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Metafictional aspects in the narrative of Miguel de Unamuno

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METAFIGTIONAL ASPECTS IN THE NARRATIVE OF MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

by

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ABSTRACT

The present work is a study of metafictional aspects in three novels of Miguel de Unamuno. The first chapter provides a definition of metafiction and positions the idea of metafiction within the Spanish novel. This fictional concept is traced through the history of the Spanish novel beginning with its first appearance through its manifestation within the novels of Unamuno.

In the second chapter, Unamuno's narrative style is described. The focus is placed on the author's own theory of the novel and on the metafictional elements of his style which illustrate him as an innovative novelist.

A relevant way to understand the metafictional aspects in Unamuno's narrative is to analyze the fictional techniques that reflect the idea of metafiction in Niebla, Cómo se hace una novela, and San Manuel Bueno, mártir. The function of the techniques is discussed in order to understand the innovations which Unamuno presents in these novels.
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INTRODUCTION

The present work proposes to analyze the metafictional aspects in three novels of Miguel de Unamuno. The novels chosen are representative of a period in Unamuno's writing, 1914 to 1931, which is reflective of a mature writer and a new style of writing seen by critics as a deviation from the norms of the traditional realistic novel.

First, a definition of what is meant by the term "metafiction" will be presented in order to foster an understanding of the meaning of this aspect of Unamuno's narrative style. The contributions to metafiction of previous Spanish novelists are discussed in order to better understand the degree of originality of the techniques employed by Unamuno. What is more important in this study is a demonstration of the fact that Unamuno used metafiction in a new way and during a period when many other contemporary Spanish novelists were still writing novels which were more in accordance with the conventions of realism.

In an effort to illustrate how Unamuno broke away from these conventions, this study presents a general idea of what constitutes a realistic novel along with Unamuno's theory of the novel. It will also attempt to show why Unamuno's theory and ideas led him to search out new fictional techniques to employ. The focus will be placed
on Unamuno’s use of metafiction as a source of innovative techniques.

The three novels chosen, Niebla, Cómo se hace una novela, and San Manuel Bueno, mártir reflect a span of seventeen years in the literary career of Unamuno. Unamuno’s first novelistic work appeared in 1897, with the publication of Paz en la guerra, which was a realistic novel. However, in 1902 with his second novel, Amor y pedagogía and then in 1914 with Niebla, Unamuno brought a new kind of novel to his public. These novels were immediately recognized by critics as being a different kind of narrative; in fact, many believed that they were disguised essays because they expressed so many of Unamuno’s personal ideas. In response to the critics, Unamuno created a new name for the revolutionary type of novel which he had written. He advised the critics that if his new literary creation was not a "novela" according to the criteria established for the genre, then it was a "nivola". This critical response to Amor y pedagogía and Niebla marks the recognition of Unamuno as an innovative novelist.

One aspect of Unamuno’s novels which was contained in Niebla and was present in subsequent novels was metafiction. This common element which ties together Niebla, Cómo se hace una novela, and San Manuel Bueno, mártir, expressed Unamuno’s dissatisfaction with the accepted methods of writing fiction. By exploring the appearance and purpose of
metafiction in these three novels of Unamuno, the present study endeavors to show how these novels are representative of Unamuno's narrative theory and to prove that Unamuno was indeed an innovative novelist.
I. ON METAFICTION

1. Towards a definition of metafiction

The prefix "meta-" is often used with the name of a discipline to designate a new but related discipline designed to deal critically with the original one. An example would be "metalanguage" which is defined as a language used to talk about another language. "Meta-" has also been employed with respect to literature and with the specific literary genres, such as poetry, and the novel. The novel, being invented prose narrative, is fictitious in nature. Hence, the term "metafiction" has been used by many writers and literary critics to name the phenomenon of reflecting critically upon and within the world of fiction.

Metafiction may be understood as "fiction about fiction". It is a fiction that includes within itself a commentary on its own narrative identity. Unlike the realistic novel, within metafiction the creative process involved in writing the novel is made visible. The realistic novel tends to imitate reality. The theoretical basis of "traditional realism" may be termed a "mimesis of product". The reader must identify the products imitated within the novel; the characters, the action, and the setting. The reader must then recognize the similarity of those products to reality as he perceives it, in order to be able to validate the literary worth of the novel. The
techniques which the novelist uses to produce that imitation are hidden, and because the novelist does not acknowledge the conventions for this process within the novel, the act of reading is viewed as being passive. The reader does not have to contemplate the creative process itself in order to judge whether the novelist has presented a believable image of reality. He simply looks into the mirror of the novel to decide whether the reflection of reality which the novelist has created through the characters, action, and setting is indeed an imitation of life. The creative techniques and conventions are carefully concealed so as not to distract the reader's attention from the imaginary world which the novel has unfolded. Metafiction, on the other hand, places the emphasis on "process" by exposing the techniques and conventions of the novel. It demands the recognition of the narrative process by the reader and encourages the reader to play an active role by entering the world of the novel, instead of merely passively reading the novel. A central aim of metafiction is to reveal the creative processes that realism sought to conceal and it often transcends the boundaries which realism used to create the novelistic world. The novel becomes self-reflective instead of being a reflection of reality. The author's mirror is turned inward, instead of outward, to reflect and emphasize the internal workings of the novel.
The fictional mode, or underlying substance of the novel, may be illustrated as a triad consisting of the fictive author, the world of the story, and the world of the "text-act reader". A metafictional mode results within the fictional mode if a member of one world violates the world of another. This violation would occur, for example, if a character from the world of the story were to challenge the authority of the fictive author, or if the fictive author were to ask for advice from the reader. Another violation would occur if the members of all three worlds were to engage in direct discourse with each other. The violations of these boundaries that separate the three worlds which are accepted as conventions of fiction, call attention to the arbitrary quality of the conventions and unmask any illusion that the narration is real rather than merely fiction.
2. An historical perspective

In Spanish literature the intervention and personal appearance of the author in the work is frequently observed. This metafictional trait can be traced back to the fourteenth century with the appearance of the *Libro de buen amor*, a prose work by Juan Ruiz, in which the author appears portrayed as the main character in the book. According to Américo Castro, this technique denotes a direct oriental-Arabic influence based upon the concept of reality which views things as interchangeable. In the oriental-Arabic concept of reality, elements of life do not have the fixed position that they have in the empirical reality of the western world. Hence, the manner in which the author enters his literary reality and installs himself within it as a character is typical of this idea of elements being interchangeable. The intrusion of the author in the work creates a reciprocal action between reality and illusion as the reality of the author obtains the mystique of illusion from the character and the character obtains a semblance of reality from the author's appearance in the work.

The Spanish novel owes its origin in part to the transmission of oriental fables to Spain in the Middle Ages. To this influence is added the impact of *Don Quijote de la Mancha* (1605-1615), by Miguel de Cervantes, in which techniques reflecting metafiction abound. The origin of metafiction in the Spanish novel can be traced back further,
however, to 1524 when almost a century before Cervantes, a Spanish cleric domiciled in Rome, Francisco Delicado, wrote a novel titled *Retrato de la lozana andaluza* in which various characters exhibit independence from their author. In chapter XVII, the author tells the reader that when he had finished writing the previous chapter, one of his characters came into his room and invited the author to join him in the novel. The author declined because he felt that afterwards the characters would say that he did no more than observe what happened in order to write it down later.⁶ Delicado was telling the reader that he declined the invitation to enter the world of the novel, because he felt that he would be reproached by his own characters for merely recording their actions, as Cervantes would be criticized almost a century later as the author of *Don Quijote*. But Delicado turns up several times in the novel, nevertheless, to mingle with the characters and finally leaves the novel with one of the characters whom he calls his friend. There is no other evidence of this technique of the author’s direct intervention within the Spanish novel until Cervantes.

In *Don Quijote*, Cervantes crossed over the boundary which had separated the author from the world of the story, to speak to his characters. Both author and characters became part of a "shifting double world" in which they could claim to have both a literary life and a real one.⁷ In the
second part of the novel, Don Quijote and Sancho speak critically of Cervantes’ book and of themselves as they appear in the first part of the novel. Cervantes enters the novel and turns directly to his characters often to warn them about the possible consequences of their actions. When the author crosses the traditional boundary between his realm and the world of the story, the world around the fictional character is transformed into one of greater credibility for the reader; one in which the characters seem to become independent and masters of their own fates.

From Cervantes, the thread of metafiction within the Spanish novel can be traced to Benito Pérez Galdós, in the nineteenth century. Galdós did not feel compelled to stay within the boundaries of the modern realistic tendencies of the period. While he was writing novels, Galdós spent a great amount of time studying Cervantes, whose influence is noted in those novels which combine reality with elements of fantasy. 8

The novels of Galdós reveal the use of many techniques reflecting the idea of metafiction with respect to the exploration of the relationship between author, character, and reader. He employed the same technique as Cervantes when he presented his imaginary characters within two planes; one plane being that of daily experience and the other of fantasy. This technique brought about a complex relationship between the author and reader with regard to
the fictional characters within the novel. In a series of novels titled *Torquemada*, the author crossed over the boundary into the fictional world of the novel and began a dialogue with the reader, which required the reader to participate in the course of the action.⁹

The *Torquemada* novels present the relationship of the narrator with his characters, and through the use of those characters, his relationship with the reader. There is a particular case in which the omniscient author is transformed into a fictional character. This case is found in the novel of Galdós, *El amigo Manso*, written in 1882. In this novel, the author who has remained outside of the novelistic world appears in the story after being led by the hand of the principal narrator, who declares himself to be merely a fictional entity. Galdós calls attention to the fictional nature of the narrator in the first chapter, entitled "Yo no existo" in which the character declares "...Soy una condensación artística, diabólica hechura del pensamiento humano..." The author then appears, fictionalized, and adds a comment about the narrator, whom he calls a friend. This friend, he says, came to ask his help with adding a volume to the already completed thirty volumes which he claims to have written. Here Galdós is fictionalized within the narrator/character just as Cervantes was in the first part of *Don Quijote*. At the end of the novel, the "amigo Manso", protagonist-narrator, asks
the omniscient author who created him to take his life, which he states was given to him solely as a diversion for the author.10

El amigo Manso appears to have influenced Miguel de Unamuno in the writing of his novel Niebla. Before writing Niebla, however, Unamuno wrote two articles under the title of "El amigo Galdós", in which he commented on the novel El amigo Manso. The same technique which Galdós used with respect to the relationship between author and protagonist was employed in Niebla. The relationship between Galdós and Manso bears a great similarity to the relationship between Unamuno and Augusto Pérez. Behind both of these novels, however, lies the influence of Cervantes bearing the confrontation of Don Quijote in the second part of his story with the stories of his previous adventures.11

The first novel of Unamuno in which metafiction can be traced is Amor y pedagogía, published in 1902. The characters of this novel seem to be independent, as autonomous as Don Quijote and Sancho in Unamuno’s Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho, published three years later. But it was in 1914, with the appearance of Niebla that the implications of the autonomous character were developed fully in the character of Augusto Pérez, the hero of the novel.12 In this novel, Unamuno explores the nature of the fictional character. In chapter XXXI, the character of Unamuno/author met face-to-face with Augusto and carried on
a dialogue in which he addressed the problems of the relationship of the author with his characters. Unamuno let Augusto know that he was in complete control of his character's destiny and that Augusto lacked the free will he needed in order to take his own life.

Another example of metafiction within Unamuno's novels is found in Cómo se hace una novela, written in 1927. This work deals critically with a novel composed by Unamuno himself in 1925 which was translated into French by Jean Cassou and published in 1926 as Retrato de Unamuno. Unamuno translated the novel from the French version in 1927 and took advantage of the occasion to lengthen it. The novel is a text rewritten, critically recovered from a foreign language, and presented with commentary. In this novel, Unamuno explored the role of the reader with respect to the narrative process. It contains autobiographical elements combined with reflections about literary creation. This self-reflective quality of the novel makes it an important example of metafiction within the works of Unamuno.

Antonio Risco notes that this novel represents literature which is reflected in itself and analyzes itself. With this work, Unamuno attempted to display a new theory of the novel both as a literary genre and an historical genre. The historical genre he wanted to create with the novel was a manifestation of the autobiographical aspect which he saw inherent in the novel. To Unamuno, the
novel should represent the vital experience of man. In *Cómo se hace una novela* the esthetic value of the literary genre was subordinated to the personal experience of man expressed in the historical genre.

The next to last novel written by Unamuno, in 1931, was *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*. Here the author claims to have discovered a manuscript which is the story told by the narrator/character Angela Carballino. This is the same fictional technique that Cervantes used when he told the reader that *Don Quijote* was based on an Arab manuscript written by Cide Hamete Benengeli. This traditional technique draws attention to the creative process as it attempts to lend greater credibility to the author’s fictional invention. Through the character of don Manuel, as presented in the recollections of Angela, Unamuno presents the theme of immortality and enters the novel as author/character in Angela and don Manuel to express his own existential struggle between faith and reason. This framed memoir focuses on the process of authorial creation.¹⁴

The thread of metafiction within the Spanish novel can therefore be traced from the beginning of the sixteenth century in the novel of Delicado in 1524, to the beginning of the seventeenth century in *Don Quijote*, and on to the nineteenth century to resurface in the novels of Galdós. In the early twentieth century, the influence of these authors can be found in Unamuno’s novels, which contain a wide
variety of methods to express the concept of metafiction. Unamuno's novelistic style, which will be discussed in the following chapter, caused him to break away from the confines of the traditional realistic novel of the period and look for other means of creative expression. One aspect of that expression was manifested in the techniques which Unamuno employed to reflect the idea of metafiction. Many of the techniques which appeared in his novels were already well-known within the history of the Spanish novel, but Unamuno employed them in new ways and during a period in Spain when many of his contemporaries were writing novels which were more faithful to the norms of the traditional novel.
II. UNAMUNO'S STYLE

1. General characteristics

By the time that Unamuno had written his first novel in 1897, *Paz en la guerra*, he had published many notable essays. He was known as a brilliant, paradoxical, and rebellious thinker. But this realistic novel did not contribute to the prestige of Unamuno. He continued to be considered as a writer, but not as a novelist. However, after *Paz en la guerra*, Unamuno began to react against the conventions of nineteenth century narrative and criticized it for its proliferation of details. Francisco Ayala notes how Unamuno began to employ the novel to communicate his vision of the world. He abandoned the precepts of the novel by rejecting the traditional ideas of realism in order to try out new novelistic methods. Ayala attributes the originality and innovative techniques of Unamuno to his fundamental philosophical position. He states that the methods of realism which Unamuno used in writing *Paz en la guerra* did not conform well with his talent and vision of the world. Within the realistic concept of the novel, the author's personality is not a focus because the creative energy is spent in the reproduction of persons and things which become a shadow of the author and obtain no autonomy of their own. This concept of the novel produced a dissatisfaction within Unamuno and he began to search for new techniques which would be more suited to his needs of expression.
Unamuno's second novel, *Amor y pedagogía*, written in 1902, did not follow the conventions of realism. This novel was not well received by the critics, however, and even began to put into doubt the novelistic talent of the author. It displayed a schematic narration, characters who appeared as ideas without form, and it lacked the description of the realistic novel. For those reasons, many critics believed that it was not a novel and the same judgment was maintained with respect to the novels of Unamuno which followed. Many affirmed that they were disguised essays and had so much dialogue that they were often more like plays. Unamuno defended his novels with a subtle humor and advised the critics that if they were not novels, they were "nivolas". The "nivola" became Unamuno's personal formula for writing fiction. He did not believe in literary genres according to the traditional criteria. Unamuno was against any classification in literature and life and felt that if the critics insisted on judging his novels according to the rules of the existing genres, then he would invent his own genre. 16

In his prologue to the translation of *Estética* by Benedette Croce (1912), Unamuno wrote of the destruction of the superstition of the genres and of the roles of literature, thereby freeing himself to create his own type of novels. Unamuno stated:
Destruye, por una parte, la superstición de los géneros y de las reglas...y así nos liberta, ya que la libertad no es sino la conciencia de la ley frente a la sumisión de la regla impuesta.17

Ignacio Elizalde notes that the literary theory of Unamuno was based on two affirmations;18 first, that literature which is made to conform with defined rules and genres is false; the only true form of literature being the personal formula which disregards rules. Secondly, with regard to the genre of the novel, Unamuno's "nivolas" constitute a personal form of writing novels. By inventing his own genre to fit the new type of fiction he was writing, Unamuno created an innovative novel which was authentic because of its originality. Elizalde states that Unamuno believed that the public liked the living word, or dialogue, because he felt that it was a natural tendency for man to want to escape from reality and social conventions through lies and fiction. To Unamuno, the word was often a lie or a fiction, which had the capacity to lead to the expression of the truth.19 These sentiments are expressed in chapters XVIII and XX of his novel, Niebla, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

The artifice, as Unamuno called it, of always writing in the present, which he employed in Amor y pedagogía, created an identity between novel and life, more than an imitation of life by the novel. The narration in this novel
reflected the present in continual progress towards the future. Ayala notes that this preoccupation lead Unamuno to the interpretation and integration of imaginary reality with practical reality, or day-to-day reality, in three of Unamuno’s subsequent novels, *Niebla*, *Cómo se hace una novela*, and *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*. In these novels, Unamuno integrated the roles of creator and creatures, which Ayala states as constituting the most profound and spectacular of his innovations. Unamuno felt the need to project whole characters, characters capable of maintaining their personality when confronted by the author. Being his creatures, however, they would also turn against him, confront him and convert him into a character of the novel’s plot. In *El espejo de la muerte*, published in 1913, a short novel appears, *Y va de cuento*, in which Unamuno established the theory of his particular novelistic style. He presented the idea that a character creates his creator in a manner similar to the way in which man creates God, the same opinion which Unamuno expressed in his book, *Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho*. These were Unamuno’s words in *Y va de cuento*: "Somos, pues, los escritores...los que para nuestro uso y satisfacción hacemos los héroes..." He continues by stating:
Como no sea que el héroe haga a su hacedor, opinión que mantengo muy brillante y profundamente en mi Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho...obra en que sostengo que fue Don Quijote el que hizo a Cervantes, y no éste a aquel. ¿Y a mi quién me ha hecho, pues? En este caso, no cabe duda que el héroe de mi cuento. Sí, yo no soy sino una fantasía del héroe de mi cuento. 23

Unamuno employed the novel to express his vision of the world and the conception of man which he conveyed in his essay, El sentimiento trágico de la vida, written in 1913. The hunger for immortality which Unamuno expressed in that essay is expressed the following year through the character of Augusto Pérez in his novel, Niebla. When Augusto cries "¡Quiero vivir!", those words are an intimate expression of Unamuno's existential struggle. 24 This theme appeared again in 1931 through the character of don Manuel in San Manuel Bueno, mártir.
2. **Innovative techniques**

Antonio Onieva describes Unamuno as a very original writer who was not completely understood during his time, particularly by the average reader. Unamuno was often called "extravagant" because he placed his personal sense above the common sense of the masses. Many intellectual readers called him a "paradoxical" and "contradictory" writer, which Unamuno was quick to defend by responding that he was the master of his ideas and not the reverse, and that his main desire in writing was to get rid of the mental laziness of his readers.

Unamuno was also known as an inventor of brilliant ideas and works and has often been praised by the critics for his originality. One area in which the originality of Unamuno was quickly noted was in his novels. In fact, Humberto Piñera is one critic who believes that the novels of Unamuno were so original that they fall outside of the genre of the novel, particularly due to the fact that the author himself is such a manifest entity in each of his works. To Piñera, the overwhelming presence of Unamuno in his novels prohibits them from becoming autonomous works.

Autobiographical elements are common in the novels of Unamuno and although this technique was not innovative, Unamuno used it in a much more direct way than many other writers had, to create a new type of novel, a novel which would integrate creator and creatures. Unamuno's shadow
may be found in a number of the fictional characters which he created for his novels as he attempted to express himself and his philosophy through those characters. Unamuno was reflected in his Augusto of *Niebla*, in his *Jugo de la Raza* of *Cómo se hace una novela*, and in Angela Carballino and don Manuel of *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*. Those characters became an extension of himself and his ideas, and through them Unamuno hoped to prove his own existence and create a literary form of immortality for himself. Many of the characters were simultaneously bound to the author while becoming autonomous creations. This fictional paradox would not have been possible through the use of the techniques common to the traditional realistic novel which respected the boundaries separating author, characters, and reader. Metafiction became the course through which Unamuno was able to embody himself and his ideas in his novelistic creations while at the same time focusing the reader's attention on the creative process.
CHAPTER III

Metafiction in Unamuno's Novels

1. Niebla: Nature of the fictional character

The three novels of Unamuno which are under consideration are linked by common techniques reflecting the idea of metafiction, while at the same time each novel also contains particular metafictional characteristics which give it a unique focus of its own. It was stated earlier that one of Unamuno's greatest innovations as a novelist was the integration of creator and creatures. This innovation could only have occurred if the boundaries which existed between creator and creatures were transgressed. Metafiction was the method which Unamuno used to facilitate this transgression which inevitably drew attention to himself as creator, and to the fictional process involved in the shaping of his creatures.

Unlike Pirandello's characters in Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore who wander in limbo searching for an author, Unamuno's characters are born author's characters. They come into existence through Unamuno and continue to exist only through him. It is their creator's will which brings them forth, not the reality of their time. The only creature which Unamuno created who objects to this existence is Augusto Pérez, in his novel Niebla. However, when Augusto seeks out the author in his study to demand independence, he is made to listen to the authority of his
law, which happens to be the same authority and law to which
Unamuno, as author, is subjected.  

Throughout the course of Unamuno’s novels, creator and
creatures, which are separate entities in the realistic
novel, become intricately enmeshed and occasionally
indistinguishable. However, Unamuno also created the
illusion at times that his characters were autonomous
beings. Augusto Pérez, who began by doubting his existence,
then believing in his existence and even in his
independence, was ultimately and tragically linked to the
will of his creator. The fate of Jugo de la Raza, in Cómo
se hace una novela was even more explicit as he was
tragically linked to the fate of the protagonist in the
novel which he was reading. The protagonist in that
autobiographical novel represented Unamuno himself. Don
Manuel in San Manuel Bueno, mártir, was also tragically
linked to his beliefs and philosophy which were an
expression of the author’s own beliefs and philosophy. On
the surface, each character appeared to be independent to a
certain degree. However, throughout the course of each
novel, the reader becomes acutely aware of Unamuno
exercising his will over each of his creatures in the
attempt to express himself.

Unamuno created characters through whom he had hoped to
live. In Niebla, Unamuno created Víctor Goti to prologuize
his novel. In the traditional realistic novel, the
prologue is not written by a character of the novel, however, the prologue of Niebla is signed by Víctor, who is Unamuno's first fictional character in the novel. Víctor is simultaneously situated in the fictional world as he claims to be a good friend of Augusto Pérez, and in the real world as a creation and extension of Unamuno. As a character, he is capable of speaking and behaving as though both worlds represented one reality. This double existence gives Víctor an appearance of reality which a character in a realistic novel lacks. He begins by telling the reader that he has written the prologue at the request of Unamuno, which was a command for him, and that he could only obey this command, as he lacks free will. In the first paragraph of the prologue, Víctor lets the reader know that Unamuno is in control, even though he believes that the author himself possesses no more free will than he does as a character.

Unamuno created a self-reflective text with the intervention of Víctor, who spends most of the prologue talking about Unamuno and his criticism of writers and of the reading public. Instead of an introduction to a literary work, the prologue written by Unamuno and presented by his character seems more like a speech made to the audience by an actor at the beginning of a play. It is as though Unamuno himself has become the first actor in his "nivola" as he employs Víctor to reflect upon himself as a
writer. Unamuno as creator and Víctor as creature become integrated in the prologue as the plane of reality and the plane of fiction coincide.

Víctor doubles Unamuno as he claims to have invented the word "nivola". He is also the one who first tells Augusto that he is a fictional being. He tells the reader that in Niebla Unamuno quotes from the conversations he has with Augusto and tells the reader the story of his son's birth. He even states that he is distantly related to the author; his surname being the same as one of Unamuno's ancestors. Throughout the prologue to Niebla, Unamuno draws attention to the creative process involved in the writing of a novel and in the creation of his characters, as well as drawing attention to himself. The reader quickly becomes aware of Unamuno's role as he listens to Víctor.

At the end of the prologue, Víctor tells the reader that the version of the death of his friend, Augusto, which is given by Unamuno in Niebla is erroneous. He asserts that he is convinced that Augusto actually committed suicide, even though Unamuno claims to have killed his character. But in order to have killed himself, Augusto must have had free will, which according to Víctor, he himself is lacking, as is Unamuno.

Unamuno responds to his character's comments in his own post-prologue, wherein he clarifies his role as creator and
controller of the destiny of his creations. He reminds the reader that Augusto died in accordance with the free will and decision of the creator/author and warns Víctor that the same powers can be exercised equally upon him if he continues to question his authority:

Y debe andarse mi amigo y prologuista Goti con mucho tiento en discutir así mis decisiones, porque si me fastidia mucho acabaré por hacer con él lo que con su amigo Pérez hice, y es que lo dejaré morir o le mataré a guisa de médico. (p. 17)

Unamuno quickly brought the reader’s attention to the creative process in the prologue and post-prologue by focusing on himself as creator and on his omnipotence in creating and controlling the fate of his fictional characters. It becomes clear to the reader from the beginning of Niebla that Unamuno is going to play a very active role as director in the "nivola" about to be staged.

In her study of Niebla, Sandra Boschetto states that Unamuno’s purpose in writing fiction was to reveal himself, his own existence, by opposing it to the characters which he created as subjects. When speaking of the world of his characters, and calling it "mi mundo", Unamuno expressed a conviction that the reader had to pass through the characters to arrive at the subject of most importance: the author. This seems to be clearly the case in the prologue and post-prologue of Niebla. Unamuno does play a very active role in his novel, or "nivola", Niebla. As the
omniscient author/narrator, he established himself firmly in command of the work. Through the use of metafiction, Unamuno simultaneously drew attention to the creative process involved in shaping his fictional characters and to himself as creator.

With the first reading of Niebla, it may seem that the novel is written according to the method described by Unamuno in his essay "A lo que salga"; a novel without a preconceived plan that aspired to reflect the fluctuations of life and its arbitrariness. However, with a closer look, Niebla may be seen as a well structured novel in which many techniques are consciously employed by the author.

Ignacio Elizalde has distinguished three sections of Niebla which correspond to the three periods in the life of Augusto Pérez. The first section, consisting of seven chapters, shows the attempt by Unamuno to awaken Augusto to a more conscious life. The second section of eighteen chapters constitutes the body of the history in which Augusto has to decide among various possibilities of action. This period of Augusto's life ends when he has committed himself to a line of action and with the appearance of Unamuno in the novel. The third part is the ending of the novel; the fleeing of Augusto's fiancée Eugenia, the visit of Augusto to the author, Unamuno, and the death of Augusto. Numerous techniques reflecting metafiction are found within
each of these three sections of Niebla, as Unamuno focuses
the reader's attention on the creation of his fictional
character.

It was noted earlier that Niebla has been criticized
for its lack of plot. Unamuno clearly subordinated plot to
the process of "self-conscious creation" in his "nivola". He created Víctor as a character to present the prologue as
well as to act within the novel as a friend of Augusto.
Unamuno then created Augusto to be the protagonist in his
novel. In chapter I, Augusto's life seems to be without
purpose. At this point, he appears as a character lacking
awareness of his role as a character and without a plot to
fit his actions into. However, in chapter II, after he sees
a woman who strikes his fancy whom he learns is Eugenia,
Augusto creates his own Eugenia to fit his ideal of a woman
and his life suddenly has a purpose. Augusto tells the
reader that this Eugenia is not the one of flesh and blood
that he saw, but a spiritual Eugenia whom he himself is
creating in order to give his life purpose. Niebla becomes
an imitation of fiction - a fiction about fiction - instead
of an imitation of reality, when Augusto, a fictional
character created by Unamuno, creates his own fictional
version of Unamuno's Eugenia. In this way Augusto seems to
be independent and in control of his life:
Augusto then talks about his life as a mist and from that mist emerged Eugenia: "...la vida es esto, la niebla. La vida es una nebulosa. Ahora surge de ella Eugenia."

(p. 31) Augusto’s invention of Eugenia is analogous to the authorial process of creation. He is conscious of the fact that he is shaping an Eugenia, an abstract creation who is different from the concrete woman created by Unamuno, who inspired him in his creative act.

In Niebla, reality and fiction merge as the character and author create themselves. Unamuno created Augusto Pérez in the beginning of the novel, who then created the object of his love, Eugenia. Thus, Unamuno created a character whose life within the novel begins with the creation of another character. Through this technique of internal duplication, Unamuno wanted to draw the reader’s attention closer to the endless creative process involved in literature and life.

Niebla consists of Augusto’s soliloquies, his monologues with his dog, Orfeo, and dialogues between himself and the other characters in the novel. These are linked by narration in the third person, up until chapter XXXI in which Unamuno enters the novel and acts as first person narrator through the end of the novel.
Augusto begins to express his existential struggle in a monologue in which he reflects on the idea of creation. This monologue appears in chapter VII and is addressed to his dog, Orfeo:

¿No es acaso todo creación de cada cosa y cada cosa creación de todo? Y ¿qué es creación? ¿que eres tú, Orfeo? ¿qué soy yo?" (p. 50)

He then muses on the appearance of Eugenia and on whether she is in fact his creation or he is her creation, or whether they are both mutual creations of each other. Augusto begins to question his existence at this point also. "Muchas veces se me ha ocurrido pensar, Orfeo, que yo no soy..." (p. 50) However, he says that Eugenia makes him think that he exists:

Y ahora me brillan en el cielo de mi soledad los dos ojos de Eugenia...Y me hacen creer que existo, ¡dulce ilusión! 'Amo, ergo sum'!... (pp. 50-51)

In the second section of Niebla, Víctor lets the reader know that he is in on Unamuno's secret - that Augusto is merely a figment of imagination, an idea, a fictional being. In chapter X, Augusto meets Víctor who tells him after hearing about Eugenia that he is only in love in his head and adds: "Y si me apuras mucho te digo que tú mismo no eres sino una pura idea, un ente de ficción..." (p. 62)

Later, in chapter XIII, Unamuno as author/narrator tells the reader that Augusto could not be sure that he existed. Then in chapter XV, Eugenia, talking to her aunt
about Augusto, says that she doesn't believe that Augusto exists. "Y para mí como si no existiera. ¡Como que no existe!" (p. 80)

In his article, "Unamuno's Niebla: Existence and the Game of Fiction," Carlos Blanco Aguinaga states that Unamuno's purpose in writing Niebla, his "game of Fiction", was to reveal the "precariousness of Existence."

The previous examples show that Unamuno is constantly attempting to focus the reader's attention on the idea of creation and the ambiguity of existence. He attempts to get the reader to begin to question reality as Augusto begins to doubt his own existence when coming into contact with the other fictional characters who express their doubts about his existence.

Unamuno draws attention to the creation/existence of Augusto as a character and as an individual. The concept of character is a thematic concern in Niebla from the viewpoint of the author/narrator and from the viewpoint of the characters themselves. The focus is placed on how a character (Augusto) is created in fiction, as well as on the relationship between the author/narrator and his fictional character. Unamuno's purpose is to lay bare the nature of the fictional "persona", to demonstrate that he consists of nothing but words and depends on the ingenuity of the author for his existence.
Víctor appears in chapter XVII as Unamuno's double and confesses that he is writing a novel with the same problems that Unamuno faces in the writing of his novel. Víctor tells Augusto:

...voy a escribir una novela, pero voy a escribirla como se vive, sin saber lo que vendrá. Me senté, cogí unas cuartillas y empecé lo primero que se me ocurrió, sin saber lo que seguiría, sin plan alguno. Mis personajes se irán haciendo según obren y hablen, sobre todo según hablen; su carácter se irá formando poco a poco... (p. 91)

Niebla becomes particularly self-reflective in this chapter with the use of metafiction. Practically all the great novels of the twentieth century contain at least some form of reflection about the genre to which they pertain. Although metafiction is found quite universally within the contemporary novel, Unamuno expressed this concept with a high degree of explicitness. Through the use of his character, Víctor, Unamuno was able to communicate directly his ideas about the writing of a novel. This allusion to the development of the novel itself also characterizes a subsequent novel of Unamuno, Cómo se hace una novela, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

In the first section of Niebla, Unamuno as author/narrator relates the story of Augusto Pérez. However, the story line is supplemented in the second section of Niebla with several intercalated stories. This technique was already well-known in the Spanish novel when Unamuno employed it in his novel. Cervantes employed it
frequently in Don Quijote. In fact, Víctor explains to Augusto that the "novelitas intercaladas" are in the tradition of Cervantes. The intercalated stories in Niebla are told by various characters. In chapter XIII, the reader hears the story of don Avito Carrascal and his son; in chapter XIV, the story of Víctor Goti and his marriage; in chapter XVII, the story of don Eloíno Rodríguez de Alburquerque y Álvarez de Castro and the widow; in chapter XXI, the story of Antonio; and in chapter XXII, the story of the hero of the Portuguese legend. The intercalated story represents the addition of another fictional plane within the novel. It introduces a fiction within a fiction; a fiction displaced from the fiction which corresponds to Augusto and the characters of his world. This technique serves to magnify the illusion of reality in the first plane of fiction as well as to draw attention to the subjective nature of fiction and reality in the day-to-day existence of Augusto. It is as though Unamuno wanted to create an atmosphere of "mist" and confusion within the novel in which the reader would begin to question the nature of reality and fiction.

After Augusto tells the story of the "fogueteiro" in chapter XXII, he tells Víctor that one of the things that horrifies him most is to look in the mirror when he is alone, when there is no one else to see him:
Acabo por dudar de mi propia existencia e imaginarme, viéndome como otro, que soy un sueño, un ente de ficción... (p. 114)

When Víctor tells him to stop looking at himself, Augusto says that he can’t help it, that he is obsessively introspective. Augusto’s introspection is a direct expression of his creator’s personal introspection. This is another example of the integration of creator and creature in *Niebla*.

In chapter XXV, Augusto asks Víctor about the "nivola" he is writing. When Augusto tells him that he is torn with doubt, his friend tells him that his doubt is proof of his existence and that neither belief, knowledge, or imagination presupposes doubt. Víctor tells Augusto that there is doubt in imagination; that he usually doubts what he must make his characters do and say. Even after he has manipulated them and made them do and say certain things, he confesses that he has doubts as to whether he did the right thing. Unamuno enters the novel later to express his own doubts about how he handles Augusto.

At the end of chapter XXV of *Niebla*, Unamuno crosses over the boundary separating the world of the author and the world of the reader to address the reader directly. Up to this point in the novel, Unamuno has only intervened indirectly as author/narrator to remind the reader of his presence. His words to the reader in this chapter are, on
the other hand, a very strong expression of his role as author and creator. He begins by commenting on the behavior of the characters he has created and tells the reader that the conversation that Augusto and Víctor are having is justifying his manipulation of them. Unamuno claims to be the "God" of his characters:

Mientras Augusto y Víctor sostenían esta conversación 'nivolesca', yo, el autor de este 'nivola', que tienes, lector, en la mano, y estás leyendo, me sonreía enigmáticamente al ver que mis 'nivolescos' personajes estaban abogando por mí y justificando mis procedimientos y me decía a mí mismo: '¡Cuán lejos estarán estos infelices de pensar que no están haciendo otra cosa que tratar de justificar lo que yo estoy haciendo con ellos! Así, cuando uno busca razones para justificarse no hace en rigor otra cosa que justificar a Dios. Y yo soy el Dios de estos dos pobres diablos 'nivolescos.' (pp. 130-131)

Until chapter XXXI, the story line of Niebla stays within the boundaries of the conventional narrative of Unamuno's time. As noted in Chapter I of this study, there have been many Spanish novels prior to Unamuno in which the author has intervened to remind the reader of his presence or made direct comments to the reader. However, Unamuno took metafiction a step further in chapter XXXI of Niebla. This chapter opens with a narrative statement about Augusto's decision to commit suicide. But Unamuno tells the reader that before doing so, Augusto decided to discuss it with him, the author of the story. He tells the reader that Augusto read an essay of his in which he made a comment
about suicide. This intervention of the author is a familiar technique, but when Augusto, a fictional character, actually makes the journey to Salamanca, the real capital of a Spanish province to speak to the real author, an innovative technique is employed. The direct confrontation between character and author is used to symbolize the meeting of fiction and reality face-to-face and to reflect the ambiguity of existence. It is in this chapter that Augusto discovers directly from his creator that he is only a character in a work of fiction, an extension of Unamuno; that he does not exist, and therefore can not kill himself:

No, no existes más que como ente de ficción; no eres, pobre Augusto, más que un producto de mi fantasía y de las de aquellos de mis lectores que lean el relato que de tus fingidas venturas y malandanzas he escrito yo; tú no eres más que un personaje de novela, o de ‘nivola’, o como quieras llamarle. Ya sabes, pues, tu secreto. (p. 149)

By committing suicide, Augusto would be able to prove independence from his author. But Unamuno refuses to grant this final request of his character. As author/character, he confronts Augusto and informs him that he must die a natural death like everyone else, even though the Unamuno of flesh and blood hungers for immortality just as his fictional character does.

Augusto truly becomes Unamuno’s puppet at this point as the reader’s attention is focused completely on the strings of the creative process which have allowed him to exist as
a fictional character. At the beginning of their meeting Unamuno believes that he is in full control of the situation. However, after Augusto’s initial shock at finding out that he does not really exist, he recovers, defends himself, and tells Unamuno that perhaps he is the fictional character, a creation of some superior author:38

No sea, mi querido don Miguel...que sea usted y no yo el ente de ficción, el que no existe en realidad, ni vivo ni muerto... No sea que usted no pase de ser un pretexto para que mi historia llegue al mundo... (p. 149)

Unamuno’s central theme in Vida de Don Quijote y Sancho is that Don Quijote and Sancho are more real than Cervantes; that the author was created by his characters. Unamuno draws attention to that theme in Niebla, but by not allowing Augusto to rebel against him, he also contradicted that theme. In the face of his character’s strong objections to his fate, Unamuno adamantly informs him that it has already been written and there is nothing that can be done about it. At the end of the confrontation, Augusto accepts his sentence and tells Unamuno that he will die also, that God will stop dreaming him, just as Unamuno plans to stop dreaming Augusto:

Pues bien, mi señor creador don Miguel, también usted se morirá,... y se volverá a la nada de que salió... ¡Dios dejará de soñarle! ...no es usted más que otro ente ‘nivolesco’... lo mismo que yo,... (p. 154)
In his interpretation of Niebla, Julián Marías disregards character and plot and elaborates on the "ontological scheme" which he observes in the novel. Augusto doubts his own reality throughout the novel, but a fictional character is "real" in the same sense that a person in a dream is real. He has a temporal existence like a human being, but he lacks substantial nature and disappears into nothing when the author's creative dreaming ends. In a similar way, a human being, considered from God's point of view, has no substantial nature because his existence also depends on his Creator. He is therefore also a fictional being, dreamed by God, but capable of dreaming other fictional beings. Fiction and reality are in this way linked in a relation of subordination. The reality of the novelistic character is subordinate when seen from man's point of view, but man is also subordinate when seen from God's point of view.

Unamuno borrowed the metaphor of "life as a dream" from Calderón and used it in Niebla to create a "mist" to envelope and confuse reality and fiction. Blanco Aguinaga notes that the most important aspect of chapter XXXI is not that Augusto tries to escape from the confines of the fictional world, but that Unamuno leaves his "mist" of reality and enters the novel. Through this act, Unamuno attempted to achieve a sort of immortality by appearing in
the realm of a novel in which he would always be remembered. It is through the creation of fictional characters that the author is able to affirm his existence; however, it is also in the world of fiction that the author is in the greatest danger of disappearing. Fiction, within the boundaries of conventional narrative, is the realm of existence that expresses the impossibility of the appearance of the subject/author and the object/character. So, Unamuno had to do something drastic to allow the simultaneous appearance to take place. However, in chapter XXXI, when Unamuno entered the novel as a character playing out the role of author, far from playing the role of omnipotent creator, he opened himself up to the character’s charge of not being God and not being immortal.

After his meeting with Unamuno, Augusto has a revelation based upon the knowledge that he does not really exist. He rationalizes that if he is truly only a fictional being, then he is but an idea, and an idea is always immortal. Augusto expresses this idea of his immortality as a fictional character in chapter XXXII:

"¡Yo no puedo morirme; sólo se muere el que está vivo, el que existe, y yo, como no existo, no puedo morirme..., ¡soy inmortal! No hay inmortalidad como la de aquello que, cual yo, no ha nacido y no existe. Un ente de ficción es una idea, y una idea es siempre inmortal...(p. 156)"

Before his death, Augusto wrote a telegram to Unamuno to inform him of his approaching death and to let him know that he has had his way as author. When Unamuno receives
the telegram, he immediately begins to regret his actions and even considers resurrecting his fictional character from death. However, Augusto appears to Unamuno in a dream and tells him that it would be impossible to resurrect him. In Unamuno's dream, the fictional character has had the final word in the struggle with his creator.

Throughout *Niebla*, Unamuno calls attention to the fictional nature of Augusto Pérez. The techniques which he employs in this novel are used to explore the relationship of the fictional character with the author. He began by using Víctor in the prologue to place himself in command of the novel. He then presented his fictional character, Augusto, in his existential struggle. When Augusto started to believe in his existence, Unamuno stepped into the world of the novel in order to assert command over his character. This transgression of the boundary which exists between author and character in the realistic novel was the technique which made *Niebla* a metafictional novel, and Unamuno a most innovative novelist for his time.

By stepping outside of the boundaries of the conventional narrative, Unamuno was also encouraging the reader to become involved and aware of the complexities of the creative process. By first creating characters in whom the reader could immerse himself while being aware that he, the reader, was giving them life which they didn’t have, the reader becomes aware of the intricacies of authorship and
aware of the presence of the author who never really vanishes from the work.\textsuperscript{42}

In chapter XXX, Víctor suggests to Augusto that if a "nivolista" were hidden behind the wardrobe and taking notes of everything that he and Augusto were saying that it would seem to the readers that nothing was going on. Augusto replies that they would not say that if they could just see inside him. Víctor asks:

\[ \text{¿Por dentro? ¿Por dentro de quién? ¿De ti? ¿De mí? Nosotros no tenemos dentro. Cuando no dirían que aquí no pasa nada es cuando pudiesen verse por dentro de sí mismos, de ellos, de los que leen.} \]

(p. 146)

A character, Víctor tells Augusto, has no more interior than that which the reader provides. Within the metafictional novel, the reader does not receive a self-contained work with all the problems settled. He is invited to participate actively in the creation of the novel and apply something of himself to the work.\textsuperscript{43} This new role of the reader became the central focus in the next novel of Unamuno to be considered, \textit{Cómo se hace una novela}. 
2. **Cómo se hace una novela:** The role of the reader

As occurs with all literary innovators, one of the principal ends of a genre consists in the creation of a new, more responsible, and active reader. The innovative novelist is frequently interested in creating a reader who can also become critic and author. In this type of novel, the triad of the fictional mode consisting of author, text, and reader takes on a different, less rigid shape. Within the realistic novel, the text and reader tend to serve as passive objects which are part of a process controlled and manipulated by the author. The only active element in this type of novel is the author who writes the text for the reader. This narrative process was altered within Unamuno's novels in the beginning of the twentieth century. One of Unamuno's innovations consists in his desire to have the reader accept a new and more active role in the novel. This motive is especially noted in **Cómo se hace una novela,** in which Unamuno crosses over the traditional boundary separating author and reader to address the reader directly and invite him to take part in the creative act.

A metafictional mode is present in **Cómo se hace una novela** because of the new role that Unamuno asks the reader to play and because it is also a self-reflective novel. In this novel the Unamuno of 1927 is writing about the Unamuno of 1925, who is writing an autobiographical novel about a
Spaniard who is exiled in Paris. This Spaniard, an autobiographical representation of Unamuno, is in turn reading an autobiographical novel. Unamuno explained his reason for writing *Cómo se hace una novela* at the beginning of the work:

Porque había imaginado, hace ya unos meses, hacer una novela en la que quería poner la más íntima experiencia de mi destierro, crearme, eternizarme bajo los rasgos de desterrado y de proscrito. Y ahora pienso que la mejor manera de hacer la novela es contar cómo hay que hacerla. Es la novela de la novela, la creación de la creación. O Dios de Dios, 'Deus de Deo'. (pp. 133-134)

The novel is based on a story written by Unamuno in 1925. The story is a political work, written to protest the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, who had driven Unamuno to imprisonment and then to a self-imposed exile in France. Unable to publish the work in Spain because of its political content, Unamuno allowed it to be translated by Jean Cassou into French and it appeared in 1926 in the *Mercure de France* as *Comment on fait un roman*. When Unamuno moved to Fuenterrabía after his exile in Paris, he decided to expand the story into a novel, using the French translation.

Unamuno tells the reader in *Cómo se hace una novela* that the first step involved in the creative process of writing this novel was to invent a central character who would be himself. He would call his character U. Jugo de la Raza. The story tells of Jugo, who wandered along the banks of the Seine in Paris and contemplated suicide.
before he happened upon a bookstall and picked up a novel which changed his life. The novel is in the form of an autobiographical confession which addresses Jugo, the reader, directly. When Jugo looked up from the pages of the book he held and gazed upon the waters of the Seine, the river appeared to be unflowing and was converted before his eyes into an immobile mirror. He looked away and when he returned to the pages of the novel, the novel also became a mirror as he read the prophetic words: "Cuando el lector llegue al fin de esta dolorosa historia se morirá conmigo." (p. 135) With those words, the fate of the protagonist of Unamuno’s novel became tied to the fate of a fictional double in the autobiographical novel.

Jugo tried to forget the book, but found that he could not live without it. His existence was tragically linked to the existence of the fictional character in the novel:

...su vida, su existencia íntima, su realidad, su verdadera realidad estaba ya definitiva e irreversiblemente unida a la del personaje de la novela. (p. 136)

While suffering from anxiety about the destiny the book told him was his, Jugo started a fire in his fireplace and burned the book. When he awoke the next morning he contemplated the ashes of the book which seemed to be like the waters of the Seine, another mirror. He felt tormented by not knowing how the story ended so he went back to look for another copy of the book. Unamuno became agitated by
his character at this point and entered the novel to address the reader about his concern:

¿Qué voy a hacer de mi Jugo de la Raza? Como esto que escribo, lector, es una novela verdadera, un poema verdadero, una creación, y consiste en decirte cómo se hace y no cómo se cuenta una novela, una vida histórica, no tengo por qué satisfacer tu interés folletinesco y frívolo. Todo lector que leyendo una novela se preocupa de saber cómo acabarán los personajes de ella sin preocuparse de saber cómo acabará él, no merece que se satisfaga su curiosidad. (pp. 162-163)

Unamuno made it clear that Jugo was destined to die because he, like the reader of the conventional novel, chose to let the novel create him instead of playing an active part in trying to create the novel. The making of a novel, to Unamuno, means much more than simply telling a story. It means that the reader must take risks and join the author in the creative process:48

Cuando mi pobre Jugo,...dio con el libro agorero y se puso a devorarlo y se ensimismó en él; convirtióse en un puro contemplador, en un mero lector, lo que es algo absurdo e inhumano; padecía la novela, pero no la hacía. Y yo quiero contarte, lector, cómo se hace una novela, cómo haces y has de hacer tú mismo tu propia novela. (p. 185)

According to Unamuno, the purpose of writing should be the eternalization or immortalization of the author: to symbolize that philosophy, the novel should not have an ending.49 In Niebla, Unamuno did not concede to the plea for life of his fictional character, Augusto Pérez. He told Augusto that everyone dies, even fictional characters. One important thing which Unamuno wanted to express with
metafiction in *Cómo se hace una novela*, was that the novel should offer the reader the possibility of transcending death through reading. The historical life of the character is not important, nor is the ending of the novel or the ending of the fictional life of the protagonist.

Unamuno states that "Los mejores novelistas no saben lo que han puesto en sus novelas...Porque su vida íntima, entrañada, novelesca se continúa en la de sus lectores." (p. 192) For the reader with an interest in Jugo's fate, Unamuno offers only a vague sketch of several possible endings to the novel. He expressed the idea that the reader should not be concerned with how the novel ends and what becomes of the characters without first being concerned with his own existence. The best readers will not require an ending, for they know that what is finished brings death. Only that which is being made will live and give life. With the expression of this attitude in *Cómo se hace una novela*, Unamuno challenged his readers to read actively and skeptically.50

In writing *Cómo se hace una novela*, Unamuno was telling his readers, the Spanish people, that if they accepted the fiction of Spain offered to them by men like the dictator, Primo de Rivera, then they would die with Jugo de la Raza, because he accepted the fiction of the novel he was reading without taking an active part and thinking critically about the novel:
¿Y cómo acabarás tú, lector? Si no eres más que lector, al acabar tu lectura, y si eres hombre, hombre como yo, es decir, comediante y autor de ti mismo, entonces no debes leer por miedo de olvidarte a ti mismo. (p. 172)

Eva Rudat has distinguished five parallel planes in this narrative work:51 1) Unamuno writing about how a novel is made; 2) the novel of Jugo de la Raza; (Unamuno, himself) 3) Jugo de la Raza, who finds his existence by reading a novel in which he identifies with the protagonist; (the reading is converted into his existence) 4) the autobiography of Unamuno in his exile; (the historical existence), and 5) the problem of immortalization through writing. These five planes of reality and fiction are placed like mirrors within the novel to reflect upon each other.

Unamuno believed that writing was the formulation and fixation of his thoughts; that without writing, those thoughts would remain in the air, without existence. At the same time, however, he admitted that once the text was finished, all that remained was the "letra muerta", so that writing also leads to non-existence. This paradox led to the problem of how to revive the text, once it was written; how to guarantee its immortality.52 Unamuno saw the solution to this problem in the reading of the text. The only way in which the text could be relived was through the reader. By taking an active role in the reading, the reader
could breathe life into the work again; eternalizing it, as well as the author, so that it might live to be reread by another:

Cómo se hace una novela, ¡bien!, pero ¿para qué se hace? Y el para qué es el porqué. ¿Por qué, o sea, para qué se hace una novela? Para hacerse el novelista. ¿Y para qué se hace el novelista? Para hacer al lector, para hacerse uno con el lector. Y sólo haciéndose uno el novelador y el lector de la novela se salvan ambos de su soledad radical. En cuanto se hacen uno se actualizan y actualizándose se eternizan. (p. 205)

Unlike the writers of the traditional realistic novel, Unamuno did not write in order to describe the reality that symbolized existence becoming writing or expression. He wrote in order to give existence to himself; to achieve a form of immortality. Writing was for him a process of self-realization that gave him existence.53

In the realistic novel, the author assigned the reader a passive role and an objective situation with regard to the text. Eva Rudat notes that the originality of Unamuno with respect to the role of the reader was based upon the subjective situation of the reader. The esthetic effect of the text upon the reader was not important to Unamuno. The existence of the reader as an individual was of primary importance to him:

...a Unamuno no le importa la situación objetiva del lector ante el texto, ni el efecto estético de la lectura sino el lector que se hace, se actualiza y se existencializa, ahí está su originalidad.54
In *Cómo se hace una novela*, Unamuno applied the analogy of opening a watchcase to explain what novelists do who write books to explain the mechanism of their novel and demonstrate their style of writing. He then tells the reader that the analogy is rather far-fetched:

> Una ficción de mecanismo, mecánica, no es ni puede ser novela. Una novela, para ser viva, para ser vida, tiene que ser, como la vida misma, organismo y no mecanismo. (p. 191)

> ...el novelista que cuenta cómo se hace una novela cuenta cómo se hace un novelista, o sea cómo se hace un hombre. Y muestra sus entrañas humanas, eternas y universales, sin tener que levantar tapa alguna de reló. Esto de levantar tapas de reló se queda para literatos que no son precisamente novelistas. (p. 193)

*Cómo se hace una novela* is not about the making of a novel. It is about the making of the reader and the making of the novelist. Unamuno was telling the reader that the novel should have a humanistic purpose instead of a literary purpose. The reader and the novelist both have a responsibility to each other in this new type of novel.

In *Niebla*, Unamuno used metafiction to lay bare the fictional process and to explore the nature of the fictional character. His purpose in employing metafiction in *Cómo se hace una novela* was somewhat different. The formation of the fictional character was not the primary focus in this work. The focus was placed on the role of the reader in the creative process, which Unamuno saw reflected in the existential struggle of the individual. The illustration of
this existential struggle is even more profound in the next novel of Unamuno to be considered, *San Manuel Bueno, mártir*. 
3. San Manuel Bueno, mártir: A framed memoir

The fictional artifice which Unamuno employed in San Manuel Bueno, mártir (1931), is a memoir which he claimed to have found and used to form the novel, applying only a few editorial emendations. The novel itself is reduced to a mere framework for the narration. This technique is reminiscent of Don Quijote, in which Cervantes pretends to lose his role as author to become editor of the work he presents. This familiar technique served as an attempt to elevate the story told by the narrator to a plane which the author wanted the reader to accept as reality. Unamuno's first objective in San Manuel was to create an illusion of reality within the novel, while focusing attention on the authorial process. The interplay between reality and fiction and the "life as a dream" motif borrowed from Calderón continues in this novel as it appeared in Niebla and Cómo se hace una novela.

The pretext of a manuscript discovered by the author and presented through the voice of the narrator created two levels of fiction within the novel; the fiction of the narrator and the fiction of the story which the narrator told. By having the story told first hand by the one who witnessed the events on which the story was based, Unamuno wanted the reader to accept the story as reality, however subjective it might be.

The narrative voice in the novel is that of Angela
Carballino, the fictional author of the memoir. Throughout the work, the reader experiences the actual process by which Angela strives to make the memory and image of don Manuel clear in her own mind.55 The entire novel is narrated completely through the memory and impressions of Angela. The narration begins in the present as Angela has just begun to write her recollections of don Manuel, the village priest who made an indelible impression on her life. The past is not organized chronologically as she begins to write, and her initial memories create a rather impressionistic portrait of don Manuel. Through Angela, the reader learns of don Manuel's existential struggle between faith and reason.

Within the novel appear reconstructed events and conversations between Angela and don Manuel as well as conversations between Angela and her brother, Lázaro and don Manuel. Soon after don Manuel's death, Lázaro himself began compiling a record of the priest's work. Angela gives credit to her brother's notes which she said made possible some of the conversations which she wrote in her memoir.

The last section of the narration takes place in the present as Angela appears in the process of writing the memoir. It takes the form of a long interior monologue through the end of the novel as she contemplates the significance of the past. As the memoir reaches completion,
Angela begins to question her own recollection of the past as she reflects on what she has written:

Yo no sé lo que es verdad y lo que es mentira, ni lo que vi y lo que sólo soñé - o mejor - lo que soñé y lo que sólo vi - ni lo que supe ni lo que creí. (p. 78)

The creative process involved in the writing of the memoir is analyzed by Angela as she formulates rhetorical questions with respect to the reality and subjectivity of what she has written. "¿Es que pueden pasar estas cosas? ¿Es que todo esto es más que un sueño soñado dentro de otro sueño?" (p. 79) Angela's uncertainty about what she has written is due to the fact that the intensity of her memories is determined by the subjective value that the past experiences hold for her, and not by the fact that the experiences occurred in a too distant past.56

Unamuno employed his narrator, Angela, as a technique to explore the creative process from the point of view of a fictional author and to bring this focus to the attention of the reader. He began by utilizing the fictional artifice of the memoir to make the reader believe that the story being told was real, and then to motivate the reader to question reality as the narrator herself began to question it after she had written the memoir.

Eleazar Huerta recognizes San Manuel as Unamuno's most lyrical novel; a novel which skillfully combines narrator
and character within a meticulously novelesque structure. The technique of integrating creator and creature is found again in this metafictional novel, making it another example of Unamuno's innovative style. The anguish and doubt of don Manuel in his existential struggle between faith and reason is mirrored in the anguish and doubt of Angela as she struggles between the subjective and objective reality of what she has written. Unamuno skillfully portrays himself also, in the anguish of both Angela and don Manuel.

In the final chapter of the novel, Unamuno employed metafiction again by stepping into the narration through the use of a short epilogue. He addressed the reader directly when he refused to tell how he discovered the memoir:

¿Cómo vino a parar a mis manos este documento, esta memoria de Angela Carballino? He aquí algo, lector, algo que debo guardar en secreto. Te lo doy tal y como a mí ha llegado, sin más que corregir pocas, muy pocas particularidades de redacción. (p. 80)

Through the use of metafiction, Unamuno unobtrusively entered the world of the novel and the world of the reader in order to make his commentary on the reality of the memoir of his fictional author. Unamuno expressed vehemently his belief in the reality of the image of don Manuel as presented by Angela:

De la realidad de este San Manuel Bueno, mártir, tal como me lo ha revelado su discípula e hija espiritual Angela Carballino, de esta realidad no se me ocurre dudar. Creo en ella más que creía el mismo santo; creo en ella más que creo en mi propia realidad. (pp. 80-81)
Unamuno recognized the portrait which Angela created of don Manuel as an act of faith on her part. He professed his own belief in the object which her faith created and viewed the portrait as the consequence of Angela's personal consciousness. By expressing his belief in that portrait, Unamuno was also asserting his belief in the reality of objects created through faith and love.58

With this final novel of Unamuno, the triad of the fictional mode has been represented in its entirety—all angles of the fictional process explored—as Unamuno focused the reader's attention this time upon the author. Just as his fictional character, Augusto and his fictional reader, Jugo de la Raza each faced an existential struggle, so did Angela, as the fictional author of the memoir which Unamuno so neatly framed by endorsing Angela's view of reality and embracing it in all its subjectivity.

In the Prologue to the third edition of Niebla, written in 1935, Unamuno wrote that no one wants his illusion of reality taken from him. It is this illusion of reality which don Manuel wanted to leave to the people of his village of Valverde de Lucerna. In this complex work which is an expression of Unamuno's philosophy embodied in El sentimiento trágico de la vida, written 13 years before San Manuel, Unamuno portrayed his own existential struggle through his fictional author and fictional character.
CONCLUSION

Aristotle wrote that the art that is the least visible is the greatest art.\textsuperscript{59} He most likely would not have called the novelistic art of Unamuno "great art", with respect to the techniques which were used by Unamuno to lay bare the creative process involved in the writing of fiction. Unamuno's purpose in the use of metafiction was to make the art of fiction and the creative process visible to the reader. He employed metafiction to explore the relationships existing between fictional character, reader, and author. Besides the technical aspects of metafiction in Unamuno's writing, there is a more profound dimension involved. In his novels, with the use of metafiction, the process of fiction becomes an existential expression;\textsuperscript{60} the fiction-making process evolves into a metaphor for self-creation. Unamuno viewed life as a creative process and through the use of metafiction he wanted to bring literature and life closer together. He rejected the values of the traditional realistic novel which aimed at imitating life. Unamuno wanted existence and writing to become one in the novel. His fiction involved a fusion of the real and the imagined which he hoped would create a model of reality which might express a deeper truth. By creating a self-conscious novel with the use of metafiction, Unamuno was expressing his idea of the importance of the self-conscious
human being who is created by reflecting upon himself and his existence. Unamuno declared to Augusto Pérez in Niebla that all human beings are characters in the novel of existence.

The three novels of Unamuno chosen in this study create a synthesis of Unamuno's narrative theory as well as an embodiment of his ideas and philosophy. Through the dialectical combination of reality and fiction in these novels, Unamuno wanted to create a higher form of truth. Niebla, Cómo se hace una novela, and San Manuel Bueno, mártir together form a triad which symbolically duplicates the triad representing the fictional mode of the novel. In each novel, Unamuno places the focus on one element of the triad, as well as expressing the interdependency which exists among the three elements. The synergy which these elements create together, forms the innovative novel of Unamuno, the "nivola".

In Niebla, with the creation of Augusto Pérez, the focus is placed on the nature of the fictional character in the novel. The role of the reader presented through Jugo de la Raza is the fictional element explored in Cómo se hace una novela. Through Angela Carballino in San Manuel Bueno, mártir, Unamuno presented the struggle of the author in the writing of her memoir. In each novel, the fictional character, the reader, and the author faced their own
personal existential struggle. Unamuno used metafiction to transgress the boundary which had traditionally existed between author and reader, and author and character. In this way, he was able to embody himself and his own existential struggle in each of the characters which represented an element of the fictional world. Whereas writers of the traditional realistic novel had incorporated their ideas into their fictional creatures in the manner of magicians, whose hands are quicker than the eyes of the observer, Unamuno wanted to show the reader the tricks of the trade by laying bare the process involved in integrating creator and creature. This innovation, his greatest one perhaps with regard to the novel, could only be accomplished through metafiction.

As the actor needs the collaboration of an audience to confirm his existence on stage, Unamuno was also aware that the author and characters of his novels needed the reader to confirm their existence. In Niebla, Víctor tells Augusto that they have no insides because the characters of a novel or "nivola" have only the consistency which their readers give them. This emphasis on the new role of the reader in the novel was also an innovation of Unamuno, the "nivolista", which was facilitated through metafiction.

Unamuno tried all the forms of literary expression that would reveal himself as "Subject" for the "Others" (his characters and readers) and also reveal the "Others" to him
and to themselves in their individual subjectivity. In his philosophical study of Unamuno, Julián Marías defines the novel's purpose, viewed from the perspective of Unamuno's novels, as the attempt to make the readers aware of "the history of the person, allowing it to develop before us, in full light, its intimate movement, in order to reveal thus its inner nucleus [The novel, the existential novel] pretends, simply, to reveal in its truth the human existence."  

Based upon familiarization with Unamuno's writing, it may be said that the exploration of human existence was Unamuno's "raison d'être". He refused to be inhibited in this exploration by the boundaries which the realistic novel imposed to separate him as author from the characters he created and from his readers. Unamuno hungered for immortality and did find a realm in which he will continue to live in the characters he molded and in the readers who have discovered and are yet to discover Unamuno - a human being and an innovative novelist - and themselves, as they enter the new worlds of fiction that his "nivolás" made possible.
NOTES

1 Miguel de Unamuno, *Niebla*, 13ª edición, (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe), 1971. Miguel de Unamuno, *San Manuel Bueno, mártir y Cómo se hace una novela*, 12ª edición, (Madrid: Alianza), 1983. All subsequent reference to these novels will come from the just mentioned editions. When quoting from these works, the page number(s) will appear in parenthesis after the quotation.


4 Leon Livingstone, "Duplicación interior y el problema de la forma en la novela," in *Teoría de la novela* (Aproximaciones hispánicas), ed. Agnes and Germán Gullón, (Madrid: Taurus, 1974), pp. 163-164. In this work, Livingstone refers to Joseph Gillet’s belief that the modern use of the author-character technique constitutes a new attitude, a modern procedure followed deliberately by the author, whereas its application in the past had been unintentional. Leon Livingstone believes that the technique is only a modern reaffirmation of a technique that has been reflected in Spanish literature throughout its entire development.
5 Ibid, pp. 163-164.


7 Ibid, p. 180.

8 Francisco Ayala, La novela: Galdós y Unamuno (Barcelona: Seix Barral, 1974), p. 97.


12 Gillet, p. 183.

13 Antonio Risco, Azorín y la ruptura con la novela tradicional (Madrid: Editorial Alhambra, 1980), p. 82.

14 Livingstone, p. 164.


19 Ibid, p. 175.
20 Ayala, pp. 69-70.
21 Ayala, p. 67.
23 Ibid, p. 229.
24 Ayala, pp. 67-68.
26 Humberto Piñera, Unamuno y Ortega y Gasset (Contraste de dos pensadores) (Centro de Estudios Humanísticos de la Universidad de Nuevo León, 1965), p. 212.

Unamuno’s attitude and techniques as a Spanish novelist have often been associated with the attitude and techniques of the Italian playwright, Luigi Pirandello. Niebla maintains a place within the history of the Spanish novel which is comparable to that of Pirandello’s Sei personaggi in cerca d’autore (1918) in the Italian theater. In both cases, the boundary which separated fiction from reality disappeared, to reveal new possibilities of literary expression. Both writers are known for their creation of autonomous characters, but there seems to have been no direct mutual influence. Unamuno’s Niebla appeared four years before Sei personaggi, but after Pirandello had
published *La tragedia d'un personaggio*, which contains a character-author interview. In an article published in *La Nación* in 1923, Unamuno denied that Pirandello influenced him. Both writers were influenced by Cervantes and Calderón. However, their innovations, which reveal several similarities, go beyond the previous treatments of the "art-life theme".


30 Miguel de Unamuno, "A lo que salga," en *Obras Completas* (Madrid: n.p., 1958). In this essay, Unamuno discusses two types of writers. The writer who mediates about the plot when writing a novel; one who thinks and reconsiders his thoughts or gestates in the writing process is called "vivíparo". When this writer feels the urgent need to exteriorize his thoughts, he takes his pen in hand and metaphorically gives birth to his literary creation. The "ovíparo" writer, on the other hand, begins writing without going through this lengthy mental process. This writer lets his thoughts flow spontaneously through his pen as he writes what comes to mind at that moment.

32 Ibid, p. 266.

33 Newberry, p. 74.


37 Newberry, p. 76. This character is from an earlier novel of Unamuno, *Amor y pedagogía*. Unamuno explains who Avito Carrascal is in a footnote in *Niebla* in order that the illusion of the character’s autonomy will not be lost to those readers not familiar with the previous novel. It is the illusion of autonomy which allows a character to pass from one novel to another.

38 Blanco Aguinaga, p. 194.


40 This paraphrase of Julián Marías appears on pages 117-118 of Alexander Parker’s article mentioned above and is

42 Ibid, p. 203.
43 Newberry, p. 75.
44 Risco, p. 251.

46 U. is the initial letter of the author's surname, Jugo is the first, paternal surname of his maternal grandfather and Larraza is the name of his paternal grandmother. Unamuno writes that name in two words, La Raza, which means "The Race", for the play on words that it contains.

47 Speck, p. 53. Paula Speck calls Cómo se hace una novela a "game of mirrors."
48 Ibid, p. 57.
50 Speck, p. 57.
51 Rudat, pp. 50-51.
54 Ibid, p. 59.
56 Ibid, p. 72.
58 Anderson, p. 75.
60 Ibid, p. 59.
61 Blanco Aguinaga, p. 201.
62 This quote of Mariás appears on pages 201-202 of Blanco Aguinaga’s article and is from the work of Mariás, Miguel de Unamuno (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1943), p. 69. Blanco Aguinaga notes that the truth of the human existence of which Mariás speaks, must be understood to be that of the character through whom we, as readers, experience the world also.
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