

ESTUDIOS HISPÁNICOS EN EL CONTEXTO GLOBAL
HISPANIC STUDIES IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT
HISPANISTIK IM GLOBALEN KONTEXT

Edited by Ulrich Winter, Christian von Tschilschke
and Germán Labrador Méndez

VOLUME 18


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Dolores Romero López /
Jeffrey Zamostny (eds.)

Towards the
Digital Cultural History of the
Other Silver Age Spain


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Chapter 9 Transatlantic Transfers: Dynamics of Circulation in Literary and Cultural Magazines of the Silver Age

1. Cultural Magazines of the “Silver Age” as Media of Literary Circulation

Where literary studies, traditionally fixated on the book medium, have so far considered cultural magazines as objects of study in their own right, they have usually been limited to the intensive analysis of the contents of individual case studies that are considered outstanding and already highly canonized. The few historical magazines or journals that found their way into the canon of literary history did so either because of the high degree of canonization of the author responsible for their publication (e.g., the *Revista de Occidente* edited by Ortega y Gasset in the Spanish context¹ or Carlos Mariátegui’s *Amauta* in Latin America²) or because of the high literary-historical significance attributed to them as the central publication organs of a literary group or style (such as the Argentinian journal *Martín Fierro* for the “Grupo de Martín Fierro” often described as being linked to this journal). However, these approaches usually remain within the framework of national philology oriented towards a single cultural context. This is also generally true for the Spanish-speaking cultural area, where both for the research situation in Spain and for the different Latin American contexts, the basic assertion holds true that the cultural magazine is treated primarily within

1 Several monographs have already been dedicated to this journal, due not only to its cultural importance but also to its long duration within the “Edad de Plata” (see López Campillo, 1972; Alonso Iglesias, 1996; Lemke Duque, 2014).

2 See the recent exhibition devoted to this magazine and its networks (Adams and Majluf, 2019).

the framework of one literary field that is almost always thought to be congruent with the boundaries of a nation-state.³ The division of labor between the different national philologies is thereby retroactively projected even onto journals that addressed themselves explicitly to an inter- or transnational readership and aimed to reach a transnational community. This retroactive nationalism substantially limits recognition of the scope of literary circulation, if it is taken into consideration at all.

The project *Cultural Magazines from “Modernismo” to Avant-Garde: Processes of Modernization and Transnational Networks*, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), attempted to lay foundations for future data-driven comparative research on cultural magazines, publishing a corresponding database (Ehrlicher, 2020) that seeks to respect as much as possible the guidelines for FAIR research data management (Wilkinson et al., 2016). The resulting data will be analyzed here in part. In this project, we tried to conceive of cultural magazines as a media infrastructure that sets literature in motion across space and time. Movement across space here primarily means transatlantic transfers, because the corpus of Spanish-language magazines under analysis includes both Spain and different cultural contexts of Hispanic America (South America with a focus on Argentina and Peru, North America with Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean with Cuba).⁴

The temporal span of literary exchange covered by the project encompassed the two paradigmatic phases of literary modernization within the period 1891–1936.⁵ In the late nineteenth century, modernization initially took place under

3 For an overview of the state of research, see Agudelo Ochoa and Bedoya Sánchez (2017).

4 For more explanation about how the corpus of digitized magazines has been conceived, see “The Corpus – Cultural Magazines from Spain and Hispanic America” in Ehrlicher (2020).

5 1891 is the publication date of the earliest journal in our corpus, *La Habana Elegante*, which was first published in Havana on 15 September 1891. Of course, the exact date of *Modernismo*’s emergence is as controversial as the question of its precursors. A variety of continuities can be discovered with respect to both the poetry of Romanticism and the various schools of French-language modernism of the *fin de siècle* (Parnassianism, Symbolism, Decadence). The independence of *modernismo* results less from the production of a new aesthetics as a real object than from contemporary reception, from the initially pejorative reaction of the press to the supposedly “fashionable” modernity of *modernismo*. From our point of view, *modernismo* is a phenomenon with a transatlantically connected history and is intrinsically linked to the antimodernist polemics which also formed a transatlantic discourse (Acereda, 2003).

the sign of the so-called *modernismo*, which – albeit with slight transformations – remained aesthetically current to a large extent until the First World War, before being replaced by the innovations of the various avant-gardes after the World War, in the 1920s and 1930s. The project thus largely overlaps with the period of time known as the “Edad de Plata,” which has been well established as an epochal concept in Spain since its use in the work of José-Carlos Mainer (1975). In his study, the time span for the “Silver Age” is dated from 1902 to 1931 and, for the peninsular context, it certainly makes sense to fix the start of a new process of modernization only after the turn of the century, since the impulses of modernization under the sign of *modernismo* took place there with some delay compared to the different Hispano-American contexts in which *modernismo* had already been formed aesthetically in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The contribution presented here will therefore focus only on the “avant-garde” part of our project which fits in the concept of “Edad de Plata,” with 23 magazines out of the whole corpus of 42. In order to provide an easy overview of this geographically widely distributed corpus, we have visualized it on a world map according to the respective places of publication of the magazines (Fig. 9.1). Although we do not cover the whole time span of the so-called “Silver Age” with this corpus, we do enlarge the concept culturally in order to provide a comparative transatlantic analysis of the different literary “modernities” in the Spanish-speaking world. We thus expand the focus of national philology without completely abandoning the framework of a specific cultural area, and also while avoiding the universalism of “global” studies.⁶ At the same time, however, this chapter also attempts to follow the call to expand the study of the “Edad de Plata” onto the digital stage (Romero López, 2018) by systematically including digital sources and digital methods.

6 Research on magazines on a global scale is currently still the exception and is clearly dominated by research in the English language. First and foremost is the multi-volume ground-breaking project edited by Brooker and Thacker (2009–2013). However, transatlantic cultural exchange is only considered possible there within the Anglo-Saxon cultural area – as is already evident from the structure of the series – and Spanish-language literary circulation across the Atlantic is not considered, nor are European forms of transnational cultural exchange. Eric Bulson (2017) also presented a global history of little magazines in monographic form.

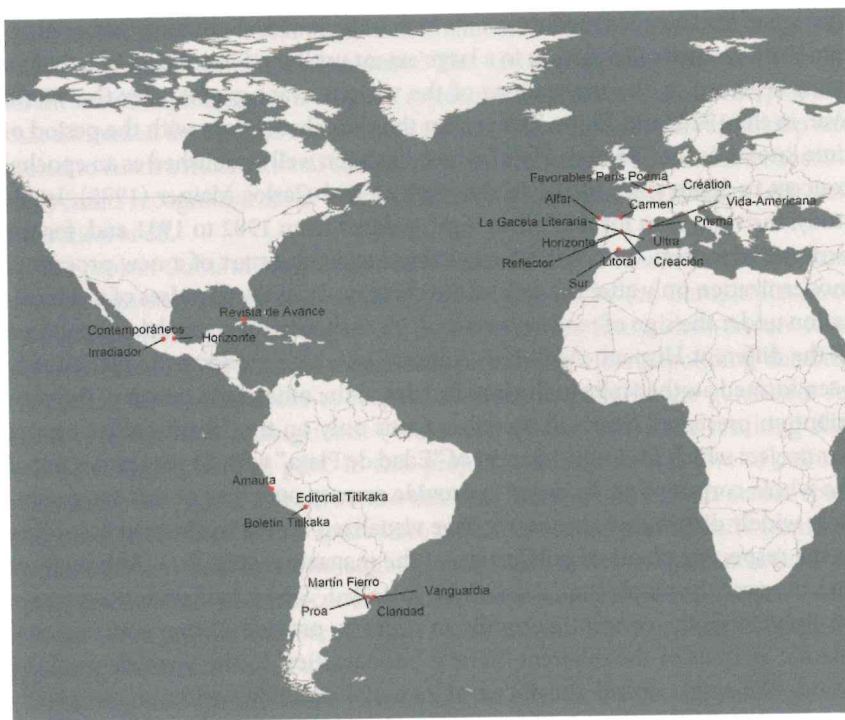


Fig. 9.1. Twenty-three avant-garde magazines of the *Edad de Plata* period from a transatlantic perspective

Our research project established a comprehensive database and applied a network analytical approach. Often quantification and humanistic inquiries are seen as opposed to each other. While quantification is interested in working at scale, identifying patterns, and deriving generalizable laws to explain phenomena, the Humanities tend to focus on precise analysis, the unique and the subjective, and a careful balancing of ambiguities. In our perception, a network approach enables the eradication of such binaries, since the artifacts under examination here are not bound to specific methodological approaches. Rather, a network approach enables us to shift the perspective from a general pattern to a specific context, and thus provides a continuum of scale that ranges from a macro to a micro view. After presenting a brief introductory discussion on agents of literary circulation (section 2) we will discuss some global findings regarding cultural transfer (section 3) and set them against a specific case study of literary circulation (section

4). Our final reflections will advocate for this heuristic process, which requires a shifting scale of analysis.

2. Agents of Circulation

Our understanding of circulation focuses on contributors as actors who circulate literary or visual products, as well as on cultural magazines as institutions of transnational and transatlantic network formation. These cultural magazines are also shaped by actors, be it in a narrower sense the editors and their editorial teams, who decisively influence the circulation of cultural products as well as their trajectory, direction, and quality, or in a broader sense the readers of the magazines, who form imaginary communities as recipients. More specifically, we will focus on the actors and institutions that enabled the circulation of texts and images across the Atlantic. In this way, we transgress a national philological orientation towards a single cultural context, since in our conception transatlantic transfers need not be understood as unidirectional movements that describe the transfer of cultural products from Europe to Hispanic America, conceiving of Paris and Madrid as the European centers and the Hispanic world overseas as the periphery. Rather, this circulation results from the dialectical relationship between Europe and Hispanic America described by Beatriz Sarlo (1988, 1993). Within this dialectical relationship, many centers emerge that are not related to each other in a hierarchical way, but that are in constant exchange, resulting in “a literature that is related to foreign literature but not in any subordinate way” (Sarlo, 1993: 5).

The printing of an article in a cultural journal already implies processes of evaluation and thus also an interest-driven concept of value based on social *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1999). The publishers of cultural journals and their editors are gatekeepers who make the decision to publish or not to publish a submission and thus make a selection based on implicit values. In the case of the publication of an article that originated on the other side of the Atlantic (i.e., in a quite different field of production), these actors have a decisive influence on the re-contextualization of an article. They also make the economic decision as to whether the contribution should be translated for a fee and by whom and have corresponding power in this decision-making position. Unlike Eric Bulson, for example, who imagines the network of “little magazines” he analyzed as a quasi-anarchic and completely unregulated rhizome – “decommercialised, decentralised, decapitalised, disconnected” (2017: 49) – , we assume that even in their smallest and most inconspicuous form, magazines do not move in a space beyond the socio-cultural norm; rather, they elicit power conflicts that shape

the literary field, even if these power structures remain informal and implicit. Our corpus also proves this very clearly. It is in the quantitatively “smallest” of all the magazines studied (measured by the average number of contributions), *Favorables París Poema* (published in two issues, Paris 1926, by Juan Larrea and César Vallejo), where the editors exaggerate their gatekeeper function in an almost fantastic way at the end of the second (and at the same time last) issue. After the usual list of books received for review, they also present a list of rejected contributors, which in view of the assembled celebrities is most likely purely fictitious. The list offers haphazard, seemingly arbitrary justifications for the rejection of selected submissions and represents a parodic over-fulfillment of the social gatekeeper function, of which the editors are clearly aware when they feign a decision-making power that in no way corresponds to the actual scope and significance of their publication. Among others, the Spanish star author “Azorín” (José Martínez Ruiz) is informed that his second attempt at a contribution was better, but still not good enough (“Su segundo trabajo está mejor, pero aún no nos satisface del todo”), and an essay by the Mexican president Plutarco Elías is rejected because it is too long (“Lamentamos que la extensión de su ensayo sobre Juliano, el Apóstata, sea excesiva para esta revista”).⁷

Beyond the publishers and editors as central decision-makers, the dynamics of literary circulation in the medium of the printed magazine also require a consideration of personalities in the cultural or literary field who assert their social or symbolic capital to promote the publication of third-party contributions in a cultural journal. In contrast to the editorial decision-making processes, which normally remain a hidden arcanum of the journals (and, if at all, have only left partial traces that can be studied from a literary historical perspective through letters from the editors and editorial staff preserved in their private estates), the interest of these agents of circulation is not infrequently revealed by introductory texts that accompany the publication of a transatlantically transferred contribution, classify it and bring it into line with the structure of the field of reception, interpret and recontextualize it, and thus decisively determine its reception, appropriation, discussion, and adaptation.⁸ This preconditioning of reception is fundamentally supported by the polysemy of artworks, whose openness to interpretation facilitates their re-situation in a new context. Here, the legitimacy of the introducer or “discoverer” of these works, and thus interpretive power, is

⁷ *Favorables París Poema* (Paris), No. 2, October 1926, [16].

⁸ This kind of information is also captured by a network approach and thus lays the foundation for case studies like the one we sketch in section 4 of this contribution.

often contested. As Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out, these introductions provide information about the usually hidden interests of the introducers: “Choices which seem pure of other interests, and are mutually agreeable, are often made on the basis of similar positions in different fields and in fact correspond to homologous interests and styles where the intellectual background or project is concerned” (Bourdieu, 1999: 223). “Discoverers” – be they editors, editorial staff, artists already established in the field, or translators – and “discovered” often form pressure groups characterized by mutual admiration, and the data compiled in our project provide a broad basis on which to explore these alliances. As already announced in the introduction, however, this contribution is not intended to provide a study of individual cases in the sociology of literature, but rather to shift the focus from a general pattern of who facilitates the transatlantic transfer, to the context in which the reception of specific artifacts takes place; both perspectives emerge from the data collected in the project. Our approach thus does exactly the opposite of what a widespread prejudice against data-based research tends to imply: namely, that it reduces context and ignores the complexity of cultural processes.⁹ Data that can be analyzed by computers do not, of course, represent any given “empirical” insights into the supposed nature of culture, but are pre-structured by culturally determined categories and are therefore always already constructs or interpretations. Yet such data do enable new insights, insofar as formally calculated statistical values and patterns can provide clues to phenomena that then have to be understood through the interpretive processes familiar to the Humanities in order to arrive at precise, grounded, and detailed insights.

3. Calculated Circulation: Database, Methodology, and the “Cultural Transfer Rate”

As highly formalized structures, social networks are well researched and can be calculated with ease by a computer. In principle, the application of network analytical methods to cultural production does not constitute a new approach (McLean, 2017). The approach chosen in this study – examining contributors, their artistic works, and institutions such as cultural journals as a network – has

⁹ This is the case with Eric Bulson, who himself works without any reference to data, but who repeatedly accuses data-driven research of only being able to achieve reductionist insights into literary circulation processes, as when he states that “all too often there is the temptation to conflate degrees of globality with the kinds of empirical data that can be compiled about reception” (46).

already been established by literary scholars Richard Jean So and Hoyt Long (2013). So and Long consider every published contribution to be, in principle, equivalent to all other contributions in a cultural journal. It is obvious that this formalization is a radical abstraction, as it ignores the aesthetic qualities of the contribution – i.e., its semantic, stylistic, or prosodic and metrical characteristics. However, the social relationships linked to such works of art move to the center of the analysis. Only the highly formalized recording of these relationships enables the analysis of complex networks and structural patterns, which form the core of investigations into circulation and transfer processes, at least in those cases wherein the communities and networks to be investigated are too large to be described in narrative form by the researcher. Within artists' groups or communities – in our case, for example, the so-called *Generación del 27* or the avant-garde trends of *creacionismo* and *ultraísmo* in Spain or *estridentismo* or the Argentinian group *Martín Fierro* in Hispanic America – typical network constellations emerge, which have been described with the terms “closure” and “brokerage” by sociologist Ronald Burt (2005). “Closure” indicates first of all the tendency to form a clustered, densely connected group and to strengthen in-group communication in order to establish coherent beliefs and practices. In sociological terms, “closure” refers to the odds that a person will be excluded from or marginalized by a group “for displaying belief or behaviour inconsistent with preferences in the closed network” (Burt, 2005: 7); closure thus reduces variation. The concept of “brokerage” is at the same time contradictory to, and interdependent with closure; it can only be understood in relational terms. Within the group, on the one hand, actors emerge who occupy a central position and become the dominant center of the social group. They often exhibit a high degree of artistic and intellectual autonomy, are strongly linked (and therefore influential), and stand out as leading actors due to their high publication intensity. In opposition to them, there are actors who tend to be located on the fringes of the social group and who are characterized by their high level of networking with other groups. Burt values these actors since they bridge the gap between different groups (“connectors”), and he also emphasizes their specific performance, as they enable synergies and the exchange of ideas and innovations across different groups and areas; this is precisely what Burt calls “brokerage.” Although these actors often do not have the same publication intensity as the dominant actors in artist groups, they serve as intermediaries.¹⁰ Consequently, So and Long refer

to them as “cultural brokers” (2013: 172), wherein “culture” designates an arbitrarily tailored and tailorable term, because it also refers to actors who link several poetic circles within a cultural area formed by a single nation – for example, the USA.

It is precisely these “cultural brokers” who interest us. Since we do not aim to study groups of artists or determine leading actors of such groups (which would form a meso view), we narrow the concept of “brokerage” to those actors who not only link different groups and currents of artists with one another, but also have a special position with regard to those networks that link the two geographical and cultural areas of Europe and Hispanic America. In keeping with our research focus on transatlantic circulation, we refer to those actors as “cultural brokers” or cultural mediators who, as intermediaries, facilitate a transatlantic exchange. The “cultural transfer rate” we have calculated refers to them, and this rate can be understood as a supplement to the centrality measures and analytical procedures developed in social network analysis to date.

The published dataset (Ehrlicher, 2020) on the cultural journals includes not only the title of each contribution and its genre, place and date of publication, language of the contribution, and information on translation and translator, but also socio-biographical data on more than 3,500 contributors, provided that they could clearly be identified. In order to enable comparability across all cultural journals, the genre classification was conceptualized in a broad way. Initially, it was oriented towards the current genres of drama, lyric poetry, and epic literature, the latter referring to fictional prose. Editorial contributions, reflections on literature and culture, essays, and commentaries were categorized as “non-fictional prose”; reviews of published works or other cultural journals and visual elements received their own label (“review,” “magazine review,” “image”).

The avant-garde part of the main corpus comprises about 19,500 datasets out of a total of 31,500 datasets. Since the socio-biographical data collected in the project also include the country of origin of the contributors, this value can be correlated with the location where a cultural journal was published. In this way it is possible to determine which contributors published on both sides of the Atlantic. If one calculates for each contributor the ratio “number of contributions published on the other side of the Atlantic” divided by the “total number of published contributions,” a value is obtained that we call the “cultural transfer rate.”

Technically speaking, the datum “country of origin” serves as an indicator of the cultural area (Europe or Hispanic America) where the contributor was born, and the publication place of the cultural journal serves as the corresponding indicator for the publication. Calculated across the more than 2,200 contributors

10 So and Long designate leading actors as “first-tier poets” and intermediaries as “second- and third-tier poets” (2013: 164).

within the Silver Age period that were unambiguously identified, this cultural transfer rate provides a baseline for the identification of an actor as a “cultural broker.” The rate is only an approximation, since (for example) all persons born in Europe who emigrated to Hispanic America early in their lives and who published in Hispanic America automatically receive a high ratio, even if they cannot necessarily be understood as cultural mediators. As is always the case with quantifying approaches, such numbers need to be checked for their explanatory power with regard to the research question.

Analysis of the calculated cultural transfer rate yielded interesting results insofar as the most productive or best linked authors often do not have a high transatlantic transfer rate. However, against the background of the network constellations described by Burt as well as So and Long, this result could be expected and thus impressively confirms their hypotheses. Highly productive and well linked artists like the Argentinian Jorge Luis Borges (80 contributions to 10 cultural magazines) and his sister Norah (90 contributions to 10 magazines) as well as the little-known Uruguayan writer Ildefonso Pereda Valdés (35 contributions to 8 magazines) show, in spite of their travels to Europe and their well-known close connections to the European avant-garde movements, cultural transfer rates of only about 33 %. In other words, only about a third of their contributions were published in Europe. Spaniards Ramón Gómez de la Serna (165 contributions) and Gerardo Diego (51 contributions) exhibit an even lower cultural transfer rate of below 20 % within the researched time frame (1920–1936). Other examples are Guillermo de Torre (13 out of 99 contributions, 13 %), Juan Chabás (two out of 50 contributions, 4 %) or José Bergamín (two out of 32 contributions, 6 %). None of them can really be described as a cultural mediator based on the calculated transfer rate. This observation is revealing in that it underlines that leaders of cultural movements – measured by their publication intensity and their high presence in a large number of journals – do not necessarily assume the task of serving as a link between two continents. On the other hand, this role and function are often overtaken by “second- and third-tier” contributors who serve as cultural brokers, or by individuals qualifying otherwise for this role.

To provide some examples for the avant-garde period, Uruguayan Julio J. Casal (23 of 24 contributions or 95 % published in Europe as editor-in-chief of the magazine *Alfar*, which first appeared in the Galician city of A Coruña) and Chilean Vicente Huidobro (16 of 18 contributions or 89 % published in Europe) were both poets and diplomats, and both based their role as cultural mediators on their travel activities. Mexican poet Rafael Lozano, who lived in Paris at the beginning of the 1920s, was able to place all 24 of his publications

in Europe. Galician poet Julio Sigüenza also benefited from his travels to Cuba, Argentina, and Uruguay, where he published all 12 of his contributions. Among the more productive artists, Spanish painter and writer Gabriel García Maroto (35 of 46 contributions, 63 %) and writer and philosopher Miguel de Unamuno (15 of 29 works, 52 %) benefited from their cultural capital by contributing to various genres. Narrator and dramatist Lino Novás Calvo (44 of 49 works, 89 %) and writer and diplomat Alfonso Hernández-Catá (13 of 15 works, 87 %) based their role as cultural brokers on their travels back and forth between Spain and Cuba. Honduran author Rafael Heliodoro Valle (5 out of 6 works, 83 %), Spanish painter and writer José Gutiérrez-Solana (4 out of 5 works, 80 %), Chilean author Arturo Torres-Rioseco (4 out of 5 works, 80 %), and Venezuelan writer-diplomat Rufino Blanco-Fombona (6 out of 8 works, 75 %) are typical examples of lesser known, second- and third-tier artists standing out by their high cultural transfer rate. French avant-garde artists Paul Valéry (9 of 11 contributions, 82 %), Paul Éluard (12 of 16 contributions, 75 %), and Jean Cocteau (12 of 17 contributions, 71 %) profited from their high symbolic capital in their country of origin and were therefore translated and printed in Hispano-American cultural magazines. With regard to the dataset on the Silver Age cultural magazines, comprising 19,516 rows, it can be noted that for 7,549 contributions (or 38.7 %) the country of origin of the contributors could not be identified. Of the remaining 61.3 % of all contributions, 1,362 or 7 % were provided by contributors born in Europe (including Eastern Europe) and published in Hispanic America. By contrast, only 558 (or 2.9 %) of all contributions were provided by contributors born in Hispanic America (and North America) and published in European cultural magazines. It can thus be noted that from a global perspective, more than twice as many works by European contributors were printed in Hispano-American magazines as compared to the number of contributions provided by contributors born in Hispanic America and published in European journals. This can be observed notwithstanding the fact that some highly productive and well-connected Spanish avant-garde writers were hardly noticed on the other side of the Atlantic.

These brief quantitative insights were intended to show a basic principle of quantitative research procedures: a single measurable benchmark alone nearly always lacks significance in the absence of other parameters, in our case the parameters of the frequency of contributions (most prolific contributors) and their dispersion across the magazines of our corpus (best connected contributors). Only when these values are compared does a significant pattern emerge that provides insight into the cultural exchange dynamics of literature.

The second remarkable conclusion is that the calculations lead to paradoxical insights into the functioning of this cultural field. Dominant actors have not necessarily been active as contributors on both sides of the Atlantic, even though the dense network of cultural journals provides an optimal platform for such cultural mediation. Rather, as So and Long have already observed, it is often, though not always, the “second- and third-tier poets” who facilitate the transatlantic transfer. These insights speak for a functional differentiation of the actors in this cultural field. However, when interpreting the provided numbers, especially with regard to the high number of contributions furnished by European-born artists to Hispano-American cultural magazines, it should be borne in mind that migration from Europe to Hispanic America was remarkably high – not only from Spain, but especially from the socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

4. From “Greguería” to “Gringuería”: Insights into the Publication History of Ramón Gómez de la Serna

To shift the perspective from a macro to a micro view, we want to start again with our collected data, from which it is possible to extract a statistical publication history for each contributor individually. Fig. 9.2 shows the contributions over time for two contrasting examples out of the most prolific and best linked literary contributors of the avant-garde era. What becomes evident is the distinction between the transatlantic career of Ramón Gómez de la Serna, on the one hand, and Jorge Mañach as one of the editors of the *Revista de Avance* (Havana), on the other. While the contributions of the Spaniard are distributed over several cultural magazines and can therefore be seen as examples for a transatlantic circulation of literature, the contributions of Jorge Mañach are completely concentrated in the *Revista de Avance*, with very occasional contributions to three other magazines. While Jorge Mañach can easily be identified as an editor, Ramón Gómez de la Serna serves as an example of the most productive and best linked contributors identified above as leading figures in the field. The data on his publication history open up the possibility of tracing his contributions in differing fields of reception and thus zooming in on the reception, appropriation, discussion, and adaptation of his works. The strong presence of his works on the other side of the Atlantic cannot be explained by an active cultural broker role (his transfer rate, as already mentioned, is comparatively low), but is due to the mechanisms of evaluation within the literary field, where he was able to achieve a high symbolic capital with his production without being part of a defined group or actively connecting different groups together.

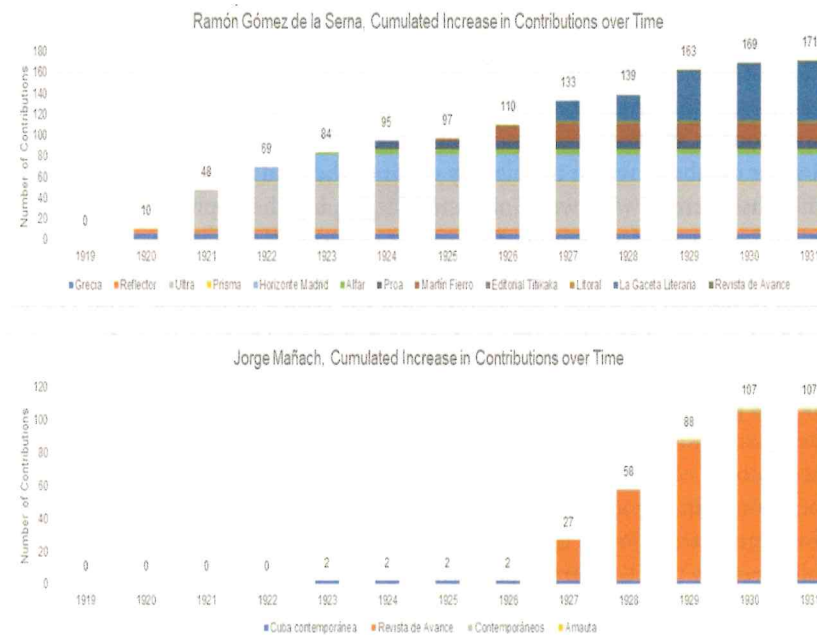


Fig. 9.2. Publication history of Ramón Gómez de la Serna as prolific literary author contrasted to Jorge Mañach as avant-garde editor

At first glance, Gómez de la Serna's presence on the other side of the Atlantic might seem surprising, since in his literary self-fashioning he liked to stylize himself as a “one-person generation,”¹¹ a lonesome individualistic writer beyond all networks and movements and, above all, firmly anchored in Madrid. Indeed, within the Spanish magazines in which he published, especially those that functioned as the mouthpiece of the Ultra group (*Ultra* and *Horizonte*), all

11 This self-fashioning was also reproduced as a cliché in research from an early date, apparently starting with Melchor Fernández Almagro's article in *España* (1923) and culminating in the work of Víctor García de la Concha (1977). The topic has been problematized and duly modified by recent criticism, which has highlighted the networks of contact without which the phenomenon of “Ramón” cannot be explained. In this sense, Laurie-Anne Laget (2012: 53–94) goes so far as to speak of “l'anti-Génération unipersonal” with respect to the beginning of Gómez de la Serna's career.

contributions are consistently advertised as “Ramonismo,” so that Gómez de la Serna’s logic of distinction is already reproduced paratextually by the editors.

This distinction within the peninsular field of avant-gardes becomes less necessary in the transatlantically oriented *Alfar* and disappears later from publications in the Hispano-American context. Precisely this context is opened up by our database, which in this way outlines the field of reception and points to the “discoverers” who were interested in shaping the appropriation, discussion, and adaptation of Ramón Gómez de la Serna. RAMÓN (as a majuscule personality) first finds his way into this context via the second of the two issues of *Proa* published by Jorge Luis Borges after his return to Buenos Aires (1924–26),¹² first as one of the three *Voces de Castilla* (alongside Cansinos-Assens and Ortega y Gasset) discussed by Alfredo Brandan Caraffa. After a sample of his work was printed in the fourth issue in the form of a *Políptico* of seven unconnected pieces, Ramón remains present above all as an object of appreciation, integrated into an equally illustrious literary genealogy of *Los tres Ramones* (i.e., in association with Ramón del Valle-Inclán and Ramón Pérez de Ayala) presented by Benjamín Jarnés in the fifth issue. Admiration for Ramón continues with the detailed review that Guillermo de Torre dedicates to the *Márgenes del ultraísmo* in issue 10, where Gómez de la Serna – in keeping with the author’s self-image – is granted a “lugar excepcional” within *ultraísmo* and where the critic explicitly refers to the aforementioned distinctive labeling of *Ramonismo*.¹³ It culminates one issue later in Soler Darás’s ludic portrait entitled *Definición de Gómez de la Serna por medio de una langosta o el lírico despachurrado*, which is particularly noteworthy as it makes a paradoxical cultural assertion by claiming the author as a universal source of ideas beyond the peninsular context (“Gómez de la Serna se ha salido de España para estar en las vidas de todas las razas y de todas las cosas y que ya le cansa el elenco literario de los moldes españoles”) and identifies the specifically “Spanish” character of his *Greguerías* precisely in the fact that they successfully integrate all the different cultures of the peninsula: “su dominio en el idioma tiene todas las expresiones del alma española. Hacer greguerías es ver en español, porque en ella hay danza morisca, saltos de jotas y llorisqueo de gaita, la risa del vasco, la fiereza del mataor, la fuga del capeo y la gracia del toreo y, si se quiere, el meneo de la moza y el jaleo del señorito, olé! (araca)... y todas las palpitaciones de los senos del mundo.”¹⁴ This constant literary-critical discourse,

12 For the contents of *Prisma* (1921–22), *Proa* (1922–23), and *Proa* (1924–26), see the bibliography by Nélica and Ardissonne (1983).

13 *Proa* N° 10 (May 1925): 24–27.

14 *Proa* N° 11 (June 1925): 3–7, citation page 4 and 7.

which is of course an expression of the author’s high symbolic capital already gained in avant-garde circles by this time, is accompanied by the caricature that preceded the first samples of Ramón’s work in the fourth issue, a drawing penned by Carlos Pérez Ruiz (Fig. 9.3).



Fig. 9.3. Caricature of Ramón Gómez de la Serna in *Proa*, N° 4 (1924), p. 5

The same issue also marks the beginning of Ramón’s parodic literary “appropriation” in America, when Alfredo Brandan Caraffa prints a first fictitious letter from Ramón to Buenos Aires, made recognizable as a fiction by the double signature “Ramón” and “BC.” This was followed by a second letter to Spain in the next issue.

From this appropriation of Ramón’s persona to the transculturation of his *Greguerías* was only a logical process of development. The “Americanization” of this short genre, which is located between prose and poetry, first begins in the Argentinian magazine *Martín Fierro* in July 1925 (issue no. 19), where in the context of the multi-page *homenaje* for the Spanish author, not only does Sergio Piñero pay his respect to the *Greguería original* with witty aphorisms, but Arturo

Cancela adapts the “original” model one page later as “Gringuerías” in the style of Ramón. Starting from this first overseas transfer, the form of the *greguería* then also finds its way into the Cuban *Revista de Avance*, where Fernando Ichaso presents *13 greguerías sobre RAMON* in August 1928. Finally, the journal *Claridad*, which directly competed with *Martín Fierro* and was also published in Buenos Aires (and was actually an avowedly critical tribune that had accused *Martín Fierro* of, among other things, being too strongly oriented towards the Spanish avant-garde and the person of Gómez de la Serna) was able to resume the success story of the new genre in 1930 and present a *Saldo de Greguerías* written by Honorio Barbiero (issue 203, March 1930).

5. Conclusion

Despite the brevity required here, the two previous sections have shown that both perspectives – the macro view based on a calculated “cultural transfer rate” identifying cultural brokers, and the micro view investigating individual case histories such as that of Gómez de la Serna – constitute a methodological contact zone because they start from the same raw material, the information obtained from data. In both cases, data-based information processing forms the prerequisite for gaining knowledge or even cognition, and the interpretation of the information is not trivial, but conceptually presuppositional. While the macro view outlined a global finding and revealed a large-scale pattern as well as previously overlooked actors (such as Ildelfonso Pereda Valdés), the micro view enabled us to discuss the dispersed contributions of a single author within the smaller networks of “discovering” authors, editors, and individual magazines and thus within the cultural and social contexts in which they were published. A way to overcome the gap between quantitative approaches and humanistic inquiry is to demand falsifiability and to provide a scalable view that offers insights that are useful to readers. This is provided by a common ground of shared open-access data that is capable of settling disputes and helps in the process of falsification because it guarantees an intersubjective level of operation. In this sense, we hope scholars will make lively use of our published research data (Ehrlicher, 2020), which might expand the digital resources for studies on the “Silver Age” of Spanish culture (Calvo Tello, 2017) and animate further scalable approaches. It is time to leave behind the unfruitful opposition between quantitative and qualitative methods, and so we would like to conclude with a slight modification of a famous title by Leslie Fiedler (1971): “cross that border, close that gap” ... and work with the data.

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Chapter 10 New Models for a Digital Reading of the Republican Exile of 1939

1. Theoretical and Methodological Requirements

Over the past decade, a profound critical reassessment of twentieth-century Spanish literature has brought new life to studies of the Republican exile of 1939. On the one hand, there is a tendency to broaden the object of study when it comes to the literature of the period in question. There is new interest in works that previously received scant attention and were considered marginal for any number of reasons (place of creation, language, or ideological, generic, or aesthetic motives). These include works that were produced in concentration camps and Spanish prisons (Who should study them? Are they literature of the "interior" or exile literature?) or were penned by a wide range of authors: maquis, authors who were not canonized prior to the Spanish Civil War, anonymous writers, occasional writers, and undoubtedly a large number of women writers. Other works belong to non-canonical genres and have therefore been overlooked as literary works despite their great cultural value – for example, life writing in the form of letters, memoirs, and diaries, a genre often cultivated by women. In short, there is a new interest in Otherness within the Otherness already assigned to exile in official Spanish Literary History. Heir to the Franco regime's national canon, this History always longs to organize and simplify, leaving no room for the complex "líneas de fuga" produced by the phenomenon of exile (Balibrea, 2017).

On the other hand, important theoretical work is underway to surpass the methods of this official History from the perspectives of Cultural Studies (Balibrea, 2017), the History of Emotions (Rodríguez-López and Ventura Herranz, 2014), and Social Network Analysis (Sánchez de Madariaga, 2017), among others. Some of these new proposals outline historiographic methods that bypass the traditional chronological and generational approaches in favor of organizational systems based on specific conceptual categories, international events, and transatlantic relations. The primary motivation for doing so is dual: first, to transcend the linear national narratives inherited from hegemonic readings in search of a more open perspective able to encompass the many individual experiences