

The Modern Times of José Rivas Panedas's *Ultraísmo*

Este ensayo estudia algunos poemas del ultraísta español José Rivas Panedas para ofrecer una nueva perspectiva sobre la vanguardia histórica y su razón de ser. Aunque los elementos rurales de algunos textos de Rivas podrían parecer ajenos al proyecto renovador y tecnofílico de la vanguardia más radical, sostengo que la fascinación de Rivas tanto por el café cosmopolita como por los gallos al amanecer evidencia la paradoja constitutiva de la vanguardia, una paradoja temporal. Para ello, defiendo una práctica renovada del "close reading" con referencia a recientes críticos de la metodología de los estudios literarios como Franco Moretti y Rita Felski.

Palabras clave: Vanguardia, ultraísmo, tiempo, José Rivas Panedas

This essay studies select poems by the Spanish ultraísta José Rivas Panedas to offer a new perspective on the avant-garde and its raison d'être. Though the rural elements in some of Rivas's texts might seem foreign to the most radical avant-garde's technophilic renewal project, I argue that Rivas's fascination with both the cosmopolitan café and with roosters at daybreak is evidence of the avant-garde's constitutive paradox, a temporal paradox. In doing so, I defend a renewed practice of close reading with reference to recent critics of the methodology of literary studies like Franco Moretti and Rita Felski.

Keywords: Avant-garde, Ultraism, time, José Rivas Panedas

The story of the historical avant-garde, in all its many versions, is a story of rupture and rebellion. Futurism called for a radical break with artistic norms; art was to become adversarial and non-transcendent, irreverent and volatile. Cubism questioned art's mimetic purpose. In Spain, the poets who were galvanized by F.T. Marinetti's Futurism and who first took up the Cubist aesthetics of writers like Guillaume Apollinaire and Pierre Reverdy scrambled to ditch the amatory verse, rhyme, and lunar motifs they had learned from the early Juan Ramón Jiménez, Rubén Darío, and other Symbolist and *modernista* predecessors. In the most aggressive forward-looking avant-garde, many poets felt that only fast cars, city lights, and the jazz club would do.

It might seem that a poet like José Rivas Panedas, one of the central though rarely remembered figures of Spanish *ultraísmo*,¹ did not completely jettison the *modernista*/Symbolist aesthetics of his earliest youth. Whereas some of his poems celebrate cosmopolitanism and urban life in the vein of avant-garde writers across Europe, others strike a nostalgic tone and seek communion with the rural world and elements of nature. While none of Rivas Panedas's poems could be called a true pastoral, many are populated with the trappings of farm life, and Rivas's speaker often finds opportunity for self-reflection in plants and animals. Rivas's companion in *ultraísmo*, Guillermo de Torre, zeroed in on these works' rural settings in order to dismiss them as "fundamentally romantic" and thus not sufficiently avant-garde (96). The current critical appraisal of Rivas also tends to doubt his having fully developed an avant-garde mode (Anderson 458; 537). It will be my contention in this essay, however, that reading the pastoral strain in Rivas Panedas's poetry can help us to reconceive a defining aspect of the avant-garde itself, namely its contradictory and complicated consciousness of modern time. Through a rehabilitation of Rivas Panedas's poetry I will try to give new nuance to what Rita Felski calls the "modernist vision of time as a break with the shackles of the benighted past" (159) by following her cue to engage in a "hermeneutics of restoration" as opposed to the negational "hermeneutics of suspicion," which has characterized literary studies in recent decades (32).

My defense of the pastoral in Rivas Panedas's poetry as avant-garde may at first seem puzzling, since the avant-garde was undoubtedly a cosmopolitan, urban phenomenon, one which often fetishized the telegram, the linotype machine, and the tramcar. As Susan Larson notes, "the avant-garde can be understood in this way, for example – as a group of artists who responded in a variety of revolutionary ways to these new experiences of space and time, so dramatic in rapidly industrializing urban centers. Modern consciousness, then, is urbanized" (29). However, this "variety" of responses to the twentieth-century urban center necessarily includes, I will show, new perspectives on rural spaces as corollaries to the avant-garde's complex consciousness of modern urban time. As Raymond Williams demonstrates in his seminal book on *The Country and the City*, rural spaces have been imagined in explicit opposition to urban spaces as stand-ins for bygone ways of feeling since Hesiod (14-18). In poetry in European languages, the opposition of the rural to the urban is often a coded opposition between the past and the present or the future (Williams 18; 240). This clear dichotomy is challenged at the turn of the twentieth century by new conceptions of space and time brought on by the connecting technologies of the telephone, rail transport, and the telegraph, all of which blurred the distinction between the rural and the urban (Kern 191-92).

To make an appraisal of Rivas Panedas's work and rethink the avant-garde, this essay will engage with current debates in the humanities on close, deep, and distant reading, as advanced by critics like Felski and Franco Moretti (Felski 52-56). I will attempt to follow Felski's model of "postcritical reading" (172-74) in order to contribute to the vitally necessary goals of Moretti's distant reading, namely, to shake up calcified critical categories and to question received literary-historical notions of canonicity and periodization. Rivas Panedas, his *ultraísta* group, and Hispanic poetry in general have been excluded from most criticism on the historical avant-garde. Rivas's inclusion in critical discourse on the avant-garde can remedy broader conceptual blind spots in the scholarly appraisal of the period. As a work of restoration focused on one poet's output, this essay brings attention to less well-known poets like Rivas, but, as in Moretti's distant reading, "the aim is not so much a change in the canon – the discovery of precursors to the canon or alternatives to it, to be restored to a prominent position – as a change in how we look at *all* of literary history" (66). In particular, I hope this essay can bring renewed nuance to how we look at the avant-garde writ large and how we engage with individual texts under that overarching rubric.

For example, I hope that my analysis can answer prevailing theorizations of the avant-garde that privilege its fascination with materiality and technology (Highfill), the spatial dimensions of its cosmopolitanism (Silverman), or its aggressive stance against artistic tradition (Bürger). I will show that these separate conceptions of the avant-garde can be united and to a certain degree challenged by a more subtle approach to understanding what the avant-garde in essence was. I argue that the avant-garde was, to a great degree, the artistic manifestation of a complex temporal paradox – the avant-garde celebrated and rejected various versions of modernity, all intimately related to time. This dialectic of rejection and celebration was characterized by sharp, even contradictory, ambivalence. Anthony Giddens, in response to Jürgen Habermas, neatly explains the avant-garde's temporal paradox. He writes:

In art as in the social sciences one can readily discern a split between an essentially Romantic conservatism and a progressivism that puts its weight behind science and technology. I would interpret "modernism"² in art (insofar as the term has a clear designation at all) as a break with *both* of these types of standpoint. Modernism is neither only a protest against lost traditions, nor an endorsement of their dissolution, but in some degree an accurate expression of the emptying of time-space. (Giddens 16)

Giddens notes that the avant-garde is characterized by a “temporal self-destructiveness” (15), since it depends on tradition in order to mock it, ultimately condemning even its own gestures to future ridicule.³ Domingo Ródenas articulates the issue in characteristically sharp terms: “[L]a hipoteca del presente por el futuro fue tanto en lo estético como en lo político la columna vertebral de la vanguardia y una de sus principales paradojas” (68).

Rivas Panedas’s poetry, whether concerned with the speaker’s nostalgic take on the trappings of rural life or his fascination with cosmopolitan modernity, engages directly with this peculiar paradox. In terms set forth by Matei Calinescu, this temporal paradox animating the historical avant-garde represents the modern artist’s struggle to escape bourgeois commodified time in favor of aesthetic time (Giddens’s break with “progressivism”), all while depending materially and artistically on the products of bourgeois modernity (Giddens’s rejection of a “conservative Romanticism”) (Calinescu 41-49). The escape is made particularly difficult by the fact that the avant-garde artist attacks tradition (Romanticism) as well as bourgeois economic materialism (the rationality of science, labor, and economics) (Giddens 15-16).

Though I will qualify some of Calinescu’s assertions further on, this struggle is the avant-garde’s defining dynamic, a productive but burdensome inheritance from the Romantic period, itself fraught with aesthetic and political ambivalence. Torre’s clever ways of saying that Rivas Panedas is not fully avant-gardist, not fully modern, ignore a more interesting problem, that of the avant-garde’s impossible desire to escape the bourgeois modernity it depended on and to revel in an aesthetic modernity to which it could never fully commit itself.

The cultural moment of the early twentieth century is, as Stephen Kern has perceptively noticed, rife with the complexities of the interplay between newly instituted standard public time and the more imaginative and personal private time. As Kern writes, “the thrust of the age was to affirm the reality of private time against that of a single public time” (34), precisely when World Standard Time was being implemented, time zones established, and commerce and war set to rigid international timetables. Thus, in life and in avant-garde art, there was a constant “friction between public and private temporalities” (Bru 280). Gerardo Diego articulates this problem in 1919 with reference to a poem by Vicente Huidobro, saying that time “pesa sobre el poeta como una maldición inapelable. El poeta hubiera querido nacer antes porque ahora no puede sacudirse el terrible yugo” (*La poesía nueva* 83). In avant-garde art, there is a tension between the ludic desire to “épater le bourgeois” and the positivist drive to “make it new.” The artist feels a need to be pure and spontaneous, but he knows he must mock

and avoid sentimentality. This situation represents a paradox since both attitudes were true to the spirit of the avant-garde, yet each implies, at least in part, the negation of the other. Juan Herrero Senés can consequently characterize the avant-garde facing this nihilist “maldición” as an “época plegada sobre sí misma” (62), and “plagada de sí misma,” I might add.

Rivas Panedas’s poems can help us understand the avant-garde struggle with time and better parse the fascinating poetics of metaphor that it produced. In reading them here, I will attempt to avoid both “ideological” and “theological” criticism (Felski 29). The point is neither to demonstrate a political or socio-historical point nor to canonize Rivas Panedas, but rather to give his poems a generous reading which may, I think, be useful in reading other poems and may also help us to reconceive the aspirations and dilemmas of the artists of the avant-garde. Rather than enshrine these poems as objects of ahistorical reverence or, alternatively, poke holes in them to reveal “a panoramic vision of the social order” (Felski 157), I hope that my analysis of Rivas Panedas’s work can show that “texts can *generate* criteria as well as be objects of criteria” (Felski 168). I will limit my analysis to four brief lyrics published in Madrid’s main *ultraísta* little magazines during the period 1920-22. The first poem I should like to consider is “Café,” published in *Grecia* in September of 1920:

CAFÉ

Caravana de voces
entre las frondosidades de ruido
Los latidos se esponjan en los vasos
Marineros de luto conducen sus canoas de plata
Los espejos copulan largamente
Nadie entró en los salones
que nos ofrecen todas las cosas de que están llenos
Músicos desinteresados brindan el Jazz Band
Los espejos son lagos puestos en pie
En los que baño mi corazón mojado de colores. (Rivas Panedas 123)⁴

This poem contains many of the most common tropes of avant-garde poetry in Spanish. The setting is urban and cosmopolitan. As in a Cubist collage, the fragmentary, confused voices mix with surrounding sounds, destabilizing the subjectivity of the café’s customers as well as that of the poem’s speaker. The café’s mirrors have the same effect: “copulan largamente.” Reflecting and reproducing one another *ad infinitum*, they create the impression of a *mise en abîme*, imponderably deep but simultaneously reflective like a lake. Avant-garde poetry was often fond of mixing voices and playing with visual

effects, especially by simultaneously presenting many different angles on a scene. Practically each unrhymed, metrically irregular line in "Café" provides us with a new focal point, enacting a poetics of multiplicity and disjuncture adapted from Cubist painting.

The final line, though, seems to carry a nostalgic tone. In temporal terms, this nostalgia reflects a preoccupation with an imagined past while much of the poem, and the avant-garde to which it belongs, seems often to be singularly focused on the excitement of the present and future. The final line, "En los que baño mi corazón mojado de colores," operates on first reading almost as an objective correlative, T.S. Eliot's preferred term for a poetic image that, instead of elucidating a direct correspondence between two terms like a traditional metaphor, presents an object or a scene with a diffuse but nonetheless distinctive emotive charge.⁵ "Baño mi corazón mojado de colores" seems, by modifying "corazón" with "mojado," to suggest a kind of sadness, a melancholy emotional state. But the heart is wet with colors, whose vibrancy might suggest just the opposite of melancholy. By looking up to an earlier line, "los latidos se esponjan en los vasos," which suggests a kind of synesthesia, we find the source of these colors: heartbeats "sponge" themselves or swell up in drinking glasses. Should we then understand the colors of the final line metaphorically as the elation of a light drunkenness?

The heartbeat marks time in this poem. The rhythm of its "latidos," however, is altered by alcohol. Time, for this speaker, is organic time, the time of his own body, but even that regular reference for the passage of time gets muted or muddled by the effects of the cocktails he has imbibed. Furthermore, the speaker "bathes his heart" in the mirrors set up around the café like "lakes stood on end." As the image from one mirror is reflected across the café to another and then rebounded across again, the *mise en abîme* effect challenges the perceptual limits of the café space and the speaker's place in it. It may even trap him like a modern Narcissus, doomed to stare forever in dumb euphoria at his infinite selves. With these metaphors, we see that conventional temporal and spatial cues are lost for the avant-garde subject.

These effects are typical of avant-garde poetry and they respond to what Matei Calinescu describes as a modern artistic conception of time, one of the two modes of comprehending time which characterize modernity since Symbolism. Calinescu writes that post-Romantic artists, starting with Baudelaire, conceived of modernity in a totally new way from the second half of the nineteenth century on. This new, aesthetic modernity offers "the paradoxical possibility of going beyond the flow of history through the consciousness of historicity in its most concrete immediacy, in its presentness" (Calinescu 50).⁶ As analyzed by Kern, this new consciousness

imagines time as a “flux” as opposed to a “sum of discrete units” (24). This attitude prioritizes the personal past over the historical past and makes possible new conceptions and experiences of the present (Kern 63-68). This aesthetic modernity, says Calinescu, pits itself squarely against another kind of modernity, bourgeois modernity, which operates on the timescale of industrialization, commodified labor, and economic positivism. It is the “atomistic” public time articulated by Kern (11). As Calinescu writes, the “bourgeois idea of modernity” includes

the doctrine of progress, the confidence in the beneficial possibilities of science and technology, the concern with time (a *measurable* time, a time that can be bought and sold and therefore has, like any other commodity, a calculable equivalent in money), the cult of reason, and the ideal of freedom defined within the framework of an abstract humanism, but also the orientation towards pragmatism and the cult of action and success. (41)

Calinescu defines the avant-gardes in opposition to bourgeois modernity. He argues that the aesthetic modernity of the avant-gardes “was from its romantic beginnings inclined toward radical antibourgeois attitudes. It was disgusted with the middle-class scale of values,” including the measurement and monetization of time, and it “expressed its disgust through the most diverse means, ranging from rebellion, anarchy, and apocalypticism to aristocratic self-exile” (42). In their rejection of bourgeois economic values and the conformity they imagined these required, avant-garde artists valued play, iconoclasm, irony, and novelty.

The theoretical captain of Spanish *ultraísmo*, Guillermo de Torre, shows how that movement’s self-conception gives credence to Calinescu’s formulation. Torre writes:

Como una violenta reacción contra la era del rubenianismo agonizante y toda su anexa cohorte de cantores fáciles que habían llegado a formar un género híbrido y confuso, especie de bisutería poética, producto de feria para las revistas burguesas; y superando las tímidas metas de algunos otros poetas independientes mas desprovistos de verdadera savia original y potencia innovadora, se imponía un movimiento simultáneamente derrocador y constructor. Sólo esta idea elemental de ruptura y avance, sólo este deseo indeterminado y abstracto de iniciar una variación de normas, faros y estilos, descubriendo otros arquetipos estéticos y creando nuevos módulos de belleza ya era en principio una solución y un ideal. (73)

Anticipating the distinction Calinescu will make later in the century between bourgeois modernity and aesthetic modernity and their competing

views of time, Torre pits *ultraísmo's* poetic inheritance, Ruben Darío-style *modernismo* and its bourgeois values,⁷ against a new conception of time. Almost all the terms Torre uses to describe his movement are rooted in the temporal imperative of novelty: “*savia original*,” “*potencia innovadora*,” “*simultáneamente derrocador y constructor*,” “*ruptura y avance*,” “*iniciar*,” “*nuevos módulos*.” In Rivas Panedas’s poem, “*Café*,” the “*Jazz Band*,” the mingled voices, the cars which I read in the “*canoas de plata*,” and the cocktails (a novel thing in 1920) all seem to fit in with both Calinescu’s and Torre’s concepts of aesthetic modernity, the modernity of presentness, of fashion, surprise, and irreverent play.

Or do they? Enjoying music and cocktails in a café or driving an automobile, while expressing the avant-garde wish to escape the drudgery of bourgeois monetized time and inhabit the glimmering present, are in fact precisely the luxuries afforded only by urban bourgeois affluence and robust industrialization. These modern pleasures, while signifying a commitment to a carefree aesthetic existence, are available only to those with access to the products of instrumentalized time, that is money, or time leveraged for profit. Also, and quite at odds with the avant-garde spirit of novelty and ludic ephemerality, a nostalgic note in fact permeates the whole poem. The speaker says that “*Marineros de luto conducen sus canoas de plata*.” What is it these sailors mourn? Their “*luto*” suggests that it is something irretrievably lost to the past. If we are to read the “*canoas de plata*” as shining modern automobiles passing by the café’s windows, then the sailors (the drivers and passengers) must lament the loss of their metaphorical ships of old. The speaker seems nostalgic for a dreamy age of unfettered heroism on the high seas. Modern life is diminished, in his view, smaller (thus “*canoas*”) and sadder, dressed in dark suits (the “*luto*”) rather than sailors’ gear. Alternatively, the “*marineros*” could be the café’s waiters, dressed in black and somberly executing the duties of their profession, a financially necessary “*luto*” which includes capitulating to the bourgeois conception of time as sellable while moving about with metal drink trays, their “*canoas de plata*.” In both these readings of the metaphor we find that hard-edged economics, the wealth required to purchase an automobile or the waiters’ need to work, contribute to a kind of modern mourning and a diminishment in the scale of the imagined heroic sailors’ life of yore. Modern people are now reduced to putzing about with “*silver canoes*.”

For Rivas Panedas, the economic realities of the moment amounted to a powerful mix of priorities. Cut off from familial support, he made a living painting commercial signage, moving about Madrid on crutches due to his having only one leg, and depending on the generosity of friends and acquaintances (García-Sedas 9; Rota 143; Bonet 526). He was certainly fascinated with the urban milieu and depended financially on the

commercial discourses that dominated public spaces. But he also must have felt that many of the modern novelties to which he was attracted were out of his reach. Like Rivas himself, the speaker of "Café" maintains a consistently ambivalent relationship to his economic moment. He writes, "Nadie entró en los salones / que nos ofrecen todas las cosas de que están llenos." What are these rooms full of? Why did no one enter?

The invitation to consumption and the mysterious plenitude, combined with the lack of interest (or disposable income) on the part of the café's customers, place us right at the intersection of Calinescu's aesthetic and bourgeois modernities. Calinescu, as we saw above, would have the avant-garde wholly committed to aesthetic modernity and opposed to bourgeois economic modernity, but the avant-garde in fact existed at the crux of the two. Ródenas, in counterpoint to Calinescu, has pointed out that the avant-garde is the product of the very same bourgeois logic it criticizes, for it evinces a "confianza burlada en el progreso benefactor de las ciencias y la fe en la virtualidad liberadora de la razón encarnada en el Estado" (38). "Café" is a short poem that makes manifest a vexing paradox at the heart of the avant-garde – the new, rebellious artist seeks an aesthetic escape from bourgeois life and the rigid positivist concept of time upon which it depends. He simultaneously hopes to escape the clichés of an outmoded aesthetic of decadent detachment and to prove himself a true modern innovator.

We see, though, that the speaker of "Café," who ostensibly does escape from bourgeois time by indulging in aesthetic experience, is only able to do so because he enjoys the privileges of bourgeois modernity. He can only seek a way out of bourgeois time if he knows it very well. Thus, Ródenas's characterization of the avant-garde as "insubordinación" (38), which is always a violation of the rules by someone understood to be subject to them, is apt. As Larson finds for the particular case of Madrid during the first third of the twentieth century, "certain visions of the future... complex, contradictory, always urban, modern, and international" shaped the way Spaniards built and inhabited the spaces and places of their city (65). Consequently, as Larson further argues, "during this defining period Madrid's literature is contradictory in its attitudes towards the city" (23). It is indeed a literature simultaneously fascinated, incensed, and overwhelmed by its moment.

As I noted at the beginning of this essay, Anthony Giddens has perceptively articulated this double bind. The avant-garde was a kind of modernism committed to both Romantic rebellion and positivist technophilia. Paradoxically, it also rebelled against the sentimental aspect of the Romantic tradition and the positivist commodification of time (Giddens 16). The critical dilemma before us is to recognize in the specific works of the period that the avant-garde was not necessarily the apogee of

an aesthetic revolt against the industrial commodification of time (and everything else). It was also not simply the flipside of that coin, the artistic apotheosis of technology and speed, the celebration of commercialism, a triumph of the “new” over the philistine art of a complacent and stuffy middle-class. The avant-garde was rather the conundrum of inhabiting bourgeois modernity and aesthetic modernity simultaneously while feeling a strong impulse to reject and embrace both (Giddens 17). It was a kind of breaking point in the spirit of rebellion initiated with Romanticism, and the expression of the tensions it involved is marvelously varied.

These tensions come to life in Rivas Panedas’s “Café.” Here, the imagination of an anachronistic heroism in the “marineros,” or the implicitly Orientalizing perspective on the “Caravana de voces / entre las frondosidades de ruido” are routes to escape from bourgeois modernity, but these images are themselves unmistakable bourgeois fantasies. Both images belie a desire to find an unreal “time before time” in which to immerse oneself. They are also jarring in that they betray the speaker’s nostalgic interest in the non-urbanized world, even as he celebrates the modern urban café. The café, a place of business and pleasure, is an oasis and a trap. This reading of “Café” demonstrates that the avant-garde desire to escape bourgeois modernity is, in fact, a hallmark of one’s belonging to bourgeois modernity. For the avant-garde artist, escaping the bourgeois city for a rural artistic oasis risks a betrayal of his commitment to a radically new art, which ought ostensibly to be devoid of nineteenth-century naturalistic sentimentalities.

As I noted above, the avant-garde’s paradoxical attitudes toward time and novelty are not entirely unlike Romantic attitudes. Susan Kirkpatrick’s comment on the latter could easily be modified for fruitful application to the avant-garde: “For many it was the latest literary fashion, a set of glamorous themes and images and, above all, a justification for exalting *cosmopolitan novelty*. Only a few understood and practiced *the avant-garde* as a radical questioning and revision of earlier values” (265; italics represent my modifications).⁸ Avant-garde poems need not abound in wireless telegraphy and jazz music to embody the spirit of the moment; these are superficial, if common tropes. Indeed, as Juan Herrero Senés points out, the rebellious artist of the avant-garde was equally likely to celebrate “ultracivilización” for its futuristic flair as he was to embrace “lo primitivo” as a daring alternative to the bourgeois status quo (151-53). Thus, the urban in one text may signify something quite different from what it signifies in another; the rural in an avant-garde poem may say a lot about urban modernity. If in our desire to expand our critical reach into the literature of the avant-garde we were to follow Moretti by cataloguing new works while eschewing their reading, we would likely exclude from our aggregation of works those

dominated by a rural lexicon. How else but through a superficial digital search to find new works to file under the category of “avant-garde”? Rivas’s “Café” demonstrates that “no work of art can yield up all its resonances in a single moment” (Felski 66), like the “moment” of trawling for a specific search term. It is for this reason that a technique like Moretti’s “sampling” could fail us in reevaluating the canon or the theoretical underpinnings of the avant-garde (67). Expanding the scope of our reading by compiling statistics about how often certain “modern” terms appear in a corpus of texts (“Charlestón,” “Telegrafía sin hilos” and the like) might leave out poems like “Café” and would do little to provide more nuance to our idea of something so multi-valent as the avant-garde. The tensions, ironies, and ambivalence of a poem like “Café” might be very hard to discover by using digital search tools, even if they are well calibrated and available for use on vast troves of material.⁹

In working to understand the avant-garde poetry of Spain, Renée Silverman’s *Mapping the Landscape, Remapping the Text* focuses on spatial representations. Her study juxtaposes the *modernista* aesthetics of a poet like Antonio Machado, whose *Campos de Castilla* inhabited the rural, national landscapes of collective memory, with avant-gardists like the *ultraísta* Guillermo de Torre, whose new sense of fragmented subjectivity found poetic expression in the cosmopolitan and decentered modern city (Silverman 89-90). While a theory of the avant-garde like Jürgen Habermas’s might support Silverman’s spatial reading of the period, his spatial metaphor for the avant-garde project, however, depends on temporal thinking:

This time consciousness expresses itself through metaphors of the vanguard and the avant-garde. The avant-garde understands itself as invading unknown territory, exposing itself to the danger of sudden, of shocking encounters, conquering an as yet unoccupied future. The avant-garde must find a direction in a landscape into which no one seems to have yet ventured. (4)

If we view the avant-garde as an expedition into new landscapes, Rivas Panedas’s interest in rural landscapes and nature could be read as a lingering commitment to the *modernista* poetics of collective memory and nationally rooted subjectivities or even as a late Romantic infatuation with nature. However, the rural/urban ambivalence in Rivas’s poetry can be read more fruitfully as a signal of a tension more temporal than spatial, the very same tension we find throughout “Café” and in the theoretical texts of writers like Torre and Habermas. Indeed, as Raymond Williams notes throughout *The Country and the City*, both rural and urban spaces have long been made to stand in for temporal dreams. Since Quintilian and Juvenal,

the rural world has often been imagined as a happy refuge, not only because it represents an innocent past, but also because it stands in contrast to the disorienting and cynical presentness of the city (Williams 46, 234-35).

Torre theorized the avant-garde in spatial metaphors, but, like Williams or the Roman writers he cites, Torre grounded these in temporal concerns. He writes in *Literaturas europeas de vanguardia* that the Madrid movement of *ultraísmo* is

el vértice de fusión potente a donde afluyen todas las pugnaces tendencias estéticas mundiales de vanguardia, que hoy disparan sus intenciones innovadoras más allá de los territorios mentalmente capturados. Pues uno de nuestros objetivos esenciales, en el espacio y en el tiempo, es llenar esa laguna de distanciaci3n que siempre ha aislado a Espa1a haciéndola marchar en sus 1ltimas evoluciones literarias extemporáneamente y a la zaga del movimiento mundial. ¿Qué ha sido toda la 1poca modernista, en suma, sino un reflejo retardado del simbolismo franc3s finisecular? (75)

Despite this kind of rhetoric, even where Silverman analyzes the “heterocronismo” of a poet like Gerardo Diego with astute generosity, she prefers to view his ambivalent temporal commitments as exceptions to the general theory and practice of the avant-garde (177-85). She writes that Gerardo Diego is a key theorizer of avant-garde poetry in Spanish and “integral to Diego’s analysis is precisely the ‘fault’ of *heterocronismo* of which Larrea accuses him ... [I]ndeed time ... becomes the main structural principle of his poetry” (Silverman 184-85). For Silverman, Diego’s central interest in time served as “a means for setting his idiosyncratic poetic in counterpoint to Huidobro, *Creacionismo*, and the avant-garde” (186). If temporal heterogeneity is set aside as not sufficiently avant-garde (by Larrea, Torre, and Silverman), and we instead allow a spatial or technological thematics to determine what counts as avant-garde and what does not, we are likely never to read many works which might teach us a great deal about avant-garde poetics. Thus, we are likely to misunderstand the avant-garde itself.

Similarly, the technological and materialist reading of the avant-garde offered by Juli Highfill in her book, *Modernism and Its Merchandise*, offers an insightful look at the art and literature of the moment. She develops a rich and intelligent analysis of Ramón Gómez de la Serna’s obsession with material things to theorize the metaphors of his *greguerías* through the dynamics of commercial exchange. She also explores the contradictory technophilia of Guillermo de Torre’s book of poems, *Hélices*, with penetrating wit. Within their valuable contributions, however, neither Highfill nor Silverman deals directly with the question of time as an

important element of the avant-garde's constitution, even while both critics' central concerns in reading the Spanish avant-garde – industrial commercialism for Highfill, cosmopolitan spaces for Silverman – are dependent on the unique reassessment of time underway in Spain throughout the first decades of the twentieth century.

Of special interest to this study of Rivas Panedas's work is the fact that his rural poems could not fit either Highfill's or Silverman's theorization of Spanish avant-garde poetry. Moretti's techniques of "sampling" and text mining would probably also miss much of Rivas Panedas's work. In these poems, Moretti's distant reading techniques would discover only birds and trees, not the self-consciously "modern" trappings of twentieth-century urban life, like automobiles or wireless telegraphy. Rivas's work would likely be overlooked by such a superficial method for identifying those texts that belong to the avant-garde. However, rather than as a holdover from a stale Romanticism, a retreat to a narrow poetics of strictly national concerns, or signs of an aversion to the industrial fervor of the day, Rivas Panedas's nostalgic moments and his flirtations with elements of the natural world can be read as signals of the poet's rich engagement with the constitutive posture of the avant-garde, a posture rooted, as elucidated above, in modernity's relationship to time.

Most of Rivas Panedas's poems from the *ultraísta* period deal with time more explicitly than "Café" does. His poem, "Silencio," published in *VLTRA* in January 1921, opens with two epigraphs from fellow *vanguardistas* César A. Comet and Gerardo Diego. Comet's reads, "El reloj, con su burla, / no nos deja pasar." Diego's is, "En la estación del alba, / ahorcaron el reloj y la campana" (Rivas Panedas 127).¹⁰ The poem continues:

SILENCIO

Veo nevar al silencio sobre mis ojos
sus mensajes del cielo

El reloj
el maldito
es la carcoma del silencio

Sobre las alas del silencio
he volado por tu aire

Mi frente se reclina
en los vilanos del silencio

Todos los pájaros del silencio
cantan sobre mi frente. (127)

The speaker in this poem seeks meditative communion with the natural world. He is eager to find organic rhythms, structured by silence rather than workaday time and the noise of the city. Torre's appraisal of Rivas Panedas as "fundamentally romantic" (96) implies a reading linking him more closely to Machado's careful "framing" of a nostalgic, collective subjectivity in rural landscapes, as analyzed by Silverman (38-39). "Silencio" might support such a reading. Torre, seeing this poem, might urge Rivas Panedas to get with the avant-garde program because the nouns populating his poems, the material things, as Highfill might read them, do not seem 'modern' enough.

Rather than stemming from the eclipsed aesthetics of Rousseauian walks in the countryside, however, Rivas Panedas's engagement with the organic world is much more the product of the avant-garde's ambivalent relationship to time. Time, metonymically represented by the clock, is the woodworm of silence, eating holes through its peaceful uniformity. As Kern notes, very few clocks appear in major works of Western art before 1912. But during the period of the avant-garde, the clock, especially in a deformed or illegible state, becomes common (Kern 22-23). For Rivas Panedas, as for many artists of the period, the clock, as a symbol of "public temporality," was a favorite target of the avant-garde rebellion against industrial temporality, as evidenced by work from Man Ray, Francis Picabia, or, most famously, Salvador Dalí (Bru 282-83). The speaker in Rivas Panedas's poem curses the clock because he wants to abandon measured, industrial, regimented time. Like any avant-gardist, he wants to inhabit Calinescu's aesthetic time.

It seems that the only way for this speaker to make his escape from bourgeois time to aesthetic time is to engage with the natural world, to take to the skies and float or fly, to leave the modern city, the product and place of industrialization and its temporal order. One contradiction in this escape from the modern bourgeois city, as we saw in "Café," is that the poet's desire for it stems from his commitment to modern aesthetics and to the cosmopolitan, positivist, and urban values of individuality, innovation, and irony. This escape to nature also exposes him to criticism as an outdated Romantic. Of course, the avant-garde inherits its drive to resist the strictures of bourgeois time from Romanticism and Symbolism. The avant-garde also inherits, in a now more keenly felt ambivalence, the inescapable irony of this fugitive drive.

Baudelaire's *flâneur* is perhaps the earliest and clearest example of this irony. He is sarcastic, detached, and dismissive of the urban jungle, the bourgeois landlord, the stock exchange. For example, Baudelaire's speaker in *Les fleurs du mal*, shaken from a sensuous marbled dream, finds himself

in a “triste monde engourdi;” he has been rattled awake by a clocktower which “sonnait brutalement midi” (146). Exclaiming “Paris change!” (125), Baudelaire’s speaker finds it at least distasteful if not simply impossible to adjust to the city’s new industrial values and pace of life. His speaker laments the power of the modern “dieu de l’Utile” but Baudelaire also must recognize that his own imagined “peuples anciens des beautés inconnues” and “beautés de langueur” are “inventions de nos muses tardives” (41). The *flâneur*, despite his dissatisfaction with modern industrial rhythms, nonetheless belongs to the modern city – he lives there and only there. He could never stand on his own in any real or imagined past, and he would be no match for the rural world. This is the dilemma an avant-garde poet like Rivas Panedas faces: if the poet flees from bourgeois industrial modernity in search of aesthetic modernity, who will see him go? Whom will he tell? Once he has arrived in the forest or on the farm, how will he convince his fellow avant-gardists that he is still a poetic acrobat, a cutting-edge original, an audacious artist and not a philistine dreaming of the country life? In other words, how can he simultaneously prove both that he prefers art to industry and that he is at the forefront of industrial modernity?

It is true, as Moretti says, that “for the *avant-garde*, Paris is closer to Buenos Aires than to Lyon,” and there is a “syntony between modernism and metropolis” (34). But this enthusiasm for the city was mixed with and subject to the avant-garde’s rebellious ironizing spirit, not to mention its convoluted politics. Since bourgeois modernity demanded that “la vida contemporánea (vale decir urbana)” (Ródenas 40) transpire perforce in cities, one way for the avant-garde to reject the nineteenth century was to reject the urban, the civilized, and embrace “lo primitivo” (Herrero Senés 153). The contradictions which undergird this embrace shine through Rivas Panedas’s poems, especially in metaphor.

In a poem published in *VLTRA* in December of 1921, “Oración de los árboles,” Rivas’s speaker focuses his attention on trees, specifically the municipally planted trees lining the road leading out of the city. The long line of trees becomes a series of “Velones que el otoño tiene luciendo” (Rivas Panedas 152). The trees are also “caballos funerarios de un largo entierro” (152). These metaphors turn the trees into objects of ritual human use. Subsequently, they are continually personified:

Los árboles
 todos los árboles
 por la tierra arriba
 tiran de la carreta del paseo
 hasta llegar a la llanura ardida

y allí se quedan inmóviles y perplejos
con sus tiernas cabezotas melencidas

Son los cachazudos y eternos viajeros
que recorren la tierra en todas direcciones
y llegan calvos y harapientos
a las estaciones naturales (152)

Through this personification the speaker participates in the same confusion that the trees feel upon reaching the edge of the city and staring out on the empty plain. Both the trees' and the speaker's eternal wandering has them old and haggard when they arrive at "las estaciones naturales," the four seasons and also, metaphorically, stations of (non)urban transit. These trees, acclimated to the order of city life, even to the urban, bourgeois pace of a "carreta de paseo," are perplexed when presented with unbounded plains. They are no match for the passing of the seasons, fitting more easily into urban spaces and rhythms. The speaker talks of the trees at dusk extending their branches, full of kisses, to one another. He says:

A esta hora la sensibilidad de borracho del hombre
que se ha bebido su propio sentimiento
clama a lo largo de las avenidas:

Árboles sumisos árboles ciegos
dadme la mano árboles de vago sexo!
Y meciéndose en sus copas
por la tierra arriba
va la voz del poeta como una flor de invierno:

Árboles sumisos árboles ciegos
da[d]me la mano
árboles de vago sexo! (153)

It is at this hour that man's "sensitivity of a drunkard," romantically drunk on his own dark feelings, shouts up and down the avenues, calling to the trees. His voice "sways in their canopies," "meciéndose en sus copas." The verb has strong connotations of the action of rocking a baby. Meanwhile the noun, "copas," refers to the foliage of the trees but also means "alcoholic drink." The poet's voice is made an infant by way of the verb "meciéndose" while the trees themselves are linked to his drunkenness by the dual sense of "copas." The trees are personified on several levels. They are "sumisos" and "ciegos," adjectives which may seem redundant when applied to trees

but which, in their application here, confer a human quality on them. In more explicit personification, their branches become hands, and indeed they seem possibly to share the “sensibilidad de borracho” of the speaker.

It is noteworthy that even in this poem, an “Oración” that tries to recover, if ironically, something of the sacred which had been abandoned by avant-garde art, the poet/speaker who appeals to nature brings nature closer to human experience through personification rather than by adjusting human perception to nature. The icons of nature, the trees planted in the sidewalk, are, in fact, products of city planning; and the rebellious, tree-loving poet shouts his plea to them along urban avenues, not in the dense and distant forest. Both the poet and the trees themselves, like *flâneurs*, are unprepared to venture into the untamed natural world – they are not hardy enough for those nonindustrial rhythms. In these lines, the poet makes his voice a flower, but a winter flower, “una flor de invierno,” a Baudelairean *fleur du mal*, out of sync with the broader natural world and dangerously exposed to its immutable operations.

In another of Rivas Panedas’s poems dealing with time, “Las estrellas,” the metaphorical confusion of the rural world is drawn somewhat violently into the modern industrialized world at daybreak. It is a poem that wrestles with the oneiric confusion¹¹ that results when aesthetic time, the night, makes effortful accommodation for the rhythms of the working day. It was published in *VLTRA* in January of 1922.

LAS ESTRELLAS

Las estrellas picotean las pepitas de la luna
 Y aquel árbol duerme sobre una pata
 con la cabeza escondida bajo el ala

Todo el amanecer está surcado
 por los cohetes dormidos de los gallos

Son los primeros intentos del día (Rivas Panedas 158)

The two metaphors of the first stanza are excellent examples of *ultraísmo*'s commitment to variable metaphor. In the line, “Las estrellas picotean las pepitas de la luna,” we can read the stars as tenor, the literal element of the metaphor. The verb “picotean” confers an avian aspect on the stars, turning them into birds pecking at the specks of light, the “seeds” of the moon. Of course, in the rural context signaled by the tree and the crowing roosters further on, we could also read “estrellas” as a metaphorical vehicle for the tenor of real live chickens. In this alternative and opposite metaphor, the

literal chickens would peck at the grain cast on the ground illuminated by the moon's receding early-morning light. The white chickens in the moon-glow are like terrestrial stars.

Likewise, the next lines allow a variable metaphorical reading. "Y aquel árbol duerme sobre una pata / con la cabeza escondida bajo el ala," could offer a metaphorical transformation of a bird, perhaps a lone sleeping rooster. His size could be misapprehended in the light of the wee hours as he casts a silhouette against the sky's new glow. The rooster might look like a tree. Alternatively, of course, a lone tree on the horizon could be seen to take on the shape of a bird sleeping while standing on one leg and covering its head underwing.

The flexible metaphors of this first stanza revel in aesthetic time. The sense of these metaphors is variable, and thus they disrupt linear time by simultaneously presenting more than one image. The correspondences with which they play are inconsequential beyond the scope of the poem and they operate at dawn, a liminal time of ambiguous transformations and nonlinear thought. In "Las estrellas," that special artistic time is bound to draw to a close. The final lines tell of the roosters' "sleeping rockets," that is, their crows breaking out of quiet sleep like sudden fireworks and tearing through the morning sky. The stars and chickens are interrupted by these "primeros intentos del día." The provisional nature of these "attempts," insinuated by "primeros," combined with the failure implicit in the word "intentos," seems to indicate that the day will not offer such smooth verbal play as did the night in the first stanza. The oneiric and luxurious artistic acrobatics of night come to an abrupt halt as the day, violently set into motion with the roosters' crowing, makes its first few abortive attempts at taking off. In "Las estrellas," the measured time of industrial reality (the working day) interrupts the dreamy aesthetic time of Rivas's metaphor-making (night). The poem, however, is not a simple lament over this interruption; the contrast of day and night and the tension between aesthetic and bourgeois time give the poem its energy.

The temporal aspect of the avant-garde is most salient, I think, when we pay attention to metaphors like these. Metaphors aspire to aesthetic simultaneity as Cubism did because they erode semantic stability by equating things that are in some ways dissimilar. Metaphor represents a kind of stasis since both terms remain "live" in the equation, each one simultaneously muted and amplified by the other. However, despite this stasis, metaphor implies the imperative of novelty. Thus, in the context of the avant-garde's temporal paradox, animated in important ways by the very real erosion of distinctions between rural and urban spaces (Kern 191-92), the metaphor of "los cohetes de los gallos" places this poem in a personal, aesthetic time by grounding the scene in the rural setting

inhabited by roosters. It also simultaneously insists on the industrial, aggressively positivist time of mass-produced fireworks, heavy artillery, and the emerging dream of space exploration.

A fascination with metaphor is readily evident in nearly all writing from Spain's avant-garde, precisely, I argue, because the semantic and syntactic structure of metaphor accommodates temporal paradox. We could say of metaphor in avant-garde poetry what Tim Armstrong says of Gertrude Stein's narrative prose: "[T]he continuous present involves the establishment of a relationship between syntax and temporal philosophy" (31). Modern poetry in general is then a "metaphysics of metaphor," since "the modern metaphor tends to divorce the idea and the figure^{e12} to annul in the last-mentioned any reference to a reality other than its own self" (Poggioli 196-97). The avant-garde metaphor vibrates with potential, but it does not anchor either term in lived reality to aestheticize and thus subordinate or elevate the other. Rather, it exists outside the usual constraints of time and space. It is an energetic and fragile stasis. Poggioli's "metaphysics of metaphor" is a near synonym for Marjorie Perloff's avant-gardist "poetics of indeterminacy," articulated in 1981. The dynamic was already understood in 1925, when Guillermo de Torre theorized the avant-garde metaphor in terms both temporal and paradoxical, as a central element to all avant-garde poetics:

La metáfora es variable, es momentánea, y empero su instantaneísmo móvil debe estampar con un viro-fijador permanente la imagen trémula ... la demostración no llega a realizarse, puesto que la metáfora lleva en sí su evidencia. En efecto, el espíritu creador del poeta no se compromete a una demostración integral. Se limita a enunciar los términos lejanos y a rasgar con un lírico fulgor instantáneo la posibilidad de su aproximación analógica. (333)

While Guillermo de Torre would say that "Rivas Panedas está henchido de un hiloísmo lírico que le lleva a la transfusión con todos los elementos de la Naturaleza" (97), and is thus stuck writing in a Romantic spirit, I think it makes much more sense to attribute his ambivalent moves between rural and urban settings and his fixation on trees, birds, and elements of the natural world to his complicated modernity. His is not a slow incorporation of the newest artistic attitudes, but a complete one, for his use of metaphor manages the tensions of the avant-garde's paradoxical temporal investments with deft ambivalence. Rivas Panedas does not write avant-garde poems packed with only the superficial signs of the times: airplanes, the wireless telegraph, cinema. In all the poems treated here, the "elements of Nature" that Torre sees as sure signs of Rivas Panedas's "romanticism" or

“lyrical hylozoism” can be more fruitfully read as signs of the avant-garde’s constitutive double bind over the problem of modern time.

The implications of this analysis are important for understanding the avant-garde more broadly since “Las estrellas,” if read simply for its thematic content, would likely be considered a *modernista*/late Symbolist poem. The database trawling implied by much of Moretti’s distant-reading project would probably not recognize “Las estrellas” as anything but a late *modernista* piece. Also, within the predominately spatial paradigm of Renée Silverman’s analysis of the avant-garde, the solitary, reflective, and rural subject of this poem would place it squarely in the “collective memory” of a nostalgic, rural Machadian poetics. Likewise, readings of the avant-garde which define the period and its art with strict reference to its negation of the past, its interest in abstraction, or its fascination with mechanization might generate similar critical lacunae.

Reading Rivas Panedas’s poetry with reference to its temporal dynamics, however, shows how it fits the avant-garde aesthetics of fractured subjectivity, including the avant-garde’s fundamental anxiety over the tension between positivist, bourgeois temporal thinking and artistic freedom, unbounded by bourgeois time. My analysis shows that the tensions resulting when aesthetic time is confronted with industrial time place this poetry more squarely with the avant-garde in which Silverman reads a cosmopolitan, fragmented subjectivity or the Modernism of Juli Highfill’s techno-material concerns.

Consequent to my analysis of the temporal tensions of the avant-garde, the *rappel à l’ordre* in European poetry in the second half of the 1920s and into the 1930s need not be read as a desertion of avant-garde aesthetics. Many of the poets of that phenomenon (Jean Cocteau, Gerardo Diego, Adriano del Valle, Federico García Lorca) were architects or students of the more radical avant-garde. Diego’s *heterocronismo* then, can be more fully understood in the context of the temporal paradox I have analyzed in these pages. Likewise, the rural and popular bent of poets like Lorca and Rafael Alberti should not necessarily be seen as a rejection of the more audacious avant-garde, though this is often the case in studies of these canonical poets. Rather, I would urge that the critical appraisal of currents of *vanguardia* and tradition in the early twentieth century is not a “zero-sum game in which one side must be crushed so that the other can triumph” (Felski 165).

The avant-garde posits its aesthetic projects as method and ethos to escape bourgeois modernity, but its fascination with technology and novelty mean that positivism and industrial affluence are part and parcel to the avant-garde endeavor. Aesthetic modernity is paradoxical because the artistic attraction to the new, as a rejection of bourgeois modernity, is nonetheless bound up in bourgeois ideas of progressive advancement.

Despite this paradox, a reading like the one I have presented here ought not condemn Rivas Panedas' poetry as self-defeating or critically naive, but rather broaden the avant-garde's theoretical purchase by avoiding the error of hasty exclusions. José Rivas Panedas and other artists of the historical avant-garde want to have their cake and cocktails and eat and drink them too. They want to claim originality but deny they are primarily concerned with the bourgeois values of competition and achievement. They need the clock but wish to live free of it. By allowing avant-garde poetry to attain critical recognition on the basis of what it does within this heady paradox rather than what superficial icons of modernity it contains, we may recuperate some of the artistic fruits of the thrilling and exasperating problems of such an aesthetic position. Thus, the work of a relatively obscure poet like José Rivas Panedas can help critics of the historical avant-garde to cultivate a more complete vision of the art of the period.

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NOTES

- 1 Andrew A. Anderson documents Rivas Panedas's presence in the early days of *ultraísmo* throughout his compendious book on the movement's beginnings. He also includes a section with analysis of some of Rivas's poems, considering him "uno de los poetas ultraístas más prolíficos" (638) and "ingenioso" (630), even if his poetry is sometimes "floja" or "arbitraria" (632). Ivana Rota's article gives a succinct overview of Rivas Panedas's involvement and protagonism in *ultraísmo*, detailing theoretical contributions such as his article, "Nosotros los del ULTRA," a response to Manuel Machado. Rivas Panedas was a signatory to the first manifesto of 1918 and he participated actively in many of the group's publications and "veladas."
- 2 Where Giddens writes "modernism" I read "the historical avant-garde." Modernism and avant-garde certainly do not mean the same thing, even if the confusion and conflation of the two is common. The distinction between the two ought to be more consistently recognized, but Giddens's thoughts here apply equally well, I think, to both the avant-garde and high modernist strains of global modernism. Perhaps the best way to distinguish between the two from the vantage of Giddens's insight here would be to consider the kind of "break" each makes, the types of "protest" or "endorsement" preferred by each, and the ways each expresses new attitudes to time and space. The first chapter of Domingo Ródenas's book, *Los espejos del novelista*, and Marjorie Perloff's book, *The Poetics of Indeterminacy*, are the most cogent and thorough treatments of the problem that I know of.

- 3 Felski notes that “critique” suffers from its own makeup in much the same way. The negativity at the heart of critique, as practiced with a “hermeneutics of suspicion,” means that critique will ultimately cannibalize critique, always eventually finding it “not yet critical enough” (Felski 148-49, 119).
- 4 I will cite Rivas Panedas’s poetry from Carlos García and Pilar García-Sedas’s edition of his work, *Poeta ultraísta, poeta exiliado*. The editors clearly indicate the original place of publication for all his poems, also listing complete publication information for poems which were printed in more than one place.
- 5 Though T.S. Eliot made the term ubiquitous in scholarship on modern poetry, “objective correlative” was originally coined by the painter Washington Allston. Eliot may have read Allston and may have been quoting him without attribution, though Nathalia Wright, the scholar who pointed out Allston’s earlier coinage, supposes Eliot was not consciously appropriating Allston’s term (Wright 590-91).
- 6 The spontaneity of Dada antics, Duchamp’s ‘ready-mades,’ Russian *zaum* language, and Surrealist automatic writing could all be considered examples of this drive to capture the present.
- 7 Of course, the extent to which Rubén Darío’s *modernismo* championed bourgeois values is up for debate. Darío himself seemed to want to escape his own industrialized time. His poetry’s fascination with princesses, musicality, and anachronism might fit more readily with the concept of “l’art pour l’art” or Aestheticism. His chilling sentence from the prologue to his *Prosas profanas* is perhaps telling: “Yo detesto la vida y el tiempo en que me tocó nacer” (Darío 96).
- 8 Kirkpatrick’s original text reads: “For many it was the latest literary fashion, a set of glamorous themes and images and, above all, a justification for exalting national tradition. Only a few understood and practiced Romanticism as a radical questioning and revision of earlier values” (265).
- 9 Vast troves of material do indeed exist for this period. The Hemeroteca Digital of the Biblioteca Nacional de España has excellent digitization of newspapers and many magazines of the first third of the twentieth century. Likewise, the online portal of *Las Revistas de la Edad de Plata* hosted by the Residencia de Estudiantes has excellent digital reproductions of nearly all the avant-garde magazines of Spain, with digital search functions, digital transcription, and high-quality scans.
- 10 The lines by Gerardo Diego are from his poem, “Gesta” (*Obras completas* 109) which appeared in *Cervantes* in December of 1919 and was later included in *Imagen* (Bernal 25-27). I have not been able to find the poem to which Comet’s lines belong.
- 11 I should like to emphasize the strictest etymological meaning of the word. A “confusion” is a mixing-together. Blending and interpenetration are key ideas for Symbolist and post-Symbolist (avant-garde) aesthetics. Charles

- Baudelaire's sonnet, "Les Correspondances," in which "Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent," is the prime exemplar of the poetics (40).
 12 I might say "to allow their separate and mutual coexistence."

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