

# New Expeditions: Itineraries, Migrations, Excursions

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Imperialism and its aftermath set off an extraordinary wave of travel, exploration, and migrations around the globe, in which writers, or potential writers, were inevitably caught up. One consequence was that many novels of the last one hundred and fifty years, especially British novels, have had exotic settings.

David Lodge, "The Exotic", *The Art of Fiction*, pp. 158–9.

I repeat: travel produces the same impressions as reading.

Lucio V. Mansilla, *Una excursión a los indios ranqueles*

In 1492, Antonio de Nebrija wrote, in the prologue to the *Gramática Castellana*: "después que Vuestra Alteza metisse debaxo de su iugo pueblos bárbaros y naciones de peregrinas lenguas . . . con el vencimiento aquellos tenían necesidad de recibir las leyes que el vencedor pone al vencido y con ellas nuestra lengua".<sup>1</sup> One of these *peregrinas lenguas* was the Spanish spoken throughout America, with the variations that history has imposed. We can say that the colonial idioms can be thought of as having two sides: dialect or *lingua franca*, with its varying degrees of submission and dependence in relation to the official language that had already become the language of the nation, group, or class, imposed or re-acquired as a vernacular language. If it is true that the concepts of "mother tongue" in the sense of national language, either at the schizoid limit, "mother's language", or as Fichte conceived it in a paranoid Fascist split in the *Addresses to the German Nation*, are historically constituted *a posteriori*, unaware of their imperialist stance, one can only set "vernacular language" in opposition to them. These are the languages of "home", extended family (group, phratry, tribe), in fact, all the familial languages which were to constitute the autochthonous languages as "languages of territory". It is undisputed that the mother tongue has always been, or at least since Nebrija, an imposed language (Charles V was well aware of this) – has been considered a sign of an ascendant group that were few in number. The constitution of anti-colonialist and later post-colonialist movements was correlated with the appearance of languages for security or protection. The colonial idioms called "creole", "pidgin", "lingua franca", or "lingua gral" (the Tupi dialect of Brazil) are not only the underpinning of a mercantile relationship specific to the colonial period, but also an attempt to protect the ownership of things and implements from the time that they were named, as well as a vengeful reaction, mocking and sarcastic, against the experience of domination. The specificity of the language, its "intimacy", would always remain a mystery for the traveller, the transhumant, the explorer, and the tourist. In 1981 Fridman, an American anthropologist, reviewed the experience of Margaret Mead in Samoa, where the puritan anthropologist had studied the consequence of the transition

to puberty of adolescent Samoan girls, and who had produced one of the period's most widely disseminated texts in anthropology. The conclusions, determining that adolescent Samoan girls had experienced the appearance of menstruation positively [see Julia Kristeva (1982), *Powers of Horror*], which extirpated the biblical curse of bleeding, were not confirmed. Mead's informants, although somewhat elderly, were still alive and declared in an offhand way that "the young lady was so good and so kind that we told here what she wanted". The anthropological adventure was thus an adventure of fiction, including meta-fiction; should we think that the reply made to Fridman was also an elocutory deceit characterizing all replies: tell the other his own message turned around, as a response to desire?

In the contemporary world, neoglottics contribute to the creation of new territorial idiolects within national languages and literatures. Two phenomena confront one: the struggle against the universality of the common language stemming from the Babel-like confusion of tongues, and the solid establishment of local idioms preserving their autochthonous character.

The imperialist evolution of virtual- and cyber-space puts forward an agent that questions the future of languages and, in so far as we are concerned, the fate of the Spanish language in all its variants: its competence, its operation as symbol and in the imagination, and its effectiveness in relation to our reality. The language's pronounced structure and its resistance to diachronic modifications, above all in the realm of syntax, are only perceptible at the level of the imagination touched upon by Pierre Ménéard's reading of *Don Quixote* and, on the other hand, by the educational stability provided by "Tlón, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius". Will they be affected by the globalization of markets which attempts to spurn the usual forms in the grip of technocratic cyber-imperialism of computers operating in the English language? The languages resist, the referent remains the same, and it is this stress on the world that is conjured up that we call meaning. The language of the immigrants in Spanish America, and especially in Argentina, beyond the indigenist claims of Icaza, Rómulo Gallegos, or – in its modernist version – of Zorilla de San Martín, has always been a turbulent element at the heart of the "Spanish language". The phenomenon is accentuated now by frontier "spanglish" (between Mexico and the United States), "portuñol" (between Brazil and Argentina), or, again, "lunfardo" (Buenos Aires argot), which produce resistance literatures as well as "minor literatures", in Deleuze's sense of the term. This has affected the language of the conquistadors, whether in the semi-invented language of the Hispanophones, or in the restored Quechua of Arguedas. The gaucho Spanish of Martín Fierro, overloaded with archaisms from the sixteenth century, according to Eleuterio Tiscornia, the gallicized Spanish of Güiraldes, above all in *Raucha*, the macaronic Spanish of *La gloria de don Ramiro* (*The Glory of Don Ramiro*)\* of Larreta, achieve their peak in the bold and impudent Spanish of the destitute in Osvaldo Lamborghini. These languages of immigrants (see the *cocoliche* coloureds – Italians of Rio de La Plata – of the playlet) end up in Hispano-American literature attempting to eradicate the American "difference" in relation to their presumed European identity.

The distinction established by Umberto Eco between migration and immigration is political,<sup>2</sup> that is, that with immigration a country or a government develops a plan to achieve a larger and more enterprising population, while migrations are phenomena that are simultaneously both telluric and historical. Eco's proposition suffers from a degree of statistical Euro-centrism: the European nations established, and now demand, statistical

control over the presence of new foreigners (considered by the natural population as truly different), while the Latin-American countries, lacking the archaic exploitative reflex specific to the capitalist system, received at base a large number of foreigners bringing their language, culture, religion, and customs at the same time as cheap labour. An imaginary being, steeped in lechery and the lure of gain, instinctive and asocial, simultaneously made its appearance. The criminology and psychiatry of the period, based on criteria of "moral degeneration" and "atavism" propounded by Lombroso, confirmed that the massive eruption of immigrants erased the difference between them and the torrential forms of migration. Current immigration to the countries of America is limited and regulated; it is a new, rich immigration, as much as a result of technical knowledge as of economic power. Current immigrations are a remnant that extends the past and the age-old core of history; they were always produced by two causes: hunger and war. In 1898 the Law of Residence permitting the deportation of undesirable immigrants appeared ("undesirables" meaning Spanish or Italian anarchists); it was the other side of the immigration policy. The base-text was written by Miguel Cané. An unaccustomed and premonitory "colour note" appeared: fear of the excessive, dread of conglomeration, of masses and multitudes, which was to reappear in Argentine history and literature in the 1950s, in the face of the Peronist masses who were invading the social and political space [see Manuel Gálvez, *El uno y la multitud* (*The One and the Multitude*); Beatriz Guido, *El incendio y las visperas* (*Fire and Vespers*); Ernesto Sábato, *Sobre héroes y tumbas* (*On Heroes and Tombs*); Leónidas Lamborghini, *Las patas en las Fuentes* (*Paws in the Fountain*)]. There was a semiotic kernel of the indiscernible concentrated by the "invasion metaphor" founded on the foreign-ness of the uncontrollable proliferation. In the broad sense, the period's imaginative world took up a long tradition, that of the East imagined by the West since Montaigne, Montesquieu, Chateaubriand, Sarmiento [see *Viajes* (*Voyages*)], and travellers from Marco Polo to Malaspina. China was the meeting-point of all the reveries which converted it into a transcendental object of description. This tradition, through the process of semiotic degradation, re-discovered itself at the end of the century in chinoiserie: these were rare objects, of uncertain form, enamelled, lacquered, perfumed, elusive in outline and releasing the strange sonorities so widespread in the Chinese quarters; these were vases and potiches, or Ming porcelain, or, again, curios from particular places (see Rubén Darío, José Asunción Silva). At Buenos Aires, despite the large number of quarters, there is no "Chinese quarter" because there was no immigration from that land, as there was on the Pacific Coast (at Lima or San Francisco) or in New York, Toronto, or Montreal. The "Chinese" marks the boundary of the exotic which passes into kitsch through the baroque search for line and form, as in Severo Sarduy [see *Maytreya*, 1978], transforming into "figuline" or in stentorian tones through the projection of the figures in the *chinas*<sup>3</sup> of Martín Fierro. In the narrative mode, articles in the United States fostered the opposition between "cowboys" and "Chinese" in the 1930s. It was the symptom of the "yellow germ", based on an opposition as radical and irreducible as that between "conquerors" (from the West), American "exploiters" (in reality, an amalgam of Irish, Scots, Polish, and Jews) and foreigners. The "commonplace" and the "foreign" were in opposition, as were (something which was subsequently also exploited by Hollywood) the "revolver", the civilized weapon of the Europeans, the product of technology, and the "dagger", an ancestral, oriental, and artisanal weapon which preceded drug narratives (Kerouac, Burroughs, Huxley, Lennon). The new journeys of frenetic tribes in the night were anticipated by the hypnotic opium market.

We have passed from journey to traffic and from traveller to trafficker: two commodities, two cultures, two pleasures, two substances, and, possibly, two forms of extermination. Miguel Cané, terrorized by the numbers, announced the “yellow peril” in surprising fashion. A dream like one of Borges’s, a possible premonition of Mao Tse Tung.<sup>4</sup>

The difference between immigration and migration is insufficient if we restrict ourselves to a quantitative calculation. At the period of the conquest, there was a violent migration that had its origins in the opposition of cultures and policies, but also in anthropological opposition: it was a question of social subjects sufficiently distinct to require war or submission. There was also confrontation between two worlds of the imagination: the “paradisical innocence” of the American Indians is a European myth, just as the “sophisticated culture of the Europeans” is a colonial myth. Ignorance, stupidity, and viciousness were all to be met with throughout Europe. Barbarity is a constituent part of humanity and always causes us to face the Other. The historical fact of the migrations can be thought of as a defensive event against the onslaught of the Other and at the same time as an instinctive destiny: the human animal as itinerant, the human body as pure mobility, *ratio* as off-centring, the social as pure displacement. Culture (like all civilization) was not peaceful, but demanded a sustained effort, never decisive, to transform the “savage beast that we all are” into the fragile humans we claim to be. Each time, culture revealed itself anew like a fact of nomadism which transfers the local into the universal or into a place where the global annihilates the initial endogamous core of our own inner consciousness. The current journey has become very rapid and vertiginous. The cultural space is a mobile space where the ephemeral passage leaves its track: tribes of travellers, itinerants, pilgrims, passers-by, including vagabonds, are the shifting stones on which civilization is built. Columbus has been replaced by numerous “internauts” and his *Journal* by web pages. The accelerated crossings of the contemporary world confiscate time as they do space: breakfast in Buenos Aires and dinner at Milan, or perhaps more prudently, and not going so far, dinner at Buenos Aires, lunch at Madrid and coffee at Valencia. This robs us of the tangible character of our own adventure, freezing it in an entirely new entity: “peaceful acceleration”, generating new narrative schemas: voyage around myself, voyage across my personal world, voyage across my dwelling-place, as far as the egocentric voyage around one’s own room [see Virginia Woolf (1929), *A Room of One’s Own*]. Woolf’s disappointment, which was mixed with a terrible suicidal melancholy, corresponded to the fall of the empire with the collapse of its egoistical structure. The other historical shift lies in the decadence which suffuses historiography from Gibbon to Spengler and constitutes the narrative matrix of Denys Arcand’s film, *La décadence de l’empire américain* (*The Decadence of the American Empire*). There are insufficient grounds to maintain that the documentary value of the cinema will replace historiography, since cinematography has not replaced photography. However, we can claim that the vision of the world “by states” is constantly modified by a cinematographic vision. Our gaze has not been the same since the invention of the cinema [see Nicolás Rosa (1999), “La production du montage dans le discours de la vérité textuelle: entre cinéma et discours narratif”].

In the course of history, migrations, from the tribes of the Caucasus, the imperialist mobility of the Greeks and the Romans, and the migrations of the barbarian armies to the penetration of the American continent from California and the West Indies to Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica, and the Falklands, have all provided the foundation of our civilization. Let us say that culture is an imposed task. Spain, so holy, racial, and traditional was only

a territory overrun by invasions: Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, Romans, Visigoths, and, much later still, the “foreigners from one’s own stock”, like the “francisés”, without overlooking – following a legend from ancient times – the tribes coming from Africa. Perhaps these new *Tartessiens*, with their unknown language, outside the Indo-European world, enriched the Spanish land with new differences, features, frontiers, and contradictions. Every peninsula calls for invasion, and every island for annexation. On the level of the imagination, the island causes new narrative territories to arise, from the imperial island of Alejo Carpentier’s *Reino de este mundo* (*The Kingdom of this World*), to the neo-baroque world of Lezama Lima or the sinicizing orientalism of Severo Sarduy.

The topological confrontation between continental character and insularity is also a semiotic war, with zones of signification where the two fields intersect, restrict, surround, and invade themselves in the hope of achieving hegemony. The island is a closed space which generates a fractal relief structure, the opposite of the topographical continuity of the continent. Between the fractal edges of the coast (isthmuses, bays, peninsulas, capes), the island expresses separation from the integrity of the continent, whose original geological memory it will always retain. On the political level, every island implies separation and rebellion (Crete, Sicily, Ireland, Cuba, the Falklands), and on the literary level it engenders fantasy and phantasms, for within its perimeter fiction can experiment in total freedom (Robinson Crusoe’s island, the island of Dr Moreau, the island of Boustrophédon, the island of Robert de la Grive, the island of Morel).<sup>5</sup> Here, the imagination of the period simultaneously summons the technology of the primitive working of early capitalism and redemptive libertarian philosophy like that of Daniel Defoe. The most important contemporary example, where construction, revolution, and tourism all overlap, is Cuba, which is attempting to replace sexual tourism with academic and didactic tourism, from the obscene island of Cabrera Infante’s *Tres tristes tigres* (*Three Trapped Tigers*) to the successive congresses devoted to teaching and training. The destiny of Latin America remains a subject for debate, between the military education of British sailors and of the *kelpers* (the Falkland Island English) and education for everybody.

The exploitation of the economic resources of the colonies produced the business trip [see David Viñas (1964), *Literatura argentina y realidad política*], requiring the organization of entries and exits, from departure to arrival, the two points which rashly guaranteed the passage. The mechanical point to which the historical imagination is fixed, is the port of Palos, from which the Admiral left. The space between is occupied by storms, whirlwinds, typhoons, tidal waves, volcanic eruptions, which make up the “lair of maritime hell”, in other words, unalterable nature as the ultimate boundary of travel and of civilization. The conquest of America, an adventure which dazzled its age and continues to do so to the present day, was the triumph of a journey reaching the unknown by combining utilitarian voyage and initiatory voyage, the potential for a huge movement of people. It also furnished new materials for a distinct rhetoric producing other new cartographies for the world and for the mind. The new world, burdened with the image of the voyage towards Asia, projects an unbalanced rhetoric, overlapping the historical and the literary accounts, thanks to the use of different narrative modes. The members of expeditions prompted a question on the level of both utterance and ideology. Were they conquerors, discoverers, explorers in search of adventures and totally new descriptions, or were they really pirates, corsairs, buccaneers, and exploiters seeking new lands and their wealth? English imperialism, more modern, produced its own new territories and launched into

the conquest of what others had already conquered in the two Americas. A new narrative territory was produced at the same time.

English imperialism offered new natural and textual territories for new “adventures” and new narrative forms. Although at the political level the imperial regime proposed the extermination, submission, and slavery of the “new peoples”, consideration and respect at a distance, an attitude that existed alongside the “native/migrant” relationship, strategically produced at the same time a “narrative reserve”, contrasting with the “mythological reserve” of the Mediterranean civilizations watered by the Tigris and the Euphrates, which produced a world of the imagination combining the real and the fabulous, culminating in the rhetoric of the “adventure”. The diachrony of the translation is organized by the points of departure and arrival, with their anticipated dissymmetry: one knows where one is coming from but not where one is going to, it is therefore a passage between known and unknown, between acquired knowledge and uncertain knowledge, which is characteristic of every intellectual guide sustained by a type of “epistemophily”. The adventure on the ground and the intellectual adventure have the same framework: danger, doubt, combat, defence, and triumph or rout. The old European myths were fabulous, bound to one place and central. The myths that came from America were real, without connection to any specific place, and peripheral: they are the myths of the here-below formed on the basis of two sequences: the journey by sea and the journey by land. Between the two, there are fractal boundary incidents: islands, peninsulas, coasts, isthmuses, archipelagos, bays, and beaches. The adventure by sea was specific to the Spanish and Portuguese conquistadors of the first era: Columbus,<sup>6</sup> “el Cano” (Sebastián Elcano), Cabot, Magellan. The adventure by land was that of Fernando Cortés, Bartolomé de las Casas, and Pizarro; one group was “island- and coastal-dwellers”, the others, “mainlanders and Mediterranean”. They initiated different policies and rhetoric. Island rhetoric is always fragmentary and fractal. Columbus leaped from one island to the next, from one name to the next. Naming was necessary to ensure possession, but also to discriminate semiotically. Columbus, as different from a corsair as he was from a pirate, established for the first time a nomenclature and cartography of numbers, he gave “names to everything”, following the biblical commandment, so that they could have life. Every visionary has their own sight defect, short or long sight; they see from too close or too far away. The “island visionary” discovered continental South America on 1 August 1493. Believing it to be an island, he called it “Zeta”. The true explorer of South America was Cabot, mid-way between coastal and Mediterranean. He explored Rio de la Plata, re-treading the paths of the adventures of Solís and Irala, before the real creator of the science fiction of the American conquest, Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, who unleashed a penetrating inquiry: were the American Indians cannibals? This filled the entire narrative territory: María Esther de Miguel’s *Lo que comimos a Solís*; Juan José Saer’s *Ocasión (The Event)*, Martín Caparrós’s *The History*; Eduardo Rozenvaig’s work, *Holy Smallpox*, were all inspired by the chronicle account, *Wahrhaftige Historien einer wunderbaren Schiffahrt, (The Conquest of the River Plate)*, of Ulrich Schmidel.

Blas Matamoro’s sound and lucid work [“Espacios de Julio Verne”] analyses the forms of the “extraordinary journey” in Verne’s work as motors of textual and intertextual spaces in relation to the previous practice of travel accounts. These spaces are the substratum of the transfers and extraditions of the “travelling imagination”, according to the virtual schema of the “quest”: certification in the imagination of the lost object, a journey

of research – passage; arrangement of means and instruments – material experimentation; success or failure of the quest; triumph or rout after the encounter with the object. It is an analytical schema prefigured in the rhetorical schema of the journey from Homer's *The Odyssey* and the victorious return to the island of Ithaca onwards, or that of Antifer in Jules Verne: "The attraction which this islet exerted upon them appeared increasingly powerful every time they approached it, in conformity with the laws of nature and in inverse proportion to the square of the distances . . ."; or, "Already they were no longer masters of themselves and an irresistible attraction drew them towards this mysterious point, as a magnet which is drawn by iron". *The Mysterious Island* is the basis of the literature and the historiography of twentieth-century Western narration. Verne's journey is quite as much archaeological (remains) as anthropological (human remains) [see *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (*Journey to the Centre of the Earth*), *Le sphinx des glaces* (*An Antarctic Mystery*)]. The "proof of writing", the legitimacy conferred by the written text, inaugurated the return to "travel books": to recount a journey, that is, to recount the imagined journey and read it, gives substance to the real journey. This is always demonstrated by an appeal to the sum total of the great travellers' accounts: Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Magellan, Cook, Drake, Darwin, etc. The text attaches the model of the voyage to the model of all narrative and converts the initiatory voyage into "anecdote". This stance does not imply the negation of the real dramatization of the human adventure in so far as utopia is defined as "desirable", and thus "inaccessible" (uninhabitable). The classification of "Vernian utopian spaces" proposed by Matamoro modifies in part the realist version which was initially put forward, and if we attempt to set this version beside that of the more brilliant and original presenter of Verne's work, Michel Serres, it is the "utopia" which is diluted.

Michel Serres says: "Our ignorance has made Verne's work a dream of Science. It is a science of dreams. It is said that travel fiction is a science fiction. That is totally wrong." Beyond some oblique references to the work of Freud, Serres maintains that Jules Verne's creation does not break any law of the universe (in mechanics, natural science, the resistance of matter, biology). In contrast, the work is the product of the rules of mechanics of the universe and the biological rules of life. This work is essentially scientific and should be separated from science fiction and the uncertain regimes of utopias. If the law of anticipation is present there, it is because it is regulated by mathematical foresight; it does not correspond to the order of probability but to that of scientific veracity, foreign to the realm of the imagination, without, however, being exempt from errors (the calculation of error constantly recurs in Verne's journeys on the earth and under water). The mathematical regulation of the event (momentariness), like the rules of development, direct the narrative time dependent on the primordial event: the discovery. The novels of Verne conform to the laws of geometrical dimensions and axial centralization between places and locations (without, within, in-between), spatial location of forms (endogenous/exogenous, concentration/dispersion, functioning/disfunctioning, localization/displacement, continental territory = nation = state/fractal territory = island = mystery). These elements are ordered by forces of attraction and repulsion (concentration/expansion, localization/displacement, thematization/rhematization) which form the natural basis of the narrative. At the psychological level, the "extraordinary voyages" of Verne, effective proof of Serres's schema, are voyages which follow the law of geodesy and the geometrical laws of the intersection between places, knowledge, and epiphany which are the nuclear forms of voyages: spacing, experimentation, and discovery [see Michel Serres (1974), *Jouvenances sur Jules Verne*].

Verne's geodesic and fractal imagination led him to produce geographical and political spaces whose operating axis is integrated by the maximal and symmetrical distances (inverted and spectacular symmetry) between the nadir and the zenith. Between the two poles, the North [see Marcel Lecomte (1966), *Le thème du grand Nord*] is an exponential system between the end of the Earth, where the ice (cold) and fire of hell (hot) converge, governed by two narrative sciences: calorimetry and hibernation (chrypreservation, the origin of the Hollywood genre lying somewhere between surrealism and kitsch and linked to the horror narrative). Opposing this are the forms of cremation, fire's allegorical revenge, consumption by fire (Rider Haggard's *Ayesha*) and survival in the face of the flames (Borges's *La ruinas circulares* [Circular Ruins]). The near-contemporaries Jules Verne and Mary Shelley confronted the purely physical narrative (researcher and superman, the science of truth and scientific verity) and met on the same polar axis (*axis mundi*), the seat of ultimate truths (*finisterres*). The South Pole is a political and scientific axis where (mineral) extraction, possession (imperialism), and speleology meet. The North generates mystery, directions for conduct, and excitement. As for the South, it belongs to the realm of negotiation, experience, and extractive labour. The other spatial order (within-without and the mysterious space of the "in-between") traces the map of the "centre of the Earth" (hell, lair, cavern, underground rivers and lakes) and is productive of adventure: exploration and exploitation, the isomorphic parallel of the bodily interiorization of the bourgeois science of exploration of the body with catheter and scintillography.

Scientific expeditions in Jules Verne are subject to dangers which lie in wait for them from within the transient currents of sulphur springs and volcanoes which breath in and out.

The fundamental difference between the Spanish and English conquerors lies in writing. The Spanish recounted their adventures, while the English described the voyages and directly supplied us with documents. The Spanish did not write commentaries or logbooks, but letters and reports. The English travellers were the source of numerous adventure stories from Drake and Hawkins onwards, raw material for the English colonial adventure, which was to dazzle Borges. The different kinds of narratives from Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* and *Kim* to Joseph Conrad's *Nostramo*, as well as the "way of telling", are the product of a vision of the world, a conception of the meshing of life and the story itself. Beyond the perception the writers had of this "world" which they were telling, by means of the rhetoric of the period, its structural depth, generation, and transformation, there was that of an ambivalent world between metropolis and colony, in the midst of a complex system of translation of imperial values and those of the indigenous culture. In the anti-colonial period, systems of reproduction were established, and the subversion of these values. At present, those who serve contemporary tourism always scoff at the foreigner, these "innocent" tourists launched in search of pleasure. The order is inverted: the subjection of the economic sphere and of benefits is invested at the level of knowledge and communication.

One of the finest poems in the English language runs:

Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
He stared at the Pacific – and all his men  
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise –  
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.<sup>7</sup>



History tells us that it was not Cortés who first saw the Pacific, but Balboa. Keats was not wrong, however, he expressed only one kind of evidence: history recounts the same facts as literature; the real problem is knowing the proportion of fiction in each account.

Literature can be dated; it is conventional, it can be codified and anthologized: name of author, name of predecessors. It is simultaneously subjective and objective, sociological and historical. Rubén Darío began a system of compensation and balance which has strengthened its position to the detriment of Spanish narrative capacity, with only Benito Pérez Galdós escaping in most extraordinary fashion. The movement culminates with Latin-American narrative from Guimarães Rosa to Juan José Saer, through García Márquez. Australia, a white colony, like Africa, a black colony, and the East, a yellow colony, were the mirror in which the white imperialists looked at themselves as members of a powerful race and looked at others as recipients of this capacity for power. Races are the position each people has on the map of empire and its policy: the whites can be educated, the yellows can be protected, although with caution, and the blacks are to be subjugated, which has produced sector-based policies from imperial colony to protectorate and Commonwealth. "Racial inferiority", even if it is a case of a brand which conquerors place upon their human beasts, aims above all to create a labour market. The fetishism of the market, of Marxist doctrine, was converted into racial fetishism. Education and submission went hand in hand, like Bartolomé de las Casas and the *encomiendas*<sup>8</sup> which the Spanish empire established in America. At the time when the native labour market was being established, the American Indians were believed to be totally lacking in will power and dynamism, thus little suited to work in the fields. This lies at the origins of the myths of American idleness, which still leaves its mark today in Latin-American jokes about Mexican half-castes. Similarly, the "hard-working" character specific to the Argentinian citizen is supposedly the product of the fervour of immigration, tempered by Spanish improvidence and Italian avarice. The need to secure new markets was, conquest historiography maintains, one of the principal motors of the voyages of discovery. Finally, the redoubling of the revenues from the colonies (cattle markets, and meat and arable farming replacing the hypothetical and fabulous mining wealth of the first stage of the conquest) transformed the colonists into true capitalists who constituted the colonial bourgeoisie: the invaders were to become investors.

The striking division between people from East and West has never had any historical and ethnographical justification, but has left traces in the imagination. Immigration and migrations have always conferred legitimacy upon sector-based policies, from the biblical migrations to European migration to America. To take the case of Italian immigration to the United States, particularly to New York, it is estimated that 4 million Italians and their descendants have lived in this city, creating a true network with their quarters, cuisine, and customs. Its physiognomy swept over the defences of the city and those of Hollywood cinema. Between Al Capone's gangsterism and that of contemporary information technology, the images of Paul Muni and Edward G. Robinson are always to be found. Among the *mafia Italiana*, the *cosa nostra*, and the Japanese mafia (judo porn by athletes with telematic weapons) there will always be Marlon Brando, and between him and Brad Pitt you will find Al Pacino, while between Brad Pitt and Tom Cruise is Antonio Banderas. These are not immigrants or migrants, but in their fusion these travellers created the social magma necessary for a new generation of images, stereotypes, changing figures, from the "Latin lover" (the flames of Italian passion prefigured by the ambiguous Valentino

– ambiguity is a constituent part of extremely heterogeneous and mobile societies where the fluidity of levels and interests makes expression vulnerable), to the ambidextrous Ricky Martin.

On Sunday, 30 January 2000, a column in the Madrid newspaper, *El País*, reported: “China executes thirteen pirates while they sing a pop song by Ricky Martin in chorus.” Information technology piracy has perhaps replaced the pirates and corsairs who boarded galleons full of riches and beautiful women through the establishment of a celluloid sensibility, but not cupidity nor constraint. As before with the Italians and the blacks, Latin Americans have become exotic, to make their entrance into the market in human flesh and into the imaginary market of tourism. How can we compare the kiss of Katherine Hepburn and Rossano Brazzi before the turbulent waters of the Venetian canals with the quasi-philosophical thrill of the German professor, Gustave von Aschenbach, gazing at Tazio in the world of the Lido? Two sensations, two worlds, and two rhetorical excursions. They will always be territories to colonize, to civilize, to submit to depredation, by confiscating the Other territory and the territory of the Other. Lucio V. Mansilla’s *Una excursión a los indios ranqueles (An Expedition to the Ranquel Indians)* is a journey into the pampas, a journey of colonization and expropriation of languages and imaginations, at the base of the narrative territory worked by César Aira in one of Luis Gusman’s novels and by David Viñas in literary criticism.

Another difference between Spanish and English travellers is that the former, strongly influenced by medieval Italian historical writing, were “chroniclers”, anticipating mass-media publicity, they were the megaphones of industry, recording, and exemplarity: civilizing, reducing to slavery, converting. The English were bolder and distanced themselves further from the imperial mandate, with a more entrepreneurial mind that entered into the first column of the accounts the interest of the colonial adventure, then the credit of the narrative reservoir, both experimental and lucrative.<sup>9</sup> This fact shaped the colonial English adventure which was to last until Rudyard Kipling and Forster (*Passage to India*) in which the alliance between initiation rite and the mystery of what is conquered but remains unknown is renewed. The novels of Rider Haggard are the two sides of the same coin: one “exploits” an anthropological mystery, the other the mysterious displacement of the adventure.

The man among monkeys, as transfiguration of the ape-man, called Tarzan, beyond the sophisticated eulogy of primitivism as a response to Rousseau and Crusoe’s first brother, is the anthropological investment in the humanization of man, the natural fiction of Nature which has provided all the literary raw material for the travellers’ description. The Darwinian evolution of the species was reinforced by the literary development of Brunetière, emulator of Darwin, anticipating Tinianov. The processes of historic development stretching from conquest and colonization to neo-colonialism found their counterpart in the narrative drift in the sequences of the framework: excursus generated by the routes, roads, and paths on which the action took place – the course of the narration of the Indians supported by the body of Frascuillo del Puerto or that of Father Quesada (and his efforts), perhaps the brother of the chronicler of the Indians, of Juan José Saer’s novel, *El enterado [The Witness,]* which interrogates the discourse of history. Semi-historical and semi-legendary personages established a schizoid bridge between adventure and tale, between legend and history: the course of events, discourse, the course of time, are the same concern.<sup>10</sup>

Was Columbus, in the truth of his displacement, part of an expedition or an excursion? The title, “discoverer”, comes from external discourse, from the extraterritoriality of history, and “adventurer”, from within historiography, is his ideological sobriquet. In narrative mode, and beyond the quasi-romantic thrill revealed in his *Journal*, which literary authority cites as a source, without, however, stipulating the fact of his being the author within a biographical framework, Columbus had the unshakeable solidity of a destiny (even if he was mistaken) and the rigorous tenacity, almost as if in a state of manic delirium. Was he greedy and dominating or an arrogant paranoiac? Beyond what historians have told us about the text, which still attracts controversy, it is more of a “private diary” than a chronicle or an account of evidence.<sup>11</sup>

The literary matrix of his accounts is evident. Here, the blossoming in response to the conquered land is expressed in the rhetorical device of a *locus amoenus* which requires different interpretations: what is already experienced, what is already seen (Italy, Portugal, Spain, perhaps Iceland). Everything is structured like something already seen. Was what was already familiar incompatible with the new experience, or did it in fact appeal to a literary model? The idealized landscape with its stress on “primitivism” (water, trees, breeze, bird song) was characteristic of the infancy of the world. The traveller cast this inappropriate gaze upon these coasts.

America was not novelty; it was everything which preceded all certainty, all verification, the distant past of the world beautified by the lyric poetry of the troubadours and the Italian narratives of the period heralded by Boscán and Garcilaso. From a semiotic viewpoint, the “rhetorical description” and the “informative comment” confront each other in the text, which was to make it possible to agree with the historians who maintain that the *Journal* is not a “chronicle”. Columbus’s text is a bifidate poetic text: lyric and narrative, tale and description, facts and commentary, European gaze and American object, vision and realism, orientation towards the future and situation in the past. The idealization of the tropics introduced a stylistic element into description and genre into transmission, accompanied by new semes: warm air, hot sand, luxuriant vegetation, to which were now added the semes of eroticism, love between different races, “easy” amorous adventures or those of organized prostitution, a paradigm that was to leave Cuba for San Domingo, reversing Columbus’s propitiatory voyage. Columbus inaugurated America’s “intimacy”.

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\* Details of English-language editions, where available, are to be found in the Bibliography. (Details of works widely available in English translation have not been given.) (English translator’s note.)

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## Notes

1. "[S]ince Your Highness has placed beneath his domination the barbarian peoples and the nations using *peregrinas* languages . . . this means that the conquered must receive the laws of the conqueror, including our language."
2. See Umberto Eco (1998) "Les migrations du Troisième Millénaire", in *Quatre textes moraux*.
3. This was the name given in the Argentine pampas to the gaucho's companion with slightly almond-shaped eyes.
4. The experience of life in Europe and "concepts of administration" were the source of the knowledge to which Miguel Cané laid claim to justify the formulation of the Law which protected the civil code from the "enemies of the social order". Cané's arguments, which are subjective (experiences) and legalized by custom and right, can be ordered as follows:
  - ideas coming from the 1848 Revolution supported by Cané within a conservative democratic model, while expressing "anxiety" about an explicit "carbonarism";
  - preliminary evidence from some colonies: Australia as the "Kafka-esque penal colony of England";
  - the proliferation of ideas about prevention formulated as social and political regeneration of "criminals" and "social misfits";
  - the exaggerated character of the diffusion in popular illustration as well as in political and class reaction to the "popular education" of Sarmiento, "taken to extremes, where the poor lose their peace of mind", the social quietism of the localized and sedentarized immigrant;
  - anarchy: the trigger was "the dreadful assassination of the Empress Isabella";
  - the conversion of the constitutional "promised land" which was to come, contradictorily, to vagabonds and delinquents, characterized as the "lowest social stratum", who would transform the country into a "laboratory of crime";
  - the "body social" understood like an "anatomical body" attacked by curses, scourges, diseases, plagues, (endemic) epidemics, metaphors for sickness as social corruption characteristic of the nineteenth century: "the presence of the pathogenic microbe";
  - the dangerous exoticism given concrete expression in "the Chinese", the "coolies", and the famous battle of the "pigtailed" which went before the United States lawcourts.

In 1874, in his presidential message to Congress, General Grant inaugurated an image which was to be very successful in the American articles of the period, the traffic in, and slavery of, the "yellows": "the great majority of Chinese immigrants are not transported voluntarily to our shores"; and he said of Chinese women, "they are brought here with shameful intent". Cané argued with total clarity: "The question shorn of all disguise or exaggeration on both sides, was simply knowing whether the working element in the vast territory of the Pacific was going to be Mongol or American", and he avidly reported a curious fact: "For those who have not done so, I also note how instructive and pleasant it is to read two admirable chapters dealing with this Chinese question, concerned with Peru and San Francisco in 'from La Plata to Niagara' by Paul Groussac." In 1882 the United States government, fearing "yellow" proliferation, suspended Chinese immigration for ten years, as it does currently for Arab immigration. The "Chinese" question was exemplary in line and colouration as a model of evident foreign-ness (the racial Other) and latent foreign-ness (the anti-social Other, the linguistic Other, the human Other). Dr Zeballos, minister at Washington, published a review considered by Cané as a montage at the intersection of model and exemplarity: "persecution and punishment of the anarchists". The strong and well-articulated figure which

- presided over all the discourses (messages, accounts, legislation, fundamental acts, etc.) was only one reactive crystallization which outlined the dramatic social space of the period since the alienated, the unbalanced, the abnormal, the social animal ("the human beast"), the sick agent, all bound together in the microbial theory of the "pathogenic germ", were taken on by law, civil and criminal jurisdiction, psychiatry, criminology, the disciplinary rigour of education, and the contemporary novel. See Miguel Cané (1899), *Projet de loi d'expulsion des étrangers: justification du droit d'expulsion des étrangers* (Buenos Aires: Édition de J. Larraill); Nicolás Rosa (1999), "Raisons d'usage: manuels et disciplines", in *Usages de la littérature* (Valencia: University of Valencia).
5. The "last island" of the day before is a bookseller's island and a bibliographical islet. "Umberto Eco's encyclopedia" re-compiles all the happenings on the island: geodesic and astronomical, geographical (land) and relating to temperature (climate), insular territory and continental territory, empire (annexed territory) and forgotten territory (uncertain territory in the "fogs" of memory, fractal space and continuous space, tranquil limit and volcanic insurrection (the Fijian islands), all the territories and spaces of doubling and of the terrestrial shift and the adventure of events (narration), of the previous vision and the index of the absent object in the limits of the "*giorno prima* [day before]". There are forms which explore (the sea and desire) and explicate (submerged wealth and colonial servitude) in a chance island of Desire impossible to attain: an educative praxis of journeying, but at the same time a theory of shipwreck and of loss. The traveller, divided between "renaissance" and "baroque confusion", between the reasons of the heart and *raison d'état*, Robert de la Grive, the protagonist, quits the Renaissance to involve himself in the maze of baroque word-play, the "particular friendships" of the "puns" of Rambouillet's *précieuses* (see Umberto Eco (1995), *L'isola del giorno prima* [*The Island of the Day Before*] (Milan: Bompiani); also Laura Milano and Rosa María Ravera, "Approche de *L'isola del giorno prima* d'Umberto Eco" (1999), *Cuadernos Gritex 7* (Rosario: UNR).
  6. The "enigmatic Columbus" is above all autobiographical, for everything depends on the details of his life (birth, race, psychology, character): what matters is based on the narrations constructed about his "prowess". For his birth, there are half-legendary, half-fabulous places available: Genoa, Galicia in Spain, Portugal. His ancestry? Nephew and servant of a pirate? His previous experience? Galician pirate or Genoese *sarcler*? The erasure of his real origin is that of the "miraculous hero", while the exaltation of his Name (*Cristo Ferens*: bearer of Christ) places him in the succession of the predestined.
  7. John Keats, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer".
  8. The Indians were divided into groups, each in the service of an *encomendero*; the mutual services were, on the one hand, dues and labour, and, on the other, protection and evangelization. (French translator's note)
  9. The voyages of John Hawkins between 1562 and 1569 (trading in slaves), the "war of reprisals" (1569–1578) under the leadership of Francis Drake (a true pirate), and the "war of the corsairs" (1585–1595) were the different facets of the colonial confrontation between England and Spain for the wealth of the new lands and domination of the seas (Atlantic, Caribbean, Pacific). When Drake disembarked in the port of San Julián, he saw the gibbet erected by Magellan, surrounded by human bones at its feet. This emblem of death, produced by confrontation and sedition, is the extreme reversal of the native antagonism, which was to be found in Argentine history and legend until the "English invasions" (1806–1807). The voyage of Woodes Rogers (1701–1711), who had taken ship at Bristol, recommenced an island itinerary: the island of Cape Verde (Africa), Ilha Grande (Brazil), Falkland Islands (then Argentina), Juan Fernández Island (Chile). The passage is transferred here from the real to the fabulous plane. When they disembarked on the island, the English encountered a single inhabitant, a man clothed in goatskins: this was the sole survivor of an earlier expedition, Alexander Selkirk. It is said that Rogers's account was the evidence that served Daniel Defoe for his *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). See Peter Bradley (1992), *Les voyageurs anglais et l'émergence de la littérature argentine*.
  10. Together with the variants and the differences in Foucault's constitution of the eighteenth-century "episteme", Michel de Certeau consigns the central notions which configure the "frame" of ethnology engendered in the eighteenth century: orality (the communication proper to "primitive", "savage", or "traditional" society), spatiality (mark of a synchronic, history-less system), alterity (difference produced by a cultural break), and *inconsistence* (confrontation or astonishment in response to a piece of knowledge come from the outside). From the Middle Ages onwards, and above all in the Renaissance, the entrance upon the stage of a "new man communicated through the media" was prepared for, slave and free, savage and educable,

“good” and “bad”, instinctive and perfectible: the “good savage” with the face of the “wild child” (wood, forest, and entry into the framework of civilization: the town), which transformed itself in a concentration of ethnological, historical, social, preliminary, and pedagogical reflections from Montaigne to Rousseau and from Bartolomé de las Casas to St John Bosco, “beauty, ingenuity, and hospitality” in opposition to “monstrousness, scorn, and savagery” accompanying the accounts of the voyages to the New World. The condition of savage was accorded him not so much because of his ferocity, but rather on the basis of the suspicion of cannibalism and debauchery. The voyage of a reformer, a Calvinist who was later to become a pastor, Jean de Léry (1578), made it possible for Michel de Certeau to note – following Lévi-Strauss (see *Tristes tropiques*) – the relationship between organization, validated by the reproductive centre of writing, trade, and science and the colonial project, a space and its political occupation. To civilize and to reduce to slavery are not opposing but co-operating actions. Certeau’s schema, between the Old and the New Worlds, between the space here and over there (exteriority, interiority), between subjectivity proper and that of the Other thought of as exteriority by the first (the Same, the Other), between the activity of modern production (already presaged by Columbus in his comparative descriptions) and theological-conservative language, were to sustain the ideological axis put in place by Léry. The “new world” was a language to translate, as Certeau says, but how to pass from savage reality to civil and civilizing European discourse? It is perhaps from this that the classificatory and hermeneutic mind comes that underlies the accounts of the conquering travellers, above all when they were explorers and “scientific”. The eroticization of the body of the Other, as something foreign, different, exotic, in sum “absent”, occurred at the same time as the formation of a Calvinist production ethic – the body as output of pleasure won, but immune in relation to the unnecessary and incurable depravity due to passion and *jouissance*. The Tupis’ celebrations (drunken, incestuous, and cannibalistic) mark the origin of American desire and simultaneously that of European expectation. See Jean de Léry (1880), “Histoire d’un voyage fait en la terre de Brésil” (History of a Journey Made in the Land of Brazil); Tzvetan Todorov (1982), *La conquête d’Amérique: la question de l’autre*, and (1989), *Nous et les autres*; Michel de Certeau (1978), *L’écriture de l’histoire*; Ulrico Schmidl (1940), *Chronique du voyage aux régions de La Plata (The Conquest of the River Plate)*.

11. “I called the first San Salvador, in memory of his high Majesty, who has given all this in wondrous fashion; the Indians call it Guahani. For the second I chose the name of Santa María de Concepción, for the third, Fernandina, for the fourth, *Isabela* [= *île belle* (‘fair isle’)], and for the fifth Juana [= Cuba], thus giving each island a new name.” Letter from Columbus announcing the discovery of the New World, 15 February/14 March 1493; (1493) reproduction of the original Spanish text (Pedro Posa, Barcelona); (1956) transcription and reconstruction of the same text with critical notes (Madrid).

“And afterwards on the side of the same little island, there were orchards with the most beautiful and leafiest foliage that could ever be seen, like in Castile in the months of April and May, and a great deal of water.” Columbus’s comparative system actually had a Spanish reference-point. Castile, mentioned above, was suddenly to be dislodged by the “greenery” of Andalucía, called in stereotypic fashion, the “orchard of Spain”. The process was so pregnant that it froze into something like what has been called “primitivism” in painting, but achieved a high level of saturation under the direct ascendancy of the rhetorical process. See Christopher Columbus (1946), *Les quatre voyages de l’Amiral et son testament*, second edition (Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe), copy of Bartolomé de las Casas’s extract. See also Noé Jotrik (1992), *Histoire d’un regard: le signe de la croix dans les écrits de Colomb*, Chapter 1 (“Scène réelle, scène textuelle”) and note 15, Chapter 2 (“Textes, corps, regards”). This is perhaps the most “exploratory” of the books on Columbus’s writing, between the base and the pure experience of the new narrative world. See especially the “gold-bearing passion” of Columbus, which was to constitute a core element of narration in colonial America until the “hidden treasures” of Sarmiento. See also Nicolás Rosa (1990), “L’or de la lignée”, in Nicolás Rosa, *El arte del olvido*.