Cuando yo venía en 1916 a América, escribiendo, con la influencia viva del alta mar de un mes de difícil navegación y el recuerdo poético de Una-muno, mi verso libre del Diario, no sabía que en la New York que me esperaba tendría pronto conmigo un montón de libros que expresaban la poesía en forma análoga a la que yo estaba escribiendo: North of Boston, The Man Against the Sky, Spoon River Anthology, The Congo, Sword Blades and Poppy Seed, Renascence and Other Poems, [y más]. Yo, renaciendo en mí mismo desde años antes, sentí como propio este renacimiento de la poesía de los Estados Unidos, equivalente en tanto al de la española.

When I came to America in 1916, I was writing my book of free verse Diary of a Newlywed Poet, and I was still under the influence of a month of difficult navigation on the high seas and my poetic memory of [Miguel de] Una-muno. I had no idea that the New York that awaited me would already have a stack of books awaiting whose poets expressed themselves in forms analogous to my own: [Robert Frost’s] North of Boston, [E.A. Robinson’s] The Man Against the Sky, [Edgar Lee Masters’s] Spoon River Anthology, [Vachel Lindsay’s] The Congo, [Amy Lowell’s] Sword Blades and Poppy Seed, [Edna St. Vincent Millay’s] Renascence and Other Poems, and more. Being reborn in myself during those years, I felt this rebirth of American poetry as if it were my own—much as I did the rebirth of Spanish poetry.

—Juan Ramón Jiménez (Política poética 184)

IN THE SPANISH POET Juan Ramón Jiménez’s mind, the moment at which he was “reborn” in American modernism in 1916 was one point of intersection—albeit a very important one—in a centuries-old history of modernism that crossed linguistic, national, temporal, and formal boundaries. In his critical writings over
the next four decades, Jiménez elaborated a theory of modernism as an inter-
connected plurality that both illuminates and complicates some of the prevail-
ing methodological questions of recent English- and Spanish-language modern-
ivist studies. Jiménez, who was Spain’s leading poet for most of the 1910s and 1920s
and later a Nobel laureate, is traditionally seen as the most vital bridge between
the end of Hispanophone modernismo in Spain and an era of the country’s litera-
ture whose best-known figures came from the Generation of ‘27 (Federico García
Lorca, Jorge Guillén, Rafael Alberti, and others). But in the passage above, he
writes himself into an English-language modernist movement in the U.S., where
he traveled in 1916 and composed his experimental semi-epic Diario de un poeta
recien casado [Diary of a Newlywed Poet, 1917]. By weaving together expanded vari-
ations on modernismo and modernism in multiform acts of translation across his
career, Jiménez formulates an idea of their imbrication (and the gaps between
them). This schema offers scholars both a way to address familiar notions involv-
ing the correlation of the two movements and an opportunity to rethink them
as part of the dynamic sphere of global circulation. He allows us to ask, that is,
whether his role in these movements and his notion of their interconnections have
remained unrecognized primarily because of the segmented ways in which we
have conceived of modernismo and modernism. What context and depth might his
own ranging and revisionary genealogies of modernism give to our contemporary
readings of a figure like him? What would be the consequences—positive and
negative—if the historiographical practices of modernist studies across languages
were to open themselves up more fully, as Jiménez does, to distinct but symbiotic
and sometimes controversial accounts of its origins and diffusion?

Jiménez broached these possibilities over a half-century ago by using the Span-
ish word modernismo to denote a polyglot genealogy of literature and thought that
signifies something similar to what many Anglophone critics now mean by “mod-
ernism” as a global phenomenon.1 He traces modernism through French symbol-
ism, for instance, but immediately argues that “simbolismo [es] mal llamado
francés, ya que Francia lo copió de Estados Unidos (Poe), Alemania (sobre todo
Wagner) y España (San Juan de la Cruz en la magnífica traducción del monje de
Solesmes)” (Modernismo 4; symbolism is wrongly called “French,” because France
copied it from the U.S. [Poe], Germany [above all Wagner], and Spain [St. John
of the Cross in the great translation done by the monk of Solesmes]). Further-
more, Jiménez not only finds “Castilian mysticism” within French symbolism, but
also asks if anything is “more symbolist” than the Arabic-Andalusian poetry of
medieval southern Spain. This essay unpacks Diary and Jiménez’s critical self-
inscriptions as key sites for reimagining some theoretical and linguistic quandari-
ies surrounding his unorthodox set of visions and rubrics. By pairing his journey
from Spain to the U.S. and back with his shifting connections to modernismo,
American (U.S.) modernism, Parnassianism, Spanish post-romanticism, “mystical
modernism,” and other movements, Jiménez attempts to inhabit modernisms in
several languages not just by imitating or adopting foreign influences but, rather,

1 The bibliography of criticism on the transnational turn in Anglophone modernist studies is
now very extensive. The best overview is Wollaeger, “Introduction.” With regard to Spain and Span-
ish-language modernisms, sec, inter alia, Bretz; Geist and Monleón; Mainer; Rodríguez García;
Rogers; Soufas.
by combining citations, allusions, translations, and cross-linguistic poetics. *Diary* is an experiential, hybridizing text, a “provisional” work (as Jiménez calls it) that belongs to no single poetic movement. Through it, we can test the boundaries of both *modernismo* and “modernism” writ large and theorize the ways in which they are comparatively situated. That is, both *Diary* and Jiménez’s theories of *modernismo* and modernism implicitly argue against the impulse simply to add the poet—especially since his works are mostly available in English translation now—to the global modernist canon that remains Anglophone at its core. Rather, these textual experiments in creating an international, multi-linguistic poetic heritage prompt us to think about how to write a literary history of texts in motion, never settled, always translating and translated—a history of literary motion between languages and places, not a history of sites and productions alone.

Jiménez argues that *modernismo* and many other modernisms are continually reshaped—unequally and surprisingly—in ways that are variously familiar, surprising and defamiliarizing, and Hispanophilic and plainly self-serving. Furthermore, he posits a broad, underacknowledged relationship between Anglo- and Hispanophone poetics that developed after the Spanish-American War of 1898 and culminated in the mobile poetics of literary exchange that *Diary*, written in what he sees as the literary wake of the war, exemplifies. Understanding the implications of his works and theories requires thinking about the transnational or global turn beyond Anglophone literary studies not in order to extrapolate a new gestalt from his work or from the relationship between these two movements that it exhibits, but rather to reconstruct their interlacing as a means of demonstrating a translational, comparative approach to international modernist studies. He privileges neither language nor nation, neither genre nor theme—though these all remain important—but instead, bidirectional exchange and boundary-crossings as foundations for modernist literary history. The potentialities and drawbacks of this approach, I argue, lie in its position between previous accounts of modernisms bounded by temporalities and national/linguistic borders and the evolving contemporary pluralist, global theories of today.


In the past two decades, the origins and constitution of Hispanophone *modernismo* (roughly the 1880s to 1910s) have been debated as vitally—and often with the same political stakes—as those of Anglophone modernism and many other roughly coeval global movements. *Modernismo*, traditional literary histories suggest, was a movement originating in the Spanish American world of the 1880s and arguably initiated by the Cuban poet José Martí. It was first crystallized in the Nicaraguan writer Rubén Darío’s *Azul* . . . (1888), given its name and sense in an 1890 essay of Darío’s, then faded in the 1910s with the rise of various avant-gardes and the death of Darío in 1916. As the first pan-Spanish American literary movement, it blended European and local sources in a reaction primarily against naturalism and positivism, and it was highlighted by such figures as Julián del Casal, Salvador Díaz-Mirón, and José Asunción Silva. Generally speaking, *modernismo* privileged ornate, strictly rhymed, and formally complex verse, and its sensibilities
were spiritual, angst-ridden, mythological, and escapist—full of ennui and enervation inherited in part from Verlaine and Baudelaire. As Matei Calinescu writes, “the spirit of Darío’s modernism implied a downright rejection of Spain’s cultural authority. The refreshing, ‘modernizing’ French influence (combining the major postromantic trends, Parnassian, decadent, and symbolist) was consciously and fruitfully played off against the old rhetorical clichés that prevailed in the Spanish literature of the time” (69). After gaining momentum in the Americas, modernismo then spread—surprisingly, Alejandro Mejías-López has argued—across a “transatlantic field” to Spain, where it influenced Jiménez, Antonio Machado, Jacinto Benavente, and Ramón del Valle-Inclán, among others. Despite the thematic, formal, epistemological, technical, and philosophical parallels between modernismo and Anglophone modernism, their relationship has remained a vexing issue for both Spanish and English critics. Octavio Paz best framed the reasons that modernismo has been so elusive, noting its peculiarly anti-modern modernity, its paradoxical attitude toward Europe (embracing derivation while sometimes rejecting the Old World), and its cosmopolitanism blended with indigenous elements (see Los Hijos). Gerard Aching explains that modernismo has been isolated amid the fields of modernist studies, comparative literature, and world literature, often because scholars have misunderstood its engagements with Paris and misread the politics of its New World elitist aestheticism. Furthermore, it is only roughly coeval with modernism: modernismo was waning just as Anglophone high modernism was cresting, and contacts among writers from these movements were relatively sparse. As Mejías-López, Mary Lee Bretz, and others have pointed out, modernismo has been sometimes included, at other times excluded, from Anglophone accounts of (implicitly Euro-American) “modernism,” or sometimes described, in somewhat misleading terms, as “Spanish-American modernism” or “Hispanic modernism” (see Bretz; Mejías-López, Inverted). Two decades ago, Astradur Eysteinsson claimed on the first page of The Concept of Modernism that the differences between modernism and modernismo were “too many to warrant their critical coalescence” (1 n.1), while the two-volume synoptic Modernism collection that he and Vivian Liska edited in 2007 devotes a chapter to modernismo’s place within an international modernism (see Jrade, “Spanish-American”). Meanwhile, a number of Spanish-language critics have resisted situating modernismo within paradigms of global modernisms that have been defined largely by their Anglo-American peers, worrying that the term loses its distinction in such an imperializing gesture. Modernismo—both as a movement and as a term—

2 See Mejías-López, The Inverted Conquest, who takes an opposing view to that of Richard Cardwell (see below). Although some critics question generalizations such as those I have given above, I do not have the space here to explore fully the implications of their arguments, nor is it my aim to settle longstanding questions about whether modernismo was “a” modernism. An incomplete bibliography of these and other contestations of modernismo, modernism, and modernity would include the following studies in English and Spanish, here listed in roughly chronological order: Onís; Castillo; Rama; Jitrik; Gutiérrez Girardot; Kirkpatrick; Gullón; Zavala; Cardwell and McGuirk; Pérez de Mendiola; Aching, Politics; Jrade, Modernismo; Llopesa; Suárez Miramón; Gabilondo; and Orringer. On modernismo and postcolonial literatures, see especially Hanneken.

3 “Temporalities” 109–17. For decades, some critics have dismissed modernismo as a derivative and belated expression of French symbolism. Aching argues that, instead, modernistas deterritorialized the putative centrality of Paris by restaging their own peripherality.
predated the English-language modernism that, in its expanded definitions, has often tried to subsume it. Hispanophone critics have also pointed to the linguistic challenge that the modernismo/modernism question presents to their scholarship. In English, it suffices to write modernismo (adding an “o” and using italics) to indicate a different object of study than the familiar (Anglo-American) modernism, but Spanish-language critics working in Anglo-dominant contexts must continually specify that their references to modernismo differ from those to modernismo británico, modernismo norteamericano, modernismo anglosajón (literally, “Anglo-Saxon,” but with the sense of “Anglophone”), or “modernism” (in quotation marks, with an explanation of the referent). Furthermore, the Brazilian avant-garde of the 1920s is also known in Portuguese and Spanish as modernismo, while still another Catalan movement was called modernisme, both of which prompt further investigation of the term’s definitional divisions that I cannot address adequately here.

Jiménez’s early-career role as a Spanish modernista and his debt to Darío have been noted, and he is also known for having incorporated many foreign influences, Anglophone and otherwise, in his poetry (see Gullón, Juan Ramón Jiménez; and Cardwell). But his poetic/critical manner of navigation between English- and Spanish-language movements has received little attention. These crossings began as literary preoccupations that would eventually bear upon his travels. He came from a country that was, at best, on the margins of the Euro-American republic of letters in the early twentieth century. Furthermore, he came from a marginalized province within Spain: Andalusia, whose Moorish and gypsy influences led to centuries of racist dismissals both by its compatriots and by other Europeans. As a self-styled “universal Andalusian,” Jiménez always had a worldly poetic scope and cosmopolitan sensibilities. The influences upon his early poetry were often foreign, usually Anglo-American, French, German, Italian, and Spanish American. As a poet still in his teens, he received a card from Rubén Darío, who had just come to Madrid from Latin America, inviting him to come “fight for the cause of modernismo” (Fredmore 24). Jiménez enthusiastically joined this crusade, which not only brought together Hispanophone writers from across the Atlantic, but also prided itself on its contacts with foreign literatures. Jiménez understood that he was destined to be the “successor of Rubén Darío, just as Darío was the successor of [Gustavo Adolfo] Bécquer” (Política 184). He soon spearheaded the founding of the modernista periodical Helios in 1903, and, after furiously publishing eight books of poetry between 1908 and 1912, he became one of the most influential poets in Spain.

Still frustrated with what he saw as the insular and isolated literary cultures of his native country, however, he desired a larger, more diverse cultural atmosphere for his work and wanted to disseminate foreign literatures further in Spain. In keeping with these goals, Jiménez and a collective of Spanish writers used Helios and other media to publish Anglophone texts in translation. English-language poetry is more “concentrated, natural, and everyday,” he wrote, and he believed that “English romanticism is the best moment of universal romantic poetry” (qtd. in Young, “Anglo-American” 2; qtd. in Young, Line 72). Jiménez thus sought to extend the pan-American links between Hispanophone and Anglophone literatures that his modernista colleagues had made by linking Spain to the U.S., adding to both of them the emphasis on popular, vernacular poetic forms and simplified prose poetry that José María Rodríguez García has noted in non-modernista
Hispanic modernisms (8). Sailing between Spain and the Americas made him realize that his view of modernismo was translingual, grounded in the abandonment of the octosyllabic verses and romance styles of his early work in favor of the “denuded” or “pure” song and free verse he launched in Diary (see Jiménez, “To Figuera” and “To Neruda”).

The “obliged deserter of Andalusia,” as he called himself, found an ideal opportunity for this task: in 1913, he had met his future wife Zenobia Camprubí Aymar. The Barcelona-born Camprubí came from a wealthy, distinguished family with roots in Spain, Puerto Rico, and New York. She was fluent in both English and Spanish, studied at Columbia University, and spent a great deal of time at her family’s home in New York. Their courtship and relationship was marked by a love of Anglophone literature and the practice of translation. In 1914, while they were collecting English-language books, Jiménez and his “americanita” Camprubí translated Yeats (who influenced him greatly), Blake, Frost, AE, and a great deal of Tagore into Spanish (see Pérez Romero). Finally, in January 1916, he sailed to New York to marry her. Much of their honeymoon would be spent continuing their voracious collecting, reading, and translating of books by Poe, Keats, Whitman, Dickinson, and Amy Lowell, among others. They traveled from Boston to Philadelphia to Baltimore to Washington, D.C., visited the homes and graves of famous American authors, and frequented places such as New York’s Authors’ Club and Cosmopolitan Club, where Jiménez met a number of leading American poets.

This trip came just as Jiménez’s interest in modernismo was waning (and, unbeknownst to him, Dario was near death), and he was searching for new forms of expression. He came to realize that he preferred Anglophone poetry to French, as the latter appeared to him too decadent and pessimistic. In comparison to Romance-language poets, figures ranging from Francis Thompson to Robert Browning to Edna St. Vincent Millay “me parecieron más directos, más libres, más modernos, unos en su sencillez y otros en su complicación” (Crítica paralela 181; appeared to me more direct, freer, more modern—some in their simplicity, others in their complexity), with what he called a “Northern” musicality and psychological exploration in verse. He later spoke of his 1916 experience:

Y ahora comprendo lo beneficioso que fue para mí ese viaje. Lo curioso es que yo presentí esa influencia, desde que puse pie en el barco. . . . Yo era un platónico, un simbolista, un idealista desde niño, pero quería serlo natural con mi palabra corriente, sin greco-latinismo, ni Renacimiento italiano, ni simbolismo francés. Yo quería ser andaluz, español, universal a un tiempo, pero siempre de mi día. Por eso me gustó siempre publicar mis versos en los periódicos diarios, que es donde debían publicarse. En los Estados Unidos siempre estoy en mi día. (Alerta 70)

And now I understand the benefits of that voyage for me. What is curious is that this influence appeared to me since I set foot on the boat. . . . I was a Platonist, a symbolist, an idealist since childhood, but I wanted to be mature with my current idiom, without Greco-Latinism, without the Italian Renaissance, without French symbolism. I wanted to be Andalusian, Spanish, and universal at the same time, but always of my moment. For this reason, it pleased me to publish my verses in daily papers, where they ought to have been published. In the U.S. I am always in my moment.

In the U.S., Jiménez claims, he seized upon a form and idiom that existed between languages and between places, between his Spanish roots, the success of the poetic-prose simplicity of his popular works such as Platero y yo (1914), and his English-language and “universal” preoccupations. The result was multigeneric and anthological.
Among Literatures: Diary of a Newlywed Poet

These various transnational threads of literary history, Jiménez believed, were most fully entwined in his own work, and, although Diary of a Newlywed Poet is credited with having developed a new mode of Spanish-language symbolism, its internationalist contexts and poetics remain mostly unexplored. The collection of over 240 formal and free verse poems, prose-poems, impressionistic journal entries, aphorisms, reflections on literary histories, imagined dialogues, citations, commentaries on contemporary letters, notes of cultural anthropology, and translations is far from a typical modernista work, especially those works that appeared in the 1890s. Instead, it stands at the chronological, generic, and formal edges of modernismo and, at the same time, on several borders of Anglophone modernism’s prevailing trends. The work spans the ten months of Jiménez’s transatlantic voyage, his stay in the U.S., and his return to southern Spain. His developing poetic identity becomes the site of translingual poetic exchange, and Diary is at different moments linear or recursive, spontaneous or molded into intricate shapes, fluid or fragmented, formal or experimental (with poems titled “No!”, “Yes!”, and “...?” and copies of advertisements from American buildings and signs). Some titles are in English; some quotations are given in English and parenthetically translated into Spanish by the poet himself. Its movements across literary history are heterogeneous, too: formal and affective traits of modernismo stand next to an updated English romanticism.

The schematic structure of Diary clarifies some of the ways in which Jiménez sought simultaneously to continue and to renovate the vast multilingual poetic heritage that preceded him. The first five parts of the book follow his actual journey, the sixth his mental wandering back to the U.S.; thus, his “rebirth” within U.S. modernism seems presaged from the very start of the book. From the opening section, “Hacia el mar” (“Toward the Sea”), set in Jiménez’s native Andalusia, we are led to expect a formally conservative collection of poems—simple rhymes, naturalistic imagery. But anxiety jolts the poet-narrator when (at poem #20), the New World first appears through technology, conjuring for him both excitement and longing: “Dos cables: ‘Madre, Novia: Moguer, Long-Island; Flushing: Naufragué, en tierra, en mar de amor’” (Diary 117; “Two cablegrams: ‘Mother, Fiancée: Moguer, Long-Island; Flushing: I am shipwrecked on land in a sea of love,’” Diary 116). Here, Jiménez casts his poetics across languages and geographies with techniques he will employ throughout the collection. The Spanish original includes both a loose sonic turn between “Flushing” and “Naufragué” and a half-rhyme around the consonant “m” in Spanish with “en mar de amor.” As he boards the ship in Part 2, “El amor en el mar” (“Love at Sea”), he initiates a transatlantic voyage that allows his feelings of love to turn to paralysis in a manner that might seem to move the text toward a modernista stylistics:

El agua, férrea,
parece un duro campo llano,
de minas agotadas,
en un arruinamiento
de ruinas.
¡Nada! La palabra, aquí, encuentra hoy, para mí, su sitio,
como un cadáver de palabra
But immediately after this seamless shift from a familiar romantic yearning and despair to existential doubt and anguish, Jiménez can no longer find poetic inspiration around him. He sees no Cervantine “La Mancha of water,” instead only a “desierto de ficciones líquidas” (“desert of liquid fictions”) as he imagines Don Quixote trailing into the sunset on the sea. He complains, in late modernista language, “¡Qué malestar, qué sed, qué estupor duro, / entre esta confusión de sol y nube, / de azul y luna, de la aurora / retardada! / Escalofrío. Pena aguda . . .” (111; “What malaise, what thirst, what harsh stupor / amidst this turbulence of sun and cloud, / blueness and moon, of dawn / delayed! / Severe chills. Sharp pain . . .”) 110). Or elsewhere, “¡Qué peso aquí en el corazón inquieto / —peso de mar o tierra—, / de arriba y de debajo!” (161; “What heaviness here in my anguished heart / —heaviness of sea or land—, / from high above and from below!” 160). The narrative approaches the United States primed for an injection of new material, new forms, new life.

The monotonous voyage is contrasted by what he calls his “Llegada ideal” (“Ideal Arrival”) in America, where it “[p]arece que lo estuviera viendo Turner con nosotros” (171; “seems like Turner is viewing it alongside us,” 170); here, Turner’s name is partially rhymed later in the line with the keyword “venir,” to come. Jiménez’s series of poetic masks and morphing voices light on the sublime as the British Turner’s watercolors become in the book’s first extended prose-poem the American melting pot, and then are blended with symbolic colors: “¡Qué alegre el rojo, encendido con el rosa, de los salvavidas; qué dulce el blanco, encendido con el rosa, de la borda; el negro de esa negra, el aceituna de ese japonés; cuán bellos todos los ojos, todos los cabellos, todas la bocas con sol poniente. ¡Qué hermanos todos—negros, blancos y amarillos—, en la alegría!” (171; “How lively the red is, color heightened by the pink on the lifebelts; how sweet the white, heightened by the pink on the railing; the black of that black woman, the olive of that Japanese man; how lovely all their eyes, all their hair, all their mouths lit against the setting sun. What brotherhood—blacks, whites, yellows—in this happy moment!” 170; translation modified). This vision jars him, for it “parece una canción levantada de un sueño, y nosotros sus heroes” (171; “resembles a song emerging from a dream, with us as its heroes,” 170). This brief glimpse of racial coexistence and international camaraderie takes him in turn back to romantic poetry—specifically, an allusion to Keats:

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4 I borrow this characterization of a hallmark of modernista poetry from Shaw 33.
Sí, somos la verdad, la belleza, la estrofa eterna que perdura, cogida con la rima, en el centro más bello y entrevisto de una poesía eterna que conocemos siempre, y que siempre estamos esperando, nueva, conocer—¿el segundo cuarteto de un puro soneto marino?—¿Dónde estamos? ¿De qué tiempo somos? ¿De qué novela hemos salido? ¿Somos una estampa? ¿Llegamos? (171)

Yes, we are the truth, the beauty, the eternal strophe that endures, captured in the rhyme scheme, in the most beautiful perceived center of an eternal poetry that we have always been aware of, and with which, anew, we eternally hope to be conversant—is it the second quatrains of a pristine aquatic sonnet?—Where are we? In what period of time? Out of what novel have we come? Are we a painting? Are we landing? (170; translation modified)

The recourse to English romanticism is not merely an indication of Jiménez’s predilections. Spain had no romantic poetic tradition (or a faint one at best); such allusions fill this gap in a modernista fashion and inscribe his Spanish verses into a transnational history that he will continue to expand in his critical writings.

The poet sees himself and his companions on the ship as characters in both a work of art and in fiction. This imagined union of life and art is the key to Jiménez’s effort to figure himself into literary history. The union is not easy; he remains disoriented. Lost in his art and in his arrival, he concludes, “[e]l papel se me cae . . . Ya no sé escribir” (173; “[m]y sheet of paper falls from my hand . . . I don’t know how to write any longer,” 172). The wordplay here lies in “papel,” which is both “a piece of paper” and “a role”: he is a poet lost in time and space, without direction, newly arrived in America. These visions of a poetic/fictional self merging into an infinite world continue when Jiménez writes, “Estoy en todo, y nada es todavía / sino el puerto del sueño. / [. . .] Estoy ya en el centro / en donde lo que viene y lo que va / unen desilusiones / de llegada y partida” (183; “I am part of everything, and nothingness is still / only the port of dreams. [. . .] I am already at the center / in which whatever comes and whatever leaves / combines disillusionments / of arrivals and departures,” 182).

Upon arriving in the U.S. in Part 3, he also learns that his one-time mentor Rubén Darío has just died in Nicaragua. Darío’s imprint remains large in Diary: the word “azul” (“azure”), which signals Darío’s Azul . . ., occurs some thirty times. But Jiménez must now forge his post-Dario reputation, one distinct from an early mode of “expressing the crisis of personality through symbolic vocabulary” that was indebted to his forebear (Predmore 48), and differentiate himself through his poeticizing of a new set of experiences and literary readings—the two remain inseparable for him—in the eastern U.S. The hints at a blending of Anglo- and Hispanophone worlds that Diary has granted thus far will now be fleshed out as more quotations and literary figures merge in the text. This process begins with an exploration of “Physical Culture” and decay among the gritty, smoky landscapes of American metropolises. In keeping with the literal and figurative transitions that characterize the text, many of the poems in Part 3 are written from carriages, trains, or taxis. The poet describes an “Urban Tunnel” in Boston as

Blanco y negro, pero sin contraste. Blanco sucio y negro sucio, con la hermandad de lo astroso. . . . Nada da la sensación de que en parte alguna—dentro, encima, al borde—haya vidas con pensamientos y sentimientos de colores, con sentidos corporales. . . . Todo es confusión, difuso, monótono, seco, frío y sucio a un tiempo, negro y blanco, es decir, negro, sin hora ni contagio. (195)

White and black, but without contrast. Dirty white and dirty black, in a brotherhood of the shabby. . . . Nothing gives the impression that anywhere—within, up above, on the edges—there is life with thinking or a semblance of colors, with corporal senses. . . . Everything is confusion, diffusion, monotony, barren, cold and dirt at one and the same time, white and black, which is to say, black, timeless and incommunicable. (194)
Far removed from the princesses and swans of modernismo or Parnassianism, he sees cemeteries, advertisements, and landfills, and his mind turns to Anglophone poetry. While on a train from Boston to New York, he thinks of the “false” and artificial poetry of the “New England poets,” whom he did not appreciate: “Long-fellow, Lowell, Bryant, Aldrich—a cloudless green sky. Without trees.” They were poets, in other words, who could create nothing from the barren American landscape. Jiménez calls to mind instead those who can; he quotes (in English) from Amy Lowell’s imagistic “A Winter Ride”—“Who shall declare the joy of the running!” (202)—and cites as a predecessor of hers Francis Thompson’s “To a Snowflake.” In between, he alludes obliquely to Poe—“sin corneja. Pintura solo” (203; “no crow in sight. Painting, nothing more,” 202)—and, as he looks upon a “desert of rose-colored sand” and “strange shadows,” he asks himself, “Emily Dickinson?” The sand and desert, the shadows and light blend together as he falls asleep on a train and the disorientation deepens. He believes for a moment that he is back in Spain: “¿Sevilla? ¿Triana? ¡Ah... no! [ ... ] ¿Cádiz? ¡New London! / ¿Huelva? ... ¡New York, maravillosa New York! ¡Presencia tuya, olvido de todo!” (201, 205; “Seville? Triana? Ah... no! [ ... ] Cadiz? ... New London! / Huelva? ... New York, marvelous New York! In your presence, I forget everything else!” 200, 204). The juxtapositions and lines of connection among these poets and places will be elaborated in his critical outlines of modernismo: modernismo and modernism, reconfigured as they both are in Diary, will find their dialogic expression, he believes, in his own poetic idiom.

“One book”: On Being Spanish and American

For Jiménez, the only way to make sense of American modernity and to craft his transnational poetic persona is to immerse himself in the clash of the new and the ancient—of life, death, blood, phantasms, and love—that he finds in New York. New York is his inroad to American modernism and its diverse sources. He asserts that to live in New York “es para mí vivir en el lugar más completo de hoy, . . . la ciudad que con todos sus defectos y por ellos es la que corresponde al hombre actual que yo siempre he querido ser y que no he podido ser, por desequilibrio exterior e interior” (Alerta 53; is for me to live in the most complete place of our day, . . . the city which, with all of its defects, and because of them, corresponds most to the actual man that I always wanted to be and which I could never be, because of my exterior/interior imbalances). Seeking perspective, he first climbs to the top of the Woolworth Building, the highest building in the world at the time, and writes the poem “New Sky,” which he dedicates to the philosopher José Ortega y Gasset. Here, he looks back at Europe from the New World and imagines a “new sky... / even without names!”—a land “sin historias” (“without histories,” with the additional sense of “without stories” [Diary 211]). He looks back to Spain again several times, then looks to Asia, then imagines characters from Goya’s paintings coming alive in New York and ponders a Velázquez at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In “Garcilaso in New York,” dedicated to Archer Milton Huntington (founder of the Hispanic Society of America in 1904), Jiménez places the sixteenth-century Spanish sonneteer and translator Garcilaso de la Vega in modern-day New York. As he reads his distant compatriot’s works, he realizes “¡Sí! ¡Yo
he sido! ¡Yo he sido! ¡Yo he sido!” (259; “Yes! I am whole! I am whole! I am whole!” 258). In other words, what makes him “whole” is that he has transported his Spanish poetic heritage to the U.S. and merged it with the modern chaos he sees around him, initiating what Lorca will do more famously in Poet in New York (1929–30) by portraying in a Spanish idiom multicultural, multiethnic New York as the ultimate amalgam of modernity.

The backdrop for these insights and these sometimes frenetic alternations between Spanish and American literature is, at the same time, an otherwise tranquil spring day. This spring brings to mind a “Tarjeta en la primavera de un amigo bibliófilo” (“Calling Card in Springtime from a Bibliophile Friend”), a two-line work with Conrad’s famous exclamation from Kurtz (“Horror!”) interjected mid-poem, and a vision of “one book” composed of several languages. The vision leads him to blend further Spanish and U.S. literary worlds. He looks out his window on Eleventh Street and—seeing “such a vast sea with a yellow moon / between us both, Spain!”—thinks of “the solitary moon” that “is dying, shattered, oh Poe!, over Broadway” (218). Here again, his Spanish ¡oh Poe! sobre Broadway presents a sonorous long “o” across two languages and a slant rhyme on the third and fourth words, linking his debt to Poe and to New York through subtle cross-linguistic play. Poe, who had lived in New York briefly in his twenties, then spent parts of his final years at a cottage in the Bronx, is one of Jiménez’s self-created avatars for his poetic experiment, a notion to which he returns at the end of his book. Later, he ponders “¿El cielo? Un incoloro color más, para hacer, en franjas iguales, una bandera —enseña de lo mortal— con la cortina azul a un tercio de ventana y, a dos tercios, la cortina amarilla. / El cuervo dice: Nada más” (295; “The sky? One colorless color more to fabricate a flag with even fringes—the emblem of mortality—with the blue curtain over a third of the window, and two-thirds up, the yellow curtain. / Quoth the raven: Nevermore,” 294). Jiménez’s fixation on cemeteries—“The most attractive thing about America for me is the charm of its cemeteries,” he writes—brings to mind Edgar Lee Masters, and, as Graciela Nemes de Palau notes, he fuses this meditation with the oceanic themes of the book in a manner that resembles his interpretations of Valéry’s “Le cimetière marin” (200). He sees a “cheerful cemetery” that is “como el de Spoon River, en la colina que pisa y levemente la primavera, al otro lado, el más bello siempre” (287; “like the one in Spoon River, it is situated on a hill that spring is just touching, on the other side, the most beautiful side, the side toward the river,” 286). He quotes Lope de Vega and Shakespeare next to one another and even ponders his own poetry’s circulation in the English-language world by criticizing the first published English translations of his poems.

Just as these literary spheres seem to be merging, however, Jiménez abruptly sails back to Spain. The return trip in Part 4 presents a different, unfamiliar sea with a “extraño idioma informe” (“strange unformed language,” 355). He again dedicates many poems to the sea and to the night, adding in several nocturnes, but the mood is altered. When he finally sees “Golden Iberia,” he seems to find himself whole again and declares, “¡Ya somos! ¡Ya soy!” (407; “Yes. Now we are! Now I am!” 406). His poetic repertory has indelibly changed, however; despite the temporary thrill of “My fatherland and my soul!,” his instinct the following morning is to translate not a Spanish poem, but Robert Browning’s “Parting at Morning” (414), placing it “here, at this point on the planet” because it “persists in my mind and in my heart.” Browning’s poem reads:
Round the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain’s rim:
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

Jiménez renders the final line “Y un fatal mundo de hombres para mí,” nihilistically shifting the “need of a world” to a sense of an “awful,” “dire,” or “mortal” world that his Spanish “fatal” implies. Feeling alien in his native land, Jiménez takes a lengthy mental voyage back across the Atlantic for the final section, “Recuerdos de América del Este escritos en España” (“Memories of the Eastern United States Written in Spain”). He returns to Dickinson now, translating stanzas 2, 27, and 55 of her “The Single Hound”—three stanzas that fit his journey and themes, highlighted by lines such as “The Soul that hath a Guest / Doth seldom go abroad”—(which he translates as “El Alma que tiene Huésped / rara vez sale de Sí”) and “The Gleam of an heroic Act / Such strange illumination / The Possible’s slow fuse is lit / By the Imagination” (“¡Resplandor de un acto heroico! / ¡Qué extraña iluminación! / —La mecha lenta del Puede / prende en la Imaginación.—”). Throughout the translations, Jiménez attempts to replicate Dickinson’s idiosyncratic capitalization, her alliteration, and even some of the Anglicisms in her diction.

Later in this final section, his poem “Boston on Sunday” has distinct echoes of Dickinson in its punctuation: “Las flores ordenadas—tulipanes, junquillos, azaleas—miran—como en altares hacia afuera—por los cristales morados, par aver a las estatuas—¡horror!—, a la ardillas, a los gorriones, a las palomas y a nosotros dos” (453; “The flowers all in order—tulips, jonquils, azaleas—look—through the purple windowpanes, as though on altars outside—to see the statues—what horror!—, the squirrels, the sparrows, the pigeons and the two of us,” 452). His memories of the U.S. are not all positive; he believes that his American peers are overlooking the best writers among them. He mocks the Cosmopolitan Club and the National Arts Club but reserves his greatest contempt for the stuffy pretentions of the Authors Club: “Creí siempre que en New York pudiera no haber poetas. Lo que no sospechaba es que hubiese tantos poetas malos, ni un tugurio como éste” (465; “I always thought that in New York there might not be any poets. What I didn’t suspect was there were so many bad poets, not even in a dive like this one,” 464). He is appalled that its members, who are half-rate poets, believe themselves to be modern-day versions of Poe and Whitman, while disparaging Robinson, Frost, Masters, Lindsay, and Amy Lowell. Furious, he even imagines burning the place to the ground.

This cacophonous mixture of registers and sites concludes the book. Jiménez describes Whitman’s birthplace and copies the plaque at the house. He also copies a “For Sale or Rent” sign in Philadelphia and a bulletin from a church service led by a disciple of Billy Sunday, the baseball player-turned-preacher who weaves baseball metaphors throughout his sermons. His last task is to find Poe’s house, but “there is no guide.” He knows that it exists somewhere in New York—“I see it, I have seen it in a street”—but he will have to remain content, in keeping with the premise of Part 6, with its existence only in memory (486). He ends with an author’s note stating that, because “Este Diario, más que ninguna otra obra mía, es un libro provisional” (“this Diary, more than any other work of mine, is provisional”), it will likely be altered in the future. “No sé lo que será. Sé que, hoy, me
parece este libro mío un boceto de él mismo” (“I don’t know what it will become. I do know that today this book of mine seems like a rough draft of itself”), he confesses, one that was written “para libertarme, por este lado del alma y del cuerpo, del mí reciente, molesto y sin revisión por ahora, de hace solo un año” (493; “to free myself from this side of my soul and body, of the recent me, troubled and without changes for now, of only a year ago,” 492). The text was never altered—in published form at least—but it was extended and explicated through Jiménez’s criticism. His critical accounts, that is, constitute an expansion of the open-ended text that he abandoned in 1916–17.

Jiménez described his *Diary* as a book of “surprise and skepticism,” and the phenomena that “surprised” him in the U.S. were ones that he found anew, across the Americas and in Spain, for decades (*Alerta* 61). But the effects of Jiménez’s journey to America—and across literary traditions—on his subsequent writings are difficult to judge. He did move away from romantic or ornamented styles and toward what he called a *poesía pura* [“pure poetry” or “naked poetry”] that is similar to Imagism in its distilled, concentrated form of simplicity. But from 1923 to 1936 (when the Spanish Civil War forced him to flee the country), he published no books of new poems, only individual verses in periodicals or collections of anthologies. His relationship with Spain’s younger poets, for whom he was now a figure similar to that which Darío had been for him, was ambivalent and often contentious. Despite his influence on the Generation of ‘27 and his bold claim that “modern symbolism in Spanish poetry begins with the *Diary*” (qtd. in Predmore 48), its place in the international literatures of its moment remains as ambiguous as that of *modernismo* itself.

**Jiménez’s History and Genealogies of Modernism(s)**

The connections between *Diary* and the works of English-language American modernism that Jiménez cites are readily apparent. Parts of *Diary* share with Frost’s *North of Boston*, for instance, a fixation on landscapes, often depicted with simple, subtly formal verse. Like Lindsay’s *Congo*, it was written during a journey, contains multiple scenes of cultural anthropology, and captures the lyricism of dialects and vernacular speech in poetic form. Replace the “Prairie troubadour” Lindsay’s Midwest and Southwest with Jiménez’s Andalusia and the parallels are even more apparent, especially in poems such as Lindsay’s “The Santa Fe Trail” and Jiménez’s “The First Almond Tree Blooming” (see Wilcox). It shares with Lowell’s *Sword Blades* what she called in her preface the organic “rhythm of the speaking voice with its necessity for breathing” instead of strict verse and cadence (xi). (Lowell also declares her affinities with Parnassianism and *vers libre* in this preface.) Or one could look to the themes taken up at length in Millay’s *Renascence*: eternity, infinity, universality, the interrelations of the soul, sea, and sky. If looking for a brand of Imagism that Jiménez had encountered in *Poetry*, one might point to poems such as “EPITAPH FOR A QUEEN OF HEARTS DECEASED IN A SONG, SINCE SHE DEPARTED FROM ME,” which reads “This rose is an example of my life / that sprouts from my death, eternal life: in its hand it tenderly holds the crown” (*Diary* 282). Or in a related vein, an untitled entry reads “¡Oh mar, cielo rebelde / caído de los cielos!” (351; “Oh sea, rebel sky / fallen from the heavens!”
The Francoist line was best represented by Guillermo Díaz-Plaja’s *Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho* (1951); Ricardo Gullón was among the most vocal to lament the separation of *modernismo* and the Generation of ‘98.

Perhaps more intriguing and critically potent than these thematic or formal comparisons, however, is the sweeping version of literary history through which Jiménez created the sometimes unexpected international repositioning of his own work from the American East Coast in 1916, through which he created a modernist triangle of Spain, Spanish America, and the U.S. *Modernismo* and modernism, in fact, were in his view always paired:


And what good fortune I had to witness the arrival of Spanish-American *modernismo* in Spain in the person of Rubén Darío, and then, some fifteen years later, to be present for the great success of the fundamental works of the greatest American modernists. . . . These poets [Frost, Robinson, et al.] corresponded very closely to the generation of Antonio Machado and me in Spain; to that of Ramón López Velarde, Carlos Sabat Ercasty, and Juan Parra del Riego in Spanish America; to Amy Lowell, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Sarah Teasdale and others—and to the extraordinary group of poetesses Eugenia Vaz Ferreira, Juana de Ibarbourou, Alfonso Storni, Gabriela Mistral, [and] Delmira Agustini.

Conveniently, Jiménez himself was born squarely between these two generations of Spanish poets—younger than the *modernistas* and the Americans, but older than the latter Spanish-American figures he mentions. He combines this circumstance with his momentary position in the U.S. in 1916 to expand, around the poetics he was developing in *Diary*, his translinguistic figuration of *modernismo*/modernism as an interrelated phenomenon.

Jiménez’s critical elaborations come primarily in two sets of writings that he left behind—one for Spanish-speaking U.S. audiences in the 1940s and one for a university course on *modernismo*/modernism (and an unfinished book to be called either *El siglo modernista* [The Modernist Century] or *El Modernismo*) in Puerto Rico in the 1950s. In both texts Jiménez intervenes in debates that have been prevalent in Anglo- and Hispanophone criticism alike for some time. Ultra-conservative and Francoist critics in Spain had distinguished clearly between *modernismo* and the peninsular Generation of 1898, denigrating the former as excessively hybrid, cosmopolitan, and peripheral, and elevating the latter as a serious, uncontaminated, proudly national project.5 In these debates, Jiménez sided with his friend Federico de Onís, an influential theorist of *modernismo*, longtime head of Columbia’s Spanish department, and the critic who first used the term “postmodernism” (Mejías-López, “Modernismo’s Inverted Conquest” 22). Jiménez and Onís—who had invited him to Puerto Rico for his lectures—both use the Spanish term “*modernismo*” in broad and unconventional ways. For my purposes here, instead of moving back

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and forth constantly between “modernismo” and “modernism,” I will use “modernismo/o” to indicate that Jiménez (who never composed in English) is using the Spanish word modernismo to refer to something that, as he explains, includes modernismo, modernism, and several related movements in other languages and places—and something that captures the fluid traffic among them without settling in either Spanish or English.

Jiménez viewed modernismo/o variously as a “tendency” or “attitude,” a “movement,” a “mentality,” a “wealth of ideologies and sensibilities,” even a “cosmo-vision,” all of which, he signals, stretch beyond the traditional sense of a literary “school” or group of figures. It flourished beginning in the late nineteenth century and dominated in the twentieth, which he calls “the modernist century.” Modernismo/o’s roots are diverse and arose in separate places at separate times, but its theological origins in the Catholic Church’s debates over “modernism” around the turn of the twentieth century, to which Jiménez often alludes, point to a common link among them: a reaction against dogmas of all types. “Modernismo/o was to Romanticism what the Renaissance was to the Middle Ages,” he writes; “it is a new Renaissance,” much like the “renacimiento” that he described experiencing personally when he was reborn in U.S. poetry.

He sketches its traits in lieu of a definition:

Entonces ¿en qué está el modernismo? En la expresión. En la forma nueva de expresar; ya no se escribe como antes, hay unas limitaciones que son completamente gramaticales, filológicas, pero que no son poéticas en muchos casos. Por eso tiene tanto éxito en Hispanoamérica... [donde] surge [como] una cosa nueva. (Transcript 260)

Where do we find modernismo/o? In expression. In the new form of expression; one can no longer write as before, there are limitations that are completely grammatical or philological, but are not poetic in many cases. For this reason, it has had so much success in Spanish America, where it emerged as something completely new.

Even so, modernismo/o is not a complete rupture with the literary past; Baudelaire, for instance, “was a Romantic, Parnassian, and symbolist combined,” and all of these coexist in parts of Jiménez’s works (103). Modernismo/o carries forward the Romantic celebration of “lo vivo, lo libre, lo auténtico, lo humano...: la mezcla de hermosa forma y espíritu grande” (the living, the free, the authentic: a mixture of beautiful form and great spirit) and evinces “un gran movimiento de entusiasmo y libertad hacia la belleza” (Alerta 31; a great movement of enthusiasm and liberty toward beauty). For Jiménez, Bécquer’s post-romanticism launched this current attitude in Spanish because he broke with aristocratic and courtly writing. Poe, Baudelaire, and the sixteenth-century Spanish mystic St. John of the Cross all performed similar roles in their times and places. The true modernists were the mystics, but in a secular, individualistic sense; “Modernismo es lo mismo para el teólogo que para el artista, igual” (Transcript 261; Modernismo/o is the same for the theologian as for the artist), he asserts, and the mystics’ questioning of church dogma was the literary equivalent of asking if El Cid was actually a great work of literature.

Modernismo/o manifested itself globally through centuries of cultural traffic between Europe and the New World, for in all of the great literary movements of the world, Jiménez believes, there is a fundamental interchange of foreign influences (Modernismo 100). This admixture, achieved through translations and exchanges such as the Venezuelan poet Juan Antonio Pérez Bonalde’s version of “The Raven,” combined with French symbolism, exoticism, the gothic, and national
traditions (especially those of Whitman, Dickinson, and Poe) to give rise to modernismo in Spanish America and Spain and modernism in the U.S. The effect of modernismo/o — the literary fellow-feeling and sympathies that it inspired — he argues, brought Spain, Spanish America, and the United States closer together, despite their political antagonisms. In part, this arose out of a shared predicament: after the Spanish-American War of 1898, he writes, all three regions needed to reintegrate themselves “morally and materially” (Política 179). While some writers became enamored with imperialism, others (the war veteran Sherwood Anderson and the Cuban revolutionary Martí, for example) turned their writing against the spirit of expansionism. The war also energized each country’s otherwise languishing creative spirit. In the U.S., it fostered a return to the “gran trío” of great poets that led to a modernist revival: Whitman, Poe, and Dickinson, who appear repeatedly in Diary. The poetry of New England and of the “Boston Brahmins” was too derived from England for Jiménez, who found Longfellow, Bryant, and James Russell Lowell — all of whom he dismisses in Diary — stolid, boring, and inauthentic. Poe, by contrast, incorporated in his writing everything from African-American spirituals to Southern lyric forms to incongruous rhyme schemes. Like Baudelaire and Bécquer, he “purified romanticism” by getting rid of its exorbitance, anachronistic neoclassicism, and the “general vice of its epoch” (Crítica 24). Whitman and Dickinson, meanwhile, both broke the paradigms of form and enabled American free verse. Continuing to make cross-cultural and cross-linguistic connections, Jiménez claims that the effect of Dickinson’s figure and her work is comparable to that of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the famous baroque poet/nun of colonial Mexico — that Dickinson was, in effect, a neo-baroque modernist who wrote poems that were “verso corto complicado, muy lleno de ideas” (Modernismo 18; short, complicated, and very full of ideas).

As his history moves forward, Jiménez turns to the still-growing American West, which inspired writers such as Bret Harte, Joaquín Miller, and Edward Rowland Sill, who saw in the west a “pueblo, . . . una democracia que venían, . . . [no la] sociedad decadente [del Este]” (Política 181–82; pueblo, a coming democracy, not the social decadence of the East) and the Boston Brahmins. (Jiménez was often keen, too, to champion lesser-known modernists whom he considered undervalued by national and international audiences.) The “North American poets of the West” inherited sensibilities from Twain and Sidney Lanier also, and took from Whitman “a popular, mystical, and democratic” style that did not simply mimic the American East. In this way, he adds, Twain’s influence has been analogous to that of non-Castilians Unamuno, Pío Baroja, and Ramón del Valle-Inclán upon Spain’s central province (Política 182). And because the literary establishment of the U.S. was disconnected from the pueblo, Americans didn’t appreciate the popular idioms of Whitman, Dickinson, and Poe fully during their lifetimes (Modernismo 19). Jiménez’s contemporary poets of the West then brought these styles East “por el camino que los españoles abrieron hace cuatro siglos, desde San Agustín de la Florida a California” (Alerta 55; by way of the path that Spaniards opened some four centuries ago, from St. Augustine, Florida, to California), just as Spain linked the two Americas. Next came the first true American modernists, the “mystics of the Midwest,” especially William Vaughn Moody and Edwin Markham (Modernismo 102). Like their counterparts in Spain’s coastal provinces (Eduardo
Marquina, Jacint Verdaguer, Manuel Curros Enríquez) and Spanish America (Martí, Darío, Silva, Salvador Díaz-Mirón), this inter-generation turned against empire and toward quotidian life, symbolic exploration, and inner worlds. Thus, both modernistas and American modernists declared their literary independence from European derivation around the same time in movements that began to peak, without a great deal of contact between them, during the same “epoch” of modernism/o. The movement from a semi-periphery to a center, whether within a country or in a global context, defines the formation of modernism/o for Jiménez, who himself had made both such journeys.

All of this paved the way for the American modernism of the 1910s, which is also the most international of U.S. movements. The Americans revived their country’s literary history beginning in 1905, Jiménez writes. He most often lists his own contemporaries as “Modernistas de tipo inglés y norteamericano,” and many of them he discovered by reading Harriet Monroe’s magazine Poetry: Frost, Robinson, Masters, Amy Lowell, J.G. Fletcher, Vachel Lindsay, the Imagists, Sandburg, Millay, Pound, and Eliot. However, Jiménez’s attempt to move across languages in his critical history encounters some of the same terminological problems contemporary scholars face. Writing from within the U.S. but in Spanish, he notes that these writers and their movements “se llaman también aquí ‘modernismo,’ los críticos usan la palabra” (Alerta 86; are called here also “modernism”; the critics use this word). They constitute, for Jiménez, a “gran generación universal de ese tiempo” (Política 179; great, universal generation of this time). He focuses, too, on Pound as “the initiator of modernism in the U.S.,” on the role of the magazine Poetry in launching the new aesthetics, and on Stein’s and Joyce’s innovations in prose (Modernismo 26, 16). And he includes elsewhere the Fugitives and the Sewanee Review, comparing their exaltation of the region to the work of Azorín, Machado, and his own (113). These writers, he insists, speak “not of poetic nationalism,” but, rather, speak to their nation—its literature and its history—by adapting foreign styles to their native tongues (103). In this sense, his declaration that “I was being reborn in these years, and I felt this rebirth of American poetry as if it were my own—much as I did the rebirth of Spanish poetry” encapsulates the revisionary national lineage that Diary offers (Política 184). He intertwines them constantly with such modernistas as Martí, Casal, Silva, Storni, Díaz-Mirón, Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera, Leopoldo Lugones, and María Eugenia, and with other poets including Yeats and Rilke.

Jiménez used this long vision of modernism/o as a tool for reading Euro-American modernists as well—most pointedly, Eliot. In 1931, he translated Eliot’s “La Figlia Che Piange,” “Marina,” and the third section of Ash-Wednesday for a Spanish periodical. As Santiago Rodríguez Guerrero-Strachan has written, Jiménez “considered Eliot part of the general movement of modernismo, which he identified with symbolism,” and an heir to American Imagism (143). Thus, Eliot is the flip side of himself, a part of a Spanish-language tradition to which he did not apparently belong. But Jiménez came to believe that Eliot’s politics betrayed the anti-dogmatic, generally heretical vision of modernism/o and plainly stated that he himself was the movement’s true heir, followed by the younger W.H. Auden. This poetic self is one he would refine for several more decades after the Spanish Civil War, when he was back in the Americas and in exile as a professor at the
University of Miami (FL) and the University of Maryland, among other places. Some of his thoughts on modernismo, in fact, were developed as part of his series of Spanish-language radio broadcasts for the American government during World War II. (He also visited Pound at St. Elizabeths and taught Spanish to Henry Wallace.) But, despite his efforts, he would not achieve recognition in the Anglophone world until 1951, when the scholar J.B. Trend published his *Fifty Spanish Poems* in translation. Two years later, *Poetry* dedicated an issue to him, and in 1956 came the Nobel Prize. Although we now recognize that figures such as Rabindranath Tagore have taken part in more than one modernist movement across borders and languages, Jiménez, despite the fact that most of his works are now available in English, was not (and still is not) widely known to Anglophone readers. We can, nevertheless, take his theorization of his different literary crossings as a means to reinvent genealogies of contemporary literatures (see Santos and Schacter).

**The Afterlives of Jiménez’s Crossings: Then and Now**

Jiménez furthermore asserted that “El modernismo no ha terminado: se ha exagerado, se ha transformado, ha ganado libertades. Neruda, Vallejo, siguen siendo modernistas. . . . En el año veinte el modernismo era actualidad. Ahora sigue siendo actualidad. Se llama *postmodernismo* o *ultramodernismo* pero es modernismo todo. Onís lo llama ultra o postmodernismo” (*Modernismo* 97; Modernism/o is not finished: it has been exaggerated, transformed, has gained liberties. [Pablo] Neruda and [César] Vallejo continue being modernists. . . . In 1920, modernism/o was still present, a reality. Now [in 1953] it continues being one. It may be called *postmodernismo* or *ultramodernismo*, in Onís’s terms, but it is all modernismo/o). This contentious conception that modernismo/o spanned several decades beyond World War II is one that he would carry into his own exile in the New World as he rethought his life in this multifarious “epoch.” There are distinct advantages and disadvantages to using Jiménez’s work and his theorizations as grounds for rethinking international modernisms. He becomes haphazard at times and labels almost everything “modernist” (this, too, is a common criticism of certain strands of contemporary Anglophone modernist studies). His critical writings not only are self-serving, but also reinscribe a form of colonial domination and elision onto a movement that was strongly Spanish-American—and often anti-Spanish—in its origins. We can read this sensibility back, then, onto his claims to see a precursor to symbolism in the cross-lingual Arabic-Andalusian poetry of medieval southern Spain, whose multiple cultural roots prefigure those of French symbolism. And when discussing the arts of mid-nineteenth-century France, he argues that Parnassianism was indebted to Spanish romanticism; impressionism to El Greco, Velázquez, and Goya; and Baudelaire to José de Espronceda. Political and cultural history, temporal conjunctions, or formulations of modernity are not as vital to Jiménez’s theories as they are to those of contemporary critics. Rather, he celebrates international exchange across uneven power relations—among states and literatures alike—in a manner that dilutes the very peripherality that key figures of modernismo integrated as forms of critique in their works and idioms. He also marginalizes writers in non-hegemonic languages: modernismo’s many dialects, or its manifestations in Yiddish or Galician, in fact disorient some of the bearings
that he posits. In short, even when de-centering the literary empire from Paris-London-Berlin and theorizing a flourishing of modernisms globally, Jiménez’s criticism relies on the paths of empire that still trouble contemporary Anglophone modernist critics who seek to extricate literary history from imperial legacies.

Yet it is crucial that we explore and make sense of the intersections of transnational literary history and translingual modernisms in a text such as _Diary on the terms that writers such as Jiménez offered. Whether in the Anglophilia of Pío Baroja or Miguel de Unamuno, or the Hispanophilia of William Carlos Williams or John Dos Passos, numerous Anglo-Spanish modernist phenomena—to choose just one crossing—are studied far too distinctly. Anglo- and Hispanophone modernisms crossed in other contexts as well: Kelly Washbourne points out, for instance, that both Ezra Pound and the Mexican poet José Juan Tablada translated the Chinese poet Li Po (xxxviii). Scholars of modernist studies in a number of languages must use such exchanges to map an interrelated web of modernist conjunctures and distinctions across a critical field whose very terms remain productively unsettled.

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**Works Cited**


