In Greenwich Village, on a hot Saturday evening at the end of June 1919, writers from across the American continent, all currently residing in New York, gathered for a “Pan-American Dinner”. Addresses were given and poems were read in English and Spanish. In the streets beyond, black soldiers returning from Europe were being attacked by white mobs, and socialists and anarchists were being rounded up by government forces and deported to Russia. Just who attended this dinner? What ideas lay behind it? And what impact would these ideas have on the development of modernist writing?

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