

Montaigne: European Reader of America

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Our world has just discovered another world [. . .] I am much afraid [. . .] that we will have sold it our opinions and our arts very dear.¹

Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 1588

The year 1992 saw many important cultural commemorations take place, of which the most important, the fifth centenary of the “discovery” of America, seemed to eclipse, at least on the American continent, the four hundredth anniversary of the death of Montaigne (1533–1592).² It therefore does not seem inappropriate to question the view of the author of the *Essays* concerning the theme, “much fussed over” by ideologues on all sides, of the “encounter,” as memorable as it is debatable, between the “New” world and the “Old.”³

The general question of Montaigne’s attitude toward the indigenous populations of America has been studied at great length by historians, anthropologists, philosophers, and literary critics, especially during the past few years.⁴ Montaigne drew his information from a great number of sources, most of which have been minutely catalogued and analysed, often with care, by specialists.⁵ We shall not attempt to review well-founded documentation, but rather to focus on the origins and the originality of Montaigne’s vision of the New World, which is generally considered in light of modern theories of cultural relativism.⁶

First of all, let us posit clearly that the author of the *Essays*, in whom today one is too quick to see the unconditional champion of Indian culture and the attacker of European colonialism – a sort of Las Casas whose “political correctness” is ever irreproachable⁷ – displays great vehemence in his denunciation of the inhuman customs of the indigenous peoples of the New World. Never does he turn a blind eye to the problem of the violence inherent to their culture. In a 1588 addition to his chapter “Of Moderation” (I:30), one which is usually overlooked in silence, we see Montaigne bor-

row from his Spanish source, López de Gómara, a horrible depiction of human sacrifice as practiced by the Mexican Aztecs.

And in these new lands discovered in our time, still pure and virgin compared with ours, this practice is to some extent accepted everywhere: *all their idols are drenched with human blood, often with horrible cruelty*. They burn the victims alive, and take them out of the brazier half roasted to tear their heart and entrails out. Others, even women, are flayed alive, and with their bloody skins they dress and disguise others [. . .] For these poor people to be sacrificed, old men, women and children themselves go about, some days before, begging alms for the offering at their sacrifice, and present themselves at the slaughter singing and dancing with the spectators (I: 30, 149b).⁸

Montaigne treats his reader roughly here, as if better to show him the violence of the religious rites of people who believe they are appeasing the cruelty of the gods. He blames, he says, "that other very ancient [idea] which consists of thinking that we gratify heaven and nature by committing massacre and homicide, a belief universally embraced in all religions" (I:30, 149b).

In the immediate context of the chapter "Of Moderation," however, which serves as a preface to the essay "Of Cannibals," this full attack also serves to lay the groundwork for the second part of his argument, where he will show us that while the sacrifices of the Aztecs are repugnant, the cruelty committed by the *Conquistadores* in America is all the more so, and all the more inexcusable. At the end of this same chapter, as if to link up with the next chapter ("Of Cannibals"), Montaigne brutally parts company with López de Gómara, his principle source, who presented the *Conquista* as a crusade carried out in good faith for the greater glory of God by the Church and the Spanish crown ("*un gran muestra de servicio a Dios, a la Iglesia y a los Reyes de España*").⁹

In place of the same refrain that had caused the Crusaders yearning for an invitation to bully the infidels in the name of "sweet France," Montaigne offers us reflections of a moral philosophy nurtured on an anthropology so ancient that we find it entirely modern: why were so many crimes committed in the name of religion? Here we recognize the reader of Lucretius: *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!*¹⁰ The immolation of helpless victims seems to correspond to a quasi-universal tendency of the human soul; and we no doubt find a final, alas European, example among the

conquerers of the New World. The last page of the essay "Of Moderation" is worth quoting here:

The ambassadors of the king of Mexico, to give Hernando Cortez an idea of the greatness of their master, after having told him that he had thirty vassals, each of whom could assemble a hundred thousand fighting men, and that he lived in the most beautiful and strongest city under heaven, added that he had to sacrifice to the gods fifty thousand men a year. Indeed, they say he fostered war with certain great neighboring peoples, not only to exercise the youth of his country, but principally to have enough prisoners of war to supply his sacrifices. Elsewhere, in a certain town, as welcome to the said Cortez, they sacrificed fifty men all at the same time (149b).

Without a doubt, as "civilized" Europeans, we will never be able to accept the gratuitous immolation of so many innocent beings. But Montaigne does not stop his pen here. He adds a last anecdote which will give an unexpected twist to his argument.

I will tell this one more story. Some of these people, having been beaten by him, are sent to acknowledge him and seek his friendship. The messengers offered him three sorts of presents, in this manner: "Lord, here are five slaves; if you are a cruel god, that feeds on flesh and blood, eat them, and we will bring you more. If you are a good-natured God, here is incense and plumes. If you are a man, take these birds and fruits" (149b).¹¹

Here the chapter ends abruptly. If Montaigne does not find it necessary to tell us Cortez' answer, it is because history knows it only too well. The Indians would learn quickly, at their own expense, what kind of "cruel God" could hide beneath the features of the European. One might have thought that Christian virtues dictated this "moderation," which is the focus of Montaigne's chapter, to the discoverers. But, alas, such was not the case. Using the pretext of "civilizing" the indigenous peoples, the invaders sinned not only against Christian charity, but also against the humanist ideal of moderation, the *via media*, the *aurea mediocritas* which Montaigne wished his own age possessed.

In this way the author of the *Essays* forces his reader to revise his prejudices in the name of that which can already be called a certain "cultural relativism."¹² Before appropriating the right to "civilize" others, first one must ask oneself what constitutes "civilization." Certain modern critics have found it worthwhile to cast

doubt on the validity of Montaigne's position on this issue. In their eyes the author of the *Essays* supposedly remains prisoner, in spite of appearances, to his ethnocentric prejudices. He could never really rid himself of his European humanistic blinders, and his cultural liberalism is allegedly nothing more than the ultimate ruse of Western good conscience. Tzvetan Todorov, among others, is particularly severe in his analysis:

Before the Other, Montaigne is unquestionably moved by a generous impetus: rather than scorning him, he admires him; and he never tires of criticizing his own society. But will the other really get his due from this ruse? There is some doubt. The judgment of positive value is based on the misunderstanding, the projection of an image of the self upon the other – or, more exactly, an ideal of self incarnated for Montaigne in classical civilization. *In fact the other is never really seen or understood.* [. . .] He would like to be a relativist; undoubtedly he believes himself to be so; he has not, in reality, ever ceased to be a universalist.¹³

However useful this warning against an anachronistic attempt at annexation may be, it seems to us to overlook the fact that, contrary to most of his contemporaries, the author of the *Essays* exercises his wits in misleading his reader by obliging him to rethink his prejudices. Of course he can only do this by using the language and cultural references that are his own.¹⁴ How could he do otherwise, heir as he was to the humanist tradition? Nonetheless, in forcing his reader to encounter the strangest strangers he could ever imagine, he must call the *a priori* of his language and cultural references into question: "Each man calls barbarism whatever is not his own practice" (I:31, 152).

Undoubtedly Montaigne's family milieu (a Catholic father, a mother of Sephardic origin, two brothers converted to Protestantism) predisposed him to accept a pluralistic vision of the world and to break away from the universalistic pretensions of a monolithic culture striving to impose itself, at all costs, in the name of principles of which it had appropriated a monopoly.¹⁵ In the form of the essay, Montaigne discovered, in any case, the ideal literary means with which to express the complexity of his point of view and the various perspectives from which the "desire to civilize" could express itself.

Before going any further, it is perhaps useful to stop a moment to consider a work, usually passed over, which could not have

been irrelevant to Montaigne's surprising stance or, rather, to the strategy he employed to make his reader understand that in spite of appearances the most barbaric person is not necessarily the one you think to be so. This work, whose "American" relevance is not immediately apparent, is the *Cosmographie universelle* by Sébastien Münster.¹⁶ We know that Montaigne owned a copy of the French translation of this work of the scholar from Basel; the title page, conserved in the Bibliothèque nationale, bears the signature of the author of the *Essays*.¹⁷

Before setting out for his long journey across Europe, Montaigne, whose well-known, amiable nonchalance was more affected than real, probably examined the tourist guides of his time. When he arrived in Germany, he regretted not having brought along a copy of Münster's *Cosmographie universelle*. His secretary makes note of this fact.

Mr. Montaigne let it be known [i.e. regretted] [. . .] that before making the journey he had not seen books which could have alerted him to the rare and remarkable things in each place, or that he did not have a Münster or someone else in his baggage.¹⁸

The traveler probably possessed this work before his departure; and his regret at not having it in hand at the right moment is an indication of the admiration the author of the *Essays* might have had for this vast encyclopedia from Basel.¹⁹

For reasons which seem not entirely justified to us, critics up until now have not deemed it necessary to account for the passages which Münster devotes to the New World in his *Cosmography*. Even though André Thevet, the cosmographer of the last Valdesians, uses the European section of the Basel encyclopedia in particular, this does not mean that his contemporaries necessarily did the same.²⁰ Certain elements of the American version proposed by Münster in the pages of his apodemic manual seem to us, on the contrary, to have helped Montaigne formulate some of his own views, to the point that it is perhaps useful to venture a few comparisons.

At the start of the chapter in the *Cosmographie universelle* entitled "Des Canib[a]les les mangeurs d[e] chairs humaines" ("Cannibals, eaters of human flesh"), Münster has us witness the arrival of the Spaniards on the island of Hispaniola. The first reaction of the

Indians is to flee, for they believe, the narrator tells us, that the newcomers are dangerous Cannibals:

In other words these islanders fled at first from the *Spaniards* (Hespaignolz), because they [the islanders] thought that they were Cannibals (p. 1322).²¹

Through the symmetry between “Spaniards” and “Cannibals” this surprising preliminary sentence perhaps set Montaigne thinking about the relativism of cultures. In any case it presented him, in concise fashion, with a radical questioning of the opposition between brute and civilized. “And what if the Europeans, in spite of appearances, were still worse than the Cannibals?” The question is inevitable. Münster cast a line to our lover of paradoxes.²² The opportunity was too great not to take advantage of it.

Furthermore, it is possible that Montaigne had other reasons, both personal and political, to denounce the ambitions and the cruelty of the Spaniards in the wake of the famous *leyenda negra*. The French translation of the *Cosmographie universelle* used by our essayist, published in places acquired by the Reformation, reflected a polemical sentiment clearly unfavorable to Spanish power. Montaigne certainly shared the resentment of the “politicians” disgusted by Spain’s intervention into religious wars. It is also possible that he was haunted by the memory of the Sephardic Jews, driven from Spain thirty years before his birth, especially given his maternal lineage.²³ Yet this is hardly to suggest that we are dealing here with the reaction of a sectarian frame of mind. Montaigne is not Voltaire; and it would be incorrect and unfair to reduce the impulses of the moralist to the level of a personal settling of scores through the bias of anti-Hispanic propaganda.²⁴

Rather, the responsibility of the Old World for the destruction of the New World should be assumed by all Europeans: “we all” had a part in it, Montaigne repeats in the chapter “Of Coaches,” using the first person plural the better to include himself among the guilty:

What an improvement that would have been, and what an amelioration for the entire globe, if the first examples of *our* conduct that were offered over there had called those peoples to the admiration and imitation of virtue and had set up between them and *us* a brotherly fellowship and understanding! How easy it would have been to make good use of souls, so fresh, so famished to learn, such fine natural

beginnings! On the contrary, *we* took advantage of their ignorance and inexperience to incline them [. . .] toward treachery, lewdness, avarice, and every sort of inhumanity and cruelty, after the example and pattern of *our* [European] ways (III:6, 695b).

Undoubtedly there exist other documents of the age which refer to the “cannibalistic” cruelty of the Europeans. But we have found none with such an explicit articulation of the analogy between the Spaniards and the Cannibals as we find Münster’s work. Written in unequivocal terms, a parallel as shocking as the following one was all the less likely to escape the readers of the *Cosmographie universelle* as it was placed at the beginning of the first chapter of the work devoted to America. The terms he chose were clear:

Thus these poor islanders complained to the Spaniards of the cruel ways of these Cannibals, reproaching them that these *gluttonous beasts* [bestes goulues] demonstrated no less cruelty *toward them* than a tiger or a lion toward a mild and tame animal (p. 1322).

The structure of this sentence lends itself to an ambiguous interpretation: Who are these “gluttonous beasts” (“bestes goulues”), the “Spaniards” or the “Cannibals”? And to which of these two peoples does the object of the personal pronoun (*toward them*) refer? Already the fabric of the text contains a baleful foreboding that the cruelty exercised against the indigenous peoples will pass from the “brutes” to the “civilized.” The proximity of the two races suggests in any case a metonymical flow from one to the other. But we are still unaware of how the Spaniards will behave. The tone becomes premonitory as the text continues:

For [the Cannibals] can stab young men who are still beardless, tearing off their testicles, *just as among us we do to young cocks, which we want to caponize, and fatten up* (ibid).²⁵

The unexpected comparison between the Indian’s castration of young men and the European’s castration of young cocks is at the very least troubling. How could this be mere chance? The intention cannot be innocent. It leads one to conclude that the two continents share cultural practices differing only in degree. Through the perspective of sameness, the radical otherness of the New World finds itself potentially reabsorbed: the “Other” is but another side of the “same.” The example of modern Europe confirms this observation: the frontier between civilization and barbarism is unbelievably small, unbelievably easy to cross.

As if better to make known this fact, Münster stacks up analogies between the cruelest crimes of the American savages and the most banal acts of day to day life in Europe:

As for those with beards, they [the Cannibals] kill them on the spot, and having hacked them down the center, they remove the still warm intestines and eat them; they do the same with the limbs, but cut up the other pieces and salt them and put them aside, *as we do with sausages and hams*. They do not eat women; they keep them to produce offspring, *as we keep chickens to have their eggs* (p. 1322).

It is as if the monstrous particularity of the New World was potentially similar to the familiar banality of the Old World; or rather that the banality of our daily lives contained the seeds of a latent monstrosity which one day could grant itself full expression through the means of analogous, apparently innocent, situations.

Indeed, the natives who fled when they saw the Spaniards land were only momentarily mistaken. In vain did they offer gifts to their foreign guests "bearing gold with them," welcoming them "honorably," and "in friendship." We know the rest: the Europeans would not waste time in taking advantage of the situation. Münster gives his next chapter a title which in hindsight appears quite symptomatic: "How the Spaniards *abused* the Islanders' attentions" (p. 1325). We see the conquerors setting themselves up as masters of the island, appropriating the goods of the inhabitants, reducing them to slavery, and beginning to carry out the genocide which will assure them the seizure of the whole continent:

Meanwhile the Spaniards, who should have made positive use of the gold, degenerated into sloth and lechery, and began mortally to hate their government, so that the savages, already quite dissolute, dissipated still more, and bastardized their honest ways (p. 1325).

Such is the pitiful result against which Montaigne rails in the chapter "Of Coaches," denouncing the will to power of the European invaders:

Whoever set the utility of commerce and trading at such a price? So many cities razed, so many nations exterminated, so many millions of people put to the sword, and the richest and most beautiful part of the world turned upside down, for the traffic in pearls and pepper! Base and mechanical victories! Never did ambition, never did public enmities, drive men against one another to such horrible hostilities and such miserable calamities. (III:6, 695b)

In trying to compare the "American" sections of the *Essays* to those of the *Cosmographie universelle* my intention is certainly not to restrict the field of Montaigne's sources. As we are well aware, Montaigne learned from many other readings.²⁶ It nevertheless seems apparent that a European traveler who possessed a copy of the French translation of Münster's work should be able to find therein, if not new information on America, at least a narrative formula which perhaps shocked and seduced him. For Münster's possible influence is more on the level of style. The expression of otherness, in fact, willingly taps the resources of a rhetoric of paradox which might well have captivated the author of the *Essays*: the use of *adunaton*, striking alternations, unexpected associations. The oxymoronic structure of the narration adds to the evocation of a horizon of anticipation in which the paradoxical reversal of Montaigne's discussion of barbarism could quite naturally fit in. In this way the passages Münster devotes to the New World in the *Cosmographie universelle* are characterized by a succession of scenes where Edenic images (America as an unexpected *locus amoenus* for the Europeans) alternate with scenes of an unbearable cruelty, depicting horrible carnage perpetrated by "inhuman" savages (p. 1322 sq.). These striking alternations have an equilavent, stylistically speaking, in the unexpected verbal associations which can be qualified as oxymoronic. By this means, the Europeans who land at the "Isle Hespaignole" (Hispaniola) are shocked to find there, against all expectation, "harmless snakes," and "wild doves" (p. 1323). In the middle of November they heard "endless bird-songs," as if nature, such as the Europeans knew her, were flouting her cycles, as if, to repeat the colorful expression of a contemporary, the seasons were "out of season."²⁷

Such a paradoxical vision of the New World could but stimulate the curiosity and provoke a subtle subversion of the reigning mental categories. Perhaps there is here an echo, if not the origin, of a reflection which, with Montaigne, will invert the givens of common sense and radically question the European cliché, according to which the Americans could only be barbaric. The most famous example of this oblique questioning is found, of course, at the end of the chapter, "Of Cannibals." Recalling the dialogue he had in 1562 in Rouen with an Indian chief just arrived from Brazil, Montaigne praises the common sense of this alleged "savage." But this praise is suddenly interrupted, for no apparent reason, with prior prejudices:

All this is not too bad – but what’s the use? They don’t wear breeches (I:31, 159a).

If Indians do not wear European clothing, they cannot be civilized. Clearly only a naive reader would think that Montaigne himself is still speaking here. The “competent reader” would immediately recognize another voice, the voice of the unrepentant *conquistador* who judges by appearances and thinks that there is nothing healthy outside European customs.

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By deftly manipulating the enunciative aspect of his discourse in this way, Montaigne permits himself the luxury of irony at the inattentive reader’s expense. This game of mocking the cannibals’ lack of clothing at once invites the reader to reread Montaigne’s entire discourse on America in a new light, to learn whether the humorous vein which, in no way detracting from the serious issues under scrutiny, gives the exposé its truly human dimension. “To wear or not to wear breeches?” Such is the question Montaigne forces us to ask each time we think of judging others. But this question is also an answer to all the world’s fanaticisms, because it invites us to make way for irony and humor in our acceptance of the “human condition.”

Translated from the French by Sophie Hawkes

Notes

1. *Essays* (III:6, 693b). All references to Montaigne’s *Essays* are taken from the Donald M. Frame translation of *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, Stanford University Press, 1965 (passages are italicized by the present author). In most cases we shall give, in parentheses, the text, the volume number (in Roman numerals), followed by the number of the chapter and the page (in Arabic numbers). The letters a, b, and c shall serve, according to tradition, to differentiate between the editions of 1580 (a), 1588 (b) as well as the manuscript additions (c). Montaigne wrote in his personal copy of the 1588 edition (the famous “Bordeaux copy”) a text which differs from that of Marie de Gournay in the edition she procured in 1595.

2. The first version of this text appeared on July 14, 1993 in Paris, for the colloquium, “Readings of Montaigne,” organized by UNESCO with the help of the Ecoles normales supérieures.

3. Today we prefer to speak of the “encounter” between the two worlds, or even the “invasion” of the “new” by the “old.” Cf. the very controversial work by James

Axtell, *Beyond 1492. Encounters in Colonial North America* (Oxford University Press, 1992) and the article by Pauline Maier, "Have We Lost our Bearings or Found Them?", *The New York Times Book Review*, (September 13, 1992, pp. 15–18). We should add the expulsion of the Jews from Spain to the other two commemorations, which is perhaps not without importance here, given Montaigne's maternal parentage.

4. The bibliography is too long to be given here in detail. We refer the reader to one of the most recent studies of this subject, notably the works of Marcel Bataillon, Gérard Defaux, Marcel Gutwirth, Raymond Lebégue, Gérard Nakam, Jean-Claude Margolin, and André Tournon; Frank Lestringant, "l'Amérique des 'Coches,' fille du Brésil des 'Cannibals': Montaigne à la rencontre de deux traditions historiques" ("The America of 'Coches,' daughter of the Brazil of 'Cannibals': Montaigne's encounter with two historical traditions") in *Montaigne et l'Histoire*, edited by Claude-Gilbert Dubois, Paris: Klincksieck, 1991, p. 143–160.

5. To simplify, let us remember that the chapter "Des Cannibales" I:31 ("Of Cannibals") draws especially from André Thevet, *Les Singularitez de la France antarctique*, 1557, and from Jean de Léry, *Histoire d'un voyage fait en la terre du Bresil*, 1578, and Urbain Chauveton, translator and commentator of Girolamo Benzoni, *Histoire nouvelle du Nouveau Monde*, 1579. On the other hand, in the later chapter, "Des Coches," III: 6 ("Of Coaches"), Montaigne is surely drawing from the *Historia general de las Indias* by Francisco López de Gómara, 1552, in the French translation by Martin Fumée, 1569, as well as, in all probability, the *Brevisima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, 1552, by Bartolomé de Las Casas, Spanish champion of the Indians, in the translation by Jacques de Migrode, 1579. Cf. Pierre Villey, *Les Livres d'histoire moderne utilisés par Montaigne. Contribution à l'étude des sources de Montaigne*, Paris, Hachette, 1908, p. 76–77, which is completed by the study by Juan Durán Luzio, "Les Casas y Montaigne: escritura y lectura del Neuvo Mundo," *Montaigne Studies* I, nov. 1989, pp. 88–106.

6. For a recent treatment of this sort see Edgar Montiel, "Amérique-Europe: Le miroir de l'altérité," *Diogenes* 159, July-September 1992, p. 31.

7. For an illuminating study of Las Casas's possible influence on Montaigne, see Juan Durán Luzio, op. cit., *ibid*.

8. See note 2. Montaigne's passage cited here draws from *l'Histoire générale des Indes de Gómara*, in the French translation by Fumée, II, 7.

9. Cf. Juan Durán Luzio, op. cit., p. 104.

10. *De Rerum natura*, I,v.102. This line is cited in an addition to the "Defence of Raymond Sebond" (II, 12, 521c).

11. This passage draws closely from Gómara, probably from the Italian translation, *Istoria di don Fernando Cortez*, Venice, 1576, pp. 66, 73, and 85.

12. See the already old but ever illuminating thoughts of Richard Sayce on this subject, in his work *The Essays of Montaigne, A Critical Exploration*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972, pp. 194–197, 216–7. See as well a small work published by UNESCO, in which Ruggiero Romano regroups all the passages in the *Essays* dealing with America: *Montaigne: De America*, Paris, Ed. Utz, 1991, pp. 18–19. For a diachronic study of this issue, see the already cited study by Edgar Montiel, pp. 28–40.

13. *Nous et les autres. La réflexion française sur la diversité humaine*. Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 1989, pp. 60–61.

14. This is precisely what Gérard Defaux demonstrates in his article entitled "Un Cannibale en haut de chausses: Montaigne, la différence et la logique de l'identité," *Modern Language Notes* 97, may 1982, pp. 919–957, reprinted in *Marot, Rabelais, Montaigne: l'écriture comme présence*, Paris, Geneva: Champion-Slatkine, 1987, pp. 145–177.

15. As Edwin M. Duval indicates, "Drawing on his own pluralistic background, he is able [. . .] to consider a foreign culture on its own terms, and to judge his

own culture from the point of view of another". "Lessons of the New World: Design and Meaning in Montaigne's 'Des Cannibales' and 'Des Coches'," *Yale French Studies* 64, 1983, p. 95.

16. For a bibliography of Münster, see Karl Heinz Burmeister, *Sebastian Münster. Eine Bibliographie*, Wiesbaden: Guido Pressler, 1964. The first edition of the *Cosmographie* in French dates back to 1552. The sixth edition, which dates from 1575, was reprinted (or precisely, "rescratched") by François de Belleforest. For more on the latter, see the thesis by Michel Simonin, *Vivre de sa plume au XVIème siècle. La carrière de François de Belleforest*, Geneva: Droz, 1992.

17. Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1568 [Rés. Fol. Z Payen 494]. Montaigne's signature is on the bottom of the frontespiece of this copy. See Pierre Villey, *Les Sources et l'Evolution des Essais de Montaigne*, Paris: Hachette, 1908, t.I, p. 180–181. Frank Lestringant has added useful details on this subject in "Montaigne topographe et la description de l'Italie," *Montaigne e l'Italia* [Atti del congresso internazionale di studi di Milano-Lecco, 23–30 Oct. 1988] Geneva: Slatkine, 1991, p. 640, n. 30.

18. *Journal de voyage*, edited by F. Rigolot, Paris: P.U.F., 1992, p. 32.

19. This is not to say that Montaigne wished to imitate the content and the style in his *Journal de Voyage* (Travel Diary). On the contrary! But he must have recognized its usefulness – even if, as F. Lestringant believes, the underlinings and annotations in the margin of the signed copy are not in his hand. Cf. "Montaigne topographe . . ." op.cit., p. 640–641, n.30.

20. Our position is quite different from that of F. Lestringant in his work, *André Thevet, cosmographe des derniers Valois*, Geneva: Droz, 1991, chapter III, "Entre Allemagne et Angleterre," p. 65sq.

21. Here and from now on we shall give the page number of this work in parentheses after each citation. We have added italics better to indicate the parallel between Spaniards and Cannibals.

22. See the book by Alfred Glauser on this subject, *Montaigne paradoxal*, Paris: Nizet 1972.

23. This idea has come up several times in scholarly criticism. See the recent article by Andrée Comparot, "De l'ouverture à l'humanisme à la responsabilité politique: l'apparementement maternel de Montaigne," in *Le Lecteur, l'auteur et l'écrivain: Montaigne 1492–1592–1992*, edited by Ilana Zinguer, Paris: Champion, 1993, pp. 104–118.

24. On this point, see Géralde Nakam, "Ibériques de Montaigne. Reflets et images de la péninsule ibérique dans les *Essais*," in *Montaigne l'Europe* [Actes du colloque international de Bordeaux, 1992], collected and introduced by Claude-Gilbert Dubois, Mont-de-Marsan, Editions Interuniversitaires, 1992, pp. 153–175.

25. The italics are ours.

26. On this matter see, among others, Thevet, Léry, and Chauveton on "Of Cannibals;" Martin Fumée and Jacques de Migrode on "Of Coaches." See above, note 5.

27. This phrase is used by Jean-Antoine de Baïf to evoke his feeling of disorientation in *Mimes*, Book I,V,33.