Literary Translation in Mexican Cultural Periodicals: from *Modernismo* to the Avant-Garde (1898-1931)

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Short abstract

This thesis explores the significance of translation and periodicals in the development of modern Mexican poetry during the early twentieth century. Drawing on Translation Studies, the sociology of literature, Periodical Studies, and Digital Humanities, I examine a selection of cultural periodicals and serialised publications, namely the *Revista Moderna* (1898–1903), *Pegaso* (1917), *El Maestro* (1921–1923), *Cvltvra* (1916–1923), *El Universal Ilustrado* (1917–1928), *Prisma* (1922), *La Falange* (1922–1923), and *Contemporáneos* (1928–1931). My analysis combines close-reading and exploratory data analysis and demonstrates that the functions of translated materials varied according to the changing circumstances of a literature that was becoming modern whilst facing the impact of radical political, institutional, and social transformations. As I argue, translation was employed by *modernista* poets to experiment with unusual and irregular verse forms, ultimately contributing to the development of free verse in Spanish. In the revolutionary years, it was used to defend the autonomy of literature and assert its value in post-revolutionary society. Finally, it allowed poets of the 1920s to challenge the elevated tone, language, and concept of poetry prevalent throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, crafting a modern poetics that heralded the pervasiveness of colloquialism in twentieth-century Spanish American poetry. I therefore argue that magazines and translation were key for the development of modern poetry in Mexico, both on the level of poetics and in terms of the articulation of cultural life. By focusing on this often-overlooked

intersection of translation and/in periodicals, I seek to offer a fresh look at literary history. Considering the transnational and translational dimensions of literature reveals deep connections between authors, periods, and movements that have hitherto been read in isolation. My thesis invites readers to rethink our understanding of literary change based on these shifting, loosely connected, yet mutually nurturing networks of authors, translators, and magazine editors.

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Long abstract

Despite our increasing awareness of the centrality of translation in many aspects of cultural life, the practice has remained largely invisible in the field of Literary Studies. While Translation Studies have contributed to our understanding of the practice and of its role in literature in important ways, the extent to which this perspective has entered the mainstream of Literary Studies is arguable. One of my aims, in this thesis, is to reassess Mexican literary history by examining it through the lens of translation in/and periodicals, and observe how this modifies and enriches our understanding of this history and, ultimately, of the very notion of literary change. I have therefore chosen to concentrate on a period that is fundamental for the evolution of Hispanic literature: that which goes from the turn of the twentieth century to the beginning of the 1930s, and which saw Hispanic literature become modern. Encompassing *modernismo* and the avant-garde, this periodisation is particularly suited to my purpose of bringing to light the significance of translation and demonstrating how it can lead us to challenge established literary historical narratives.

Indeed, as discursive practices, these narratives are historically situated and respond to logics that are still too seldom acknowledged. The fact that literary histories tend to focus on books over other kinds of materials (whether print or not), as it does on

originals over translations, entails biases that are closely related to the processes of canon-formation and which should not be ignored. Focusing on both periodicals and translation allows us to disentangle, in a certain measure, our understanding of the evolution of literature from those invisible biases, and challenge established narratives (while keeping in mind the format's own limitations and biases). As a form of textuality that is composite, inter-medial, aggregative, created collaboratively, and that travels across national boundaries more easily than books do (at least in the studied period), magazines are widely considered by Periodical Studies scholars as the locus of literary activity—where poetics take shape and hence, where change happens. Importantly, periodicals, like translation, draw our attention to the dialogic, transnational processes that underpin literature and culture, shifting the focus from the individual to the collective, and from the national to the transnational.

Despite the evident link between translation and periodicals, which is simultaneously concrete (most magazines included translated content, and translation happened, for a long time, mostly in periodicals), conceptual (both forms of textuality are relational and transnational), and functional (in terms of how both kinds of material change our understanding of literature), the intersection between these two fields of study is very recent. It is to this emerging subfield of scholarship, in addition to Mexican/Latin American Literary Studies, that my thesis seeks to contribute primarily.

As evidenced by the conferences and publications on the topic of translation in/and periodicals from the last few years, one of the most pressing questions, for this scholarly community, is that of method, and it is perhaps in this area that my thesis makes its most valuable contributions. Indeed, how are we to fruitfully approach such a complex, relational, multi-layered, and shifting text as a periodical or a corpus of translations published in periodicals? One of my underlying arguments is that approaches that bridge the gap between the systemic level and textual particulars are best suited to this purpose. This is why I combine, in my analysis, a broad understanding of literature as a system of interrelated agents (drawing on Bourdieusean

sociology and Polysystem theory) and close-reading. This allows me to examine how periodicals function as aggregates of individual texts as well as projects that seek to establish an overarching editorial line and position themselves within their field. This evidences how a multitude of textual details combine to articulate a broad statement of purpose—or, if we look at it the other way, how broad cultural statements and poetics manifest concretely, as a series of textual features. This is not, however, an approach that scales very well to a corpus composed of various magazines, which is needed if we are to explore a determined period. I subsequently argue that the best solution to this problem is a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Similarly to Bourdieu's field theory, combining the quantitative and qualitative is a way to address the complex relationship between the general and the particular, the whole and its parts—an especially crucial aspect of periodicals. I have therefore created an inventory of the translations published in my corpus's magazines (following, in this, a long tradition of compiling indexes and catalogues in both Periodical and Translation Studies). It records each translation's metadata, including its title, author, translator (if known), source language, genre, length, and position in its respective issue and in the magazine in general. Analysing this data quantitatively (following some of the principles of Exploratory Data Analysis) brings out the underlying trends in the corpus. This can then be used to guide the qualitative analysis, confirm or refute hypotheses, contextualise textual findings, and support arguments. While this might at first appear contradictory, I seek to demonstrate that working with data does not preclude a humanistic, text-based approach; that valuable insight is to be gained from interdisciplinarity and mixed methodologies; and that quantitative analysis has a place in traditional literary scholarship. Much work remains to be done regarding how we conceptualise, model, analyse, and visualise periodical/translational data. This is a growing area of research, and I hope to have contributed to its foundations.[1] Some highlights of my work, from this point of view, are the visualisations that go beyond

[1] My database and code will ultimately be published, and I will pursue more systematic explorations of this aspect based on the data collection and analysis that I have done for this thesis.

simple counts and/or time series. My representation of the simultaneously synchronic and diachronic nature of periodicals, by using the x axis as a timeline (i.e., going chronologically from the first to the last issue) and the y axis as a way to represent the space of each issue (from its first to its last page) has proved particularly useful in order to obtain a general view.

In concrete terms, my analysis demonstrates that taking into account the transnational and translational dimensions of literature (as manifested in the practice of translation and the publication of periodicals) is indispensable to understand its evolution. Doing so has led me to disprove or nuance a series of widely-held beliefs about the history of Mexican and Latin American literature. This starts with the idea that *modernismo*, and the *Revista Moderna* more specifically, are almost exclusively Francophile and that most of their formal innovations derive from their appropriation of the French tradition. Chapter 1 demonstrates that the magazine's engagement with foreign literatures is much more diverse, and that US and Japanese letters, in particular, played an important role in its experimentations. It thus emerges that Mexico's complicated relationship with the United States is more complex than mere antagonism, as illustrated by the magazine's reception of Walt Whitman's poetry. This, in turn, modifies our understanding of said reception, which was hitherto thought to be mainly the work of the *postmodernistas.* This also locates the development of free verse, commonly associated with the avant-garde, within the context of *modernista* experiments. The connection between *modernismo* and avant-garde thus becomes much clearer. While this has been argued by critics like Octavio Paz, it has not become generally accepted, and characterizations of the avant-garde still often concentrate more on rupture than on continuity. Another interesting implication of this, which I do not explore at length, is that it situates the experiments of Anglo-American Modernism around form and image in a wider international context of modernizing poetics, and questions the leading role in the process of poetic modernisation often attributed to the movement in Anglophone academia. Chapters 2 and 3 provide new insight into the

functioning of literature in the context of revolution, and into the link between translation and ideology. In particular, they disprove the consensus around the supposed apolitical nature of various periodicals of the period (namely *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*), showing how translation allowed their editors to address national politics indirectly. This brings to light the importance of translation for the functioning of cultural life in general, beyond the textual level—an aspect that has not been explored systematically—as well as its imbrication with cultural politics and diplomacy. The latter is also very clear in Chapters 1 and 5, showing that even authors who are commonly considered as staunch advocates of literary autonomy had to compose with political interference.

My thesis thus invites a reconsideration of the very notion of literary change, as a phenomenon that derives much less from creative inspiration and individual genius than from intertextual dialogue and collective enterprises. This constitutes a first step towards a better understanding of literature—one that also seeks to retrieve silenced voices, and transform the canon.

Para hacer una revista, en el mejor de los casos, se recurre a las traducciones; en el peor, a las tijeras.

Salvador Novo

Todo depende del concepto que se tenga del arte. Hay quien lo cree estático y definitivo; yo lo creo en perpetuo movimiento y en continua renovación como los astros y como las células de nuestro cuerpo mismo. La vida universal puede sintetizarse en una sola palabra: movimiento. El arte moderno está en marcha, y dentro de él la obra personal lo está también sobre sí misma, como el planeta, alrededor del sol.

José Juan Tablada

Or qu'est-ce qu'un poète (je prends le mot dans son acception la plus large), si ce n'est un traducteur, un déchiffreur ? Chez les excellents poètes, il n'y a pas de métaphore, de comparaison ou d'épithète qui ne soit une adaptation mathématiquement exacte dans la circonstance actuelle, parce que ces comparaisons, ces métaphores, et ces épithètes sont puisées dans l'inépuisable fonds de l'universelle analogie, et qu'elles ne peuvent être puisées ailleurs.

Charles Baudelaire

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Abbreviations

APMG	*Antología de poetas muertos en la guerra (1914-1918)*
CROM	Confederación Regional Obrera Mexicana
EM	*El Maestro*
ENP	Escuela Nacional Preparatoria
ESD	*El soldado desconocido*
EUI	*El Universal Ilustrado*
LF	*La Falange*
LPNM	*La poesía norte-americana moderna*
MAP	*Modern American Poetry*
PNA	Partido Nacional Agrarista
RMM	*Revista Moderna de México*
SEP	Secretaría de Educación Pública
UNM	Universidad Nacional de México

Introduction: translation and cultural magazines in the making of modern Mexican poetry

Borges's statement, in "Las versiones homéricas," that "ningún problema es tan consustancial con las letras como el que propone la traducción"[2] is famous; however, the notion that translation is indispensable in order to understand literature—and especially its historic evolution—is still too rare in literary scholarship outside of the field of Translation Studies. My thesis is inscribed in the line of recent scholarly works that place translation and transcultural exchanges at the centre of their understanding of literary history.[3] It follows the journey through which modern Mexican poetry came into being in the early decades of the twentieth century, exploring, in particular, how translation contributed to this process. Based on the notion that translation is a practice that reaches far beyond the limits of the text itself into the realms of the literary field's dynamics, the formation of poetics, and cultural politics and diplomacy, it examines how foreign materials were used by magazine editors in the formative years of the Mexican literary system. More specifically, translations can be seen as instances in which the translator and/or editors are seeking to intervene in the literary field, aesthetically or ideologically. This agenda is reflected in the thematic and stylistic choices made on the textural level (word choice), in the selection of the translated author and text, as well as in how a translation is presented and framed within each issue. Ultimately, the interplay of these factors is indicative of the translator's and/or editors' intended contribution to the process of literary change. Through the analysis of a selection of cultural periodicals and serialised publications including the *Revista Moderna* (1898-1903), *Pegaso* (1917), *El Maestro* (1921-1923), *Cvltvra* (1916-1923), *El Universal Ilustrado* (1917-1928), *Prisma* (1922), *La Falange* (1922-1923), and *Contemporáneos* (1928-1931), I establish that the functions of translated materials

[2] Borges, "Las versiones homéricas," 1.

[3] Infante, *After Translation*; Feinsod, *Poetry of the Americas*; Rogers, *Incomparable Empires*; Lonsdale, *Multilingualism and Modernity.*

varied according to the changing circumstances of a literature that was becoming modern while being impacted by radical political, institutional, and social transformations. Thus, translation was successively used to experiment with original and irregular verse forms in the context of *modernismo* (ultimately contributing to the development of free verse in Spanish), to defend the autonomy of literature and assert its value in post-revolutionary society, and to challenge the elevated tone, language, and concept of poetry prevalent throughout most of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, crafting a modern poetics that heralded the pervasiveness of colloquialism in twentieth-century Spanish American poetry. This highlights the prominent role played by translation and periodicals in literary change, both on the textual level and in terms of the articulation of cultural life more generally.

Besides the study of translation itself and of its evolution in the first decades of twentieth-century Mexico, I aim to offer a fresh look at literary history by analysing "lost" and overlooked materials. In addition to the focus on translated texts, this includes the occasional use of archival documents, rediscovered ephemera, and periodicals that have rarely been considered from a scholarly perspective. I approach these materials as pieces of a literary history that is simultaneously transnational and collective, given how magazines are essentially collaborative enterprises. To achieve this, I combine macro and micro methodologies: this covers the mixture of close-reading and the sociological lens of field theory, but also and above all, that of quantitative and qualitative methods. I argue that the combination of two essentially different methodologies gives the best results when it comes to analysing phenomena such as cultural magazines, which involve large corpora and complex interplays at synchronic and diachronic levels.

Mexico offers fertile ground to assess the importance of translations published in periodicals for various reasons, ranging from its remarkably rich history of print culture to its position as a cultural centre of reference for part of Spanish America and a direct point of contact with the United States and their growing relevance on the scene of

international politics, art, and literature. It could be argued, too, that the country's historic ties with France (and Europe more generally) were more tightly knit than in more remote parts of the hemisphere. Home to the first printing press of the Americas, Mexico went on to develop a bustling periodical culture dating back to the eighteenth century. This increased in the post-independence period, resulting in the "proliferación extraordinaria" of magazines and their prominent role in the formation of national expression.[4] Another factor making Mexico an ideal setting to study cultural field dynamics is its history of radical political change in the early twentieth century and the involvement of the state in cultural affairs both before and after the revolution. In this context, the recourse to foreign traditions as sources of inspiration and authority becomes entangled in shifting webs of nation building, cultural diplomacy, and literary nationalism that inform how writers and editors (re)configure their position on the changing cultural scene.

My analysis demonstrates that translation was indeed a crucial catalyst for the emergence of modern poetry in Mexico for several reasons: it contributed both to the development of modern poetics, broadly understood as the set of general principles that underpin literary and poetic creation in the context of industrial capitalism, and to further the conditions for the emergence of such poetics.[5] I address both dimensions in this thesis, in order to offer a holistic account of the role of translation in the shaping of Mexican literature. My contention is that the creation of a symbolic space for autonomous literature is a *sine qua non* condition for its modernisation. This creates the space for translation to be used as a means of poetic experimentation through the import, discussion, playful rehearsal, and adaptation of new forms of writing. This is true of the two fundamental stages of the development of modern Hispanic poetry: *modernismo* and the avant-garde. Through the exploration of foreign traditions such as

[4] José Luis Martínez, "'El Renacimiento' y su tiempo," 82.

[5] Following André Lefevere, "a poetics can be said to consist of two components: one is an inventory of literary devices, genres, motifs, prototypical characters and situations, and symbols; the other a concept of what the role of literature is, or should be, in the social system as a whole." Thus, it comprises both a general theory of poetry and/or literature, and a set of formal and expressive characteristics that are seen to reflect said theory. Lefevere, *Translation, rewriting*, 20.

the French, the Japanese and the US-American, *modernista* translators and magazine editors introduced ways of writing poetry that were rhythmically inventive, relying on particularly short or long lines, and generally breaking away from the stricter adherence to traditional forms observed in Romanticism and very early *modernismo*. As early as the first years of the twentieth century, free verse—a development that would prove fundamental for modern poetry—was introduced, mainly through the translation of Walt Whitman's verse, as well as explorations in the realm of prose poetry. The turbulent years of the Mexican Revolution and its immediate aftermath saw a halt in this experimental activity as translation assumed a more conservative role in defence of autonomous art and high culture in general. This would lay the groundwork for the resumption of poetic experiments in the 1920s, when free verse became more widespread and developed in conjunction with other techniques that would feature prominently in modern poetry, such as the juxtaposition of different registers, colloquialism, prosaism, and irony. Ultimately, this goes to show that change is incremental, uncoordinated, and collective, as all actors involved in this process contributed in some way to the general evolution of Mexican letters.

Chapter breakdown

To follow the literary evolutions triggered by the profound socio-political and cultural changes of turn-of-the-century peripheral modernity, I have structured my thesis chronologically. Each chapter focuses on different publications, which share the fact that they appeared serially, and that they were "cultural" in nature (i.e., they were edited by writers and intellectuals, and featured literature and/or other arts as primary topics and concerns). This brings together diverse periodicals, as well as some anthologies and ephemera that were published as part of series. Funding was not a defining criterion inasmuch as the literary field was so precarious that very few of the magazines

published during the studied period would qualify as financially independent (e.g., the *Revista Moderna*), most of them being directly or indirectly funded by the state. Intended readership was not decisive either; although some of the magazines such as the *Revista Moderna* or *Contemporáneos* were mainly directed to writers and intellectuals, others were aimed at a broader public while still maintaining the focus on literature and culture, like *Pegaso* and notoriously *El Maestro*. Ultimately, this stems from the conviction that, in Spanish too, "magazines of all types and sizes—not just the 'littles'—were instrumental to the development and circulation of modernist ideas and aesthetics."[6] I have chosen to examine different topics and/or aspects of the periodicals in each chapter, to account for the specific ways in which each publication used translation to engage with its times and contribute to the modernisation of Mexican literature. What I describe is not a linear phenomenon, however; these are some highlights in a complex process of change that is not homogeneous nor teleological.

My thesis is divided into three parts, which contain between one and two chapters each, as well as introductory remarks and preliminary conclusions. These form broad units in terms of the functions of translation: Part I (which consists of Chapter 1) corresponds to a phase of poetic experimentation during the peak of *modernismo.* Part II (comprising Chapters 2 and 3) addresses the transitional years of the Mexican Revolution, when experimentation gave way to ideological debates. Finally, Part III (which contains Chapters 4 and 5) covers the avant-gardist resurgence of poetic innovation.

In Chapter 1, I explore how translation was used to expand the formal possibilities of Hispanic verse by focusing on the flagship magazine of the *modernista* movement, the *Revista Moderna*, published in Mexico between 1898 and 1903 and funded privately by two patrons of the group of decadent writers and artists. In addition to the well-known recourse to French Symbolism and Parnassianism to establish new rhythms, images, and more generally, notions of aestheticism, I bring into focus the lesser-known experiments with prose poetry and heterometric, very short, and very long

[6] Churchill and McKible, "Modernism in Magazines," 335.

verse forms, which would prove fundamental to the development of modern poetics. Thus, I trace the evolution of the *Revista Moderna*'s editorial line towards increasingly daring forms of experimentation, getting progressively closer to free verse. I argue that this constitutes a major step towards poetic modernity. This also emphasises the contribution of literatures other than the French to the great *modernista* renovation, an aspect which has often been overlooked by criticism. By reading Balbino Dávalos's and Amado Nervo's translations of Whitman (among the earliest done into Spanish) and José Juan Tablada's versions of Japanese poetry alongside the more traditional translations of Gautier's, Musset's, and Baudelaire's works, it becomes clear that the magazine's cosmopolitanism reached far beyond France, and that the seeds of some of the later avant-garde experiments were already in the *modernista* production of the turn of the twentieth century.

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the particular function assumed by translation in the context of armed violence and political instability brought about by the revolutionary struggle during the 1910s and early 1920s. A decade that has often been neglected by literary scholarship, it is nevertheless key to understand the development of the avant-garde in Mexico, the complicated relationship between the lettered elite and the revolutionary state, and the prolonged impact of the irruption of modern warfare on national and international stages. Focusing on the late *modernista Pegaso* (in Chapter 2) and the state-sponsored *El Maestro* (in Chapter 3), I read translations of texts about World War I and the February Revolution in Russia as ways to reconfigure Mexico's experience of violence and to articulate the intellectuals' position in the changing political and cultural landscape. Far from the experiments of the turn of the century, I argue that the revolutionary decade sees translation used as a mostly ideological kind of "prise de position" in defence of the autonomy and socio-political importance of culture.[7] In contrast with Chapters 1, 4, and 5, these two chapters illustrate the ideological potential of translation and its crucial role in this area in a period in which

[7] Lefevere rightly observed that rewritings can respond to either poetological or ideological motives. Lefevere, *Translation, rewriting*, 5.

writers and intellectuals sought to redefine the sphere, scope, and terms of their activity, as well as their position within the field of power—that is, their relationships with other fields such as politics. This is consistent with a general perception of the period as one of conceptual rather than creative richness put forward by critics then and now.[8] Alfonso Reyes further argued, in *Nosotros*, that "la evolución de las letras mexicanas, desde la era del modernismo hasta nuestros días, queda definida por esta fórmula: un ritmo, una sucesión casi prevista o previsible, quizá necesaria, entre los virtuosos del talento poético y los sedientos de una nueva atmósfera de ideas."[9] Thus, the magazines discussed in Part II opened the way for the renewed literary activity and formal experimentation of the avant-garde period. They also demonstrate how translation can contribute to the development of modern poetics even when it is not directly involved in repertoire renovation.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I analyse how avant-garde poets built on both the *modernistas*' experiments towards free verse and the *postmodernistas*' efforts to re-establish culture as a leading force in post-revolutionary society, to create a modern poetics that would pervade a good part of the twentieth century: conversationalism. Based on formal de-structuration and a generalised sense of disenchantment, this poetics, which would evolve into *coloquialismo* and *antipoesía*, is sometimes likened to Modernism in its ability to capture the fragmented and hopeless nature of existence in the post-WWI landscape. Starting from José Emilio Pacheco's "Nota sobre la otra vanguardia," I trace the translational origins of conversationalism in periodicals published within Mexico (*La Falange*, *El Universal Ilustrado*'s literary supplements, *Contemporáneos*) and abroad by Mexican writers (*Prisma*), focusing principally on contemporary US poetry. In Chapter 4, I analyse the multilingual poetry of Salomón de

[8] Sánchez, "Nosotros," *Enciclopedia de la literatura en México*, n.p.

[9] *Nosotros* I.9:32 [620]. All subsequent references to magazines indicate the volume, issue, and page numbers in the same format. The first page number corresponds to the position within the respective issue (counted from its first page), and the number in brackets corresponds to the facsimile edition's numbering, where applicable.
I do not wish to imply any determinism or cyclicality here; it is clear that the ideological struggle that marked the decade was prompted by external events (i.e. the Revolution) rather than literary factors. This does not contradict the fact, however, that the ideological work carried out by writers and intellectuals can open the way for poetological changes.

la Selva (*El soldado desconocido*) alongside WWI verse. Chapter 5 focuses on Rafael Lozano and Salvador Novo's anthologies of US poetry, and further translations of US poets in *Contemporáneos* to indicate the centrality of then-recent developments in Anglophone verse (such as the emphasis on realism and straightforward expression found in New Poetry, Imagism, and early Modernism), as well as the direct relationship between the formal loss of structure and the experience of violence of the previous decade. On this last aspect, de la Selva is a case in point, while also embodying the growing imbrication of Anglo-American and Hispanic modernisms.

These five chapters demonstrate that translation was far from a derivative practice for writers of the early twentieth century. Rather, it played a central role in the literary struggles of the times and impacted the development of modern poetics in Mexico in several ways. Although this process is mainly spontaneous and disorderly, broad evolutions can be distinguished across periods and movements, and the chapter organisation is intended to underscore them. Examining the development of conversationalism in light of the *modernistas*' experiments with verse forms, as well as the engagement of writers of the 1910s with the topic of armed violence enhances our understanding of the roots of this poetics and of the workings of literary history. The notion that *modernismo* constituted the basis for avant-garde experiments and that both movements ultimately correspond to one generalised drive towards modernisation is not new. Octavio Paz noted that *modernismo*, "un movimiento cuyo fundamento y meta primordial era el movimiento mismo—aún no termina: la vanguardia de 1925 y las tentativas de la poesía contemporánea están íntimamente ligadas a ese gran comienzo."[10] My analysis discusses concrete examples of how this broad innovative impetus evolved, highlighting translation's sustained importance within it. In doing this, this thesis seeks to contribute to the fields of Translation Studies, Periodical Studies, and in particular Mexican and Latin American Literary Studies by rethinking the notion of literary change in two of the most widely acknowledged transformative aesthetic movements in the region.

[10] Paz, "El caracol y la sirena," 4.

Literary change as a systemic phenomenon

My thesis relies on a general understanding of the literary world as a system of interconnected agents, be they writers, translators, magazine editors, or publishers. The result of their work is an interrelated web of texts that partly exists and evolves as a whole, a conception of literature that is not alien to Borges's emphasis on the value of translation and rewriting, and T. S. Eliot's conception of poetry as "a living whole of all the poetry that has ever been written."[11] As Eliot himself put it, "no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone."[12] It then becomes clear how translation, both in its narrower sense and understood broadly as the circulation of ideas and motifs, is an inherent component of literary creation.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the theories that underpin this thesis on the most general level—Pierre Bourdieu's field theory and Itamar Even-Zohar's polysystem theory—build on structuralism to form models that seek to account for the complexity and dynamism of culture. The interconnectedness of the literary field (or polysystem), and the blend of diachronic and synchronic analysis, are hallmarks of these approaches which inform my research as well as that of other scholars in the field of Translation Studies, especially following the so-called sociological turn in the discipline.[13] The concept of field is therefore paramount. For Bourdieu, society is composed of a series of fields (e.g., culture, science, sports, politics, and the economy), which, while being only

[11] Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," pt. 2, 72.
Borges, "Las versiones homéricas," 1.

[12] Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," pt. 1, 55.

[13] See, in priority, the special issue of *The Translator* on "Bourdieu and the sociology of translation and interpreting" (issue 11.2, edited by Moira Inghilleri in 2005); Gouanvic, *Sociologie de la traduction*; Gouanvic, "Stakes of Translation"; Inghilleri, "Habitus, Field and Discourse"; Wolf and Fukari, *Constructing a Sociology of Translation*; Sapiro, "Le champ littéraire français,"; Some scholars, following in the footsteps of Pascale Casanova's *La république mondiale des lettres*, approach the topic from a broad, international perspective: Johan Heilbron and Gisèle Sapiro's special issue of *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* (144, September 2002) is a good example of this. See also Heilbron, "Translation as a Cultural World System," and Sapiro, "Globalization and Cultural Diversity."

"relatively autonomous," have their own logics and principles. One important motor of cultural change is the struggle for the definition of those principles, as they determine legitimacy and prestige within each area of activity.[14] In each field, agents have positions that characterise them by differentiating them from others: "exister dans un espace, […] c'est différer, être différent."[15] As a result, the field acts as "un champ de forces agissant sur tous ceux qui y entrent, et de manière différentielle selon la position qu'ils y occupent [...] en même temps qu'un champ de luttes de concurrence qui tendent à conserver ou à transformer ce champ de forces."[16]

This is relevant to my analysis in two ways: firstly, the struggles often occur between representatives of different principles of hierarchisation, the autonomous and the heteronomous. While the latter establishes a hierarchy of cultural producers based on external criteria (often determined by economic success or political interests), the former represents the discipline's own internal form of hierarchisation, generally linked to the idea of *art for art's sake* as formulated by nineteenth-century French writers, starting with Théophile Gautier. This dichotomy structures the field, creating an autonomous pole (also called subfield of restricted production, where literature is intended for a small group of connoisseurs, usually peers), and a heteronomous pole (or subfield of mass-production). Secondly, those symbolic battles are waged in the texts themselves, including translations. One of the benefits of field theory is that it links the textual and the structural by positing that "l'analyse des œuvres culturelles a pour objet la *correspondance entre deux structures homologues*, la structure des œuvres (c'est-à-dire des genres, mais aussi des *formes,* des styles, et des thèmes, etc.) et la structure du champ littéraire."[17] Similarly to the literary field, the symbolic space in which the works exist is conceived as a "champ de prises de position qui ne peuvent être comprises que relationnellement, à la façon d'un système de phonèmes, c'est-à-dire comme système

[14] In Bourdieu's words, "l'histoire du champ est l'histoire de la lutte pour le monopole de l'imposition des catégories de perception et d'appréciation légitimes." *Règles de l'art*, 261.
[15] Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 24.
[16] Bourdieu, "Le champ littéraire," 3-4.
[17] Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 70 (author's italics).

d'écarts différentiels."[18] These "prises de position" (i.e., stances that cultural producers take in their work) can be "spécifiques, c'est-à-dire stylistiques par exemple, ou non spécifiques, politiques, éthiques etc.,"[19] and again, they are viewed from a systemic standpoint. The fact that form, broadly understood, is both a means and an end in those struggles is crucial when thinking about how translation is used.[20]

The notion of a stratified system in which the position of literary agents is related to the aesthetic and ideological stances that they adopt is also found in Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, an approach that has the advantage of addressing the question of translation more directly. For Even-Zohar, literature is a polysystem (a system composed of various inter-dependent systems), itself part of the vaster polysystem of culture. This emphasises the interconnectedness between what is traditionally considered as canonical literature and what isn't (e.g., translation).[21] The inclusion of non-canonical material is important in that it provides a broader perspective on literature—one, Even-Zohar insists, that enables us to challenge dominant conceptions and hierarchies, and that puts forward systemic and collective interpretations of change, highlighting the contribution of non-central strata such as translation to this process.[22] Focusing on magazines is another way to try and establish a more comprehensive and pragmatic view of literary history. This includes questioning the notions of originality, individual genius, and influence often used to account for change in literary historiography, and replacing them by more empirically driven explanations, in line with what writers such as Borges and Eliot have suggested about their craft. As in Bourdieu's model, literary agents in the polysystem compete not only for prestige (determined here by centrality within the system), but also to impose their vision of literature, their poetics. A constitutive part of this is what Even-Zohar calls repertoire: an "aggregate of laws and elements (either single, bound, or total models)

18 Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 71.
19 Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 71.
20 "[L]es formes […] sont des instruments et des enjeux dans ces luttes." Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 71.
21 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 13.
22 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 14.

that govern the production of texts."[23] He further notes that translation is "an integral part of innovatory forces" seeking to change the repertoire, and as such, is most resorted to when a literature is "'young', in the process of being established," when it is peripheral, or when it is undergoing "turning points, crises, or literary vacuums," as will become clear.[24] It is important to note, however, that translation does not automatically renovate the repertoire; rather, this depends on the translators' interest in either maintaining or replacing the current repertoire. Thus, translation can play what Even-Zohar defines as a primary role (i.e., as a factor of innovation through the importation of new models of literary production that influence the way in which literature is written in the target system) or a secondary role (i.e., as a factor of conservatism by adhering to the norms and forms already in place).[25] Using this terminology, the renovation of the repertoires of Mexican poetry is at the core of this thesis: the introduction of free verse, for instance, can be seen as a change of repertoire insofar as the previous model governing the writing of poetry, which generally insisted on fixed and regular form, was progressively replaced as dominant paradigm.

The extent to which these theories, in particular Bourdieu's, are applicable to Latin American culture is a matter for debate.[26] Although peripheral cultural fields differ in no small way from the French model that has inspired Bourdieu, the notion of field itself has been in use in Spanish American sociology and cultural studies for various decades, as illustrated by the work of Beatriz Sarlo and Carlos Altamirano in Argentina. The two theorists discuss these questions of applicability in *Literatura/sociedad*, where they argue that capitalist economy, in the absence of stable liberal democracies in the region, has led to the development of intellectual fields that do not benefit from the relative autonomy vis-a-vis the political world that Bourdieu postulates.[27] Thus,

[23] Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 17.
This includes "new models of reality, […] new (poetic) language, [and] compositional patterns and techniques." Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 47.

[24] Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 47.

[25] Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 21 and 46-51.

[26] On this topic, see Moraña, *Bourdieu en la periferia* and Sánchez Prado, *Bourdieu in Hispanic Literature.*

[27] Altamirano and Salro, *Literatura/sociedad*, 159-160.
This and other aspects are also discussed at length by Mabel Moraña in *Bourdieu en la periferia*,

intellectual and cultural productions are not, in Latin America, "preserv[adas] de la coerción abierta por parte de las autoridades del sistema político." The use of translation as a form of cultural diplomacy, which we will observe throughout this thesis, is a good example of this phenomenon whereas even the most autonomous producers are sometimes impacted by heteronomous factors. This does not invalidate field theory as a fruitful approach to peripheral literatures, however. Altamirano and Sarlo conclude that

> a partir de los estudios de Bourdieu es posible comprender mejor la lógica y la estructura de ese campo [intelectual], a condición de entender los dos términos, y sobre todo el de estructura, en un sentido más bien lato, es decir, no según el que posee en los modelos lingüísticos de inspiración saussureana. Liberado de la obediencia estricta al modelo lingüístico, lo que significa un análisis más atento de las asimetrías y las irregularidades, el concepto de campo intelectual puede funcionar como hipótesis fértil para elaborar versiones sociológicas, por decirlo así, del proceso de la práctica literaria.[28]

Thus, even though Latin American cultural fields do not follow the same evolution as that of the French field outlined in *Les règles de l'art*, Bourdieu's theory provides a wealth of versatile concepts to think about cultural production in different contexts. By definition, approaches inspired by dynamic functionalism do not propose a set of fixed categories to apply to every case—rather, they prompt us to look at our object in a specific way.[29] As Even-Zohar remarks, "seen from this point of view, translation is no longer a phenomenon whose nature and borders are given once and for all, but an activity dependent on the relations within a certain cultural system."[30] Thinking in terms of relations rather than essences provides an apt framework to examine the changing and travelling texts that translations effectively are and the questions of transformation, appropriation, circulation, and interrelatedness that they pose.

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section 3.2.

28 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Literatura/sociedad*, 152-3.

29 This also stands true for polysystem theory. As Theo Hermans notes, "it is simple and bold enough to be attractive as a cognitive tool, and yet flexible and inclusive enough to adapt itself to different cases and situations." The discussion of the value of "theory" that follows this passage is an enlightening one. Theo Hermans, "Introduction," 12. André Lefevere goes further by affirming that a systemic approach provides a "neutral framework" that makes it possible to move away from "Eurocentric concepts of literature." Lefevere, "Why waste our time?" 223.

30 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 51.

Finally, another distinctive aspect of peripheral cultural fields is, according to Altamirano and Sarlo, their intrinsically trans-national dimension. Unlike in their Western European counterparts, "un sector decisivo de su sistema de referencias está radicado en centros externos que tienen el papel de metrópolis o polos culturales."[31] Indeed, this is one of the reasons why translation played such a prominent role in the establishment of the modern literary field in Mexico, and why it is so important to study it if we are to understand the evolution of modern literature in the region. While translation has been recently integrated in literary historical accounts, those tend to stem from English/American studies or Comparative Literature (e.g., Feinsod, Rogers, Infante). Opening the way for similar kinds of research within Latin American Studies is one of my goals.

Translation in Latin America: a long-standing, understudied history

From the time of the Spanish conquest and the collision of dissimilar social, governmental, religious, and linguistic systems to the formulation of the political organisation, legislation, and print culture of the independent republics, translation has been a fundamental component in the development of modern Latin America. Although interest in the topic of translation has been growing quickly within Latin American Studies in recent years, there is still a considerable scholarly gap in this area, as illustrated by the scantness of monographs dedicated exclusively to this practice in the modern period. There are, to my knowledge, only a few exceptions, and even these are often comprised of semi-autonomous case studies: Frances Aparicio's *Versiones, interpretaciones, creaciones: instancias de la traducción literaria en Hispanoamérica en el siglo veinte* (1991) offers a series of highlights of the practice of translation throughout the twentieth century, mostly by concentrating on canonical

[31] Altamirano and Sarlo, *Literatura/sociedad*, 161.

authors/translators (Guillermo Valencia, Alfonso Reyes, Octavio Paz, Borges, Julio Cortázar), Patricia Willson's *La constelación del Sur. Traductores y traducciones en la literatura argentina del siglo XX* (2004) analyses the practice of translation in Argentine group Sur, again by focusing on a selection of representative figures (Victoria Ocampo, Borges, José Bianco), and María Constanza Guzmán's *Mapping Spaces of Translation in Twentieth-Century Latin American Print Culture* (2020) contrasts different Caribbean and Latin American magazines and publishers, most of them from the 1940s onwards. My thesis aims to fill this gap by examining the formative years of modern literature and producing a cohesive account of the roles played by translation in the period.

Unlike Guzmán, I believe that an approach that includes close-reading is fundamental to understand what is at stake with translation and its role in Latin America.[32] Indeed, if we are to conceive of translation as a form of "prise de position," in Bourdieusean terms (that is, a practice that can be used strategically to intervene in the field), it is defined by its features *as a text*. In other words, the form and content of translations are essential when considering the practice from a field perspective. In this, I also seek to add to Anthony Pym's first two fundamental principles of translation history (namely that the discipline "should explain *why* translations were produced in a particular social time and place" and that "the central object of historical knowledge should not be the text of the translation, nor its contextual system, nor even its linguistic features. [It] should be the human translators.")[33] While I agree with these postulates to an extent, I maintain that in order to clarify *why* a translation was produced, it is worth looking at *how* it was produced. Likewise, there is a lot to be learnt about one translator and her practice in the granular textual decisions that she makes;[34] at the risk of stating the obvious, two translations made in the same place at the same time by two different translators will necessarily have different outcomes. Exploring social causation, as Pym suggests, will therefore inevitably have to include a detailed discussion of the decisions

[32] Guzmán, *Mapping Spaces*, 3.

[33] Pym, *Method*, ix.

[34] This might in fact be what Pym himself recognises when he states, in a subsequent chapter, that "we can only reach those other activities [performed by translators] and that humanity [of translators] through translational documents." Pym, *Method*, 38.

made at all levels of textual production, on which I will elaborate shortly.

As a result, my understanding of translation builds mainly on approaches that affirm the importance of the text, such as the Manipulation school (which, broadly speaking, stipulates that translation implies a transformation of the original according to the translator's agenda) and culturalist Translation Studies more generally. By combining the work of André Lefevere on translation as rewriting, and that of Jiří Levý on translation as decision making, I argue that we can bridge the divide between the textual dimension of translations, the translator as cultural agent, and the systemic dynamics described in the previous section. My method for the analysis of translated texts follows from this contention, with the notion of transformation at its core. Based on polysystem theory, Theo Hermans argues that "from the point of view of the target literature, all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose," be that the modification or conservation of dominant poetics.[35] This is doubly relevant for Latin American fields, which are, as we have established, inherently trans-national due to their post-colonial situation. Sarlo and Altamirano discuss how, despite a certain level of dependence upon metropolitan fields, this state of affairs implies a transformation (they use the term "refraction") of the original ideas in the target field.[36] Furthermore, this should also be considered in light of the active, creative, and at times subversive reception and re-signification of foreign codes at the core of Latin American cultural production.[37]

In the same line as Hermans, Lefevere, one of the leaders in the development of Translation Studies as a discipline, considered translation a form of rewriting—that is to say, a modality that transformed the text according to the translator's agenda within the target literary field. As such, it is "a weapon in the struggle for supremacy between various ideologies, various poetics."[38] The struggle for cultural prestige and hegemony

35 Hermans, "Introduction," 11.

36 Altamirano and Sarlo, *Literatura/sociedad*, 165 and following.

37 The parallels between the notion of translation as manipulation and that of "transculturación," as developed by Fernando Ortiz and Ángel Rama to describe an essentially Latin American modality of cultural expression, are evident and inform my approach to the translations studied in this thesis on a general level. These intersections are explored at greater length in Guzmán, "Ángel Rama."

38 Lefevere, "Why waste our time?" 234.

described by Bourdieu and Even-Zohar is thus intimately linked with the ways in which translation is actually carried out. When, in 1931, *Contemporáneos* published León Felipe's version of Eliot's "Hollow Men," in which "Here we go round the prickly pear" is translated using the Mexican botanical term "nopal" (as opposed to the more Peninsular "chumbera" or "higuera chumba"), this specific semantic choice rewrites the poem in Mexican terms. Drawing on Eliot's authority, this gives weight to the group's poetics of post-revolutionary desolation and moral disaster, and conforms a symbolic space of resistance against the celebratory tone of official culture. Other modalities of rewriting, according to Lefevere, include interpretation, criticism, and the making of anthologies, which, he notes, often work together to renew repertoire.[39] This will become evident in the following chapters, as I will refer to anthologies, as well as introductory and/or paratextual material to complement my analysis.

Translation is thus used strategically by literary agents to further their agenda, a dimension that ties in with Levý's definition of the practice as a series of decisions made successively, as in a chess game.[40] Levý's contribution is useful in thinking about how, concretely, manipulation happens—in other words, how the translator's agenda is observable in the translations themselves. For the Czech theorist, translation consists of "a certain number of consecutive situations—moves, as in a game—situations imposing on the translator the necessity of choosing among a certain (and very often exactly definable) number of alternatives."[41] The alternative of using "nopal" or "chumbera" mentioned just above is one such situation. This produces what Levý calls "translation variants," differing versions of the original that are shaped by every decision made throughout the translation process. Thus, tracing back the possibilities available to the translator can be a productive analytical tool (even though their number seldom turns out to be "exactly definable"). Gideon Toury, another exponent of the Manipulation school who also conceives of translation as a decision-making process, establishes the

[39] Lefevere, "Why waste our time?" 234-235 and 237.
[40] Levý, "Translation as decision process," 74.
[41] Levý, "Translation as decision process," 72.

"pairs of problem + solution" as unit for comparative analysis.[42] The comparison between the source and target texts is what allows us to observe the manipulation at work and to understand the translator's attempt to intervene in her field, as it brings to light what Toury calls the "shifts" between the original and the translation. In some cases, this results in a clearer picture of the intention behind the publication of the text. Of course, this method is partly speculative and needs to be backed through the study of clusters of translations and/or other materials displaying similar interventions.

While Toury's approach is more linguistically focused, I argue that it can be fruitfully applied to the analysis of the literary system as defined above. Combining the approaches presented so far, I have identified four levels on which decisions are made resulting in the creation of new meaning in order to engage in public debate: the first one is the choice of the author to be translated. Indeed, for literary translations published in the subfield of restricted production, the starting point is the decision of *what* to translate (since the economic factors that guide the production of commercial—generally commissioned—translations are largely excluded).[43] Thus, the choice of different authors will have contrasting effects on the translator's (and magazine editors') positioning within their own field, inasmuch as each author (and especially those that Bourdieu calls "personnages phares"[44]) represents a certain poetics, a position within their own field. While it is sometimes argued that translation implies the decontextualisation of the original text, I contend that, although this might happen to an extent, in particular when a text is actively reframed, it is never wholly an "objet trouvé," as Willson argues.[45] This is especially the case in publications destined to a highly specialised and erudite readership, like highbrow magazines. As Chapter 1 demonstrates, it is not the same, in 1900, to translate Théophile Gautier's poetry as to translate Walt Whitman's. For similar reasons, the second level is the choice of the text

42 Toury, "Rationale for Descriptive Translation Studies," 25.

43 In Even-Zohar's words, "it is clear that the very principles of selecting the works to be translated are determined by the situation governing the (home) polysystem: the texts are chosen according to their compatibility with the new approaches and the supposedly innovatory role they may assume within the target literature." "Polysystem Studies," 47.

44 Bourdieu, *Raisons Pratiques*, 61.

45 Willson, "La fundación vanguardista," http://www.borges.pitt.edu/bsol/pw.php.

or fragment to be translated, which can be relevant in terms of either content or form; the third is the textual level, on which word choice and other stylistic options play a central role; and the final level is specific to periodicals: it is that of intertextual relations, that is to say, the meaning created through the framing of the translations and the juxtaposition of different texts. While the textual level will be considered through close comparative analysis, where relevant, I would like to emphasise that, on the one hand, there are not always significant shifts on the textual level (making the comparison uninteresting from the point of view of the analysis described above), and on the other, meaningful decisions are made on the other three levels too. As a result, I do not consistently compare every translation with its respective original; if I omit this aspect, it should be assumed that the translation is literal and/or not yielding any significant insight. I also comment, sometimes, on features of the original, or on the figure of the author. The reader should not conclude that the focus on the translation is lost at such times: as explained above, these are considerations that are highly relevant to the translation process understood holistically as a sequence of decisions through which meaning is created.

Ultimately, this new meaning articulates the poetics that magazine editors seek to promote within the target literary field. This comprises not only the import and re-elaboration of elements of repertoire, but also the creation of a trans-national canon or genealogy of writers representing this poetics. This follows from Ricardo Piglia's idea that, from the perspective of writers, "se construye la tradición desde el lugar en el que se está definiendo la propia escritura y se intenta construir esa lectura como un espacio desde el cual los textos que se van a escribir o se están escribiendo puedan funcionar."[46] This operation prepares the readership to understand and value the production of a certain writer or group, and is achieved, I argue, through a variety of practices including criticism, editorship, anthologisation, and of course translation (the coincidence with Lefevere's categories of rewriting is not fortuitous). Translation thus functions, especially in periodicals, as a way to "imponer el contexto dentro del cual quería[n] que

[46] Piglia, *Las tres vanguardias*, Primera clase.

sus textos fueran leídos"[47] and an important component in the generation of literary value.

Despite the relative absence of comprehensive accounts of the history of translation in modern Latin America, several scholars are working towards this goal collectively. These fragmented instances of scholarship speak of the establishment of a subfield and its imminent flourishing, to which this thesis seeks to contribute. A good example of this is Francisco Lafarga and Luis Pegenaute's *Diccionario histórico de la traducción en Hispanoamérica* (2013).[48] In their introduction to this volume, Lafarga and Pegenaute mention the lack of a "visión de conjunto" of the history of translation in Latin America, a lacuna that has shaped this doctoral project.[49] While my thesis is but a small contribution towards this goal, I attempt to uncover general trends that might be helpful in the study of translation in other areas of the region during the same period and/or built upon to create a study with a longer time-span. For this reason, I have chosen the pivotal moment of the passage from *modernismo* to the avant-garde; it also explains why the project concentrates on one of the leading poles of print culture production in the continent (which also happens to be one of the foremost points of contact and passage between Latin American and US literatures).

While it exceeds the scope of this introduction to discuss all the valuable contributions towards the understanding of specific aspects of translation in Latin America,[50] I would like to draw attention to one emerging area of the subfield in which

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47 Piglia, *Las tres vanguardias*, Primera clase.

48 Other useful collective volumes are listed in Andrea Pagni's "Hacia una historia," (which also includes an account of the development of Translation Studies in Latin America), and in the "Biblioteca de Traducciones Hispanoamericanas" curated by Pegenaute and Lafarga, and hosted by the University of Alicante's Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes. The latter includes a very useful and thorough (up to early 2013) bibliography: https://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/traducciones_hispanoamericanas/obra/biblioteca-de-traducciones-hispanoamericanas-bibliografia/. To the works referenced by Pagni and Pegenaute and Lafarga, I should add the more recent *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-America*, edited by Diana Roig Sanz and Jaume Subirana, and the forthcoming *Routledge Handbook of Latin American Literary Translation*, edited by Delfina Cabrera and Denise Kripper.

49 Lafarga and Pegenaute, "Introducción," in *Diccionario histórico*, 7.

50 For studies about translation in Mexico, see the work of Nayelli Castro Ramírez, Danielle Zaslavsky, Lucrecia Orensanz, and Elena Madrigal, as well as the series of "panoramas" dedicated to translation on the website of the *Enciclopedia de la Literatura en México*

this thesis is firmly rooted: the study of translation in cultural periodicals. While this development is not limited to Latin American magazines, these occupy a noteworthy position within this small field, as attested by a variety of recent research projects,[51] as well as their consistent representation at conferences ("Translation in periodical publications: theoretical problems and methodological challenges for a transnational study on a large scale" organised by the MapModern Project and the Centre de recherche en littérature comparée of the Sorbonne Université) and in collective publications (Roig Sanz, Laura Fólica, and Stefania Caristia's *Literary Translation in Periodicals. Methodological Challenges for a Transnational Approach*, as well as the special issue of *Translation and Interpreting Studies* about periodicals, edited by María Constanza Guzmán).[52]

The intersection of Translation Studies and Periodical Studies is both logical and necessary, particularly for Latin American literature. The combination of both fields of study is essential to understand the literary history of the continent, where translation has been a core component of post-colonial cultural life and periodicals were for a long time the main vector of literary expression. On a more abstract level, the shared aim to re-interpret literary history from a transnational, non-canonical perspective and based on overlooked materials has methodological implications that, again, bring both fields of study together almost seamlessly. These theoretical and methodological implications will be discussed in the next two sections.

(http://www.elem.mx/panoramas/traduccion).

51 Hanno Ehrlicher's "Digitalisierung und Analyse von kulturellen Transfers in kolumbianischen Literaturzeitschriften (1892-1950)" and "Literarische Modernisierungsprozesse und transnationale Netzwerkbildung im Medium der Kulturzeitschrift: vom ʻModernismoʼ zur Avantgarde," and Diana Roig Sanz's "Mapping Hispanic Modernity. Cross-border Literary Networks and Cultural Mediators (1908-1939)" and "Social Networks of the Past. Mapping Hispanic and Lusophone Literary Modernity, 1898-1959."
Similar projects focusing on European periodicals include Christine Lombez's "Traduire sous l'Occupation - France, Belgique 1940-44," Daniela La Penna's "Mapping Literary Space: Intellectuals, Journals, and Publishing Firms in Italy 1940-1960," and Alison E. Martin and Andrew Thacker's "Spaces of Translation, European Magazine Culture, 1945–1965."

52 Roig Sanz, Fólica and Caristia, eds., *Literary Translation in Periodicals*; Guzmán, ed., "Translation and/in Periodical Publications."

Translations within periodicals: at the cutting edge of the literary field

We have already established that translation can be at the forefront of literary innovation; however, this would prove difficult without a medium that can support such a function through its immediacy, versatility, and involvement in aesthetic and ideological struggles: the cultural magazine. This is mainly due to the periodicals' role as "bancos de prueba" and "laboratorios" where ideological and aesthetic projects are concocted and trialled out.[53] According to Sarlo,

> la conciencia de su estar en el presente se superpone con su cualidad instrumental: las revistas son medios. A diferencia de los poemas o las ficciones, la sintaxis de la revista (que obviamente los incluye) se diseña para intervenir en la coyuntura, alinearse respecto de posiciones y, en lo posible, alterarlas, mostrar los textos en vez de solamente publicarlos.[54]

Magazines therefore function as "instrumentos de batalla cultural"[55] and are privileged sources for the study of the struggles that resulted in literary change, as described in Bourdieusean sociology and polysystem theory.

The notions of testbed and laboratory also imply that this is where experimentation happens—to conflate both dimensions, it can be said that magazines create "una zona de combatividad de enorme potencial creativo."[56] In their pages, new ideas and forms of expression are not only put forward, they take shape and coalesce in the complex, intertextual web of juxtaposed contributions. As noted by José Luis Martínez, one of the characteristics of magazines is that they bring together the work of canonical, marginal, and emerging authors alike, almost inherently challenging the status quo.[57] Thus, magazines often contain the earliest form(s) of an idea or poetics that later crystallises in book format. In Guillermo de Torre's words, "el perfil más nítido de

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53 Sarlo, "Intelectuales y revistas," 14; Corral, Stanton, and Valender, eds., *Laboratorios de lo nuevo.*
54 Sarlo, "Intelectuales y revistas," 11.
55 Sarlo, "Intelectuales y revistas," 14.
56 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 366.
57 Martínez, "'El Renacimiento' y su tiempo," 82.

una época, el escorzo más revelador de una personalidad, el antecedente olvidado o renegado de cierta actitud que luego nos asombra, en tal o cual escritor, se hallan escondidos, subyacentes, no en los libros, sino en las páginas de las revistas primiciales."[58] It is precisely the "tejido discursivo" proper to magazines (to which I will come back in a moment) that acts as "un laboratorio donde se experimentan propuestas estéticas y posiciones ideológicas."[59] Thanks to this double constitution as spaces of experimentation and cultural combativeness, periodicals become "generadoras de la historia literaria"[60] and thereby, the foremost source for the study of literary history.

Although this is not unique to Spanish America, the significance of periodicals for the evolution of literature is particularly crucial in the region, and this for various reasons related to the publishing industry and the circulation of print.[61] In effect, for much of the nineteenth century and part of the twentieth, magazines were the main vector of literary expression and dissemination in Latin America; this has been repeatedly stressed by writers and scholars since the 1940s, when Martínez emphatically affirmed: "en el principio existieron las revistas literarias."[62] It is difficult, from a contemporary perspective in which book publishing is so prevalent (in our lives as readers but also in literary studies research), to appreciate the fundamental importance and reach of Latin American literary magazines, especially during the second half of the long nineteenth century, in a context in which the local book publishing industry was rudimentary and dominated by strict economic imperatives. In this, Latin American literary fields differed significantly from the scenery described by Bourdieu in *Les règles de l'art*. Book publishing was a risky financial enterprise, especially in circumstances in which readership was limited and the threat of censorship real. Novels were first published as *feuilletons* in newspapers rather than self-contained volumes,

58 De Torre, "El 98 y el modernismo," 13.
59 Sarlo, "Intelectuales y revistas," 14.
60 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 365.
61 The role of magazines in literary change is also clear in the Anglophone world: Amy Lowell qualifies "the newspaper" as "that flamboyant medium for the dissemination of half-baked ideas" in the post-WW1 context *Tendencies*, 208, and highly canonical works in English were first published in periodicals too (e.g. Joyce's *Ulysses*, Eliot's *Waste Land*).
62 José Luis Martínez, "Las revistas literarias," 281.

and only books that guaranteed a certain level of success attracted the interest of a reduced pool of publishers. It was even more unlikely for literary producers pertaining to the pole of restricted production (i.e., those that are the focus of this thesis) to meet the profitability criteria required by book publishing. As a result, published books were few and print runs very small, making magazines the main medium for the publication and diffusion of contemporary literature.[63]

The Mexican book market did not really emerge until the late 1910s when the Great War created a void in Spanish book exports that could be filled in Mexico and that would (alongside a slowly progressing literacy rate) make local production profitable.[64] And even then, if we compare the usual print run of 300-500 for books (according to Guillermo Sheridan's and José Emilio Pacheco's estimates) to *El Maestro*'s 50,000 monthly copies, the differences in circulation and potential impact are evident.[65] Even for magazines with less grandiose ambitions (I think for example of *Contemporáneos* and its 1,500 monthly print run), the number is still significantly higher than in book publishing. Sheridan confirms that even in 1922, in the midst of the expansion of the Mexican book industry,

> las revistas literarias eran el agente más adecuado para la promoción cultural, y […] resultaban la opción lógica en un medio en el que los consumidores de literatura libresca eran mínimos y en el que las ediciones (que solían ser de 300 ejemplares) solían abultar las bodegas de las librerías hasta que el dueño se decidía por un remate. Las revistas, en cambio, funcionaban como sucedáneos eficaces puesto que circulaban más y llegaban más rápidamente a los lectores adecuados.[66]

The material reality of the book trade thus contributed to making magazines the venue where experimentation and literary change happened.

As a result of this precarious infrastructure of the print market within the region, magazines also often constituted the main link between Latin American writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Commonly procured through international

63 Ross, *Fuentes de la historia*, VII.
64 Cervantes and Valero. *La colección Cvltvra*, 28-29.
65 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 120; Pacheco, "Nota," 332.
66 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 120.

subscription (which was available for almost all periodicals discussed here), private correspondence, or mutual acquaintances (especially those intellectuals enrolled in the diplomatic service), magazines offered a unique opportunity to read others' work and stay up to date, as books circulated particularly poorly between Spanish American countries—an issue that is still pressing today.[67] Unfortunately, there remain few archival traces of these often informal exchanges for the studied period as subscription records (as well as magazines' archives more generally) and personal libraries have rarely been preserved. Although systematic information on the circulation of magazines is typically unavailable, their international diffusion among intellectual networks does generate critical consensus; indeed, it would be almost absurd to believe that a magazine such as the *Revista Moderna*, which gathered contributions from collaborators in 12 Latin American countries and Spain (amounting to 17% of all contributors), was itself not read in those same countries.[68] As Martínez puts it, *modernista* magazines had a "clara vocación hispánica," and the "circulación que lograron establecer los modernistas" was an "hazaña."[69] Additionally, occasional mentions are made by writers themselves. Manuel Toussaint affirmed in the pages of *Pegaso* in April 1917: "a Lugones, como a la mayor parte de los poetas sudamericanos—Rubén Darío es la excepción—apenas se le conoce en México. Se sabe de él un poco por las revistas y mucho menos por los libros."[70] Leopoldo Díaz, in turn, read Darío in the *Revista Moderna* from Geneva: "Mi querido Darío—le escribí hace días preguntándole por noticias—y no obtuve respuesta. Leí en 'Revista Moderna' de México la transcripción de un artículo de su último libro 'La Caravana Pasa'..—que no he tenido el gusto de recibir."[71] Toussaint's comment summarises my points of the last few paragraphs: poetry in particular, as a generally non-profitable genre, circulated almost exclusively through

67 On this question, see for instance Levitt and Saferstein, "From Buenos Aires to Mexico."

68 Valdés, *Índice de la* Revista Moderna," 25.

69 José Luis Martínez, "Las revistas literarias," 291. He goes on to affirm, in line with the figures mentioned above, that the *Revista Moderna*'s predecessor, the *Revista Azul*, published the work of 96 Latin American writers from 16 countries, excluding Mexico, in addition to 32 Spaniards, in only three years.

70 *Pegaso* I.8:14 [190].

71 Leopoldo Díaz, Postcard to Rubén Darío, 23 September 1903, Archivo de Rubén Darío, Biblioteca AECID, 3RC-721-1/52.

magazines. This is widely recognised even outside of Latin America; there too, magazines were the primary medium for "lyrical expression, where translations published in periodicals and anthologies are often more influential than those published in individual books."[72] Since this thesis is mainly concerned with translations of poetry and with field dynamics in which periodicals were key actors as discussed by Sarlo and Sheridan, it is fitting to keep the focus on magazines, as well as anthologies published either as ephemera (in literary supplements of periodicals) or series.

Like periodicals, anthologies were a fundamental venue for translations, and both the similarities between the two formats and their interconnectedness place them within the remit of this thesis. Balbino Dávalos's mini-anthology *Los grandes poetas norteamericanos*, analysed in Chapter 1, was published both in the *Revista Moderna* and as an independent pamphlet by the Tipografía de la Oficina Impresora del Timbre the same year. Salvador Novo's *La poesía norteamericana moderna*, published as a supplement of *El Universal Ilustrado* (in pamphlet form) and examined in Chapter 5, was derived from shorter anthologies published in *Prisma* and *La Falange*.[73] Finally, *Cvltvra*, discussed Chapter 4, consisted of a series of anthologies published periodically. There are therefore multiple intersections between both formats, which also share core components in terms of the work of the editors, from the selection of different authors, texts, and passages, to their juxtaposition within one composite whole.

It could thus be argued that cultural periodicals also fall within Lefevere's category of "rewriting," which he uses for translations and anthologies. Consequently, translations published in magazines compound the processes of selection, interpretation, re-signification, and reframing inherent to both the practice and the medium. They are also the object of complex intertextual relations, covered by my fourth level of analysis. Indeed, the anthological *and* serialised nature of periodicals results in intertextual dialogue on the synchronic and diachronic levels alike (i.e., within one issue and between different issues). In other words, the counterpoint created by the variety of

[72] Pym, *Method*, 48.

[73] It would later be expanded to form a book: *101 poemas: antología bilingüe de la poesía norteamericana moderna.*

other contributions with which a text resonates, to which it responds in different possible ways, is specific to periodicals. Thus, a magazine is always more than the mere sum of the texts that conform it, and it is precisely this complex network of signification that gives periodicals their potency in cultural warfare:

> Las revistas generan un sentido inmediato de la literatura y de la cultura de un momento dado; permiten captar con gran nitidez un estado de permeabilidad de los discursos, una especie de estado de latencia previa a su consolidación en ideologías culturales, en tanto conjunto articulado de ideas y valores. Este estado de movilidad del pensamiento y de la sensibilidad posibilita una serie de cruces diversos, novedosos e inclusive contradictorios, impensables a posteriori.[74]

While this unique view into multiple ideas, motifs, and forms that are developing, converging, and sometimes contradicting each other is what makes periodicals such a rich source for the study of literary history, it also constitutes a methodological challenge: how to untangle and present a coherent narrative from this heterogeneous and massive conglomerate.

Tackling complexity (i): Periodical Series

To make sense of the contents of "esos cuadernos irregulares, dueños de todas las arbitrariedades,"[75] my core methodological principle is to establish clusters of texts around aspects or problems that are of interest and that appear to be relevant to the studied magazines. This allows me to reduce the amount of material to treat and be able to examine it in all its complexity. This approach is inspired by Nancy Calomarde's notion of "series," which she defines as "la organización de textos y discursos en torno a un problema o eje del que dan cuenta desde diferentes modulaciones genéricas, retóricas e ideológicas."[76] Read together, the texts that conform a series ultimately "revelan

[74] Schwartz and Patiño, "Introducción," 648.
[75] José Luis Martínez, "Panorama de la literatura," 87.
[76] Calomarde, *Diálogo oblicuo*, 19.

aspectos de un devenir, en tanto microhistoria de una idea, o una forma."[77] This is why I occasionally discuss non-translated texts when they are part of a series that includes translations. Although I have endeavoured to limit the number of such instances, some of them are indispensable in order to get a fuller picture; to give just one example, it is useful, to understand the evolution of the translation of US poetry, to read the versions of Langston Hughes's poems in *Contemporáneos* alongside Salvador Novo's essay "Notas sobre la poesía de los negros en los Estados Unidos," printed in the same issue.[78] Not all series are thematic, though, and rich insight can be gained by examining different kinds of groupings, as the structure of my thesis demonstrates: the first part revolves around a series of translations that share salient formal characteristics; the second part is thematically focused, and the third uses the provenance of the translated texts as common denominator. In each case, the analysed series was deemed the most representative of each magazine and of its contribution to the modernisation of literature in Mexico.[79]

These core series can be seen to overlap, to a certain extent, with the magazines' editorial lines. It is difficult to understand the *Revista Moderna*, for instance, without considering the series revolving around decadence or formal experimentation. Likewise, the series of pedagogy and militarism are central to *El Maestro*. Those series certainly do not make up the editorial lines by themselves, but they strongly contribute to them. Seeking to uncover the editors' general guiding principles is worthwhile in terms of analysis, since these are directly related to their participation in the cultural struggles outlined earlier. Moreover, translation plays a non-negligible role in the conformation of editorial lines: as Sarlo stated, "la política de traducciones de una revista puede indicar de qué modo un colectivo intelectual piensa su intervención en la esfera pública como propuesta de reorganización de la tradición cultural."[80] Identifying key translation-

[77] Calomarde, *Diálogo oblícuo*, 20.
[78] *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:45-47 [157-159] and 85-88 [197-200].
[79] Needless to say, magazines contain a myriad overlapping series, and any individual contribution can be part of various series simultaneously. This is what makes the remarkable richness of the textual web conformed by periodicals, allowing multiple points of entry and avenues for analysis.
[80] Sarlo, "Intelectuales y revistas," 13.

related series is therefore a way to understand the change that magazine editors and close collaborators were working towards.

Of course, the notions of editorial and translatorial lines are not uncomplicated. As aggregates not only of texts but also of people (with frequent co-editorships, editorial boards, and networks of close collaborators), magazines often have not one strategy for their engagement with the literary canon (and with their social, political, and economic circumstances), but several. Thus, magazines tend to be compounds of different editorial lines, defined by the personalities working on them. Sometimes these lines are complementary, with differences ranging from mere emphasis on distinct aspects to divergent personal preferences. Other times, they stem from radically converse poetics and can result in open conflict (as in mid-twentieth century Cuban magazine *Orígenes,* which split in two). To this, translation adds another layer of complexity since it introduces one more agent making decisions that have a bearing on the end result.[81] When the translator is a member of the editorial team or a close collaborator, her own translation choices can be considered almost an extension of the editors' poetics. When she isn't, however, the relevance of her choices to the editors' project is to be assessed in the light of the series in which it is included. Thus, editorial intent is often identifiable through thematic, functional, and formal clusters of which the translation is part (including programmatic texts such as manifestos and editorials), the meaning created through the juxtaposition of materials, and the framing of the text and its visibility (which includes announcements and commentary about it, but also layout, placement within the issue, and potentially illustrations). As in kaleidoscopes, the unique combination of elements (here, texts and images) produces the final pattern (editorial line). Thus, although many authors and even works are shared across

[81] Other factors intervening in the making of translations suggest that the "translatorial line" cannot be held as a completely deliberate construct. These range from the availability of a suitable translator and her personal decision-making, to print circulation (i.e., which original publications are physically available in the first place), and even translation rights, especially as we move further into the twentieth century). The part of chance involved in this process and in magazine editing more generally is not unrelated to the notion of "bricolaje" as a cultural modality specific to Latin America (resulting from its colonial history and peripheral position), referred to by critics such as Mabel Moraña and Silvia Molloy.

periodicals, their arrangement, presentation, and intertextual relations create meaning that is distinctive to each magazine.

This is not, however, a call to simplify or domesticate the rich material offered by periodicals; their heterogeneous (and at times partly haphazard) form of textuality is vital for cultural change and for our understanding of it. I have already stated that my thesis shows that literary change is incremental, uncoordinated, and collective, and this is mainly made possible by the kind of enterprises and textual products that magazines are—ones that build "proyectos derivados menos de una programática incontaminada y unidireccional, que del resultado de una negociación entre líneas que conviven en permanente estado de tensión y recolocación."[82] A similar point is made by Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker about Anglophone Modernist periodicals: those "show us how the newness of modernist forms first came into the world in tentative, exploratory, and dynamic ways."[83] This is not solely a result of the experimental bias of periodicals; indeed, the progressive conformation of innovative series by the editors is a form of poetic exploration that is much more disorganised (and dependent on the personal contribution of each individual collaborator) than it would appear when we retrospectively examine an aesthetics in its crystallised form. It is through the input of all agents involved and the ensuing intertextual dialogue that the definitive iteration of a poetics is shaped. Examining periodicals thus allows us to delve into the intricacies (and sometimes the contradictions) of the process of change and question simplistic accounts of this process (e.g., those revolving around the idea of individual genius).

Tackling complexity (ii): Indexes

The historical prominence of periodicals in Mexico has resulted in a rich tradition of hemerographic studies in the country, especially thanks to the efforts of Martínez, who

82 Schwartz and Patiño, "Introducción," 648.
83 Brooker and Thacker, "General Introduction," 3, paraphrasing Marks, "Making the New," 37.

emphasised the importance of magazines for literary history as early as the 1940s. He also led the way in terms of the preservation of such materials, with the publication of facsimile editions of many modern Mexican literary periodicals by the prestigious Fondo de Cultura Económica, of which he was the director: the *Revistas Literarias Mexicanas Modernas* collection, created in the 1970s, has been an invaluable source for numerous scholars (myself included) and has likely contributed to the still growing interest in Mexican cultural periodicals. The work of the pioneers of hemerographic research in Mexico ran in parallel with this reprinting effort, with the shared aim of making periodical materials more accessible. Starting in the 1960s, we see the publication of a series of detailed catalogues of the contents of certain magazines by the UNAM's Centro de Estudios Literarios (CEL).[84]

The publication of these *índices* has given way to seminal research into the corresponding periodicals, but what I would like to emphasise is the heuristic importance of these catalogues as ways to systematise the abundant and eclectic information provided by periodicals.[85] Indeed, many of these *índices* contain not only a full catalogue (that in itself is a valuable tool for general exploratory work as well as for the elaboration of series and/or inventories of texts with certain characteristics), but also, often, basic summaries of some aspects of the information gathered. Valdés's *Índice de la* Revista Moderna includes a computation of the collaborators' nationalities (which I have quoted above), and another of the number of images reproduced for each artist. Clark and Curiel's *índices* of the *Revista Moderna de México* go even further, with the inclusion of "cuadros estadísticos" comprising various tables, lists, and graphs

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[84] This includes Ana Elena Díaz Alejo and Ernesto Prado Velázquez's *Índices de* El Nacional*: periódico literario mexicano (1880-1884)* (1961), their *Índice de la* Revista Azul, *1894-1896, y estudio preliminar* (1968), Héctor Valdés's *Índice de la* Revista Moderna Arte y Ciencia *(1898-1903) y estudio preliminar* (1967), Guillermo Sheridan's *Índices de* Contemporáneos (1988)*,* and Belem Clark de Lara and Fernando Curiel's *Revista Moderna de México (1903-1911), tomo I. Índices* (2002). For a more complete list of the titles in this series and information on its genesis, see Sheridan, *Breve revistero*, 10 and following.

[85] See Clark de Lara and Curiel Defossé, *El modernismo en México*; Clark de Lara and Curiel Defossé, *Revista Moderna de México*; Clark de Lara and Speckman Guerra, *La república de las letras*; Clark de Lara and Curiel Defossé, *Aproximaciones a una historia*; Chavarín and Rodríguez González, eds., *Literatura y prensa*; Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, and Sheridan, *Breve revistero.*

delving much deeper into the catalogue's data.[86] This has fundamental epistemological implications for periodical research, to which I will come back shortly.

Of course, the rise of hemerographic studies is not exclusive to Mexico, and examples of the increasing interest in the topic can be found across the continent[87] and abroad.[88] The study of Anglo-American "little magazines" of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries has coalesced into Modern Periodical Studies, an area of research that, although less directly related to my object of study than the Mexican scholarly tradition described above, has informed my research in general ways. Aspects of Modern Periodical Studies that intersect with my project include the notions that modern literature is intrinsically trans-national and underpinned by the circulation of print, and that this has been overlooked in more traditional approaches to literary history. Various scholars within the field have shown how the study of periodical culture changes our understanding of Modernism, and I would argue that most of the magazines analysed in this thesis participated in the broad transnational movement towards literary modernity.[89] Through their dialogue with similar publications in the Francophone and Anglophone worlds and their anticipation of some of the innovations brought about by canonical Modernist writers, these magazines challenge the conception of Modernism as an essentially Anglo-American phenomenon and individual-centric accounts of literary change. A good example of this can be found in José Juan Tablada's turn-of-the-

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86 Through these, one does not only have a general idea of the collaborators' nationalities, but also of how the proportion of foreign, Spanish American, and Mexican authors varied throughout the publication span (in graph form). The genre of all the contributions to the *RMM* is also plotted diachronically, as well as the amount of contributions by leading writers and illustrators. The main table tallies the number of texts by nationality, author, and genre, and a basic list of translations (including author, title, and translator) is also provided. Clark de Lara and Curiel Defossé, *Revista Moderna de México*, 525-562.

87 Examples of this include the 2004 special issue of the *Revista Iberoamericana* (LXX.208-209) titled *Revistas literarias/culturales latinoamericanas del siglo XX* and edited by Jorge Schwartz and Roxana Patiño; Sosnowski, ed., *La cultura de un siglo*; and more recently Zamorano, ed., *Escrituras en tránsito*.

88 Pioneers of Latin American periodical studies in Anglo-American academia include Boyd G. Carter, with *Las revistas literarias de Hispanoamérica* and *Historia de la literatura hispanoamericana a través de sus revistas*; King, *'Sur': a Study*; and Merlin Forster, who published an *Index to Mexican literary periodicals* (1966), as well as various studies about Contemporáneos.

89 On this topic, see for instance Thacker, "Modernism and the Periodical Scene"; Brooker and Thacker, eds., *Oxford Critical and Cultural History*; Marks, "Making the New," as well as, more generally, the *Journal of Modern Periodical Studies.*

century experiments with poetic image and short form inspired by his translations of Japanese haiku (discussed in Chapter 1), which bring to mind Ezra Pound's own relationship with Japanese and Chinese poetry roughly a decade later. Through its aim to evaluate the contribution of translation and periodicals to Mexican literary modernity, as well as its broader implications regarding global modernism, this thesis is congruent with the objectives of Modern Periodical Studies.[90] This is, however, not the guiding framework and question for my research; in line with Patrick Collier's lucid remarks on the field of Modern Periodical Studies, I believe that the big narrative of Modernism might prove limiting to periodical research, and that a more empirical approach based on the specificities of each publication and its interactions with its socio-political and artistic circumstances is more fruitful.

Between qualitative and quantitative approaches: periodical data

Such a new and intricate object of study calls for inventive methods to approach it. This is not least due to the scope and heterogeneity of most periodicals, even when working with series. With most of the major magazines in my corpus (*Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna*, *El Maestro*) around 2,000 pages in total, and *Contemporáneos* coming close to 3,500, it becomes difficult to have a general view of translated materials in each of these publications. There are over 800 translations in these periodicals alone; even establishing functional series and formulating hypotheses becomes a challenge, let alone assessing their validity. Various methodological tools can make this more practicable. The first one is the notion of list, discussed by Anthony Pym in *Method in translation history*. As Pym notes, making lists of translations is an indispensable first step in historical studies of translation, which he denominates "translation archaeology."[91] This approach is especially fitting for material that is itself serialised and abundant, and it is

[90] Collier, "Modern Periodical Studies."
[91] Pym, *Method*, 38.

no coincidence that the publication of indexes has been encouraged and praised as a catalyst of Periodical Studies.[92] In this approach, one starts from an encompassing list of bibliographic metadata about translations (i.e., a catalogue) and then extracts topic- or problem-based corpora to explore specific questions—in other words, series.[93]

Pym links the notion of lists with a form of empiricism that he sees as an essential basis for translation history, with which I concur.[94] "The prime function of lists is to falsify first impressions,"[95] and this is precisely the role that they have played in my analysis of the visibility given to translation in the *Revista Azul* and the *Revista Moderna*.[96] Thus, lists allow the scholar of periodical culture to root her research into the actual text rather than her impression of it which can quickly become unreliable when working with big magazines; they guide the investigation and help substantiate hypotheses. It has probably become evident, by this point, that empiricism is an underlying principle in my research. It is transversal to the different approaches that I combine (from the sociological/systemic perspective, to the Manipulation school—and Descriptive Translation Studies in general—, and the Mexican hemerographic tradition) and I find it particularly effective to challenge established (yet often poorly substantiated) discourses around literary history and canon formation.[97] Hermans eloquently describes how theory functions, within an empirical approach, as a "framework for collecting, ordering and explaining data. Although a theory is first and foremost a conceptual pattern, it also functions as an instrument of exploration, and thus

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92 Martínez, "Las revistas literarias," 295.

93 Pym, *Method*, 42 and following.

94 Pym, "A spirited defense."

95 Pym, *Method*, 39.

96 A close examination of the inventory of translations published in the *Revista Moderna* (284 translated texts over a five-year run) not only refuted my working hypothesis based on observation, but also pointed to aspects of the question that were not observable through a reading of the magazine. The particulars of this exploratory process can be found in Marina Popea, "Shaping translation."

97 This is not to be confused with an uncritical pretension to full objectivity. The benefit of this approach is the production of knowledge through a replicable process of testing and adaptation of hypotheses, which is achieved by making my data and analysis available online, in accordance with open data good practice.
Empiricism in Descriptive Translation Studies is discussed at length in Toury, "Rationale for Descriptive Translation Studies."

has both heuristic and cognitive value." It is thus destined to "stan[d] or fal[l] with the success of its applications."[98]

The questions of data collection, ordering, and interpretation are therefore crucial to my research, while also being impacted by the abundance of serialised material. As shown earlier, attempts to summarise periodical metadata are not a new phenomenon, but those were usually the result of extensive teamwork and their output is not easily exploitable in its paper catalogue form. Tackling the amount of magazines that I analyse here was only made possible by digital technologies. In terms of data collection and ordering, this translates into using a digital, tabular format.[99] Compared with lists or indexes, tabular data in a digital format is much easier to edit, but also and most importantly, to filter, wrangle, analyse, visualise, and share (on which more anon).

Regarding analysis and interpretation, the intuitive approach for this kind of data is quantitative. As Claire Lemercier and Claire Zalc put it, "sources of any type that come in large quantities lend themselves to quantification, if only because it is difficult to keep a general view of their contents without creating a database."[100] On this basis, descriptive statistics may provide valuable insight into relatively big amounts of data and its diachronic evolution, guiding research in various ways. This assumption is shared by Translation Studies and Periodical Studies alike, and some antecedents (such as the "cuadros estadísticos" for the *Revista Moderna*) have been mentioned already.[101] Even canonical studies that appear entirely qualitative in nature, such as John King's seminal monograph on Argentine magazine *Sur*, rely on statistical analysis to some extent. In his introduction, King acknowledges that, while he does not "dwell on detailed statistical analysis at any given period, [he] will attempt to illustrate and analyse the most important tendencies" in his data.[102] After highlighting the impact that

98 Hermans, "Introduction," 12.

99 At this stage, I am working with CSV tables, but the aim is to make this into either a relational or a graph database prior to publication.

100 Lemercier and Zalc, *Quantitative methods*, 30.

101 A good early example for Translation Studies is Katrin Van Bragt, Lieven D'hulst, and José Lambert's catalogue of French translations in CD-ROM format, which includes some computations: *Bibliographie des traductions françaises (1810–1840).*

102 King, *'Sur': a Study*, 5.

rapid progress in digitisation technologies has had on the study of periodicals by increasing accessibility (much like Martínez's facsimiles did in their own time), Brooker and Thacker state that data modelling and statistical analysis, while only incipient (a little over a decade ago), are "clearly a direction in which the study of periodical codes might usefully go."[103] A small number of academics are now working on such questions, and I believe that digital methods will shortly bring about the next turn in Periodical Studies.[104] In this context, perhaps one of the most important contributions of this thesis is its methodological component, and more precisely its examination of the different ways in which data analysis can aid research in Translation and Periodical Studies.

In this realm too, technological progress is helpful. The development of computational statistics, with purpose-built programming languages such as R, is helpful even for relatively simple datasets like metadata catalogues.[105] This allows researchers to examine and describe their data efficiently, following, for instance, the principles outlined by John Tukey in his seminal *Exploratory Data Analysis.* Tukey provides a series of tools to summarise the characteristics of a dataset (such as, notoriously, the boxplot, based on Mary Eleanor Spear's previous work), as well as a method for its exploration: one starts from general features, potentially represented in what Tukey calls a "distant-view graph," and narrows the focus progressively. In his analogy of exploratory data analysis as detective work, the distant-view graph is like a picture of a crime scene, offering a general view of the situation and pointing to aspects worthy of further inquiry.[106] Successive stages of the exploration focus on increasingly

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103 Brooker and Thacker, "General Introduction," 23.

104 Most of the contributions in Roig, Fólica and Caristia's *Literary Translation in Periodicals* rely on datasets of various natures, and statistics are a common tool among them. For data-driven studies of newspapers, see Lansdall-Welfare et al., "Content Analysis"; Cristianini, Lansdall-Welfare, and Dato, "Large-Scale Content Analysis"; Liddle, "20,000 Victorian Newspapers."

105 Wickham and Grolemund, *R for data science.*
My goal is not to produce cutting-edge digital methods but to demonstrate that even simple data analysis can yield valuable insight into literary phenomena, especially when combined with qualitative approaches. As Underwood notes, "many useful methods are supervised, comparatively straightforward, and have been in social-science courses for decades." Underwood, "Distant Reading."

106 Tukey, *Exploratory Data Analysis*, 5-10.
This corresponds to the notion of "macroscope" used by others—see Lemercier and Zalc quoting the work of Tim Hitchcock and Katy Börner in *Quantitative methods*, 24-25.

specific aspects of the data, allowing the researcher to formulate more precise hypotheses, and identify relevant series and general trends (not unlike the move from catalogue to corpus in Pym's approach). In this process, data visualisation is key, not only because it is an eloquent manner to summarise information, but because it can reveal unexpected properties of the data: "one of the great features of graphical impact […] is the graph's ability to show you what you were not looking for—what you may even have been very reluctant to see."[107] The *Revista Moderna*, for instance, has been largely analysed as a periodical with a strongly Francophile editorial line, much like its predecessor the *Revista Azul*. This is of course a valid point, with two thirds of all translations being made from French, although the figure does not come close to the *Revista Azul*'s sweeping 80%. When considering the presence of French as a source language diachronically, however, a different picture emerges: the proportion of French falls unevenly throughout the magazine's publication span, going from 82% of all translated texts in the first volume to 55% in the last (Figure 0.1). The decrease is even more marked in poetry translation (Figure 0.2). This is a good example of Tukey's method of progressively refining hypotheses, and my argument in Chapter 1 derives from this observation.[108] This chapter shows how this bigger trend is linked to formal features and experiments in specific translations, demonstrating the complementarity of

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[107] Tukey, *Exploratory Data Analysis*, 5-6. A similar argument is made by F. J. Anscombe in "Graphs in Statistical Analysis."
My analysis in "Shaping translation" illustrates this aspect particularly well. Data visualisation is bound to be a central component of studies in the field; half of the 16 contributions published in *Literary Translation in Periodicals* (edited by Roig, Fólica, and Caristia), rely on visualisations. However, these are mostly confined to either mapping or diverse (synchronic and diachronic) representations of counts. Exploring original and effective ways to represent periodical/translatorial data is one of my methodological objectives.

[108] I am including graphs here as a demonstration of the heuristic value of Exploratory Data Analysis. In the following, I provide them only when necessary to support my argument. Data exploration and visualisation has guided my research in many ways, but it remains mostly behind the scenes. This is not least because of the disciplinary bias that prompts literary scholars located "on a tricky disciplinary boundary" to present results in a "casually discursive, thesis-driven way" typical of the humanities rather than in the drier scientific manner of summarising experiments. Underwood, "Genealogy of Distant Reading," paragraphs 36 and following. Besides replicability, one of the reasons why I will be publishing all my data and code online is precisely to "reveal the experimental infrastructure that the disciplinary mores of literary study would tend to conceal" (Underwood, "Genealogy of Distant Reading," note 1), and shine some light on the quantitative side of my project.

macro quantitative analysis and close-reading. Thus, it becomes possible to "extend findings bearing on particular instances to more substantial corpora, so as to be able to discover large-scale and long-term patterns and trends" as envisioned by Hermans.[109] This method is therefore especially suited for larger periodicals, as well as studies covering more or less extended periods of time and aiming to uncover historical trends.[110] As observed by Ted Underwood, "quantitative methods give scholars a different way of connecting the dots—one that makes it easier to reveal gradual change across a long timeline."[111]

While the relevance and usefulness of trends is indubitable, especially when studying diachronic phenomena, I would like to formulate two important caveats: firstly, that this does not imply that individual translations and/or translations that go against the main tendencies in the corpus are insignificant, much to the contrary. An exceptional occurrence in the corpus is as noteworthy as a tendency—indeed, "what is particular can only be discovered in relation to a more general rule."[112] This is especially relevant when studying change: as noted by Pym, "since historical change is commonly motivated by discontent minorities or initially minor technologies, its dynamic tends to escape monolithic periodisations based on numerical majorities."[113] Following this logic, it is possible that its earliest nuances escape quantitative analysis altogether. This is why I chose to analyse, in my first chapter, translations of US poets in my earliest magazine, the *Revista Moderna*, despite their relatively modest presence. English accounts for only 15% of all poetry translation in the magazine, and its evolution over the publication span is much less compelling than that of French (Figures 0.3 and 0.4).[114] Nonetheless, the United States are the second most represented author

[109] Hermans, "Introduction," 14.
The dialectic nature of this process is key: quantitative analysis points to texts to be examined more closely, and details of the texts lead to new questions to be explored through data analysis.

[110] In an effort to avoid the "law of small numbers," I have excluded those periodicals with less than 25 translations from the cross-corpus plots and calculations.

[111] Underwood, *Distant Horizons*, 33.

[112] José Lambert, Lieven D'hulst, and Katrin van Bragt, "Translated literature in France," 151.
This is particularly true in the absence of any statistical modelling, in which outliers may become more problematic.

[113] Pym, "Shortcomings," 225.

[114] It should be noted that the seemingly sharp increase in the last year of the magazine is deceptive: the

nationality in the magazines (after France), and later portions of my corpus display an increase in poetry translation from English, drawing my attention to these versions as potential pioneers.[115] As it turns out, versions of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* are an important innovative force within the magazine, despite his lack of prominence from a quantitative point of view. Translated Japanese poetry, also analysed in the first chapter, is an example of an outlier that is not related to any corpus trend, but which nevertheless proves to be highly significant qualitatively.

Secondly, and as a corollary to the importance of anomalies and particular cases, I am not advocating for an exclusively distant reading here, at least not as understood by many following Franco Moretti's early definition (i.e., as precluding any traditional form of reading and textual analysis).[116] Other scholars such as Underwood conceive distant reading in a way that is much closer to the methods and aims of this thesis, namely as "the practice of framing historical inquiry as an experiment, using hypotheses and samples (of texts or other social evidence) that are defined before the writer settles on a conclusion," locating it at the intersection of literary history and social science.[117] Although I share this general framework to an extent, I prefer to think of my approach as a middle way between close and distant reading, emphasising the integration of both approaches.[118] Among other things, this results in a marked difference in the scale of my project: in contrast with Underwood's Braudel-inspired, large-scale studies of literary

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last volume was abruptly cut short when the *Revista Moderna* became the *Revista Moderna de México*, lasting only 8 months, instead of a whole year. Partly due to this, it is the volume with the least amount of poetry translation with a total of 5 texts, which artificially drives proportions up.

115 English was the source language of between 15 and 17% of all poetry translations in *modernista* magazines of the turn of the century, compared to 40% or above in periodicals of the 1920s.

116 There is value, nevertheless, in Moretti's challenge of literary historical practices that rely on small samples of canonical literature, and in a certain way, this thesis implicitly upholds the idea that if we are to question the canon, we must look at amounts of material that are better approached through means other than close-reading. I maintain, however, that qualitative approaches still have an important role to play in the analysis of literature.
Moretti, "Conjectures on World literature."

117 Underwood, "Genealogy of Distant Reading," paragraph 5.

118 This is not to say that Underwood is averse to this integration, but the difference in the balance of quantitative and qualitative components in his approach and mine is clear. Another important difference is that my method is not entirely experimental (inasmuch as I do not work exclusively with hypotheses that can be formally tested through quantitative means).

change, I aim to produce a "micro-sociology of modernist innovation,"[119] using Michael Levenson's words not in their original sense (i.e., that ground-breaking artists congregated in relatively small circles), but in a disciplinary sense. Much like in micro-history, I use small-scale qualitative analysis to characterise and comment on broader, systemic phenomena related to cultural change, but using Exploratory Data Analysis to guide the investigative and interpretive process, and support my findings on the micro level.[120]

Thus, although some readers might at first see a tension between literary scholarship and quantification, I argue, based on the above, that quantitative and qualitative approaches are not only compatible, but that they can produce solid, original results when used in conjunction. Quantitative methods are not as much a break from previous scholarship as a continuation of longstanding questions and practices in the fields of Translation and Periodical Studies (namely, the creation of indexes and catalogues).[121] Additionally, recent disciplinary changes, as formulated by Underwood, mean

> that quantitative and qualitative evidence are becoming easier to combine, blurring disciplinary boundaries. We're working on a methodological continuum now that extends from history and literature through linguistics and sociology. […] Since human affairs are also a continuum, we should feel free to use whatever mixture of methods gives us leverage on a particular problem.[122]

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119 Levenson, "Introduction," 6.

120 As noted by Moacir de Sá Pereira, combining qualitative and quantitative methods can be instrumental in "allowing us to craft digital hermeneutic strategies for a handful of texts or even for just one" (as I do in Chapter 4). Sá Pereira, "Mixed Methodological Digital Humanities." The question of quantification and micro-scale historical analysis is also explored in rich detail in Lemercier and Zalc's first chapter of *Quantitative methods in the humanities*. See in particular pp. 23 and following.
Independently of this, it could also be argued that the joint examination of multiple periodicals ultimately produces a mid-scale picture of a specific (and limited) period, as opposed to the longer time span of studies such as Underwood's.

121 For a more in-depth epistemological discussion of how "computer-aided methods can be seen as a continuation of traditional humanistic approaches," see Ganascia, "Logic of the Big Data Turn."; for a genealogy of the use of quantification in historical research, see Lemercier and Zalc, *Quantitative methods*, chapter 1.

122 Underwood, "Distant Reading."
This is also why I do not necessarily showcase the same computations for all magazines, choosing, instead, the most fitting method for each question.

Despite the sometimes strong sense of there being disciplinary divide between traditional and digitally-assisted methods, digital humanists and distant readers are increasingly arguing for integrated approaches.[123] Jeremy Rosen, for instance, explains how combining quantitative and qualitative methods might help avert two core pitfalls of distant reading, namely the question of the (mis)interpretation of quantitative results, and the reification of datasets as objective and/or representative sets of texts (a point also raised by Pym in his discussion of catalogues).[124] The idea that different modes of reading complement each other is also present in Hoyt Long and Richard Jean So's study of the genesis of the English haiku form, in which they show how each mode (close-reading, historicism, and machine learning) relies on an ontology of the text that illuminates certain of its aspects but that also has blind-spots, which are best covered by using multiple approaches in conjunction.[125] Tukey noted the importance of combining his analytical tools with critical thinking as early as 1970: "if [a detective] has no fingerprint powder, he will fail to find fingerprints on most surfaces. If he does not understand where the criminal is likely to have put his fingers, he will not look in the right places. Equally, the analyst of data needs both tools and understanding."[126] This is the kind of feedback loop that I establish between Exploratory Data Analysis and close reading, using the former to guide and support the latter, and the latter to interpret and refine the former. This method also allows one to move from the particular to the

123 See the contributions by Rosen, Long and So, Underwood, and Moacir de Sá Pereira quoted so far and in the rest of the paragraph. Following the example of the social sciences, Sá Pereira argues that the humanities would benefit from making "a conscious use of mixed methods [that] would push aside the binarism and let literary study be a counting discipline at the same time as a reading one."
Within the group of scholars studying translation in periodicals, such arguments are also rife—see in priority Hacke, "Metadata mining" as well as Ehrlicher, "The magazine as a medium," and De Clerck, "Eternal problems," 361.
On the question of disciplinary feuds: scholars from various fields note the impact of research metrification (and, indirectly, mercantilised higher education) and of the ensuing rhetoric of newness on this tendency to pit approaches against each other and work antagonistically rather than collaboratively. See DiCenzo, "Remediating the Past" and Underwood, "Distant Reading" for two different takes on this phenomenon. The question is also addressed in Lemercier and Zalc, *Quantitative methods*, 20.

124 Rosen, "Combining Close and Distant"; Pym, *Method*, 48 and following.

125 Long and So, "Literary Pattern Recognition."
Long and So work with Machine learning, which is altogether different from the kind of statistical analysis that I use in this thesis, but their general point still stands.

126 Tukey, *Exploratory Data Analysis*, 1-1.

general (and back)—a tension, Andrew Piper argues, that underlies cultural studies—and thereby to do justice to periodicals as a unique kind of material.[127]

My methodological contention is that this kind of analysis is particularly suited to the study of cultural periodicals as hybrid textual formations that create meaning through individual fragments as well as the collage of those into a whole, because it allows the researcher to tackle both dimensions, effectively combining her findings on the synchronic and diachronic levels to account for a complex serialised object. Thus, I would like to replace Maria DiCenzo's argument that "periodicals offer rich opportunities to engage critically and productively with the tensions between analog and digital skills"[128] and argue the opposite—namely, that they offer rich opportunities to explore the interplay and complementarity of analogue and digital skills in literary historical research. In light of this, it is not altogether surprising that the most precise formulation of the kind of methodological process that I have devised emanated precisely from Periodical Studies. Patrick Collier, when discussing possible developments in the field, remarks that

> it is entirely possible that, as modern periodical studies matures, it will create a feedback loop in which computer-assisted data mining and visualisation will be used to extend and validate hypotheses generated through close-reading and "surface reading" done the old-fashioned way, while larger patterns unearthed by distant reading make available new texts and concepts to be explored in close reading.[129]

This is, in my opinion, one of the most fruitful ways forward in the field. Overcoming the false dichotomy between close and distant reading will allow us to make the most of the rich, abundant, and understudied data provided by periodicals and will inevitably enhance our understanding of literary history.

127 Piper, "There Will Be Numbers," 3-5.
128 DiCenzo, "Remediating the Past," 35.
129 Collier, "Modern Periodical Studies," 108.

A note on the data

One of the main challenges of the methodology that I propose is the availability of data. Due to the recentness of the interest in translations published in periodicals, there are, to my knowledge, no comprehensive catalogues of such texts for Latin America. Andrea Pagni identifies this lacuna as one of the limiting factors for literary histories of translation in the region:

> importa destacar el ingente trabajo de archivo que queda por realizar cuando se piensa en historiar la traducción en América Latina. No se trata solo de reunir a los grandes nombres, destacar la labor traductiva de los letrados, intelectuales y poetas, sino de relevar los distintos circuitos de importación y circulación. Para ello, la metodología propuesta por Pym es una herramienta útil.[130]

The absence of data is compounded by the fact that translations published in periodicals are not independently listed in library catalogues, making it impossible to retrieve their metadata automatically. While indexes contain some information on such texts, they are not available for all the magazines in my corpus. Basing a list on them alone would also be both unpractical and unhelpful, as they were not designed for the study of translation and have significant limitations from this point of view.[131] As a result, my first step was to inventory every translation published in all periodicals of my corpus, collect the relevant metadata and structure it into a dataset. In this way, I obtained a general view of certain "circuitos de importación" that Pagni describes as indispensable for translation history, by bringing to light the work of a broad group of not always well-known (and often anonymous) translators.[132]

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130 Pagni, "Hacia una historia," 208.
"La metodología propuesta por Pym" refers to his *Method in Translation History* and, particularly, his focus on lists.

131 For details of these limitations, see Popea, "Shaping translation," 126.

132 Indeed, these are elite lettered circuits, and virtually everyone involved in them fits into the category of "intelectuales y poetas." I would argue, however, that there is still much to be gained from studying such circuits holistically; even within lettered circles, not all actors are "big names," and lesser-known figures have contributed to literary history in ways that are often overlooked, although they might have played an important role prior to falling through the cracks of canon-formation (e.g., Rafael Lozano, as shown in Chapter 5).

The design of the dataset follows Hadley Wickham's "tidy data" principles.[133] Building it from scratch rather than by using existing lists such as indexes or tables was the best way to avoid the biases that come with using pre-existing lists discussed by Pym and Rosen. It also allowed me to collect data for a wide range of variables. I detail the challenges that arose during this process, as well as the decisions that I have made in my article "Shaping translation in two Mexican cultural magazines: a case study in the use of quantitative methods for the analysis of translation in periodical publications" and in the GitHub repository for this thesis.[134] The design and making of the database are as much part of my project as the analysis of the trends observed in it. It is meant as a resource on which I shall build in the future, adding new periodicals in order to expand my analysis. I will also publish it as Open Data so that other scholars can access it for purposes of replicability and further research, which constitutes perhaps one of the main contributions of this doctoral project.

133 Wickham, "Tidy Data."
134 https://github.com/Mpopea/DPhil_supporting_data_and_code

Part I

Towards free verse: *modernista* experiments at the turn of the century

Chapter 1

From Gautier to Whitman: translation and evolution of verse forms and poetics in the *Revista Moderna* (1898-1903)

> *Nous assistons, en ce moment [...] à un spectacle vraiment extraordinaire, unique, dans toute l'histoire de la poésie : chaque poète allant, dans son coin, jouer sur une flûte, bien à lui, les airs qu'il lui plaît; pour la première fois, depuis le commencement, les poètes ne chantent plus au lutrin. Jusqu'ici, n'est-ce pas, il fallait, pour s'accompagner, les grandes orgues du mètre officiel. Eh bien! on en a trop joué, et on s'en est lassé.*
>
> Stéphane Mallarmé

The publication span of the *Revista Moderna*, 1898-1903, broadly coincided with the height of Spanish American *modernismo*.[135] Described by Max Henríquez Ureña as the "vocero del movimiento modernista de todo el continente,"[136] the magazine contributed to the movement's development, nuances, debates, and struggles. Thus, the *Revista Moderna* can function as a historical map of *modernismo*: as this chapter will show, it contained the emblematic poetics of the movement's first phase, the seeds of what would become the *postmodernista* reaction (almost ten years before Enrique González Martínez penned his famous, anti-*modernista* line, "Tuércele el cuello al cisne de

[135] Federico de Onís defines the years 1896-1905 as the "Triunfo del Modernismo" in *Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana (1882-1932)*, xvii. Similarly, Octavio Paz posits *Cantos de vida y esperanza* (1905) as "el momento de mediodía del modernismo." This corresponds roughly to what he calls "la segunda revolución modernista," led by Leopoldo Lugones (and starting in 1903 with *Crepúsculos del jardín*), and constituting a reaction against the ornate aesthetics of "el primer modernismo." Paz, *Los hijos del limo*, 136 and 139.

[136] Max Henríquez Ureña, *Breve historia*, 472. On the magazine's continental reach, see Pilar Mandujano, "La Revista Moderna."

engañoso plumaje"), and elements that prefigure the more radical poetic changes of the avant-garde. The *Revista Moderna* therefore offers a particularly fruitful base to study the evolution of *modernismo* and of poetics more generally. While foreign literatures (especially the French) have often been cited as sources of inspiration for the *modernista*s, translation has seldom received in-depth scholarly attention. In this chapter, I argue that translation functions as a central space of poetic experimentation in the *Revista Moderna* and that it therefore reflects the poetic changes mentioned above. More specifically, the evolution of the choice of translated authors and of the translations' formal characteristics denotes a growing experimentalism and an attempt to go beyond the aesthetic basis of traditional *modernismo* that are key for poetic modernisation.

Founded by Bernardo Couto Castillo and Jesús E. Valenzuela in the wake of the publication of the *Revista Azul* (1894-1896), the *Revista Moderna* benefited from the pioneer work realised by its predecessor and occupied a similar position in the literary field of turn-of-the-century Mexico (that is, the autonomous pole of the field), with the important difference that it was a privately funded enterprise. As such, it did not depend on government funding or sales, and was freer in its editorial line. On the other hand, this placed it in a more precarious situation in the long term, which affected its format, content (including translations), and very existence. In fact, the *Revista Moderna* as such ceased to exist in September 1903, when it was transformed into a more general magazine titled *Revista Moderna de México*, which was supported with public funds. For this reason, the *Revista Moderna* does stand as an independent publication and will be considered so in the present chapter.

The *Revista Moderna*'s creation followed José Juan Tablada's call, in an open letter published in January 1893, to design, for the decadent artists and poets, "excluidos por profanadores del templo de todos los fieles" (i.e., the mainstream periodical press), a new temple in which they could venerate their "dogma estético."[137] This was a symbolic space in which autonomous artistic and literary creation could exist without

[137] Tablada, "Cuestión literaria. Decadentismo," 109, 107.

being submitted to the pressures of politics or morality. Despite announcing the imminent publication of the *Revista Moderna* in 1893, Tablada was probably unable to gather the funds to bring his project to fruition. The *Revista Azul* came to fill this space and was, for almost two years, the temple in which art was revered. Building on the work of its editors, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera and Carlos Díaz Dufóo, and of their collaborators, the *Revista Moderna* could focus on the form that modern literature and poetry were to take rather than generating the conditions for their emergence.

The *Revista Moderna*'s editorial line is therefore characterised by constant exploration and experimentation around poetics. In this, it contributed to *modernismo*'s core purpose, which was the renovation of artistic expression. This all-encompassing change affected both style and content, but one of its most prominent features was metrical reform. As José Domínguez Caparrós observes, "rara será la caracterización del modernismo en que no se aluda, al menos, a la métrica como elemento esencial, si es que no se pone en el primer plano."[138] This purpose was expressed by many *modernistas,* such as Salvador Rueda in 1894: "¿no cree usted que se haya dado al traste con nuestro tímpano, y que el oído esté reclamando con gran urgencia metros distintos, ritmos nuevos, estrofas que no sean el terceto, el soneto, la octava real, la silva, la quintilla y la cuarteta?"[139] The auditive dimension of this claim alludes to rhythm as the central component of metrical renovation. Starting from the idea that traditional versification principles were not applicable beyond the corpus that they described (that is, classic verse forms), Ricardo Jaimes Freyre, in his *Leyes de la versificación castellana* (1912), sought to formulate "la ley que preside al fenómeno de la música verbal, con la cual ley pudiera explicarse no sólo todos los ritmos conocidos, sino también los que creara más tarde la intuición de los poetas."[140] Without entering into the details of his theory, it is clear that the primacy of accents was examined theoretically and practised by various authors of the turn of the century, and that it was one of the foundations of the experiments around heterometric and, ultimately, ametric poetry or

[138] Domínguez Caparrós, "El modernismo," 87.
[139] Rueda, *El ritmo: crítica contemporánea*, 15.
[140] Jaimes Freyre, *Leyes de la versificación*, 10.

free verse.[141]

In the space opened up by the *Revista Azul*, the *Revista Moderna* functioned as a true *modernista* laboratory for poetic form. In its pages, these rhythmic innovations were rehearsed and further developments formulated. The magazine included what would become iconic pieces written in Spanish, such as José Asunción Silva's much quoted "Nocturno," consisting of different combinations of tetrasyllabic units and considered an intermediary option on the road to free verse (although it is not technically free, its composition based on accentual rhythm structured in clauses questions the isosyllabic principle).[142] María Victoria Utrera sees it as a turning point, since "el ritmo acentual de cláusulas se vincula al verso libre sobre todo en el movimiento modernista, concretamente a partir del poema 'Nocturno', de 1892, de José Asunción Silva, y otros poemas posteriores de Rubén Darío."[143] Jaimes Freyre's "Voz extraña" published later in the *Revista Moderna*, illustrates this progression particularly well, as it uses tetrasyllabic clauses too, only to break away from their regular rhythm, as lines 9-11 demonstrate: "De la trenza, en sus oídos resonara. / Desfallece / Como un crepúsculo, el eco de las palabras."[144] As a heterometric poem with assonantal rhyme in uneven lines which uses clauses but is not based on them, it corresponds to a *silva libre arromanzada*, as Isabel Paraíso defines it, one of the forms of the "verso libre de base tradicional."[145]

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141 Besides Jaimes Freyre, authors writing about versification principles other than the isometric include Manuel González Prada, who affirmed, in *Exóticas* (1911), that in Spanish, "no poseemos Métrica, sino Rítmica," and, famously, Pedro Henríquez Ureña. The latter published an *Antología de la versificación rítmica* in Mexico in 1919, and, the following year, *La versificación irregular en la poesía castellana*, in which he traces the origins of irregular versification to the Medieval tradition (prior to the introduction of the syllabic model) and popular poetry. González Prada, *Exóticas; Trozos de vida*, 87.

142 The general rhythm of the piece is as follows: "Una noche / una noche [toda] llena de murmullos, de perfumes y de música de alas / una noche" (ooóo). *Revista Moderna* III.7:15. Silva, *Obra completa*, 32-35.

143 Utrera Torremocha, *Estructura y teoría*, 37-38.

144 *Revista Moderna* VI.5: 15. Isabel Paraíso offers a more detailed metric analysis of the opening of this poem in *El verso libre hispánico*, 75. She observes that Jaimes Freyre breaks from the regularity of the tetrasyllables in a radical manner and that "las rupturas rítmicas de Jaimes Freyre se dirigen no sólo al metro (heterometría e incluso mezcla de metros concordantes y discordantes) sino, incluso dentro de un mismo metro, a su estructura acentual."

145 Paraíso, *Verso libre hispánico*, 395.

Before its reprinting in the *Revista Moderna*, "Voz extraña" appeared in Jaimes Freyre's *Castalia bárbara*, whose prologue was written by Leopoldo Lugones and also included in the magazine. It was featured in issue II.11 the year that *Castalia bárbara* was published (1899), and focuses mainly on the importance of rhythm in poetic expression. It explicitly mentions "Voz extraña" among a group of poems that are "verdaderas novedades en la poética castellana," adding that, although Lugones is not completely convinced by what he sometimes perceives as "un abuso de originalidad," "a nuevas ideas, nuevos modos de expresión."[146] Thus, the *Revista Moderna* appears to have been purposefully seeking to disseminate metrically innovative content.

In his *Leyes de la versificación castellana*, Jaimes Freyre referred directly to the formal innovations that were then considered as free verse (among them Silva's use of accentual clauses), presenting himself as the harbinger of one of these forms in Spanish:

> la tercera innovación es la mezcla arbitraria de versos de períodos diferentes y aun la combinación de frases sin ritmo regular alguno. Éste es el verdadero *verso libre*. Su aparición en castellano data de 1894 y su introductor—un poeta que residía á la sazón en Buenos Aires—procediendo un poco por intuición y otro poco por imitación á los franceses, italianos y portugueses, incurrió en todos los errores del empirismo y en las vacilaciones del que penetra en una vida nueva.[147]

Jaimes Freyre's self-avowed recourse to foreign sources of inspiration underlines the transnational character of poetic experiments and the importance of translation in the formal revolution taking place around the turn of the century. As in other cases when a literature faces a crisis or a turning point, translation was used by *modernistas* to renovate the repertoire of Hispanic poetry.[148] French verse played an important role in what Ivan Schulman calls the "exploración de nuevos senderos expresivos,"[149] The character of this exploration, which goes in many different directions and produces results by trial and error is, for Schulman, one of the reasons behind the heterogeneity of *modernismo* itself, and has been linked by other scholars to the development of free

146 *Revista Moderna* II.11: 20, 21.
147 Jaimes Freyre, *Leyes de la versificación*, 106 (author's emphasis).
148 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 26.
149 Schulman, "Reflexiones," 77.

verse itself. As explained by Paraíso, "los jóvenes modernistas que inician el moderno verso libre lo hacen con carácter experimental, incidental –no sistemático– y considerándolo como una posibilidad de exploración lingüística más, dentro de esa amplísima indagación métrica que están llevando a cabo."[150] Thus, although the *Revista Moderna*'s experimentalism was very unsystematic, it responded to a shared intention to reflect on the many possible forms that poetry does and can take, and brought together the uncoordinated contributions of a variety of individual poets. The fact that most versions of poetry were signed by the translator (86%), unlike translated prose (only 13%), is telling of the personal nature of such enterprises. This chapter shows that, through the juxtaposition of these different personal projects, the editors managed to bring forward a general evolution that contemplates the progressive freeing of Hispanic verse, drawing on several traditions.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the wide variety of authors translated in the *Revista Moderna*. Through the analysis of their distribution in the magazine, I will show that, despite the unsystematic character of experimentation, a progression can be distinguished, going from Théophile Gautier and the Parnassian obsession with perfect form to Walt Whitman and free verse, by way of Baudelaire's and Mallarmé's prose poetry.[151] This is not simply the story of a symbolic journey from the old world to the new. At a time when the international dimension of literature developed fast, the circulation of elements of repertoire entailed a sustained and complex transatlantic dialogue. This chapter examines several instances of this process of poetic renovation and their contributions to modern poetry in Mexico and Latin America, illuminating the role that translation played in it and showing that *modernista* cosmopolitanism reached, in fact, far beyond France and Europe.[152]

150 Paraíso, *Verso libre hispánico*, 61.

151 Symbolically enough, the first translation in *Revista Moderna* is of a poem by Gautier and the very last one, from Whitman.

152 In the *Revista Moderna*'s 111 issues, 284 translations were published in total, of which 76 correspond to poetry. Although something interesting could be said about every translation, they do not all equally participate in the developments that I am tracing, and I have selected the most relevant on the basis of the Exploratory Data Analysis as well as a qualitative assessment of the dataset.

Parnassianism and the translational origins of the Revista Moderna

The *Revista Moderna* appeared for the first time on 1 July 1898, with the subtitle "Literaria y artística." It was 16 pages long, like the *Revista Azul*, and was to appear fortnightly. From its very first issue, translation was present as a component of the editorial line in its own right, featuring on the first page. The magazine opened on the publication, in two columns, of Tablada's poem "Hostias Negras" and Balbino Dávalos's translation of "L'art," by Théophile Gautier (fig. 1.2). This layout is unusual in that, even if the *Revista Moderna* regularly employs columns during its first years, they are not used to create this kind of parallel between different works in other instances. Here, the two poems function as a sort of twofold manifesto for the periodical, gesturing towards the international and dialogic nature of its poetics. By including translation in such a symbolic place as the first page of the first issue, the editors present it as a central component of the magazine's poetics and editorial line, which emerge from the recurrent combination of foreign and local poetry.

This opening is also programmatic for other reasons. The juxtaposition of two very different pieces, expressing in turn profound melancholia and the cold grandiosity of the *Parnasse*, alludes to the composite nature of *modernista* aesthetics, in which, as Max Henríquez Ureña wrote,

> encontramos el eco de todas las tendencias literarias que predominaron en Francia a lo largo del siglo XIX: el parnasismo, el simbolismo, el realismo, el naturalismo, el impresionismo y, para completar el cuadro, también el romanticismo cuyos excesos combatía, pues los modernistas no repudiaron el influjo de los grandes románticos...[153]

The *Revista Moderna*'s editorial line is marked by uncanny combinations of ideas and aesthetics that could, at first, appear contradictory.

However, it is unlikely that the first page of the first issue of the magazine is the

[153] Max Henríquez Ureña, *Breve historia*, 12.

mere result of a fortuitous convergence of two disparate poetic projects. In the absence of an explicit manifesto, we are led to read these two poems (along with Tablada's fable that follows them), as a deliberate effort to articulate one main programme arising from intertextual dialogue. "Hostias Negras" appeared in the left-hand column, signed by its author, José Juan Tablada. Although this poem recalls his notorious "Misa Negra," especially through its title, its tone is more subdued and melancholic.[154] The different images of the poem converge into the notion that time passes and everything comes to an end. Night and winter fall on the world, announcing the dawn of old poetic forms, as "...en el nido tibio de los madrigales / La sombra nocturna sus cenizas llueve." Similarly, "El viento de otoño temblando arrebata / Las notas triunfales de aquella sonata...!"[155] Thus, it is not only love and life that are finite, but also artistic forms, represented here by the madrigals and sonatas:

> ¡Sonatas perdidas! ¡Muertos madrigales!
> Pasaron los fastos, y el viento y el buho
> En las espesuras de los saucedales
> Preludian las notas de un trágico duo...

The use of specific vocabulary referring to particular modalities of artistic creation indicates that it is not art in itself (as in Gautier's poem) but certain traditional forms that are on the decline. A similar metaphor is used in "El rey burgués," by Rubén Darío, in which the poet, describing his craft, says "he ensayado el yambo dando al olvido el madrigal."[156]

The days that are past, according to Tablada, are those of the first *modernismo*, with its luminous images and affected evocations of the ideal:

> Murió bajo el negro pavor de las frondas
> La luz argentada de los plenilunios...
> Y por la obsidiana de las yertas ondas
> Van—cisnes fantasmas—nuestro infortunios...

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154 "Misa Negra" was Tablada's poem which caused the public scandal that resulted in his resignation from the newspaper *El País*. This episode led to his 1893 open letter in which he called for the creation of the *Revista Moderna* for the profanatory poets.
Tablada, "Misa Negra," 1.

155 *Revista Moderna* I.1:1.

156 Darío, *Azul...*, 72.

The swans, a constitutive image of the poetics of the *Revista Azul,* but also of Darío's first *modernista* period including *Azul...* and *Prosas profanas*, are here no more than ghosts.[157] Henríquez Ureña, in his treatment of the swan as a "*leit motiv* de la estética modernista" describes how "al evocar el mito de Leda, Rubén Darío convierte al cisne en símbolo de la nueva poesía."[158] It is no coincidence that González Martínez chose to wring a swan's neck in his 1910 symbolic rupture with *modernismo*. Similarly but much earlier, in 1894, Silva mocked the *modernistas*' inauthentic affectation in "Sinfonía color de fresa con leche," mentioning, among other stereotypical motifs, the "argentados cisnes" and the "noche diáfana de plenilunio."[159] Thus, from the very start of the *Revista Moderna,* a form of internal criticism is formulated, calling for renovation within *modernismo* itself, to which translation will contribute.[160]

Tablada's poem maintains an ambivalent intertextual relationship with Dávalos's translation printed in the right-hand column. The main object of "L'art" is the persistence of art:

> Todo pasa—Robusto
> el arte siempre vive
> el busto
> al pueblo sobrevive.
> […]
> Los dioses mismos mueren,
> pero los versos, gonces
> adquieren
> más fuertes que los bronces.[161]

One of the conclusions that can be drawn from this juxtaposition is that forms come and

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157 The *Revista Azul* published various of Darío's most emblematic swan poems, such as "Blasón" (III.14:8) and "Leda" (V.1:4), consolidating this image within early *modernismo*. At the time, Max Henríquez Ureña notes, "el culto preciosista de la forma favorece el desarrollo de una voluntad de estilo que culmina en el refinamiento artificioso y en inevitable amaneramineto. Se imponen los símbolos elegantes, como el cisne, el pavo real, el lis." *Breve historia*, 31.

158 Max Henríquez Ureña, *Breve historia*, 24 and 25. His discussion of the origins of this symbol starts on page 20.

159 Silva, *Obra completa,* 118-119.

160 Over the different volumes of the *Revista Moderna,* Darío actually became increasingly absent from the pages of the magazine. If we consider his poetic works only, after two relatively normal years (12 contributions in total), the third volume comprises only two of his poems, the fourth contains none, the fifth, only one, and the last year features four pieces. In *Savia Moderna*, often considered as the *Revista Moderna'*s heir, there is nothing by Darío.

161 *Revista Moderna* I.1:2.

go, but art itself survives everything. Affirming, moreover, the pre-eminence of art over religion, this poem cannot fail to bring to mind Tablada's project to "er[egir] Dios de sus altares a un ideal estético."[162] Dávalos's translation thus reinforces the *Revista Moderna*'s conception of art as the only end and unique possibility of transcendence.

The next step in this argument is that formal renovation is a necessary component of art's everlasting permanence. On this aspect, too, the intertextual dialogue is telling. Going back to "Hostias Negras," the image of falling leaves and snow reminds us of Tablada's 1893 open letter: "¿Qué son los carámbanos del invierno, sino las lluvias de primavera?"[163] Winter constitutes an ending, but it also—most importantly—prepares the grounds for the coming of spring, rebirth, and bloom. The cycle of the seasons announces periodical renewal. The time was therefore coming for formal regeneration.

Regarding the shape that this regeneration was to take, "Hostias Negras" responds ironically to the opening of Dávalos's translation, which reads:

> Sí; la obra es más radiante
> si el pulimento es terso
> diamante,
> mármol, esmalte, verso.[164]

Although the translation is rather close to the original in general, the first stanza, quoted here, departs in some measure from Gautier's version. The argument that the resistance of the medium is essential to the work of art ("...l'œuvre sort plus belle / D'une forme au travail / Rebelle," lines 1-3) is modified in the translation, in which the work of art is presented as benefiting, rather, from a polished finish. The emphasis is shifted from the creation process to its final result. Dávalos also alters Gautier's list of materials ("Vers, marbre, onyx, émail"), removing the onyx and adding the "diamante." This word is, moreover, located in a very visible place (the short line, consisting here of a single, rhyming word). This creates an emphasis on the diamond, a metaphor for the

[162] Tablada, "Cuestión literaria. Decadentismo," 108.
[163] Tablada, "Cuestión literaria. Decadentismo," 108.
[164] *Revista Moderna* I.1:1.

meticulous work and craft that results in a perfect man-made object already found in Gutiérrez Nájera's writing.[165]

While "El arte" responds to this conception of the work of art, scrupulously following the same regular pattern as the original, "Hostias Negras," in contrast, breaks away from rigid structure.[166] Although written in rhymed dodecasyllables, the latter poem has irregular stanzas, including one sestet and one quintain (which is actually a sestet but its first line is composed exclusively of dots) among quatrains. The rhyme scheme (abab cdcd eefggf chch ijij –klkkl mnmn) suggests that these could be seen as two sonnets one after the other, followed by a last quatrain. Even so, a line is missing from the second sestet, being replaced by dots. This fractured configuration questions the very notion of pattern. Following from my previous interpretation, it could be argued that not only traditional forms, but also rigid metric structures in general, are worn out. Although polished forms and bright images have a space in the *Revista Moderna,* they are perceived as things of the past, and formal innovation is bound to update old forms, as well as break with meter and regularity altogether.

The concept of art that emerges from the juxtaposition of the two poems is completed by a piece of prose published immediately after them. Titled "Exempli gratia o fábula de los siete trovadores y de 'la Revista Moderna'," and signed by Tablada, it is a parable for the relationship of the writers of the *Revista Moderna* with their readership, as well as an affirmation of the transcendent power of art. The fable features seven troubadours, who, after arriving at a castle, are asked by the court to sing. Tablada denounces the hypocrisy of the public that is first (falsely) enthusiastic, speaking "con amor de los romances, de los rondeles, de los madrigales y de los Hierodramas,"[167] but reacts to them with insulting indifference in the end. The troubadours are subsequently caught in a snowstorm and transformed into statues, while the public is punished with

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165 The *Revista Azul*'s editor wrote that great writers plagiarise effectively by stealing "diamantes mal pulidos" and improving them. Gutiérrez Nájera, *Obras*, 70.

166 Dávalos replicates the French *rime riche* as consonantal rhymes in Spanish and maintains the general structure of the stanzas (with two heptasyllables, one trisyllable, and one final heptasyllable, instead of lines of 6 and 2 syllables in French.)

167 *Revista Moderna* I.1:2.

divine fire: “Los moradores del burgo son hoy un montón de cenizas que ha dispersado el viento muchos años ha... Los trovadores son estatuas de nieve, adamantinas esculturas que clavadas en la barbacana del alcázar inhospitalario provocan aún la admiración y la piedad del viandante.”[168] The troubadours reach immortal life through art, which evidently responds to “... el busto / al pueblo sobrevive,” in Dávalos’s translation of “L'art.” As in Gautier’s poem, the artists have, unlike common people, achieved a state of transcendence. The moral of the story is therefore not only that art should not concern itself with public approval, but also that this is the attitude that leads to actual transcendence.[169]

While Gautier was used as an opening reference that allowed the editors to make a general point about their notion of art and claim the aestheticist legacy of the *Revista Azul*, he gradually disappeared from the pages of the magazine. After the first issue, Gautier was featured in the *Revista Moderna* on a couple of occasions. The French version of “L’art” was mentioned again in the fourth issue of the magazine in an article by Ciro B. Ceballos on Julio Ruelas’s art:

> Thophile [sic] Gautier, el admirable aurifabrista, el plástico rimador, el llamado impecable por Charles Baudelaire, ha esmaltado sobre el aconchado múrice de alguna aristocrática estrofa, una idea que podría grabarse como un mote, sobre los gules del blasón de Julio Ruelas.
>
> Peintre, fuis l’aquarelle,
> Et fixe la couleur
> Trop frêle
> Au four de l’émailleur.[170]

This confirms that the poetics of “L’art” worked as a guiding principle for certain collaborators of the *Revista Moderna.* Ceballos's portrayal of the French poet as “aurifabrista” only reinforces the idea that the artist is a kind of goldsmith or craftsman,

168 *Revista Moderna* I.1:3.

169 Tablada’s conclusion, which has to be read in the light of the 1893 polemic and as a manifesto for the *Revista Moderna*, reaffirms his autonomist stance: “¡Oh público de la ‘Revista Moderna!’ obra á tu guisa, y si sólo tu indiferencia hemos de merecer, seguiremos con gusto la suerte de aquellos nuestros precursores, los siete troveros medioevales.”

170 *Revista Moderna* I.4:56.

as well as the Parnassian emphasis on form.

Gautier's parallel between writing and other forms of artistic expression and craft goes hand in hand with his widespread recourse to synaesthesia, exemplified, for instance, by his poem "Symphonie en blanc majeur," also translated for the *Revista Moderna.* Originally published in *Émaux et camées* (1852), this is already an established reference by the time of its translation by Dávalos. The poem is published bilingually in issue number I.8. The French text and the translation into Spanish appear side by side, in two columns. The parallelism is perfect, the original stanzas being mirrored in Spanish (quatrains in both cases). The length of the poem is exactly the same, and the author's and translator's signatures are printed in the same font and in the same position at the end of their respective sections. This creates a sense of recognition of the translator's work, as he seems to be given the same kind of authorial credit for the translated text as the author for the original.

This layout is, in itself, quite noteworthy, as it represents the first time, in the *Revista Moderna*, that a bilingual presentation was used. The *Revista Azul* had published a translation along with its original on one occasion (on 23 June 1895), but this was not a usual configuration at the time.[171] The *Revista Moderna*'s translation of "Symphonie en blanc majeur" reinforces the parallelism between source and target texts including them under the same title, interestingly enough in Spanish ("Sinfonía en blanco mayor"). They are therefore considered as one piece, with a slight emphasis on the translated text (through the title). Thus, the reader seems to be invited to read both versions together and see what Dávalos has made of Gautier's emblematic poem. This also fosters a reading of the text not as a final and stable product here (be it the original or the translation) but, rather, as a dialogical entity and process. Dávalos scrupulously follows Gautier's original in both form and content, with only minor changes that seem to have been dictated primarily by metric constraints. The overall literality of the translation appears to be partly due to the bilingual layout, thanks to which the reader can easily compare the French and Spanish as she reads along, as a later, monolingual

[171] "Le vieux sargent," by P. J. Béranger in Néstor Ponce de León's translation. *Revista Azul* III.8:4-7.

version of this translation demonstrates. Dávalos opened his 1913 anthology of translations of French poetry, *Musas de Francia*, with a section by Gautier. The first two poems in this volume are "L'art" and "Symphonie en blanc majeur," indicating the symbolic importance of these two pieces for Dávalos. While the changes in his second version of "L'art" appear to be motivated by the flow of the translated text, the modifications in "Symphonie en blanc majeur" seem to follow a general pattern of stepping—ever so slightly—away from the literality of the first published version. Interestingly enough, both versions of the "Symphonie..." are more regular than the original; while the French version contains different kinds of rhyme (mostly *suffisantes,* with sporadic inclusions of *rimes riches* and a few *pauvres*), Dávalos consistently displays consonantal rhymes and a caesura at the hemistich.

The presence of Gautier in highly emblematic places such as the openings of the *Revista Moderna* and *Musas de Francia* illustrates the recourse to his poetry as a kind of basic poetic principle or starting point. He was also probably a personal favourite of Dávalos, his only translator within the *Revista Moderna*. He is the source of the poetic genealogy in which the *Revista Moderna* included itself (if we omit the troubadours). In this, the editors and collaborators did not go as far back as those of the *Revista Azul*, who claimed Victor Hugo as guiding principle; the claims of this generation of *modernistas* have become increasingly specific, concentrating around the situation and role of art.

However, as a starting point, Gautier quickly became outdated, and his presence in the *Revista Moderna* did not exceed the first issues. After the translation of "Symphonie en blanc majeur," which appeared in the fifth month of the publication, he is only mentioned occasionally, in comments generally unrelated to the core of his poetics. This indicates that, while he might have been a reference early on, especially in the way art is conceived, Gautier was no longer a model of how to write poetry. In Even-Zohar's terms, the translation of his works constitutes secondary repertoire: although prestigious, it does not provide an example or inspiration for contemporary

creation.[172] Other pieces translated in the *Revista Moderna* that fall into this category include Lamartine's "Le lac," translated by Manuel de Olaguíbel in Spanish alexandrines (Sept. 1899), Leconte de Lisle's "La chute des étoiles," in Dávalos's mostly iambic eneasyllables[173] (Feb. 1899), and numerous versions of José-María de Heredia's poems, starting with Justo Sierra's well-known translations from *Les Trophées*, already published in the *Revista Azul*. These sonnets opened issue I.8 (Nov. 1898) and also appeared in issue II.5 (May 1899). This was not only a bequest of the *Revista Azul,* since other translators also produced new versions.[174] Reprinted from the *Revista Azul* too, the translation of Hugo's "1851" figured in issue number II.9 (Sept. 1899). Despite these early examples of relatively conservative versification, which allowed the *Revista Moderna* to establish aestheticism as its unquestionable base and claim a certain continuity with the *Revista Azul*, the magazine would soon move away from this symbolic connection and kick-start its own reformist agenda.

Versions of Baudelaire: decadent aesthetics and prose poetry

Although the secondary repertoire mentioned above was present for a couple of years in the *Revista Moderna*, new voices appeared as soon as the second issue, with translations from Catulle Mendès ("Las islas del amor") and Pierre Louÿs ("Canciones de Bilitis"). French decadence would, from then on, constitute the main foreign poetic reference in the magazine, with Charles Baudelaire and Paul Verlaine as figureheads. In contrast with the material discussed so far, this repertoire is primary: it constituted the model that various *modernistas*—Tablada among them—adopted for their own poetry, a manner to

172 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 20-22.

173 This verse form has, as José Domínguez Caparrós explains, a "ritmo acentual muy marcado" and is related to the development of rhythmic clauses, but is not in itself innovative at the time. Domínguez Caparrós, "Construcción del verso," 50 note 14, 56 and following.

174 Those are Joaquín D. Casasús (issue II.9, Sept. 1899), Tablada (II.3, March 1899 and IV.18, 15 Sept. 1901) and J. A. de Izcue (two poems in II.10, Oct. 1899), in addition to one anonymous translation in IV.19 (1 Oct. 1901).

become truly modern. In Sylvia Molloy's terms, "la apropiación de la decadencia europea correspondía […] a una *retórica* mediante la cual Hispanoamérica creía entrar en la modernidad."[175]

While Baudelaire's poetry was not a complete novelty (it had been translated for some time and appeared in the *Revista Azul*), the terms of his reception in the *Revista Moderna* were different from Gutiérrez Nájera's, with a marked emphasis on his more saturnine and opprobrious aspects. The second issue of the *Revista Moderna* is indicative of this take on Baudelairean poetics, as it included on its first page a poem in French, titled "À une femme" and attributed to Baudelaire. A question mark, in parenthesis, is placed next to the poet's name, alluding to the uncertainty of his authorship, and an editors' footnote gives the following information:

> La poesía en francés así titulada y que en este número publicamos, se atribuye al autor de "Les Fleurs du Mal" y tal presunción es muy verosímil, pues como los lectores notarán, tan hermosa pieza está impregnada del carácter poético personalísimo que el insigne Baudelaire imprimió á todas sus obras líricas.
>
> La poesía á que aludimos es totalmente desconocida, aunque alguien asegura que apareció en la primera edición de "Les Fleurs du Mal," edición recogida y destruida por las mismas pudibundas autoridades que mutilaron la obra de Flaubert y Richepin...[176]

A certain emphasis is put on Baudelaire's figure and—ironically enough—the uniqueness of his highly personal poetics. The value of this piece arises from its attribution to the French poet and, most importantly, its status as an unknown piece. Having found a forgotten poem by a very famous author is in itself a feat. But there is more to it: the poem supposedly comes from the scandalous first edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, a book for which Baudelaire was condemned for "outrage aux bonnes mœurs" and which was consequently not distributed. This anecdote completes the mysterious aura around this supposedly censored poem.

In fact, not only is "À une femme" not from the first edition of *Les Fleurs du mal* (the anonymity of the source affirming so is revealing of the degree of speculation

175 Molloy, "Lecturas de descubrimiento," 19.
176 *Revista Moderna* I.2:17.

here); it is not even by Baudelaire.[177] It was written by Louis Bouilhet and published in 1859 as part of *Festons et astragales*, and then again in Bouilhet's complete works in 1880. Its second stanza, in which the persona is offering his forgiveness to a treacherous woman, is left out of the version published in the *Revista Moderna*, possibly to make the tone of the poem more dramatic or to make it fit on the first page.[178] Whether the false attribution was the result of the editors' ignorance, wishful thinking, or a downright trick to arouse the readers' curiosity at a moment when the future of the *Revista Moderna* was uncertain, is impossible to establish with confidence.[179] And yet, it is telling of the characteristics that the collaborators *attribute* to Baudelairean poetics, namely the representation of dissolute women, treason, loveless relationships, covert sexual allusions, and the transformative effect of the persona's gaze, which bestows worth upon an objectified female figure.

Most importantly, it denotes a certain taste for scandal, not so much because of the (relatively mild) contents of the poem, but because it is explicitly pitched as a censored—and therefore infamous—text. This is a dimension of Baudelaire's work that the editors of the *Revista Moderna* seem to claim and exploit, inevitably recalling Tablada's own disruptive poetics and troubles with censorship, thus placing him alongside a small group of select *provocateurs*.

Yet Baudelaire represents, in the *Revista Moderna*, much more than a challenge to bourgeois morality. Of the seven poems actually authored by Baudelaire published in the magazine, six are prose poems (a proportion that is not very different from that of

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177 The six prohibited poems from *Les Fleurs du mal* are "Les Bijoux," "Le Léthé," "À celle qui est trop gaie," "Lesbos," "Femmes damnées," and "Les Métamorphoses du Vampire."

178 Garde-le, large et franc, comme fut ma tendresse.
Que par aucun regret ton cœur ne soit mordu:
Ce que j'aimais, en toi, c'était ma propre ivresse,
Ce que j'aimais, en toi, je ne l'ai pas perdu.
Bouilhet, *Œuvres*, 34.

179 I have, so far, found no mention of such an attribution by anyone else besides the *Revista Moderna*'s editors. Porfirio Martínez Peñaloza adds, to what he considers a poor knowledge of Baudelaire's oeuvre, the more surprising fact that no one seems to have noticed that Bouilhet's poem served as an inspiration for Gutiérrez Nájera's "Para un menú." Martínez Peñaloza, "La Revista Moderna," 366. The ending of the Duque Job's poem ("Dejemos las copas... ¡Si queda una gota, / que beba el lacayo las heces de amor!") mirrors that of Bouilhet's ("Le banquet est fini, quand j'ai vidé ma tasse, / S'il reste encor du vin, les laquais le boiront !").

the *Revista Azul*). This form is often considered to have been rediscovered and defined in its modern configuration by Baudelaire in his *Petits poëmes en prose* (1869).[180] In his prologue to this collection, Baudelaire writes that "c'est en feuilletant, pour la vingtième fois au moins, le fameux *Gaspard de la Nuit* d'Aloysius Bertrand […] que l'idée m'est venue de tenter quelque chose d'analogue, et d'appliquer à la description de la vie moderne, ou plutôt d'*une* vie moderne et plus abstraite, le procédé qu'il avait appliqué à la peinture de la vie ancienne, si étrangement pittoresque."[181] Emerging from the need to express a new reality in a new form, the modern city gives the prose poem its rhythm:

> Quel est celui de nous qui n'a pas, dans ses jours d'ambition, rêvé le miracle d'une prose poétique, musicale sans rythme et sans rime, assez souple et assez heurtée pour s'adapter aux mouvements lyriques de l'âme, aux ondulations de la rêverie, aux soubresauts de la conscience? C'est surtout de la fréquentation des villes énormes, c'est du croisement de leurs innombrables rapports que naît cet idéal obsédant.[182]

As Anaëlle Évard explains, the translation of Baudelaire's prose poems into Spanish, initiated in a Spanish periodical by a Cuban translator, Aniceto Valdivia, are few at the *fin de siècle,* besides the renowned versions by Julián del Casal published in *La Habana Elegante* (1887) and *La Discusión* (1890). The prose poems that appear in either the *Revista Azul* or the *Revista Moderna* broadly correspond with del Casal's selection; only two poems that have not been previously translated by the Cuban appear in the *Revistas*: "Enivrez-vous" (in both) and "Un Plaisant" (in the *Revista Moderna* only). The two magazines, however, display contrasting selections, except for "Le Désespoir de la vieille" (an anecdote about a woman so old that she has become frightfully repulsive) and "Enivrez-vous," (which postulates the necessity of some form of escape from the tiresomeness of existence, be it alcohol, poetry, or virtue), featured in both.

Unlike in the *Revista Azul*, there is, in the *Revista Moderna*, almost no trace of the Baudelairean notion of *idéal*. Poems published in the former, besides the two pieces

180 Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 21 and following.
181 Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes*, 2.
182 Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes,* 2.

listed above, included “Cabellera Negra” (a fragrant head of hair’s erotic invitation to exotic travels), “El loco y la venus” (about a fool in love with a marble statue of Venus), “Cuál es la verdadera?” (a lover having recently and prematurely lost his ideal wife refuses to let go), and “Mi ideal” (a poem written in verse and translated as prose, which discusses the persona’s ideal in terms of women). Many of these rely on the notion of *idéal*, often through the image of a female figure that has either been demoted (“Le Désespoir de la vieille”), is beyond reach (“Cuál es la verdadera?”), altogether unreal (“Mi ideal”), or both (“El loco y la Venus”). The *Revista Moderna*’s selection, in contrast, focuses on two other Baudelairean themes. The first is related to the aesthetic appreciation of natural elements, with “El confiteor del artista,” whose lyric subject’s nerves cannot stand the sublime dimension of nature, and “El extranjero,” whose enigmatic persona only seems to enjoy clouds.[183] These two texts are part of a cluster translated by Antenor Lescano (the main translator of Baudelaire's pose poems in the *Revista Moderna*) and published in early 1899, in issue II.2. The second topic is the absurdity of life, with “El chusco” (also in Lescano's version), in which the lyric subject sees an elegant man wish a happy new year to an ass, and “Cada uno con su quimera” (translated anonymously. In the latter, the speaker encounters aimless men, unknowingly carrying chimeras throttling them. It turns out, in the end, that his very own chimera, of which he is of course unconscious, is actually “l’irrésistible Indifférence,” in a good example of Baudelairean spleen. In general terms, this selection of poems shows a greater emphasis on the figure of the artist/poet and an overall bleaker tone. In this, they present one of the aspects that Utrera identifies in Baudelaire’s meta-artistic prose poems: “los diferentes correlatos simbólicos del artista, muchos de ellos en forma de relato, contribuyen a la subversión del ideal lírico sobre la personalidad del poeta.”[184]

This also recalls a poem by F. M. de Olaguíbel, published in the second issue of

[183] Nature's beatuy, in “El confiteor del artista,” appears as an (impossible) challenge to the skill of the artist, who asks: ”es necesario sufrir eternamente ó huir de lo bello eternamente?” and affirms that “El estudio de lo bello es un duelo en el que el artista grita de horror antes de ser vencido.” *Revista Moderna* II.2:31.

[184] Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 98.

the *Revista Moderna*, that illustrates precisely the collaborators' relationship with the *idéal:* "Vengo del Ideal y estoy rendido! / Traspuse ya la cumbre del Ensueño / Y bajo el palio azul de la Quimera / marché al claro de luna. En el desierto / Florecieron las rosas de mi sangre. / Estoy cansado y solo.. tengo sueño."[185] It is impossible not to remember "Cada uno con su quimera" and think of indifference as the ill affecting the collaborators of the *Revista Moderna*. We could therefore suggest that the *Revista Azul* represents the time of the *idéal* and its luminous, elevated poetics, while the *Revista Moderna* appears after the loss of the *idéal.* It is marked by the fall, the decadence and disenchantment of the spleen.

Along with this interest in Baudelaire's darker and more infamous side, the *Revista Moderna*'s editorial line incorporated another element of Baudelairean poetics: its dissociation of aesthetic appreciation from moral considerations. The correspondence between what is *good* and what is *beautiful*—another core component of the *Revista Azul*'s poetics—is shattered by the *Revista Moderna* as the editors embrace the Baudelairean conception of beauty. This notion is quite pervasive in *Les Fleurs du mal*, in whose original dedication to Gautier Baudelaire wrote: "je sais que dans les régions éthérées de la véritable Poésie le Mal n'est pas, non plus que le Bien."[186] This poetic principle according to which beauty is independent of moral judgement is explicitly formulated in "Hymne à la beauté," a poem that appeared in the *Revista Moderna* in a bilingual version, in November 1899. It is Baudelaire's only verse poem to be translated in this magazine and holds a prominent place in issue II.11, being the first written contribution after the image on the cover and occupying a whole double page.

Here again, original and translation are presented in parallel (the original on the left-hand page), mirroring each other. This time, the translated title, facing the original, adds to this effect, although the regularity is broken by the mention of the original author's name below the title of the translation (Fig. 1.3). The signatures appear on the same level. The French text contains one significant modification: "Le Destin charmé

185 "Del poema de la mujer," *Revista Moderna* I.2.

186 This fragment would eventually be left out. It appears crossed out in the corrected proofs of the 1857 edition of *Les Fleurs du mal* (n.p.).

suit tes jupons comme un chien;"[187] (line 10) is replaced by "Le Démon charmé suit tes jupons comme un chien."[188] This is, however, not the magazine's editors' hand, as this variation appears in a few French editions. The only one prior to 1899 is Lemerre's 1888 edition, on which we can deduce that Tablada based his translation.[189]

Like in other bilingual versions, the translation closely follows the original, in terms of form and content. The seven quatrains of "Hymne à la beauté" are rendered as such by Tablada, with little to no modification even in the order of the images (only two permutations occur, between the second and third lines of stanzas 3 and 7 respectively). The translation maintains the alternate rhymes and renders the French alexandrines into their Spanish equivalent. Tablada's translation is formally rather unnoteworthy, and the main contribution of "Hymne à la beauté" to the *Revista Moderna* is the specific poetics that Baudelaire formulates in this poem.

Beauty is presented as the only possibility of transcendence, but the fulfilment of desire and/or aesthetic aspiration is inherently destructive. As with the troubadours, true transcendence only comes at the price of life:

> L'éphémère ébloui vole vers toi, chandelle,
> Crépite, flambe et dit: Bénissons ce flambeau!
> L'amoureux pantelant incliné sur sa belle
> A l'air d'un moribond caressant son tombeau.[190]

Sex and death are here associated, as well as light and darkness, beauty and the macabre, God and Satan. Beauty is neither good nor bad, and in this, it is compared to wine, as it "verse confusément le bienfait et le crime." Just like wine, its function is to make "l'univers moins hideux et les instants moins lourds." Again, it offers to the poet, and more generally to the person capable of aesthetic appreciation, the possibility to transcend their existence, as it "ouvr[e] la porte / d'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu." This conception of beauty, and, by extension, of art, breaks with both Catholic

187 Baudelaire, *Fleurs du mal* (1861), 52.
188 *Revista Moderna* II.11:322.
189 For an interesting explanation of how "Destin" became "Démon" in Lemerre's edition, see Bandy, "Une fausse variante," 13.
190 *Revista Moderna* II.11:322.

and positivist paradigms and marks the editorial line of the *Revista Moderna*.

Despite this emphasis on the gloomier aspects of Baudelaire's poetry, the content of his translated pieces and of those by other decadent authors is, in moral terms, on the milder side. "Hymne à la Beauté" might well be among the most radical decadent pieces to appear in the *Revista Moderna*. This is to say that, although the editors showed a certain taste for scandal, it was often evoked rather than reproduced (as in "À une femme"), or watered down. This is also true of the translations from Mendès and Louÿs, which, after a promising start in terms of immoral content, fell short of the infamous expectations they might have generated. In Mendès's case, what was to be a long series of texts depicting an array of (more or less perverse, for the times) forms of physical love was finally discontinued after the third instalment. After "Invitation au voyage," "Ferloë," and "Croissy," which appeared in issues I.2, I.5, and I.7, the journey to Lesbos was never completed.[191] Whether the publication of this series was stopped because it was deemed too morally dubious, because there was an issue with the translation rights, or for other reasons is left unexplained. Only two other prose texts by Mendès were published afterwards, all of them following the pattern created by the *Revista Azul,* avoiding controversial topics.[192] Most significantly, none of the translated pieces depart from the norms of heterosexual love.

Similarly, the translation by Tablada of two poems from Louÿs's *Chansons de Bilitis* responds to a selection that omits the central theme of the original collection: lesbian love in erotic poetry. The collection is a pseudo-translation from an Ancient Greek female poet who is presented by Louÿs as Sappho's lover and disciple. However, this is never mentioned in the two pieces that appear in the *Revista Moderna*: "Bilitis" and "Paroles maternelles."[193] It could be argued that Louÿs functions here as a hidden

[191] Those texts are sections of Mendès's *Les îles d'Amour* (1886), a collection of short prose texts that conform a journey through different islands, each of which displays its own particular kind of depravation. The omitted pieces contain episodes of prostitution ("Sado Shima"), lesbianism ("Lesbos" and "Cythère"), animal sexuality ("Bornéo" and "L'île aux cygnes"), bestiality ("Caprée"), and cannibalism ("Neïraï).

[192] Those are "Novela de amor" translated anonymously and published in issue V.9 and "Un alma sobre un hilo" in issue VI.13.

[193] *Revista Moderna* I.2:10.

reference, or a nod to readers familiar with the poet and the idea behind *Les Chansons de Bilitis*, while the actual contents of the translations are devoid of any hint to homo-eroticism. This might be the result either of self-censorship or of the negotiations within the magazine's editorial team.[194]

The translation of Verlaine's poetry follows a similar path, with various versions by different translators published over the years, none of which are either formally original or provocative in terms of content.[195] In fact, the *Revista Moderna*'s editors included the first poem of the second part of *Sagesse* (1880) in the last issue before Easter 1899 (II.3), under the title "Mística." This translation, by Dávalos, had already appeared in the *Revista Azul*, on that occasion just after Easter, to which the poem was linked in an editorial note, omitted in the *Revista Moderna*. This poem stems from Verlaine's repentance and return to the Catholic faith: "¡Oh Dios, me horrorizó mi vida impura / Y hasta mí descendió soplo divino!"[196]

Therefore, although the *Revista Moderna* did not censor translated texts as the *Revista Azul* did, it still followed common rules of moral propriety and, mostly through its selection process, left out "immoral" content almost entirely. The *Revista Moderna*'s reception of French decadence displays a rather ambivalent approach in which despondency is more present than perversion. Additionally, except for Baudelaire's prose poems, it was not a source of formal experimentation.

Transatlantic translations: Poe and Mallarmé

The use of translation to explore the potentialities of prose poetry is exemplified, in the

194 The same year as Tablada's versions, Dávalos translated Louÿs's novel *Aphrodite*, a task that he accepted on the condition that "no se imprimiera mi nombre por mi coincidente carácter de profesor en la Preparatoria y secretario particular del Ministro de Relaciones. Torpe hipocresía, pero tan necesaria entonces!" Autobiographical typescript by Balbino Dávalos, box 5, folder 14, Fondo Balbino Dávalos, Archivo Histórico del Municipio de Colima, 16.

195 The translators are Dávalos, Guillermo Valencia, Enrique González Martínez, and Rafael de Alba, in addition to one anonymous version.

196 *Revista Moderna* II.3:27.

Revista Moderna, not only by the versions of Baudelaire's *petits poèmes*, but also by the inclusion of a series of poems written in verse and translated as prose: Mallarmé's versions of Poe, originally published in 1888 under the title *Les Poèmes d'Edgar Poe* and illustrated by Edouard Manet.[197] This confirms the importance of the prose poem in the *Revista Moderna*'s explorations of poetic form. Mallarmé is the main figure on this front, thanks to both his experimental translations and his own prose poems. This goes to show that the developments brought forward during the *fin de siècle* were ultimately the result of sustained transatlantic dialogue. Texts, ideas, and innovation circulated both ways, and the *Revista Moderna* is as much featuring Poe as received through Mallarmé, as Mallarmé as impacted by Poe. This notion was presented in the first essay about Mallarmé to appear in the magazine, a text by Ernest la Jeunesse translated by an anonymous translator signing as "Rasch." Although Mallarmé started by writing

> versos admirables y clásicos; después, escuchando en los aires el alma de Poe, á quien comprendió mejor que Baudelaire, vagando en pos del alma de Beckford y por entre las *mil y una noches*, aspirando el ensueño que sabía extraer á la existencia, pareció embeberse escribiendo más ásperamente, arrancando las palabras con lentitud, como soñando, grabando en papel de sensaciones aéreas, sentimientos, y todo esto sublimemente.[198]

Poe is thus presented as an inflection point in Mallarmé's writing, which in turn appears as a more authentic approach to Poe's poetics than Baudelaire's, who was at the time the main mediator through which Poe's works had been introduced into Spanish. The "asperity" of Mallarmé's style is a good part of what differentiates him from Baudelaire. Through this emphasis, the *Revista Moderna* distinguished itself from its contemporaries (in the Bourdieusean sense) by offering a new model for the reception of Poe. Importantly, this model is based on the translation of his poetic works rather than his prose, on which Baudelaire and part of the early reception had focused.[199]

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197 Poe, *Les poèmes.*

198 *Revista Moderna* I.5:11-12.

199 The focus on poetry rather than prose marks, according to John Englekirk the reception of Poe in Latin America in general. Englekirk, *Edgar Allan Poe*, 34. While the *Revista Moderna* was an early agent of this trend, it might have been initiated by the Argentine Leopoldo Díaz, who included numerous versions or Poe's poems in his 1897 volume titled *Traducciones.*

Although he was linked to French decadence, having appeared, for instance, in Verlaine's anthology *Les poètes maudits*, Mallarmé was not viewed through this lens in the *Revista Moderna*. It is, rather, his original approach to poetic rhythm that characterises his presence in the magazine. Mallarmé defined poetry as "l'expression, par le langage humain ramené à son rythme essentiel, du sens mystérieux des aspects de l'existence."[200] This connection between rhythm and some kind of universal essence is shared by various *modernista*s in their return to nature as the source of artistic creation. Mallarmé also pioneered the deconstruction of traditional verse in French, although his boldest poetry from this point of view (namely, *Un coup de dés jamais n'abolira le hasard*) was not included in the *Revista Moderna*, despite having been published earlier.

Completely absent from the *Revista Azul*, Mallarmé is among the main "new voices" brought forward by the *Revista Moderna.* The approach to his figure and works is thorough, including translations of critical works about him;[201] one fragment of his poetry in the original French;[202] translations of his poetry (in verse and prose);[203] translations of his versions of Poe's poems;[204] and a translation of one of his essays.[205] Translating Mallarmé's poetry, at the time of the publication of the *Revista Moderna*, was a relatively recent trend in Spanish America, as his first poem was translated in 1894 ("Les Fleurs," by Rubén Darío).[206]

The interest in Mallarmé's work and figure in the *Revista Moderna* arose after his death in September 1898; the first version of one of his translations (of "Ulalume") was published in October of the same year, along with la Jeunesse's necrological note. Three months later, the *Revista Moderna* reproduced one of Darío's essays on the

200 Mallarmé, *Correspondance complète*, 572. This idea is expressed in Lugones's essay cited in the introduction to this chapter and is, according to Paz, the ultimate consequence of the *modernistas*' rhythmic search. Paz, "El caracol y la sirena," 8 and 10.

201 An essay by la Jeunesse in issue I.5 (pp. 11-12) and another by Maurice Pujo in III.10 (pp. 4-8), both under the title "Stéphane Mallarmé."

202 "Hérodiade," II.4:27.

203 "Pauvre enfant pâle" translated as "Pobre niño pálido" by Rasch (pseudonym) in issue I.7:10 and "Apparition," in issue III.3:15 in Guillermo Valencia's translation.

204 "Ulalume" in issue I.5:8-9, translated by Rasch again, and "Annabel Lee" in an anonymous version in issue I.7:16.

205 "Hamlet," translated by Ricardo Gómez Robelo in issue V.22:13-14.

206 García Morales, "Un artículo desconocido," 32.

occasion of his demise, initially published in Buenos Aires in September 1898.[207] Although this might have been an inspiration for the editors, their approach to the French poet seems to go beyond Darío's perspective, with sources that do not appear in Darío (according to García Morales) and translations coming from different external figures such as prolific Colombian translator Guillermo Valencia.

"Apparition" was translated by Valencia and published in issue III.3 in February 1900. Consisting of 16 rhymed alexandrines, with caesuras at the hemistich, occasional internal rhymes, and no stanzas, this is probably not Mallarmé's most audacious poem from a formal point of view. Valencia, nonetheless, finds room for formal playfulness, if not experimentation. He translates the poem in alternate Spanish alexandrines and heptasyllables (corresponding to one hemistich), and introduces irregular stanzas (two quatrains, one single line, then one quatrain and one 10-line stanza), which give the poem a less regular aspect and flow. Valencia also endeavoured to maintain the alliterations of the original (e.g. "sanglots glissant" or the "blancs bouquets" and in Spanish, "los dedos, adolorida" or "la febril fantasía"), which Mallarmé considered a central element of the music of language and attributed to the Anglophone tradition in *Les mots anglais*:

> Au poète comme au prosateur savant, il appartiendra, par un instinct supérieur et libre, de rapprocher des termes unis avec d'autant plus de bonheur pour concourir au charme et à la musique du langage, qu'ils arrivent comme de lointains plus fortuits: c'est là ce procédé, inhérent au génie septentrional, et dont tant de vers célèbres nous montrent tant d'exemples, l'allitération.[208]

Internal rhymes can be seen as a component of this method through which words phonetically refer to one another creating acoustic associations, an element that, some critics argue, Mallarmé took from Poe.[209] Valencia maintains some of them in his version, although most of the time the hemistich rhymes with one of the nearby line endings, as in the following passage:

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207 "Mallarmé. Notas para un ensayo futuro," *Revista Moderna* II.1:17-18.
208 Mallarmé*, Les mots anglais*, 44.
209 Buffard-Moret, "Le vers de Mallarmé," 48.

como un hada riente,
como el hada risueña de mis tiempos mejores,
como el hada riente que de blancos fulgores
coronada la frente
pasaba ante mis ojos
pasaba ante mis ojos turbados dulcemente[210]

As this example shows, Valencia also recurs abundantly to repetitions and parallelisms that are absent from the original, moving further away from its event-less stream and introducing an effect of "return" similar to Poe's.[211] Amy Lowell would later theorise that the "return" is a form of "marked balance," "circular swing," or "spheric effect" which characterises poetry and which can be achieved through a variety of means, from meter and rhyme, to alliteration, repetition, and even recurring images and ideas in modern poetry.[212] Valencia shows a clear awareness of Anglophone developments in verse-making.

Unlike "Apparition," "Pauvre enfant pâle" is a prose poem, a form that Mallarmé strove to develop. For him, poetry exists as soon as there is some stylistic elaboration. Thus, it is not characterised by verse, understood in its traditional, metric form:

> ... en dehors des préceptes consacrés, est-il possible de faire de la poésie? On a pensé que oui et je crois qu'on a eu raison. Le vers est partout dans la langue où il y a rythme […] il n'y a pas de prose; il y a l'alphabet et puis des vers plus ou moins serrés, plus ou moins diffus. Toutes les fois qu'il y a effort au style, il y a versification. Je vous ai dit tout à l'heure que, si on en est arrivé au vers actuel, c'est surtout qu'on est las du vers officiel.[213]

It is this specific rhythm that Mallarmé is seeking in prose pieces such as "Pauvre enfant pâle," through a combination of different elements which, again, have a transatlantic component, according to Utrera:

> bajo la influencia del escritor americano [E.A.Poe], de los efectos recurrentes de [Aloysius] Bertrand y con el idéntico deseo

210 *Revista Moderna* III.3:15.
211 In the original, the quoted passage reads: "Et dans le soir, tu m'es en riant apparue, / Et j'ai cru voir la fée au chapeau de clarté / Qui jadis sur mes beaux sommeils d'enfant gâté / Passait, laissant toujours de ses mains mal fermées..."
212 Lowell, "A consideration," 110, 115.
213 Mallarmé, "M. Stéphane Mallarmé," 57.

> baudelairiano de conseguir una prosa musical, [Mallarmé] inicia la búsqueda de nuevos ritmos prosísticos que se alejen de cualquier patrón previo para adaptarse a su particular estética, dominada por la musicalidad, el rigor y la concentración formal y encaminada a evitar cualquier concesión al lenguaje común.[214]

Resulting from this combination of approaches, "Pauvre enfant pâle," originally published in the "Anecdotes ou poèmes" section of *Divagations* (1897), was translated by the anonymous "Rasch" for the *Revista Moderna.* It appeared in issue n. I.7, and is probably one of the best examples of French prose poetry from the second half of the nineteenth century in the magazine. Mallarmé's recourse to the poetics of the anecdote, inherited from Baudelaire and Bertrand, is evident in this poem, which was inspired by a real story, as Mallarmé recounted in a letter.[215] The anecdotal nature of this kind of prose poem is directly linked to the manner in which the poet experiences modernity, as we have seen with Baudelaire's prologue to the *Petits poëmes.*

The poor child in Mallarmé's poem can be read as an image of the poet that corresponds to the *Revista Moderna*'s. He is a penniless orphan singing on the street in the hope of receiving a charitable donation, while other children are playing. His shrill song is met with utter indifference, and the lyric subject announces that the result of this is that "on te rendra mauvais et un jour tu commettras un crime." The boy's punishment for it is prefigured by the way in which he raises his head, giving the lyric subject the impression that it is already starting to separate from his body: "tu lamento es tan alto, tan alto que tu cabeza descubierta que se levanta en el aire á medida de tu voz, sube, parece querer arrancarse de tus hombros."[216] Once again, in yet another context, the person who sings is doomed to a tragic end by the public's indifference. Mallarmé himself commented on the complicated relationship of the poet with society: "seul, je fabrique un produit dont la Société ne veut pas, en échange duquel elle ne me donne pas

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214 Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 173.

215 For a discussion of the Baudelairean origins of this poetics, see Hara, "Poétique de l'anecdote." The letter in which Mallarmé narrated the anecdote and how it prompted him to write the poem was addressed to Armand Renaud on 8 January 1864 (Mallarmé, *Correspondance complète*, 185). It is discussed at length, in relation to "Pauvre enfant pâle," in Klein, "D'un post-scriptum."

216 *Revista Moderna* I.7:10.

de quoi vivre," as contemporary poet Henri de Régnier recalled.[217] This reflection on the place of art in society acquires a specific meaning in the context of the *Revista Moderna,* where it echoes the "Fábula de los siete trovadores" and reinforces the *modernistas*' experimental autonomism.

Translating Mallarmé's versions of Poe's poetry enhances the *Revista Moderna*'s quest for rhythm in prose. The editors' choice to feature retranslations is not altogether unusual, as they presumably published indirect translations from inaccessible languages —there is no evidence that any of the *Revista*'s collaborators could translate directly from Russian or Norwegian for instance—but this was usually implicit. An indirect translation from a language that was perfectly accessible and from which translations were usually first-hand is more striking.[218] So is the choice to allude to the indirect character of those versions by mentioning Mallarmé, both times, just under the title. His name appears in parenthesis, stating "(Stéphane Mallarmé.)" in "Annabel Lee" and "(De Stéphane Mallarmé)." in "Ulalume." Both poems are signed by their original author, Edgar A. Poe, as contributions to the *Revista Moderna* usually are, including the vast majority of translations. However, the subtitle, "(De Stéphane Mallarmé)," indicates that the specific text being translated for the magazine is actually *by* Mallarmé, establishing him as a kind of co-author. Besides the emphasis on translation as formal experimentation through the shift from verse to prose, this also points to a conception of translation in which the translator assumes an authorial role and imbues the text with his own poetics, in a similar way to the bilingual versions mentioned earlier. The translations of Poe's "Annabel Lee and Ulalume" are two of only three cases of showcased retranslations in the *Revista Moderna*, the other one involving André Gide and Oscar Wilde.[219]

217 De Régnier, *Les Cahiers inédits*, 383.

218 While the reception of Anglophone writers in French translation was common in *fin-de-siècle* Latin America, it was certainly not the case in the *Revista Moderna*, which counted with the collaboration of very qualified translators from English, such as Dávalos, Ricardo Gómez Robelo, and Ignacio Mariscal to mention only a few.

219 *Revista Moderna* V.13:9-10. More than an actual retranslation, this contribution is a collection of four stories told by Wilde to Gide, who wrote them down and published them in *L'Ermitage.* The *Revista Moderna* translated them from Gide's version, explaining the whole process in an introductory note. Here, too, the two mentioned writers seem to share authorship.

Besides illustrating how prose can be tried out as a medium for poetic expression, the *Revista Moderna* shows, with these two poems, a double interest, on the one hand in Poe and his poetics, and on the other, in the manner in which they are received and transformed by Mallarmé.[220] These two aspects converge if we consider that Dávalos argued, in "Los grandes poetas norteamericanos," that Poe is the true creator of decadentism with his "poesía enferma, anormal, siniestra, taciturna y triste." Dávalos considered that "los decadentes de hoy no provienen de Verlaine, no descienden de Baudelaire, proceden de Edgar Poe á través de los últimos."[221] This confirms that the French reception of Poe's works is not so much conceived as an instrument to access the original, but, rather, as a continuation of his aesthetics and an example of how to build on it.

Furthermore, decadence is, for Dávalos, a transatlantic phenomenon in itself, as this series of translations perfectly illustrates. Therefore, more than receiving a US poet through a French lens, the *Revista Moderna* is showcasing a dialogue in which it strives to participate and from which truly modern artistic expression shall emerge. Although Dávalos uses, in the quoted article, the lexical field of illness to describe decadent poetics (as its critics often did), decadence is also presented as a source of regeneration, first for French literature, and by extension, for Latin American letters: "talentos de primer orden, como el de Baudelaire, como el de Mallarmé, han buscado el *contagio regenerador*" of Poe's poetics.[222] The medical oxymoron confirms Molloy's point mentioned earlier that decadence, in Latin America, corresponded more to a renaissance than to a closure. Furthermore, Dávalos's comment implies that, in Europe too, the importation of foreign literature through translation has resulted in great original creations. In a context in which the *modernistas* were constantly accused of being *afrancesados* or *extranjerizantes,* this constituted an illuminating reminder of the fact

220 On this point, we can note that the same (anonymous) translator rendered Mallarmé's version of "Ulalume," la Jeunesse's text about the poet, and Mallarmé's own "Pauvre enfant pâle." There is therefore a personal interest in various aspects of the figure of Mallarmé, as well as a more collective one in the *Revista Moderna,* with the translations of "Annabel Lee," "Apparition," and other materials adding to Rasch's contribution.

221 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:8.

222 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:8 (my emphasis).

that cross-cultural transfers are a necessary component of a healthy and productive literary field.

Besides the fundamental formal difference between verse and prose, Mallarmé closely follows the English version most of the time, including its uncanny syntactic constructions. The Spanish translation normalises them slightly, but is, overall, also on the literal side. The only considerable difference, in "Annabel Lee," is the inversion, by Mallarmé, of the last two stanzas. There is therefore no particularly significant element in the textual options taken by the Hispanophone translators of these two poems, which are more meaningful in terms of the creation of a genealogy for the collaborators of the *Revista Moderna* and of a conception of poetry that relies on new notions of rhythm and repetition. Interestingly enough, this genealogy is not merely French, as could have been expected, but specifically transatlantic. "Annabel Lee" and "Ulalume," as they appear in the magazine, have crossed the Atlantic twice, to Europe and back, in a journey that intertwines poetic renovation and translation far beyond the *Revista*'s own activity.

Translation as cultural diplomacy: Poe and other US poets in the Revista Moderna

The reception of Poe's poetry was, however, not entirely indirect in the *Revista Moderna.* In this, the magazine contributed to the Latin American first-hand reception of Poe, moving away from the previous Hispanic reception of his works which was mostly Spanish, indirect, and focused on prose. Two of Poe's most emblematic poems featured in the periodical were translated directly from English and, most importantly, they were closely linked to instances of cultural diplomacy between Mexico and the United States. Those poems—"The Raven" and "To Helen"—were translated by two intellectuals who travelled to and lived in the United States as they worked for the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (the Mexican ministry of foreign affairs): Ignacio

Mariscal and Balbino Dávalos. Both translators, who were also friends, thus stepped away from the typical pattern of translations of Poe's works into Spanish, establishing a new avenue of hemispheric dialogue.

Mariscal's "El cuervo" is the first known verse translation of Poe into Spanish. It was composed in 1867, while Mariscal held a diplomatic post in Washington, and was published in 1869 in *El Renacimiento.* It was reprinted in the *Revista Moderna*'s issue n. III.16 (August 1900). This translation has been widely commented; I will therefore limit myself to a few relevant points. Although "El cuervo" is defined, underneath the title, as a free translation, it is rather close to the original, both in terms of content and form. *Modernista* renovation was not on the agenda at the time of Mariscal's translation, but this does not prevent some playfulness in his rendition of "The Raven," which is not altogether unrelated to the *fin-de-siècle* experiments. As in Poe's version, Mariscal opts for regular stanzas with a shorter last line. Instead of the octameter and final half-line used in English, he opts for hendecasyllables and heptasyllables, slightly increasing the length of each stanza to compensate for the comparatively shorter lines. The combination of hendecasyllables and heptasyllables is typical of the Hispanic *silva*, a heterometric poetic form that is one of the formal bases of the development of free verse due to its flexibility and combination of different line lengths, although it should be noted that Mariscal leans more on the regular side due to the fixed structure of the stanzas.[223] Even so, his version is freer than Poe's as he removes the caesuras (which created well-defined, uniform hemistichs) and internal rhymes. Thus, Mariscal created a sort of intercultural hybrid, combining elements of the *silva* with Poe's stanza:

> Al sueño me rendía, cuando súbito
> Un sonido me viene á despertar.
> "Alguien está llamando en el vestíbulo:
> ¡Importuna visita!" exclamo, "¡bah!
> Será algún necio, amigo de farándulas,

[223] Romantic and modernista experiments with the silva introduced more line lengths, making it progressively closer to free verse. As Utrera writes, it is the "primer paso a la destrucción de la estrofa y del metro cuando se combinan versos rítmicamente variados y distintos entre sí." Utrera Torremocha, *Estructura y teoría*, 71.

Un necio y nada más!"[224]

Even more playful is his treatment of the hendecasyllables, which are alternately *agudos* and *esdrújulos* (e.g. "súbito" and "despertar" above). Thus, although the lines are technically isometric, the rhythm varies due to the difference in the amount of grammatical syllables (10 for the *versos agudos* and 12 for the *esdrújulos*), which might be seen as an attempt to render the combination of catalectic and acatalectic lines in "The Raven," which Poe mentioned in "The Philosophy of Composition" as a key aspect of his formal innovation.

Mariscal's translation was republished various times before appearing in the *Revista Moderna*, and was therefore neither a new nor an original contribution in 1900.[225] As a poem that plays with heterometry and accentuation to create an unusual and slightly irregular rhythm though, it added to the *modernistas*' quest for new poetic forms, if only as an item in a series. There are, however, other reasons for its publication and ostentatious display.[226] One possible explanation is an attempt to showcase, in the wake of the Spanish-American War and of the US display of military force and expansionist proclivities, the direct cultural bond between Mexico and its northern neighbour. In this, it is particularly relevant that the poem is explicitly dated in Washington and that a mention is made of the fact that it was "traducido libremente de Edgard [sic] A. Poe," which suggests that no intermediary was used.[227] The imperialist menace and considerable US investments in Porfirian economy were strong incentives for Díaz's regime to maintain amicable relations. Mariscal, as secretary of foreign affairs, was one of the main executors of this diplomatic agenda. His mediator role was therefore double, as a translator and diplomat. The *Revista Moderna* emphasised the former, with two translations of Anglo-American poetry signed by Mariscal between

[224] *Revista Moderna* III.16:1.

[225] There were at least two other publications of this text between that of *El Renacimiento* and the one discussed here, in Mexico alone. For more details about its publication history, see Olea Franco and Vicenteño Bravo, "Encountering the Melancholy Swan," 141-142.

[226] Mariscal's translation opened its issue, occupying more than one third of its page space (6 pages in total) and was illustrated specially by Julio Ruelas, the *Revista Moderna*'s main illustrator (Fig. 1.4).

[227] *Revista Moderna* III.16:6 and 1.

1899 and 1900.[228]

It is in this context that the second Pan-American Conference was organised in Mexico (a location suggested by the United States government).[229] It opened in October 1901 under the aegis of Mariscal himself. In his letter of invitation addressed to the officials of other American countries, he mentioned "la armonía entre los pueblos del mundo de Colón" as one of the objectives of the conference.[230] He is not the only collaborator of the *Revista Moderna* to participate in this encounter; Joaquín D. Casasús acted as general secretary and Mexican delegate, and Dávalos as secretary (upon Casasús's request).[231] Moreover, the magazine officially offered its "patrocinio" to the "festival artístico" organised by the Mexican delegation at the National Library as an "homenaje á las letras anglo-americanas."[232] As its programme indicates, this event included, in addition to chamber music, a speech by Dávalos in honour of the "grandes poetas norteamericanos," a poem by Tablada to the same effect, as well as a "lectura de poesías americanas" by Luis G. Urbina and a second talk, by Jesús Urueta. Both Dávalos's speech and Urbina's reading include translated US poetry, and all addresses were published in the *Revista Moderna*.

Thus, the *Revista Moderna* was not only *de facto* organising this event; it also publicised it and dedicated a special issue to it in November 1901 (IV.21). Unlike almost all other numbers of the period, its first page did not feature a work of art, but instead, the title and the beginning of Dávalos's speech (fig. 1.5). "Los grandes poetas norteamericanos" occupies almost two thirds of the issue (10 pages in total), followed only by Urueta's discourse and one poem. It offers an overview of recent US-American poetry and contains Dávalos's translations of poems or fragments by Richard Henry Wilde, Henry Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, Whitman, and Poe, as well as a critical commentary on those authors and on Bryant, translated by Casasús and

228 "The Raven," and a version of William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis," which was not a novelty either since it had already been published in the *Revista Azul* just five years before (I.26:3-4).
229 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Conferencias Internacionales*, 49.
230 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Conferencias Internacionales,* 50.
231 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Conferencias Internacionales,* 57-58; Dávalos, *Los grandes poetas*, 19.
232 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:16.

published in the following issue. This is the second direct translation of Poe in the *Revista Moderna.* Dávalos's "A Elena" is therefore even more closely linked to Mexican-US diplomacy than Mariscal's contributions, given the occasion of its reading. This might also explain the overly dithyrambic tone of Dávalos's talk, which is to be read as a diplomatic performance. The outspoken criticism of Dávalos's retrospective account of this event is revealing of his tactful efforts at the Pan-American Conference:

> Dada nuestra obsequiosidad genuinamente mexicana que nos impulsa a halagar a huéspedes extranjeros con lo que suponemos pueda agradarles más, inventóse para amenizar los días destinados a lo grave, serio y austero de la propia labor del (tiendo a decir "inútil") congreso con excursiones por el país (me atreveré a llamarlas ridículas?? Sí, señores, me atrevo y si llégase a preguntármelo, lo aclararé) a excursiones por el país y al mismo tiempo a una o dos veladas netamente literarias en honor de las delegaciones norte y sudamericanas.. Casasús, en su idealístico fervor literario quiso que la primera velada se dedicase a la Delegación de los Estados Unidos, que simplemente me inclinaría a calificar, más o menos propia o impropiamente […] como la Delegación yanki, honor que aun entonces me parecía inapreciable para quienes formaban dicha delegación. Pero había que complacer a Casasús, más en sus ensueños de intelectual, que en su camaradería de excelente amigo. Y quiso Casasús que fuese yo el panegirista de la literatura de nuestros vecinos allende el pérfido Río Bravo.[233]

It is likely, nevertheless, that Dávalos would differentiate between the US delegates to the conference and the authors whom he translated of his own accord and even included in a personal anthology that he published in 1930, *Musas de Albión y otras congeneres.*

From his introduction to "A Elena," it is evident that Dávalos knew Mallarmé's version of this particular piece as he translated a fragment of the French poet's "scolie" attached to the poem referring to Helen's identity.[234] Yet Dávalos, unlike Mallarmé, chose to translate "To Helen" in verse, indicating that his version is probably direct and showing once again that he was amongst the *Revista Moderna*'s translators who were most attached to traditional verse forms. In this case, his translation, in hendecasyllables, follows the original quite closely, only diverging when the

[233] Dávalos, Autobiographical typescript, box 5, folder 14, 12.
[234] Poe, *Les Poèmes*, 188.

formulation of an idea or image requires it. He maintains the unrhymed pattern of the original, but fails, in most cases, to reproduce other phonic effects such as alliterations and rhymes that occur between line endings and caesuras, For instance

> Was it not Fate, that, on this July midnight—
> Was it not Fate, (whose name is also Sorrow,)
> That bade me pause before that garden-gate,
> To breathe the incense of those slumbering roses?

is rendered as

> ¿Fué el Destino? (también Dolor se llama)
> ¿Fué el Destino quizá quien esa noche
> A la entrada del huerto me condujo
> Para que de las rosas somnolientas
> Aspirase el olor?... Rumor ninguno[235]

It appears that Dávalos was not particularly keen on including such features into his verse, unlike other translators, although he adds occasional assonantal rhymes as in lines 3 and 5 of the stanza quoted above. Casasús, whose versions of W.C. Bryant's poetry for the same event appeared in the *Revista Moderna* one month later (1 December 1901), makes a steadier use of such devices. In his translations of "Oh fairest of the rural maids!" and "Upon the mountain's distant head," which are in hendecasyllables as well (but with assonantal rhymes in even lines), he attempts to reproduce Bryant's alliterative verse (for instance with "las selvas salvajes y boscosas" or the "lejano monte / De nieve nunca hollada").[236]

Although Dávalos's personal preference seems to go to the French poetic tradition, he certainly saw the potential of US-American poetry for a continental expression and postcolonial renaissance. In his speech, he asserted that US poetry is "un mundo nuevo dentro del Nuevo Mundo, creado de ayer á hoy, desarrollado en menos de un siglo, emanación de un pueblo que pasma con su modo grandioso de improvisar prodigios." It thus appears as a hemispheric model for artistic creation.[237] This brings some nuance to Paz's general statement that the *modernistas* had "la idea de que la

235 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:9.
236 *Revista Moderna* IV.23:11.
237 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:1.

América Latina y la América de lengua inglesa representaban dos versiones distintas y probablemente inconciliables de la civilización de Occidente,"[238] although both types of discourse certainly coincided.

Tablada shared Dávalos's belief, which he expressed in his poem read on the same occasion and published in the following issue of the *Revista Moderna.* In it, he couples the idea of the rebirth of poetry on American soil and the critique of the excessively ornate style of the first generation of *modernistas* that he had already formulated on other occasions. "Poesía en honor de los poetas Norte-americanos" starts with a kind of pastiche of the aesthetics of the first *modernismo,* with abundant Hellenistic references (inherited from the Parnassians).[239] Only in the first 35 lines of the poem, Selene, Dionysus, Pallas and Medusa are summoned, among the fauns and Bacchantes, taking turns trying to wake up the drowsy Muse, to no avail:

> La musa en el obscuro hipogeo reposa!
> Así duerme en la cárcel de su botón de rosa;
> Así bajo la tierra duerme la gema pálida;
> Así el canto en la lira; así la mariposa[240]

The "cárcel de su botón de rosa," would, in 1901, inevitably evoke the iconic "Yo persigo una forma," by Darío, added to the second edition of *Prosas profanas* that very year. In this last poem of his collection, Darío writes: "Yo persigo una forma que no encuentra mi estilo, / botón de pensamiento que busca ser la rosa."[241] In Tablada's ironic poem, this *modernista* bud becomes a prison that oppresses the muse and stifles poetry.

Pygmalion is also present, embodying, in a twist of Greek mythology, the unproductiveness of this poetics:

> En vano el imperioso conjuro de la idea!...
> En vano en el granito con el cincel de oro
> El artista inspirado y afanoso golpea!...
> Pigmaleón agota sus ansias y su lloro
> Sin conmover tu mármol ¡oh helada Galatea![242]

238 Paz, *Hijos del limo*, 131.
239 Max Henríquez Ureña, *Breve historia*, 17.
240 *Revista Moderna* IV.22:5.
241 Darío, *Prosas profanas*, 158-159.
242 *Revista Moderna* IV.22:5.

This stanza develops the critique by referring explicitly to the Parnassian concept of artistic creation, with the "artista inspirado y afanoso" hammering his block of granite. In the context of the *Revista Moderna*, this is a direct response to "L'art," published in the first issue. With this poem, Tablada announces not only that the time of cold industrious work on form is past, but also, taking a step further than in "Hostias Negras," that renovation is to come from American poetry.

This renewal implies leaving behind *recherché* cultural artefacts (illustrated for instance by the "syringas" and "sistros," two instruments from ancient Greece) as sources for poetic creation and reconnecting with nature instead. While the muse is unmoved by the elaborate manifestations of Greek music, it is stirred "Cuando la brisa leda / Entre las frondas hace gemir el harpa colia."[243] The ensuing renaissance of the Muse is distinctly linked to American poetry by Tablada:

> Canta ¡oh lira! los bardos de la pujante América
> Que al Septentrión llevaron la egregia apoteosis,
> De Bryant y Longfellow el alta virtud feérica
> Y de Poe la Musa, divinidad histérica,
> Y del poeta Whitman la épica neurosis[244]

Tablada goes on to describe the contribution of these authors, running through the canon established by Dávalos in his speech, which evokes the possibility of a concerted effort of the *Revista Moderna*'s collaborators. The Greek references recede form the moment when the Muse wakes up, and disappear when Tablada writes about the specific poets mentioned above (except for a few fitting mentions in the passage on Poe). It is almost as if Tablada was writing in the manner of each of the poets (including first generation *modernistas* at the beginning), concluding triumphally with Whitman:

> ¡Oh genios! de las altas regiones siderales
> Do viven venturosos los estros inmortales
> Descienda vuestro numen del bien inspirador
> Y cesen las discordias y vivan los mortales
> Unidos en el Credo Divino del amor!!
>
> Y á vuestro influjo miren las gentes venideras

[243] *Revista Moderna* IV.22:5.
[244] *Revista Moderna* IV.22:6.

De olivos coronadas las épocas cimeras
Cesar á los cañones su ronca tempestad
Y á todos los colores de todas las banderas
Tendiendo un arco-iris sobre la humanidad![245]

Whitman appears as the ultimate reference for poetic renovation and peace among American nations, in an interesting convergence of literary and political agendas. In this, the *Revista Moderna* seems to be aligning with the government's position regarding the United States and participate directly to the corresponding diplomatic efforts. This may be linked to the fact that various of its close collaborators also held official positions in Porfirian administration. It is likely not a coincidence that the homage to US-American poets was organised by four of its main contributors (Dávalos, Tablada, Casasús, Urueta), three of which were also among its most prolific translators (fig. 1.6). The special issue seems to have opened the way to more translations from Anglo-American authors and most importantly, to translations of Whitman's poetry.[246]

"All songs of current lands come sounding 'round me": versions of Whitman's dissonant music

Dávalos's "Los grandes poetas norteamericanos" contained the first translation of Whitman's poetry in the *Revista Moderna*, a fragment of "For You, O Democracy."[247] The series of translations from Whitman probably constitutes one of the most outstanding aspects of the magazine's formal exploration. By the turn of the century, Whitman was by no means a new name, but his reception in Latin America was very incipient, with more homages and references to him than actual translations of his poetry. José Martí's 1887 essay "El poeta Walt Whitman" introduced the poet to a

245 *Revista Moderna* IV.22:8.
246 There are two texts by US-American authors in the first volume, as well as in the second and third, three texts in the fourth and fifth volumes each, and finally, four texts in the sixth, which is also the second shortest, with only 16 16-pages issues. It should be noted, however, that this increase is mainly due to prose translations.
247 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:7-8.

Spanish-speaking audience and opened the way for what critics would call a "cult" of Whitman in Latin America.[248] However, besides this text written from the US where Martí discovered Whitman at a public reading and first published in the Mexican newspaper *El Partido Liberal*, other references to the poet are scarce during the *fin de siècle*. They include, the following year, Darío's poem "Walt Whitman" in *Azul...*, possibly motivated by Martí's essay and reprinted in the *Revista Moderna* in 1899,[249] and in 1897, Lugones's mentions of Whitman as essential poetic inspiration in *Las montañas de oro*, both in the introduction and in the closing piece, "El himno de las torres," which was reproduced in the *Revista Moderna* in March 1899 (II.3). In fact, the translations published in the magazine, "A una locomotora en invierno," "A la Democracia," and particularly "Proud Music of the Storm/Música orgullosa de la tempestad" might well be among the first translations into Spanish of Whitman's poetry, a fact that seems to have gone mostly unnoticed, except for a short mention by Fernando Alegría.[250]

In this context, the *Revista Moderna*, with three translations of Whitman's poetry and two translated essays about him, appears as a major agent in the early diffusion of Whitman's work and figure in Latin America. Another way in which this is groundbreaking is that, contrary to widely held beliefs about the *modernista* reception of Whitman, the *Revista Moderna* opens a new, direct hemispheric avenue for cultural contact.[251] Unlike the versions of Poe, which relied to some extent on retranslation, the approach to Whitman appears to be altogether unmediated, although it does have a

248 Santí, "The Accidental Tourist," 159.

249 This is, at least, what Juan Ramón Jiménez claims in *Españoles de tres mundos*, 33, quoted in Mary Edgar Meyer, "Walt Whitman's Popularity," 5; *Revista Moderna* II.4:23.

250 The only earlier translation that I have found so far is an assortment of fragments translated by Francisco Gavidia and published in *Repertorio Salvadoreño* under the title "Walt Whitman" (Aug. 1889). Alegría mentions Dávalos's and Nervo's translations only, first in his article and then his book on Whitman in Latin America. He never discusses those texts nor does he seem to consider them of any particular relevance, stating that "podríamos considerar a Vasseur como el verdadero introductor de Whitman en Hispanoamérica" in 1912. Alegría, "Walt Whitman en Hispanoamérica," 354, note 4. The discussion of the translations, in his book, also starts with Vasseur.

251 Most critics affirm that the *modernista* reception of Whitman was mostly second-hand and that he was mainly read in French or Italian translation. Josef Raab, "El gran viejo," 5; Enrico Mario Santí, "The Accidental Tourist," 162-163; Franklin, "A Translation of Whitman."

transatlantic component too, since the translated essays about the American poet are by French critics Bernard-Henri Gausseron (in issue II.10) and Henri Durand-Davray (in issue VI.6). Thus, not only did the *Revista Moderna* broaden the cultural network of textual circulation, but it also gave continental foundations to the search for modern poetics.

Nevertheless, the main reason why this series of translations stands out as radical and unprecedented is form, as "A una locomotora en invierno," "A la Democracia," and "Proud Music of the Storm/Música orgullosa de la tempestad" are the first poems in free verse to be translated in the *Revista Moderna*, and in all likelihood, in Mexican periodicals more generally. Although free verse was adopted progressively in Latin America and does not figure among non-translated contents in the *Revista Moderna*, the fact that this form was introduced and commented upon in the magazine certainly contributed to its importation to Mexico and Latin America, and to the process that led to its adoption in Hispanic poetry.[252]

All three poems were published rather late in the lifespan of the magazine. The first of them, "A la Democracia," is probably the least relevant in formal terms. It appeared in the special issue discussed in the previous section. As such, it is also a result of the diplomatic effort of the Mexican government's cultural representatives on the occasion of the second Pan-American Conference. In his poem about US-American poets, Tablada introduces Whitman as follows:

> Es Whitman que aparece! Sus líricas legiones
> No lucen áureos cascos como los mirmidones,
> Pues nunca ensangrentaron las tierras ni las aguas;
> Su amor llenó de mieses los áridos terrones
> Su afán forjó los hierros en las ardientes fraguas
>
> Es Whitman el humano y el lírico poeta!
> El que miró en sus claras videncias de profeta
> Un águila triunfando sobre una flor de lis.
> Es él el demagogo que toca su retreta

[252] For an account of the development of free verse in Latin America, see Utrera Torremocha, *Estructura y teoría.*

Honor á las legiones del buen poeta gris!![253]

Tablada goes on to describe Whitman in a Phrygian cap, associating him in various ways with the democratic legacy of the French Revolution. Similarly, Dávalos emphasises both Whitman's egalitarian principles and his "excentricidades poéticas." He adds that "su ritmo, con todo, no es regular ni armónico, sino caprichoso en extremo," which makes it "imposible traducirlo dándole una forma análoga."[254] Whitman's innovativeness appears to come into conflict with Dávalos's more traditional preferences.

Dávalos, nonetheless, proceeds to translate a fragment of "For You, O Democracy," somehow making Whitman's poem less structured than the original. He achieves this by adding lines to the second stanza, resulting in an imbalance between the first two stanzas (of similar length and shape in Whitman's original), adding an enjambment in the second stanza, and avoiding the repetition in the last two lines of each stanza. The closing couplet "With the love of comrades, / With the life-long love of comrades" becomes "Con el amor de hermanos / Con la vida de amor de camaradas," completely eliminating the parallelism, the rhyme, and the alliteration ("life-long love").[255] Surprisingly, Dávalos does not seem to understand Whitman's poetic devices in this piece as he instead attempts to bring it closer to a *modernista silva*.[256] He presents his version as an attempt ("ensayo el deciros este canto"[257]) and this curious introduction, as well as the disruption of the flow created by repetition and parallelism in the original, denote Dávalos's uneasiness with this poem. He ends up leaving it out of his personal anthology of translations from Anglophone poets published in 1930, unlike his other translations from "Los grandes poetas norteamericanos." This translation

253 *Revista Moderna* IV.22:8.

254 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:7.

255 It also jumps from an heptasyllable to an hendecasyllable (in line with *silva* conventions), whereas Whitman merely adds one metrical foot.

256 Whether consciously or not, he constructs his translation in a way that each line is either of a length typical of a *silva modernista* (7 or 11 syllables) or a combination of such lengths (9+7, 7+11, 9+9, and 7+7 for the longer lines). Although this confirms the link between heterometric forms like the *silva* and free verse, it also illustrates the initial difficulty in dealing with free verse and the challenge of translating it "dándole una forma análoga."

257 *Revista Moderna* IV.21:7.

therefore seems to have been motivated more by diplomacy than by an aesthetic affinity; the line "Venid, yo haré que el Continente indisoluble sea" speaks of the yearned-for fraternal relationship with the United States. Mariscal, in his invitation to the Pan-American Conference, emphasised this aspect of international relations, as he sang the praises of the "verdadera y hasta ahora puramente ideal fraternidad humana" and spoke of "vínculos más estrechos" between the inhabitants of the Americas.[258] The omission of the last two lines of the poem in Dávalos's translation ("For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme! / For you, for you I am trilling these songs.") removes any abstract mention of democracy and enables Dávalos to end on a Pan-American note.

The other two translations constitute more creative attempts to render Whitman's free verse in Spanish. They also appeared considerably later in the magazine, within the last five months of the publication span (April-August 1903). "A una locomotora en invierno" was included in issue number VI.7, in April 1903. It is an anonymous version of "To a Locomotive in Winter," a poem added to *Leaves of Grass* in 1881 which depicts a locomotive as motor for poetic creation.[259] The pulsating rhythm of the personified locomotive's engine corresponds to both the rhythm of modern life and that of poetry. This translation can be read as part of the *modernistas*' explorations of new and discordant concepts of rhythm as the base of modern poetry: "ruede en mi canto tu música desenfrenada."[260] It would, moreover, acquire a particular significance in the Mexican *fin-de-siècle*, when the railroad had assumed such a symbolic importance for the Porfirian regime. Finally, it corresponds to the change in locations that Paz identifies in the second stage of the *modernista* movement (or *postmodernismo*).[261]

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258 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Conferencias Internacionales*, 50.

259 Since it is anonymous, it is difficult to confirm that this translation is direct. However, it is not based on Vielé-Griffin's, the only existing French version of this poem from this period that I know of and that is inventoried by P. M. Jones and Betsy Erkkila."To a locomotive in winter" does not seem to feature in any Italian translation of the time either, and I therefore consider it as a direct translation for now.
Jones, "Whitman in France"; Erkkila, *Walt Whitman.*

260 *Revista Moderna* VI.7:5.

261 "El modernismo había poblado el mar de tritones y sirenas, los nuevos poetas viajan en barcos comerciales y desembarcan, no en Citeres, sino en Liverpool." Paz, *Hijos del limo*, 136-137.

Interestingly, this free-verse poem is translated as a sort of prose poem, in which the original lines are separated by dashes (fig. 1.7). The same configuration can be found in Lugones's *Las montañas de oro* (1897), of which one poem, "Nebulosa Thulé," was reproduced in the *Revista Moderna* in August 1898 (issue I.2). "Nebulosa Thulé" consists of hendecasyllables (and two heptasyllables) laid out as prose.[262] The dashes indicate the place where line breaks would be, reinforcing the (already evident) regular rhythm and poetic nature of the text. Utrera, in her *Teoría del poema en prosa*, rightly points out that this form was already used by Rimbaud in the *Illuminations*, published integrally just two years earlier.[263] She also refers to this technique as "verso dispuesto como prosa,"[264] and although in the case of "A una locomotora en invierno," the fragments are not of regular length or regularly accented, it can be read as free verse laid out as prose. Thus, although the translation does not reproduce the kind of free verse displayed by the original, it is still a step in the gradual introduction and adoption of free verse in *modernista* poetry, since it offers an opportunity to explore the potentialities of free verse without directly employing it.

On the other hand, the formal features of the translation denote a relatively low level of reflection around other versification strategies in this poem. Alliteration is maintained only at the beginning of the poem, effects of parallelism are not respected (and the prose layout would further undermine any such attempt), and neither is the repetitive binary (iambic) rhythm that phonetically represents the locomotive. This confirms the haphazard nature of much of the experimentation which only later coalesced into widespread changes.

Amado Nervo's version of "Proud Music of the Storm" is the most daring translation in the *Revista Moderna*. It was published bilingually in the magazine's

[262] *Las montañas del oro* is considered by critics such as Algría and Englekirk as Lugones's most Whitmanian work. Englekirk describes it as showing "a marked and decidedly palpable bit of evidence of the influence of Whitman's 'To a Locomotive in Winter'" in "Notes on Whitman," 137. He does not elaborate on the exact nature of this "influence," nor does he explain why he specifically chose Whitman's "To a Locomotive in Winter." At any rate, it is striking that the exact same mechanism is used both in "Nebulosa Thulé" and "A una locomotora en invierno," except if the anonymous translator is in fact Lugones, which, cannot be excluded.

[263] Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 254.

[264] Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 254.

penultimate issue, in August 1903 (VI.15). Like "To a Locomotive in Winter," it describes how the sounds of modern life conform a new, dissonant music that is also that of nature and of poetry. Much more extensive, this poem makes use of the characteristic Whitmanian catalogue, enumerating the different kinds of sounds perceived by the lyric subject.

> Ah, from a little child,
> Thou knowest, Soul, how to me all sounds became music;
> My mother's voice, in lullaby or hymn,
> (The voice—O tender voices—memory's loving voices!
> Last miracle of all—O dearest mother's sister's voice;)
> The rain, the growing corn, the breeze among the long-leav'd corn,
> The measur'd sea-surf, beating on the sand,
> The twittering bird, the hawk's sharp scream,
> The wild fowl's notes at night, as flying low, migrating north or south,
> The psalm in the country church, or mid the clustering trees, the open air camp-meeting,
> The fiddler in the tavern—the glee, the long-strung sailor-song,
> The lowing cattle, bleating sheep—the crowing cock at dawn.
>
> All songs of current lands come sounding round me.
> The German airs of friendship, wine and love,
> Irish ballads, merry jigs and dances—English warbles,
> Chansons of France, Scotch tunes—and o'er the rest,
> Italia's peerless compositions.[265]

This mixture of languages, nature's sounds, popular traditions, and spirituality is the stuff of poetry: "Haply what thou hast heard O soul was not the sound of winds, […] But to a new rhythmus fitted for thee, / Poems, bridging the way from Life to Death, vaguely wafted in night air, uncaught, unwritten / Which, let us go forth in the bold day, and write."[266] The tumultuous rhythm of the world is the inspiration for the poet, the material for her creation. It comes from all kinds of different sources and countries, ignoring borders and converging in order to produce poetry, like, metaphorically, the contents of the *Revista Moderna*. Beyond the direct context of the magazine, this concept of poetry coincides to an extent with that formulated by Baudelaire and

[265] *Revista Moderna* VI.15:8.

[266] The sound of wind, mentioned four times throughout the poem, cannot fail to evoke the turning point of Tablada's "Poesía en honor de los poetas Norte-americanos," when the muse of modern poetry is awakened precisely by the music of the wind. *Revista Moderna* VI.15:12.

Mallarmé, and adopted by some *modernistas* such as Darío and Lugones: the poet, turning her back on artifice, returns to cosmic unity through rhythm: "And Man and Art, with Nature fused again."[267]

In many ways, this translation is the culmination of the *Revista Moderna*'s exploration of new poetic forms. It concludes a series that, not coincidentally, also approached sound and music thematically, from Gautier's "Symphonie en blanc majeur" to Mallarmé's "Pauvre enfant pâle." As in the latter, orality takes precedence in "Proud music of the storm," and poetry becomes progressively less ornate and harmonious, and closer to everyday sounds, including speech. Sergio Raimondi observes the telling detail that Nervo translated "the twittering bird" as "el ave que charla," relating this to later translations of US poetry and the development of simpler, more conversational poetry in Spanish. With "Música orgullosa de la tempestad," finally, "¡existe una poesía donde los pájaros ya no cantan!"[268]

All this goes hand in hand with Nervo's radical choice to make this the first translation in proper free verse in the *Revista Moderna.* As one of the first Hispanic writers to experiment with free verse in his own poetry, it is not overly surprising that he would take this big step towards the introduction of this form.[269] As the parallel bilingual layout shows, he follows the structure of the original quite closely, including its irregular lines and stanzas, and its absence of rhyme. He also reproduces Whitman's anaphoric catalogues and long lines, as in

> Acaso eso que oíste, oh alma, no era el ruido de los vientos;
> Ni el ensueño de la tempestad rabiosa, ni las alas que palpitan, ni el grito ronco del pájaro marino,
> Ni la vocalización de la Italia llena de Sol,
> Ni el majestuoso órgano germánico—ni el vasto concurso de voces ni los creadores de harmonías,
> Ni las estrofas de los esposos y de las esposas ni el rumor de los soldados en marcha
> Ni las flautas, ni las arpas, ni los llamamientos de los clarines en los

[267] *Revista Moderna* VI.15:8.
[268] Sergio Raimondi, "Infancia y adolescencia," n.p.
[269] He was later credited for having "introduced, together with Darío and others, *vers libre* in Spanish." *The Pan-American Magazine* XXVI.6:338.

campos,

Sino que un nuevo ritmo hecho para ti[270]

Just like "Laforgue's formally mimetic translation of Whitman" is considered by Pym "as a major step towards the *vers libre*," this is an instance in which "mimetic translation practices" functioned as catalysts of prosification.[271]

In light of the different translations of Whitman's poetry published in the *Revista Moderna*, it emerges that the early reception of Whitman in Latin America has been generally underestimated. Dávalos's and Nervo's translations, seen in isolation, as Alegría seems to consider them, can seem anecdotal. However, reading the *Revista Moderna* as a whole (i.e. as a new unit of analysis) brings into focus the existence of an articulated programme around the figure of Whitman in the first years of the twentieth century, and a more thorough reception than was previously thought. Contrary to what scholars have written on this topic, this reception seems to have been mostly first-hand, and the *Revista Moderna* was a central agent in the articulation of a hemispheric literary dialogue.

This considerably widens the scope of what was thought to be the *modernista* response to Whitman's poetry, providing a new perspective on the transformative character of his poetics as well as new material to map his early reception in Latin America. It reaffirms the idea that Whitman "actually forms part of the very mythology of modernismo,"[272] with the important nuance that this participation is not viewed exclusively (or even mainly) from the political point of view, as Enrico Santí argues, but, rather, from the aesthetic one. Thus, sectors of *modernismo* separate from Martí read Whitman and adopted aspects of his poetics as early as the turn of the century. This is especially true of the second stage of *modernismo*, which drifts ever so slightly away from France and focuses on a more hemispheric conception of artistic creation. The characterisation, by Tablada, of Whitman as the prophet who saw "Un águila triunfando sobre una flor de lis,"[273] can be interpreted as the symbolic victory of American poetics

[270] *Revista Moderna* VI.15:13.
[271] Pym, "Shortcomings," 222 (author's italics).
[272] Santí, "The Accidental Tourist," 160.
[273] *Revista Moderna* IV.22:8.

over the French tradition. With various translations, the *Revista Moderna* opens the way for this development, from the very beginning of the twentieth century. Englekirk offers an important link between the reception of Whitman and anti-*modernista* attitudes. He does, however, date this phenomenon to 1904, while my corpus shows that such tendency was already underway a few years before.[274] Considering the series of translations of the *Revista Moderna* therefore leads to a more accurate evaluation of the origins of this anti-*modernista* or *postmodernista* reaction.

Besides the wide scope of the *Revista Moderna* itself, this series of Whitman translations gained visibility as they were read at cultural gatherings. The Pan-American event at which "For You, O Democracy" was read was attended by representatives from various American countries as well as foreign journalists, being even reported in Spain.[275] Nervo's translation, in turn, was read at an event held by the Liceo Altamirano in honour of Leo Stanton Rowe, a US scholar and international law and politics expert involved in inter-American relations since 1900 (he went on to become the director general of the Pan-American Union in 1920). It was also reprinted in Catalan magazine *Pèl & Ploma* just one month after appearing in the *Revista Moderna.*[276] The impact of Nervo's translation is clear if we consider that José Coronel Urtecho, arguably the most prolific twentieth-century translator of modernist US poetry into Spanish and promoter of conversational poetics in Latin America, recounted that he discovered Whitman (the "bardo de todo un continente"[277]) and a whole new world of poetic possibilities through Nervo's "Música orgullosa de la tempestad."[278] This prompted him to travel to the United States in the mid-1920s and start his own translational journey.

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274 It started, according to Englekirk, with the publication of Vasseur's *Cantos augurales*. The Whitman translations in the *Revista Moderna* show that this reaction had a more collective dimension than what was previously thought.

275 Spanish writer Juan Pérez de Guzmán y Gallo, for instance, gave a detailed account of the evening in "El congreso panamericano en Méjico," 68-69.

276 *Pèl & Ploma* 097 (Sept. 1903), 273-280.

277 Coronel Urtecho, "El americanismo," 31.

278 He might have read the piece in the third volume of Nervo's complete works, published in Madrid in 1920, in which the translation was also reprinted.

Tablada, Portuguese, and Japanese poetry: new translational horizons

The broadening of horizons operated by the *Revista Moderna* was not limited to the inclusion of Whitman. Another contribution to this trend was that of Eugénio de Castro. Paraíso affirms that "mayor importancia que Whitman en el nacimiento del verso libre modernista, tiene el portugués Eugênio de Castro (1869-1944), quien con su libro *Horas* (1891) entró de lleno en el versolibrismo."[279] *Horas* was not, however, the source of the magazine's translations, which came from *Sagramor* and *O rei Galaor.* Both identified as poems in their original paratexts, these are long pieces that share an important dramatic component. *O rei Galaor* (which was actually labelled as a dramatic poem) was integrally translated by Tablada and published in six instalments, making de Castro the most represented poet in the late years of the *Revista Moderna*.[280] Tablada's translation is written, like the original, in rhymed, regular verse. A subtitle indicates that it was "traducido del portugués," a rare occurrence that draws attention to the widening of the magazine's cultural geography.[281] The translation of the closing passage of *Sagramor* was published anonymously in issue II.11 (Nov. 1899), but it corresponds to the version that Darío included in his section on de Castro in *Los Raros* (1896). In this essay, Darío describes de Castro as "una de las más brillantes fases del renacimiento latino" and an example of the contribution of what he calls "la raza ibérica" to modern poetry. He characterises *Sagramor* as starting "en prosa, en la prosa musical y artística de de Castro,"[282] which is noteworthy since the passage that he translates in prose is actually written in verse in the original:

> Aqui tens oiro, mancheias d'oiro
> Toma! não chores...
> Com os ducados d'este thesoiro
> Terás palacios, joias e flores...
> Repara, vê

279 Paraíso, *Verso libre hispánico*, 64. Max Henríquez Ureña also mentions de Castro as one of the main inspirations for Hispanic free verse. *Breve historia*, 29.

280 They appeared in issues V.7:2-4, V.8:14-15, V.10:8-12, V.12:15-16, V.13:11-14, and V.14:6-10.

281 As Darío noted a few years earlier, "la literatura portuguesa ha sido hasta hace poco tiempo escasamente conocida." *Los Raros*, 220.

282 Darío, *Los Raros,* 217, 227.

Como o oiro é flavo, como o oiro explende...[283]

Darío attempts to replicate the original's tetrasyllabic clauses, although not consistently: "He aquí oro, llénate de oro, toma, no llores... Son los ducados de ese tesoro, tendrás palacios, yemas y flores... Mira, ve cuán rubio es el oro y cómo resplandece..."[284] In this, his "Sagramor" can be seen as a hybrid between versification based on accentual clauses and rhythmic prose poetry, and yet another creative experiment around form.

The *Revista Moderna*'s opening to the world and its diversification of versification concepts beyond first-generation *modernismo* is taken even further through Tablada's introduction of Japanese poetry. Although his interest in Japanese literature and culture was not out of the ordinary in the context of turn-of-the-century orientalism, his approach had the particularity that, once again, Tablada tried to establish some sort of unmediated contact with Japanese culture. He travelled to Japan and there is some evidence that he attempted to learn Japanese, although his linguistic abilities did not allow him to translate directly from this language. His journey to Japan was sponsored by Jesús Luján (who also funded the *Revista Moderna*), and he regularly published chronicles inspired by this experience in the magazine between July 1900 and March 1901. During his stay, he also translated various *wakas*, traditional Japanese poems based on different combinations of penta- and heptasyllables, that were published in issues III.19 and III.24, and one dramatic piece that appeared in IV.5 under the title "El manto de penitencia." Although the subtitle of this short comedy states that it was "traducida del japonés por José Juan Tablada," Seiko Ota explains that textual details indicate that it was most likely based on Basil Hall Chamberlain's 1880 English translation.[285] The *wakas*, too, seem to be translated either from Chamberlain or from Judith Gautier's French version, except for one of them which might be a freer imitation.[286] Ota offers an analysis of these translations which I will not replicate here,

283 De Castro, *Poesias escolhidas*, 87.

284 Portuguese tetrasyllables are typically composed of five grammatical syllables, as any syllable following the last stressed vowel is not counted. This explains Darío's use of pentasyllabic clauses. *Revista Moderna* II.11:26.

285 Ota, *José Juan Tablada*, 27 note 12.

286 Ota, *José Juan Tablada*, 72-73.

focusing instead on their formal characteristics, since indeed, "la traducción de los *wakas* durante la estancia en Japón fue un proceso necesario para que después Tablada se apropiara del estilo del haikú. Por consiguiente, la estancia en Japón tuvo como sentido primordial el permitirle renovar su obra poética."[287]

The *wakas* constituting the "Cantos de amor y de otoño" were presented as a "paráfrasis de poetas japoneses." They are translated either in Spanish alexandrines; a combination of three alexandrines and one final heptasyllable; hendecasyllables; or octosyllables, as in the following example:

> Son las gotas de la aurora
> Que el fulgor de Otoño dora,
> Leve polvo de diamantes
> Y la araña lo atesora
> En sus redes cintilantes![288]

This last form is the most common if we also consider the other series of *wakas*, titled "'Utas' japonesas. Poetas del amor," which are all translated as octosyllables, except for one, which uses the traditional combination of lengths of the *silva*.[289] All of Tablada's *wakas* are rhymed, confirming that he does not appropriate the *waka* as an ametric or free-verse form, as haikus would later come to be approached. Instead, this is the occasion to experiment with short lines that condensate the poetic image and create an ephemeral evocation, following the principle of "cantar muchas cosas con pocas palabras"[290] that would become prevalent with modernism.

This is a feature that Tablada sought to include in his own poetry, as his "Variaciones sobre un tema" show, demonstrating the impact of Japanese literature and culture on his poetics as early as 1900.[291] These "variations" are a ludic experiment around line length. It consists of a sonnet being (re)written four times in increasingly short meters, its contents becoming progressively more condensed (fig. 1.8). As such, it

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287 Ota, *José Juan Tablada*, 89.
288 *Revista Moderna* III.24:5. Note that this version is based on the same tetrasyllabic clauses as Silva's "Nocturno" (ooóo).
289 *Revista Moderna* III.19:10.
290 Ota, *José Juan Tablada*, 69.
291 *Revista Moderna* III.8:2-3.

can be considered as a form of intralingual translation, according to Jakobson's classic typology, since the same content is retold over and over again in a different manner. The first version of the sonnet is in alexandrines ("Cual las carnales tintas de la fragrante rosa"), the second in dodecasyllables ("Como los colores de opulenta rosa"), the third in octosyllables, the same meter as most of the *wakas* ("Como á la opulenta rosa"), and the last one is in hexasyllables ("Como roja rosa"). This exercise illustrates the fact that the same can be said in fewer words, and that, in poetry too, less can be more. Indeed, through this process of simplification, Tablada dismisses useless ornaments. The very *modernista* "mármol de una diosa," referring to the body of the speaker's lover, disappears in the third version, giving way to her "cuerpo de diosa." The "polvo de perlas" is left out from the second version onwards, as does the swan, mentioned twice in the first iteration of the sonnet. The second stanza evolves as follows

> Caerá bajo mis besos tu blanca muselina
> Polvo de perlas; alas de blanca mariposa;
> Plumón de cisne blanco, para Leda gloriosa
> Que aguarda entre los juncos la conjunción divina.
>
> Romperán mis labios esa muselina
> Leve como el polvo de la mariposa
> Y bajo mi beso surgirá gloriosa
> Blanca y sonrosada tu carne divina!
>
> Es leve tu muselina!
> Es ala de mariposa!
> Ya mi pasión gloriosa
> Besa tu carne divina!
>
> Vuela muselina
> Cual la mariposa,
> Mi boca gloriosa
> Te besa ¡oh Divina!

It is telling that the depurated versions should retain natural elements before anything else (the rose, the fog, the butterfly, the lake, and the moon) but still exclude the image of the swan, so developed in the version in alexandrines. Metric change is therefore associated, once more, with overcoming the symbols and precious *bric-à-brac* of the

first *modernismo*. The omission of the figure of Leda also marks the end of mythological references, and the whole poem becomes progressively less elitist in its references, more sober from the point of view of language, and more concrete and grounded in reality. Although in this instance, Tablada does not, as in his later haikus, transform the image into the poem itself, he relieves it from symbolic implications. As Paz writes, "Su innovación es algo más que una simple importación literaria. Esa forma dio libertad a la imagen y la rescató del poema con argumento, en el que se ahogaba."[292] The evolution outlined here and Tablada's translations of Japanese poetry in general prefigure elements of avant-gardist poetics, especially in terms of its treatment of the image. Tablada himself would go on to increasingly experiment with the poetic image, calligrams, short poems, and notably haikus, which his 1919 book *Un día...* is considered to have introduced in Latin America. His syntactic and semantic simplification also heralds the transformations popularised by New Poetry and Modernism a decade or so later, on which I will touch in part III of this thesis.[293]

Conclusion

In addition to the importation of a way of life and literary socialisation (the *cultura del bar*), and of some aesthetic elements such as images and references, translation in the *Revista Moderna* also—and above all—constituted a way to explore new poetic modalities and experiment with form. In this, the magazine contributed to the *modernista* quest for a new poetic expression. The different translations presented in this chapter, through their wild heterogeneity, have demonstrated, however, that there was no systematic effort for the dissemination of free verse in the *Revista Moderna*. Significantly, none of the leaders of francophone vers-librisme (Francis Vielé-Griffin, Gustave Kahn, Jules Laforgue, Arthur Rimbaud) were included in the magazine. Rather,

[292] Paz, *Peras del olmo*, 62.

[293] For instance, "las carnales tintas de la fragrante rosa" successively becomes "los colores de opulenta rosa" and "roja rosa."

the collaborators experimented with all kinds of verse, with no definite programme but a playful disposition to try out various options and expand the repertoire in all directions.

In so doing, these experiments opened the way for the exploration of lesser-known aspects of the work of canonical authors (Baudelaire's prose poems for instance), new authors (such as Whitman), and original combinations of versification principles. As might be expected, these constituted the two main channels through which free verse was progressively introduced in Spanish, through translation: prose poetry and ametric verse. As Utrera explains, free verse is the final result of

> una serie de experimentalismos métricos de distinto tipo. Éstos, sin duda, facilitaron la concepción de un verso distinto al verso clásico imperante. A ello se suma la revalorización de la prosa y la aparición del poema en prosa. Las traducciones poéticas en prosa contribuirían decisivamente al desarrollo final del versolibrismo.[294]

In translation, the collaborators of the *Revista Moderna* played with the form of the *silva* (Mariscal), irregular, heterometric stanzas with abundant alliteration and repetitions (Valencia), prose poetry (Rasch, Lescano) including rhythmical prose (Darío), accentual clauses (Tablada), free verse laid out as prose (anonymous translator of Whitman), heterometric verse (*silva*) laid out as free verse (Dávalos), short, condensed lines (Tablada), and finally long lines (called "versículo" in Spanish) and free verse (Nervo). At the same time, they also produced heaps of alexandrines and sonnets, a form still very much in use.

This is because of the magazine's function as an ideal laboratory for poetics. Various experiments happen simultaneously and their results are different. So are the translators, who tend to choose what they translate based on personal affinities and projects. Translations can be more radical (Nervo), ludic (Tablada), composite (Dávalos, Darío), inconsistent, or traditional (Dávalos). Furthermore, the experiments do not always produce results, and when they do, those are not necessarily immediate. This explains the important proportion of traditional verse forms translated in the *Revista*

[294] Utrera Torremocha, *Poema en prosa*, 30-31.

Moderna; some of the new repertoire that appeared in translation assumed a primary role right away (as was the case with decadence, which was quickly assimilated by some *modernistas* like Tablada), while other elements would take more time to become productive models, and merely prefigure, in the *Revista Moderna*, later literary movements (such as free verse, plain language, and the primacy of the image).[295] Thus, far from sudden and radical innovations brought forward by creative genius, change is the result of a more or less "armonioso esfuerzo colectivo"[296] through which different elements of a major breakthrough are rehearsed, improved, and combined in tentative and often uncoordinated ways.

As the site of such experiments, the *Revista Moderna* is a valuable source for literary history. In it, decadent aesthetics is pervasive and underlies the personal poetics of many of its collaborators; yet the magazine's editorial line is broader, being defined by the juxtaposition of disparate elements, various of which share their innovative and experimental quality. Although this might give the impression that the whole process is more or less random, we cannot disregard the work of the editors, whose task is to articulate and present all the material. Firstly, they maintained a stable proportion of poetry translations, contrary to the *Revista Azul*, where they decreased with time.[297] They also placed signed translations (as we have seen, mostly verse translations) in more visible places than in the *Revista Azul* (figures 1.9 and 1.10), and this tends to highlight important pieces in terms of poetics ("Hymne à la beauté" and "The Raven" both open their respective issue, for instance). The conformation and showcasing of series around the works and figures of Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Whitman is undeniable. While individual pieces are not particularly significant in isolation, they come to conform a project when they are read in terms of their association.

Seen through the lens of these different series, the development of the *Revista Moderna*'s poetics is coherent. As figure 1.11 illustrates, Gautier appears only at the

[295] Indeed, not all the translated material becomes primary at all, and part of it simply never reaches a primary status.

[296] Tablada, *La feria*, 303.

[297] Except for year 2 with 28 translations and year 6 (which was cut short) with 5, every volume of the *Revista Moderna* contains between 9 and 12 verse translations.

beginning of the *Revista*, while Whitman is only present in the last two volumes. Mallarmé and Baudelaire, on the other hand, are featured throughout the whole publication span. Thus, we can see that most of the translations that have been discussed in this chapter as traditional were published roughly during the first years of the *Revista Moderna*. The most radically innovative contents, in turn, emerged towards the end.

The poetic journey that this chart outlines is multi-layered: at the same time as the *Revista Moderna* implements innovative verse forms that tend towards free verse, it distances itself from the legacy of the *Revista Azul* and dissociates itself from the aesthetics of the first *modernismo.* It establishes a new poetics that is based on a more authentic relationship with nature and society, with a strong American component to it, while also broadening its cultural horizons and giving more visibility to translation as a literary practice in its own right. This includes crediting the translator more often,[298] showcasing signed translations and creative retranslations, and publishing more bilingual versions.

Since the first generation of *modernistas* was so closely associated to French literary tradition (and Parnassianism in particular), breaking away from it also implied a change in the *Revista Moderna*'s map of literary references. This is of course a slight shift, and France remains the main cultural point of reference. Overall, most translations were made from French, and France, along with the United States, contributed to the evolution towards free verse in no small measure. We have seen, however, that in practice, the process is often transatlantic and challenges the national divisions of literary histories. The *Revista Moderna* also diversified its cultural horizons. France lost some of its protagonism with time, especially with respect to poetry translation, as it went from representing almost 70% of all verse translations in the first two years, to 56%, 50%, 30%, and finally 20% in the last volume (figs. 1.12-1.17). As Paz notoriously remarked, "los modernistas no querían ser franceses: querían ser modernos." In this, the *modernista*s considered, he adds, that "modernidad y

[298] 84.5% of the translations remain anonymous in the *Revista Azul* versus 69.01% in the *Revista Moderna.*

comopolitismo eran términos sinónimos."[299] Figures 1.12 to 1.17 also indicate that there was a progressive diversification of the languages from which translations were made (including, in a few cases, translations from Spanish into French or English, showing that the collaborators' works were also being translated abroad), and an irregular increase in versions from English.[300] The *Revista Moderna*'s cosmopolitanism therefore goes far beyond the French tradition alone, especially with respect to poetry translation.

From this cultural diversity, the collaborators of the *Revista Moderna* derive new poetic elements that would fundamentally change the aesthetics of *modernismo.* In this, it can be argued that the magazine marked the transition from *modernismo* to *postmodernismo.* This prompts us to rethink the periodisation of this transition, especially in light of the conception of change outlined above. Well before 1903—the date that Paz sets for the "segunda revolución modernista" with Lugones's *Crepúsculos del jardín*—there was, in the *Revista Moderna*, an articulate response to the first *modernismo,* which contemplated a more modest and authentic poetics and found inspiration in Whitman's and Bryant's poetry. With Japanese poetry, Tablada makes an even bigger step and anticipates various features of the avant-garde, introducing the haiku in Spanish-speaking countries and developing a radically new treatment of the poetic image.

299 Paz, "El caracol y la sirena," 6.

300 The two translations from originals in Spanish are H. D. Steele's English version of Jesús E. Valenzuela's "Balada de las manos" (IV.17:9) and J. Raisin's translation of "La flauta de Pan" by Leopoldo Díaz (VI.12:11, bilingual version).

Part II

A tale of two wars

Translation as ideological negotiation in the revolutionary context: *Pegaso* (1917) and *El Maestro* (1921-1923)

En esta crisis de la Historia […] parece que estamos presenciando dos guerras paralelas. Luchan los cuerpos con el hierro en la mano y luchan también en las alturas los espíritus.

Luis de Zulueta

In the early days of August 1914, as Germany declared war on Russia and France, Álvaro Obregón had very different preoccupations. He was marching, with his *Ejército del Noroeste*, on Mexico City, following a series of victories against federal troops. On 13 August, he signed the Teoloyucan Treaties, formalising the surrender and dissolution of the Federal Army. Thus, while Germany was conducting its offensive through Belgium and France, Constitutionalist forces defeated Victoriano Huerta's counter-revolutionary regime, marking the triumph of the revolution in Mexico. Venustiano Carranza entered Mexico City on 20 August to become the new head of state. As the European conflict became bogged down in trench warfare, the Mexican revolution entered its years of factional in-fighting, which would culminate in 1915 and subside over the rest of the decade, making way for the revolution's institutional phase.

The co-occurrence of both conflicts is highly significant. Besides its concrete consequences, described by historians such as Alan Knight and Javier Garcíadiego,[301] its symbolic implications were substantial; the Great War was a central event even for neutral Latin American countries, impacting the political and intellectual spheres, as well as public opinion.[302] While scholars have analysed the location of WWI in the press,[303] the conflict's effects on literature and culture more generally have been less studied. It is one of the aims of Chapters 2 and 3 to examine this question in more depth. Mariano Siskind has offered an interpretive framework according to which writers from neutral American countries wrote and commented on WWI to enter a

301 Garciadiego, "Primera Guerra Mundial"; Knight, "Revolución mexicana."

302 Besides Garciadiego, see Pla, Fuentes, and Montero, eds., *Civil War*; Compagnon, *L'adieu à l'Europe*; Compagnon et al., eds., *Gran Guerra*; and Rinke, *Latin America.*

303 Studies of the press response to WWI are too numerous to be listed here. For a general introduction, see Vega Jiménez, "Press (Latin America)"; for a glimpse of the situation in Mexico, see Jean Meyer, "¿Fue México germanófilo?"; and de la Parra, "Primera Guerra Mundial."

shared global discursive space and establish themselves as cosmopolitan subjects.[304] While this might partly account for the Mexican writers and intellectuals' interest in WWI, the particularities of their country's internal situation add another dimension to the matter which needs to be addressed in a more consistent manner. The symbolic potential of the two simultaneous conflicts was huge and this synchronicity was exploited by Mexican cultural agents. This phenomenon and its manifestation in two dissimilar periodicals—*Pegaso* (1917) and *El Maestro* (1921-23)—constitutes the main focus of this part of my thesis. The different responses to (and strategic uses of) European events shall evidence the many nuances of the reconfiguration of the Mexican literary field, from *Pegaso*, which was led by prominent *modernista* and *posmodernista* figures who displayed a certain degree of scepticism and resistance vis-a-vis the revolutionary project, to *El Maestro*, which was published by the government's *Secretaría de Educación Pública* (SEP).

Translation in the mirror of the Great War

From WWI's early days, parallels were drawn between the two conflicts, both inside and outside Mexico. In "La viga en el ojo," published in August 1914 in *La Nación* (Buenos Aires), Leopoldo Lugones compared Albania and Mexico, inverting the symbolic hierarchy between countries and establishing Latin America as the locus of a new, fairer understanding of international relations and of the very notion of civilisation.[305] Similar comparisons appeared in the Mexican press, such as "La guerra de Europa y nuestra Revolución" in *El Demócrata* (September 1914). Its anonymous author ironically reverses the dichotomy between civilisation and barbarianism, stating that "aquí, en la joven América, las guerras no son tan espantosamente civilizadas."

304 Siskind, "Spectacle of War" and "Primera Guerra Mundial."
Besides Siskind, the closest analysis to what I am postulating is María Inés Tato's, in "The Latin American Intellectual Field in the Face of the First World War: An Initial Approach."

305 Lugones, "Viga en el ojo," 2-3.

They also lampoon the idea of modernity: in Mexico,

> el militarismo no ha tenido tiempo de pertrecharse a la moderna: nos matamos por lo que sea, pero poco a poco, a tiro de fusil o con ametralladoras; no poseemos zepelines ni cañones de ocho leguas de alcance, y nos conformamos con procedimientos exterminadores más modestos.

The author then concludes: "lamentemos que la civilizada Europa nos dé ahora […] una prueba de inferioridad tan manifiesta como fatal."[306] Although not all commentators saw in the European events the onset of a major civilisation crisis that had bearings on world order, they shared the propensity to juxtapose and compare the Great War and the Mexican revolutionary struggle.

WWI thus became the mirror in which Mexicans observed their own civil war, albeit from different angles.[307] The next two chapters examine how two periodicals of the revolutionary years, *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*, used WWI and the ensuing events of the February and October Revolutions in Russia to comment, indirectly, on the Mexican situation. Translated materials about these events were instrumental in this process. Thus, even when not fulfilling a purely literary function, translation played a fundamental role in magazines: that of enabling editors to take an ideological stance on local political matters, allowing a covert form of criticism. This proved particularly useful in times of high socio-political instability, when cultural agents had to carefully position themselves and negotiate their relationship with the authorities of the day. Therefore, these chapters analyse, more specifically, how the translation of texts on the topics of war and revolution was used strategically by magazine editors to formulate the ideological grounds of their activity and of their relationship with the state in the changing landscape of the 1910s and early 1920s.

The use of WWI as proxy for domestic affairs has been examined by scholars of Spanish history, but not, to my knowledge, by Mexicanists, despite the unmatched

306 Pepito, "La guerra de Europa," 2.

307 I resort here to Tato's terminology, as she wrote that, since their independence, Latin American states "looked at themselves in the mirror of Europe, which constituted their main cultural reference." Tato, "Latin American Intellectual Field," 117.

comparative potential offered by the revolutionary conjecture.[308] As Paul Aubert pointed out about Spain, "the quarrel between pro-allies and pro-Germans […] quickly became a debate about domestic policy and the essence of the Spanish regime."[309] This is also valid for Mexico, and the two countries' different readings of WWI only confirm this point, as will become evident. Comments on the Russian Revolution have been analysed in a similar way; as Matthew Taunton states for 1920s Britain, "the Soviet Union had become in this period 'a kind of fantasy space' where British writers and intellectuals could stage their debates, and onto which they could project their desires."[310] Again, this holds true for Mexico, where the pre-existing revolution offered fertile grounds for parallels to be drawn.

Examining the role played by translation in this process adds a layer of complexity. On this point, I argue that translation was a useful tool for editors to address sensitive issues indirectly, allowing them to use original authors either as sources of authority or shields behind which they can avoid taking full responsibility for the expressed ideas (especially when discussing the topic of revolution). This particular aspect has not received much attention in Translation Studies, besides Anthony Pym's discussion of the translators' status as "messengers" and their subsequent moral responsibility over the contents of their translations (or lack thereof). While Pym's conclusion that "translators are not simple messengers […] They have choices, and thus responsibility"[311] certainly applies to magazines that actually *select* the translations that they publish, it omits the possibility to recur to the messenger status strategically in order to eschew responsibility.

Translation, I maintain, can therefore be closely related to the editors' (sometimes covert) ideological positioning. It is also particularly helpful in order to study this positioning due to the manipulation inherent to the practice described in my

308 Fuentes, "Great War"; Aubert, "Motives of Francophilia"; José Ramón González, "Toward a Pro-Ally."
309 Aubert, "Motives of Francophilia," 241.
310 Taunton, "Russia and the British Intellectuals," 210.
311 Anthony Pym, *On Translator Ethics*, 56.

introduction to this thesis.[312] André Lefevere delves into the mechanisms of such manipulation, explaining that translation results in the creation of a *representation*:

> in the past, as in the present, rewriters created images of a writer, a work, a period, a genre, sometimes even a whole literature. These images existed side by side with the realities they competed with, but the images always tended to reach more people than the corresponding realities did.[313]

This part of the thesis is therefore chiefly concerned with the images of WWI created by magazine editors to advance their ideological agenda. While Lefevere acknowledges the link between such images and ideology/power, he does not systematically explore the particulars of this complex relationship. He affirms, for instance, that texts are usually manipulated "to make them fit in with the dominant, or one of the dominant ideological and poetological currents of their time."[314] This is complicated, however, if we consider them from the perspective of field dynamics; indeed, manipulation can also be used to resist dominant forms and ideas, or to foster alternatives. Ultimately, this depends on the agents' concrete means of being more or less independent from the political establishment, a consequential factor in the post-revolutionary context, in which cultural agents were bound to re-negotiate their relationship with the state.

This observation led me to think of translation as a form of ideological negotiation. Indeed, for publishing enterprises that are not fully sustainable (like many literary periodicals), editors have to tread a fine line between their moral or political convictions and the relationship that they can afford to have with the government. This becomes even more delicate in times of rapid and radical political change, hegemonic vacuums in the cultural field, and economic hardship. It is in this context that translation fulfils all its potential as a vector of authority and/or a mask, being used by editors to subtly convey ideological points. This approach complements both Lefevere's notion of manipulation, by linking it to strategic negotiation, and Even-Zohar's theorisation of repertoire renovation in situations of crisis. Even-Zohar defines "crises" in the literary

312 Hermans, "Introduction," 11.
313 Lefevere, *Translation, rewriting*, 4.
314 Lefevere, *Translation, rewriting*, 6.

polysystem as "occurrences which call for radical change, either by internal or external transfer," during which translation may be used widely to renew a literature.[315] However, as I demonstrate in these chapters, when the crisis is linked to deep institutional change, we notice a transition period during which different ideo-aesthetic projects compete for the re-definition of artistic and literary activity before the phase of repertoire renovation. Representatives of the old order seek to adapt to the new circumstances, while newcomers work towards the foundation of new venues for their future creations. In other words, the symbolic space for innovation has to be prepared in advance.

The images of WWI and the Russian Revolution created through translation therefore depend on each group's strategy and interests in these changing times. The magazines analysed here illustrate this particularly well, at the same time as they mark distinct phases in the re-establishing of the literary field. In this, Chapters 2 and 3 endeavour to contribute to the critical discussion around Mexican literature during the 1910s by reassessing the periodicals' involvement in public debate and and offering new insight into the mechanisms of change during the period.

Magazine publishing during the **década armada***: a general overview*

The Mexican Revolution was a complex phenomenon; various stages need to be distinguished in the development of the revolutionary literary field in order to accurately account for cultural processes. Arguments about either the absence or the flourishing of culture in the 1910s too rarely introduce this kind of nuance—or, for that matter, a reflection on the conflict's differentiated impact on various forms of cultural production.[316] Based on periodicals, three phases can be identified: disruption (1911-

315 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 26.

316 We are thus led to nuance Antonio Saborit's statement that the *década armada* was a time of cultural flourishing. While literary activity did not cease in the 1910s, it corresponded mostly to the concretion of personal projects and was not articulated in a well-functioning field, especially during

1916), transition (1917-1920) and institutionalisation (1921-1923).[317] The political and economic instability of the first half of the decade particularly impacted literary magazines which, more than books, relied on income other than sales (e.g., private sponsorship, state support, advertisement). They were therefore especially affected by the revolutionary struggle, which resulted in the closure and replacement of the institutions that often supported their publication.[318] With the end of imposed political stability came that of prominent, centralised, and long-lasting cultural periodicals. The fall of the *Porfiriato* also led to the dispersion of the lettered elite; "ya no se estilaba formar grupos de intelectuales con grandes proyectos. Los escritores se encontraban dispersos."[319] This fragmentation of the literary scene disproportionately affected periodical and collaborative enterprises. Various attempts to publish magazines were made between 1911 and 1916 (*Nosotros*, *Argos*, *Gladios*, *La Nave*), none of which prevailed. With an average of just under 5 issues published over 6 months, the magazines of those years were noticeably shorter-lived than earlier and later publications (Figs. 2.1 and 2.2).

Things began to change around 1916. The Constitutionalist victories against Huerta's regime in 1914 and *Villista* forces in 1915 brought a precarious yet real sense of stability. Periodical publications resumed, although with hybrid formats (such as the *cuadernos* of the *colección Cvltvra*, created in 1916 and examined in Chapter 4), due to the relative lack of funding opportunities. 1917 is the true watershed though, in more than one way. Generally considered as the symbolic birth-date of modern Mexico,

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the first two thirds of the decade. Most examples given by Saborit are individual, stand-alone projects (e.g., books) as opposed to collective and periodical ones. Saborit, "Trabajo literario."

317 This periodisation coincides partly with that of Pedro Ángel Palou, who identifies a long phase of persistence of Porfirian institutions and mainly *modernista* aesthetics spanning the years 1900 to 1917 and an in-between phase of minimal change from 1918 to 1921, before the bigger ruptures of the 1920s. Palou, *La casa del silencio*, 43-75. It is also congruent with Alfonso García Morales's statement that the literature written during Carranza's presidency is a "puente, tránsito final entre los siglos XIX y XX" in "Introducción. México 1915-1920," 24.
The question of the last phase's end date is up for debate. I delimited it as 1921-1923 for the purposes of this chapter, which does not go beyond that date.

318 The best example of this is the *Revista Moderna de México*, which was subsidised by Ramón Corral, the Secretary of the Interior and Vice President of Mexico between 1904 and 1911, and stopped existing in July of that year, a couple of months only after the fall of the Porfirian regime.

319 "*Pegaso. Revista Ilustrada*" in Pereira et al., *Diccionario de literatura mexicana*, 367-369.

February 1917 marked the beginning of the revolution's slow institutionalisation, with the approval of Mexico's new Constitution. Carranza was formally elected as president the following month. The Constitutionalist government's task to implement the changes that the revolutionaries had fought for was fraught with difficulties, from internal disagreements, to tense international relations, armed opposition (especially from the *Zapatistas*), economic dearth, and a growing labour movement. The Constitution fulfilled its purpose, though, bestowing some stability on a shaky regime, which ultimately benefited cultural institutions.[320]

On the publishing scene, 1917 saw the emergence of another hybrid kind of publication closer to the literary magazine: the illustrated *magazine de actualidades*. After the failure of *La Nave* (attributed by some to its excessively literary content),[321] Ramón López Velarde, Efrén Rebolledo, and Enrique González Martínez opted for combining, in *Pegaso*, literary texts with journalistic materials such as interviews, news, and comments on international and local events.[322] Similar projects stemmed from the mainstream press in the form of cultural supplements like *El Universal Ilustrado* (1917-1928). As a result of this format, *Pegaso* was the first cultural magazine to substantially address the topics of WWI and national politics. The Revolution was a central preoccupation of the editors, who tackled it both directly and indirectly, articulating a decidedly conservative set of values. However, while their overall position on revolution was one of tacit reprobation, a progressive effort to make those values compatible with the Constitutionalist government's agenda can be observed. In Chapter 2, I show how *Pegaso*'s image of WWI upholds these values and attempts to establish them as a valid option in the literary field of the *carrancista* years.

This was underpinned by the magnitude of international events in 1917—the year of two revolutions in Russia, and of the United States' entry into WWI, on 6 April. The latter put pressure on other American countries to support the war effort, a context

320 Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 2:471.

321 Monterde, "*Savia Moderna*," 121-122.

322 The periodical also contained theatre, film, and book reviews, a sports section, jokes, and a chess section. González Martínez had already used this format in *Argos* (1912), although with considerably less illustrations and a "feminine" instead of a chess section.

in which Mexican neutrality was tried from both sides. The country's relationship with the United States had been strained for some time due to the Mexican Border War, especially after General Pershing's punitive expedition against Francisco Villa, which ended in February 1917. The German Empire attempted to take advantage of this situation and form an alliance with Carranza. The Zimmermann telegram, sent to this effect, became public on 1 March 1917, propelling the United States' involvement in WWI.

In cultural terms, this was a period in which "los contenidos ideológicos del proyecto hegemónico se encuentran en un momento de plena indeterminación."[323] The state did not have operational cultural institutions and several groups of writers and intellectuals were competing to determine the ideo-aesthetic bases of Mexican literary life. This is what makes the years 1917-1920 a transition period; the cultural field was slowly regaining its functionality although with remnants of its Porfirian/*modernista* components. Hybrid formats like the *magazine de actualidades* and the *cuadernos* are fundamental for our understanding of the literary field of the period and the strategies deployed by literary agents to survive in troubled times. The fact that they gave way to more "classic" literary magazines in the early 1920s (e.g., *México Moderno* and *El Maestro*) points to the field's recovery, demarcating the transition phase from the institutionalisation phase. During the latter, the state had new cultural institutions and an articulated cultural policy, if not cultural hegemony. The SEP was founded on 3 October 1921, under Obregón's government. Its famous first *secretario*, José Vasconcelos, remains an emblem of the revolutionary state's educational crusade of the 1920s. Created in April 1921, *El Maestro* is one of the pillars of this policy. As a massive publication aiming to promote literacy, this magazine stands out in my corpus. It is also the only one to emanate from a public institution, although Chapter 3 will show that this does not mean that it followed a governmental line. This illustrates how ideological negotiation can happen within state institutions, with Vasconcelos and his editors using texts about the aftermath of the Great War and the Russian October Revolution to

[323] Sánchez Prado, *Naciones intelectuales*, 19-20.

criticise the Mexican government's militarism and populism, and to offer an alternative, civilian, and peaceful path to social justice. Translation was an essential tool in the negotiations described in the following chapters, assuming a more instrumental, but no less important role.

Chapter 2

World War I as Catholic epic: *Pegaso*'s negotiation of conservative values (1917)

Published weekly between March and July 1917, *Pegaso* appeared a month after the end of the US punitive expedition against Villa and the approval of the revolutionary Constitution; just one week after the infamous Zimmermann telegram was revealed by the press; and one month before the United States' entry into WWI. In the midst of those events, the editors benefited from the relative sense of stability but were undoubtedly aware of its precariousness. From its first issue, *Pegaso* devoted much attention to the events of the Great War, but it is at the time of the United States' involvement that interest in the topic was strongest (Figure 2.3).[324]

Mexican public opinion and press were divided in the face of the World War, perhaps more so than the rest of Latin America,[325] partly due to the tensions with the United States, but also to the overthrown Porfirian regime's historic ties with France. As Knight states, there was some correspondence between political ascription and opinions on international matters:

> The Europhile (which generally meant Anglo- and Francophile) sentiments of the Porfirian elite, forged by education, travel and commercial association, were thus sharpened by the ostensible pro-German stance of the Carrancistas and this polarity [...] created an additional, if secondary, division between Felicismo and Carrancismo, between the old, liberal oligarchs and the new, nationalist parvenus, between civilians and soldiers.[326]

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[324] War-themed texts appeared mostly in a dedicated section titled "La Gran Guerra," which included weekly reports of the war's progress. The translation of materials relating to the conflict increased over time, until it corresponded to almost 50% of all translations published in *Pegaso* (Fig. 2.3).

[325] *Pegaso*'s editors recognise this as they write that "la gloria tudesca tiene en México algunos admiradores." I.4:9 [93]. For a study of the allegiance of Mexican periodicals, in particular *El Demócrata* (Germanophile) and *El Universal* (pro-Allies), see Meyer, "¿Fue México Germanófilo," 71-84.

[326] Knight, *Mexican Revolution*, 2:380.
This dichotomy was even visible within revolutionary ranks, with the militarist sectors favouring the

Although not *Felicistas*, *Pegaso*'s editors were the product of Porfirian educational institutions, and representatives of the old learned, *modernista* elite (except López Velarde).[327] Their Allied preference, which was shared with most leading literary figures in Spain and Latin America,[328] was used as a marker of intellectual elitism. The Franco-Mexican soldier interviewed in issue I.4 explained, for instance, how he dissuaded his fellow soldiers from the idea that Mexicans were Germanophiles, "haciéndoles ver cuánta simpatía tienen los franceses en este país, especialmente entre las clases cultas."[329] By equating sympathy for France with the upper, intellectual class, *Pegaso*'s editors belittled the support for Germany while asserting their own superior status. This ties in with the elitist conception of Western culture which underpins *Pegaso* and which, according to its editors, was at stake in the war.

Pegaso's image of WWI was highly propagandistic and Manichaean, idealising the Allies and demonising the Central Powers. Illustrations and texts (mostly translated) jointly formed a vivid and dramatic, yet unrealistic, representation of the conflict. Accounts of the trauma of war, such as Henri Barbusse's *Le feu* and *Contes véridiques des tranchées*, a collection of non-fictional war stories written by soldiers, were systematically omitted, despite being on sale in Mexico City bookshops, per the magazine's advertisements.[330] Even moderately critical texts were censored, like the translation of French General Bruneau's Franco-Prussian War diaries, from which the French army's logistic disorganisation and poor chain of command is erased.[331] Authenticity was therefore not the main consideration in *Pegaso*'s selection, and first-hand accounts were favoured only inasmuch as they upheld the magazine's propagandistic purpose or could be twisted into doing so. Concurrently, most war-

Central Powers while civilians tended to show pro-Allies sympathies, as Knight affirms. *Mexican Revolution*, 2:452.

327 Pacheco described the magazine as an "intento de reunir la dispersa generación modernista" in *Antología del modernismo*, 290.

328 González, "Toward a Pro-Ally," 290.

329 *Pegaso* I.4:7 [91]. The same discourse is found in other texts—see for instance *Pegaso* I.2:4 [40] and *Pegaso* I.16:7 [2:19]. NB: the latter reference is to the second volume of the facsimile edition. I indicate it within the brackets since *Pegaso* as a magazine had only one volume.

330 *Pegaso* I.8:18 [194].

331 *Pegaso* I.6:9-10 [141-142].

themed poems published in *Pegaso* were written by Latin American authors. The only translated pieces were by Émile Verhaeren, who only visited the battlefields as an observer. Despite the non-negligible amounts of war poetry published during the conflict, the editors chose to showcase an external, idealised perspective.

This abstracted representation of the Great War followed official propaganda on most points, but above all, it was based on the ideological values that the editors sought to uphold in their own cultural field. Its two core components were Greco-Roman culture and Catholic theology, and it was articulated through the constant interplay of texts about war, religion, and revolution. WWI was represented as the struggle between France as the ultimate representative of a traditional conception of Western European culture (a concept of civilization of which the editors saw themselves as the representatives in Mexico), and Germany as its barbarian and heretical antithesis. The position thus formulated is conservative, especially in the reception of Russia's February Revolution. At the same time, *Pegaso*'s editors appear constrained by the local political situation and refrain from launching direct attacks against the *carrancista* government. Throughout the periodical's short publication span, there is a noticeable shift towards a more conciliatory attitude on the question of revolution. This is part of the negotiation undertaken by the editors in order to maintain ideo-aesthetic elements linked to certain *modernista* sectors while smoothing their discordance with the state's revolutionary values.

This is particularly relevant if we consider the magazine as part of González Martínez's "gradual rehabilitación pública."[332] Unlike others of his contemporaries involved in Porfirian and *huertista* politics who chose exile, González Martínez opted for staying in Mexico and trying to regain the authorities' favour. He was eventually pardoned and integrated into the diplomatic corps in 1920, but in 1917, he was only at the beginning of this process, being reinstated in some of his former classes at the Escuela Nacional de Altos Estudios and the Escuela Nacional Preparatoria [ENP].[333]

[332] García Morales, "Introducción. México 1915-1920," 22.
[333] Martínez Carrizales,"Enrique González Martínez," 148.

Publishing a magazine along with younger poet López Velarde, then personal secretary of Carranza's *ministro de Gobernación* Manuel Aguirre Berlanga, was certainly an attempt to negotiate a public presence that would be acceptable to the government without necessarily being complaisant.

Pegasus as modernista *symbol of civilisation*

In the mirror of foreign events, Mexican culture is identified with a certain conception of the French tradition. Thus, the values under threat on the battlefields match those that are at risk in post-revolutionary Mexico, and there is a general sense of shared heritage, identity, and destiny. As the anonymous author of "¿México en camino a la guerra?" stated, Mexican intellectuals support the Allies due to "afinidades de raza, influencia grandísima en la educación, cultura francesa abundantemente repartida."[334]

The correspondence between *Pegaso*'s conception of Western European culture and the socio-cultural group represented by its editors is embodied by the figure of Pegasus. In *Pegaso*, the mythical creature symbolises poetic elevation, with a little help from Catholic faith. Andrés Terzaga, in his critique of Voltaire's anticlericalism, sarcastically affirms that the philosopher "no monta en *Pegaso*; teme caerse de las estrellas."[335] Moreover, the very first cover of the magazine, especially designed by Saturnino Herrán, featured the winged horse above a distinctly Mexican cityscape dominated by a church's dome (Fig. 2.4). The same imagery is used to symbolise Allied culture. In "Dos ideales," a double-page illustration in issue I.19, a statue of a reared up Pegasus, at the centre, separates the two "ideals": on the left-hand side, the Allies, standing for creative power, art, and spirituality, represented by a young sculptor working on the statue, with Reims Cathedral in the background; on the right-hand side,

[334] *Pegaso* I.16:7 [2:19].
This speaks of the socio-economic sectors represented by the author, especially considering that, at the time, the majority of the Mexican population could not even read Spanish.

[335] *Pegaso* I.12:4 [272] (author's italics).

the Central Powers, represented by a brutish German soldier with his typical pointed helmet, threatening to strike the delicate piece of art with a ball mace (Fig. 2.5). Pegasus and Reims therefore stand as the classical and Christian pillars of Western civilisation, while Germany is simply characterised by its bellicose attitude and purpose to destroy those. Through this image of Pegasus, the magazine created a symbolic correspondence between its editorial project and the values on which Western civilisation supposedly rested.

This use of Greek mythology and the recurrent equation of French culture with civilisation give the magazine a distinctly *modernista* tone. This is a continuity from Porfirian times, when "la cultura y la vida de Francia se utiliza[ban] como modelos civilizatorios y exorcismos ante la barbarie."[336] Darío's well-known sonnet "A Francia," which exemplifies this, was quoted in *Pegaso.* Its famous line, "los bárbaros, cara Lutecia!", opens the "La Gran Guerra" section of issue I.5, which then explains that the threat glimpsed by Darío in 1893 has become real. This is presented as the logical result of a long history of Germanic barbarianism: "bajo el paño flamante de los uniformes, respira el mismo bárbaro musculoso que hace siglos dejó las obscuras selvas germanas y arrasó como un huracán el mundo romano."[337] The reference to the Barbarian Invasions that brought about the fall of the Roman Empire creates a narrative of WWI as a broad, transhistorical clash of civilisations.[338] French culture appears as the heir of the Roman Empire and the embodiment of a deeply rooted notion of civilisation and of the tradition of European democracy. This continuity is also reflected by the reference to "veinte centurias de civilización cristiana," with a slight shift towards Christendom. Therefore, *Pegaso*'s *modernista* component functions as an attempt for "la subsistencia estética de un orden social que había dejado de ser tal,"[339] both *per se* and through its rhetoric of endangered civilisation.

336 Monsiváis, *Historia mínima*, 15.
337 *Pegaso* I.5:9 [117].
338 It was, in fact, explicitly described as a "gigantesca guerra en que dos civilizaciones se disputan la dirección de mundo." *Pegaso* I.6:7 [139].
339 Sánchez Prado, "1915-1920," 35.

The Great War as a religious conflict: Catholicism versus Protestantism

Superimposed on Greco-Roman tradition, the Christian character of the civilisation embodied by the Allies was paramount in *Pegaso*'s narrative of endangered values. In addition to aesthetic continuity, the editors thus also articulated a defence of what they considered the spiritual grounds of literary activity. Both aspects are effectively intertwined and stem from the poetics of the second *modernismo* (or *postmodernismo*). This is illustrated in several translations of French Catholic writer Francis Jammes's works and in González Martínez's review of Nervo's 1916 poetry collection *Elevación.* The latter praises Nervo's "ansia noble de fundir y resolver en una sola actitud decisiva su ideal estético y su problema moral." The reaction against formal ornament entails a re-centring on a truer form of spirituality and cult (i.e., not that of form and aesthetics). This is presented as a double process of depuration, "limpiar el espíritu y limpiar la palabra," and Nervo's rupture with rhythm and rhyme is associated with his shift towards "un deísmo concreto, cristiano, católico más bien."[340] *Pegaso*'s interest in religious topics is therefore closely related to its *postmodernista* conception of literature.

These assertions of religious sentiment were a central component of the ideological negotiation undertaken by *Pegaso*, as the first years of *carrancista* rule corresponded to a period of strong anticlericalism, which was institutionalised in the 1917 Constitution.[341] The presumed attack against Catholicism in Europe thus mirrors the repeated assaults, in Mexico, against Church interests, representatives, and property. Establishing Catholicism as a basis of literary activity and a valid option in the revolutionary cultural field can be read as *Pegaso*'s attempt to defend pre-revolutionary cultural codes, as well as the identity and literary production of its editors and collaborators, many of whom were openly Catholic.

This strongly influenced the magazine's image of WWI. For the editors, the

340 *Pegaso* I.7:12 [166].
341 It then receded during Carranza's constitutional presidency, but this was after *Pegaso*'s publication.

civilisation clash could be summed up in one basic opposition: Catholicism versus Protestantism. This reading differs from that of intellectuals in other countries, such as monarchic Spain, where Allied support was related to progressivist attitudes and ideas, and to the legacy of the French Revolution. For *Pegaso*'s collaborators, in contrast, the Allies embodied threatened Catholic values. As Antonio Caso wrote, "Francia es creadora de grandes movimientos morales […] Francia tiene fe en el libre albedrío metafísico, en la colaboración efectiva, social, cristiana, del hombre con Dios."[342] German culture, in turn, was equated with Protestantism. In "La Encuesta de 'Pegaso' sobre la Guerra" (April 1917), López Velarde compared "el protestantismo carnavalesco del Kaiser" to "el pazguato y pedestremente pedagógico de Wilson," who according to him had the bad taste of entering the war "el Viernes Santo." He criticised the rigidity of the German moral order and its "regularidad mecánica, sensatez en la tribuna y en el lecho, disciplina en la conciencia y en el cinematógrafo," which destroyed both individuality and chance, preventing any form of enjoyment.[343] He thus made Protestantism, rather than Catholicism, the real enemy of liberal societies.

While López Velarde's comments denote his ambiguity vis-à-vis the inclusion of the United States in the Allied cultural cluster, the question of Anglican Britain was settled efficiently thanks to the figure of G. K. Chesterton.[344] One of the very few British authors translated in *Pegaso*, he made possible the association of British culture with the Catholic tradition. The introduction to his *Orthodoxy*, which addresses this very topic, was published in issue I.16, in Alfonso Reyes's translation. In the following issue, Chesterton's recently published *The Crimes of England* was quoted by Castro Leal in the "La Gran Guerra" section, making Chesterton's religious position even clearer: "para el pensador católico los crímenes de su patria son las acciones que la han alejado del *romanismo* y de la tradición católica de Europa." Belonging to this "romanismo" is therefore not only a matter of heritage, but one of affinity: the British are thus opposed

342 *Pegaso* I.2:3 [39].

343 *Pegaso* I.6:4 [136].

344 This reluctance to consider the United States as another representative of civilisation, and its links with the difficult Mexico-US relationships, can also be glimpsed in the disparaging remarks on General Pershing's commanding role in WWI. *Pegaso* I.15:9 [337].

to other people which are not Catholic either but which "no viven sentimentalmente esa tradición."[345] Meanwhile, Chesterton's ironic anti-Germanism reinforced the sense of a common enemy. The German onslaught on this "romanismo" and "tradición católica de Europa" is one of the main components of *Pegaso*'s representation of WWI as a religious conflict, vividly represented by images and accounts of the bombing of Churches, especially the emblematic Notre-Dame de Reims (Fig 2.6). Attacking the Church is thus equated to attacking both civilisation and culture, and these images could be seen as echoing the destruction of confessionals and Church property by Constitutionalist troops.[346]

Images of religious conflict in Pegaso*: Eça de Queirós and Aloysius Bertrand*

The theme of religious conflict is omnipresent in *Pegaso.* The enmity of Christians/Catholics with the Jewish people, Protestants, and Muslims is alluded to in a series of literary texts set in different time periods, fostering ahistorical essentialisation. The first is a translation from Eça de Queirós, titled "El juicio de Jesús," which appeared in the Easter issue (5 April 1917). In this text, taken from Eça's 1887 novel *A Relíquia*, the protagonist, Teodorico, travels in time (in a dream-like state) to attend Jesus's trial. He ponders on the responsibilities in Jesus's condemnation, a reflection which supports *Pegaso*'s Christian and Greco-Roman preferences alike. The translated fragment corresponds to the moment when Jesus is brought up before Pontius Pilate. Eça mostly follows John's gospel but, where in John, the Jewish leaders claimed that mercy toward Jesus went against Caesar's interests, in *A Relíquia*, "Rabi Robã," an influential (and fictional) member of the Sanhedrin, threatened with accusing Pilate of mismanagement to Tiberius.[347] Although Eça's version of the Biblical episode was

345 *Pegaso* I.17:8 [40].
346 Fallaw, "Seduction of Revolution."
347 John 19:12 (New International Version).

heavily summarised in *Pegaso*'s translation, the fictional dialogue between Robã and Pilate is maintained almost entirely, as well as Pilate's internal dilemma in the face of blackmail: "¡Tal vez su justicia y su orgullo en mantene[r] [su decisión] le costasen el proconsulado de Judea!" Thus, Pilate is presented not only as ultimately not responsible for Jesus's death (which falls entirely on the Jewish authorities), but also as a just man, "penetrado de equidad y de clemencia."[348] This allowed *Pegaso*'s editors to maintain a positive image of Roman authorities and reconcile their classical cultural preferences with their Christian beliefs, while presenting the whole episode as an instance of religious conflict.[349] "El juicio de Jesús" condensates many elements of *Pegaso*'s ideological position, and I will be coming back to it.

Religious persecution is then addressed in issue I.12 with the translation of two prose poems from Aloysius Bertrand's *Gaspard de la nuit*. Both "Le Marchand de tulipes" and "La Barbe pointue," which appeared in Rafael Cabrera's version, are in fact highly ironic and critical of religious intolerance, and it is not completely clear to what extent the editors read them literally. In these poems, Bertrand respectively addresses the feud between Catholics and Protestants—and, to a lesser extent, Muslims—, and Protestants and Jews, without establishing any moral hierarchy, criticising instead religious intolerance as a whole. This is a transversal topic in the collection, but these two poems are particularly representative of it,[350] which might have motivated their selection despite their apparent antagonism with *Pegaso*'s editorial line. My hypothesis here is that the editors did not grasp the poems' irony (or chose to ignore it), especially in "Le Marchand de tulipes," which covertly addresses Catholic integralism. The poem's cryptic criticism is achieved through Bertrand's playful use of *recherché* references and

348 *Pegaso* I.5:6 [114] and I.5:5 [113].

349 Textual choices in the translation reinforce the sense that Jesus was not judged by Roman authorities by suppressing elements symbolising them. For instance, Jesus is awaiting the examination of his case standing "sob a loba romana," a detail which is absent from the translation. The original's explicit mention that Barabbas was imprisoned "por haber dado muerte traidoramente a un legionario en una riña" (a departure from the Bible), also contributes to this idea: according to Eça's narrative, when choosing to save Barabbas over Jesus, the Pharisee crowd did not only commit deicide, but also condoned an enemy of the Romans, effectively linking attacks against Christianity and against Roman civilisation.

350 Ravonneaux, "L'œuvre d'une vie?" 101 note 34. Murphy, "Un air de chapelle travesti," 89 note 3.

embodied by the ambiguous figure of "docteur Huylten," an early modern Dutch Catholic scholar. Huylten's study of the Bible is interrupted by a tulip vendor, whom he turns down, admonishing him dryly for his prosaism and for offering a symbol of heresy.[351] The doctor might appear, at first, as a knowledgeable and pious person, and his distaste for the Reformist doctrine could well have been taken at face value by *Pegaso*'s editors, as it has been by prominent Bertrand scholars.[352] Nevertheless, Steve Murphy and Helen Hart Poggenburg demonstrate how Bertrand's references to the Inquisition and to the repression of Dutch Calvinists combine with Huylten's disdain for tulips and other symbolic details to denounce "l'énorme ironie de la lutte religieuse"[353] and the hypocrite, arrogant, and hostile attitude of the Catholic Church.[354]

Even if *Pegaso*'s editors realised the irony of "Le Marchand de tulipes," it does not fully undermine their point about religious conflict when read alongside "La Barbe pointue." In this second poem, the feud is more obvious, as a synecdochic "barbe luthérienne" is spotted in a synagogue and its owner is almost lynched as a result of this profanation, before a dramatic plot twist in which the Protestant turns out to be a representative of the secular authorities, on a mission to arrest the butcher Isaac van Heck and take him to the gallows. This supports another reading of the group of poems which is that, from being persecuted, Protestants have become the aggressors. The poems' sequence fosters this sense of historic evolution by creating a chronological shift from victims to perpetrators. This was a translational/editorial decision, since, in *Gaspard de la nuit*, "La Barbe pointue" appears in fact just *before* "Le Marchand de tulipes." The idea that Protestants are falsely considered as the victims of religious hatred, when they are in fact its initiators, is also supported by the action depicted in "La

351 "Une tulipe ! ce symbole de l'orgueil et de la luxure qui ont engendré dans la malheureuse cité de Wittemberg la détestable hérésie de Luther et de Mélanchthon !" Bertrand, *Gaspard de la nuit*, 50. Steve Murphy shows how the tulips also stand for Islam, in "Les manies de Maître Huylten," 17-18.

352 "L'opposition entre catholiques et protestants étant l'un des axes du poème, on peut penser que Bertrand a voulu prendre parti pour un art flamand au service du catholicisme, considéré comme plus favorable aux arts." Bertrand, *Gaspard de la Nuit*, ed. Jacques Bony, 377, quoted in Murphy, "Les manies de Maître Huylten," 8.

353 Hart Poggenburg, ed., *Oeuvres complètes d'Aloysius Bertrand*, 302 note 4.

354 For a study of how intertextuality establishes "Le Marchand de tulipes" as a subversive, inverted version of a text by Catholic moralist Jean de La Bruyère, see Ravonneaux, "Bertrand, lecteur de La Bruyère."

Barbe pointue."

The notion that Catholic faith is at stake in WWI is also discussed explicitly in *Pegaso*, with the translation of two priests' accounts of their battlefield experience. French religious periodicals, among which these stories seem to have circulated abundantly, are the likely source of this translation.[355] The two stories appeared anonymously in the "La Gran Guerra" section of issue I.5, with a lengthy introduction about the Catholic priests' crucial role on the battlefields: "tienen en esta pugna de razas su parte de gloria por haber sabido sostener, cuando todo parecía vacilar, la fuerza espiritual de los suyos, haciéndoles dulce el sacrificio e infundiéndoles la necesidad de vencer."[356] The translation, which is about the revival of Catholic faith experienced among soldiers, is accompanied by 6 photographs of destroyed churches, contrasting this spiritual renaissance with the material destruction wrought by the Germans. By presenting the Catholic faith as a deciding factor in the war, and an indestructible factor of resistance and community, the editors might well be reflecting on its place in post-revolutionary Mexico.[357]

Images of resurrection: the perdurance of Catholic faith

Resurrection is thematised throughout *Pegaso*, and particularly so in the special Easter issue in which the priests' testimonies were published, alongside Eça's "El juicio de Jesús." The issue semantically links Christ's resurrection with the renaissance of Christian faith in the face of violence, and with Allied military successes. The "*renacimiento* de la fe y de las prácticas religiosas" is praised in the passage about battlefield priests, while the "La Gran Guerra" section comments on the German troops'

355 The exact original remains unclear; however, the earliest fragment that I have traced (in the *Semaine religieuse de Paris* [19 June 1915]), mentions the *Semaine religieuse de Séez* as its source.

356 *Pegaso* I.5:9 [117].

357 A contrasting representation of the clergy is found in Bertrand's "Padre Pugnaccio," also translated by Cabrera and published in issue I.8. In this poem, Roman members of the orders and Pontifical Guard are depicted as greedy and immoral. This can be regarded as a form of negotiation: while the magazine eulogised French priests and their sacrifice on the battlefields, it also acknowledged that some clergymen have a more hypocritical and dishonest attitude.

retreat in the Marne in the following terms: “tras ellos parece que el mundo *renace*.”[358] “El juicio de Jesús” is the cornerstone of this issue as it alludes to the original resurrection: that of Jesus. This is a significant manipulation of the text, since the core of *A Relíquia*'s ironic treatment of Christianity is that resurrection was in fact a lie, which the protagonist discovers during his oneiric journey in time. Much like in Ferdinando Petruccelli della Gattina's *Les mémoires de Judas* (1867), Jesus's supporters drugged him to endure crucifixion, appear as dead, and be eventually revived. This plan backfires as they accidentally poison him and hide the body (which explains its disappearance from its original sepulture, and eventually leads to the belief that he was resurrected). Passage selection, layout, and juxtaposition twist the critical message of the original. The passage in which resurrection is discovered to be a hoax (the backbone of Eça's “rewriting of Christianity as a myth based on a well-intentioned lie”[359]) is left out. The Spanish version ends on Pilate's emphatic and final exclamation: “¡Id, y crucificadlo!” and Jesus's death is represented in a series of photographs printed alongside the text, featuring dramatic recreations of various moments of his life. The last of them depicts his body taken down from the cross, hinting at his imminent resurrection (Fig. 2.7). These images replace Eça's fanciful version of events, completing the narrative. The factual tone of the translation's title and the pictures' captions confers a halo of objectivity to the whole episode, which is further reinforced by the lack of narrative context in the translation.[360] Through this radical change, *Pegaso*'s version becomes a reassertion of Biblical dogma, and especially of Jesus's resurrection, against the original. Thus, through a combination of different translations, the editors created a transversal sense of symbolic, actual, and spiritual rebirth. In the context of post-revolutionary Mexico, it functions as an affirmation of conservative (religious) values at the same time as it conceptualises their enduring nature.

358 *Pegaso* I.5:10 [118] and 9 [117] (my emphases).
359 Jull Costa, “Introduction,” 5.
360 No mention is made, for instance, of the fact that Teodorico is a time-traveller.

Catholic values and social status quo: Francis Jammes, Jules Lemaître, and the role of women

The editors' conservatism was not only aesthetic or symbolic though, and their values are also tied to the concrete social order that they represented and sought to defend. Self-sacrifice, as a unifying concept, ultimately supported existing social hierarchies and *status quo*. Dead—or dying—soldiers were often represented as Christ figures, as in Castro Leal's review of Paul Lintier's *Ma pièce*, S*ouvenirs d'un canonnier (1914)*, where he translates a passage from Lintier's book: "'los párpados violetas, los labios pálidos, su barba de azafrán en su larga cara huesosa le daban una máscara de crucificado.'"[361] The Christ-like sacrifice of Allied soldiers was to bring collective redemption and mark the rebirth of Western civilisation.

In civilian life, this value of abnegation served as a justification of gender and class hierarchies, by applying the notion of self-sacrifice to domestic workers and/or women, in a traditional binary representation of gender roles. An example of this is women's duty of blind and unconditional support and subordination. In the context of the war, this means moral support for the soldiers and their cause. "La mujer americana y la guerra," published in issue I.13, consists of a translation of a letter sent by Emma Sheridan Fry in response to Fanny Garrison Villard's call, on behalf of the Emergency Peace Federation, to prevent the United States from entering the war. While Garrison Villard appealed to women to oppose the country's involvement to protect their sons, fathers and husbands,[362] Sheridan Fry protested that women should not interfere, as "ningún hombre que sea digno […] ha rehuido jamás una lucha de honor." The women's duty is to support the war, for "nuestros hombres […] serán hombres, ya sea que les ayudemos o que les estorbemos. Y mi deseo […] es ayudar, no estorbar, a los míos."[363] The traditional association of war with honour and manhood thus functions as the counterpart of the pretended link between womanhood and nurturing.

361 *Pegaso* I.1:10 [22].
362 Garrison Villard, "Mothers, Daughters, and Wives," 6.
363 *Pegaso* I.13:14 [302].

Pegaso's requisition for women to act as the discrete auxiliaries of male greatness, and not to overstep this responsibility is evident in this translation's textual selection. The original article, titled "Women and the war" and published in *The Outlook* on 11 April 1917, included another protest letter besides Sheridan Fry's. However, this piece by Irene McNeal Swasey was omitted in *Pegaso.* While it equated neutrality in the war with cowardice and faintness of heart too, it dissociated those qualities from gender stereotypes. In fact, "high courage" is presented by McNeal Swasey as "woman's rightful heritage since the world began." The core of her response is to challenge the association, in Villard's pacifist discourse, of women with emotion: "Are the women of America capable of real thinking, or are we to be used as the country's emotional pendulum? Are we to wilfully remain in the fog of sentiment […] or are we to prove ourselves once and for all as capable and brave and strong?" Instead, she affirms: "we can think and act, as well as feel, and […] our kind of courage […] is as great as, if not greater than, that which sends men marching into battle."[364] Thus, Villard's call strikes McNeal Swasey not only as timorous, but also as sexist, a critique which certainly had no place in *Pegaso*.

This conception of well-defined gender roles intersects with Catholic values and is found in texts that are unrelated to the war. The translation of Francis Jammes's "Le Paradis" is one such instance. This story, translated especially for *Pegaso* by Manuel Toussaint, is the second collaboration of the first issue of the magazine, making it potentially programmatic. In it, a dead poet joins his family in heaven, an anecdote which, despite some unconventional components, upholds traditional values as well as gender and class hierarchies.[365] The poet's account starts with his reunion with his parents, thus recomposing the nuclear family. Afterwards, he meets his deceased pets, and his past lover (in this order). The young girl "lo había seguido al cielo, aun sin

364 "Women and the war," 650.

365 I am referring, for instance, to the presence of domestic animals in heaven. Although the question of Jammes' unorthodoxy is mentioned in issue I.19, it is dismissed as a matter of misguided interpretation: Jammes "se proclama ahora el poeta católico sumiso y reprueba cuantas interpretaciones contrarias al dogma puedan darse a su obra." *Pegaso* I.19:9 [81].

haber muerto todavía,"[366] confirming women's complete subordination. This kind of *Marianismo* is further supported by representations of the biblical figure of Mary herself. The image of the "mater dolorosa" printed alongside "El juicio de Jesús" evokes the attitude expected of the soldiers' mothers, wives, and daughters, as per Sheridan Fry's letter (Fig. 2.7). The concept of abnegated motherhood is developed further in "La virgen de los ángeles." Anonymously translated from Jules Lemaître's short story "La Vierge aux Anges," this is an account of Mary, Jesus, and Joseph's first months as a family. This narrative "al margen de los evangelios," as its subtitle indicates, recounts uncanonical and even apparently heterodox events which, in fact, reinforce traditional Catholic values.[367] The crux of Lemaître's story is Mary's insistence on completing domestic tasks herself, despite a legion of cherubs trying to help. Domestic work is unironically presented as her contribution to Jesus's life mission: "sé que me asocio más a su voluntad redentora aceptando las penas como las otras mujeres." It is an act of necessary, everyday valour, and a counterpart to male bravery (although, paradoxically, it is simultaneously described as insignificant and pleasurable). Mary herself reminds Joseph, "¿no sería cobardía de mi parte renunciar a mis labores maternales?".[368] Thus, while men are expected to die on the battlefield in defence of civilisation, women's pathway to self-sacrifice and contribution to the common good is domesticity.

A similar pattern applies to class hierarchies. In "El Paraíso," the poet eventually sits down for a meal with his family, served by their former domestics. Although he offers to swap places with the latter, they insist that they are happy to wait on him, as this is their way of serving God.[369] Subaltern subjects are thus not only represented as diligent in their duties, but also as genuinely happy to perform them, viewing them as their contribution to Christian social order. The links between Christianity and inequality are also erased through passage selection, most notably in the translation of Eça's *A Relíquia.* The Portuguese writer gives an alternative, critical account of the

366 *Pegaso* I.1:2 [14].
367 It seems that this subtitle was introduced by the translator/editors, denoting a deliberate framing effort.
368 *Pegaso* I.13:3 [291].
369 "Nuestra felicidad es servir; así estamos cerca de Dios." *Pegaso* I.1:2 [14].

cleansing of the temple, which appears in the middle of the episode translated for *Pegaso*. Against usual interpretations, Eça represents the ban as affecting only poor merchants. A pathetic engraved stones vendor explains to the protagonist that it impacted his ability to sustain himself and his family for a whole year. Teodorico, moved by the old man's distress, offers him money, thereby ironically settling "a divida de Jesus." The prophet is described as "bem duro com os pobres."[370] This criticism of the link between Catholicism and social inequality, and the idea that social justice is reached when an individual decides to take matters in his own hands was unsurprisingly unwelcome in *Pegaso.*

"Que los épicos sones aperciban justicias y muevan corazones": Pegaso*'s Catholic epic*

Pegaso's image of the war culminated in the creation of a Catholic epic of WWI in the magazine's last few issues. This appears to have stemmed from the creative writing contest in support of the Allied cause publicised in issue I.5. The "juegos florales de la Alianza Francesa" were organised by "un grupo de simpatizadores de los Aliados" and contemplated three categories: "Canto a la batalla del Marne, en verso castellano, poesía épica"; "Consecuencias del triunfo de los Aliados en el desarrollo intelectual, moral y económico de la Humanidad. Prosa."; "Canto a la mujer aliada. En verso de rima perfecto."[371] For the organisers, battlefield poetry is thus prescriptively epic.

Indeed, the epic genre is ideal to create a glorious narrative and reinforce the imagined community of the Allies and their supporters around a set of common values quintessentially embodied by the epos of the French resistance against Germanic/barbarian invasion.[372] One of the defining traits of the classical epic, as Paul

370 Eça de Queirós, *Obras completas* (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia José Aguilar Editora, 1970), 1:1192.
371 *Pegaso* I.5:8 [116].
372 I use Benedict Anderson's terminology loosely to convey the idea that *Pegaso*'s myth of the war constructs an imagined sense of cultural unity between the Allies and their supporters. Anderson,

Merchant reminds us, is that it concentrates "either on a hero (Achilles, Beowulf) or on a civilization, like Rome or Christendom."[373] *Pegaso*'s epic of WWI is an instance of the latter, representing the Allies as a form of unified civilisation (in which neutral Latin American supporters are rhetorically included). Its archetypal expression is "Canto a la batalla del Marne" by González Martínez—a possible result of the writing competition, alongside Alfonso Teja Zabre's "París en el Marne"—published in issue I.18. Complementing Teja Zabre's classical perspective, González Martínez offers a distinctly religious narrative. The magazine's whole image of WWI is condensed in this lengthy, emphatic, allegorical piece: a transhistorical epic of Christian civilisation fighting against heresy and barbarianism.[374] The poem's first epigraph, taken from the *Chanson de Roland*, places the piece within the epic tradition while gesturing towards religious wars, as this twelfth-century epic poem presents Charlemagne's Spanish campaigns as a holy war in defence of Christianity.[375] This ties in with what appears to be a metaphoric description of the Ottoman army, involved in WWI as Germany's ally: "El rojo turbante lleva inscrita la insignia moruna; / la sigue el Infierno y la alienta la voz de Mahoma, / y es lívido augurio la rabiosa y fatal medialuna."[376] Thus, representatives of different religious groups are lumped together as enemies of Catholic civilisation, an amalgam which echoes Bertrand's "Le marchand de tulipes."[377] The terms used to describe the Germans, besides the obvious "bárbaro[s]," range from the inhuman ("monstruo") to the diabolical ("Leviatán"). In fact, it appears that their belligerent actions are the work of the devil himself: "¡Satán unicorne anima las huestes y manda el tropel!" The battle of

Imagined communities.

The first battle of the Marne (1914), where German troops advancing through France were stopped and repelled, derives, in 1917, from a form of optimistic nostalgia for the early days of the conflict, when military victories were more clear-cut and meaningful, before trench stalemate and attrition warfare. In this too, the competition fostered the creation of a myth of WWI rather than a realistic representation.

373 Merchant, *The Epic*, vii.

374 Of course, the magazine contained a variety of voices, some of which were mildly dissenting, but overall, it followed the general lines established in "Canto a la batalla del Marne."

375 Although there is no historiographic consensus on this point, the epic characterises Charlemagne's opponents as Muslims.

376 *Pegaso* I.18:5 [57].

377 To complete this ahistorical heretical threat, Protestants and Muslims are also conflated with Jews in the "Canto..." when the Germans' actions are compared to "matanzas de Herodes."

the Marne thus appears as the ultimate struggle between good and evil, between Satan's and God's armies. In this, the "Canto..." at least partially follows the tradition of medieval epics, in which the foundational myth is "how God's people attain the goal of salvation rather than the triumph of empire."[378] The French, assisted by Britain, fight back with a heterogeneous squad of religious, semi-mythical, and historic figures: Roland and Charlemagne, Saint Genevieve, patron saint of Paris (who, through her prayers, is thought to have saved the city from the Huns), Joan of Arc (whose collaboration with the English takes some convincing but is eventually secured, on lines 93-101),[379] Saint George (and his special monster-slaying abilities), emblematic Gaul king Vercingetorix, and last but not least, Napoleon Bonaparte. The culmination of the epic's genealogy in the figure of Napoleon invokes the legacy of the liberal Empire rather than France's republican tradition.[380]

Pegaso's epic of WWI contrasts with the image of the war of pro-Allied groups in other countries, confirming the importance of local circumstances. This is particularly noticeable in the choice of historical events with which the Great War was conflated. Unlike Spanish intellectuals, who mainly created parallels with the French Revolutionary Wars, due to their focus on the opposition between monarchy and republic,[381] *Pegaso*'s editors omit revolution altogether. Instead, the references are to holy wars such as that depicted in the *Chanson de Roland* and, overwhelmingly, to the Franco-Prussian War. The 1870s conflict is brought up through some translated quotations form German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, as well as the version of General Bruneau's account of the hostilities. The fact that the latter was titled "La revancha"[382] and subtitled "A propósito de la retirada alemana," hints at the fact that the

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378 Revard, "Epic. I History," 364.

379 While it could be argued that the presence of a female warrior challenges the gender stereotypes discussed above, the poem clearly emphasises the true (and almost mechanic) role of women "y las madres aprestan los hijos esforzados. / ¡Quién tuviera mil vientres para fundir soldados!" *Pegaso* I.18:4 [56].

380 This is reminiscent of Porfirio Díaz, who was an admirer of the French Emperor and who, in the early days of his exile in France, was publicly offered to hold the sword with which Bonaparte fought at Austerlitz.

381 Aubert, "Motives of Francophilia," 254-255.

382 *Pegaso* I.6:9 [141].

fight against the Central Powers (who retreated slightly in February and March 1917) is the rightful retribution for the crushing German victory in 1871. In this case as in that of the battle of Roncevaux, pictured in the *Chanson de Roland*, a moral axiom that is highly relevant in the Mexican context is established: war and armed violence are justified when they are defensive rather than offensive.

Thus, translation contributed in various ways to the creation of an epic of Western civilisation on bases that allowed the editors to insert themselves (and Porfirian elites more generally) in the same tradition and imagined community. Against many readings of the time, *Pegaso* represented the Great War as an opportunity for cultural renaissance and for the civilisation incarnated by France and based on Catholicism and Greco-Roman tradition to be founded anew.

From one Revolution to another: shifting representations of the Russian Revolution in Pegaso

It is probably in *Pegaso*'s coverage of the Russian February Revolution that the magazine's conservative position is most explicit. Its first issue was published on 8 March, the very day on which popular protests soared in Petrograd, providing an unparalleled opportunity to comment more specifically, yet still indirectly, on Mexican politics. Overall, the editors' position is not a sympathetic one: it should be remembered that González Martínez held various regional political positions under the *Porfiriato* and acted as Huerta's sub-secretary of Public Instruction and Fine Arts in 1913 (a choice that he would later publicly repudiate). Efrén Rebolledo, in turn, was Head of Protocol for the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of the same cabinet. However, despite their antagonistic political ideas, they understood the value of indirect criticism to safeguard their position on the national cultural stage.[383] This is an aspect that the existing

[383] González Martínez had been a vocal critic of *maderismo* in *Argos* (1912), which he edited, and *El Imparcial* (to which he collaborated), a mistake that he would not repeat after the Constitutionalist

scholarship on *Pegaso* has missed. All critics affirm categorically that *Pegaso* did not address matters of national politics.[384] But if we consider both direct and indirect allusions and comments, we obtain a significant corpus showing that revolution was in fact one of the key preoccupations of *Pegaso*'s editorial team. Considering translated texts as primary material is undoubtedly a sizeable advantage, as translation was instrumental in this process, allowing the editors to adopt a doubly oblique approach (i.e., by commenting on foreign events through translation). This section illustrates how texts about the February Revolution can be read as indirect comments on Constitutionalism, and how *Pegaso* moved from explicit repudiation to a more conciliatory stance.

Initial criticism: revolution as essentially flawed

Pegaso's initial anti-revolutionary premises emerged as a fervent defence of the Russian monarchy.[385] Issue I.3 included a written portrait of recently overthrown Tsar Nicholas II and his family, very likely a translation whose original I have not located. In its introduction, the editors defended the monarch against criticism, characterising him as "un hombre sencillo y generoso, amante de su hogar y muy lejos de las fantasías con que el vulgo quiere rodear a estos personajes."[386] The use of the derogatory term

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victory.

384 "México […] no existe en la revista ni como preocupación ni como proyecto." Sheridan, "El despegue de *Pegaso*," 38-39; José Luis Rico writes that "se pasa prácticamente en silencio la Revolución mexicana" ("Pegaso. Revista Ilustrada," *Enciclopedia de la literatura en México* http://www.elem.mx/institucion/datos/1881); Ángel José Fernández shares this assessment in "López Velarde," 108, as do José María Martínez in "Sincronías transatlánticas del modernismo," 936, and Alfonso García Morales in his "Introducción" to García Morales and García Gutiérrez, *México 1915-1920*, 22. In the same volume, Vicente Fernández Mora speaks of a "sistemático y conveniente olvido de la sangrienta realidad de la Revolución, que permitía a la clase acomodada refugiarse del horror de la guerra en los ambientes cultos y elegantes de la isla capitalina" ("Las revistas literarias," 66). This could not be further from the truth; even the magazine's militantly Catholic tone alone, read against the backdrop of early *carrancista* anticlericalism, constitutes a statement on national politics.

385 Besides the text on Nicholas II discussed here, the magazine included a similar portrait of his brother, "El Gran Duque Miguel, íntimo" (*Pegaso* I.13:7-8 [295-296]), as well as a piece on the Cossacks, who, in their military capacities, functioned as a tsarist institution.

386 *Pegaso* I.3:6 [66].

"vulgo" to refer to the Tsar's critics is telling. So is the idealisation of the former emperor. Throughout the article, Nicholas II is presented as a hard-working ruler, an affectionate dog-owner, an admirable rower, a keen reader, and a funny and caring family man. The text's intimate lens humanises the political figure and eludes the questions of his legitimacy and his opponents' demands. The affirmation that the monarch's German ancestry was "al parecer […] una de las causas determinantes de la revolución" is yet another way of invalidating both the democratising efforts and the struggle of the Russian people faced with heavily deteriorating living conditions.

In the "La Gran Guerra" section of the same issue, a more nuanced and detailed account of the February Revolution was given, although it was not as prominently featured as the portrait of the imperial family. While the anonymous author recognised that food riots sparked the rebellion and that "el impulso inicial del movimiento […] partió de lo más hondo de las entrañas del pueblo," they also underlined that its success was due to the military intervention, which in itself undermined the new government's legitimacy.

> La Duma no ha recibido el poder de las manos del pueblo: una parte del ejército, comprándolo con su sangre en las calles […] se lo ha entregado; y su suerte, velada por este vicio de origen, continuará sujeta al capricho móvil y terrible de las milicias. ¡Libertad!... La libertad no puede surgir de un movimiento que tiene las características de un cuartelazo.[387]

Violent political change (at least when it is revolutionary) is thus judged unlawful, denying any possible benefits to the Russian Revolution based on its flawed origins.

This idea is also evoked in the translation of Eça's *A Relíquia*, through the intrusion of the notion of "revolution" in the negotiation between Rabi Robã and Pilate. In the original, Robã accuses Pilate of sowing unrest in Judea in order to better assert his power through repression:

> Tu queres deixar impune o homem que pregou a insurreição […] para tentar, pela impunidade, outras ambições mais fortes e levar, outro Judas de Gamala, a atacar as guarnições de Samaria! Assim preparas um pretexto para abater sobre nós a espada imperial […] Tu queres

[387] *Pegaso* I.3:10 [70].

> uma revolta para afogares em sangue, e apresentar-te depois a César como soldado vitorioso, administrador sábio.[388]

In the Spanish version, however, Pilate is accused of seeking to instigate "una *revolución* para ahogarla en sangre."[389] The translator's anachronistic choice of the term "revolution" in the Pharisaic context (instead of the literal "revuelta") exemplifies how translated texts, read between the lines, denote a concern with the Mexican situation even when they are unrelated to it. This is yet another indication of the editors' early position on the question of revolution; indeed, this wording suggests that a revolution is not a popular uprising with justifiable causes rooted in inequality, but rather, a political manoeuvre instigated from above by manipulative and ambitious leaders, and encouraged through impunity. Moreover, violent repression and eradication of protest are marks of an "administrador sabio" according to Robã. Although the repressive temptation appears once more in issue I.14 (see footnote 393), *Pegaso* would largely move away from this authoritarian stance and come to recognise that a moderate revolutionary government might be better than a radical one.

The pragmatic approach: revolution as a double-edged sword

After this initial response, concerns about the consequences of revolutionary processes were articulated in *Pegaso*. One of them is the impact of a revolution on the literary sphere. The article titled "Rusia se muere," published anonymously in issue I.9, exemplifies these symbolic apprehensions. Far from celebrating political change, the author recognises nonetheless that the Revolution might bring some democratisation. While this marks the country's "nacimiento […] a la vida civilizada," they also argue that it sounds the death knell of Russia (given that "es imposible concebirla sin el autocratismo imperial") and especially of Russian literature. For them, the February Revolution implies "el fracaso de toda una época de la literatura más personal y más

388 Eça, *Obras completas*, 1:1198.
389 *Pegaso* I.5:6 [114] (my emphasis).

vigorosa del mundo."[390] This deep preoccupation with the cultural consequences of revolutionary processes ultimately refers back to *Pegaso*'s editors (and close collaborators), as intellectuals aligned with pre-revolutionary politics and aesthetics within a post-revolutionary landscape.

Another major concern relates to the potential outcomes of uncontrolled violence. There is a general sense, in *Pegaso*, that revolutionary violence is always on the brink of growing out of control, effectively undermining possible social benefits. This is first expressed in issue I.10, in a short text on the newly-formed opposition to the equally new revolutionary Russian government, and in a translation titled "El cosaco."[391] It is striking how the text about Cossacks, written by Alexandra Kropotkin, frames the note on the concerning Russian situation (Figure 2.8). The dispatch is further enclosed by a black rectangular border, an unusual practice in *Pegaso* (except for introductory remarks). Thus, political unrest and the menace of a "período de disolución y anarquía" are symbolically contained by a traditional institution often associated with the Tsar and the repression of popular protest. The first paragraph of the framing translation refers specifically to this: "cuantas veces el pueblo ruso se ha echado a las calles para protestar contra algún abuso del Gobierno, los cosacos solían cabalgar entre la muchedumbre restaurando el orden."[392] Thus, translation and juxtaposition are used to symbolically defend the monarchic tradition.

The threat against public order becomes progressively clearer, and issue I.14 is central in articulating the idea that revolution entails a risk of chaos and anarchy. In it, the focus shifts from the Republican government (whose reality *Pegaso* seems to eventually accept) to sectors fostering social unrest. By mid-June 1917, the magazine's main concern is not said government's legitimacy, but the revolutionaries still fighting against it and threatening the new order: "Rusia no ha podido todavía resolver el

390 *Pegaso* I.9:7-8 [207-208].

391 The note's beginning reads: "parte del elemento obrero dirigido por los agitadores y parte del elemento militar han creado un nuevo poder frente al débil gobierno revolucionario de Rusia y tal ingerencia [sic] pretenden tener en los negocios públicos que los leaders del movimiento político que derribó al Zar Nicolás empiezan a retirarse para eludir las responsabilidades en caso de sobrevenir un desastre, al parecer próximo e irremediable." *Pegaso* I.10:12 [236].

392 *Pegaso* I.10:12 [236].

problema capital que […] amenaza llevarla a los abismos de la anarquía."[393] The political instability created by dissenting revolutionary factions threatens nothing less than the future of the nation, a perspective that strongly resonates with the situation of the first years of Constitutionalist government and what was perceived as the threat of agrarian rebels. González Martínez would later recall, in his memoirs, that there was "un temor […] de que mal dirigida la revolución llevara al país a la anarquía."[394] This view of the revolutionary process is supported visually through a caricature of the toddler Russian Republic struggling to keep its bear (symbol of the nation) under control, printed two pages later (Fig. 2.9). Other illustrations to the same effect are included later in the magazines (Fig. 2.10). This criminalisation of agitators and radical factions might also be read as a concession to the *carrancista* administration, that used this rhetoric to discredit *villistas* and *zapatistas*.[395]

The argument that violence threatens the revolution's social benefits is reinforced through the inclusion, in the same issue (I.14), of a version of the Russian folk-tale "El Juez Shemyak." Although not about revolution or political change, this story appeared on the opposite page to a news piece about social unrest in Russia and should be read as a direct complement to that text (which I discuss in the next section). In this tale, probably indirectly translated in *Pegaso*,[396] a poor man borrows his rich brother's horse to carry wood and accidentally rips the animal's tail off, as his brother refused to also lend him a proper horse collar. There ensue a series of disasters, inadvertently provoked by the poor brother, who is ultimately brought before a court by his sibling and two other men demanding compensation. Desperate, the poor man threatens the judge with a stone wrapped in a handkerchief, but the magistrate assumes

393 *Pegaso* I.14:8 [316].
Although they do not develop this idea, the anonymous author appears to lean towards an authoritarian response to popular unrest in order to safeguard the nation: while it is a "medida extrema," they consider that the Duma might "buscar en los cañones la salud pública." The term "salud pública" is unequivocal here. The author emphasises the necessity of a "fuerza irresistible y disciplinada […] para agarrotar y reducir" dissenting factions "a la nada."

394 González Martínez, *Obras completas*, 696.

395 Frenández Mora, "Las revistas literarias," 74.

396 Leonard Arthur Magnus's *Russian Folk-Tales*, published in 1916 in New York is a good candidate as intermediary text.

that he is trying to bribe him. He therefore rules in favour of the poor man, who ironically ends up benefiting from the catastrophes he has caused. When the judge requests his payment and discovers that the man was threatening to kill him instead, he exclaims: "Gracias a Dios que me decidí por la parte justa."[397] Placed next to the news of Russian "agitadores" threatening the integrity of the Provisional Government and of the nation, this tale, usually interpreted as a mere critique of the judiciary, can be read as an assertion that violence is an even greater factor of corruption than wealth. In this, it reinforces the other text's point that while some claims are legitimate, physical violence ultimately undermines (social) justice.

In the same issue, the mixed outcomes of the revolutionary process are discussed in relationship to the Mexican situation. The article "Política agrícola / El problema de la repartición de tierras I," blames the "desastre agrícola de la República [mexicana]" on the "idiosincracia étnica" which favours effortless and rapid gain over hard work and patience, and relies on legislation to solve problems which could and should be addressed privately. Far from assessing the *hacienda* system and agrarian reform, the author affirms that the challenge faced by Mexican agriculture, besides poor working culture, is the lack of hands, due to either low population density or rural revolutionary struggles.[398] The Mexican Revolution, euphemistically referred to as "las condicionales [sic] excepcionales en que nos hallamos por razón de los sucesos que hondamente nos conmueven hace siete años" is therefore seen as aggravating agricultural issues rather than solving them. This text is printed right under two photographs from Russia titled "La revolución en Rusia," and depicting dead Russians revolutionaries (Figure 2.11). To some extent, this juxtaposition creates a sense that revolutions essentially bring death and severe issues for the people they seek to defend.[399]

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397 *Pegaso* I.14:9 [317].

398 However, the text's second instalment, published in the following issue, affirms more openly that "la subdivisión de la tierra es algo que influye de un modo fundamental en el desarrollo agrícola. Es fuente […] de riqueza individual y de prosperidad nacional." *Pegaso* I.15:10 [338].

399 As a parenthesis, it is probably worth noting that *Pegaso* includes no visual representation of dead WWI soldiers.

Depoliticising revolution: the erasure of the French Revolution's legacy and international Socialism

The threat of anarchy and left-wing radicalism is also linked, in *Pegaso*, to the French Revolution. The editors affirmed, in the "La Gran Guerra" section of issue I.14 (on the page next to judge Shemyak's story), that the "elementos anárquicos que se agitan en la sombra" could "convertir el movimiento libertador de Rusia en una bacanal tan trágica como la Revolución francesa, con […] su cortejo de crímenes." [400] The concession of the emancipating potential of the revolution is made only inasmuch as the process remains under control and avoids radicalism. The French Revolution, in contrast, appears as an exclusively negative example. In other instances, it inspired mixed reactions. In "El idealismo moral de Francia," for instance, Antonio Caso concedes that the revolutionary cause "tenía un fondo de justicia, una nobleza de ideal," but it was "obscurecida […] por la ambición y el crimen."[401] Again, the notion that just ideals can easily be misdirected and end tragically is presented as a defining feature of the revolutionary process. Thus, the French Revolution was never claimed as a political and cultural milestone by *Pegaso*'s editors, as it was in other countries like Spain, and its democratic legacy was erased.[402]

Additionally, *Pegaso* expunged mentions of Socialism from its representation of WWI, unless Socialists were depicted as agitators and enemies of Allied interests.[403] Émile Verhaeren's "Au Reichstag" and "Au peuple allemand," translated by José D. Frías in issue I.18, are perfect examples. While those poems were likely included due to their harsh criticism of Germany, their disenchanted nostalgia for international

400 *Pegaso* I.14:8 [316].
401 *Pegaso* I.2:3 [39].
402 Aubert, "Motives of Francophilia," 242.
403 In issue I.13, the "La Gran Guerra" section covered the 1917 Stockholm Peace Conference, stating that "tanto en Rusia como en Francia se mueven hace tiempo los agitadores, inoculando en el organismo de la defensa común, el virus de la disolución, inconscientes unos […] de que al hacerlo trabajan por la pérdida de los suyos." *Pegaso* I.13:9 [297]. The topic was mentioned again in issue I.15.

Socialism (and their—arguable—allusions to such a solution to the war) were deflected for a suitable ideological fit within *Pegaso*.[404]

The first poem, "Au peuple allemand," is translated entirely and the manipulation of the text occurs through word choice. In it, Verhaeren dissociates the decisions made by Germany's anti-democratic government from the potential of its organised people. In Verhaeren's words, the "kings" are misdirecting Germany's courage towards the war effort. Instead, the country's organised and efficient warfare could and should be used to overthrow its obsolete and violent leaders: "Mais quand sentiras-tu, sous ton front, la puissance / D'organiser aussi la révolte et l'orgueil?"[405] Apostrophising the German people, Verhaeren urges them to join forces to fight for an ideal and change the nation's destiny. In this, he does not fall in the plain anti-Germanism that characterises some of his other works from the period, and hints at the possibility of democratically-driven change. In the translation, however, the popular uprising to which Verhaeren alludes in the lines quoted above is rendered as "orgullos santos de rebelión." The whole poem acquires a clearly religious dimension in Frías's version, and its representation of the Allied cause is radically modified, bringing it into line with *Pegaso*'s image of WWI. In the original, the *Entente* is fighting "afin qu'en soit grandi l'homme, dans l'univers," that is, for the benefit of a universal ideal of humankind. Frías's armies, in contrast, fight "al fin de engrandecer al Mundo y su Señor." Humanity is thus erased by the religious motive, and what *Pegaso* opposes to the brutal despotism of German monarchs is not popular revolt but, rather, religious faith.

The other poem ("Al Reichstag") is, as Frías acknowledges, a fragment of the original, and in this case, its ideological connotations are modified through this cut. The translated passage corresponds to the piece's last two stanzas (of eleven) about the onset of the war and its effects. The entire first part of the poem, which deals with the previous situation of peace and harmony among European people, is completely omitted. The translation thus misses the main point of the original, which is that the

404 For an account of how Verhaeren's political beliefs were transformed by his experience of the war and of the German invasion of Belgium, see Hemmerijckx, "Émile Verhaeren."

405 Verhaeren, *Les ailes rouges*, 239-240.

German parliament's support for the war annihilated "le cœur fraternel d'une plus haute Europe," ultimately destroying faith in mankind itself.[406] This interpretation of the poem's ending is impossible in the absence of its first part.[407] Most significantly, Verhaeren's former European utopia rested on the transformative power of the united masses and international Socialism, for which there was not much room in *Pegaso*. "Au Reichstag" expresses his indignation at Socialist parliamentarians who betrayed the people's trust by failing to avoid the war, marking, for some, the collapse of this ideology. Besides depriving the poem of the specificity of its critique and reducing it to blaming Germany, the translation obscures what "la luz del pasado" might have been.[408] Even unsuccessful, Socialist ideals are wiped out of "Al Reichstag," denoting *Pegaso*'s use of translation to articulate an ideological position.

Revolution as self-sacrifice: conciliating revolutionary and religious ideas

Finally, after having developed the argument that revolution can unleash the most radical sectors of the opposition and that, pragmatically, a moderate revolutionary government might be a lesser evil, *Pegaso*'s editors set out to conciliate the idea of this government with their own ideological (and particularly religious) positions. It is clear that the elements of their reception of the February Revolution outlined so far point back to the Mexican situation. The opening article of issue I.12, titled "El zapatismo desaparece," illustrates this point, using the same language to describe the *Ejército Libertador del Sur*: "el zapatismo […] corrompido por influencias nocivas de exaltados agitadores, convertido en el más tremendo de los bandidajes por una larga actitud de

406 "Car c'est là ton crime immense, Allemagne, / D'avoir tué atrocement / L'idée / Que se faisait pendant la paix, / En notre temps, / L'homme de l'homme." Verhaeren, *Les ailes rouges*, 21.

407 It can only be conjectured what Frías might have meant by "haber asesinado atrozmente la idea / que en el tiempo de paz se metamorfosea / en el hombre del hombre!..."

408 These passages about idyllic times are mirrored in "Canto a la batalla del Marne," published right next to Verhaeren's poems, albeit in a depoliticised variation: "¿Qué soplo de espanto llenó la campiña enantes serena / do alzaban su canto los hombres como una colmena, / donde antes medraban la oliva y el verde laurel?" *Pegaso* I.18:4 [56], lines 21-23.

guerra a muerte contra todo orden establecido, tuvo en sus orígenes una bandera de justicia."[409] This has prevented "que la administración actual encuentre libre de obstáculos el camino por donde irá […] a la reconstrucción de la República." The argument of the inherent lack of legitimacy of a revolutionary government is abandoned in exchange for a more diplomatic treatment of the existing administration. Compared to more radical agrarian groups, the *constitucionalista* government was eventually seen as preferable. This article was anonymous yet prominently featured on *Pegaso*'s first page. As such, it was probably considered a key piece of the editorial line (and especially of the shift towards a position more supportive of the government) while also representing the editors' tendency to tread on eggshells in matters of national politics and avoid taking personal responsibility for published texts.

Indeed, it became increasingly clear, in mid-1917, that literary agents would need to adapt to the new political and institutional order. Consequently, the opinions about revolution expressed in *Pegaso* shift, within the magazine's short publication span, from an overtly critical stance to more conciliatory attitudes. The latter are well represented by the two texts about "La actualidad política" published in the last two issues (I.19 and I.20), in which Juan Novell Ruiz emphasises the highly moral character of the Mexican Revolution, seen as an attempt to restore justice after the blatant abuse of the Constitution. According to him, the uprising responded to an "anhelo de mejoramiento social" and a "sentido de justicia." Quoting Carranza, Novell Ruiz affirms that Mexico is at the vanguard of a transnational movement for social justice:

> la Revolución no es sólo la lucha armada, ni son los campos ensangrentados […] es el progreso de la humanidad, que se impone y del que a nosotros […] nos ha tocado ser iniciadores en esta gran lucha... Y para que cese la guerra, es preciso que reine en la tierra la justicia.[410]

Against the dominant position on revolutionary violence in *Pegaso*, Novell Ruiz introduces the notion that this form of armed violence was necessary in order to stop

[409] *Pegaso* I.12:1 [269].
[410] *Pegaso* I.19:10 [2:82].

injustice and even to put an end to violence and war. The paradoxical idea of using violent means towards their own eradication is used to legitimise the recourse to force.

Moreover, positioning Mexico at the forefront of global peace processes has extensive implications in the context of WWI. Beyond the symbolic involvement of Mexico in international matters, what we witness here is a slight shift in the perceived solution to the Great War, from Allied victory to revolution and social justice. As in the Christ metaphors described earlier, Mexicans sacrifice themselves for the progress of all humankind. The recourse to the lexical field of religion is even clearer in Novell Ruiz's second instalment (subtitled "reconstrucción nacional"), in which he explains that the country is in a phase of recovery and rebuilding: "el Gobierno mexicano ha entrado en el período de reconstrucción nacional y serenamente sigue y seguirá su obra de *redención.* Nuestro pueblo conoce los hechos y supo *sacrificarse*."[411] Catholic discourse thus appears as a set of references that can be mobilised with diverse ideological aims in *Pegaso*.

While Novell Ruiz's opinions are marginal within the periodical, his recourse to elements of Christian rhetoric in conjunction with revolutionary ideas is not isolated, and attempts to reconcile the two are part of *Pegaso*'s ambivalent line on the subject of revolution. Stressing those elements of Christian thought that are compatible with revolutionary ideals is another way of leaving the door open to an adhesion to the state's new values and ensuring the editors' permanence in the cultural field. In various of the Christian-themed translations, Biblical references were used with social undertones. God himself is compared to "los pobres de los grandes caminos, aquellos que tienen un pedazo de pan en una alforja, y a quienes la magistratura hace detener en la puerta de las ciudades y aprisionar porque no saben escribir su nombre," in Jammes.[412] In Lemaître, Mary divides the treasure received from the Wise Men equally between the shepherds, arguing with Joseph that they do not need any of it themselves. The most explicit example of this compromise is probably the "Página de Andrés Terzaga," in which the

411 *Pegaso* I.20:4 [96] (my emphasis).
412 *Pegaso* I.1:2 [14].

Argentine author abundantly criticises Voltaire's anticlericalism (which he equates with a lack of passion and courage), closing on this conciliatory note: "más alta que las más altas montañas, más alta que las estrellas, más alta que aun nuestra esperanza, hay una línea en la cual cabe Marat al lado de San Francisco de Asís."[413] This is certainly the line on which *Pegaso* would have endeavoured to position itself if material conditions had allowed it to continue beyond its twenty issues.

Pegasus at the crossroads

As Carlos Monsiváis wrote, "la primera década de la Revolución sorprende a los habituados a dar por 'eternos' su modo de vida y su lugar destacado en el *establishment* (llamado 'República de las Letras y las Artes')."[414] Those literary agents suddenly needed to defend both their poetics and their legitimacy, which *Pegaso* did, mostly in a reactionary way. With its negotiations and paradoxes, the magazine is a faithful reflection of the ambivalent, "in-between" period of Mexican revolutionary history in which it existed.[415] It marks the end of an era in literature and publishing, with its remnants of *modernismo* and some outdated editorial practices, but it also opens a new one, as the "primera revista profusamente ilustrada,"[416] containing, additionally, innovative adverts produced by the first advertising agency in Mexico.[417] It brings together various generations (*modernistas*, *ateneístas*, and younger poets such as Torres Bodet), and stands at the intersection of text and image; its editorial line appears as a constant negotiation between the imperative of neutrality and the impulse of Allied propaganda, as well as between moral and political conservatism and diplomacy towards the *constitucionalista* government.

413 *Pegaso* I.12:4 [272].
414 Monsiváis, *Historia mínima*, 48 (author's italics).
415 This idea is also found in Fernández Mora, "Las revistas literarias," 77.
416 Sheridan, "El despegue de Pegaso," 39.
417 María Jaua, "Recuerdo de la revista *Pegaso*," 234.
The use of quotations from well-known authors to fill gaps between articles, for instance, gives the magazine a certain old-fashioned feel. Those *gacetillas* were typical of the early days of the *Revista Azul* and *Revista Moderna*.

A careful consideration of *Pegaso*'s wildly heterogeneous corpus of translations enables us to follow these negotiations and do justice to the richness of this editorial project, which has received little scholarly attention. It emerges that, far from ignoring the Mexican Revolution, as most critics have argued, the editors conformed an editorial line that allowed them to approach it indirectly from various angles and formulate a rather clear position on their country's politics. Thus, the interest in WWI and armed violence in general was linked, in *Pegaso*, to ideological considerations much more than to aesthetic ones. While *Pegaso* included a few reflections on the role of art and literature in the context of a conflict of the magnitude of WWI, it does not explore the effects of such violence on them.

Due to this focus on message over form, the original texts were often heavily manipulated, mostly through the selection and omission of passages, and, in some cases, textual changes. While several authors seem to have been chosen based on their fit within *Pegaso*'s editorial line (Verhaeren, but also Pierre Loti and Henri Lavedan who produced fiercely anti-Germanic pieces), or as negative examples (quotations from Bismarck were used as a way to demonstrate the intrinsically belligerent nature of the Germans), others were included despite their diverging ideas (Eça, Bruneau). This is when texts were most intervened, sometimes resulting in spectacular transformations of their ideological contents as in *A Relíquia*, for which the translator and editors went to great lengths to turn the text around. Thus, translation appears to have been widely instrumental in *Pegaso*, and little to no new repertoire was imported (besides Allied propaganda).

The militant support to the Allied cause (especially when viewed through the prism of religion) and criticism of the February Revolution combined to form an ideologically conservative project, which in turn tied in with old-fashioned aesthetics and social *status quo*. In this way, *Pegaso* defended the *modernista* heritage of the Mexican elite whilst championing the capacity of *fin-de-siècle* French culture (at the core of its identity) to regenerate. In its eclectic imagery, the victory of Joan of Arc and

Saint George against the German dragon of heretical culture mirrored that of Bellerophon who, mounted on Pegasus's back, defeated the Chimera. While France did, in the end, prevail, *Pegaso*'s editors were not as successful in their crusade against cultural change. Yet neither idea of culture remained unharmed by the actual and symbolic wars of the 1910s, and both gave way, in the following decade, to new manners to conceive the role of writers and artists, as well as radical repertoire renovation.

Although short-lived, *Pegaso* is an important link in the transformations undergone by the Mexican literary field of the revolutionary years. It might be one of the only attempts made by the intellectual elite to "recomponer su estatus en el mundo revolucionario"[418] according to old conventions, and speaks of the strategies used to salvage literary legitimacy, in which translation played an important part. As such, the magazine is also a good indicator of a period of transition in this field: while part of its project functioned as a swan song, the other heralded new developments.

[418] Monsiváis, *Historia mínima*, 59.

Chapter 3

After the War: *El Maestro*'s case for civilian government

Published between 1921 and 1923, *El Maestro* is indissociable from the *obregonista* administration's cultural and educative policies. As the Revolution entered its institutional phase, culture became a source of legitimacy and education was a key component of the government's programme for the masses. At a time when the majority of Mexicans were illiterate, this was no small task.[419] *Ateneísta* José Vasconcelos was chosen to carry it out, first as rector of the Universidad Nacional de México (UNM) and, from October 1921 onwards, as head of the newly-created SEP. *El Maestro*, published under his authority, was to support his efforts to establish reading habits across all sectors of the population.[420] It was therefore distributed widely and without charge, reaching a monthly print run of about 50,000 copies.[421] However, *El Maestro* was much more than a "manual de cultura general,"[422] and while its educational purposes are undebatable, the magazine's editorial line is richer and more complex than a functionalist reading would suggest. Critics have tended to overlook this aspect in their analyses of *El Maestro*, which is often presented as a mere reflection of the government's (or Vasconcelos's) educational project.[423] The ideological debates in which the magazine was inevitably engaged have therefore been almost completely ignored, with some scholars even stating, following Vasconcelos's affirmations, that "el lector

419 Illiteracy amounted to around 80% according to Claude Fell, *José Vasconcelos*, 22.

420 Although the magazine was edited by Agustín Loera y Chávez and Enrique Monteverde for the first eight issues, and Monteverde alone afterwards, it is known that Vasconcelos contributed actively to its making, and the correlation between the authors published in *El Maestro* and Vasconcelos's personal canon has been noted by Aguirre and Cantón, *Revista* El Maestro *(1921-1923)*, 55.

421 Aguirre and Cantón, *Revista* El Maestro *(1921-1923)*, 54.
An anecdote that gives a sense of the magnitude and ambition of this publishing enterprise is the fact that Vasconcelos had copies of *El Maestro* sent directly to the Bodleian Library.

422 José Joaquín Bianco, *Se llamaba Vasconcelos*, 106.

423 Aguirre and Cantón, *Revista El Maestro (1921-1923)*; Fell, "José Vasconcelos"; Tejeda, "El Maestro. Revista de Cultura Nacional," *Enciclopedia de la literatura en México*. http://www.elem.mx/obra/datos/2595.

podrá encontrar las más diversas enseñanzas, *excluyendo cualquier propaganda religiosa o política*."[424] This chapter demonstrates that this is not so by approaching *El Maestro* through the lens of translation as oblique strategy to participate in national public debate.

Although it appeared two and a half years after the end of WWI and after most revolutionary fighting was over in Mexico, *El Maestro* contains the ripples of both conflicts as the involved nations strove to return to normality. Carranza's moderate bourgeois liberalism was replaced by the more Jacobin and *caudillista* orientation of the Sonoran generals, reflected in a new determination to implement the provisions of the 1917 Constitution. The opposition between civilian and military authorities, rampant since the Constitutionalist victory,[425] was exacerbated when Carranza attempted to impose a civilian candidate for his succession. His overthrow in the Agua Prieta Revolt and Obregón's subsequent election were perceived as a corrective, transferring the state's lead to those who fought in the revolution. However, "the armed revolution left a legacy of a bloated army, a swollen military budget, and an excess population of politically ambitious officers"[426] which the new president, while representing the military, set out to reduce in order to stabilise national politics.

Vasconcelos, in contrast, was an outspoken advocate of civilian administration.[427] Even as Obregón's minister, he might have been pursuing this personal agenda, positioning himself as a future presidential candidate.[428] Obregón appeared to be aware of this possibility, as Vasconcelos himself remembers how the president was persuaded to pre-emptively undermine him and his magazine: "se murmuraba en público que *El Maestro* me hacía propaganda, lo que niego señalando su texto. El hecho es que con pretexto de que se necesitaba dinero para la guerra se suprimió la partida que sostenía la revista."[429] The discontinuation of *El Maestro* thus

424 Aguirre and Cantón, *Revista El Maestro (1921-1923)*, 53 (authors' emphasis).
425 Knight, M*exican Revolution*, 2:450.
426 Knight, *Very short introduction*, 78.
427 Knight, M*exican Revolution*, 2:452.
428 He did, in fact, run for president in 1929, in an attempt to end the military monopoly of the presidency.
429 José Vasconcelos, *Creación de la Secretaría*, 185.

appears to have been a direct consequence of the feud between civilians and the military.

Using translation as a lens, this chapter examines this neglected political aspect of the magazine, which used foreign texts about the aftermath of WWI and the Russian October Revolution to comment on the legitimacy, nature, and orientation of the revolutionary government in Mexico, with an emphasis on the role of intellectuals. *El Maestro* depicts WWI as a great catastrophe for humankind,[430] and maintains that peace is a prerequisite for social justice. Its stance is strongly anti-militaristic, and quite radical in certain aspects of economic policy, commenting abundantly on land reform and private property. Although its exact position on these subjects is often vague and at times paradoxical, it eventually articulates a Christian kind of semi-socialist pacifism. This entailed a mystical conception of the social function of the writer and a new association of civilisation with peace. Ultimately, this refers back to the benefits of a civilian government, which appears better suited to achieve real social justice.

European pacifist intellectuals and anti-militarism: Romain Rolland and the Clarté *movement*

Due to the rivalry between military and civilian leaders, anti-militarism is key in *El Maestro*'s statement of the core values of revolutionary culture. Vasconcelos and his editorial team aimed to articulate a form of culture that is indisputably revolutionary yet vigorously anti-militaristic. To this effect, the magazine opens, like the *Revista Moderna* had done, on a double manifesto: the combination of Vasconcelos's "Un llamado cordial" and Romain Rolland's "Una declaración de independencia intelectual" (in translation) sets the foundations of an editorial line based on a negative image of armed conflict. This also creates a parallel between the figures of Vasconcelos and

[430] This discourse is shared with numerous—especially left-wing—movements across Latin America (Rinke, "'The Birth Year of Revolutions'," 208). Its articulation in the Mexican context, however, is particularly significant due to the local relevance of the military question.

Rolland—at the time, one of the most prominent European exponents of pacifism. In his opening piece, Vasconcelos asserts that true "civilisation" can only exist in a peaceful and egalitarian society, in which the individual does not take precedence over the collective. Rolland's position is similar, stemming from the observation that war has divided intellectuals and defeated thought by putting it at the service of nationalist, martial agendas. Significantly, the word "patrie," used critically in Rolland, is left out of the translation, where "nación" replaces it. The "patria" is a central component of post-revolutionary nationalism and a recurring concept in *El Maestro*, as in López Velarde's famous "La suave patria" to give only one example.[431] This double manifesto articulates a powerful call for unity and peace, a message that was reiterated in the second and third issues through the translation of two other manifestos, from the French *Clarté* movement. This group of intellectuals, led by Henri Barbusse, had fought in WWI and sought to establish an international anti-war network. Inspired at first by Rolland's militancy, their "original aim was to rally the intellectual elite of all countries in support of an internationalist ideology with vague overtones of social regeneration."[432] *El Maestro* translated "La internacional de los intelectuales/Manifiesto del Grupo 'Claridad'," and "Manifiesto a los intelectuales y estudiantes de la América Latina," which invited Latin Americans to join the movement.[433] There, WWI is described, again, as a "cataclismo colosal" which is entangled with "la tragedia de la vida social,"[434] i.e., inequality and exploitation.

Besides direct references to WWI, *El Maestro*'s position on armed conflict is complemented by positive affirmations of pacifism, such as Mahatma Gandhi's declarations at his sedition trial ("la paz es el primer artículo de mi fe y el último

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431 *El Maestro* I.1:7 [11]. Romain Rolland, "Fière déclaration d'intellectuels," 1.

432 Racine, "The Clarté Movement in France," 195.
The movement would later grow considerably, with local *Clarté* groups popping up across Europe and America (Fabio Moraga, "El resplandor en el abismo," 132-134). It also became progressively closer to the Third International as its ideological grounds became more defined and focused on Marxism. The texts translated in *El Maestro*, however, correspond to an earlier, more indeterminate phase.

433 *El Maestro* I.2:35-37 [133-135] and I.3:43-45 [253-255].

434 *El Maestro* I.3:43 [253].

artículo de mi fe"[435]), and more general critiques of war. One of them is Voltaire's "Le monde comme il va," translated in issue II.1. In this 1748 philosophical story (which is in fact a covert critique of Parisian society, in a mirror effect that recalls the magazine's own approach to armed violence), the protagonist witnesses the absurd war waged between Persians and Indians, whose cause no one can explain (except, eventually, one general who invokes a ludicrous disagreement over a piddling amount of tax money). Fuelled by greed and cruelty, the bloodshed is both awful and pointless, as its conclusion demonstrates: "declaróse en breve la paz y los caudillos de ambos ejércitos que por sólo su interés habían hecho verter la sangre de tantos semejantes suyos, se fueron a solicitar el premio a su corte respectiva, aunque ninguno había ganado la victoria."[436] This situation, and in particular the use of the term "caudillos" in the translation (for the generic "chefs" in French) inevitably evokes the Mexican context and the failings of revolutionary leaders.[437]

Along with this critique, *El Maestro* offers a solution: education and spiritual elevation. Only thus will a peaceful and egalitarian society be achieved, and the magazine seeks to facilitate this process through the democratisation of culture and knowledge. For Vasconcelos, "no vale nada la cultura, […] no valen nada las ideas, […] no vale nada el arte, si todo ello no se inspira en el interés general de la humanidad."[438] This sense of social responsibility is shared with all three manifestos. France and Barbusse declared, for instance, that "es necesario mezclar a sus preocupaciones intelectuales el anhelo de ser útiles a la humanidad, vibrando al unísono de sus más legítimas aspiraciones de justicia y cooperando en todos los esfuerzos colectivos que expresan una saludable voluntad de renovación."[439]

To achieve this renovation, the intellectuals' first task is to rebuild unity. In Rolland's words, "hemos estado separados durante cinco largos años por ejércitos, por

435 *El Maestro* II.6:54 [584].
436 *El Maestro* II.1:60 [62].
437 The term "caudillo" is not used to describe non-American military commanders elsewhere in *El Maestro*.
438 *El Maestro* I.1:1 [5].
439 *El Maestro* I.3:43 [253].

censores, y por el odio de las naciones en guerra."[440] This acquires a particular significance in 1921 Mexico, as the government sought to overcome past divisions and foster a sense of cultural reunification.[441] The translation stresses this aspect of Rolland's manifesto, rendering its closing remarks as "luchamos por la unión de todos los hombres, todos hermanos, y por el conocimiento de esta verdad, de esta hermandad sublime."[442] While this coincides with Rolland's general message of unity and brotherhood, the French does not contain any phrase that could correspond to "luchamos por la unión." Thus, this double manifesto reflects Vasconcelos's programme and establishes intellectuals as the driving force of reunification and reconstruction, in Europe as in Mexico.

This position coincided to some extent with Obregón's own declarations about WWI and the necessity for peace,[443] and about the new social order.[444] Nonetheless, this discourse should also be read as an expression of Vasconcelos's civilian agenda, establishing intellectuals as the solution to the problems caused by militarism, and as a political force for the future. This is supported by the emphasis on the irreplaceable role that intellectuals are called to play in post-war society, and the clear-cut, binary opposition between men of culture and men of war constructed throughout *El Maestro*. The former is found in the *Clarté* movement's manifesto, which stresses that what intellectuals can achieve for the future of society, no other political actor can: "todos los cambios ocurridos en el transcurso de los tiempos, todas las realizaciones operadas, son la obra de los pensadores y de los artistas, inventores espirituales que ordenan el progreso"; "puesto que los asuntos humanos no son válidamente regulados más que por la inteligencia humana, pertenece a los intelectuales, ante todo, la intervención para preparar el reino del espíritu."[445] This broad paradigm shift led by intellectuals is

440 *El Maestro* I.1:7 [11].
441 Aguirre and Cantón, *Revista El Maestro (1921-1923)*, 39.
442 *El Maestro* I.1:8 [12]. Rolland, "Fière déclaration d'intellectuels," 1.
443 Obregón affirmed, for instance, that "la humanidad entera surge a una nueva vida orientada por la más amarga de las experiencias, la experiencia de la última hecatombe europea, donde quedó demostrado el fracaso de la fuerza bruta." *El Maestro* II.1:5 [7].
444 "Nosotros creemos que la moral, la inteligencia constructiva y generosa y la cultura son las fuerzas llamadas a gobernar el mundo en la vida moderna" *El Maestro* II.1:5-6 [7-8].
445 *El Maestro* I.2:35 [133].

imminent, and implies turning social order upside down, as maintained in both *Clarté* manifestos, and by some Latin American contributors. For Vasconcelos, "el camino de la verdadera civilización sólo se encuentra volteando de raíz los criterios que hasta la fecha han servido para organizar pueblos."[446] This includes the reversal of the symbolic hierarchy between military and intellectual authorities. These two categories are repeatedly presented as fundamentally opposed, setting the grounds for a (very veiled) critique of Obregón's government. In an interview published in the US press and translated back into Spanish for *El Maestro*,[447] Vasconcelos summarised a conference that he had attended:

> el orador […] hablaba sobre "Conquistadores y civilizadores." Clasificó a Cortés, a Napoleón y a otros famosos guerreros como conquistadores y destructores de la civilización y enemigos del pueblo. Después bosquejó la historia de los frailes españoles en México, especialmente de Las Casas, que fué realmente un educador y que estableció buenas leyes socialistas, aun cuando nunca fueron aplicadas. Los llamó civilizadores. De aquí sugirió al auditorio la idea de que no debía admirar a los hombres del tipo de los déspotas y guerreros, sino a los pensadores y educadores, hombres que […] trabajan por el bien social.[448]

Some of *Pegaso*'s central references, such as Napoleon, function here as symbolic substitutes for the Mexican military class. They were straightforwardly characterised as enemies of the people, a strong statement in the context of revolutionary rhetoric. It is telling that Vasconcelos chose a clergyman as the archetypal example of the intellectual —an aspect which I will discuss later.

In a similar text, José Ingenieros, himself a member of the Argentine *Clarté* group, opposes the "héroes de la sangre" (Alexander the Great, Julius Ceasar and Napoleon) to the "héroes de la Ciencia" (Laplace, Darwin, Lyell, Marx, Spencer), stating that the replacement of the former by the latter marks the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. "En el corazón de la Humanidad, los grandes

446 *El Maestro* I.1:1 [5].
447 This speaks of *El Maestro*'s strategy to represent the international interest sparked by Vasconcelos and his project, bestowing authority upon both.
448 *El Maestro* III.1:26 [28].

verdugos están a punto de ser suplantados por los grandes maestros."[449] This category of the "maestro" is particularly relevant in the eponymous magazine, and is used throughout the article as part of this recurring binary: "el soldado ha constituido la fuerza y la superioridad de los pueblos en la barbarie; el maestro constituirá su fuerza y su superioridad en la civilización."[450] It is this insistence that suggests that, while sharing *obregonista* propaganda, *El Maestro*'s editors were, in fact, making a case for civilian government in Mexico.

Walt Whitman's poetics and the dismantlement of the war epic

This conception of armed conflict does not make for very glorious war literature, and, as Ingenieros suggested, the epic of the twentieth century is not a martial one. While war-themed literature is almost completely absent from *El Maestro* (excepting Julian Grenfell's "Into battle," taken from *Cvltvra*),[451] the editors go even further and deconstruct the very idea of the war epic. Besides statements such as Ingenieros's, this is achieved through the translation of Whitman's "As I Ponder'd in Silence" in double issue II.4-5.[452] In this poem, Whitman addresses the question of war being the ultimate topic for poetry. His persona faces the "genius of poets of old lands," who asks what he sings, before asserting that

> there is but one theme for ever-enduring bards […]
> And that is the theme of War, the fortune of battles,
> The making of perfect soldiers[453]

To this, the lyric subject replies that he sings war too, but the war "for life and death, for the Body and for the eternal Soul." Human existence itself is a battle for both physical

449 *El Maestro* III.4-5:54 [418].
450 *El Maestro* III.4-5:54 [418].
451 *El Maestro* II.2:109-110 [223-224]; Castro and Zaslavsky, "México," 266.
452 The poem appears in Vasseur's 1912 version, although this is not acknowledged. Whitman. *Poemas*, 44.
453 Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, 9-10.

survival and moral redemption, and the real war is waged, on the one hand, against the concrete difficulties of life, and on the other, between good and evil in order to achieve spiritual transcendence. The poets' guiding role in this war is made clear in the speaker's last line: "Yo también, por encima de todo, suscito bravos soldados"[454] Vasseur's translation of the "genius of poets of old lands" as "genio de los poetas del antiguo mundo" acquires a new meaning in the pages of *El Maestro* (and the post-WWI context more generally). The definite article in "del," as well as the singular "antiguo mundo" allude to one specific, homogeneous bygone cultural order to be replaced by Whitman's poetics of everyday, non-military war. The concept of "antiguo mundo" could imply, additionally, that this old belligerent cultural order is typically European, by opposition to the *Nuevo Mundo* from which renovation is coming (e.g., through the changes brought about by the Mexican Revolution).[455]

Whitman's poetics, in which the war epic is re-signified as the moral battle between good and evil, is developed further on the back-cover of the issue in which "As I Ponder'd in Silence" appeared (i.e., two pages later). It features a translation of a passage of nineteenth-century French statesman François Guizot's *De la démocratie en France*. Printed under the allusive title "Lucha entre el bien y el mal," it discusses the importance of humans' internal war between good and evil, and the necessity to contemplate and understand this struggle. Upon engaging in introspection, Guizot states, anyone "se conmoverá profundamente al ver la *guerra* incesante que libran en él las buenas y las malas inclinaciones, la razón y el capricho, el deber y la pasión, el bien y el mal."[456] This ties back to the question of government, as the passage ends on the assertion that pride leads some people to disregard those internal struggles, resulting in a disruption of "el orden moral y el orden político, su gobierno interior y el gobierno general de la sociedad." Good government thus also derives from a moral, introspective inclination.

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454 *El Maestro* II.4-5:190 [528].

455 This acceptation of the expression "antiguo mundo" is used on at least one other occasion in *El Maestro*. I.3:26 [236].

456 *El Maestro* II.4-5: back-cover [unnumbered page after p. 528] (my emphasis).

Art plays a fundamental role in this internal war, constituting, in Vasconcelos's philosophy, the only way to transcend the egoistical Darwinism of existence and commune "con la divinidad." In his heterodox messianism, which mixes Catholicism and Oriental spirituality, this communication is facilitated by figures such as "Buda Jesucristo" and the "Buda del arte, […] Beethoven."[457] The latter is part of Vasconcelos's personal pantheon, exemplifying the transcending power of art. In *El Maestro*, this is conveyed through a version of a fragment of Rolland's *Vie de Beethoven* (which was translated entirely and included in a volume titled *Vidas Ejemplares*, published by the UNM in 1923, upon Vasconcelos's request).[458] Only the beginning and end of the text are retained in *El Maestro*, and while its opening is a mere physical description of the composer, the conclusion is highly relevant to the re-semantisation of the discourse around war. Beethoven's entire life and oeuvre are described through the metaphor of an unfolding tempest. Towards the end of his life,

> el nublado se amontona […] y son los densos nubarrones hinchados de relámpagos, negros de duelo, preñados de trueno, del comienzo de la *Novena*... Súbitamente […] se rajan las tinieblas, es arrojada la sombra del firmamento, y la serenidad del día torna por un acto de voluntad.

Beethoven's ability to overcome darkness and adversity through artistic creation is the quintessential example of the human mind's power and the vital importance of artists and intellectuals. The cultural significance of Beethoven's work, for *El Maestro*, surpasses the greatest military achievements, as formulated by Rolland about the Ninth Symphony: "¡Qué victoria vale lo que esta victoria; qué batalla de Bonaparte, qué sol de Austerlitz tienen la gloria de este esfuerzo sobrehumano, de esta conquista, la más luminosa que haya nunca hecho el espíritu!"[459] Again, true war is not military but spiritual, and art is called to play a decisive role in it.

As the metaphor of the storm suggests, the real struggle faced by humankind is not only internal, but also against nature, offering another level of reinterpretation of

457 Vasconcelos, *Obras completas*, 80, 68, and 81.
458 Rolland, *Vidas Ejemplares*, 1923.
459 *El Maestro* III.1:114 [116].

war imagery. In Tablada's words (which stand in stark contrast with *Pegaso*), "la Guerra Santa moderna, las únicas Cruzadas en que podemos batallar nosotros […] deben tener por objetivo la conquista de la Energía Solar." Like art, science offers victories that are valuable for all humankind and life is marked by "la lucha por la subsistencia, no *del hombre contra el hombre*, sino del hombre contra la naturaleza, para aprovechar todos sus inagotables tesoros potenciales."[460] This same idea is expressed in an anonymous text titled "El optimismo," which cheerfully observes that natural resources are becoming scarce as mankind is using more than it produces, but that a solution will undoubtedly be found before long. For the author, "la vida es una lucha de la humanidad contra los elementos."[461] Vasconcelos, in turn, gave another meaning to the concept of holy war when he encouraged his contemporaries to "hace[r] de la educación una cruzada y un misticismo."[462] *El Maestro* thus offered a multitude of alternative discourses to redefine the war narrative in ways that would be both peaceful and oriented towards the greater good and the progress of humanity.

El Maestro*'s ambivalence on the question of revolution*

El Maestro's discourse on revolution builds on the image of WWI and the ensuing conception of the intellectuals' role in the post-war period. It stems from the observation that, as phrased in the translation of France and Barbusse's call to Latin American intellectuals, "todas las miserias, todos los sufrimientos, todos los despojos, todas las guerras, tienen sus raíces en las voracidades que se derivan de la injusticia económica."[463] WWI is considered a wake-up call, prompting intellectuals to understand the concrete consequences of capitalism and act against social inequity:

> ha sido preciso el cataclismo de la gran Guerra Europea, en la que

460 *El Maestro* I.4:45 [367].
461 *El Maestro* II.6: inside of back-cover [unnumbered page after p. 648].
462 Vasconcelos, quoted in Fell, "José Vasconcelos," 90.
463 *El Maestro* I.3:44 [254].

> naufragaron por obra del régimen capitalista, las más bellas conquistas del hombre […] para que los intelectuales […] se sintieran avergonzados de su complacencia o de su inercia; y […] se tornaran enemigos de un sistema en el que se combinaron la matanza y la explotación.[464]

As a result, the editors formulated their own version of socialism, based on a mixture of Georgist and Tolstoyan thought (including the Christian aspects of the latter), as well as more radical ideas. They sought to distance themselves from Soviet Russia, as well as from the more left-wing intellectuals linked to the CROM and based at the ENP (Alfonso Caso, Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, and Salomón de la Selva), and form the *obregonista* administration, establishing an alternative, peaceful, and civilian path to true social justice.[465] This rested on various genuine and complex explorations of the notions of justice, injustice, legality, and citizenship, in line with Vasconcelos's ambition to educate the people, "afin qu'il [le peuple] puisse se prononcer lui-même sur la valeur et les capacités de ceux qui le dirigent."[466] The magazine's position on the question of capitalism is thus often unclear, but its proposed reforms (such as the single tax, discussed below) appear as more ambitious than the government's.

Between labour and capital: denouncing social inequality in El Maestro *(Henri Barbusse and Henry George)*

For *El Maestro*, the entanglement of war, capitalism, and social inequity prompted intellectuals and writers to advocate not only for peace, but also for social justice. Several translations about economic inequality and wealth distribution support this position, like Barbusse's "La doctrina del comunismo internacional." This is the fifth

[464] Pedro de Alba, *El Maestro* I.5-6:103 [537].

[465] For an account of Vasconcelos's differences with the intellectuals and writers close to the CROM, which overall supported Plutarco Elías Calles (Obregón's military successor to the presidency), see Vasconcelos, *Memorias*, 141 and following.

[466] Although this statement refers to Vasconcelos's later magazine *La Antorcha*, it certainly applies to *El Maestro*. Fell, "Un premier bilan," 98.

chapter of *Le Couteau entre les dents*, a 1921 pamphlet in which he exhorts intellectuals to advocate for a social and political system inspired by Soviet Russia. Chapter V, however, is a more general discussion of the egalitarian values underpinning Communism, and it does not address matters of Communist doctrine nor anything related to Russia. The translation's title can be read as an attempt to equate those vague, positive values with Communist dogma and to link this with the pacifist internationalism formulated in Rolland's and Barbusse's manifestos, while avoiding references to Russia. The translation states, for instance, that

> la exacta doctrina revolucionaria […] coloca a todos los ciudadanos en condiciones idénticas de la vida colectiva: iguales recursos e iguales obligaciones delante del trabajo; iguales condiciones en la instrucción, igual participación en la dirección de los negocios comunales, y […] suprime […] todas las superioridades preestablecidas del hombre sobre el hombre.[467]

In comparison, other chapters offer more detailed and concrete accounts of the Soviet system and of the author's beliefs. Chapter VII, for instance, heavily criticises Christian communism, reaffirming the strictly rational grounds of Communist doctrine.[468] It is no wonder that this passage did not make Vasconcelos's cut, as the last part of this section will demonstrate.

This general idea of social justice is also found in Henry George's "La injusticia de las condiciones sociales." In this chapter of *Social Problems* published in issue II.1, the US economist argues against theories that explain social inequality as the natural result of differences in skill and/or effort. He uses the metaphor of military hierarchy to illustrate this well-accepted idea, before disproving it through a series of examples of great fortunes that were not created through effort nor work.[469] George denounces the fact that enrichment is often based on land ownership (the value of which increases in

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467 *El Maestro* III.3:62 [304].

468 Barbusse, *Le Couteau entre les dents*, 62-63.

469 George refers to a generic individual who works hard and earns little as "no […] más que un soldado raso en las filas de gran ejército de la industria, […] El otro es el organizador, el general, que guía y maneja la gran máquina completa, […] y sus grandes remuneraciones son únicamente proporcionadas al compararlas con las más altas y arduas potestades que ejerce y con la mucha mayor importancia de las funciones que desempeña." *El Maestro* II.1:48-49 [50-51].

time without requiring any labour) and monopoly. The latter is particularly relevant to Mexico, where one of the Revolution's aims was to fight against (foreign) monopolies in the country's economy, from energy companies to land ownership. The text emphasises the necessity to change the general outlook on wealth distribution as well as its legal framework to avoid perpetuating social inequality.

A telling feature of the translation is the removal of three short paragraphs, one of which criticises (amongst others) the Standard Oil Company.[470] This US company held the oil sales monopoly in Mexico before the country became a producer, at which point it strove to take part in the booming production.[471] It is rumoured to have financed Carranza in the hope of securing concessions after his victory. Although this has not been proven, the Standard Oil Company certainly had sizeable interests in the 1920s Mexican oil industry.[472] This was a strategic sector for Obregón's government, which sought to regain foreign investors' trust, and whose revenue was partly based on oil taxes. In fact, those accounted for almost a quarter of the government's income in 1921, when George's text was published.[473] Despite the truthfulness of the economist's claims and their relevance to the Mexican case, they were omitted, likely as part of a concrete negotiation prompted by the tension between political ideals and pragmatism regarding sources of income at the periphery of the global capitalist economy.

Similarly, George's rejection of anti-capitalism was toned down, although for opposite reasons. While the translation maintains, along with the original, that the opinion according to which "capital" is "a public enemy" and wealth acquisition should be "arbitrarily restrict[ed]" is counterproductive, it omits the following sentence: "Capital is a good; the capitalist is a helper, if he is not also a monopolist."[474] This

470 "So, likewise, of the great fortunes which the Pacific railroads have created. They have been made by lobbying through profligate donations of lands, bonds and subsidies, […] by monopolizing and gouging. And so of fortunes made by such combinations as the Standard Oil Company." George, *Social Problems*, 74.

471 Grieb, "Standard Oil and the Financing," 60.

472 Interestingly, the "only direct evidence of financial aid," as Kenneth Grieb shows, is a telegram addressed to none other than Vasconcelos (who, in 1914, represented Carranza in the United States). Grieb, "Standard Oil and the Financing," 67.

473 Haber, Maurer and Razo, "When the Law," 17.

474 George, *Social Problems*, 77.

reflects the government's own ideological negotiation, aimed at reassuring investors while not losing the support of more radical agrarian and labour groups. This resulted in the articulation of an alternative kind of socialism that was "orientad[o] a buscar la armonía y la conciliación de las clases," which is clear in the president's definition of this ideology: "el socialismo lleva como mira principal tender la mano a los de abajo para buscar un mayor equilibrio entre el capital y el trabajo."[475] In the first half of the 1920s, Obregón sought to make concessions to peasant and workers organisations to maintain his alliance with them and consolidate his government.[476] He resumed the reforms that were not carried through by Carranza, including the application of article 123 of the 1917 Constitution (relative to workers' rights), and accelerating the pace of the agrarian reform. These policies were not, however, anti-capitalist. Rather, the government endeavoured to attract foreign capital while ensuring certain improvements in the lower classes' working and living conditions. The importance of foreign investment for the Mexican economy was made very clear by Obregón and featured in *El Maestro* on various occasions. Meanwhile, peasant and workers movements became increasingly organised, creating instances of representation such as parties (e.g., the *Partido Nacional Agrarista* [PNA]) and syndicates, which became relevant political actors. The situation called for a degree of populism in Obregón's discourse and policies —a "radicalismo verbal"[477] reflected in *El Maestro*'s most political contributions. While the government's populism was mostly aimed at co-opting radical critics, it is unclear whether the magazine contributed to this strategy or actually tried to point to government shortcomings by establishing a more radical line.

This radicalism is visible in texts such as H. G. Wells's "This misery of boots," translated by member of parliament Manlío Fabio Altamirano. The representative of Misantla (Veracruz) had been a rural teacher and was close to agrarian and labour movements. Both the translator and chosen piece are indicative of the presence, in *El Maestro*, of the more radical sectors of revolutionary politics. The text has an epigraph

475 Obregón, quoted in Tamayo, "Ejes constitutivos del obregonismo," 41.
476 Tamayo, "Ejes constitutivos del obregonismo," 32.
477 Tamayo, "Ejes constitutivos del obregonismo," 40.

by France stating that it is "una de las más perfectas exposiciones del socialismo," pointing to the left wing of the *Clarté* movement, to which Wells was close. In "This misery of boots," the English writer, using shoes as a metaphor of social condition, tackles the questions of private property and revolution.

Unlike other affirmations of Socialist doctrine in *El Maestro*, this pamphlet insists on the abolition of private property: "si tuviese que dar un consejo a un camarada socialista, le diría: ʿentrégate a la idea simple y esencial del socialismo que es *la abolición de la propiedad privada de todo aquello que un hombre no haya ganado o fabricado...*'"[478] For Wells, given that not everyone can enjoy shoes in which they are comfortable (read: the social condition of part of the population makes them miserable), the state has a mission to provide suitable footwear for all citizens (read: fight inequality), for which it is bound to abolish private property, since this is what makes massive, quality shoe production unsustainable (read: inherently fosters social injustice). In other words, the solution is "que el Estado desposesione de la tierra, de los ferrocarriles, de los buques, y de otras muchas grandes empresas, a sus propietarios, que no usan de ellas sino para extraer de la comunidad del pueblo los medios de hacer estériles gastos privados,"[479] and this (ideally) without compensation. Subsequently, Wells argues that there cannot be Socialism without a proper revolution and a complete change of social organisation; timid reformism will not do, and he criticises the "socialistas a medias, o mejor dicho, individuos que se titulan socialistas" who settle for less, betraying the movement. In his translator's words, "no se puede cambiar el mundo, y al mismo tiempo no cambiarlo."[480] Again, there is a careful ambiguity as to whether this is a critique of Obregón's government and its middle ground, or an endorsement of its radical discourse.

478 *El Maestro* III.4-5:53 [417] (author's emphasis).
479 *El Maestro* III.4-5:48 [412].
480 *El Maestro* III.4-5:51 [415].

The single tax as solution to the agrarian question (Henry George and his disciple Lev Tolstoy)

Despite isolated occurrences of radicalism, *El Maestro*'s position on economic policy was usually more moderate and revolved around the specific question of land ownership (rather than private property as a whole). Following Henry George and Lev Tolstoy, it is consistently argued that land ownership is damaging and needs to be abolished to achieve a more just society. For both authors, land ownership is essentially unjust since it does not proceed from individual merit, being often inherited or acquired through questionable means, as George illustrates in *Social Problems*. This position overlaps only minimally with Bolshevik policies; it is more focused and moderate overall (coinciding with the need to preserve foreign economic activity within Mexico) yet more radical than *obregnonista* reforms. The fact that *El Maestro* problematises the question of property through two nineteenth-century intellectuals who, although influential for Socialist thinkers, were not Socialists themselves, denotes the magazine's attempts to avoid dogmatism and party politics alike.

Land ownership is examined in great detail in *El Maestro*, from the basic implications of the very notion of property, to specific policies and particulars of the Mexican agrarian reform. The former is done in the translation of a chapter from George's *Progress and Poverty*, where he discusses land ownership from the perspective of ethics. In "The injustice of private property in land," he defines two types of individual property: that which results from man's effort and labour (and, hence, is acceptable) and that which does not. The only justified form of property is that of what is man-made, for "Nature acknowledges no ownership or control in man save as the result of exertion. In no other way can her treasures be drawn forth, her powers directed, or her forces utilized or controlled […] She recognizes no claim but that of labor..."[481] This is particularly relevant in the Mexican context of growing extractivism and the calls for the nationalisation of natural resources.

[481] George, *Progress and Poverty*, 327.

Undoubtedly, George's text is an indirect comment on land reform, especially given its juxtaposition with Lauro Caloca's "Frente a frente." This article, by an agrarian revolutionary and member of the PNA, addresses "el problema más serio del país, es decir: el problema agrario"[482] and the widespread resistance that it sparked. Caloca, who worked with Vasconcelos on the development of rural education, posits the land question as the central stake of the Revolution and number one demand of the people. Although he offers a different solution to George's ("la pequeña propiedad," i.e., the distribution of small plots of land that become the peasants' property—an option which Tolstoy opposed in Russia),[483] Caloca defends the legitimacy of such a demand on the same grounds as the US thinker, for he considers land as "lo que le pertenece [al pueblo] por derecho divino, por derecho natural, fuentes supremas de todos los derechos."[484] Caloca also denounces Constitutionalist parliamentary representatives for blocking Antonio Díaz-Soto y Gama's attempt to legislate against the hacienda system.[485] This suggests that *El Maestro* did in fact articulate a position that was critical of the state's take on agrarian reform, hinting at the insufficiency of governmental action.

The reflection on land ownership was developed further by Tolstoy, who was a notorious exponent of Georgist thought and its single-tax system.[486] Tolstoy's "Letters on Henry George," translated in the same issue, explain how George's single tax addresses the injustice of land ownership. In addition to the abolition of private property of the land, he suggested that men who wanted to occupy or work the land should pay a tax proportional to the quantity and quality of the land they exploit, so that benefits generated by the use of natural resources can be shared with the whole society. Besides explaining this idea and backing it with Tolstoy's enormous symbolic capital, this translation adds to the debate around the agrarian question articulated in this issue of *El Maestro*, pointing the finger at the government's hypocrisy:

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482 *El Maestro* II.2:58 [172].
483 Wenzer, "Tolstoy's Georgist Spiritual Political Economy," 654-655.
484 *El Maestro* II.2:59 [173].
485 Formerly a *zapatista*, Díaz-Soto y Gama was the founder and first leader of the PNA, and the president of the Chamber of Deputies' first Agrarian Committee.
486 Wenzer, "Tolstoy's Georgist Spiritual Political Economy."

> El gobierno y las clases dominantes, conocedores de que la cuestión de la tierra está íntimamente entrelazada con su ventajosa situación en la sociedad, fingen el mayor celo por el interés de los pueblos, fundan cajas obreras, nombran inspectores del trabajo, crean impuestos sobre la renta, llegan al extremo de establecer la jornada de ocho horas, pero nada dicen de la cuestión territorial...[487]

Obregón's attempts to reconcile the interests of foreign investors and those of Mexican workers (in addition to his own and his collaborators') correspond to the attitude denounced by Tolstoy; the fact that the 1917 Constitution introduced the 8-hour working day in Mexico is an interesting coincidence. Whether Vasconcelos shared this opinion or not is impossible to determine, but the inclusion of other critiques of a similar nature, in *El Maestro*, suggests that he might. In "La ilustración de las masas," for instance, Dionisio Montelongo Jr wrote that "los hombres de poder, antes de llegar a él, son sostenedores, a veces, de grandes ideas de justicia; pero obtenido, o las olvidan o transigen uniéndose con la clase social más poderosa, aún en contra de la justicia misma."[488] The government listens to the demands of the masses out of opportunism, a self-interest that makes politicians unsuited to lead the country, according to Montelongo, because it subordinates them to the uninformed will of the masses, unlike intellectuals who can present objective evidence and educate the people accordingly.

The single tax as a superior solution to the problem of social inequality is evoked again just a couple of months later, in another text by Tolstoy. In this article, eloquently titled "La única solución posible de la cuestión agraria," Tolstoy explains the idea in more detail, describing the concrete measures proposed by George, their benefits, and their implementation. In spite of this active militancy in favour of the single tax, it was never retained by the Mexican government.

Despite some diverging opinions on the question of property, *El Maestro* mostly advocates for George's single tax (which is not in itself anti-capitalist), rather than a more radical solution such as Wells's and the expropriations practised in Soviet Russia. The translation of George's and Tolstoy's writings on the subject were key in the

[487] *El Maestro* II.2:78-79 [192-193]
[488] *El Maestro* I.4:41 [363].

articulation of this position. With six texts of his authorship and three that he edited (the instalments of peasant Bondarev's "El trabajo según la Biblia"), Tolstoy was the most translated author in *El Maestro*.[489] One of his contributions touches on Latin American politics (under the title "Tolstoy y el porvenir de la América Latina"), and he was a personal favourite of Vasconcelos's, as Jaime Torres Bodet later remembered.[490] He thus appears as a guiding figure in the magazine, which even featured his portrait on the cover of its last issue (Fig. 3.1).

In Tolstoy's footsteps: social utopia and Christian beliefs

The cover illustration mentioned above is a reproduction of Ilya Repin's 1901 painting titled "Leo Tolstoy Barefoot." The depiction of Tolstoy as a wise and ascetic patriarch is representative of the writer's image in *El Maestro.* In it, the agrarian component is central, as is the sense that the Russian writer is, above all, a spiritual guide for those who seek social justice. Tolstoy's attire in the picture (a typical peasant shirt) corresponds to what he would wear at Yasnaya Polyana, his countryside estate where he worked the land alongside peasants. The book protruding from his pocket can be seen as representing instruction in general, or the Bible more specifically. His contemplative attitude is indicative, according to Repin, of a moment of prayer.[491] Tolstoy is thus represented "as a wanderer or apostle."[492] This depiction on *El Maestro*'s cover establishes him as the apostle of a new way of combining social justice and Christian faith.

In line with Tolstoyan thought, religion is central in the magazine's discourse on

[489] That is, if we consider the number of independent contributions. If page space is counted alone, then William Swinton, with ten chapters of his *Outlines of the World's History* spread throughout the magazine, is the most represented.

[490] According to him, Vasconcelos "profesaba […] una admiración sin reserva para Tolstoi. Mandó a inscribir su apellido en el friso de su despacho." Quoted in Moraga, "Las ideas pedagógicas," 1353.

[491] Petrova, "Personal Religiousness," 165.

[492] Petrova, "Personal Religiousness," 165.

social justice and reform.[493] Both Tolstoy's and George's approaches to land ownership ultimately rested on religious foundations: in George's (translated) words, “si estamos todos aquí por igual permiso del Creador, estamos con un derecho igual al disfrute de su munificencia, con un derecho igual al uso de lo que la naturaleza ofrece tan imparcialmente.”[494] Vasconcelos repeatedly suggested that this combination of Christian faith and fight against economic inequality is at the core of the Mexican revolutionary project. Already in his opening manifesto, he asserted his conviction that “sólo la justicia absoluta, la justicia amorosa y cristiana puede servir de base para reorganizar a los pueblos.”[495]

This imbrication of Christian ideals and social justice is even found in Obregón's 1923 letter to Archbishops Mora y del Río and Ruiz, published in *El Maestro*. Arguably, this is a very specific instance of governmental diplomacy (as a response to the outcry of the Church's hierarchy against the expulsion of Apostolic delegate Ernesto Filippi from Mexico) and not a general statement of policy. It is, nonetheless, noteworthy that Obregón would suggest that “el actual programa social del Gobierno emanado de la Revolución, es esencialmente cristiano y es un complemento del programa fundamental de la Iglesia Católica.”[496] The only problem, according to the letter, “radica principalmente en los métodos distintos que aplican [los miembros de la Iglesia] entre sus teorías y sus prácticas.”[497] It is therefore not Christian ideas that Obregón opposes, but the Church's practices.

This critique of the Church as an institution is an essential component of *El Maestro'*s take on religion, which centres on the values represented by Jesus Christ and the Bible's teachings, much as Tolstoy did. For this reason, allusions to the early Christians are rife, pointing to an ideal time when Christianity was not yet institutionalised and thereby denatured. Vasconcelos thus affirmed to a student assembly

493 As Fell explained, “dentro de esta 'herencia' [del proyecto educativo liberal encarnado por Justo Sierra], Vasconcelos da un lugar preponderante a lo espiritual, sin por ello soslayar lo social.” Fell, *José Vasconcelos*, 504.
494 *El Maestro* II.2:52 [166].
495 *El Maestro* I.1:2 [6].
496 *El Maestro* III.3:9 [251].
497 *El Maestro* III.3:10 [252].

that they were witnessing the start of "una edad comparable solamente a la de los primeros siglos del cristianismo, cuando se resolvieron los problemas del alma y se dejaron sentadas las bases de una justicia social verdadera."[498] By contrast, the clergy is associated with greed and exploitation. In his address to the students, Vasconcelos delved on the institution's role in Mexican history, and especially in the betrayal of the Independence process and the replacement of colonial order by new forms of oppression and injustice.[499] In an interview with a US newspaper, Vasconcelos summarised this point, stating that the clergy is "reaccionario y capitalista."[500] The translation of Tolstoy's writings about the agrarian question concur on this point, writing about the prolonged injustice of land ownership that "la religión la bendice y la ciencia político-económica prueba que debe ser así para el mejor bien de los hombres,"[501] His authorial figure itself also represents the dissociation between so-called true Christian values and institutional religion, given his 1901 excommunication from the Russian Orthodox Church.

Jesus's figure is also adapted to the revolutionary agenda as, for instance, in Obregón's letter to the archbishops, where he wrote that Christ was "el socialista más grande que haya conocido hasta ahora la Humanidad."[502] Less populist expressions of this also had a place in the magazine, as evidenced in two translations: "Diez capítulos de la historia de Cristo," originally by Giovanni Papini, and Tolstoy's "En donde está el amor, ahí está Dios." *Storia di Cristo* is a 1921 rewriting of the Gospels arising from Papini's conversion to Catholicism, after years professing atheism. It covers Jesus's whole life and is aimed at reconnecting with him, by way of offering a more accessible version of the story than the New Testament. In fact, Papini presents his work as a translation of the Gospels.[503] In *El Maestro*, only a small portion of the text is translated into Spanish, spanning the years from Jesus's birth to his early adulthood. In line with

498 *El Maestro* II.1:8 [10].
499 *El Maestro* II.1:9 [11].
500 *El Maestro* III.1:25 [27].
501 *El Maestro* II.2:78 [192].
502 *El Maestro* III.3:10 [252].
503 For Papini, "nessun tempo fu, come questo, tanto diviso da Cristo e così bisognoso di Cristo. Ma per ritrovarlo, non bastano i vecchi libri. […] Bisogna *ritradurre*, per aiuto dei persi, l'antico Evangelo." Papini, *Storia di Cristo*, XIII (my emphasis).

the magazine's general philosophy, the narrative insists on Jesus's humble origins, explaining for example that "un verdadero Establo, no es el alegre pórtico ligero que los pintores cristianos han edificado al Hijo de David. […] es sólo: cuatro muros toscos, un empedrado sucio, un techo de viguetas y lámina. El verdadero Establo es obscuro, sucio, maloliente," or that "Jesús fué un Obrero e hijo adoptivo de un Obrero: […] nació Pobre, entre gente […] que ganaba su pan con el trabajo de las Manos, y […] él se ganó el Pan cotidiano."[504] This is fundamental, for, as the translation concludes, "el oficio le enseñó que vivir significa transformar las cosas muertas e inútiles en cosas útiles y vivas; […] que para salvar, en suma, es necesario cambiar."[505] Thus, redemption becomes incompatible with a conservative agenda. Ingenieros, too, characterises Jesus as a free spirit and an advocate for change: "Cristo fué hereje contra la rutina, contra la ley y contra el dogma de su pueblo."[506]

The transformative potential of Jesus's message of love is further illustrated in "En donde está el amor, ahí está Dios," published in issue III.3. This short story by Tolstoy recounts how a sad and bitter shoemaker finds love again by reading the Bible and, as a result, spreading good. This text echoes Wells's "This misery of boots" in its opening and setting, but offers a radically different conclusion, which is key for *El Maestro*'s editorial line. At the beginning of his essay, Wells writes:

> A very considerable part of my childhood was spent in an underground kitchen; the window opened upon a bricked-in space, surmounted by a grating […] So that, when I looked out […], instead of seeing—as children of a higher upbringing would do—the heads and bodies of people, I saw their under side. I got acquainted indeed with all sorts of social types as boots simply, […] and only subsequently, and with care, have I fitted heads, bodies, and legs to these pediments.[507]

Tolstoy's story, in turn, starts as follows (in *El Maestro*'s translation):

> Una vez había en una ciudad cierto zapatero remendón llamado Martín Avdieitch, el cual habitaba en un sótano una pieza alumbrada

504 *El Maestro* II.3:35 [261] and 46 [272].
505 *El Maestro* II.3:48 [274].
506 *El Maestro* II.3:51 [277].
507 Wells, *This Misery of Boots*, 5-6.

> por una ventana. Esta ventana daba a la calle, y por ella se veía pasar la gente; y aunque sólo se distinguían los pies de los transeúntes, Martín conocía por el calzado a cuantos cruzaban por allí.[508]

It is not impossible that the opening of Wells's essay was a reference to Tolstoy, to whom he wrote, in 1906, that he had read all his works translated into English.[509] But the intertextuality reaches another level when the two Spanish translations are purposefully included in the same magazine, whose editors cannot possibly have overlooked the similarity, thus forming a small series.

This stresses the very different solutions that both authors offer to shoe inequality (i.e., social injustice). While Wells advocated for the abolition of all private property and for revolution, Tolstoy believed in religion and, above all, love. After taking to reading the Bible and discovering the passage in which a sinful woman anoints Jesus at the house of Simon, the Pharisee,[510] Tolstoy's protagonist Martin hears God's voice telling him that he will visit him the following day, and he resolves not to be like Simon and honour God upon his visit. While waiting for his guest, Martin helps out a poor and elderly veteran, inviting him in for tea, then he shares his meal with an unemployed and penniless peasant mother and her toddler, before mediating between a young and hungry apple thief and an old, miserable, and grumpy apple vendor. At night, he sees the smiling ghosts of everyone he helped out that day, and reads the following Bible verse: "lo que habéis hecho por el más pequeño de mis hermanos es a mí a quien lo habéis hecho." He thus realises that "el Salvador había estado aquel día en su casa, y que era a Él a quien había acogido."[511] The text thus upholds two main Christian ideas: that Jesus is within everyone without discrimination,[512] and that being kind and generous is the best way to honour God. It illustrates how following Jesus's teachings, as advocated by Tolstoy as an alternative to institutional religion, can make a positive impact on society and foster social justice. In this second instance of the shoes series, *El*

508 *El Maestro* III.3:68 [310].
509 Soboleva and Wrenn, *From Orientalism to Cultural Capital*, 113; Bartlett, "Tolstoy translated."
510 Luke 7:36-50 (New International Version).
511 *El Maestro* III.3:77 [319].
512 This is also expressed in Papini's text, where Jesus tells Mary, who had been looking for him: "¿Por qué me buscáis? ¿No sabéis que yo […] no estaré jamás perdido para ninguno? […] no puedo estar perdido para ningún hombre con tal de que me tenga en el corazón." *El Maestro* II.3:46 [272].

Maestro replaces revolution by love and kindness. This can be seen as part of a generally ambivalent attitude towards revolution: although the magazine is—at least apparently—behind the government, it subtly hints at alternative forms of action that yield positive (and real) social results.

The story stresses Tolstoy's Christian-rooted idea that kindness is a solution to the social issue, but also that non-violence is better than violent revolt, even in cases of injustice. This is evident in the passage in which Martin reads quotations from the Bible, at the beginning of the story, all of which mandate how to respond to injustice along the lines of "'Da a todos lo que te pidan, y si alguno te quita lo que te pertenece, no se lo exijas.'"[513]

Reform versus revolution: Fabianism and the legitimacy of resistance

The choice of kindness over revolt, which goes hand in hand with the use of Soviet Russia as a foil rather than an example for Mexico, can be read as the culmination of the strategy employed by *El Maestro*/the SEP to distance itself from the military sectors of the government, and to offer an alternative path to social justice. As formulated in "La inmutabilidad del derecho de propiedad," by Fernando González Roa, "es un error [pensar] que sólo los bolchevistas han alterado el derecho de propiedad."[514] Giving the example of various European countries, as well as the Romans, and the Church, the author shows that private property has often been subordinated to collective interests, dissociating this idea from political radicalism. Therefore, the challenge to land ownership, in *El Maestro*, has grounds other than Marxism; its means are also different, with solutions such as the *pequeña propiedad* and the single tax.

Dissension and ambiguity in the reception of the Russian Revolution are most noticeable in discussions of violence, as illustrated by the magazine's second issue. Its

513 *El Maestro* III.3:70 [312].
514 *El Maestro* I.5-6:93 [527].

editorial section includes a note on the Russian situation, stating that "parece tratarse de una verdadera transformación de los valores sociales, llevada a cabo con la violencia necesaria y que se impone a los espíritus, como todas las renovaciones, con dificultad." While this appears as an approving remark, the end of the short text somewhat contradicts it, as, in the event of Lenin's deposition, "no nos sería posible aclarar hasta qué punto debemos regocijarnos o lamentar la inconclusión de una obra, aparentemente perniciosa."[515] Additionally, the anonymous author(s) (who acknowledge their limited understanding of the situation), lucidly point at the risk that Lenin's strict rule degenerated into dictatorship. For Vasconcelos, this is not a necessary evil: "no hay otra forma respetable de gobierno que la democrática socialista […] es la única que puede aceptar un hombre digno; la tiranía, aún fundada en el supuesto fracaso de la democracia, es una infamia."[516]

The liberticidal nature of the Bolshevik government is reaffirmed further in the same issue, this time by José Siurob. In "Orientación obrera," the general and member of parliament denounces fake Bolsheviks ("nuestros socialistas líricos y nuestros sindicalizados teorizantes, así como toda una caterva de leaders político-sociales que viven a costa de los trabajadores"[517]), arguing that, although some Soviet ideas might be valuable, they are not necessarily applicable in Mexico. For him, it is absurd to replace even flawed democracy with authoritarianism, which is the sign that change was forced upon the people rather than reached through popular action. In this way, even a good and just cause can turn out "pésima por apresurada, violenta, inconsecuente con su medio, y falta de toda premeditación y base racional y científica."[518] Violence is thus the harmful consequence of a lack of forethought and intellectual reflection. The big problem, for Siurob, is that "faltan cerebros que piensen antes de ejecutar,"[519] alluding again to the role that intellectuals are called on to play in the pursuit of a more equitable society. Montelongo, in "La ilustración de las masas," offers a similar argument. In

515 *El Maestro* II.2:2 [100].
516 Vasconcelos, quoted in Fell, *José Vasconcelos*, 102.
517 *El Maestro* I.2:47 [145].
518 *El Maestro* I.2:49 [147].
519 *El Maestro* I.2:48 [146].

Mexico, he asserts, "el movimiento es real, es justo, es moral, es cristiano; pero es violento, arrollador, colérico, con todas las nerviosidades y los grandes excesos que se observan en las reacciones contra las injusticias largamente soportadas."[520] His text focuses on the intellectuals' crucial role in channelling popular demands and directing social reform. The following passage from Siurob's article summarises his point on how to achieve social change:

> cuando hayamos dado tierras a la mayoría, cuando hayamos sostenido durante varios lustros las escuelas suficientes para la población, cuando nuestras masas de campesinos hayan aprendido a agremiarse y comprendan el por qué y el cómo de la lucha […] cuando hayan hecho lo que los primitivos cristianos, que en la obscuridad de las catacumbas robustecían su doctrina y sus anhelos […] entonces sí vayamos a la revolución social, que no será como la revolución francesa, un aleluya a la guillotina, sino una mera escaramuza en que las masas desbordantes de hombres libres venzan con sólo su presencia.[521]

Educating the people to foster reasoned, progressive reform and avoid bloodshed is paramount for Siurob. This quotation also summarises *El Maestro*'s position on the social question: in favour of bold land reform, extensive education programmes, with the indispensable reference to early Christians, as well as a critical image of the French Revolution and a general aversion to violence.

El Maestro's preference for reform over revolution is expressed in various instances. In terms of author choice, it manifests as a certain partiality for representatives of British literature who were members of the Fabian Society, like Wells and George Bernard Shaw. One of the ideological tenets of Fabianism was the gradual and democratic path to Socialism. Thus, even the most politically radical exponents of left-wing thought in *El Maestro* were not advocates of revolution.

Although Shaw would later grow frustrated with the little results yielded by this strategy and embrace Stalinism, his 1920 lecture on Soviet Russia, of which an extract was translated in *El Maestro*'s first issue, represents an earlier and less unequivocal

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520 *El Maestro* I.4:42 [364].

521 The French Revolution was also criticised by Torres Bodet, who condemned the "arbitrarias exaltaciones jacobinas" and "gestos hipócritas de Robespierre." *El Maestro* I.1:31 [35].

stage of his response to the Russian Revolution. Shaw's characteristic sarcasm, added to the translator's seemingly approximative command of English, do not make for a very definite interpretation of this text. It can be said, though, that it is at the very least ambiguous, and as such, a good example of the reception of Bolshevism in *El Maestro*. For Shaw, Lenin's politics are a questionable yet pragmatic solution to inequality. In his words, the Revolution "may have been an atrocity, but it was a jolly practical atrocity."[522] While the text denotes an uneasiness with methods that are presented as undemocratic and merciless, Shaw acknowledges that, unlike his own measured, democratic approach, they give actual results. Revolution and Bolshevism thus appear as a potentially necessary evil, although Shaw seems reluctant to admit it overtly and still situates himself on the side of democracy. Vasconcelos valued this position, as he affirmed that the British Labour party was the political entity that offered "mayores esperanzas, porque luchan por resolver el problema económico. Sin caer en el crimen de la dictadura."[523] Thus, despite a somewhat unclear statement, the general line of *El Maestro* favours legality over violent uprising.

This preference for reform over revolution is underpinned by a more general exploration of the possible responses to injustice. Besides the Biblical quotations from Tolstoy's story mentioned earlier, the notion that responding to injustice with another injustice (e.g., a violent action) is illegitimate is thematised on numerous occasions: in Plato's *Crito*, where Socrates argues against his escape from the prison in which he is awaiting his unjust execution,[524] in Gandhi's similar attitude at his 1922 sedition trial,[525] as well as in children's stories such as "El violín mágico," by the Brothers Grimm. In this anti-Semitic tale, a selfless young boy obtains compensation from his avaricious and unfair Jewish employer (who refused to pay him) by making him dance irresistibly

522 Shaw, "Russian Frightfulness," 86.

523 Vasconcelos, quoted in Fell, *José Vasconcelos*, 102.

524 For Socrates, one must not "volver injusticia por injusticia, como cree el vulgo, pues aunque a uno se la hagan no hay que hacerla." *El Maestro* II.1:41 [43] and following.

525 Per Gandhi's speech, "la no cooperación aplicada violentamente sirve únicamente para multiplicar los males, y […] como el mal puede sostenerse solamente por medio de la violencia, el retiro de la ayuda de las cosas malas requiere una abstención completa de toda violencia. La no violencia implica una sumisión voluntaria al castigo por no cooperar con el mal. Yo estoy aquí, por lo tanto, para someterme a la pena máxima que pueda aplicárseme"*El Maestro* II.6:58-59 [588-589].

in a thorny bush, with the help of his magical violin. The employer then falsely accuses him of stealing, and he narrowly escapes execution by involving the judge in a frenzied and exhausting dance. This leads to the employer confessing his own stealing and being executed instead. In the original, the Jew in the thorny bush is not the employer, but stands, rather, as the symbolic representative of all greediness and exploitation. While the translation retains some of this anti-Semitism (the employer is described as an "usurero" and a "judío"),[526] the fact that the boy obtains justice against him specifically shifts the story's focus. Rather than a revenge against the perceived ills caused by Jews, the story presented in *El Maestro* is about getting justice and compensation for exploitative work conditions. Notably, the boy does so through music rather than violence, despite being in the possession of a magic blowgun that never errs. The title change, from "Der Jude im Dorn" ("The Jew in thorns") to "El violín mágico," illustrates this change in focus. Moreover, the boy seemed ready to submit to his unjust execution, and only escaped it through his art. The common trait of these texts is the idea that submitting to justice is the duty of any citizen, although she disagrees with the country's political system—she can try to change it, but without violence, as Gandhi exemplifies.[527] Ingenieros explicitly linked violence to injustice when he affirmed that "la violencia […] es un efecto de la injusticia, aunque a su vez sea injusta." The Argentine went further than others in justifying a violent response to social inequality, although he maintained a certain scepticism: "oponer la violencia a la violencia puede ser un mal necesario, pero es transitoriamente una agravación del mal; sólo es un bien si de ella surge un nuevo estado de equilibrio fundado en mayor justicia."[528] To this affirmation, *El Maestro* seems to oppose the observation that the government's action is

[526] *El Maestro* II.3:91 [317].
Interestingly, anti-Semitism is present in Vasconcelos's own political positioning, for instance when he refers to his *callista* opponents as "la pandilla izquierdo-judeo-yanquizante." Vasconcelos, *Memorias*, 167.

[527] The Indian leader's attitude is explicitly presented as an alternative to armed violence and revolution: "hay mucha gente en la India que desea la lucha a mano armada […] la teoría de Gandhi contraria a la revuelta y su maravilloso poder personal han impedido un levantamiento. Aun los revolucionarios extremos esperan la ocasión de ver si pueden triunfar las teorías contrarias a la violencia." *El Maestro* II.6:53 [583].

[528] *El Maestro* II.4-5:77 [417].

not sufficient to justify violence. Vasconcelos's personal position on this question, in 1923, is clear: “las únicas figuras que admiro son las que están desprovistas de sangre y de lucro, como Tagore y Gandhi.”[529]

El Maestro *on the tightrope*

El Maestro's ideological position is firmly inscribed in the revolutionary context. It embraced change, upholding big parts of the government's new social agenda and endeavouring to redefine the intellectuals' role in this process. In this, it clearly differs from *Pegaso*, yet this does not make it a mere representative of the government's ideas. The magazine actively sought to promote its own version of what revolutionary culture and politics should be, albeit in sometimes ambiguous or roundabout ways, as the editors were constantly treading the fine line between supporting the government's action and pointing out its limitations and articulating a better alternative. It fostered a sense that the *obregonista* administration was not fulfilling its social promise and that a civilian government, led by intellectuals, would provide a more balanced, earnest, and effective programme to achieve social justice, based on pacifism, education, legislative reform, and a somewhat mystic understanding of Christianism.

This negotiation relied heavily on a vast corpus of translations. In fact, with an average of seven translated contributions per issue and over 500 cumulated pages of translated materials (corresponding to almost a third of the periodical's total page space), *El Maestro* contains the highest proportion of translation amongst the publications studied in this thesis (Fig. 3.2). Its project for greater equity is an aggregate of different foreign approaches to social justice, oscillating between two (mostly) pacifist, interrelated intellectual constellations: the political one, linked to Socialism and incarnated in the magazine by Shaw, Wells, Barbusse, France, and Maxim Gorky, and

[529] Vasconcelos, quoted in Fell, *José Vasconcelos*, 102 note 58.

the more spiritual one, represented by Tolstoy, Tagore, Selma Lagerlöf, Gandhi, and Chilean Gabriela Mistral, who was working with Vasconcelos at the time. These intellectuals notoriously sustained fruitful exchanges and were involved in shared enterprises (Gorky, Lagerlöf, and Tagore, for instance, signed the *Clarté* manifesto that was translated in *El Maestro* and Wells sat on the *Clarté* magazine's steering committee). They were imported into *El Maestro* as a network, brought together by Rolland's unifying figure. Both Vasconcelos and Mistral had read Rolland's biography of Tolstoy,[530] and Vasconcelos affirmed, around 1916, that he had followed Rolland's writings "como se sigue a un guía o a un maestro."[531] He later distanced himself from this guiding figure due to his atheism and support of the Soviet Union. It could be argued that this is already visible in *El Maestro*, where Rolland appears as a founding figure in the first issue's double manifesto, before fading away and being replaced by more spiritual models such as Tolstoy. *El Maestro* thus articulated an alternative form of socialism which was strongly rooted in religious feeling and the land.[532] The choice to focus on land ownership, through figures such as George and Tolstoy, who were not Socialist and predate the Third International, resonates strongly with the Mexican context while removing the debate from the dogmatism of the period's politics.[533]

Given these elements, Obregón's decision to cut the funds allocated to *El Maestro* in 1923 does not appear completely unfounded. While Vasconcelos's attempts to promote civilian government were unsuccessful,[534] he played a crucial role in the promotion of literature, the expansion of the Mexican readership, and the diversification of the literary traditions with which national culture was engaging symbolically. He also contributed to a certain continuity with previous forms of literary activity, despite some ideological divergences, as the following conclusion demonstrates. Finally, his (relative) anti-elitism is also worth mentioning as one element that paved the way for the rise of

530 Moraga, "Las ideas pedagógicas," 1352.
531 Quoted in Moraga, "Las ideas pedagógicas," 1386 note 89.
532 The importance of nature—an overarching theme in the magazine—feeds into this and would deserve a study of its own.
533 Interestingly, they are the only figures used in *El Maestro*'s political negotiation not to be contemporary.
534 Mexico would have to wait until Miguel Alemán in the mid-1940s to have a civilian president.

colloquial poetics in the second half of the 1920s.

Closing remarks on translation as ideological negotiation

From WWI to the Russian Revolution, the European events of the 1910s had many ramifications in Latin America. Chapters 2 and 3 have shown that, rather than merely *impacting* a passive Mexican audience, they were appropriated by cultural agents and reworked in ways that allowed them to intervene in local public debate and outline the kind of society and artistic scene that they envisioned for the future. This fundamentally changes our understanding of some periodicals of the revolutionary years, by bringing into focus the centrality of ideological negotiation in their editorial lines.

In a clear context of "lucha de las ideas,"[535] various projects competed for hegemony in a changing cultural field, prompting different negotiations depending on their circumstances. Re-establishing literary practices such as magazine publishing, after years of interruption and in a new political landscape, entailed re-negotiating relationships within the field of power all over again, given the literary field's *relative* autonomy (especially in Latin America).[536] The negotiations in which *Pegaso* and *El Maestro* were engaged therefore concerned the re-definition of the bases of literary activity, the role of writers and intellectuals, and their relationship with the state. They defended different levels of literary autonomy, and *El Maestro* attempted to establish cultural capital over military capital in the field of power. Although neither prevailed, their belief in the transformative power of art and certain elements of their poetics would live on in later projects that formulated alternatives to official culture (such as Contemporáneos, whose older members gravitated around Gonzáez Martínez in the late 1910s and early 1920s,[537] and who also worked on various of Vasconcelos's initiatives). This is how the literary field "construye los términos ideológicos de su propia autonomía relativa y su posición crítica, y se empieza a pensar como lugar de emergencia de contranarrativas."[538]

535 Vasconcelos, *El Maestro* II.1:8 [10].
536 Bourdieu, "Le champ littéraire," 6-7.
537 Sheridan, "La *Revista Nueva*," 108.
538 Sánchez Prado, "Vanguardia y campo literario, 187-188.

The magazines' images of WWI and the Russian Revolutions were instrumental in these negotiations, allowing the editors to make subtle and indirect but compelling cases for their vision of the place of literature in post-revolutionary society. *Pegaso* saw the Great War as a legitimate and heroic attempt to save a form of culture which they represented in Mexico. For *El Maestro*, by contrast, WWI was a great catastrophe for humankind, but also an opportunity to rebuild the world on better bases, a task which should not be left to military leaders.

These dissimilar purposes (conservation versus transformation) confirm that *Pegaso* and *El Maestro* correspond to different phases in the re-establishment of the Mexican literary field. They are also due to the fact that both periodicals were run by distinct groups of people, despite sharing some contributors. Indeed, while González Martínez and Rebolledo started publishing in the early 1900s, Vasconcelos's public career was inseparable from his revolutionary aspirations. This is not a merely chronological distinction; the editors' *habiti* were radically different. The re-configuration of the figure and function of intellectuals therefore derives, in *Pegaso*, from the Porfirian tradition, while *El Maestro* offers a more revolutionary position. These antagonistic perspectives are also reflected in the attitudes towards social order: *El Maestro*'s strong case in favour of change contrasts with *Pegaso*'s notion of abnegation, which supports *status quo* and the perpetuation of hierarchies of exploitation.

Another relevant variation between the two magazines is the geographic provenance of translated texts. *Pegaso* followed its professed Francophilia, in line with *modernista* tradition, and translated mostly French authors. German writers were of course vetted. *El Maestro*, in turn, opted for a more varied panel. Translations of tales by the Brothers Grimm brought back German literature, and it is the first time, in my corpus, that translations from English outnumber those from French.[539] Thus, *El Maestro* operated the first break with French precedence in in-translation, illustrating the progressive erosion of the hegemonic position of nineteenth-century French culture

[539] 45% of translations in *El Maestro* were made from English, against only 20% from French.

in Mexican intellectual life. Although this process had already started in the *Revista Moderna*, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, it appears to have been greatly accelerated by WWI. Even as an exponent of *latinidad*, Vasconcelos did not give as much importance to French culture as his predecessors.[540]

The last relevant difference between both magazines is the degree of manipulation of the translations. Where *El Maestro*'s political line is established through the inclusion of ideologically congruent figures (as indicated by their belonging to one broad network), *Pegaso* sometimes included dissenting figures, having to modify the texts considerably to make them fit ideologically.

Despite these fundamental differences, continuities can be observed between the magazines' editorial lines. These stem from certain overlaps in their cultural adscriptions, in particular their relation to the humanistic project of the *Ateneo*, which both González Martínez and Vasconcelos presided in the first half of the 1910s. The importance given to classical heritage is one of the shared characteristics, albeit with nuances. In *Pegaso*, it fulfils a mostly symbolic role as a set of aesthetic references and a marker of cultural *distinction*,[541] maintaining a continuity with the *modernista* conception of literature and the bygone cultural order. In *El Maestro*, by contrast, this form of elitism is less marked, and we observe, instead, a more concrete engagement with the democratic tradition of Ancient Greece (e.g. in the relatively lengthy translations of Plato's *Crito* and part of his *Republic*), as well as a commitment to democratise access to this tradition.[542]

The importance of religion is another shared element, again with certain nuances. This stands in contrast to Lugones's "La viga en el ojo," mentioned in my introduction to Part II, which attributed Europe's violent and martial propensities to its

[540] "Seguimos creyendo en una latinidad de savia española y de alcance universal […] Y si en esta empresa no nos desentendemos del todo de Francia es justamente porque Francia sigue contando con espíritus como el de [Rolland], que ponen ejemplo de universalismo fecundo." Vasconcelos quoted in Moraga, "Las ideas pedagógicas," 1367 note 53.

[541] Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

[542] The recurring adverts for the SEP's "traducciones directas del griego" of Homer's, Aeschylus's, Euripides's, and Plato's works are another indicator of *El Maestro*'s endeavour to foster direct engagement with classic literature and thought. These appear on the inside page of the back-covers, starting with issue II.1.

Christian roots.[543] Far from this critical stance, negotiations around the place of Christian religion in literature and in society at large occupied a non-negligible proportion of both *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*. Although *Pegaso*'s editors had already adopted a slightly "alternative" approach to Catholic faith (through the various literary re-elaborations of biblical episodes and the perspective from the "margins" of the official canon), this was much more accentuated in *El Maestro*, with the radical re-signification of Christian values from the angle of social justice. Unlike *Pegaso*, which remained mostly dogmatic, *El Maestro* embraced overtly heterodox ideas and bypassed the Church altogether. While the seeds of a reaction against the Church's institution (or its pretence) can be glimpsed in the inclusion, in *Pegaso*, of Bertrand's "Padre Pugnaccio," this critique is much more systematic, explicit, and frontal in *El Maestro*.

While in *Pegaso*, religion is a collective epic, in *El Maestro* it represents a personal practice linked to the responsibility to improve as a person and make society better for everyone. Consequently, sacrifice is central in *Pegaso*'s religious thought and barely mentioned in *El Maestro*. In fact, in Obregón's own words, it is an unhelpful and undesirable concept: while the Church "nutre el espíritu y lo prepara para el sacrificio," the revolutionary government's effort for greater equality "nutre el estómago, el cerebro y el espíritu, para *evitar el sacrificio.*"[544] The notion of collective redemption follows a similar logic. In *Pegaso*, it is attained through sacrifice on the battlefield and military victories, whereas in *El Maestro*, it results from a more just and peaceful society (itself achieved through education). As Vasconcelos suggested in his speech to the student assembly, "los hombres de hoy no nos cruzamos de brazos ante el desastre de los pueblos, sino que buscamos […] el camino de su redención."[545] The link between literature and religion is therefore perpetuated, yet radically redefined in *El Maestro.*

Ultimately, the prominence of religion in both periodicals speaks of significant cultural continuities, beyond its purpose to oppose anticlerical political leaders and

543 In contrast, "el Nuevo Mundo presupone y ya ha iniciado una nueva civilización, que reemplazará a la semibarbarie cristiana, encaminada por su propia lógica al fracaso en la inequidad y en la violencia." Lugones, "La viga," 3.

544 *El Maestro* III.3:10 [252] (my emphasis).

545 *El Maestro* II.1:8 [10].

articulate alternative projects for post-revolutionary Mexico. The most general of these is religion's long-standing role as a shaping force in Mexican culture and as an easily readable set of references. It is part of the contributors' and editors' *habiti*, while being shared with a potentially wide readership. It is therefore no surprise that it was used as a way to articulate collective identities and broad cultural projects, especially in a moment of crisis. In the context of the *década armada*, religion may thus have provided a familiar and reassuring discourse that functioned as a refuge from a harsh or confusing reality.[546] This might also be related to the periodicals' ties with *ateneísta* humanism and turn-of-the-century *latinidad* as formulated by Rodó and Darío. Indeed, as Fell notes, the latter's concept of the sub-continent's shared identity, which inspired Vasconcelos, is partly based on Catholicism ("la América católica, la América española"), emphasising the cultural contrast with the United States.[547] In addition, religion was praised by *ateneísta* thinkers in the context of a revival of metaphysics, in opposition to positivism. This echoes its use in late *modernista* poetry, where, as we have seen, religion is linked to a more genuine form of artistic expression. Therefore, the recourse to religion (and Catholicism in particular) to define cultural projects is also to be read as a direct opposition to what was perceived as the unauthentic and utilitarian nature of modern life, and to the growing influence of the United States, commonly associated with crude materialism. Chapter 5 discusses different literary takes on this debate later in the 1920s.

Finally, some similarities can be observed in *Pegaso*'s and *El Maestro*'s use of translation. The practice was at the core of both magazines' participation in the intense symbolic and political struggles that marked the cultural field of the revolutionary years, assuming a mostly utilitarian function. The texts' ideological contents took precedence over their aesthetic qualities. As an example, Verhaeren's poems in *Pegaso* were

546 Antonio Caso alludes to the stable and durable nature of religion when he defines it as an "hech[o] perenn[e]" (quoted in Trejo Villalobos, "Pensamineto filosófico de Antonio Caso," 87) and Reyes referred to its potential refuge function in the face of the moral crisis of modernity, in March 1914: "el general desconcierto, en medio del naufragio crítico, como todas las aspiraciones vagas a la vez que intensas, busca alivio en la religión." *Nosotros* I.9: 32 [620].

547 Fell, "José Vasconcelos," 92.

published along with a translator's note in the form of an epigraph: “Procuré en la traducción de estos poemas trasuntar la rudeza original del poeta que en ‘Les Ailes Rouges de la Guerre’ aparece aún mas distante de todo embellecimiento en la técnica.”[548] Frías's comment denotes his focus on content over form. It might at first appear contradictory, then, that he chose to translate Verhaeren's rhymed alexandrines, in “Au peuple allemand,” into rhymed Hispanic alexandrines, adding a layer of ornament through the alternation of *grave* and *agudo* line endings.[549] However, I would argue that this stems more from a disposition to follow compositional rules mechanically than from an interest in form and aesthetics. The fact that the translation's form corresponds to one of the most conventional (and, by 1917, worn) kind of *modernista* pattern, would tend to confirm that little thought was given to the poem's formal aspect. This is corroborated by “Au Reichstag,” in which Frías almost completely overlooks Verhaeren's formal devices, and follows, instead, a similar, regular form (rhymed alexandrines). Where the original features a progressive loss of structure, with changes in stanzaic organisation, loss of rhyme, and heterometry, to depict the progressive fall from the utopia of European harmony into the chaos of war, the translation only deviates from the pattern once, adding an extra line to a quatrain. Verhaeren's tumultuous and dramatic ending,

> Car c’est là ton crime immense, Allemagne,
> D’avoir tué atrocement
> L’idée
> Que se faisait pendant la paix,
> En notre temps,
> L’homme de l’homme.[550]

Becomes the much flatter

> ¡poque este fué, Alemania, tu delito sin nombre:
> haber asesinado atrozmente la idea
> que en el tiempo de paz se metamorfosea

548 *Pegaso* I.18:5 [2:57].
549 “¡Alemania, Alemania, será tu eterna suerte / que una horda de reyes ocupe tu valor / en la infamia y la cólera, de hermanos en la muerte / en realizar un crimen o prevaricación?” *Pegaso* I.18:5 [2:57].
550 Verhaeren, *Les ailes rouges*, 21.

en el hombre del hombre!...[551]

Frías reinstates the rhyme, and follows both the poem's initial quatrain-based structure and its regular alexandrines—the lone closing heptasyllable replicating the exact same rhythm. It thus becomes clear that the translator is concerned chiefly (if not exclusively) with the poem's message. Paradoxically, at this stage, the disinterest in form meant the persistence of rhymed, regular verse. The poetry analysed in Chapters 4 and 5 will provide a revealing contrast to this ideologically-motivated use of translation.

This shift of focus from form to content is shared by *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*. In both magazines (and throughout most of the 1910s), translation was mostly devoid of the experimental edge it had at the beginning of the century. It could be said that it was "sumergid[a] en la superior tendencia ideológica,"[552] like much of the creation of the period was, according to Reyes. Besides the polarised context, this is also a result of the fulfilment and decline of the *modernista* transformative aesthetics. As Reyes put it, "la hora de la *Revista Moderna* había pasado."[553] The decreasing proportion of poetry among translated texts, as well as the spectacular rise of other genres such as essay-writing, journalism, and political pamphlets, illustrate this renewed importance of message over form. Even in the case of poems and fictional prose, the goal was often to disseminate classic pieces and educate readers about them. *El Maestro*'s editors, in Tolstoyan fashion, believed in the prevalence of the moral function over the aesthetic in a work of art.[554]

While this means that translations of the period were mostly secondary (in Even-Zohar's terms),[555] they were not devoid of usefulness. This demonstrates that there are many different ways in which translation contributes to literary change, beyond repertoire renovation. Even-Zohar argues that moments of crisis foster primary translations, but the example of the first twelve years of the Mexican Revolution shows that, if said crisis involves radical institutional change, then negotiations around the

551 *Pegaso* I.18:5 [2:57].
552 *Nosotros* I.9: 32 [620].
553 Reyes, *Pasado inmediado*, 36.
554 Tolstoy, *What is art?*
555 Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 20-22.

nature and definition of literature have to be carried out before attending to the state of the repertoire. *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*, each in its own manner, opened the way for the poetic experiments of the rest of the 1920s.

Part III

From Grenfell to Langston Hughes: translation and the origins of the "otra vanguardia" in *Cvltvra*, *Prisma*, *La Falange*, and *Contemporáneos* (1919-1931)

La guerra antiheroica ha engendrado una poesía antipoética.

José Emilio Pacheco

José Enrique Rodó affirmed, in *Pegaso*, that WWI's legacy would not be a heroic one: in "La guerra," he contended that aesthetic innovation would arise from collective trauma rather than military glories:

> La guerra traerá la renovación del ideal literario, pero no para expresarse a sí misma […] en son de gloria y de soberbia. La traerá porque la profunda conmoción con que tenderá a modificar las formas sociales, […] es forzoso que repercuta en la vida del espíritu, provocando […] nuevos caracteres de expresión. [...] pero […] lo capaz de morder en el centro de los corazones, donde espera el genio dormido, no estará en el resplandor de las victorias, ni en el ondear de las banderas, ni en la aureola de los héroes, sino más bien en la pavorosa herencia de culpa, de devastación y de miseria: en la austera majestad del dolor humano, levantándose por encima de las ficciones de la gloria, y poniendo, con doble imperio, el pensamiento angustiado, en los enigmas de nuestro destino, en los que toda poesía tiene su raíz.[556]

By opposing war literature to "las ficciones de la gloria," so prominent in *Pegaso*, Rodó lucidly anticipated the phenomenon at the core of the development of high Modernism: the sweeping impact of modern warfare was bound to fundamentally change the forms of literary and artistic expression. It is well known that the Great War was intimately linked to the strong sense of civilisational crisis that marked the literature and culture of the period, from Apollinaire to Eliot.[557] The advent of the "pensamiento angustiado" announced by the Uruguayan intellectual cannot fail to evoke the bleak ethos to which W. H. Auden would later refer as "The Age of Anxiety."

This chapter discusses how the translation of Anglo-American poetry from WWI and its aftermath reflected this cultural shift in various aspects of poetic form and

[556] *Pegaso* I.10:16 [240].
[557] See MacKay, *Modernism, War.*

content, opening the way for a new form of poetics: *conversacionalismo* (also referred to as *coloquialismo*). We are therefore back in the realm of aesthetics and poetic experimentation with this chapter; translation assumes, again, a primary character—i.e., it is used to import and adapt new models of literary creation, changing how poetry is written and conceived. In many ways, the explorations that I analyse here pursue the quest, described in Chapter 1, for a poetic expression of post-colonial modernity. I argue that translations from WWI poetry, New Poetry, and Imagism, during the 1920s, contributed to a general desacralisation and democratisation of poetry that manifested both in form (through the normalisation of free verse and the use of plainer language and more colloquial registers) and content (including a focus on simple, everyday images, socially marginal subjects, and a decrease in abstraction)—what José Emilio Pacheco describes as "una poesía antipoética." Salvador Novo's "Viaje" (1925) is a good example of this:

> Los nopales nos sacan la lengua;
> pero los maizales por estaturas
> —con su copetito mal rapado
> y su cuaderno debajo del brazo—
> nos saludan con sus mangas rotas.[558]

The studied magazines were thus instrumental in the development of conversationalism, and, as a result, of modern Hispanic poetry in general.

Conversationalism is a loosely defined poetics, although most critics agree on the authors that represent it and its main components.[559] Despite being generally considered a prominent trend in Latin American poetry of the second half of the twentieth century, theorisations and histories of this aesthetics are proportionally scant.[560] Essentially, conversational poetics

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[558] Salvador Novo, *Antología*, 4.

[559] Its main representatives, besides the poets featured here, are Nicanor Parra (and his *antipoesía*), Ernesto Cardenal (who speaks of *exteriorismo*), Roque Dalton, Mario Benedetti, Juan Gelman, Roberto Fernández Retamar, Jaime Sabines, and Pacheco himself.

[560] See Pacheco, "Nota."; Alemany Bay, "Para una revisión," 49-55 and *Poética coloquial hispanoamericana*, whose section "Influencia de la literatura norteamericana" illustrates how pressing it is to examine the origins of the poetics more in depth; Rodriguez, "La poesía posvanguardista"; Hart, "Conversational Poetry"; Fernández Retamar, "Antipoesía" (despite his very partial distinction between conversational poetry and *antipoesía*).

> recoge una voluntad que empezó a surgir ya en el siglo pasado con la poesía realista para crear un campo experimental mucho más amplio donde todos los elementos del poema, tanto formales como temáticos, se unen para ofrecer un resultado en el que el poeta habla de los problemas que afectan al lector […] opinando de forma natural sobre el amor, la existencia, lo cotidiano, sobre el momento histórico que están viviendo, lejos de la abstracción de los hechos. Además estos temas cuentan con el factor humorístico, lo que conduce a estos escritores a ironizar y a desacralizar la realidad incluso desmitificando la figura del poeta.[561]

Conversational poetics thus seeks to be understandable and relatable, reacting against elevated notions of poetry, grandness, hermeticism, elitism, and aestheticism.[562] It is therefore realist and often prosaic both in form and content, treating everyday topics and using a simple, oral mode of expression, normally in free verse and with a colloquial tone. The poet appears as an ordinary person; this anti-elitism may be linked with a more-or-less direct form of social activism or critique (often relying on humour and irony).

In his seminal article "Nota sobre la otra vanguardia," Pacheco argues that this is not only a post-vanguard poetics, as suggested by various scholars,[563] but that its roots are in the 1920s, as a strand of avant-garde (the "otra vanguardia"). Unlike most vanguard movements, it is "realista y no surrealista" and "se origina en la 'New Poetry' norteamericana" as received by its main exponents: Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Salomón de la Selva, and Salvador Novo, who coincided in Mexico in the *obregonista* years.[564] This chapter follows from this assertion and explores the genesis of conversationalism in more depth. By analysing the founding texts in detail, as well as other publications of the period, I offer an account of the origins of conversationalism that draws attention to

561 Alemany, "Para una revisión," 51.

562 Saúl Yurkiévich offers the following definition in an unpublished text: "La antipoesía se caracteriza negativamente en oposición a la poesía pura o visionaria, poesía de lo inefable, a la poesía reveladora de la suprarrealidad como manifestadora de lo esencial. Se opone a la pretendida autonomía del signo poético [...] Intenta abolir el distanciamiento con respecto a la realidad empírica. Reaccionando contra las pretensiones metafísicas, contra la estilización y la sublimación de la poesía estética, quiere volver a conectarse con lo circunstancial y circundante, con la experiencia cotidiana, con la vida concreta, quiere asumir la situación efectiva del poeta y representar su verdadero condicionamiento histórico." Quoted in Pailler, "'Poésie matériale'," 128.

563 Hart, "Conversational Poetry," 63; Alemany, "Para una revisión," 49; Rodríguez, "La poesía posvanguardista," 36-37; and Schopf, *Del vanguardismo a la antipoesía.*.

564 Pacheco, "Nota," 327.

the critical part that both war and translation played in this process.

This part is divided in two chapters, corresponding to two key stages in the development of conversationalism: chapter 4 examines the poetics' roots in WWI poetry through Pedro Requena's versions of WWI verse for *Cvltvra* (1919), which gesture towards the importance of engaging with reality and reinventing form without contriving to convey these aspects in Spanish, and de la Selva's *El soldado desconocido*, also published in *Cvltvra* (1922). This multilingual and multi-layered collection of WWI poetry is the first text of the "otra vanguardia" according to Pacheco—a turning point in and of itself and a powerful piece of anti-war writing through its markedly anti-epic tone. Its complex structure and approach to form offer a unique opportunity to analyse the link between the experience of modern industrialised warfare on one hand, and the triad of realism and prosaism, loss of formal structure, and degradation of the figure of the poet on the other.[565] These elements were equally inspired by de la Selva's own military training, WWI poetry, and New Poetry from the United States, which the poet translated abundantly. In chapter 5, I examine the translational work of the younger generation of Mexican poets and the increasing engagement with US poetry in the 1920s, in Rafael Lozano's *Prisma* (1922), Lozano and Novo's collaboration in *La Falange* (1922) and, finally, Novo's independent and most innovative work for *El Universal Ilustrado* (1924) and *Contemporáneos* (1931). I assess how translations contributed to the diffusion of colloquial, unpretentious, free verse outside the context of war poetry while still retaining its potential as social critique, either from marginalised subjects (Langston Hughes as received by Xavier Villaurrutia and Salvador Novo) or the intellectual elite (Eliot for older members of Contemporáneos). As in Chapter 1, each translator and poet contributed to this evolution in a distinct and uncoordinated way, resulting in a variety of aesthetic projects, some of which would later converge into conversationalism and have a lasting impact on Hispanic poetry.

[565] De la Selva weaves these different aspects together to create an elaborate narrative that is best approached through a combination of close-reading and digital visualisation of the whole collection. To this effect, I have adapted my method for the study of periodicals to represent the evolution of poetic form throughout the volume.

Towards American poetic modernity: a brief contextualisation

To say that 1922 is the *annus mirabilis* of the avant-garde is somewhat of a critical cliché. Nonetheless, besides the usual examples of canonical works that appeared in book form that year (*Trilce*, *The Waste Land*, *Ulysses*), it is also key for the lesser-known publications of the "otra vanguardia," bearing witness to a period of exceptional creative output. As attested by the outline above, it represents a watershed for de la Selva, Lozano, and Novo alike. In January 1922, Lozano wrote, in *Prisma*'s first editorial, that "en todo el mundo, después de la Gran Guerra, se siente un inmenso deseo de renovación y de actividad, sobre todo en lo que atañe a la poesía lírica."[566] Although the pace of avant-gardist poetic experimentation did accelerate after the war, it predates the conflict. Henríquez Ureña, in an essay about US literature written six years later, explained that "la era nueva se abre hacia 1910, no con figuras magistrales sino con multitudes movedizas, rebeldes, destructoras, que, si creen en la disciplina, no respetan la tradición […]; que si buscan la cultura, le piden que sea eficacia y no lujo."[567]

Thus, the societal transformations of the first decades of the century were related to literary renovation in several manners. Cultural change was stirred by the social effervescence and (very gradual) democratisation under way, from the emergence of authors from marginalised backgrounds, to changing representations of minorities, the introduction of new topics, and the attempt to make art accessible to wider audiences. During this period, Mexico saw the rise of political actors representing agrarian and labour interests, as well as students and women: the first national federation of labour unions (CROM) was founded in 1918, and the Federación de Estudiantes del Distrito Federal, in 1920, followed by a national student confederation (in 1927). The feminist

[566] *Prisma* I.1: 3.
[567] Pedro Henríquez Ureña, *Seis ensayos*, 120.

movement was on the rise, with the first and second Feminist Congresses of Yucatán (1916) advocating for universal suffrage, with some regional success.[568] The United States, in turn, were just coming out of their Progressive Era, which saw political reform and the emergence of new social and cultural actors, but also of Jim Crow legislation. 1920 marked the culmination of US suffragism, and women poets were coming into their own, as noted by de la Selva.[569] The Harlem Renaissance, in turn, speaks of the increasing visibility of Black writers and artists, although it should not be forgotten that this was partly the result of the brutal, entrenched racism of those years, and the ensuing Great Migration.

Some representatives of the "New Poetry," which emerged in this context, conceived of their attempts to renovate literature as part of this broad democratising impulse. The fifth issue of Alfred Kreymborg's *Others* poetry magazine opens on a quotation from critic J. B. Kerfoot stating that "the new poetry *is* revolutionary. It is the expression of a democracy of feeling rebelling against an aristocracy of form."[570] This outlook was not shared, however, by poets later labelled as high modernists such as Pound and Eliot, and it is clear that "New Poetry" describes more a rupturist and innovative ethos than a cohesive movement. Harriet Monroe, in her 1917 anthology titled *The New Poetry*, uses the denomination as an umbrella for the variety of poetic creation that sought, mostly, to break with Victorian poetry and what was perceived as abstraction and artificiality:

> the new poetry strives for a concrete and immediate realization of life; it would discard the theory, the abstraction, the remoteness […] It is less vague, less verbose […] than most poetry of the Victorian period and much work of earlier periods. It has set before itself an ideal of absolute simplicity, and sincerity—an ideal which implies an individual, unstereotyped diction; and an individual, unstereotyped rhythm.[571]

As a result, many new poets also used and promoted free verse, as exemplified in

568 Cano, "Sufragio femenino," 37-38.
569 De la Selva, "Edna St. Vincent Millay," 20.
570 *Others* I.5 (1915) (author's emphasis).
571 Monroe, *The New Poetry*, vi.

magazines *Poetry* (1912—), edited by Monroe, and *Others* (1915—1919).[572] All these elements were of great importance for conversationalism, and it thus becomes clear how translations of New Poetry might have contributed to its development. Moreover, the many nuances of the new poetry of the 1910s and 1920s carried through into the Mexican field, where they inspired very different projects, as this chapter illustrates.

One influential current of new poetry, which is particularly relevant to my analysis in this chapter, is Imagism. Often considered the first Modernist movement, Imagism brought together T.E. Hulme, Ezra Pound, Lowell, H.D., F.S. Flint, Richard Aldington, Williams, Ford Madox Ford, and John Gould Fletcher for a brief period during the 1910s. Inspired mostly by French symbolism, Japanese and Chinese poetry, the Greek lyric, and, to a lesser extent, Whitmanian free verse, the Imagists formulated various sets of poetic principles revolving around the ideas of concentration and simplicity. The following passage from the introduction to *Some Imagist Poets* (1915) represents Lowell's take on the movement's poetics:

1. To use the language of common speech, but to employ always the *exact* word, not […] the merely decorative word.

2. To create new rhythms […]

4. To present an image […] poetry should render particulars exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous. It is for this reason that we oppose the cosmic poet, who seems to us to shirk the real difficulties of his art.

5. To produce poetry that is hard and clear, never blurred nor indefinite.

6. […] concentration is of the very essence of poetry.[573]

Despite not centring their approach to poetry on it, Imagism ended up pioneering the more systematic use of free verse. But the core of their innovation is a new treatment of poetic subject matter based on the image, not merely as a form of content, but as an end

[572] *Poetry* and Monroe were key players in this poetic renaissance. The magazine offered a national stage to emerging poets and was, in Amy Lowell's words, "a forum in which youth could thrash out its ideas, and succeed or fail according to its deserts" as well as an important promoter of free verse. It spearheaded a national and international boom of "little magazines" dedicated to poetry (e.g., *Others*, *The Free Spirit*, the more generalist *The Little Review*), which it saluted in issue XX.2, even mentioning Lozano's *Prisma.* Lowell*, Tendencies*, 159. "More new magazines," *Poetry*, 109.

[573] *Some Imagist Poets*, vi-vii.

in itself and the catalyst of a determined emotional reaction in the reader. Pound defined the image as "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time."[574] Lowell, meanwhile, wrote that older poets "told stories. We do not tell stories —we throw pictures on a screen."[575] Undoubtedly, this is part of a much broader and complex process of change in Western poetry (of which we have seen a manifestation in Tablada's translations of Japanese verse). Translations of Imagist poems are only one strand of this process, but one which, I argue, played an important role in Mexico.

The significance of translating US verse in 1920s Mexico also derives from the fact that the poetic renovation described so far was conceived as a symbolic emancipation from European culture, whether it was a conscious project (as in William Carlos Williams's "American idiom") or a collateral result. As Lowell argues in *Tendencies in modern American poetry*, the "so-called 'new movement' in American poetry" is the "evidence of the rise of a native school," which culminated with the United States being, symbolically, "no more colonies of this or that other land, but [them]selves."[576] This is how the country became, for some Hispanic commentators, both the "país donde florece la poesía," in Enrique Díez-Canedo's words, and a conflicting example of post-colonial literary empowerment. Form and language are central components of this emancipation, as highlighted by Henríquez Ureña in his seminal *Seis ensayos en busca de nuestra expresión*, in which he presented US literature as a mirror to Hispanic aspirations: for him, the New Poetry follows two intertwined principles, "el anhelo de dar voz al alma de la tierra, al espíritu patrio," and "la expresión acendrada y el ritmo libre."[577] Henríquez Ureña, along with his friend and disciple de la Selva, consciously sought to promote dialogue between both Americas in an attempt to circumvent European influence and explore American expression, a project that became even more pressing in the context of (and as an alternative to) the

574 Pound, "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste," *Poetry* I.6 (March 1913), [200].
575 Lowell, "A consideration," 105.
576 Lowell, *Tendencies*, v.
577 Henríquez Ureña, *Seis ensayos*, 129.
In Henríquez Ureña's own words, the essay on US poetry was included "como término de comparación." *Seis ensayos*, 134.
This does not refer to free verse as the only possible form.

"gran desastre europeo."[578] They spent part of the 1910s in the United States, where they were involved in the rise of Hispanic studies in US academia and other instances of Pan-American exchange, such as readings of Spanish American poetry organised by the newly-founded Poetry Society of America (PSA).[579] Pan-Americanism was both a self-serving US political strategy and a cultural and political utopia for intellectuals like de la Selva, who acted as an interpreter at PSA events, as well as a translator of poetry from Spanish into English and vice versa, and an editor of Pan-American publications (such as *Pan-American Poetry* and the literary section of the *Pan-American Magazine*). He pursued this work as cultural mediator in Mexico, where he and Henríquez Ureña transmitted this double interest in formal modernisation and US culture to Novo, who was briefly part of their circle. As will become evident, each poet/translator drew on distinct sectors and aspects of the rich landscape of New Poetry, as well as their own ideo-aesthetic affinities, in order to produce different iterations of the "otra vanguardia."[580]

578 Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, quoted in Hulme, *Dinner*, 166.

579 Peter Hulme's *Dinner at Gonfarone's* offers an excellent recreation of the Pan-American scene in New York during the 1910s.

580 A quick terminology note before we dive in: I will be referring to the poetry of the period as a whole as New Poetry. The more specific terms early Modernism and high Modernism will be used to distinguish the incipient, experimental Imagist phase of the 1910s and the more established production of canonical poets in the 1920s respectively.

Chapter 4

The roots of conversational poetics in WWI poetry: the degradation of the war epic in *Cvltvra*'s translations

In contrast with *Pegaso* and *El Maestro*, which were essentially aimed at renegotiating the role of intellectuals in post-revolutionary public life, *Cvltvra* is a venue in which literature gets back to the fore and formal experiments resume. Founded in 1916, *Cvltvra* was part of the rebirth of Mexican periodical culture and of the rise of the local publishing industry. It was located "en el centro de la modernización cultural del México posrevolucionario"[581] and of the poetic renovation which occurred in that context. Thus, amidst the resistance to change and persistence of *modernismo* described in the previous chapter, some books initiated the modernisation to come in the twenties —many of which were published by Cvltvra, as underlined by Sánchez Prado.[582]

An outsider in my corpus, Cvltvra is composed of a series of "cuadernos" (*Colección Cvltvra*, published between 1916 and 1923 and hereafter referred to as *Cvltvra*) and later, of an independent publishing house which produced books (Editorial Cvltvra, 1922-1968). This section analyses the production of the former. While *Cvltvra* is not technically a magazine, as each instalment consisted of one single, relatively lengthy body of literary work (most of the time an anthology of one author's writing—Fig. 4.1), its composite and serialised nature brings it within the scope of my thesis.

581 Cervantes and Valero. *La colección Cvltvra*, 25.

582 Sánchez Prado, "1915-1920," 29.
This is not to say that the different editorial enterprises and periodicals of the later years of the *década armada* were radically opposed to each other. Indeed, they shared many collaborators, editors, and even texts. Agustín Loera y Chávez, who founded and directed *Cvltvra*, was also briefly responsible for *El Maestro* (in 1921). His translation of one of Selma Lagerlöf's stories ("El nido de aguzanieves"), published with *Cvltvra* in August 1918 (VIII.4) was reproduced in the SEP's periodical in December 1921 (*El Maestro* II.3: 75-80 [301-306]). As I have emphasised, it is the specific combination of contents that creates unique editorial lines, which, ultimately, speak of different concepts of literature and distinct interventions in the country's cultural life.

Manuel Toussaint, in a review, described it as an "antología periódica."[583] Six issues constituted one volume; they were published over a period lasting between three months and a year, and were to be bound together, conforming, eventually, a personal library of what was considered the very best of national and international letters.[584]

As exposed by Freja Cervantes, *Cvltvra* responded to the decrease in book imports caused by the Great War and the Revolution. Mexican booksellers took advantage of this market gap to produce, along with intellectuals from prominent educational institutions (the SEP, UNM, and Escuela Nacional Preparatoria [ENP]), print material that was commercially minded and of good quality.[585] *Cvltvra* was created and directed by Agustín Loera y Chávez and Julio Torri, and co-directed by Pedro Henríquez Ureña, and, during the last two years of the publication, by future member of the Contemporáneos group José Gorostiza. It was funded through subscriptions and advertisements (strategies that were typical of periodical culture), circulating in Mexico and even abroad.[586]

Of the 87 instalments published between 1916 and 1923, almost half (38) are translations, featuring contemporary authors such as Selma Lagerlöf, Tagore, Jammes, Gide, Shaw, Maeterlinck, as well as older canonical figures and a few more varied anthologies (*Antigua literatura indígena mexicana*, *Tres grandes poetas belgas*, *Antología de poetas muertos en la guerra (1914-1918)*, *Jardines de Francia*). Cervantes speaks of the "personalidad antológica" of *Cvltvra*, which highlights the importance of selection and framing in its making.

WWI poetry appears in different issues of *Cvltvra*, from less experimental works

583 *Pegaso* I.3:12 [72].

584 Freja Cervantes, "Cvltvra," n.p.
This ties in with state-sponsored projects of a pedagogical nature such as *El Maestro* and the series *Libros clásicos verdes*, which were launched by Vasconcelos and aimed at developing literacy and educating a new readership through the accessible publication of what was considered to be an international canon of good literature.

585 Cervantes, "Cvltvra," n.p.
La Nave published an anonymous comment on this: "asistimos en México, en el momento actual, a un resurgimiento intelectual y principalmente literario muy digno de notarse. La literatura se pone de moda saliendo de las columnas de los diarios y haciéndose más tangible en la forma del libro." *La Nave* I.1:124 [356].

586 Freja Cervantes mentions such places as Madrid, San José and Santiago de Chile for its reception.

like the *Antología de poetas muertos en la guerra (1914-1918)* (hereafter *APMG*) to Salomón de la Selva's fresh representation of the conflict through the juxtaposition of elements of the Hispanic poetic tradition and the latest innovations of the early years of Anglophone Modernism, in *El soldado desconocido* (*ESD*). This section examines how these two texts approach the topic of the Great War, as well as its relationship to poetics. It demonstrates that they display an evolution in their concept and representation of war. While *APMG* only takes a small step away from wartime propagandistic publications in acknowledging that "reality" should play an important role in war poetry and showcasing changing attitudes towards WWI and its literature, *ESD* radically breaks with prevalent representations of the conflict and with traditional forms. The second part of this section explores de la Selva's thematisation of violence through metre and relies on an original quantitative approach that highlights the role played by the brutality of WWI in the genesis of conversationalism. Both contributed, albeit unequally, to the development of a poetics that relies on unidealised and concrete representation, as well as a degraded lyric subject.

Realism and criticism of WWI in Antología de poetas muertos en la guerra (1914-1918) *(Cvltvra X.4)*

Published in June 1919, *APMG* is the result of Pedro Requena Legarreta's versions of WWI poetry and Antonio Castro Leal's selection (presumably) and critical apparatus comprising an introduction, a preface, and notes on the translated authors (Fig. 4.2).[587] While the selection gives more visibility to poets who died relatively early in the war, as opposed to those who lived through its harshest years and those who came back to see its devastating effects on society at large, it contains snippets of a new representation of the conflict that moves away from the celebratory epic and romantic enthusiasm of the

[587] Requena is another Mexican writer with ties to US academia; he studied at the National University in Washington, graduating in 1911, and was living in the United States at the time of his death, in 1918. For this reason, it is unlikely that he was directly involved in the making of this anthology.

early years of the conflict. Although it does not completely realise this project, *APMG* introduces the idea that a new kind of war poetry is not only possible but also desirable from a literary standpoint.[588]

One important representative of the early enthusiasm for the war is Rupert Brooke, who is among the top tier in terms of page-space in *APMG* and has the most poems featured, with four of his five "1914" sonnets. This sequence, written in late 1914 while he travelled to his posting in Gallipoli, is considered representative of the spirit with which England entered the war, having later been deemed naïve, "sentimental and unrealistic."[589] In *APMG*, they are described as ethereal creations and "sin duda, de los mejores poemas que produjo la guerra."[590] The title of Castro Leal's introduction ("1914" as well) is likely no coincidence and illustrates the deliberate emphasis on the war's beginning. In Brooke's translated sonnets, war is successively presented as a desirable opportunity to give meaning to an undignified existence, regenerate a decadent or stagnating society, and reach inner peace; it is also a chance to access an eternal life of glory through self-sacrifice ("The Dead" III and IV),[591] and to demonstrate love to one's country by fulfilling one's patriotic duty ("The Soldier"). Indeed, "the 1914 sonnets do not deal with war; they reveal a sophisticated sensibility contemplating itself on the verge of war."[592] The accent is on the state of mind in which one goes "into battle" and not so much the one with which one comes out of it, as illustrated by Julian Grenfell's famous poem, also included in *APMG*.[593] Notably, the volume's epigraph is taken from Grenfell's "Into battle": "And he is dead who will not

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588 Of 13 translated soldier-poets, eight died before 1916 and the first Battle of the Somme, an event that, for John Johnston, represents the "division between the earlier and the later poets." *English Poetry*, xii. One (Edmond Rostand) was, in fact, not in the war at all.

589 John Lehmann, *Rupert Brooke,* 136.

590 *APMG*, 47.

591 This is made very explicit by Requena, who translates "But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold" as "pues nos hizo regalo de su gloria la muerte" *APMG* 50.

592 Johnston, *English Poetry*, 30.
Brooke's exaltation of war is echoed throughout the volume: Castro Leal writes, in his introduction, that "la guerra es una fuente de perfecciones, pero, como todas las ocasiones felices, se presenta con irregularidad en el tiempo" (*APMG*, 17).

593 A professional soldier, Grenfell was elated by the war and stated, for instance: "I adore war. ... It is like a big picnic but without the objectivelessness of a picnic. I have never been more well or more happy." (quoted in Hollander, *Elusive Dove.*, 191).

fight; / and who dies fighting has increase."[594] This sets the tone for most of the volume, in which other poets are often compared to Grenfell, and self-sacrifice (a topos of propagandistic writing) is abundantly praised.[595]

Despite its abstract idealism and largely celebratory tone, *APMG* also contains dissenting perspectives on the conflict, reflecting the more realistic poetics that emerged after the experience of trench warfare and its pointless butchery.[596] As John Lehmann rhetorically asked, referencing Brooke's sonnet "Peace,"

> what soldier, who had experienced the meaningless horror and foulness of the Western Front stalemate in 1916 and 1917, could think of it as a place to greet "as swimmers into cleanness leaping" or as a welcome relief "from a world grown old and cold and weary"?[597]

The main representatives of this later poetics in *APMG* are Charles Hamilton Sorley and Leslie Coulson, thereby linking criticism of the war with Anglophone poetry. Sorley's and Coulson's criticism of WWI revolves around its absurdity and savageness, and is often grounded in concrete observations rather than abstract reflections. As mentioned above, much of the war poetry written after 1916-17 was of a more realist nature than earlier verse.[598] Being grounded in "reality" is, for Castro Leal, one of the qualities of the poetry written on the battlefields. He stated, for instance, that Louis Geandreau is not "de los poetas que mejor comprendieron la Guerra, y esto se debe […] a la devoción […] por los poetas formales sin hondas raíces en la realidad."[599] Although this emphasis on reality is not particularly visible in *APMG*, its mention itself is meaningful, as it heralds the move towards a more concrete poetry, which is a central characteristic of

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[594] *APMG*, 7. Castro Leal also gestures towards "Into battle" in his introduction, when he describes the soldiers' experience as a mystical reconnection with the universe and reuses (without quoting them) the last two lines of the poem. *APMG* 13.

[595] Allard is presented as "un remedo del capitán Grenfell," (*APMG* 29), as is Brooke (47). Sorley, in turn, is compared to both Grenfell and Brooke (126).

[596] At this point, the "mood of muse [sic] shifted radically as poets began to write about their squalid, precarious lives in the trenches. The sentimental patriotism waned, and a harsh, barbed reality took its place." Hollander, *Elusive Dove*, 191.

[597] Lehmann, *Rupert Brooke*, 136.

[598] Although Sorley does not fit in the former category, having died in 1915, he can be considered as a "link between the more idealistic poets and poetry of the very early part of the war and the darker, more agonised and cynical writers and writing of its final years." Cooper, "Charles Hamilton Sorley."

[599] *APMG* 74.

conversationalism.

Sorley with his "brisk, no-nonsense disposition,"[600] privately criticised Brooke's verse precisely for its lack of engagement with reality, as per this passage of a 1915 letter to his family: "He is far too obsessed with his own sacrifice, regarding the going to war of himself (and others) as a highly intense, remarkable and sacrificial exploit [...] He has clothed his attitude in fine words: but he has taken the sentimental attitude."[601] The romantic idealism described so far is, for Sorley, a narcissistic fantasy, and he scorns its exponents for taking themselves and their own perceived grandeur so seriously. This mindset is visible in his poems translated in *APMG*, in which the figure of the hero, as understood by Brooke, is absent. To brilliant individuals, Sorley opposes the men who fight without public acclaim, with whom the speaker of "Two sonnets–I," translated by Requena, identifies: "nosotros somos esas multitudes sin nombre."[602] Their sacrifice is not a source of prestige: "La muerte así, no es triunfo ni tampoco derrota," as death erases all differences between men: "Vencedor y vencido se adunan en la muerte: / bravo y cobarde, amigo y adversario..."[603] Not only is death in battle unheroic and somewhat pointless, so too is war as a whole. Sorley's "To Germany," translated by Requena, exemplifies this. The notion that men on both sides are essentially the same, in life as in death, makes the bloodshed appear rather absurd. The description of the war as "the blind fight the blind" equates German and Allied troops while opposing them to political interests that use them as cannon fodder (represented by the Germans' "future bigly planned" and by the fact that soldiers on both sides are "gropers" who "do not understand"). Undoubtedly, this perspective on the conflict challenges the epic of the war and its grandiose tone.

Coulson, while sharing this general assessment, is more critical of the soldiers' role, degrading the shiny figure exalted by Brooke or Grenfell. He died in 1916 during

600 Kirschke, "Different Kind of Life," 123.

601 Sorley, *The letters*, 263.
It is also often argued that Sorley's famous sonnet "When you see millions of the mouthless dead" (sadly not included in *APMG*) was a crudely real response to Brooke's "1914" sequence.

602 *APMG* 130.

603 *APMG* 131.

the later stages of the First Battle of the Somme, an experience that "changed the man and his writing." Two poems exemplify this change: "But a Short Time to Live" and "The Rainbow,"[604] both featured in *APMG*. "But a short time to live" underlines the insignificance of power and pointlessness of the war: "Our little hour – how short a time, / To wage our wars, to fan our hates, / To take our fill of armoured crime, […] Blind in our puny reign of power."[605] Like Sorley, Coulson writes this poem in the first person plural, understanding the soldier-poet subject as part of a military collective where there is no space for heroics.[606] "The Rainbow," in turn, describes war not only as dark and absurd, but as a criminal activity, presenting the soldier-poet as an "agen[t] of the forces of darkness."[607] In the translation, this is visible when the lyric subject affirms that his hands "han matado en el día,"[608] but where Coulson's speaker charges "to be killed or to kill," Requena's participates in "la carga que a la muerte me guía," falling back, through the subject' passive role and the unavoidable outcome, on the sacrificial trope and erasing the idea that both warring parties are just the same. Thus, although the degradation of the figure of the soldier-poet is present in the translation, it is somewhat diluted.

The treatment of form in the translations is equally ambivalent. This is significant in a context in which the experience of modern warfare challenged traditional forms of poetic expression: "as World War I progressed, the poets […] seemed to sense a discrepancy between the multifarious nature of their material and the limited potentialities of the lyric form; through various means most of them sought a more comprehensive, more objective mode for the communication of their experiences."[609] This is not a defining feature of *APMG* due to its focus on the early years of the conflict; however, the selected poems show some formal experimentation.

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604 Whelpton, "Leslie Coulson." n.p.

605 Coulson, "But a short time," in Clarke, *A Treasury*, 176-177.

606 This displacement from the lyric I is also observed in non-war-themed conversational poetry such as Novo's *XX poemas* (1925). Laura Trejo mentions the "evidente predominio del *nosotros*" and the "deliberado tono impersonal"as characteristic of the collection. "*XX poemas*," 260.

607 Whelpton, "Leslie Coulson," n.p.

608 *APMG* 58.

609 Johnston, *English Poetry*, xi.

Sorley's second sonnet on death ("Two sonnets–II") underlines the absurd loss of life, and the unnatural, senseless nature of both war and the discourse that glorifies sacrifice, through the inversion of the sonnet's structure, starting with the tercets and ending with the quatrains. Thus, the epic of the war is deconstructed by turning the classical form upside down, which is maintained in the translation (Fig. 4.3).

Subtler rupturist features, however, are not reproduced in Spanish. In "El arco iris," Coulson's alternation between trimeter, occasional dimeter, and (mostly dactylic) pentameter is reduced to a traditional combination of heptasyllables and alexandrines. This effaces the original's play with shorter lines on line six of each stanza, followed by a strong rhythmic disruption in line seven, which invariably starts with a stressed syllable in a word alluding to violence:

> But up to a cloudless sky
> From the ground where our dead men lie
> A brown lark soars in song.
> Through the tortured air,
> **Rent** by the shrapnel's flare,
> Over the troubless dead he carols his fill,
> And I thank the gods that the birds are beautiful still. (lines 12-18)[610]

is translated as:

> mas del trágico suelo
> de pronto sube al cielo
> una alondra cantando,
> y tiende al sol las alas
> a pesar de las balas;
> y yo digo, escuchando su tierna melodía:
> —¡Gracias a Dios, las aves son bellas todavía![611]

The more abstractly poetic tone of the closing couplets, reflected in the use of pentameter (see lines 17-18 above), is somewhat preserved by the alexandrines, although in a much flatter way, especially considering that both the heptasyllables and alexandrines are mostly iambic—a very regular and orthodox way to craft such verse.

[610] Other examples of this rhythmic disruption include "And stabbing of light / **Scorches** the virginal white.," (lines 6-7) and "The gold stalks hide / **Bodies** of men who died (lines 23-24)."
Coulson, *From an Outpost*, 38-39 (my emphasis).
I would like to thank Yvette Siegert for her insight into the formal aspects of this and other poems.

[611] *APMG* 57.

Irregularity as a way to represent the chaotic brutality of war is thus erased, as well as the potentially ironic juxtaposition of stereotypical poetic discourse with the reality of combat (visible in the contrast between the closing couplets and the rest of each stanza). Similarly, William Henry Littlejohn's mixture of trimeter, tetrameter and pentameter in "A Prayer" (in a repetitive pattern that recalls religious hymns as well as trench songs) is rendered by Requena as *decasílabos heroicos*, a ceremonious and regular form typical of anthems and military marching music.

Thus, the translation has a markedly solemn, old-fashioned feel, in line with José Luis Martínez's assessment of Requena's own poetry as "ters[a] en muchos registros, sin voz personal ni innovaciones, y con cierta tendencia declamatoria."[612] Although the originals are not particularly audacious themselves, the translations (mostly in alexandrines with consonantal rhyme throughout) normalise them further, going against Castro Leal's assertion that "la poesía de trinchera […] tiene un carácter propio: una constante realidad y un vigor lírico, que nacen de la íntima relación entre la vida y el canto; una escasez casi completa de la simple ostentación técnica a flor de diccionario; un sano ahorro de las mil locuras literarias."[613] This complements the discrepancy between the perceived importance of reality and its presence in the poems. Most poems are not concerned with the actual experience of war, and those that are see this aspect subdued in the translation. Significantly, "The Rainbow" is the only poem set in a trench in all *APMG.* Mentions of the trench and its topography are removed from the translation, however, as "From death that hurtles by / I crouch in the *trench* day-long" morphs into "Horas enteras velo / a la muerte burlando" and "Where the *parapet* is low" becomes the unspecific "en las abrieras grietas."[614] In the passage quoted earlier, semantic markers of physical suffering and of the concrete specificities of modern warfare are also removed from the translation (e.g., "tortured," "rent," and "shrapnel" is rendered simply as "balas"). In the same vein, the prosaic and graphic "ground where

612 Martínez, "Pedro Requena Legarreta," 54.

613 *APMG* 21-22. Eliot said of Alan Seeger's poetry that it is "so much out of date as to be almost a positive quality. It is high-flown, heavily decorated and solemn" in "Review of Seeger, Poems," *The Egoist* IV.11 (1917), 172.

614 *APMG* 57.

our dead men lie" becomes the abstract "trágico suelo." Finally, the informal, conversational tone of line 33, which evokes an oral account of the experience of trench warfare to an implied interlocutor, is absent in Requena's version: "But blood at night is red, / Yea, even at night, / And a dead man's face is white" (lines 32-34) is translated "La sangre es más bermeja / de noche, y son los muertos / más pálidos y yertos."[615] In content, tone, and form, then, *APMG* remains very formal and rather cut off from the reality of WWI, despite Castro Leal's intentions.

Therefore, although the inclusion of critical perspectives sets *APMG* aside from more propagandistic publications and anticipates certain elements of the "otra vanguardia," the anthology lacks a clear aesthetic intention. The ambiguous nature of this material points to its location at a poetic crossroads, and its relevance lies in documenting the progressive (and parallel) shifts to a more critical discourse on the war, a poetics more concerned with reality, and a form of Anglophone cultural hegemony, foreshadowing later, bolder developments.

Free verse, prosaism, and violence in Salomón de la Selva's El soldado desconocido *(*Cvltvra *XIV.1)*

Cvltvra's interest in WWI poetry (with *APMG*) and Hispanic heterometric/free verse (with Pedro Henríquez Ureña's *Antología de la versificación rítmica* [1919] and the re-edition of Jaimes Freyre's *Castalia bábara* [1920]) converged in de la Selva's *El soldado desconocido* (*ESD*). Published in 1922, *ESD* offers a new perspective on WWI and its poetry, cementing the *cuadernos*' place at the forefront of formal experimentation. Likely the earliest example of conversationalism, *ESD* plays with irregular and free verse in conjunction with other conversationalist tropes and techniques such as a degraded lyric subject, colloquial tone, prosaism, and *feísmo*.[616]

615 *APMG* 58.

616 Among the most notable recent contributions, see Hulme, *Dinner*; Suárez Turriza, "Salomón de la Selva," ""El soldado desconocido," and "Iluminaciones." Montealegre "Las ideas estéticas" and "'El soldado desconocido'"; Baciu, "Salomón de la Selva precursor"; Bolanos, "Bolanos, "Salomón

These elements are closely related, in the collection, with the experience of the Great War, and are used to create an anti-epic of WWI. This highlights the link between the development of conversationalism and this specific historical context.

ESD's importance for Latin American poetry, while often overlooked, is undeniable. Pacheco's affirmation that Henríquez Ureña's, de la Selva's, and Novo's efforts remained marginal on the international stage, and that Latin American conversational poetics developed later through the work of José Coronel Urtecho and the Nicaraguan *vanguardia*, underestimates the impact of *ESD*.[617] The book was of great importance for poets of the Contemporáneos group, which would in time become one of the most hegemonic Mexican cultural formations. This not only applies to Novo, who found *ESD* "magnífico"[618] and, Pacheco affirms, "aprende en De la Selva […] la posibilidad de expropiar, para los fines de su propia lengua y dentro de su molde, la dicción poética angloamericana."[619] The book also impacted older members of Contemporáneos, such as Carlos Pellicer, who told José Joaquín Blanco that *ESD* "tuvo enorme impacto entre los poetas jóvenes como introductor de libertades y de maneras de expresión."[620] Its ripples reached South America too; Pablo Neruda, who befriended de la Selva in Mexico, stated that the Nicaraguan produced "uno de los libros más admirables de nuestro continente […] Este libro impacta con su severidad y monumentalismo […] Ha sido el primer aporte poético significativo a la lucha por la paz […] además de una obra sabia, llena de nuevas ideas, cosecha de espigas inesperadas."[621]

De la Selva's approach to form in *ESD* is elaborately linked to the experience of trench warfare that he recounts as in a diary. While most scholarship agrees on its innovative character, it often does not pay much attention to this diachronic dimension

de la Selva"; White, "Salomón de la Selva."

617 Coronel Urtecho affirms that he was not familiar with de la Selva's poetry when he founded the *vanguardia* group, in 1927. His path to conversational poetics appears to run parallel to de la Selva's: after three years in the USA, he returned to Nicaragua and started translating contemporary US poets, in search for continental poetic expression.

618 Novo, *Vida en México*, 664.

619 Pacheco, "Nota," 328.

620 Blanco, *Crónica*, 181.

621 Neruda, "Manchas de Sangre," 178.

of the collection, with the exception of Tatiana Suárez Turriza, who offers a fitting account of the lyric subject's evolution throughout *ESD*.[622] This complex and carefully crafted collection tells multiple stories and requires an approach that is both detailed and holistic. In this section, I therefore combine close reading with graphical representations of the formal characteristics of each poem in the volume. This allows us to examine its particulars while offering a general view of the whole collection, much like my analysis of periodical texts. It demonstrates that, while most of *ESD* is far from being written in free verse, de la Selva is very deliberate in his use of form, following principles of symphonic composition, using varying levels of formality to problematise the topics of violence and the lasting effects of WW1, as well as the role of language and literature in the context of the war. To achieve this, he draws on the epic tradition and celebratory WWI poetry (to parody, degrade, and undermine them) as well as, more extensively, on contemporary developments in US poetry, which he juxtaposes with more traditional, *modernista* conventions. *ESD* is thus the result of a clear process of cross-cultural and trans-linguistic transfer, if not a translation in the strictest sense.

Salomón de la Selva between cultures and languages: a few biographical pointers

De la Selva resided in Mexico between 1921 and 1924, upon an invitation from Vasconcelos to participate in the country's cultural life and educational drive. Prior to this, he had been living in the United States, where he completed his secondary and superior education, and eventually taught at Williams College. He spent the years 1915-1919 mostly in New York, with his friend and mentor Pedro Henríquez Ureña. During this period, he worked as an interpreter at the PSA's Pan-American events, launched his own bilingual periodical, *Pan American Poetry* (1918), which lasted for one single issue due to lack of funding, and subsequently edited the poetry section of the *Pan-American*

[622] Suárez Turriza, "El soldado desconocido."

Magazine.[623] In these publications, he used translation as a means to foster exchanges between Spanish- and Anglo-American poets, who, he considered, had much to learn from each other.[624] He mingled with US literary circles, being friends with prominent poets such as Edna St. Vincent Millay, William Rose Benét, and Amy Lowell. He wrote almost exclusively in English and published poems in leading magazines of the time (including *Poetry*). It is thanks to this background as a prolific cultural mediator and translator that he became, in Paz's words, "el primero que en lengua española aprovechó las experiencias de la poesía norteamericana contemporánea; no sólo introdujo en el poema los giros coloquiales y el prosaísmo sino que el tema mismo de su libro único [sic]—El soldado desconocido (1922)—también fue novedoso en nuestra lírica: la primera guerra mundial vista y vivida."[625] De la Selva was keen to join Allied ranks and served, for a few months in 1918, in the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment of the British Army.[626]

It is after this experience that he joined Vasconcelos and Henríquez Ureña in Mexico, eager to pursue his Pan-American endeavours. He quickly became immersed in the country's cultural life, publishing in its foremost venues (*Cvltvra*, *El Maestro*, and *México Moderno*) and teaching at the ENP and the Universidad Obrera Libre. His first book in Spanish, *ESD*, appeared in *Cvltvra*, for which he also planned to translate an anthology of Lowell's, Frost's, and Masters's poetry. This collection never materialised, but it confirms the Nicaraguan's commitment to disseminate modern US poetry in Mexico.[627] As such, he and Henríquez Ureña (to whose group of disciples he belonged)

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623 The featured poems were drawn from the corpus of New Poetry, although at this stage, his focus was hardly on formal rupturism; of 68 translated poems in the *Pan-American Magazine*, 26 are sonnets, of which 16 were translated by de la Selva himself. Despite constituting fundamental sources for the study of cultural exchanges between the Americas, these will not be discussed here, as their circulation in Mexico is unclear.

624 He translated abundantly to support these publications, both from Spanish into English and vice versa, and was also Rubén Darío's personal interpreter during his visit to New York in 1915.

625 Paz, "Epílogo," in *Laurel*, 496.

626 His battalion (3rd Bn) was part of the Special Reserve and de la Selva was in fact never sent to the battlefields, much to his frustration. Montealegre, "'El soldado desconocido'," 330-331.

627 This might have been due to Masters's remuneration expectations. Amy Lowell, *Letter to Salomón de la Selva*, 22 June 1918, Houghton Library, MS Lowell 19.1, Box 47, 1155.
He also reproduced, in *El Maestro*, a translation of a sonnet by Millay published in his *Pan-American Magazine. El Maestro* II.1:101-102 [103-104].

had a determining influence on the developments studied in this chapter, since "fuera de Henríquez Ureña y los hermanos de La Selva, no hay en el ámbito mexicano otra muestra de interés y comprensión del fenómeno de la poesía estadounidense,"[628] and it is through them that Novo, who briefly joined the group, was introduced to New Poetry. This was also a period of labour activism for de la Selva, first as a member of the Grupo Solidario del Movimiento Obrero (alongside Diego Rivera, who illustrated the cover of *ESD* [Fig. 4.4], Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Henríquez Ureña, and Pellicer, among others), and then directly of the CROM, whose Pan-American ties with the American Federation of Labour he actively cultivated. The link between aesthetics and politics is clear in *ESD*.

Translation and multilingualism in El soldado desconocido

Multilingualism is central in de la Selva's poetics. Written after his brief service in the British Army, *ESD* is scattered with English expressions. In his prologue, dated in New York in 1921, de la Selva uses the words "bum," "rough-neck," "tough," "liliom," "Unknown Soldier," and speaks of another soldier who "se murió Over There." The lyric subject displays the same kind of code-switching (with French additions), referring to the "boche," the "barrage," titling poems "Camouflage" and "Poilu," describing "la No Man's Land," "el dug-out hermético," and including lines such as "*Gently, gently, my lad!* Horas o siglos."[629] But this is only the tip of de la Selva's multilingual literary practice.

ESD is located at a crossroads in de la Selva's writing: the shift from English to Spanish.[630] Partly for this reason, it has been speculated that it might be a translation of

628 Arellano, *Rafael Lozano*, Chapter I, Tercera estación.
629 *ESD*, 7, 9, 8, 43, 53-54, 51, 57, 71 and 43, 108, and 54.
630 *Tropical town and other poems* appeared in English in 1918. *ESD* was de la Selva's first published work in Spanish, after which he wrote almost exclusively in Spanish.

de la Selva's *A soldier sings,* a collection of war sonnets that was to be published in 1919 by the Bodley Head in London, but that seems to have never come into existence, being consequently labelled as a "ghost book."[631] A series of sonnets about the poet's enlistment and expectation to travel to the front were published in 1918 and 1919 in US magazine *Ainslee's* (all in English), indicating that he had at least started working on this project.[632] We also know that de la Selva occasionally translated his own work, so it would not be too far-fetched to suppose that he relied on translation to some extent in his transition from one language to another.[633] In fact "Epigrama," from *ESD*, appears to be a rewriting of one of the *Ainslee's* sonnets, "In Defense of Helen," referencing Helen of Troy.

> But of Queen Helen, […]
> Sing not in bitter song, rash utterer!
> […]
> Consider what thou hast, a mortal mind
> And a most human strength; and fear Lord Zeus:
> He begat Helen, and made Homer blind.[634]

becomes

> Homero fue cegado
> por decir mal de Helena:
> Lo castigó el Cronida.
> ¡La causa de la guerra,
> artillero, no digas,
> por temor de que pierdas
> tu buena puntería![635]

The form and context of the poem change, but the main ideas (that one should not criticise Helen/discuss the cause of the war, and that this brings misfortune) are the same, pointing to a loose form of translation. This is the only clear antecedent that I

631 Suárez Turriza, "El soldado desconocido," 142, note 6.
632 *Aisnlee's* 41.1 (1918): 43; 42.2 (1918): 146; 42.4 (1918): 132; 43.1 (1919): 130; 43.2 (1919): 103.
633 He published one of his poems bilingually in the *Pan-American Magazine*, under the pseudonym of Hipólito Mattonel. "The good shade/La buena sombra" *Pan-American Magazine* XXVII.1: 42-43.
634 *Ainslee's* 43.2 (1919), 103.
635 *ESD* 103.

have found, however, suggesting that *ESD* likely contains completely original content too. Be this as it may, the relationship between *A soldier sings* and *ESD* is clear (as attested by the similar titles and subject matters), and the latter is the product of inter-linguistic transfer, if only as a reworking of the original sonnet project.

Interestingly, there are several sonnets (and looser 14-line units) in *ESD*, which hints at the connection with de la Selva's war writing in English. Notably, *ESD* opens with a sonnet, "Testamento," which displays some features linking it to the Anglophone tradition. It has an absence of line breaks between stanzas, unlike Hispanic usage, and, most importantly, an atypical rhyme pattern that is more characteristic of Anglophone sonnets, which prefer alternate rhymes to the Petrarchan form often observed in Spanish.[636] Even for the Anglo-Saxon tradition, though, this rhyme scheme (*ababcdcdeefgfg*) is peculiar. The final couplet is placed before the quartet instead of after it, as in Shelley's poem "To Wordsworth." In this piece, Stuart Curran argues, the inversion reflects Shelley's "sense of Wordsworth's own negation of the ideals he had once exemplified,"[637] an interpretation that is fully relevant in de la Selva's poem, which, as we will see later on, represents the state of naïve and romantic idealism that is

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636 Although not unheard of, alternate rhymes in a Spanish sonnet were, at the time, still a statement. As a comparison, English alternate rhymes are maintained in Spanish versions throughout *APMG* with the notable exception of sonnets, where they are systematically replaced by enclosed rhymes. This is virtually the only circumstance in which Requena departs from the original rhyme patterns.
This kind of play with foreign codes is found in other versions by de la Selva: firstly, he tended to select sonnets that did not correspond to the usual form in their respective language (that is, poems by Hispanic authors using alternate rhymes and poems by Anglophone authors using enclosed rhymes). This is true of one out of two sonnets that he translated in *Pan American Poetry*, and of 9 out of 14 that he translated for the *Pan-American Magazine.* (Comparatively, only one of eleven sonnets rendered by other translators in the latter magazine presents this unusual feature). Additionally, de la Selva experiments with switching the rhyme pattern from alternate to enclosed and vice versa in over a third of the sonnets that he translated for the *Pan-American Magazine* (5 out of 14). Thus, Hispanic poets end up with a more Spanish-sounding pattern *in English*, and Anglo-American poets are rendered in Spanish with English-sounding rhyme. This is something that other translators for the same periodical (Lillian E. Elliott, Thomas Walsh, and Alice Stone Blackwell) never did, and that de la Selva practised exclusively between January and May 1918, which points to conscious, almost systematic experimentation. He displayed the same deliberate playfulness with cultural codes in his work as a professional translator. In a letter to Millay, he wrote: "It is so wonderful to know that even in this mean way I am a factor in bringing North and South America together … I laugh to think what courteous and much obliging gentlemen I make these Swedes and Yankees, and what concise precise little businessmen I am turning many a wordy Latin American into." Quoted in Hulme, *Dinner*..., 199.

637 Curran, "To Wordsworth," 438.

to be shattered by the experience of WWI. This form is also symbolically located between cultures and traditions, being "neither Petrarchan nor Shakespearean"[638] (although clearly closer to the latter). Thus, de la Selva thematises his position between cultures through a form that draws on different literary traditions.

He thus conforms, in *ESD*, a poetics that is marked from the beginning by its transcultural origins, and of which translation is an inherent component—a poetics of modernity as understood, for instance, by Edouard Glissant: "les langues en relation trament la poétique imprévisible de la modernité."[639] This multilingualism "both highlights the dynamic and cross-cultural forces that characterise the modern era, and […] exemplifies the fracturing of linguistic unity commonly associated with both modernist and postmodernist aesthetics."[640] Thus, the kind of multilingualism displayed by de la Selva in *ESD* becomes a crucial component in the articulation of a modern Latin American poetics, while underlining the importance of poetry as a medium for the creative assessment of the experience of modernity.[641] The function of multilingualism "to reflect, engage with and otherwise comment on moments of historical change and transition" and "to convey both the most barbarous elements of modernity (inarticulacy, incomprehension) and some of its most utopian possibilities (translation)"[642] is clear in *ESD*, which oscillates between the barbarity of the Great War and the use of poetry for social justice. This is particularly apparent in the prologue, where de la Selva advocates for veterans' rights and for a post-war society in which governments care more about people than about (feigned) nationalism. It is against this backdrop that *ESD*, as a multilingual and at least partly translational text, will be read in this section.

638 Barentsen, *Romantic Metasubjectivity*, chapter 5.
639 Glissant, *Le discours*, 356. Quoted in Lonsdale, *Multilingualism and Modernity*, 2.
640 Lonsdale, *Multilingualism and Modernity*, 2.
641 We find similar examples of multilingualism (mainly through the use of Anglicisms) in Novo and later conversational poets such as Cardenal.
642 Lonsdale, *Multilingualism and Modernity*, 6.

De la Selva's anti-epic of modernity

First and foremost, de la Selva uses his multilingual, avant-garde poetics to question the social and cultural impact of the war. To this end, he explores the meaning of the epic in the modern world, especially in the presence of large-scale, technified warfare. The poet's background in classics is reflected by the ubiquitous allusions to Greek and Roman epic poetry. *ESD* is divided in five "jornadas," arranged chronologically from the decision to enlist, the first soldiering experiences, battle, permission, and back to the battlefields (Fig 4.5). This last section is titled "Sunt lachrymae rerum" after a verse of the *Aeneid*.[643] Thus, the poet blends the Latin epic with the Hispanic dramatic tradition, suggesting that his war story is not bound to end well. Indeed, the fifth act of *ESD* sees the lyric subject realising the far-reaching tragic consequences of the conflict as he returns to the battlefields. The reference to Virgil's classical epic also represents the genre reflecting on itself: the well-known quotation comes from a passage in which Aeneas contemplates a mural depicting scenes from the Trojan war. The epic hero thus looks back on past epics and, despite being moved by all the suffering and destruction, goes on to accomplish similar deeds. De la Selva's own anti-epic can be read as an attempt to break this cycle, in which Europe was enmeshed.

The narrative dimension of *ESD* is therefore paramount, although it has not received much critical attention. I agree with Suárez Turriza that one of de la Selva's central points is reflected in the lyric subject's transformation as he comes into contact with extreme violence. While her argument about the speaker's fragmentation and later redemption through religion is solidly grounded, I would like to draw attention to other aspects here. Instead of reading *ESD* as a fragmented "poema total," typical of the avant-garde, as she does, I will be approaching it as a degraded epic congruent with the characteristics of conversational poetics.[644] This is supported by the fact that *ESD*, as

643 Literally, "there are tears of (or for) things."

644 Both interpretations are backed by de la Selva's definition of *ESD* as one poem rather than a collection. *ESD*, 9. While this is a telling detail, I argue that the text is generically hybrid, combining the intentionality of a fragmented epic with the intensity of a collection of short lyric pieces. For this reason, and for the sake of clarity in the quantitative part of the analysis, I will keep referring to it as a collection of poems.

many traditional epics, focuses on one battle, recounting the build up to it and its aftermath. Figure 4.6 clearly shows this structure, as all poems dealing with combat and/or physical violence and death appear in the first third of the volume. They are concentrated in the "tercera jornada," which covers the battle, as confirmed by its title: "Mêlée" (at least a partial reference to Romain Rolland's 1914 pacifist manifesto, "Au-dessus de la mêlée"). Figure 4.7 illustrates this.

Unlike a traditional epic, however, and despite this narrative arc, there is no sense of a triumphal, foundational moment following the action. Rather, the last section points to an inescapable cycle of violence and destruction. Despite an impression of improvement (and potentially even armistice) towards the end of the volume, the last lines of the final poem bring us back to the beginning: "Sin embargo, esta noche / esperamos ataque. / Por eso te escribo."[645] In light of this, it becomes unclear whether the title of this piece ("Última carta") refers to the end of the war or the death of the speaker. In this context, the reference to Virgil might also be read as alluding to the encompassing desolation that characterises the war and its immediate aftermath.[646] Accordingly, the final section sees affirmations such as "¡Aquí puedo decirlo: / Nunca hallé la belleza, / que todo es podredumbre / y dolor y miseria!"[647] and the pointlessness of the war is reaffirmed, for instance in "Las ratas," the second poem of the fifth "jornada": "¡Ja! ¡ja! ¡ja!—Compañeros, la guerra / la vamos a perder de todos modos." The rats that infested the trenches become a metaphor for the corrupt political elites: "dejamos los oficios pacíficos: / para darle Europa a las ratas."[648] This cycle of violence and absurdity truncates the traditional development of the war epic.

The notion that the written word can accurately convey the experience of war—which is the very condition of existence of the epic—is also questioned by de la Selva, alongside an increasing number of his contemporaries. "Carta," a poem that appears in

645 *ESD*, 154.

646 There are many interpretations of this particular verse and my purpose here is not to discuss the most accurate reading but, rather, to discuss its possible ramifications in the context of *ESD*. David Wharton, "Sunt lacrimae rerum: An Exploration in Meaning," *The Classical Journal* 103.3 (Feb.-Mar. 2008), 260.

647 *ESD*, 107.

648 *ESD*, 101.

the third “jornada,” after the battle, opens as follows:

> Ya me curé de la literatura.
> Estas cosas no hay cómo contarlas.
> Estoy piojoso y eso es lo de menos.
> De nada sirven las palabras.[649]

Literature therefore appears as unfit to express the reality of war, especially its squalidness. This is also an attack on the naïve triumphalism of some war poets like Grenfell and Brooke.[650] In fact, and returning for a second to the rhyme scheme of the first poem, “Testamento” follows the same peculiar pattern as Brooke's second “The Dead” sonnet.[651] This allusion confirms the parodic character of the opening piece, also hinted at in the section's title: “Voluntario romántico.”[652] The unrealistic idealism that characterised many volunteers and early poetry of the war is underlined, only to be crushed by the actual experience of combat in *ESD*.

The poet and soldier as anti-heroes

De la Selva's attack on lyric WWI poetry through the figure of the poet and its association with the “romantic volunteer” has important ramifications. Being a poet appears to be, at least in some measure, incompatible with the experience of war, as expressed by the speaker in “Vergüenza,” a poem of the second “jornada” (fittingly titled “Soldado nuevo”): “Todos han dicho lo que eran / antes de ser soldados; / ¿y yo?

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649 *ESD*, 71.

650 This also includes, perhaps a tad ironically, de la Selva's own early poems, as the penultimate section of *Tropical Town and Other Poems*, titled “In war time,” contains verse of a similar tone, as does *Ainslee's*.

651 De la Selva knew of Brooke, mentioning precise biographic details in a letter to his friend, playwright Theresa Helburn (quoted in Montealegre, “‘El soldado desconocido,” 332). He also translated and published Joyce Kilmer's sonnet “In memory of Rupert Brooke,” under the pseudonym of Hipólito Mattonel, for the *Pan-American Magazine*, XXVI.6: 331.
The clear reference to a poem that reached instant fame in England is another element that points to the fact that “Testamento” might have been originally intended for an Anglophone audience.

652 The ending of the sonnet (“... tuve / un coraje de siglos y de razas y de / saber ser mar, volcán y roca y río y nube”) also evokes Grenfell's “The fighting man shall from the sun / Take warmth, and life from glowing earth; / Speed with the light-foot winds to run / And with the trees to newer birth;”

¿Yo qué sería / que ya no lo recuerdo? / ¿Poeta? ¡No! Decirlo / me daría vergüenza."[653] Early on, *ESD* remarks on the futility of being a poet in the war. The conversational poet, Pacheco explains, is far from the near-godly figure typical of other avant-garde movements, becoming, instead, a "bufón doliente" and a "ser degradado."[654]

In this way, de la Selva pursues his deconstruction of the epic genre by challenging one of its pillars: the hero. His depiction of Allied warriors, whom he calls "legendarios Aquiles,"[655] is at odds with this image of classic heroes. The first poem of the last section, "Sunt lachrymae rerum," is titled "Cobardía" and ends on a telling exclamation, that goes against all discourses around heroism and self-sacrifice: "¡Mi vida es para mí: Yo no la entrego!"[656] The notions of courage and cowardice are completely reversed five poems later, when the speaker affirms that going to war is in fact the result of a gregarious disposition and lack of willpower. He concludes: "Y nada es tan cobarde ni tan mezquino / como el morir uniformados mil al día."[657] The notion of military valour is repeatedly questioned, along with the purpose of the war itself: "¿Y de qué sirve la guerra? / ¡Si al fin he peleado / y no sé decirte de veras/ si soy valiente, / porque no me fijé"[658]; "Quiero, por si me muero, / confesarte que casi / todas las noches lloro, […] y ya nada me importa, / quienes ganen o pierdan, / pues, no sé cómo, ahora / lo único que creo / es que la guerra es mala."[659] It is not a coincidence that those occurrences are concentrated in the last section of the book, which displays the full extent of the war's dramatic consequences and undermines the epic.

De la Selva's intention to engage with, appropriate, and modify the concept of

653 *ESD*, 23.
654 Pacheco, "Nota," 330.
655 *ESD*, 65. WWI is also set against the backdrop of the classical epic is "Epigrama," quoted above.
656 *ESD*, 100.
657 *ESD*, 113.
This echoes the eighth line of Sorley's "When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead" ("... It is easy to be dead.") and coincides with Anne Mounic's point that WWI poetry was marked by the struggle between the universal/collective (which responds to the tragic notion of inevitable and accepted sacrifice) and the individual (which entails a change in poetics in order to describe personal, unique suffering).
Mounic, "'Tell and be told'," 70-83.
658 *ESD*, 69.
659 *ESD*, 70.

the war hero is clear in his prologue to *ESD*, where he distinguishes different kinds of veterans: the "bueno para nada," the "imbécil que sufre," the one that "trajeron en un cajón," and the "perfecto bourgeois" who is devoid of any critical thought.[660] But the Great War's hero is the unknown soldier. Reclaiming this figure while criticising it as a form of military homage is de la Selva's attempt to represent the truly anonymous and silent masses of soldiers and defend them against the cynicism and greediness of Allied governments, which enshrine the unknown soldier because "es barato y a todos satisface. No hay que darle pensión. No tiene nombre. Ni familia. Ni nada. Sólo patria."[661] Against this hypocritical show of patriotism, he insists on the unknown soldier's corporeality and real existence ("ese fetiche era de carne y hueso, humano y muy humano!"[662]). Along with the realisation that "muy bien pude haber sido yo mismo ese héroe desconocido," this restores the unknown soldier's individuality and realness, as opposed to his abstract life as a national symbol. Ultimately, this reverses the process through which "the sacrificed individual becomes an object belonging to the community" in this kind of propagandistic narrative.[663] This entails a prosaism that degrades even this hero figure: "era un cadáver como todos, cuando he aquí que le desentierran. Lo han metido con todos sus gusanos en una caja de zinc, bien soldada para que no se escape mal olor ninguno."[664] By undermining the different components of the classic epic, *ESD* leaves the realms of myth and abstraction behind and becomes "testimonio y crítica de la realidad,"[665] an important step towards conversational poetry.

Realism and abstraction in El soldado desconocido

De la Selva's attempt to bring individual lived experience to the fore and demythify

660 *ESD*, 7-8.
661 *ESD,* 8-9.
662 *ESD*, 9.
663 Mounic, "'Tell and be told," 77.
664 *ESD*, 9.
665 Alfredo Veiravé, quoted in Rodríguez, "La poesía posvanguardista," 40.

representations of WWI is underpinned by *ESD*'s strong testimonial component and by its poetic engagement with reality.[666] This engagement with reality thus contributes to de la Selva's criticism of war and politics, but also to shaping a new poetics, as it ties in with recent developments brought about by Imagism, with which the poet was certainly acquainted, being Lowell's correspondent and having met Pound in person. A condensed formulation of Imagist principles was penned by Flint in *Poetry*'s March 1913 issue (and famously featured in Pound's 1918 *A Retrospect*):

> Direct treatment of the "thing" whether subjective or objective.
> To use absolutely no word that d[oes] not contribute to the presentation.
> As regarding rhythm: to compose in sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.[667]

De la Selva combines these three principles with more traditional, *modernista* verse in an eclectic mixture that is the mark of his unique poetics. I will come back to the question of rhythm later on; in terms of "direct" and economic treatment of the subject matter, the poems in *ESD* vary considerably. Some pieces, like "Vergüenza" quoted above, embody the first and second principles, condensing meaning in a concise and objective scene. Others, in turn, are long-winded, rambling, and verbose ("La Paz" or "La trinchera abandonada"). Even in shorter pieces, treatment is not always "direct," and metaphors and abstraction abound.

This is not aleatory, however, and de la Selva uses these differences in the treatment of the "thing" to create meaning and advance his narrative. To evidence this, I have classified the poems in *ESD* in three different categories: A (abstract representation of the war), B (concrete representation of the war), and C (images of violence and combat—see appendix, note 1 for more details and examples). Going back to Figures 4.6 and 4.7, we observe how, as the battle nears, the treatment of the events becomes more concrete, more grounded in reality, suggesting a link between the experience of violence and the poetic engagement with reality. The first "jornada" contains only

666 Despite not having fought, de la Selva ambiguously states, in his prologue, that he served in the British Army, "por eso pude escribir este poema." *ESD*, 9.

667 F.S. Flint, "Imagisme," *Poetry* I.6 (March 1913), [199].

abstract poems (unsurprisingly, since this section precedes enlistment); the second "jornada" almost exclusively consists of concrete (yet non-violent) poems, as it corresponds to training time and the wait prior to travelling to the front-line, ending with a poem to the North Sea, which soldiers would have crossed on their way from Britain to Flanders.[668] The third section, corresponding to battle time, is the most interesting: after a first encounter with physical violence in the form of the wounded coming back from the front (in "Heridos"), there are a few poems describing trench life and surroundings (all concrete but non-violent—category B). In those, although the enemy is in sight, real danger is not yet present, and bullets fly by rather harmlessly in "Curiosidad." Things become serious in "Comienzo de batalla," when fighting begins. The action unfolds progressively, first with poison gas and artillery fire (as an actual WWI battle would), a phase during which category-A and category-C poems alternate, possibly as a way to represent the soldier's intermittent dissociation in the face of extreme danger and trauma. Tension thus builds gradually until the climax, when the soldiers go over the top (at the end of "Al asalto") and engage into close combat (in "Carga a la bayoneta"). The following poem opens with an ellipsis: "Dicen que la batalla ha durado seis días,—".[669] These last three poems, which mark the height of the battle, are all category-C. In this third "jornada," made up of very dissimilar pieces, de la Selva experiments with different ways to describe the same events (as is evident with the grenades)[670] and plays with several levels of "direct treatment" in order to produce meaning; in effect, the more hectic and violent the described events, the more direct the treatment. In this, *ESD* offers a unique opportunity to observe the correlation between war and the development of a poetics that is grounded in reality.[671]

This periodic sense of realism is reinforced by the use of "feísmo" and shocking

668 The crossing actually occurs in the following poem, "Primera carta."

669 *ESD*, 57.

670 See appendix note 1 and/or *ESD*, 47-49.

671 For Anne Mounic, "war poetry raises the issue of poetic language and its link with, or divorce from, existence. Does the poet wish to put an idealistic mask on reality or does he wish to reveal it in its terrible ambivalence and the nonsense of individual death?" As this critic shows, it becomes indispensable, in the latter case, to "find a new language in order to tackle the experience of individual suffering." 'Tell and be told" 80, 72.

images. Henríquez Ureña speaks of "deliberadas exageraciones de fealdad" in *ESD.*[672] "Oda a Safo" is often quoted in this discussion: "En el dug-out hermético, / sonoro de risas y de pedos" and "¡Oh Safo, ¿será cierto / que Faón no te quiso / porque tenías caspa?..." But other passages contribute more notably to this effect with their images of wounded, dead, and inhuman bodies: "¡Qué horribles son los trapos manchados de sangre! […] y aquel muchacho loco que se ha mordido la lengua / y la lleva fuera, morada, como si lo hubieran ahorcado!"; soldiers moving through the No Man's Land, "cuántas veces hundiéndose en charcas putrefactas / y al alargar la mano sobre el suelo / metiéndola en la boca de un cadáver!—", "Todos enmascarados, / iguales a demonios"; or "cuando me quite los zapatos / me van a heder los pies, y tendré llagas / húmedas y verdosas en las plantas."[673] This treatment of the physicality of the war resonates with the realism of both the Imagists and the poets critical of the war (Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Herbert Read, himself close to Hulme and Pound).

Another way in which reality and individuality are conveyed in *ESD* is the recourse to colloquial and oral registers. Besides plain and occasionally informal vocabulary, especially to refer to women ("mujeres preguntonas", "muchachitas"[674]), de la Selva makes abundant use of reported speech, exclamations and interjections ("Y esta sangre en el suelo, / ¡por Dios! ¿qué ha sucedido?..."[675]), and (often rhetorical) questions ("¿Y de qué sirve la guerra?"[676]). Five poems start with a question, and four finish with one. Exclamations are even more recurrent in those positions. In addition, various poems are titled "Carta," simultaneously alluding to the importance of correspondence for soldiers and imbuing the collection with a dialogic, conversational tone: "¿Sabes lo que quisiera, / de lo que tengo ganas?", "¡Fíjate: me da fuerzas para creer / que hoy no hay bala que me toque."[677] Even outside of those letter-poems, the lyric subject often addresses an interlocutor, be it his fellow servicemen ("La causa de la guerra, / artillero,

672 Henríquez Ureña and Reyes, *Epistolario íntimo*, 209.
673 *ESD*, 108, 31, 43, 57.
674 *ESD*, 85, 89.
675 *ESD*, 79.
676 *ESD*, 69.
677 *ESD*, 73, 74.

no digas,"[678]), his bayonet, an abstract "you," or Sappho or God themselves. Finally, he also sustains internal debates and conversations with himself, as in "Vergüenza" quoted earlier, or in "Carga a la bayoneta": "Y uno se pregunta de sí mismo: / –ʿ¿Soy ése yo? ¿Por qué estará tan pálido?"[679] All these elements lend a distinctly oral tone to the verse and bring communication to the fore, an element characteristic of war poets such as Coulson, discussed above, and that would prove fundamental for conversationalism.

"Como el son que hacen las balas": violence and formal de-structuring

Finally, the cornerstone of de la Selva's innovative aesthetics is his use of poetic form. The Nicaraguan was acutely aware of the necessity to transform language in order to write about war, as attested by"La lira":

> La lira es cosa muy barata.
> ¡Quién no tiene lira!
> Yo quiero algo diferente.
> Algo hecho de este alambre de púas;
> algo que no pueda tocar un cualquiera,
> que haga sangrar los dedos,
> que dé un son como el son que hacen las balas
> […]
> Aunque la gente diga que no es música
> las estrellas en sus danzas acatarán el nuevo ritmo.[680]

The overrated ability to write according to convention (lines 1-2) is opposed to a new, unsettling, unharmonious form of writing that arises from—and hence can convey—the reality of war (lines 4-7). The last two lines evoke the third Imagist principle, to write according to natural flow rather than regular cadence, although here, the natural flow is that of combat. De la Selva's dissonant "nuevo ritmo" is closely linked to free verse, which, for the poet "basa su versificación en el ritmo." He insists on the musical quality of free verse:

678 *ESD*, 101, 103.
679 *ESD*, 55.
680 *ESD*, 41.

> En vez de piezas de baile, que á eso se reduce la antigua versificación; […] el verso libre inglés nos ofrece trozos sinfónicos y hasta sinfonías enteras. Por consiguiente, en lo que toca á la musicalidad del verso, la manera nueva es un medio de expresión superior á las formas antiguas […] particularmente si se considera que es permisible, y hasta elegante, lo mismo que en la música sinfónica, emplear, cuando se quiera, las medidas líricas de la vieja prosodia. Respecto de la rima, queda reducida á su verdadera condición de ornamento. […] los versolibristas norteamericanos la emplean con frecuencia, especialmente Miss Lowell, para marcar el tiempo ó, como Beethoven en los más bellos pasajes líricos de sus sinfonías […] para darle alas de pájaro á la música del verso, para hacer enfática una frase ó para prolongar la emoción de un ritmo.[681]

This corresponds precisely to de la Selva's technique in *ESD*: the volume contains sections that can be understood as musical movements, more structured passages, freer portions, intertextual references, and themes and motifs that are repeated, sometimes with variations. This can be read as an adaptation of the symphonic tradition of the previous century or so, and of its characteristic techniques used, among others, by Beethoven: cyclic form (whereby a theme reoccurs in different parts of the work) and thematic transformation (in which a theme is changed into something different, as illustrated by the different takes on grenades).[682] In particular, *ESD* shares an artistic intention with the genre of the symphonic poem and its mixture of narrative, musical, and pictorial components.[683] Significantly, one such symphonic poem is referenced in *ESD*: Scriabin's 1910 *Prometheus*, which de la Selva had attended, along with Henríquez Ureña, at Carnegie Hall back in 1915.[684]

De la Selva applied similar principles to the composition of *ESD*, using formal variations to tell the story of his supposed participation in WWI. Far from using free verse throughout, de la Selva maintains elements of traditional versification, combining

681 Salomón de la Selva, "Una gran poetisa americana," *El Universal,* 4 July 1918, 5.

682 The link between poetry and symphonic music is not unprecedented, with such associations found in French symbolists (Laforgue, Mallarmé) and Anglophone Modernists. Conrad Aiken wrote in *Poetry*, in 1919, that symphonic composition allowed him to explore "contrapuntal effects in poetry —the effects of contrasting and conflicting tones and themes, a kind of underlying simultaneity in dissimilarity." ("Counterpoint and Implication," *Poetry* XIV (1919): 155). Eliot's *Waste Land* is often read in terms of this association (see e.g. Nicolosi, "T. S. Eliot and Music").

683 A form of programme music, symphonic poems are, roughly speaking, single-movement orchestral pieces designed to tell a story or evoke a scene or atmosphere, being often inspired in a work of art or literature.

684 *ESD*, 72.

New Poetry with *modernismo*.[685] In fact, most of the volume corresponds to metric (if irregular) verse. The majority of the poems can be considered as more or less free *silvas*, and although the boundary between very loose *silvas* and free verse can be blurry, they retain a noticeable base of hendecasyllables and heptasyllables. Figure 4.8, representing the dominant line length in each poem, confirms this, at the same time as it draws our attention to the use of other lengths associated either with *modernismo* (alexandrines) or popular poetry and the romance form (octosyllables) at the beginning and end of the volume. Thus, different verse lengths and structures are purposefully used at different points of the volume.

Overall, only eight poems (of 55) can be considered to be free verse, strictly speaking.[686] "Heridos" is the first one, and it is not a coincidence that it recounts the lyric subject's first encounter with violence.[687] As mentioned above, it is the first poem to graphically depict the effects of violence, marking the start of the engagement with modern warfare and its consequences. The next two pieces in free verse are also category-C and correspond to the beginning of the battle and the charge. We will remember here that the first poem, which was very abstract and idealistic (category-A), was an almost perfect sonnet. The level of formal regularity thus appears to be connected to the poems' content.

The connection between the experience of war and the use of free verse is confirmed when considering the volume as a whole. To ascertain this empirically, I determined each poem's level of poetic formality, which I understand as the position of

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685 Another possible source of formal inspiration is Lowell's notion of "polyphonic prose," which consists of regular poetry printed as prose, and interspersed with actual prose, thus creating a contrast between rhythmic pattern and freedom. Lowell insists on the "dramatic possibilities of the new form" (Lowell, "A consideration...," 116), something which is particularly relevant to *ESD*. While this might have inspired de la Selva's play with more or less regular verse (especially in light of his mention of Lowell in relation to symphonic music), it should be noted that the end result is quite different.

686 15 more have what I defined as a weak metric base, meaning the two main verse lengths make up roughly half of the poem (between 43 and 58% more precisely). Although this is arguably a borderline situation, I deemed it too regular to be considered free verse proper.

687 Although in the form of a short poem (9 lines), "Heridos" displays some typical features of free verse as developed from Whitman: long lines (15 and 20 syllables for the ending of the poem), and an enumeration supported by anaphora and parallelism ("Y los hombres que se quejan mucho; / y los que se quejan poco; y los que ya han dejado de quejarse!").

the piece on the continuum that runs from the strictest formal pattern (e.g., a sonnet in regular alexandrines, with conventional accentuation, and consonantal rhyme in a recognisable pattern) to completely free (that is, ametric) verse. It is based on a classification system that considers rhyme, diversity of verse lengths, and stanzaic organisation to assess the degree of formality displayed by the poems; please refer to the appendix, note 2, for a more detailed explanation of the method. A total formality score is thus calculated for each poem, and then plotted as a function of the poem's position in the volume (Figure 4.9). The red curve (corresponding to a local polynomial regression) clearly shows how poetic destructuration rises as aggression and violence intensify, and decreases once the battle has passed. The level of formal structuredness overlaps with the epic narrative arc (centred on the battle) and, thus, is closely related to the experience of warfare. This is a creative way of illustrating (instead of merely discussing) the limits of literary discourse and poetic convention (as expressed in "Carta," quoted earlier), as well as the necessity to craft a different literary language.

Importantly, the evolution of formal structuredness throughout the collection also mirrors that of the engagement with reality shown in Figure 4.10. Therefore, as the battle approaches and unfolds, de la Selva's poetry shifts towards both a more realist mode and freer form. It comes as no surprise that realism and free verse would be connected, since it is a characteristic of free verse to "clai[m] and thematiz[e] a proximity to lived experience,"[688] but it is useful to confirm that the cluster of techniques that would crystallise as conversationalism arose jointly and in close relation to the trauma of WWI. This link is confirmed if we look at the distribution of the total formality score for each category (Figure 4.11): overall, cat-C poems are the less structured, followed by cat-B and cat-A (see Note 3 in the appendix for an explanation of this plot).

If we consider the formality score distributions by "jornada" instead of by category, we observe a similar arc but we see that, as a whole, the poems of the fourth

[688] Wesling and Bollobaś, "Free verse," 427.

"jornada" are freer than those of the third (Figure 4.12).[689] In other words, the most consistently de-structured period occurs just after the battle is over. In Figure 4.9, this is visible in the almost double-peak of the regression curve. I interpret this as an attempt to depict the lasting and widespread ravages of WWI. An important theme in "jornada" 4, in which the persona is on leave in London, is the devastating impact of the conflict on civil society, and especially on women (as family members of soldiers in "Las preguntas," but also young girls forced to sell their bodies to survive, in "El deber de un padre cuando se va a la guerra"). While those poems are not violent in a literal sense, they certainly point to the many ramifications of suffering. It is also when he is back in civil society that the lyric subject/soldier realises the extent of his psychological distress. This is related to his general change of heart regarding the war, and the attempts to break the epic cycle in the last part of the volume, and is reflected by the ironic and/or cynical tone of some of the poems of the fifth section (e.g., "Las ratas" and "La Paz") and by the higher variability of formality scores for both "jornada" 5 and category A visible in Figures 4.11 and 4.12.[690] In other words, while the initial loss of structure (and illusions) is clearly marked, the way back from hell seems less straightforward and includes numerous ups and downs. The new poetic language of war infiltrates poems about other topics, such as the lyric subject's time in London, his loneliness, and his feelings of romantic inadequacy and repressed sexual desire. Interestingly, of the eight poems written in free verse, only the first three are accounts of the battlefields (cat-C); the following two are cat-B and the last three are cat-A (see Fig. 4.13). The association between violence and metric freedom is thus broken, on punctual occasions, within the second half of the volume. In *ESD*, free verse therefore appeared as a result of the experience of industrialised warfare, but through its lasting trauma, it also started to make its way into more mundane realms.

[689] That is, the median is higher in "jornada" 4, although the highest values do occur in "jornada" 3.
[690] This congruity is mainly due to the fact that the fifth section is composed of 90% of cat-A poems.

Conclusion

Arising from de la Selva's multilingual, translational, and cross-cultural literary practice, *ESD* embodies transition, in terms of both poetics and attitude towards the war and poetic conventions. To convey this transition, de la Selva resorts to various elements of WWI poetry outlined in *APMG*, either to challenge them (e.g., Brookes's celebratory tone) or to build on them (Coulson's use of the oral register and of formal disruption to represent violence), as well as to *modernismo* and emerging Anglo-American poetics (New Poetry, Imagism). *ESD* thus relies on the latest developments of modern Anglophone poetry, symphonic composition, and de la Selva's own poetry in English to conform a complex and multi-layered narrative that criticises the war and its apologists by questioning the tenets of the epic genre and developing a new, degraded, prosaic poetics. Although intermittent, realism, prosaism, anti-poetic elements, free verse, and social critique are intertwined in *ESD*, and intimately linked to the experience of modern warfare. Undoubtedly, de la Selva is one of those poets who "rebelled as much against the literary falsities, reticences, and decorums which preceded them, as against the intolerable conditions of trench warfare."[691] In this, de la Selva not only bridges the distance between Latin America and the Great War—in line with Siskind's argument discussed in the previous chapter—but he also brings Hispanic letters to the forefront of the avant-garde poetic laboratory. *ESD* ends with a *post scriptum* where de la Selva refers to this new connection between his place of origin and the international community, hyperbolically (and perhaps somewhat jokingly) stating that "La América tropical dará al mundo los mejores poetas, los mejores pintores, y los mejores santos"[692] This also goes to show that Modernism, even in its most historically narrow definition, was not exclusively Anglophone, being instead a multilingual and transcultural phenomenon.

691 Johnston, *English Poetry*, 20.
692 *ESD,* 154.

Chapter 5

On the margins of *Contemporáneos*: Rafael Lozano and Salvador Novo's translations of US poetry

The Mexican literary field of the mid-to-late 1920s was dominated by the Contemporáneos group, and conversational poetics developed mostly on its margins. This is not altogether surprising given the aestheticism and cultural elitism displayed by most of its members. This circle of writers came together throughout the decade, collaborating in important venues (starting with *Pegaso*, and including *El Maestro* and *México Moderno*), and publishing various periodicals before the famed *Contemporáneos* (1928-1931): *Revista Nueva* (1919), *La Falange* (1922-23), and *Ulises* (1927-28). This is one of the reasons of the group's heterogeneity.[693] As Guillermo Sheridan puts it, "a este grupo le interesaba más que la diversidad de sus voluntades se dirigiera a un mismo y quizá impreciso objetivo, cada cual por su propio camino y sus propios medios, que fingir un programa que, unificándolos como grupo, los limitara como individuos."[694] Two main sub-groups can be distinguished, however, as Sheridan explains: the older (and earliest) members, who initially gathered within the short-lived Nuevo Ateneo de la Juventud (Jaime Torres Bodet, Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano, Enrique González Rojo, José Gorostiza, and, in some measure, Carlos Pellicer), and the younger members, who joined them later (Salvador Novo and Xavier Villaurrutia—called the "generación bicápite"—, Gilberto Owen, and Jorge Cuesta). The difference between both sub-groups, besides being generational, was also one of literary affinities: while the former walked in González Martínez's footsteps and followed *modernista* models, at least initially, the latter was more radical.[695] This is why "la voluntad de renovación parece no llegar a los Contemporáneos hasta la unión del

693 For a discussion of the factors of diversity and unity, see Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 11 and following.
694 Sheridan, "La *Revista Nueva.*" 108.
695 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer...*, 18-20.

otro subgrupo que Sheridan llama 'la genéración bicápite'."[696]

This renovation was partly sparked by Novo's readings and translations of New Poetry, and his appropriation of certain of its poetic principles, encouraged by Henríquez Ureña and de la Selva. This speaks of two opposed areas of interest and influence: the new Ateneo sub-group was a Francophile formation close to Vasconcelos, as many of its members worked for the SEP in the early twenties; Novo, in turn, worked for Henríquez Ureña at the UNM, where a group gathered around the Dominican and directed its attention towards Anglophone literature.[697] Various scholars have pointed to the opposition between the group of the SEP and that of the UNM.[698] Novo's ambivalent position and his distance with respect to the core of Contemporáneos (both symbolically and concretely), as well as the venues in which his translations of New Poetry appeared, place his translational activity on the margins of Contemporáneos. It conforms a highly personal project that combines Henríquez Ureña and de la Selva's Pan-American aspirations and Novo's articulation of a marginal authorial figure.

Although the translation of modern US poetry was eventually embraced by the group in its later publications (such as *Contemporáneos*, as discussed in section 4.6), it is mainly not in terms of the broad poetics outlined by Monroe and other contemporaries as New Poetry, or even Imagism, but as the specific juxtaposition of colloquialism, hermetism, and erudition that characterised some high Modernists like Eliot. In Contemporáneos, the legacy of the "otra vanguardia" thus bifurcates into two strands, one that is irreverent, democratising (to an extent), and mundane, in line with the tenets of conversationalism, and another that appropriates some of its techniques and uses them into a form of verse that is abstract, intellectual, affiliated with high culture, and often spiritual. The latter also ties in with a vision of the poet as the "cosmic poet" decried by the Imagists.

Importantly, Henríquez Ureña is not the only agent feeding into Novo's work on

696 Fernández Mora, "Las revistas literarias," 82.

697 The group included de la Selva, Daniel Cosío Villegas, Eduardo Villaseñor, and to an extent Novo. Henríquez Ureña was, at the time, the head of the Departamento de Intercambio Universitario and taught at the ENP and the UNM's Escuela de Altos Estudios.

698 Pacheco, "Nota," 329; Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 19.

New Poetry. Another figure, which has gone almost completely unnoticed, has indirectly contributed to what would later become Novo's anthology, *La poesía norteamericana moderna* (mentioned by Pacheco as one of the founding texts of the "otra vanguardia"): Rafael Lozano. This part of the chapter examines the gestation of Novo's anthology through its various iterations (from Lozano's groundwork, and Lozano and Novo's collaboration, to its final version), as well as the split that occurred in *Contemporáneos*, to illustrate how translation of New and Modernist poetry contributed to major currents in twentieth-century Hispanic poetry.

A first take on New Poetry: Rafael Lozano's translations for **Prisma** *(1922)*

Around the same time as de la Selva published *ESD*, Lozano, another multilingual and cosmopolitan writer, worked towards the diffusion of US poetry in Spanish. Mostly overlooked by scholarship, only Sheridan and Luis Arellano and Anuar Jalife recognise his contribution as the first systematic promoter of modern US poetry in Mexico.[699] There is virtually no criticism on Lozano besides Arellano's doctoral research.[700] In it, Lozano's role as a harbinger of the avant-gardes is underlined, and his activity as a translator briefly mentioned. Focusing on this aspect of his work, this section and the next shed light on his contribution to the development of the "otra vanguardia"—probably the biggest gap in Pacheco's account (and much of the subsequent scholarship on the topic).

Like de la Selva in the 1910s, Lozano transited through various non-Hispanophone countries, first the United States, where he pursued his education and published a poetry collection (in Spanish), and then France, where he published another volume of poetry (in French) and founded a periodical (in Spanish): *Prisma, revista internacional de poesía*.[701] In the vein of *Poetry*, *Prisma* was published "con el objeto de

[699] Sheridan mentions this in passing. Arellano and Jalife offer more details in their article on Lozano and Novo, albeit with a slightly patchy record. "Rafael Lozano y Salvador Novo."

[700] Published as *Rafael Lozano, mensajero de vanguardias.*

[701] The volume in French is an experimental collection of haiku-inspired poems, read entirely from

provocar un renacimiento en la poesía castellana," an important part of which consisted of "da[r] a conocer en castellano todas las tendencias mundiales de la poesía."[702] As a result, translation was omnipresent in its pages, perhaps more so than any other periodical of my corpus. It differs from de la Selva's early translational work in that it circulated abundantly in Mexico, thus falling within the scope of this thesis despite being edited in Paris and printed in Barcelona.[703]

One of the main "tendencias mundiales" featured in *Prisma* is the Anglo-American, although with poets like Shelley, Robert Browning, and Poe prominently featured, the magazine cannot be defined as properly avant-gardist. Nevertheless, it did open the way for modern US poetics to be disseminated and discussed in Mexico through translations of Lowell's, Sandburg's, Teasdale's, and Thomas Walsh's poetry, as well as articles on poetic concepts akin to Imagism. Lowell and Sandburg are, in *Prisma*, the main voices of this poetic change.

Carl Sandburg, one of the celebrated figures of *Prisma*'s first issue (along with Paul Fort), gets the honour of an etching and an introductory study. In this text, signed by Louis Butcher Lee, Sandburg is described as a poet of the people and of the modern city, and quoted affirming that his goal is to "concretar y embellecer las aspiraciones […] de toda la gente que compone nuestras ciudades, y decirlo abiertamente en su propio lenguaje y con el ritmo de nuestra lengua"[704] Although this text is presented as Lee's impressions upon meeting Sandburg, it is in fact mostly taken from Lowell's critical writings, except for the parts that refer to Lee's personal encounter with the poet. Long passages are both quoted and (mostly) plagiarised from at least two different texts by Lowell: *Tendencies in modern American poetry* (1917) and "Poetry and propaganda" (1920), a review of Sandburg's *Smoke and Steel*. While it is possible that Lee existed and plagiarised Lowell's work before being translated for *Prisma*, I would venture to hypothesise that he is entirely Lozano's creation. Other contributions to *Prisma* are

right to left.

[702] *Prisma* I.1:1 (3).

[703] Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 121.

[704] *Prisma* I.1:37-38 [39-40].

suspected of being attributed by the editor to imaginary authors (such as Gisèle de Lorient's poems).[705] Moreover, his name could be read as a juxtaposition of Sandburg's famous denomination for Chicago ("Hog Butcher for the World") and a common name among poets of the time (Muna Lee, Agnes Lee, Edgar Lee Masters, Robert Lee Frost). Unlike Arellano and Jalife's, who read this text as an intent to contextualise Sandburg's poetry (based on the incorrect assertion that Lee was a "colaborador asiduo de *Poetry*"[706]), I consider it as a playful attempt to give the illusion of a critical perspective that matches *Prisma*'s selection perfectly (and thence infuses it with literary capital), and foster a false sense of proximity with the poet (since Lee describes his meeting with Sandburg in detail). The reference to Lowell in the study might function as another source of authority, and a way to establish a web of interrelated poets and critics who back Lozano's editorial and translatorial choices. A final detail that contributes to this self-legitimising network is the passage in which Sandburg supposedly affirmed that he was influenced by "la Biblia, Lincoln y Paul Fort," the French poet being the first author translated in this first issue of *Prisma*.[707] The selection of poems ("A fence," "Vaudeville dancer," "Limited," "Jan Kubelik," "Stripes," "Monosyllable, and "Cool tombs") matches the contents of the introduction: in a form that is somewhere between free verse and rhythmic prose, it presents a series of snapshots of city-dwellers, immigrants, and common people, with their joys and their struggles. The re-titling of "Stripes" as "Instantáneas" in the Spanish translation emphasises this visual, fragmented character of Sandburg's poetry, and the framing of the selection through "Trinity Place" and "Cool tombs," two poems with a counterpoint between buried political figures (Alexander Hamilton, Abraham Lincoln) and living ordinary people, insists on the place

[705] The poems by "T'Zin-Pa-O" also included in the first issue are versions of pseudo-translations of a presumably non-existent Chinese author into French (the pseudo-translator himself operating under a pseudonym). It is unclear whether Lozano knew this and chose to include the selection as a gesture towards make-believe authorship, or if he held the translations as genuine. For more details on this and other fictitious authors, see Kharitonova, "El misterio Chino."

[706] Arellano and Jalife, "Rafael Lozano," 114; Arellano, *Rafael Lozano*, chapter III, section "Poetry, a Magazine
of Verse."

[707] There is evidence that Sandburg read Fort's poetry. It is unclear, however, if he really counted the French poet among his top three references along with Lincoln and the Bible. This is rendered more doubtful as he allegedly told this to Lee in their personal interview. *Prisma* I.2:31-34 [94-97].

of the latter in history and art. On the textual level, the translation denotes sporadic attempts to replicate the colloquial tone and a surprisingly imprecise command of English.

The same can be said of Lowell's poems, translated in issue I.3, although the selection is less daring; besides the fact that the poems are written and translated in free verse, and rely mostly on images, they can hardly be considered as ground-breaking. They establish Lowell as another important figure in *Prisma*, however, complementing her indirect appearance in the first issue (via Lee). Lozano corresponded with her and I contend that she was his point of entry into US poetry. This would challenge Sheridan's claim that Lozano's reception of US verse was influenced by the European avant-garde and Arellano's that "es evidente que el acceso a esta poesía [estadounidense] […] vino dado por la influencia de *Poetry*."[708] While *Poetry* was certainly a general inspiration for Lozano, as far as verse-centred periodicals go, it does not seem to have been a direct source.[709] Out of 16 poems by contemporary US authors translated in *Prisma*, 14 did not appear in *Poetry*, and although Sandburg and Lowell were the most published poets in *Poetry* (Fig. 5.1), their inclusion in *Prisma* was likely due to them simply being the biggest names at the time.[710] All three of Lowell's poems translated by Lozano come, instead, from *Pictures of the floating world* (1919),[711] and three of Sandburg's nine poems appeared in Lowell's *Tendencies in modern American poetry*, which we have already established as a source for *Prisma*'s critical commentary. There are also parallels between the introduction to *Tendencies in modern American poetry* and Lozano's first editorial: the notion that interest in poetry has been roused by WWI (quoted in the introduction to this chapter) is indeed the opening point made by Lowell.[712] Additionally, the foundational importance of Fort for the formal experiments of some

708 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 121.; Arellano, *Rafael Lozano*, chapter III, section "Poetry, a Magazine of Verse."

709 He clearly knew the magazine, which was advertised in *Prisma*.

710 Both had published numerous collections of poetry by this time and were regular features of many magazines besides *Poetry*.

711 This collection is mentioned by Lozano in his essay "La poesía estadunidense contemporánea" as one of Lowell's main publications and a "volumen que acaba de aparecer." Although not completely accurate, this denotes his attempt to present her latest work. *Prisma* I.4:16 [198].

712 Lowell, *Tendencies*, v.

Imagists and new poets is also discussed at length in Lowell's *Six French Poets* (1915) and "A consideration of modern poetry," published in *The North American Review* in 1917. All these elements point to Lowell's importance for Lozano's approach to New Poetry.

There is no clear aesthetic line, however, for the translation of contemporary US poetry in *Prisma*, and while there may be a stronger emphasis on free verse than in de la Selva's Pan-American translations, the more experimental poets (Sandburg and Lowell) coexist alongside less bold colleagues. Both Teasdale's and Walsh's poems are written and translated in mostly metric and rhymed verse.[713] In fact, Lozano even adds rhyme to the only unrhymed piece of this group: Teasdale's "The Lamp."[714] Lozano's strong initial impulse for renovation appears to be progressively diluted throughout the publication span (at least with respect to US poetry): we move from Sandburg's experimental snapshots of ordinary people in Chicago (issue I.1), to Lowell's free but uninventive love poems (I.3), to Teasdale's metric (if somewhat irregular) and uninventive love poems (I.4), to, finally, Walsh's apology of the forceful religious conversion of native populations under colonial rule, translated by Tablada in fully regular and rhymed alexandrines.

The ambivalent nature of Lozano's reception of US poetry is also visible in his critical work. In "La poesía estadunidense contemporánea," Lozano argues that although rigid form is undesirable, the new poets' verse is immature and not an end in itself: "están en la primera etapa del lirismo, la del encandilamiento de la visión avasalladora. Ya irá clarificándose esta visión, y entonces estos mismos poetas nos mostrarán el secreto que se esconde tras el velo luminoso de la vida."[715] We thus return to the trope of poetry as a tool for the knowledge of the ineffable, something that could not be further from the realist, unpretentious, and prosaic tone of both New Poetry and the "otra vanguardia." The paradoxical position of being one of the very first promoters

713 Those are "Joy," "I Would Live In Your Love," and "The lamp" by Teasdale, translated by Lozano, and Walsh's "To Fray Junipero," in Tablada's version.
714 "La linterna," *Prisma* I.4:1 [183].
715 *Prisma* I.4:19 [201].

of this poetics while missing (or rejecting) one of its core premises marks the contribution of Lozano to the history of conversational poetry, in which he acts as a kind of missing link between de la Selva and Novo in the chain of Latin American poets interested in the Anglo-American lyric.

Rafael Lozano and Salvador Novo's collaboration in La Falange (1922-1923)

Notwithstanding this contradiction, Lozano's work for *Prisma* was fundamental for the development of the "otra vanguardia." Upon his return to Mexico, he teamed up with Novo to pursue his dissemination work, this time in *La Falange* (*LF*), resulting in the short "Antología norte-americana moderna."[716] His translations and criticism for *Prisma* fed directly into this shared project, on which Novo also brought his own perspective to bear.

Founded by Torres Bodet and Ortiz de Montellano in December 1922, *La Falange* is one of the early periodicals to gather various members of Contemporáneos. Considered by Sheridan as the Nuevo Ateneo's publication, it is also described as the "revista portavoz del esteticismo de Torres Bodet."[717] As such, it leant on the side of late *modernismo* and the "grupo del cuello torcido" (as Novo called the first sub-group of Contemporáneos in allusion to their link to González Martínez). In its first editorial, the magazine, which was published under Vasconcelos's auspices, embraced the *latinista* ideal inherited from Darío, declaring that its collaborators "desautorizan, por ilógica y enemiga, la influencia sajona y se proponen reivindicar los fueros de la vieja civilización romana de la que todos provenimos."[718] Nevertheless, almost a quarter of the pages of its seventh (and last) issue are occupied by Lozano and Novo's short anthology of US poetry. In this section, I examine the significance of this small body of

[716] *La Falange* I.7:19-23 [443-447].
[717] Scroggins, "poetas de una revista olvidada," 38.
[718] *La Falange* I.1:1 [13].

work for the development of Novo's reception of US poetry and for Contemporáneos more generally.

The "Antología norte-americana moderna" consists of poems by Alfred Kreymborg, Masters, Lowell, Pound, Sandburg, and Teasdale, translated by Lozano, Novo, and Antonio Dodero, as well as an introduction by Lozano titled "Los nuevos poetas de los Estados Unidos." This is in fact a very lightly edited version of Lozano's essay for *Prisma* ("La poesía estadunidense contemporánea"), with a few small factual and lexical corrections, and a title change that shifts the focus from a general view of US literature to specific individual figures. In terms of translation, Lozano reuses his versions of Lowell's "Opal," Sandburg's "Cool Tombs," and Teasdale's "The Lamp," the new material being provided by Novo and his friend Dodero.

Compared to *Prisma*, this short anthology is more forward-looking for three reasons: its strict focus on contemporary authors, its more stringent selection (of both authors and poems), and the addition of Novo's translations. Walsh's poem is omitted, and the excess of dull love poems is greatly reduced; the only remaining piece by Lowell is the most concentrated Imagist poem of *Prisma*'s selection, "Opal," in which the image of the iridescent gem is used to evoke the complex nuances of passion.

But it is Novo's translations that lend the selection a truly innovative character. Both authors translated by the young poet (Masters and Pound) were among the leaders of formal experimentation and free verse, through the realism of ordinary lives and the juxtaposition of images respectively. We lack information on the selection process, but it is safe to assume that this was Novo's contribution, especially in light of Lozano's explicit characterisation of Pound as a minor poet.[719] Of all authors discussed in Lozano's essay, he appears in ante-penultimate position and is dedicated just a little over two lines, to state that he was "originalmente, uno de los fundadores del grupo Imaginista, pero separado de él por diferencias de técnica trató de fundar el Vorticismo,

[719] *La Falange* I.7:16 [440].
For Lozano, the major figures were Sandburg, Lowell, Frost, Lindsay, Teasdale, Masters, H.D. and Fletcher.

sin éxito."[720] The little consideration afforded to Pound by Lozano contrasts with Novo's later comments on his "erudición erásmica" and the "inmenso valor de su espíritu, que inició corrientes saludables de interpretación nueva."[721]

Another difference is that, contrary to Lozano's work for *Prisma*, Monroe and *Poetry* appear to be among Novo's sources. While none of the poems translated by Lozano in the *LF* selection appeared in either *Poetry* or Monroe's anthology *The New Poetry*, all poems translated by Novo (Masters's "Silence" and Pound's "N.Y.") and Dodero ("The old manuscript" by Kreymborg) were featured in the anthology and two of them also appeared in the magazine. Novo recounts his discovery of US highbrow magazines, among which *Poetry*, in "Un esquema de las revistas americanas," published in *El Universal Ilustrado.*[722] According to him, it happened during the summer of 1922 —a few months only before the *LF* anthology—when a student of the UNM's Escuela de Verano responded to a derogatory comment about US magazines made by Novo by sending him a selection of highbrow publications. This, Novo writes, opened his eyes to his (and his contemporaries') ignorance of US culture and literature fostered by the focus on French letters still prevalent in educational contexts: "aceptamos sin discutir la idea de que los Estados Unidos tienen rascacielos, opresión capitalista y máquinas, nada más... ¡Qué grande sorpresa para nuestro hombres de letras si les fuera dado asomarse al crisol admirable de los Estados Unidos!"[723] From this, it emerges that Novo's translation work is aimed at fighting prejudice and offering a truer representation of US culture to the Mexican readership (and not a mere glimpse at poetic novelty as in *Prisma*), reflecting, in a way, Henríquez Ureña and de la Selva's Pan-American endeavours.[724]

In terms of poetics, too, Novo's version of Pound's "N.Y."—probably the first

720 *La Falange* I.7:17 [441].

721 Novo, *La poesía norte-americana* , 27.

722 Novo, "Un esquema, quoted from *Los Contemporáneos en* El Universal, 216-220.

723 Novo, "Un esquema," 217.

Created by Henríquez Ureña as an instance of cultural diplomacy to disseminate Mexican culture and gain support for the revolutionary government among foreign (and particularly US) teachers and journalists, it is notable that the summer school also contributed to a better understanding of US literature in Mexico, albeit indirectly.

724 Novo has acknowledged the role of the Dominican in guiding his readings of US poetry. "Un esquema de las revistas americanas" adds a more direct source for his approach to the literature of the Northern neighbour and attests to his personal interest and independent reading.

translation of Pound in Spanish according to Anthony Stanton[725]—is an original addition to the anthology, particularly thanks to its meta-poetic reflection on recent aesthetic developments. Addressed to the city of New York, the poem explores the relationship of the poet with the modern metropolis:

> My City, my beloved, my white!
> Ah, slender,
> Listen! Listen to me, and I will breathe into thee a soul.
> Delicately upon the reed, attend me!
>
> *Now do I know that I am mad,*
> *For here are a million people surly with traffic;*
> *This is no maid.*
> *Neither could I play upon any reed if I had one.*
>
> My City, my beloved,
> Thou art a maid with no breasts,
> Thou art slender as a silver reed.
> Listen to me, attend me!
> And I will breathe into thee a soul,
> And thou shalt live for ever.[726]

The second stanza contrasts starkly with the poem's beginning and end, in terms of typography, tone, and content, undermining both the personification of the city as the poet's lover and the poet's ability to make it transcend its material existence. In opposition to the caricaturesque poetic tone of the first and last passages (marked by the bombastic exclamations and use of the archaic "thou"), the middle stanza functions almost like a soliloquy, displaying a conversational tone and prosaic perspective that point to the nonsense of the rest of the poem. In the translation, Novo appears to be fully aware of this meta-poetic play; he not only maintains the use of the italics, but he adds assonantal rhyme to the uneven lines of the first and last stanza, thereby reinforcing the feel of worn poetic discourse.[727] At the same time, as noted by Tom Boll, he "accentuates the colloquialism" of the middle passage by using less literary syntactic

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725 Stanton, "Salvador Novo , 154.

726 Pound, "N.Y.," in *The New Poetry*, 259.

727 "Mi ciudad, mi amada, mi bl**anca**! […] Mi ciudad, mi am**ada**, / tu eres una mujer sin senos, / tú eres esbelta como un junco de pl**ata** / óyeme, atiéndeme / y te infundiré un **alma**." *La Falange* I.7:22 [446] (my emphases).

structures.[728] This also contributes to the degradation of the poet figure: in the middle stanza, we witness the moment when the speaker/poet realises that he is stripped of his demiurgic powers in the face of modern urban life.

With respect to Contemporáneos, "Antología norte-americana moderna" is excentric on various counts. Novo was not a regular collaborator of *La Falange* and affirmed, in a letter to Merlin Foster, that he was "ya para esa época más cerca de Pedro Henríquez Ureña y de su grupo que de Jaime Torres Bodet y el suyo."[729] The translated authors and the poetics that they represent are at odds with the group's hostile stance towards Anglo-American culture, expressed overtly in the first editorial and in the translation of Alice Meynell's "Decivilized." This essay, in which she vilified American attempts at literary renewal through formal experimentation, was published in the *Revista Nueva* (another of the group's magazines) a few years prior.[730] This is not to say, however, that Lozano and Novo's anthology had no effect on the group. Significantly, it was printed just before a cluster of poems titled "Poesía de América." Those appear to be designed as a counterpart to the Anglo-American selection, but they denote certain points of contact, in the use of free verse but also in terms of content. The first poem, Torres Bodet's "Civilización," addresses, like Pound's "N.Y.," the relationship between modern poetics and industrial urban life:

> Lo que se necesita
> es un verso que diga
> esta vida mecánica
> de las ciudades en que habitan
> tantos hombres sin alma.
>
> Un verso en el que cruja el aire ardiente

[728] The use of the auxiliary ("Now do I know that I am mad"), for instance, is not reproduced in the Spanish version, which follows a more natural construction: "Ahora sé que estoy loco." This kind of alternation between poetic and prosaic diction, Boll explains, will later mark Paz's own experiments with colloquial verse. Boll, *Octavio Paz*, 45-46.

[729] Quoted in Barrera, "Salvador Novo, navaja de la inteligencia" (PhD diss., UNAM, 1998), 153 note 173.

[730] *Revista Nueva* I.2:8-11 [390-393]. Meynell, in her acrimonious 1891 essay, affirms that breaking with the coloniser's culture and trying to forge new modes of expression (such as "poems in prose form" and "panoramic landscape" in painting), is leading America to decivilisation. She particularly criticises the "artless slang" of decivilised writers. *The Rhythm of Life and Other Essays* (London; New York: John Lane, 1905) 7.

que las hélices blancas
de los aviones, locos en su viaje de oro,
arremolinan y desgarran.
[…]
Un verso que no hable de rosas, de crepúsculos,
de amor, de fe, de nada
de lo que ya no existe en la vida del hombre
de estas ciudades tumultuarias.

Un verso que no mienta: un verso sin retórica[731]

The parallel with "N.Y.," printed just two pages earlier, is striking. It is reinforced by Torres Bodet's choice to use the exact same assonantal rhyme (-a-a) on odd lines (except the first). In fact, two of the rhyming words also appear in Novo's version of Pound's poem ("alma" and "blancas"). Indeed, this is a markedly more pessimistic piece about modern life, but it attests to Torres Bodet's careful reading of Novo's translation, and, perhaps, to a glimpse of change in Contemporáneos's *postmodernista* poetics.

Thus, the "Antología norte-americana moderna," with its double origin in Lozano's cosmopolitan ambitions and Novo's take on Henríquez Ureña's Pan-Americanism, is a fundamental link in the reception of Anglo-American poetry in Mexico, for Contemporáneos, but mostly for Novo himself.

Salvador Novo's La poesía norte-americana moderna*, pamphlet from* El Universal Ilustrado *(1924)*

The development of Novo's reading, translation, and assimilation of New Poetry is clear when we consider "Antología norte-americana moderna" against *La poesía norteamericana moderna* (hereafter *LPNM*), which he edited and published only one year later as a pamphlet, within *El Universal Ilustrado*'s "Publicaciones literarias exclusivas" series. While this anthology has its roots in Novo and Lozano's work for *La Falange* and, more distantly, in Lozano's translations for *Prisma* (his version of "The Lamp," by Teasdale, closes *LPNM*), it clearly transcends both projects and attests to

[731] *La Falange* I.7:24-25 [448-449].

Novo's personal evolution and appropriation of New Poetry. Through his selection, framing, and translation, Novo introduces important variations, conforming a new, more mature and comprehensive, but also original and playful representation of contemporary US poetry. Its impact on his own poetry (especially in *XX poemas* and *Espejo*) is mentioned by Pacheco and Monsiváis, and studied in detail by Stanton.[732]

Novo's interest in poetic innovation and freer forms predated 1922 (and even his meeting with Henríquez Ureña, in 1921). In 1920 already, at the age of 16, he wrote haiku-inspired short poems, as well as calligrams, following Tablada's pioneering work. One of them ("Jarrón") was published in *Prisma* (issue II.3).[733] He found fault with the soon-to-be Contemporáneos's *modernista* poetic conservatism: "le habían torcido el cuello al cisne y estaban consecuentemente llenos de lagos, corazones, plenilunios, halagos, sinrazones, junios." He rejected their practice of the "perdurable, sonoro, filosófico, didáctico alejandrino del doctor González Martínez" and their tendency "a buscar en todas las cosas un alma y un sentido oculto, a […] seguir el rastro de la verdad 'arcana'"[734] This is how Novo began to perceive "la necesidad de romper con un lenguaje conservador e inmutable en pos de procedimientos más escépticos, abiertos al azar de la mutación, propios de una modernidad más consciente de su velocidad y de su crisis esencial," leading the way for the other Contemporáneos.[735] Besides Tablada, *Cvltvra* contributed to Novo's literary education, as he and his close friend Villaurrutia "leían frenéticamente las ediciones de la editorial Cultura,"[736] highlighting the interrelatedness of the developments presented in this chapter.

It is, however, Henríquez Ureña who provides the strongest link between his and de la Selva's Pan-American efforts in New York, and the Mexican publishing scene of the early 1920s. Invited by Vasconcelos to develop the UNM's exchange programmes with initiatives such as the Escuela de Verano, the Dominican became Novo's mentor.

732 Pacheco, "Nota," 332; Monsiváis , ed., *Salvador Novo*, 4-6; Stanton, "Salvador Novo"
733 *Prisma* II.3:46 [172].
734 Novo, "¡Veinte años después...!" in Capistrán, ed., "Los 'Contemporáneos' por sí mismos," vi-vii.
735 Sheridan,*Contemporáneos ayer*, 80-82.
736 Sheridan, "La *Revista Nueva*," 108.

He described his pupil's poetry as "oscura"[737] and encouraged him to write more "como se habla y no como se piensa," a lesson brought from the United States.[738] Under this intellectual patronage, Novo came into contact both with US students at the Escuela de Verano and with contemporary US poetry, sparking a lifelong interest.

La poesía norte-americana moderna: general characterisation

As noted by Pacheco, "Novo sigue las recomendaciones, pero impone su criterio."[739] Most of the anthology derives from his own readings and preferences; only eight of the 17 authors featured in *LPNM* are mentioned in Henríquez Ureñas's seminal 1927 essay on US literature, discussed in the introduction to this chapter. A higher proportion (15 out of 17) were published in *Poetry*: Sherwood Anderson, Witter Bynner, Hilda Conkling, John Gould Fletcher, Robert Frost, Joyce Kilmer, Alfred Kreymborg, Vachel Lindsay, Amy Lowell, Edgar Lee Masters, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Harriet Monroe, Ezra Pound, Carl Sandburg, and Sara Teasdale. The remaining two are Adelaide Crapsey (misspelled Chapsey) and Christopher Morley. While Novo's selection might appear, from a contemporary perspective, rather haphazard, it makes sense once replaced in the context of the early twenties.[740] If we consider Novo's selection against a ranking of the most published poets in *Poetry* (Fig. 5.1), it appears that he accurately identified relevant figures in the poetic landscape of the years 1912-1922, as 11 of the 17 translated authors from *LPNM* were among the 7% most published poets in the magazine (that is, in the top 43 out of 610). Of the editors and translators discussed in this chapter, Novo is thus the one who reflects the *de facto* canon of *Poetry* most closely.

On the other hand, some of Novo's choices deviate from this canon, attesting to

737 Novo, *La vida*, 665.
738 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 114.
739 Pacheco, "Nota," 333.
740 Stanton, "Salvador Novo," 154.

readings well beyond *Poetry*, signallling the development of a personal perspective. This is visible, for instance, in his inclusion of poets who were not published in *Poetry* (Crapsey and Morley),[741] poets who were less prominent within the publication (Millay, Kilmer, and Frost),[742] and authors who were, as Novo acknowledged, better known as prose-writers (Anderson). Most importantly, his selection of poems confirms his independent study: even for figures that were well represented in *Poetry*, Novo's choice of texts often draws on the authors' own publications rather than what appeared in the periodical, unlike his translations for the *LF* anthology. In the cases of Bynner, Conkling, and Lindsay, despite their important presence in the magazine and in Monroe's *The New Poetry*, none of the chosen poems (with the exception of one of Conkling's eight short pieces) were ever published in either venue. This is also true of one of Sandburg's two translated poems. Monroe's and Pound's pieces appeared in *The New Poetry* but not in *Poetry*, suggesting that the anthology might have played a slightly more important role than the magazine. This is corroborated by Table 5.1, which also indicates that the relative canonicity of a poet (as represented by her presence in the top 7% most published authors in *Poetry*) is the only partial predictor of the inclusion of a determined poem in *LPNM*. Most translated authors were not mentioned by Henríquez Ureña, and most translated poems were not included in either *Poetry* or *The New Poetry.*

Another difference with *LF*'s "Antología norte-americana moderna" is format. Printed as a pamphlet by *El Universal Ilustrado* (*EUI*) in 1924 (on occasion of the fourth of July), *LPNM* is a small-format, thin, yet autonomous publication, as opposed to a section of a larger whole, which potentially includes elements to frame it or bring contrast (as Torres Bodet's poem does in *La Falange*). While suggesting an increase in the symbolic value ascribed to the text, its characteristics as an object (an ephemeral booklet produced on a specific occasion and released by a massive middle-brow cultural

741 To be precise, three of Crapsey's cinquains were reproduced in issue 21.6 of *Poetry* (March 1923), but this was part of a review by Pearl Andelson and not an entry in the poetry section ([334]-[335]).

742 Notably, even these less represented poets fall within the first third of most published authors in *Poetry*, except Robert Frost (at the 58th percentile, with three published poems).

supplement) point in the opposite direction, emphasising the precarious material existence of some of the most ground-breaking pieces of creation.[743] *EUI*, founded in 1917 following a mixed formula similar to *Pegaso*'s, was certainly a less elitist venue than the other publications discussed in this thesis. However, its editor, Carlos Noriega Hope, who assumed in 1920 after spending a few months in the United States himself, had "un interés amplio y serio en las artes y letras contemporáneas."[744] He notoriously sought to create an original product by including the voices of the younger generation and promoting the debate around literary renovation and avant-garde experiments. To these young writers, *EUI* was an "espacio sensible a la relevancia de sus riesgos y apuestas, más que sólo un techo protector."[745] Additionally, one of the original aims of *EUI* was to foster "un acercamiento provechoso entre nuestro país y la República del Norte" in the wake of the revolution, in the words of its first editor.[746] Noriega Hope had some direct knowledge of the Californian illustrated press which, according to Saborit, he might have used as a source of editorial inspiration. In light of Novo's work for the Escuela de Verano, it becomes clear that his translational work was, in more ways than one, inscribed in the broader context of post-revolutionary cultural diplomacy. Like Dávalos before him, his anthology of translated US poetry is explicitly presented as an "Homenaje a los Estados Unidos en la celebración del 4 de julio,"[747] a wording that is significant in a situation in which diplomatic relations between Mexico and the United States were being renegotiated.

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743 The rudimentary binding, with one single signature attached by a unique staple, as well as a plain paper cover and a back-cover that is in fact a detachable slip for a children's colouring competition (Figs. 5.2 and 5.3), speaks of the limited intended durability of the supplement. Its scholarly reception confirms this: *LPNM* does not normally figure among library holdings and, until recently, was deemed "inencontrable" by top-notch scholars like Sheridan and Pacheco (Pacheco, "Nota," 328, note 4). To my knowledge, only Stanton, Arellano and Jalife, and myself have consulted it.

744 Saborit, ed. *El Universal Ilustrado*, 9.

745 Saborit, *El Universal Ilustrado*, 23.

746 Carlos González Peña, "A los lectores de este semanario," *EUI* 2.73 (27 Sept 1918), 2.

747 Novo, *LPNM*, title page.

Anthologisation as cultural capital: raising the status of US poetry

At the same time as it fights against the general public's ignorance of US culture, *LPNM* also endows the country's poetry—and New Poetry in particular—with symbolic capital through anthologisation. This is another common point with Dávalos, who first published his anthologic essay *Los grandes poetas norteamericanos* (discussed in Chapter 1) as a pamphlet in 1901, and then edited two sister anthologies, *Musas de Francia* and *Musas de Albión y otras congeneres*, although the latter appeared after *LPNM.* If we omit the 1901 publication, which consisted of only five poems and mostly commentary, Novo is, to my knowledge, the first in Latin America (and probably the Hispanic world) to publish a self-contained anthology composed exclusively of translated US poetry. Indeed, in format as in content, *LPNM* differs radically from other anthologies of translated Anglophone poetry of the same period, such as the *Antología de líricos ingleses y angloamericanos* edited by Venezuelan romantic poet Miguel Sánchez Pesquera and published in Madrid between 1915 and 1924, or even Dávalos's *Musas de Albión* (1930).[748] As opposed to these, Novo focused exclusively on US poetry, which he did not present as an appendix of English literature; on contemporary figures (whereas most of the poets translated in Pesquera's and Dávalos's books were dead at the time of publication); and on more experimental, freer verse.[749] Unlike his (older) contemporaries, he therefore showcased uncanonical authors and texts that were to assume a primary role within Mexican letters (as attested by Novo's own poetic production). This contrasts with the prestige of the anthologic tradition which, according to Cervantes and Valero, was marked both by its high status as a "libro ilustrado y bien patrimonial" and its literary historiographic efforts to (re)create the canon.[750] Publishing an anthology of US poetry, at the time, is therefore a way to situate

748 Sánchez Pesquera. ed., *Antología de líricos*; Dávalos. *Musas de Albión.*

749 A telling detail is Pesquera's open disagreement, in his introduction to the first volume of his anthology, with "la opinión de los que tienen a Walt Whitman como un genio originalísimo." *Antología*, 43.

750 Cervantes and Valero. *La colección Cvltvra*, 45-46.

this literature within the international canon and display it as worthy of symbolic capital. This is reinforced by the fact that Novo published two parallel anthologies ten days apart: *LPNM* and *Poetas franceses modernos*, on the French national holiday. Both pamphlets have the same format, the same cover, and very similar titles. Dávalos followed suit and published his *Musas de Albión* with Cvltvra six years later, although as mentioned above, his selection does not fulfil the same purpose as Novo's (or even his own 1901 essay).[751] This elevates New Poetry, symbolically, to the level of the French tradition, which was the acme of prestige for Latin American intellectuals of the period.

Novo's introduction to *LPNM* is another opportunity to distinguish himself from previous projects and assert his own criteria. It is especially significant since he did not include one in the sister anthology of French poetry. While Lozano offered an extensive factual and chronological account of US poetry, Novo centred his introduction around a couple of interrelated concepts: freedom and rebellion. However, not unlike Lozano's introduction to Sandburg's poetry, which was mainly taken from Lowell, Novo's introduction consists, for the most part, of a rearranged collage of plagiarised quotations from the 1921 edition of Louis Untermeyer's didactic anthology *Modern American Poetry* (hereafter *MAP*).[752] Untermeyer's name is cryptically referenced in parenthesis at the end of Novo's first paragraph, which indeed comes from *MAP*, but so does roughly 90% of the rest of the introduction, without any citation. Although this speaks of a greater diversity of sources in Novo, the impression that the young poet is highly knowledgeable about US literature is an illusion, and his reception remains to a certain extent second-hand. Of the 17 individual introductory notes (one for each featured poet), 15 are taken partly from *MAP*, confirming that it was an important source insofar as critical framing goes. In terms of poem selection, however, Untermeyer hardly

751 In Dávalos too, the titles (*Musas de Francia* and *Musas de Albión y otras congeneres*) reinforced the parallel and, hence, the transfer of cultural capital from one poetic tradition to the other. This is reiterated in the introductory note to *Musas de Albión*: "A semejanza de lo que practiqué con otra serie de versos en mis "MUSAS DE FRANCIA", colecciono aquí mis versiones de poesías inglesas." Dávalos, *Musas de Albión.* [3].

752 Untermeyer. ed., *Modern American Poetry.*

guided Novo's work: only six of the pieces featured in *LPNM* also appeared in *MAP* (less than both *Poetry* and *The New Poetry*).[753]

Anthologisation as genealogy: Novo's "regimiento de rebeldes"

In his introduction, Novo carefully curated Untermeyer's preface, reducing its original 31 pages to four, and modified a few key details that reveal his own vision. Starting from the general premise that US literature was, in the post-Civil War era, derivative of European letters (found in both Untermeyer and Lozano), Novo proceeds to establish a genealogy of "rebeldes," who broke this association, starting with Whitman. The overpowering figure of the bard in Novo's introduction contrasts with Lozano's account, which merely mentions him as part of a group of writers who "trazaron los caminos del movimiento contemporáneo," alongside Poe, Emerson, Hawthorne, and Thoreau.[754] It matches Untermeyer's narrative, which establishes Whitman as "the Lincoln of our literature" (a formulation that Novo translates literally).[755] From Untermeyer, Novo takes the ideas that Whitman's revolutionary poetics opened the way for the renaissance of the 1910s and that formal freedom resulted in more authentically American, but also more democratic verse. As part of this discussion, Novo translates a fragment of section II of Whitman's "Song of the exposition" (included in Untermeyer): "Ven, musa, emigra de Grecia y de Jonia / […] Pon en las rocas de tu nevado Parnaso el letrero "Se renta", / Pues sabe que una esfera mejor, más fresca, más ocupada, un dominio intacto y más amplio te aguarda y te demanda."[756] Indeed, this applies to Latin America too, particularly as it resonates with Andrés Bello's 1823 "Alocución a la poesía," one of the

753 And of those 6, 5 had appeared in *The New Poetry* previously, and 2 were published both in *The New Poetry* and *Poetry* (Kreymborg's "Old Manuscript" and Masters's "Silence"), confirming a level of popularity.

754 *Prisma* I.4:14 [196].
Despite Whitman's historic and symbolic relevance, he only features in *LPNM* as a forefather (in the introduction), as Novo adheres strictly to his purpose of translating contemporary figures.

755 "Whitman es el Lincoln de la literatura americana," *LPNM*, 3. Lincoln would become an important figure for conversationalists later on, as attested by Coronel Urtecho and Cardenal's anthology *Lincoln de los poetas* (Managua: Talleres Tipográficos Universal, 1951).

756 *LPNM*, 4.

first calls for Latin American cultural independence.[757] In contrast to the Venezuelan polymath's verse, the funny and absurd image of the "to let" sign on the Parnassus is a prototypically conversational take on the idea of cultural emancipation and an example of the kind of humour that Novo would use in his own poetry.[758]

From Whitman, Novo jumps to the authors published in *Poetry* and, in particular, to Sandburg and Pound, whom he considers the bard's direct and most influential heirs. Based on these two examples, Novo elaborates on how this rebellion translates in terms of poetic expression, with the inclusion of the American idiom in poetry, in the work of the former, and an innovative treatment of the image in the latter. Pound is also praised for his attempt to bring rebels together and systematise the new poetics: "reunió por primera vez a los insurgentes en un grupo: los imaginistas," of which Novo translates the guiding principles (from Untermeyer). It is clear that these guided his own writing in some measure; he openly prioritised the visual dimension in his poems of the period, which, he affirmed "concretan una forma propia que se ha liberado de los moldes en que mi voz adquirió, sin embargo, contornos perdurables. Estos poemas se podrían colgar como cuadros: ante todo son visuales."[759]

The notion of rebellion allows Novo to create a genealogy of poets in which to insert himself, in line with Piglia's suggestion that writers build a tradition in which their own works can be appreciated, which anthologisation greatly facilitates.[760] Although the idea of rebellion is present in *MAP*, it is nowhere near as prominent as in Novo's plagiarised version. The first writers to break with the Europhile style of New England intellectuals of the 1860s and 1870s are described by Untermeyer as "a regiment recruited from the ranks of vulgarity" (in the eyes of the "Boston gentlemen of the early

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757 "Divina poesía, / [...] tiempo es que dejes ya la culta Europa,/ [...] y dirijas el vuelo adonde te abre / el mundo de Colón su grande escena." Bello, *Obras completas*, 3:38.

758 Significantly, Novo only mentions two figures besides Whitman for the period 1890-1912: Mark Twain and Bret Harte. Humour and irony were central aspects of Novo's writing, and these two writers get a wink in a short paragraph that records the onset of humourism. This goes to show that Novo's reception is careful and guided by his own poetic affinities.

759 Monsiváis, *Salvador Novo*, 5.

760 Like magazines, anthologies can be seen as ways to "irrumpir en la tradición y reinsertarse en ella." Cervantes and Valero, *La colección Cvltvra*, 46.

Renaissance"). Novo transforms them into a "regimiento de rebeldes."[761] The same happens to the authors published by *Poetry*: in Untermeyer's words, "October, 1912, saw the first issue of *Poetry* […] a monthly that was to introduce the work of hitherto unknown poets and to herald, with an eager impartiality, the various groups, schools and 'movements'."[762] For Novo, "en octubre de 1912 se lanza el primer número de "Poetry" […] que iba a afiliar, sin distinción de banderas, a todos los rebeldes."[763] Novo systematically characterises the literary figures that conform the line in which he is positioning himself as rebels; this is also true of Pound and his fellow "insurgentes," although this one is formulated as such in *MAP*.[764]

"Libre y literalmente": Novo's translational filibusterism

However, more than rebels, the Imagists were, for Untermeyer, "prophets of freedom—liberators," a nuance also found in his treatment of Whitman.[765] For all its ubiquity in *MAP*, the concept of freedom is emphasised further in the passages that Novo chose to translate. Untermeyer's observation that contemporary poets "are more nearly free" than their British counterparts becomes the absolute "son ya libres" in Spanish.[766] Similarly, Novo closes his introduction on the following reflection: "a sweeping *inclusiveness* distinguishes our contemporary verse; it embraces all themes, all cultures, all modes of expression" but changing it to "Una avasalladora *libertad* invade y distingue el arte poético contemporáneo en los Estados Unidos. Abarca todas las culturas, todos los temas y todos los modos de expresión."[767]

Freedom also informed the making of the anthology, as Novo explains in the small portion of the introduction that he wrote himself. He discusses his choice not to organise *LPNM* hierarchically, leaving "al lector la *libertad* de clasificar según su

761 Untermeyer, *MAP*, xviii; *LPNM*, 3.
762 Unvermeyer, *MAP*, xxxi.
763 *LPNM*, 4.
764 Untermeyer, *MAP*, xxxvii.
765 Untermeyer, *MAP*, xxxvii, xxi.
766 Untermeyer, *MAP*, xliii; *LPNM*, 6.
767 Untermeyer, *MAP*, xliii-xliv; *LPNM*, 6 (my emphases).

gusto," and his decision to translate the selected poems "*libre* y literalmente."[768] This oxymoron denotes Novo's careful evaluation of the different aspects of poetic translation, and of the tension between form and content in this process. From the translations themselves, it emerges that freedom applies to Novo's treatment of form and literality to his treatment of content. This relates to the emphasis put on the poetic image in Novo's translatorial and creative work, following Imagist principles. Novo's awareness of formal devices is clear here, as he seeks to replicate some of them in his translations (e.g., occasional rhyme). However, this is done only when it does not disrupt the flow of images in the poem. In other words, content is not altered to fit a fixed pattern, as was often done in *modernista* translations. The regular alternate rhyme of Kilmer's "Poets," for instance, (*abab cdcd*), is rendered partially in Novo's translation, as *aa-- bcbc.*[769]

This manner of translating can be observed earlier, in Novo's versions of Vachel Lindsay's poetry, published in *EUI* in April 1924.[770] In "The fairy circus," for instance, even lines are rhymed:

> A fairy ran a circus
> With a pigeon puffed and proud,
> A humble bullfrog
> And a rather solid cloud.
> [...]
> The pigeon wore his feathers
> And spread himself—O My!
> The cloud wore sunshine
> He gathered in the sky.[771]

In Novo's translation, however, only the last stanza rhymes, likely due to the substantial modifications that would be needed to make two lines ending with a masculine and a feminine adjective respectively rhyme:

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768 *LPNM*, 6, (my emphases).
The order was also alphabetic in *LF*, although this is only underlined and expressed in terms of freedom in *LPNM*.

769 *LPNM*, 17.

770 Salvador Novo, "El buen té y la poesía de Vachel Lindsay," *EUI* (3 April 1924), 18-19, 46. I am quoting the text as anthologised in *Los Contemporáneos en* El Universal..., 198-205.

771 Lindsay, *Going-to-the-Sun*, 20.

Un hada tuvo un circo
con un pichón inflado y orgulloso,
una humilde rana
y una nube un tanto sólida.
[…]
El pichón usaba sus plumas
y se extendía
la nube usaba luz de sol
que por los cielos recogía.[772]

In the last stanza, by contrast, Novo resorted to an easier solution by rhyming two verbs in the imperfect tense ("extendía" and "recogía"). The effort put into producing this rhyme is appreciable, since it implied both the omission of "O My!" on the stanza's second line, and the inversion of the verb and prepositional phrase on the fourth—changes which do not alter the poem's images in any way though. All poems translated in this cluster are literal versions in which rhyme schemes are only partially reproduced.

Novo specifically addresses this translatorial choice in his introductory note: Lindsay (who, incidentally, has a "larga melena *rebelde* y anacrónica") is

> un poeta en verso. […] la razón que me ha decidido a traducir sus versos libre y literalmente es la que tuvo Mallarmé para traducir a E. A. Poe en la misma forma, la propia que tuvo Machado para traducir en prosa y literalmente a Verlaine: un respeto católico a las imágenes y a las esencias y la conciencia de que las cámaras fotográficas, al traducir, no traicionan.[773]

This is therefore a deliberate choice derived from a poetics that promotes an absolute precedence of image over form, eye over ear. The comparison with Mallarmé and Machado is an interesting one, not least because Novo is far from translating in prose, as both referenced poets did. Despite this, it is clear that he sought to create a parallel with them, as reflected in his formulation "libre y literalmente,"[774] which echoes "en prosa y literalmente." The latter phrase, used to describe Machado's translation style, is taken from Enrique Gómez Carrillo's prologue to Machado's volume of translations of Verlaine. This demonstrates both an acute interest in others' translatorial practices and experimentalism in translation, and an attempt to insert himself in a prestigious tradition

[772] Novo, "El buen té," 202.
[773] Novo, "El buen té," 201 (my emphasis).
[774] He was obviously fond of the phrase, which he used verbatim in *LPNM.*

of poet-translators and lyric innovators.

The depth of Novo's reflection on translation as a practice is also attested by his discussion of its role in the Anglophone literary renaissance, in his commentary of Lindsay's poems. There, Novo wrote: "todos saben que el afán filibustero y colonizador —en el buen sentido de la palabra—ha sido provechoso ejercicio en la literatura de lengua inglesa." He proceeds to list Anglophone poets such as Pound, Lowell, Bynner, H. D., and Flint, who relied on their translation from Chinese poetry (among other exotic traditions) to develop "la visión directa y sintética, el rasgo esencial que caracteriza hoy a los poetas americanos."[775] Novo is therefore acutely aware of the potentialities of translation as a way to appropriate content and renovate poetic repertoire, and this is exactly what he does with *LPNM*, both explicitly (with the translations themselves) and implicitly (with his plagiarism).

Novo's own filibusterism is therefore driven by his intent to import elements of the aesthetics of New Poetry into Spanish. He seems to be the first to fully appreciate this poetics and its contributions to modern verse for what it is, and not as an interesting but lacking step in an uncertain direction, as in Lozano and, to some extent, de la Selva. This is another of the crucial differences with his former collaborator; for Novo, New Poetry is not a stage in an evolution towards a more mature poetics but, rather, a culmination. This is evident in his characterisation of the period beginning in 1912 as the "Edad de Oro de la literatura americana."[776] Meaningfully, this formulation does not seem to come from Untermeyer's preface, reflecting Novo's endeavour to lend legitimacy and value to the poetry that he is presenting in *LPNM*.

"Socarrón y astuto": translation and Novo's authorial figure

Through these different elements of framing, Novo offers a paradoxically personal take on New Poetry that goes much beyond the scope and purpose of previous projects and is

[775] Novo, "El buen té," 200.
[776] *LPNM*, 4.

closely linked to his own situation in the Mexican literary field of the 1920s. On a general level, Novo's emphasis on concepts such as freedom and rebellion supports the construction of his authorial figure, as a member of a long tradition of "rebeldes." As an openly gay writer in the decidedly homophobic context of the post-revolution, he produced work that was deliberately marginal and provocative. Thus, the notion that truly modern poetry is written from the fringe and against the grain of mainstream culture, expressed in his introduction, resonates with his own, unique position in his field. Moreover, this discourse is also intertwined with Contemporáneos's broader attempt to create alternatives to official culture and defend artistic autonomy against political co-optation. To an extent, the idea that first-rate US writers are necessarily rebels is shared with Henríquez Ureña, who wrote, four years later, that "en los Estados Unidos del siglo XX el pensador y el artista, si son genuinos, son rebeldes."[777] The true artist, then, is the one who goes against official or mainstream culture, be it Protestant ethics, mercantilism, and racial prejudice, or Catholic morality and revolutionary nationalism. Thus, more than a historical summary of the development of US poetry, Novo offers, in his introduction, a plagiarised yet thoughtfully curated account that supports his own experimental writing as well as his precarious position within the post-revolutionary literary field, as an individual and a member of a collective (however loose).

This is complemented by the poem selection, which conveys a strong sense of loneliness and isolation. Many of the speakers and represented individuals in these poems are outsiders. Solitude characterises the lyric subjects in Bynner's "Dream" and Fletcher's "Blue symphony" (which Fletcher himself related to his "modern loneliness, exile, despair,"[778]), and is implicitly present in many of the other poems. Even the city of Chicago, in Anderson's eponymous poem, is personified as somewhat of a misfit:

> Yo soy un niño, un niño confuso en un mundo confuso. No hay ropa que me venga. Las mentes de los hombres no saben vestirme. Los

[777] Henríquez Ureña, *Seis ensayos*, 121.

[778] John Gould Fletcher, "The Orient and contemporary poetry," in *Selected Essays* (Fayetteville; London: U. of Arkansas P, 1989), 66.

> proyectos grandes surgen en mí. Tengo un cerebro y es socarrón y astuto.[779]

In this passage, Novo translates the original's "cunning and shrewd" by "socarrón y astuto," adding a fundamental characteristic to the maladjusted speaker—one that very much represents Novo himself—: snideness and insolence.

A second element that coincides with Novo's authorial performance is the feature (albeit discreet and inconsistent) of homo-eroticism. Lowell's "Venus transiens" is the only example in *LPNM.* Although the original contains no indication that the speaker is female, this remains a love poem to a woman, written by a woman. The translation maintains this ambiguity, unlike other cases in which it is normalised by gendering the speaker (as in Lowell's "A Gift," also translated by Novo, where the use of the noun "beloved," when the speaker addresses their interlocutor, and of the adjective "dead" referring to themselves, sees Novo opt for making the relationship heterosexual by translating "amado" and "muerta" respectively).[780] This goes to show the defiance, but also the limitations, of Novo's early work.

Playing with the reader's expectations: a different image of the United States

Novo's selection differs from the *LF* anthology substantially, creating a different representation of the United States—one that goes against preconceptions in a humorous way. Of 30 pieces in total, only four are reused from *La Falange* (Kreymborg's "Old manuscript," Masters's "Silence," Pound's "N.Y.," and Teasdale's "The Lamp"), and eleven new poets are introduced. About his selection, Novo states that "en cuanto a los poemas, se han escogido en cada caso los más característicos y los más celebrados."[781] For various of the featured poets though, this is hardly an accurate

779 *LPNM*, 7.

780 Lozano made a similar choice in "Madonna of the evening flowers," another love poem to a woman, in which "tired" (describing the speaker) was rendered as "fatigado." *Prisma* I.3:7 [129].

781 *LPNM*, 6.

statement (Frost, Millay, Lindsay, Sandburg). A similar discrepancy occurs between the presentation of some authors in the introductory notes and the selected poems. Sherwood Anderson, for instance, is said to be characterised by "una expresión vívida y salvaje, epopeya moderna de las ciudades." Yet his poem "Chicago" is far from the period's realist depictions of the industrial city, with a setting described as "el gran valle del Mississippi," "los maizales," "las llanuras vastas," and "campos desnudos" throughout the poem and no urban images.[782] Lindsay, in turn, is presented as "esencialmente un poeta del pueblo. No anhela sino ser comprendido," after which Novo proceeds to translate one of his poems about a sonneteer pheasant who lives among cake-bushes and celebrates his birthday every day.[783]

LPNM's play with the reader's expectations can be read as a strategy to push back against prevailing representations of the United States as a cold, heartless, industrial nation full of factories and devoid of culture, imagination, and fantasy.[784] In effect, Novo's selection emphasises precisely those points, with less realist poems and even some surrealist elements, tying in with the young poet's intention to fight against misconceptions about the northern neighbour. He even problematises this topic in *LPNM*, through the series of Morley's poems. In "El viejo mandarín en sus viajes," the speaker, a Chinese traveller, is astonished by the consumption of new mass media such as the press (particularly on the subway) and the cinema. He concludes "si el pueblo americano llega a desarrollar su mente / hay dos grandes industrias / que se arruinarán." The second poem, "Un místico americano," is a direct response to this: "Pero usted no entiende el *subway* / […] es una ermita viajera, / un monasterio en vuelo," a place where people go because they know that "nadie perturbará su meditación." A third individual adds that "olvida usted que [los periódicos] son el último amigo / que resta a muchos pobres diablos," somewhat ironically as he gives the example of homeless persons using the papers for shelter.[785] The series, organised as a conversation, shows different

782 *LPNM*, 7-8.
783 *LPNM*, 18.
784 This view, prevalent in the decades following the publication of Rodó's *Ariel*, was shared by many of Novo's contemporaries.
785 *LPNM*, 26-27 (author's italics).

perspectives at play and, ultimately, questions simplistic judgements on others' ways of life and forms of culture, without completely abandoning a critical stance.

Another way in which Novo challenges the common opposition between the perceived materialism of the United States and Latin America's spirituality, initially promoted by authors such as Rodó and Darío, is the inclusion of poems with religious components in *LPNM.* Spirituality is found in the anthology under different forms, from Morley's partly humorous exchange discussed above, to an almost sceptical perspective in Teasdale ("Y he de llegar hasta Dios, si es que éste existe"[786]), and a more traditional one in Kilmer's "Poets." This is probably the strongest point made against the binary trope, since Kilmer was, as Novo underlines in the biographic note, a convert to Catholicism. Religion permeated his conception of poetry, as illustrated by his famous poem "Trees" (which Novo rates as "excelso") and, indeed, "Poets," in which he asserts that only piously-inspired verse will live on.[787] Other elements of *LPNM* can be read through a spiritual lens, despite not being openly religious, such as the recurrent motifs of the passing of time, the finitude of existence, loss, and transcendence, often represented through natural metaphors.

Overall, the selection also emphasises natural environments over the city, mentioned (and not described) in "Chicago and "N.Y.," and used as a setting in Monroe's "The hotel" (in some measure), and the series by Morley. The selection of Sandburg's poetry, which differs completely form the poems translated in both *Prisma* and *La Falange*, is representative of this displacement operated by Novo. It is introduced as follows, playing once again with the radical opposition between Mexico (López Velarde's "Suave patria") and the United States (Sandburg's *Smoke and Steel*): "Los Estados Unidos no son una 'suave patria'. Humo y acero de fábricas. Fatiga citadina. En este sentido, Carl August Sandburg, nacido en 1878, es el poeta nacional" (incidentally, not a passage taken from Untermeyer). In stark contrast with this, however, the two poems included in *LPNM*, "Night stuff" and "Handfuls," are a love

786 *LPNM*, 29.

787 "Con labios que las hieles desconocen / Cantamos nuestra efímera canción / No vivirán quienes la muerte ignoren / y sólo cantan los que Dios calló." *LPNM*, 17.

poem and a cryptic reflection on the fleeting nature of life, both resting on metaphors of the natural world. Indeed, opting for "Óyeme un momento—el lago es de noche una desamparada mujer, una deliciosa mujer, rodeada de abedules y pinos, mezclando su verde y su blanco entre estrellas hechas astillas en noche clara como espuma del mar" out of everything in *Smoke and Steel* is a peculiar choice, which contrasts with the focus on Sandburg's more social and urban poetry in *Prisma*. Other pieces are overwhelmingly rural, such as Fletcher's "Blue symphony," and Conkling's and Crapsey's selections. From the latter, Novo translates haiku-inspired cinquains, which stemmed from Crapsey's strong interest in metrics. "Noche de noviembre" is one of them:

> Escucha,
> Con sonido tenue y seco
> Como pisadas de espectros que pasan
> Las hojas, encrespadas, rompen de los árboles
> y caen.[788]

In addition to falling leaves, chiming bells, butterflies, sparkling moonlight, and murmuring brooks populate *LPNM*, contributing to Novo's humorous demolition of prejudices. Moreover, this largely bucolic atmosphere is also a way to create a difference (in the Bourdieusean sense) with the cult of technological progress that characterised sectors of the avant-garde closer to revolutionary officialism. The *estridentista* movement, which had emerged on the Mexican literary scene a few years prior (in late 1921), shared a fascination for technology with Futurism and other Hispanic avant-gardes such as *Ultraísmo*. Its publications abound in representations of modern cities, telegraph poles, cranes, electric wiring, high-raise buildings, etc., as in Manuel Maples Arces's *Andamios Interiores* (1922). In this context, Novo's translation

[788] *LPNM*, 12.
Crapsey's cinquains invariably consist of five unrhymed lines of two, four, six, eight, and two syllables respectively. This also illustrates my earlier point about Novo's manner of translation, with the perhaps too literal "rompen de los árboles" (for "break from the trees"), and the general metric scheme reproduced loosely—all his translated cinquains have a first and last line of the same length, and increasing lengths in between, but the exact number of syllables is variable (3-8-11-13-3 for "Noche de noviembre, 4-7-9-13-4 for "Triada").

of Pound's "N.Y." can be read as a parody of this kind of avant-garde verse that replaces the old muse by the modern city without fundamentally changing its core understanding of what poetry is.[789] *LPNM* contrasts with this ultra-modern poetics as Novo withholds the images of the urban, industrial United States and replaces them with pastoral considerations about the meaning of existence. As Stanton notes, this is an aspect that also distinguishes Novo's writing: "lejos de la modernolatría de los futuristas, los ultraístas y los estridentistas, Novo se revela como un testigo fascinado pero escéptico."[790]

Irreverent humour and literary convention

Ultimately, this should be read not only as part of Novo's critique of avant-garde populist tropes, but also in the light of his all-pervasive irony about literary practice—even his own. Besides the generally humorous tone, various poems in *LPNM* make fun of literary conventions specifically, such as "N.Y.," discussed above, and Lindsay's "The pheasant speaks of his birthdays," in which the joyful fowl declaims a sonnet that is actually 15 lines long. As explained by Monsiváis, for Novo, "poesía es lo no previsto por las tradiciones disponibles, y es, también y por lo mismo, lo no consagrado, la metamorfosis de las cosas comunes."[791] Even at the forefront of poetic innovation, Novo follows his own path and refuses to conform to expectations. Humour and irony are key in this process—qualities that he values in other writers too. In his introduction to his translations of Morley's poetry, published in *EUI* on 20 December 1923, he praises the poet for being "excelente para brevedades de humor y de ironía," and, particularly, for playing with the readers' expectations with his pseudo-translations of Chinese poetry. The underlying idea here is that writing (including translation) is sometimes a game in which the writer pokes fun at "la preciosa cualidad humana de tomar en serio todo lo

789 *LPNM*, 27.
790 Stanton, "Salvador Novo," 157.
791 Monsiváis, *Salvador Novo*, 73.

que esté impreso."[792]

In addition to this characteristically conversational approach to literature, various pieces in *LPNM* refer to the limits of language and poetry; loneliness, silence, and muteness are recurring themes. Anderson's speaker opens the anthology by confiding his expressive struggles: "¿No comprendes que no puedo cantar, que mis canciones me ahogan? ¿No ves que soy tan joven que no puedo encontrar la palabra en la confusión de palabras?"[793] Lowell's "The Gift" also addresses the self-destructive nature of expression: "Cuando te habrá [sic] dado la última [palabra] / Me tendrás del todo / Mas yo estaré muerta."[794] Finally, Masters's "Silence" is probably the most serious assault on the communicative potential of language and literature. Listing a series of situations in which communication is hampered by fear, embarrassment, shame, defeat, suffering, hate, etc., the speaker asks "... ¿para qué profundos / usos sirve el lenguaje? / […] quedamos sin voz en presencia de las realidades. / Nosotros no podemos hablar." Masters gives the example of a Civil War veteran who lost a limb in the conflict and cannot verbalise his experience. The idea that artists have a special relationship with language is expressed ("... si él pudiera describir todo esto / sería un artista.") only to be immediately undermined ("Mas si fuera un artista habría heridas más hondas / que no podría describir."[795]).

Thus, Novo offered, in *LPNM*, his very personal take on New Poetry, which played with expectations and challenged prejudice, resonated with the conversational elements that he incorporated to his own poetics, and served his personal agenda as a queer writer. It is markedly less realist than other examples that we have seen so far, but also funny, irreverent, and prosaic in different ways. The pre-eminence of the poetic image (which might to a degree result from Novo's early admiration for Tablada) can be observed both in the selection and in the manner of translation (free with regards to form and literal in terms of contents). In *LPNM*, translation was used strategically (to

792 Salvador Novo, "Traducciones del chino," *EUI* VII.345 (20 Dec.1923). This also sheds new light on Novo's critical theft in the introduction to *LPNM*.
793 *LPNM*, 8.
794 *LPNM*, 20.
795 *LPNM*, 22.

thematise marginality) as well as experimentally (as repertoire renovation). As a result, Novo was credited with the diffusion of contemporary US poetry (and with the appropriation of its poetics) in a note in *EUI*: "Novo es la prueba de que la literatura norteamericana no ha terminado con Poe. […] es un escritor *yanqui* que escribe en español."[796] Although his work had roots in previous translations, it is clear that Novo embraced New Poetry more fully than his predecessors and he did so in a highly original manner.

New directions in modern poetry: Contemporáneos's *translations of T. S. Eliot and Langston Hughes (1928-1931)*

LPNM marked the culmination of Novo's translatorial efforts to disseminate US poetry in 1920s Mexico.[797] These receded during the second half of the decade and the publication of *Contemporáneos* (1928-1931), to which Novo made a limited contribution due, as Sheridan explains, to tensions with Torres Bodet.[798] This section will explore the magazine's take on US poetry and show how, even within a wildly different enterprise such as *Contemporáneos*, Novo sought to promote elements related to conversational poetics through collaboration (in this case with Villaurrutia).

Founded and edited by Bernardo Gastélum (the magazine's first sponsor and Mexican health secretary), Torres Bodet, Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano, and Enrique González Rojo for issues 1-8, and by Ortiz de Montellano alone for the rest of the publication span (with the financial support of Genaro Estrada, then foreign secretary), the flagship magazine of the Contemporáneos group, *Contemporáneos*, built on their previous publications. Like *La Falange*, it was "más del grupo del Nuevo Ateneo que de [Villaurrutia, Gorostiza, Cuesta, Novo, and Owen]" the last four of whom did not

796 *El Universal Ilustrado*, 8 May 1924, 11, quoted in Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 117.
797 Its true apogee would be the publication, in 1965, of *101 poemas*. During the rest of the twenties, Novo focused mainly on translating drama.
798 He did not translate at all and wrote little for *Contemporáneos* (starting in issue VIII.26-27).

contribute to the periodical at all until Torres Bodet left Mexico on his diplomatic mission, in 1929.[799] Although translations made by the older generation (Torres Bodet, González Rojo, Ortiz de Montellano, and José Gorostiza) are almost exclusively from French (Fig. 5.4), their preference for French letters is not as marked in *Contemporáneos*; there is ever so slightly more English than French in the magazine overall (Fig. 5.5), reflecting the changing cultural dynamics of the 1920s. This was, however, only very partially the result of the translation work of younger generations, as the translators of English-language texts in *Contemporáneos* are split between two groups: that of the young writers who were part of Contemporáneos (Villaurrutia and Celestino Gorostiza) or members of the diplomatic corps (Enrique Munguía Jr), and that of older figures that were more or less related to the Ateneo (Martín Luis Guzmán) and Nuevo Ateneo (Octavio Barreda) without being members of Contemporáneos, or prominent Spanish writers (Enrique Díez-Canedo and León Felipe).[800] Notably, Felipe worked for Henríquez Ureña at the Escuela de Verano in 1923, and Guzmán befriended him during his time in New York. Thus, while most of the older Contemporáneos favoured French literature, they were, at this stage, no longer averse to including Anglophone literature in their periodical and a varied group of translators carried out this task.

Despite this increasing diversity, the editorial line was still considerably skewed towards the poetics of the older generation, and that of Ortiz de Montellano in particular.[801] Although it had evolved past the group's early predilection for *modernista* aesthetics, it retained a serious and solemn tone. Ortiz de Montellano located poetry within the realm of the extra-ordinary; in one of his most programmatic pieces, “Notas

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799 Except for one contribution by Owen in issue I.2, after which he closed ranks with the separatist group. Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 324.
Sheridan includes Gorostiza here on the grounds of his stronger affiliation to Novo and Villaurrutia's theatrical project and magazine *Ulises* than to *Contemporáneos*, although he had a good relationship with Torres Bodet and was of the same generation as the older members of the group.

800 Although Celestino Gorostiza is not usually considered as a member of the second generation, he is the same age as Villaurrutia and Novo, being born in 1904, as is Munguía, born in 1903.

801 Sheridan states that *Contemporáneos* “refleja en su larga vida las irregularidades de gusto de su director.” *Contemporáneos ayer*, 368.

de un lector de poesía," he opposed "la lógica poética" and "la lógica usual."[802] In the same issue (VIII.26-27, which is the first special poetry issue), he insists on this dichotomy between the poetic and the everyday in his version of Paul Valéry's "Propos sur la poésie." The translation, composed of two short fragments (selected from the original's essay-length text), opens the special issue under the title "Conversación sobre la poesía," thus framing the instalment and establishing itself as a guiding principle for poetry reading. In it, Valéry states that "Malherbe comparaba la prosa a la marcha ordinaria y la poesía a la danza."[803] Poetry implies a difference in both purpose and modality, as Valéry further affirms that while walking is used with a specific, external aim (that of moving from point A to point B), dancing is an end in and of itself. The idea that poetry is an atypical modality of language was in fact already present in Ortiz de Montellano's short note "Suma de Poesía," published in issue IV.12: for him, "el poeta habla un lenguaje que no es usual o, bien, las palabras no representan lo mismo para él que para [el lector]."[804] Other central components of this conception of poetry, which point to its loose connection with the notion of pure poetry as exemplified by Valéry, are the ideas that poetry is a means of heuristic exploration ("hurga en el misterio más allá de la realidad conocida"[805]) and that it is not intended for a wide audience. In fact, it should be reserved to a closed circle of initiated people, "una sociedad secreta adonde el lector sólo puede ingresar a condición de esforzarse activamente por ser él también sujeto de poesía, o liberto de sueños."[806] Ortiz de Montellano thus formulates an elitist conception of literature, one in which hermeticism is valued over understandability.

It is easy to understand, then, why Novo's poetics sat uncomfortably with the main line of *Contemporáneos*. In Sheridan's words, "Novo despreciaba a la revista y a Ortiz de Montellano en tal forma que los convirtió, durante una época en materia de burla de su columna" in *Revista de Revistas*.[807] Ortiz de Montellano reciprocates the

802 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 92-93 [94-95].
803 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 2 [3].
804 *Contemporáneos* IV.12: 48 [144].
805 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 92 [94].
806 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 93 [95].
807 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 338.

antipathy, for instance in his "Notas de un lector de poesía," in which he details the three different paths taken by modern poetry as "el camino de los exhumadores de Góngora, Baudelaire y Mallarmé apoyados en las teorías y prácticas de la poesía pura de Valéry"; "el de los surrealistas"; and "el movimiento utilitario con fines de propaganda al servicio de las ideas sociales," which does not qualify as art.[808] The poetics represented by Novo and derived from New Poetry does not even deserve a passing mention in this typology.

However, despite Ortiz de Montellano's sometimes unilateral editorship, he still very much thought of *Contemporáneos* as a collaborative endeavour. Along with Villaurrutia, he actively sought to include the sceptics.[809] The result of this is the well-known heterogeneity of the periodical, which was, by Montellano's own admission, not a "revista de grupo sino de direcciones personales y de actitudes nuevas."[810] This is how, even in the highly aestheticist and elitist realm of *Contemporáneos*, the "otra vanguardia" found a small, marginal space in which to exist. It is represented, in the magazine, by the translation by Villaurrutia of Langston Hughes's poetry, accompanied by an essay by Novo on Black-American poetry, and an essay by Villaurrutia on US poetry. The translations of T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land* and "The Hollow Men," in turn, represent the fusion between the new interest in US poetry and *Contemporáneos*'s literary elitism, pointing to the fact that the 1920s translations of US poetry did not only impact the poets who were or would become conversationalists, but also highbrow currents of poetry.

At the convergence of colloquial poetics and high literature: T. S. Eliot in **Contemporáneos**

Although it opened the door to translations of US poetry, *Contemporáneos* moved away

808 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 92 [94].

809 According to Ermilo Abreu Gómez, "él quería manejarlo todo y decidir por sí mismo lo administrativo y lo literario." Quoted in Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 336 and 338.

810 Quoted in Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 368.

from the concise pieces of the Imagists and new poets analysed so far, and into the realm of the longer, more intricate, erudite, and hermetic poems of high Modernism. Two perfect examples of this are Saint-John Perse's *Anabase* (in Barreda's version) and Eliot's "The Hollow Men" and *The Waste Land* (translated by León Felipe and Enrique Munguía Jr respectively).[811] These texts represent a relatively high proportion of all poetry translations in *Contemporáneos*, marking the passage to high Modernism as overbearing poetic paradigm. They denote the editorial team's interest in modern re-configurations of the epic, as well as their belief in the cultural gate-keeping function of poetry (as expressed by Ortiz de Montellano). Both authors are closely related; Perse translated part of "The Hollow Men" in 1925, and Eliot's version of *Anabase* appeared in London in 1930. This link is important for *Contemporáneos*, which receives Perse partly through Eliot: most of Barreda's six-page introduction is taken more-or-less literally from Eliot's preface to his own version of *Anabase*, published the previous year.[812] One element that Barreda does not steal from Eliot, though, is the comparison of *Anabase* to a dance:

> como todo verdadero poema, el de Perse está dentro de un marco—hay todo un propósito, una danza—en el que se han suprimido cuidadosamente detalles ociosos de lógica conceptual o gramatical, para darle así esa vertiginosa serie de imágenes...[813]

He conceives true poetry as a mode of expression in which logic and communication conventions are hindrances, while also linking back to the theoretical framework put forth in the translation of Valéry's "Propos sur la poésie." This configures a series supporting the magazine's general poetics, especially as Valéry is also associated to Eliot throughout *Contemporáneos*.[814]

Eliot therefore functions as a guide and poetic reference in the magazine, which is noteworthy since he was, at the time, hardly known in the Hispanic world.

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811 *Contemporáneos* IX.32: 1-37 [1-37]; IX.33: 36-40 [132-136]; and VIII.26-27: 5-30 [7-32].

812 Perse, *Anabasis*.

813 *Contemporáneos* IX.32: 3 [3].

814 The second sentence of Munguía's introduction to his translation of *The Waste Land* includes the following comparison "disciplinado como Paul Valéry en la observación de métodos y de formas, posee Eliot una rebuscada esterilidad." *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 5 [7].

Contemporáneos publishes the first translations of his poetry in Mexico (and nearly the first into Spanish), Eliot having been entirely omitted by both Lozano and Novo.[815] His inclusion in the magazine can be read in terms of a conservative literary reaction to the political situation, the post-revolutionary surge of committed art, and the pervasive iconoclasm of the avant-gardes. In addition to its barriers to popular access, Eliot's verse suggests a different relationship with tradition, one that supports Contemporáneos's attempt to maintain a continuity with González Martínez's idea of high literature and autonomous art as an alternative to revolutionary culture. This was an important component of Contemporáneos's position within the literary field, and it might explain why Eliot was such a central point of reference.[816]

Felipe's translation of "The Hollow Men" exemplifies this ideo-aesthetic *prise de position*. Although it was published without any critical paratext, its careful framing indicates the context in which it should be interpreted: the issue in which it appeared (IX.33) is dominated by the topic of culture in the post-war and post-revolutionary contexts. "Los hombres huecos" is included in the main section between two other texts (and a selection of photographs by Manuel Álvarez Bravo): Reyes's essay "Discurso por Virgilio," which seeks to reconcile the democratising endeavour of the revolution with a highbrow, classical notion of culture (much in the vein of the Ateneo and of Vasconcelos's educational project), and Gastélum's "La revolución mexicana," a historical account of the failed promises to Mexican liberal democracy.[817] This juxtapositions alludes simultaneously to the opportunity offered by the revolution to overcome the spiritual and cultural hollowness of Porfirian life and to the incipient realisation that the revolution itself was not fulfilling its promises. Felipe transposes

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815 Indeed, his verse is rather distant from Novo's preference for short, simple, and understandable poems, and is much more attuned to the core principles of *Contemporáneos*.
The first versions of Eliot were Munguía's and Ángel Flores's *Waste Lands*. Both were published in 1930, and while the Puerto Rican's appeared in Barcelona slightly before the Mexican version, the translation processes must have run in parallel.

816 *Contemporáneos* is one of the cultural formations that used "los códigos de la cultura occidental para constituir posiciones críticas de los nuevos proyectos políticos." Sánchez Prado, "Vanguardia," 188.

817 Reyes's essay contains his famous statement: "Quiero el latín para las izquierdas, porque no veo la ventaja de dejar caer conquistas ya alcanzadas." *Contemporáneos* IX.33: 8 [104].

Eliot's metaphoric depiction of cultural desolation to Mexico by translating his desert version of the nursery rhyme, "Here we go round the prickly pear," as "No damos más que vueltas al nopal / al nopal, al nopal."[818] The use of the Mexican denomination of the plant is particularly significant in view of its highly symbolic importance as a national emblem.

That Eliot's references to the post-war period are used as commentary on the Mexican situation (like in the magazines studied in Chapters 2 and 3), is confirmed by Munguía's introduction to his version of *The Waste Land*. In "'El páramo' de T. S. Eliot," he describes the poet's "tema nuevo, de nuevo característico, muy suyo—¿o muy nuestro?—: el del agotamiento afectivo, el de la desolación allá en los círculos más espesos y oscuros de la conciencia del hombre cultivado de nuestra época."[819] This is part of a broader "poética del recato y la desolación" shared by the Contemporáneos and stemming, according to Sheridan, from their coming of age when the revolution's corruption was starting to outweigh, for some, its transformative potential, as well as the impact it had specifically on the upper-middle class, of which the Contemporáneos were representatives.[820] While Novo's response to this situation was incisive irony and humour, other Contemporáneos opted for a graver approach.[821] The fact that *The Waste Land* and "The Hollow Men" were selected among Eliot's poetic production to be translated in *Contemporáneos* is telling. His images of the symbolic ruins of the post-war period certainly constituted an apt backdrop for the group's reflection on the spiritual and cultural dearth in the wake of the revolutionary process and, more generally, in modern mass society.

The link between this position and the elitist attempt to preserve high culture is clear, especially if we consider, again, the issue in which "Los hombres huecos" was published. The critical section, "Motivos," is partly dedicated to the discussion of

818 *Contemporáneos* IX.33: 39 [135]. Whether this was Felipe's own decision (as a Mexican resident) or the editors', the result is the same.

819 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 9 [11] .

820 Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 15.

821 As noted by Cuesta, "el humorismo de Novo, justa expresión de sus aptitudes vivas y de la influencia visible en su obra, de la literatura norteamericana, representa en su poesía la reacción de un impreciso desengaño del mundo." Quoted in Sheridan, *Los Contemporáneos*, 218.

Ortega y Gasset's *La rebelión de las masas*, reviewed by Cuesta. This completes an issue that problematises the irruption of the masses on the political and cultural stages (with which Ortega is particularly annoyed), but it also illustrates the internal dissent within the magazine. In effect, Cuesta's rather cryptic criticism of the Spaniard's elitist conservatism was published alongside an exchange of letters between himself and Ortiz de Montellano, in which the editor references some changes that he requested in the review as, it seems, he found Cuesta's criticism sometimes difficult to comprehend and hardly justified. To this, Cuesta replies defending himself of *ad hominem* attacks and of decontextualising Ortega's claims, and refusing to modify the review's contents.[822] The choice of *La rebelión de las masas* for a review, its inclusion in this particular issue, and the fact that Ortiz de Montellano felt it necessary to publish Cuesta's text alongside a sort of personal disclaimer that he did not share the reviewer's opinions, denote his interest in Ortega's ideas, as well as his intellectual affinities with Spanish Novecentismo more generally.[823] Nevertheless, this also speaks of the often-overlooked attempt to make different opinions and poetics coincide in *Contemporáneos* and to foster debate, even on core components of the editorial line.

This form of convergence between the two sub-groups of Contemporáneos can also be observed on an aesthetic level, especially given Eliot's juxtaposition of highbrow, erudite references, and techniques akin to prosaism. Munguía's introduction to "El Páramo" highlights the perceived duality of the poet's work: on the one hand, Eliot is presented as "un poeta hondo, más bien religioso […] y más bien, antes que fácil, adusto y frío," following the British dramatic and metaphysical traditions; on the other, Munguía writes, he adopted the new language of French symbolism, "en el que se anteponen las expresiones más vulgares del diálogo callejero a las metáforas refinadas de un cerebro en bonanza, y la alta complejidad de un patetismo elocuente y original a

822 *Contemporáneos* IX.33: 66-69 [162-165].

823 Cuesta clearly states that "[l]e tocó la suerte de escribir esta nota en el momento en que consideraba [Ortiz de Montellano] propio que 'Contemporáneos' se ocupara seriamente de valorar la obra de [Ortega]." *Contemporáneos* IX.33: 67 [163].
Ortiz de Montellano's admiration for the *Revista de Occidente* is well documented. Sheridan, *Contemporáneos ayer*, 327.

un desenfado en ratos agrio, irónico o mordaz."[824] This duality is maintained in Munguía's translation, whose use of colloquial speech to render the end of the second section of *The Waste Land* in particular, is one of its rare highlights according to Boll.[825] For the critic, Novo's translation of Pound's "N.Y.," which showcases the alternation between literary and colloquial discourse, is a direct antecedent.[826] He argues that "not only do Novo and Munguía provide a context in which Eliot can be understood, but they channel that understanding in a particular direction. They suggest the reflexive possibilities of a form that can offer a meditation on contrasting poetic languages."[827] Thus, Eliot brings together the broad preoccupation of the core Contemporáneos for the preservation of high culture and literary autonomy, their elitist gate-keeping, and the recent developments, spearheaded by Novo in Mexico, around the use of the conversational register in poetry. While Munguía's version might be considered to lean slightly on the side of the latter, with his choice to translate in prose and remove most of Eliot's abstruse, scholarly footnotes, the framing of the text through Valéry's "Propos sur la poésie" clearly shows the editor's pull in the opposite direction.[828]

One of *Contemporáneos*'s main legacies to younger Mexican poets (especially Octavio Paz, who was an avid reader of the magazine) therefore derives from this convergence of both sub-groups, from the mixture of pessimism and irony, of elements of conversationalism and erudite hermeticism. Munguía's translation was Paz's first encounter with Eliot. He claimed to have discovered modern poetry "through reading translations of Blake, T. S. Eliot and Saint-John Perse."[829] In Boll's words, his

> initial reading [of Eliot, a notoriously important figure in his work]

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824 *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 7 [9].

825 Boll, *Octavio Paz*, 45.
Examples of this include the translation of "Then I'll know who to thank" by "Ya sabré entonces a quien estar re-agradecida" (line 151) and "What you get married for if you don't want children?" by "pa qué diablos te casaste si no querías hijos" (line 164). *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 19-20 [21-22]; Eliot, *Annontated Waste Land*, 61-62.

826 Boll, *Octavio Paz*, 45.

827 Boll, *Octavio Paz*, 46.

828 The choice not to respect the self-imposed alphabetical order for contributions, and to include Eliot right after the introduction by Valéry, before Cuesta, is telling.

829 Wilson, *A Companion to Pablo Neruda*, 95.
Blake was translated by Villaurrutia for *Contemporáneos.*

> was inevitably dominated by the group of Mexican writers who contributed to the magazine. They provided him with routes back to Hispanic precursors, Ramón López Velarde, Salomón de la Selva and Salvador Novo, as well as relating Eliot to international contemporaries such as Paul Valéry and Saint-John Perse.[830]

The impact of *Contemporáneos*'s translations of US verse on Mexican and Latin American poetry was therefore considerable and followed more than one route.

Langston Hughes in translation and "Notas sobre la poesía de los negros en los Estados Unidos": diversifying the canon of US poetry

Besides Eliot, the only contemporary poet translated from English is Langston Hughes, whose writing has been recently characterised by Vera Kutzinski as a form of "fringe modernism." This poetics encompasses "avant-garde literary practices typically excluded from modernist studies for being too 'transparent', too 'realistic', too 'ethnic', or too 'political.'"[831] The link with New Poetry is clear, mainly in terms of Hughes's accessible, concise form that relies on everyday images and diction. Music (and in particular Black folk music) is also fundamental in Hughes's poetry, although this aspect is not represented in the translated poems.

Like Eliot, Hughes was an emerging figure in US letters, and his translation into Spanish was incipient.[832] Villaurrutia's translations of Hughes's poems were published in the penultimate issue of *Contemporáneos* (XI.40-41), which was also the second special poetry issue. They were accompanied by an essay on Black-American poetry signed by Novo and titled "Notas sobre la poesía de los negros en los Estados Unidos,"[833] indicating some level of coordination. Novo and Villaurrutia were close friends, and it is known that they often collaborated and published together. This includes certain

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830 Boll, *Octavio Paz*, 58.

831 Kutzinski, *Worlds of Langston Hughes*, 8.

832 The first translation of Hughes into Spanish was made by José Antonio Fernández de Castro in 1928 in Cuba, followed by Borges's in *Sur*, in 1931, just months before Villaurrutia's.

833 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:45-47 [157-159] and 85-88 [197-200].

translational projects, such as Novo's versions of Jammes's short stories for *Cvltvra*, prologued by Villaurrutia, or *Poetas franceses modernos*, which was announced, in *LPNM*, as edited by Villaurrutia, although it finally appeared under Novo's sole name.[834] Although Borges's translations of Hughes in *Sur* might have encouraged Ortiz de Montellano to include Villaurrutia's and Novo's pieces in *Contemporáneos*, the genesis of this joint project is likely the poets' friendship with Hughes and their appreciation of the changing literary landscape in the United States.[835]

Novo's awareness of racial issues can be traced back to his reception of Lindsay's verse and of Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry*, in 1924. In his note on Lindsay for *EUI* (1924), Novo quoted a fragment of "The Congo" in the original, to illustrate the musical qualities of Lindsay's poetry, inspired in Black culture. Oblivious to its cultural appropriation and racist stereotypes (which have been challenged during Lindsay's times and later), Novo chose to emphasise the importance of Black culture for the development of modern poetry: in his introduction to Lindsay in *LPNM*, he wrote that the poet "vive lo bastante cerca del sur para apreciar las expresiones de la raza negra y aprovechar su viveza de dicción y de observación en sus poemas"—a passage taken from *MAP*.[836] It is also significant that Novo chose to end the critical part of his introduction to *LPNM* with Untermeyer's idea that the United States have become a cultural melting-pot which is positively reflected in its literature: "una avasalladora libertad invade y distingue el arte poético contemporáneo en los Estados Unidos. Abarca todas las culturas, todo los temas y todos los modos de expresión. La Unión Americana es un crisol de razas y de espíritus."[837] Thus, Novo understands poetic renovation and experimentalism in relation to the process of increasing democratisation.

After his contributions to *La Falange* and *LPNM*, Novo opted, along with Villaurrutia, for exploring this specific aspect of US poetry in *Contemporáneos*. It is

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834 Francis Jammes, *Almaida de Etremont, Manzana de anís y otros cuentos*, *Cvltvra* XIV.5 (1922); *LPNM*, 31.

835 Hughes visited his father in Mexico for prolonged periods of time around 1920, befriending local artists and writers. He was introduced to the "generación bicápite" by Pellicer.

836 *LPNM*, 18.

837 *LPNM*, 6.

highly symbolic that the essay and Hughes's verse were included in the second "poetry issue," which was limited "a los contornos líricos de América," as per Ortiz de Montellano's introduction.[838] This affirmation, and the position of Hughes's poems between Huidobro's and Neruda's, fosters a sense of hemispheric cultural unity which is only strengthened by Hughes's opening poem, "I, too" and Villaurrutia's translation of "America" as "América" (Fig. 5.6). In the Spanish version, the meaning of "America" is thus extended to mean the entire continent (instead of its restricted sense as a synonym of the United States in English). Hughes's famous statement "I, too, am America" thus shifts from a claim for greater racial equality within the United States to an affirmation of Pan-Americanism. Even Ortiz de Montellano mentions, in his introduction to the issue, "curiosas, inadvertidas semejanzas de unidad americana."[839] Hughes is, however, the only representative of US poetry in the issue, which speaks of both the limits of this hemispheric lens and of its revolutionary nature: not only are the United States and Latin America part of a shared cultural entity, they are part of a shared *and diverse* cultural entity, one in which marginal subjects are valid representatives of the whole.[840]

This, again, relates to the way in which Novo considers marginality and its place in culture. Through his life and the construction of his authorial self, Novo put, in Monsiváis famous words, "lo marginal en el centro."[841] Hughes's appropriation of Whitman's American poetics ("I, too, sing America.") follows a similar logic and, in Villaurrutia's translation, is expanded to Latin America. This general idea is also found in Novo's essay on Black-American poets, where he discusses the complex implications of marginalised poetic expression. Many anthologies, he contends, only select Black-American poetry written in the African American vernacular, leading Black writers (like other minorities) to factor racial prejudice into their self-expression. Thus, Black intellectuals are faced with

> el dilema de olvidar su color y de superarlo haciéndolo olvidar, para

838 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:1 [113].
839 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:1 [113].
840 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:48-50 [160-162].
841 Monsiváis, *Salvador Novo*, 12.

> sumarse al general parnaso—y en este caso se aplica[n] a las más puras normas de versificación inglesa y habla[n] en difícil—o de aceptar su sitio social, con todas las implicaciones de humillación injusta y de insinuación de valores profundos...

Novo does not give a definitive answer on how to conduct these subtle negotiations, but, in a line of reasoning that evokes his own complicated relationship with his national field, he suggests that international acclaim might be a way to circumvent the false dilemma between discrimination and cultural uprooting:

> Poco a poco, los poetas negros […] irán abandonando el dialecto. El reconocimiento universal de su calidad de poetas (los versos suyos empiezan a aparecer en revistas y en antologías europeas) los animará a continuar una obra que ofrece ya características de singular valor, pero cuya aspiración parece todavía la de incorporarse a la poesía norteamericana cuyos colores borra su generalidad.[842]

The inclusion of Hughes in *Contemporáneos*, then, is carried out on the grounds of him being not a curious specimen of a minority, but rather, another face of universal literature, a marginal writer in the centre.

The selection of poems translated by Villaurrutia matches this reflection: none of them include dialect nor any other exoticising elements: Black people "too, [are] America," they are also beautiful (in "Poema"), they also doubt and pray (in "Plegaria"), and they also (and perhaps particularly) give in to despair (in "Nota de un suicida").[843] These pieces are not written, however, "en difícil," suggesting that Hughes might represent, for Novo and Villaurrutia, a middle way in which poetic expression is both simple and universal, in which the poet is true to his origins while also speaking to a broad audience. Hughes's unadorned, oral language and ordinary images lend power to his verse and critique. In "I too," Hughes speaks of social (in)justice not by using abstract concepts such as racism or discrimination, but, rather, by evoking the concrete, everyday image of a Black subject made to eat in the kitchen. Often described as a folk poet, Hughes was therefore close to oral poetry, as exemplified by his verse. The almost

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842 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:86-87 [198-199].
This is not to say that Novo's essay is unproblematic as far as racial prejudice is concerned.

843 For more detailed analyses of the translation of "I, too," which compare it to other versions, see Kutzinski, *Worlds of Langston Hughes*, 70 and following, and Kernan, "Lost and Found," 54 and following.

confessional enunciative situation of some of his poems translated in *Contemporáneos*, as well as the social critique found, for instance, in "I, too," coincide with the kind of tone used by conversationalists.

All four translated poems, originally published in *The Weary Blues* (1926) and *Fine Clothes to the Jew* (1927), were featured in Countee Cullen's anthology of Black-American poetry *Caroling Dusk* which, I contend, served as source text.[844] This is supported by the fact that part of Novo's essay comes from Cullen's preface to *Caroling Dusk* and his biographic note on Hughes. As in previous cases, Novo surreptitiously points to his source ("Countee Cullen, autor de tres libros de versos y de una Antología de la Poesía Negra"[845]), without acknowledging his borrowings. He betrays himself, however, when he translates "Phyllis Wheatly, the first American negro known to have composed verses" as "*el primer negro* de quien se sabe que haya escrito poesía en los Estados Unidos es Phyllis Wheatley."[846] What Novo could not deduce from Cullen's formulation, but would have known had this been based on his own research, is that Wheatley was, in fact, a woman.[847] Once again, we see Novo feigning in-depth knowledge of US literature by plagiarising an anthology, a practice that was "habitual" in his essay-writing of the time.[848] While this confirms Novo's use of translation as cultural filibustering, it does not diminish the symbolic importance of the inclusion of Hughes in *Contemporáneos*. It constitutes an exceptional occurrence in the magazine, and offers a remarkable continuity with previous instances of poetic experimentation, making Whitmanian legacy, new poetics, the emergence of marginal subjectivities, claims for social justice, and literary Pan-Americanism converge.

Thus, the legacy of Contemporáneos as a group is comprised of two distinct lines, whose main difference lies in their respective relations to reality, to the public, and to the massification of culture: the main one is Europhile and elitist; it is mostly inspired

844 Cullen, ed., *Caroling Dusk.*
845 *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:87 [199].
846 Cullen, *Caroling Dusk*, vii; *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41:87 [199] (my emphasis).
847 The reflection on dialect and form, however, does not proceed from Cullen's book. No source for this could be traced among the anthologies of Black-American poetry published during the period, although I suspect that it is also plagiarised.
848 Sheridan*, Contemporáneos ayer*, 215-216.

in Eliot, read in dialogue with contemporary French poets such as Perse and Valéry, and contributes to poetic developments outside of conversationalism. As later expressed by Ortiz de Montellano, this is "un arte nuevo, difícil, complicado y, sin embargo, primordial en que la palabra vuelve a la pureza de origen o a la magia de la plegaria, sin perder su cultivo precioso y refinado."[849] The second line, in *Contemporáneos*, results from the marginal space afforded to Novo towards the end of the magazine's print run. It follows from the poet's prior translations of New Poetry, and, by contrast with the dominant poetics, is essentially American, accessible, and grounded in social reality. Translating Hughes was a way of upholding the tradition set by Whitman, Sandburg, and Lindsay through one of its newest representatives, a tradition that was committed with reality and democratic values.[850] This is particularly relevant since Hughes went on to become hugely popular in Latin America. As Kutzinski puts it, "even after his death in 1967, Hughes remained the best-known and most admired USAmerican poet in the Hispanic Americas since Longfellow and Whitman."[851] These two lines illustrate the complex, intertwined paths through which colloquialism made its way into Latin American poetry.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how multilingualism and translation were used, from the late 1910s to the height of the avant-garde, as a source of ideo-aesthetic renovation in post-revolutionary Mexico. In many cases, Anglophone and in particular US poetry was used as inspiration in the search for new modes of lyric expression that could articulate the experience of modernity, including its distinctive violence. It is therefore no surprise that WWI poetry informed, along with New Poetry, the development of modern,

849 Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano, "Nota previa. T. S. Eliot, Poemas," *Taller* 10 (March-April 1940): 64.
850 Perkins, *A History of Modern Poetry.*, 390.
851 Kutzinski, *Worlds of Langston Hughes*, 57.

conversational poetics in Spanish. A series of inter-related poets and translators experimented with form (especially the tension between pattern and freedom), content (primarily the role and treatment of the image), and tone (the use of contrasting registers, as well as the representation of the lyric subject/poet figure and her relationship with the reader), to conform new ways of conceiving and writing poetry. Castro Leal first insisted on the poetic relevance of reality as he commented on Requena's translations of war poetry. Those remained, however, mostly abstract and formally conservative. The big step away from this kind of poetry and into conversationalism was taken in *Cvltvra* by de la Selva, who used his profound knowledge of both Anglo-American and Hispanic verse-making, and of US New Poetry, to craft an aesthetics in which realism, prosaism, and formal de-structuring fluctuate in function of his supposed experience of the Great War. In parallel, Lozano was translating New Poetry for *Prisma*, presenting it as an example of innovation without, however, fully embracing this poetics. Simultaneously connecting with de la Selva (through Henríquez Ureña) and Lozano, Novo is probably the most prolific translator of US poetry in 1920s Mexico (mainly for *EUI*) and the most prominent poet to include conversational elements in his own poetry at such an early stage, playing with expectations, irony, and emphasising the visual qualities of the poem. Finally, *Contemporáneos* blended this tradition with the autotelic, metaphysical tendencies of pure poetry to import some of its techniques into the realm of highbrow literature. From all these endeavours, different aspects of this new poetics were passed on to younger generations of Mexican and Latin American poets.[852]

From a field perspective, this whole process ultimately had to do with the necessity to re-articulate the literary field, and especially its autonomous pole, following

[852] Besides Neruda and Paz, mentioned earlier, the experiments studied in this chapter also impacted prominent cultural formations such as the Argentine *Sur*, partly through Henríquez Ureña's editorial contribution. The Dominican's interest in US poetry and Pan-Americanism marked the magazine's first years, during which Borges translated some of the poets studied in this chapter (e.g., Hughes and Masters). For an account of this connection, see Deviagge, "Saavedra, Villa Ortúzar." Owen, in turn, might have contributed to the diffusion of US poetry in Colombia, through his friend, the philosopher and educator Rafael Carrillo. Celene García Ávila, *Gilberto Owen en el tiempo de Bogotá: prosas recuperadas 1933-1935* (Mexico: Porrúa, UAEMéx, 2009), 13.

the fall of Porfirian institutions and networks, and amidst the revolutionary government's attempts to promote committed literature and co-opt culture for propagandistic ends. As noted by Cervantes and Valero, the "consolidación de un campo cultural autónomo" is a key concern for literary agents of the time.[853] Thanks to the doors opened by some publications of the transition phase such as *Cvltvra*, autonomous literature could be re-imagined in conditions that were radically different from the ones in which it flourished at the turn of the century. The irruption of the masses in the political, educational, and cultural agenda of post-revolutionary Mexico, as well as on the international stage in general, particularly as a result of the Great War (as attested by de la Selva's prologue for instance), is also to be related to the new poetic developments, which had to address the link between autonomous literature and rising democratising ideals.

The new canon of international letters created through translation reflects those broad social changes in various ways. One aspect that distinguishes the "otra vanguardia," as expressed in *Cvltvra* and *EUI* in particular, from previous publications studied in this thesis (and from *Contemporáneos*) is the inclusion of women writers in translation and among the set of aesthetic references put forward. I believe that a more comprehensive dataset could establish this as a clear trend. For the time being, if we examine the proportion of translation of works by female authors in my corpus of anthologies, it becomes evident that Novo's *LPNM* offers a radically different picture from most other publications (Figures 5.7 and 5.8). The link between New Poetry/the "otra vanguardia" and women's voices is further supported by the limited presence of women in Novo's sister anthology of French poetry (only one woman poet out of 17 translated authors). While de la Selva could not be included in this graph due to the nature of his work studied here, his endorsement and diffusion of the work of women poets of his time is apparent in his editorship of *Pan-American Poetry* (in which he published openly feminist authors such as Millay and Muna Lee), as well as his articles about the central role played by figures such as Lowell and Millay in the poetic

[853] Cervantes and Valero. *La colección Cvltvra*, 40.

renaissance of the early twentieth century.

Another component of this slight change in cultural magazines' demographics is the glimmer of ethnic diversity fostered by translation. This speaks of the progressive (if very slow) diversification of the Hispanic poetic landscape. Although Hughes is the only Black writer to be featured in my corpus, other figures make brief appearances in related publications: Harlem Renaissance poet James Weldon Johnson is translated by de la Selva for *The Pan-American Magazine*;[854] Leslie Pinckney Hill, educator and poet pertaining to the same movement features as the translator of two poems by Alberto de Oliveira in the same periodical;[855] Henríquez Ureña himself was, as Hulme emphasises, of mixed heritage, and although this was not at the forefront of his writing, he explicitly condemned racism as one of the ills of US society and culture.[856] The period's zeitgeist might have played a role in this evolution, but I contend that there is grounds to affirm that the "otra vanguardia," with its anti-elitist stance, democratising poetics, and occasional ties with left-wing politics, was inherently more sympathetic to the experience and literary expression of marginalised subjects, and/or that some of its representatives' own marginal position (most notably Novo's) prompted these symbolic alliances.[857] This can also be observed in later expressions of conversationalism as, for instance, in Cuba, where it developed in the years leading to the Revolution and flourished afterwards. In *Orígenes* (1944-1956), the sub-group of editors, translators, and authors linked to this poetics (José Rodríguez Feo, Virgilio Piñera, Lydia Cabrera, Katherine Anne Porter, Helena Lam, Aimé Césaire, and Soledad Salinas) is much more diverse than core *origenismo*, and these alliances within marginal sectors underpinned

854 *The Pan-American Magazine* XXVII.1: 46-47. He is described by de la Selva as "de los mejores poetas de la raza negra que actualmente escriben en los Estados Unidos" in his contributor note. XXVII.2: 112.

855 *The Pan-American Magazine* XXVII.2: 98.

856 Hulme, *Dinner*, 169. Henríquez Ureña, *Seis ensayos*, 121.

857 Henríquez Ureña's UNM group was notoriously close to the CROM, through de la Selva himself, but also Vicente Lombardo Toledano and Alfonso Caso, Henríquez Ureña's brothers-in-law. Particulars of this situation are described comprehensively in Arellano, *Rafael Lozano*, chapter III, section "Novo y Lozano..."
Sexual diversity can also be glimpsed in the work of the "otra vanguardia," with some of its representatives being openly gay (Novo) and translations of homosexual writers (Wilde, Lowell, Millay, etc.), although this is rarely—if ever—thematised in the translated texts.

the sub-group's aesthetic stance.

In the publications studied in this chapter, translation assumed a primary role again. It fostered innovation, but in a different way from the *modernista* period, when textual manipulation was more prevalent. While plagiarism through translation was widely used in critical paratexts, as we have observed repeatedly, the translated literary texts show a much lower degree of intervention: poems were often translated in their entirety and more literally. Novo is a prime example of this, with his manner of translating "libre y literalmente," and the alphabetical order of the authors in his anthology, also used in *Contemporáneos*'s special poetry issues (albeit with some cheating). Thus, editorial presence is less prominent, and the focus is now more on the diffusion of the latest literary trends and on the framing of the translations than on intervening their contents.

Besides increased access to originals (due to improvements in both textual circulation and knowledge of foreign languages), this greater literalness might be explained by the closer contact between translators and authors. In effect, the translated authors become gradually more contemporary and their translators tend to maintain a more direct contact with them. De la Selva was friends with Millay and other key figures of the US poetic scene; Lozano wrote to Lowell personally to ask her for material to translate; Novo and Villaurrutia knew Hughes from his time in Mexico; and Munguía contacted Eliot himself (with a recommendation from Fletcher) to request his permission to translate *The Waste Land.* The fact that the latter translation includes a footnote to the effect that "'Contemporáneos' cuenta también con la autorización del autor para traducirlo"[858] is indicative of the increasing showcasing of such relations. This practice would become a common source of cultural capital for translations published in Latin American magazines in the twentieth century.

This progressive formalisation of the practice of translation also goes hand in hand with the emergence of a new generation of highly skilled, multilingual translators. Lozano's and de la Selva's nomadic lives and their work as cultural mediators have been

[858] *Contemporáneos* VIII.26-27: 13 [15].

discussed already. Requena also resided in the United States, as did Munguía, who was a diplomat, and who even translated Mariano Azuela's *Los de Abajo* into English (apparently with questionable success, however). Novo used English in his own writing, e.g. in *Return ticket* (1928) and *Seamen rhymes* (1934)—both works, significantly, alluding to travel. At the same time, we observe new forms of translating that rely on foreignness, unfamiliarity, and the juxtaposition of different languages to express a modernity in which migration is pervasive and the boundaries between countries are increasingly blurred. Not only are the names of the original authors no longer hispanicised (no Carlos Baudelaire here), some of the titles of the poems, as well as culturally specific references, are left in English in the text.[859] Even punctuation follows, in Barreda's translation of "Anabase," foreign rules, foregoing the Spanish inverted question and exclamation marks with the acknowledged objective of "rendir esa sensación de fluidez, de agua en desliz, que tiene el poema en su idioma original."[860] Overall, translations appear to be increasingly intentional, but also more codified. As explained by Elena Madrigal and Marco Antonio Reyes, translations are, in *Contemporáneos*, often commissioned expressly. They are also signed by the translator more often than in *modernista* periodicals (Fig. 5.9), a first step in the still ongoing process of recognition of the work of literary translators.

[859] Lozano, for instance, maintains Sandburg's title in "Trinity Place," as well as the title of the song "The Livery Stables Blues" in "Vaudeville Dancer." *Prisma* I.2: 41-42 [43-44].

[860] *Contemporáneos* IX.32: 6 [6].

Conclusion

> *Francia se va de entre nosotros, se aleja inexorable y melancólica como una música, como una juventud […] Francia fue el amor de la juventud de la Patria*
>
> José Juan Tablada

As I have shown throughout this thesis, the development of modern poetics in Mexico (and by extension Latin America) was shaped by cultural exchanges and translation at all its stages. These allowed Mexican writers to rehearse, adapt, and craft new poetic forms that empowered them to express their experience of peripheral (or post-colonial) modernity, to educate the reading public to receive and appreciate these new forms, to build an economically viable book market, and to establish transnational cultural ties, but also to defend creative autonomy and the role of literature in society. With such varied functions, translation stands out as a critical component of literary life. It was particularly instrumental to key developments for modern poetry, such as the adoption of free verse, the focus on the poetic image, and a certain desacralisation of poetry. These changes built on Mexico's long-standing connection with France but also, and perhaps mostly—to an extent that is rarely acknowledged for the studied period—, on its fast-growing and complicated relationship with its Northern neighbour, just over half a century after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the end of the Mexican-American war.

My chapter organisation has underlined how translation fulfils a series of multifarious purposes, which complement each other in the modernisation process. These can be put in two categories (following Lefevere's characterisation of

manipulation as responding to either ideological or poetological motives)[861]: repertoire renovation (e.g., formal experiments, introducing new motifs and devices, etc.) and interventions about wider political and societal questions (such as, for instance, debates around the public role of intellectuals, educational policy, international relations, and so on). While Parts I and III focus on the former use of translation, Part II illustrates the latter. This is not to say that these purposes are mutually exclusive; Chapters 1, 4, and 5 have clearly shown that a focus on aesthetics and formal experimentation does not imply that literary activity is actually independent from the field of power and/or that there is no concurrent ideological agenda. Indeed, translation (and literature in general) can serve both purposes (aesthetic and political) simultaneously, as the activities linked to the second Pan-American Conference in 1901 and Novo's translations well illustrate. In fact, this might be a hallmark of Latin American literary fields (as peripheral/post-colonial formations), where the precarious institutional bases of culture go hand in hand with a prolonged dependence on state structures (as observed in magazines throughout my corpus) and, to quote Julio Ramos, "paradójicamente, un campo literario cuya autoridad política no cesa […] de manifestarse."[862]

This being said, there are clear differences between phases in which the attention is mostly on matters of aesthetics, and periods of intense ideological strife, especially in the context of revolutionary Mexico. This is reflected in translation practices in various ways. In magazines from the early 1910s, translation is very under-represented, with less page space occupied by translations (Fig. 6.1). While the fact that little new literary material reached Mexico from abroad in the context of the Revolution and then WWI might partly explain such a gap, it is still noteworthy that slightly older materials were not used; *Gladios*, for instance, does not include any translation at all in its two issues.[863] This changes radically in the immediate post-revolution period, with *El Maestro* displaying both the highest proportion of total page space occupied by translations and

[861] Lefevere, *Translation, rewriting*, 5.

[862] Ramos, *Desencuentros*, 43.

[863] Of course, its extremely brief publication span makes it difficult to draw very significant conclusions, as with other magazines of the period, but the drop in translations is considerable and worth noting.

the second lowest proportion of identified translations (i.e., translations that appeared either signed or with a note specifying that the text is a translation) in my restricted corpus (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2). This is a result of the double propagandistic purpose to enhance the place of literature and culture within the field of power, and to use them as a pillar of the revolutionary state's educational and literacy policies by promoting the best of foreign literature. Such an instrumental and ideological use of translation entails exceptionally large amounts of translated texts presented in the simplest, most seemingly transparent way (i.e., without much paratext or details about the text that complicate access and signal erudition). Besides this isolated case of government publishing, it is clear that translation is at its highest during the periods of aesthetic experimentation such as *modernismo* and the late 1920s (Fig. 6.1).[864] Even more conclusive is the increased proportion of poetry—a genre that embodies autonomous/autotelic literature—among translated texts during these periods (Fig. 6.3). The practice of translation thus appears to be dependent, to an extent, on its function (whether primarily aesthetic or primarily ideological).

Ultimately, however, these phases are part of the same evolution towards modern literature; the field is progressively organised and codified; this, in turn, opens the space for autonomous creation. This is observed both before and after the Revolution: the *Revista Azul*'s work on the notion of art for art's sake opened a symbolic space for the *Revista Moderna*'s experiments. Similarly, *Savia Moderna* and, even more so, the magazines of the 1910s paved the way for the aesthetic transformations of the avant-garde. This is why Alfonso Reyes affirmed, in 1913, "no es hoy el día del cuento maravilloso ni del poema excelso, no es el día de la invención, sino el de la crisis intelectual, el de la tormenta de los valores."[865] This leads me to nuance Even-Zohar's postulate that moments of crisis, for a literary system, are also moments of repertoire

[864] A longer time span would allow us to confirm that this is an effect of those periods' literary ebullience and not an illusion created by the depression noted during the armed struggle. A corpus expansion is a pending task for future projects and researchers; it would undoubtedly provide valuable insights into the data, even if not radically new conclusions.

[865] *Nosotros* I.9: 32 [620].

renovation through translation.[866] The Mexican example shows that the phases of experimentation and repertoire renovation, in which translation does indeed play a great part, are not immediate. Rather, they closely follow periods in which the focus is on the ideological and conceptual aspects of the literary system and of its relationship with state institutions.

This ties in with the notion of change that I have put forward in my introduction —one that is multi-layered, uncoordinated, sometimes contradictory, and always collective. My analysis has illustrated this, but also the multiple threads running through different periodicals and studied periods, which ultimately converge and crystallise into the core of the broad evolutions that I set out to examine. The perspective of magazines and translation enables us to see that modern poetics in Latin America does not derive from a sudden iconoclastic gesture made by the avant-garde; rather, it is the result of a long process of playfulness and experimentation in which intercultural exchanges were fundamental. Parts I and III of this thesis have demonstrated that the avant-gardist experiments with free and prosaic verse are much less the result of a rupture than a continuation of the work done by *modernista* writers at the beginning of the century, and of the slow process through which cultural hegemony started to make its way from France to the United States. Thus, the aesthetics of *feísmo* and prosaism exhibited by the "otra vanguardia" can be traced back to the changes brought forward by Baudelaire and adopted by some *modernistas*. Similarly, the figure of the poet as a degraded outcast singing modern life is already found in the Symbolist and Decadent authors translated in the *Revista Moderna*. Finally, heterometric and free verse forms, and even the focus on the image as basic unit of the poem, have precedents in Tablada's, Nervo's, and Dávalos's versions of US and Japanese poetry. Through the prism of translation and literary change, the connection between *modernismo* and the avant-garde is evident. This can be read as a specific instance of the connection that Matei Călinescu establishes between the avant-garde and Decadence, as "cultures of crisis" (i.e., expressions of modernity): "as a culture of crisis, the avant-garde is consciously

[866] Even-Zohar, "Polysystem Studies," 47.

involved in furthering the 'natural' decay of traditional forms in our world of change, and does its best to intensify and dramatize all existing symptoms of decadence and exhaustion."[867] As my analysis has shown, *modernismo* and the avant-garde, often too clearly delimited in literary histories, respond in fact to a common objective—that of developing a form able to express modernity—and are much more interpenetrated than is generally acknowledged.

Recognising this connection shifts our perception of the rhythm of literary evolution, bringing to light cycles of change that tend to be slower than we think.[868] As Underwood puts it, "received narratives of literary history generally lead scholars to overestimate the pace of change,"[869] an observation that applies particularly to the move towards modern literature.[870] Underwood proceeds to explain: "some things scholars tend to describe as rejections of tradition—modernist insistence on the concrete image, for instance—might better be explained as continuations of a long-term trend, guided by established standards."[871] This very aspect is clearly visible in Tablada's pioneering work with Japanese verse and haiku-inspired poetry, in 1900. The only critic to acknowledge this longstanding undercurrent is Fernández Retamar, who stated, in an answer to a question about the origins of Latin American colloquialism, that "la poesía hispanoamericana venía moviéndose en esa dirección desde principios de este siglo, al menos desde la obra madura de Rubén Darío."[872] It becomes clear, then, that conversationalism did not appear as a reaction to the avant-garde, as generally argued in scholarship on the topic, but as a subdivision of it and a part of a much deeper process

867 Călinescu, *Five Faces*, 124.

868 Another process that is slow and incremental is the emergence of the modern literary field, which is why I posit the 1890s as its starting point. This is probably what Ignacio Sánchez Prado alludes to when he mentions a "primera etapa de profesionalización" in the late nineteenth century, although he sees the post-revolution period as a foundational moment and not a renegotiation of terms and further development on new institutional bases as I do. Sánchez Prado, *Naciones Intelectuales* 27.

869 Underwood and Sellers, "*Longue Durée*," 334.

870 As David Perkins remarks for Anglophone literature, "the transition from Romantic and Victorian to 'modern' modes of poetry is one of the fundamental shifts in the history of art," and "historical changes of this magnitude take place gradually over a long period of time." *History of Modern Poetry*, 293.

871 Underwood and Sellers, "*Longue Durée*," 337.

872 Quoted in Alemany Bay, "Para una revisión," 50.

that can be traced further back in time. Indeed, Utrera Torremocha situates the beginning of the changes that culminated in free verse at an international level somewhere during the second half of the eighteenth century. She highlights the role played by Victor Hugo and his reaction against the classical notion of beauty based on perfection and harmony.[873] On an even larger scale, the evolutions that I discuss in this thesis can be located within the broader, slower trend towards the prosification of Western literature. This line of research has not been explored in depth for Latin America, and a macro-scale analysis of this phenomenon would be an exciting development in the emerging field of Latin American Digital Humanities. Even on a smaller scale, it is probable that studies extending my timespan back into the nineteenth century would uncover additional precursors and ramifications, especially in the Romantic ranks. Cuban poet Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (herself a prolific translator from both French and English) is a strong candidate for this and a worthy object of further study.[874]

This process also appears to have been intimately linked, in Spanish America, with the quest for new modes of expression in the post-colonial context, in which breaking with traditional form is also a way to break with the colonial legacy and find an authentic, original voice. Roughly a century after Andrés Bello invited the poetic muse to leave Europe for America, it is not coincidental that US poetry would play a role in this process, having had to wrestle with its own cultural dependency. The Americas' common cultural destiny was underlined by Henríquez Ureña, de la Selva, and Lozano, and gained particular traction in the wake of the European disaster of WWI.[875] Tato explains that "the civilization crisis engendered by the war eroded that hegemony [of France], and gave birth to a critical stance about the Old Continent"[876] and to a general sense that renovation was to come from the new world. Already in the editorial of *Pegaso*'s first issue, López Velarde alluded to the winds of change through a

873 Utrera Torremocha, *Estructura y teoría*, 30.
874 On Gómez de Avellaneda's metric experiments, see for instance Boti, "La Avellaneda."
875 See e.g., Salomón de la Selva, "Editorial," *The Pan-American Magazine* XXVII.1:51-52; Henríquez Ureña, *Seis ensayos*, 134; *Prisma* I.4:13 (195).
876 Tato, "Latin American Intellectual Field," 117.

Mexican topographic metaphor: “conocí a un demente que me despertaba a deshora para repetirme: '*Plateros* fue una *calle*, luego una *rue*, y hoy es una *street*.' No creo lo último.”[877] His reluctance to accept the last shift from French to English speaks of *Pegaso*'s futile attempts to hold on to the Francophile aesthetics of *modernismo* in a context in which things were already changing. As Pacheco notes, during the last years of Carranza's government, “lo norteamericano ya desplazaba a lo francés. Los diarios de la capital incluían secciones en lengua inglesa. Pianolas y organillos tocaban ‘Baby Face’ al lado de ‘Mi querido capitán’...”[878] Pacheco mentions this progressive displacement of cultural hegemony as a factor in the development of the “otra vanguardia,”[879] but a diachronic view of the proportion of translations made from French and English in my corpus reveals the full extent and scope of this transformation (Figure 6.4).[880] While French fin-de-siècle literary culture gave *modernistas* the inspiration and conceptual framework for autonomous art, the formal innovations of the first decades of the twentieth century appear to have been increasingly inspired by Anglophone poetry (before the rise of Surrealism).

Of the factors that facilitated these hemispheric exchanges, one is of particular relevance to a study of translation: the increased movement of writers and intellectuals across national borders, sped up by the development of transportation means and infrastructure. Thus, writers increasingly spent time on the opposite side of the Río Bravo, often becoming cultural mediators and translators themselves. This movement goes in both directions, nurtured by initiatives such as the UNM's Escuela de Verano. Langston Hughes spent time in Mexico during the 1920s, mixing with local intellectual and artistic circles, as did Katherine Anne Porter and John Dos Passos (who befriended Novo on this occasion).[881] Notably, all three of them translated Spanish American literature into English. We thus observe the creation of what Anthony Pym calls an

877 *Pegaso* I.1:2 [14], author's emphases.
878 Pacheco, “López Velarde,” 44.
879 Pacheco, “Nota,” 332.
880 It will be interesting, in the future, to expand the corpus and repeat this graph to delimit the phenomenon more precisely and explore its nuances.
881 *Ulises* I.1:28-29 [42-43].

"interculture," that is, a liminal space in which "groups of people […] for reasons of institutionalized livelihood, are somehow engaged in the transfer of cultural products across borders," separating cultures perceived as essentially different.[882] This is also true of Mexican writers of the time, and various of the pioneers of the developments that I have outlined spent time in the United States (Balbino Dávalos, José Juan Tablada, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Pedro Requena Legarreta, Salomón de la Selva, Rafael Lozano, Enrique Munguía Jr). A more comprehensive historical study of inter-American literary exchanges, along the lines of Harris Feinsod's *The Poetry of the Americas*, would be a good way to build on this thesis.

Additionally, various of the central cultural mediators and translators we have encountered in this thesis are migrants, welcomed by Mexican cultural institutions and particularly cosmopolitan ventures such as magazines (Guillermo Valencia, Henríquez Ureña, de la Selva, León Felipe) or, like Rafael Lozano, members of the Hispanic diaspora. It is no coincidence that Novo and Villaurrutia chose to title their magazine *Ulises* and to establish travel as the essential modality of modern life and literature. The periodical published various instalments of Novo's fictionalised narrative of his travels through the United States, introducing him as a modern-day Ulysses: "Ulises, Novo ha vuelto."[883] Literature thus emerges, symbolically and concretely, from different geographical displacements. This is therefore not only a story of circulating texts and poetics, but also of migration, a dimension of cross-cultural exchanges implicit in my analysis, but which could spell out further horizons in my research. As Anthony Pym puts it, tracing "the histories of moving feet"[884] is likely to yield valuable insights into the history of translation and of its cultural uses. This is another avenue along which my research can be taken forward and a fuller understanding of literary and cultural history reached.

Finally, I hope that my work will prompt further research into translation, periodicals, and cultural change in Mexico and Latin America. While I have sought to

[882] Pym, *Negotiating the Frontier*, 5.
[883] *Ulises* I.2:27 [77].
[884] Pym, "Humanizing Translation History," 36.

include as many voices involved in the process of modernisation as possible, my account is by no means exhaustive. Some of the decisions made in my research design, as well as the fact that this thesis constitutes a first approach to the history of translation in Mexican periodicals, have kept my account closer to the canon than I would have intended. Challenging periodisation and explanations of literary change by re-evaluating the contribution of different figures to it and emphasising their inter-relatedness does not necessarily imply diversifying the canon itself. Much work remains to be done to recover marginal or non-canonical voices, and to understand their contribution or resistance to the changes that I have outlined. This is especially visible in the severe under-representation of women writers in my analysis. In all the inventoried magazines, I have found only five women translators and twenty women authors translated into Spanish (out of various hundreds of original authors). This offers a real sense of how male-dominated literary spaces like magazines were at the time. In fact, women not only represent a very small proportion of translated authors, they account for an even lower proportion of all translations (i.e., they have fewer pieces translated), and are generally given an even lower share of page space, which speaks of the little disposition towards inclusivity (Fig. 6.5).[885] Examining lesser-known periodicals, as well as other formats (particularly ephemera) might bring some visibility to actors excluded from the main literary enterprises. Although this is unlikely to modify my general conclusions, since (to quote Underwood) "on many axes of measurement, prominent and obscure writers are travelling together in the same direction, albeit at slightly (and interestingly) different speeds,"[886] it would enhance our understanding of cultural phenomena and produce a narrative that actively questions the self-perpetuating biases of canon-formation.

As I hope to have shown, we are only starting to recognise the importance of translation and periodicals for literary life and to replace them at the core of our

[885] In fact, none of the women writers translated in the 14 fully inventoried magazines has been translated more than once *across these periodicals*. The same holds true for women translators—none of them appears more than once, and they seem to follow a similar (if a little less marked) logic (Fig. 6.6).

[886] Underwood, *Distant horizons*, 11.

understanding of literary history. A pressing task for this emerging field is the development of object-specific methods for the study of serialised material (in particular, translations published in periodicals), be they computational or not. I have conceived my contribution, in this thesis, as spanning the theoretical, methodological, and empirical planes, although without particular emphasis on technical advancement. My analysis aimed to demonstrate that even simple computational and/or statistical methods can provide valuable insight. Without a doubt, bespoke tools to conceptualise, represent, and analyse the contents of periodicals will greatly assist this growing scholarly community. My next step is therefore to explore the possible applications of data-based approaches to translations published in periodicals more systematically, and to create new tools that capture the complex polyphony of periodical texts. Modelling periodical metadata using semantic networks, for instance, is a promising development that could allow us to study editorial lines as symbolic networks of contributors, as well as magazines as concrete networks of agents (e.g., translators, editors, close collaborators). Natural Language Processing, in turn, will open new analytical pathways as the contents of periodicals become increasingly available in digital formats. Ultimately, all these developments contribute to the establishment of a new perspective that might challenge our assumptions about literary history on multiple fronts and draw our attention to silenced voices, cross-cultural movements of various kinds, and a generally more inclusive and historically accurate picture of the literary world.

Appendix A - Figures

Introduction:

Figure 0.1

Proportion of translations from French in the Revista Moderna
(excluding gacetillas)

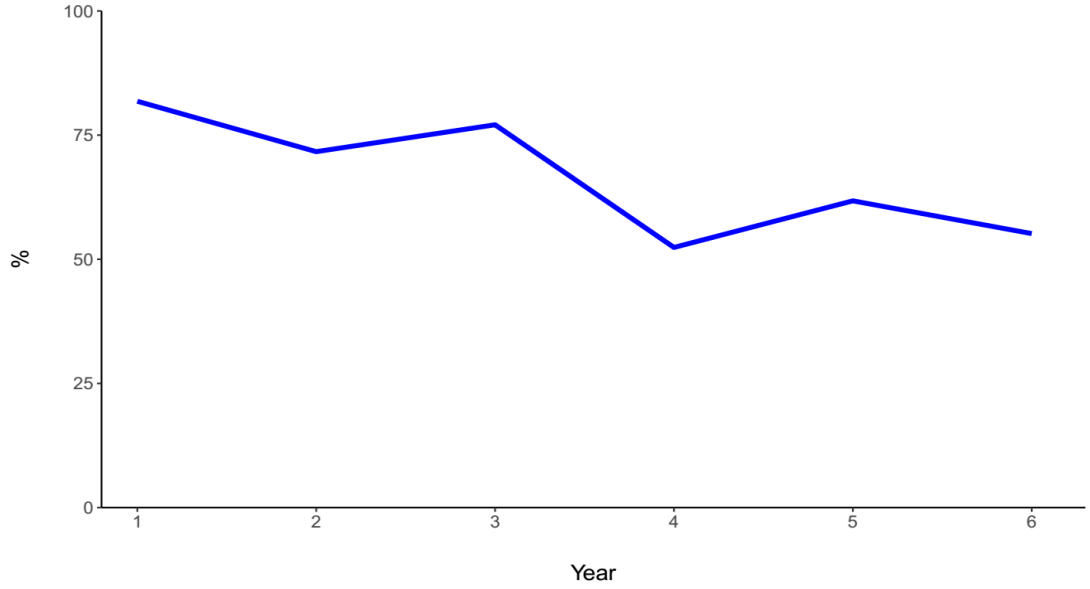


Figure 0.2

Proportion of poetry translated from French in the Revista Moderna

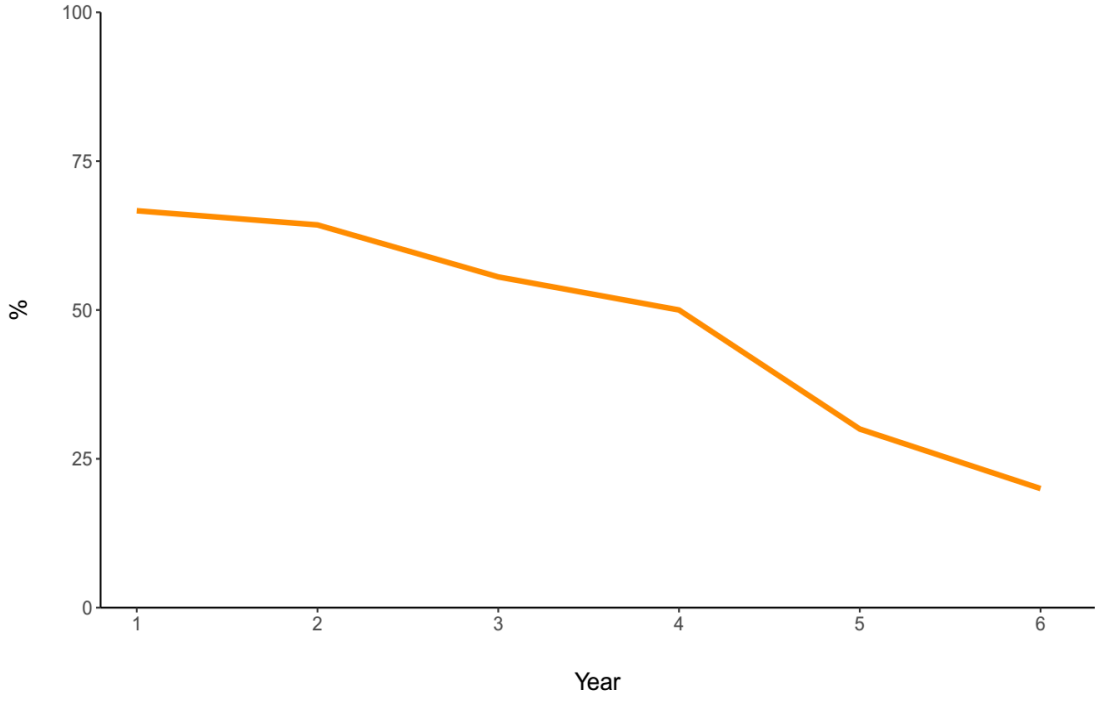


Figure 0.3

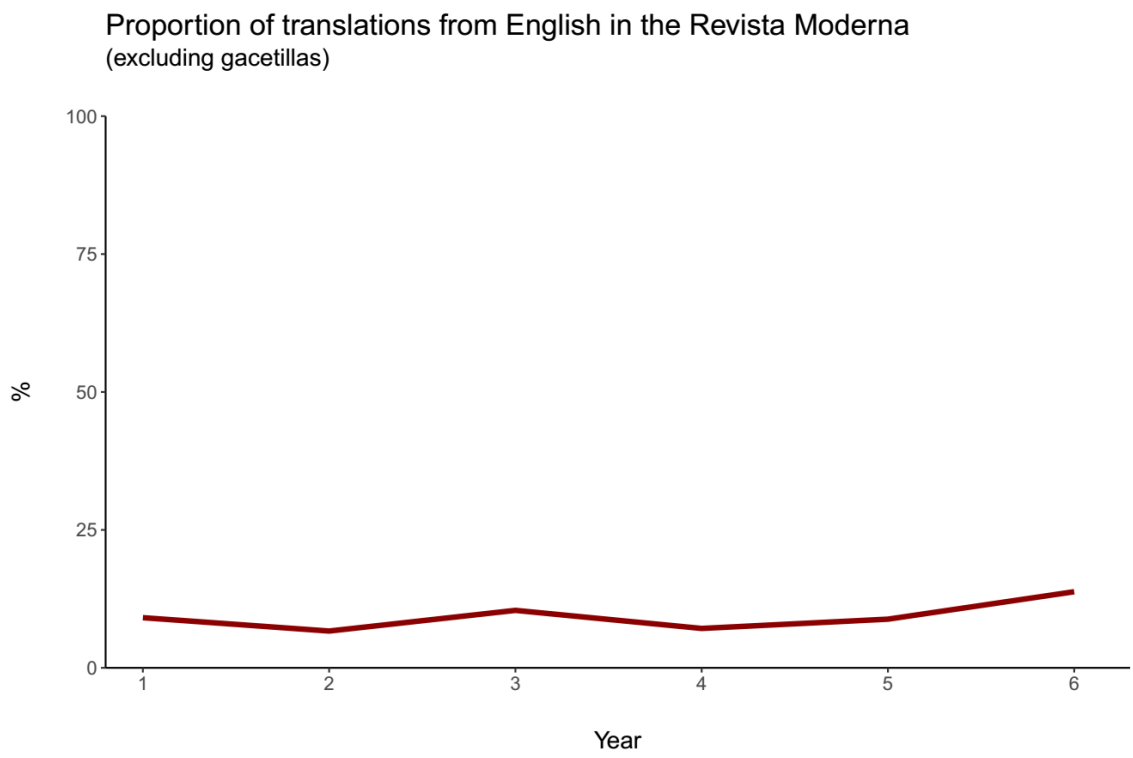
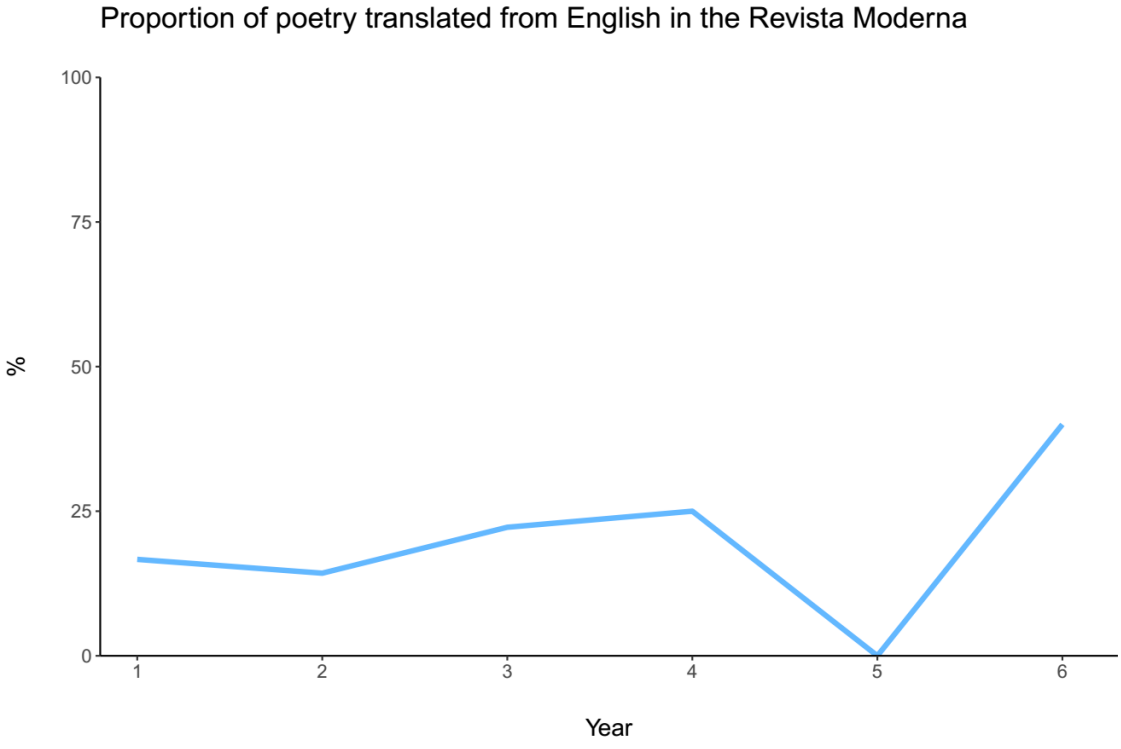


Figure 0.4



Chapter 1:

Figure 1.1

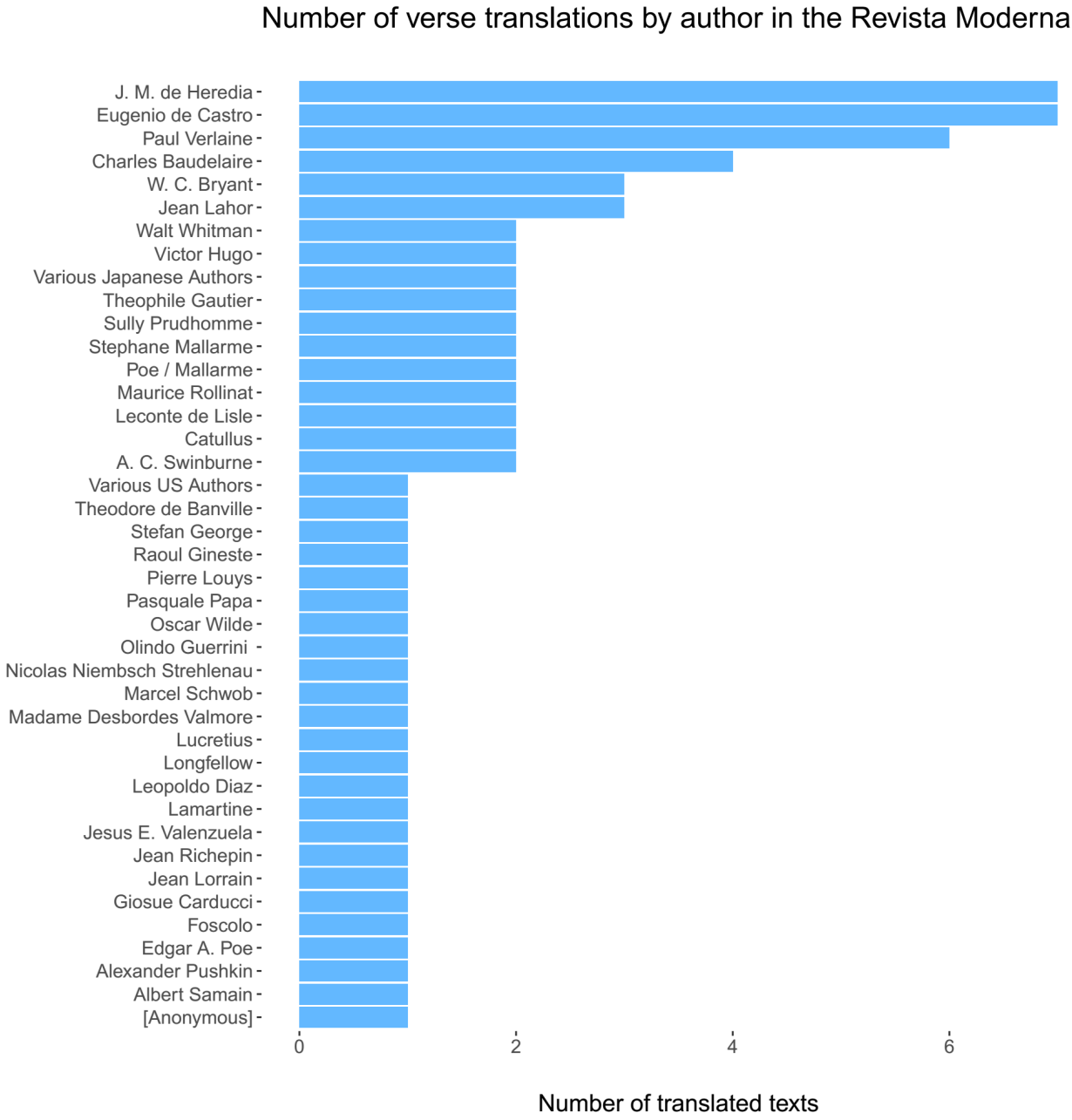
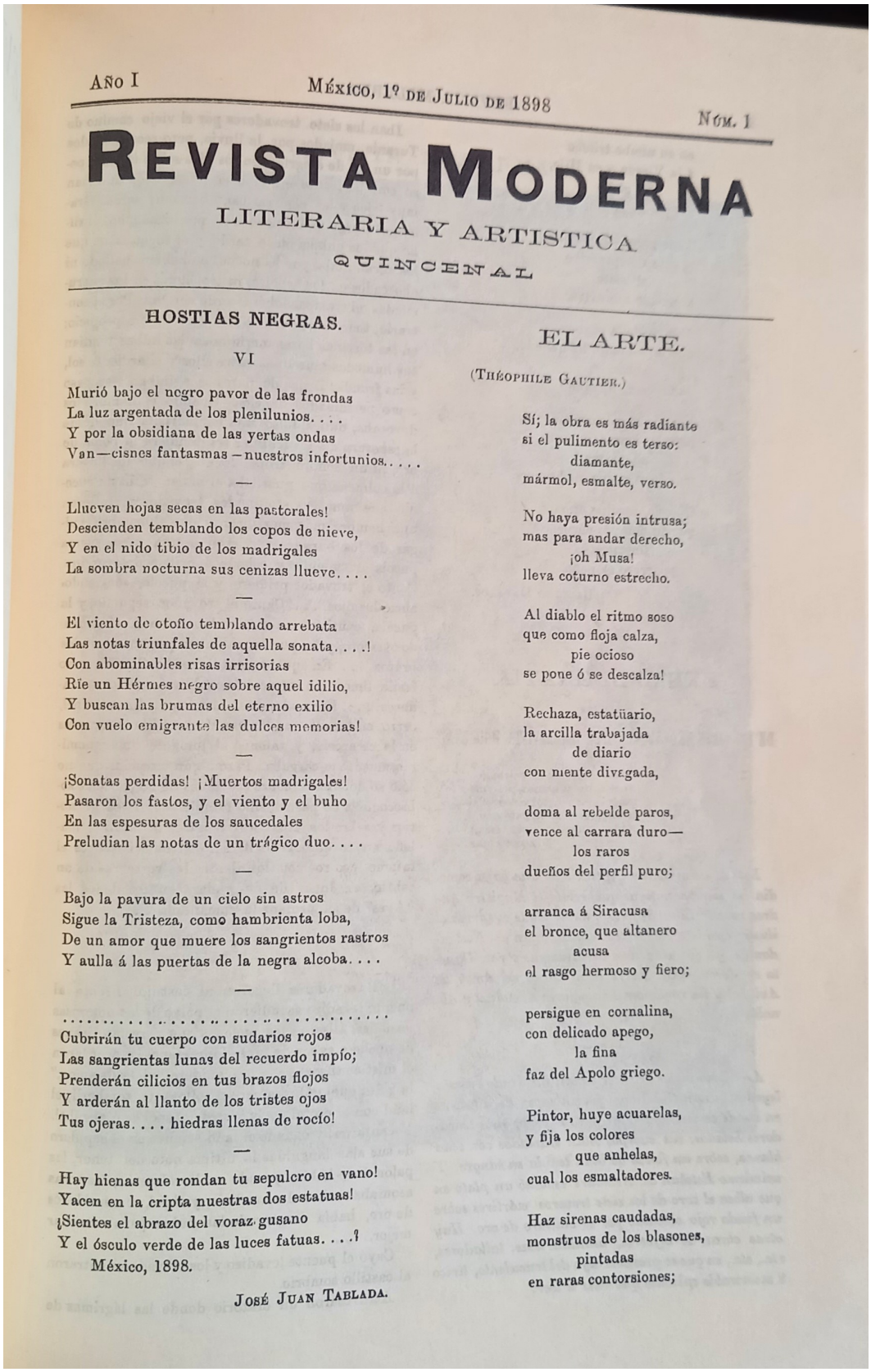


Figure 1.2 "L'art" and "Hostias Negras," *Revista Moderna* I.1:1-2



Año I — México, 1º de Julio de 1898 — Núm. 1

REVISTA MODERNA

LITERARIA Y ARTISTICA

QUINCENAL

HOSTIAS NEGRAS.

VI

Murió bajo el negro pavor de las frondas
La luz argentada de los plenilunios. . . .
Y por la obsidiana de las yertas ondas
Van—cisnes fantasmas—nuestros infortunios. . . .

—

Llueven hojas secas en las pastorales!
Descienden temblando los copos de nieve,
Y en el nido tibio de los madrigales
La sombra nocturna sus cenizas llueve. . . .

—

El viento de otoño temblando arrebata
Las notas triunfales de aquella sonata. . . .!
Con abominables risas irrisorias
Rïe un Hérmes negro sobre aquel idilio,
Y buscan las brumas del eterno exilio
Con vuelo emigrante las dulces memorias!

—

¡Sonatas perdidas! ¡Muertos madrigales!
Pasaron los fastos, y el viento y el buho
En las espesuras de los saucedales
Preludian las notas de un trágico duo. . . .

—

Bajo la pavura de un cielo sin astros
Sigue la Tristeza, como hambrienta loba,
De un amor que muere los sangrientos rastros
Y aulla á las puertas de la negra alcoba. . . .

—

. . . . . .
Cubrirán tu cuerpo con sudarios rojos
Las sangrientas lunas del recuerdo impío;
Prenderán cilicios en tus brazos flojos
Y arderán al llanto de los tristes ojos
Tus ojeras. . . . hiedras llenas de rocío!

—

Hay hienas que rondan tu sepulcro en vano!
Yacen en la cripta nuestras dos estatuas!
¡Sientes el abrazo del voraz gusano
Y el ósculo verde de las luces fatuas. . . .?

México, 1898.

José Juan Tablada.

EL ARTE.

(Théophile Gautier.)

Sí; la obra es más radiante
si el pulimento es terso:
diamante,
mármol, esmalte, verso.

No haya presión intrusa;
mas para andar derecho,
¡oh Musa!
lleva coturno estrecho.

Al diablo el ritmo soso
que como floja calza,
pie ocioso
se pone ó se descalza!

Rechaza, estatüario,
la arcilla trabajada
de diario
con mente divagada,

doma al rebelde paros,
vence al carrara duro—
los raros
dueños del perfil puro;

arranca á Siracusa
el bronce, que altanero
acusa
el rasgo hermoso y fiero;

persigue en cornalina,
con delicado apego,
la fina
faz del Apolo griego.

Pintor, huye acuarelas,
y fija los colores
que anhelas,
cual los esmaltadores.

Haz sirenas caudadas,
monstruos de los blasones,
pintadas
en raras contorsiones;

en su nimbo trilobo
á la Virgen y su Hijo,
el globo
del pie de la cruz fijo.

Todo pasa.—Robusto
el arte siempre vive,
el busto
al pueblo sobrevive.

Y la medalla austera
que un labrador ha hallado,
entera
de un césar ignorado.

Los dioses mismos mueren,
pero los versos, gonces
adquieren
más fuertes que los bronces.

Cincela, esculpe, lima;
que tu flotante ensueño
imprima
su poderoso empeño.

BALBINO DÁVALOS.

EXEMPLI GRATIA

O FABULA

DE LOS SIETE TROVADORES Y DE "LA REVISTA MODERNA."

L' Esperance, notre patronne
Nous a dit: «Chantez, pelerins
Partout ou ma gloire fleuronne....»
L' Esperance notre patronne
Nous a dit: «Semez vos refrains....»
VIEUX FABLIAU.

Este es un memorable episodio de una gaya comedia del tiempo antiguo que relata el Magistro Andrea en su "Liber de arte amandi" que confirma el ilustre cronista de los trovadores, Juan de Nostradamus, y á que aluden en varias de sus obras: Ugueta de Jorculquier, dama de la Corte de Amor de Aviñón, y los romanceros mudéjares Abenduet y Abnalazar.

Asimismo viejos artífices se han inspirado en esta leyenda. Juan Gobelino tejió un tapiz de alta lira en donde se distinguen las figuras de los siete trovadores helados; sus cuerpos están tramados con seda blanca, sobre un fondo de lana teñida en sangre. Y asimismo Esteban de Nemours esmaltó un plato en que albea el coro de los siete troveros mártires sobre un fondo rojo obtenido por el cianuro de oro. Hay otras obras, de orfevres, miniaturistas, talladores, etc., etc., en que se presume algo del truculento, lírico y memorable episodio que vais á leer:

Iban los siete trovadores por el viejo camino de Turania, mojados por la lluvia, pero reconfortados por un sol de alegría; con los pies sobre el lodo, pero con la frente en el cielo. Los lobos aullaban muy lejos y las cigarras cantaban muy cerca. Gracias al trasgo que los conducía por la mañana, al silfio que los guiaba en la tarde, y al fuego fatuo que los encaminaba por la noche, no habían hallado ni ahorcados en los árboles, ni tropeleros en las encrucijadas, ni trampas loberas en la sombra. Por el contrario, todo lo que era Naturaleza les era propicio; en las tórridas horas meridianas las nubes tendían sus húmedas muselinas entre ellos y el ardiente sol, y las frondas llenas de flores se agitaban á su paso como perfumados flabelos. Cuando el hambre los devoraba, nunca faltó una hamadríada que desde la espesura de los frutales les tendiera la poma de oro, ni un sonoro tropel de abejas que los llevara á la colmena que guardaba el panal. Y hasta sucedió que una vez en que los trovadores sintieron una hambre más mortificante que el hambre vulgar de los burgueses, vieron á una hermosísima pucela durmiente y echada á orillas del camino. Cantó el trovador primero, y la pucela, sonriendo, abrió los ojos.... Cantó el trovador segundo, y la pucela, cautivada, abrió los labios; cantó el trovador tercero, y la pucela, caída en pasmo, abrió los brazos.... En aquel cruento éxodo, sólo un grueso fraile limosnero mereció la maldición de los trovadores.... Ese malandrín, al mirar al lírico tropel, cerró en las alforjas las viandas, las libras tornesas en la escarcela, y taloneó al jumento que ignominiosamente lo cargaba. Pero algún trovador que no sólo se inclinaba sobre los senos de las pucelas sobrecogidas de pasmo, sino también sobre los grimorios y sobre los athanores mágicos le lanzó el maleficio y lo embovedó de odio. Desde entonces el infame lego roe con los dientes las vértebras de un cabrío, en lugar de desgranar con los dedos las "Aves" de su profanada camándula....

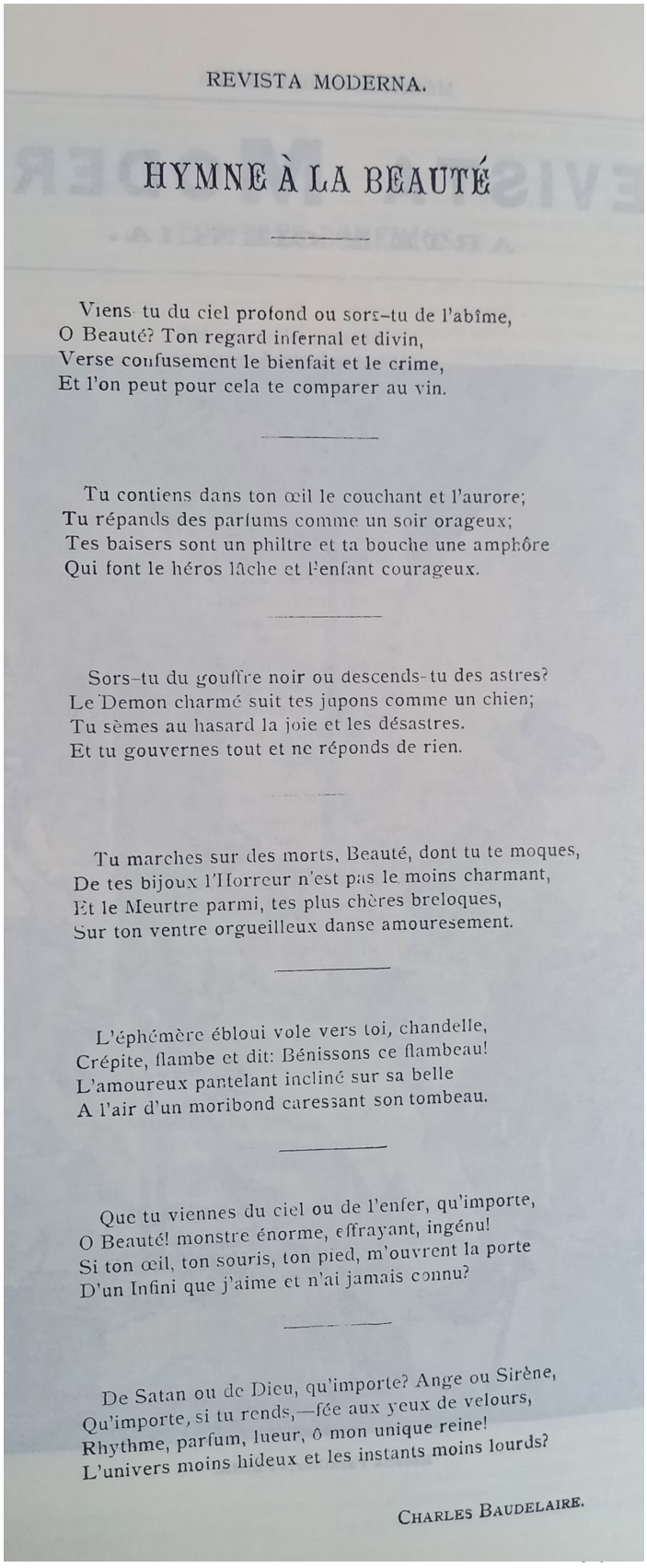
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Los trovadores llegaron al castillo. Frente al puente levadizo sacudieron el polvo de las dolorosas jornadas, alisaron las melenas que parecían jirones de noche y rayos de luna deshebrados, y acordaron el místico theorbe con la plañidera "viola de amor," la gaita quejumbrosa con el sollozante tamboril, el laúd con el crótalo y la voz del tenor con el rabel. Y cantaron; y cuando el laúd sepultó en el sepulcro de sus alas lánguidas la última nota del tenor, las palomas se habían posado en las almenas, las rosas asomaban sobre el muro bajo, y el sol, con sus dedos de oro, había desgarrado las nubes para escuchar mejor....

Cayó el puente levadizo y los trovadores entraron al castillo sombrío.

Atravesaron un oratorio donde las lágrimas de

Figure 1.3 “Hymne à la beauté”/“Himno a la belleza,” *Revista Moderna* II.11:2-3.



REVISTA MODERNA.

HYMNE À LA BEAUTÉ

Viens-tu du ciel profond ou sors-tu de l'abîme,
O Beauté? Ton regard infernal et divin,
Verse confusement le bienfait et le crime,
Et l'on peut pour cela te comparer au vin.

Tu contiens dans ton œil le couchant et l'aurore;
Tu répands des parfums comme un soir orageux;
Tes baisers sont un philtre et ta bouche une amphôre
Qui font le héros lâche et l'enfant courageux.

Sors-tu du gouffre noir ou descends-tu des astres?
Le Demon charmé suit tes japons comme un chien;
Tu sèmes au hasard la joie et les désastres.
Et tu gouvernes tout et ne réponds de rien.

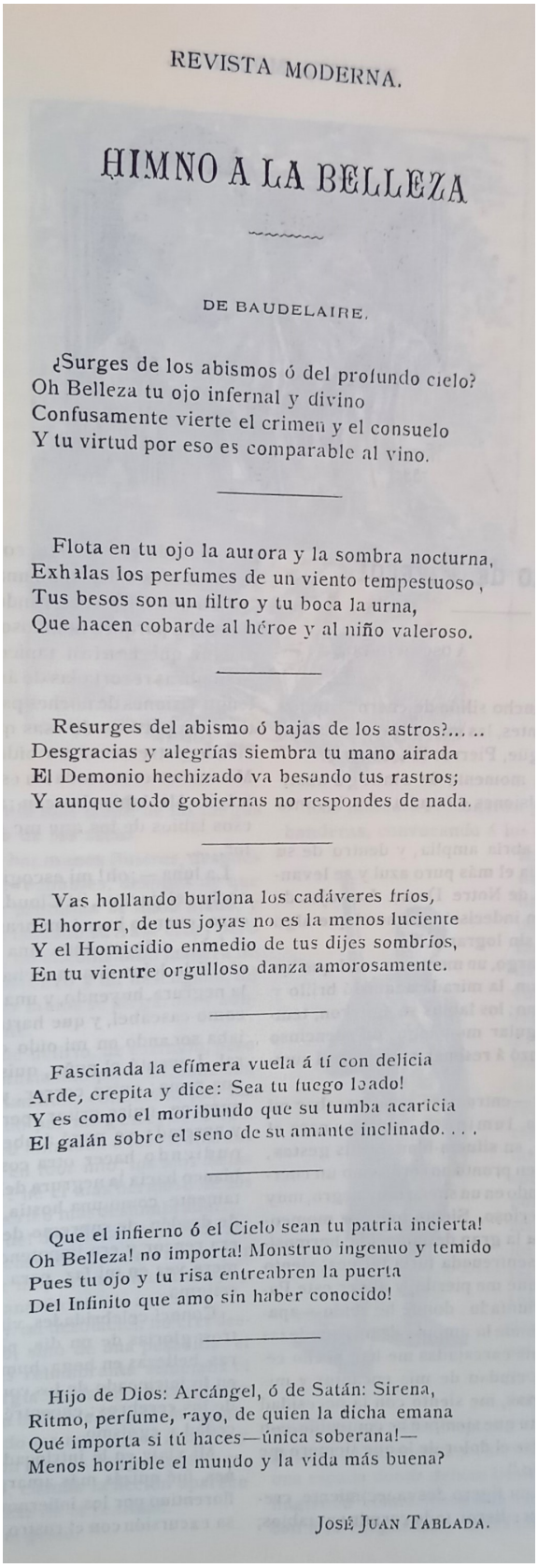
Tu marches sur des morts, Beauté, dont tu te moques,
De tes bijoux l'Horreur n'est pas le moins charmant,
Et le Meurtre parmi, tes plus chères breloques,
Sur ton ventre orgueilleux danse amouresement.

L'éphémère ébloui vole vers toi, chandelle,
Crépite, flambe et dit: Bénissons ce flambeau!
L'amoureux pantelant incliné sur sa belle
A l'air d'un moribond caressant son tombeau.

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe,
O Beauté! monstre énorme, effrayant, ingénu!
Si ton œil, ton souris, ton pied, m'ouvrent la porte
D'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu?

De Satan ou de Dieu, qu'importe? Ange ou Sirène,
Qu'importe, si tu rends,—fée aux yeux de velours,
Rhythme, parfum, lueur, ô mon unique reine!
L'univers moins hideux et les instants moins lourds?

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE.



REVISTA MODERNA.

HIMNO A LA BELLEZA

DE BAUDELAIRE.

¿Surges de los abismos ó del profundo cielo?
Oh Belleza tu ojo infernal y divino
Confusamente vierte el crimen y el consuelo
Y tu virtud por eso es comparable al vino.

Flota en tu ojo la aurora y la sombra nocturna,
Exhalas los perfumes de un viento tempestuoso,
Tus besos son un filtro y tu boca la urna,
Que hacen cobarde al héroe y al niño valeroso.

Resurges del abismo ó bajas de los astros?... ..
Desgracias y alegrías siembra tu mano airada
El Demonio hechizado va besando tus rastros;
Y aunque todo gobiernas no respondes de nada.

Vas hollando burlona los cadáveres fríos,
El horror, de tus joyas no es la menos luciente
Y el Homicidio enmedio de tus dijes sombríos,
En tu vientre orgulloso danza amorosamente.

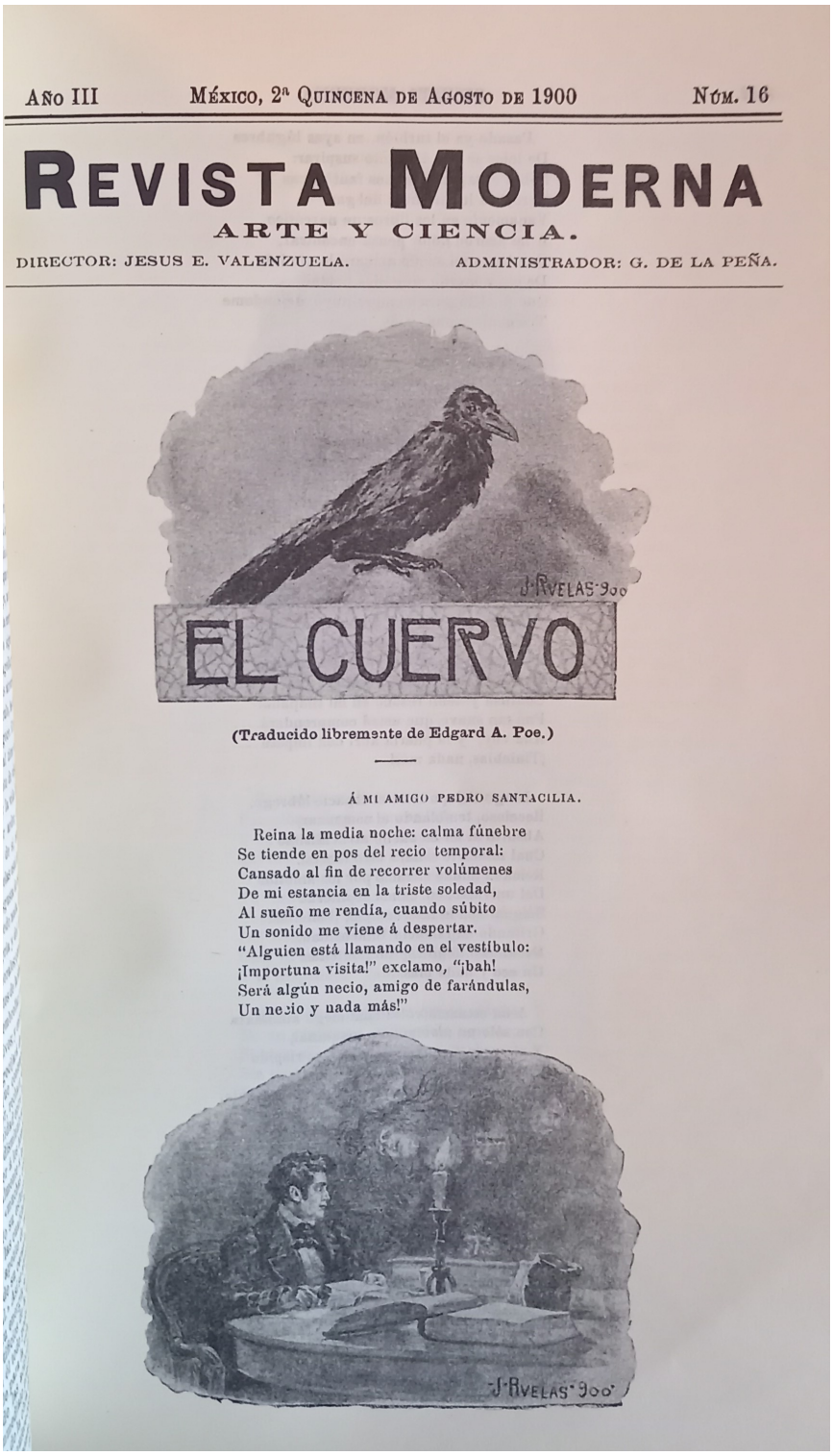
Fascinada la efímera vuela á tí con delicia
Arde, crepita y dice: Sea tu fuego loado!
Y es como el moribundo que su tumba acaricia
El galán sobre el seno de su amante inclinado. . . .

Que el infierno ó el Cielo sean tu patria incierta!
Oh Belleza! no importa! Monstruo ingenuo y temido
Pues tu ojo y tu risa entreabren la puerta
Del Infinito que amo sin haber conocido!

Hijo de Dios: Arcángel, ó de Satán: Sirena,
Ritmo, perfume, rayo, de quien la dicha emana
Qué importa si tú haces—única soberana!—
Menos horrible el mundo y la vida más buena?

JOSÉ JUAN TABLADA.

Figure 1.4 “El cuervo,” tansl. Ignacio Mariscal, *Revista Moderna* III.16:1.



AÑO III — MÉXICO, 2ª QUINCENA DE AGOSTO DE 1900 — NÚM. 16

REVISTA MODERNA

ARTE Y CIENCIA.

DIRECTOR: JESUS E. VALENZUELA. ADMINISTRADOR: G. DE LA PEÑA.

J. RVELAS 900

EL CUERVO

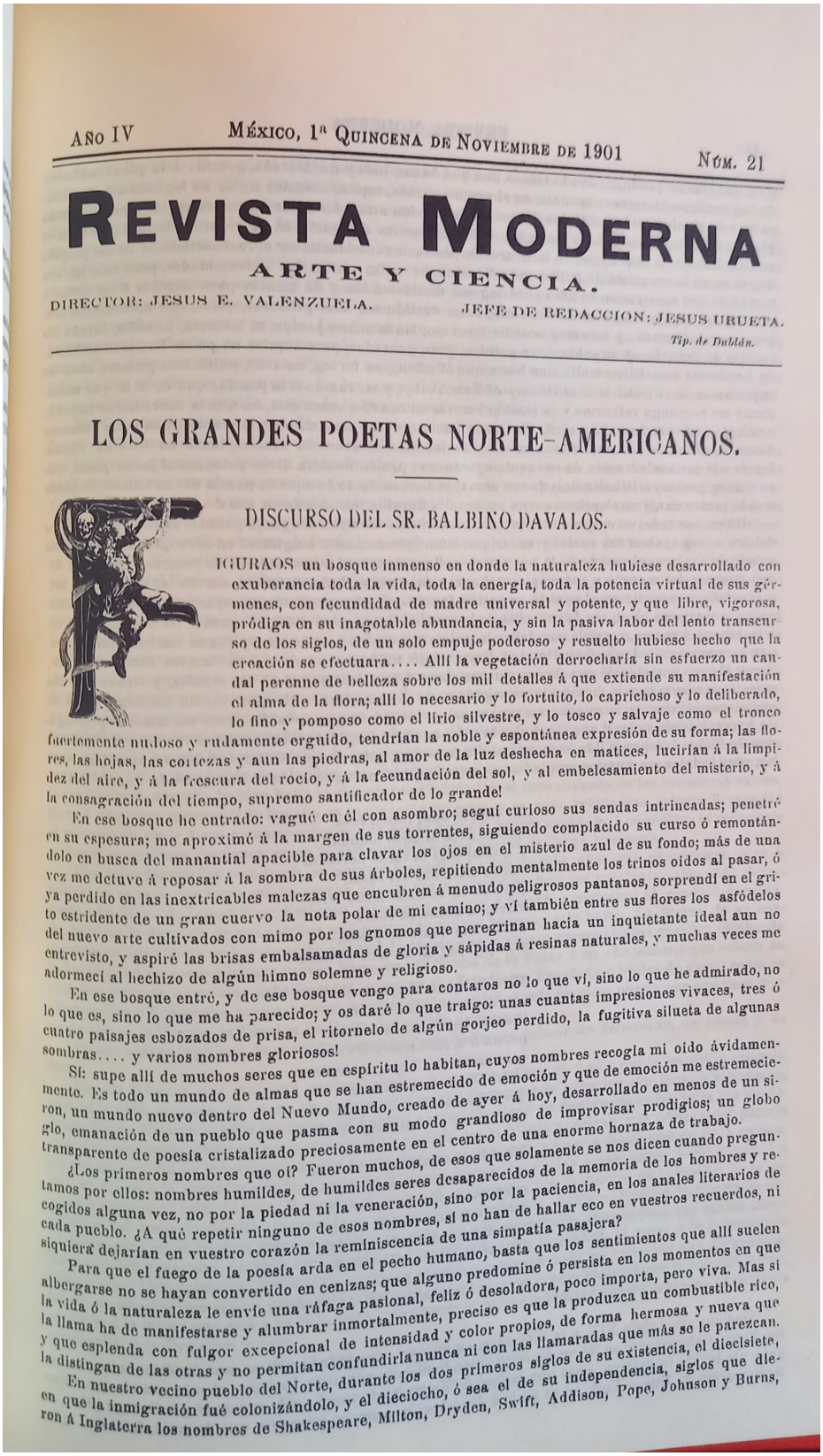
(Traducido libremente de Edgar A. Poe.)

Á MI AMIGO PEDRO SANTACILIA.

Reina la media noche: calma fúnebre
Se tiende en pos del recio temporal:
Cansado al fin de recorrer volúmenes
De mi estancia en la triste soledad,
Al sueño me rendía, cuando súbito
Un sonido me viene á despertar.
“Alguien está llamando en el vestíbulo:
¡Importuna visita!” exclamo, “¡bah!
Será algún necio, amigo de farándulas,
Un necio y nada más!”

J. RVELAS 900

Fig. 1.5 "Los grandes poetas norte-americanos," *Revista Moderna* IV.21:1.



AÑO IV — MÉXICO, 1ª QUINCENA DE NOVIEMBRE DE 1901 — NÚM. 21

REVISTA MODERNA

ARTE Y CIENCIA.

DIRECTOR: JESUS E. VALENZUELA. JEFE DE REDACCION: JESUS URUETA.

Tip. de Dublán.

LOS GRANDES POETAS NORTE-AMERICANOS.

DISCURSO DEL SR. BALBINO DAVALOS.

IGURAOS un bosque inmenso en donde la naturaleza hubiese desarrollado con exuberancia toda la vida, toda la energía, toda la potencia virtual de sus gérmenes, con fecundidad de madre universal y potente, y que libre, vigorosa, pródiga en su inagotable abundancia, y sin la pasiva labor del lento transcurso de los siglos, de un solo empuje poderoso y resuelto hubiese hecho que la creación se efectuara.... Allí la vegetación derrocharía sin esfuerzo un caudal perenne de belleza sobre los mil detalles á que extiende su manifestación el alma de la flora; allí lo necesario y lo fortuito, lo caprichoso y lo deliberado, lo fino y pomposo como el lirio silvestre, y lo tosco y salvaje como el tronco fuertemente nudoso y rudamente erguido, tendrían la noble y espontánea expresión de su forma; las flores, las hojas, las cortezas y aun las piedras, al amor de la luz deshecha en matices, lucirían á la limpidez del aire, y á la frescura del rocío, y á la fecundación del sol, y al embelesamiento del misterio, y á la consagración del tiempo, supremo santificador de lo grande!

En ese bosque he entrado: vagué en él con asombro; seguí curioso sus sendas intrincadas; penetré en su espesura; me aproximé á la margen de sus torrentes, siguiendo complacido su curso ó remontándolo en busca del manantial apacible para clavar los ojos en el misterio azul de su fondo; más de una vez me detuve á reposar á la sombra de sus árboles, repitiendo mentalmente los trinos oídos al pasar, ó ya perdido en las inextricables malezas que encubren á menudo peligrosos pantanos, sorprendí en el grito estridente de un gran cuervo la nota polar de mi camino; y ví también entre sus flores los asfódelos del nuevo arte cultivados con mimo por los gnomos que peregrinan hacia un inquietante ideal aun no entrevisto, y aspiré las brisas embalsamadas de gloria y sápidas á resinas naturales, y muchas veces me adormecí al hechizo de algún himno solemne y religioso.

En ese bosque entré, y de ese bosque vengo para contaros no lo que ví, sino lo que he admirado, no lo que es, sino lo que me ha parecido; y os daré lo que traigo: unas cuantas impresiones vivaces, tres ó cuatro paisajes esbozados de prisa, el ritornelo de algún gorjeo perdido, la fugitiva silueta de algunas sombras.... y varios nombres gloriosos!

Sí: supe allí de muchos seres que en espíritu lo habitan, cuyos nombres recogía mi oído ávidamente. Es todo un mundo de almas que se han estremecido de emoción y que de emoción me estremecieron, un mundo nuevo dentro del Nuevo Mundo, creado de ayer á hoy, desarrollado en menos de un siglo, emanación de un pueblo que pasma con su modo grandioso de improvisar prodigios; un globo transparente de poesía cristalizado preciosamente en el centro de una enorme hornaza de trabajo.

¿Los primeros nombres que oí? Fueron muchos, de esos que solamente se nos dicen cuando preguntamos por ellos: nombres humildes, de humildes seres desaparecidos de la memoria de los hombres y recogidos alguna vez, no por la piedad ni la veneración, sino por la paciencia, en los anales literarios de cada pueblo. ¿A qué repetir ninguno de esos nombres, si no han de hallar eco en vuestros recuerdos, ni siquiera dejarían en vuestro corazón la reminiscencia de una simpatía pasajera?

Para que el fuego de la poesía arda en el pecho humano, basta que los sentimientos que allí suelen albergarse no se hayan convertido en cenizas; que alguno predomine ó persista en los momentos en que la vida ó la naturaleza le envíe una ráfaga pasional, feliz ó desoladora, poco importa, pero viva. Mas si la llama ha de manifestarse y alumbrar inmortalmente, preciso es que la produzca un combustible rico, y que esplenda con fulgor excepcional de intensidad y color propios, de forma hermosa y nueva que la distingan de las otras y no permitan confundirla nunca ni con las llamaradas que más se le parezcan.

En nuestro vecino pueblo del Norte, durante los dos primeros siglos de su existencia, el diecisiete, en que la inmigración fué colonizándolo, y el dieciocho, ó sea el de su independencia, siglos que dieron á Inglaterra los nombres de Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Swift, Addison, Pope, Johnson y Burns,

Figure 1.6

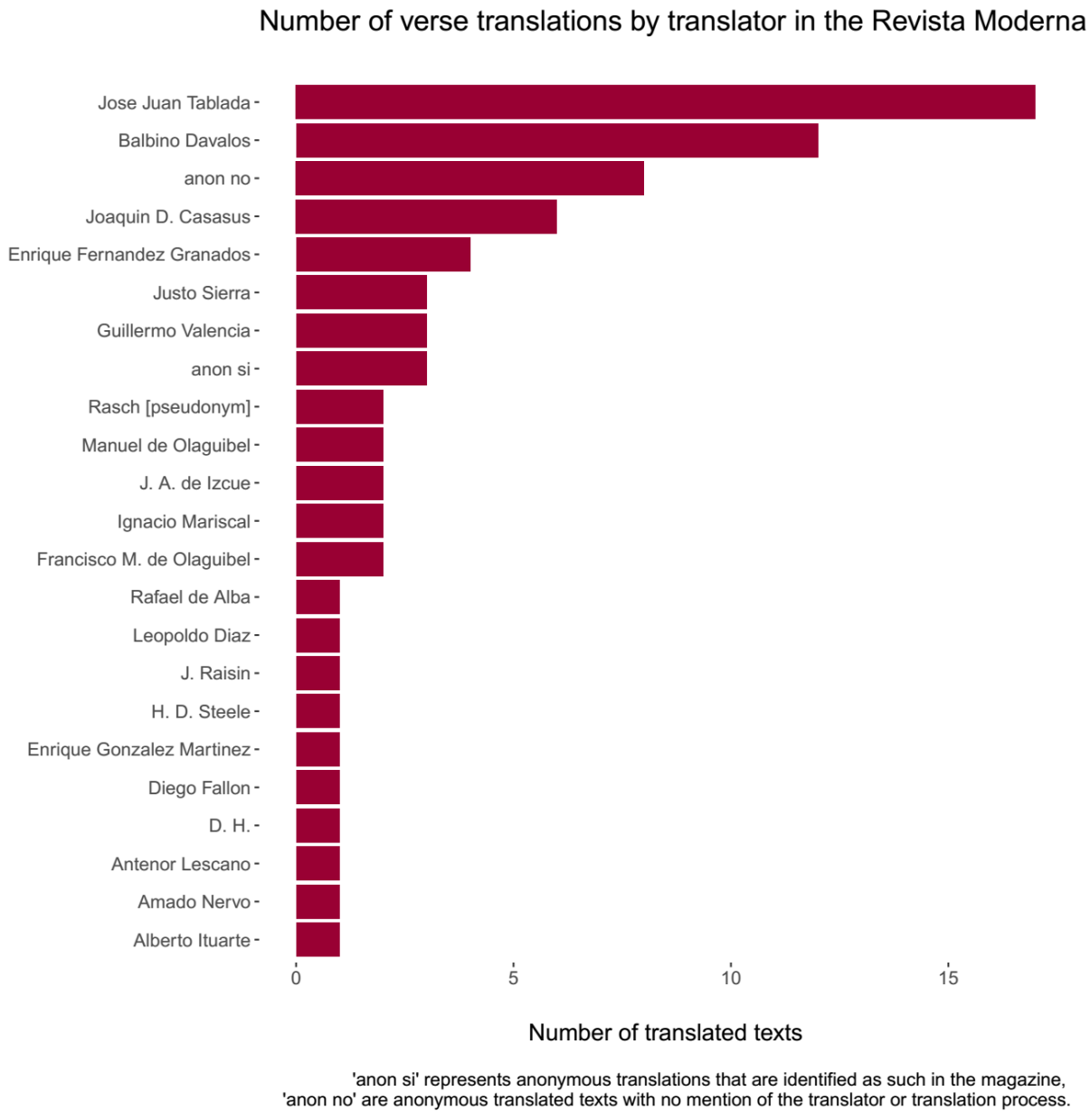
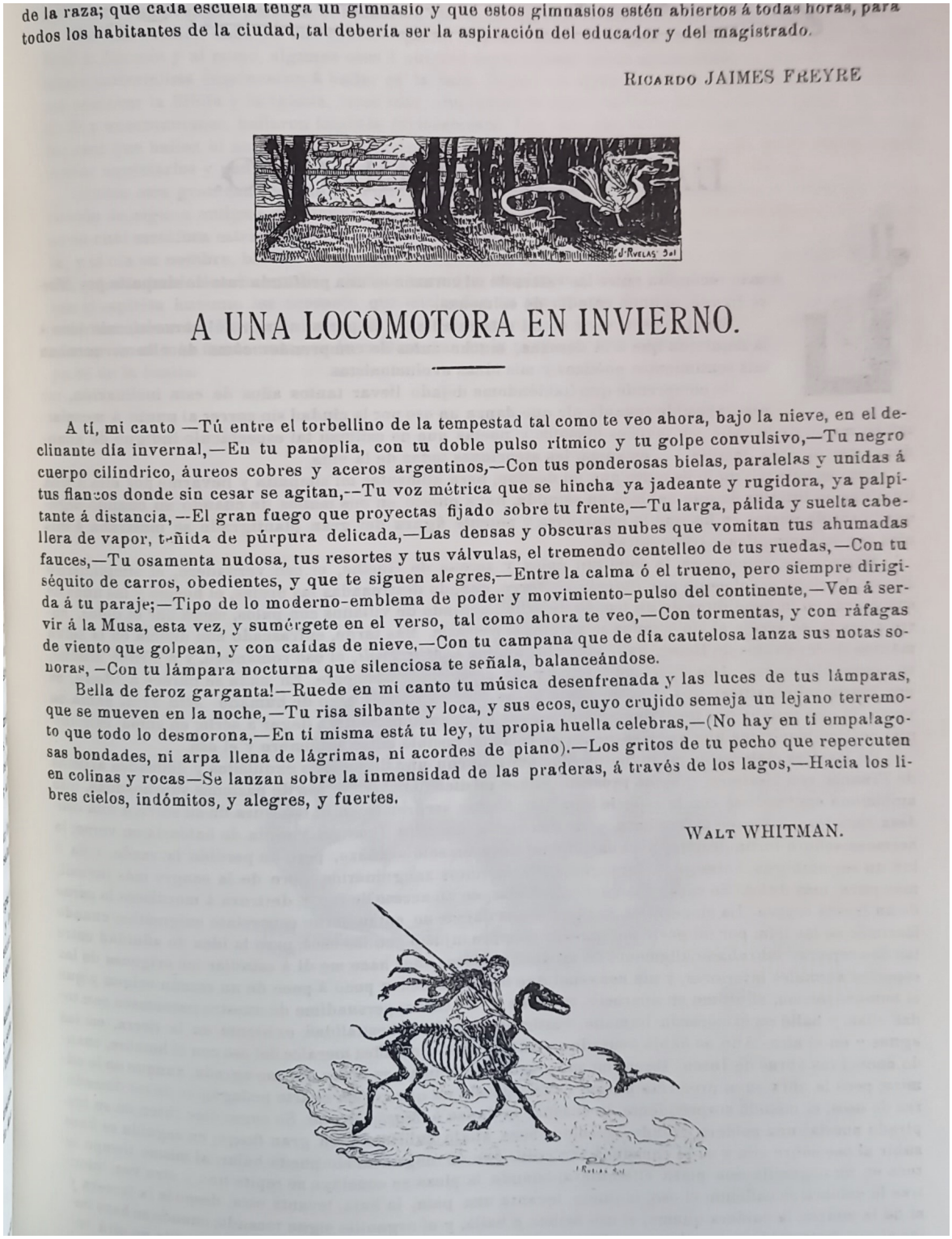

Number of verse translations by translator in the Revista Moderna
Jose Juan Tablada
Balbino Davalos
anon no
Joaquin D. Casasus
Enrique Fernandez Granados
Justo Sierra
Guillermo Valencia
anon si
Rasch [pseudonym]
Manuel de Olaguibel
J. A. de Izcue
Ignacio Mariscal
Francisco M. de Olaguibel
Rafael de Alba
Leopoldo Diaz
J. Raisin
H. D. Steele
Enrique Gonzalez Martinez
Diego Fallon
D. H.
Antenor Lescano
Amado Nervo
Alberto Ituarte
0
5
10
15
Number of translated texts
'anon si' represents anonymous translations that are identified as such in the magazine,
'anon no' are anonymous translated texts with no mention of the translator or translation process.

Figure 1.7 "A una locomotora en invierno," *Revista Moderna* VI.7:5.



de la raza; que cada escuela tenga un gimnasio y que estos gimnasios estén abiertos á todas horas, para todos los habitantes de la ciudad, tal debería ser la aspiración del educador y del magistrado.

RICARDO JAIMES FREYRE

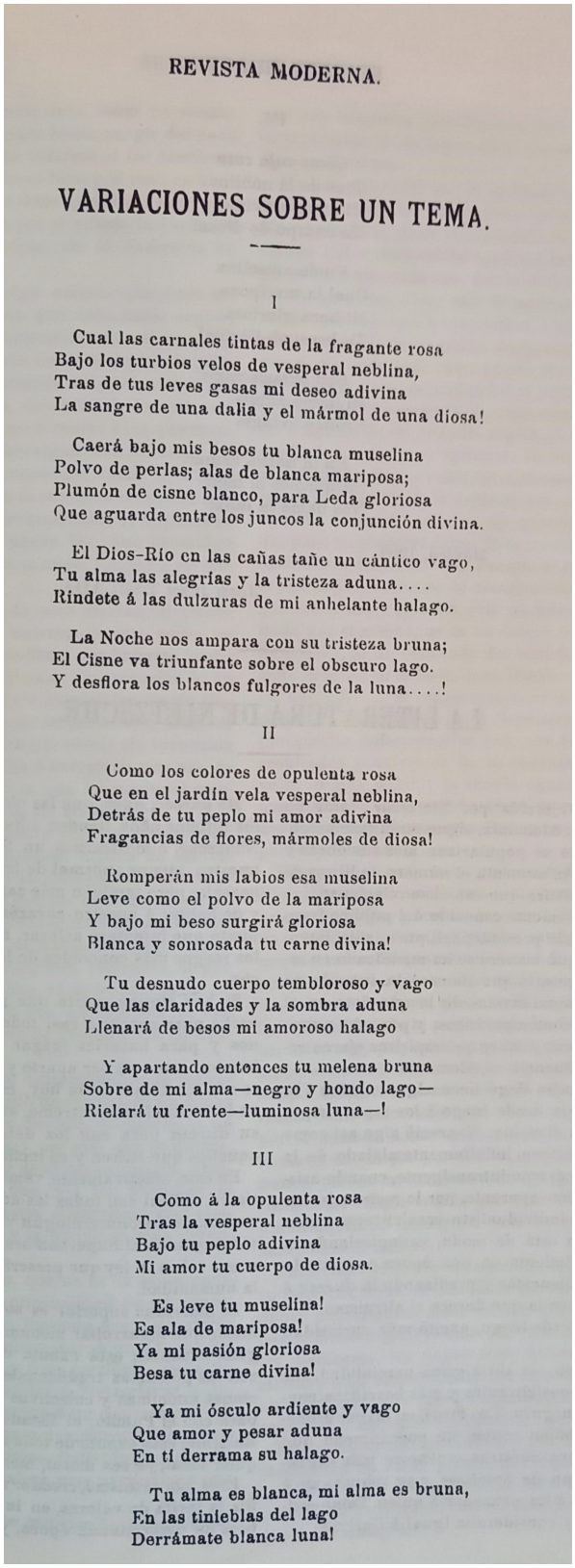
A UNA LOCOMOTORA EN INVIERNO.

A tí, mi canto —Tú entre el torbellino de la tempestad tal como te veo ahora, bajo la nieve, en el declinante día invernal,—Eu tu panoplia, con tu doble pulso rítmico y tu golpe convulsivo,—Tu negro cuerpo cilíndrico, áureos cobres y aceros argentinos,—Con tus ponderosas bielas, paralelas y unidas á tus flancos donde sin cesar se agitan,--Tu voz métrica que se hincha ya jadeante y rugidora, ya palpitante á distancia,--El gran fuego que proyectas fijado sobre tu frente,—Tu larga, pálida y suelta cabellera de vapor, teñida de púrpura delicada,—Las densas y obscuras nubes que vomitan tus ahumadas fauces,—Tu osamenta nudosa, tus resortes y tus válvulas, el tremendo centelleo de tus ruedas,—Con tu séquito de carros, obedientes, y que te siguen alegres,—Entre la calma ó el trueno, pero siempre dirigida á tu paraje;—Tipo de lo moderno-emblema de poder y movimiento-pulso del continente,—Ven á servir á la Musa, esta vez, y sumérgete en el verso, tal como ahora te veo,—Con tormentas, y con ráfagas de viento que golpean, y con caídas de nieve,—Con tu campana que de día cautelosa lanza sus notas sonoras, —Con tu lámpara nocturna que silenciosa te señala, balanceándose.

Bella de feroz garganta!—Ruede en mi canto tu música desenfrenada y las luces de tus lámparas, que se mueven en la noche,—Tu risa silbante y loca, y sus ecos, cuyo crujido semeja un lejano terremoto que todo lo desmorona,—En tí misma está tu ley, tu propia huella celebras,—(No hay en tí empalagosas bondades, ni arpa llena de lágrimas, ni acordes de piano).—Los gritos de tu pecho que repercuten en colinas y rocas—Se lanzan sobre la inmensidad de las praderas, á través de los lagos,—Hacia los libres cielos, indómitos, y alegres, y fuertes.

WALT WHITMAN.

Figure 1.8 "Variaciones sobre un tema," *Revista Moderna* III.8:2-3.



REVISTA MODERNA.

VARIACIONES SOBRE UN TEMA.

I

Cual las carnales tintas de la fragante rosa
Bajo los turbios velos de vesperal neblina,
Tras de tus leves gasas mi deseo adivina
La sangre de una dalia y el mármol de una diosa!

Caerá bajo mis besos tu blanca muselina
Polvo de perlas; alas de blanca mariposa;
Plumón de cisne blanco, para Leda gloriosa
Que aguarda entre los juncos la conjunción divina.

El Dios-Río en las cañas taña un cántico vago,
Tu alma las alegrías y la tristeza aduna....
Ríndete á las dulzuras de mi anhelante halago.

La Noche nos ampara con su tristeza bruna;
El Cisne va triunfante sobre el obscuro lago.
Y desflora los blancos fulgores de la luna....!

II

Como los colores de opulenta rosa
Que en el jardín vela vesperal neblina,
Detrás de tu peplo mi amor adivina
Fragancias de flores, mármoles de diosa!

Romperán mis labios esa muselina
Leve como el polvo de la mariposa
Y bajo mi beso surgirá gloriosa
Blanca y sonrosada tu carne divina!

Tu desnudo cuerpo tembloroso y vago
Que las claridades y la sombra aduna
Llenará de besos mi amoroso halago

Y apartando entonces tu melena bruna
Sobre de mi alma—negro y hondo lago—
Rielará tu frente—luminosa luna—!

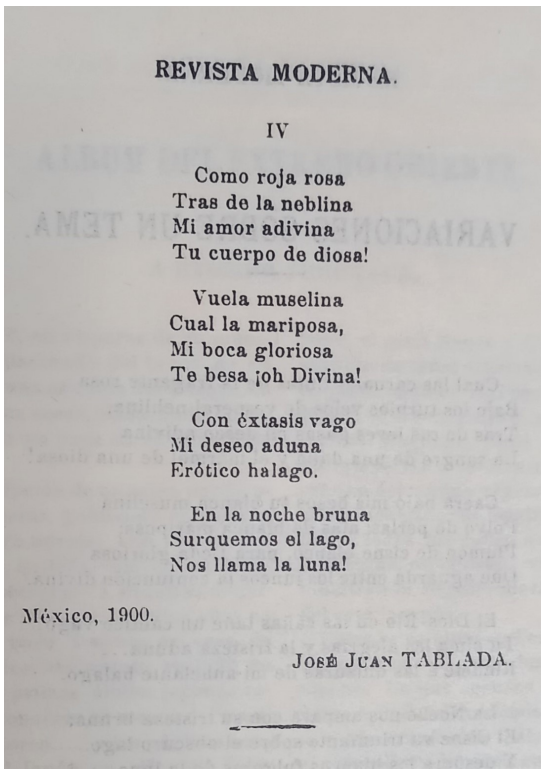
III

Como á la opulenta rosa
Tras la vesperal neblina
Bajo tu peplo adivina
Mi amor tu cuerpo de diosa.

Es leve tu muselina!
Es ala de mariposa!
Ya mi pasión gloriosa
Besa tu carne divina!

Ya mi ósculo ardiente y vago
Que amor y pesar aduna
En tí derrama su halago.

Tu alma es blanca, mi alma es bruna,
En las tinieblas del lago
Derrámate blanca luna!



REVISTA MODERNA.

IV

Como roja rosa
Tras de la neblina
Mi amor adivina
Tu cuerpo de diosa!

Vuela muselina
Cual la mariposa,
Mi boca gloriosa
Te besa ¡oh Divina!

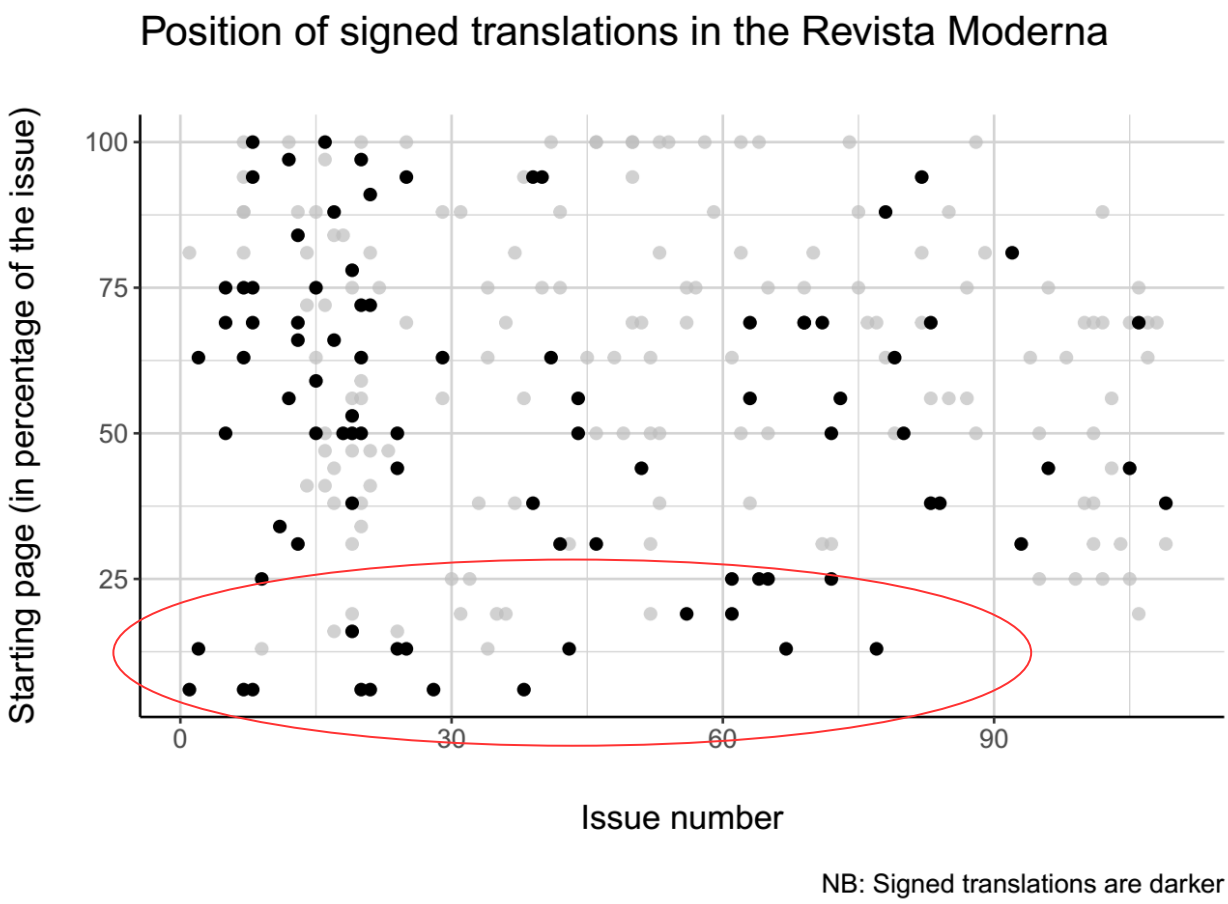
Con éxtasis vago
Mi deseo aduna
Erótico halago.

En la noche bruna
Surquemos el lago,
Nos llama la luna!

México, 1900.

José Juan TABLADA.

Figure 1.9



Figures 1.9 to 1.11 can be seen as representing the whole space of the magazine. Each dot represents a translation. The x axis functions as a chronological timeline: the beginning of the *Revista Moderna*'s publication span is on the left of the plot, and its last issues, on the right-hand side. The y axis represents each issue's page space, in terms of percentage of the issue's total number of pages. The dots that are lower represent translations that appear in the first pages of the magazine, while the dots further up are translations that appear further into the magazine. Therefore, each vertical slice corresponds to one issue. Darker dots correspond to texts that appear signed by their translators.

In figure 1.11, only verse translations are represented—each one corresponding to a dot. The bigger, coloured ones are the translations treated or mentioned in this chapter. Blue dots correspond to traditional, or secondary repertoire, yellow ones to decadent, or primary translations, and red ones, to innovative content that prefigures later developments (also primary or about to become so).

Figure 1.10

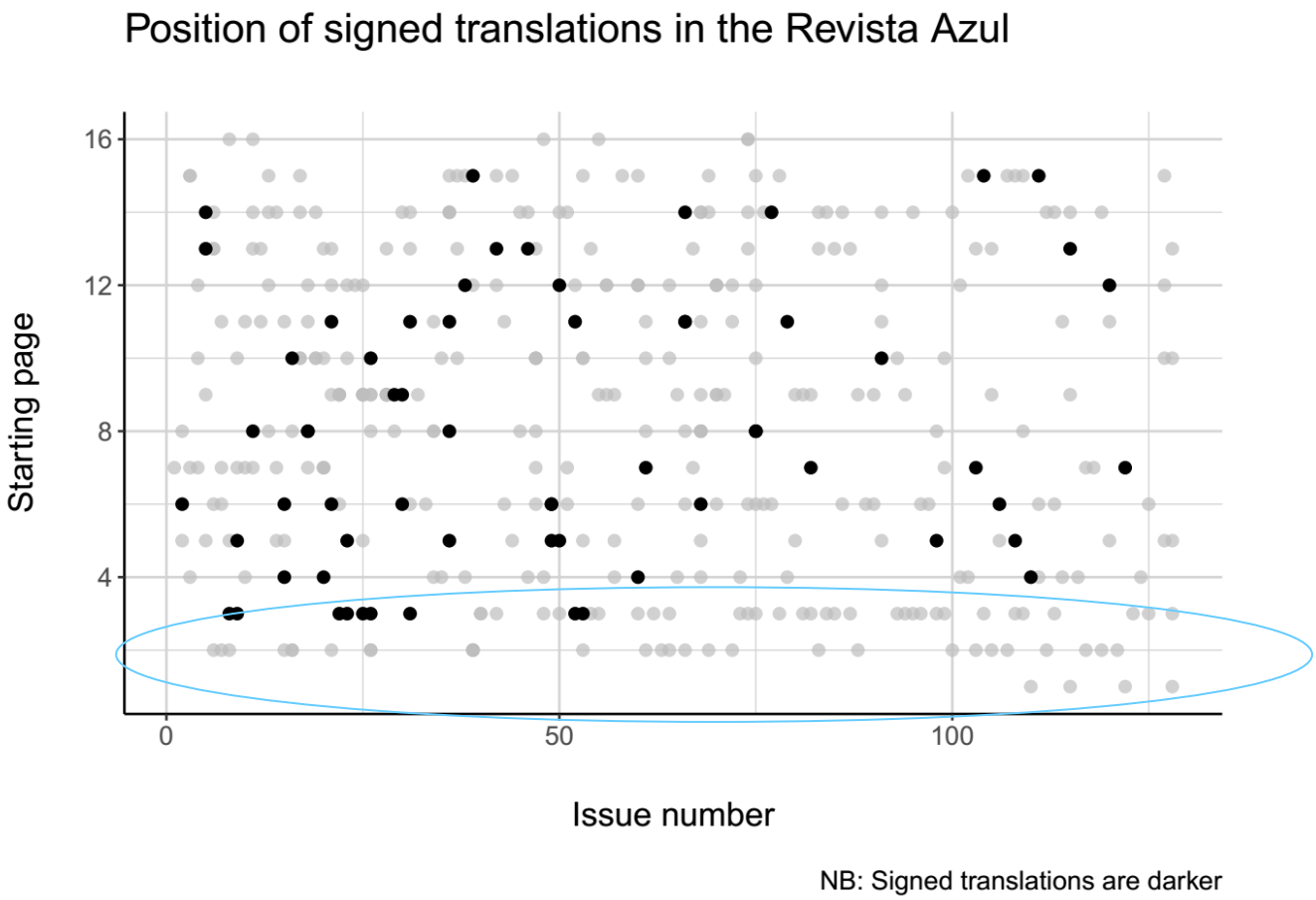

Position of signed translations in the Revista Azul
Starting page
16
12
8
4
0
50
100
Issue number
NB: Signed translations are darker

Figure 1.11

Fig. 8

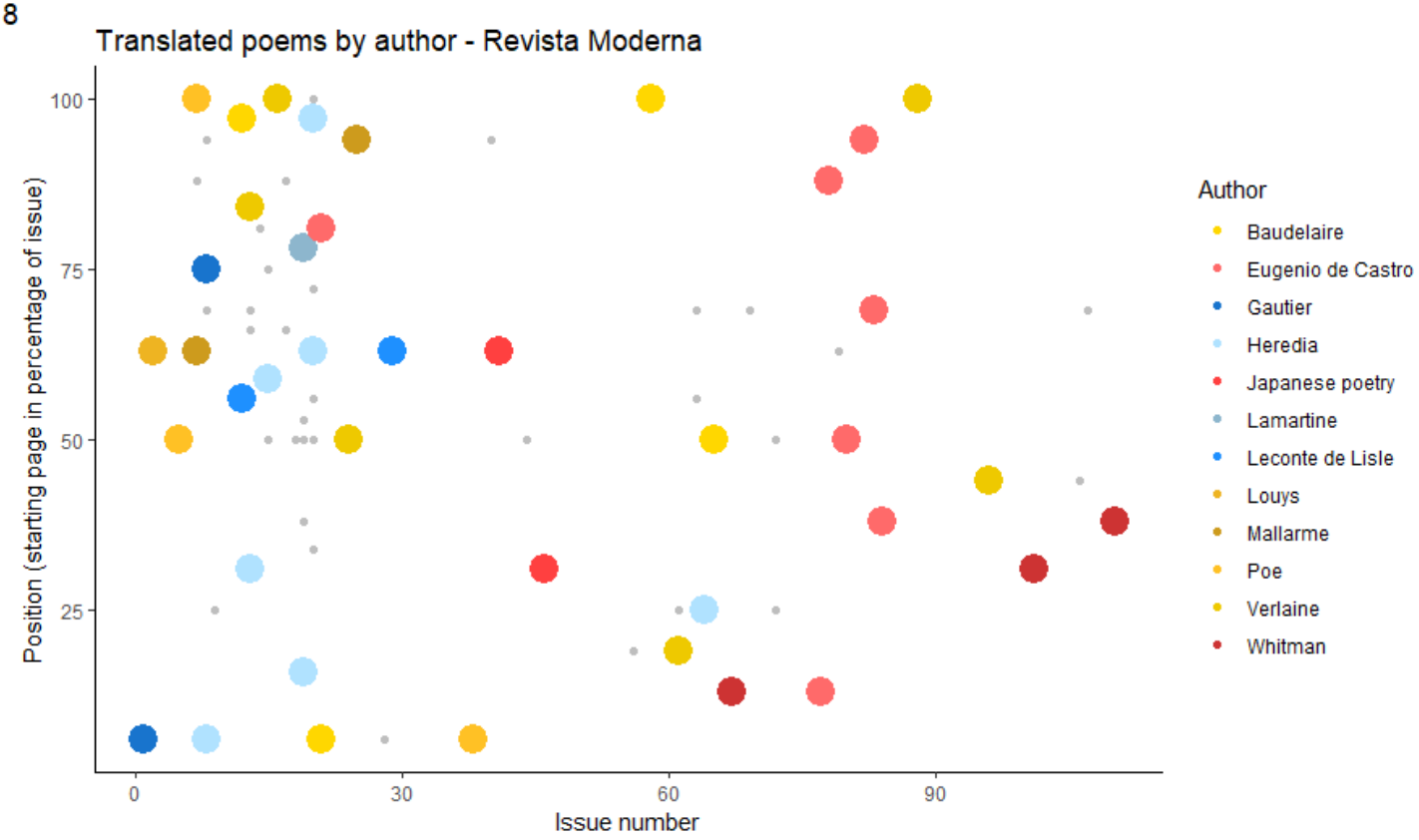


Figure 1.12

Fig. 11 Original languages of verse translations in year 1 of the Revista Moderna

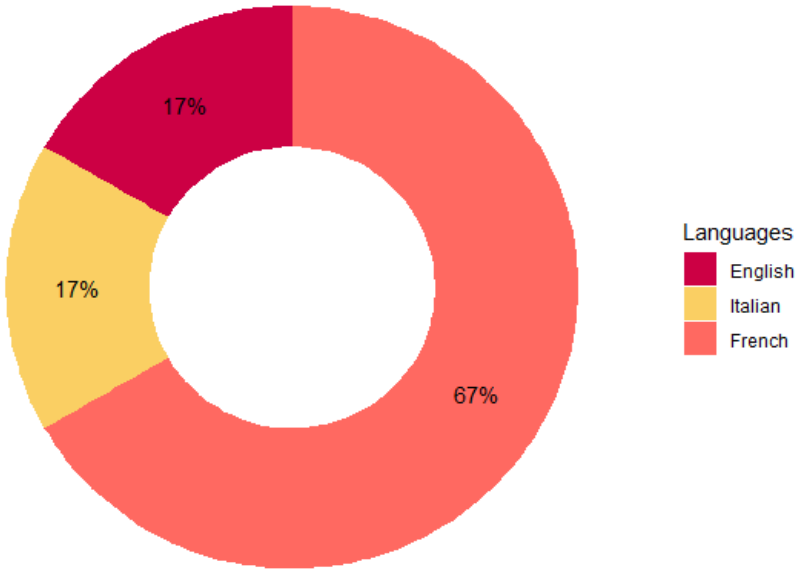


Figure 1.13

Fig. 12 Original languages of verse translations in year 2 of the Revista Moderna

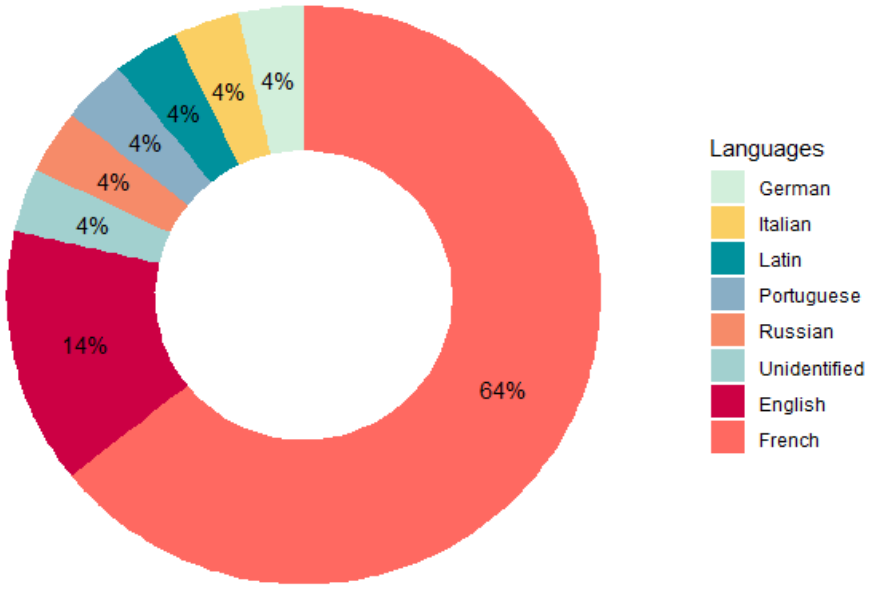


Figure 1.14

Fig. 13 Original languages of verse translations in year 3 of the Revista Moderna

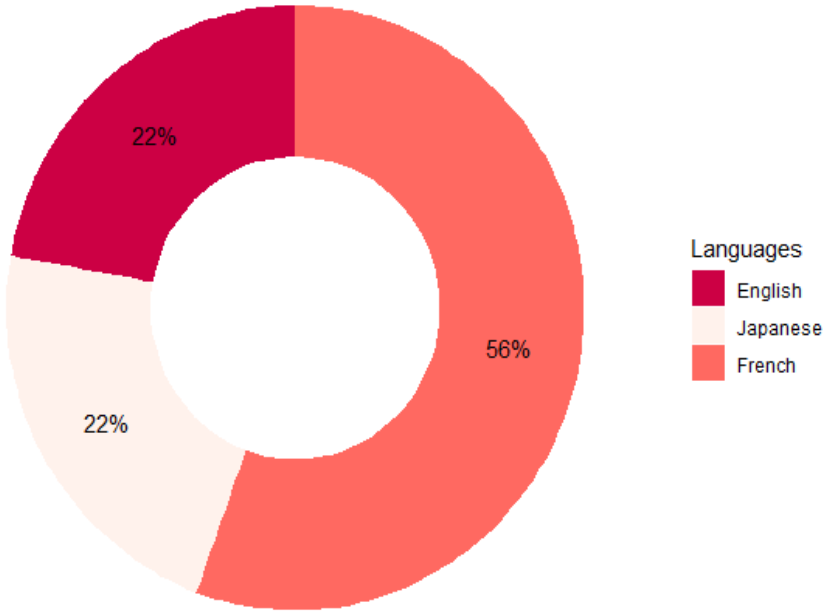


Figure 1.15

Fig. 14 Original languages of verse translations in year 4 of the Revista Moderna

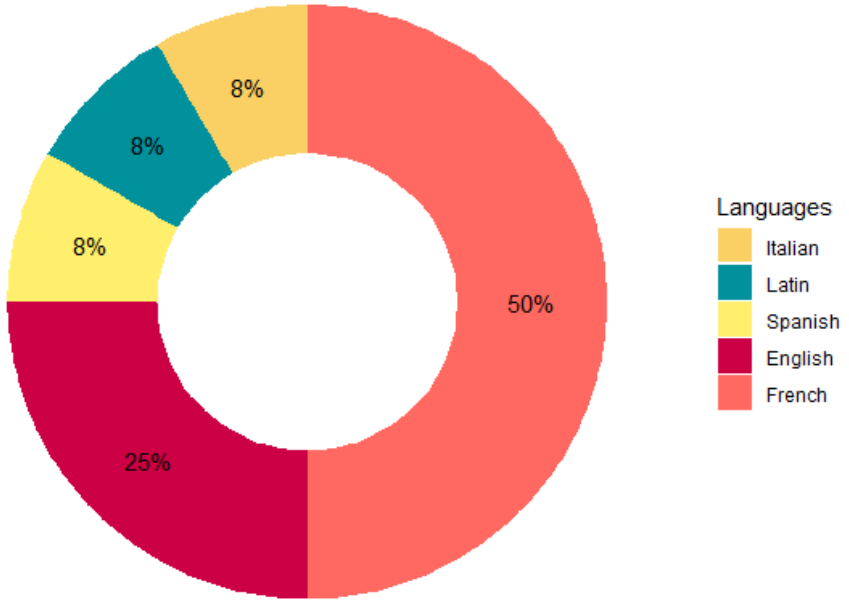


Figure 1.16

Fig. 15 Original languages of verse translations in year 5 of the Revista Moderna

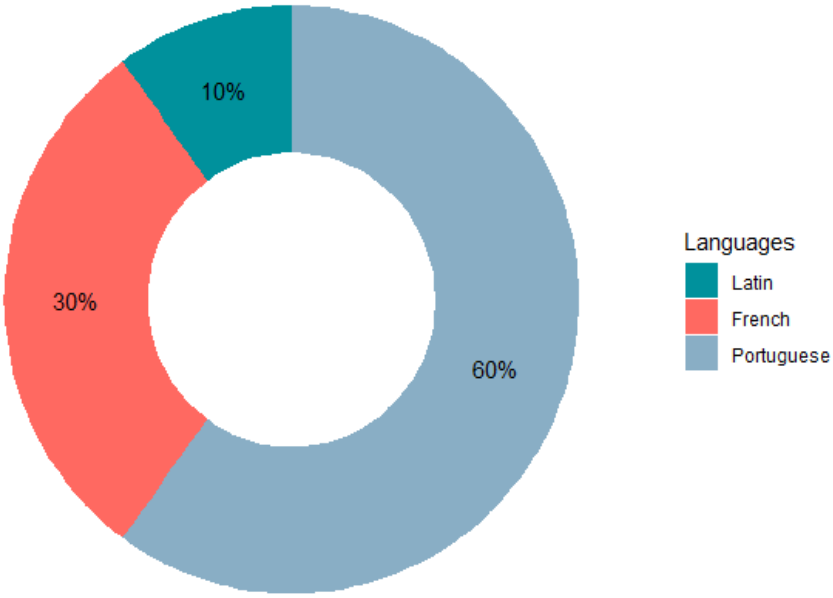
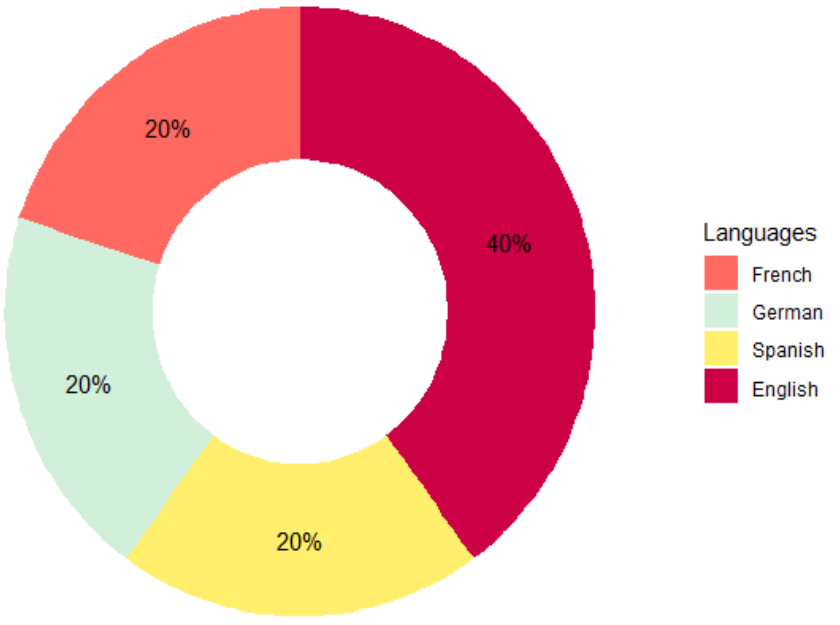


Figure1.17

Fig. 16 Original languages of verse translations in year 6 of the Revista Moderna



Chapter 2:

Figure 2.1

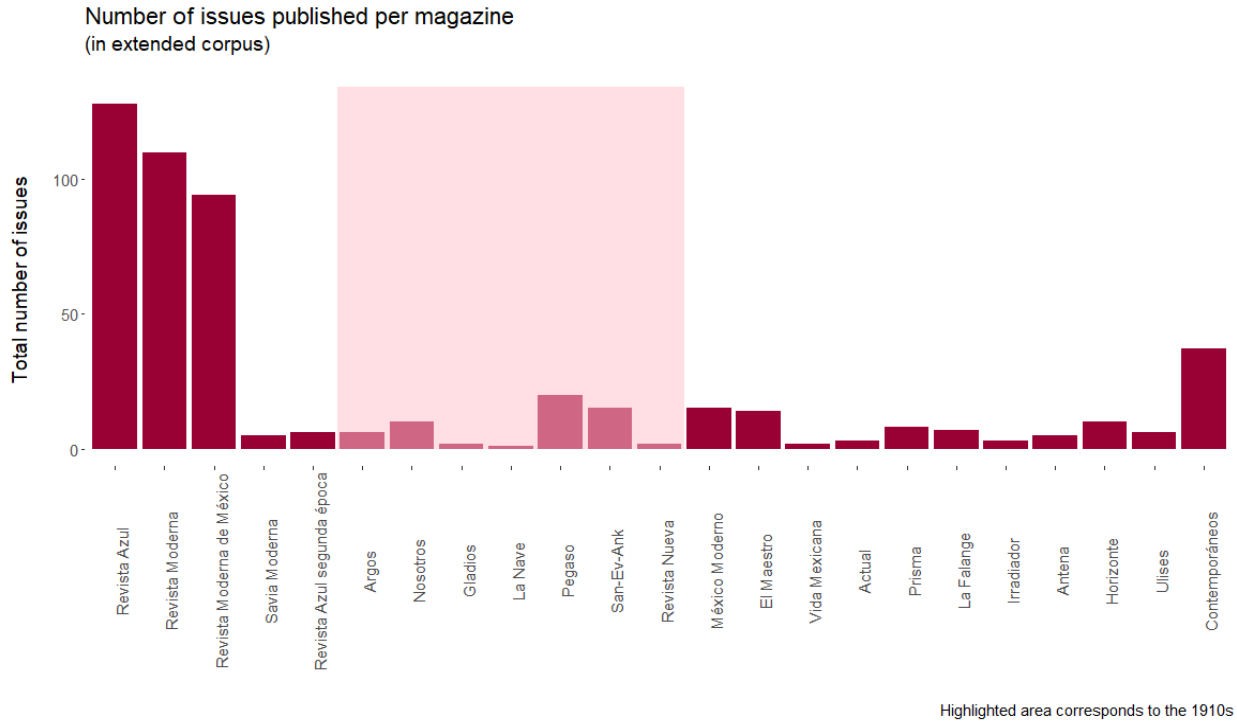


Figure 2.2

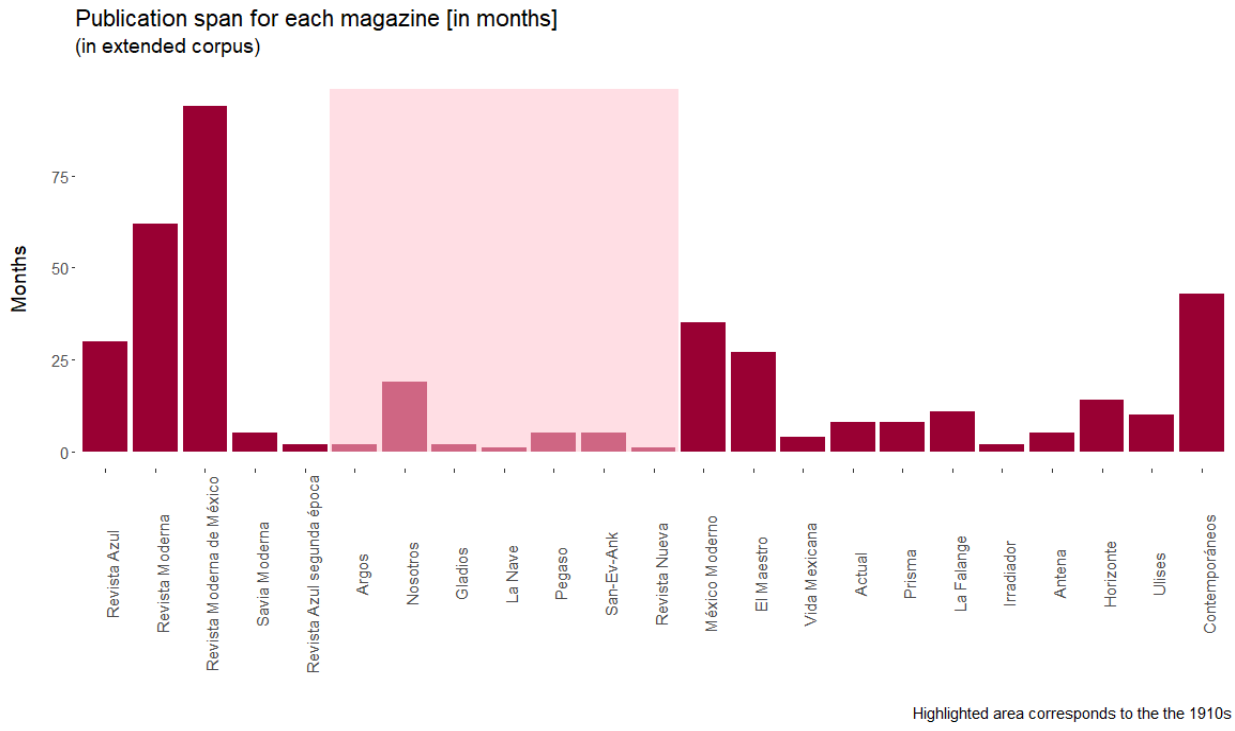


Figure 2.3

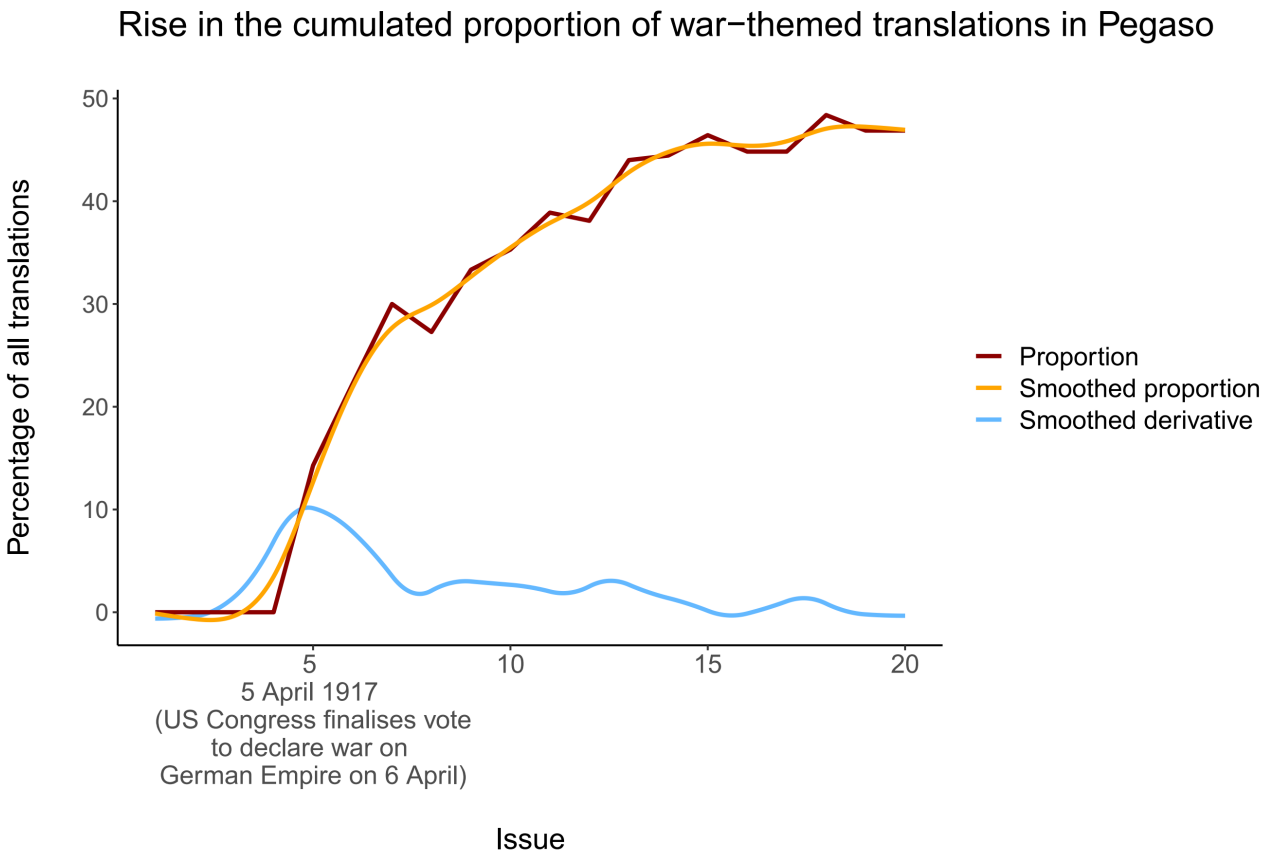


Figure 2.3 represents the cumulative proportion of translations that address the topic of war (i.e., for each issue, it takes into account all translations published up to the date and shows (in red) the proportion of war-themed texts among them). The derivative (in blue) indicates the rate at which the proportion of war-themed translations is rising. From this, it can be observed that the moment with the highest increase was issue I.5, which was published on 5 April 1917, three days after Woodrow Wilson requested a declaration of war against Germany to the US Congress, and just one day before war was actually declared. It becomes clear, therefore, that while the desire to participate in a cosmopolitan discursive sphere is important, the increasing closeness of the war, with the involvement of a country from the American continent, was a factor that sparked considerable interest in the conflict.

Figure 2.4 [Front cover] *Pegaso* I.1:I [9].



Figure 2.5 “Dos ideales,” *Pegaso* I.19:6-7 [78-79, vol II].

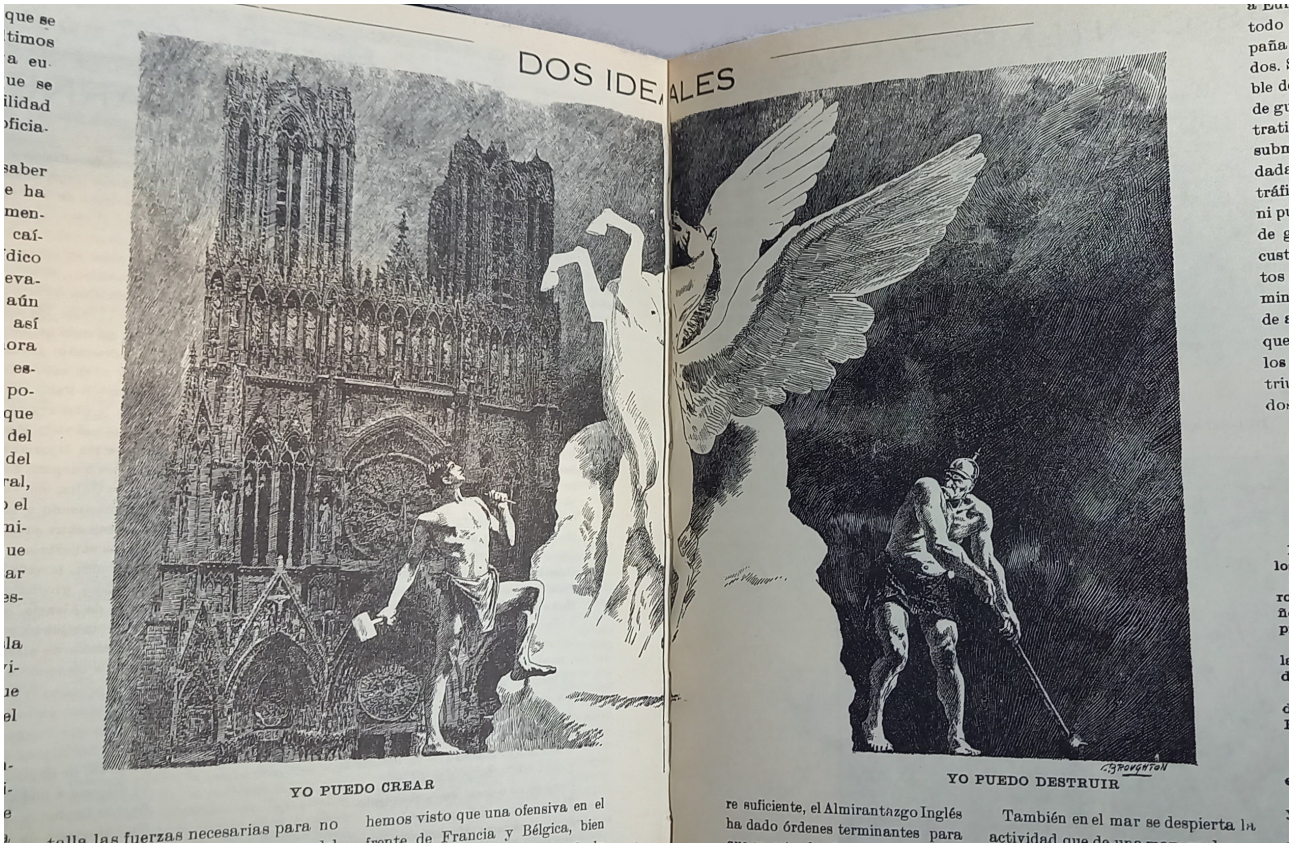
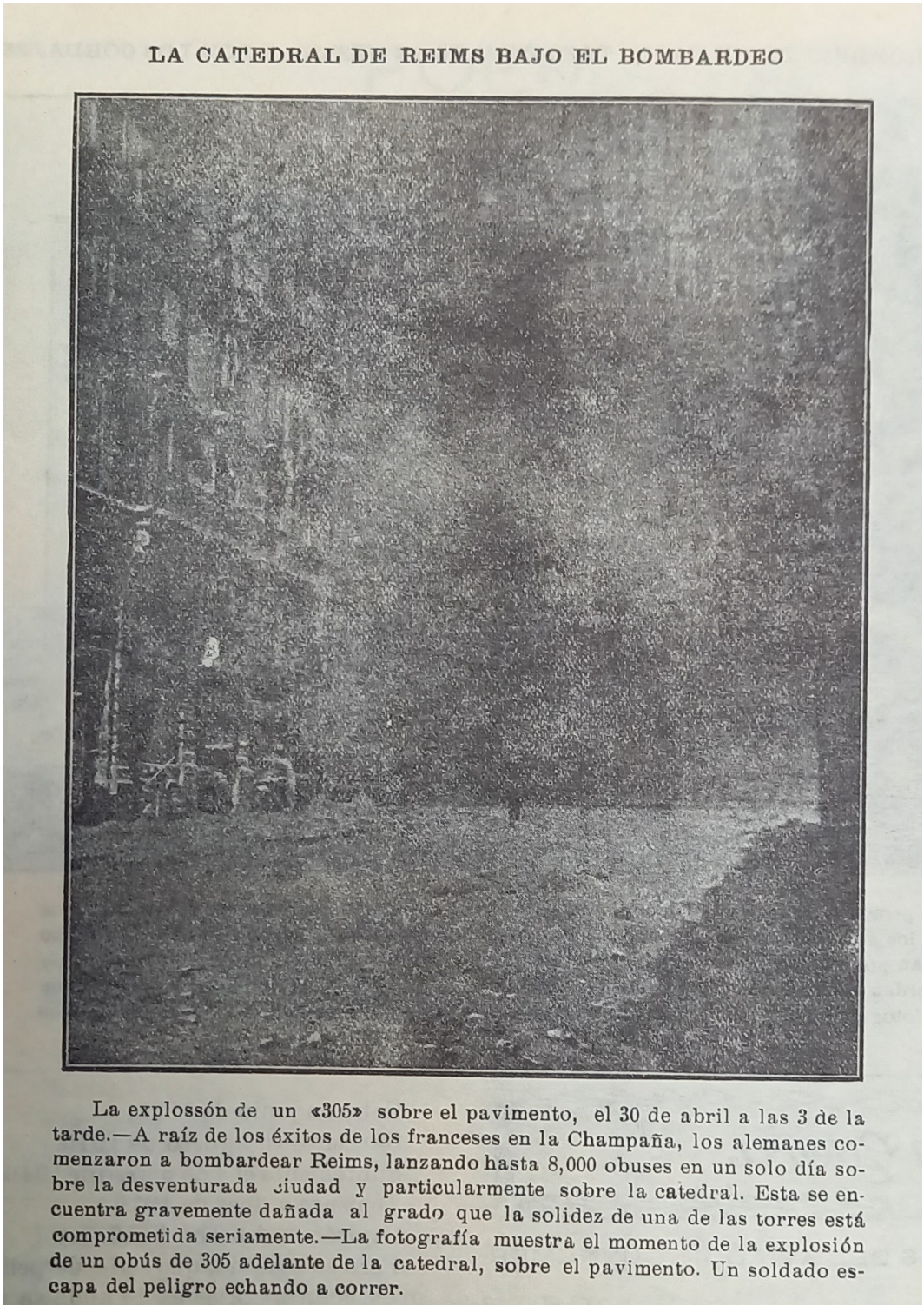


Figure 2.6 "La catedral de Reims bajo el bombardeo," *Pegaso* I.18: 8 [60, vol II].



LA CATEDRAL DE REIMS BAJO EL BOMBARDEO

La explossón de un «305» sobre el pavimento, el 30 de abril a las 3 de la tarde.—A raíz de los éxitos de los franceses en la Champaña, los alemanes comenzaron a bombardear Reims, lanzando hasta 8,000 obuses en un solo día sobre la desventurada ciudad y particularmente sobre la catedral. Esta se encuentra gravemente dañada al grado que la solidez de una de las torres está comprometida seriamente.—La fotografía muestra el momento de la explosión de un obús de 305 adelante de la catedral, sobre el pavimento. Un soldado escapa del peligro echando a correr.

Figure 2.7 "El juicio de Jesús" *Pegaso* I.5:6 [114]

autoridad, saciar un odio sacerdotal, sublevó la rectitud del romano.

—Callad. Los procuradores de César no vienen a aprender, en una colonia bárbara del Asia, sus deberes para con César.

Manases que estaba a mi lado, y se tiraba impaciente de la barba, alejóse con indignación. Pero el Rabí prosiguió tan indiferente a la ira de Poncio como a los balidos de un cordero que condujese a las aras.

—Tu amo te da a guardar una viña y tu dejas que entren en ella y que la vendimien. ¿Para que estás en Judea? ¿para qué está la sexta legión en la torre Antonia?

Poncio, ten presente que nuestra voz es lo bastante clara y lo bastante alta para que el César la oiga.

Poncio dió un paso lento hacia la puerta; y dijo con los ojos clavados en aquellos judíos que lentamente le iban enlazando en la trampa sutil de sus rencores religiosos:

—No temo vuestras intrigas. Elio Lamma es mi amigo..... ¡Y César me conoce bien!

El Rabí Robam repuso, sereno y apacible como si conversase a la sombra de un verjel.

—Tú ves lo que no está en nuestros corazones, Poncio; pero nosotros vemos lo que está en el tuyo. Tú quieres la destrucción de Judá.

Un estremecimiento de cólera devota pasó entre los fariseos. El Rabí Robam continuaba denunciando al Pretor con serenidad y lentitud.

—Tú quieres dejar impune al hombre que pregonó la insurrección declarándose rey en una provincia de César, para tentar, con tal impunidad, otras ambiciones más fuertes y hacer que un nuevo Judas de Gamala ataque las guarniciones de Samaria. Así preparan un pretexto para descargar sobre nosotros la espada imperial, y extinguir completamente la vida nacional de Judea. Tú quieres una revolución para ahogarla en sangre, y presentarte ante César como soldado victorioso y administrador sabio, digno de un proconsulado o de un gobierno de Italia. Nosotros estamos en paz con César y cumpliremos nuestro deber, condenando al hombre que se levantó contra César..... ¿Tú no quieres confirmar el tuyo confirmando esta condena? ¡Bien! Mandaremos emisarios a Roma para que lleven nuestra sentencia y tu negativa. Salvando ante el César nuestra responsablidad, mostraremos a César como procede en Judea aquél que representa la ley del Imperio..... Y ahora, Pretor, puedes volver al Pretorio.



Mater dolorosa

Poncio frunció las cejas e inclinó la frente. César, desconfiado y siempre inquieto, tal vez sospecharía un pacto entre él y aquel rey de los judíos ¡Tal vez su justicia y su orgullo en mantenerla le costasen el proconsulado de Judea! Llegó lentamente hasta el umbral de la puerta, y abriendo los brazos, conmovido por un impulso magnánimo de conciliación, comenzó a decir:

—Hace siete años que gobierno Judea. ¿Cuándo me habéis encontrado injusto o infiel a las promesas juradas?..... Ciertamente que vuestras amenazas no me conmuevon..... César me conoce bien..... Pero, entre nosotros, para provecho de César no debe haber desacuerdos. ¡Siempre os hice concesiones! Más que ningún procurador desde Coponio he respetado vuestras leyes.....

Dudó un momento; después, frotándose lentamente las manos, y sacudiéndolas como mojadas en un agua impura, continuó;

—¿Queréis la vida de ese visionario? ¿Qué me importa? Tomadla..... ¿No os basta la flagelación? ¿Queréis la cruz? ¡Crucificadlo! ¡Pero no soy yo quien derrama esa sangre!

Un levita macilento clamó con pasión:

—Somos nosotros y que esa sangre caiga sobre nuestras cabezas.

Algunos se estremecieron: creían que todas las palabras tienen un poder sobrenatural y hacen reales las cosas pasadas.

***

Entre un brillo de armas, surgieron nuevamente las varas de los lictores. Poncio, pálido y pesado, volvió a ocupar el asiento Curul. Reinó silencio tan profundo, que se oyeron las bocinas que tocaban a lo lejos en la torre Mariana. Poncio Pilatos, con una dignidad indolente, alzando levemente el brazo desnudo, confirmó en nombre de César la sentencia del Sanhedrín que juzgaba en Jerusalem.....

Los fariseos triunfaban. Junto a nosotros, dos muy viejos se besaban en silencio las barbas blancas; otros agitaban en el aire los bastones, o lanzaban sarcásticamente la exclamación forense de los romanos: «*Bene et belle. Non potest melius!*»

Pero de pronto el intérprete apareció encima de un escabel, ostentando sobre el pecho su papagayo flamante. La turba enmudeció sorprendida. El fenicio, después de haber consultado con el escriba, sonrió y gritó en caldeo alzando los brazos cargados de pulseras de coral:

—¡Escuchad! En esta vuestra fiesta de Pascua, el Pretor de Jerusalem acostumbra, desde que Valerio Grato así lo determinó, con el beneplácito de César, perdonar a un criminal..... El Pretor os propone el perdón del Rabí..... ¡Escuchad todavía! Vosotros tenéis también el derecho de escoger entre los condenados. El Pretor tiene en su poder, en los calabozos de Herodes, otro sentenciado a muerte.....

Dudó y de nuevo consultó con el escriba. Luego, volviéndose a la multitud, gritó con la faz risueña:

—Uno de los condenados es el Rabí Jeschoua que aquí tenéis y que se dice hijo de David..... Ese es el que propone el Pretor..... El otro, endurecido en el mal, fué preso por haber dado muerte traidoramente a un legionario en una riña cerca de Xistus. Su nombre es Bar-Abbás. ¡Escoged!

Un grito brusco y enronquecido partió de entre los fariseos:

—¡Bar-Abbás!

Y después por el atrio, confusamente, fué resonando el nombre de Bar-Abbas, y un esclavo del templo, de sayal amarillo, llegando hasta las gradas del solio, rompió a gritar enfrente de Poncio:

—¡Bar-Abbás! ¡Oye bien! ¡Oye bien! ¡Bar-Abbás! ¡El pueblo sólo quiere a Bar-Abbás!

El cuento de una lanza le hizo rodar por las losas. Pero ya toda la gente gritaba:

—¡Bar-Abbás! ¡Bar-Abbás!

Casi nadie conocía allí a Bar-Abbás. Muchos, ciertamente, tampoco odiaban al Rabí; sin embargo, engrosaban el tumulto porque sentían, en aquella reclamación del preso que atacara a los legionarios, un ultraje al Pretor romano, togado y augusto en su tribunal. Poncio, entre tanto, indiferente al vocerío de aquella turba, escribía en una gran hoja de pergamino posada sobre sus rodillas. En torno los clamores ya disciplinados resonaban en cadencia como mazos en una era:

—¡Bar-Abbás! ¡Bar Abbás!

Entonces Jesús lentamente volvióse hacia aquel populacho duro y revoltoso que le condenaba: en sus ojos refulgentes y húmedos, en el fugitivo temblor de sus labios, sólo apareció en aquel momento una tristeza misericordiosa por la inconsciencia de aquellos que así empujaban hacia la muerte al amigo de los hombres..... Con las manos atadas limpióse una gota de sudor: después quedó ante el Pretor, mudo e inmóvil, como si ya no perteneciese a este mundo.

El escriba, batiendo con una regla de hierro en la mesa de piedra, impuso silencio tres veces en nombre de César. El tumulto ardiente agonizaba. Poncio se levantó: sereno, sin demostrar impaciencia ni cólera, elevó la mano pronunciando el mandato final:

—¡Id, y crucificadlo!

LA SEMANA SANTA
EN SAN ANGEL INN
ES UNA DE LAS MAS HERMOSAS TEMPORADAS EN QUE SE GOZA DEL DESCANSO CON TODAS LAS COMODIDADES.

Figure 2.8 “El cosaco” *Pegaso* I.10:12 [236].

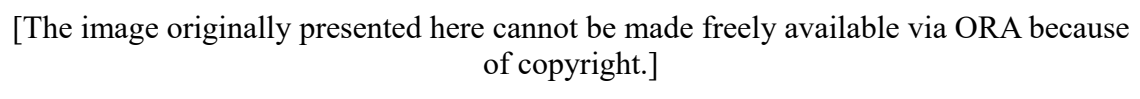


Figure 2.9 "Caricatura," *Pegaso* I.14:10 [318].

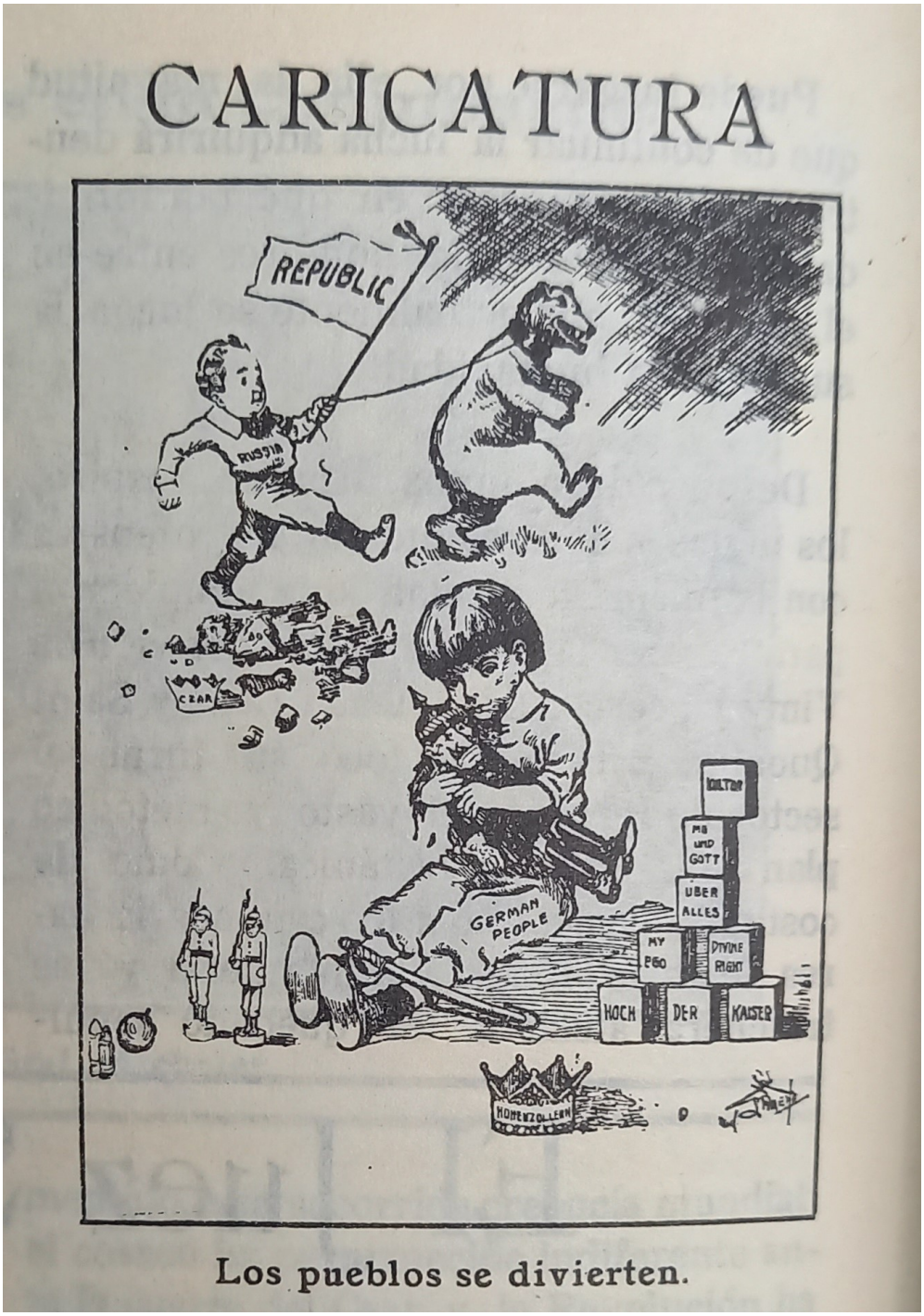
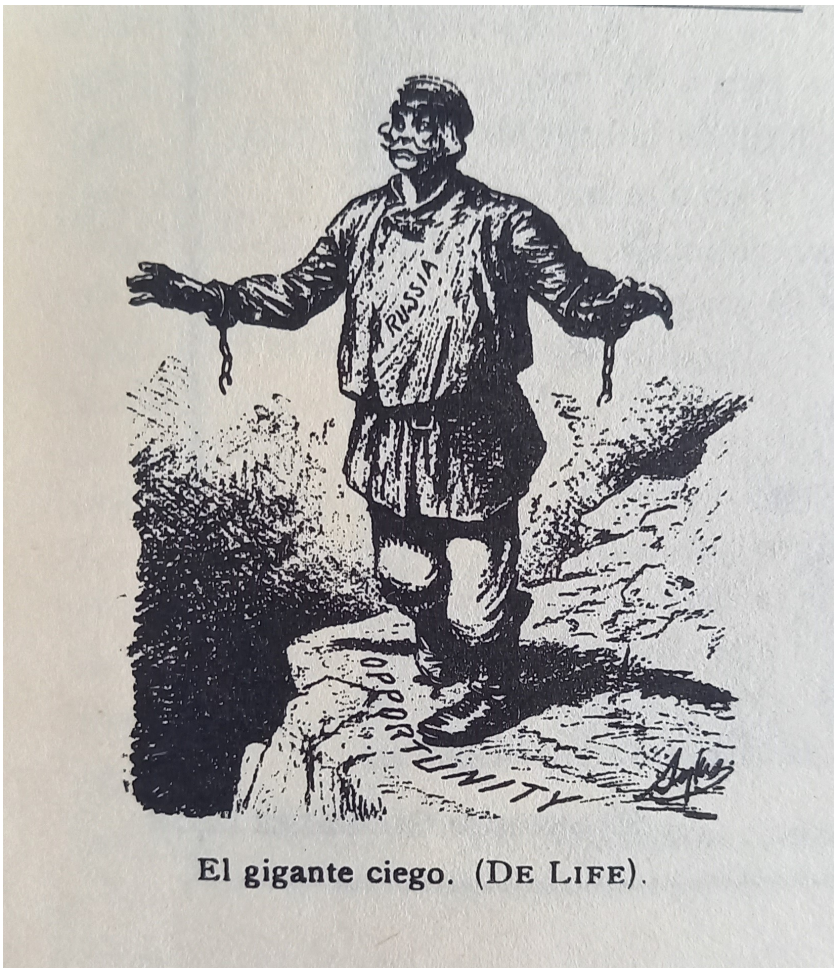


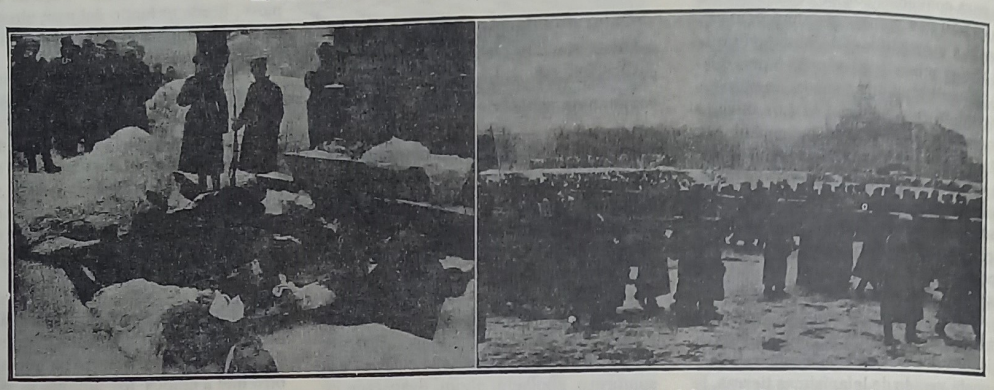
Figure 2.10 "El gigante ciego," *Pegaso* I.17:3 [35, vol II].



El gigante ciego. (De Life).

Figure 2.11 "Política Agrícola," *Pegaso* I.14:4 [312].

LA REVOLUCION EN RUSIA



Soldados custodiando los cadáveres de los revolucionarios que cayeron en las calles bajo el fuego de las tropas leales a la monarquía.—Solemnes funerales de los muertos por la revolución.—Soldados, estudiantes y obreros transportando los ataúdes al panteón.

Política Agrícola

EL PROBLEMA DE LA REPARTICION DE TIERRAS

I

Nuestro amor a la tierra, ese amor que bien orientado y bien fortalecido podía habernos trasformado en un gran país productor y opulento, adolece en nosotros de todos los defectos propios de nuestra raza poco tenaz y poco laboriosa. Amamos la tierra, pero no para fecundarla pacientemente, no para recibir al cabo de los años el producto seguro y constante de una labor asidua, sino como la caja de sorpresa que un día de tantos, como en un cuento de las Mil y una noches, muestre a nuestros ojos el codiciado tesoro sin más trabajo que una oportuna paletada en el punto preciso en que se oculta el rico filón que ha de cambiar en esplendor nuestra penuria. La agricultura rara vez nos da esas sorpresas, y por eso mismo la minería nos atrae. El azar que preside en gran parte a los triunfos mineros nos seduce como la compra de un billete de lotería. Olvidamos los fracasos para recordar los triunfos, sin tomar en cuenta que éstos son los menos y los otros constituyen la regla. Quien ha probado el goce del descubrimiento de una veta rica, desdeña verter sobre el suelo el grano que ha de producir a los pocos meses la cosecha.

El menguado progreso agrícola, la producción insuficiente que hoy nos orilla a los más graves problemas económicos, dependen de este afán de jugar a la lotería con el pródigo suelo nacional que como madre consentidora da a sus hijos el oro de sus entrañas y los desvía del trabajo rudo, vigorizante y educador de la labranza. Y nos puede pasar un día lo que al viajero fatigado y hambriento que halla al alcance de su mano un montón de piedras preciosas y las arroja airado por inútiles, ya que ellas no han de saciar su hambre, ni calmar su sed, ni aliviar su fatiga. Estamos ya en los momentos en que las trojes repletas valen más que las trincheras de barras de oro y que las minas diamantes.

El gobierno, no sólo para cumplir sus promesas, sino forzado por las necesidades del momento, va a verse obligado a desarrollar una política agrícola que salve al país del espectro amenazador del hambre, y es necesario que cada cual en la medida de sus fuerzas contribuya a resolver el problema vital y próximo. Desdichado el país que necesita de la iniciativa oficial para dedicarse a resolver sus más apremiantes problemas; en que la iniciativa privada duerme como Lázaro y necesita la voz milagrosa del gobierno para levantarse a andar. Y éste es el caso entre nosotros.

Si en nuestra idiosincracia étnica existe la causa primordial del desastre agrícola de la República, no por eso deja de ser interesante estudiar las causas concretas que han contribuído a que el cultivo de nuestros campos y la producción de la agricultura hayan permanecido casi estacionarios en los últimos años. Es preciso hablar de estas causas aunque sea someramente para tratar de buscar el remedio de nuestros males.

Es cosa indiscutible que la poca densidad de nuestra población es factor muy importante en el atraso agrícola de México. Quince millones de habitantes para dos millones de kilómetros cuadrados de superficie territorial, son cifras desconsoladoras. Los gobiernos no han cuidado siquiera de acrecentar la población útil por medio de leyes protectoras de la inmigración, y el resultado es que grandes extensiones de tierras potencialmente productivas se encuentran en el abandono más absoluto y no contribuyen en nada para la riqueza nacional.

Las condicionales excepcionales en que nos hallamos por razón de los sucesos que hondamente nos conmueven hace siete años, agrava la situación de un modo alarmante, ya que los hombres que han tomado parte activa en la lucha revolucionaria son en gran parte hombres de campo que han dejado el arado por el fusil. En la relativa paz que hoy disfrutamos, no todos vuelven a sus viejas ocupaciones, ya porque han encontrado mayor holgura económica en sus tareas de hoy, ya porque la tierra que un tiempo recogió el fruto de sus sudores se encuentra todavía sustraída a la acción del gobierno y en manos de los grupos rebeldes que impiden todo trabajo rural. Hay muchas regiones de la república que, aun en tiempos normales, tropiezan con graves dificultades para encontrar braceros que se dediquen a las labores del campo. ¿Qué pasará en la actualidad en esos lugares? Los campos abandonados y la ruina amenazante dan la respuesta.

En próximo artículo examinaremos otras causas importantes de la depresión de nuestra agricultura y trataremos después de apuntar algunas ideas respecto de los medios de mejorarla.

Chapter 3

Figure 3.1 [Front-cover] *El Maestro* III.4-5

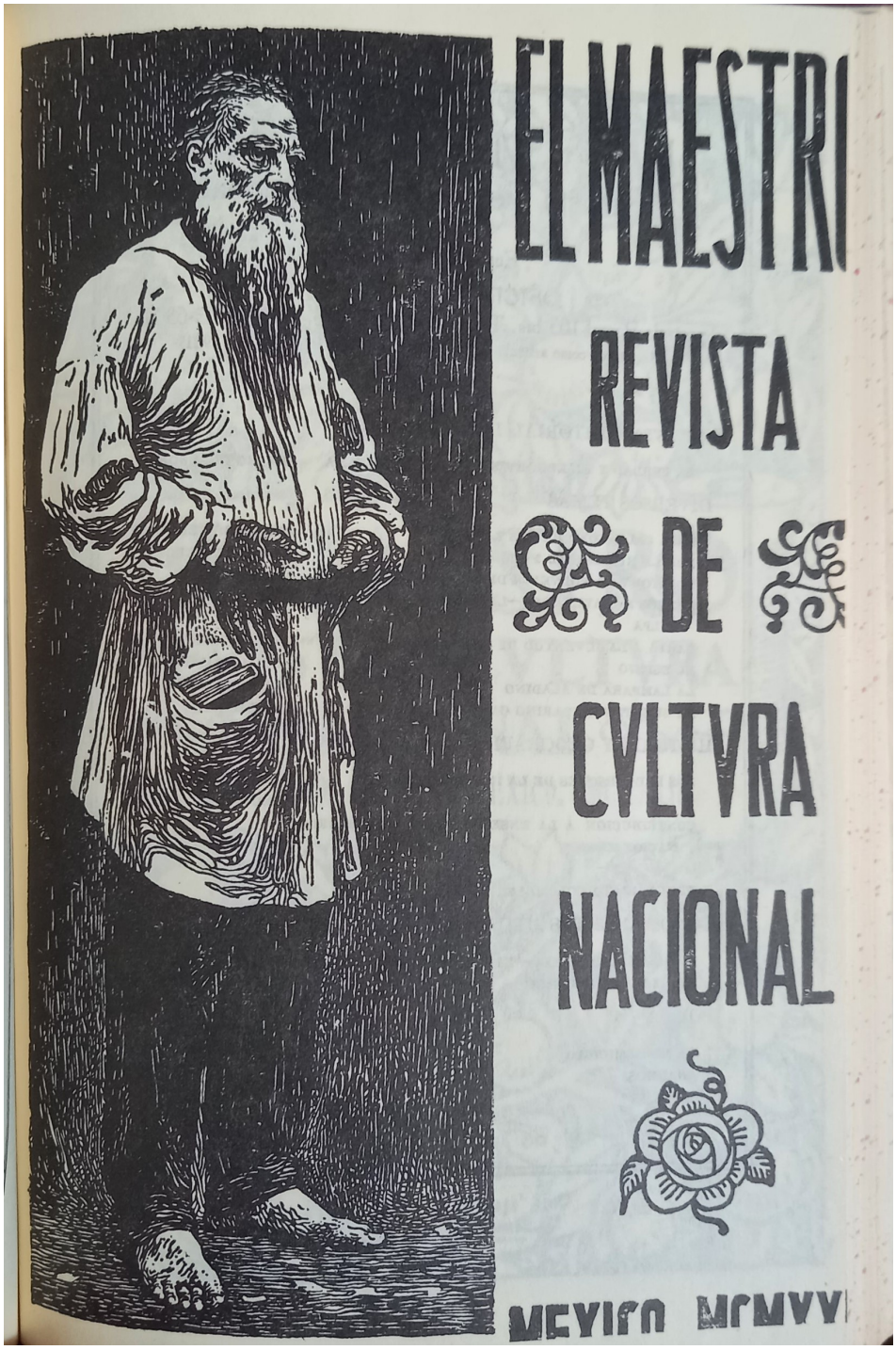
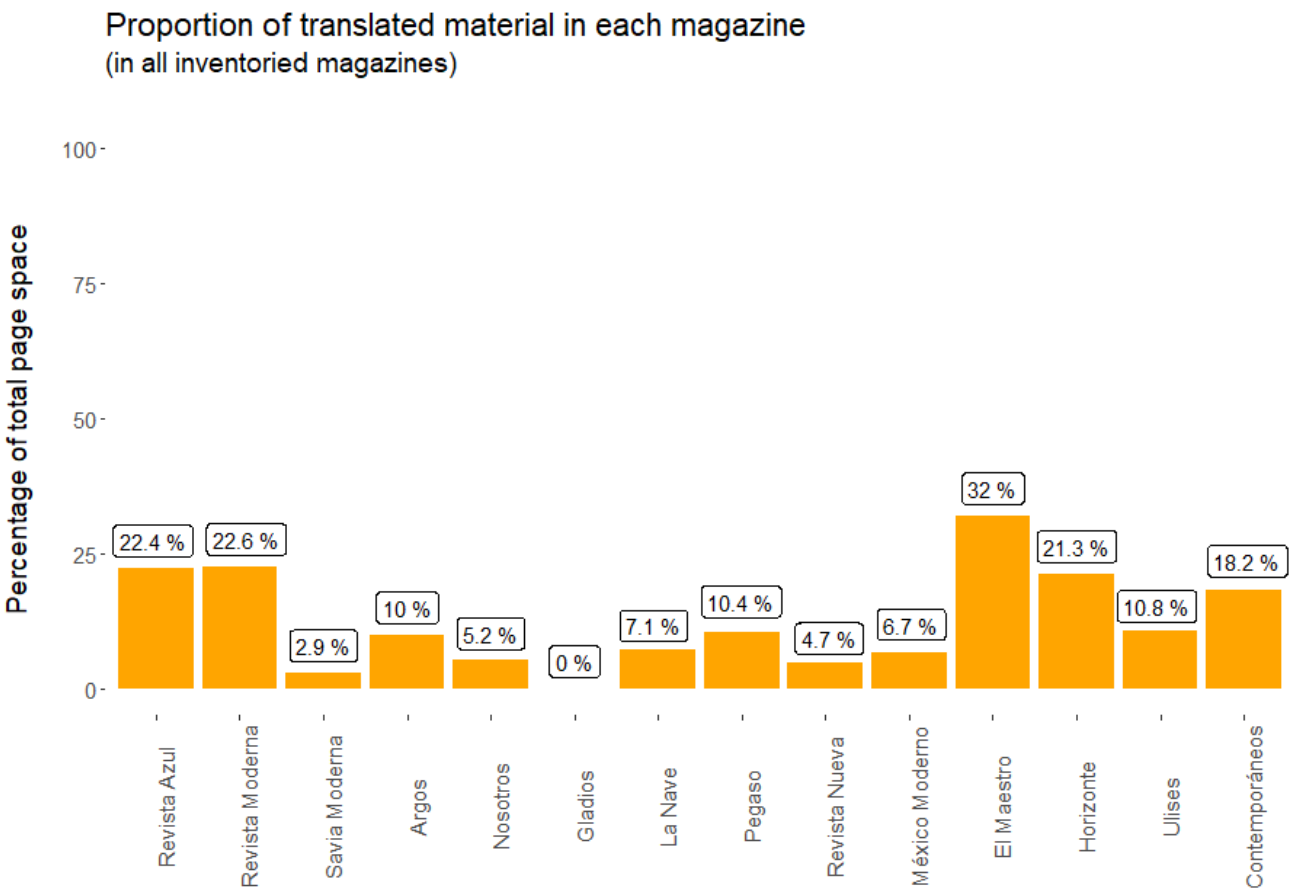


Figure 3.2


Proportion of translated material in each magazine
(in all inventoried magazines)
Percentage of total page space
100
75
50
25
0
22.4 %
22.6 %
2.9 %
10 %
5.2 %
0 %
7.1 %
10.4 %
4.7 %
6.7 %
32 %
21.3 %
10.8 %
18.2 %
Revista Azul
Revista Moderna
Savia Moderna
Argos
Nosotros
Gladios
La Nave
Pegaso
Revista Nueva
México Moderno
El Maestro
Horizonte
Ulises
Contemporáneos

Chapter 4:

Figure 4.1 Front covers of *Cvltvra* issues, facsimile editions by the Secretaría de Cultura (2016)



Figure 4.2 *Antología de poetas muertos en la guerra (1914-1918)* (*Cvltvra* X.4) – Front cover

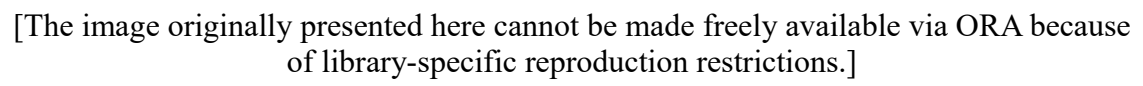


Figure 4.3 Charles Hamilton Sorley, “Dos sonetos,” trans. Pedro Requena. *APMG* 130-131.

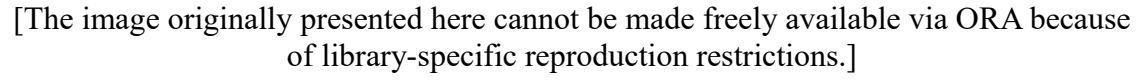


Figure 4.4 *El soldado desconocido* (*Cvltvra* XIV.1) – Front cover

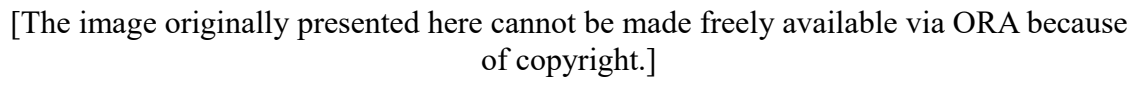


Figure 4.5 *El soldado desconocido* (*Cvltvra* XIV.1) – Table of contents

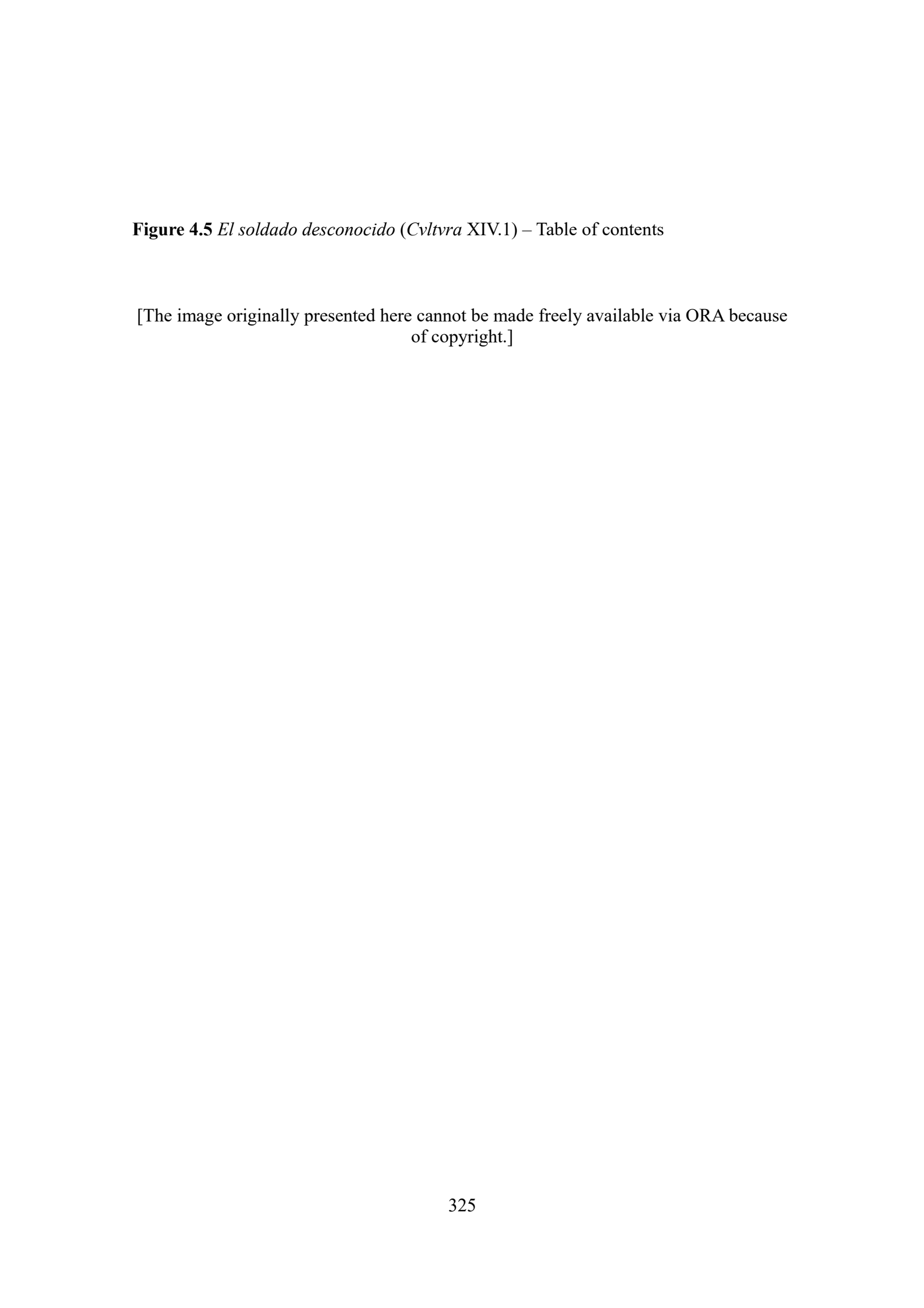
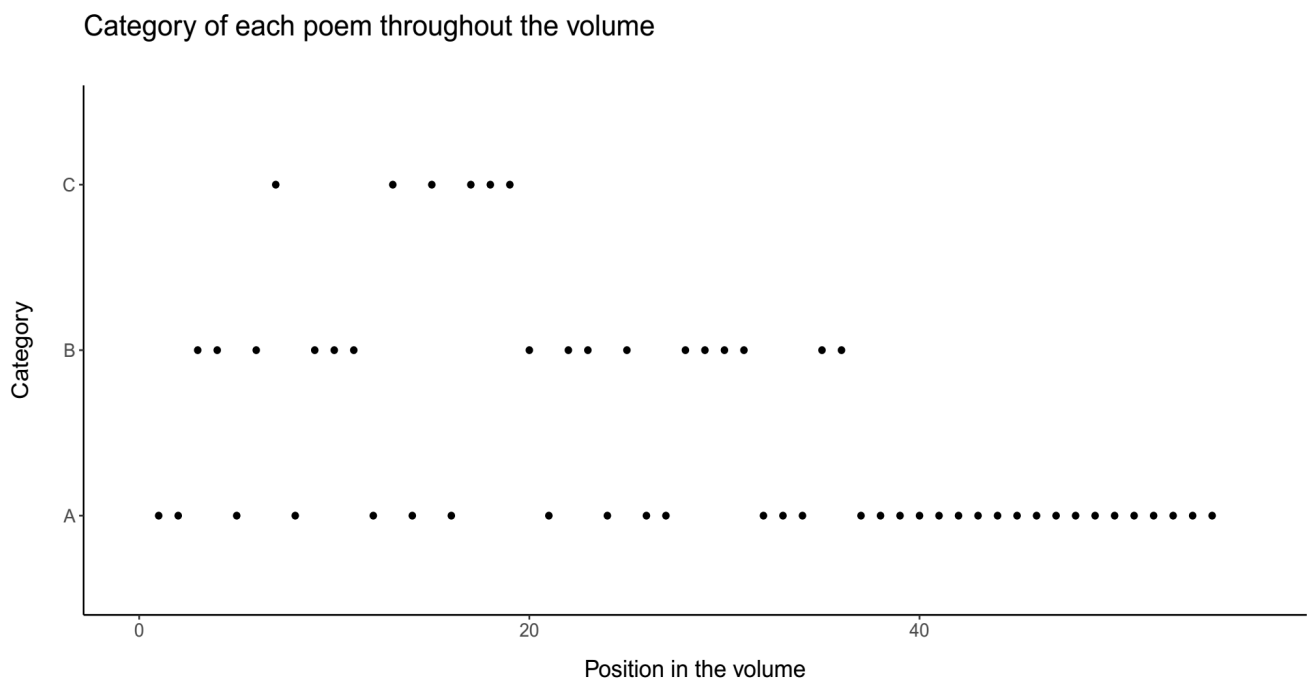


Figure 4.6



NB: As I do with magazine issues, I approach the poems' data as a time series.
Each dot corresponds to a poem, in the order of appearance in the volume (from left to right).

Note 1: on categories

For the needs of the analysis, poems in *ESD* have been divided into three categories: A (abstract treatment of the war experience), B (concrete treatment of the war experience, indirect violence), C (direct violence, combat experience, explicit treatment of physical injuries and death, etc). While the difference between A and B especially is not always clear-cut, the former is characterised by a mostly metaphorical and/or ethereal treatment of the situation (even if it involves military operations), while the latter contains practical reflections and descriptive passages. This distinction corresponds to the "doble visión" of the conflict described by Suárez Turriza:

> El poeta soldado presenta su visión de la guerra a partir de un doble registro discursivo, al que corresponden distintas nociones espacio-temporales. De ahí que en el poemario se puedan identificar: por un lado, **una visión «realista» sobre los hechos** o vivencias bélicas del «yo» poético, el soldado, expresada en términos más prosaicos; y por otro, **una perspectiva «mística y mítica»**, verbalizada en un lenguaje más poético, con metáforas o imágenes de carácter místico o religioso.[887]

Thus, two poems about sporadic gunfire on the front-line, "La bala" and "Curiosidad," were categorised as A and B respectively due to this difference in treatment. It becomes clear when we contrast the following passages, one from each poem: "La bala que me hiera / será bala con alma. / El alma de esa bala / será como sería / la canción de una

[887] Suárez Turriza, "Iluminaciones de William Blake," n.p. (author's emphasis).

rosa / si las flores cantaran" (*ESD*, 33, category A); "De tiempo en tiempo / nos cambiamos un tiro. / Nosotros disparamos entre risas: / ¡A ver si hace una baja! / El también se reirá. / Nuestras carcajadas son pueriles. / Sus balas silban sobre nuestras cabezas, / o levantan pajaritos de lodo / frente a nuestra trinchera." (*ESD*, 39, category B). Where both modes are present in a poem, the selected category corresponds to the most prevalent one (i.e., how much of the poem is written in that mode). Similarly, two consecutive poems about grenades ("Granadas" and "Granadas de gas asfixiante") were categorised as A and C respectively. The following passages, again, illustrate the difference: "Porque me parecieron / pájaros que volaban las granadas,— / golondrinas de los atardeceres,— / me sorprendió como cosa de magia / ver que en donde caían / con un estruendo vasto, levantaban / espirituales árboles de tierra" (*ESD*, 47, category A) and "Pló-pló-pló-pló hacen las granadas, / y cuando caen, *plúm* […] El gas que he respirado / me dejó casi ciego" (*ESD*, 49, category C).

Suárez Turriza notes that it is in the third "jornada" that "se advierte con mayor claridad la alternancia de esas dos distintas visiones sobre la realidad bélica, mediante cambios abruptos de tono y estilo," which is corroborated by the alternation of category-A, category-B, and category-C poems in this section, as illustrated by figure 4.7 below (the third section is highlighted), as well as the considerable variability of the poems' levels of formality (the highest in the volume), visible in figure 4.12.

Figure 4.7

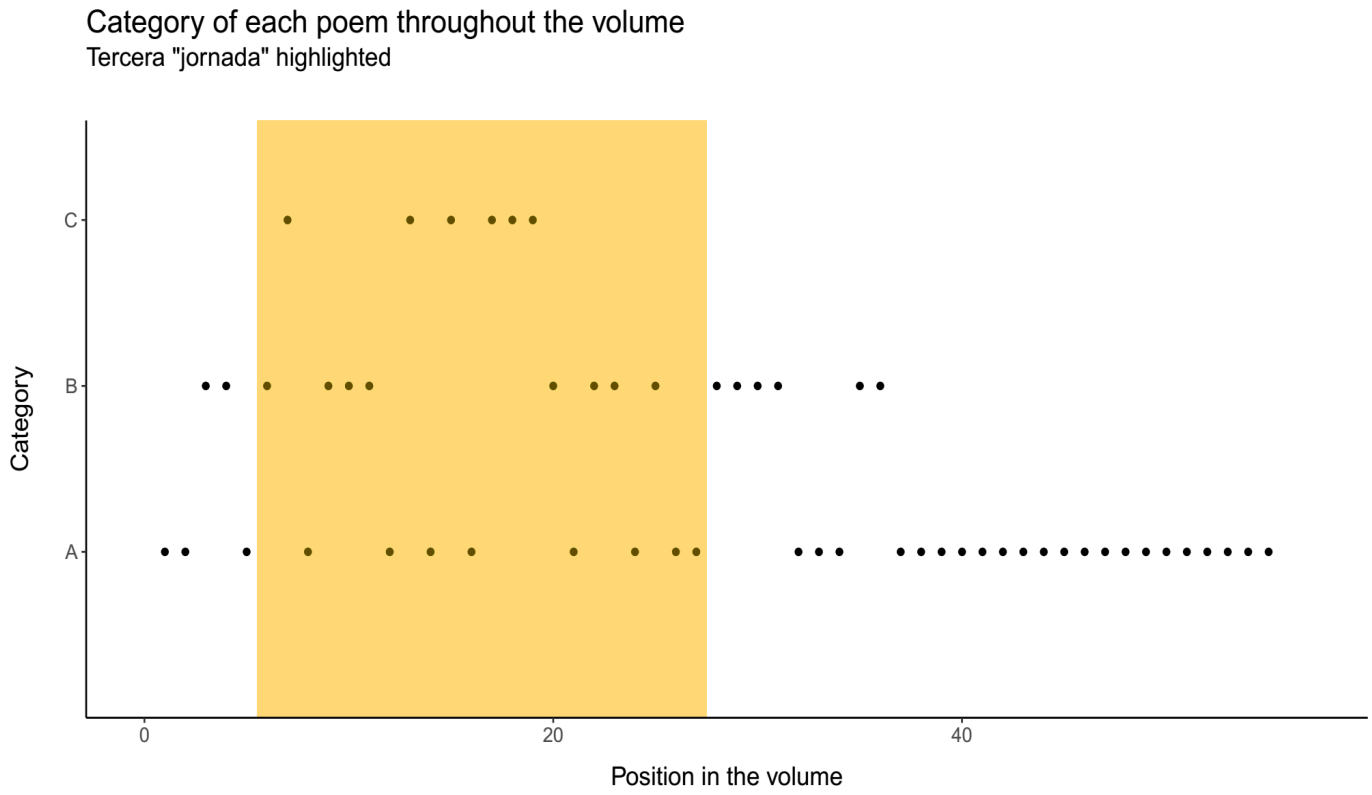
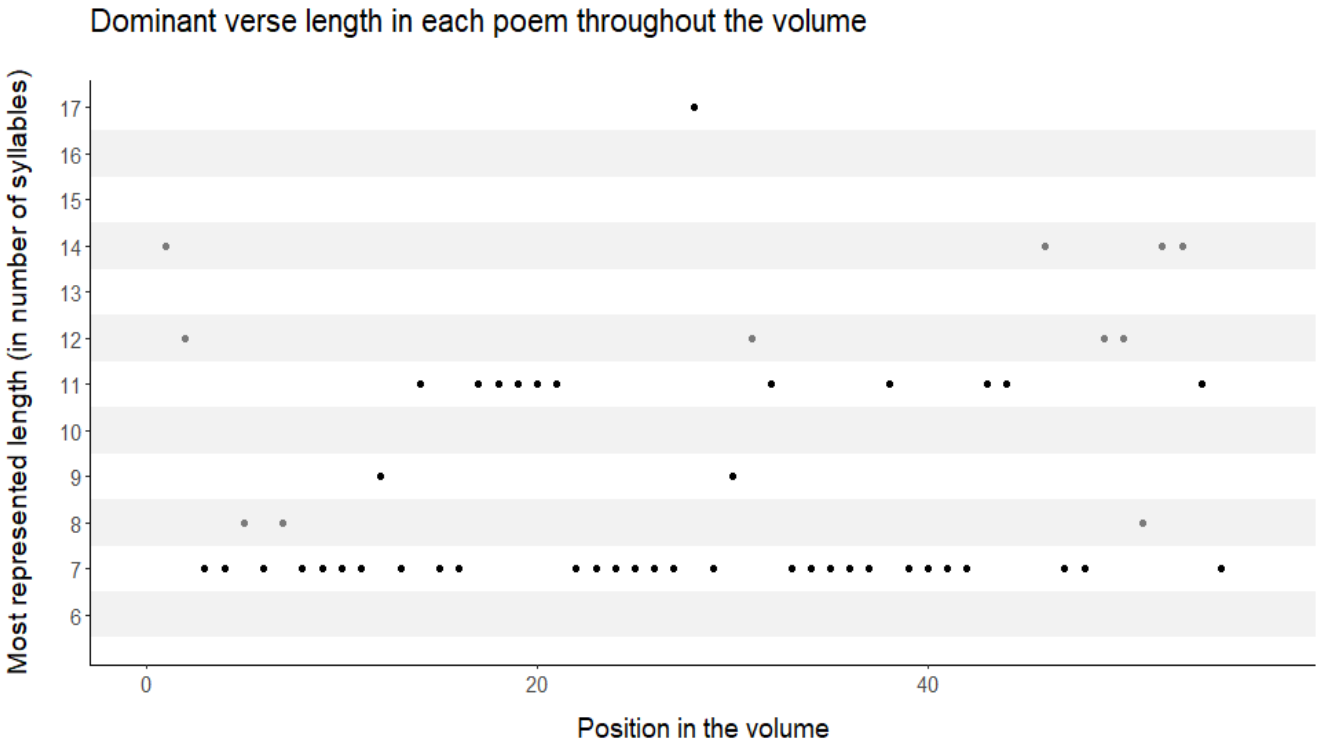


Figure 4.8



Note 2: on formality score

To assess the level of formal regularity of a poem, I have chosen to rely on a mixed evaluation (i.e., qualitative and quantitative) of a series of features. In a letter to Gustave Kahn, Jules Laforgue referred to his practice of free verse in the following manner: "I forget to rhyme, I forget about the number of syllables, I forget about stanzaic structure."[888] I have therefore opted for rating those three elements (rhyme, verse length, and stanzaic organisation) in each poem.[889] The grades, in all three categories, follow clear and objective guidelines.

Verse forms, or lengths, is the most important component when assessing the regularity of a poem and the scale has been weighted accordingly:

- completely regular verse lengths or fixed polymetric form (such as the *silva* in

[888] Quoted in Clive Scott, "Vers libre," in *The New Princeton Enciclopedia,* 1344.

[889] Accentuation is certainly a relevant feature too, but it is very variable in Spanish, it often depends on the reader's preferences (and this is truer the freer the verse, since *vers libre* "proposes a range of rhythmic possibilities which the reader is left to resolve into any one of a number of specific recitations") and is therefore more problematic to assess meaningfully. Clive Scott, "Vers libre," in *The New Princeton,* 1344.

its strictest sense, that is, a poem composed of heptasyllables and hendecasyllables only): 1pt
- polymetric poems with an organised form (i.e. repeated patterns as in song): 1.5pt (this is an intermediate category)
- unpatterned polymetric poem with a strong metric base (where most of the poem is composed of two verse forms (i.e., the two most represented verse lengths account for roughly 60 to 85% of the lines): 2pts
- unpatterned polymetric poem with a weak metric base (where the two most represented verse forms account for roughly 40 to 60% of the total): 3pts
- poems in free verse: 4pts

The rhyme scale proceeds by half-point increments:
- fully rhymed poem with recognisable pattern: 1pt
- fully rhymed poem with a more unusual pattern: 1.5pt
- rhymes on even lines or almost fully rhymed (i.e., at least two thirds of the poem is rhymed): 2pts
- irregular rhyme (in more than 50% of the poem): 2.5pts
- occasional rhyme (in less than 50% of the poem): 3pts
- no rhyme: 3.5pts (meaningfully, no poem in *ESD* fell in this category).

Additionally, 0.5 is subtracted if most rhymes are consonantal, and a further 0.25 if there is a rhythmic play with line endings such as the alternation of *grave* and *agudo* endings (a rare occurrence).

Stanzaic organisation admits three different levels, pondered even more lightly:
- established form or fully regular stanzas: 1pt
- partially regular stanzas: 1.25pt
- irregular stanzas/no stanza: 1.5pt

The first two categories (verse length and rhyme) admit one exception each (as de la Selva's poems are rarely (if ever) *completely* regular). Thus, the initial sonnet is considered as regular from the verse-length point of view despite one of its lines being a heptasyllable instead of an alexandrine.

These three scores are then summed up to obtain the total formality score, ranging, in *ESD*, from 2.25 (the lowest possible score) to 8.5 (9 being the highest possible score).

(NB: a purely quantitative approach is also possible (relying exclusively on the proportion of rhymed lines in each poem and on diversity indices (Simpson's D and Shannon-Wiener's H', two indices used in biology to assess the diversity of a habitat and easily adaptable to verse lengths) although it is slightly less satisfactory in accounting for poetic phenomena. For instance, a poem with even lines rhymed, in Spanish, will be more formal than another piece with close to 60% of rhymed lines distributed haphazardly. Similarly, a polymetric poem such as a *silva* might have greater D and H' values without being necessarily more informal. All those values were nevertheless computed and used in ambiguous cases and as a way to assess the quality of my personal assessment. A more in-depth discussion of these findings would be, in my opinion, desirable, although the scope of this thesis does not allow me to develop this at length here.)

Figure 4.9

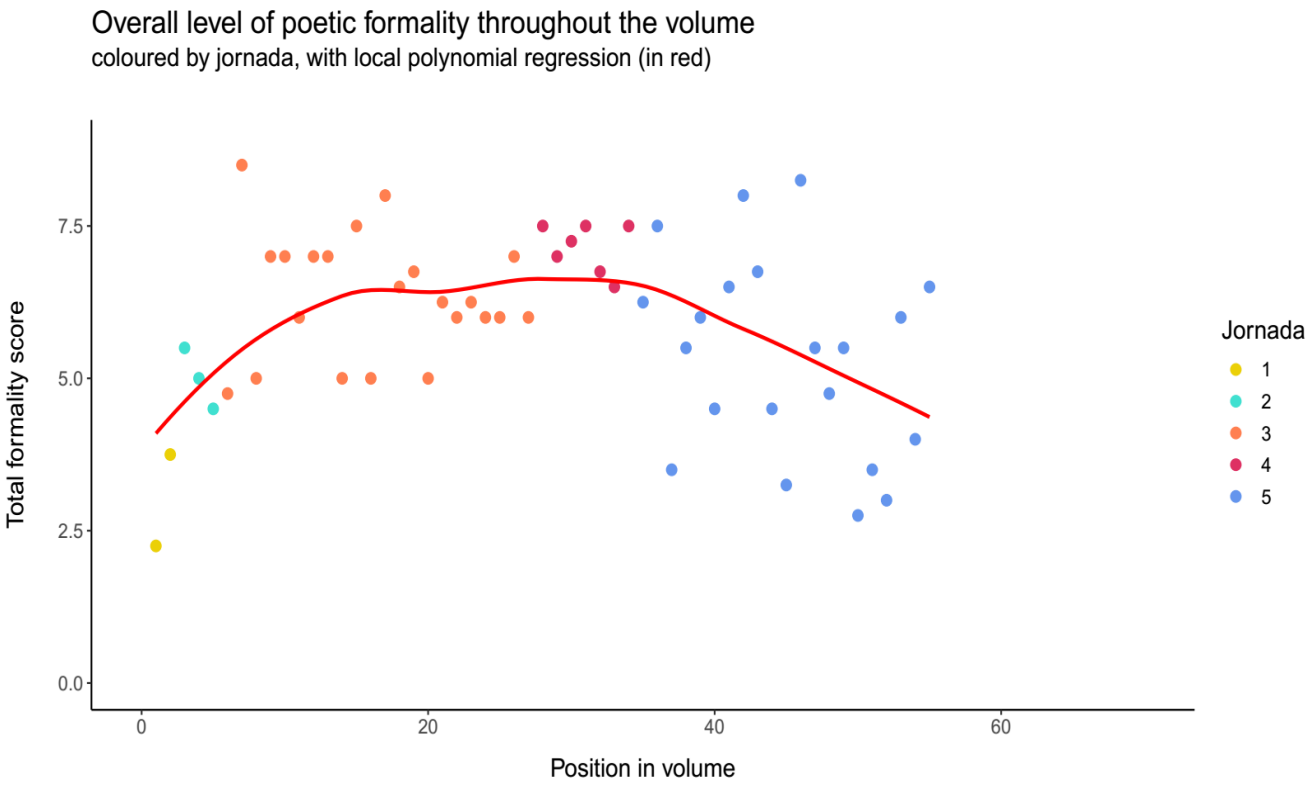


Figure 4.10

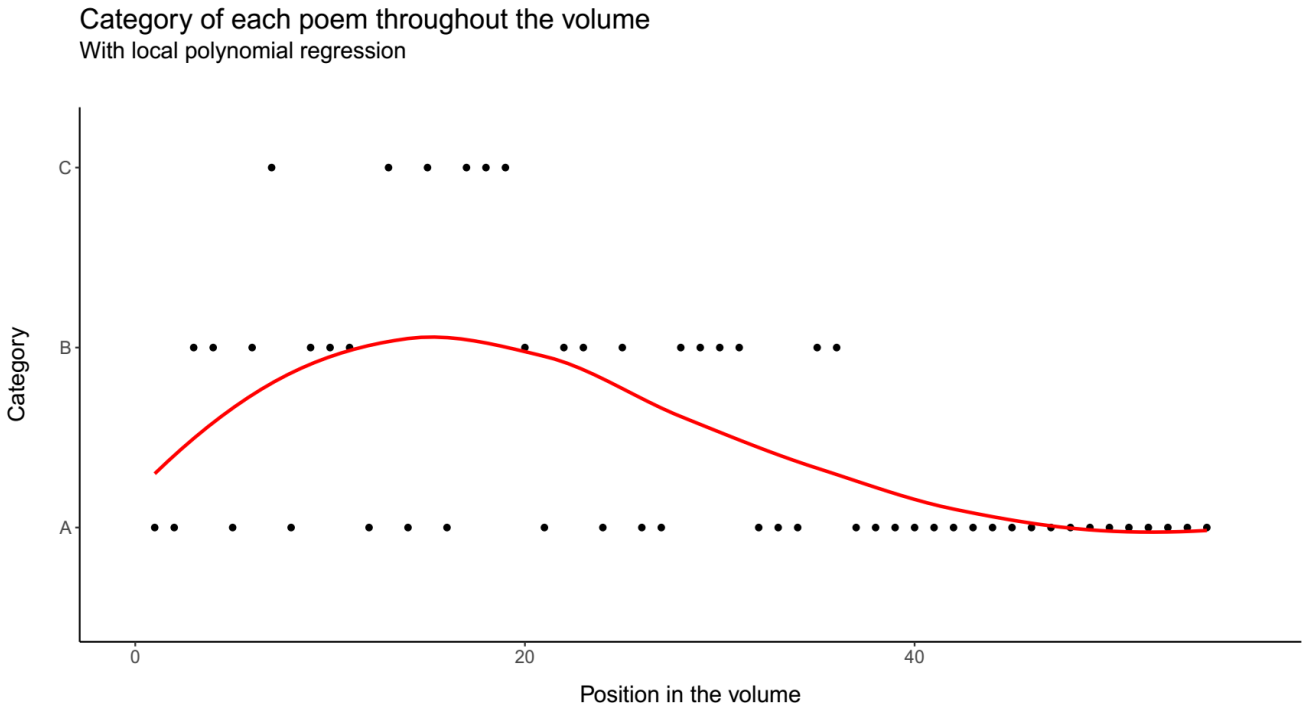


Figure 4.11

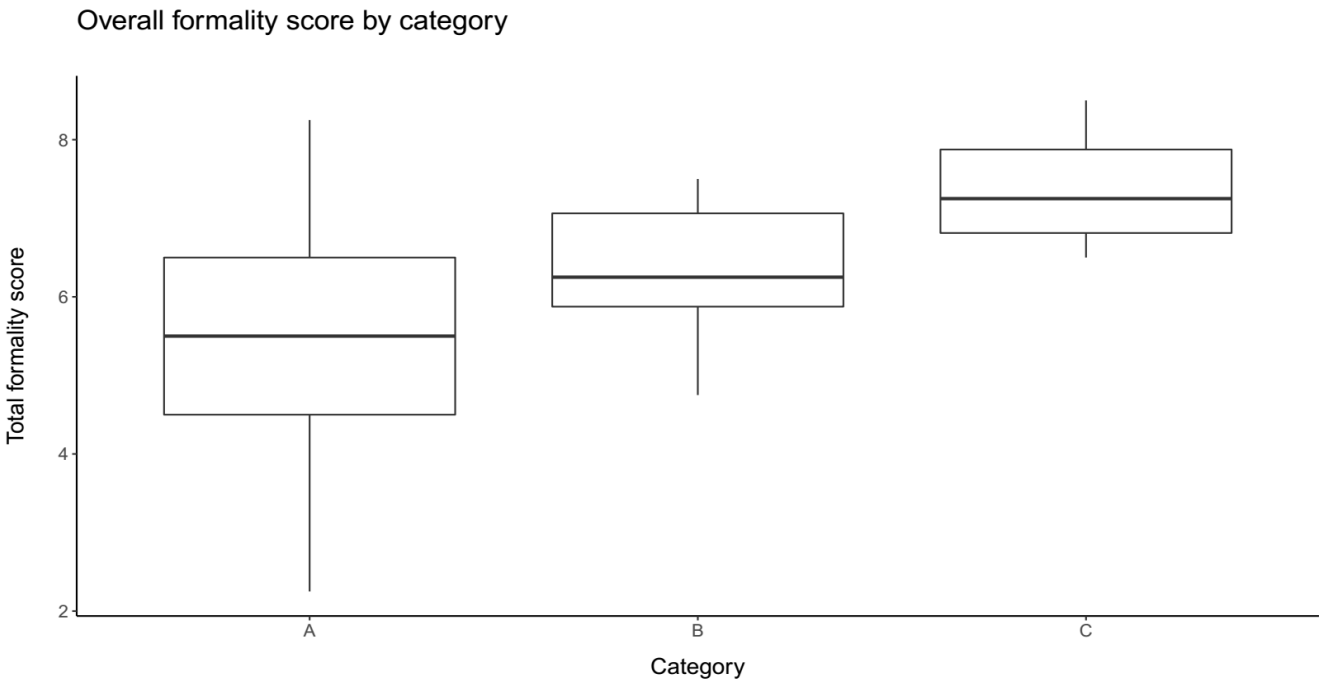
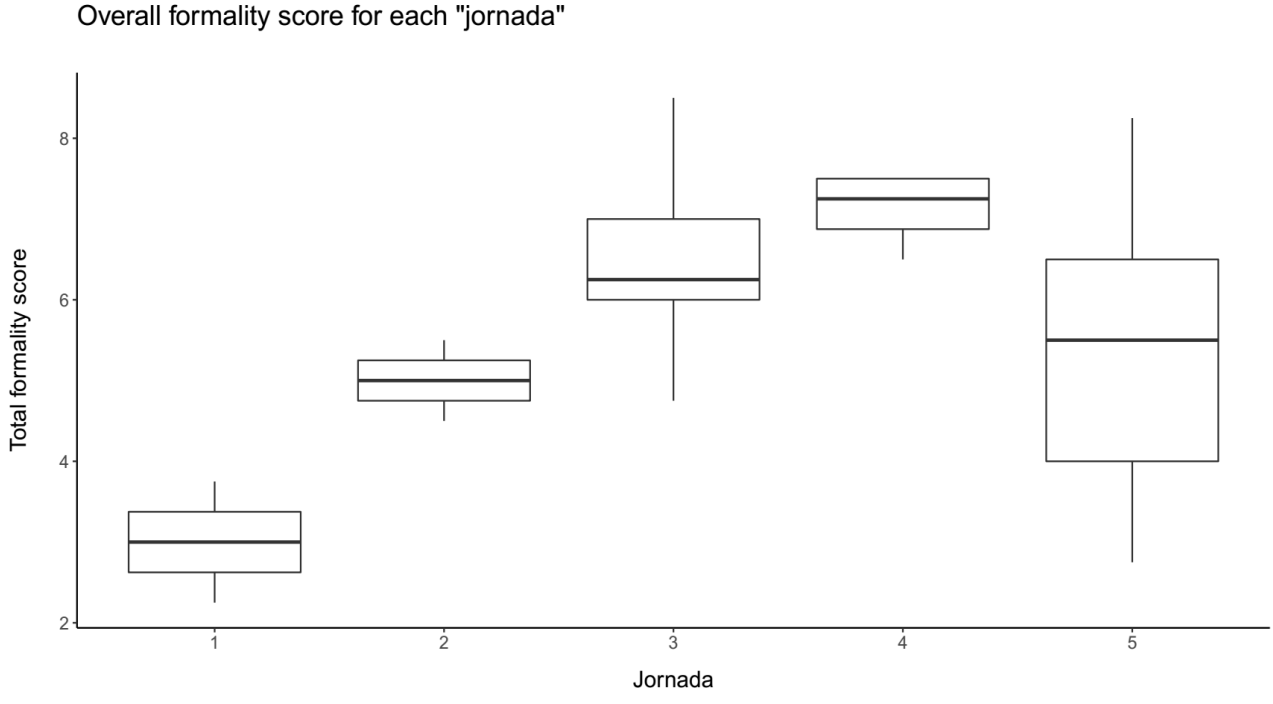


Figure 4.12



Note 3: on boxplots

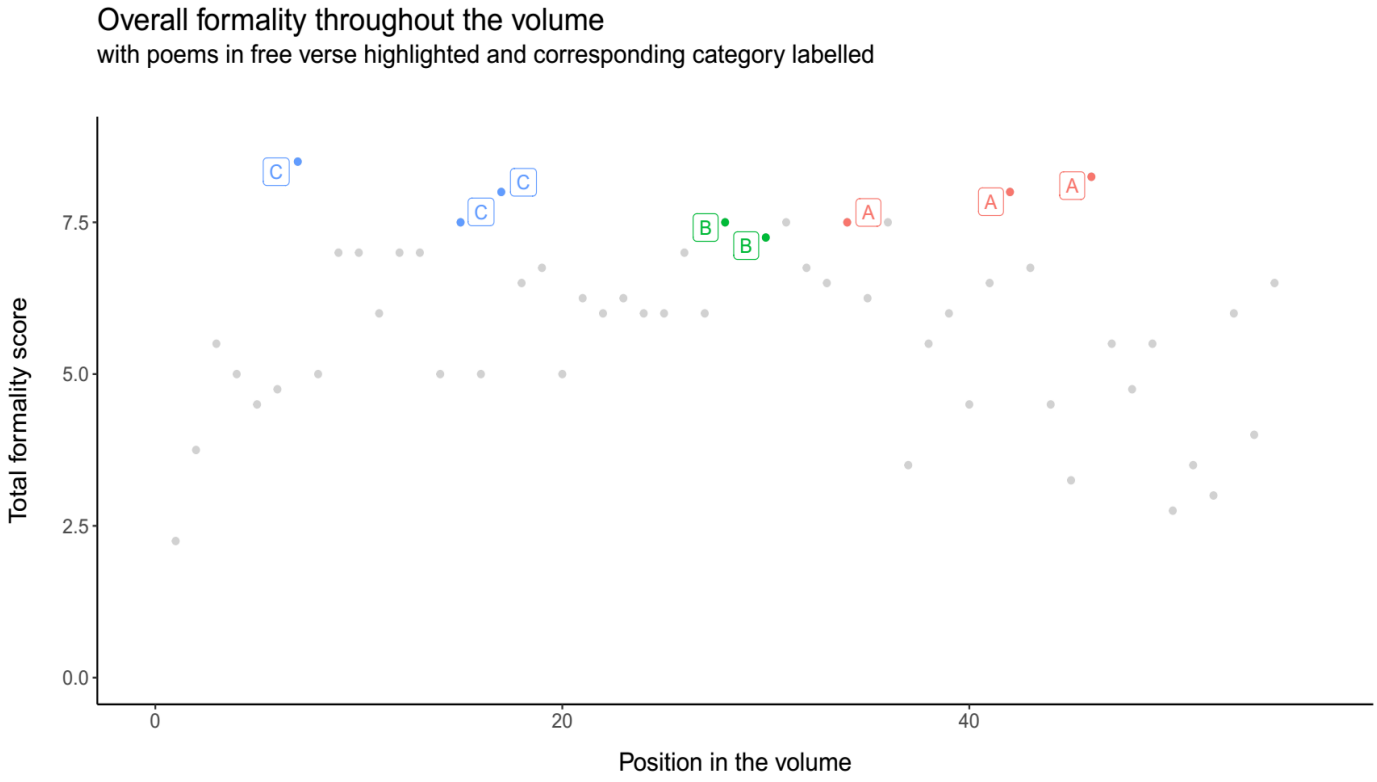
Boxplots are a graphical representation of the distribution of a variable, that is, the range of values that are observed. It represents the five-number summary of the data:

- the minimum (0th percentile): lower end of the whisker, representing the smallest value observed
- the first quartile (25th percentile): lower end of the box, representing the middle point between the median and the minimum
- the median (50th percentile): middle point of the data, indicated by the horizontal line within the box
- the third quartile (75th percentile): higher end of the box, representing the middle point between the median and the maximum
- the maximum (100th percentile): higher end of the whisker, representing the biggest value observed

Thus, half of the values are within the range delimited by the box.

A bigger box and longer whiskers indicate more dispersed data, meaning that the values vary more widely for that variable. To take an example from figure 4.12 above, while poems from the second and fifth "jornadas" are approximately equally formal *overall* (i.e., the medians are similar), poems from the second "jornada" are more homogeneous (they are similar to each other in terms of formality), while the formality of the poems of the fifth "jornada" varies widely (i.e., there are very formal and very informal poems there).

Figure 4.13



Chapter 5:

Figure 5.1

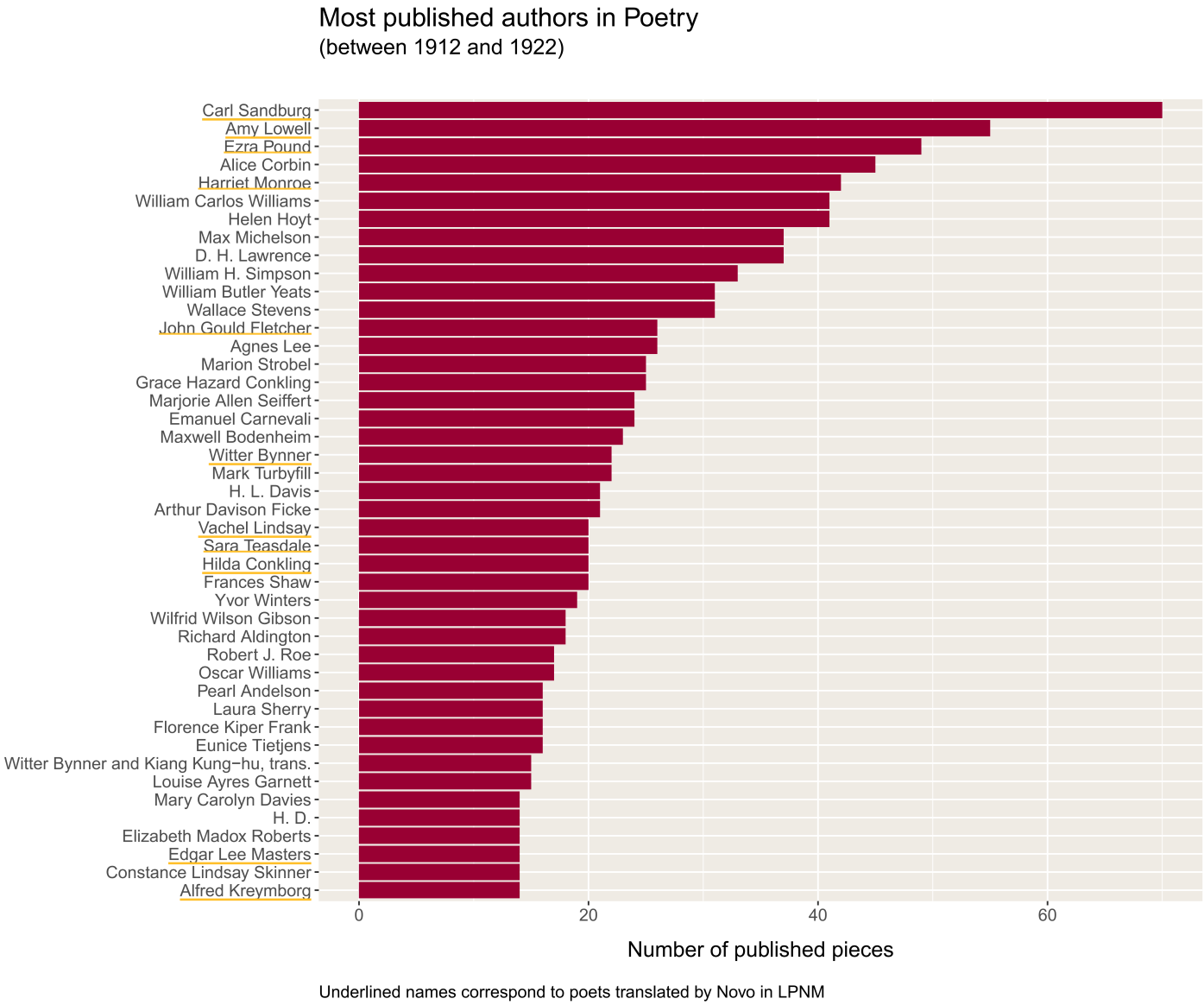


Figure 5.2 Salvador Novo, ed. *La poesía norteamericana moderna* – Front cover

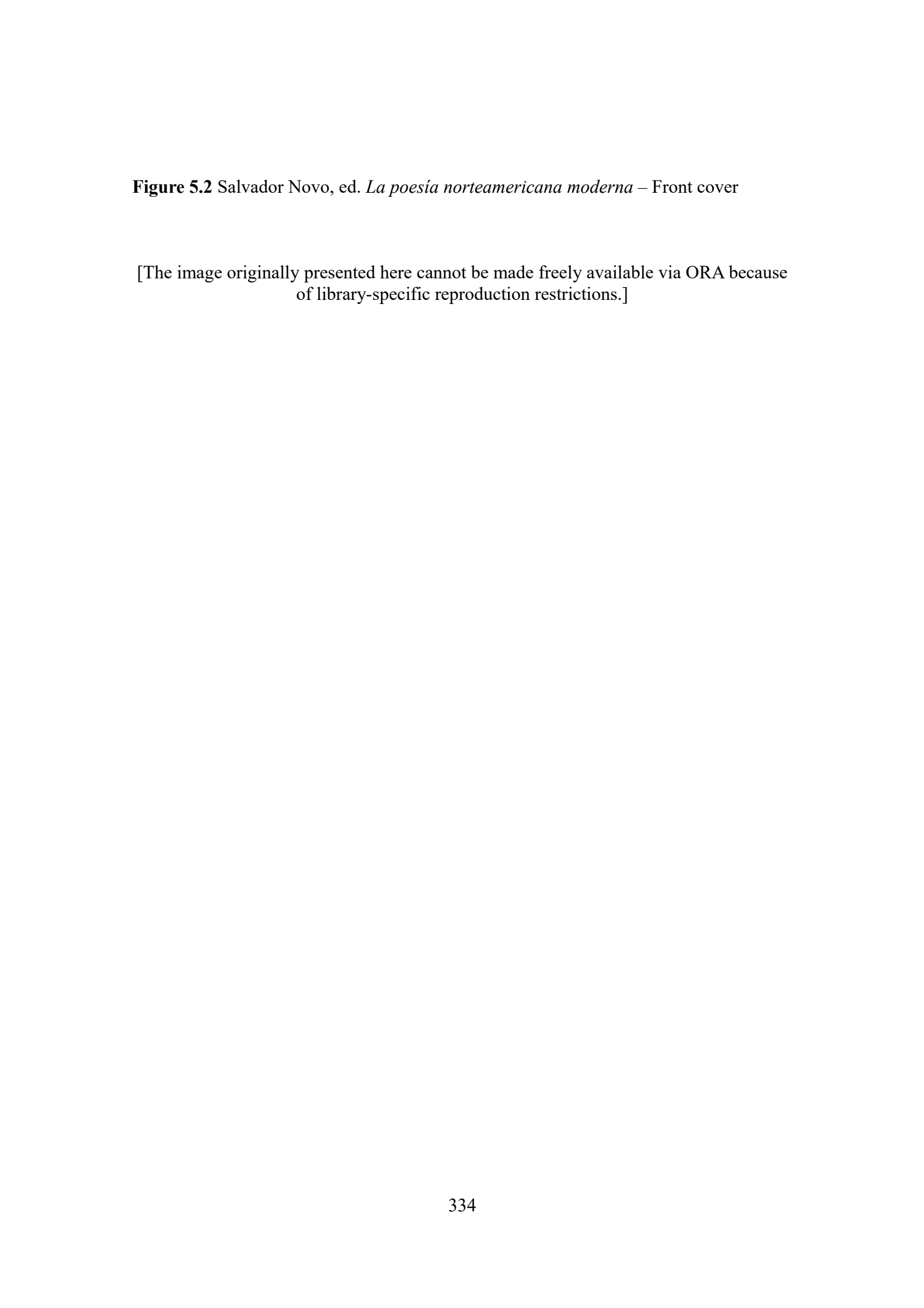


Figure 5.3 Salvador Novo, ed. *La poesía norteamericana moderna* – Back cover

[The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of library-specific reproduction restrictions.]

Figure 5.4

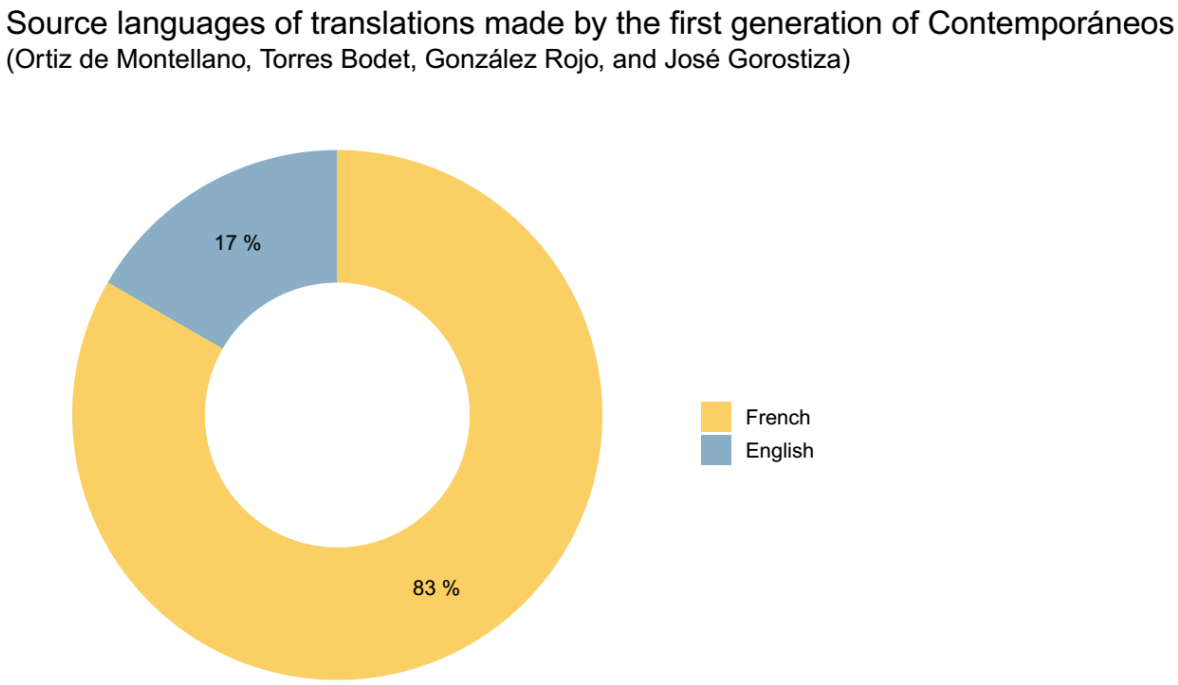


Figure 5.5

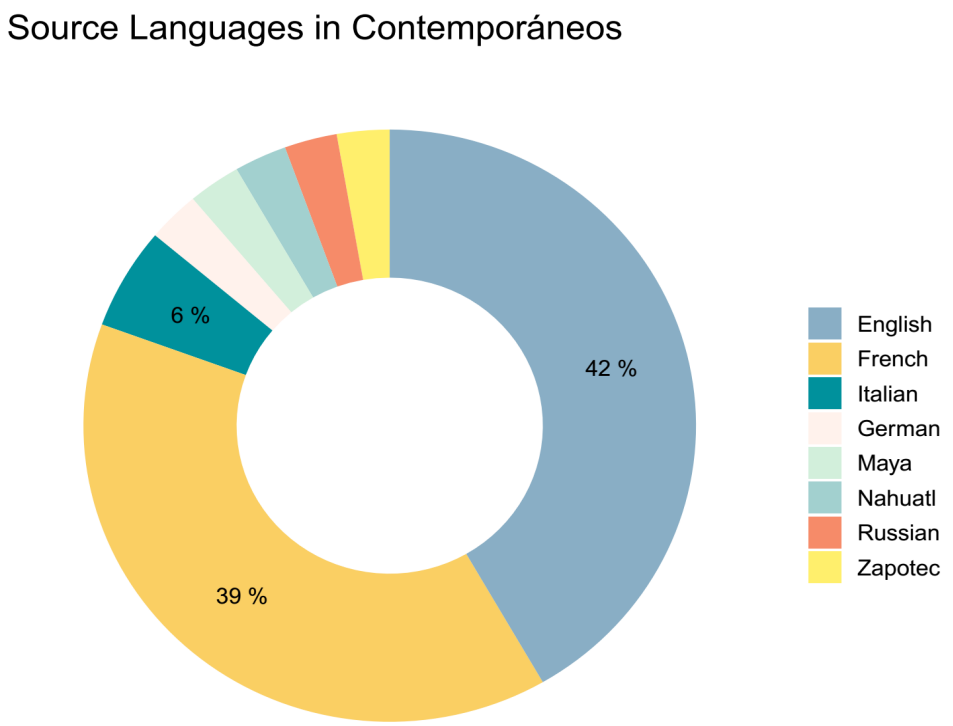

Source Languages in Contemporáneos
42 %
39 %
6 %
English
French
Italian
German
Maya
Nahuatl
Russian
Zapotec

Figure 5.6 Langston Hughes, “Yo también” and “Poema,” trans. Xavier Villaurrutia. *Contemporáneos* XI.40-41: [157-159]

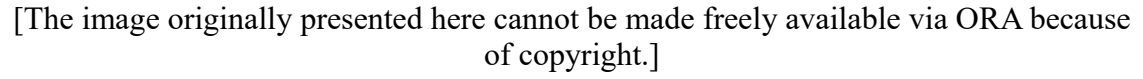


Figure 5.7

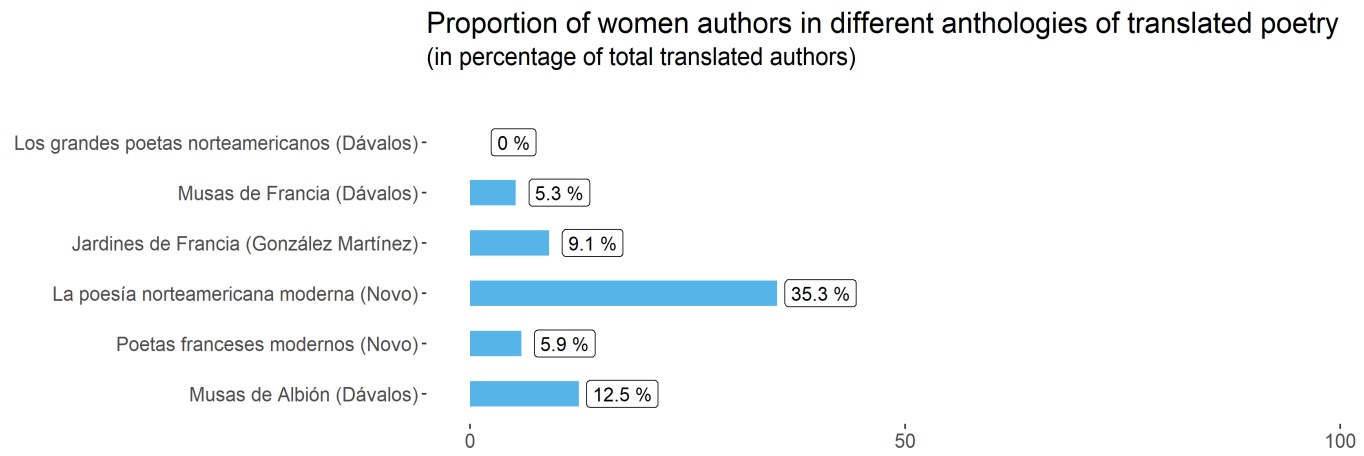


Figure 5.8

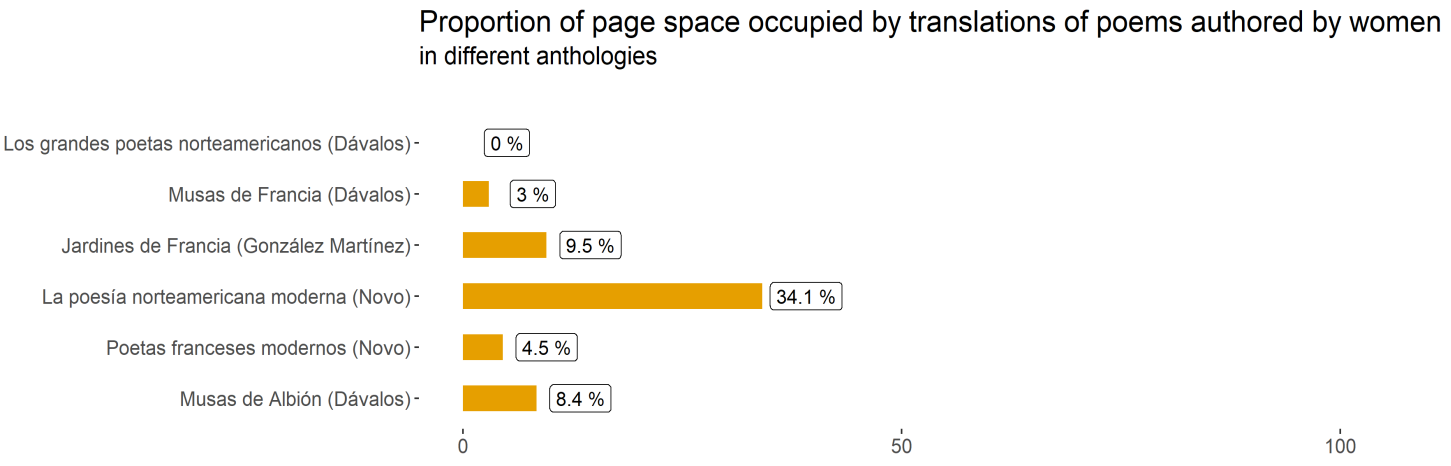
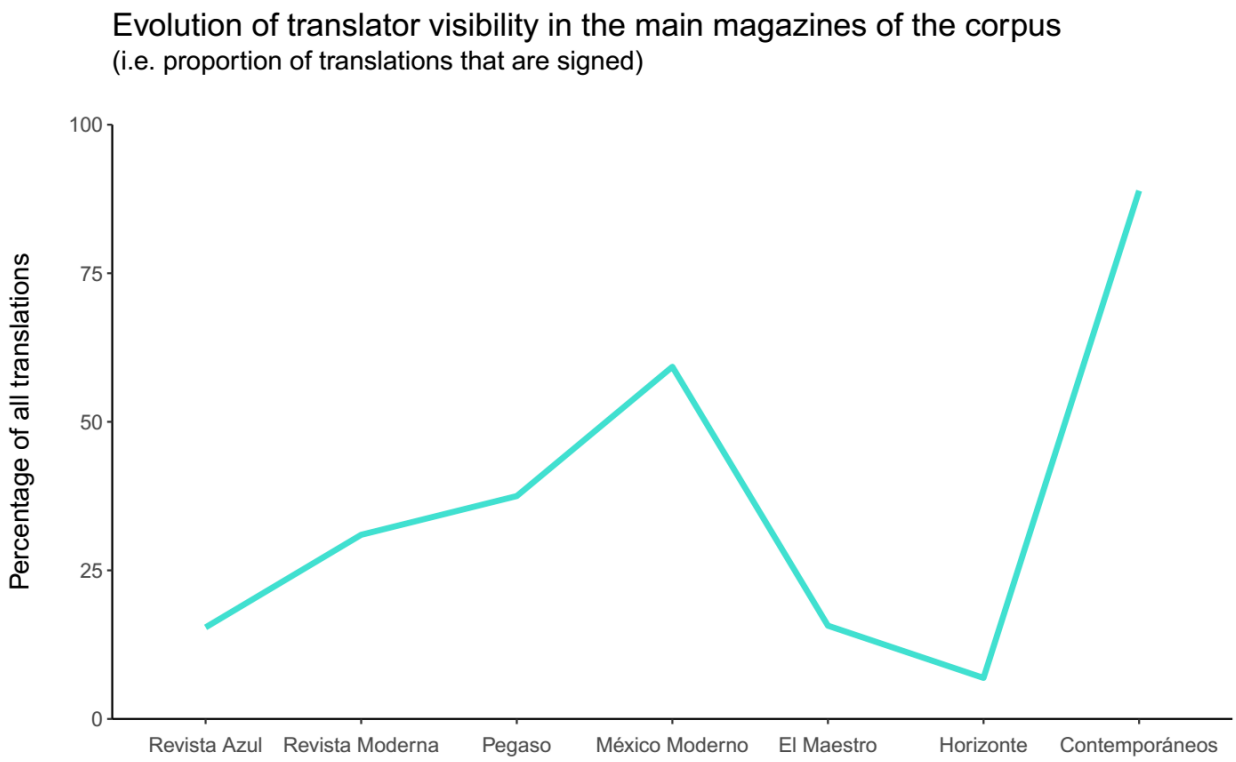


Figure 5.9


Evolution of translator visibility in the main magazines of the corpus
(i.e. proportion of translations that are signed)
Percentage of all translations
100
75
50
25
0
Revista Azul
Revista Moderna
Pegaso
México Moderno
El Maestro
Horizonte
Contemporáneos

Conclusion:

Figure 6.1

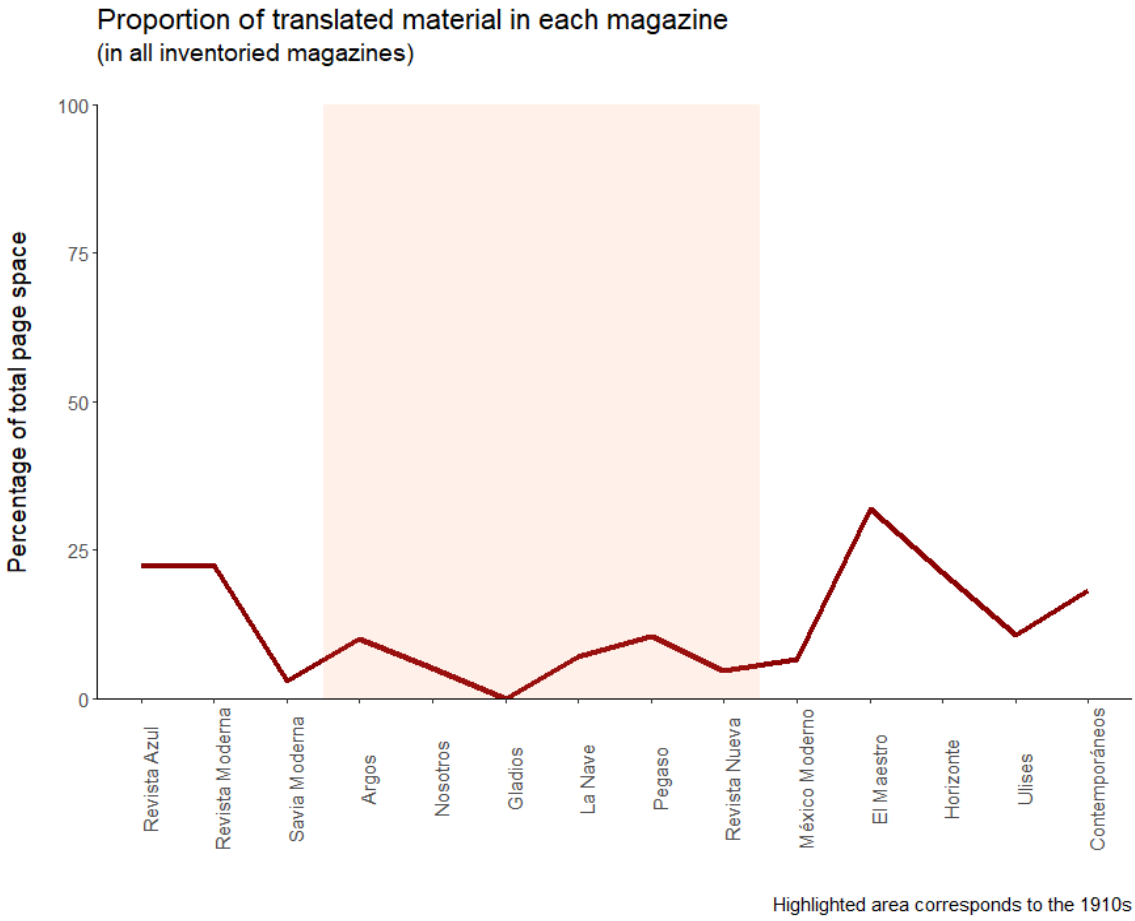


Figure 6.2

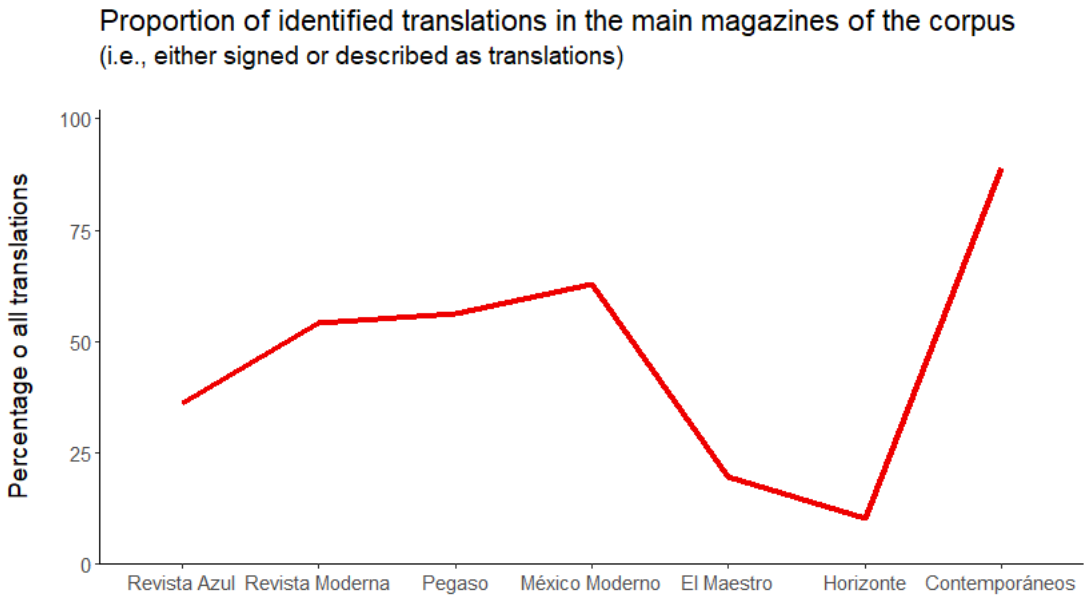


Figure 6.3

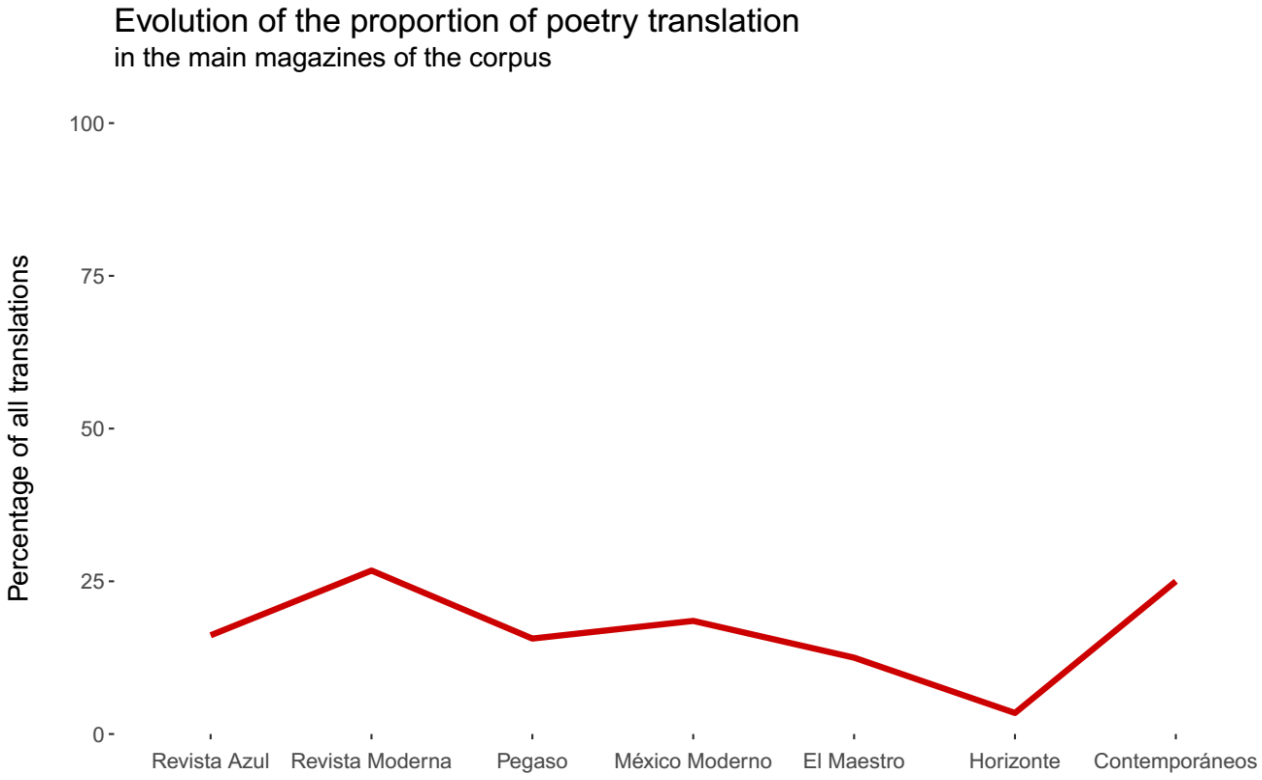


Figure 6.4

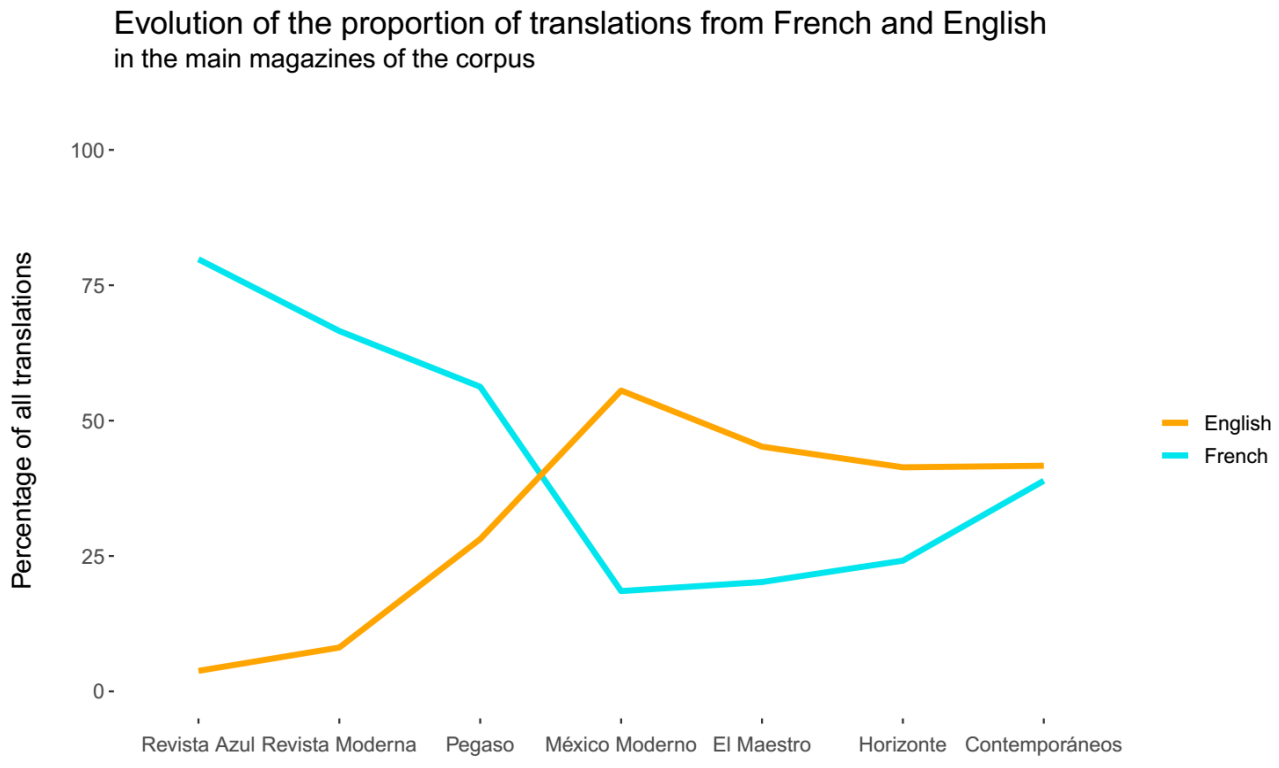


Figure 6.5

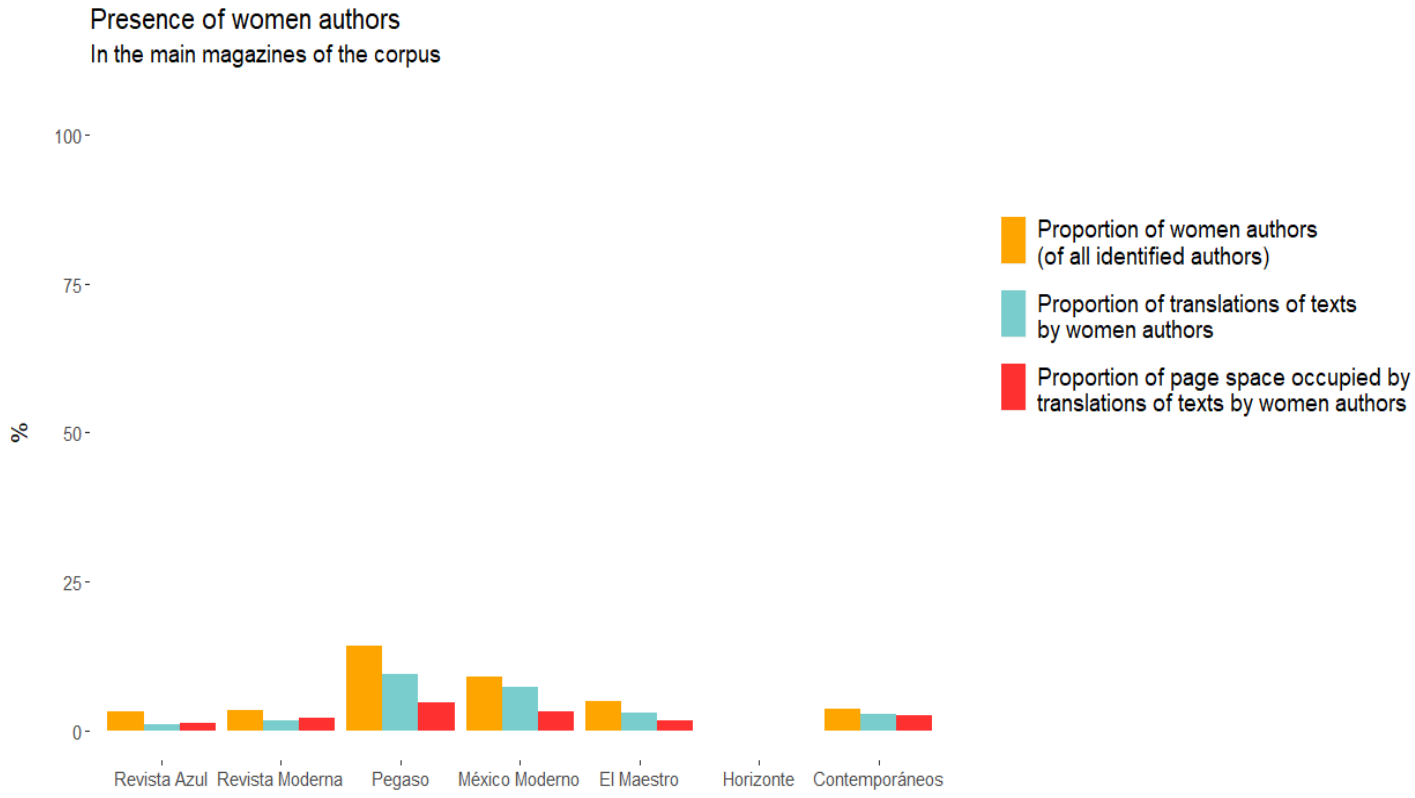
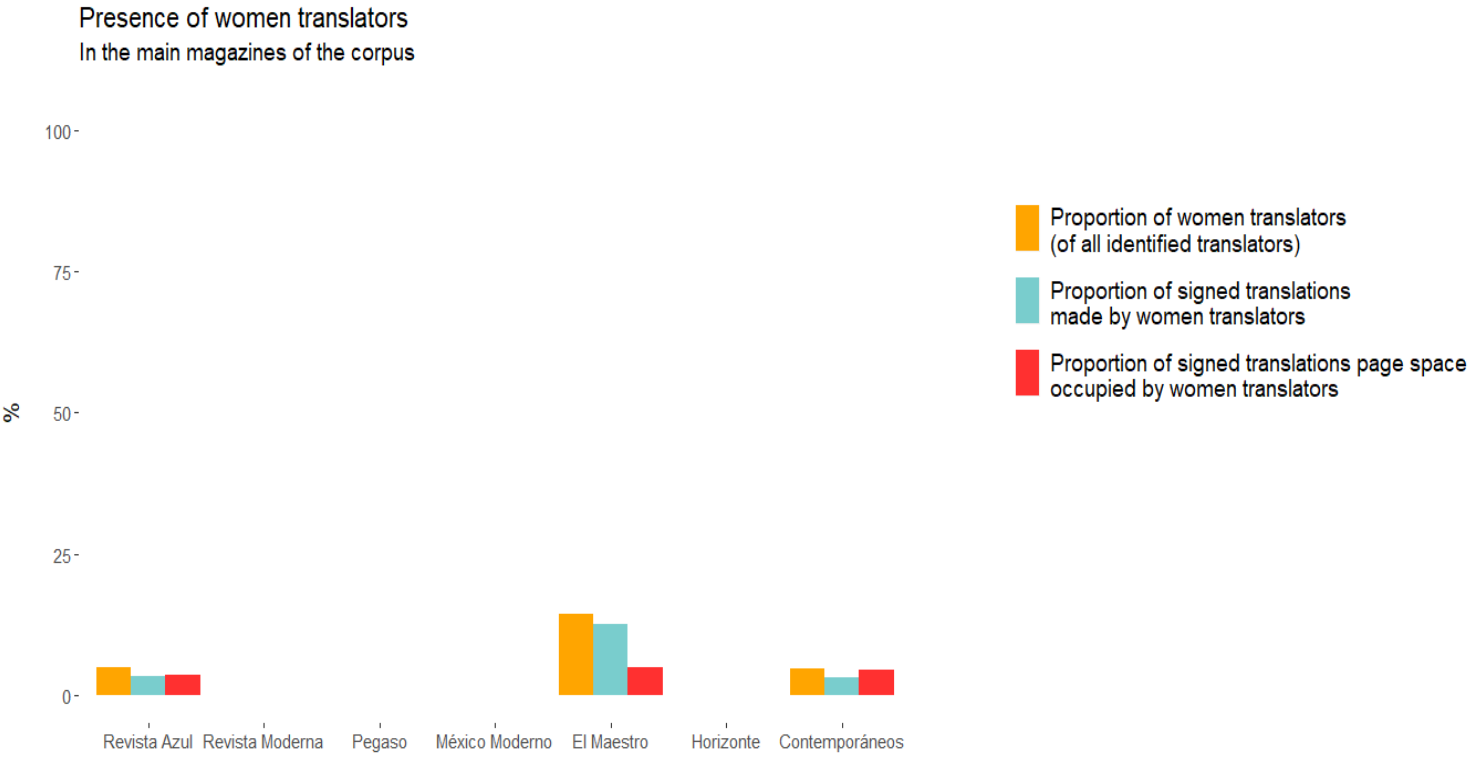


Figure 6.6



Appendix B – Tables

Table 5.1 Pontential factors for the inclusion of poems in *LPNM*

Poet	Poem	Poet mentioned in Henríquez Ureña's "Panorama"	Poet among the top 43 most published authors in *Poetry* (by number of poems)	Poem featured in *Poetry*	Poem featured in *The New Poetry*	Poem featured in *Modern American Poetry*
Anderson	Chicago	no	no	no	no	no
Bynner	Dream	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	[First songs] I	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	[First songs] V	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	Water	no	yes	no	no	yes
Conkling	Thunder shower	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	Morning	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	My mind and I	no	yes	yes	no	no
Conkling	Butterfly	no	yes	no	no	no
Conkling	I am	no	yes	no	no	no
Crapsey	November night	no	no	no	yes	yes
Crapsey	Triad	no	no	no	yes	yes
Crapsey	The warning	no	no	no	yes	yes
Fletcher	The blue symphony	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Frost	Fire and Ice	yes	no	no	no	no
Kilmer	Poets	no	no	no	no	no
Kreymborg	Old Manuscript	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Lindsay	The pheasant speaks of his birthdays	yes	yes	no	no	no
Lowell	Venus transiens	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Lowell	A gift	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Masters	Silence	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Millay	Chorus	yes	no	no	no	no
Monroe	The Hotel	no	yes	no	yes	no
Morley	The old Mandarin on his travels	no	no	no	no	no
Morley	An American mystic	no	no	no	no	no
Morley	He likes to give both sides of the matter	no	no	no	no	no
Pound	N. Y.	yes	yes	no	yes	no
Sandburg	Night Stuff	yes	yes	no	no	no
Sandburg	Handfuls	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Teasdale	The Lamp	no	yes	no	no	no
Total NO:		**20**	10	**23**	**19**	**24**
Total YES:		10	**20**	7	11	6

Appendix C – methodological remarks

About the corpus

My dataset contains the metadata corresponding to all translations published in a corpus of periodicals. Selection criteria for this corpus were that the materials be published serially, and that they be "cultural" publications (i.e., be edited by writers and intellectuals, and feature literature and/or other arts as primary topics and concerns). This brings together diverse periodicals, as well as some anthologies and ephemera that were published as part of series. Funding was not a defining criterion inasmuch as the literary field was so precarious that very few of the magazines published during the studied period would qualify as financially independent, most of them being directly or indirectly funded by the state. Similarly, intended readership is also variable, and although some of the magazines such as the *Revista Moderna* or *Contemporáneos* were mainly directed to writers and intellectuals, others were aimed at a broader public while still maintaining the focus on literature and culture, like *Pegaso* and notoriously *El Maestro*.

Following these criteria, however, we obtain a corpus that is far too large to be covered in a thesis. Time constraints, as well as the accessibility of the materials, have been limiting factors, and as noted by Pym, the conformation of lists requires some strategising: "the cost of compiling information has to be related to the probable value of the result. One needs just enough information to confirm or deny the pertinent hypothesis."[890] I therefore started by making a list of periodicals of the studied period that were available either as facsimiles or online (for instance through the Hemeroteca Nacional Digital de México).[891] I consulted those 22 magazines, using surface reading to obtain a first general picture and scout for noteworthy features.[892] On these grounds, I excluded some of the magazines either because they were very small and did not appear particularly relevant or because there were far too big and the potential benefit of keeping them in the corpus did not justify the time spent on the translation inventory.[893]

[890] Pym, *Method in Translation History*, 50.

[891] The initial list is comprised of the *Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna*, *Revista Moderna de México*, *Savia Moderna*, *Revista Azul (segunda época)*, *Argos*, *Nosotros*, *Gladios*, *La Nave*, *Pegaso*, *San-ev-Ank*, *Revista Nueva*, *México Moderno*, *El Maestro*, *Vida mexicana*, *Actual*, *La Falange*, *Irradiador*, *Antena*, *Horizonte*, *Ulises*, and *Contemporáneos*.
I have also consulted original copies for almost all magazines on this list during two archival stays in Mexico, in order to get a clearer idea of how they looked as material objects and get a more accurate reading experience.
The Hemeroteca Nacional Digital de México can be accessed at https://hndm.iib.unam.mx The Biblioteca Nacional de España's Hemeroteca Digital (https://hemerotecadigital.bne.es) has also been a useful resource.

[892] "Surface reading" is a mode of reading periodicals described by Patrick Collier following Margaret Cohen. It is "committed to recording and sorting surface characteristics" of the texts and is therefore helpful to separate translations from originals, as well as to obtain a first image of how translation is practised and used in a specific periodical. Collier, "Modern Periodical Studies" 108; Cohen, "Narratology in the Archive."

[893] Magazines with very few translations cannot be included in cross-corpus computations anyway, so the inventory loses some of its value in those cases, at least for the kind of analysis that I am proposing. Only one periodical has been excluded due to its excessive size, the *Revista Moderna de México* (1903-1911). After careful consideration, I concluded that it was unlikely that it contributed

I then proceeded to collect the metadata for all the translations published in the remaining 14 magazines, examined this data both qualitatively and quantitatively, and on the basis of the method outlined in my introduction, selected the 6 periodicals that are the main focus of my thesis: the *Revista Moderna*, *Pegaso*, *El Maestro*, *Prisma*, *La Falange*, and *Contemporáneos*.[894] The anthologies that I analyse alongside them, which come from the *Cvltvra* series and *El Universal Ilustrado*'s literary supplements, were included on the basis of their thematic relevance to the broad themes identified in the magazine corpus.

This bears the question of whether focusing on magazines that have been republished (as facsimiles or online) reproduces a certain canonisation bias. Of course, the FCE's and the UNAM's selections do not exclusively include highly canonical publications; of the six periodicals that I examine closely, three have received little scholarly attention (*Pegaso*, *Prisma*, and *La Falange*). This does not mean, however, that relying on a pre-existing selection does not contribute to the artificial attribution of value to a certain body of texts. Nonetheless, the fact that the UNAM's and FCE's selections are based on extensive hemerographic research and aimed at preserving a wide range of periodicals deemed representative of the cultural life of the period might in fact be beneficial. Since, as Pym remarks, no list is ever exhaustive, "settl[ing] for representativity"[895] is not necessarily a bad thing. This might mean that one misses some of the nuances—and possibly some of the earliest and/or most marginal manifestations—of change, but it is likely that the general tendencies remain the same. This is corroborated by DH scholarship; Underwood, for instance, argues that "it often turns out that the same patterns are visible, whether you look at ten thousand obscure texts, or at two hundred lovingly curated editions. So it would be a mistake to stall out at the initial stage of research, in 'an argument about what constitutes an historically relevant and justifiable sample for analysis'."[896] Moreover, some early manifestations can be uncovered through other methods. The magazine *Prisma*, (Chapter 5), is a case in point: although it was originally not part of my corpus, in-depth research around Salvador Novo's anthologising work revealed this precedent, which I subsequently included in the analysis. Future research on translation in Mexican periodicals could focus on magazines that have not been republished and aim at complementing the database as much as possible. Although this would without a doubt contribute to our understanding of the phenomena analysed here, it is my opinion that this would not fundamentally alter the results presented in my thesis.

About the dataset

Building a catalogue of translations manually rather than by using existing lists such as indexes or tables of content involved surface-reading all 14 periodicals page-by-page, identifying translations, generating the relevant metadata, and entering it into Excel.

anything substantially new and that going through its almost 6,000 pages to confirm this was not feasible. I plan to include it in my database and analysis in future.

894 Magazines with a complete inventory include the *Revista Azul*, *Revista Moderna*, *Savia Moderna*, *Argos*, *Nosotros*, *Gladios*, *La Nave*, *Pegaso*, *Revista Nueva*, *México moderno*, *El Maestro*, *Horizonte*, *Ulises*, and *Contemporáneos.*

895 Pym, *Method in Translation History.* 51.

896 Underwood, "Genealogy of Distant Reading," paragraph 24.

This allowed me to collect data for all the variables which interested me, and it was also the safest way to avoid the biases that come with using pre-existing lists, as discussed by Pym and Rosen. In particular, this helped ensure that the inventory is as comprehensive as possible; the decisions made in the compilation of an index can entail the exclusion of certain translations (such as the short quotations from famous authors used to fill blank space in *modernista* periodicals) or, at best, make it especially difficult to identify some contributions as translations, in the absence of any paratextual mention and author name. My method solves this issue; texts have been deemed to be translated (and therefore included in the dataset) if they fell in at least one of the following categories: they were identified as translations (or versions, imitations, adaptations) in the paratext; they were explicitly attributed to a foreign author who is known to write in a language other than Spanish; in the absence of any of the above, they can be traced to an existing original in a language other than Spanish. For the earliest magazines in my corpus, the last category contains a non-negligible amount of texts due to the tendency to use plagiarism and translation as strategies to generate content for periodicals. As Salvador Novo put it, "Para hacer una revista, en el mejor de los casos, se recurre a las traducciones; en el peor, a las tijeras." Some anonymous texts therefore require extensive detective work to ascertain whether they are translations or not. While it is not impossible that I have missed a translation here or there (considering that this kind of sleuthing depends on the availability of certain materials online), these cases should be anecdotal and not affect the statistics in any meaningful way.

The design of the dataset follows Hadley Wickham's "tidy data" principles.[897] Each row corresponds to one translation, with variables to record the volume and issue in which it appeared, the corresponding year, its title, genre, author, translator, original language, length, and starting page. Indeed, these categories come with a set of challenges and require both definitions and decisions to be made, some details of which can be found in my article "Shaping translation in two Mexican cultural magazines: a case study in the use of quantitative methods for the analysis of translation in periodical publications." The most noteworthy points are that I am currently working with a simplified generic typology consisting of four categories (fictional prose, non-fictional prose, poetry, and drama); that I have filled in the author and translator fields where this could be confidently deduced (e.g., if I could trace the original for an anonymous text); and that the translator field includes the values "anon no" and "anon sí" to distinguish cases in which an anonymous translation is identified as a translation in the paratext (anon sí) from cases in which there is no indication at all (anon no).

Significant work remains to be done to tidy the data, merge the different magazines' tables, and get the dataset ready for publication (on this page). At this stage, it is unclear whether I will be using a relational or a graph database model. Independently of this, I will hopefully be able to build on this dataset in the future, adding new periodicals to expand the timeframe as well as complement the information on the period in my thesis.

[897] Wickham, "Tidy Data."

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[898] Howard Wainer, *Graphic Discovery: a trout in the milk and other visual adventures* (Princeton: UP, 2008), xiii-xiv.

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