Enrique Gómez Carrillo Writes the Home Out of Egypt: Orientalism and the *Modernista* Print Industry

Andrew Reynolds
West Texas A&M University

This essay seeks to explore how the aesthetic modes and Orientalist impressions created by *modernista* writers such as Guatemalan Enrique Gómez Carrillo at the turn of the twentieth century relied on the print industry and the varying textual venues where they formed and disseminated their texts. Through newspapers, literary and cultural magazines and book publications writers helped to create a web of market-based agents, literary opportunities, increased levels of prestige and cultural economies that proved foundational in the Hispanic literary field of the period. “La moral de 'Kismet',” an article inextricably connected to Gómez Carrillo’s 1913 publication of his book *La sonrisa de la esfinge*, which describes his travels to Egypt, is one of many newspaper and magazine articles that coincided with the first printing of the book. The careful marketing strategy composed of the publishing of book selections and reviews, as well as announcements of the book’s publication reveal a carefully orchestrated campaign over the course of the years surrounding the release of *La sonrisa de la esfinge* that pointed to the *modernista’s* literary authority and ability to increase cultural prestige through various print modalities. As a consequence, through the newspaper, magazine and book publications on Egypt, Gómez Carrillo also formulated a *modernista* Orientalism founded on visual experience and the privileged gaze of the traveler enhanced by the use of photojournalistic images and their accompanying captions. In this way, selections of Egyptian culture, such as the home, impenetrable to the experiences of the *modernista*, were rewritten and even erased from the published representations of the Orient.

Modernista scholars, such as Araceli Tinajero and her thorough study, *Orientalism en el modernismo hispanoamericano*, have situated the Spanish American representation of the Orient as one marginal discourse describing other societies at the margins of modernity. By contrast, Enrique Gómez Carrillo produced literature from the centers of European cultural production and published with well established Parisian editorial houses and literary magazines. This *modernista* falls well within the discourses that attempted to colonize the Orient through a particular type of cultural representation as described by Edward

Said.(1) Nevertheless, I share Tinajero's goal, which she successfully achieves in her study, of "ofrecer una o más alternativas a partir de textos literarios y crítica enfáticamente hispanoamericanos"(3). In the case of this study, the particular Orientalist discourse creates a marginalized Egyptian subjectivity across a wide variety of textual materialities that also corresponded to a strengthening of the *modernista* presence in journalism and book industries on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the *crónica* "La moral de 'Kismet'" Enrique Gómez Carrillo connects the fatalistic morality found in the Orientalist British play by Edward Knoblauch to a *modernista* aesthetic that defines the Orient through an impenetrable essence. He first cites the introduction to the play: "Poned cuidado en la enseñanza que va a daros el Destino, llamado 'Kismet' por los poetas. Y notad bien las venturas y las desventuras asignadas de antemano al hombre que se eleva y se hunde como la cuba en el pozo. Pero Alá solo conoce todo... oid..." ("París" 1). Here, the *modernista* relies on Islam (or at least its Western embodiment) to empower his own representation. The religiosity and epistemology founded on a lack of knowledge, a thing known only by Allah, lies at the cornerstone of Gómez Carrillo's Orientalist perspectives. He interprets Knoblauch's text through a moralizing lens that is then converted to an aesthetic determination. He continues: "Ahora bien; ¿no está encerrada en estas líneas la más bella y la más profunda de las moralidades? Alá es el único que sabe el secreto de la vida. Por más que hagamos, por más que combinemos sabios planes, por más que intentemos grandes empresas, Alá está siempre por encima de nosotros" ("París" 1). In the establishment of this moral system in which an omniscient Allah is in control of all, Gómez Carrillo is then free to embrace the mise en scène, costumes, individual details and character traits of the actors, the minute beauty that, to the Guatemalan, permeates the work. This religious fatalism imposed by an omniscient creator, then, causes the artist to focus on the dream-like reality represented. He ends the article with this proclamation: ¿No se trata acaso de un sueño, de un puro sueño Oriental? Pues, entonces, ¿para qué pedir algo más que la embriaguez exquisita de las imágenes maravillosas...?" ("París" 1). This Allah-imposed fatalism would seem to contradict the entrenched *modernista* ideal of individual freedom in artistic creation yet Gómez Carrillo takes advantage of the moralizing character of British play and Islamic orthodox divinity to open up new perspectives of the Orient. Indeed, the exclusion of the Oriental subject, central to the *modernista's* representation of Arab cultures, allows him increased flexibility in representing Egypt according to his exclusive travel experiences in the region.

"La moral de Kismet," published in January of 1913 on the front page of *El Liberal*, one of the most widely

read Spanish newspapers of the time, is an example of how Gómez Carrillo negotiated the publishing world in order to have his work in a constant state of circulation. Tied to his book *La sonrisa de la esfinge* published in the same year, the accompanying newspaper article on the Orientalist play that helped to inspire his own impressions of his trip to Egypt speaks more generally to the power of *modernista* publishing and the authority of the movement garnered through the journalistic *crónica* genre. In his book he describes Knoblauch's play in this way: “no hay obra que haga comprender mejor el caracter Oriental, que *Kismet*” (41). Gómez Carrillo, who was extremely well read, appropriates the then contemporary 1911 British play based on injustice, concubines, secret identities, and revenge killings to construct an Orientalist epistemology. One U.S. reviewer of the play stated that “The whole world knew superficially the Arab temperament with its frenzies of action and its respites of patient endurance, its sensuality, its cruelty, its day-dreaming, its fierce and wanton playfulness, its superstition, its delight in the extremes of misery and magnificence” (qtd. in Singleton 77). This distanced “knowledge” of the Arab world subjects the Middle East to “truths” based on Western impressions. This impressionism, even when experienced firsthand by travelers like Gómez Carrillo, nullifies the Egyptian subject and leaves him at the mercy of the historical preconceptions of the Western canon.

The newspaper, as a space for literary experimentation, allowed *modernista* writers to have their works consumed by vast readerships throughout the Spanish-speaking world. In addition to forming impressions on Egypt and adding to the genealogy of Western Orientalist discourse, Gómez Carrillo was also expanding the textual creation of a revolutionary and transformative literary movement as Spanish American *modernismo* continued to maintain authority in the literary field of the period through social and political ties and persistent literary innovation. Gómez Carrillo's decades long textual production in *El Liberal* became a pivotal venue for the Guatemalan and the *modernista* movement as Spanish readers grew accustomed to seeing the writer’s name on the front pages of the newspaper several times a month. Consequently, *modernismo*'s authority endured on the Iberian Peninsula for decades following the 1916 death of Rubén Darío, the movement's leading figure. This repeated exposure allowed Gómez Carrillo to carve his own personal space in the Spanish journalistic world eventually becoming managing editor of *El Liberal* in 1916 and 1917.(2)

In scholarship on *modernista* Orientalism, Enrique Gómez Carrillo's name is a familiar sight. The lengthy travel pedigree of the Guatemalan includes Japan, Morocco, Palestine, Russia, and as narrated in *La sonrisa*

de la esfinge, Egypt. Among the most prolific writers of the *modernista* era, Gómez Carrillo published literally thousands of journalistic *crónicas* -many of which were the result of his extensive travels. In 1913, he first published his impressions of the North African country in *La sonrisa de la esfinge*; a book that was published in a total of four Spanish editions during the writer's lifetime speaking to his book-publishing prestige. *La sonrisa de la esfinge* was first published by Madrid editorial house *Renacimiento*. The rather lengthy book, consisting of 12 chapters and no introduction, declares the following on its dedication page: "A mi ilustre compañero Julio Piquet / Homenaje de E.G.C." The dedication to the renowned Uruguayan journalist who eventually became director of Buenos Aires's *La Nación* for a short time, reflects the prevalent intersection between literature and journalism during *modernismo*. Also included in the Renacimiento edition, opposite the title page is a folio designated "Obras del mismo autor." On the page are five Gómez Carrillo works listed in the following manner: "El Japón heroico y galante. (Edición popular) / Grecia. (Edición Corregida.) / Jerusalén y la tierra santa. (10.ª edición.) / Flores de penitencia. (4.ª edición.) / El libro de las mujeres. / Cultos Profanos." (*La sonrisa* 2) This paratextual list tells the reader, before he even begins the text, of the prolific textual production of a writer that already has other travel narratives published in over 10 editions. The meaning of this list should not go unnoticed. For readers unfamiliar with his writing it establishes Enrique Gómez Carrillo as an authority in narrating the East, as one whose texts have already been in circulation for years. And to those already familiar with the writer, it confirms their knowledge of the cultural authority of the Guatemalan. The list also calls to attention the rather narrow selection on the printed page as Gómez Carrillo had a rather long repertoire of published books before the 1913 publication. According to Juan Manuel González Martel, by 1913 Gómez Carrillo had already published over 50 individual books, not including at least that many in subsequent editions and translations. The list in the *Renacimiento* edition points to three travel-based books, similar to *La sonrisa de la esfinge*, on Japan, Greece and Jerusalem. *Flores de penitencia*, *El libro de las mujeres* and *Cultos profanos* are all collections of impressionistic *crónicas* on the themes of religion, secular worship and feminine culture -all of which also appear as central topoi in the author's Egyptian text. The editorial decision to add the listed works was clearly informed on the generic connections between the published book and prior publications. Readers, the editors presumed, attracted to the content of *La sonrisa de la esfinge* would also be interested in purchasing the books in the list, all published within five years of the 1913 book.(3)

Gómez Carrillo begins the book stating that; "La primera impresión en las grandes ciudades Orientales, es

casi siempre desilusionante [...] Mas el poder de la ilusión es tan invencible, que en cada uno de esos lugares lloramos ante lo que vemos desde luego, como si alguien nos hubiera prometido algo diferente." (13) Who is this "alguien" that has promised such a different (and substantially better) experience? And why is Gómez Carrillo so disillusioned? This intense shattering of a construction of reality experienced as the Guatemalan writer actually visits the foreign nation and situates himself in within the spaces of Egyptian society and culture builds upon an Orientalist discourse that Gómez Carrillo has consumed throughout his lifetime as a displaced Latin American immersed in a European cultural and discursive web. This rather complicates notions of Latin American Orientalism, espoused by critics such as Tinajero, described as one peripheral culture inscribing its experience on the other instead of the erasure and complete transformation of the region resulting from the colonizing practices of the Eurocentric West. Gómez Carrillo, in a sense, dedicates his life to the blotting out of his own Guatemalaness by living within and representing an altogether cosmopolitan existence.(4) Nevertheless, this supposed "universalist" takes on humanity, textually produced and reproduced throughout the lifetime of the *modernista*, has rather damaging hegemonic affects upon oriental subjectivities as it undergoes its descriptive project to represent the cultures of the Eastern Hemisphere. Hence, the peripheral nature of Gómez Carrillo's Orientalist discourse is rather limited to the central American country where the writer was born - his rather normative Orientalism put on display in texts such as *La Sonrisa de la esfinge* demonstrates that often Latin American depictions of the eastern hemisphere fall alongside the most stereotypical and Eurocentric renderings of the East.

Francisco Morán writes that *modernismo* attempts to describe, "la ambigüedad con que lo Oriental se inscribe a sí mismo [...] imposible de fijar por la epistemología occidental. Si, como afirma Said, el Orientalismo occidental representa al Oriente, y busca fijarlo como objeto del conocimiento -y por tanto, de dominación- el *modernismo*, en cambio, parece sugerir la falacia y la imposibilidad de ese intento, y hasta hallar cierto goce en ello." (396) This would certainly seem to be the case reading the introduction of *La sonrisa de la esfinge* and its notion of illusion and false impressions. Additionally, *modernistas* lacked the political motivation of explicitly entering into the hegemonic practice of controlling the Orient through its discursive conversion. However, in writing Egypt as impenetrable -as a mysterious culture that is beyond experience, beyond affect, Gómez Carrillo is still performing a representational function and writing the Egyptian subject. The defining of the Egyptian as ambiguous and incomprehensible supplements and advances notions of secrecy, weakness, and a fundamental lack of agency.

Jack Selzer's idea of "material moments of rhetorical action," (11) which ground material realities on a foundation of rhetorical strategies that sustain certain subjectivities, assists in correlating the material construction of the Egyptian book edition and the Orientalist constructions found therein with accompanying magazine and newspaper articles. The rhetorical action of Gómez Carillo's description sets aside a normative *modernista* aestheticization and, like many travel narratives, provides a realist chronicling of his experience. These are then repeated in the mechanized process of publication repetition and reproduction. In these texts he departs from his narrative ideal in describing the "sensación" of travel, a goal that he speaks of in his well-known *crónica*, "La psicología del viaje." He writes, "Es una locura, en efecto, eso de querer […] sorprender el fondo de un pueblo por los signos exteriores de su vida" ("La psicología" 264). As he elaborates on his Egyptian wanderings this revealing exploit is precisely what the *modernista* desires to achieve. Arriving at his Cairo hotel, he dreams of the sights that await him the next day:

> Tuve visiones de jardines árabes con terrazas de mirtos, y boscajes de jazmineros, y laberintos caprichosos. La brisa traíame aromas de flores tropicales, ecos de surtidores juguetones. Hoy en la claridad de esta mañana primaveral, lo que aparece ante mis vista es un inmenso parque inglés cercado por altas verjas de hierro y poblado de bellos castaños triviales […] ¿Por qué engaña, en la noche, con murmullos que no le corresponden? (*La sonrisa* 14).

Though he laments the Western influence that has invaded the country, he even goes as far to admit that Cairo and other cities have been "deshonradas" by European civilization, nevertheless his embodied experience is one of disillusion and spatial disenchantment. In order for him to overcome the façade of European influence in Cairo, it is necessary to venture beyond the tourist circuit and invade the heart of city. This movement towards an authentic Egyptian culture is not only an exercise of aesthetic creation through experience, but one of truth-seeking that results in the creation of an Oriental subject. This "material moment of rhetorical action" then is a multifaceted experiment that is both textual and material in nature. It is represented both in the words on the page and through a wide variety of print formats, including photography, which enhances the discursive power of both message and messenger. The travel results in an active representation that marks the Egyptian (and Arab in general) with certain essential qualities mirroring those of the Orientalist discourse of the West. Gómez Carrillo, through writing that which is outside of his sphere of experience, uses the cultural weight of the family body and the home to advance his vision of Egypt.

Similar to the description found in the book's introduction, when Gómez Carrillo has the opportunity to visit an aristocratic Cairo home, he is again disheartened by the experience; "Lo malo es que fuera del salemlik

abierto a la amistad, todo lo demás es impenetrable" (*La sonrisa* 39). The word "impenetrable" is not a passive description nor is it a *modernista* poeticized metaphor, but one Gómez Carrillo uses that represents a quality established by the Egyptian family, with purpose and meaning. Through unknown spaces, Gómez Carillo chooses not to idealize what happens beyond closed doors, but inscribes the "hidden" family with a lack - a nonexistence with secrecy and patriarchy at the core of the Egyptian social structure.

He continues:

> La vida familiar del árabe distinguido es un perpetuo misterio. Mientras el pueblo canta en las terrazas de los cafés, en las puertas de las tiendas, en los bancos de los suks, los bajás y los beys esconden sus harems en el fondo de palacios herméticos, y no vayáis a atribuir a vano orgullo de casta este aislamiento. El mismo personaje que en su casa, entre sus esclavas de amor, se hace invisible, irá a sentarse luego, solo, en una esquina, para fumar su narghile. Lo que se esconde, es el gineceo, el hogar antiguo, el nido caliente. (*La sonrisa* 41)

The perpetual mystery of the Arab family home is in direct opposition to the public and rather feverish nature of Egyptian society. It is this active function of hiding the personal and female-Oriented space of the home that Gómez Carrillo narrates as invisible. The act of hiding, a performance attributed by the Guatemalan to the Egyptian man, is a representation of the *modernista's* inability to penetrate the most private areas of Egyptian life. It is indescribable for the writer because he cannot go there. As an experienced traveler, a colonizer of space which is then transferred into a discursive experience, he is frustrated by this inability to write the Egyptian home and convert it into something his own. Consequently he shifts the representation of the impenetrable space onto the shoulders of Egypt where it melds in with the hegemonic discourse so familiar to Gómez Carrillo. What he can see, the public jubilantly singing on outdoor terraces, in the doors of their tents, smiles on their faces eagerly waiting for an interested customer - these public traces, open to the *modernista*, are beautiful, and transform themselves into the wonders of travel and tourism. By contrast, that which he is unable to see, to experience, and to write is enslaving, hidden, and invisible. Nevertheless, this optimism evidently inherent in public life in Egypt together with its lack of hierarchical structure ends at the doorstep of the home's patio: "Esta especie de indiferencia ante lo que puede pasar y este desdén de las jerarquías, desaparecen en el umbral del harén. Una vez en su casa, el árabe es un ser que no reconoce hermandades. ¿Quién puede jactarse de haber penetrado jamás en el gineceo de un Oriental? La amistad y la hospitalidad terminan en el selamlik. Un paso más allá, es el misterio insondable." (*La sonrisa* 43). It is not only the fact that what goes on behind the closed doors of the Egyptian home is unknown but Goméz Carillo's conversion of this mystery into the redefinition of the Egyptian subject. If beyond the patio is a great

unknown, how does the Guatemalan know that "la amistad" and "la hospitalidad" stops there? This is not the exploration or poeticization of an Arab enigma, but a rewriting of its very existence following rather colonialist strains. In this text, cultural and racial conjecture and a stripping of agency demonstrate a falling in line with the authoritative hierarchies of representation based on colonial history. This depleting representation coincides with Franz Fanon's famed description of colonialism: "Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying that native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it" (210).

Again, many of the *modernista's* depictions in *La sonrisa del esfinge* are not metaphorical and overly stylized representations of Egyptian society and culture but a realist rendering of Gómez Carrillo's frustrated inability to experience certain, rather private, aspects of the home. The agency gained through the freedom to travel, that has perpetually advanced Gómez Carrillo's literary prestige and career, screeches to a halt as he maneuvers through the streets of Cairo and the ethnographic content needed to fill the hundreds of pages of books and newspapers comes to a standstill upon exploring a simple Egyptian home. So, this rejection meets a strong resistance by the Guatemalan who in turn shrouds the home in darkness and discursive absence.

Gómez Carrillo finishes the section resigned to his inability to enter into the private lives of Cairo's citizenry: "Así, los que venimos a uno de estos pueblos con el ánimo de verlo todo, tenemos que contentarnos con lo que está al alcance de nuestra mirada. Detrás de los muros, Alá solo sabe lo que pasa" (*La sonrisa* 41). Using the same evocation of the divine as the aforementioned *Kismet* article, the privileged gaze is corrupted through what is represented as an intense secrecy, unfamiliar to one of *those* regions which allows for the erasure or blurring between the public and private. The intense focus on seeing – on invading private space with his body and eyes, no matter what the consequence, speaks to the curiosity and thirst for knowledge by the *modernista* writer, but also one that is similar to the most anxious ethnographer wanting to read the inner soul of the other. In this desire he is set up for failure and as this knowledge evades the writer he is forced to marginalize and paint only a partial perspective of the studied subject. Throughout history this partiality in representation is a model that has lead to repeated cultural misunderstandings and ethnic subjugations.(5)

The idea of illumination of the disillusion of the Orient is evident in the publishing trends of Gómez Carrillo and *modernistas* more generally. Gómez Carrillo's travels to the Arab world were built around a publishing enterprise that consisted of continual book publication and, even more importantly, a constant stream of

submissions to magazines and newspapers in Europe and Spanish America. In addition to providing a steady income for the increasingly professionalized *modernista* writer, journalism and the repetitive publication of the *crónica* genre secured a Latin American seat at the trans-national literary field and led to a *modernista* artistic authority in the Spanish-speaking world for several decades. *La sonrisa de la esfinge* and the numerous magazine and newspaper submissions surrounding the book's publication highlight a nuanced strategy by the Guatemalan demonstrating a strong network among artists and publishers that help to situate the literature of the period as inextricably tied to an intellectual marketplace that was well established both in the Americas and in Spain. This network and the cultural prestige that accompanies the widespread publishing practices of *modernista* writers also speak to an established readership that continually consumed the works.

Along these lines, Alejandro Mejías-López affirms that, "La prensa, pues, no es solo un vehículo de información sobre el comercio sino que llega a ser un elemento catalizador entre cultura, mercado y poder, en un primer momento de desarrollo global de la información. En este contexto, estas alianzas cobran un carácter estratégico de representación en lo que se percibe como una lucha de discursos por la hegemonía representacional" (148). Enrique Gómez Carrillo's extensive journalistic production in cultural and literary magazines as well as in daily newspapers embodies the strategic design of the press at the turn of the twentieth century. The representations discussed lie at the crux of emerging globalized information technologies consumed by a growing readership. The power gained through this market-based production allowed the Guatemalan writer to surge to the forefront of the multi-national literary field of the period. The format of the newspaper and magazine also helped him to do just that.

Reviews of *La sonrisa de la esfinge* were scattered throughout Spanish-speaking newspapers following the book's publication, creating an additional space to further Gómez Carrillo's ideas and aesthetic. At the time, it was common to see book reviews in both cultural inserts as well as in the main news sections of daily newspapers. Madrid's *El Imparcial* published one such review on Apri 13, 1914. Well-known Madrid literary critic Eduardo Gómez de Baquero wrote:

> En sus libros acerca de Grecia, Jerusalén, el Japón, y en este, Gómez Carrillo ha puesto en acción las mismas facultades y los mismo procedimientos literarios que han hecho de él el mejor, el más ameno, pintoresco e ingenioso de los cronistas de París. Estos libros, que son los términos o bitos de su etapa de Pierre Loti español, deben el encanto de sus páginas a la movilidad y claridad del estilo [...] Esta selección se hace atendiendo, no a la importancia total, sino a la virtud o eficiencia estética de los particulares elegidos. Es por el estilo de la

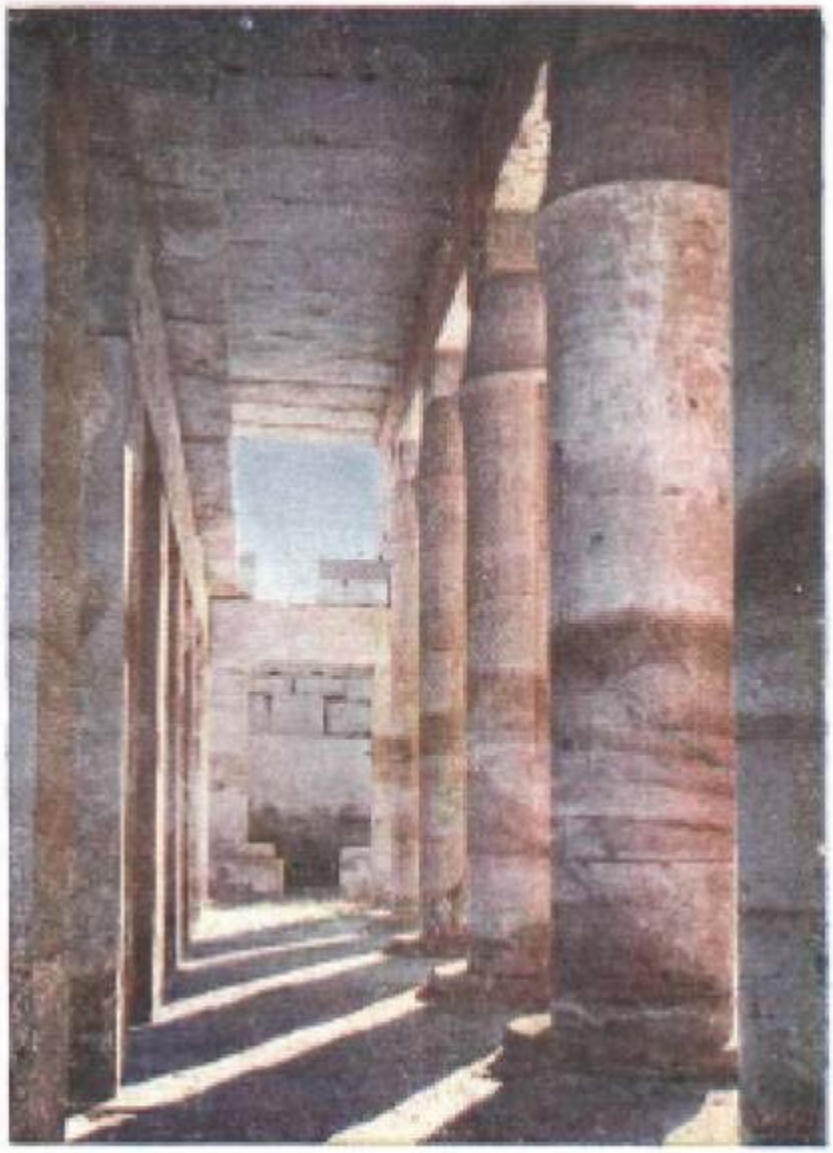
> elección que hace un pintor en las líneas de un boceto de retrato, de los rasgos más expresivos de la fisonomía. [...] El autor no es un especialista, no es un egiptólogo, no es un emulo de Maspero, ni hace falta que lo sea en un libro escrito, no para comunicarnos conocimientos, sino impresiones artísticas. Pero tiene, con todo, este exquisito narrador cierto don de adivinación poética, que muchas veces le hace ver la perspectiva exacta de los hechos y la nota característica de las instituciones. (3)

In this review, the author situates Gómez Carrillo in the French literary tradition by citing Gaston Maspero and Pierre Loti. Moreover, the Guatemalan is described by his *modernista* originality of thought and poetic prose. He is compared to a painter who chooses his subjects wisely, contemplating their every angle and aesthetic importance before producing the work. This focus on "elección," on choosing which elements to produce, confers all of the representational authority in describing the visited locale on the writer and his textual abilities. The self expression of the subjects in the traveled region is null and void from the beginning. In fact, for the reviewer, they do not even equate into the chronicler's renderings because his aesthetic elections are made sure by his competence as an artist. In fact, a depiction of Gómez Carrillo's previous book publications introduces the review and forms a foundation on which *La sonrisa de la esfinge* constructs its own authority. This review also compares the production of the book to a human portrait that brings out the most expressive parts of the physiological form, yet fails to mention the Egyptian human subject at all. In this case, as we have seen, the artist brings to light what he can and that which lacks he reinvents using a preconceived Orientalist canon.

The wide differences between print forms also illustrate a divergence in textual power and authority. Articles in the famed *modernista* journal, *Mundial Magazine*, for example, were profusely illustrated, often complete with color photos or illustrations from well known artists of the period such as Daniel Vázquez Díaz, Gerardo Murillo and Tomas Gutiérrez-Larraya. The captioned illustrations add an additional layer of textuality to the articles bringing to life the *modernista* travel experience coupled with a poeticization of the visual. Gómez Carrillo's nine page selection from *La sonrisa de la esfinge* published in the 1913 *Navidad* issue of *Mundial Magazine* titled "Una visita a los dioses de Tebas," contains eight full color photographs shot by famed French photographer Jules Gervais-Courtellemont - two of which are full page images. The article approximates the genre of photo-essay as the *modernista* narrates his Tebas experience with the captioned images; the *crónica* text serving as a mere supplement to the magnificent color photos.

The first image captures a passageway of columns, with the midday sunlight shining through to create a dramatic contrast between light and dark (Fig. 1). The caption reads; "La visión de los templos de Tebas"

("Una visita" 137). This opening glimpse of both text and accompanying photographs introduces Gómez Carrillo's aesthetic motives for the magazine article. Though the *crónica* alone provides us with an elaborate textual vision of the Egyptian experience, the literal visualization of the images gives the reader additional signs. The photo captions assist in placing the images in the *modernista* context of aesthetic creation; one where the word also has the ability to create the visual - though this time standing beside the visual as parallel discourses. The initial image of the temple is only a "visión" due to the appended caption without which the image loses the meaning associated with the term, leaving the reader to decipher the photograph within the more drawn out context of the *crónica* itself. The text contextualizes the image within Gómez Carrillo's aesthetic mission in representing Egypt as a nebulous, atemporal and spiritualized site.

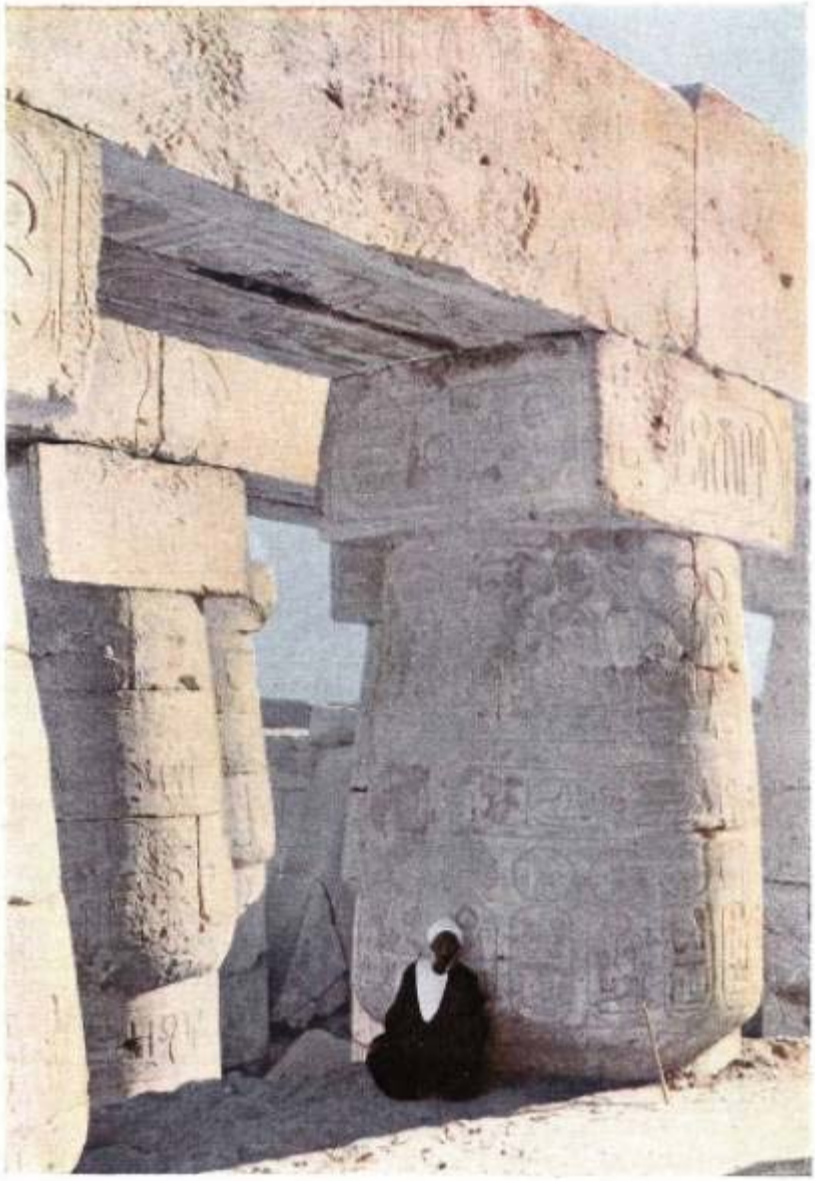


La visión de los templos de Tebas.

Fig. 1: "La visión de los templos de Tebas."

The following images accompanying the article are captioned as follows; A silhouette of a small sailboat on the Nile at sunset: "¡Ah, las deliciosas alboradas del Nilo, todas iguales!" ("Una visita" 138). Another view of the Nile, this time in the midday sun: "No hay una nube, ni siquera un fleco de gasa." ("Una visita" 139). The following image includes a camel in the foreground with a backdrop of the temple built into the mountainside: "Todo está colocado con un arte supremo" ("Una visita" 140). The next photograph takes up the full page and includes an Egyptian man sitting leaning upon the temple columns with a black thawb robe with a white undergarment and matching stark white Egyptian hat – or keffiyeh: "Las columnalas se bañan en claridades fantásticas" ("Una visita" 141). Then is an image of a large stone entrance to the temple, framed by large palm trees: "La inverosimil mágia de los matices en las tardes tebanas" (142). The next is another full page image of large stone figures carved into the mountainside: "Las figuras hieráticas anímanse en el crepúsculo" ("Una visita" 143). Finally a man, in the distance and again in a black Thawb is situated between two towering Egyptian figures: "Dos gigantescas apariciones salieron a nuestro encuentro." ("Una visita" 144).

The photo captions echo Gómez Carrillo's writing of the Egyptian subject in both article and book texts. In the two images that incorporate a solitary figure of an Egyptian man, perhaps even the same man, the person is written out of the image by the accompanying textual description. In the first, the whitewashed temple columns are covered in ancient hieroglyphs that melt into the similarly colored sand (Fig. 2). The image of the man, foregrounded and centered among the columns in his black and white dress, sits in an immobile, silent and stark contrast to the temple structure. Seemingly as ancient as the temple, the man is the focal point of the viewer's gaze. Nevertheless, the caption reads, "Las columnalas se bañan en claridades fantásticas" ("Una visita" 141). The reference alludes to the angles of light against the temple which establish a clear contrast between the shaded and sunlit sections of the columns. The man, sitting in the dense shade at the foot of the column, is not bathed in the "claridades fantásticas" of the Egyptian sun against the temple. Instead, he is hidden among the dark and mysterious unknowns of the monument. He is almost ghostlike, an indecipherable shape hidden among the ancient shadows. Although he is clearly present, the illuminated temple is of upmost importance for the Guatemalan as he chooses to represent the figure as dim and hazy, in fact nearly impossible to see.



Las columnalas se bañan en claridades fantásticas.

Fig. 2: "Las columnalas se bañan en claridades fantásticas."

A very similar figure is present in the image depicting two huge stone figures that appear to be standing guard before the mountainous temple valley (Fig. 3). Seated at the base of the figures and centered in the photograph, the male figure, again in black and white, is a definite focal point at first glance. The man is not mentioned in the caption which states, "Dos gigantescas apariciones salieron a nuestro encuentro" ("Una visita" 144). The apparitions, personified as striding out to greet the travelers, are faceless and motionless; their details have been eroded away after centuries of exposure to the elements. Yet, the Guatemalan describes them as active beings, rising from the desert and giving life to the arid landscape. The small seated man is also motionless, transfixed in a lost sense of temporality. Viewers are also unable to see his facial

details. By contrast to the large statues, the man's subjectivity is lost both in the photograph and the accompanying caption. Accordingly, the man is also an apparition, an “imagen de una persona muerta” (“Aparición”). The stone figures, on the other hand, are apparitions of another kind; a “visión de un ser sobrenatural o fantástico” (“Aparición”). The temple and surrounding area is a fantasyland for the foreign traveler, full of visions - of supernatural experiences around every corner. The traveler’s gaze hones in on the connection between nature and landscape and formulates a new living world among the ancient ruins. This experience is then transferred to images and textual commentary where the masses are able to emulate the travel experience. These visions, personifications and corporeal experiences also exhibit a fundamental lack, that of the Egyptian subject. The living and breathing are interred while the dead ruins are brought to life. In this way the Guatemalan is able to stay on his rhetorical course of action, embedding himself in his own logocentrism and discounting any sense of local subjectivity. This Orientalist erasure allows the *modernista* to rely on his own aestheticization in describing the lived experience undistracted by the impenetrable peoples of the region. Yet this textual absence is disturbed by a visual presence in *Mundial Magazine*, where the Egyptian man is also a guardian of Tebas, speaking out as a centerpiece in the images accompanying the article.

Dos gigantescas apariciones salieron á nuestro encuentro.

Fig. 3: "Dos gigantescas apariciones salieron a nuestro encuentro."

In "Una visita a los dioses de Tebas" there is no mention of the contemporary Egyptian. In fact, the only allusion to the people in the surrounding area is an old ghost story that was told by the site's French archeologist:

> Cuando Monsieur Maspero, hace treinta años, emprendió sus trabajos para desenterrar este templo, que había sido sepultado por la arena - me asegura mi cicerone muy serio - los habitantes de la aldea le dijeron que, en ciertas épocas del año, el gran santuario llenábase de fantasmas. El sabio arqueólogo se reía de los pobres aldeanos, y muy a menudo venía, después de la cena, a pasearse solo entre las columnatas. Una noche, cuando salía de las estancias de Amón, vióse de pronto rodeado de momias negras, que conducían en silencio una barca mortuoria. Un sacerdote marchaba a la cabeza de aquella procesión de sombras. Desde entonces, Monsieur Maspero no volvió a entrar aquí después de la puesta del sol. (144-5)

The man at the center in the photos is akin to the ghostly priest. As represented by the Guatemalan, this darkly dressed mummy-like figure, hiding in the shadows of the temple is lost in the dreams of past archeologists. He is a speechless ghost that is erased from the tourist gaze and from the poet's vision of Egypt. The illuminating sun, penetrating the temple and landscape in the images of the article is not enough to give voice to the speechless subject shrouded in black. The man is waiting to speak but can only do so

through the image and not the textual power of the literary representation in the article or the paratextual marginalia accompanying the images. In an *El Liberal* article commenting on Gómez Carrillo's best books, Max Nordau states that *La sonrisa de la esfinge* is; "una evocación y una fotografía, un sueño maravilloso y una visión concreta y aguda. Es la obra de un erudito, de un poeta y de un impresionista" (3). The poetic impressionism that guides Gómez Carrillo and that hones in on the visual nature of the travel experience, akin to that of a photographer, garners him a wealth of accolades within Hispanic intellectual communities yet ultimately shrouds the Egyptian subject in a perpetual state of mystery and negation.

Jerome McGann emphasizes that bibliographical codes such as images, textual forms, prologues, and editorial embellishments embedded in a literary work necessarily transmit meaning. Such significance must be set apart from the author's intentionality and is connected to the network of agents involved in the often complex production processes of the literary world and publishing industries. The bibliographical elements, for McGann, add to the "thickness" of the literary and its fundamental "polyvocal" status (75). He writes that:

> Whereas 'noise' is always a form of corruption for a channel of information, it can be exploited in literary texts for positive results. The thicker the description, so far as an artist is concerned, the better. [...] A thickened text is a scene where metaphor and metonymy thrive [...] But thickness is also built through the textual presence and activities of many non-authorial agents. These agencies may be the artist's contemporaries - these are the examples most often adduced - or they may not; furthermore, the agencies may hardly be imagined as 'individuals' at all (75-6).

Following McGann, the seemingly extra-textual features in the material form of the text explored in this essay are not outside of the text at all but contribute to the aesthetic layers that develop from the time an artist conceives of a work, through its transference on paper, to the editorial decisions that are made according to the different publication forms, and finally through the mechanized processes of production and reproduction. Each layer of this multifaceted development of a literary text contributes to the construction of the final product which, in the case of Gómez Carrillo, was consumed by thousands across the literary world.

Modernista anti-colonialist experience, lived through their renovation of the Spanish language and a creation of constant textual revolution through the communication technologies of the turn of the twentieth century, provided the movement with only marginal resistance in combating the entrenched Orientalism of Western Europe. In fact, *modernismo's* "Inverted Conquest" of the Hispanic literary field extends to the transnational cultural field of power and appropriated the authoritative discourses to create their own, often conflicting

voice in order to contribute to trans-Atlantic cultural production.(6) From Rubén Darío's and Juan José Tablada's exoticization of the far east, to Gómez Carrillo's criticisms of the westernization of Cairo together with an Orientalist discourse that follows the Eurocentric colonial model in the same text; these discursive nuances based on repetition and difference, keeping in mind the diverse textual modalities and paratextual influence that permeated the rise of *modernista* literary preeminence, must mediate future studies on *modernista* Orientalism.

Notes

(1). In this case I largely agree with Joan Torres-Pou and his analysis on Gómez Carrillo's Japanese travel chronicles. He writes that: "La erotización del Japón que lleva a cabo Gómez Carrillo no es solo fruto de su complacencia en describir a las mujeres sino que es parte del discurso colonial asimilado por el autor guatemalteco. Es éste un aspecto de la formulación de Oriente señalado ya por Edward Said (1978) cuando plantea que el Orientalismo establece un set de polaridades en el cual el Oriente se caracteriza de irracional, exótico y erótico ante un Occidente marcado por lo racional, lo familiar y lo moral" (189-90).

(2). During his short Editorship of *El Liberal*, Gómez Carrillo modernized the formatting and layout of the newspaper. He also placed a strong emphasis on cultural commentary on the front pages of the periodical. International writers and artists were frequently invited to contribute their opinions of important stories and the latest news on the cultural fronts of Spain was published on a daily basis.

(3). The publishing details of the six books are as follows: *El Japón heroico y galante*. Madrid: Renacimiento – Biblioteca Popular, 1912. *Grecia*. Madrid: Imp. Artística de José Blass y Cía, 1908 (along with three other editions before 1913). *Jerusalén y la tierra santa*. Paris: Sociedad de ediciones, 1912. *Flores de penitencia*. Paris: Sociedad de ediciones, 1913. *El libro de las mujeres*. Paris: Garnier Hnos, 1908. *Cultos profanos*. Paris: Garnier Hnos, 1911.

(4). An example of this is reflected through his extensive textual production that is centered on Europe, primarily France. Out of the dozens of Gómez Carrillo chronicle editions the only book of prose dedicated to Latin American was *El encanto de Buenos Aires* published in 1914. The only references to Guatemala in his book production are found in his autobiography and a couple of editions written in support of the Guatemalan dictator Manuel Estrada Cabrera.

(5). A revised section of the book that discusses the rather elusive interior of the Egyptian home was also published in *crónica* format in Bogotá's literary magazine *El Gráfico,* the same year as the first book edition, pointing to the expansive transatlantic audience of the discourse represented in the text.

(6). See Alejandro Mejías-López's recent study *The Inverted Conquest: The Myth of Modernity and the Transatlantic Onset of Modernism* for an excellent book-length treatise that investigates the *modernista* rise to authority in the transatlantic literary field of the period confirming Díaz Rodríguez's maxim that the movement was an "inversa conquista."

Works Cited

Alonso, Cecilio. "*El cuento semanal* en la continuidad literaria y periodística de su tiempo." *Monteagudo*. 12 (2007): 27-56. Print.

"Aparición." *Real Academia Española: Diccionario de la lengua española – Vigésima segunda edición*. Real Academia Española, n.d. Web. 26 May 2011.

Díaz Rodríguez, Manuel. *Camino de perfección y otros ensayos*. Caracas-Barcelona: Ediciones Nueva Cádiz, 1908. Print.

Fanon, Frantz. *The Wretched of the Earth*. Trans. Constance Farrington. New York: Grove Press, 1963. Print.

Gómez de Baquero, Eduardo. "Revista literaria: Literatura de viajes – *La sonrisa de la esfinge* (Sensaciones de Egipto), por E. Gómez Carrillo. –Madrid, 1913." *El Imparcial* [Madrid] 13 Apr. 1914. 3. Print.

Gómez Carrillo, Enrique. "Los bellos palacios de Oriente." *El Gráfico* [Bogota]. 4 Oct. 1913: 23-4. Print.

---. "París: El moral de Kismet." *El Liberal* [Madrid] 17 Jan. 1913: 1. Print.

---. "La psicología del viaje." *Antología de Enrique Gómez Carrillo*. Guatemala: Artemis Edinter, 2004: 263-276. Print.

---. *La sonrisa de la esfinge*. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1913. Print.

---. "Una visita a los dioses de Tebas." *Mundial Magazine*. 6.32 (Dec. 1913): 137-145. Print.

González Martel, Juan Manuel. "Enrique Gómez Carrillo: Obra literaria publicada en libro." *Asociación Enrique Gómez Carrillo*. Asociación Enrique Gómez Carrillo, 21 May 2006. Web. 26 May 2011.

McGann, Jerome. *The Textual Condition*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U P, 1991. Print.

Mejías-López, Alejandro. "'Conocer y ser conocido': identidad cultural, mercado y discursos globales en tres revistas latinoamericanas de entre siglos." *Revista Iberoamericana*. 72.214 (Jan.-Mar. 2006): 139-154. Print.

---. *The Inverted Conquest: The Myth of Modernity and the Transatlantic Onset of Modernism*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt UP, 2009. Print.

Morán, Francisco. "*Volutas del deseo*: hacia una lectura del Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano." *MLN*. 120 (2005): 383-407. Print.

Nordau, Max. "Los últimos libros de Gómez Carrillo." *El Liberal* [Madrid] Jan. 24, 1916: 3. Print.

Selzer, Jack. "Habeas Corpus: An Introduction." *Rhetorical Bodies*. Eds. Jack Selzer & Sharon Crowley. Madison, Wisconsin: U of Wisconsin P, 1999. Print.

Singleton, Brian. *Oscar Asche, Orientalism, and British Musical Comedy*. London: Praeger, 2004. Print.

Tinajero, Araceli. *Orientalismo en el modernismo hispanoamericano*. West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue U P, 2003. Print.

Torres-Pou, Joan. "El discurso colonial en las crónicas sobre el Japón de Enrique Gómez Carrillo." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*. 82.2 (2005): 185-194. Print.