

Transatlantic Sensationalism and the First Printing of Rubén Darío's "A Roosevelt"

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Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío once posed the following question concerning the effects of U.S. domination of Cuba 15 years following the Spanish American War: “¿Qué espectáculo ofrece hoy día ese pueblo al espectador imparcial? El de una colonia disimulada donde a las aspiraciones de veinte años de lucha ha sucedido un oscuro servilismo al oro yanqui” (“Refutación” 111). Darío suggests that readers visually perceive the situation, that they trust “impartial spectators” in order to truly comprehend the U.S. domination in the region. Spectacles are events based on the optics of the consuming observers; viewers who, at their own leisure, decipher visual productions and performances. Unsurprisingly, Darío himself is the informed spectator and enlightens readers to the colonialist and financial burdens imposed on Cuba. The poet continually implemented this didactic maneuver to uncover the “spectacles” of U.S. domination following *el desastre* of 1898. The spectacle of the “lucha” of U.S.-Latin American relations, as construed by Darío, is no more evident than in the first printing of his seminal poem “A Roosevelt” in Madrid magazine *Helios* in 1904.¹

“A Roosevelt” depicts the U.S. president as a “Cazador,” “Primitivo,” “invasor,” and as one “domando caballos” and “asesinando tigres.” The poem is replete with metaphors portraying violence, colonialism and war. Darío confronts this enemy with discursive force with the resounding “No” that visually divides the poem in two. The marked division of verse is a reminder of the strength of concrete poetry, rare in *Modernismo*, to represent ideological opposition. In addition to the visual nature of the poem’s many symbolic and metaphorical representations, a paratextual header image accompanying Darío’s piece in *Helios* visually frames the poem and adds an extra layer of context that further guides readership in consuming and interpreting the text. The illustration is difficult to decipher due to its small size on the page and the blurry black and white print; nevertheless, it coincides with the violent metaphors of the poem and the anti-imperialist thematic of the poet’s response to the American president (Figures 1 & 2). This study reads the poem and image together, in its original site of production, giving prominence to visual imagery found in *Modernista* literary production, and attempts to re-read “A Roosevelt” in light of the accompanying periodical illustration in its first print publication.

Lou Charnon-Deutsch writes of the idea behind the statement:

'The medium is the message,' [...] holds true for emerging media like photography and the illustrated magazine that developed in its wake. The visual order conventionalized in the magazine image served social, economic, and national interests in myriad ways: convening groups of subjects in common interests; educating consumers about available as well as precious commodities; garnering support for national enterprises such as wars, railroad building, industrial and urban modernization. (2)

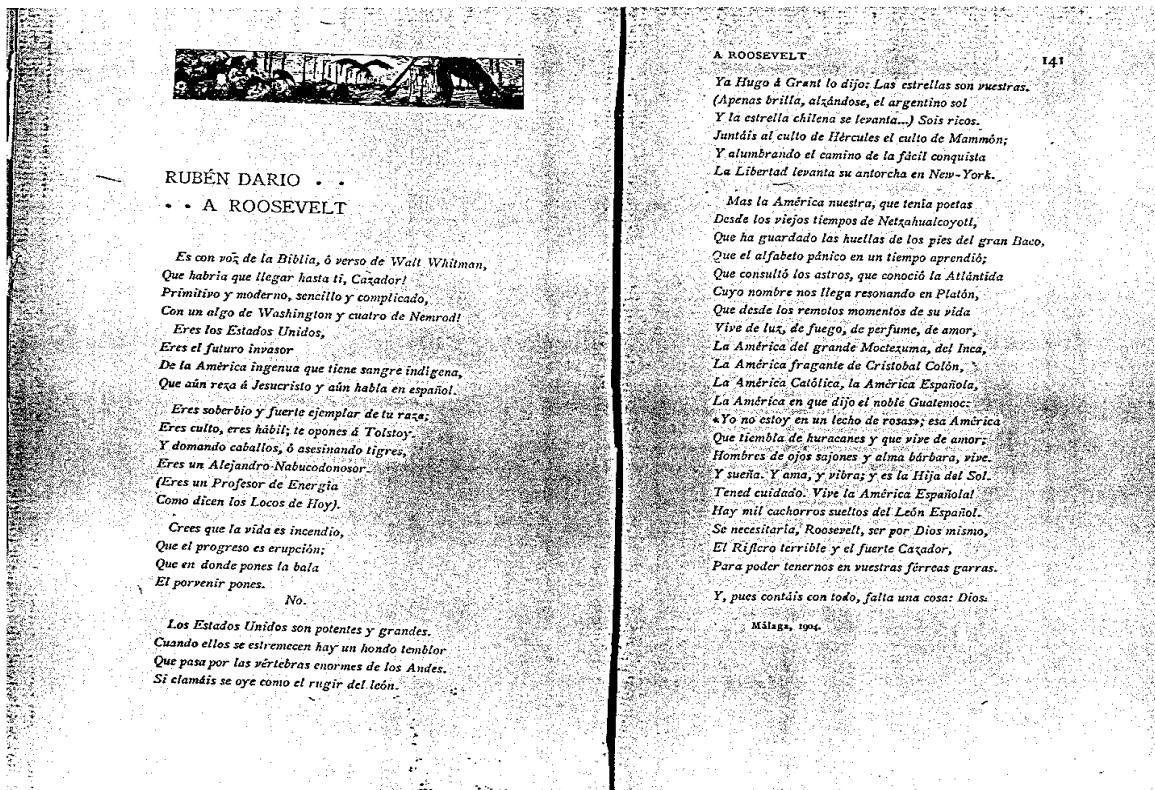


Figure 1. Full page of Darío's "A Roosevelt." *Helios*. Madrid: February, 1904. 140-41.

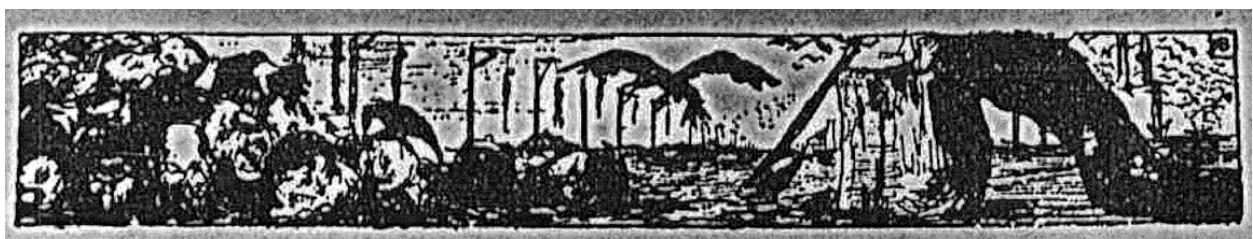


Figure 2. Close up of illustration accompanying Darío's "A Roosevelt." *Helios*. Madrid: February, 1904.

The magazine medium, allowing for a visual contextualization of the literary, opens up a new space for textual analysis and additional meaning when we speak of *Modernista* aesthetics. The politicization of the pages of *Helios* through both poem and image situates *Modernista* letters within a sphere of public discourse that underscores post-Spanish American war sentiment; in this case highlighting the aestheticized and sensationalistic representation of U.S. domination and violence. Dári's use of the magazine medium strengthens his literary authority through the discursive power of both verse and illustration combined. The use of print modernization provided the Nicaraguan with a striking convergence of technology and art, immersing readers in a vivid political message. The representational logic during *Modernismo*, what Josefina Ludmer has labeled a "máquina de leer fin de siglo," commenced a new dialogue in the region between art, visuality and the market (8). This new visual tension follows a long emblematic and vignette tradition in the West. The Parnassian and Symbolist movements, which heavily influenced *Modernista* perspectives on aesthetics and the arts, incorporated illustrative vignettes in their textual productions. Juliet Simpson writes that French Symbolists "use vignette techniques as the bases for creating visual correlatives to the images conjured up in the texts [...] the emphasis is on the creation of a parallel visual text with its own visual syntax: a syntax that foregrounds the image as both image and design" (158-9). Though often incorporated in books and magazines for ornamentation and embellishment, vignettes, as Simpson expresses, are coextensive with the texts they accompany. The decorative elements in the vignette tradition connect textual metaphor and form to the plastic arts creating a synthesis of discourse among disparate representational formats.² Along these lines, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam articulate that "[t]he visual, in our view, never comes 'pure,' it is always 'contaminated' by the work of other senses (hearing, touch, smell), touched by other texts and discourses, and imbricated in a whole series of apparatuses [...] which govern the production, dissemination, and legitimization of artistic productions" (55). The transnational print industry represented in the *Helios* publication joined together poem and image, Latin America and Spain, literature and art, racial and political discourse, and a convergence of both textual and extratextual implications. This "impurity" or representational fragmentation is a touchstone of the *Modernista* experience. The tension inherent in the visual cultures of the period stemmed from the interaction between a high aesthetics and the burgeoning marketplace of mass communication industries at the *fin de siglo*. Shohat and Stam continue: "The visual is simply one point of entry [...] into a multidimensional world of intertextual dialogism" (55). The strategic nature of the literary/visual coalescence is an intentional dialogic merging that supplements the symbolic power of both Dári's poem and the anonymous illustration. The continuum of textual interaction is central in the two-page poem as Spanish American letters at the turn of the 20th century relied on intertextuality and the interplay of diverging fields of power. In this case, politics, art, current events, journalism and expanding print and media industries converge on the two folios. Hence the visual image during the *Modernista* moment brings producer and consumer together into an experience that introduces a multitude of discursive and overt political elements.

Jacques Rancière suggests that literature "carries" a sense of politics in its expression. He explains that "writing is not imposing one will on another, in the fashion of the orator, the priest or the general. It is displaying and deciphering the symptoms of a state of things. It is revealing the signs of history, delving as the geologist does, into the seams and strata

under the stage of the orators and politicians—the seams and strata that underlie its foundation” (161-62). As Darío reacted against *El desastre* and increased domination of the U.S. in the poem at hand, he overtly exhibits “symptoms” of the Latin American region of the time. Rancière goes on to explain that literary texts, as interpretations of the experience of life and all that this entails, “are political to the extent that they are reconfigurations of the visibility of a common world” (167). “A Roosevelt” is a reconfiguration of a common Latin America in both a visual and literary sense. It aims to renew expressive action against U.S. hegemony and retrench literary discourse within the Hispanic cultural tradition. The poem expresses the divine power that accompanies Hispanism against a Goliath-like foe. It is the prominence and openness of what Rancière titles a “partition of the sensible” (152), characteristic of both politics and literature, which highlights Darío’s literary power that spread across the continent following the poem’s publication. In 1906, the same year that Darío wrote U.S.-friendly “Salutación al águila” as he participated in the Pan-American conference in Rio de Janeiro, Madrid periodical *El Liberal* ran a front page article on the meeting. In a paragraph on anti-U.S. sentiment that accompanied the conference, the newspaper emphasizes the widespread influence of Darío’s critical stance towards the U.S. in “A Roosevelt” stating: “La Oda á Roosevelt, de Rubén Darío, es en todo el Sur una especie de oración dominical” (“En Río” 1). This is further manifest by the poem’s publication soon after the *Helios* printing in at least five Spanish American publications in Venezuela, Costa Rica and Chile (Arellano 119).

The poignant and alluring message of the two *Helios* folios is most visually evident in the header illustration ripe with sensationalistic and emblematic symbolism of violence, authoritarianism and consumption. On the right side of the image there is a pile of corpses, picked at by ravaging vultures. Leading out from the bodies is a seemingly endless line of lynched figures, fading off into the distance. In the center of the image is a large black vulture swooping down to take part in consuming the bodies. In the distance in the center and on the far right are flocks of vultures that fill the air also coming to feed on the lynched corpses. Then ominously filling the right side of the illustration is a spectral and disfigured body that darkly overtakes nearly a third of the image. Even in the original manuscript, partly due to the subpar printing of the old periodical and the image’s small size, the black mass is difficult to decipher.³ Nonetheless, the kneeling or misshapen figure contributes to the monstrous and suffering tone of the illustration. The drawing, as grotesque as it may be, follows a tradition of sensationalistic and provocative illustrations common in literary magazines at the time. Mexican *Modernista*-influenced artist/illustrators Roberto Montenegro and Julio Ruelas, among others, commonly depicted violent and phantasmagorical drawings that would often accompany *Modernista* literature (Figures 3 & 4). Francisco Morán recently wrote that “Los rubíes del *Modernismo* ¿qué son sino sangre congelada? Sangre engarzada en la joya, la escritura *Modernista* es siempre la escena de un crimen, el rastro de una violencia atroz” (202). As *Modernistas* were avid journalists, sensationalism and the coverage of often violent current events lie at the heart of the movement’s literary work. Aníbal González understates the fact that “[*Modernismo*’s] experience with journalism was clearly invaluable. It showed them the limits and limitations of the petty and archaic notion of literature [. . .] and gave them a glimpse of the powers and perils of writing” (100). *Modernista* journalism from the beginning placed the group into direct contact with the fields of power resulting in several cases of censorship, close contact with dictatorial regimes and clear and ongoing

ideological struggles.⁴ This interaction with the journalism industry was in reality what gave discursive purpose and momentum to the individual literary and political experiences of *Modernista* writers. In this case, Darío's poem in *Helios* seeks to further uncover the scene of an expanding American empire in connection with the visceral illustration. Perhaps at the center of the image's U.S.-centered critique is the long line of lynched corpses.

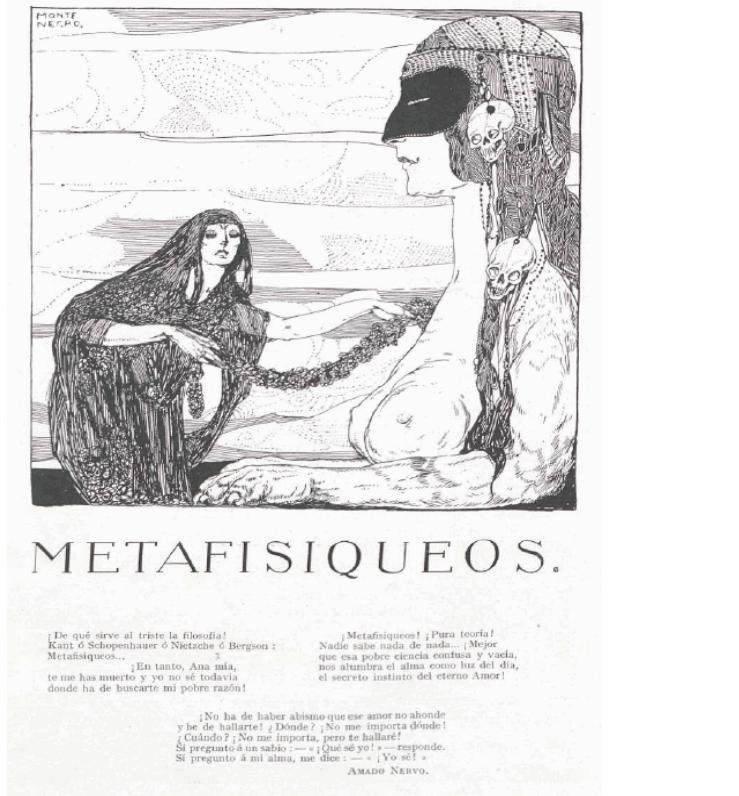


Figure 3. Roberto Montenegro's illustration accompanying Amado Nervo's poem. *Mundial Magazine*. Paris: September, 1912. 392.



Figure 4. Julio Ruelas' illustration. *Revista Moderna de México*. Mexico: August, 1910. 323.

Between 1889 and 1918 close to 3000 extra-legal lynchings occurred in the U.S. (Litwack 306). In several of Darío's texts, he refers to the extra-legal process as a critique of U.S. excess. He writes that "sus grandes hombres como no ser [sic] Edison, se llaman Lynch" ("El triunfo" 86), referring to Charles Lynch and the mob justice named after the Virginian jurist.⁵ Ashraf Rushdy explains that the years surrounding the turn of the 20th century can be called "The Age of Lynching" due to the highly sensationalistic and widespread journalistic promotion of African-American lynchings. Rushdy uses this title "primarily because of the remarkable circulation of information about the practice and, consequently, the way lynching became imbricated over so many other features of American life. Lynching became the subject of careful tabulation for social scientists and newspapers, the subject of study by scholars and intellectuals, the subject of activism for intelligentsia" (74). Latin American *letrados* were not immune to the topic and the *Helios* image incorporates the spectacle of lynching into the poem's thematic, thereby centering violence towards African-American populations and their lack of basic rights as a critical metaphor of the periodical page. In this case, lynching discourse was exported and transferred to a critique of the U.S. at the highest levels of Hispanic literary and artistic discourse as manifest in *Helios*, one of the most popular and successful literary magazines in Spain at the time.

The link between literature and mass culture, through popular illustration connected to high poetry, can be found in the *Helios* image read together with "A Roosevelt." Ricardo Gullón called *Helios* "la mejor revista de la modernidad" (201), and Almudena Revilla Guijarro wrote that *Helios* "recogía lo romántico y lo clásico, mezclaba escritores ya consagrados con los nuevos valores que empezaban a sonar y que presentaba estéticas nuevas" (42). The connection between image and poem represents a Hispanic modernity driven by political and economic modernization and crisis, ideals of vanguardist experimentation and an aesthetic renovation in arts and literature together with a postcolonial and anti-imperialist awareness. In addition, it highlights Darío's prestige in the Hispanic world as one who represents both Peninsular and Latin American letters. *Modernista* transatlantic visual culture at the turn of the twentieth century was at the center of a new site of representation. With illustrated magazines and newspapers reaching unprecedented numbers and ever growing readers, the public came to expect photographs, color illustrations, and art as a part of their reading experience.⁶ *Helios* represented this growth and the "A Roosevelt" visual demonstrates the complex ideological and discursive ties that connected text and image.

Theodore Roosevelt himself was highly interested in imagery and self-promotion through spectacle. This is captured by the iconic image of Colonel Roosevelt following his decisive victory at the Battle of San Juan Hill with his Rough Riders' battalion (Figure 5). Gary Gerstle reports that "[i]n this climactic battle that Roosevelt had long wished for, he seemed as immortal as a Greek god, especially to the awestruck journalists who were reporting this fight to the millions of avid newspaper readers back home. [. . .] [W]rote Richard Harding Davis, the famed *New York Herald* and *Scribner's* reporter, Roosevelt 'made you feel that you would like to cheer'" (1290). Nevertheless, Roosevelt's heroics in the battle were exaggerated by sensationalistic journalists. In the unpublished version of the event, the same Richard Harding Davis, recounting his experience, wrote: "It seemed as if someone had made an awful and terrible mistake. One's instinct was to call to them

to come back. You felt that someone had blundered and that these few men were blindly following some madman's mad order" (qtd. in Miller 96-7). Yet Roosevelt's authoritative stature and the fierce U.S. nationalism surging from the war drowned out voices such as Davis'. Richard Hofstadter expresses that "What Roosevelt stood for, [...] were the aggressive, masterful, fighting virtues of the soldier" (206). He continues: "'Manly' and 'masterful,' two of the most common words in Roosevelt's prose, reflect a persistent desire to impose himself upon others" (208). The brute and conquering theatrics of Roosevelt during the war eventually propelled him to the U.S. Presidency. The visual optics of the sensational *Helios* folio parallels the visually-focused construction of Roosevelt as a domineering world leader.



Figure 5. "Colonel Roosevelt and his Rough Riders at the top of the hill which they captured, Battle of San Juan." Photograph by William Dinwiddie, 1898. U.S. Library of Congress.

Even so, Darió's anti-imperialist stance is a conflicted one and his views did not always depict a strident anti-Americanism. For example, in the introduction to *El canto errante* he praises Roosevelt as a "varón sensato" for providing support to U.S. poetry ("Dilucidaciones" IX). Darió's well-known poem, "Salutación al águila," is also optimistic about the relationship between Latin America and the U.S.⁷ Nevertheless, Dario's influential criticism towards his northern neighbor cannot be understated. This sentiment is perhaps most strongly expressed in the essay "El triunfo de Calibán." He writes that:

Son enemigos míos, son los aborrecedores de la sangre latina, son los Bárbaros. [...] Y los he visto a esos yankees, en sus abrumadoras ciudades

de hierro y piedra y las horas que entre ellos he vivido las he pasado con una vaga angustia.

Parecíame sentir la opresión de una montaña, sentía respirar en un país de cíclopes [. . .]. Comen, comen, calculan, beben whisky y hacen millones. (85)

This scathing critique is also clear in “A Roosevelt.” Darío refers to the critical poem in his preface to *Cantos de vida y esperanza*: “Si en estos cantos hay política, es porque aparece universal. Y si encontráis versos a un presidente, es porque son un clamor continental. Mañana podremos ser yanquis (y es lo más probable)” (334). This concern further deepens the representation of crisis in the poem and the implied existential threat of the U.S. For the poet the most probable outcome is that domination of the northern neighbor will extend southward, erasing Spanish American identity. This “clamor continental” is likewise expressed in the front matter of the book. Darío dedicates *Cantos de vida y esperanza* to “Nicaragua” and “A la República Argentina.” Although Darío considered both nations as home, the words also represent a geospatial dedicatory that spans the continent representing a unified whole. The book, and more specifically “A Roosevelt,” personify, in their poetics and ideology, an expression of life and hope for Hispanism on the American continent.

The hyperbolic violence of Darío’s essay and poem—the repeated feasting, the U.S. abhorrence of Latin blood, and the barbaric actions of the state—are metaphors that can be similarly found in the *Helios* image. Applying this metaphorical reading to the header image, the representation of the U.S. as a vulture, feeding on the dead, lynched bodies creates an inevitable symbolic intersection with Darío’s poem. A central theme in the image and poem is the conceptualization of U.S. excess. There is a pile of corpses, a long line of lynched bodies, and a sky packed full of vultures. Consequently, print culture, from the 18th century forward, took on an excessive and indeed a carnivalesque nature. Isabelle Lehuu writes that “print culture allowed the body to be omnipresent. Reading matter became a feast for the eye [. . .]. It was a carnival on the page” (4). Echoing Bakhtin, the carnivalesque is evident in both texts and textualities of the *Modernista* period. The Russian philosopher writes:

In the example of grotesque, displeasure is caused by the impossible and improbable nature of the image [. . .]. But this feeling is overcome by two forms of pleasure: first, we see the truly existing monastic corruption and depravity as symbolized in the hyperbolic image; in other words, we find some place for this exaggeration within reality. Second, we feel a moral satisfaction, since sharp criticism and mockery have dealt a blow to these vices. (305-6)

The purpose of Darío’s poem, traditionally read as a representation of the moral superiority of Hispanism in comparison to U.S. politics, culture and society, is supported by the accompanying image. Its excess and hyperbole are overstated, the inherent violence of the U.S. is evidenced by the lynched corpses and, together with the poem, both representations elicit a clear moral advantage over the barbarism of Latin America’s

northern neighbor. The moral supremacy is particularly poignant in the poem as it ends with the famous line: “Y, pues contáis con todo, falta una cosa: ¡Dios!” The two phrases that bookend the poem, “Es con voz de la Biblia [...] Que habría que llegar hasta ti” and “falta una cosa: Dios,” situate the poetic voice as one reproaching the U.S. president using biblical and divine authority and in turn expressing the lack of religious morality in the U.S. This ironic tone underscores the grotesque and exhibitionist immorality of the image. In it lies a lifeless, godless wasteland, unable to relieve human tragedy and violence. Bodily destruction is directly tied, in this case, to state power and authority. Sylvia Molloy’s theorization of *fin de siglo* exhibitionist posing applies here. She writes that “[m]anejada por el *poseur* mismo, la exageración es estrategia de provocación para no pasar desatendido, para obligar la mirada del otro, para forzar una lectura, para obligar un discurso” (44). In this sense the illustration assists in the exhibition process in that it empowers readers to stop and look, to take in the literary and artistic scene. In the case of the *Helios* “A Roosevelt” printing there is an entire team of “poseurs,” from editor, author, illustrator, and publisher, even those that financed the journal’s existence. All of these enabled the text’s discursive power. This strategy of sensationalism and exaggeration lies at the heart of the poem and image’s political expression.

The black bodies are not only hanging from the strikingly emblematic gallows, but are further destroyed by scavenging animals. This double representation of death, one not only depicting the execution of the figures, but also the bodies being picked apart by vultures, highlights Darío’s underlying animosity articulated in the violent and dominating metaphors of the poem. The image as text shares the page with “A Roosevelt” not as supplement, but as a separate piece that nevertheless affects the reading of the poem just as the lines of verse influence our interpretation of the image. The illustration is a portraiture of death and destruction; the poem is one of warning but ultimately life. It reads: “Que desde los remotos momentos de su vida / Vive de luz, de fuego, de perfume, de amor / [...] esa América / Que tiembla de huracanes y que vive de amor; / Hombres de ojos sajones y alma bárbara, vive. / Y sueña. Y ama, y vibra; y es la Hija del Sol. / Tened cuidado. Vive la América Española!” (141). The ability to rise above the deprivation and despair of the header illustration positions the poem in contrast to the image; as a lifesaving device that gives cautious hope in the face of violence and death. The image ultimately serves as an effective foil of comparison to the poem and provides additional discursive power to “A Roosevelt” as a text articulating the ability to face down the seemingly endless lynchings and ravenous vultures.

The pillaging of humanity in the black and white image also represents the rampant consumption inherent in the liberalism of the period. Despite the overt criticism in both image and poem, *Modernista* political ideology and more specifically that of Darío is much more complex and nuanced. Involved in politics since his youth, Darío was always passionate about Central American unity, autonomy and development. The poet’s time in Spain following *el desastre* of 1898 had a profound impact on his consciousness of the dichotomy between Hispanism and U.S. domination of the American hemisphere. This eventually grew into a deep relationship with Jose Santos Zelaya up through the Nicaraguan president’s U.S.-backed ouster in 1909. Zelaya was heavily invested in Nicaraguan economic development at the expense of the basic rights of the country’s Native populations, particularly the Miskito Indians.⁸ The Nicaraguan president also

repeatedly resisted U.S. influence in his country and throughout the region connecting Darío's homeland to a continual North American military threat. This was ultimately represented through Darío's expulsion as a Guest of Honor at Mexico's centennial celebration in 1909 because of strong American influence surrounding the event and the poet's ties to the recently ousted Zelaya. "A Roosevelt," as political verse, reconfigures Latin American life in its Hispanist enunciation. This identitarian expression, outlining the state of the continent following *el desastre*, is a defensive move, completely un-critical of itself due to the poem's depiction of the threat confronting the region. As a both literary and visual "oración dominical" for the region, the poem, reinforced by its *Helios* illustration, politicizes Darío's poetics yet also diagnoses his non-literary stances by restating the *Modernista* "signs of history" as expressed by Rancière. This sensationalism, then, is at the same site as any representational crime, attracting the masses to a certain reconfiguration of the visible, in this case supported and enhanced by the collaboration between verse and image.

Eduardo Chirinos, in a recent and intriguing reading of "A Roosevelt," points to the visual power of the poem itself. He writes that "las márgenes de estos dos bloques (norte y sur) solo se recortan si somos capaces de ver la magnitud del litoral herido por ese 'No' que [Pedro] Salinas contrapone a la palabra final 'Dios'. Es allí donde se instala la cesura del canal panameño y el núcleo de la reivindicación hispánica" (69).⁹ In the *Helios* version we see the clear caesura in the poem divided between the North American shaped denunciation of Roosevelt ending with the Panamanian "No" and the metaphorical "southern" section of the poem which offers a defensive stance of "la América nuestra." This double visuality, represented by both header image and the poem itself, strengthens the ideological messaging of both illustrator and poet and bolsters the tie between visual art and verse. The header introduces the poem with a grotesque and excessive critique and prepares the reader for a dark and violent appraisal. Darío accomplishes that critique with a further "litoral herido" visualized in the poem.¹⁰

The repetition of sensationalistic and anti-imperialist discourse through a wide variety of genres and texts together with the mechanical repetition of newspapers and magazines proved to be a potent force for ideological dissemination during *Modernismo*. As Serge Gruzinski suggests, the culture of Latin American imagery "practiced decontextualization and reuse, the destructuralization and restructuring of languages. The blurring of references, the confusion of ethnic and cultural registers, the overlap of life and fiction" (226). As in the long tradition of Hispanic visual representations, the "A Roosevelt" publication should be situated in the discursive genesis of the connection between image and literary work. The magazine medium offered *Modernistas* a way to fuse their texts with the artwork of the period and stretch the literary boundaries of their texts thus contributing to a richness in merging genres, textualities and levels of discursive reality. This in turn allowed writers to be involved in the process of print modernization and technologies of reproduction placing them at a crossroads of high literature and mass-produced content. This textual and visual combination opens up the complex intersection of artistic illustrations and literature as it appealed to both *literatos* and the growing readerships of the period.

Notes

¹ *Modernista* writing during the decades spanning the turn of the twentieth century was almost always featured in newspapers and magazines before publication in book form. Following this model, a year later “A Roosevelt” was published in Darío’s widely read volume *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza*.

² José Rosero Navarrete asserts the following regarding the definition of the vignette: “lo que se denomina ‘viñetas’ se confunde normalmente con las ilustraciones variantes. Una viñeta, en el sentido estricto de la palabra, es considerada una imagen en un mínimo espacio bidimensional [. . .]. En los libros a veces se ubican como elementos decorativos o como una letra capital inicial ilustrada. [. . .] [S]u proceso de conceptualización no es el mismo que en las semblanzas y variantes, ya que su función no es la de clarificar a través de un objeto condensado sino la de decorar” (20).

³ The included images were scanned at Spain’s National Library. Online copies are also now available from the Google Books website.

⁴ Darío’s rejection from the Mexican Centennial celebration, Manuel Gutierrez Najera’s close ties to the *Porfiriato*, José Martí’s revolutionary journalism, and the imposed Spanish censorship on Gómez Carrillo’s World War I writings are just a few examples of the complicit and often radical politics of many *Modernistas*.

⁵ Lynching in the United States was mentioned in several Darío texts including “El linchamiento de Puck,” and “La ley lynch en París.” Additionally, Darío seems to marginally support the practice in his provocative essay, “La raza de Cham.”

⁶ This growth in journalistic production and readership can be seen throughout the Spanish-speaking world at the turn of the 20th century. One concrete example is Buenos Aires where, between 1880 and 1886, the number of periodicals jumped from 109 to 407 and that of monthly magazines from 41 to 121 (Prieto 37).

⁷ For example, the poem’s opening lines read:

Bien vengas, mágica Águila de alas enormes y fuertes
A extender sobre el Sur tu gran sombra continental,
A traer en tus garras, anilladas de rojos brillantes,
Una palma de gloria, del color de la inmensa esperanza,
Y en tu pico la oliva de una vasta y fecunda paz. (27)

⁸ See Jorge Camacho’s article, “José Martí y Rubén Darío ante la anexión de los territorios indígenas en Argentina y Nicaragua,” for a lucid evaluation of Darío’s involvement in the Miskito Indian episode.

⁹ Chirinos is not the only one who has spoken of the visuality of “A Roosevelt.” Other interpretations taking into account the visual nature of “A Roosevelt” have been published by Keith Ellis and Julio Valle-Castillo.

¹⁰ See Patricia Montenegro’s discussion of Darío’s creative and original stance on the historical expression of Spanish America. She writes: “su Modernismo representa una de las pocas alternativas de hacer historia, de iniciar un cambio dentro de su esquema social. [. . .] dejándonos el testimonio de los modos de relación neocoloniales de su época. Una historia que sin proponérselo sigue siendo válida en nuestros días” (233).

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