

THE GENTE BAJA IN THE SPANISH
ROMANTIC THEATER

A THESIS

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

One of the outstanding traits of Spanish literature is the presence of characters from the lower classes to aid in the general development of the plot and to contrast with the heroic characters. The nobility exemplify the idealistic and the common folk the practical side of life. One of the early types of the gente baja¹ characters appearing in Spanish drama was that of the gracioso and graciosa introduced as early as the time of Torres Naharro (d. 1531?)² and further developed by Lope de Vega. Later Cervantes, in Don Quijote, created Sancho Panza, the crude but practical squire, who is still a vivid literary figure.

Among the critical studies of lowly characters is the one on the gracioso by José F. Montesinos³ and the one on Sancho Panza by Professor Hendrix.⁴ There has been, however, little written concerning the gente baja characters in the romantic drama.

This study will consider the group of characters known as the gente baja, in order to show that these people were consciously included in the romantic drama to add practical and

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1. The term gente baja refers to people of the lower classes.
 2. Romera-Navarro, Historia de la literatura española, p. 118.
 3. See Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal, Vol. I, pp. 409 ff.
 4. Hendrix, "Sancho Panza and the Comic Types of the Sixteenth Century", Homenaje a Menéndez Pidal, Vol. 2, pp. 485-94.

picturesque elements to an otherwise emotional intrigue full of improbabilities.

By the gente baja is meant the class of people who would under no circumstances be considered in any but an inferior relationship to the nobility and the upper middle class. This group includes people of a wide variety of personalities and occupations. The gente baja serve as pages to the lords and ladies, as shepherds, soldiers, slaves, household servants, tavern proprietors, guards, ushers, fortune tellers, students, villagers, sailors, muleteers, water-carriers, and the lesser members of the clerical orders. This classification includes those types of people who have few scruples concerning points of honor, those who perform the demeaning tasks of their superiors with little thought of fame or fortune, those who are easily bribed with the promise of a few pieces of gold, and those who are forever trustworthy and faithful no matter how difficult their task may be.

The gente baja in earlier Spanish literature had been employed as aids to the general technical composition such as plot construction, the balancing of characters, and comic relief. Their role during the romantic period, however, became amplified for here, in addition, they furthered the portrayal of atmosphere and local color and were used to exemplify the romantic principle of antithesis.

The gente baja in this study will be considered from two standpoints: (1) as an aid to dramatic technique, and (2) as an important factor in the portrayal of customs and manners. Such phases as factors in plot construction, the use of the crowd as

a stage device, the gente baja as an aid to comic relief and in the foretelling of future events, and the linguistic peculiarities of the common people will be discussed under the general division of mechanics of the drama. The discussion of customs and manners will include such facts as religious and holiday life, carnivals and pastimes, and the significance of the village inn and the public square as a natural background for a realistic scene.

Sixteen plays which may be considered romantic have been read and from each of these the most significant contributions of the gente baja selected. Not all of the dramas are entirely romantic, but all at least have certain passages which identify them as such. A list of authors and works read follows:⁵

Francisco Martínez de la Rosa, Aben Humeya and La conjuración de Venecia; Mariano José de Larra, Macías; the Duque de Rivas, Don Álvaro; Antonio García Gutiérrez, El trovador; Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch, Los amantes de Teruel; Antonio Gil y Zárate, Carlos II el hechizado; Antonio García Gutiérrez, El rey monje and Simón Bocanegra; Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, Alfonso Muñoz; José Zorrilla, Don Juan Tenorio; Antonio Gil y Zárate, Guzmán el bueno; José Zorrilla, Traidor, inconfeso y mártir; Antonio García Gutiérrez, Venganza catalana and Juan Lorenzo; José de Espronceda, Blanca de Borbón.

A comprehensive survey of the Spanish romantic movement does not exist, and few critical works concerning this subject

5. The plays are listed in chronological order.

are available. The books and authors which have proved especially helpful for this study are Enrique Piñeyro, El romanticismo en España; Hurtado y Palencia, Historia de la literatura española; Blanco García, La literatura española en el siglo XIX; and Mérimée and Morley, History of Spanish Literature.

The general method of procedure has been the survey. Each play was carefully read, its various features concerning the gente baja noted, and the outstanding and most frequently occurring techniques and characteristics selected for discussion.

CHAPTER II

THE ROMANTIC DRAMA

Romanticism as a definite literary movement began to assume concrete proportions in the early part of the nineteenth century, and like most literary movements was international in its scope. Its outstanding characteristic was an increased freedom in literary standards and subject matter.

The preceding classical period, as a general literary movement, had stressed the general and common characteristics of man and had made reason one of its leading principles. Rigid adherence to literary rules and models was demanded. Romanticism, on the other hand, broke down the restraints of reason and stressed the subjective and emotional qualities of the individual. During this period man's inner self became the guiding factor. Also, horizons were widened, and the nations began to take a literary interest in their national pasts. Historical themes became the fashion. There was a conscious turning away from the classic period of Greece and Rome to the colorful days of chivalry and adventure. Great interest was also manifested in the fantastic, in witchcraft, and in magic.

In the drama Christian allusions frequently replaced those of mythology, and the unity of interest succeeded the classical unities of time, place, and action. There was a conscious mingling of the tragic and the comic, the repulsive and the beautiful, the fantastic and the materialistic; for the romanticist gained one of his greatest effects through antithesis. He made continual use of lyric passages for the portrayal of the emotions,

and the general tone of his work was declamatory.

The Spanish romantic movement was somewhat later in its development than was that of other countries despite the fact that it was to Spanish literature of the earlier periods that many of the precursors of romanticism directed their search for inspiration.

Foreign interest was manifested in Spain during the romantic period for Spanish literature, never having rigidly conformed to the ideals of classicism, retained many of the qualities for which the romanticists were searching. The French style, as imitated in Spain, was largely artificial and adhered strictly to rule and was in no way related to the new literary ideals of freedom and naturalness of expression. On the other hand, the authors of the siglo de oro, with their masterpieces of beautiful lyric qualities were in great favor with the foreign writers during the early period of this new literary genre. Thus Spain, with her literary perspective turned towards the colorful past, possessed a potential foundation for the romantic movement. However, when romanticism, as a well defined movement, did reach Spain it came by way of foreign sources, especially from Germany, France, and England.

Early in the nineteenth century the theater of Calderón de la Barca began to attract the attention of foreign scholars. Two brothers, August William and Frederick Schlegel, began to examine Spanish literature in the light of the new romantic ideals.¹

1. August William Schlegel, Spanisches Theater (1808) and Frederick Schlegel, Geschichte der altern und neueren Literatur (1815).

They exalted manifestations of the national tradition and of the chivalrous and adventurous spirit of the Middle Ages, hence it was the poetic and rational drama of Calderón that was offered as a model of romantic art. Another German scholar who made investigations in a similar field was Jacob Grimm. Grimm studied the old Spanish romances and made many of them popular in his Silva de romances viejos españoles (1815). Juan Nicolás Böhl de Faber with his Crónica científica y literaria (1814-19) helped develop the Spanish interest in foreign romanticists and served as the chief connecting link between German and Spanish romanticism.²

From France the foreign influence was also great. The exotic works of Chateaubriand were translated into Spanish, beginning with the year 1801. After the favorable reception of Chateaubriand, other French authors gained ready acceptance. Such writers as Mme de Staël, Benjamin Constant, and Sainte-Beuve were received with enthusiasm. An outstanding French contribution in the field of the drama was Victor Hugo's Hernani (1830), which served as the dramatic model par excellence. Through its influence the romantic drama gained in scope. Simple scenes with few characters were replaced by complex ones with many characters. The stage presented a panoramic view of life. Much attention was given to local color and to historical details. Scenes from medieval life gained great favor because of their picturesque character.

From England such authors as Scott, Byron, Shelley, Keats,

2. Northup, An Introduction to Spanish Literature, p. 343.

and Wordsworth were quickly translated. Scott had particular influence on Larra and the development of the historical novel, while Byron's influence was felt by Espronceda and many others.

With the return of the emigrados³ from England and France in 1833, the triumph of the new doctrines was certain; for it was among this group of exiles that Spain counted her most ardent romanticists: Martínez de la Rosa, Alcalá Galiano, the Duque de Rivas and José de Espronceda. While the Spanish romantic drama embraced practically all the principles of the international movement, it also had some features peculiar to the personality and temperament of the Spanish people. It was not necessary to turn from classical allusions to those of Christianity, for the strong Catholic influence in Spain had maintained this Christian atmosphere side by side with references to classical mythology. A land of colorful and picturesque legends and traditions like Spain had a wealth of material upon which to construct her romantic theater. This drama adhered closely to the principle of antithesis advocated by Victor Hugo. Also the numerous metrical forms employed by the Spanish dramatists allowed for the expression of varied emotions. Although the romanticist could portray almost every human emotion in his work, the chief motivating power was a pursuing and hostile fate which usually caused the tragic end of the main characters.

The play which is regarded by critics to have marked a literary epoch in Spain and to be most representative of the Romantic

3. Liberalists exiled by the reactionary administration of Ferdinand VII (1814-33).

drama is Don Alvaro written by the Duque de Rivas in 1830 and presented in 1835. It is the most typical of all Spanish romantic plays with its variety of rhymes and metric lengths, its mixture of prose and poetry, its mingling of the comic with the tragic and the common place with the sublime, its intense sensationalism, and its disregard for the classical unities. Reason has given place to sensation and the display of emotion. Most of the characteristics of Don Alvaro were afterwards found in one or more plays of the romantic theater.

Since Don Alvaro is the typical romantic play it may serve to illustrate the characteristics of the romantic drama. The gente baja have an important part in this play. The Duque de Rivas has presented them in various situations and thereby adds much color and realism to his drama. He has delighted in portraying the realistic scenes of the aguaducho (a booth for selling water), the posada (inn), and the portería de convento (porter's lodge at the convent) with their crowds and groups of merry-makers, gossipers and begging friars. Such scenes are presented at the beginning of each act. By these pictures of the villagers in their holiday dress engaging in their favorite pastimes, and speaking a brusque language peculiar to themselves, much picturesque color is added to the drama. Their humorous and naïve conversations lend comic relief to an otherwise tragic intrigue. Of these scenes Blanco García writes:⁴

4. Blanco García, La literatura española en el siglo XIX, Vol. 1, p. 148-49.

¡Qué cuadros tan sanamente realistas, dignos de Goya y Theniers, de Quevedo y D. Ramón de la Cruz! ¡Qué costumbres tan españolas, qué posadas y qué estudiantes! Pocos artistas han sabido pintar así de rosa y de azul el horizonte que de subito han de ennegrecer las nubes y rasgar los estampidos de la tempestad.

Thus the Duque de Rivas is able to achieve an outstanding picture of the everyday life of the Spanish people by his portrayal of the gente baja engaging in their customary activities.

The purpose of this chapter has been to present a condensed survey of the romantic movement with particular reference to Spanish romanticism and the Spanish romantic drama. Don Alvaro is the typical romantic play with its observance of the principles of antithesis, with its large number of characters, its colorful scenery, its power of fate, as well as its use of the gente baja.

CHAPTER III

THE USE OF THE GENTE BAJA
IN THE MECHANICS OF THE DRAMA

A. Plot Construction

The gente baja shall first be considered in their relation to the general plot construction. Here their role is fourfold: (1) they introduce the leading characters and present the basic facts of the intrigue, (2) they describe the outstanding characteristics of the dramatis personae, (3) they act as balancing agents to the leading characters, and (4) they serve as an integral part of the plot.

The introduction of the main characters by the gente baja is a common device. This explanation is usually briefly and simply stated and ordinarily concerns the number of characters, their names and their rank.

Thus in the opening scenes of El trovador (I, 1,3-8)¹ two servants of the Count of Luna show by their conversation that there are three important characters: the Count of Luna, a proud nobleman; Leonor de Sesé, the queen's most beautiful lady-in-waiting; and a trovador. The servants tell of the disappearance of the count's younger brother, and of the burning of a gypsy suspected of the kidnapping. They also acquaint the audience with the fact that the Count of Luna is in love with

1. Act I, scene 1, pp. 3-8. Similar notations will be used for succeeding references except where lines are cited, then the following notations are used: act, scene, page and lines.

Leonor but that she, in turn, loves the mysterious troubadour. By this natural scene of two gossiping servants, the various threads of the plot are presented.

In Simón Bocanegra, another play by this same author, a similar plan is followed. However, here the writer has made use of a prologue wherein the gente baja are among the principal characters who introduce the protagonists of the play proper and have some contact with them. Paolo Albiani, a goldsmith, and Pietro, a sailor, in the opening scenes,² are discussing the candidates aspiring for the position of dux in the coming election at Genoa. Their conversation on politics is natural and is not unlike the political discourses heard in the present century. By means of this conversation three of the leading characters are introduced, two of whom are candidates for the position of dux: Lorenzino Buchetto, the choice of the nobles, and Simón Bocanegra, pirate and buccaneer, the choice of the people. Towards the end of the prologue Pietro announces the results of the election to Paolo:³

¡Ya lo visteís! casi todos.
Por Lorenzino Buchetto
Apenas habrá cien votos.

With this announcement of Bocanegra's victory the audience has a slight indication of what the forthcoming plot may be, for the two men who have been rival candidates for a high position, will probably become rivals in the main plot.

2. Prologue, scene 1, pp. 192-93.
3. Prologue, scene 12, p. 203.

Besides serving as agents of introduction, the gente baja are often utilized as a device to explain the personality of a character, his occupation, past history, and other general facts about him. This is important as oftentimes the leading characters engage in activities seemingly paradoxical to their temperament, and the audience could easily be misled as to their true role, were it not for this explanation. Thus in Don Álvaro (I, 3, 14) when the hero first appears it is at nightfall. His rich clothing is hidden by a large cape and hat which he wears, and as he walks he peers cautiously from side to side as if searching for someone. His actions bespeak evil deeds, and it is only by means of the explanation of his character, preceding his actual appearance, that the audience knows Don Álvaro to be an honorable and valiant man saddened by a mysterious past.

The explanation of character is sometimes effected by a monologue but more often by means of a conversation usually at the beginning of each act. The following examples and quotations illustrate the fact that the gente baja aid in a general placing of the characters.

In Don Álvaro (I, 2, 8) the villagers at the water booth describe the hero as being a gallant young man much troubled about his love for Leonor. Later (I, 2, 9) they describe him as generous, gentlemanly, valiant and victorious in combats. They further describe the hero as being extremely rich and supposedly of Inca origin. All this explanation takes place in a single scene (I, 2, 8-22).

In the opening scenes of Don Juan Tenorio the innkeeper and

Don Juan's servant Ciutti reveal that the latter's master is rich, generous, noble and brave:⁴

Innkeeper---	Rico ¿eh?	
Ciutti---		Varea la plata
Innkeeper---	¿Franco?	
Ciutti---		Como un estudiante
Innkeeper---	¿noble?	
Ciutti---		Como un infante
Innkeeper---	y ¿bravo?	
Ciutti---		Como un pirata.

This explanation is as concise as possible, no words are wasted, yet the character of Don Juan is adequately revealed.

Throughout this play, as in many others, the servants disclose the personality and life of the leading characters. The character of Doña Inés is portrayed by the speech of her maid Brígida to Don Juan.⁵ This characterization prepares the audience for the raptures of Doña Inés when she receives her first love letter. Her maid describes her as knowing nothing of the world, for she has spent most of her seventeen years within the convent.

In the play Guzmán el bueno the faithful servant Nuño introduces the villain Don Juan and describes him thus:

turbulento y sin valor,
 que ya mil veces traidor;
 quien hizo un cesto hará ciento.
 Siempre pérfido y villano,
 no hay maldad que no le cuadre:
 primero vendió su padre,
 y vendió luego al hermano (I, 2, p. 11, lines 186-92).

This characterization of an habitual and unscrupulous traitor, appearing at the beginning of the play, prepares for his actual

4. Part I, act I, scene 1, pp. 4-5, lines 24-28.

5. Part I, act II, scene 9, p. 50.

entrance and gives the audience an idea of his role.

In Los amantes de Teruel, Teresa, the old family servant, reveals the character and life of the heroine's mother, Margarita. Teresa states that the latter has a charitable spirit, that she is in the habit of caring for the sick, and that she fasts on bread and water to do penance for her sins (II, I, p. 22, lines 35-42).

In Macías the hero's page and his steward, Rui Pero, review the outstanding traits of their master (II, 6-7, 40):

SCENE 6

Rui Pero---Vive Dios que es hombre franco!
Page---Y armado de punta en blanco,
que parece un matasiete.

SCENE 7

Page---¡Buen talle y bella apostura!
Rui Pero---¡Cierto es gallarda figura!

Thus Macías is shown to be a man of honor, noble, and comely in stature.

Examples of the introduction and exposition of characters by the gente baja are numerous. The preceding citations serve to illustrate the types that are generally found.

The gente baja act also as balancing agents for the protagonists. Since they belong to a class which must work to earn a living, they are always interested in the materialistic and practical side of life, whereas the romantic hero and heroine, having no thought of labor, have more opportunity to engage in romance and adventure. Thus the latter type is often offset by

the common people who because of their practicability offer a sharp contrast to the romantic characters.

In Don Juan Tenorio an excellent example of this contrast is in a scene between Doña Inés and her maid. The former has just received a love letter from Don Juan which awakens dormant passions within her. Brígida, the maid, is anxious to hear at once the contents of the entire letter, but Doña Inés must stop at intervals for an emotional monologue. This scene follows in part:⁶

Doña Inés---Brígida, no sé qué siento.
Brígida---Seguid, seguid la lectura.

Doña Inés---Yo desfallezco.
Brígida--- Adelante.

Doña Inés---¿qué es lo que me pasa, ¡cielos!
que me estoy viendo morir?
Brígida---Vamos, que está al concluir.

Doña Inés--- ¡Virgen María!
Brígida---Pero acabad, Doña Inés.

The contrast of mistress and maid is striking, with the heroine experiencing deeper emotions at every turn, and with Brígida, seemingly immune to her passion, continually urging her to conclude the letter.

In El rey monje the same balance is effected between the male and female characters and their servants. Thus Don Ramiro

6. Part 1, act IV, scene 3, pp. 64-68, lines 1657-58; 1689; 1707-10; 1721-22.

is highly emotional and contrasts with the practical temperament of his faithful servant, Ortiz (I, scene 6-7, pp. 64-65); and the realistic qualities of Aldonza help reveal the romantic nature of her mistress, Leonor (II, 1, 65 and II, 2, 70).

In Guzmán el bueno, Aben-Comat, a Moorish servant, serves as a balance to his master's daughter, Doña Sol, when he urges her to think of practical issues in order to save her lover's life:

Calmaos....Oíd tan solo
esa pasión que en vos arde.
Don Pedro viene,...Mirad
que es tiempo aun de salvarle,
y a decretar vais ahora
o su muerte o su rescate (III, 3, p. 73, lines 1367-72).

In the play Macías, Elvira and her maid, Beatriz, offer a contrast in feminine personalities. When Elvira, thinking of the probable fate of her lover, succumbs to emotion, the practical Beatriz urges her to be more thoughtful and to restrain her display of sorrow (I, 2, 11).

In Venganza catalana, María the wife of Roger de Flor, is balanced by her maid Catalina. When María is distressed over the continued absence of her husband, Catalina requests that she calm herself:

Mas tranquilizaos, señora (III, 1, 546).

Leonor has much the same relation to Doña Blanca in Blanca de Borbón when she urges her mistress to suppress her sorrow.

Sosiega ¡oh Reina! tu dolor (IV, 7, 142).

The trovador in the play of that name has his page Ruiz as his balancing agent. Thus when the hero goes to a convent to see his betrothed, he is greatly alarmed for fear Leonor has taken her vows and will no longer be free to marry. Ruiz, however, remonstrates with him at this show of emotion and urges him to be silent (II, 7, 29).

Thus the leading characters often have their servants or pages as a balance in order to portray better their romantic personalities.

The gente baja regularly serve as media for the introduction of character and of plot construction. They are, however, less frequently outstanding in the main intrigue. In minor ways they often add some slight incident to the general theme, but only a few instances can be cited where they are a real motivating force in the drama. In Blanca de Borbón, a Moorish magician and her son Abenfarax plot for the death of one of the leading characters. These two are seeking vengeance against the Christians for having made them slaves. Their intention is to kill Don Enrique, Doña Blanca's lover. They are thwarted in this attempt but gain Doña Blanca as their victim. This plot concerning the magician and her son aids in the complication of the main intrigue.

One of the outstanding instances in which a member of the gente baja has a leading role is found in El trovador in the role of Azucena, the gypsy. Her avowal of vengeance in recompense for the murder of her mother leads to the tragic culmination of the play when she refuses to reveal the identity of the trovador until after his death. Only then it is learned that he is not

her son, but the son of a nobleman and the brother of the man who has caused his death.

In Simón Bocanegra the goldsmith, Paolo, aids in the general intrigue. In the prologue,⁷ Paolo plots for the triumph of Simón Bocanegra as dux. After Simón wins the election, however, Paolo demands that he aid him in accumulating wealth and gaining Susana Bocanegra for his wife. The dux refuses and as a consequence Paolo plots against him, succeeds in poisoning him at Susana's wedding feast, and thus causes the tragic end of the drama.

García Gutiérrez frequently employed members of the gente baja as important characters in his plots. This is true in El trovador and Simón Bocanegra and also in Juan Lorenzo. Lorenzo is a wool dresser who has been selected by his people to lead them in a contest for equality with the nobles. Lorenzo exemplifies all that is right and good, but his friend Sorolla is vengeful and treacherous. When Juan Lorenzo refuses to allow him to marry his sister, Bernarda, he gains Sorolla's animosity. As a result Sorolla declares a counter rebellion with himself as leader, and Juan Lorenzo is killed in the attempt to help his people and to shield Bernarda. The common people here play significant roles, while the titled characters have positions of minor importance.

As factors in disclosing character and laying the foundation of the plot the gente baja are very important. In the development of the main intrigue their role is often a minor one, although

7. Prologue, pp. 191-203.

El trovador, Simón Bocanegra, Blanca de Borbón, and Juan Lorenzo have common people among their leading characters.

B. Crowd Scenes.

A stage device, popular in the modern theater, but which was merely gaining its first triumph during the romantic period, is the use of the crowd. An atmosphere of reality is effectively produced by the heterogeneous group. Thus the crowds of the romantic stage were composed of the artisans, soldiers, friars, and other villagers; and its foremost purposes were to portray local color,⁸ create an element of suspense, and to lend dramatic emphasis to the play. The holiday crowd enjoying a religious festival or carnival seems to be the most frequent type in the romantic drama. The mob group exists only in a few instances.

A crowd in action whether in a festive or murderous mood adds to the element of suspense. For example, the various threads of the plot have been brought together and a climax is expected in the following scene. In order to intensify the interest, the author sometimes inserts a realistic picture of a crowd whose actions are far removed from the main intrigue. In La conjuración de Venecia (IV, 1-8, 80-93) the scene of the revelers in Saint Mark's Square of Venice demonstrates this principle. The conspiracy against the Venetian government is on the eve of its execution. The interest of the spectator is heightened when this

8. See below, p. 34 for the discussion on the gente baja as portrayers of local color.

9. Carlos II el hechizado (IV, 6, 159-62), Blanca de Borbón (IV, 3, 194) and Juan Lorenzo (I, 14, 114).

scene of merry-making at a pre-Lenten carnival intervenes before the execution of the plot. Towards the end of the act (IV, 9-10, 94-96) the conspirators make their stand for liberty and fail. The result of this attempt is of supreme interest for the hero of the drama.

In Carlos II el hechizado there is a scene (IV, 6, 158-62) of a crowd which gradually develops into a mob and which serves much the same purpose as that just cited in La conjuración de Venecia. Here the antics of an impatient crowd waiting at a baker's shop to receive bread afford a diversion from the main plot. In the preceding scene, Inés, condemned to die by the Inquisition, is bidding her lover farewell. To know her fate is the outstanding issue. Will she live or die? The answer is set aside for a scene of bickering, gossiping, and quarreling by the common people over such a material thing as bread. After having witnessed a scene of intense passion portrayed in the lovers' farewell, the audience must then listen to the following conversation which takes place before the baker's shop:

Hombre (1 ^o)	--Venga una hogaza	
Tahonero	-----	Yo no puedo
		Dar a todos a la vez
Hombre (1 ^o)	--Hace tres horas que espero	
Mujer (1 ^o)	---Yo más de cinco	
Tahonero	-----	Tomad
Hombre (3 ^o)	}--No hay que empujar	
Hombre (2 ^o)		--
Mujer	-----	¡Bruto! (IV, 6, 159).

The contrast achieved is striking.

In Aben Humeya the crowd is also employed as a device to produce an element of suspense although the use the author

makes of it is slightly different from that of the play already noted. The scene (II, 1, 324-29) takes place in the public square where a crowd of villagers and a chorus of shepherds and shepherdesses engage in dancing, singing, and general enjoyment. The chorus gains the center of attention when it sings a villancico (carol) in honor of the shepherds and shepherdesses and a hymn in praise of Allah and his bountiful gifts. The preceding scene shows every indication of a climax which would be disclosed in the following act. The disclosure, however, is delayed for this scene in the square which, while serving as a diversion from the main plot, is also singularly associated with it, for the songs concern important features of the intrigue. Briefly, the plot is that the Moors who are being oppressed by the rigorous yoke of Spain have sworn to overthrow their brutal masters. The songs praise the groups who will attempt this overthrow and the god from whom they expect aid in their undertaking. Thus this scene, while presenting a general picture of lightness and gaiety, continues to a degree the ideas of the main theme.

The crowd as an aid to dramatic technique is thus commonly employed in the romantic drama to heighten the interest in a climax usually tragic. The author assumes that the withholding of facts creates a greater interest in their disclosure.

Another factor which the crowd adds to the general construction of the drama is emphasis. With it the play evinces an atmosphere full of action with large numbers of participating characters. The general effect of a speaking crowd is always

versations affords much of the comic atmosphere of the Spanish romantic theater.

In Don Álvaro and other romantic plays this humorous element is frequent and is often evident in a scene portraying a crowd at play. This device aids the author in producing an element of suspense before an impending tragedy. In La conjuración de Venecia (IV, 1-8, pp. 80-93) the scene which unfolds in Saint Mark's square and serves as a diversion from the main plot is largely concerned with merrymaking. This entertainment includes many jests and frivolous conversations. In the third scene (IV, 3, 83-85) a man and his wife engage in a combat of words which is interrupted by one of the masked conspirators who, having witnessed the domination of the wife, suggests the old adage, "Quien se casa!"¹⁰ to the husband.

At the tavern of Hornachuelos in Don Álvaro (II, 1, 39-51) is gathered a gossiping group composed of the innkeeper and his wife, a witty student, the justice of the peace, servants, muleteers, and others who are interested only in entertaining and being entertained. They discuss many topics ranging from the number of pilgrims visiting in the city, to the kind of cooking that the innkeeper's wife provides. Their conversation is of little consequence except for a few facts relating to the main plot which are revealed. The student in an attempt to display his abilities as a wit inquires of a villager, after grace has

10. The full form is: "Quien se casa todo lo pasa" (when a man marries his troubles begin).

been said, if he is now with the angels; and the old man, no less witty, retorts that among such noisy people as the student he could not be anywhere but with the devils (II, 1, 44).

Another time the student inquires the sex of a recently arrived guest, and Tío Trabuco answers that he is only interested in his money which has no sex (II, 1, 45).

This conversation follows the scene in which one of the leading characters is killed by the hand of his daughter's lover, and it immediately precedes the scene where the girl seeks the convent for consolation. This picture of the tavern stands apart from the rest of the tragic play by its atmosphere of lightness and triviality. A similar comic scene is developed in the fifth act, (V, 1, 140-44) of this drama when Melitón, the doorkeeper of the monastery, serves soup to the poor. The task is not to his liking, hence he engages in many naïve retorts to the impatient beggars. This picture precedes the final tragedy of the play where the hero and heroine meet only to be separated again by death.

The gente baja were adapt in the use of clever repartee. For example, in Don Juan Tenorio, when Don Juan makes inquiries about Doña Inés, the servant replies that his beloved is ready to follow him meek as a lamb:¹¹

Don Juan---¿La has preparado?
 Brígida----Vaya, y os la he convencido
 con tal maña y de manera,
 que irá como una cordera
 tras vos.

11. Part 1, act I, scene 9, p. 50, lines 1244-48. There is a pun here on the name Inés which means "lamb".

Guzmán el bueno, thoroughly tragic in theme and partly in the classic manner, has no entire scene of comic relief. But Guzmán's faithful servant, Nuño, however, does at intervals add this touch. He is gifted with a ready tongue when the occasion demands. For instance, when the Moors arrive to demand Guzmán's son as their award for not attacking the fort, a witty conversation between Nuño and one of the Moorish envoys affords a marked contrast with the tragedy of the scene that follows.

Moro---Valiente anciano
 ¿no te acuerdas de mi?
 Nuño---Moro del diantre
 más de lo que quisiera (II, 4, 57, lines 1034-35).

Teresa, the dueña of Los amantes de Teruel, furnishes much of the humor in this play. The mother and daughter are attempting to converse with Pedro who has just returned home after a long absence, but with Teresa's interruptions little can be said. Teresa is urged either to be silent or to leave the room to which advice she retorts that going away is easy but being silent is another thing (II, 1, 23, lines 51-52).

D. Preparation for Subsequent Scenes

Besides the comic roles which they play, the gente baja also serve as the reporters of important events not shown in the theater and also as the foretellers of future events. Oftentimes there are scenes necessary to the plot which are related rather than staged, while frequently the foretelling gives the audience some idea concerning the outcome of the drama.

The romantic theater makes much use of the song in lending atmosphere and often in foretelling and intensifying the significance of a coming event.

Thus in La conjuración de Venecia (II, 3, 32-33) the boatman sings a song about Leander's fate in the Hellespont. This song, picturesque in its Venetian setting, has, moreover, a further significance from the fact that the hero, Rugiero, is shirking his duties in order to see his beloved, Elvira. The song foretells that, just as Leander's attempt to see Hero ended in tragedy, so will Rugiero's endeavors end.

In El trovador (III, 1, 131) the act opens with the gypsy Azucena singing the song of the burning of a victim in a camp fire. Her song refers to the fate of her mother who was burned as a witch, and it seems a device for foretelling some future event, such as a vengeance in recompense for the deed already done.

Somewhat related to the religious beliefs of the gente baja are the superstitions which the uneducated classes readily accept. Thus in Los amantes de Teruel the old dueña tells of the ghost of Don Diego which she thought she saw and heard speaking (IV, X, p. 72, lines 98-101):

Las ánimas del infierno...
 Las del purgatorio...No
 sé cuales; pero las veo,
 las oigo.

In the opening scenes of El trovador, two servants display their belief in apparitions. Ferrando tells of a gypsy who has been frequenting his rooms, first in the form of a crow and later

as an owl who sipped the oil from his lamp, put out his light, kissed him and before departing emitted an unearthly cry (I, 1, p. 5, line 23ff-p. 6, line 5).

Unas veces bajo la figura de un cuervo negro; de noche regularmente en buho. Ultimamente, noches pasadas se transformó en lechuza.... y se entró en mi cuarto a sorberse el aceite de mi lampara;apagó la luz y me empezó a mirar con unos ojos tan relucientes.....temía no sé qué de diabólico y de infernal aquel espantoso animalejo.

Such scenes share somewhat in foretelling unhappy events of the future. Thus in El trovador the gypsy of whom the servant speaks returns to take revenge upon his master's family. The chief purpose of these scenes, however, is to aid in the portrayal of local color.

Another superstition was a belief in dreams, thus in La conjuración de Venecia (IV, 1, 81) one of the merry-makers in the carnival scene remarks that he has dreamed about the two famous columns in the square and he fears that something terrible is about to take place. In subsequent scenes of this act there is an attempt to overthrow the government. The dream foretells this event.

In Blanca de Borbon the Moorish magician who hates the Christians swears that she has the power, if she wills, to control the affairs of the world (III, 3, 98). While this avowal tells nothing definite, it does give an indication that the role of the magician is to be significant, especially since she is a slave and an enemy of the Christians. Her prophecy comes true when Abenfarax, her son, succeeds in killing Doña Blanca, the king's banished wife. The song that a hidden musician sings

also foretells ruin for Doña Blanca who is held prisoner by her husband, Pedro el cruel. The song concerns a beautiful young lady, Elvira, who is forgotten in her prison by her lover (III, 3, 100-01).

Since the romantic drama was not primarily concerned with the portrayal of action, many incidents are merely reported and described by the gente baja. Thus in Carlos II el hechizado (V, 6, 166) a servant of the Inquisition reports to the king that a girl has fled from her captors and has taken refuge in the palace. The girl is Inés, the leading female character, who is condemned to die for alleged practicing of witchcraft upon the king. Since she is one of the leading characters this report is interesting and important.

In El trovador (IV, 2, 48) two servants announce that a gypsy has been taken prisoner. This incident is significant for the remainder of the play since Azucena, sentenced to die, reveals the identity of the trovador only after his death, thereby aiding the tragic termination of the play.

In Blanca de Borbón there are many instances where events are merely related and not portrayed. In the first act (I, 2, 26-30) Doña Blanca's maid, Leonor, relates facts that have not been indicated otherwise. She tells of the festivities taking place in the royal courtyard in honor of the king's new heir (of this the audience has some idea), of the pride of the king, of the discontent of the people, and of a young man in disguise attempting to gain entrance to Doña Blanca's prison. These facts are important, for the man in disguise is the king's brother, Don

Enrique, who loves Doña Blanca and who later stages a revolt against the king in order to free the imprisoned queen.

In practically every romantic play there are some incidents revealed merely through reports, and the gente baja are often the bearers of such news.

E. Linguistic Peculiarities

The Spanish romanticist gained another of his antithetical effects through the combined use of prose and poetry, the prose usually being the language of the gente baja and the poetry that of the nobles. This method is not always followed, however; for in scenes of great emotional appeal, where there are both nobles and the common folk present, everyone speaks in verse, while in the less emotional scenes, where both classes are present, prose is the medium of expression. But even though the servant class does speak in poetry it is usually a kind of prosaic poetry in contrast to the more lyric language of their superiors. Thus in various scenes in Los amantes de Tervel,¹² Teresa, the dueña, uses verse, but her speeches are marked by their brevity and bluntness. When the father asks his daughter to tell about the events which took place during his absence, Teresa interrupts with the remark that there is very little to tell (II, 1, 22). Another time when the Sultana, discloses that she too loved Isabel's lover, Teresa immediately rejoins, "¡qué desverguenza!" (II, 10, 43 line 596).

12. See II, 1, 20-23; II, 3, 27; II, 10-11, 42-46; IV, 2, 72-73.

In Don Álvaro much the same arrangement of prose and poetry is maintained. Thus the innkeeper and his wife converse in poetry but with little emotion and without poetic language. The innkeeper says that his wife's task is to serve well, say "yes" or "no", catch flies, and observe silence:

Servir bien, decir no o sí,
Cobrar la mosca, y chitón (II, 2, 52).

The wife responds that she knows how to be silent, therefore her husband cannot possibly be referring to her:

No, por mí no lo dirás
Bien sabes que callar sé (II, 2, 52).

In plays written entirely in verse, the difference between the two types of characters, the hidalgo and the gente baja, is portrayed through the use of colloquialisms, interjections, and slang remarks in the speech of the latter. Thus in Don Juan Tenorio the first act opens in an Italian inn where the innkeeper and his assistant speak Italian. Their foreign conversation aids in localizing the setting. The innkeeper also portrays his social status by the use of various slang phrases and unpolished remarks. Thus he asks Don Juan's servant:¹³

y ¿a quién mil diablos escribe
Tan cuidadoso y prolijo?

Later when a policeman observes Don Juan and Don Luis entering the inn he bluntly remarks that something is certainly going to happen:¹⁴

13. Part 1, act 1, scene 1, p. 4, lines 33-34.
14. Part 1, act 1, scene 12, p. 18, lines 378-79.

Pues allí va otro ocupar
la otra silla. ¡Uf! ¡Aquí es ella!

In Simón Bocanegra when Paolo gives his friend Pietro a position as guard and admonishes him to hold his breath for fear of detection, the latter remarks:

¡qué diablos de comisión! (III, 1, 226).

Thus in language as in character portrayals the romanticist makes a distinction between the nobility and the gente baja by qualities of brusqueness, bluntness, colloquialisms, and numerous interjections in the speech of the latter.

An attempt has been made in this chapter to present the various phases of dramatic construction to which the gente baja add definite features. Their role in the technique of the drama is far from negligible. They aid in the general plot construction through their introduction of the leading characters and the basic facts of the plot, by their descriptions of the main characters, by acting as a balance to these characters, and by serving in a few instances as important characters in the drama. Portrayed in groups, the gente baja aid in the production of an element of suspense for the main intrigue, and by their speech they afford an emphasis which is often dramatic. With their clever conversations and droll retorts they lend the humorous side to the romantic drama, while in their more serious moments they serve as bearers of news of both the past and future. The romanticist, in upholding the principle of antithesis, has maintained his purpose even in the language which the characters

speak. The nobility employ a polished phrase in verse, while the gente baja speak a brusque and blunt language, be it poetry or prose.

CHAPTER IV.

CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF THE GENTE BAJA

The members of the gente baja, having few opportunities for education and little or no opportunity for travel, are not cosmopolitan but are decidedly provincial in their daily life. Hence one can learn from them something of the customs and manners peculiar to a particular region or social group. The romanticist has made use of these common people to add picturesqueness and local color to his work. The activities which seem best to portray the ideals of local color and atmosphere are religious festivals and processions, secular entertainments, the life surrounding the public square and the village inn, and the various types of songs which the gente baja sing.

As far as dramatic technique is concerned the religious festival and carnival scenes are introduced in the romantic drama either to create comic relief or to further interest in the main plot. Many of these scenes are veritable cuadros de costumbres and as such depict many interesting and picturesque features of the life of the gente baja.

In La conjuración de Venecia the scenes which aid in comic relief and in dramatic suspense are those concerning the pre-Lenten festival (IV, 3, 78) held in the public square where the merry-makers dance and listen to a song about the duel between Carnival and Lent, and the story of the Holy Land recited in verse by two pilgrims. The religious atmosphere is created by the general idea of the Carnival, by the verses about the Holy

Land, and by the song of the age-old contest between Carnival and Lent. In La conjuración this religious festival serves merely as a brief diversion from the main plot.

Aben Humeya also makes use of the religious gathering which, however, shows deeper religious sentiment and also aids in the development of an integral part of the plot. This scene (II, 1-4, 324-29) takes place in the public square in the village of Cadiar where there is much dancing and singing. The crowd is varied but is largely composed of shepherds and shepherdesses who sing two selections, a villancico in adoration of Allah with much reference to the shepherds and shepherdesses, and a hymn which praises their god and asks for his aid against their oppressors.

In Carlos II el hechizado the religious group and procession figure prominently as the author has conceived a theme based on the activities of the Inquisition. In the second act (II, 1, 136) there is a religious procession of the nobles while a group of villagers sing a hymn asking compassion for their king who appears to be bewitched. In a later scene (II, 8, 141) there is a procession composed entirely of the lower clergy carrying lighted candles and singing the De Profundis.¹ They have no speaking part, consequently their greatest service is the religious atmosphere and color which they afford. Officers of the Inquisition, their servants, guards, and minor officials appear

1. The one hundred thirtieth Psalm of David; one of the seven Psalms expressive of sorrow for sin and desire for pardon. It is used in the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church.

in a similar procession in the third act (III, 10, 150-52), while in the fifth act (V, 10, 170) bailiffs and soldiers of the Inquisition are shown marching to the scene of an auto de fe where one of the leading characters is to be executed because she is thought to be a witch. This play with its religious plot adheres to the plausible through its historical background. The various processions of the common people which are portrayed here lend both realism and picturesqueness to the stage. These processions, made colorful by the variegated costumes of the participants, were customary activities during the Inquisition.

The carnival, which in Catholic countries is closely associated with the religious festivals, also has its place in many of the plays where the gente baja are portrayed. The Spanish carnival is often a masked affair with much dancing, singing, instrumental music, and general enjoyment. The entire celebration is not always portrayed in the foreground of the stage, however, but the voices of the shouting people or the music from the strumming guitars adds this festive atmosphere.

Thus in the opening scenes of Don Juan Tenorio,² the action takes place within an Italian tavern. However, the merry-makers from without furnish a festive background with their laughter, music, talking and dancing.

In Blanca de Borbón there is also a festive atmosphere evident in the general tone of the scenes, although the revelers

2. Part 1, act I, pp. 3-34.

do not appear on the stage. Voices singing of soldiers, honor, and beautiful women, combined with a general hilarity lend this feeling of celebration (I, 1, 79). The common people and the courtiers are celebrating the birth of an heir to the king, Pedro el cruel.

While some plays have entire scenes devoted to the portrayal of religious sentiment and custom there are those in which individual members of the gente baja afford this same atmosphere. In Don Álvaro the Duque de Rivas places some members of the gente baja in the realistic scenes at the beginning of each act. There is the village canon in the first act (I, 2, 5-16) who, after listening to a slightly profane remark admonishes the bystanders that religious things must be treated sacredly (I, 2, 27). In act II the innkeeper insists that the food shall be blessed before eating. His prayer preceding the meal is certainly materialistic in thought, yet no less a prayer:

Jesús; por la buena compañía,
y que Dios nos dé salud y pesetas
en esta vida y la gloria en la
eterna (II, 1, 44).

After this prayer for health, wealth, good company, and eternal glory the guests murmur, "Amén". At the end of the meal the innkeeper remarks that since they have eaten well, thanks should again be given to God:

Pues que ya hemos cenado, demos gracias a
Dios, y recogerse (II, 1, 51).

In the third act (III, 2, 83) a chaplain in the soldiers' camp lends the religious note, and completing the series is Hermano

Melitón who stands before the monastery and issues food to the begging populace (V, 1, 140-44).

The public square figures prominently as the place in which many of the religious and secular celebrations take place. Here the lower classes of all types and all ages gather to make merry and to meet their friends. Here their dress, action, and amusement can readily be discerned. The government officials make use of the public square to read any proclamation about which the people should know. The square is the scene of many types of activities: conspiracies, carnivals, quarrels, and various contests.

Since the square is important in the public life of the gente baja, it is natural that the romantic author should make use of it to portray everyday life. In Carlos II el hechizado the square serves as a setting for news when a proclamation of an auto de fe is read (III, 6, 148). In this play the square is also the scene of a brief quarrel over bread, and of a mob seeking vengeance against the nobles (IV, 6, 150). The stage directions state that the theater represents a square where a multitude of people are gathered before a baker's shop waiting to get bread. There is a general restlessness among them with much pushing, shoving and shouting (IV, 6, 158).

A comparable scene takes place in El rey monje where the stage represents a large square in the village of Manzón with many groups of the common people present (I, 1, 59). In the fourth act (IV, 5, 89) a proclamation is read, and the dissenting murmur of the crowd is heard throughout the square.

Martínez de la Rosa employs a scene from the square in both Aben Humeya and La conjuración de Venecia. The stage directions for the latter follow:

El teatro representa la plaza de San Marcos iluminada....En la plaza se descubren las dos famosas columnas, y todo el ámbito aparece lleno de grupos de gente, paseándose y divirtiéndose la mayor parte con máscaras y disfraces (IV, 1, 80).

Here the theater represents an illuminated square full of masked revelers. The stage directions of the romantic drama are especially interesting because little attention was given to theatrical decorations until the dramatic innovations of this period.

The public square, having an important place in the actual life of the Spanish people, figures largely in the commonplace scenes of the romantic drama where it adds local color and atmosphere.

The inn, like the public square, furnishes an opportunity for the common people to enjoy life as a group. It affords them a general meeting place, where they can greet their friends, exchange the latest gossip, observe the incoming travelers, learn the news, obtain refreshments, and enjoy themselves generally. The innkeeper as a dispenser of food and news is almost a dignitary among the gente baja, few of whom can read. Thus the inn exemplifies another phase of the group life of the common people.

The first two acts of Traidor, inconfeso y mártir take place in the ante-room of an inn in Valladolid. Although the setting is realistic, nothing exemplifying the life of the

gente baja is shown except that the innkeeper is preparing for guests. It can be imagined, however, that when the play is presented on the stage, the decorative features of the inn further enhanced with the activities of the busy innkeeper would serve as a somewhat colorful background upon which this imaginative drama is staged.

The first act of Don Juan Tenorio takes place in an Italian tavern. The atmosphere of the inn is further developed by the presence of an Italian innkeeper, Buttarelli and his servant, Miguel, and groups of villagers and policemen who enter from time to time to witness the meeting between the hero and his friend. Many of the guests demand refreshments. The picture of this inn crowded with patrons presents a view of everyday life.

Act two of Don Álvaro takes place at an inn in the village of Hornachuelos. Here are found the innkeeper, his wife, the village alcalde, a student, Tío Trabuco (an old muleteer), other muleteers, and several villagers. Here the patrons spend their time in interesting gossip, in jesting, and in singing while a student furnishes instrumental accompaniment with his guitar. The author makes use of this scene of enjoyment to introduce a number of facts concerning the principal characters who appear during the remainder of the act.

The square and the inn frequently serve as backgrounds for many of the customs and manners of the gente baja. The activities of the common people in their realistic and picturesque background are often employed by the romantic dramatist to serve

his purpose of making the real contrast with the ideal and the practical with the emotional.

Other customs which are less generally portrayed but no less effective are those of gambling, card playing and quarreling. In Don Juan Tenorio³ two members of the gente baja engage in gambling on a small scale when Avellaneda makes a wager with his friend Centellas that Don Juan will succeed in the contest with his friend Don Luis.

A scene of card playing in a soldiers' camp takes place in the third act of Don Alvaro (III, 2, 79-83). The remarks of the soldiers as they play their cards, regardless of the fact that they speak in poetry, are certainly realistic:

Oficial 1^o ---Tiro
 Don Carlos --- Juego
 Oficial 1^o ---Tira a la derecha el as
 Y a la izquierda la sotita.
 Oficial 2^o ---Ya salió de muy maldita
 Por vida de Barrabas.....
 Oficial 1^o ---Tengo aprestado la mano
 Tres onzas nada se debe.
 A la derecha la sota (III, 2, 80-81).

Although quarreling is not usually considered a pastime, that type of argument in which the gente baja engage often has the effect of entertainment, not only for the onlookers, but for the participants as well. Thus in Carlos II el hechizado one notes a number of people impatiently waiting their turn at a baker's shop. The crowd is not orderly, and the following remarks are heard:

3. Part 1, act I, pp. 832-33.

Tahonero----- Yo no puedo dar a todos a la vez.
 Hombre-----Hace tres horas que espero
 Mujer-----Yo más de cinco.
 Tahonero----- Tomad.
 Hombre-----A mí.
 Mujer----- A mí (Iv, 6, 158).

The scene just indicated is similar to one in the fifth act of Don Álvaro where the uncharitable Melitón is serving soup to the poor as they clamor before the convent door.

Hermano Melitón-----Vamos, silencio y orden,
 que no están en ningún
 figón.
 Mujer-----¡Padre! ¡a mí!, a mí!
 Viejo-----¡Cuántas raciones quiere
 Marica?
 Cajo-----Ya le han dado tres y no es
 regular (V, I, 140).

Another activity in which the gente baja frequently engage is singing. Their songs, many times, are expressive of activities in which it is impossible for them to indulge so occupied are they in the business of earning a living. The songs express their religious fervor, patriotism, vengeance, and love. There are also the popular songs of the young people which are merely for entertainment.

In Carlos II el hechizado a procession of the lower clergy chants a supplication to God for compassion on their king, Carlos II, who is bewitched:

Oye beneficio
 Supremo Dios
 De fieles súbditos
 La triste voz (II, 1, 136).

Later this procession chants the De Profundis, one of the

penitential hymns of the Catholic faith (II, 8, 141). In Aben Humeya a group of the common folk sing a villancico and a hymn praising Allah and asking for his assistance in their undertakings (II, 1-4, 324-29).

Aben Humeya also uses the patriotic song when an unnamed Moorish woman sings of the regret of the Moors on leaving their home. Her song expresses the fear that Granada, their last stronghold, will be lost forever:

A dios, Granada, por siempre!
A dios, patria de mi alma (III, 1, 345).

During the carnival scene in Blanca de Borbón hidden voices sing of honor, love, and fighting men.

The song of the gypsy Azucena has already been mentioned as an instance of the foreshadowing of future events.⁴ Azucena's weird song (III, 1, 31) adds much to the picturesque atmosphere of El trovador. The song which La Maga, (the magician) sings to the Devil in Blanca de Borbón (V, 1, 146-47) serves much the same purpose.

The gente baja have few opportunities in the romantic drama to express any emotion of Love. Their role offers a marked contrast to that of the gracioso and graciosa in the dramas of the siglo de oro where often these lower characters parodied the love affairs of their masters. The song which Rugiero's boatman sings in La conjuración de Venecia (II, 2, 32) may, however, be described as a love song. As he rows his boat in

1. See above, p. 27.

the canal he makes use of a classic theme and sings of Leander's fate in the Hellespont.

The student in Don Alvaro (II, 1, 38) sings a ditty with guitar accompaniment for the entertainment of the villagers at the tavern of Hornachuelos. His song expresses neither religious nor patriotic fervor, nor extols classic heroes, but merely sets forth a clever rhyme for the entertainment of his listeners.

The romantic dramatist pictures various activities in which the common people, as a definite social group, participate. He portrays activities which are actually a part of their daily life. The gente baja are deeply religious and are shown enjoying religious festivals and carnivals. Their community centers are the public square and the village inn where various types of news are discussed and disseminated. They engage in other pastimes such as card playing, betting, and quarreling; and their emotional nature is often portrayed in the songs which they sing.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

The gente baja of the Spanish romantic theater have been shown to have definite roles in the drama in accordance with the general scheme of Spanish romanticism. In a genre which mingles the comic and the tragic, the realistic with the sublime, and the practical with the imaginative, the gente baja afford the comic, the realistic, and the practical features. Their role may be divided into two general functions: that in which they aid in the mechanics of the drama, and that in which some of their customs are portrayed by which they add to the reality and picturesqueness of the play.

The phases of dramatic construction in which the gente baja are important factors are: (1) plot construction which includes an introduction of the main characters and the basic facts of the plot, a description of the protagonists, a balance of the two types of characters, (the aristocrat and the servant), and occasionally the use of the gente baja as main characters in the drama; (2) the use of the crowd as a stage device to portray local color, to create an element of suspense for the main intrigue, and to produce dramatic emphasis; (3) comic relief which is supplied through naïve and humorous conversations rather than by action or situation; (4) the preparation of the stage for subsequent scenes by the foretelling of future events and the relating of facts concerning happenings which are not portrayed on the stage; and (5) linguistic peculiarities where the gente baja and the hidalgo are differentiated by the brusque and

colloquial language of the one and by the polished Castillian of the other.

Besides serving as factors in the mechanics of the drama, the gente baja influence the entire play by the portrayal of their customs and manners. The plays which are not entirely romantic have only a few of the realistic and picturesque qualities that the true romantic drama contains. Those plays, however, which adhere closely to the principles of romanticism depict many scenes from the daily life of the gente baja. These plays portray the religious festival and the carnival, the activities in the public square, and the interesting life of the village inn. They picture the common people at their pastimes: begging, card playing, dancing, singing, and even quarreling.

It can be seen that if one or several of these customs are portrayed in a drama which has fate and passion as its animating forces, then these excerpts from actual life would aid in producing a sense of reality for an audience which would experience varied emotions with the hero and heroine. These scenes add realism to the stage and make the main intrigue seem less improbable. The prime significance of the gente baja in the Spanish romantic drama is to furnish the quality of realism and naturalness which the main characters do not always afford. The dramatist has included the common people who with their practical and materialistic ideas afford a balance to the emotional and fanciful ideals of the protagonists, and by so doing upholds one of the major principles of romanticism: antithesis.

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APPENDIX

Synopsis of the Dramas.

Espronceda, José de. Blanca de Borbón.

Blanca de Borbón loves her husband, Pedro el cruel, despite the fact that he has imprisoned her and proclaimed another his mistress. Pedro's bastard brother gives Blanca the opportunity to escape but because of loyalty and love for her husband she refuses and is killed by her rival's orders.

García Gutiérrez, Antonio. El trovador.

The troubadour loves Leonor but believing himself to be the son of a gypsy, he remains loyal to his mother. For the crime of leading an opposing army against the king's forces he is captured and put to death. At the time of the execution it is revealed that the troubadour is the brother of the count who has ordered his death and that he had been kidnapped by the gypsy in infancy.

García Gutiérrez, Antonio. El rey monje.

Don Ramiro, seeking a monastery to free himself from his kingly duties, meets the lady whom he had loved in his youth. They are again separated by her brother who kills Don Ramiro and leaves the sister to mourn his death.

García Gutiérrez, Antonio. Juan Lorenzo.

Juan Lorenzo, lover of Bernarda, is the leader of the wool workers who are demanding equal rights with the nobility. The

ambitious Sorolla who also loves Bernarda, plots against Lorenzo, succeeds in killing him, and makes himself leader.

García Gutiérrez, Antonio. Simón Bocanegra.

Simón Bocanegra, dux of Genoa, refuses to allow Pietro, a goldsmith to marry his daughter. Pietro gains his revenge by killing Bocanegra at his daughter's wedding feast.

García Gutiérrez, Antonio. Venganza catalana.

María, the Grecian wife of Roger de Flor, pledges allegiance to the Spanish forces who are attempting to gain land in the Orient. Roger is killed, but the Spaniards are victorious. María is happy in the belief that the victory is a revenge against the Orient for the death of her husband.

Gil y Zárate, Antonio. Carlos II el hechizado.

Carlos II is said to have been bewitched by his ward Inés. The girl is sentenced to death by the Inquisition at which time it is learned that she is the king's own daughter. The decree against her is enforced. A fanatical priest, whom Inés refused to love, devised this plot against her.

Gil y Zárate, Antonio. Guzmán el bueno.

Guzmán, a loyal and noble chieftain, sacrifices his beloved son in order to save the lives of his subjects who are menaced by the Moors.

Gómez de Avellaneda, Gertrudis. Munio Alfonso.

Munio Alfonso kills his daughter Fronilde when he discovers that she has a lover, of whom he knows little. After Fronilde's death it is disclosed that the empress' son was the lover. Alfonso is remorseful, for he could not have arranged a more worthy marriage.

Hartzenbusch, Juan Eugenio. Los amantes de Teruel.

Two lovers separated by a father's whim are reunited too late. Each doubts the other's sincerity. The young man, after escaping a dagger thrust from a jealous sultana and after winning over his rival in a duel, dies because his beloved offends him.

Larra, Mariano José de. Macías.

Macías loves Elvira whose father, having political ambitions, promises her to another during Macías' absence. Macías returns after the wedding, and is killed in an attempt to regain his beloved.

Martínez de la Rosa, Francisco. La conjuración de Venecia.

Rugiero a conspirator, loves Laura, the daughter of a member of the Venetian Council. The conspiracy fails, and Rugiero is condemned to death. Too late it is learned that he is the son of one of the judges who has condemned him.

Martínez de la Rosa, Francisco. Aben Humeya.

Aben Humeya is a Moorish chieftain who attempts to lead his people in revolt against Spanish oppression. There is a counter revolt among the Moors which results in the tragic death of Aben Humeya and his family.

Saavedra, Ángel de (Duque de Rivas). Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino.

Don Álvaro, pursued by a hostile fate, is led through many adventures in an attempt to gain his beloved Leonor. The lovers are finally united, but only to be separated by Leonor's brother, who kills his sister. Don Álvaro jumps to his death from a cliff.

Zorrilla, José. Don Juan Tenorio.

Don Juan, a seducer of women, finds true love only after the spirit of his dead beloved returns to him and redeems his soul.

Zorrilla, José. Traidor, inconfeso y mártir.

A man traveling incognito is believed to be a former Portuguese king. The refusal to disclose his identity results in his death. It is later learned that he is the former king and that the young girl traveling with him was not his daughter but the daughter of the man who condemned the king to die.

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