER III: THE LOVER

Since Jarnés sees no point in taking things too seriously and is opposed to the complicating and obscuring of straightforward issues with grandiose, transcendental trappings and hollow rhetoric, it is not surprising that he has a radical attitude towards love. He retains love as one of his main themes, but scorns, parodies and debunks its Romantic manifestations and insists upon honest treatment of lovers' sentiments and their causes. Relationships are treated realistically; ideals may be sought, but not found, and a love affair is much more likely to be terminated through boredom or expediency than through death, violence, or the decision to get married.

The main philosophical basis for Jarnés' treatment of love is the rejection of what he regards as a perverse legacy of Christianity -- the idea that life on earth is merely a preparation for the true life after death -- and a belief instead in the value of what man has here and now. He sees the introduction of the Christian idea of grace as an attempt to stamp out earthly fulfilment:

toda la Edad Media es un hondo conflicto entre dos gracias, entre dos sentidos de la vida: el de tránsito y el de permanencia gozosa, aunque fugaz. Se niega a la vida otro sentido que no sea el de viaje; pero la misma vida afirmará siempre su derecho a ser considerada como fin. (Viviana, p. 47)

Because immortality is an abstraction beyond human verification it is a dubious basis on which to establish any philosophy
of life. Man is on surer ground if he contents himself with phenomena he can experience and enjoy directly. Jarnés advocates a hedonistic attitude and considers abstinence and self-denial as, at best, negative virtues. In proclaiming "la única gracia verdadera, ... la que surge de la armoniosa plenitud de las fuerzas de la vida" (Viviana, p. 47), he is attacking conventional Christian morality, for, as he says, his idea of grace "desde el patíbulo (the Cross) es llamada siempre delito" (ibid.).

At the end of Viviana y Merlí, Viviana resurrects Merlí and arranges to meet him in Cervantes' "Cueva de Montesinos" in order to proclaim in Spain the happy union of gracia and sabiduría. This suggests that by the time of the Renaissance the conflict between the two attitudes to life -- tránsito and permanencia -- was already being resolved in favour of the latter. But the ethics of the medieval Church have persisted and permeated many social institutions, so that still in the twentieth century the young hero of Lo rojo y lo azul finds himself at odds with society in his desire to live fully in the present:

¿Por qué, en definitiva, no enriquecer su presente, crear otro más risueño?

Sí; era muy difícil: el mundo está montado para fabricar en él futuros.

Todos sus talleres tienden a ofrecer al obrero humano lo indispensable para obtener un porvenir a trueque de irse viendo desmoronar el presente.\(^1\)

While it is true that the future intended here is a worldly, not a
heavenly, one, the principle is the same: self-denial now in order to reap rewards later, perhaps too late. The moral is that the hypothetical outcome does not justify the sacrifice.

An obvious example of the suppression of spontaneous action is traditional sexual morality, especially the behaviour expected of women. In Jarnés' novels there is no glorification of chastity or condemnation of immodesty, marital infidelity, or prostitution. Most of the female characters are either experienced lovers or willing recruits. The conventional restrictive upbringing of young girls is shown to be unnatural and artificial, and totally inadequate against the forces of instinct. The innocent Blanca (Teoría del zumbel) learns rapidly that her devout training is irrelevant:

Prefiero ... desear el espantoso momento de perder la gracia, de jugarme una eternidad por un momento... Quiero hundirme pronto en esa ceniza que dicen que sigue al amor. Quiero, en ese tedio, esperar misericordia. Pero, ¡ante todo, quemarme! (p. 128)

The seduction of Rebeca in El profesor inútil is accompanied by anguish and terror, but this is an unusual case, and Rebeca's fear is more superstitious than moral. In general, Jarnés' seducers meet little opposition. Sexual equality prevails, with no question of a double moral standard. The untouched and untouchable single girl is presented as ignorant rather than virtuous, and prostitutes are treated sympathetically, especially if they have been driven to prostitution by poverty. This is made
clear at the end of *Escenas junto a la muerte*, where the hero, who has just been successful in his *oposiciones* for a university post, first meets his future wife soliciting in the street.

Samuel Putnam has described *El profesor inútil* as a modern version of the Don Juan story. The *profesor*, he says, is "un nuevo burlador, un Don Juan joven, tímido y profesoral, y sin embargo, extrañamente afortunado. . ." While it is true that the *profesor* has a succession of amorous adventures of temporary nature, which involve no deep emotional attachment and do not lead to marriage, he is not a cynical seducer intent only upon conquest without concern for his victims' feelings or fate. The same is true of Jarnés' other lovers: they may be light-hearted but they are not callous.

The lack of seriousness about love affairs is due to two ideas fundamental to Jarnés' work. One is the emphasis on the present, without undue concern for the future. The other is the acceptance of limitations on human endeavour which permit a greater intensity within a reduced field. In terms of human relationships this means that one will not expect too much but that what one has may be enjoyed without inhibition. If Jarnés' young men are reluctant to tie themselves down, it is because conventional bourgeois marriage often involves more than the simple union of a man and a woman. Suppression of the individuality of either partner must not be allowed to occur. Jarnés is opposed to possessiveness: jealousy and a proprietary interest in the loved one are alien to
his concept of love. Even worse is a desire to reform, or to co-opt the partner into a family business. Neither partner should enslave the other or expect to have exclusive rights over him or her. Finally, if the only true reason for a relationship is passing sexual interest, that fact should be admitted: something inherently temporary should not be pushed beyond its limitations.

An illustration of the threat to freedom constituted by marriage is provided by Julio's "invitación a la vida burguesa" in Lo Rojo y lo azul. Julio initiates courtship with Cecilia because his idea of a happier present includes love as a vital element. Cecilia and her mother, however, have very different ideas: Julio is a prospect for the future, and not only as a prospective husband, but as a partner in the family undertaking business. His individuality is disregarded. Cecilia is not really in love with him as he is, but with "(el) hombre que resulte de una larga elaboración" (p. 75). Realizing eventually that marriage to "La Eterna Paz" would be spiritual death, Julio flees and spends his savings on Rubí.

Conformism and routine are seen as devitalizing, even dehumanizing, and therefore to be resisted. Jarnés frequently returns to the paradox that only the transient, the fluid, the unstable really endure. The Ebro erodes its banks, and washes away buildings, people, and objects, but the river itself flows on. Similarly life prevails over the setbacks and contradictions it encounters. When the profesor's relationship with Carlota begins
to show signs of strain, he reflects:

"El río y el tiempo nunca vuelven la cabeza.
La fidelidad perfecta estriba en saber huir."

"La otra fidelidad es un vano empeño de juntar
dos tedios en uno." (Prof., p. 162)

Neither people nor relationships can be expected to remain constant and static. Jarnés' lovers accept that many love affairs can be only partially or temporarily satisfying. They tend to react with equanimity to rejection and to extricate themselves in good time if a relationship is heading towards boredom, a divergence of interests, or a crisis likely to force an unwelcome decision. The profesor's adventures serve as examples. We are given no details about what went wrong with Ruth, but we witness the profesor's deliberate readjustment:

Puesto que el amor de Ruth está para mí tan lejos, quiero yo también hacerlo pequeño dentro de mí. Todo lo más grande quisiera hoy verlo convertido en un lindo juguete. (p. 190)

In this way he reduces his emotion to manageable proportions and rejuvenates himself. He sets out to be a child for the day and is in the right frame of mind to meet his next girlfriend -- Herminia -- who, appropriately, is a governess. In the case of Carlota, the love affair ends because she wishes to convert it into marriage, and to the profesor this represents a falsification:

Yo enriquecería la aventura con otro dulce episodio; pero Carlota pretende reeditarla corrigiendo bien las erratas, añadiéndole un minucioso colofón. Ella quería hacerme recorrer el largo camino del amor burgués para adquirir lo que ya pudo lograrse por el instinto. (p. 164)
The actual separation occurs calmly, urbanely, as Carlota writes his name beside her own on her examination result and drops the paper into the Ebro, thus terminating simultaneously the love affair and the pupil-teacher relationship.

The fourth adventure of the profesor inútil will be examined more closely in Chapter IV, but it is relevant to mention here some general reflections which his experiences with Rebeca provoke. He bemoans the fact that very few women can present themselves to a lover in a state of both physical and spiritual nudity. Usually, from the start of an association, the woman's background and idées recues intrude:

Por eso nuestro deseo no suele crecer en proporción a la distancia de su logro, sino que frecuentemente lo va mordiendo en el camino el áspid de la desilusión; excepto en los casos infrecuentes en que la mujer sabe ocultar todo cuanto no es en definitiva ella misma, su propia carne en sazón, su alma vehemente, el gentil penacho—porque entonces existe—de su espíritu; entonces la mujer llega a la posesión, desprendida de todo cuanto la sociedad arrojó sobre ella: normas éticas, prejuicios, taras, recelos, insuficiente educación; llega a nosotros completamente desnuda. (p. 194)

During a relationship Jamés' lover has two distinct attitudes towards his mistress's body, sexual and aesthetic. He desires her, but also wants to contemplate her as an object of beauty. The two attitudes cannot normally occur simultaneously because sexual desire is blind and impatient while aesthetic contemplation demands leisure and tranquillity. This being so, the animal passion is best dealt with first, so that the mind and
perceptual faculties can function calmly and accurately. Attempts to reverse the process are unlikely to succeed. With Carlota, the *profesor* struggles lamely to resist her flirtatious overtures by forcing himself to perceive her in Cubist terms. He succeeds in translating her into "pura geometría" (p. 148) but as soon as he moves a little, in order to improve on the design, "... esferas, cilindros, poliedros y troncos de cono comienzan a henchirse, ... a deformarse en la pura geometría para formarse de nuevo en la sensual fugacidad de la carne de Carlota" (p. 149).

Aesthetic appreciation excludes other emotions and has to be objective. The *profesor* adds a parenthesis to his account of first seeing Rebeca:

(Entonces me daba escasa cuenta de ninguna ley de armonía; confieso humildemente que no contemplé el seno izquierdo como ninguna estructura, sino como relieve donde ensayar caricias... ¿Cómo podía percibir ejes de perspectiva si yo estaba plenamente sumergido en el cuadro? Es ahora, cuando lo cuento...) (p. 184)

On the other hand Julio (*Paula y Paulita*) is so far from being anything but an aesthetic observer, on the occasion when Paulita drops a basket of apples, that he forgets his manners and offers her no help.

The development of the sexual and aesthetic aspects of love is clearly traced in *El convidado de papel* and *Lo rojo y lo azul*. As a child of ten Julio has alert senses and a capacity for
voluptuous enjoyment. Although too young to be sexually interested in Eulalia, he is enchanted by her femininity and love of life. In *Ejercicios*, Jarnés seems to be referring to *El convidado da papel* when he describes the first childish awareness of beauty, "anterior a la fiebre de los sentidos. El niño ya persigue el misterio de la belleza feminina, aunque apenas conoce los signos de lo bello" (p. 59). The article goes on to describe the suppression of this innocent discovery: "Luego los maestros le enseñarán a dudar, a cerrar los ojos, le prohibirán el himno de la Venus Armoniosa" (ibid.). In Julio's seminary the rigorous discipline fails in its efforts to banish the erotic. Julio becomes more and more obsessed with the mystery of a woman's body. His knowledge of female anatomy has been confined to images of mutilated or semi-clad saints and coldly scientific illustrations in "un texto antiguo de Ginecología, desechado por el médico" (*Convidado*, p. 38). His most urgent desire is "reconstruir aquella ideal estructura, totalmente, en su perfecta y viva integridad" (ibid.).

During his time as a seminarist Julio has the occasional experience with a prostitute, but his aesthetic aspirations remain frustrated. A girl like Araceli is always in too much of a hurry and therefore "enemiga de la pura contemplación estética" (*Convidado*, p. 39). Later, in *Lo rojo y lo azul*, he is disillusioned after six orgiastic days with Rubí, "porque sin dinero el amor pierde al momento sus falsas purpurinas; se le ve tal cual es: un poco de monótona vehemencia que va apagándose" (*Rojo*, p. 126). He is physically
satiated but aesthetically disappointed. The reason is that the couple's poverty makes them hasten to lose themselves in blind passion; Rubi has no resources other than pure animal sexuality, and this soon bores Julio, who "imaginaba el amor como cierta complicada estructura donde el goce sensual fuese ofrecido a la vez por todos sus elementos. . . . Para Julio la desnudez de una hembra sólo podía ser cierto tema de primer término en una complicada partitura viva" (pp. 188-189).

When a man is engaged in aesthetic contemplation of a woman he is not really behaving as a lover. He might as well be looking at a painting, a view, a sculpture. . . except that for Jarnés' lovers a woman's body is their favourite object of contemplation. The naked body is normally exposed to view only by a wife, mistress or night-club performer, but the connection with love, sexual desire, affection, etc. is incidental. Contemplation is a private, self-contained activity. In Jarnés it is often associated with dehumanization. The observer derives a special kind of pleasure from the mental exercise of analysing and abstracting the nude form, just as Julio, in the seminary, found it rewarding to eliminate from a photograph of two girls everything except Estrella's smile. Such dehumanization is often accompanied by mathematical calculation or problem-solving. Thus in the night-club in Teoría del zumbel, "calcula Bermúdez la edad de las seis amigas por el ángulo que forman sus senos con la tabla torácica" (p. 77). Arturo, watching Matilde, ponders: "¿Por qué la forma cónica es en
This kind of pleasure demands great awareness and self-control, but the lover can derive equally intense enjoyment from the opposite: unseeing, uncalculating oblivion. For Arturo, such renunciation of the self is the only way he can truly live in the present: “Arturo se siente resbalar por la deliciosa pendiente que le empuja a ser un ente colectivo, un número de masa, un Nadie que desmenuza lentamente su gozosa postura de hombre sin ramificaciones sociales, sin tentáculos domésticos, sin opiniones, sin prejuicios, sin pasado y sin futuro, con un fugaz y encantador presente” (Locura, p. 59). In Paula y Paulita, Julio enjoys a similar loss of self. The experience is intensified because he has just been meditating on the vanity of trying to be unique. He makes love to Paula, indistinguishable in the darkness from her daughter -- or from any other female -- letting himself "ser un ente que goza en borrarse todo gesto individual" (p. 142). Again one finds the acceptance of a limitation as a key to pleasure: self-consciousness is irrelevant to sex and risks spoiling the experience. Arturo rejoices when Matilde calls him Alfredo by mistake, whereas his inept friend Juan Sánchez flies into a rage when a prostitute confuses him with "un tal Juan Martínez" (Locura, p. 98).

As already mentioned, the hero is not to be idealized or presented as any kind of superman. This applies also to the lover. Jarnés often places him in a ludicrous situation, usually making
him aware of his own absurdity and thereby preventing him from taking himself too seriously. There are numerous examples. The opositor has no chance to protect Susana from her assailant because the latter falls over a chair. (Escenas). The profesor has great difficulty gauging what distance should separate him from his new pupil, Carlota, as they walk along the street (El profesor inútil). Julio (of Paula y Paulita) enters the wrong hotel room, immediately becomes known to everyone as "el joven que anoche se metió en el cuarto de una señora" (p. 63), and seals his fate for the rest of his holiday. Such situations, calculated to make the hero look, and feel, gauche and ill equipped for heroism, are used with especially comic effect in the short stories of Salón de estío.

Although neither lovers nor love affairs are idealized, the fact that people do cherish ideals is recognized. But since Jarnés' lover tends to be an extremely lucid character, aware of his own imperfections and limitations and able to regard them with irony, he knows he will not find his ideal. Each person creates his ideal of love to his own specifications, which cannot all be met by one partner. Rather than spend his life in a futile pursuit, Jarnés' character prefers to settle for a compromise. He can either invent a fictitious love or, like the profesor, "acudir a cualquier provisional resumen que el azar nos traiga" (Prof., p. 247). Instead of contrasting each imperfect specimen with his notion of the ideal woman, the profesor strives to synthesize the best elements
of all the women he has known, and project the result, provisionally, on to the woman of the moment. For him, therefore, the anonymous prostitute at the end of the novel sums up Ruth, Herminia, Carlota, and Rebeca, adds as her own contribution her "fina delgadez" (p. 257), and, is, for a brief spell, all that the profesor can desire.
FOOTNOTES


CHAPTER IV: THE INTELLECTUAL

Jarnés' novels demonstrate both the possibilities and the limitations of the intellect, the Merlin of the legend. In order to bear fruit, Merlin's accomplishments have to combine with Viviana's.

As already mentioned in Chapter I, Jarnés avoids metaphysical conjecture in favour of close attention to phenomena within reach of direct human experience. Preoccupation with insoluble questions is a waste of time and energy and eventually leads to a paralysis of the vital forces. Reason, which should be man's most useful tool for dealing with the chaos of his situation, fails if it simply leads him to a confrontation with a few insoluble abstract problems, "où l'être se simplifie jusqu'à la sottise et il se noie au lieu de nager dans les circonstances de l'eau." Jarnés and his intellectual characters are familiar with this state of impotent pessimism, but there is an alternative to despair: the mind can apply itself to grasping what positive qualities the world has to offer. It can create its own pleasure by playing intellectual games, inventing metaphors, studying the habits of ants and gnats, focusing its attention on the concrete and particular instead of on the abstract. Jarnés' novels themselves embody the principle of steering away from pessimism to a hedonistic attitude which is far from naïve. Jarnés prefers to entertain his readers rather than to frighten them; writing of Juan Sánchez's neurotic terror of being engulfed in the crowd, he comments:

Yo he sentido ese miedo, me he sentido desfallecido,
aniquilado. Pero he preferido siempre no asustar a los demás. Tampoco hoy quisiera asustar a mis buenos amigos. (Locura, pp. 12-13)

He chooses to let the "gran pulpo", the threat to individuality, hide under the surface, while Juan Sánchez amuses the reader in a Chaplinesque fashion.

The most important of Jarnés' intellectual heroes are the first-person narrators of El profesor inútil and Escenas junto a la muerte. They are in fact probably the same person: Jarnés', dedication of the latter novel suggests that it is a continuation of the former, and the opositor refers briefly to previous relationships with Carlota and Ruth. Julio may also be regarded as an intellectual, especially as he appears in El convidado de papel. In Lo rojo y lo azul, while he is not a "professional" intellectual, he is nevertheless a perplexed thinker, at odds with materialistic society and inhibited by his scruples from either joining it or destroying it.

Julio and the profesor share an aversion to settling down and joining the ranks of the bourgeoisie. The opositor, who is older, though no more materialistic, has by the end of Escenas married and established himself as a catedrático. These characters are presumably of humble origin. We know that Julio's family was poor and that his only alternative to being a farm labourer was to enter a seminary. No background is provided for the profesor or the opositor, but their lack of financial resources is indicated
by the employment they take --.positions as tutors or clerks. They are people who are not quite of the middle class but whose intelligence and education have detached them from the working class. The profesor shows little concern about his social position or his future and the opositor is on the way to establishing his, but for Julio the problem is crucial. He flounders about in a world which has no sympathy for one who "no conoce ningún modo de conquistar este mundo visible porque sólo le enseñaron los modos de conquistar el invisible" (Rojo, p. 16). Society expects a young man to have plans for the future and is hostile to the drifter who would like first to comprehend the present. Although Julio has repudiated the seminary his "equipaje interior" (p. 10) contains values and an expectation of life more elevated than those of the capitalist world he has entered. He has learnt to think, but has no useful skill, and he soon feels resentment against a society which despises and humiliates the thinker if he happens to be poor. When he is snubbed and swindled by the illiterate grocer his indignation is not that of the exploited worker, but that of the exploited intellectual:

Estudiar toda mi vida, para qué? Para poner mi inteligencia a las órdenes de cualquier salchichero que ni siquiera me paga. ¿Tiene algún valor la inteligencia? (p. 142).

It is obvious that Jarnés sympathizes with Julio's plight as long as the young man is trying to discover his true self and the direction his life should take. When Julio leaves Augusta to join the army he has "un programa vital completamente en blanco" (Rojo, p. 10). His life has scarcely begun, though he is twenty-
one years old, because his education in the seminary was a false trail. He could not be expected to know his own destiny. He wants to investigate and to learn by experience, without preconceived ideas. Jarnés approves of this attitude; comparing Julio with Guillermína, he comments:

Su sentido de la vida era opuesto. El de Guillermína era bien claro; por eso era tan dudoso. El de Julio parecía demasiado obscuro; por eso era tan humano. Guillermína lo preestablecía según datos que reputaba auténticos: Julio no tenía otros datos que su propia vehemencia, que su propio instinto vital. (p. 19)

As the novel proceeds, however, Jarnés' sympathy diminishes, because although Julio gets to know himself better, he does not remain faithful to the self he discovers. Referring to the snub by the grocer and Julio's reaction to it -- joining the Marxists -- Jarnés asks: "¿Quién creerá en un hombre que se aprovecha del gran dolor humano para enlazar la inquietud que le causa cualquier picadura de esos vulgares mosquitos de la contradicción?" (p. 145) Julio's revolutionary sentiments are false. He does not hate and he does not believe that he is working for social justice, or that a heaven on earth will follow a socialist revolution. The whole of this part of his life is based on a betrayal of his better nature and better judgment. He is the more guilty because in honest moments he admits his hypocrisy, but repeatedly suppresses his true feelings. Ultimately he cannot live up to the role he has assigned himself. He discovers he is unable to kill and, ironically, his failure to kill one man contributes to the execution of seven.
Julio is disloyal to his línea interior or línea de la vida, a concept which is explained by the profesor:

Muy tarde solemos conocer nuestra propia línea, porque nada más arduo que el conocimiento de sí mismo; pero, una vez conocida, ¿no debemos conservarla a todo trance? Es acaso lo fatal; pero lo más leal consigo mismo es admitir esa fatalidad, defenderla, encuazarla, no desear nunca torcerla, como nunca se desea torcer el esqueleto. (Prof., pp. 110-111)

This is the message which the lieutenant whom Julio should have killed delivers at the end of Lo rojo y lo azul: Julio is a generous, non-aggressive person who should regard his peaceful, amorous nature as a blessing, not as cowardice, and leave others to hate and kill.

In a young person the línea is still flexible and developing, and the profesor realizes that his own is not yet "definitivamente elaborada" (p. 110). Drifting, experiment, hesitation, reluctance to commit oneself are all characteristic of the young man set on making his own evaluation of the world and his place in it. But the mature adult should have achieved some stability, so that his attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are consistent. The profesor's monologue continues:

... es bueno conservar la línea del cuerpo, pero mucho más la del espíritu. Notemos la diferencia entre el hombre opuesto en ideas a nosotros, pero de ideas firmes, por las cuales es capaz de sacrificio, y el hombre cuya opinión se nos escapa, cuya línea de conducta se nos borra o se nos pierde por caminos sospechosos... Aunque este hombre pretenda compartir nuestras ideas, ¿no preferiremos al otro? (pp. 112-113)

By firm ideas, however, the profesor does not mean complacency,
authoritarianism or idées recuees. The mind should never become static, but this does not prevent the definition of the línea interior or intimidad. Writing of the function of the intimidad in Cartas al Ebro, Jarnés says: "... el hombre no ha de ser cofre ambulante, sino una sensitiva máquina de devolver en deleite el combustible de ideas comunes que hurte de aquí y allí" (p. 136). Happiness is possible if only those ideas which are truly compatible with the inner self are retained; the selection and pruning processes have to be continuous.

In a study of the intellectual hero in French literature, Victor Brombert says: "Pain and lucidity are excellent tragic associates. The intellectual hero faces the widest range of suffering with the maximum degree of awareness." That Jarnés' hero feels this pain is shown by the opositor's suicidal disillusionment in the prelude to Escenas junto a la muerte, or by Julio's lucid assessment of his failure at the end of Lo rojo y lo azul. But Jarnés does not create tragic heroes: he prefers more modest characters who are subject to attacks of depression and lassitude but who manage to find some way of emerging from them and continuing the struggle. As already mentioned (above, p. 35) this often involves narrowing the focus and concentrating on little things. Alternatively one can let the senses take over from reason. "Sentir, cuando se trata de razonar, es malo. Razonar, cuando se trata de ver, es peor" (Teoría, p. 16).

Jarnés has one character who commits suicide. He is the Englishman, Mr. Brook, who shares with Julio the hero's role in
Paula y Paulita. His lucidity leads him to see man as the slave of "Cronos, el gran tirano" (p. 200) and to picture with intolerable vividness his own degeneration and senility. For him the only freedom is to forestall time and to cut off his life in middle age before his individuality becomes obscured by anonymous old age. Jarnés comments: "La razón es la gran aniquiladora. Ha cultivado Brook con exceso la razón" (p. 160). Brook is aware that his enemy is intellectualism and before his death he repudiates it. His to final toast is/the the destruction of the old abbey with its history and legends, "y que sobre la hierba y con el ritmo perenne del agua, un equipo de gimnastas desnudas purifiquen de espectros la Abadía" (p. 207).

Julio is Mr. Brook's alter ego, to whom the older man bequeaths his spirit along with his notebooks. Julio still has youth and vigour, without which Brook cannot bear to live, but he lacks direction. Brook stimulates his vital energy. After his death Julio says: "Prendió en mí su alegría, su sed de fertilizar cada hora con un nuevo afán, con una idea nueva" (p. 213). Brook's suicide cannot be regarded as tragic because it is an affirmation of the value of life: "Paró su vida en el momento en que comenzaba a parecerse a la muerte" (ibid.).

The phrase "profesor inútil" occurs several times in Jarnés' works as well as being the title of his first novel. On a superficial level the profesor is unsuccessful because the subjects he teaches are of considerably less interest to himself and his
students than is sex. Only de Libro de Buen Amor succeeds, momentarily, in arousing Valentín's curiosity, and the profesor's exposition of love is intended not for his ears but for Ruth's, should she be eavesdropping. Sexual attraction from the start distracts both the profesor and Carlota, and when she fails her mathematics examination, it is because of the erotic turn her geometry classes have taken: her cylinders and cones have never been amputated, so she does not know how an ellipse is formed!

The phrase "profesor inútil," however, raises two more serious questions: how much knowledge is worth and to what extent teaching is useful, or even possible. Jarnés has no time for pedantry or for dry erudition which has lost touch with life and disallows imagination. Mr. Brook eliminates the scholar in himself on his last day alive: "Profesor, inútil profesor: ¡Se acabó la razón! Paso franco a la audaz fantasía" (P. y P., pp. 162-163).

Books, like people, should be lively and not too serious: "Cuando la temperatura del párrafo crece y va a apuntar el profesor--ese profesor inútil que tantos llevamos dentro--, ¡zas!, un papirotazo y encasquetarle un revoltoso imagen" (Rúbricas, p. 69). Learning is useful only when it enriches a person and increases the quality of his life: "Archivo ambulante: si no estudias para vivir más intensamente, ¿por qué estudias?" (Viviana, p. 82). Even then, study alone is not sufficient: it must be combined with other activities. Head, heart, and instincts cannot be divorced from each other. Although in general Jarnés scorns the sentimental connotations of
the heart, the opositor's mysterious illness is heart trouble in both physical and metaphorical senses, and he reproaches himself for ignoring the heart, now in rebellion, for years.

Jarnés has doubts about the value of teaching. Learning occurs privately and often in spite of formal instruction rather than because of it. Julio, in the seminary, obviously profits little from his lessons, and, on the other hand, learns a great deal from the smuggled books circulated illegally in study time and from the enforced meditation periods which allow free rein to his imagination. He apparently reaches a high standard in schoolwork but this is due to his reliable memory, "tan útil para repetir con deliciosa inconsciencia páginas enteras de los textos" (Convidado, p. 43). Here, however, Jarnés is criticizing rote-learning rather than more enlightened educational methods. In Feria del libro he lists the duties of the teacher as knowing the pupil, stimulating him and disciplining him, none of which implies teaching in the sense of imparting factual knowledge. He expresses particular approval of the idea of encouraging adolescents to express themselves in free composition. In the "Discurso a Herminia" the profesor realizes that his rustic pupil Juan understands nothing he hears but that he can learn from his teacher's voice and personality. From a personal friendship, instead of a formal pupil-teacher relationship, much can be gained, but,

... Entonces, ¿qué lección podría darse y recibirse sino una pura lección de humanidad? ¿Qué texto, entonces, podría yo explicar a Juan, como no fuese un texto probablemente inútil, el texto de mí mismo? (Prof., p. 17)
In fact the profesor fails even in this, for he does not manage to entice Juan away from Ceferino to an interest in heterosexual relationships. Teaching is limited by what the pupil can learn; the basic personality cannot be altered, for it was formed in early childhood. In an article on Adler's psychology, Jarnés remarks: "Lo que el hombre ha de afirmar--aquello, en fin, por lo cual un hombre es tal hombre--no puede enseñarlo la vida" (Feria, p. 225).

Jarnés' teachers are frequently relegated to the position of learner by their female students. This is to be expected, for while man represents sabiduría -- the intellect, logical thought, theoretical knowledge -- woman embodies gracia -- the instincts and emotions, intuitive knowledge -- and each has much to learn from the other. The profesor delivers a lecture on the Maja desnuda's breasts, but Ruth is the teacher of practical anatomy. Isabel has scarcely learnt to read when the profundity of one of her remarks causes the opositor to say: "Soy para ti un profesor inútil. Sabes más que yo" (Escenas, p. 188). With Isabel he has experienced an archetypal union of sabiduría and gracia, but his possessiveness spoils it. He is unwilling to share her with the rest of the world. He is punished for such arrogance by marrying a woman whose nude form is available to the public in the form of a statue of victory, and he bows before Isabel's sarcastic comment:

Saliste ganando. Cuando tu Matilde se desmorone, podrás seguirla viendo en plena lozanía ... de piedra por todas las provincias de España. El papel de las revistas donde mi desnudez se conserva es mucho menos resistente. (p. 252)
Jarnés' intellectuals are extremely introspective and the process and results of their self-examination are expounded in detail. Self-knowledge is vital for discovering and remaining faithful to one's línea interior. Jarnés' novels themselves are an externalization of his intimidad. He writes in Cartas al Ebro of the combined pain and pleasure of self-analysis:

Esta tortura de ver siempre claro dentro del propio corazón . . . puede atenuarse al volcar en el papel nuestra desnuda intimidad. La confesión fue siempre medicina. Esta angustia de la sinceridad llega a trocarse en deleite--deleite enfermizo, aunque intenso--, en un vicio secreto y, por serlo así, de los más sabrosos. (p. 135)

A very similar passage occurs in Lo rojo y lo azul when Julio is in prison and embarks upon "la más peligrosa aventura: (el) conocimiento de sí mismo" (p. 64). The "deleite enfermizo" is narcissistic and can become obsessive. Jarnés considers that only the inhibited, neurotic person will spend much time indulging in this secret vice. For the "intimidad robusta" (Rojo, p. 65) introspection will soon give way to an outgoing movement and be translated into action. Julio's intimidad is not robust, but he aspires nevertheless to be a man of action. He fails at each attempt. As a revolutionary he can be only an agitator, defined by Jarnés as follows: "El hombre de agitación suele ser hombre deacción fracasado" (Fauna, p. 41). The hero, the true man of action, cannot usually be very introspective because he has to be competitive and able to commit himself. The introverted intellectual
is often inhibited from action by his awareness of complexity and corresponding reluctance to take sides. In the seminary Julio is already aware that he cannot be a real, live hero. The people who can are those with less imagination. Julio, however, has the advantage of being able to fulfil many heroic rôles in his fantasies.

Julio invents intellectual games for his private delectation. He provides film rôles for himself, embroiders Biblical stories, experiments with variations on Arturo's love story. . . but in addition to invention, he learns to derive pleasure from abstraction. From a photograph of two girls he eliminates all but the "zigzagueo luminoso" (p. 118) of Estrella's smile because in doing so he enjoys "más refinadas voluptuosidades" (p. 117). Jarnés uses the word alquimia to describe the process and points out that Julio concentrates his emotion, whereas Romantics like Arturo dilute theirs, dissolving it "en grandes ánforas" (p. 118) and sprinkling it lyrically over the world around them.

The older intellectual heroes also play games, both for pleasure and as an escape from painful thought or emotion. I have already mentioned the profesor's reversion to childhood after his separation from Ruth (above, p. 34). He is beaten at his own game by real children, but Herminia provides him with a better one: that of living in the "pluscuampresente" tense. The object of this game is to escape from "estos cadáveres de pensamientos, de
este campo estéril donde la razón... amenaza con sus últimas flechas" (Prof., p. 124).

The profesor makes another attempt to return to childhood after his disquieting experiences with Rebeca and Trótula. After watching children float -- and lose -- boats made of newspaper, he drops Rebeca’s photograph into the pond and feels great relief. But this time neither his intellect nor his game serves him, for he is dealing with irrational forces. The celebration of his freedom and rejuvenation is short-lived, for he receives news that Rebeca has drowned. Apparently the occult forces have triumphed and the profesor has unwittingly killed by black magic, confirming the indications of murder on his palm. The profesor -- a rationalist -- recoils from the idea that Trótula and her ilk may indeed have supernatural powers but, of course, the question of magic or coincidence can never be proved either way. The profesor’s accomplishments are useless again: he tried to wean Rebeca from her superstitious beliefs only to find himself implicated by two deaths and puzzled by phenomena which make a mockery of his arrogant rationalism. Perhaps his predicament is the result of an impertinent and insensitive invasion of female territory. In the "Dedicatoria" of "Trótula", Jarnés equates Lucifer with Viviana and the eternal female -- a desirable and enchanting incarnation of the devil, but one whom reason cannot touch because the devil lies and deceives...

Reason is a necessary implement and Jarnés’ intellectual heroes make good use of it, but it is only one of man’s attributes.
Its limitations are summarized in the following passage of Carl Jung which Jarnés quotes in the "Nota preliminar" to Teoría del Zumbel:

En todas partes se encuentra lo irracional, lo discordante con la razón. Y este elemento irracional es también una función psicológica; es precisamente lo inconsciente colectivo, mientras que la función de la conciencia consiste esencialmente en la razón. La conciencia ha de tener la razón para descubrir en el caos de los casos individuales desordenados del universo un orden, y también para crearlo, por lo menos en la esfera humana. (pp. 15-16).
FOOTNOTES

1 Paul Valéry, quoted in *Prof.*, p. 99.
2 Victor Brombert, *The Intellectual Hero*.
CHAPTER V: THE NOBODY

Each person is the centre of his world. He matters -- to himself -- as does nothing else. As the opositor remarks: "Qué puede importarnos--confesémonos todos--, qué puede importarnos la muerte de un hombre ante la muerte de un día, de uno de nuestros días?" (Escenas, p. 204). The opositor continues: "el tiempo somos nosotros mismos" which is a corollary of Ortega's "yo soy yo con mis circunstancias," for time is the one circumstance on which every existence depends. Less despotic than time are other circumstances which intimately affect the individual -- place, social and economic pressures, personal relationships. A person is incoceivable without his circumstances, and the circumstances are meaningless except when combined in the context of an individual's life. Jarnés expresses the theory in geometric terms: "Cada momento de nuestra vida es el vértice único de muchos ángulos que tienen un lado común: nuestro propio aliento. Los otros lados son ajenas incitaciones" (Rúbricas, p. 56).

Man's fundamental self-centredness is, however, only one side of a coin. The other side is his pathetic insignificance, the painful fact that every child has to learn: that his claim to the centre of the universe is in competition with everyone else's claim to the same privilege. Jarnés was the seventeenth child in his family, so he must have learnt this lesson very early; there is bitterness in Adolfo's evocation of his childhood; he too was a seventeenth child, and as all the brothers had names ending in -olfo,
-oldo, or -ardo, no one knew one from the other: "Los nombres eran otros tantos anzuelos que la especie tendría para procurarse un individuo más. Pero esta individualización apenas se lograba..." The harsh, dehumanizing terms which Adolfo uses to describe his own procreation -- "cierto gastado mecanismo echado a andar por la costumbre"; "dos sexos . . . instigados por cierto impulso cronométrico" (Convidado, p. 135)-- reveal a resentment against such senseless fertility which produces crowds rather than individuals. The dehumanizing effect of large numbers is exacerbated by poverty, which is "más temible por su promiscuidad que por el resto de sus calamidades" (Feria, p. 42). Expressed in another way, "No hay individuos en un viaje con billete de tercera; sólo hay series, expediciones, masas" (Rojo, p. 14).

The combination of poverty and teeming humanity can have various effects on a child. If he is sensitive he may withdraw into himself to find the privacy and attention which he lacks. If he is intelligent he may form the ambition of escaping at all costs from his unsatisfactory environment and is potentially a relentless social climber and money-maker. It is from a combination of sensitivity and intelligence that Jarnés' intellectual hero is formed. Stendhal's Julien Sorel, so much admired by Julio and by Jarnés himself, also combines these qualities, but in him intelligence pre dominates to the extent that he wages continuous war on his sensibilities and succeeds in overcoming them. Jarnés' characters lack such determination and their ambition never rises to challenging
their social superiors or competing with them on materialistic terms. Julio, in *Lo rojo y lo azul*, naturally comes closest to emulating Julien, but the gentle, timid, peace-loving side of his nature prevails over his ambition. When Julien shoots Mme. Rénal he is convinced he has killed her; when Julio is required to shoot his lieutenant he feels compassion—"una absurda compasión" (p. 221) -- and postpones the deed until overcome by sleep. Julien feels remorse for his action; Julio, for his failure to act. Julien goes to the gallows; Julio's guilt is not even suspected. He is a Julien Sorel *manqué*, and the ending of *Lo rojo y lo azul* suggests that he will go through life as an amiable nobody.

Julio is a nobody in the usual social sense of a person without money, connections, authority, or any special talent. In addition, though, he is placed in circumstances which further obscure what outward individuality he has. In the seminary he is just one of the community of black-clad adolescents:

Nos parecemos todos. Casi el mismo traje, el mismo andar... El Seminario lo uniforma todo. (Convidado, p. 40)

In the army too he wears uniform and behaves according to rules as arbitrarily fixed as those of chess. Julio is one of the pawns, the humblest and most numerous chessmen with the most restricted movements. The word *peón* -- with its double meaning of pawn and foot soldier -- occurs frequently in *Lo rojo y lo azul*. Julio, commenting sarcastically on Vigny's *Servitude et grandeur militaires*
... los soldados son peones de ajedrez, ... las unidades tácticas no se componen de hombres, sino de números, de brazos mecanizados. ..." (p. 155). Military honour, for the common soldier, lies in futile and degrading activities like sentry duty and menial tasks. Even at war the soldier cannot aspire to being anything but cannon-fodder.

The seminary and the army are obvious and extreme examples of institutions which reduce people to the status of statistics or puppets, but Jarnés shows that there are many other situations which present the same threat. Any institution, in fact, is by definition anathema to the individual because it depends on numbers of people acting in accordance with established routines. Bourgeois materialism offers enslavement as surely as does poverty; a Right-wing dictatorship, which manipulates the masses, is no better and no worse than Left-wing government by the masses; Saulo Bermúdez, sole heir to a fortune, is as hampered by his responsibilities and family traditions as Julio is by his lack of them. Spiritual freedom lies in staying aloof from all the conflicting forces which threaten to submerge the individual and deprive him of his spontaneity, but withdrawal into the intimidad is not a complete solution to the problem either. Self-knowledge is not the same thing as self-affirmation, though it may be a preparation for it. Narcissistic preoccupation with oneself is futile unless eventually it becomes productive. There has to be outward movement as well as inward; Jarnés makes this point in a quotation from Ortega on the meaning of the verb vivir:
... resulta que vivir es, a la vez, estar dentro de sí y salir fuera de sí; es precisamente un movimiento constante desde un dentro--la intimidad reclusa del organismo--hacia un fuera, el Mundo. ... Para que la vitalidad sea completa y sana es menester que ese movimiento se cumpla energicamente en su doble dirección. No sólo salir de sí a las cosas, sino traerse luego éstas, apoderarse de ellas, internarlas, entrañaselas. (Feria, pp. 102-103)

The problem of how not to be a nobody is very complex. Avoidance of the social institutions which would incur spiritual death is not sufficient. Various types of misanthropist and holgazán are dealt with severely in Fauna contemporánea, and Jarnés divides politically uncommitted people into neutrales and inmóviles. He sympathizes with the former because their integrity prevents them from choosing between unsatisfactory alternatives: they are in a genuine dilemma. But the inmóviles, the "neutrales indiferentes o escépticos" (p. 134), who like to call themselves free, are in fact merely inert: their "freedom" is "libertad para no avanzar" (p. 138).

The uncommitted person, in politics or any other issue, is a kind of nobody floating in limbo, without the reassurance which membership of one of the despised social institutions would give him. If his lack of commitment is not due to indifference or laziness but stems from an unfulfilled quest for something worthy of his dedication, such a person will suffer. His anguish will continue and even increase until he can apply his potential energy to a cause in which he believes. Jarnés' young heroes are at the
stage of freeing themselves from those elements in their background which they regard as chains, and of searching both inside and outside themselves for the path to fulfilment.

Jarnés sympathizes with his young characters, and yet his sympathy is not unmixed with impatience. This is shown most clearly in the long dialogue between Julio and Arturo in _Lo rojo y lo azul_. As already stated (above, p. 46), the author's sympathy diminishes after his young hero becomes involved with the Marxists, and he appears to argue against him in the person of Arturo. (The assumption is supported by the fact that some of Arturo's opinions occur almost verbatim in _Fauna contemporánea_.) Arturo makes fun of Julio and cuts him down to size, for he considers that his ideas are vain, excessively ambitious, and of no practical application. Julio is an intelligent young man who is letting himself be misled by slogans and propaganda. He needs instead to recognize and accept his limitations and then to work hard within them. When he asks plaintively: "¿No puedo hacer yo nada grande?"

Arturo replies: "Por lo pronto, aprende a hacer bien alguna cosa pequeña. Por ejemplo: zapatos, artículos de fondo, jaulas para grillos" (_Rojo_, p. 167). At the time these admonishments are totally unacceptable to Julio, and Arturo does in fact appear smug, narrow, and apathetic towards everything beyond his own comforts and his music. But it is true that Julio's aspirations have become exaggerated and abstract and that they need to be brought down to a practical and personal level.
Lo rojo y lo azul is Jarnés' most conventional novel in that it tells a story in straightforward narrative and dialogue, with little interruption by the author except to reveal the intimate workings of Julio's mind. In his other novels Jarnés experiments with different techniques and among these are various methods of limiting his heroes' possibilities of action, that is, of showing up their "nobody" facets. His heroes are predisposed to be nobodies because they are externally in no way exceptional: as raw material for a novel they look unpromising. Their actions within the novel are either few and unremarkable, or else they are interesting only in their function of revealing character. It would be contrary to Jarnés' idea of authenticity to create a picturesque man of action and plant him in a situation teeming with heroic possibilities. Genuine exceptional qualities are often more subtle than traditionally heroic ones; opportunities for heroism do occur, but not to order: a reluctant passer-by is as likely a candidate for such eventualities as the would-be adventurer; and finally, in the average slice of life the emotional temperature is normal, events take place haphazardly, and only very rarely are all the elements of high drama found in combination. If the novel is to be a mirror of reality, the number of undramatic situations it reflects will heavily outnumber the crises, and ordinary little people will similarly outnumber heroes.

One way of keeping the hero in a suitably humble position is to make him a comic figure. Some examples of this have already
been mentioned in the examination of Jarnés' lover (above, p. 39). The humour depends partly on the hero's realization of his own absurdity, and his actions are funny chiefly because of the discrepancy between them and their preceding or accompanying thought processes. Thus in Paula y Paulita the humour of Julio's invasion of Paula's hotel room is enriched by the fact that he has just used an elaborate arithmetical method of memorizing his own room number, instead of simply using his eyes. Furthermore, his ridiculous blunder nips in the bud his arrogant pretensions to solitude and obscurity: now he has become one of the spa's celebrities.

Sometimes Jarnés takes well known figures from literature or mythology and debunks their heroic attributes. In "Andrómeda" the revamped Perseus is a reluctant protagonist who distinguishes himself by his ineptitude. Ordered to close his eyes before the heroine's nudity, he is then unable to untie the knots which bind her to the tree. He puffs and pants ungallantly as he tries to carry her to the road. In the car, when he accidentally awakens her by caressing her wrist and breast, he is so embarrassed that his first words are a bulletin on the exact latitude and longitude of their location. As the adventure continues his heroism wears even thinner, overshadowed by his fatigue and pangs of hunger. . . In "Película", Romeo and Juliet suffer an even more drastic reduction of heroic stature and their story ends in a banal anti-climax instead of in tragedy. Romeo "ama, pero no sabe reptar;"²
as he tries to climb up to Juliet's balcony he gets blistered hands, makes a noise, breaks things, and at the second floor, "previo un ademán de trágico desaliento, se deja caer, vencido" (Salón, p. 123). Juliet, more acrobatic, climbs down, while Romeo looks up her skirt. The story ends with Romeo fleeing on a motor-cycle and Juliet jumping out of a window -- straight into the arms of a guardia civil! These stories demonstrate the difficulties of real-life drama, especially in a modern context. They also reveal the feet of clay which idols have; Jarnés has re-written these great love-stories with a child's perverse curiosity about the mundane details which are not normally disclosed.

There are echoes of Romeo and Juliet in Teoría del zumbel too, for Saulo and Blanca are ill-starred lovers whom society and chance contrive to separate. Saulo is not a comic character, but he is a nobody in the sense that he is a toy dependent on the whim of the various "children" who play with him or neglect him. This is in fact true of all the characters of the novel, for the theory of the title postulates a world peopled by spinning-tops which are whipped by God, the keeper of the zumbeles. If God's attitude to his creation is that of a child at play, the author, as a creator in miniature, must have a similar attitude to his fictitious world: "Having realized that he is playing the role of God, the artist must also admit that he often does not know what to create or what rules to follow." But when the top has been
whipped it has a certain momentum of its own and can spin for a while without any attention from the player, so that at times even the author, even God himself, are in the "nobody" position, for they are superfluous to the action. The author sets the novel in motion but at a given point he tells Blanca: "Fienso dejar sola a la acción. Ya no interrogo a nadie hasta el epílogo" (Teoría, p. 147). In the interval, anything may happen. As Paul Ilie says, when art becomes a game, "the only structural law is that of chance." The author can, for example, declare "a favorable destiny for his characters even while allowing them to pursue less appropriate alternatives."5

It is after the author's desertion that Saulo receives the telegram about his imminent bankruptcy which precipitates the events leading to his death. His story from this point is futile and illogical; and from the moment of his first car accident he ceases to exist except inside his own head, for as the momentum of the top decreases, he is left further and further behind the time governing the living. Saulo is now outside time, the one essential circumstance. The world goes on but in it he is nobody. The only people who recognize him -- his servant and his secretary -- take him for a ghost.

The characters in Teoría del zumbel have no real independence or power. Events are determined by objects. The author says to Blanca in the epilogue:

--Tú no eres un personaje. Ni Carrasco. Ni tu hermana. Ni siquiera Bermúdez. Mis personajes son un zumbel, un reloj, un telegrama... (p. 251)
Even divine power is limited. God is portrayed as "el viejo teósofo" who in his dotage has reverted to children's games. His power is now only theoretical, while functional power is in the hands of the devil, who runs an explosives factory opposite God's cabin.

I have left until last a discussion of *Locura de muerte de nadie*, Jarnés' most consummate treatment of the nobody. Juan Sánchez y Sánchez contends with a variety of forces, not least his own self-critical lucidity, which causes him to appear to others and even to himself as someone or other, "otro cualquiera" (p. 32), that is, no one in particular. He is obsessed by the desire to distinguish himself from the crowd, but even in his supreme moments (like his appearance in the newsreel film) he succeeds only in representing the crowd.

Juan Sánchez is in some respects a grotesquely comic figure, with his name tattooed across his chest and his nondescript face which reminds almost everyone of someone else. But Jarnés' treatment of him is much less humorous than ironic, and the irony becomes more cruel as Juan's madness develops and his self-assertive schemes become more preposterous. The brains behind the bank robbery, for example, are his, and he places all his hopes on becoming a renowned criminal (by this time fame and notoriety are indistinguishable to him). But the crime is attributed to Alfredo, who does indeed become something of a hero, and Juan's lamentations are interpreted as those of a particularly hard-hit investor:

---Quién es? ---pregunta un transeúnte.
---Nadie. Uno de los estafados. (p. 218)
His death too is a cruel stroke of irony. He has planned to commit suicide, been talked out of it by Arturo, and then, just when he is convinced that he can after all make a fresh start in life, he is run over by a truck, wiped out as by an eraser. And this ignoble death is not even unique within his family: his mother suffered an identical fate.

As Paul Ilie points out, Juan Sánchez's life in the novel is a series of post-climaxes, a situation which is necessary because, "... since he is a non-hero, were he to be observed in a climactic set of circumstances, he would not only become an individual self coping with his drama, but he would be heroic." Juan's story is, of course, as contrived as the events which occur in Teoría del zumbel during the author's supposed absence, but the avoidance of dramatic climaxes is defended by Jarnés as being a faithful reflection of real life, in which many potential crises never materialize because some element is missing at the crucial time:

*Sólo un falso novelador puede recortar de aquí y allí trozos singulares de vida y acoplarlos ... para hacerlos hervir ruidosamente, en un momento prefijado. En este breve relato, en este fragmento de la vida de Juan Sánchez, no se tuvo la fortuna de hallar a los personajes en su punto de más alta tensión. (Locura, p. 153)*

The general irony concerning Juan Sánchez, over and above his particular exploits, is that there is ample material for a unique and exciting biography, but at every point some circumstance or other is either missing or occurs at an inappropriate
time. Time itself serves Juan badly. He strongly suspects that his wife is deceiving him with Arturo and Alfredo, but erupts at the wrong time to prove it. Jarnés remarks: "Si Sánchez irrumpiese en un bosque salvaje, las fieras le verían llegar indiferentes, porque en aquel momento estarían en plena digestión de alguna caravana acabada de engullir" (p. 151).

On other occasions Juan's own lucidity is his enemy. He is too critical to be satisfied with facile solutions to the problem of proving himself. He attaches great hopes to the excursion to Monte Azul to investigate his ancestry, and in fact his origins are picturesque compared with the ones he thought he had (a family of shopkeepers). He was the product of a liaison between the late count and a singer, a history on which Arturo congratulates him: "Su pasado es magnifico. Es una admirable novela" (p. 130). But it is too late; the magic was dispelled as soon as Juan learned that his mother was no prima donna, but a mere chorus girl. From that moment he sees his aristocratic forebears for what they were, nobodies like his mother and himself, "... ridículos imitadores del artista, del político, del sabio" (p. 131). From them he inherits his face and his obscure, sterile existence.

Juan Sánchez is also a victim of introspection. For him, withdrawal into his intimidad has provided no "deleite personal" because every probe into his own mind has shown him, only attributes he shares with everyone else. "El siempre tropezó con esa red en la que todos los peces aprisionados son comunes a toda la Humanidad. Así comenzó su locura" (p. 108).
But Juan's madness is debatable; towards the end of the novel, when he has decided to commit suicide, his farewell speech to Arturo is calm and lucid and reveals that he understands precisely why Matilde has been unfaithful to him: "(Ella) busca a cierto hombre integral, que yo no pude llegar a ser... Matilde es resignada y comprende que poseer una síntesis humana es aspirar a demasiado" (p. 222-223). She therefore compounds her own, of several lovers. If Juan cannot be an "hombre integral", neither can Arturo, who has brains, nor Alfredo, who has brawn. The "hombre integral" is the sum total of attributes derived from a number of people, that is, from the crowd. Juan Sánchez cannot bear to be just one of the crowd -- a nobody -- though he is supremely good at it.

Juan's problem is everybody's problem, for everyone is at the same time an entity in his own right and a member of the crowd. Affirming the individual self against the force of numbers has become so difficult as to be almost impossible. Arturo pessimistically sees mankind in the last phase of its era of "tipos originales" (p. 166). He demolishes one by one the traditional ways of distinguishing oneself -- bravery, wealth, passion, crime and predicts an age of standardized masses. Juan Sánchez lives at an unpropitious time for transcending his insignificance, but Arturo holds out this one crumb of hope for him:

Busque, Juan Sánchez, una anécdota cualquiera de usted; haga que la cante un poeta y ambos pasarán a la posteridad. Aún queda un margen para el individuo... Pero no se atrasse mucho." (p. 170)
Art can still vindicate the individual when all else fails; Jarnés shows that in a novel, even a nobody can be a hero.
FOOTNOTES

1 Convidado, nueva edición (Madrid, 1935), p. 157. This passage is not found in 1st ed. All subsequent quotations from 1st ed.


3 Ilie, Surrealist Mode in Sp. Lit., p. 158.

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid., p. 159.

CHAPTER VI: THE HERO

JARNÉS' hero has been examined as a lover, an intellectual, and a nobody. It remains to attempt a synthesis of his characteristics and to determine to what extent he is heroic.

In his capacities as lover, intellectual, and nobody he strives for individuality and freedom, for mobility, an intense life, and a kind of happiness which he claims not as an automatic right but as the result of a continuous struggle. The effort and its reward are described as follows by Víctor Fuentes:

La alegría y la felicidad se ofrecen . . . sólo a los seres que, por encima de todos los contratiempos y sufrimientos, afirman su vida, se sienten dueños de sí. Son un estado—estado de gracia—al que se llega después de un arduo camino de perfección, de un ejercicio ascético de superación.¹

Life is regarded as a series of journeys, not in the Christian sense of travelling the strait and narrow way towards death and immortality, nor in the sense of superficial tourism, but rather as exploratory wanderings with plenty of time to examine the flora and fauna beside the road. The traveller must be perpetually curious; citing Ortega, Jarnés defines true curiosity as being the awareness of problems, and anything new and strange presents the observer with a problem. In order to be fully alert and capable of maximum response to new phenomena, the observer needs an agile, uncluttered mind; he needs to travel light. All Jarnés' heroes demonstrate the desire to choose their own itinerary and their own luggage. This is symbolically represented in Lo rojo y lo azul by Julio's lack
of possessions. When he leaves Augusta he has as luggage only a provincial newspaper, which he throws away. Later, in the prison cell, his intimidad is represented by the few objects he carries in his pockets, and even these are dispensable: all one really needs is oneself, in good working order. Luggage, both material and mental is often mere weight which impedes the traveller. The personality is held back by preconceptions, memories, and other people's opinions. The point is not to store ideas but to transform them into vital energy. To return to the concept of the línea interior, (see above p. 47) it is useless to overfeed and to accumulate layers of fat.

Jarnés hero is independent and restless. He is opposed to pedantry, dogmatism, and complacency, and is quick to notice them even in himself. He wants to be confronted by new ideas, emotions, and sensations, and never to have his curiosity blunted by familiarity and routine. He is therefore on his guard against any situation which threatens his freedom and which would lead eventually to boredom and spiritual death.

The ponderous legacy of the past is a particular threat to the young man who wants a free and unburdened start to life. At every step he meets opposition from a society which owes too much to traditional and outdated attitudes. In particular the nineteenth century haunts many aspects of life in the twentieth, affecting not only social institutions but also personal attitudes and even emotions. Sentimental and idealized concepts of love are regarded by Julio in El convidado de papel as an old-fashioned fever which
should have been banished, but its germs still thrive where twentieth
century light and air have not penetrated. Saulo (Teorfa) is
particularly weighed down by the past, as his drunken fantasies about
his grandfather's watch show. The watch represents the regulated
bourgeois life which Saulo is about to begin, but it comes to
symbolize Saulo's life itself which effectively ends when the watch
is broken.

The past represents one inert force. Another is constituted
by aspects of contemporary life -- monolithic groups of people, rapid
communications, mass media, world wars, collectivism, automation,
and mass-production. The individual is ever more puny when measured
against his environment. This is shown chiefly in Locura y muerte de
nadie, in which Juan Sánchez struggles vainly and frantically to
assert his individuality; but the danger inherent in large-scale
organization is revealed also in Lo rojo y lo azul. Julio reacts
against the social hierarchy, which would either keep him poor or
sell him into bourgeois bondage; he has escaped from the oppressive
monastic life; and he is equally disillusioned with the dehumanizing
discipline of the army. But instead of resisting the collective
threat when it presents itself under the Marxist flag, he joins the
movement, and learns the hard way that this offers no solution either.
The revolution feeds on petty discontent but it has no place for
personal scruples and sensibilities which inhibit action. Ultimately
Julio is thrown back on his own resources, which consist of the
positive qualities in his own nature.

The refusal of Jarnés' hero to commit himself to institutions and his inability to accept readymade solutions to questions which he feels he must answer himself mean that he is often in the position of spectator rather than that of active participant. The action in most of these novels could be stated in a few words. The hero has, however, a rich and energetic inner life. His external circumstances foster introspection but he also cultivates it deliberately. He finds pleasure as well as pain in knowing himself thoroughly, and when he feels at one with himself he is in a position to see beauty and harmony in the external world. The detached aesthetic experience is a way of dealing with ugly facts which would otherwise be intolerably depressing.

The passive rôles of spectator and introvert can, however, be carried to excess, to the extent where a person retreats behind a barrier and is no longer capable of normal emotional responses. In the prelude to Escenas junto a la muerte the suicidal opositor describes how the alegría he cultivated as a kind of protective game became a hermetic seal inside which his indifference gradually hardened. He reached the point where he could feel no sympathy for another's suffering. He had only two emotions left: the aesthetic one, and revulsion at his own coldness.

Reason can similarly become negative and devitalizing if cultivated in isolation or to excess. The summit of Merlin's achievement, before he yields to Viviana, is the spell which turns
people to stone. This is a figurative description of what happens when the life goes out of study and human problems become generalized and abstract. Jarnés' hero is not allowed to become all mind and brain or to confine himself to an ivory tower. When he places too much emphasis on intellectual activities he is dislodged from his comfortable but one-sided existence as some manifestation of Viviana's power begins to function in order to correct the balance.

Jarnés' hero is not a recluse or a misanthropist; he is unsociable only in the sense that he prefers to avoid dealings with crowds and to enter close relationships with individuals. The most important relationship is that between the hero and a woman, or a succession of women, because the man cannot find fulfilment without the qualities he regards as feminine. A successful relationship is based on the harmonious interaction of the mind with the senses, instincts, and intuitions, to the benefit of both partners. The delicate balance is liable to be destroyed by elements extraneous to love but often associated with it, such as possessiveness or the ulterior motive of moral reform or social advancement. Love should be generous and undemanding. It should also be spontaneous and uninhibited; if Jarnés avoids lyrical sentimentality it is above all because it is often a hackneyed and hypocritical disguise for the febrile state which results from frustrated sexual desire. It is therefore a false emotion fostered especially by nineteenth century puritanism.

Sabidurfa and gracia, and the love which springs from their
harmonious combination, are spiritual values, but Jarnés' heroes move in a materialistic, tradition-ridden society, of which they are members whether they like it or not. They are not, after all, legendary characters with magical powers, like Merlín, but ordinary human beings, and Jarnés will not allow them to be more. Various techniques which keep the hero in his place have been described in Chapter V, but one needs further discussion here: in several novels the main character's position as hero is challenged by another character. He is usually a more active, pragmatic, or successful character than the hero, whose rôle in relation to him tends to be that of the spectator or commentator.

In El convidado de papel, Adolfo is the hero of what story there is. Julio's rôle is almost entirely inactive: his adventures take place in his imagination. Adolfo has had the experience of a real love affair which, instead of being cut short by the end of the summer holiday, follows him back to the seminary. Eulalia's visits are fraught with danger to Adolfo and her amorous attentions become a torment, arousing a mixture of desire and guilt. Adolfo grows pale and lovesick and eventually breaks out of the seminary. This story and Adolfo himself are presented through the eyes of Julio, who, though somewhat envious of his friend, is well aware that he is conventional and his story trite. Nevertheless, the story has potential as the theme of a novel which Julio would like to write. He would give it a dramatic ending, such as suicide or execution, but a realistic assessment of Adolfo tells him that a
much more probable dénouement would be an exemplary bourgeois life. Adolfo is the sort of hero who would have to be rapidly disposed of once his adventure were over, because in the context of everyday life he would not have enough originality to be interesting. Julio comes up against the problem faced by Jarnés himself, of how to write an authentic novel which would maintain interest without relying on tension: "Estorba mucho al cronista de aventuras la presencia tenaz de los aventureros, tan inferiores luego a su misma aventura—porque la aventura es un trozo de vida en tensión, mientras la vida normal acaba por relajar todas las cuerdas" (Convidado, p. 220). Jarnés solves the problem by presenting his hero in circumstances not dependent on adventure and tension; so that although potentially Adolfo is more interesting than Julio he has much less chance of surviving and transcending his own adventure. This novel is a good example of the novel postulated by Ortega (Ideas sobre la novela). The plot is minimal but character and environment (the "vida provinciana") are revealed in a detailed, leisurely fashion.

In Paula y Paulita the hero's rôle is shared by two characters and the challenger succeeds in usurping the hero's position for a while. In the first part of the novel the hero is also the narrator. He is a dreamy, rather ineffectual character, socially inept and inclined towards solitude. In spite of himself he becomes involved with Paula and Paulita. He falls in love with the daughter but attracts only her mother, to whom he eventually makes love when
her face and identity are obscured by darkness and his abstracted mood. The second part of the novel, "Petronio", is related in the third person. The narrator has become Julio, a character subordinate to Mr. Brook, Paula's former lover and Paulita's father. Brook has been an active man in the past, but with advancing years his mind has outstripped his physical capacities, and he cannot bear to witness the onset of his own senility. He recalls having encountered his father, aged sixty, making merry in a night club, and is determined never to become such a travesty of his younger self. If he cannot participate in life with all his faculties, he would rather be dead: "Como yo no puedo ser héroe, tampoco quiero ser espectador y cronista" (p. 179). The only heroism still possible for him is a spectacular suicide which forestalls the annihilating onslaught of time. His death is therefore a positive gesture, but even more positive is his generosity in passing on to Julio all that was best in himself, his spiritual values and vitality. In the "Nota final" Julio is again the narrator -- and the hero. The two men have in fact become one: Julio has assimilated the spiritual qualities of Brook, who thus ensures for himself the most worthwhile kind of immortality.

Locura y muerte de nadie also has two heroes, and of the two Arturo is much stronger and a much more successful person. The presence of the two antithetical heroes is necessary because of the conception of the novel as a portrayal of no one in particular. Juan Sánchez needs Arturo as a foil because a less different personality
would be indistinguishable from his own. Juan is just one of the crowd, so that he cannot be allowed a definite personality, such as would emerge if his intimidad were revealed in depth. But he is not the same thing as the crowd, which has a composite personality of its own, and therefore a certain individuality must somehow be conveyed to the reader. Arturo provides a solution to this technical problem. He is an intellectual character who takes pleasure in exploring beneath Juan's nondescript surface, which no one else would bother to do, and who at the same time can record how Juan's exterior appears to the world.

Arturo succeeds where Juan fails, and yet he is at times envious of Juan because he too has to contend with the problems of individualism versus group-membership, but it affects him in the opposite way. He has too much personality; it isolates him from the crowd and he is often lonely and bored. He has to cultivate ways of suppressing his ego, which is a handicap, for example, in his work: he cannot write a report for an insurance company without its resembling personal memoirs. At the same time he is aware that much of the burden of self can never be known or shared by anyone else. Personality is a social phenomenon: "Sólo nos conocerán (los demás) cuando una arista de nuestro ser roce el suyo, les hiera, les haga volver los ojos" (p. 91). One reason for Juan's being such a failure is that he cannot believe in his intimate self -- unknowable to others -- unless it is recognized socially. As Jarnés says in the prologue to this novel, "no se aparta de la barandilla" (p. 12). But if Juan fails to be **someone**, he succeeds to his death in being
no one, and so as the hero of this unusual novel he prevails over Arturo.

Paul Ilie makes this comment on Juan: "... if Juan Sánchez fails to acquire a unique set of character traits, at least he ceases to be indefinable within the collectivity by virtue of his very consciousness of the problem."² Juan has everything against him but he does put up an unceasing and courageous fight. His struggle against overwhelming odds both inside and outside himself gives him, after all, a kind of heroic stature. The same might be said of other apparently unheroic characters in Jarnés' novels.

Saulo has the scales heavily weighted against him: Valdivia's committee threatens his hedonistic enjoyment of life; Carrasco, the wet blanket, attempts to separate him from Blanca; his forebears reproach him in his conscience, the author abandons him. . . but when Saulo dies it is in a last despairing attempt, in defiance of all opposition and obstacles -- even God's -- to get back to Blanca, the woman who has given him the unique authentic experience of his life. The playwright in Tántalo, forbidden on falsified medical grounds to have his plays performed, has continued through the years to write, sublimating in his works the frustrations of his life. Finally he attains success and recognition, but like the hero of his own play, "Vidas paralelas", he drops dead amid the applause.

Even in these novels, where the main character dies, the final note is one of optimism, of affirmation of the life that goes
on. Juan Sánchez is reincarnated in the epilogue of *Locura y muerte de nadie*, as the novel returns to its beginning, when Arturo notices a man having trouble identifying himself in the bank. This ending is highly appropriate, if not the one that Juan Sánchez would have chosen for his story. *Teoría del zumbel* ends with a repetition of the description of a child playing with a top. But the child has a life of his own, he transcends Saulo, his father, and is out of reach even of the author. In *Tántalo*, Julio and Arturo observe a minute's silence in honour of their dead protégé and then return home: "alegremente".  

The heroes who survive to the end of their novel take their leave at a hopeful point in their lives. They turn their backs on the past and appear to be in a strong position to face the future. The reader is left with the conviction that these are people whose lives will continue; they transcend the part of their biography which Jarnés has happened to write. They have been deeply involved in their experiences, however transitory, in the novel, but have retained or recovered the fundamental freedom which will enable them to continue on their restless, exploratory way.

Julio, in *Lo rojo y lo azul*, has had particularly painful experiences. He is utterly disillusioned with himself and can envisage only a colourless future as a neurotic nobody:

> Por primera vez se dio allí cuenta de que el neurótico es poco menos que un ente despreciable, sin cotización ninguna entre las hembras, con escasa valoración entre los hombres. El neurótico podrá ser un héroe momentáneo, en esos trances en que el suicidio se ofrece como un placer, pero es incapaz de heroísmos perdurables, de persistencias útiles. (p. 234)
But among the wreckage of Julio's ambitions appears the lieutenant whom Julio was supposed to kill and who could have retaliated by having him executed for mutiny. The message which the lieutenant delivers -- that the inability to kill is not cowardice but generosity; that generosity is the supreme spiritual value, "la única religión fecunda" (p. 236); that the regeneration of society can be accomplished only by the affirmation of positive personal values, not by mass hatred and conflict -- could be Jarnés' own exhortation to all Spaniards. Provided Julio heeds the lieutenant's words, leaves behind him his errors and guilt, and remains faithful in future to the generous, loving, and individualistic side of his nature, he will emerge after all as a hero, at least in his creator's eyes.

Two final quotations describe some of the human qualities which Jarnés most admired and which, in their various ways and within their limitations, his heroes embody:

El verdadero espíritu no piensa en almacenar, sino en transformar. En ir y venir, como la abeja. Es la inquietud, es el movimiento quien produce los espíritus. Nunca el reposo. Y toda intimidad está elaborada de inquietudes.

De ahí la fertilidad de estos hombres que no encuentran reposo en el amor, en el arte, en la fe. Hombres que de continuo se imponen una áspera tarea, la duda... Hombres cuya vida es una delgada pasarela sin fin, sobre el abismo. Temerosos de la felicidad--la eluden como a su peor enemigo--. Espíritus hirsutos, siempre en pie de guerra ante el resto del orbe. (Cartas, pp. 136-137)
Sólo podrá verdaderamente llamarse hombre libre el hombre capaz de encadenarse de todo -- como el ilusionista de feria -- para mejor, y auténticamente, desembarazarse de todo. . . . Sólo podrá llamarse auténtico hombre libre quien se deje arrastrar por todo y -- como el buen torero -- sepa escamotear a tiempo su propia individualidad. (Fauna, p. 142)


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