



A Translation of Whitman Discovered in the 1912 Spanish Periodical Prometeo

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NOTES



A TRANSLATION OF WHITMAN DISCOVERED IN THE 1912 SPANISH PERIODICAL *PROMETEO*

UNTIL NOW, the first substantial Spanish translation of Whitman was believed to be the 1912 *Walt Whitman: Poemas*, published in Valencia by the Uruguayan writer Armando Vasseur. But I have now discovered the publication of an earlier, fifteen-page Spanish translation of Whitman's poetry, including a full translation of his long poem "Salut au Monde." In addition to pushing back the date of print entry for Whitman's poems into Spanish, this discovery represents a very early point of print contact between Whitman and the inception of the Spanish-language *vanguardias*, or avant-gardes. Furthermore, both the text and the context of the translation help explain why the avant-gardes in Spain and Mexico tend to imagine Whitman in Futurist terms. Finally, the *Prometeo* translations reveal that even Whitman's ostensibly transamerican appropriations may occur through a transatlantic—and in fact a heavily global—network of circulation.

These newly-discovered poems appear in a mostly-prose translation at the beginning of 1912 in the Spanish literary and cultural journal *Prometeo*.¹ Since it was the first of eleven issues published in 1912 (*Prometeo* was basically a monthly periodical), we can assume this translation predates or is at most simultaneous with *Walt Whitman: Poemas*, since Vasseur dates his preface as February, 1912, suggesting an even later publication date for his book-length translation.² Either way, we can see this earlier translation as independent from Vasseur's textual influence. But more importantly, the *Prometeo* publication marks or colors Whitman's reception in a particular way, by locating the American poet within an increasingly avant-garde context.

First published in 1908 with a *modernista*³ bent, the journal *Prometeo* was not always linked with the avant-garde;⁴ but in 1909, the journal made a radical endorsement of the new aesthetics of Italian Futurism, one of the originators of the global avant-gardes. When the Italian movement's founder, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, published his bombastic "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," *Prometeo*'s

editor, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, published his own translation of the avant-garde text, alongside a piece celebrating Marinetti—making *Prometeo* the first Spanish periodical to bring Italian Futurism to Spain. Marinetti's performative text, a hybrid of prose narrative and manifesto, proclaimed the inauguration of a new era, as it celebrated rebellion, violence, the power and aesthetics of machines, and the vitality of industry.⁵ Then, in 1910, at Gómez de la Serna's personal request, Marinetti even wrote a Futurist address directly to Spain, "Proclama Futurista a los Españoles," again translated by Gómez de la Serna, and for exclusive publication in *Prometeo*. In it, Marinetti railed against what he perceived as the lassitude of Spanish culture, and called for a revitalization of Spain through radical social change and the development of industry. We see Futurism taking hold in Spain: Gómez de la Serna channels Marinetti's language in his own enthusiastic preface to the "Proclama:"

. . . intersection, spark, exhalation, text like a wireless telegraph or of something more subtle flying over the oceans and over the mountains! Wing towards the North, wing towards the South, wing towards the East, and wing towards the West! Sturdy desire for height, expansion, and speed! Healthy spectacle of aerodrome and oversized runway!⁶

It is the early language of the avant-garde in Spain—global, techno-industrial, and fixated upon the aesthetics of speed and power.

The spread of Futurism in Spain would have far-reaching effects, influencing Rafael Cansinos Assens (who would himself later publish poetry in *Prometeo*'s pages) to found Spain's first avant-garde movement, *Ultraísmo*. Cansinos Assens would go on to promote the work of the important Chilean avant-gardist Vicente Huidobro, and the ranks of his own movement would include none other than the young Argentine Jorge Luis Borges. The movement's periodicals, appropriating Futurist ideas and aesthetics, would reach as far as Mexico, where they shaped Manuel Maples Arce's founding of his own *vanguardia*, known as *Estridentismo*, or Stridentism. Each of these writers would write about Whitman in an avant-garde context, and the 1912 *Prometeo* translation can help explain why: it is partly from this marriage of *Prometeo* and Futurism that a new Whitman—an

avant-garde Whitman—is born into the Spanish-speaking world.

The creation of this avant-garde Whitman was sparked partly by the fact that Marinetti himself claimed Whitman as a precursor to Futurism, an idea that gained currency among the avant-gardes. In a 1911 manifesto that appeared in Paris, the Italian Futurist claimed Whitman as one of the “four or five great precursors of Futurism.”⁷ Although this particular manifesto, linking Whitman and Futurism, was not translated into Spanish until 1912, critics in Spain knew of—or at least observed—the relationship. The Grand-Canary-born José Betancourt—who had spent time as a correspondent in Paris—observed in his 1911 article “Walt Whitman” for *La España Moderna* that Whitman’s innovation “lamentably, has found an echo as well in the extravagances of the *Futurist* poet Marinetti.”⁸ Betancourt’s condescending tone reveals his skepticism about the merits and originality of the controversial Italian movement. But many Spaniards like *Prometeo*’s editor, Gómez de la Serna, eagerly welcomed Italian Futurism to Spain, and along with it, the urban-industrial, proto-avant-garde Walt Whitman that was beginning to emerge. Still, even Betancourt’s 1911 article reveals how Whitman was starting to be linked with Futurism and the avant-garde aesthetics. Betancourt, not associated with the avant-garde movements in Spain, notes: “He [Whitman] understands that in the modern world another beauty has arisen, heretofore unknown, and from within him has arisen a completely new poetry. He includes vertigo, and exalts the emotion of the machine.”⁹

It is in this proto-avant-garde context that we find the earliest known substantial translation of Whitman into Spanish, and some elements of the translation suggest an early formulation of Whitman as a precursor to the new aesthetics taking hold in Europe.¹⁰ Whitman’s *Prometeo* translator is Ramón Gómez de la Serna’s brother, Julio, who translated the following poems in order of their appearance: “Salut au Monde,” “To Foreign Lands,” “Beginning My Studies,” “To a Certain Cantatrice,” “One’s-Self I Sing,” “Me Imperturbe,” “Shut Not Your Doors,” and “Poets to Come.” All of these except “Salut Au Monde” originally appeared in Whitman’s “Inscriptions” cluster of *Leaves of Grass*. Gómez de la Serna curiously places “Salut au Monde”

outside the grouping of poems he labels *Briznas de Hierba* [*Leaves of Grass*], and identifies only “One’s-Self I Sing” and “Me Imperturbe” as “Inscriptions” poems.

Although Julio Gómez de la Serna was not a translator for the avant-gardes, the themes of some of the selected poems—as well as some moments in the translations—resonate with the concerns of those embracing the new aesthetics.¹¹ He translates the entirety of “Salut Au Monde!”—Whitman’s bombastic, exclamatory, exhaustive catalogue of the peoples and places of the entire world—a choice that reflects the internationalist, cosmopolitan euphoria informing Futurism and the early avant-gardes. Likewise, Whitman’s “Shut Not Your Doors,” which claims that his book emerges from the Civil War, resonates with Marinetti’s insistence in article IX of his first manifesto that “We want to glorify war.”¹² Whitman’s “One’s-Self I Sing” ends claiming “The Modern Man I sing,” and both it and the poem “Me Imperturbe” celebrate the strong individual sense of self.¹³ This lines up with the spirit of self-assertion that Marinetti would proclaim in “We Renounce Our Symbolist Masters,” just after invoking Whitman, when he insists that “Futurist lyricism” “expresses our ‘I’ with increasing speed, that ‘I’ which is created through endless inspiration,” and calls it “the complete ‘I,’ sung, painted, and sculpted, yet never fixed....”¹⁴ Finally, ending the *Prometeo* translations with “Poets to Come” (which Whitman does not do with his “Inscriptions” cluster) implicitly positions the poets of the new aesthetics as taking up Whitman’s call.

A few specific moments in the translations place Whitman in a “modern,” Futurist-leaning light as well.¹⁵ In his poem “Beginning My Studies,” Whitman’s poetic speaker espouses a characteristic Romantic wonder at the simple things of the world, such as: “The least insect or animal, the senses, eyesight, love,” and says that “The first step I saw awed me and pleas’d me so much, / I have hardly gone and hardly wish’d to go any further, / But stop and loiter all the time to sing it in ecstatic songs.”¹⁶ But Gómez de la Serna’s translation seemingly misunderstands the second “hardly” to mean (perhaps) “strongly” or “speedily” instead of “barely,” and subsequently translates it as “velozmente,” thus evoking a futurist buzz word, velocity:¹⁷ “me produjeron tal respeto y tal placer, que apenas había andado una parte,

cuando ya deseaba ir velozmente más allá hacia el todo, para poder estacionarme, meditar entre ellos y alabar después todo el conjunto en cantos extáticos.”¹⁸ In Gómez de la Serna’s twentieth-century Spanish translation, Whitman’s speaker rushes with increased velocity beyond some boundary towards everything, rather than pausing there—as the English suggests—to further celebrate the simple things encountered in the “first step.”

Likewise, in “Shut Not Your Doors,” Whitman writes, “The words of my book nothing, the drift of it everything,”¹⁹ which Gómez de la Serna translates as “un libro cuyas palabras no son nada, pero cuyos impulsos lo son todo”²⁰ Although “impulso” can mean “suggestion,” which would match Whitman’s “drift,” it more often denotes force, energy, compulsion, and unreflective action, making it match the kind of energy asserted by the avant-garde instead of Whitman’s more characteristic vision of the subtle, indirect, organic meaning arising from his poems.

Both the publication context and the text of the translations, then, associate Whitman with the emerging avant-gardes in Spain and the rest of Europe, and this new version of Walt Whitman would become an element of Spain’s first avant-garde movement, *Ultraísmo*. In this very same 1912 issue of *Prometeo*, we find a poem by Rafael Cansinos Assens, the man who would go on to found *Ultraísmo*. Some years later, in 1919, Cansinos Assens would also explicitly link *Prometeo* and Whitman both with Futurism and the new aesthetics. He praises *Prometeo* for its introduction of the new aesthetics and Futurism into Spain, writing “The new literary modalities have arrived to us through the intercession of *Prometeo*,” and praises Ramón Gómez de la Serna for having “passionately glossed the Futurist manifestos that Marinetti hurled from his waterlogged Venice.”²¹ “*Prometeo*,” he reiterates, “was among us a manifesto of the new art” (262).²² Then, in an interview for the 1919 issue of the *Ultraísta* magazine *Grecia*, Cansinos Assens explicitly claimed Whitman as an influence on *Ultraísmo*, alongside Marinetti, the Belgian Verhaeren, and the Chilean Vicente Huidobro.²³ So Cansinos Assens was certainly attentive to the way the avant-gardes were reimagining Whitman, and he most certainly read the 1912 translations in *Prometeo*, alongside which his own poem was

published.

The early periodical writings of the movement he founded in Madrid in 1918 bear this connection out, as we see his disciples writing about Whitman in strikingly Futurist and avant-garde terms.²⁴ In the movement's literary and cultural journals, *Ultraísmo* repeatedly returns to Whitman as a metaphor for modernity, and as a marker or signifier of avant-garde aesthetics during the dates of *Ultraísmo* from 1918 through early 1920s. One of these journals was the Seville magazine *Grecia*, which at the time had only recently become a prime disseminator of the avant-garde. In April of 1919, editor Adriano del Valle had written an article called "La Nueva Lirica y la Revista 'Cervantes'" crediting Whitman's "prolific seed" as the source of the new aesthetics sweeping Europe (13).²⁵ In May of the same year, an issue of the monthly *Ultraísta* magazine *Cervantes* (founded by Cansinos Assens) published a centennial homage to Whitman, by future Falangist Eugenio Montes. Montes praises Whitman in avant-garde terms for his portrayal of "multitudes intoxicated with tentacular vitality, new democratic directives, contending and striding war, the skyscraper thirsting for altitude, greedy for stars, the locomotive, swift as an electric message . . ." ²⁶ "The Italian futurists," Montes continues later on, "in the exaltation of the city-like feverishness of the urbe . . . have received fervid impulses [notice his word "impulsos"] from the son of Long Island."²⁷ In 1920, an article in *Cervantes* about Guillermo de Torre—a major player in *Ultraísmo* and a promoter of the Hispanophone avant-gardes—describes de Torre's "epigonic admiration for Whitman, Verhaeren, Marinetti,"²⁸ among others, and argues that Whitman was one of de Torre's aesthetic "evolutionary ancestors";²⁹ and de Torre himself refers to Whitman in his article on the aesthetics of *Ultraísmo* in the same year.³⁰

Whitman's name occurs twice in the October 1921 issue of *Cosmópolis* in ways that reinforce the way avant-garde discourse had fashioned the US poet into a reference point for the new aesthetics. In the issue, two essays by Borges link Whitman with the new aesthetics, even as they reveal the Argentine writer's growing skepticism about the Futurist version of the avant-garde. The first, "A Review of the Landscape" ["Crítica del paisaje"], tellingly snubs the militaristic,

technology-loving Futurist movement as “Whitman badly translated into Italian,”³¹ and the second, “Buenos Aires,” describes the urban landscape of his beloved city (196): “Although at times an occasional skyscraper humbles us,” Borges writes, “the total vision of Buenos Aires is not whitmanian. The horizontal lines defeat the vertical.”³² Here a skyscrapered city would be “whitmanian,” and we see *Ultraísmo* having reimagined Whitman as a poet of urban-industrial modernity.³³

It is in this issue of *Cosmópolis* that we can see how this refashioned avant-garde Whitman spread from Spain to Mexico. In this same issue, October 1921 of *Cosmópolis*, appears a poem by the soon-to-be-founder of the Mexican avant-garde, Manuel Maples Arce. Across the Atlantic, Maples Arce had been reading the journals of *Ultraísmo* and hungrily absorbing everything he could from the global avant-gardes. His first manifesto of *Estridentismo*, or Stridentism, ended with a “Directory of the Avant-Garde” that included basically all the writers mentioned above—men who were writing about Whitman as a precursor to the new aesthetics. In his 1924 book of avant-garde, urban-industrial poems, tellingly titled *URBE*, Maples Arce name-drops Whitman and even claims to have surpassed him.³⁴ In this way, Maples Arce—like the writers of *Ultraísmo*—invokes a father’s blessing for the avant-garde in Mexico. So it is that a refashioned Whitman, an avant-garde Whitman, comes to Mexico not across the more local border but across the Atlantic, fused with Italian Futurism in the pages of *Prometeo* and the other peninsular journals of *Ultraísmo*.

The fifteen pages of the *Prometeo* translations of Whitman raise many questions and offer much material for future investigations; in themselves, they merit a full examination and comparison with Whitman’s text. The text of the poems seems to be that of the 1891-92 *Leaves of Grass*, but there are numerous divergences from the original: apparent mistranslations, elisions, and even the relocation of a line in “Salut au Monde.” Matching these unique characteristics with errata in a reprinted English edition of *Leaves of Grass* or another contemporary published anthology of Whitman’s verse may perhaps reveal which copy Julio Gómez de la Serna used when translating. But more importantly, this minute textual analysis would reveal how Whitman’s text was shaped, changed, and even transformed as it entered the

Spanish language and this proto-avant-garde milieu. Also fascinating for scholars of the global circulation of American literature is that both the Gómez de la Serna brothers went on in the 1950s and 1960s to extensively translate Edgar Allan Poe into Spanish. As such, these two writers and translators represent a major conduit for the further dissemination of American literature into Spain and Latin America. How was their reading of American literature shaped by their early encounters with Whitman or with the avant-gardes? Are there other early translations of Whitman awaiting rediscovery in the archives of Spanish periodicals?

Finally, the story of the *Prometeo* translations of Walt Whitman (and their ripple effects) suggests a network of circulation and appropriation far more complex than heretofore imagined. Whitman moves across the Atlantic, where, linked with Marinetti's Italian Futurism, and translated in *Prometeo*, he gets circulated in an avant-garde context, appropriated by Spanish *Ultraísmo*, and re-circulated across the Atlantic in Peninsular journals read by a Mexican avant-garde writer. So, we can see Whitman's entrance into the Spanish avant-garde as more than a simple translation, just as we can see his appropriation by the Mexican avant-garde as much more than strictly "transamerican." What emerges, then, is a Walt Whitman who is shaped by multiple languages and textual crosscurrents, crossing and recrossing the hemispheres. Yet it is a process that involves the gleaning as much as the making of meaning. Whitman's powerful verse, vision, and persona also have something in them that provokes and inspires, that speaks globally to readers and writers, sending them, as Ultraist Eugenio Montes put it in 1919, "fervid impulses from the son of Long Island."³⁵

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NOTES

1 Only "Salut au Monde" has some seemingly-inconsistent preservation of Whitman's line breaks. Walt Whitman, [Untitled selection of poems], translated by Julio Gómez de la Serna, *Prometeo* 5.36 (1912), 1-15.

2 Armando Vasseur, Preface, *Walt Whitman: Poemas*, translated by Armando

Vasseur (Valencia: F. Sempere y compañía, Editores, 1912), xii. Available on the *Walt Whitman Archive* (www.whitmanarchive.org).

3 Not to be confused with the Anglophone avant-garde known as Modernism, this Hispanophone literary movement flourished in Spain and Latin America from the 1880s through the 1920s, and constituted the generation against which many of the *vanguardias* would rebel.

4 See “Description” of *Prometeo*, *Hemeroteca Digital* (<http://hemerotecadigital.bne.es/details.vm?q=id:0003764048>).

5 Not all supporters of the emerging new art forms embraced either the aesthetic program or the far-right politics that Marinetti became increasingly known for in those years. Even before becoming a fervent promoter of Mussolini and one of the founding figures of Italian Fascism at the close of the 1910s, Marinetti’s chauvinist, pro-military positions were a thorn in the side of many left-leaning avant-gardes. Under the leadership of Marinetti, the Italian Futurists supported Italy’s imperial campaigns in Libya (1909-1911) and its war against Turkey (1911), embracing violence and expansionism as a means of cultural hygiene. Even Marinetti’s 1909 “Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” had already included decidedly racist and misogynist imagery to argue for nationalist rebirth through unbridled technological growth and war. On the complex politics of Futurism, see Emilio Gentile, *The Origins of Fascist Ideology, 1918-1925* (New York: Enigma, 2005), esp. 73-155; Anne Bowler, “Politics as Art: Italian Futurism and Fascism,” *Theory and Society* 20.6 (1991), 763-794; Günter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1901-1944* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996); and Christine Poggi, *Inventing Futurism: The Art and Politics of Artificial Optimism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

6 Ramón Gómez de la Serna, “Proclama Futurista a los Españoles, por F. T. Marinetti, Escrita Expresamente para ‘PROMETEO’” [“Futurist Proclamation to the Spanish, by F. T. Marinetti, Written Expressly for PROMETEO”], *Prometeo* 20 (1910), 518. All historical periodicals discussed herein are available on *Hemeroteca Digital* (hemerotecadigital.bne.es). The original reads: “. . . intersección, chispa, exhalación, texto como de marconigrama ó de algo más sutil volante sobre los mares y sobre los montes! ¡Ala hacia el Norte, ala hacia el Sur, ala hacia el Este y ala hacia el Oeste! ¡Recio deseo de estatura, de ampliación y de velocidad! ¡Saludable espectáculo de aeródromo y de pista desorbitada!”

7 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “We Renounce Our Symbolist Masters, the Last of All Lovers of the Moonlight.” Manifesto included in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “Refusals, Exhortations, and Announcements,” translated by Doug Thompson, *New England Review* 27.3 (2006), 58.

8 Angel Guerra, pseudonym for José Betancourt, “Walt Whitman,” *La España Moderna* 270 (June 1911), 19. The original reads: “lamentablemente, ha encontrado eco también en las extravagancias del poeta *futurista* Marinetti.”

9 Guerra, “Walt Whitman,” 18. The original reads: “Comprende que en el mundo moderno ha surgido otra belleza, anteriormente desconocida, y que de sus entrañas ha surgido una poesía completamente nueva. Comprende el vértigo, y exalta la emoción de la máquina.”

10 In his Preface to *Walt Whitman: Poemas*, Vasseur neutrally acknowledges that the new aesthetics of Futurism have been shaped by Whitman. But his own treatment of Whitman in the introduction compares Whitman to ancient mystical texts like the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, or to figures like Nietzsche and Wagner. He also does not translate “Beginning My Studies,” a poem where—as we will see—Gómez de la Serna’s translation offers a somewhat Futurist interpretation of Whitman.

11 A prolific translator, over his lifetime Julio Gómez de la Serna’s numerous translations include works by Jean Cocteau, Oscar Wilde, Edgar Allan Poe—and even Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*.

12 Walt Whitman, “Shut Not Your Doors,” in *Leaves of Grass* (Philadelphia: David McKay, 1891-92), 17. Hereafter: *LG1892*. Available on the Whitman Archive. Julio Gómez de la Serna, trans., “No Cerreis Vuestras Puertas,” *Prometeo* 36 (1912), 15. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” translated by R.W. Flint. Available on *Italian Futurism* (www.italianfuturism.org). Reproduced from Umbro Apollonio, ed., *Documents of 20th Century Art: Futurist Manifestos*, translated by Robert Brain, R.W. Flint, J.C. Higgitt, and Caroline Tisdall (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 19-24. Indeed, Whitman’s inverted syntax (“Forth from the war emerging, a book I have made”), which buries “war” in the center of the line, becomes in Gómez de la Serna’s translation a statement whose emphasis falls on war: “es un libro, surgido de la guerra” [“it is a book, emerged from the war”].

13 “One’s-Self I Sing,” “Me Imperturbe,” *LG1892*, 9, 16.

14 Marinetti, “We Renounce,” 58.

15 Julio Gómez de la Serna’s translational choices, divergences, and errors are entirely his own. After careful comparison to Gamberale’s 1890-91 *Canti scelti* and his 1907 *Foglie di erba*, as well as Bazalgette’s 1909 *Feuilles d’herbe*, and Montoliu’s 1909 Catalan translation, *Fulles d’Herba*, I found no significant similarities, shared errata or misreadings, or any evidence of influence other than one instance where Gómez de la Serna may have consulted the French translation for Whitman’s obscure phrenological term “constructiveness” in section 10 of “Salut au Monde.”

16 “Beginning My Studies,” *LG1892*, 14.

17 See for instance Marinetti’s later statement that “we are creating a new good, which is speed, and a new evil, which is torpor.” Marinetti, “The New Ethical Religion of Speed,” in Marinetti, “Refusals, Exhortations, and Announcements,”

translated by Doug Thompson, *New England Review* 27.3 (2006), 71.

18 Julio Gómez de la Serna, trans., “Al Empezar Mis Estudios,” *Prometeo* 36 (1912), 13. The line could be rendered back into English: “they produced such respect and such pleasure, that I had hardly walked one part, when suddenly I desired to go with great velocity beyond towards everything, to be able to stand/ stop, meditate among them and afterwards praise everything in ecstatic songs.”

19 “Shut Not Your Doors,” in *LG1892*, 17.

20 Julio Gómez de la Serna, trans., “No Cerreis [sic] Vuestras Puertas,” *Prometeo* 36 (1912), 15.

21 Rafael Cansinos Assens, “El Arte Nuevo: Sus Manifestaciones Entre Nosotros” [“The New Art: Its Manifestations Among Ourselves”], *Cosmópolis* 2 (1919), 262. The original passages read: “Las nuevas modalidades literarias nos han llegado por la intercesión de *Prometeo*” and “glosó apasionadamente los manifiestos futuristas que Marinetti lanzaba desde su encharcada Venecia.”

22 Assens, “El Arte,” 262. The original reads: “*Prometeo* fue entre nosotros un manifiesto de arte nuevo. . . .”

23 Alberto de Segovia, interview of Rafael Cansinos Assens, “Haciéndonos Justicia” [“Doing Us Justice”], *Grecia* 33 (November 20, 1919), 4.

24 As we have seen, this association was gaining currency through Marinetti, and others had perceived a likeness as well, so I am not proposing that Cansinos Assens gets this association entirely from the *Prometeo* translations. Rather, I argue that Gómez de la Serna’s *Prometeo* publication of Whitman forms one important piece of a growing body of consensus among the nascent Hispanophone avant-gardes—a piece that has demonstrable ramifications for global Hispanophone literature.

25 Adriano del Valle, “La Nueva Lirica y la Revista ‘Cervantes,’” *Grecia* 12 (April 1, 1919), 13. Available on *Hemeroteca Digital*. The original reads: “. . . prolífica semilla. . . .”

26 Eugenio Montes, “En el centenario de Walt Whitman” [“On the Centennial of Walt Whitman”], *Cervantes* (May 1919), 73-74. The original reads: “El cantó las multitudes ebrias de vitalidad tentacular, las nuevas directrices democráticas, la guerra propugnante y caminadora, el rascacielos sediento de / altura, ávido de estrellas, la locomotora, veloz como un mensaje eléctrico. . . .”

27 Montes, “En el centenario,” 74. The original reads: “Los futuristas italianos, . . . en la exaltación de la ciudadana febrilidad de la urbe . . . han recibido del hijo de Long-Island impulsos férvidos.”

28 Joaquín de la Escosura, “Guillermo de Torre,” *Cervantes* (October 1920), 88. The original reads: “su epigónica admiración por Whitman, Verhaeren, Marinetti. . . .”

29 Escosura, “Guillermo de Torre,” 94. The original reads: “ascendientes evolutivos. . . .”

30 Guillermo de Torre, “Ultra-manifiestos: estética del yoísmo ultraísta” [“Ultra-Manifestoes: The Esthetic of Ultraist I-ism”], *Cosmópolis* 29 (May 1921), 53.

31 Jorge Luis Borges, “Crítica del Paisaje” [“A Review of the Landscape”], *Cosmópolis* 34 (October 1921), 195-197. The original reads: “Whitman mal traducido al italiano. . . .”

32 Jorge Luis Borges, “Buenos Aires,” *Cosmópolis* 34 (October 1921), 198. The original reads: “Aunque a veces nos humille algún rascacielos, la visión total de Buenos Aires no es whitmaniana. Las líneas horizontales vencen las verticales.”

33 This association should shock readers familiar with Whitman’s verse. Although Whitman wrote appreciatively of the urban life in places like Brooklyn and Manhattan, the US did not see its first skyscraper until toward the end of the poet’s life, well after most of his poetry had been written. The Brooklyn and Manhattan Whitman knew still had pigs eating garbage in the street—a far cry from the ultramodern urbe celebrated by the avant-gardes who appropriated him.

34 Manuel Maples Arce, *URBE: super-poema bolchevique en 5 cantos* [*URBE: Bolshevik Super-Poem in 5 Cantos*] (México: Andres Botas e hijo, 1924), I.

The poem describes “A simultaneous explosion, / of the new theories / a little beyond / Witman [sic] and Turner / and a little nearer / to Maples Arce.”

The original reads: “Explosión simultánea / de las nuevas teorías, / un poco más allá / de Witman [sic] y de Turner / y un poco más acá / de Maples Arce.”

35 Montes, “En el centenario,” 74.