

A GEOGRAPHY OF HARD TIMES



Narratives
about Travel to
South America,
1780–1849



ÁNGELA PÉREZ-MEJÍA
Translated by Dick Cluster

A Geography of Hard Times

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Editors

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*Narratives about Travel to
South America, 1780–1849*

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Introduction

I, like all men, have found myself living in hard times.

—J. L. Borges

HISTORY BETWEEN TWO MAPS

THE HARD TIMES that are the focus of this study open, symbolically, with the crucial year 1780, which marked the beginning of the end of the colonial period for the countries of South America. The event that justifies singling this particular year out of a century chock-full of discontent within the Spanish vicerealties¹ is, of course, the murder in Cuzco's central plaza of José Gabriel Túpac Amaru Inca, his wife Micaela Bastidas, their sons Francisco and Hipolito, and several cousins, principal lieutenants of his rebellion, and other men and women who followed him.² Before he suffered being drawn and quartered, his body pulled apart by horses and his bodily remnants scattered throughout the territory of Cuzco, Túpac Amaru's tongue was cut out. His provocative power of speech, which had succeeded in uniting Peru's diverse ethnic groups against the government, would forever be quieted. Yet this descendant of the Incas knew how to write the Spanish tongue, and among his possessions was found a final proclamation which would later be viewed as his manifesto, which begins as follows:

Don José I by the grace of God, Inca, King of Perú, Santa Fé, Quito, Chile, Buenos Aires, and the continents of the Southern seas, Duke of La Superlativa, Lord of the [rivers] César and Amazon, with dominion over the Gran Patití, matchless Commissary and Distributor of divine mercy with respect to treasuries, et cetera. As it has been agreed in my council, in careful consideration on repeated occasions, some secret and some public, that the Kings of Castile have for nearly three centuries usurped the throne and dominion of my people, burdening my vassals with unbearable tributes, taxes, moneys, fees, duties upon goods, duties upon sales, taxes of fifths, taxes of tenths, viceroys, courts . . . (Translated from Lewin, 153)

This document of rebellion lends itself well to analysis as testimony to the indigenous mentality toward the end of the colonial period.³ Here I want to point out only two of its salient aspects. The first is that Túpac Amaru's manifesto is, in my opinion, a map in which the descendant of the Incas attempts a reconstruction of his ancestors' empire from its center, Cuzco, while using names that would be recognizable to the Spanish crown. Demarcating the territory, he declares himself, by the grace of God, not only Inca but "King of Perú, Santa Fé, Quito, Chile, Buenos Aires, and the continents of the Southern seas, Duke of La Superlativa, Lord of the César and the Amazon, with dominion over the Gran Patití." The objective of this "oral map" is the generation of a geographic discourse of territorial re-appropriation which, although it has little to do with the cartography of South America that we would recognize, recalls the *Mapa Mundi* sketched by Guamán Poma de Ayala, which embodied not only an Inca geography but a system of knowledge of time and space anterior to European cartography.⁴

On another level, a fundamental objective of this territorial manifesto is to identify the sites where the Spanish crown collected all of its taxes, "burdening my vassals with unbearable tributes. . . ." This map, like cartography in general, is intended to clarify borders so as to determine tributes and specify ownership of lands.⁵ Although Túpac Amaru's manifesto did not have the desired effects and soon became utopian, in its moment it was feared by the Spanish crown. It served as a revolutionary battle cry for the communards of all the territory from Argentina to Nueva Granada.

The closing date of this study is symbolic as well. In 1849, the first official maps of all the provinces of Venezuela and Colombia were commissioned. They were to be prepared by the Italian cartographer Agustín Codazzi who had fought as a mercenary officer in the revolutionary armies alongside Luis Aury. These innumerable military campaigns across the geography of the South, together with Humboldt's studies, allowed Codazzi to become the official cartographer of the republics of Gran Colombia. Like Túpac Amaru's map, Codazzi's also had a political goal, that of marking the limits of the countries and organizing the collection of taxes. But his were not maps with an ethnic center like that of the Inca. They were drawn within the symbolic system for space and time that had been developed by the European Enlightenment.⁶ The graphemes of the territory had changed, new borders had been drawn, and the new cartography spoke of seven republics with constitutional governments in the territory that had previously belonged to the Viceroyalties of Nueva Granada, Peru, and La Plata—and which once, before, had been the Inca Empire.

By 1820 all of these lands had declared their independence from Spain, but they were still to suffer through a powerful reconquest in Peru, civil wars in the territories of Alto Perú, confrontations in the interior of what had been Nueva Granada, and the emergence of a border war between Peru and

Chile. Battles for the freedom of slaves were fought in all of these countries, and indigenous uprisings continued in the rural areas. The hard times had not ended. The new centers of power, the South American capitals, were restructured amidst internal conflicts over new forms of government. Europe, meanwhile, watched this American process with interest because here the new forms of republics were being put to the test, and here too enormous mercantile possibilities were opening up.

In the interval between these two symbolic dates—an interval in which, from this point of view, the geography of the Andes was being reorganized—a wave of European voyagers arrived in South America, constituting what has come to be called “the discovery of America by the travelers”:

What we call “the discovery of America by the travelers” refers to a period in which the spirit of curiosity turned toward the New World as a result of the great scientific expeditions undertaken in the eighteenth century and also of the struggles for emancipation in the former Spanish possessions in the early nineteenth century which gave rise to the newly sovereign states. (Medina, viii)

Among them were the four travelers with whom this study is concerned. José Celestino Mutis, a Spanish botanist and doctor, had arrived in Nueva Granada in 1760; in 1782, in the middle of the communitarian revolts, he launched his great enterprise, the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada. Alexander von Humboldt, a German geographer, visited South America with Aimé Bonpland between 1799 and 1804; in 1816 he published the famous atlases of the lands of America which would serve as a basic geographic source for years to come. Maria Graham, a British writer, embarked for Chile to accompany her British naval officer husband, and traveled through that country between 1822 and 1823 while a struggle for control of its government was taking place. Flora Tristán, a Frenchwoman whose father was Peruvian, arrived in Peru in 1833 in flight from her husband and in search of an inheritance; the Peru that received her had also risen in arms, with her family in the center of local civil conflicts.

All of these voyagers kept travel diaries which were later published, and all of their books are cited, in the historiographies of the countries they visited,⁷ as contributions to the knowledge of the territory. All of these travelers drew a geography,⁸ in the broadest sense of the word, and contributed to completing a map of the new Latin American nations.

My interest in studying this specific moment in the production of a South American travel literature, and in studying these four travelers in particular, proceeds from a certainty that this period between centuries constitutes a hybrid moment of colonial transition. It is well worthwhile to pause there and search for clues that will allow us to read the development of later

discourses in postcolonial situations.⁹ South America emerged as a postcolonial reality with the collapse of the Spanish empire while England and France were still cementing their imperial expansion in Asia and Africa. Also, the discourse that justified imperial enterprises was undergoing a period of change. If the Spanish empire had launched its expansion under arguments of ecclesiastic providence, and the eighteenth century had found in the sciences a new justification for imperial projects, now transnational economic enterprises became the medium of colonial expansion. Although none of these voyagers was sent by the crown of his or her country, and what unites them is something else, still various tendencies of the European powers may be found in their ideological baggage. Humboldt emerged from the German and French Enlightenment. Mutis came from imperial Spain, the weakened colossus which the emerging powers needed to destroy. The English Graham, an aristocrat from a military family, brought the eyes of commerce and investment. The French Tristán, illegitimate and a fugitive, navigated between the ideas of the French Revolution and those of utopian socialism. As has already been said, these four individuals took on their voyages as personal endeavors: Mutis working as a doctor, Humboldt and Graham enjoying sizable inheritances, and Tristán with funds from her Peruvian uncle. This fact guarantees, in a way, a certain loyalty to subjectivity that cannot be found in travels subsidized either by the Spanish crown or by the Latin American governments themselves, nor in the many strictly commercial missions of this era.

My selection also has a geographic criterion. Together, the four voyages covered the Andes from their northern traces in Venezuela to the southern heights of Chile and Arequipa: nearly the entire mythic map of Túpac Amaru. All told, they contributed to the construction of a complex map of those Andes in which many levels of physical and social geography may be read. Humboldt drew in the rivers, measured the mountains, established distances and populations. That is to say, he made the sketch. Mutis contributed the classification of flowers and insects to be located on this map; he drew in the details of a world hidden below the leaves of plants and revealed the secret properties of their sap. Tristán observed the inhabitants of the urban centers and constructed an interior geography, laying out the cartography of the cupboards, cataloguing the wardrobes, and constructing a map of the social tensions as well. Graham dissected the domestic customs, the table manners, the particularities of the commerce, and she depicted the hidden difficulties and intrigues of the new governing class. The two male travelers—"the scholar" and "the baron"—thus represent the voyage of the exact sciences, and the two female ones—"the pariah" and "the white child of the East"—that of the social sciences. Therefore, the study is divided into two parts as well, two parts that also correspond to the years immediately before the declarations of independence (1780–1810) and those immediately after (1820–1849).

ITINERARY OF A READING

Walter Mignolo (*The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*, 1995) has examined the tension between the two bodies of study of postcolonial reflections and found in it an explanation of his position as a critic. While the focus of researchers who study the ex-British colonies is, for obvious reasons, the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, those researchers interested in the Spanish empire concentrate on the sixteenth and seventeenth. Mignolo argues that the legacy of the Spanish empire in America is what connects the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with the present. He argues that the multilingual and multicultural reality of colonial Mesoamerica and the Andes is comparable to Latino realities in the contemporary United States. His interest in studying this connection explains why and how he, as a postcolonial theorist, studies the legacy of the Spanish empire.

My interest in studying the eighteenth-to-nineteenth-century moment of transition between colonial powers and between their justificatory rhetorics also stems from a desire to relate the object of study to a contemporary situation of travel and immigration. I seek to relate two postcolonial situations of hybrid character that modify the subjectivity of those who try to narrate their experience of diverse geographies. I am concerned with moments of transition just as I am with hybrid positions of reading, what Gloria Anzaldúa calls "Borderlands" (*Borderlands: The New Mestiza/La Frontera*, 1987), which are privileged locations of analysis that permit one to live in an interstice between two worlds. The texts that occupy me were produced on a border between eras and between discourses, and I read them with attention to this situation. In spite of these narratives having been written by travelers from the imperial centers, the transitional moment in the colonies generated a special situation for the travelers. Each of them, in his or her own way, experienced a personal transformation which became embedded in his or her geographical discourse.

My research began with the sole intention of seeing how the travelers had represented South American geography in the hard times of the Independence period. During my process of reading, however, the travel diaries showed themselves to be narratives governed by the subjectivity of their narrators (the idea comes from Porter and his book *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing*, 1991), for whom the American experience represented a crucial moment which determined "the writing situation."¹⁰ The reading I will present is thus the result of both goals: to analyze the representation of South America offered by the narratives, illustrations, and maps produced during these four voyages, and to try to puzzle out the effect that the South America of those hard times had on the subjectivity of the narrators, and how the situation of the territory they visited shaped the narrators' own self-representation in the texts.

My interest in reading both of these aspects stems from a need to understand travel narratives from two theoretical points of view. The writing of a travel narrative provides a privileged space for exploring the established relations, in this case, between Europe and the rest of the world. These narratives are written as objective documents, carriers of knowledge about the place, yet they also have a first-person narrator through whose subjectivity the writing is constructed.¹¹ Keeping this in mind, it is necessary to observe the factors that compromise the texts at an ideological level: the origins of the traveler, the purpose of the trip, the concrete conditions of international politics, and the ideological baggage. All these factors are present in the telling of the traveling. They are woven into the descriptions of landscape, events, and experiences which the traveler offers in his or her capacity as a witness who has established a pact of truth with his or her reader. It is not to be marveled at, then, that critics of colonial discourse have found travel literature to be a genre midway between fiction and document, a genre that offers a privileged space for them to apply their tools.

My reading is aligned with the possibility suggested by Homi K. Bhabha (1994) about the manner in which the colonized subject subverts the imperial language, generating parody or criticism of the imposed model. This approach offers an alternative to the interpretation that views the colonial situation as an imposition that closes off any chance of the generation of a discourse expressing the subaltern group. The novelty of the present reading lies in the fact that I seek to analyze geographic texts as a liminal territory in which it is possible to interpret the presence of the "other." The "other" begins as the object of study yet manages to leave its mark as a producer of knowledge or as a transformative agent of the traveler's reality. As will be seen, however, I am not trying to ignore the fact that the writers of these narratives were bearers of an ethnocentric vision of the world. Nor do I attempt to minimize the consequences that this type of vision has had in the postcolonial Latin American reality.

In undertaking the reading of these texts as palimpsests (Rabasa, 1993) in which to decipher a process of transformation of each narrator's subjectivity, my starting points have been studies such as Susan Morgan's *Place Matters* (1996), which demonstrates how the place visited has a substantial influence on the narrator and the text. Following Sara Mills (*Discourse of Differences*, 1991),¹² Mary Louise Pratt (*Imperial Eyes*, 1992), and Alison Blunt (*Writing Women and Space*, 1994), I share the idea that gender is determinant in the construction of rhetorical strategies, and, along with Porter, that the desire of the traveler modifies the geography generated in the text.

My analysis of these four travelers further relies on the conception that the "other" in the relation of difference established during colonial transitions plays an active role in the process of production of knowledge. This "other" not only serves as a paradigm but also can modify the subjectivity of the narrator/traveler.

The reading map for this study is easy to follow. Both sections, “Voyage of the Exact Sciences” and “Voyage of the Social Sciences,” are preceded by introductions that locate the travel diaries within the tradition of travel literature dedicated to both modalities, and that offer an interpretation of what these trajectories have represented in the formation of the Latin American independence rhetoric. The four chapters, each devoted to one of the four travelers, are textual analyses that include readings of maps and illustrations along with interpretation of the autobiographical representation of the narrators. For each of the travelers, the hard times lived in South America became an essential reference point. Their travel narratives became the interlocutor of what that experience meant to their destinies and destinations. Mutis never found the road home, while Humboldt longed until his death for the impossible return to the New World. Tristán became a pariah while in Peru, and Graham transformed the output of her pen thanks to her reflection as a foreigner in indomitable lands.

The geography the reader will find in these pages is an exploration of both the physical territory and the interior world of the travelers. The voyage which this reading has represented is, like all voyages, the history of a transformation by way of a journey through hard times.

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PART I

THE SCHOLAR AND THE BARON:
VOYAGE OF THE EXACT SCIENCES

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Introduction to Part I

AMONG THE IMAGES of the medieval epoch in Europe, that of the traveler Marco Polo stands out unmistakably: his encounter with the Orient, his triumphal return full of stories of walls and khans, his baggage replete with spices and silks that would change the tastes and desires of his continent. To the same extent, or perhaps even more brilliantly, the image of Columbus crystalized in the Renaissance. The admiral of the ocean sea stepping from his caravel, bearing ashore the standard of the Spanish kings, greeting the naked and generous natives who would offer him gold to carry back to Europe—this image too would upset the desires of the Old Continent in an unforeseeable way. Along the same lines, in a style somewhat more measured but no less effective, the Age of Reason brought light to the Occident by way of its scientific travelers loaded down with compasses, telescopes, sextants, the revolutionary ideas of Newton and the great mathematicians. These travelers toured the world to measure, map, and classify it. The “scholar” José Celestino Mutis (Cádiz 1732–Santa Fe de Bogotá 1808) and the “baron” Alexander von Humboldt (Berlin 1769–Berlin 1859) were two adventurers of this type. They arrived in America with the object of advancing scientific knowledge so as to complete a totalizing vision of the globe.

Mutis and Humboldt are in the line of travelers to whom science and experimentation (in the manner in which these began to be seen during the eighteenth century) provided the elements with which to change both the meaning of travel and its literary representation. This period generated a model of the traveler as man of letters. It assigned to travel writing the function of scientific observation. As Dennis Porter explains in his book *Haunted Journeys: Desire and Transgression in European Travel Writing*, Rousseau in his *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755) had called for a new type of voyager: the philosopher. Before, there had been only merchants, missionaries, conquerors, and soldiers. None of them, according to Rousseau, possessed the capacity for observation. Diderot likewise judged traveling to be an indispensable part of the education of the enlightened European man. Porter analyzes the turn taken by travel writing during this

era, which marks a key juncture for our reading of travel writing in general. The Enlightenment philosophers opened a space for the theorization of the travel text. They questioned the profile of the traveler, thus generating a critical discourse about the written expression of the voyage. Now it was not merely the material, ecclesiastical, or territorial triumphs that mattered; now the form of text produced by the voyage gathered weight.¹ The scientific traveler had the obligation to give a “written” image of the visited territory, one that contributed to European imperial development as much as Oriental silks and New World gold had done. This image had to be scientific and objective, exactly as was fit for the enlightened man.

This new responsibility, the traveler as producer of knowledge, offers us a guideline for reading the subjectivity of the narrator of this type of voyage: the enlightened traveler who evaluates the reality he visits in terms of European science and compares it with previously existing knowledge about the visited place. The traveler’s subjectivity resulted from a scientific desire to define lands not yet deciphered by European science. This clear conception of the function and desire of the scientific traveler that was generated by the Enlightenment determined the subjectivity of this traveler/narrator in terms of a superiority conferred by his knowledge of the nature and inhabitants of the still-unknown lands. He stands out for his knowledge of “the other”: an object of study and of travel writing. Therefore, it is appropriate to analyze these texts not just as documents that contain scientific information but also as discourses whose narrator develops a subjectivity that allows us room for interpretation beyond the scientific data.

Contemporary criticism of colonial discourse has developed distinct analyses of how the texts of the eighteenth-century scientific travelers contributed to the formation of a discourse of postcolonial dependencies. Following the classificatory impulse of Linnaeus, who opened an unexpected chapter of science with the publication of *Systema Naturae* (System of Nature) in 1735, these travelers saw the world as a *tabula rasa* on which the enlightened scientists had to codify nature.² Some of the texts of enlightened voyages became part of a series of key events in the formation of a modern European ideology. These include Linnaeus’s system of classification, the French La Condamine expedition (1735), which went to Peru with the intention of settling the dispute between Cartesians and Newtonians about the shape of the earth, the voyage of Captain James Cook (1728–1779), and the complete mapping of Oceania, which rounded out the picture of the continents. These projects constituted the finale of the voyages of discovery. They ushered in the era of voyages to the geographical interior, and therefore of voyages of botany, zoology, and ethnography.³

The great question of the epoch of the Enlightenment was, thus, Nature—the great unknown. In this moment of privileging of reason, of faith in the power of scientific experiment, and of vehement support for classifica-

tory observation, the enlightened traveler became an irreplaceable element in the acquisition of knowledge about this universe awaiting discovery. Within the complex political, cultural, philosophical, and scientific fabric that constituted the Enlightenment, it is possible to find, as a constant, a certain expression that seems to sum it all up: Nature. Mutis's biographer summarizes the motivations of the epoch in this way:

Making human knowledge into an objective instrument, it was expected, would make it possible to establish the real and true image that during so long a time had dissolved under the influence of so much theology and so many abuses. . . . This is the indisputable triumph of Buffon and his new discourse. This is the tired return to the garden of the impassioned Voltaire. It is the question hurled by Grimm at other, more traditional efforts and discourses: Enough gibberish! What is nature? (Hernández de Alba, *Quinas Amargas: El sabio Mutis y la discusión naturalista del siglo XVIII*, 83–84)

America, Africa, and the Orient were unknown territories for the scientific knowledge of the Occident. In the Enlightenment mindset they were equivalent to a genuine example of "Nature." The attempts to answer that great question about nature in America gave rise to furious disputes which marked the entire eighteenth century and definitively influenced the development of the sciences.⁴ The conflict revolved around the determination of whether the nature found in the New Continent was inferior to that of other continents or not. The enlightened travelers were the gatherers of material that fed both sides of this polemic. It is important to understand the terms of the argument, because this was precisely the referent under which Humboldt and Mutis undertook their voyages to America.

Antonello Gerbi presents an analysis of this polemic in his book *The Dispute of the New World* (1973). According to Gerbi, the thesis of the weakness of New World nature can be traced back to Buffon, who (based in the system of Linnaeus but evading its scientific implications) was the first to hold that the animals of the New World were inferior. The argument was constructed upon the fact that there were no large mammals such as lions, giraffes, or elephants. Instead there was a super-population of insects of an uncommon size. The argument also cited the hostility of the natural environment, the supposed impotence of the natives, the humidity, and the abundance of water and the above-mentioned insects. As a result, this current of thought presented a vision of the indigenous Americans as inferior and impotent human beings, incapable of the sensibility of Europeans. David Hume would later define tropical people as "indolent." Actually, it was only the tropical man who was described in these terms, with his inferiority based upon his sexual ineptitude. The native women, whom the scientific discourse did not deign to discuss, were covered by an opposite myth that had been growing since the

sixteenth century: that of their unsatisfied sexual voracity. On the other hand, older geographic traditions also lingered on, seeing the American continent as a virgin woman replete with possible treasures (Tiffany, *The Wild Woman*, 1985).

The implications of a scientific justification of the supposed human hierarchies grew into a theoretical approach whose consequences are still felt today. As Gerbi summarizes:

With Buffon "Europeocentrism" becomes firmly established in the new science of living nature. And it is not mere coincidence that this should have happened precisely when the idea of Europe was becoming more fully worked out, more tangible, more forceful, nor is it insignificant that just as civil and political Europe was then defined by contrasting it to Asia and Africa, physical Europe should be closing ranks with the other continents of the Old World to present a bold and united front to the American World. (Gerbi, 32)

Travelers such as Humboldt and Mutis, both adherents to the school of Linnaeus and opponents of Buffon, attempted something like a defense of American nature. Their defense was based on the supposition that planetary nature was an interdependent system susceptible to being classified, and not a hierarchy of more or less imperfect creatures. Hence the importance of Linnaeus's system of classification, which offered the scientific possibility of organizing nature and classifying it in such a way that it could be knowable by the human mind. The organization of the earth's creatures was now an affair of the human mind and not of Noah's caprices. Humboldt, and in particular his crowning book *Kosmos*, represented the next definitive step in this relay race toward the creation of contemporary science, whose culmination would be Darwin and his theory of the evolution of species. For the scientists opposed to Buffon, it was absolutely indispensable to demonstrate that nature in the tropics belonged to the planetary system, not on an inferior level but as a constituted and constituting part, which Humboldt did in fact demonstrate. The immediate objective of these travelers was the collection of the necessary information to advance their projects showing nature to be classifiable. The most essential part of their enterprise, therefore, was measuring and quantifying.

The primordial equipment of the eighteenth-century scientific traveler was an absolute belief in being able to learn the true essence of nature. The tools of the trade were looking, gathering, and naming. Of course, it was also necessary to bring the barometers, compasses, drawing instruments, and astrolabes. Curiously, the majority of these instruments had been brought to Europe centuries earlier by travelers returning from the Orient, and the Enlightenment travelers carried them now as part of their cultural patrimony

and as tools for their new transoceanic projects. This was the arsenal that replaced the arms and armor of the sixteenth-century conquistadors, taking to a sea threatened by pirates and corsairs. The new promise represented by knowledge also managed to break through old international borders.⁵ Nature became the patrimony of knowledge, and so England, Germany, France, and Holland disputed it with new soldiers armed with pens and plant collections. Spain feared them, but could do little.⁶ The territory of America had become, along with Africa and Australia, the location *par excellence* of nature, and it was necessary to discuss this location in order to shape an idea of the cosmos.⁷

As Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* points out, the writings of the naturalists contributed to an ideological reinvention of America which took place on both sides of the Atlantic during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Darwin attributed his formation to *Kosmos*, Humboldt dedicated his first botanical treatise to Mutis, and Bolívar thanked the Baron for having pulled America from its ignorance and painted it in its true beauty. In this chain of famous men lies a coded history in which it is possible to read the levels of thinking generated in America during that epoch and, still more interesting, to see what role America played in the production of this chain of knowledge. The two links chosen for this study, the baron Humboldt and the scholar Mutis, are two travel narrators whose subjectivities allow us to observe a process in which the American reality left an enormous mark. At the same time, through their texts we can exemplify a key moment in the development of the postcolonial relations between Latin America and Europe that would later be established.

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Mutis, or The Trap of *Mutisia Clematis*

The malady called America is an affliction that attacks certain inhabitants of the Old World. It presents as a longing to stretch beyond the ocean and beyond what is known, to reach a New World: an ambiguous desire, in fact.

—Giorgio Antei, *Mal de América:
Las obras y los días de Agustín Codazzi, 1793–1859*

I saw that I had to free myself of the images which up till then had announced the things I was seeking: only then would I succeed in understanding the language of Hypatia.

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

MANY PAINTINGS and sculptures memorialize José Celestino Mutis. He spent twenty-two years surrounded by painters drawing the flora of Nueva Granada, and he did not live in such company in vain. These painters immortalized him too on canvas. He now presides over the halls and chambers of museums and planetariums, universities and governments, to such an extent that his image ought to be immediately recognizable to Colombians at least. One particularly common portrait adorned my third-grade natural sciences book: the painting of an old man's head and torso suspended above a marble pedestal which itself was surrounded by instruments of measurement and books of botanical notes. A vine that seemed to emerge from one of these books climbed the base of the bust and delicately began to circle around the man. Underneath was written, "Mutis: scholar and precursor of Independence" (Figure 1.1). My curiosity could not help but be aroused by this founding father with neither weapon nor uniform, gently touched by a flower. Reading the reports of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom



FIGURE 1.1 “José Celestino Mutis”

Villegas, Oil on Canvas, Attributed to Salvador Rizo 118 x104 cm, Original in Museo Veinte de Julio. Taken from Villegas, *Mutis y la Real Expedición Botánica del Nuevo Reyno de Granada*, 1992.

of Granada (Villegas 1992) satisfied my curiosity at last. The plant is called *Mutisia clematis* in honor of the scholar and was so named by none less than Linnaeus. The portrait is by Salvador Rizo, the outstanding painter among the personnel of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada of which Mutis was the promoter and the director. Rizo painted it in Santa Fe de Bogotá, in the expedition’s workshop where the innumerable collections of the plants of Nueva Granada were organized according to Linnaeus’s system. He depicted Mutis this way a few years before the botanist’s death. Mutis rests atop the marble pedestal where dead patriots are placed,

enmeshed in a plant that grows not out of the earth but out of a book. To the left is an astrolabe, to the right his treatise on quinine, and carved into the marble is a Latin inscription: “*Virtutem Factis, Naturam Scriptis Colere Docuit*” (“He taught respect for the virtue of facts and the writings of nature”). Mutis did in fact spend his final days surrounded by these items that Rizo selected for his portrait, while suffering, among many other maladies, the American one: that literary disease said to attack European travelers who dare to cross the torrid zone, which condemns them to be unable to ever return to Europe.¹

That ubiquitous painting assembles elements that are symbolic of the links I propose to make in this reading of the *Diario de observaciones científicas de José Celestino Mutis (1760–1790)* (Journal of Observations of José Celestino Mutis).² In the center is the Spanish traveler of the Enlightenment whom historiography raised onto a pedestal even before his death, converting him into a “precursor” of Nueva Granada’s independence. In the wings are the instruments used to create geography, that text about nature, and the books in which an unknown reality is classified within the new code of the West. Wrapping itself around the botanist comes the *Mutisia*, the involving, entangling nature that completely takes over the *Diario de observaciones* just as it took over the life of the historical character there portrayed. The painting thus summarizes a travel book that, like so many, is also the story of an interior journey, of a transformation provoked by the visited reality. A reading of this text from the perspective of the subjectivity, desire, and transformations that make themselves felt in the journal allows us to look at another facet of the ambiguous desire of those Europeans who contracted the malady of America. It contributes, too, to an analysis of how the texts generated by their travel fed the consciousness of national geographies and the discourses of Independence.

THE ENLIGHTENED TRAVELER

Mutis was born in Cádiz. This Atlantic port had a particular importance for the Spanish eighteenth century, which opened with the defense of empire in a sea infested by pirates and privateers, and closed on the point of the loss of the empire overseas. In between there was a redistribution of power among the countries of Europe and a variety of internal national reorganizations in which science played a central role. Spain, in its drive to redesign education, created institutions such as the College of Surgery of Cádiz. This was where Mutis studied, and where the guidelines about natural experimentation laid down by Feijóo found their greatest response among botanists.³

As a scientist, Mutis left behind a legacy of such dimensions that his work has still not been published in its entirety. He enjoyed international respect among his colleagues. He maintained correspondence with scientists in different parts, especially with Linnaeus, which allowed the two of them to

make use of each other's research and also to develop a moving friendship—all without ever having personally met. Linnaeus began this correspondence when Mutis was already in Santa Fe. In it, one can observe how, for the botanist of Upsala, Mutis was a direct emissary to that paradise which America represented for his science. In his last letter, Linnaeus says:

I hope you may return safely to Europe, as from your letters I see that you will return, richer than Croesus himself with his treasures, with your plants and the observations you have made of them. I wish it were granted to me, in this life, to see you personally at least one time, now that you are returning as from paradise. Certainly, if you should return, on your account I would dare undertake a voyage to Spain, even though such a trip is impeded by old age and a death which will not wait. (Gredilla 1982, 9)

They never met. Mutis did not return from paradise, and death did not keep Linnaeus waiting.

Humboldt and Bonpland, however, did change their travel plans so as to go to Santa Fe to meet Mutis. This was the beginning of these scientists' admiration for the man they often referred to as the most important botanist of America.⁴ Years later they dedicated their *Essai sur la Géographie des Plantes* (1805) to him, and asked:

But what is the degree of goodness of each of these species? With what virtues are they endowed and what valuation do they deserve on our part? . . . We have here some important matters whose solution depends upon the profound knowledge of the illustrious Mutis. . . . How many relationships! How many characteristics! How many rays of light essential to discerning these distinctions could be supplied by that Linnaeus of the new world! (Gredilla 1982, 119)

What is strange is that besides noting the relationship between Mutis and Linnaeus, Humboldt and Bonpland also see the New World as Mutis's "place." To them he is part of paradise and not a visitor there. Mutis is, without doubt, a European traveler within the line of those who contributed to the scientific reinvention of tropical America, but nonetheless his circumstances were unique. He came from Spain, where the Enlightenment had its particular nuances.⁵ He was not sent by the crown to do his research, like La Condamine, nor sent on a diplomatic mission, like Boussingault,⁶ nor did he travel as head of a scientific expedition, like Humboldt. Perhaps the most essential peculiarity is that he never went back to Europe to make his work known. He never felt the work was completed nor gave his text a final shape, never felt he was ready to return from paradise and tell what he had seen. His exhaustive output remained in perpetual transit between the patrimonies of Spain and Nueva Granada/Colombia, in a sort of limbo that even now is also

home to his name. After the triumph of Independence all his physical works were sent to Spain by order of the crown, but it is in Colombia that he is remembered as a founding father. His figure is some way a part of the patri-monies of both lands.⁷

Mutis departed for America in 1760 in the capacity of private physician to the viceroy Pedro Messía de la Cerda. Twenty-eight years would pass before his pleas for the crown to patronize his scientific dream would be heard. His *Diario de observaciones* begins in that same 1760, and in 1763 and 1764 he sent his first letters to the king of Spain requesting support for the undertaking of a natural history of the New Kingdom of Granada. In the letters, as part of his argument in pursuit of the money, Mutis places himself in the context of the international situation:

If other Nations which possess establishments or Colonies in America have acquired from the outset a precise knowledge of all that the soil of these Possessions yields them—as may well be gathered, especially in this century, from their handsome, well-printed histories—this must be attributed not only to the good taste of that beautiful day which for them dawned so early, but also to the ease with which such expeditions could be mounted. (Gredilla 1982, 43)

That letter to the king of Spain, an extensive document transcribed by Gredilla, is particularly important to this study because in it Mutis describes his personal project in America as a contribution to Spanish national glory and the advance of European knowledge:

[F]inding myself unexpectedly solicited to follow our Viceroy in the capacity of his physician, I resolved to leave behind projects, comforts, and whatever my permanent establishment in the Court may have proffered, because I wanted to dedicate myself wholly to the development of the Natural History of America, gloriously begun by the munificence of Señor Don Philip II. . . . The Natural History of America, for which learned Europe longs so much, is the work of a monarch like Your Majesty. (Gredilla 1982, 44–5)

He continues lauding the good it would do for Spain to put itself on a par with the other European nations, as well as making a detailed analysis of the agriculture of Nueva Granada and repeating ad infinitum that the riches of the colonies are not only mineral but agricultural.

The shores of the Marañon could supply all of Europe with stores of spices sufficient to tarnish the much-praised merits of the Orient, according to the testimony of M. de la Condamine. In the hot country and along the shores of the mighty rivers that bathe the interior of our Provinces, all of the plants that yield these spices grow in the same abundance as in the East. (Gredilla 1982, 46)

In presenting his scientific project, Mutis not only writes a history of scientific voyaging during the three centuries of the Colony, but also uses the rhetoric of many of the travel texts in which America was presented to the Spanish crown as an inexhaustible source of riches. In spite of his convincing arguments and the fact that his letter went accompanied by one from the viceroy Pedro Messía de la Cerda, the crown did not approve any funds for the expedition. Along with his heavy burden of work as a doctor, this denial was a frustration for Mutis. He had left Spain convinced that his botanical project in America would be viable thanks to the viceroy's support.

Countless and continuous obstacles spring up to interrupt my literary tasks in the area of natural history. I have barely any time to involve myself in these matters, nor can I take any comfort in my previous plans which I highly suspect to be frustrated. Since Spain I had thought to . . . investigate the Quinine, and such projects appeared well-founded in the confidence with which the Viceroy promised me that within a few days of our arrive he would assign me to this task. The silence which His Exc. has maintained with me on this point, and need for me to devote myself to preserving the health of Don Felix de la Sala, now confirm my doubts. All doors appear to be closed to the presumption that I might begin a search for any sort of solution. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 100)

At the same time as Mutis began to doubt that the viceroy would be of any use to his enterprise, local authorities started to recognize him and give him academic opportunities. In 1762 he took occupancy of the chair in mathematics in the Colegio de Rosario de Santa Fe de Bogotá, which he would continue to hold until 1766. The Colegio was the first institution in the kingdom to teach the mathematical discoveries of Newton and the physics employed in the exploitation of mines. Both sciences, Gredilla makes clear, stimulated the exploitation of natural resources in the local area.

The project of promoting a Natural History of America was becoming a personal one for Mutis. Meanwhile, he became an ordained priest in 1772, more than ten years after his arrival in America. During the following years the tenacious botanist also became a mine owner, which gave him the economic wherewithal to begin his scientific enterprise on his own account. Finally, in 1782, the then-viceroy Caballero y Góngora came upon Mutis shut up in his house in El Sapo at work on a book about the flora of Bogotá. Infuriated by the news that other scientists, foreign ones, had been granted the right to visit the colonies, this viceroy wrote to Charles III criticizing his decision which "snatched from the Spaniards the legitimate pride and glory of their discoveries" (Gredilla 1982, 139). Before receiving an answer, acting on his own authority, he named a provisional scientific commission, the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada.⁸

The expedition officially began in 1783 with several draftsmen and plant collectors who moved to Mariquita where the collection, drawing, and scientific description of thousands of botanical and animal species was done. With infinite patience Mutis recorded all the group's work and progress in his personal journal until the year 1790. At the time of his death, in 1808, the expedition's base in Santa Fe de Bogotá had become a center of astronomic, zoologic, and botanical studies, where the work group continued on in spite of the absence of its founder. Colombian historiography has always linked the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada with Independence in terms of the influence that the new sciences exercised in the formation of a creole consciousness. In addition, historical figures who would play major roles emerged from the expedition: Jorge Tadeo Lozano, a zoologist who deserted from the Spanish army to join the patriots; Francisco Antonio Zea, a scientist who fought on the patriot side; and Salvador Rizo, the painter, who fought in Bolívar's army. All three died in front of Spanish firing squads. But the most outstanding figure was the astronomer Francisco José de Caldas, Mutis's favorite disciple, founder of the *Semanario del Nuevo Reino de Granada*. The works of various members of the expedition were published in Caldas's weekly, and its pages stoked the fires of Independence too. Caldas was executed during Morillo's reconquest and pacification campaign.⁹

However, the *Diario de observaciones*, almost two thousand pages written over the course of thirty years, does not communicate the revolutionary spirit that grew up in the workshops of the expedition. The pages written during the period of the uprisings reflect the fervor of a scientist lost in his work—and then comes the absolute silence of his last eighteen years. The *Diario de observaciones* is a voluminous collection of observations in which, as this analysis will demonstrate, the narrative subject undergoes a total disintegration, ceding terrain to the representation of nature (the *Mutisia*). What at first was merely one more object of observation for the enlightened man, by the end has taken over the text and displaced the narrative subject.

SUBJECTIVITY VERSUS THE MUTISIA

Whatever genres travel narratives may belong to, all of them are testimonies that attempt to represent an unknown world with pretensions of objectivity. Yet, to one degree or another, they are always inhabited by a first-person voice of the author which makes itself the axis of the visited reality. This is one of the circumstances that make the concept of representation in travel writing so complex. Dennis Porter explains it this way:

To represent the world is a political as well as an aesthetic-cognitive activity. It is an effort both to put something alien into the words of a shared language for someone else at home and to put oneself in the other's place abroad in order to speak on its behalf. (14)

The traveler is at once representer and represented, reporter and lawmaker. Within those multiple and inevitable situations, the traveler is narrating herself or himself. The *Diario de observaciones* has a scientific objective, but in its final form it also testifies to a change in Mutis's subjectivity. At first we find him radiant with faith in the cause of European science. Little by little this certainty grows weaker, and Mutis establishes his alliances with the advancement of American knowledge and of his own personal wealth. At the end of his day, Mutis will be a silent patriarch of the exact sciences in a workshop where protest against the Spanish crown is taking root. His journal is a witness to this personal transformation and to the scientific advances he achieved, but not to what was happening around him in the workshop in Santa Fe.

The first complete edition of Mutis's journal was prepared by Guillermo Hernández de Alba. It was he who decided on the divisions into which the text is organized, taking into account the intervals in which Mutis stopped writing. The journal is divided this way: voyage from Cádiz to Madrid in 1760; voyage from Cádiz to Cartagena de Indias in 1760; voyage from Cartagena de Indias to Santa Fe de Bogotá in 1761; Journal of Observations in Santa Fe de Bogotá in 1762; and voyage from Santa Fe to Cartagena de Indias from 1763 to 1764. Between 1766 and 1782, Mutis wrote in disorganized fashion and undertook various travels within the country, about which he maintained an erratic observation journal. Between 1783 and 1790 he wrote the largest part of his journal, which corresponds to the observations of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada. One could question whether or not this part qualifies as a travel narrative, since it contains basically scientific reflections.¹⁰ But Mutis also wrote a parallel work containing his various scientific reports, which was not only much longer than the journal but also was organized in a different way and written in a different sort of language that emphasizes mathematical formulas, research results, and theoretical discussions. Therefore, it is appropriate to think that the journal, for him, continued to be his personal interlocutor.

The narrative begins with the moment in which Mutis decides to go to America as the viceroy's doctor. He is in Madrid, twenty-eight years old and already a passionate follower of botany and mathematics. He writes enthusiastically:

Today, July 28, I left Madrid—along with Don Jaime Navarro who has decided to follow me to America—at eight o'clock in the night with the López pack train. A half league from Madrid, my mule was frightened by the sound of the beads on the rosary which I was praying, and threw me to the ground. I was lucky that this shock did not yield me anything worse than a good pounding of my body. I fell to the right side, so hard that I crushed a box of tobacco I was carrying in that pocket, but I preserved the small box compass that I carried in the other. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 2)

The voyage has hardly begun, but the traveler has already presented himself as we will see him throughout the narration: an extremely meticulous observer who details even the direction of his fall, but for whom the only really important objects are his scientific instruments, which are present everywhere in his journal and his correspondence. Mutis is always asking someone to bring him, from somewhere, a very precise thermometer, or a magnifying glass, or some chemical. Upstream or downstream on the Magdalena River, he will suffer no end of difficulties with his huge baggage of instruments. We can imagine what it must have involved, in that era, to get hold of an object that was produced only in Europe. It would have had to cross seas by sailing ship and then rivers and jungles on the backs of mules or of peons before arriving at the scientific retreat of Mariquita.

It is surprising, to say the least, that the viceroy's physician, the scientist who already had in mind the great work to be carried out in America, the bold youth who was embarking on one of the most dangerous voyages of the era, should decide to begin by retelling the rather ridiculous episode of his falling from a mule. In many parts of his narrative, Mutis would go on to present himself as a weak man. During the travels of the expedition he would often complain of his tiredness, of the length and complexity of the trips, the discomforts and shortages he faced. On his first voyage to Cartagena he fell terribly ill. In a letter whose intended recipient is unknown he complained about his destiny as a martyr to science:

The mosquitos, centipedes, scorpions, snakes, spiders and other vermin taint with unspeakable bitterness the wondrous flavors which the investigator of nature finds. (Frías 1991, *Viaje a Santa Fe de José Celestino Mutis*, 206)

His body fails him in every way, and suddenly he writes, "I lack the hands to draw everything I would like" (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 207). That sharp aside written by the scientific observer could be the beginning of a certain surrender to American nature, making it a project superior to his strength. This scientific traveler does not portray himself a strong figure capable of conquering and dominating that which he visits. To a certain extent this matches the rhetoric of the enlightened voyager who places his faith not in arms, nor in strength, nor in the religion he imparts, but in his science, which often comes up short before the immensity of his project.¹¹ Those travelers with magnifying glasses in hand often trip and fall and thank heaven for the bump that saved the lens. They are butterfly hunters and flower collectors who have made nature their object of desire. As Mutis says when he takes a friend to see the tree that yields quinine:

Doctor Valenzuela, all missteps forgotten, fixed his full attention upon the trees and plants, impatient to see the Quinine alive in its native soil.

Such is a botanist's desire to see a plant, especially one so justly celebrated. The object of our desires was near, we were approaching the marsh called Pantano Goloso, where the Watercress abound. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 9)

Where Mutis sees a masculine ideal of an agile, intrepid explorer is in his plant collectors. They are what he needs but is not, an attitude in which we may also read a homosocial attitude on his part. At the death of Roque, his favorite collector, he writes:

He was a loyal worker to the end, a sufferer of hunger on the trail, tough and firm in his work, ingenious in findings and discoveries, trampling over dangers, climbing the steepest trees. He withstood the harsh rains and suns of this countryside. In a word, he was what I wanted and what I needed. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 626)

What Mutis desired in those who made up his expedition was physical strength and an ability to travel and collect. He reserved for himself the authority of enlightened traveler and of scientific knowledge. Nonetheless, the authority of the narrator of the opening text is transformed by the experience of the voyage. When Mutis arrives in Nueva Granada he has enormous confidence in his accoutrements of the European Enlightenment, but his faith in science will not remain completely loyal to him. Mutis's text is not organized around the subject who returns home to share his findings with European confreres and produces a totalizing, highly structured work that lends him scientific authority. Rather, the fragile figure who tumbles from his mule will become, at the end of his days, a grumbly but rich old man shut up inside the expedition's workshop, concerned with nothing but the closed or open petals of his plants.

To help us see this process, we can divide the text into three major parts. The first covers his departure from Spain, arrival in Cartagena, exploration of the Magdalena, first stay in Santa Fe, return to Cartagena, and retreat to El Sapó.¹² The second part begins on April 29, 1783, when Mutis departs for Mariquita with his group of painters and plant collectors to begin the work of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada, which has been approved at last by the new viceroy. This part contains endless local expeditions, descriptions of the work of the group, and endless botanical reports. The final entry is for an unspecified day of 1790; the next-to-final one, from Mariquita in 1785. The journal of thirty years of life in America closes with a phrase as inconclusive as it is enigmatic: "Day 11. The third flower was open, and has continued as before" (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 684).¹³

During his silent years, Mutis wrote a text, "La vigilia y el sueño de las plantas" (The Sleep and Waking Life of Plants), which has been excluded

from the final version of the *Diario de observaciones*, but which for purposes of this study may be considered its third part. This text, although it continues the scientific obsession already present in the second part, differs in that now there are no human characters, not even Mutis himself. The entries are limited to determining the processes of some plants that sleep and wake like humans—and to drawing these plants, in representations that often fill an entire page (Figure 1.2).

Mutis's desire for American nature is motivated at first by scientific interest, then by economic possibilities this nature represents. Finally, both of these motives seem to abandon the narrator of the text. He opts for silence. When he is first leaving Spain on his American voyage, the narrator speaks with an authority granted by his faith in science and knowledge and his great confidence that Europe must reveal American nature to the Enlightenment mind. In the third part of the text, the narrator is absent; the first person has disappeared, and the sleep and waking of the plants are all that keeps him going. Around him, in the workshop of the expedition, his young assistants, Caldas in particular, began to immerse themselves in texts that would lead them to the gallows, in which the nature that their master taught them to dissect became a patrimony capable of producing patriotic pride. That nature was now the patrimony of the enlightened creoles who could map, study, and exploit it. For his part, Mutis had decided to keep silent forever. We will examine the process that led to that silencing.

Three months after beginning his journey, Mutis wrote to an unknown reader:

My dear sir: If I had to take notes about all the extravagant ideas of the men of this country, I would not have time to jot them down. It seems incredible that, in our own time, there can be a country whose inhabitants think so wrongly. On many such occasions I can only have recourse to silence, so as not to expose myself to unbearable contradiction and conflict. . . . To listen to these people speak of some effects of nature is to pass one's time listening to the delirium of madmen. . . . Let Your Honor learn something of these people's manner of thought, and give thanks to heaven that you are not in a country where rationality is so scarce that any well-enlightened understanding is in danger. (*Viaje a Santa Fe de José Celestino Mutis*, 1991, 23)

The letter was written from Cartagena during the first year of Mutis's visit. His journal of that period also displays his disdain for the curative practices of the residents of Nueva Granada. In this first part of the text he is still faithfully including dates in his entries, describing people and places, dreaming of returning to Europe, and establishing a clear difference between an "other" and a "we." Narrating his first trip to Honda, he writes:

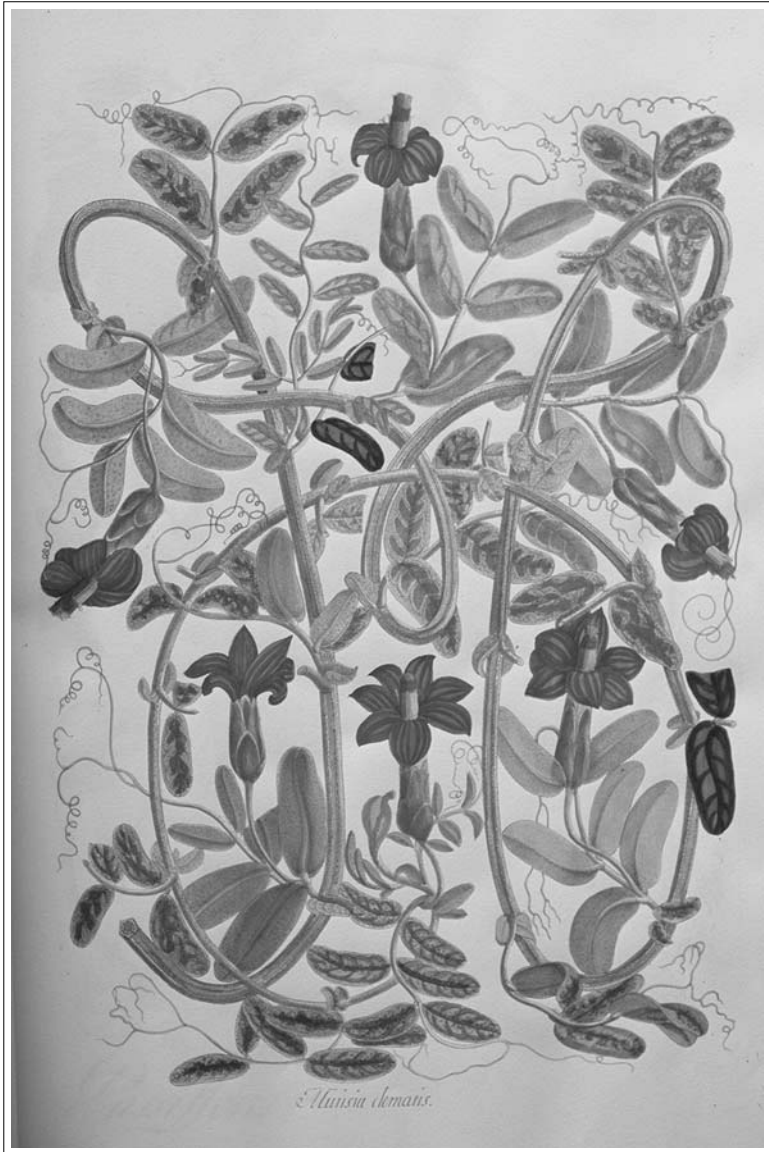


FIGURE 1.2 “Mutisia Clematis”

Painted by Salvador Rizo. Original in Real Jardín Botánico de Madrid. Taken from Villegas, *Mutis y la Real Expedición Botánica del Nuevo Reyno de Granada*, 1992.

At the moment (eleven months after having arrived) I am lacking many things that would contribute to alleviating the discomforts suffered by one away from home, but now in some manner I have adapted, until God pleases to return me from this exile and place me in my own country, surrounded by family and friends, whom I will entertain for a long while with my abundant harvest of tasty species. (*Viaje a Santa Fe de José Celestino Mutis*, 1991, 212)

He has made the decision to stay until he can assemble the “abundant harvest” which he will take back to his country, and he still places his role as a doctor above all of others. For long years his journal is full of patients and their sores, which the traveling doctor discusses insistently and repeatedly to the point of shocking the reader. He always disparages the way popular usage confronts these diseases: “[A]nother vulgarity, no less widespread, is the belief that the night air does much harm” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 88). On hearing that no plant should be taken after nightfall he exclaims, indignantly, “Who ever heard of such a thing!” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 89). On transcribing a legend about the influence of snakes on pregnant women he declares with irony: “The geniuses of America are full of such tales, naturally inclined to believe and repeat such prodigies, but rare is the one who can judge them with a critical eye” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 97). His authority in the text comes from medical science and European knowledge, which make him superior to American circumstances and install him as the judge of what he observes.

Almost imperceptibly, the narrator begins to cede space to another phenomenon, one that took some years to motivate the scientific observer, but once it did, it changed him forever. The physician turns to observing how the native people effect their cures. What has earlier produced his surest disdain soon becomes his object of study. By 1761 he is writing:

I did not omit from journal some notes relative to Medicine, just as I have heard them from these people who daily put them into practice, as well as some other loose reflections about various vulgarities that prevail in Santa Fé among all classes of people. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 87)

For months he keeps up the stories of how diseases and the bites of tropical animals are treated, and little by little local knowledge comes to occupy a good many of his pages. At first he ends every story with comments that disqualify the narrated remedy, such as, “I cannot understand such medicine” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 108), or, “a story very similar to many in this country, which deserve eternal disdain” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 94). Soon he comments, about a tale he has heard:

I was in conversation with some creole ladies, some creole men, and some newcomers, in which arose several matters worthy of my curiosity. Touching

upon the issue of the cures carried out by the blacks to protect themselves from the ill-effects of poisonous animals, Don José Rocha said that they involved pacts with the devil, while others held that some of these actions were fictions invented to impress the priest . . . all the rest concluded that there was a pact with the devil in these cures. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 96)

This time the scientist confesses, “In this report many details are lacking, especially the result for the patient” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 96). As he recognizes that he does not have all the necessary information, Mutis leaves open the extreme possibility of a pact with the devil. About a fantastic story of monstrous hens and roosters produced by a particular kind of corn, he notes, “A strange way of thinking, that does violence to the eyes, which might have seen the contrary. Nonetheless, I will remember the species so as to get to the root of this” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 101). A time will come in which the transcription of all the curative knowledge he is gaining reflects a certain avidity, and he begins to employ a gushing syntax that calls to mind the *culebreros* who still walk the streets of Colombian cities, snakes twined around their necks, hawking magical remedies from the unknown jungles of the Amazon:

That the effective remedy for snake bites is the *bejuco curare*, which is much used in the hot country, [the people] carrying it with them so as to be protected from this ill. . . . That the *coyas*, after bursting upon contact with the skin, cause death by means of the poison thus introduced. . . . That the *ayutama*, when *vicha*, or unripe, sauteed to the point where the insides are cooked, are effective against gangrene. . . . That the hairy worms called *nuches*, which grow between skin and flesh, come from the bite of the *mosquito zancudo*. That . . . (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 100)

The narrator who endlessly reports these stories appears to have lost sight of the intended reader of his report. The family that is supposed to share “the harvest of tasty species” would not even be able to understand the vocabulary in which these findings are told: *bejuco*, *vicha*, *nuches*, *zancudo*. The text is becoming introspective, Mutis his own reader, and his *Diario de observaciones* the notebook where he collects information for his personal study. Four months later, the viceroy’s physician is so persuaded by the local beliefs that he begins an unheard-of experiment as the only means to demonstrate his scientific authority:

I decided to display a *Tatacúa* snake which I had kept in water for some twenty days, so as to be able to contradict, with experience, the tenacious vulgarity believed throughout the kingdom about the resurrection of said snake upon its feeling any humidity. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 113)

The journal goes on in this way for several years. Yet such surrender to local knowledge cannot be seen as a result purely of Mutis's scientific curiosity. It also paralleled his involvement in Nueva Granada's economic production, which would make him a man of some capital. His desire to discover the mysteries of nature of America was the product of a scientific aspiration, but it was also the product of an economic interest.

In 1766 came an important event in Mutis's life: he began the mining activity¹⁴ in which he would embody, for many years, his dreams of economic prosperity. In a 1789 letter to Charles IV's physician Francisco Martínez Sobral, in which Mutis communicates that at last he will devote himself to botany as had been his longstanding dream, he would write:

I also hope to soon harvest the generous fruit of my tasks in a most-abundant Mine in Sapo, which deserves recognition for its abundance and its wonderful circumstances. (Gredilla 1992, 91)

Mutis had by then given up his work as the viceroy's physician and devoted himself to his activities as miner and professor. Using the earnings these activities provided, he managed to turn to his true vocation, botanical observation, on his own account. American nature had become not only an object of study but a source of unexpected riches. It is difficult to determine exactly how Mutis's fortune came into being. Humboldt tells us that it was substantial when he went to visit Mutis in Santa Fe in 1801, but neither Humboldt nor even Mutis's biographer tells us anything more. Still, we can say with assurance that this fortune allowed him to join Nueva Granada's high society and to modify his judgment in some ways. The country previously seen as "where rationality is so scarce" becomes, now, the soil that offers him a chance at a private enterprise and the society that has named him university professor and recognized him as a teacher.

When he decided to move to his first mine, in Montuosa Baja, he wrote:

I arrived at my intended destination of Real de la Montuosa Baja in Vetas de Pamplona. . . . My toleration of such a voluntary exile, leaving behind the comforts of the court . . . leaving behind, that is, the delights of my study-room there, the rationality and culture, such as it is, of that city, my interests; it has led me to learn about the poverty of the Indies, about miseries which are truly unbelievable, though true, and not unknown to the Europeans who live near these mines. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 179)

Geographically, what we might call an ideological displacement has occurred. Santa Fe de Bogotá, which earlier seemed to him a place in which "any well enlightened understanding is in danger," is now the site of "rationality and culture." Europe is no longer the exclusive center of knowledge. The territory

of Nueva Granada, in turn, has become more complex. Even its periphery is of scientific and economic interest to the botanist.

From 1776 until 1782, Mutis and his friend Clemente Páez would live at their new mine El Sapo (in Ibagué, near Mariquita), and devote themselves to mining and to the minute observation of nature, which we see reflected in a journal obsessed with description but now intermittent. The periodic entries of the early period are replaced by occasional descriptions of something he has seen. Now that he has again taken up the journal—after a great silence between 1762 and 1777—he has given up talking about diseases. The only beings in motion in these pages now are the ants and the bees, and the pages begin to be filled with botanical species instead.

There was another key event in Mutis's life during those years, one which, although not committed to paper in his journal, is regarded by Colombian historiography as a crucial moment. Mutis discovered the cinchona, the quinine tree, on the outskirts of Santa Fe de Bogotá. Acting on his suggestion, the Spanish government restricted its export in 1778.¹⁵ Mutis apparently kept the details of the exploitation of the cinchona secret for many years, which eventually gave rise to a dispute with José López Ruiz, another botanist who claimed to be the discoverer of the species in Nueva Granada. *Quinas Amargas* (Hernández de Alba 1991) discusses this polemic at length. What is clear, however, may be seen in passages in Mutis's report *El arcano de la quina* (The Secret of the Quinine), in which he gives complete medical information about its use as a fermented beverage. The predictable may be confirmed: it was the native people who gave Mutis all his information about the methods of preparing quinine, something they used regularly.

Although we can give assurances that we have not learned these ideas from anyone, we do try to base them upon some empirical practices, and upon other preparations which perhaps the Indians might make from this bark, which they would not have hidden so well had they not been constrained by longstanding tradition and their own experience of the infallible effects of this remedy. (*Quinas Amargas*, 226)

Mutis later gives a detailed description of the process of fermenting quinine. As he himself explains, it is exactly the same process used by the indigenous people in the preparation of their most popular drink, which was *chicha*. The result is that the scientist must criticize the judgments of European science in a tone that cannot but remind us of Las Casas:

Thus we conjecture that the Indians made greater use of the quinine, but the human weakness of regarding as barbarous the inventions of peoples lacking in the culture of our times, with the specious pretext of improving them, tends to worsen their state. Truly and in good faith we confess that there is neither any monument nor any tradition which would support

granting to our Indians, inventors of this remedy, the glory of having used the fermented quinine. . . . In these circumstances they obtained through a more abbreviated method an equivalent to the fermented quinine, whose efficacy, together with the benignity of its healthful effect, would highly commend that valuable secret which they hid for so long from their conquerors. (*Quinas Amargas*, 227)¹⁶

The commercial discovery of quinine-bearing trees had an economic impact that modified even the landscape. Between 1801 and 1806, 4,250,000 pounds of the wondrous bark were taken from the highland forests of Nueva Granada, which according to Hernández de Alba financed the last years of the vicereignty and the armies of the reconquest (*Quinas Amargas*, 242). The independence interrupted the exploitation of these trees because the patriotic armies, in their recruitment of indigenous people, took away the only workforce able to collect and identify them. "Europe suffered a quinine famine. . . . Such was its power and its indispensability that, in some messages sent to the Vatican, this became the basic theme of Colombian diplomacy and helped bring on recognition of its independence" (*Quinas Amargas*, 245). It is not clear whether this exploitation yielded Mutis economic gains, but it did represent his glory as a botanist and was the culmination of his surrender to American nature. *Mutisia*, thanks to his observations, had become exportable.¹⁷

Shortly afterward, he decided not to return to Spain. In the above-cited letter to Charles IV's doctor, he writes:

This decision answers Your Honor's questions as to my return to Spain to follow up upon those glorious ideas you have suggested about the reform of the Sciences. No, my friend, age douses the fires of youth, which Your Honor saw burning in me at that time, and my personal Christian reflections have uprooted my hopes of return. (Gredilla 1992, 92)

Quinine was, without doubt, the last treasure the Spaniards were to find in the paradise of Nueva Granada, and it was Mutis who assumed the task of uncovering its secret uses so as to make it a much-sought commodity in Europe. So perhaps it is not so arbitrary that, while in Colombia he is remembered as a teacher of science and venerated in a romantic statue girdled by nature, his image in Spain is quite different. In his country of origin, the scholar from Cádiz is barely remembered on the 2000 peseta bill while Latin American imagery has made him a romantic precursor of Independence.

THE AMBIGUITIES OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

To analyze the development of the subjectivity that the traveler constructs in the pages of his journal, it is necessary to keep in mind that at first he planned

to return to Spain with the knowledge amassed during his explorations. In that context, his retreat to the Sapo mine and his discovery of the quinine-bearing cinchona mark the culminating period of a definitive change undergone by the narrator of the *Diario de observaciones*. In America, Mutis had found glory as a botanist and a place to carry out his great natural history project. At the mine, in 1782, he would be visited by Archbishop Antonio Caballero y Góngora, then viceroy of Nueva Granada. That encounter would pull Mutis out of his scientific isolation and set into official motion the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada, now supported by the crown under special protection of the viceroy.¹⁸

In 1783, Mutis again picked up the journal he had put down some day or other in 1782, and this time the text picks up the narrative thread that had been abandoned for years:

29th day of April, 1783, Tuesday. After the many travails which, in these countries, are implied by the preparation of a voyage toward the progress of Natural History, with a much-enlarged family of comrades and servants and their corresponding volume of baggage, we set off at last for the Juan Díaz mesa [Mariquita], a site which I chose because it offers so many qualities for the rapid collection of natural products. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 3)

The concrete opportunity to launch the expedition and the absolute decision to stay are also reflected in Mutis's new sense of himself as the colleague of Nueva Granadans. Here begins a new voyage, a new text if you will, in which Mutis's comrades appear as respected and even beloved members of a conversation. The narrator allows himself deep emotions when he describes his work team: "Roque so efficient and loyal" (319). Pedro and Esteban are now "my rustic observers." Although we never know as much as their surnames, we see them coming into the work room time and time again with an intact butterfly or plant in hand for Rizo, García, or Matiz to eventually draw. Mutis indicates quite often that the work of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada was the work of a team of botanists, draftsmen, and plant collectors. His own figure does not appear as the bearer of any previous and infallible knowledge. He is now an observer who can be moved by the small discoveries of these others, telling us about them in such an intimate tone that if we did not know the context of the composition, we might be under the illusion that it was verse:

Shortly after I left my study, Pedrito entered it, and luckily he was curious and managed to see the *Butterfly* hanging upon the outside of the cocoon, with soft wings unable to fly. He called my comrade (and in this he had the foresight to choose so well prepared a witness) and observed—carefully, for the reasons already discussed—that the butterfly had only recently emerged

from its cocoon. When they came to my house they gave me the good news and I had the pleasure of seeing it, leaving it behind glass so it would die there, so as not to kill it. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 193)

The traveler in paradise who should have returned to Europe with more treasures than Croesus had now left the road home forever. Instead, he is captivated by the wings of a butterfly on some remote mesa. August 22, 1784, he writes, “My journals supply the history of my errors and disappointments” (*Diario de observaciones*, libro II: 441). In June 1785 he writes:

It is not easy to make discoveries at a single stroke, nor to verify that which you suspect. The polygamy of plants cannot be demonstrated by conjecture, only by repeated observations. The traveler cannot do so without stopping for a long time in the same place. (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 634)

Thus, travel could no longer be justified as pursuit of knowledge. What had scientific validity, now, was remaining in the same spot.

Mutis’s text “La vigilia y el sueño de las plantas” dates from this same year. His biographer regards it as a part of the *Diario de observaciones* and presents it this way:

The study we now present . . . if it might have been of some novelty at the end of the eighteenth century because it partially imitated the clock of the Flora conceived by Linnaeus in Upsala, today is completely lacking in scientific importance. (Gredilla 1992, 362)

The text consists of consecutive daily entries in which there is no observing subject, only the plants, which sleep and wake. Their anatomy is described in infinite detail and their reactions are perceived and told by the writer in a lyrical tone closer to poetry than to science.

About ten in the morning (with a clear sky and a cool wind) some flowers of the *exandras* began to wake up, displaying their corollas bit by bit (209). . . . Mid-day: Among the *exandras*, some are still fully awake and others withdrawing (300). . . . Toward dawn the *Exandras* began to stretch little by little, but without yet opening their little calyxes (301). . . . At five (the sun hidden, calm) All the calyxes completely shut. I see that lately the seeds of the *Triandras* have fully developed. It was pure illusion, therefore, to have believed they only seeded during the wakeful times. (303)

In this sensual language, in which it is not easy to recognize the traveler, José Celestino Mutis writes his final work. Really, this is direct scientific observation without the evaluative judgments that accompanied the observations of the first pages of his text. The narrator is alone before his sleeping object of

scientific desire, that American nature which he had made into discourse, and which had enveloped him and given him fame and fortune in return.

In 1791 the expedition moved at last to Santa Fe de Bogotá because Mutis fell ill. There he would work for ten more years, but he would not write any more in the notebooks that he called journals. The nation was living through the commotion of communitarian uprisings. In 1793 the crown began to question the results of the expedition, which seemed to prolong itself endlessly, and sent Don Francisco Martínez to act as supervisor. Martínez praised the work of the expedition but warned that Mutis was old and sick. In 1801, Humboldt and Bonpland came to visit. In a letter to his brother, Humboldt described his visit with the venerable old man whom he had altered his American itinerary in order to see. Of Mutis he says:

[H]e is an aged priest, venerable, of almost seventy-two years, and a rich man as well. The king provides 10,000 piasters a year for the Botanical expedition. 30 painters have worked for Mutis for fifteen years; he has from 2000 to 3000 folio-sized drawings, miniatures. After the Banks' in London, I have never seen a botanical library as large as that of Mutis. (*Cartas Americanas*, 85)

During the Bogotá years, Jorge Tadeo Lozano and Francisco José de Caldas joined the project, and the Expedition broadened to take in the field of astronomy and zoology. Part of the “family” from Mariquita had died: Roque trying to get hold of an exotic plant in Quebradaseca, and Pedro Ferná by snakebite. In 1808 Mutis died in Santa Fe, but his disciples continued his work until 1817. Then, in the face of the capture of the city by Simón Bolívar, the Spanish government decided to dismantle the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada. All of Mutis's work was sent to Spain. A good part was lost forever, according to his biographer, because of negligence on the Spanish authorities' part.

During those last difficult years of political confusion and uncertainty, Mutis did not write anything. With this silence he responded to what was gestating in his workshop, where his creole disciples took responsibility not only for continuing and broadening his work but also for including the project of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada within the rhetoric of Independence. Colombian historiography has linked the figure of Mutis with the Colombian Enlightenment and has placed the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada among the antecedents of Independence.¹⁹ Around the creole Enlightenment there grew up an enlightened elite that assumed the creole leadership in the independence wars.

Precisely in those years when the ideas of emancipation were taking shape among Mutis's students, Rizo painted the master. A few years later, underneath

a monument erected in his honor in the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario, was written: "José Celestino Mutis, teacher of free men." The connection between the nature that Mutis taught and Independence had been established. This note of a patriotic debt to the "scholar," which resonates even in the present day, was first sounded by Caldas himself. In the obituary to his teacher that he published in the *Semanario del Nuevo Reyno*, which may be considered the first biographical data on Mutis, he recognized Mutis's desire for American nature, which could not be deferred. "The silence, the peace, the forests of America, which exercised a greater attraction on his heart than the pomp of the courts of Spain" (Gredilla 1992, 182).

Nature, the *Mutisia*, had twined itself around Mutis, trapping him forever. At the same time, he had converted it into the discourse of his journal, leaving it as a legacy to his American apprentices who incorporated it into the rhetoric of liberation. The American nature he had come in search of, as an object worthy of the Enlightenment, now emerged from the pages of the book rather than from the untamed tropics. Now it did not take the form of contemptible mosquitoes and centipedes that embittered the victorious task of the enlightened martyr, but rather of a dissected text that did not need any scientific judgment to spread its wide wings in free flight. It became a butterfly with wings intact, which he left among his books so that it could die alone, so as not to kill it.

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Humboldt: The Silences and Complicities of Cartography

A map of Esmeralda should include, marked in different colored inks, all these routes, solid and liquid, evident and hidden.

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

“THE NEW DISCOVERER OF AMERICA”

ON JULY 6, 1801, Alexander von Humboldt, his comrade Aimé Bonpland, and their group of travelers reached Santa Fe de Bogotá. During their great American expedition, they had already traversed parts of Nueva Granada (in Venezuela and the Orinoco), gone on to Cuba, and returned to the viceroyalty of Nueva Granada by way of Cartagena. They then proceeded southward, ascending the Magdalena River to the capital, with the specific goal of visiting José Celestino Mutis in the workshop of his botanical expedition. In Bogotá they were welcomed with great ceremony by the viceroy of the moment, Pedro Mendinueta y Muzquiz, and by Mutis himself. The Spanish government had awarded Humboldt the jealously guarded authorization to travel freely through its colonies,¹ and in his effort to continue this alliance the scientist appeared at the palace with a gift worthy of the occasion: eight sheets of maps. These included the first map of the Magdalena, never before charted in its entirety, several maps that corrected the route of the Orinoco, and a plan of Cartagena and Santa Fe. Under the circumstances,² this was a much-desired gift.

Spain, in its attempt at economic and political restructuring of the erratic vicerealties, had discerned a hope of recovery in scientific and geographic development. In Nueva Granada, that task had been assigned to Mutis and his students: Francisco José de Caldas, Francisco Antonio Zea,

Salvador Rizo, and others. All of them were to be students of Humboldt and Bonpland during the travelers' three-month stay in Santa Fe. Shortly thereafter, in a rather paradoxical twist of fate, several of these ex-students would die before the firing squad for having defended the cause of independence. To that group of young scientists, Humboldt's cartographic knowledge proved not merely a courtly offering, but a politically useful gift.

In Humboldt's work as in Mutis's, we can read the way in which geographic knowledge became an active entity in the independence struggles the Latin American nations were experiencing. Humboldt's study, in addition to what was contained in the maps just cited, included the classification of isothermic climate zones and the censuses of all the settlements he visited. These would have concrete repercussions in the formation of the new republics. Simón Bolívar, in his famous "Letter from Jamaica" dated September 6, 1815, analyzed the situation of all of South America by offering data from various local censuses, citing Humboldt as his source (Bolívar, vol. I: 159). Humboldt's text is the first total vision of the territory through which the pro-independence and royalist armies marched and countermarched in their struggle for dominion over the colonies. The map Bolívar used in his campaign to reconquer Nueva Granada had been made possible by Humboldt. Along the Orinoco, mapped by Humboldt, Bolívar met up with José Antonio Páez, and together they won an important victory over Morillo "The Pacifier." The Orinoco was also the first territory that Bolívar declared open to commerce, in the pages of *El Correo del Orinoco*, a newspaper he founded with Francisco Antonio Zea (Bernal Medina, 75–80).

On the other hand, Humboldt's project had much wider ambitions, indeed planetary ones. A geographic representation of the cosmos required a journey to the equatorial regions of the globe.³ Humboldt wrote up this unprecedented journey in his *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent, fait en 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803 et 1804 par Alexandre de Humboldt et Aimé Bonpland, rédigé par A. de Humboldt avec un Atlas Géographique et Physique*.⁴ The German traveler spent six years in the torrid zone of America, shaping this piece that he could fit into the puzzle of the cosmos. Humboldt's voyage became the geographic representation of equatorial America, recognized and accepted in Europe and America. It gave the new continent a place in the "grammar" of world geography.⁵

As a character, Humboldt made a deep impression on South America, where he is still admired today. In the imagery of Latin America, Humboldt stands as the personal emissary of the Enlightenment. It is not surprising that Bolívar called him "the new discoverer of America" and declared that "[h]e has done more for America than all the conquistadors together" (Rippy, 79). In his famous letter of November 10, 1821, written while he was president of the newly declared country of Gran Colombia, Bolívar wrote to Humboldt:

In America, Baron Humboldt shall be forever present in the hearts of those who know how to value a great man, one who with his eyes has lifted her from ignorance and with his pen has painted her as beautifully as her Nature deserves. (Humboldt, *Cartas Americanas*, 266)

Indeed, today when the rest of the world is beginning to forget the baron, he is still venerated in Latin America. This fact gives rise to innumerable questions. What elements of the “painting” of American nature led the new nations to see their reality represented in a fashion never before “discovered”? Why would Bolívar, an anticolonialist leader, laud Humboldt as a “discoverer” and “conquistador”? What did those eyes see, and what did that pen paint, that called forth such gratitude and “raised us from our ignorance”? To explore some possible answers, my analysis will concentrate on the maps and illustrations of the atlas that makes up part of Humboldt’s total travel collection (*Atlas pittoresque du voyage, plus connu sous le titre: Vues des Cordillères et monumens des peuples indigènes de l’Amérique*) and on his personal narratives about his journeys in Nueva Granada.⁶

However, the questions raised by Humboldt’s journey do not end there. They reappear in inverted form when we think about America’s influence on the celebrated German geographer. In a letter to his friend A. Freiesleben, written during his return voyage, Humboldt says:

I have returned to Europe happily after an absence of five years . . . my expedition of 9,000 miles over the two hemispheres has brought incomparable happiness. . . . I return with thirty-five crates filled with botanical, astronomical, and geologic treasures. It will take me many years to publish my great work. . . . I am afraid of my first winter, everything is so new, I will try to find myself again. (*Lettres Américaines*, 135)

Humboldt’s voyage had transformed his native Europe, while the tropics had gotten under his skin. He apparently never managed to carry out the proposed re-encounter with himself. Contact with American reality caused a division within the scientist. Though he managed to re-create America on a textual level in his travel writing, he remained exiled in the realm of nostalgia for the rest of his days.

Humboldt dreamed of rejoining his American friends for good. He spent a great deal of his life trying to return to Mexico as director of a school for naturalists. On August 22, 1822, he wrote to Boussingault, whom he had met through Bolívar’s personal recommendation and who was continuing his work in America:

Only death could change my plans. I am fifty-two years old and my spirit is young again. I remain firm in my resolve to leave Europe and live in the

tropics of Spanish America, where I have left behind so many memories and where the institutions are in harmony with my desires. (*Lettres Américaines*, 291)

From Verona, also in 1822, he wrote to Bonpland:

I have a great plan for a central scientific establishment in Mexico to serve all of free America. . . . This is a way to avoid dying without glory, to surround myself with many educated people, and to enjoy that independence of opinions and sentiments which is so necessary to my happiness. . . . [Y]ou will laugh at my passion for this American project, but when one has neither family nor children, one must think of improving one's old age. (*Cartas Americanas*, 202–203)

The irony is that the one who managed to die in America was Bonpland,⁷ who ended his days cultivating a rose garden in Paraguay. Humboldt never returned. His king kept him in Prussia where he served as chamberlain until his death—always complaining about his situation, always surrounded in his German studio by preserved specimens of American nature, just as depicted in the famous print (Figure 2.1).

So we may point to a synthesis of the two sources of desire of Humboldt the traveler: knowledge structured according to the precepts of the European Enlightenment, and a free America in harmony with his desires. The synthesis was only possible in his monumental cartography where he joined the hemispheres that divided him, articulating them as part of the universal grammar of the cosmos.⁸ His scientific synthesis led to the expression of a particular geographic discourse in a moment of colonial transition.

THE TEXT AND THE PRE-TEXT

A reading of the geography produced by Humboldt must start from a recognition that America at the turn of the nineteenth century, besides being the place to go in search of natural treasures, was a term within the global equation of international commerce. Humboldt was aware of a geographic pre-text about equatorial America, and he wrote the geographic text resulting from his voyages upon this foundation. His atlas included not only maps but also illustrations and other reproductions which, in the main, were made by French engravers from the sketches in Humboldt's travel journals. These engravings greatly influenced the development of Latin American art and become the model for a new way of representing voyages in which science and art were equally privileged. In these prints we may also read the way Europe read America as a symbol within a schema of international relations.



FIGURE 2.1 “Alexander von Humboldt in his library”

1856. Oleograph by Eduard Hildebrandt. Original in Stiftung Stadtmuseum, Berlin. Taken from Amaya et al., *El Regreso de Humboldt*, 2001.



FIGURE 2.2 “Humanity, Knowledge and Economy”
 Engraving by François Gérard for the frontispiece of *Atlas géographique et physique du nouveau continent*. Paris: Schoell, 1814. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

The frontispiece of Humboldt's geographic and physical atlas (Figure 2.2) is an engraving by François Gérard based on sketches by the scientist. America, which had often been allegorically represented as a woman, is in this print an androgynous person of classical bearing,⁹ dressed in the style of a Mexican warrior. Pallas Athena, Greek goddess of industry, offers an olive branch while Hermes, god of commerce, helps America to stand up. Below them lie remnants of the broken statue of an Aztec goddess. In the background rises the volcano Chimborazo, a majestic representation of American nature. The caption reads: "Humanity, Knowledge, and Economy." These were key terms both for the Enlightenment and for the new mercantile system then imposing itself throughout the globe. They define this print as well: independent equatorial America enters the era of free trade, aided by Europe which offers to help her recover from the ruins of the colonial past. We cannot forget that European cartography made frequent use of such continental personification, using a symbolism that graphically represented its commercial interests. With the popularization of the Mercator (1512–1594) cartographic projection came the custom of embellishing the margins of world maps with an allegorical representation of Africa, Asia, and America generously offering their treasures to Europe (Figure 2.3).¹⁰

Among allegorical representations of America as a woman, the classic image is that by Jan Van de Straet (1523–1605). His engraving represents the continent receiving a name from Amerigo Vespucci (Figure 2.4).¹¹ America is naked, undeniably a woman and a native, waiting placidly in her hammock for the traveler to give her his name and so bring her into existence. Nude America generously offers herself to a Europe under wraps. She is surrounded by luxuriant tropical vegetation and by animals whose anatomy resembles hers. Though there are some men in the background, they are too deeply involved in cannibalistic acts to take note of the historical moment as it unfolds.

But in the two centuries that intervened between this image and the frontispiece of Humboldt's atlas, the representation of the world underwent a profound change—thanks, among other things, to the colonization of that same America. By the time this Enlightenment traveler visited, according to the frontispiece allegory, the symbolic figure was dressed, conquered, and had completely lost her indigenous features and voluptuous, accessible woman's form. This America might not be female, but it was fallen, waiting for "civilization" to come and lead it out of ruin.

In fact, Humboldt did trust that his science would help to develop America, and his interpretation of geography was also a reading of himself in the act of traveling. He needed to position himself as *the* investigator who could succeed in inserting a new vision of the continent within a global order. Antonio Benítez-Rojo, in *La Isla que se repite*, suggests a relationship between the work of Alejo Carpentier and earlier texts by Humboldt and

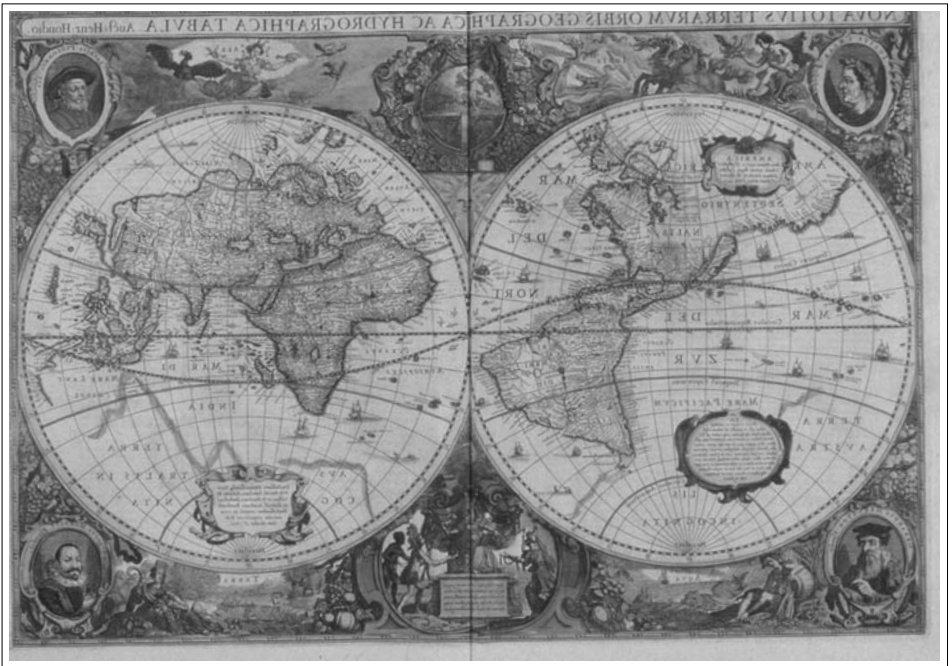


FIGURE 2.3 “Nova Totius Terrarum Orbis
Geographica ac Hydrographica a Tabula”

Taken from Mercator, Gerard Kremer et Hondius, *Atlas Novus*, Amsterdam, 1638, at the John Carter Brown Library, Providence.



FIGURE 2.4 “Allegory of Amerigo Vespucci and America”

Engraving by Johannes Stradanus/Gallé. Illustration #1 of the Collection *Nova Reperta*. Taken from the selection of prints by Burndy Library, 1953, at the John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

other travelers to the Caribbean. He argues that the geographer’s intent was not to establish a dialogue with the American “other,” because Humboldt would have felt that his rational analysis had already foreseen what the “other” had to say. Far from invalidating Humboldt’s text, however, this perspective allows us to understand the context of the work. Today’s reader must see Humboldt’s writing in relation to the Enlightenment frame of reference and the existent discourse about America, which constituted Humboldt’s baggage.

Humboldt’s travel writing was in part an analysis by hindsight. His travel narratives were first published ten years after his return to Europe, and the atlas was corrected twenty years later. Humboldt’s text is not, like Mutis’s, a journal kept day-by-day, but rather an informed reading of notes taken during a voyage, carefully edited toward a specific end. We can clearly read the

scientific goal of showing nature as an immense and complex machine that can be disassembled and completely understood. Further, like any man of the Enlightenment, he writes with full consciousness of the studies surrounding his. The German scientist's exploration of American geography is continually juxtaposed with earlier and later readings.¹² Among many examples of how Humboldt's daily travel experiences were later rewritten, we find the story of the terrible earthquake that he experienced in Caracas in 1799. He compares it in intensity and effect with the ones that occurred in the same area in 1760 and 1812. When he arrives in Cumaná, Venezuela's commercial port, in 1799, he compares it with towns he will visit in Mexico four years later. Sometimes he pauses to correct other travelers (among whom his favorite target is La Condamine) or historians (the errors of William Robertson particularly annoy him).¹³ We might say that on his voyage he is riding a previous text. He travels to correct the deficiencies in the Enlightenment view of "America." His tendency is clearly encyclopedic.

His travel writing also reveals what it is about by way of its own internal organization. We know that the geographer thought of his whole oeuvre, of which the *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* is only a part, as a unitary work. The narrator often reflects on the great geographic treatise he is planning:

I was unwilling to mingle with the narrative of our journey to the Missions of Caripe general considerations on the different tribes of natives that inhabit New Andalusia, on their manners, their languages and their common origin. . . . As we advance into the interior of the country, this subject will become more interesting than the phenomena of physical world. (*Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent, during the years 1799–1804*, vol. 3: 207)

Humboldt does not try to hide his pedagogical intent. This narrator is no scientist full of doubts who lets himself be interrogated by nature in the fashion of Mutis's diary. This is the scientist as producer of knowledge, the cartographer of his own discourse. The narrator's organization of his text and his classifications of his object of study reveal the ideology that articulated this geographic discourse and made it the authorized source on American "reality."

Atlas pittoresque du voyage, plus connu sous le titre: Vues des Cordillères et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique includes basically two types of illustrations. Some are based on the sketches in his diaries, mostly nature pictures or maps. The others, American codices, are not products of the traveler's observations but rather the result of a bibliographic search in the libraries of the Vatican, Rome, and Berlin (Figures 2.5 and 2.6).¹⁴ In addition to a study of the symbols and representations of those pre-Columbian documents, Humboldt undertakes a comparative analysis of mythology, drawing analogies between the Mexican codices and the astrological studies of Egyptian and Asian calendars.

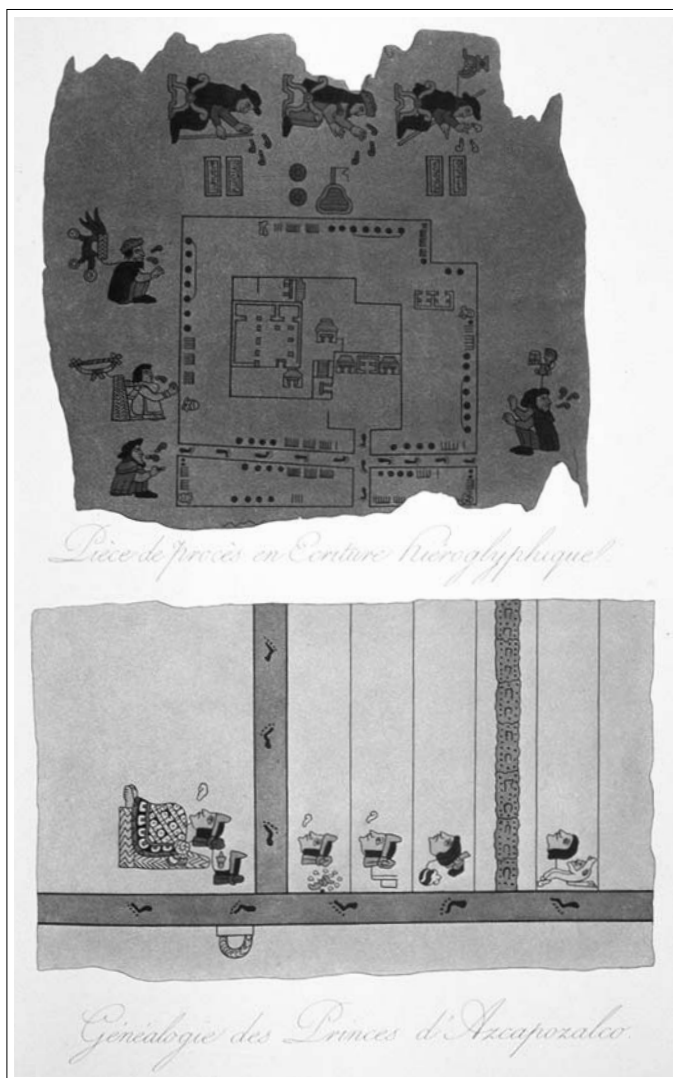


FIGURE 2.5 “Hieroglyphic writing and genealogy of the Azcapozalco princes”

Atlas pittoresque du voyage. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

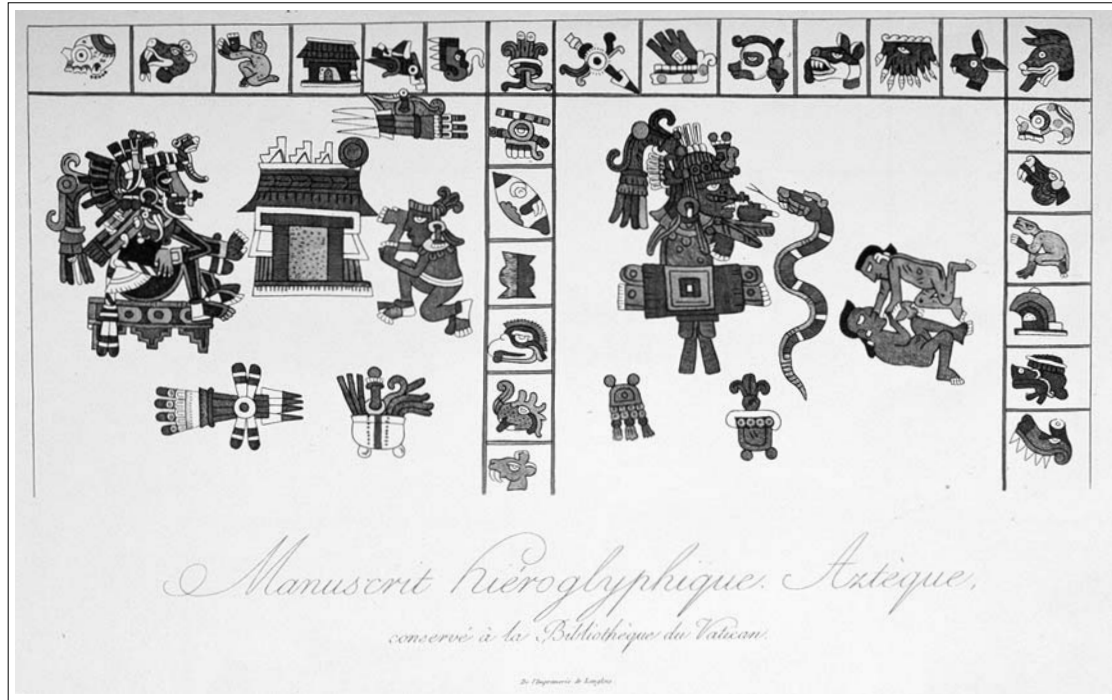


FIGURE 2.6 “Aztec manuscript”

Original at the Vatican Library. *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

Indigenous America is, for Humboldt, a destroyed goddess over which the new America arises. This new America is the one that nascent capitalism needs: white, mistreated, and ready to accept European aid. At the graphic level, however, the character who really interested him was a different one: the monumental nature of America, which he represented in dimensions the human eye can barely take in. An example is his illustration of Chimborazo (Figure 2.7), the snow-capped volcano which he and his group were the first Europeans to climb. Humboldt's greatness depends in no small part on the greatness of his object of study. This is the same Chimborazo that appears as backdrop to the scene in the frontispiece, which became a symbol of American nature. It is also possible that, however majestic the mountain may appear in his representation, he found the feat of conquering it more incredible still.

With the intention of constructing a planetary geography, the geographer dissected this monumental landscape in a work of meticulous detail, inscribing on the landscape the new discourse with which it would be named from then on. This was the new "-graphy," the new writing of this land. The explored territory was virtually converted into discourse: mountains of words that completed encyclopedic European knowledge (Figure 2.8). This discourse was also a continuation of sorts of the botanical text that Mutis had generated about the flora of Nueva Granada. The words making up the mountain are all the vegetable species that grow in each thermal climatic zone, a classification similar to the one the botanist had made in the mountains of Mariquita. This imposing, monumental nature does not serve as a stage for its inhabitants, but rather appears to surpass them in importance (Figure 2.9). However, there are in the illustration some eyes that give it meaning: the eyes of a scholar who, seated with book in hand, understands it in its real dimensions (see detail, Figure 2.10); these are the eyes of an enlightened white man and his fortunate readers.

Humboldt's travel writing corrects prior information about the land both by noting everything that has been wrongly classified and by pointing out natural riches susceptible to exploitation that have previously been overlooked. His exhaustive study of the geography includes specific data about how this virgin nature can serve the European market:

The Indians made incisions with their large knives in the trunks of the trees, and fixed our attention on those beautiful red and golden yellow woods, which will one day be sought for by our turners and cabinet makers. (*Narrative*, vol. 3: 74)

More than the six-sevenths of the seventy-eight thousand marks of this metal, which at the beginning of the 19th century America has annually furnished to the commerce of Europe, have come, not from the lofty Cordillera of the Andes, but from the alluvial lands on the east and west

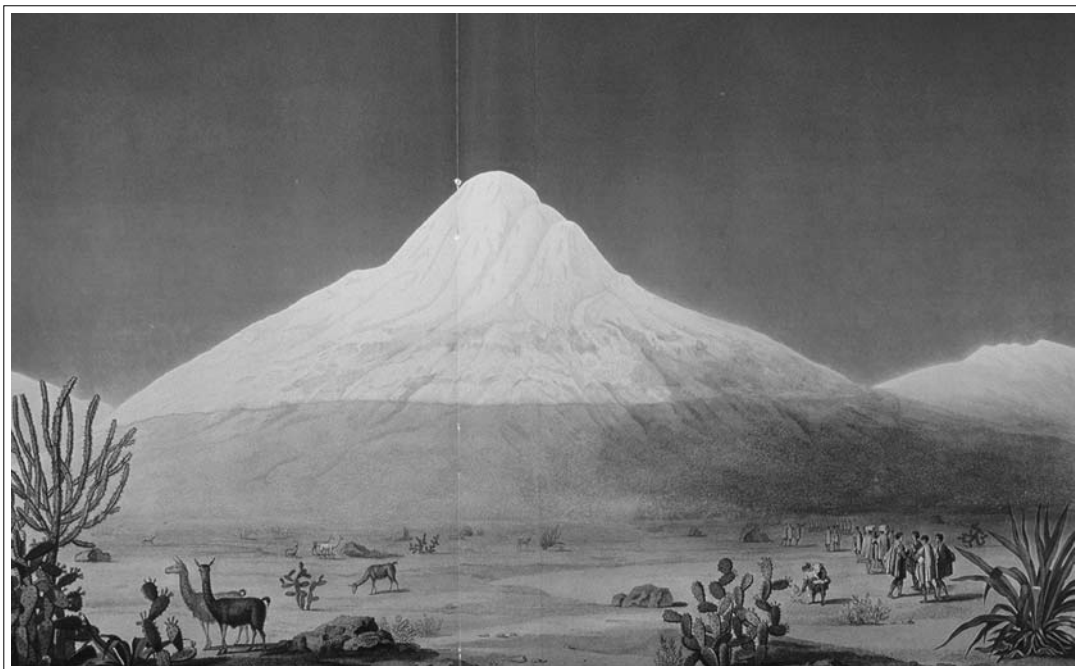


FIGURE 2.7 “Chimborazo”

Engraving by Bouquet based on Humboldt, *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

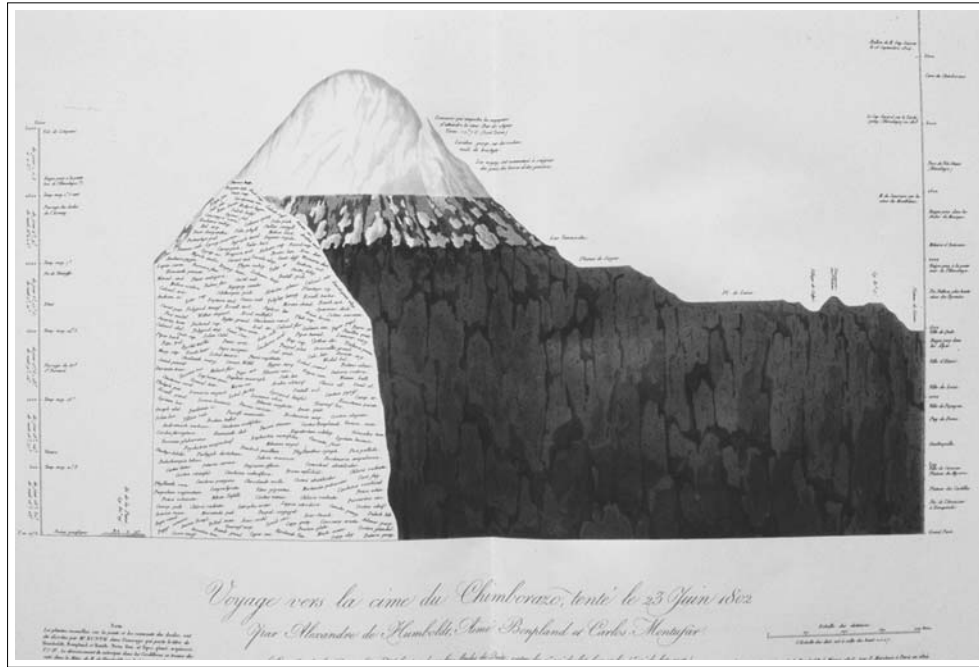


FIGURE 2.8 “El Chimborazo with its thermal floors”

Drawing by Marchais based on Humboldt, *Atlas géographique et physique du nouveau continent*. Paris: Schoell, 1814. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

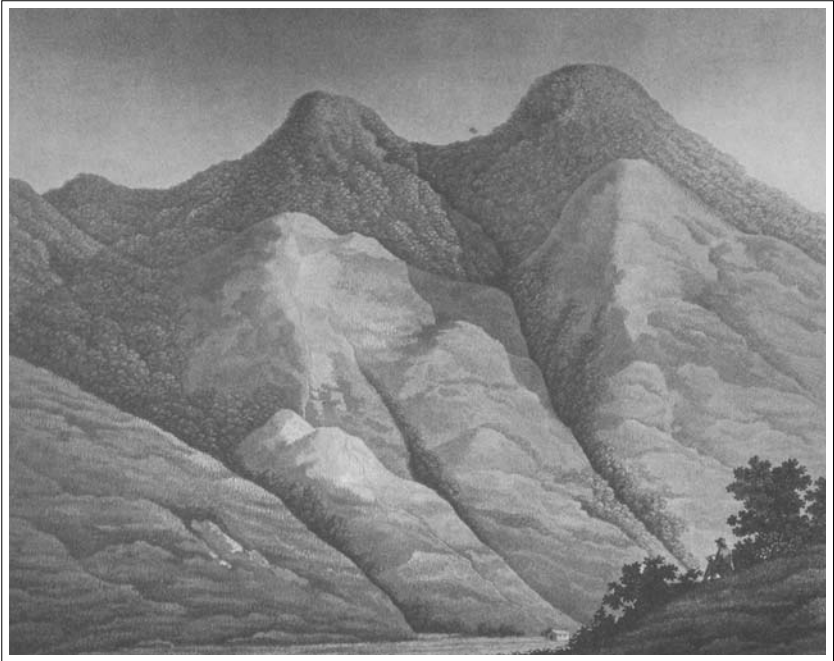


FIGURE 2.9 “La silla de Caracas”

Engraving by Bouquet based on Humboldt, *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.



FIGURE 2.10 “La silla de Caracas” (detail)

of the cordilleras. . . . Is it not probable, that some other depositions of auriferous earth extend towards the northern hemisphere? (*Narrative*, vol. 5: 860–61)

Both the atlas and the narrative of *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* convert American nature into the central, monumental character, but this character is inscribed by European Enlightenment knowledge within the prior scientific tradition, duly corrected and augmented, with a view to its insertion in the international market. That is the America “seen” by Humboldt and “painted” within the liberal and pro-independence parameters of the emergent governing class which would thank the traveler for his scientific work in a decidedly nationalistic tone.

HUMBOLDT AND HIS “TRAVELEES”

In fact, Humboldt and Bonpland’s voyage was no solitary pursuit of knowledge. It would be foolish to think that the thirty crates of “treasures” with which Humboldt arrived in the Old World were purely his personal discovery. Humboldt’s expedition was a major scientific enterprise whose participants were mostly creoles (American-born people of Spanish blood) and indigenous Americans. The diverse relations among these members of the expedition make up a hidden history of how scientific knowledge was actually generated. In them, we may read the alliances with the American “spirit” that transformed the traveler, infiltrated his desires, and filled him with nostalgia for the impossible.

In a footnote to her valuable analysis of Humboldt as a romantic traveler and of the intercontinental implications of his travels, Mary Louise Pratt tentatively coins the term “travelee”:

This clumsy term is coined on analogy with the term “addressee” as the latter means the person addressed by a speaker, “travelee” means persons traveled to (or on) by a traveler, receptors of travel. A few years ago literary theorists began speaking of “narratees,” figures corresponding to narrators on the reception end of narration. Obviously, travel is studied overwhelmingly from the perspective of the traveler, but it is perfectly possible, and extremely interesting, to study it from those who participate on the receiving end. (242)

The suggestion is not only fascinating, but necessary. An account such as Humboldt’s does not make it easy for us to read the “travelees,” because the narrative revolves around the character of the scientist who, as a researcher, eliminates anything that in his judgment fails to contribute to his scientific goal. Nonetheless, the text contains fissures into which we can cast a suspicious eye.

In addition, in the two intervening centuries an enormous bibliography on Humboldt has grown up on both sides of the Atlantic. That body of work contains some news about the role of the “travelees.”

We will find that Humboldt’s interaction with a certain group of Americans led to the creation of two different discourses. On the one hand, the visitor presented American geography in a discourse of such scientific and historical rigor that it became the “true” discourse about America. On the other hand, the new, emerging American ruling class greeted the teachings of the *Voyage* with such acceptance and so resounding an echo as to give the character “Humboldt” and his travels a particular place in the construction of a nation-building discourse. This was especially true in the countries formed out of what had been Nueva Granada. Humboldt “rediscovered” America to the same degree as America “discovered” a Humboldt who fit its historiography.

According to Benedict Anderson,¹⁵ the rebellious spirit of the nascent American republics found broad acceptance among early-nineteenth-century European liberals who saw how monarchical restoration was undermining the movements generated by the French Revolution. Continuing in this vein, we can speak of the repercussions of American knowledge on Humboldt’s ideology. On a more internal level, we can also see how the author of *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* was affected by his travels, and how his “travelees” influenced the situation in which he wrote.

The immediately identifiable group of “travelees” is the American scientists. Humboldt went in search of Mutis, whose praises he constantly sang and to whom he and Bonpland dedicated the first text they published after their return, *Essay on the Geography of Plants* (1812). But he also took note of others, among them one of the few women he mentions in the *Voyage*, Manuela Santamaría de Manrique. When he viewed her botanical collection in Santa Fe, she gained his respect and admiration. He also mentions those who shared invaluable geographic and archeological information, especially those attached to the libraries and universities of Mexico, within which he spent almost all of the year he was in that country, in search of its indigenous past. For the rest of his life, Humboldt thanked these Mexican scholars for their intellectual generosity; as indicated in his letter to Bonpland, quoted above, he considered them his ideal colleagues.

Humboldt also maintained relations with the new republics’ political leaders. He corresponded with Lucas Alamán (1792–1853), who served several terms as a minister in the Mexican government. In 1824 he wrote to General Guadalupe Victoria to request clemency for a Frenchman who had been expelled from Mexico. He wrote on several occasions to a variety of political figures to recommend scientist friends or to solicit information. The most significant relationship, however, continued to be the one with Bolívar, which began in Europe when the future liberator was only twenty-one. That first meeting did not make much of an impression on Humboldt, who had

recently returned from his travels and knew more about Nueva Granada than Bolívar did. When the relationship grew firmer after the formation of Gran Colombia, however, Humboldt would write to Bolívar to vouch for particular German travelers or to request his collaboration in international matters, such as freeing Bonpland when the latter was imprisoned by the dictator Francia in Uruguay. On November 28, 1825, Humboldt wrote:

Honorable Señor Liberator Simón Bolívar: How can your name not adorn some pages of my book? In the most recent volume of the *Voyage* to appear, Volume III, page 541, I have spoken about the liberation of the blacks. The Republic of Colombia has set the example. Credit for this measure, both humanitarian and prudent, is due to the good will of General Bolívar. (*Cartas Americanas*, 137)

In America, Humboldt found scientific and political correspondents with whom he kept up a dialogue all his life, and who put into practice the democratic ideals of his liberal Enlightenment mentality.

There is another level in the reading of Humboldt's eternal desire to return to America, which we may find through a close look at his personal relations. Some young Latin Americans appear to have stolen his heart. These include Carlos de Aguirre y Montúfar (1778–1813), who accompanied him from Quito to Cuba and also sailed with him on his return voyage to Europe. Once back in America, Montúfar joined the insurgent cause and enlisted in Bolívar's army. Captured by the Spaniards, he was executed September 3, 1813. When the astronomer Francisco José de Caldas met Humboldt in 1801 in Santa Fe, he hoped to join the group of explorers and carry out his project of atmospheric measurements with them. After first accepting Caldas in the group, Humboldt then changed his mind and instead took Montúfar, whom he had just met in Quito. Caldas wrote two letters to Mutis in which he complained angrily about this rejection, attributing it to an amorous passion between Montúfar and Humboldt which he condemned. With wounded pride, he wrote:

The Baron's conduct in Quito is so different than it was in Santa Fe and Popayán! . . . In Quito's poisoned air no one breathes anything but pleasures. . . . The Baron, to his misfortune, has made friends with some dissolute and obscene young men in this infectious Babylon; they drag him to houses where impure love reigns. This shameful passion conquers his heart and blinds the young scholar to a degree which is difficult to believe. (Letter of April 21, 1802, *Obras completas*, 79)

The Baron von Humboldt left here on the eighth with Mr. Bonpland and his Adonis, in whose path he places no obstacles, unlike Caldas. . . . I love him, but I feel the insult, which the scholar will not be able to remedy. (Letter of June 21, 1802, *Obras completas*, 81)¹⁶

We can deduce from the available biographical information what social problems Humboldt's acting on his homosexuality brought him. These men (Mutis, Humboldt, Montúfar) escaped the strictures of marriage, became explorers in far-off territories, and spent their lives surrounded by scientists of their own sex. It is perfectly plausible to infer that the spiritual bonds among them were made possible by the geographic enterprise they undertook in the New World. America was the land of possibility for the German, hemmed in at home by the Prussian nobility to which he belonged, and for the young Americans who offered him the scientific and human alliances he needed to complete the possible map of his desire.

There is no doubt that Latin American intellectuals, scientists, and thinkers forged an alliance with Humboldt that has lasted until the current days. The organizers of the new nations contributed to the creating of the "Humboldt myth" and converted his geographic study into the keystone of the "true" America. This sentiment is synthesized in Bolívar's statement: "He has done more for America than all the conquistadors together." What Bolívar meant, and what is still echoed today, is that he led us out of "barbarity" and toward the light of Europe. To understand the staying power of this affirmation, it is enough to cite one contemporary historian who, on Humboldt's bicentennial, repeated it with the same vehemence.

Humboldt's work not only definitively dissolved errors long accepted as truth and drew the cultured world's attention to this part of the globe, but also opened the eyes of its own inhabitants. Humboldt awoke the sentiments of admiration and gratitude in the spirits of the Americans . . . and he surely sowed in the patriots the will to free themselves. . . . The right to emancipation was sanctioned by Humboldt's research, which united the impressive cataloguing of a grand nature with testimony to the value of a great sector of humankind. (*Homenaje a Humboldt en el Bicentenario*, 2)

Like Mutis, the German geographer has been placed atop the pedestal of the liberators. His discourse about America has been recognized as a stamp of approval for the pro-independence feelings of the creole upper class.

That relationship certainly existed. However, when we read Humboldt from our contemporary perspective, we must analyze less obvious but equally significant effects. First, this was a relationship between those who fought to become the new ruling class of the American republics and the cartographer who drew the most exact map of those lands. Humboldt defined the borders and drew the exact courses of the rivers along which the economic exploitation of these countries would occur. He compiled exact statistics on mines and mineral deposits. These studies allowed the construction of a new, post-colonial order with a well-informed new ruling class.

The maps presented to the viceroy were only a symbol. The knowledge of the territory, the instruments with which to measure it, the statistics, were the useful information. These became the discourse about the lands the creoles were to appropriate. National entities had to be created, they had to be territorially delimited, and they had to be articulated in words. Humboldt smoothed the way. *Voyage* exemplifies this process to the point where the haciendas of the creoles appear with their own names, mapping the relations of who owns what and where. The land is the space in which a nation may be imagined; its borders serve as a kind of container, defining the nation and justifying its armies. Thus, knowledge of the territory is the basic unit in the structuring of a “grammar” of the nation (see Anderson, chapter 10).

Nonetheless, Ileana Rodríguez offers us a warning in *House/Garden/Nation: Space, Gender, and Ethnicity in Post-colonial Latin American Literatures by Women*, in which she discusses narratives of formation of Latin American concepts of nationality in times of political transition:

In these narratives of nation-formation there remain loose and unclear ends. What is uncontestable is that everything is tied to the land, to agriculture, to lineage and family and to the ethnic groups associated with them. “Land” is the yearning for nation and nationhood. Land, whose owners draw in and blur the boundaries between the haciendas and latifundios they inherit and sell, make and remake, and plot and till and replot, makes a history which is not the history of one narrative but of several, the history of an uninterrupted continental narratology, the history of a map of disputed borders, limits and frontiers, the ever polemic discussion of nation and nationality. (4)

The group of “travelees” with whom Humboldt established his discursive alliances were precisely the owners of the land in dispute, of the haciendas and *latifundios*. This group saw themselves as masters of the land and therefore deserving to govern it and collect its taxes:¹⁷

Don Francisco Montera, and his brother, a young and enlightened ecclesiastic, accompanied us, in order to conduct us to their house at La Victoria. Almost all the families with whom we had lived in friendship at Caracas, the Ustarizes, the Tovars, and the Toroës, were assembled in the fine valleys of Aragua. Proprietors of the richest plantations, they contended with each other in whatever could render our stay agreeable. Before we plunged into the forests of the Oroonoko, we enjoyed once more all the advantages of an advanced civilization. (*Narrative*, vol 4: 101)

Humboldt does not ally himself, despite the way the celebratory rhetoric has tried to present it, with “Americans” as an undifferentiated group. On the

contrary, his atlas and personal narratives demonstrate the existence of two groups clearly differentiated by race—and that he, and the group of Americans to whom he felt allied, fears one of them:¹⁸

When the young Tupac-Amaru, who believed himself the legitimate heir to the empire of the Incas, made the conquest of several provinces of Upper Peru, in 1781, at the head of forty thousand Indians mountaineers, all the Whites were seized with the same apprehensions. The Hispano-Americans felt, like the Spaniards born in Europe, that the contest was between the Copper-coloured race and the Whites, between barbarism and civilization. (*Narrative*, vol. 3: 438)

That identification of copper races = barbarism versus white = civilization underlies the independence discourse generated in the new republics. Luis Alberto Sánchez offers an extensive analysis of the significance of race in the formation of the independence movements, which he synthesizes as follows: “Race was more powerful than economics in the creole American mentality” (56). In the America of Humboldt’s text, women and members of nonwhite ethnic groups were represented differently than educated creole men. Although it is particularly difficult to determine how those groups of “travelees” influenced the traveler, it is worth searching for some indications.

THE UNKNOWN “TRAVELEES,” OR THE SUBTLETIES OF ORALITY

We know from the travel narrative that Humboldt and Bonpland required guidance by native people (Figure 2.11). This was true even for the excursions the geographer refers to as “short” ones. The guides had to know the territory and, if at all possible, they had to speak Spanish. These guides also collected the plants and explained their uses to the botanists:

It rained unceasingly during several months, and Mr. Bonpland lost the greater part of the specimens, which he had been compelled to dry by artificial heat. Our Indians named the trees, as usual, on chewing the wood. They distinguished the leaves better than the corollæ or their fruit. Occupied in seeking timber for building (trunks for canoes), they are little attentive to the flowers. “All those great trees bear neither flowers nor fruits” the Indians repeated unceasingly. Like the botanist of antiquity, they denied what they had not taken the trouble to observe. They were tired with our questions, and exhausted our patience in turn. (*Narrative*, vol. 5: 256)

Humboldt and Bonpland also needed men to row the boats, to transport their trunks full of herbariums, astrolabes, sextants, and thermometers. Often these



FIGURE 2.11 “Orinoco Camp”

Engraving by Gottfried Schick. Taken from Amaya et al., *El Regreso de Humboldt*, 2001.

indigenous bearers were replaced by African slaves. Sometimes they caused trouble because, according to Humboldt, the majority were lazy, ignorant, indolent, and always trying to take advantage of the travelers:

By intimidating the European traveler, the Indians believe that they shall render themselves more necessary, and gain the confidence of the stranger. The rudest inhabitant of the missions understands the deceptions, which everywhere arise from the relations between men of unequal fortune and civilization. Under the absolute and sometimes vexatious government of the monks, he seeks to meliorate his condition by those little artifices which are the weapons of childhood, and of all physical and intellectual weakness. (*Narrative*, vol. 5: 132–33)

In the transit through the jungles and missions of the Orinoco, the need for guides was absolute, though apparently the inhabitants did not always want to accept the task. When he describes his ascent of the Silla de Caracas, Humboldt notes:

Mr Bonpland and I foresaw from these infallible signs, that we should soon be covered by a thick fog; and lest our guides should avail themselves of this circumstance to abandon us, we obliged those who carried the most necessary instruments to precede us. We continued climbing the slopes, that lead toward the crevice of Chacaito. The familiar loquacity of the Creolian Blacks formed a striking contrast with the taciturn gravity of the Indians. (*Narrative*, vol. 3: 484–85)

Because Humboldt knows that his prime interest is physical geography, he is quite conscious that he would prefer not to mention the vicissitudes of these individuals:

In the relation of my travels I feel no propensity to pause at a picture of individual calamity, of evils which are everywhere frequent, where there are masters and slaves, civilized Europeans living with people in a state of barbarism, and priests executing the plenitude of arbitrary power on men ignorant and without defense. (*Narrative*, vol. 5: 238)

Yet their presence filters into the writings, because they were a permanent part of the expedition and vital to its advance.

In the atlas, in the graphical representation of monumental nature described above, the guides do not receive the same treatment. Certainly there are no Africans, whether slave or free.¹⁹ If by chance an indigenous guide appears on board a raft along with a mountain of tropical fruits (Figure 2.12), the caption is sure to name the pineapple, the plantain, the monkey, and the parrot, but to tell us nothing about the identity of the boatman. The

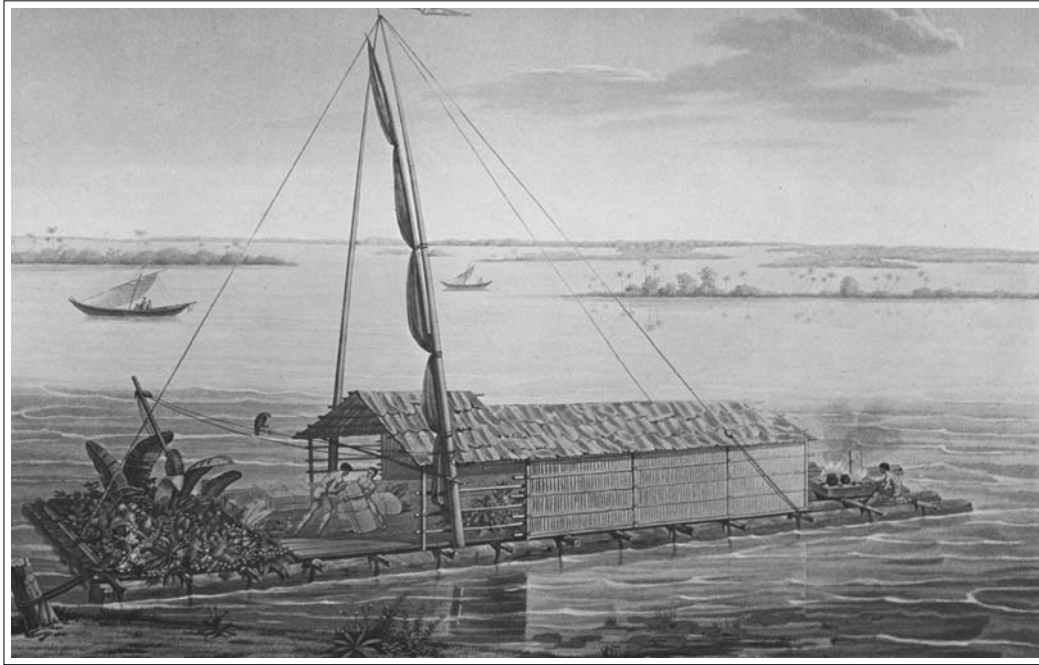


FIGURE 2.12 “Raft with fruit”

Engraving by M.M.Turpit y Poileau based on Humboldt, *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

indigenous people who appear in the atlas of the cordilleras seem to be supplied (like the codices) by European museums, but we can perceive the botanical and geographic knowledge they so amply shared if we suspiciously point a magnifying glass at the margins of the maps.

Figure 2.13, a segment of the first complete map of the Orinoco, may serve as an example. For Humboldt and his group to map that river required a year of explorations in the humid jungles, and much of the Humboldt iconography has developed around that.²⁰ The resulting map is much more than a simple navigational chart. Aside from its artistic flourishes, such as the miniature nature drawings in the tradition of classic cartography, the map is a complete text, a travel chronicle in itself. To begin with, it is titled "Itinerary of the Orinoco." In other words the goal of the text is to map not only the territory traversed by a river, but also the voyage of a traveler along it. In the personal narrative about the exploration of the Orinoco, the text is organized around the traveler-narrator who sometimes comments on his impressions of the indigenous people, questioning their behavior without recognizing the enormous firsthand scientific contribution they make at every turn. Exploring according to his pre-text, the narrator/traveler categorizes these races as a part of his geographic scheme; those farthest from institutions and closest to a state of nature are consigned to the inferior levels. In the map we can read the guides' voices, the voices of producers of geographic information. The information noted on the map is not included in the encyclopedic pre-text of America which serves as reference point for the narrative. The cartography is a text constructed day by day, following the itinerary through a geography that was the cultural patrimony of its inhabitants. A quick glance shows that the map is full of texts, testimonies. In every corner are annotations such as, "The natives assure me that the source of the Rio Casanare is two hours away." Or in a space left blank, not explored, may be read, "Inhabited by cannibals." At one point we find, "Stone where the Portuguese claimed Brazilian territory began," and in another, "Here there was once a prison." In fact the map is a palimpsest. It is geographic in the strictest sense of the word, because it is a useful map, a presentation of a territory which will serve as guide to the future navigator. But it is also oral history. The map was dictated to Humboldt by the indigenous inhabitants. Humboldt was the editor who possessed the necessary instruments to transform it into a geographic text,²¹ a palimpsest map in which indigenous American oral geographic knowledge is overlaid with European science to construct the perfect metaphor of the Orinoco.

The narrator of *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* does not recognize this contribution of enormously valuable empirical scientific knowledge in the making of geographic science. We may read this omission as another level of the relationship between Humboldt and his "travelees." As represented in the atlas, the guides from various ethnic groups are stripped of their scientific

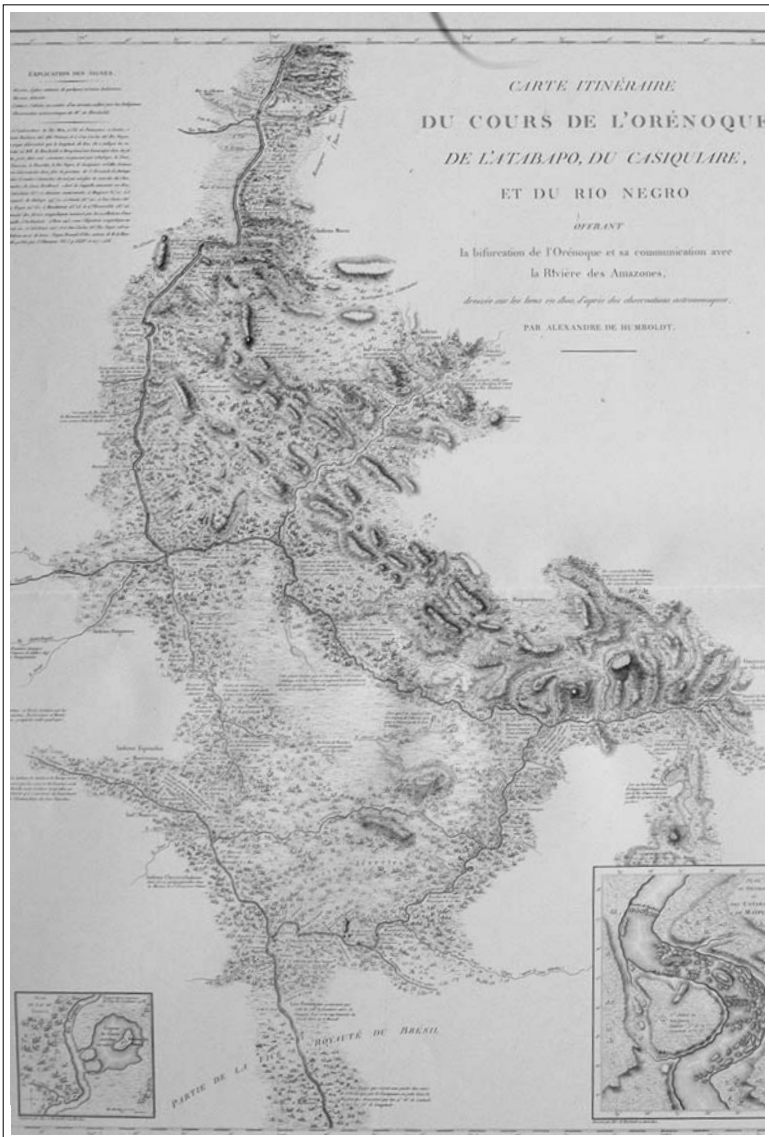


FIGURE 2.13 “Map Itinerary of Orinoco River”

Engraving by Blondeau based on Humboldt, *Atlas géographique et physique du nouveau continent*. Paris: Schoell, 1814. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1971, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

knowledge. Symbolically, the majority of the indigenous people pictured in the illustrations are semi-naked. This detail is interesting because Humboldt himself discusses nakedness in his text. He notes that the people of the hot country consider nudity more decent than dress, and are always unclothed within their homes. He says that the old women always laugh at the travelers passing by in full regalia, and that the natives wear rustic tunics in public places only because the missionaries have exhorted them to do so. Those still outside the missions (not his guides, but those he sees from his canoe) adorn their bodies but do not cover them. Thus, he observes a hierarchy: those under the control of the mission, among whom were all his guides, and those still free. Dress or undress constituted the first indication of this difference. The guides, recruited on the missions, were required to wear clothes; nonetheless, they often appear naked in the atlas illustrations.²²

It is difficult to establish today what things were actually like, who in fact went nude or did not. But the pictorial convention of the naked native survives to this day, to show a lack of civilization and distance from knowledge on the native's part.²³ In the picture of the arrival at the dwarf volcanoes of Turbaco, the indigenous guide is shown almost naked, and the contrast with the fully dressed European emphasizes his nakedness (Figure 2.14). The illustration also contains traces of the romantic-era discourse of the "noble savage": naked and therefore closer to nature, purer and less contaminated by civilization. By representing the guides who offered him necessary geographic information as half-naked, Humboldt wrests authority from their knowledge by placing them beyond the bounds of civilization.

Reading the journal further complicates this relationship. In general, when Humboldt mentions his guides he is doing so as the geographer pursuing a classification of the world's races. Although the dedication shown by a guide occasionally spurs Humboldt to mention the man's name (as in the case of one Carlos del Pino who accompanied the group for sixteen months), the narrator's scientific goal usually leads him to speak in general racial terms. "The copper races" and "black races" are always classified on a lower rung of human development; the scientist does not recognize their members as his equals. Humboldt's explanations of the inferiority of the ethnic Americans respond to a highly racist European scientific viewpoint and his classification of human evolution follows a logic of superior and inferior races.²⁴ Yet what makes him fascinating is that he was simultaneously an opponent of slavery, and there are moments in which he recognizes the racism of his own pre-text. He doesn't condemn it, but he recognizes its partiality:

Both in men and animals the emotions of the soul are reflected in their features; and the features acquire the habit of mobility, in proportion as the emotions of the mind are more frequent, more varied and more durable . . . if the variety and mobility of the features embellish the

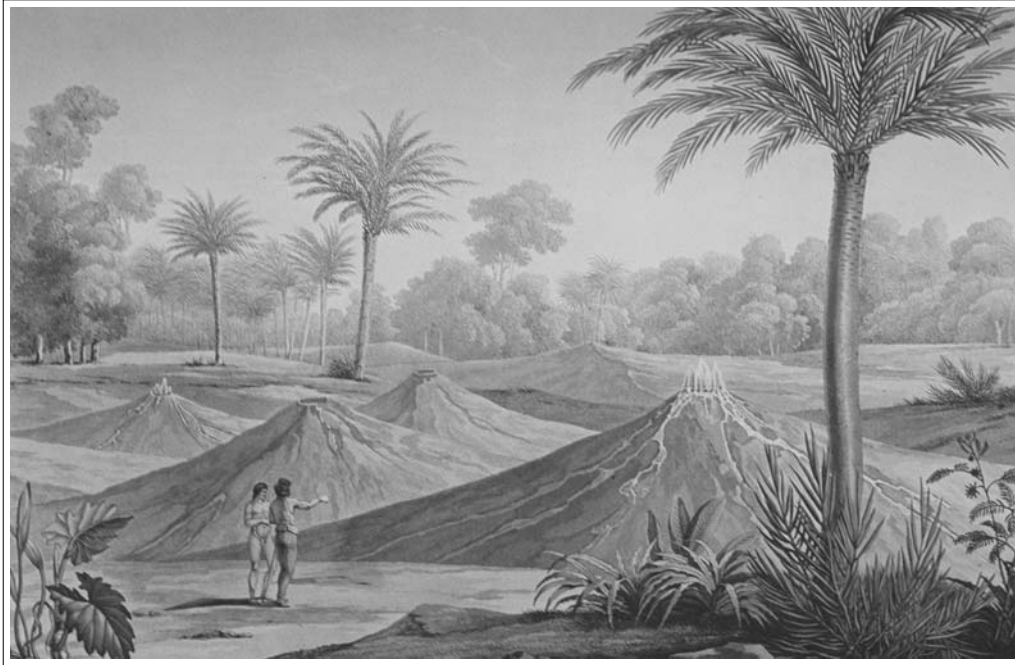


FIGURE 2.14 “Volcanoes in Turbaco”

Engraving by Bouquet based on Humboldt, *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810.
Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis
Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

domain of animated nature, we must admit also, that both increase by civilization, without being produced by it alone. In the great family of nations, no other race unites these advantages to a higher degree than that of Caucasus, or the European. It is only in white men, that the instantaneous penetration of the dermoidal system by the blood can take place; that slight change of the colour of the skin, which adds so powerful an expression to the emotions of the soul. "How can those be trusted, who know not how to blush" says the European, in his inveterate hatred of the Negro and the Indian. (*Narrative*, vol. 3: 228–29)

Though the scientist unblushingly casts himself as a member of a superior race better connected to its emotions, still this passage represents a transition. "Barbarism" is no longer strictly a scientific category, but something classifiable according to a hierarchy of the spirit, which is a gesture more recognizable as romantic. When he attributes to civilization the property of increasing certain reactions of the human organism, Humboldt is establishing a relationship that does not depend on science of the eighteenth-century variety but rather suggests a more sociological way of thinking, highly positivist, in which a degenerated environment necessarily degenerates a race or group.

If we accept the idea that Humboldt's native people are not real people but symbols within his geographic scheme, perhaps this suggests an answer to a question that has been latent during my reading of his text and whose precise answer I do not have. Why are there no women in Humboldt's atlas? Why in so painstaking a geography does he omit half of the population he sees? From the text we cannot tell whether any women accompanied the expedition, although, given the infrastructure required by a year's voyage along the Orinoco, it is certainly possible that they did.²⁵ But if the indigenous people are primarily information to feed into the geographer's classificatory table of human races, if they are pieces to complete his encyclopedist's knowledge of the cosmos, why should he represent any women? The equation is generic-naked-man = inferior-races. Within the scheme established by previous travel literature, a naked woman would have symbolized an object of desire, the territory available to the European conqueror. But Humboldt was a conqueror of knowledge, not of lands. The latent desire in this narrator is not for native women but for guides who know the route and share this knowledge candidly, in all their nakedness. The lone female figure in the atlas is a representation of the typical Mexican woman, fully dressed (Figure 2.15). Any other women are encyclopedic symbols, such as the "America" of the frontispiece whose function is to represent alliances among white men, among the Europeans and the new governing class.

The image put forth at the textual and graphic level, in sum, has much more to do with the pre-text that was part of the traveler's baggage than it does with the complex situation of the voyage itself. The full reality of the



FIGURE 2.15 “Indigenous from Mechoacan”

Engraving by Bouquet. *Atlas pittoresque du voyage*. Paris: F. Schoell, 1810. Taken from facsimile edition, Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1972, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

American ethnic groups is not present in either the narrative text or the atlas. American ethnic groups are represented as passive objects of the traveler's gaze: analyzable and classifiable. Throughout the colonies, these same groups were fighting for their lands against the creoles, but in Humboldt's text their political agency is forgotten. The indigenous people, mulattos, run-aways, and slaves who were rising in bloody revolts throughout the continent do not exist in Humboldt's graphical representations. The non-European peoples of *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* are geographic pieces whose political reality is unknown. An episode in one of Humboldt's journals summarizes the narrator's general attitude as well as offering evidence of latent racial conflict. In his account of an argument over local politics which he witnessed, which demonstrates the creoles' fear of the fury of the repressed groups, Humboldt sharpens his geographer's pen and says:

While they descanted on the hatred of the Mulattoes against the free Negroes and Whites, on the wealth of the monks, and the difficulty of holding slaves in obedience, a cold wind, that seemed to descend from the lofty summit of the Silla de Caracas, enveloped us in a thick fog, and put an end to this animated conversation. (*Narrative*, vol. 3: 414–15)

As in the atlas, gigantic and uninhabited nature is not the place of its inhabitants. It is there to serve the European narrator. In the form of a fog that covers any mention of interethnic conflicts, geography becomes an accomplice in an act of silencing. I am not denying what has been repeated and repeated about Humboldt's democratic ideas and their influence in the development of a pro-independence discourse.²⁶ But it is important to understand what the convictions of the French Revolution represented for Latin America in the context of different ethnic groups, slavery, and the confrontation of various races in the colony.²⁷ Anderson has pointed out that the liberal leaders of the independence movement throughout the continent owned slaves or were landlords commanding the labor of masses of native people. Ileana Rodríguez argues that any analysis of a political transition is complicated by race and gender: "In mestizo and mulatto republics, ethnicity is always a threat, a lurking phantom, a fluid term shot through with fear . . ." (17).

If Humboldt's maps may be read as a palimpsest in which to glimpse the knowledge that the American natives shared with Humboldt, his journals and illustrations are also a superimposition of discourses. They involve pre-texts about America into which other discourses find their way, including that of the fear with which the American whites viewed the possibility of ethnic revolts. Quite evidently in Humboldt's atlas, and more subtly in his travel narrative, his representations exalt a monumental nature in which the indigenous human inhabitants are one more exotic fruit, a strange and beautiful fruit.

They have been stripped of their scientific knowledge about a geography that only they understood. Now it has been systematized by the geographer.

The ignorance from which Humboldt awakened America, for which Bolívar so loyally thanked him, was replaced by the knowledge of a territory in which the alliance between Europe and the creole class was possible. The new geography allowed re-ordering of the boundaries of the new nations within a liberal ideology of free trade among members of the governing classes. In the process, it left evidence of a self-image in which the other ethnic groups are seen as marginal and women are represented only by a symbol for use in the making of alliances. The classic confrontation of Civilization versus Barbarism established by colonial relations, in which America was barbarous and Europe was civilized, went through a displacement quite useful to the emerging governing class: barbarism was now associated with the native American ethnic groups, and civilization with the Caucasian races from whom the creoles were directly descended. In the margins and between the lines of the travel narrative and the cartography that represent this transition, however, a story of complicity and silencing may also be read.

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PART II

THE DAUGHTER OF THE EAST AND THE PARIAH:
VOYAGE OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Introduction to Part II

AMONG THE IMAGES left to us by the European Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Enlightenment, those of the world travelers stand out. We can see them so clearly, those great men who circled the seas, gave their names to continents, traded mirrors for gold and pearls for words, unleashed campaigns of ethnocide to impose new religions on vast cultures, and sketched out maps that would define the farthest borders of empires. Without hesitation, we can recount the history of European expansion through such key figures as Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus, James Cook, and Alexander von Humboldt. In so doing, we can construct a coherent narrative in which travel and expansion are twins, in which passionate accounts of distant landscapes color in the blank “*terras incognitas*” of the older maps and engender a cartography of kingdoms to come. None of this raises any doubts. It is when we begin to think about women travelers that the questions begin.

What about those women? There are no images of them as ship captains, nor commanders of expeditions, nor intrepid conquerors, nor standard-bearers of the Crusades. Yet they set off from the European center toward the ends of the earth as carriers of Western culture all the same. What kind of geography did they construct? How did they travel? Where did they go? And why?

Geographic accounts and maps that have come down to us often equate women with the lands themselves.¹ Before there was yet a complete map of the American continent, Jan Van de Straet’s allegory depicted that continent as an indigenous woman in a hammock, waiting for Amerigo Vespucci to give her his name. (See Figure 2.4.) America as a woman awaiting penetration and conquest was a common metaphor in travel literature.² But where do we find the women traveling *to* America? Surely they existed. Women too found the temptation of weighing anchor for far-off lands irresistible. In the vast bibliography of world travel and travelers over the centuries to all parts of the globe, there do appear limited numbers of women who achieved fame. The specialized literature leads us to suspect that there were always women travelers, many of them since forgotten. Egeria, a pilgrim to the Holy Land in the year 400, wrote an account which Mary Campbell holds to be the first travel

text. In 1669, the German scholar Maria Merian made the much-feared Atlantic crossing for the sole purpose of studying the insects of Suriname. In 1660, at the age of fifteen, Catalina de Erauso shed her novice's habit, disguised herself in the military trousers of a conquistador, and took ship for South America as a soldier of the Spanish crown. These three dazzling examples lead us to an obvious conclusion: women, like men, have always traveled, and they have done so for reasons too many to name.³

Nonetheless, their accounts were not published to any significant degree until the nineteenth century, when a true "boom" in women's travel literature began. By 1889, the female traveler was a well enough established figure for a guidebook to appear in London: *Hints to Lady Travellers at Home and Abroad* (Davidson 1899). The publication suggests a certain demand. The causes of this boom are numerous and not easy to define. Some observers say that nineteenth-century women traveled to escape social restrictions,⁴ while others see a change in patterns of conduct (Hamalian 1981). Some point to the abundance of female travelers during the Victorian era, and the texts they wrote about their voyages, as "visible evidence which casts doubt on the traditional twentieth century images of Victorian Culture and the role of women in it" (Morgan, 19).

In the case of America, the expansion of capitalism and establishment of commercial shipping lines allowed travelers to undertake voyages with extremely diverse goals, including strictly personal ones. Women joined in this process as well. With the nineteenth-century elevation of individual sensibility, the travel narrative as we know it today took shape: an account of a geographic space that has been visited, described in the first person and explicitly shaped by the narrator's opinions and observations. That genre allowed for the publication and popularization of women's travel accounts with a general tendency toward autobiography. That does not necessarily mean women's travels were any more numerous than before.

Quite early in the century, before the emergence of travel guides or of female travelers as writers, the Englishwoman Maria Graham (1785–1842) embarked along with her husband Capt. Thomas Graham on the frigate *Doris*, bound for Brazil and Chile. She left England in 1821 and arrived in Valparaiso on Sunday April 28 of the following year—with her husband's corpse, for he had died during the rounding of Cape Horn. Graham remained in Chile until 1823, and in 1824 published her book *Journal of My Residence in Chile During the Year 1822*. Nine years later, Flora Tristán (France, 1803–1844) boarded *Le Mexicain* alone, her destination Peru. She was taking flight from a difficult family situation and going in search of an inheritance. She stayed in Peru until July 16, 1834, and in 1838 she published her book *Pérégrinations d'une paria* about her experiences. My analysis will focus on these two books because they pioneered the type of South American travel book which became popular during the rest of the nineteenth century.

Tristán and Graham belonged to the first group of travelers who, in the footsteps of the Enlightenment explorers, began to inundate Latin America. The conflicts over independence, the instability of Spanish colonial power, and the opening up of enormous economic opportunities all proved a particularly tempting attraction for the “capitalist vanguard.”⁵ Although neither of the two women was traveling with commercial or military aims, the countries from which they came had great interest in the markets then emerging in Latin America. Both travelers shared the blind faith in economic progress that nourished the driving force of European and North American capitalism. Colonial America had been, for Enlightenment travelers, a place to seek nature. Now the new nations, struggling to free their commerce from centuries of Spanish restrictions, represented an opportunity for mercantile expansion for which other foreign powers were prepared to do battle. In addition, the independence wars in their own right were sadly beneficial to foreign powers.⁶

Besides the characteristics that mark the two texts as pioneers in a rhetoric of capitalist expansion, the books are exceptional—and deserve to be paired—for other reasons. Both women were alone in America, an uncommon situation for the time.⁷ Because Tristán was the niece of the influential royalist landowner Pío Tristán, and Graham was a personal friend of Lord Cochrane, an English officer hired by the Chilean navy, both were exceptionally well positioned to view local contests for power from the point of view of their protagonists. Thus, their texts became firsthand accounts of those historically important conflicts. The authors’ being women traveling alone also made them relatively more stationary; thus, their travel accounts are different from those of the men who headed scientific enterprises that allowed them to range freely over the territory.

Shirley Foster, in her book *Across New Worlds: Nineteenth-Century Women Travellers and Their Writings*, offers a fine analysis of how, in travel writing, gender difference becomes an advantage for women. The restrictions imposed by the inflexibility of their societies and by what was or was not expected of a woman allowed them access to places and points of view rarely available to male travelers. Foster says:

First, there is the treatment of topics not generally explored in any depth in male travel writing. These included the appearance, costume, and manners of women; details of domestic life such as household management and culinary habits, behavior towards children, marriage customs, and female status; the importance of space in the physical environment. All of these often suggest a covert means of challenging the male norm and establishing a new female oriented genre. (24)

Thus, we find in Tristán’s and Graham’s accounts the Latin American women who are conspicuous only by their absence in the works of Humboldt and

Mutis. For the female narrators, women exist. They exist in all the complexity of their personal desires, their cultural customs, their different social classes, races, and marital states. Tristán's text, moreover, passionately denounces the repression to which women were victims and describes the forms of resistance they had created. The female travelers' texts add real women to the map of Andean America; they draw in the personal conflicts women confronted in their suffocating social environments.

Foster demonstrates, too, how the mere fact of traveling became a sort of liberation for women. By 1820, this phenomenon had already produced a reaction in the French press, which published articles and cartoons ridiculing female travelers.⁸ If these women suffered discrimination in their travels for the fact of being women, however, their European origins and their white skins allowed them to assume a position of superiority as narrators with respect toward any other race, whether African or indigenous. Flora Tristán and Maria Graham were both educated European women. They can thus be placed within the Enlightenment-derived figure of the intellectual traveler who has sufficient distance to recognize and study the "other." That position led the two travelers to observe the customs of the local societies. In their texts, their points of view mark them as foreigners, yet the writers' subjectivity is doubly complex. On the one hand they are bearers of an imperial discourse, while on the other hand, as women, their authority is suspect. On one hand, they are producers of social science; on the other, they travel alone without the supporting resources of a scientist. Thus, an ethnographic discourse about America motivated by the concerns of nineteenth-century realism makes its first appearance on the pages of these female travel writers. They explore interior geographies, generating a new type of geographic knowledge. The space of this geography centers on the bedroom. Its borders are the balcony and the windows, its scientific instruments the indiscreet question and razor-sharp commentary. Its map hangs in the balance between romantic tale and realities laid bare.

The question that will orient my reading of these texts is the following: How did these two female travelers negotiate between the expectations of the Victorian era and the interests of empire? This question, fundamental for questioning gendered power relations in colonial situations, may lead in many directions. To begin with, there is the telling fact that the same Victorian public that witnessed a rigid social division and hierarchy according to gender with reference to the domestic and public spheres, also witnessed a boom in travel literature written by women. How did the travelers, in their texts, negotiate the tensions between their required roles as "angels of the hearth" and their public work as writers and adventurers? What were the links between gender and travel writing, when the travel was from the imperial center to the colonial periphery? How did the race and social class of the travelers affect the type of negotiation they undertook in their accounts? The

key terms here are gender and empire. The line of exploration is the one proposed by Anne McClintock in her book *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (1995):

Imperialism cannot be fully understood without a theory of gender power. Gender power was not the superficial patina of empire, an ephemeral gloss over the more decisive mechanics of class or race; rather, gender dynamics were, from the outset, fundamental to the securing and maintenance of the imperial enterprise. (7)

If the cult of domesticity as feminine prerogative was central to the formation of the British imperial identity,⁹ it is a fact that the discourses that constituted both social constructions (the domestic as prerogative of the feminine, and the imperial center as the superior realm) nourished each other in intricate complications and contradictions.

In analyzing the travel narratives of these two writers, I begin with the idea that the representation of gender in the text is a product of the conflict between social expectations and the particularities of the narrative subject. I assume that social requirements are often questioned or mocked, and the tension so generated affects the formal decisions seen in the text. Here it is important to pay close attention to what, unfortunately, feminist studies often overlook: the fact that social expectations about gender do not affect all women in the same way. When we speak of a “Victorian mentality,” we are speaking only of a reference point around which different personal negotiations take place. These in turn are affected by race, social class, and the interests of women as individuals. The following reading takes for granted that the formation of the subject is relational. Each of these female travelers, as a subject, is a prism through which social expectations are refracted at a specific time and in a specific place.¹⁰

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Graham: The White Daughter of the East, or A Foreigner in Indomitable Lands

Marco Polo imagined answering (or Kublai Khan imagined his answer) that the more one was lost in unfamiliar quarters of distant cities, the more one understood the other cities he had crossed to arrive there; and he retraced the stages of his journeys, and he came to know the port from which he had set sail, and the familiar places of his youth, and the surroundings of home, and a little square of Venice where he gamboled as a child.

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

THE FIRST EDITION of Maria Graham's 1824 book, *A Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822*,¹ contains a reproduction of a drawing in the author's own hand (Figure 3.1), in which she herself appears as a character. Though this print does not appear in any subsequent edition (perhaps because of its poor quality), it has a special value because in it the author gives us her own view of herself in the act of traveling. The picture, which bears the simple caption, "Travelling in Spanish America," shows the traveler looking cautiously out the window of a mule-drawn carriage. There is an unidentified white man beside her, and an indigenous man driving the mules. The location could well be Chile, because the Andean landscape of snow-covered mountains is similar to other drawings made by Graham during that part of her South American journey. The point of view, though, is not the totalizing gaze at a landscape, which characterizes other drawings included in the book (Figure 3.2). This print gives us a portrait, a close-up, in which we can catch a glimpse of the expression on the traveler's own face, just as someone standing along the edge of the road might have done. It is not the image of a visited country but of the traveler in the act of observing, what we might



FIGURE 3.1 “Travelling in Spanish America”

Engraving by Edward Finden based on Graham. Taken from Graham, *Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822*, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

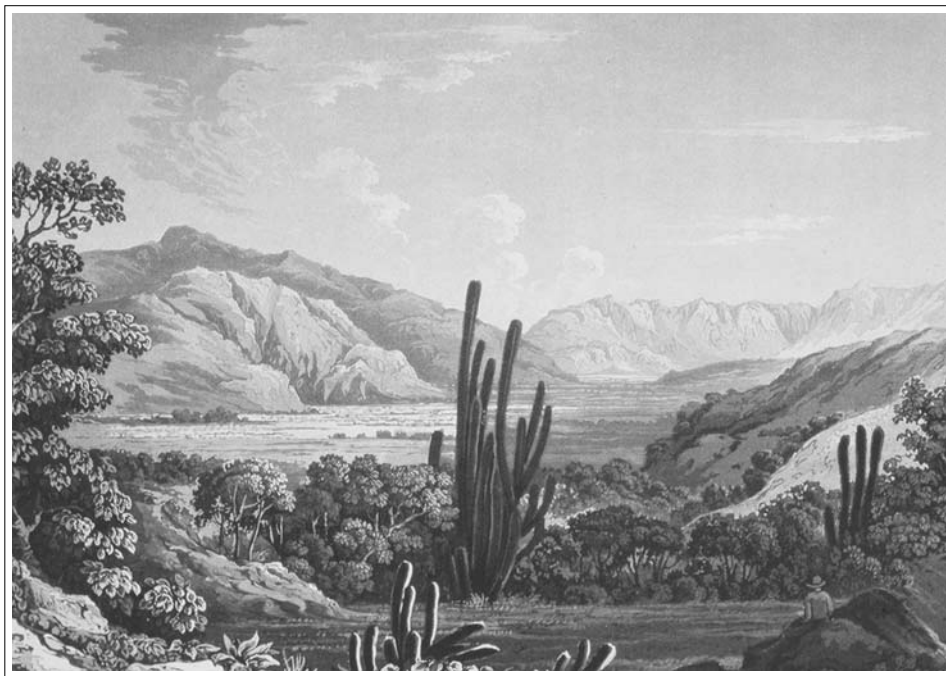


FIGURE 3.2 “View of Cuesta de Prado”

Engraving by Edward Finden based on Graham. Taken from Graham, *Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822*, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

call a self-reflective pose. The following reading of Graham's work intends to investigate the circumstances that encouraged such self-reflection during Graham's voyage—that is, to investigate how the narrator discovered her otherness in the eyes that were watching her. The narrative contains a level on which Graham, perhaps like every other traveler, departs from the point of view of her own eager eyes, which are busily seeing and describing every new thing, so as to become aware that she too is being seen and perceived as foreign. This perception, in turn, signified a good deal more in the Chile of 1822, where Graham was living through the political tumult of the post-Independence days.²

Maria Graham, later known as Lady Callcott, arrived in Chile from England. Her original plan was to accompany her husband on a diplomatic mission, but the trip by way of Tierra del Fuego was too much for the English captain, who died en route. Graham faced this situation armed with her historian's pen. However, in the end she fell ill and, in the midst of the confusion following an earthquake, became sure that she did not belong in such lands of ungovernable nature and ungovernable people as well. She decided to leave the South behind. Her narrative of this voyage, and the illustrations that accompany it, offer testimony about the era, about the transformations Graham experienced, and about their effects on the narrator's subjectivity. The book is a treasure trove of ethnographic observations which offer information not only about Chile but also about Victorian society and British-Chilean relations. However, the reader will also find a sort of postcolonial "guilt" with which the emissary of European civilization confronts the Chilean past and the colonialist legacy. We must remember that England was at that moment at the peak of its imperial expansion in the East, and the travel narratives of that epoch allow us to see how the European constructed his or her identity as "foreigner" in moments of colonial transition.

In this particular case, we might well imagine that an Englishwoman circulating by herself through the streets of Valparaiso would provoke the attention of the local populace. And that attention, that gaze as it is implicitly appears in the drawing of Maria Graham in her coach, must in turn have provoked some reaction in the personal journal that she wrote during her trip. Recent literary criticism of travel literature for the age of European expansion has explored in detail the European subject's creation of an "other" and the attendant ideological and economic implications of such a discourse. But when we examine the phenomenon from *this* side of the Atlantic, what is interesting is to see how the local geography and local experience influenced the formation of the foreign subjectivity. When Graham constructed an image of Chile, she did so under the influence of her origins and her personal situation. Yet, at the same time, she changed her image and began to think of herself as a *foreigner*. That is, she thought about how she was seen by the local populace, as the self-reflective pose of that drawing represents. What

happens when the European feels she is a foreigner? How does she see herself in the context of this new and different reality? What image of herself does the Chilean gaze confer on Maria Graham?

Approaching Graham's text in this way is not a mere caprice. The journal itself offers episodes in which Graham ponders her image. The narrator wonders about her own authority, which calls our attention not only to the modern features of Graham's prose, but also to the voyage of internal transformation which her narrative subject experiences.

I am not claiming that the text is fundamentally introspective. We are dealing with an English traveler in Chile. She is a daughter of the most expansive empire of the early nineteenth century, a woman who has already traveled to India, who has been married to a captain in the British navy, who herself comes from an aristocratic and military family, and whose eye for commerce anticipates the rhetoric of the hundreds of British travelers who would soon inundate Hispanic America (and especially the Southern Cone) in search of markets and commerce.³ It is important to understand, too, the nature of the British-Chilean relationship at the moment of Graham's journey. On the one hand, all of South America held promise for the industrial development of Britain, the world's new mercantile leader.⁴ On the other, Britain had supported the South American independence movements with capital, arms, and political influence. In particular, a British fleet had helped Chile to defeat Spanish forces in the Pacific. We should not be surprised that one of the first things in Chile to impress Graham was that

English tailors, shoemakers, saddlers, and inn-keepers, hang out their signs in every street; and the preponderance of the English language over every other spoken in the chief streets, would make one fancy Valparaiso a coast town in Britain. (131)

However, I am saying that Maria Graham's personal situation, along with the historical moment, helps us to read the episodes in her journal in which the foreigner sees herself and talks about herself as part of the landscape she is visiting. There is a particularly eloquent moment in which she has been in the country for several months and has joined an excursion to Salto de Agua, a series of artificial waterfalls constructed by the Araucanians who had lived on the outskirts of Santiago. She finds herself alone for a brief time, during which she suddenly experiences a discursive hallucination which, for our purposes, serves as an allegory of her situation as an English traveler in Chilean territory:

I was a few minutes apart from my companions; and, as a dense cloud rolled from the Andes across the sky, I could, in the spirit of Ossian, have believed that the soul of some old Cacique had flitted by; and, if he regretted that his name and nation were no longer supreme here, he was not

ungratified at the sight of the smiling cultivated plain his labours had tended to render fruitful; nor, it may be, of me, as one of the white children of the East, whence freedom to the sons of the Indians was once more to arise. However that may be, the cloud passed, and my good horse began to make way up . . . (213)

My goal is to analyze the ambiguous elements of this allegory, keeping in mind the “self-reflective” drawing with which I began. I want to see how Maria Graham constructs her image as a foreigner observed, how she generates her discursive authority, and what implications power relations have in her narrative. Maria paints herself as a foreigner within Chilean geography, just as she reaffirms herself as a “civilized” Englishwoman and constructs her English culture as the hope for Chilean progress. That rhetoric of Europe as Latin America’s “economic hope” is one more link in a chain of discourses present in travel literature, determined by colonial economic dependence.

THE HORSEWOMAN: “CHILD OF THE EAST”

Maria Dundas, born in the north of England in 1785, was the daughter of an American refugee and a British naval officer. She enjoyed a privileged education and leaned especially toward languages, writing, and painting. From childhood she was afflicted with tuberculosis, which would immobilize her in the final years of her life. At twenty-three, however, she embarked on her first overseas voyage along with her brothers and her father who had been promoted to admiral. In India she married Thomas Graham and (making use of a privilege reserved exclusively for captains’ wives) began to travel the high seas with him. Her life can be sketched in terms of her voyages and the narratives she subsequently wrote. *Journal of a Residence in India* appeared in 1812, *Letters to India* in 1814, and six years later she published *Three Months Passed in the Mountains East of Rome During the Year 1819* as well as an essay on Poussin. In 1821 she departed for South America, where she lived for a year in Brazil. On April 28, 1822, she arrived in Valparaiso along with Thomas Graham’s corpse. She spent a year in Chile before returning to Brazil, where she became the tutor of Princess Doña María, later Queen of Portugal. In 1824, back in England, she published two travel journals, one dedicated to Brazil and the other to Chile. She married the painter Augustus Wall Callcott in 1828, becoming Lady Callcott in the process. In 1829 she published a history of Spain, became partially paralyzed, and began the book that would finally make her famous, *Little Arthur’s History of England*. Thus, the author who concerns us was already a seasoned writer when she arrived in America, a professional traveler, connected to influential circles in England, and approaching forty years of age. As a narrator, Graham communicated a sense of previous knowledge which conveyed authority, though

her narratives were met with public suspicion nonetheless.⁵ She arrived in Chile alone thanks to a twist of fate, but the political connections she inherited from her late husband gave her access to the internal affairs of the local ruling class, to which she dedicated a good part of her text. She was able to establish friendships and alliances with the creole elite, among whom Bernardo O'Higgins (1778–1842) particularly stands out. Chile's political intrigues also included many men of her own nationality who were in that country either on business or in connection with the military strategy of the Independence War.⁶ Rival factions emerged within the new government, and Graham's book makes explicit reference to the dispute between the leader of the independence movement, José de San Martín, and O'Higgins, as well as to O'Higgins's alliance with Lord Thomas Cochrane, who had his own differences with San Martín. In the text Graham takes sides among these factions, while at the same time honoring all of them as patriots giving birth to a nation.

Graham's ties with this Chilean ruling class grew during her residence in the country, and the text plainly reveals a self-definition as a "white child of the East" who is also a member of the new civilizing class. We must remember that the privileged captain's wife who had left England arrived in Valparaíso as a widow in a far-off land, unsure even how she was to return to her country. In the first part of her book, the narrative voice belongs to a subject who is, above all, lamenting her own her personal pain.

This is but a sad day. The *Doris* sailed early, and I feel again alone in the world; in her are gone the only relations, the only acquaintances I have in this wide country. . . . I cannot forget that I am a widow, unprotected, and in a foreign land, separated from all my natural friends by distant and dangerous ways, whether I return by sea or land! (129)

Little by little, Graham begins to take an interest in her surroundings. The first descriptions of Valparaíso life come to the reader as part of the narrator's efforts to acquire a house and furniture, and to learn the basics of survival. The professional writer who had already written travel books—and the woman of great intellectual curiosity who Graham must have been—gradually begins to regain authority over the subject and to render judgments about what she sees: "To-day, for the first time since I came *home*, I rode to the port; and had the leisure to observe . . . the wharf, if one may give that name to the platform before the custom house" (130). It is interesting to note that, as Graham goes on to assume the role of solo traveler, she ponders how her perception has changed. She notes a tendency toward realism in this change:

While I had another to communicate with, I use to see the fairest side of every picture; now I suspect myself of that growing selfishness, that looks

with coldness or dislike on all not conformable to my own tastes and ideas, and that sees but the sad realities of things. The poetry of life is not over; but I begin to feel that Crabbe's pictures are truer than Lord Byron's. (134)

The romantic narrator of Graham's Indian and Italian travel books had been concerned primarily with observation and illustration of mythological monuments. It is impossible to determine whether or not the transformation of this subject was due to her now being a woman traveling alone. What we can say for sure is that she identifies the change with her Chilean experience. And we can note that this observation allows her to begin the ethnographic observations that characterize her Chilean journal and differentiate it from her previous travel accounts. Graham's observations about the groups that make up Chilean society combine an irritating ethnocentrism with a detailed consideration of ethnic differences. When she describes her visit to O'Higgins's house, for instance, she relates a scene in which a group of indigenous girls comes in to greet the political leader:

I was very much pleased . . . when I saw several wild looking little girls come into the room, and run up to him, and cling about his knees, and found they were little orphan Indians rescued from slaughter on the field of battle. It appears that the Indians, when they make their inroads on the reclaimed grounds, bring their wives and families with them; and should a battle take place and become desperate, the women usually take part in it. Should they lose it, it is not uncommon for the men to put to death their wives and children to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy. . . . The director now gives a reward for all persons, especially women and children saved on these occasions. The children are to be educated and employed hereafter as mediators between their nation and Chile, and, to this end, care is taken that they should not forget their native tongue. (207)

Descriptions such as these offer the reader fundamental information about the brutal process of colonization and expropriation which had taken place and was still taking place in frontier areas. The fact that Graham is aware of the clashes among different ethnic groups within Chile differentiates her from most of the European travelers to the Southern Cone who were intent only on the economic opportunities offered by the new nations. There is a connection between her observation of Chilean ethnic relations and her growing consciousness of herself as a white foreigner whose presence could be problematic for some members of Chilean society. We may recall her above-cited allegory about the imaginary chief looking down from heaven. She recognizes her own doubt about what opinion the chief might have, and she presents his opinion in ambiguous fashion: "nor, it may be, of me, as one of the white children of the East." The European traveler rarely questions his or her

own superiority in the eyes of the local people. Graham does, although her writing then hurries to order things in such a hierarchical way that her European status is not dethroned.

The same observant spirit that permits Graham to see herself in racial terms also prompts her to delve into many levels of Chilean life. This is what makes her book a true ethnographic document. For instance, Graham learns to make ceramics with the local potters, who share with her their traditional secrets of working with the clay. One modern commentator sees her as a kind of social heroine who was willing to descend to the level of the lowest (Mavor xii). Moreover, Graham's detailed observations are not limited to the social sphere. We know from her biography that she was well schooled in botanical classification, and we can find this reflected in the *Journal*: "I saw, for the first time, the lucuma (*Achræs lucumo*), a fruit rare here. . . . There is also the chimoya (an *Anonna*, one of the *coadunatae* of Linnæus's natural method) so famous in Perú" (158). What she learns about local uses of plants allows her to make sociological comparisons with Europe, and to tell stories that combine local color and a certain sense of humor:

I found, however, that witches here do much the same things as in Europe; they influence the birth of animals, nay, even of children; spoil milk, wither trees and control the winds. It is scarcely thirty years since the master of a trading ship was thrown into the prison of the Inquisition for making a passage of thirty-five days from Lima, a time then considered too short to have performed the voyage in without preternatural assistance. (161)

Graham does not miss any opportunity to record the details of domestic life in the various houses to which she has access. On one horseback trip in the mountains, she and her friend "Miss H." are invited to eat in a peasant household. Here is how she reports the particulars of the meal:

We found the mother sitting alone on the *estrada*, supported by her cushions, with a small low round table before her, on which was spread a cotton cloth, by no means clean. The daughters only served their mother; but ate their own meals in the kitchen by the fire. . . . The first dish that appeared was a small platter of melted marrow, into which we were invited to dip the bread that had been presented to each, the old lady setting the example and even presenting bits thoroughly sopped, with her fingers, to Miss H., who contrived to pass them on to a puppy who sat behind her. (159)

Graham's eye is as attentive to occurrences in the street as it is to what she finds within doors. Religious celebrations and processions, for instance, always draw a strong rebuke from her pen. For her, Chilean Catholicism is fanatical. In this type of account, the narrative subject is doing two things simultaneously. On one hand she is employing the rhetoric of close observation of customs, and so

serves as a unique source on local history. On the other, the subject is constructing a community that will serve as a referent to help define her own supposed superiority, thus compensating for a lack of authority stemming from her being both female and foreign.

The travel account that lingers over the geography of local customs, a type of narrative characteristic of women travelers, was a keystone in the generation of new discourses, including that of ethnography. This outlook signified a change in direction of the so-called "Human Sciences" to which the Enlightenment had given birth.⁷ In texts such as Graham's, we have moved on to a new stage in the development of social science: that of the observation and description of "native" people, the basis of modern anthropology. Until the time of Graham's voyage, the geographic discourse about America had not dwelled on either interiors or domestic customs. The contribution of this new kind of text constituted one more step in the construction of the image of the new countries.

From another point of view, however, this ethnographer's gaze allows Graham to reaffirm her own cultural identity, presenting herself as the carrier of customs that are much more refined. She establishes a difference between the England she comes from and these Chilean villages where no one hesitates to share the same straw for drinking *mate*, or to eat from the same fork—these lands where one must haul along one's own bed and bedding on local trips because most of the inns do not provide them. At the same time, the narrator presents herself as braver and more daring than the locals:

I felt little fatigue from the ride, which is only thirty miles, but my poor maid was so fagged that I began to regret having brought her. . . . The inn is kept by an English Negro, who understands something about the comforts required by an Englishman, and really presents a very tolerable resting-place to a traveler. (194)

The narrator thus establishes herself as an intermediary between two extremes of culture, England and Chile. Her heroism, as she sees it, lies in bearing the discomforts of the southern country after having previously enjoyed the privileges of an English aristocrat:

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still," Cowper said at home, and Lord Byron at Calais. For my part, I believe if they had either of them been in Valparaiso, they would have forgotten that there were any faults at all in England. It is very pretty and very charming to read of delicious climates . . . but is really very disagreeable to perform the retrograde steps to a state that counteracts the blessings of climate, and places less comfort in a palace in Chile than in a labourer's hut in Scotland. (134)

What is particularly interesting in this account is what it tells us about the ethnocentric outlook generated within Great Britain. It reminds us not

only that the colonialist spirit was alive and well in Europe, but also that, when facing her own uncertainty about local perceptions of one of her own race, Graham appeals to the superiority conferred by her social class to reaffirm the authority of her narrative subject. In her daydream about how the ancient chief might view her from heaven, Maria sees herself as “white” and “civilized”; both of these attributes grant her the authority to bring “freedom to the sons of the Indians.” That mission offers us fertile ground for discussion. The first step is to return to the allegory, and to see why the “smiling cultivated plain” constitutes the backdrop against which she imagines the chief to be viewing her. She makes the plain a symbol of her civilizing mission.

“THE SMILING CULTIVATED PLAIN”

“Hearing maps” is the way Lady Callcott later remembered her geography classes. She was young and thirsting for knowledge. Having lost her mother, she lived in a boarding school for rich girls in southern England, and there, as she would go on to tell it, her love of travel and of writing about far-off geography was born.⁸ Nonetheless, in this attachment to “hearing maps” we must suspect something more than the simple romantic memory of a precocious girl in geography class. We must consider what the map of a world to be traveled meant for a member of the British aristocracy in the first half of the nineteenth century. Buoyed by the success of the East India Company, with the French as rivals and the Spanish empire in complete crisis, England was the imperial power enjoying the greatest expansion. Its strategy was one of international commerce.⁹ Graham had been in India, where she had met the most influential figures in the service of the Crown. Her *Journal of a Residence in India* (1812) is, in large part, an account of the relations established by the family during this trip. The map Maria Graham constructs of Chile, however, more resembles a commercial navigation chart of the “new” country as seen by British interests. The first edition even includes among its appendices a compendium of Chilean trees. Alongside the political documents of O’Higgins and Cochrane appears this “Account of the useful Trees and Shrubs of Chile, drawn up for the Court of Spain, in obedience to the Royal Edict of July 20th 1789; and forwarded with samples of the woods.” (Graham 1824: 498) The text presents itself almost as an act of economic espionage, and in fact it was. The survey of the trees and their possible productive uses was a geographic text of political and commercial value. Beyond the title, we can see this in the way the entries for each species are constructed: details of location, production, and possible means of transport.

It would be unfair to say that Graham’s text is completely commercial in its aims. Unlike the authors of other English travelers’ texts about voyages to

Chile and Argentina,¹⁰ Graham was neither an investor nor an emissary of any commercial firm. Still, the subject interests her, and sometimes she dwells on historical explanations of the problems confronting the country's commercial development:

The cruel policy of Spain with regard to these countries always repressed any attempt at establishing a coasting trade, although the shores of Chile abound with harbors most commodious for the purpose. Hence, these harbors were either not surveyed or so erroneously set down in the published maps as to deter ships of all nations. . . . (173)

Sometimes she analyzes the impossibilities of an internal market, always arguing for the elimination of transport taxes: "But who will grow turnip or beet, when he must pay as much for the harbor dues of a boat to carry it to market as the whole culture has cost?" (174). At one point she even asserts the validity of her text in terms of its contribution to the country's mercantile development. She argues explicitly that Chile's degree of civilization can be measured by its readiness to engage in international commerce. She implicitly identifies her narrative subject as a member of a European nation well-versed in business, who therefore possesses a degree of civilization higher than that of the people she visits:

I have been almost overwhelmed with details about the new regulation of trade, the taxes to be laid on, and the monopolies of the minister Rodriguez . . . it is a severe grievance, and will, of course, at once retard civilization and rob the revenue; for it will drive the people back to their habits of wearing nothing but their household stuffs, and thereby afford less leisure for agriculture, . . . at the same time that discouraging the use of foreign stuffs, the import duties must fail. Are Nations like individuals, who never profit by each other's experience? And must each state have its dark age? (275–76)

The paradigm of Europe as the civilizing power (and Latin America as the territory that must learn from Europe if it is ever to escape from its inferior state) is hardly a new rhetoric. Regarding the "others" as beings who are devoid of memory, incapable of learning from history, is also part of colonialist rhetoric. What is new here is the way Maria Graham's subjectivity gathers authority from being the direct representative of the country that has its finger on the pulse of commerce and consumption.

I paid a visit to Madame Zenteno, the governor's lady, a pleasing, lively little woman, who received me very politely . . . and seems delighted to display the English comforts of the apartment I was received in. An English carpet, an English grate, and even English coals were all very agreeable of

this cold raw day. . . . She is properly anxious to promote a taste for the elegance of civilized life; but under any other circumstances, I should say that it was affectation in her great admiration for everything English. (165)

This type of observation, which denies the locals even the ability to put on a good imitation of the English model, reaffirms Graham as someone on a mission she must fulfil. The perception of herself as civilized martyr suffering in untamed lands becomes sharper after she is attacked by a grave illness and lives through the severe earthquake of December 1822. The narrator's authority wavers, and all that allows her to reaffirm it now is the certainty that her presence in barbarous territory is due to some design that will assure her a place in posterity:

I more than once on the way caught myself smiling over the fanciful resemblances I drew between human life and the scene I was in; or at the fatality which had brought me, an Englishwoman, whose very characteristic is to be the most domestic of creatures, almost to the antipodes, and place me among all the commotions of nature and of society. But if not a sparrow falls unheeded to the ground, I may feel sure that I am not forgotten. Often am I obliged to have recourse to this assurance, to make me bear evils and inconveniences that, none, not the meanest, in my own happy country would submit to without complaint. (334)

The widow abandoned to her fate in the antipodes by personal misfortune must have recourse to all her cultural baggage in order to shape her narrative voice and lend it authority, so that by the end of the book she allies herself with nothing less than the English "liberators." In the above quote, she uses Shakespeare to explain the divine providence of her inevitable destiny as a fallen sparrow.¹¹ Nonetheless, her use of this image may also be viewed as a representation of her romantic feminine subject: a bird fallen into the antipodes, who thanks to her civilizing power rises transformed into the phoenix so as to give a lesson in commercial progress.

This is exactly the model of the problematic subject, as Sara Mills calls it, that women's travel writing generates. What happens is a superimposition of identities. According to Mills, the travelers are trapped between the social demands of femininity and the fact of their being representatives of an imperial power (Mills, vi.). In Graham's case, on one hand she is the lone female traveler confronting specific realities that place her in a situation of inferiority. When she wants to visit the seat of government in Santiago, for instance, she needs first to ascertain, "if there was any objection to a woman going thither" (221). On the other hand, she must justify the audacity of traveling alone in far-off lands and construct herself as the bearer of strength and civilized knowledge. In Graham's constant reaffirmation of herself as a

sophisticated lady with a wide range of knowledge, we can see the confrontation between the civilized and the inferior, as determined by commerce and consumption habits. Yet we can also see the Victorian woman who ought to be “the most domestic creature.” Later, in reading Flora Tristán, we will see a different version of a female traveler representing her problematic status.

The “smiling cultivated plain” upon which Graham imagines that the old chief sees her is also a superimposition of romantic ideas and commercial interests. On one level, she presents American nature as that ungraspable immensity that characterized the texts of the Enlightenment travelers, which she here raises to the point of poetry with a clearly romantic gesture: “But what pen or pencil can impart a thousandth part of the sublime beauty of sunset on the Andes? I gazed on it: ‘till the place became/ Religion, and my heart ran o’er/ in secret worship” (205). But on another level, the hand of those “whites from the East” must appear in the center of this romanticized Andean landscape, so that European markets and texts can point the way out of the pre-commercial barbarian status that oppresses it. The first edition of the *Journal* included a pictorial representation of this theme (Figure 3.3). In the middle of the mountains, an impossibly straight road stretches into the distance. This is more a blueprint for a road than a real one subject to topographical obstacles. It is a road that would present no obstacles to the new “liberators from the East.” English desires for commercial expansion would find their culmination traveling such a straight and unobstructed road.

“THE SOUL OF SOME OLD CACIQUE”

In Graham’s construction of the Andes in a romantic vein, the old Cacique—now converted into a passing cloud—deserves particular attention. From above, he observes a rider in the middle of the mountains. She represents the power “whence freedom to the sons of the Indians was once more to arise.” It is not surprising that the narrator invokes Ossian, the Scottish poet who mythologized the Celtic warriors and greatly influenced romantic literature. Yet the *Journal’s* representation of actual indigenous Chileans is quite different. Graham’s text does not hide her opinions about the Araucanians, who were still fighting for their territories on the frontiers. When she speaks in her introduction about Ambrosio de O’Higgins, Bernardo’s father, she describes him as: “an Irish soldier who, having served in the Spanish armies, afterwards commanded the troop on the frontier of Chile, and having repulsed the Indians, who had once more begun to threaten the tranquility of that state . . . put many of the frontier towns and forts in a state of proper defense” (11).

Graham’s ethnographic voice does allow her to refer to these people from time to time, and she mentions popular fiestas in which indigenous customs

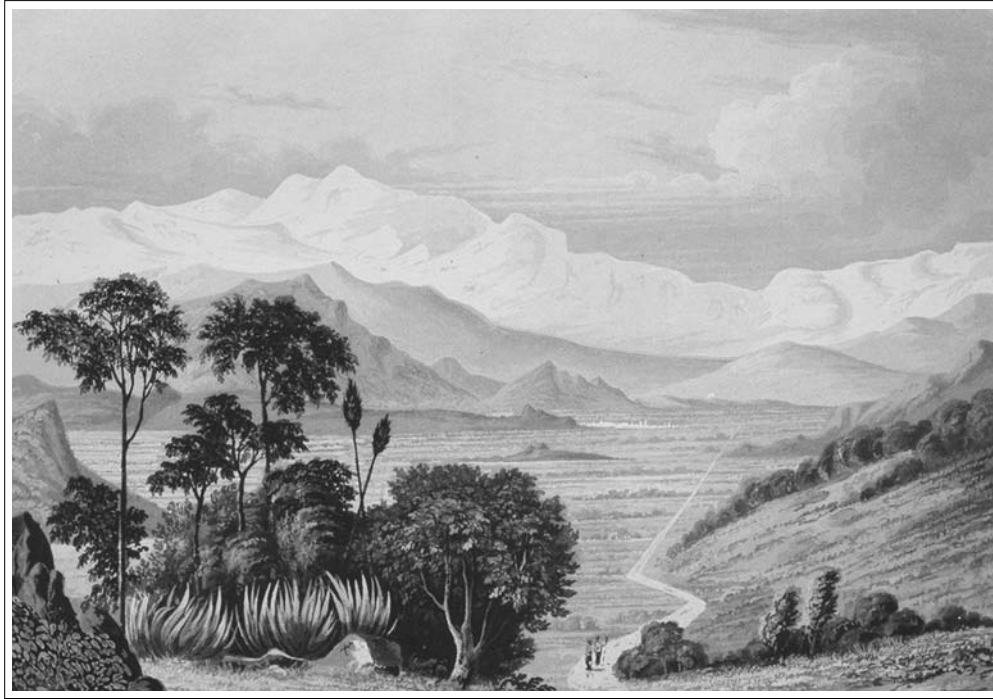


FIGURE 3.3 “View from Cuesta de Prado”

Engraving by Edward Finden based on Graham. Taken from Graham, *Journal of a Residence in Chile During the Year 1822*, at the Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango, Bogotá.

are included, but she adds that “these scenes, however, are only delightful in description” (267). The main thrust of her text assumes that the landscapes are empty, that there is no civilization there, and therefore that human life is absent: “In short, it may have been Italy, but that it wanted the tower and the temple to show that man inhabited it: but here all is too new; and one half expects to see a savage start from the nearest thicket, or to hear a panther roar from the hill” (195). The tendency to call anything American “new” has been a constant in the discourses about the “new” continent. The adjective erases the existence of the territory’s inhabitants. It erases their histories and the genocide that the arrival of the Europeans represented for them. Meanwhile, a parallel myth arises, in which the native American appears as a noble figure who pre-dates the decadence of modernity. According to Mary B. Campbell,¹² the idea, which Rousseau consolidated, can be found in travel narratives reaching back before the Renaissance. With the arrival of the Romantic period, the myth of the Native American would reach its height. Graham’s text offers us an example of this tendency.

The most famous colonial epic poem of Latin America, Alonso de Ercilla’s *La Araucana* (1569–1589), was written about the native people of Chile. They are seen as mythological warriors, comparable to the Greeks and Romans, whose bravery confers nobility. In the historical introduction Graham attaches to her text (to which we will return later), she provides a detailed account of these heroes’ deeds. She describes the scene in which Lautaro, in spite of his loyalty to Spain, rips up his European clothing and, in the name of his country, leads his compatriots to victory with the death of Valdivia. She goes on to tell of the death of Caupolicán and other episodes of that glorious era.

The *cacique* who looks down upon Graham with an imperturbable air is one of those mythologized chieftains from literature. He is not one of the innumerable and nameless “peons” carrying baggage, driving mules, doing the housework—like the man driving the coach in the first illustration. The Mapuches who populated the Chilean territory enter Graham’s text, but not as protagonists or members of the conversation. The first edition of the *Journal* includes an appendix that does speak of the political and social importance of the indigenous people in the whole Andean zone. This is a proclamation by O’Higgins, addressed to the Mapuches, explaining to them that the peoples of the Americas have won their freedom and that they must respect this freedom in order to remain sovereign. What stands out is that the proclamation appears in three versions: English, Spanish, and Quechua. Aside from being a bibliographic curiosity, the document expresses a real situation involving friction between the patriots and the native people, a tension about which Graham obviously was aware. Yet she preferred to ignore it in her account of independence-era conflicts.

What is clear is that (like Graham’s drawing of herself) the paragraph which serves us as allegory has a moment in which the narrator gives a sign

of being intimidated by the character who is watching her: “some old Cacique . . . if he regretted that his name and nation were no longer supreme here. . . .” Maria Graham is conscious that in the eyes of the natives, whether mythologized or real, she belongs to the world of the foreigners who have caused the romanticized chieftain’s lament. The narrative subject is conscious of the differences between the projects of one group and the other, and she allies herself with the group she designates as the “saviors.”

There is another case of discursive hallucination in which Graham adds her personal friend Cochrane to the roster of the conquistadors and, in an equally romantic gesture, raises him upon a historical pedestal that he never really reached. In so doing, she is not only adding historical importance to the English military forces that intervened in Chile, but also adding importance to her own character, since Cochrane is her intimate friend and the one who conducts her back to England. While surveying the bay of Valparaiso, she watches Cochrane’s frigate return victorious from Peru. She imagines:

With what rapture would the breast of Almagro¹³ have been filled, if some Magician could have shown him, in the enchanted glass of futurity, the port of Valdivia filled with vessels from Europe, and from Asia, and from states not yet in existence and our stately vessel gliding smooth and swiftly through them without a sail, against the wind and waves, carrying on her decks a stronger artillery than he ever commanded, and bearing on board a hero whose name, even in Peru and Chile, was to surpass, not only his own, but those of his more famed companions, the Pizarros. (173)

In this delirium, Graham responds haughtily to any possible intimidating stares on the part of the natives. She draws a definitive line according to which the only natives worthy of being individuals in her text either belong to the realm of myth or impassively observe the world from the clouds. She and her people, by contrast, belong to the realm of history. They, like their predecessors, have a mission to fulfill in the development of the lands once ruled by others.

“HOWEVER THAT MAY BE,
THE CLOUD PASSED AND MY GOOD HORSE . . .”

Graham’s introduction to the *Journal* places the English presence in Chile within a chain of historical events. After retelling the feats of the Araucanian warriors, she briefly summarizes the colonial period and devotes a great deal of space to the recent history of Chile and the roles of O’Higgins and Cochrane. In the narrative itself, the interest in Chilean political events represents a moment of change for the narrator, largely coinciding with the arrival of Cochrane in Valparaiso and the friendship that grew up between

them. If the narrative subject who had begun the text lamented being a lone widow who could not muster the enthusiasm to describe anything, a few months later this same subject gushes over the English officer: "If ever I met with genius, I should say it was pre-eminent in Lord Cochrane" (188). From this moment on, her interest in local politics almost completely displaces her observation of social customs, and she even expresses surprise at herself when her text detours into a detailed account of Chilean political events. Lord Cochrane returns to Valparaiso after a great falling out with San Martín, and Graham unleashes an exhaustive analysis of the argument and the political situation. Then she wonders:

But I have been writing away the rainy morning. . . . What have I to do with states or governments, who am living in foreign land by sufferance, and who can tell from experience: "How small of all that human hearts endure / The part that Kings or laws can cause or cure!" (148)

Soon, though, her skepticism will fade and she will devote her complete attention to the fates of those peoples and governments, over which her friend Lord Cochrane does in fact wield great influence. She recognizes the transformation of her interests when she is again surprised to find herself immersed in reading the new Chilean constitution. It is also true that taking an interest in political doings and documents allows her more access to Lord Cochrane, whom she sees as her savior and who others have claimed was later her lover (Avila Martel, 263). In any case her interest in politics and history continues to grow. Not only does the rest of her Chilean journal concentrate on a detailed account of Lord Cochrane's actions, but her later works will also be devoted primarily to historical themes. By the time her account of her voyage to Chile is published, her interest is more historical than it had been when she was writing. The comprehensive introduction to the English edition of 1824 makes her desire to contribute to Chilean historiography evident. The preface she writes to her own book explains that her text is the only written testimony to these political events, because the official reports had all been burned to keep them from falling into Spanish hands.

Her intent was clearly to make the book a text of historical value, completely different from her Indian travel journal, which was couched as a personal letter to a friend. In fact, the first published edition of her Chilean journal is a collection of documents of which the travel narrative forms only one part. There are also a report on what happened after her departure, a memorial addressed to the new convention and signed by the members of the government council that had exercised authority since O'Higgins's renunciation, an account of the actions of the Carrera family written by a Mr. Yates, Cochrane's correspondence, a proclamation by San Martín to the inhabitants of Peru, the compendium of the native trees of Chile, and government doc-

uments produced by Cochrane. The travel text was intended to contribute to the alliance established in its later months between Cochrane and O'Higgins, and it contains very strong criticism of San Martín, whom it accuses of being an ignoramus, smuggler, and even a traitor to the country. Giving over her journal to a report on the disputes between Cochrane and San Martín at their bitterest moment, she undertakes a passionate defense of Cochrane. Graham thus locates herself, and all the English who intervened, as the people best endowed to understand what is happening. She even presents herself as a fundamental factor in the outcome of the political events in Chile, just as Flora Tristán will soon do in the case of Peru.

As an example, let me cite Graham's fascinating rendition of a mystery she herself uncovered. On September 11, she is visiting Santiago, staying in the hacienda of Don Justo Salinas and Doña Ana María, widow of Juan José Carrera who had gone before the firing squad for taking part in a conspiracy against O'Higgins. The entire Carrera family belonged to the opposition, and some had gone into exile. One night Maria is introduced to Don Juan de Buenaventura, whom she describes as a "tonto" (fool). Graham begins to observe this foolish man closely, noting his beauty and a certain cunning, so that he begins to remind her of the character Touchstone in *As You Like It*. She gives the reader a long history of the Carrera family and its importance in Chilean history. Suddenly one night she begins to suspect that the *tonto* is not so dumb. When she mentions in conversation that Bernardo O'Higgins has the best intentions of granting amnesty to victims of political persecution, he reacts strongly. Graham asks him, cleverly, why he is not happy. His strong reaction follows:

He answered quickly; and this time his voice and language corresponded with the dignity of his figure and his fine features—"I happy with farms and peons, and cattle !—No! for years I was wretched, and the first moment of happiness I owe to you."—Indeed say I. "Then you are not what you seem?" He started up and stretched himself to his full height, and his eyes flashed fire.—"No,—I will no longer play this fool's part; it is unworthy of the son of Xabiera, the nephew of José Miguel Carrera. I am that unhappy exile Lastra, reduced to fly from desert to desert . . . and my crime has been to love Chile too well." (150)

Maria presents herself not only as the key which unlocked this great political secret, but also, effectively, as O'Higgins's messenger and the one who somehow facilitates Lastra's amnesty, of which the reader learns some pages later.

The narrative voice has now given itself over entirely to details of political conflict to which she has access through her social life. In the middle of this political upheaval something unexpected occurs: an earthquake shakes Chile and destroys the house where Graham is living, so that she must go live

in a tent and adopt “a sort of Robin Hood life” (341). At this point, she once again becomes the observer of nature and of people, making entries every two hours to record the “mad disquietude” (305) that has overtaken everyone. She observes nature gone out of control: “There was not a breath of air; yet the trees were so agitated, that their topmost branches seemed on the point of touching the ground” (306). Her difficult situation sends her in search of explanations of this natural phenomenon both among the local people and in the literature she knows about Chile. Finally she finds a relationship between nature and civil war, thanks to a travel narrator of 1625 from whom she learns that Chilean nature is predisposed to earthquakes. Then she can establish a parallel between that predisposition and the upheaval of the internal civil war which finally precipitates her departure from the country. The hallucinatory account of Samuel Purchas is worth citing:

The poor valley is . . . so hampered between the tyrannical meteors and elements, as that shee often quaken with feare, and in these chill fevers shaken of and loseth her best. . . . I speak not of the beastes and men, which, in these civil warres of nature, must needes bee subject to devouring miseries. (331)

Graham interprets the “civil wars” of nature as an imitation of what has been happening among the members of the government. All of this causes both her and Cochrane to feel estranged from Chilean nature, disposed as it is to such primitive reactions, and from the Chilean citizens who, not yet having acquired order and civilization, vibrate out of all control and show little respect for the foreign representatives of freedom.

In the personal sphere, Graham is also in a rather unstable situation. She has suffered a burst artery and is also taking care of her cousin Glennie, who had arrived in Chile a few months before and fallen ill. She writes under a tree, sleeps in a tent, and is disgusted by the way the Chileans fail to understand the need for even a basic division of classes, which she feels would maintain a certain sanitary order:

I saw the calamity in a light it had not hitherto appeared in. Rich and poor, young and old, masters and servants, were huddled together in intimacy frightful even here, where the distinction of rank is by no means so broad as in Europe. I can quite understand, now, the effect of great general calamities in demoralising and loosening the ties of society. (315)

New Year’s Eve finds her surrounded by all of this. She marks the thirty-first of December with a lament: “Misery and death have been busy with me. . . . A silent walk home . . . ended this, perhaps the most disastrous year of my life” (341). Her tragedies had begun with the death of her husband. They continued with her illness, with that of her cousin, with the fury of nature which had left them unsheltered and the civil disturbance that only promised to make

things worse. At this dramatic moment, a helping hand appears. Lord Cochrane, who has decided to leave Chile, offers to take her and her cousin back to England. She is enormously grateful. The two of them set up a lithographic press within Graham's tent where they begin to print communiques from the admiral to the Chileans. Cochrane refers to "Chilenos, my countrymen . . . I leave you in order not to involve myself in matters foreign to my duties" (342). The British officer knows he is foreign and decides on a retreat. Maria Graham feels foreign too, and prepares herself to leave with him.

On January 18, on the frigate *Moctezuma*, Cochrane struck his colors and officially put an end to his naval authority in Chile. Maria writes from on board:

Quintero is fading fast behind us, and God knows if we may any of us ever see it again. Lord Cochrane had adopted Chile as his country: its government has used him ill; and now at a time when, if he had been so minded, revenge on the authors of the ill usage he has suffered would have been easy, he withdraws. . . . Having done everything to deliver the country from a foreign enemy, and to secure its national independence, it is wisdom, it is generosity, to stand aloof and let the seed of the soil be the arbiters of the concerns of the soil. (346)

The cloud has passed. The rider, having reflected on her position as a foreigner in Chilean lands, is ready to leave. Graham knows that she is not from there, but she also knows what her position is. The authority she has gained permits her to observe, describe, and judge. She and Cochrane are both foreigners and of aristocratic lineage, and she finds that this is where her alliances lie. Andean nature and the Chilean *patria*, both battered by civil wars and at the threshold of commercial flowering, have served as a stage for Maria Graham to paint her self-portrait and experience a transformation as a writer. The portrait superimposes the problematic identities the traveler adopts: a fallen bird alone far from home and a lady of lineage who becomes an important figure on the Chilean scene. Thus, she configures the foreigner who feels superior and who has a redemptive mission, which she will carry out through her writing.

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Tristán, or The Incendiary Geography of a Pilgrim Pariah

And Marco's answer was: "Elsewhere is a negative mirror. The traveler recognizes the little that is his, discovering the much he had not had and will never have."

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

IN 1839, IN THE CENTRAL PLAZA of the city of Arequipa in southern Peru, Don Pío Tristán set fire to a pile of recently arrived books. They were copies of *Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834*.¹ Don Pío, the paternal uncle of Flora Tristán (1803–1844), was publicly rejecting the image of his family and country presented in his niece's account of her travels during 1833 and 1834. This episode is rarely mentioned,² but we may suppose it is true—not only because all of Flora Tristán's life was equally incendiary, but also because the text does contain an impassioned criticism of the Tristáns, rich creole landlords, and of Peru, which had barely consolidated its existence as an independent country in the midst of tangled civil wars.³ The book is also a valiant indictment of women's oppression by way of autobiographical confessions which inflamed not only Pío Tristán but others involved in the narrated intrigues.

Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834, far from being a casual chronicle of travel observations, is a highly premeditated text with a particular function. In this text, the account of a visited country is almost a pretext for the construction of an exemplary autobiographical subject within a context of political activism. The author precedes her travel narrative with three prologues that attempt to explain her motives and acquit herself in the eyes of the Peruvians, from an ambiguous position which I will discuss below. The text quite evidently has the reader in mind, to a nearly obsessive degree. This

is not the intimate diary of a woman writing to while away long hours of traveling. Rather, it is a meticulous account seeking to tell a convincing story in which the struggles of the autobiographical subject may appear to be the only point. The writer, a feminist and an active socialist, has been completely possessed by the character she has made out of herself. As Silvina Bullrich puts it, "If I were to invent a Flora Tristán, not a single reader would believe she were real. But she did exist, and the novelists of her time did portray women like her" (9).

Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834, in spite of being an account of Peru, is the text in which Flora Tristán presents her life and her romantic tragedy. She returns from Peru a "pariah" because she went there in search of family that would recognize her as the legitimate daughter of her late father Mariano Tristán, and she did not succeed. She went there in search of a fortune she never obtained, but instead she learned, among other things, to journey, and journeying became for her a way of life and of literature. Given the complexity of this text, a reading of its subjectivity is risky to say the least. This is a book that deliberately uses autobiography as medium of social criticism, but it also opens with those three prologues, which guide the reader into a way of seeing the speaker who is addressing them. Modern editions of *Pérégrinations* tend to omit the prologues, but from a literary critic's point of view, these meta-texts are essential.⁴ They are essential for any reader who is seeking, more than news from Peru, to understand the situation of the journey and the text. Taking the prologues as a point of departure, I propose to read the voyage to Peru to see how Tristán becomes a "pariah," how she converts a voyage into a "pilgrimage," and how the geographic, political, and human realities of Peru are present in this transformation.

Flora Tristán's voyage to Peru offered her the necessary distance from her native Paris to observe her own situation as a woman without material resources in France. The dissection of a social structure other than her own, where she did not find the economic status she expected, gave her the opportunity to take a critical stance toward her own society. Declaring herself a "pariah" became a strategy for expressing her radical political position in defense of women and the oppressed. In her travel diary, Tristán created a textual reality in which Peru became her stage. On this stage, her supposed European superiority authorized her to generate an identity above the limitations of class and gender imposed by her society. It equipped her to undertake a redemptive mission within the Christian-socialist-feminist rhetoric that would frame her later militancy and literary works.

According to Cross and Gray, *Pérégrinations* marked a moment of transition for Tristán.⁵ The clearest evidence for this fact is that on her return she decided to devote herself to the life of an activist, and she began the dizzying career as a socialist and feminist in which she did not pause until her death

in 1844. *Pérégrinations* is also her best-known work, and the only one still translated and studied. In its own era, it was the object of commentary of every sort. Estuardo Núñez states:

This book was an uncommon literary success in France. It attracted a wide variety of comments in the *Revue de Paris* in 1838 and 1839, including a negative review by Balzac, all of which generated the publication of a total of three editions during a period of only two years. (Núñez 1989, 531)

Today Tristán is known almost exclusively for her Peruvian travel book and for the biographical detail of being the maternal grandmother of Paul Gauguin. In Peru, on the other hand, she has become an important image for the feminist movement and for the Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán (Flora Tristán Center for Peruvian Women).⁶

To understand the circumstances in which the book appeared, and its repercussions, we must dwell for a moment on the complex drama of Flora Tristán's life.⁷ She was born in Paris to Mariano Tristán, a Spanish colonel of Peruvian origin, and Teresa Laisney, a Frenchwoman who had fled to Spain to escape the Revolution.⁸ The couple were married within the Church but Mariano never went through the legal formalities required of a member of the royal army. The result—that Flora was always considered an illegitimate daughter—left its mark on her life. When Tristán and Laisney moved to Paris at the turn of the nineteenth century, their house became a meeting place for figures associated with Latin America, among them Simón Bolívar and Aimé Bonpland.⁹

When Mariano Tristán died, the family's precarious economic situation led Flora, still a girl, to go to work. At the age of sixteen she entered the printmaking studio of André Chazal, with whom she later lived in a stormy marriage from which she escaped in 1825, the mother of two children and pregnant with a third. The Napoleonic Code then in force in France prohibited divorce.¹⁰ Flora began an underground life in flight from her husband's obsessive pursuit. Her older son died, she gave the second son to Chazal on the condition that he would leave her in peace (which he did not), and she kept charge of her daughter Alina, the youngest of the three. In 1832 came her first trip to England, working as a lady's maid under the guise of being a widow.

During her childhood, Flora had heard from her father about his millionaire family in Peru. On several occasions after his death, mother and child had written in search of economic protection, but they had never gotten any response. In 1833, thanks to a chance meeting with the ship captain Zacarías Chabrié, Flora made contact with Pío Tristán and decided to set sail for America in *Le Mexicain*, the vessel under Chabrié's command. This time she traveled as a single woman, leaving Alina under the care of a friend. She

had not told Chabrié she was married, and had spoken of her daughter as illegitimate. In Tristán's text, once the ship has rounded Cape Horn, it becomes obvious that the two characters are in love. Tristán begins to worry about the possibility that the captain will propose a marriage that she cannot legally accept. Finally the feared proposal arrives, and after much hesitation she decides to lie to Chabrié again, now claiming she will marry him if he can acquire for her a false certification that she is the legitimate daughter of Mariano Tristán. Chabrié, shocked by this request, decides to leave her, which is exactly what she has planned. She then stays in Peru as an independent traveler until July 16, 1834. Although received by her family, she does not obtain the inheritance of which she has dreamed. She returns to Paris poorer than when she left. As she says on the final page of the book, "I remained alone, completely alone, between two immensities, the sea and the sky." (*Pérégrinations*, 1986, 307)

Shortly after her return to France, Tristán began a friendship with François Marie Charles Fournier. In 1835 she published a pamphlet called *Nécessité de faire un bon accueil aux femmes étrangères* (*On the Necessity of Sheltering Foreign Women*), which describes the difficulties faced by a traveling woman, including those of being constantly watched, scorned, harassed, and threatened. Over the following years Tristán gave herself fully to socialist and feminist activism,¹¹ including her presentation of a petition to the Chamber of Deputies, in 1837, requesting the restoration of the right of divorce. In January of 1838 she published *Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834* with several prologues, one of which was a denunciation of her domestic problems with Chazal. In September, infuriated by the attacks in the book, Chazal fired a pistol shot at Tristán as she left her house, wounding her in the arm. Chazal was imprisoned, Flora recovered custody of Alina (whom her husband had kidnapped), and based on the girl's confessions she decided to accuse Chazal of sexual abuse. The scandal particularly impressed Parisian society because Tristán meanwhile persevered in a project of presenting a proposal for the elimination of the death penalty to the Chamber, and because she spoke out in the trial of her husband, delivering a fiery speech about the oppression of women which gained her a good deal of public respect. Her celebrity, although temporary, gave rise to two more editions of *Pérégrinations* and opened possibilities for her project of a labor union.¹²

After publishing her only novel (*Méphis* 1836, a semiautobiographical story of two lovers), Tristán traveled to London where she observed the life of the marginal population of the city's southern flank. Based on this experience she wrote *Promenades dans Londres* (1840), a second travel book, but in this one the descriptions revolve around the poverty produced by a highly industrialized city, with emphasis on the life of women workers and prostitutes in the pioneer center of economic development. This was her best-received book during her lifetime, and today it merits her recognition as an

early proponent of international workers' unity as the only alternative to the poverty produced by capitalism.¹³ In 1844, Tristán set off on a "*Tour de France*" to publicize the principles she had laid out in *Union ouvrière* (1844), where the strong ties between the interests of women and those of workers are laid out.¹⁴ During this journey, however, a painful illness and death overtook her in Bordeaux.¹⁵ In 1845, French workers organized an act of homage, dedicating a monument in her honor, with eight thousand people in attendance. Two years later, her devoted follower Eléonore Blanc published a biography, but soon after that Tristán was largely forgotten. Her historical memory was revived in a 1925 book by Jules Puech, a historian of French socialism. Puech's book led to her becoming known in South America, and to her work and character being rescued on both continents, if sporadically, over the course of the century.¹⁶

The preceding map of the life and work of Flora Tristán is necessary in order to situate *Pérégrinations* within the context of its production, but the other essential context is Peru itself. What did that far-off land mean to the French outlook of the time? According to Pablo Macera, in his book *La imagen francesa del Perú (siglos XVI–XIX)*, France discovered Peru in this first half of the nineteenth century thanks to the travelers who went there with a mindset that questioned the generalizations of the Enlightenment. Economic interest had revived in 1826 with the definitive defeat of Spain, and the opening of the Pacific to European commerce reached its height in the 1830s. France's recognition of the independence of the new nation in 1831 led to a commercial relationship quite beneficial to the nascent industries of Rouen, Nantes, and Paris. Peru thus lost something of the mystery and exoticism that had predominated in the eighteenth century. For the first time, Europe learned of aspects of Peruvian social life that previous travelers such as Feuilée, Frézier, or La Condamine had not discussed (Macera, 111–15). The spirit of liberty expressed in the independence struggles in the former Spanish colonies also constituted a reference point for French liberals, who saw the achievements of the French Revolution threatened by the restoration of the monarchy.

For Flora Tristán, before her voyage, Peru was the home of the family she had never had. It was the place where she could seek a substitute father, the site of her longed-for inheritance and the possibility of being legitimized as a member of a powerful family.¹⁷ It was also an option for escaping the exhausting situation of being a fugitive wife in a society that condemned her. Or at least, this is what we can deduce from the letter she wrote to her uncle Pío before setting off, a letter overflowing with filial piety and placing all her hopes in her Peruvian family:

It is not my wish, sir, that this brief summary of my misfortunes, which I have so feebly sketched for you, should convey to you the depth of my hardships. Your soul, sensitive to the memory of a brother who loved you like his

son, would suffer too much in knowing the extent to which my fate differs from the destiny that the daughter of Mariano should have had . . . the memory of a brother, who, struck down by a sudden and premature death as if by a bolt of lightning, could say only these words, "My daughter, you still have Pío . . . unfortunate child!" (Translated from Tristán, *Lettres*, 1980, 46)

The great economic promise of Peru was not realized in Flora's case. Pío Tristán took advantage of the lack of documentation of a legitimate marriage to deny his niece any right of inheritance. It is known that for many years she did receive a pension from her family in Peru, a fact that goes unmentioned in her long indictment of her uncle. Years later, Alina Tristán also took ship for Peru, with her son Paul Gauguin, to seek the family's help, and mother and son were supported there for five years. Nonetheless, the denial of a substantial inheritance contributed to Flora Tristán's self-representation, on her return to Paris, as a pariah without parentage or property, whose point of reference was that of being alone in the world between two immensities.¹⁸ The shaping of this romantic subject also stemmed, of course, from the influence of the Saint-Simonist movement, which combined socialist, feminist, and religious ideologies.¹⁹ Formed in Paris between 1820 and 1830 among the followers of Claude Henry, Count of Saint-Simon, that movement greatly influenced Flora although she did not directly belong to it. The woman who aligns herself with the oppressed began to emerge in this context, which to a large extent is also the context for the image of "pariah" which Flora would use from the time of her Peruvian travel narrative. The pariah would in turn evolve into what Jill Kuhnheim has called "the female messiah," which would sustain her labor union efforts.

Jill Kuhnheim sees Tristán as at once a victim of her society and superior to it, thus demonstrating certain classic features of an alienated romantic subject.²⁰ In my view, this type of subjectivity is exactly what is at work in the text about Peru. Tristán is rejected by the upper class of Arequipa through a denial of capital, while she also considers herself a superior subject who can clearly observe what is happening in Peru and place herself above the imperfections of her uncle and his avaricious class. That sense of superiority allows her to represent herself in the text as a possible element in the salvation of Peru. It provides the key to a reading of how her voyage to Peru contributed to the formation of the pariah image that the writer would adopt in her representation of that country.

THE PARIAH IDENTITY

Inderpal Grewal, in her book *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel* (1996), asks what "home" might signify in women's

travel narratives. Grewal opposes the idea that home is always the site from which the traveler leaves and to which she will return, that home is the point of reference that unites the account of the voyage.²¹ Grewal analyzes how the concept of “home” is complicated by gender, social class, and origin. She argues that a different concept of the places of departure and return produces complex subjectivities whose “I” and “others” and “here” and “there” do not work in the way that the subjectivity of the European traveler has traditionally been read.

Following in this line, I suggest that the Flora Tristán of *Pérégrinations*, although she sails from Europe toward a former colony, does not orient herself on her travel map by seeing France as “home.” On the contrary, Flora goes to Peru in search of a home, a family, and a patrimony, in search of a center by which to define herself. She goes, also, to escape the home or family that French society has designated for her, which she has chosen to leave. Similarly, at the moment of departure her subject is not clearly defined. Rather, it is a mixture or confusion of identities, which she should fulfill in her role a woman but with which she does not identify. To Chabrié, the ship captain, she presents herself as a woman alone with an illegitimate child. To Philippe Bertera, a relative who helps her organize her voyage, she presents herself as single. Under French law, she is a wife and mother running away from Chazal. Tristán is a mother who chooses to leave her daughter in the care of others in order to seek her fortune. Once in Peru, she is a single woman who decides never to mention her children. She plays with identities that the society has assigned her, but finally she assumes none of them. Going to Peru in search of paternity and property, she finds neither, but she constructs her identity as a pariah. This identity will be the subject of her activity as a writer, and it will determine the form of her discourse: narration of voyage, of pilgrimage, a genre that will largely characterize her output. The question that arises, then, is who exactly is the character that Tristán creates in her text, and how can we explain her contradictory subjectivity: single/widow/wife/mother, French/Peruvian, traveler/pilgrim. The image Tristán presents of Peru is filtered through all these oppositions. Her experience in Peru, at the same time, helps her create the pariah subject who emerges from the voyage.

It is important to remember that Tristán’s prologues are reflections of her narrative subject, of the genre she has chosen for her writing, and of her opinion of the Peruvians. Tristán wrote *Pérégrinations* four years after returning to Paris, and she did it as part of her feminist activism, after having written her pamphlet in defense of foreign women. The woman who picked up her Peruvian travel notes and rewrote them was a woman with a clear political intent. *Pérégrinations* is a reflection of and about herself, using Peru as her point of observation. It is also a reflection of and about those two immensities, Peru and her situation in France; she has traveled between them and, in

the process, has found a way to articulate her politics using testimonial writing as a weapon. The author knows this. In her prologues, she provides us with clues by which to read that process.

THE PERUVIANS, OR THE ARISTOCRATIC POSSIBILITIES OF A PARIAH

The first prologue of *Pérégrinations* is a letter to the Peruvians. In it, Flora adopts a quite complex position in which different levels of her identity are superimposed. Origin, class, gender, etc., all combine to produce something that is both romantic (in the sense of superior, alienated subject) and colonialist (to the extent that Europe is presented as the only model for a new Latin American republic). This prologue is a perfect point of departure for reading the position of the European female traveler faced with American reality, and the way the two circumstances become mingled in a mutual process of creation. It identifies the Peruvians as “compatriots” and apologizes for the way the author will criticize them in the text. Tristán says that she speaks of their weaknesses because she considers them her equals, only they are in a primitive state because of their lack of education. Therefore, her book has a didactic intention: to help them leave behind their ignorance, to offer them their own reality from the point of view of a European woman who has lived among them and can counsel them. In the second prologue, however, she expresses some doubt about her own society’s degree of civilization because of the treatment it hands out to women:

[T]he perversity that does not credit the motives a woman might claim pursues her with vile slander. . . . She is, in this society that prides itself on its civilization, nothing but a miserable *Pariah*, to whom people believe they are showing kindness when they are not actually insulting her. (Moses, 211)

She develops that idea further in the third prologue, which is an explanation of her domestic situation with Chazal and a clear indictment of the violence and oppression that married women face under the Napoleonic Code. This final prologue is written to convert her potential French followers to a feminist and socialist cause, and to support her petition to the French government to grant the right of divorce.

Nonetheless, Tristán often locates the Peruvians in an inferior position because of their customs. When she begs their pardon for her criticisms, she writes, “The brutishness of the village is extreme with regard to all the races that compose it” (translated from *Pérégrinations* 1838, vii). Her narrative itself is peppered with observations such as, “The Arequipans are very fond of all kinds of spectacles. . . . They need such diversions because of their total lack of education, which also makes them very easy to please. . . . They [the local

theatrical company] mutilate Lope de Vega and Calderon and murder music so that it sets your nerves on edge, all to the applause of the audience" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 124). Of their eating habits, she says, "their cuisine is detestable: the food is bad and the culinary art is still in primitive stage . . ." (116). And she goes on, "The plates and the cutlery are dirty. This is not just the fault of the slaves: like master, like servant. The slaves of English masters are very clean" (117).

In her gesture of representing herself as one rejected by her own society, and representing the Peruvians as inferior by virtue of their customs, there is a double construction (both superiority and alliance with the oppressed) that guarantees her position as a pariah. In order to see the different (and possibly contradictory) levels of representation of Peru and pariah in the text, we must examine the group of readers to whom Flora dedicates her first prologue: the Peruvians. Whom does the text designate, in fact, as "Peruvians"? What Peru is Flora addressing? This is a difficult question, because it may be that the Peruvian reader she had in mind was in fact her uncle, the enraged uncle who would burn her book, who would make her a pariah by neither recognizing her nor giving her properties, and who, according to Silvina Bullrich, is "the true protagonist of *Pérégrinations*" (15).

After Tristán arrives in Arequipa where her family lives, several months pass before she meets her uncle. When the meeting with Pío Tristán finally occurs, the narrator devotes several laudatory pages to him. She appears fascinated by his personality and intelligence. Sure of winning his acceptance, she decides to tell him the purpose of her voyage, but she receives a roundly negative response. Nonetheless, she presents herself as a superior character who takes this news with a clear sense of privilege, confirming again Kuhnheim's assertion that Tristán is both society's victim and above society:

By now I felt I had plumbed the very depths of despair, and I must say, if only for the consolation of the afflicted, that once I had reached this point I found an inexpressible pleasure in my pain, a heavenly joy I had never dreamed could exist. A superhuman power transported me into higher realms from which I could see the things of the earth in their true light, stripped of the deceptive glamour in which men's passions clothe them. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 151)

Her uncle's rejection implies the end of an effort in which Flora has risked everything and placed all her hopes, yet she rises ennobled from the ashes. From this moment on, her Peruvian project changes. The alienated romantic subject, clairvoyant and in a "superior realm," begins to observe Peru. On the next page, the narrator of the text comments heatedly on the civil war that is engulfing the region, which until this moment has not occupied her attention at all.²²

According to the narrator's account of the war, the small Arequipan contingent boasts several major characters: Althaus, a German officer who has already become her friend; Don Pío, a key figure because he is the largest property owner and had been very influential during colonial times; and Emmanuel, also an officer, married to a cousin of Tristán's. She has become the confidante of all of them:

I knew everything that happened at headquarters, as in his need to ridicule his illustrious superiors, Althaus told me everything down to the smallest detail. The arrogance and inefficiency of these men was beyond imagination. Emmanuel, on his side, confided to me everything that Althaus was in no position to know, so that I was better informed than anyone else. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 165)

Similarly she has become an advisor—even to her uncle, overlooking his denial of her inheritance which earlier had left her grievously hurt:

My uncle sent for me and I returned home. In spite of the letter I had written to the family, Don Pío still trusted me completely; he spoke to me of his secret worries and consulted me with a frankness and friendliness I found difficult to understand. (*Peregrinations* 1986,165)

The political situation in Peru was complex. President Gamarra, in the face of his imminent fall from power, imposed General Pedro Bermúdez as his successor. His opponents, led by Nieto and Valdivia, deemed that appointment invalid and appointed Luis José de Orbegoso instead. This conflict led to a series of civil wars, toward which the ruling classes were required to contribute large sums of money. Amidst the disorder caused by these economic demands, Tristán had the opportunity to observe the stinginess of the ruling class. In her narrative she describes how one afternoon she and her cousin Carmen witness, from the balcony of their house, a scene that may be understood as an epiphany in which she comes to see clearly the hypocrisy and greed of the landlords and their unfitnes to govern. We must remember that this is the same class that, ten pages before, she had clamored to enter, only to have the doors of property shut in her face. Carmen and Flora now listen patiently and with a certain satisfaction to the complaints of the rich who pause beneath them in the act of carrying bundles of gold toward the town hall. The majority are complaining that a few years before it had been the leaders of the forces of liberty in Nueva Granada and Peru, Bolívar and San Martín, who had stolen their capital—and now it is the turn of those promoting the cause of Orbegoso. The traveler comes to see the weakness of this ruling class, as she will express it in her prologue to "the Peruvians":

I have said, having witnessed it, that the upper classes of Perú are profoundly corrupt, driven by their egoism to satisfy their cupidity, their love of power, and virtually every other anti-social obsession. (Translated from *Pérégrinations* 1838, vii)

With her story of the rich fighting among themselves over money, the narrator is in a certain way invalidating the political process of Peru, reducing it to a contest among selfish men and a people hoping to deprive them of their riches. Once again, in other words, we see the characteristics of a romantic subject who views herself as superior, and the colonialist position of a European who sees the country's civil war as a game played by the greedy products of a backward society, who need a strong European hand to lead them out of their conflicts. Tristán's narrative of the war unfolds under this assumption. She herself becomes a protagonist.

Orbegoso's army, led by San Román, finally reaches Arequipa to face the local army under the command of Althaus and Emmanuel. The confrontation sends the local families scattering into hiding in the convents. Tristán is one of the few to stay in the city, and she becomes the messenger between the convents and the battlefield. At one point she persuades the monks to take part in the conflict: "It was largely through my efforts that the monks were persuaded to undertake this mission" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 224). All the actors in this drama seem to her to be inferior beings incapable of governing a free country, except for Althaus and Escudero (the personal secretary of ex-president Gamarra's wife). She agrees with Althaus, who "feared for the fate of a country at the mercy of leaders such as these" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 182).

One night, in the middle of the war, the narrator experiences a second illuminating moment. She glimpses the possibility of an alliance with that other immense world that is Peru, a world she has described in passing but never really paid attention to before:

As I was not at all afraid, I went back alone to write up the three days which had just elapsed. . . . I spent the night in the house with nobody except my *samba*. This girl said to me "Don't be afraid, mademoiselle, if the soldiers or the *rabonas* come looking for loot, I am Indian like them, their language is the same as mine, I shall tell them 'My mistress is not Spanish, she is French, so don't hurt her.' I am quite sure they won't as they only hurt their enemies." (*Peregrinations* 1986, 226)

This is the first ally Flora finds in Peru. Because the slave girl sees Flora as "French," she is willing to offer her the aid of her race and her language, both inaccessible to the Peruvian ruling class. It is strange that Tristán, who has been so critical of the ruling class, has no difficulty referring to this speaker

(a slave assigned by her aunt to be her personal servant) with the possessive construction “my *samba*.”²³ The European finds nothing to criticize here, though elsewhere she assures the reader that “I have always been keenly interested in the welfare of the different peoples I chance to live among, and I felt genuinely distressed at the degradation of the people here” (*Peregrinations* 1986, 111). Nor does she seem to recall that the first time she saw African slaves, during her outward passage through the Canary Islands, she had written without hesitation, “It was then I became aware of the characteristic Negro smell. . . . I am particularly sensitive and the slightest smell affects my head or my stomach, so we had to quicken our pace to escape from the *effluvium Affricanum*” (*Peregrinations* 1986, 18). Nonetheless, Flora here allies herself with the “*samba*” whose name we never know, only her race. She does so because of their common situation of “difference” with respect to the Peruvian ruling class.

This act completes the epiphany that had begun on the balcony. In the eyes of the European who is also spiritually superior, the local ruling class appears inferior and cowardly, and the oppressed group appears disposed to offer her an alliance because she does not belong to the group of their enemies. The action thus prefigures Flora Tristán’s career as a labor leader, in which she as pariah will ally herself with the oppressed classes of France, among whom she becomes a female messiah capable of redeeming their oppression. We may see Peru as a laboratory for the political formation of this utopian socialist leader who played a pioneering role in the development of an international trade union consciousness.

Once the seizure of Arequipa was complete, Flora decided to leave for Lima. She brought her experience in Arequipa to a close, leaving behind the family that had scorned her and the inferior society that did not deserve a spirit such as hers. In the text, her time in Arequipa ends with one last romantic touch. She feels tempted to become a political leader alongside Escudero, who confesses that he is tired of following Señora Gamarra and hints that he may be in love with her.²⁴ But Flora, intent on liquidating the subject who had been in search of love, states:

Once again it took me all my moral strength not to succumb to the tempting prospect . . . I was afraid of myself, and I judged prudent to escape this new danger by flight, so I decided to leave immediately for Lima. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 232)

Tristán decides to reject Escudero, and with him her Peruvian project as a whole. We may understand this rejection as an affirmation of her new identity. Her new project, as feminist and labor leader, will require her to be single, neither wife nor mother nor widow, but a pariah equipped for political activism.

TRYING OUT A FEMININE MODEL IN PERU

As Claire Goldberg Moses suggests in the introduction to her English translation of the second prologue to *Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834*, Tristán's goal in this text is to put forward her ideas about autobiography. The second prologue is a theoretical discussion of autobiography as a literary genre and its political use. In her discussion, Tristán also draws connections between literary genres and the gender of those who employ them; in so doing, she constructs a theoretical relationship that is of interest to today's literary criticism as well. Finally, this prologue may also be used to read the identification Flora establishes between the female autobiographical subject and the feminine models available in Peru. Since her personal experiences serve as the backbone of her narrated voyage, and since she emerges from this voyage transformed into a militant feminist, it is worth looking at the confrontation she experiences with the established models of femininity, and how this confrontation contributes to the emergence of her new subjectivity.

In her "forward," Tristán argues for the importance of personal testimony in the process of intellectual development. She then examines the genre itself, establishing an opposition between memoir and autobiography that depends, principally, on the time of publication: memoirs are posthumous while autobiography is published during the writer's lifetime. She criticizes memoirs severely, accusing that genre of cowardice:

These days, our leaders arrange to have their testamentary revelations published immediately after their death. That is the moment they choose to have their shadow bravely rip the mask off those who preceded them to the grave and those few survivors whom old age has pushed off stage. So did the Rousseaus, the Fouchés, the Grégoires, the Lafayettes, etc. . . . so too, will the Talleyrands, the Chateubriands, the Berangeres. . . . They are branches of a felled tree; fruit will not follow the perfume of their flowers. (Moses, 206)

Then Tristán establishes the connection between testimonial writing and the struggle for emancipation:

But if slavery exist in society . . . if laws are not equal for all, if religious or other prejudice recognize a class of PARIAS. . . . The peasants in Russia, the Jews in Rome, the sailors in England, women everywhere. . . . Let the women whose lives have been tormented by great misfortunes speak of their sufferings. (Moses, 207, 208)

In arguing that women have a political responsibility to offer their personal histories of oppression, Flora is defining a relationship between gender and literary genre, a relationship that must be read as a goal of her narrative subject.

In terms of travel literature, Tristán proposes a displacement of the organizational center. The organizing principle of travel account is no longer the description of a visited geography and the way this information may contribute to the knowledge of those who stayed at home. Rather, the travel account now uses the experience of the traveler as social criticism—and, in her case, as a form of self-defense before society. This mimesis between text and subject produces a complex subjectivity which may often appear contradictory.²⁵ The second prologue is written to lend authority to the testifying textual subject who asks to be recognized as an individual. It reveals that her experience in Peru permitted Tristán to discard the tangled welter of identities with which she had boarded *Le Mexicain*, so as to emerge as a woman writer who, as such, insists on the authority of her text and defends autobiography as a form of social critique.²⁶

In the different stages of her Peruvian journey, we may follow a process in which Flora compares herself and her situation to the various women whom she meets in her family and in the other social groups with whom she comes in contact. While she begins as the typical privileged romantic subject who situates herself above all the Peruvians, Tristán goes through a process in which specific Peruvian women show her other possibilities that point the way toward her development as a social leader. If I have argued that the Peruvian society as a whole can be seen as the laboratory within which Flora Tristán confronted her own social being and began a process of cross-class alliance, I can say, too, that the mirror held up by Peruvian women helped her to construct a feminist and activist subjectivity.

In Tristán's travel narrative there is a process of shedding the female model with which she has arrived in Peru, in favor of observation of Peruvian women and a redefinition of her own identity. In no way am I claiming that Tristán shaped herself in the image of the Peruvian women, whom in general she considered inferior. But I am claiming that the immense possibilities of being a woman that she saw in Peru, and the innumerable forms of oppression of women, helped her to examine and construct her own female subject.

The *Pérégrinations'* first five chapters tell of crossing the Atlantic and rounding Cape Horn during which time Tristán and Chabrié fall in love. This love story is a small romantic novel within the book, whose happy ending is clearly impossible from the start. As explained above, Tristán to some extent encourages Chabrié's idea of marriage until shortly after they reach Valparaiso, when she decides on a definitive break. Then the narrator speaks as if she has freed herself from a romantic yoke and may now dedicate herself to the travel narrative:

I persuaded M David that it was urgent for me to leave immediately, and he helped me to reconcile Chabrié to our approaching separation. From the moment I took my decision I felt strong and free from all anxiety. I experi-

enced that inner satisfaction so beneficial when we know we have done right. I found I was quite calm: I had just won a victory over the *self*. . . . As I was free from any inner preoccupation I could devote myself to the role of observer . . . (*Peregrinations* 1986, 60)

She then embarks on an exhausting horseback journey to Arequipa, full of physical suffering. Tristán arrives in the conservative provincial capital, where the majority of her stay in Peru will take place, and begins to meet all the members of her family and to tour the city and its environs. She maintains her position as the “civilized” European and criticizes the way the locals eat, sleep, and cook:

For dinner at three o'clock they have *olla podrida* (which is known as *puchero* in Perú). . . . It is good form to select a choice morsel from your own plate and have it passed on the end of a fork to a favored guest. The Europeans were so disgusted by this custom that it is falling into disuse. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 123)

There are few aspects of domestic life that seem positive to her. Nonetheless, there are some moments when either Peruvian nature or certain peculiarities of the society energize her pen. It is a pleasure, for instance, to read her report on convents of Arequipa, which she enters out of a curiosity to see the alternative manner in which these women live. Here Tristán is a traveler with the capacity for surprise. She gives the reader a detailed vision of the interiors, the kitchens, and the cloisters of the nuns, offering unprecedented historical testimony.

In her discussion of the nuns we find the most interesting story that Tristán tells about Peru: the story of her cousin Dominga, whom she finally manages to meet. Dominga had become a nun after being jilted by a lover, but after eleven years in the convent she decides to escape with the aid of her slave, who obtains the dead body of an Indian woman for her. Dominga puts the body in her bed and sets fire to it, so the community will believe that she has burned to death; then she flees. For the first time Tristán finds heroism in Peru. She identifies with Dominga as a pariah:

Here, I thought, in all its beauty, is the civilization that results from the cult of Rome. Just like the religion of Brahma, this cult which so audaciously invoked the name of Christ, had its *pariahs* too, and the creatures to whom God had given so abundantly of his gifts are also stoned to death by these ferocious sectarians. (Translated from *Pérégrinations* 1838, 740)

Once free, Dominga manages to reclaim the money her family had contributed to the convent to pay for her admission. Although Dominga remains

scorned by Peruvian society, the narrator sees her as a model for women who must escape from all forms of oppression. In Lima, nonetheless, Flora seems to find the convents a model of freedom: "One is almost tempted to think that the women here have only taken refuge within these walls in order to be more independent than they could be outside" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 262).

Another group of women she admires are the *rabonas*, the only group in the Peruvian civil war whom she does not characterize as inferior or primitive:

The *rabonas* are the camp followers of South America. In Peru each soldier takes with him as many women as he likes: some have as many as four. . . . These women, who provide for all the needs of the soldier, who wash and mend his clothes, receive no pay and their only reward is the freedom to rob with impunity. They are of Indian race, speak the native languages, and do not know a word of Spanish. The *rabonas* are not married; they belong to nobody and are there for anyone who wants them. . . . When the army is on the march it is nearly always on the courage and daring of these women four or five hours ahead of them that it depends for its subsistence. . . . It is worth observing that whereas the Indian will rather kill himself than be a soldier, the Indian women embrace this life *voluntarily*. . . . I do not believe it is possible to adduce a more striking proof of the superiority of woman in primitive societies. . . . (*Peregrinations* 1986, 179–80)

We must recognize that the narrator is idealizing these women. She is making an essentialist gesture which fails to recognize the real lives they are living, a gesture that converts them into romantic heroines. What is at work here is the creation of a paradigm: the woman who (even in "primitive" society) gives herself over to a social cause and so raises herself to a superior category. In the text, this paradigm becomes a referent for Tristán herself and the mission of salvation she will soon take on.

Leaving aside the essentialism and romanticism in Tristán's observation of this group of women, however, it is also worth noting the importance of their presence in the first place. In the books written by the scientific travelers, women and natives stand out by their absence. The text of *Pérégrinations* manages to present various circumstances of the lives of Peruvian women and men of different social classes and races. That fact places it among the travel texts that use ethnography as a device to get closer to the place being visited; in so doing, this journal inaugurates a social science discourse about the recently formed republics. Tristán carefully observes the women of her family who belong to the Peruvian upper class, and although she manages to be on good terms with some of them, her portraits always stress her own Eurocentric sense of superiority. When she speaks of her cousin Manuela, who for her possesses a special spirit, she says:

Manuela was meant to live in the elite societies that are found in the capitals of Europe, where she could shine with a lively splendor. But my poor cousin is reduced to wasting her rich temperament in a world whose petty ways do not agree with her character. (Translated from *Pérégrinations* 1838, 40)

When Tristán arrives in Lima and at last abandons her indictment of the ruling class of Arequipa, her traveler's eye sharpens. This is especially true when she observes the women. Lima is in the middle of a civil war just as much as Arequipa, but Tristán never mentions this fact. She has overcome her temptation to be an American warrior, and now she seems to be in search of female models instead. The way she travels to Lima is revealing in itself. While she had arrived in Arequipa exhausted by the rigors of an arduous trip on horseback, now she describes herself as an amazon whose guide, an English officer, has trouble keeping up with her. With this same spirit she embarks on her observation of the capital city, which she characterizes as "feline and feminine" (279):

Thus the pre-eminence of Lima's women, however inferior they may be to European women from a moral aspect, must be attributed to the superior intelligence with which God has endowed them. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 273)

What impresses her most is *la saya*, literally 'the skirt' but in fact a unique manner of dressing which gives the women of Lima complete independence of movement (Figure 4.1). She gives an extensive and fascinating portrait of how the women have designed this special costume, which includes a shawl covering the whole face except for one eye. This covering guarantees that they can traverse all of Lima without being recognized *even by their husbands*. "There is no place on earth where women are so free and exercise so much power as in Lima" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 269). Tristán even compares the *limeñas* with the enchanted creatures who, as much as American gold, had fascinated European visitors of the sixteenth century:

A number of foreigners have told me what a magical effect the sight of these women produced on their imagination. They fancied they had landed in Paradise, and that it was to compensate them for the hardships of a long voyage that God had set them down in this enchanted land. These flights of fancy are not implausible when one sees the follies and extravagances that these beautiful women lead foreigners to commit. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 272)

Curiously, years later, in her journey to London to research the realities of that society, Tristán herself would hide behind a cloth that covered her head. She would disguise herself in the costume of a Turkish minister in order to enter Parliament, off-limits to women (Baelen 1972).

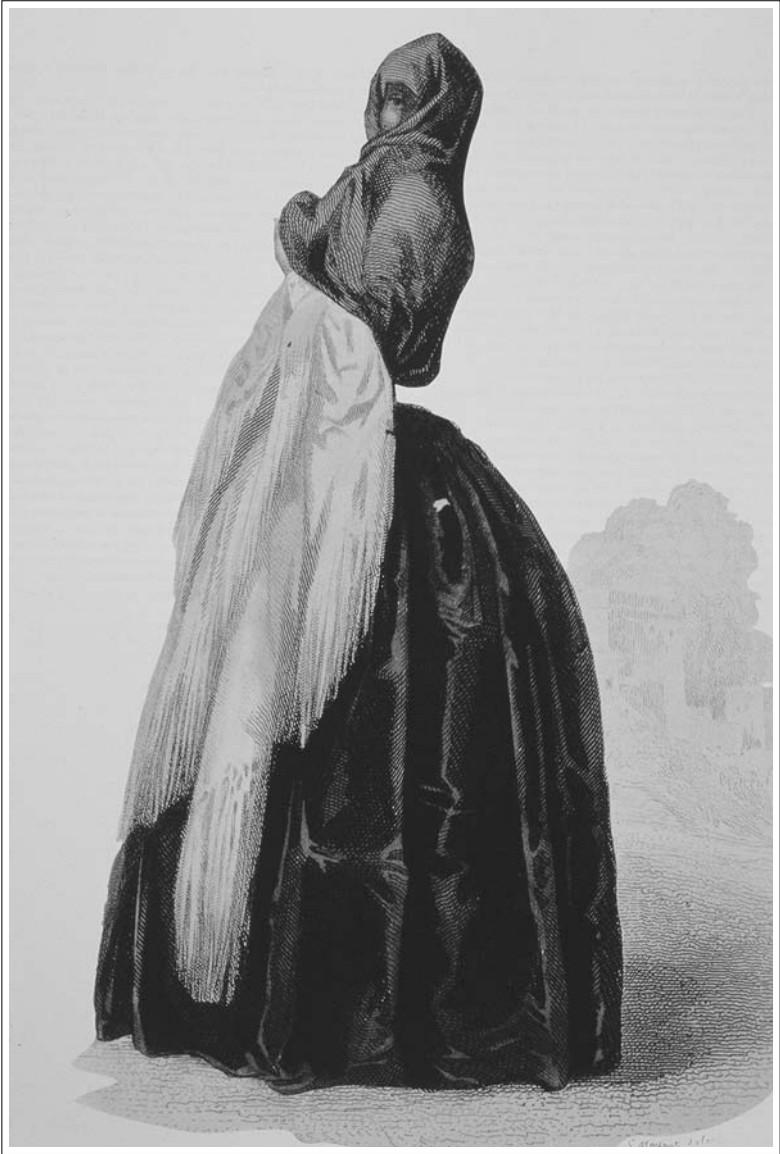


FIGURE 4.1 “Limeña with skirt”

Taken from Delamaral/Jacomini, Montant, Paris 1860. Gutiérrez et al., *Imagen de América*, 1996.

Flora's final confrontation in Lima is her meeting with Pancha Gamarra, whom she calls (using the female noun *presidenta*) the "ex-president of the Republic." A woman of great political influence, Gamarra was said to have been in charge during the presidency of her recently deposed husband. Señora Gamarra is now in Lima, in flight, accompanied by her secretary Escudero to whom Flora had felt the strong attraction that had led her to leave Arequipa. Tristán has earlier described Gamarra as "a woman of Napoleonic ambitions" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 230). Although now sick and defeated, *la presidenta* evokes Tristán's highest admiration and respect. The two women conduct long conversations, which become a confession on Gamarra's part. The narrator structures the interchange so that it functions as a sort of textual transference in which Flora ends up as the stronger. Señora Gamarra is giving her a lesson in power:

Child, let me tell you that it is precisely because I had never been able to submit my invincible pride to brute force that you see me a prisoner here, driven into exile by the very men I commanded for three years. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 295)

Tristán then makes a declaration through which she takes possession of the strongest spirit she has found in Peru:

In that moment I penetrated her mind; my soul took possession of hers. I felt stronger than she was and dominated her with the power of my gaze. (*Peregrinations* 1986, 295)

Later, she launches into an impassioned defense of Gamarra to a group of soldiers who accuse her of being a "virago." For Tristán, she is "more daring than a watchful dragon" (Translated from *Pérégrinations* 1838, 461).

Señora Gamarra will die of tuberculosis a few weeks later, but meanwhile Flora Tristán reaches the end of her journey to Peru. When she boards the ship *William Ruthson*, she chooses to occupy the same stateroom in which Gamarra had traveled before. The discursive transference becomes complete. Even though Tristán writes that "I remained alone, completely alone, between two immensities, the sea and the sky" (*Peregrinations* 1986, 307), the reader retains the sensation that the pariah is returning to Europe shorn of all the false identities which her society had imposed on her. More daring than a watchful dragon, she is ready to begin her political project. On the return trip, in fact, she will begin to write her first book: not the one about Peru but the one about female travelers, about their right to be alone, their right not to be stared at, their right to governmental protection.

The subject has completed her process of formation. Peru has made her a pariah. No longer will she have to wander among the imposed subjectivities of mother/wife and the false ones of unmarried/widow, which she had

adopted in self-defense. Tristán, at this moment, knows she is alone and knows she is on a pilgrimage, a manner of traveling that implies that one has no fixed home to return to, but rather one travels from place to place in pursuit of a goal. From now on, Tristán's work will be marked by this concept of journeying or pilgrimage. All of her texts are concerned with political action, and in all of them the subject travels so as to observe and indict, a writing-in-motion whose organizational center is not the return home but the subjectivity adopted for the journey: Pariah.

Epilogue

The Grand Khan's atlas also holds maps of the promised lands visited in the realm of the thought.

—Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

AT THE END of every voyage comes a moment of looking back so as to reconsider where to go from here. We may link our reading of these four texts, guided by a reflection about the transformations experienced by these travelers in the course of hard times linked to contemporary situations as well.

Reading maps, illustrations, and texts simultaneously, we become aware of the coexistence of different systems of knowledge in the generation of South American geography during the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The geography of the nascent republics was constructed like a palimpsest to which different ethnic and social groups contributed their knowledge. Both the travel accounts and their graphic representations are susceptible to an interpretive reading that reveals how these different social sources were conjoined, and what the results of such interaction were. This interpretation allows us to understand how the wave of European travelers to the recently independent colonies contributed to the formation of national narratives and imagery in both the graphical and the discursive realms.

Such an interpretation makes us consider, too, the peculiarities of the development of a Latin America postcolonial mentality in relation to the formation of the international myth of “modernity.” Enrique Dussel (2000) distinguishes between the way modernity has been read and the way it might be read. Rather than a phenomenon of exclusively European origin, which then radiated outward toward the peripheries of the globe, relationships and interchange between the imperial center and the periphery generated a postcolonial mentality. Reading from the second point of view offered by Dussel, the foregoing analysis of these four travelers offers evidence that this formative process was a two-way street. Traditionally it has been said that with independence and

the coincident wave of foreign travelers to Southern lands, Latin America “left” its colonial state to enter into and “pursue” a “modern” European ideal. An analysis of these travelers invites us to explore other possibilities. As Benedict Anderson (1983) has shown, Europeans watched the liberatory experiment of Latin America and traveled, among other reasons, to confront their own liberal ideas. Thus, the moment of interchange facilitated by the winning of American independence is fundamental to the demystification of modernity as a European cultural phenomenon.

Comparative analysis of the firsthand reports left by these four travelers prompts a further reflection about the formation of nationalist discourses during the crucial time of transition being considered here. Latin America confronted its colonial past and a multiethnic legacy imbued with critical social tensions. The way this multiplicity was ignored or romantically mythified has had fundamental consequences for the subsequent development of national destinies. The role of diverse ethnic groups in the formation of postcolonial societies is an open wound, a question without an answer. The demands being put forward now by groups such as the Zapatistas of Mexico, which have the whole world wondering at the political agency exercised by Latin American ethnic groups, make us turn our eyes to the foundational discourses of the Latin American nations and the effect of this legacy on postcolonial relations. The transition that our four visitors observed offers a window into the many aspects of the “mutual process of imbrication and contamination” (Gikandi 1996), which the formation of societies emerging from colonial situations implies.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. John Lynch affirms that “[p]opular rebellion anticipated the revolutions for independence in many parts of Spanish America, and continued throughout that revolutionary period and beyond without limitation by political chronology” (Lynch 1994, 26).

2. The uprising of Túpac Amaru II is the most outstanding event among a chain of indigenous disturbances which sprang up in the colonies during the eighteenth century and bore witness to a general discontent that finally overflowed in the independence wars. The rebel cry of Túpac Amaru II took up that of his predecessor Túpac Amaru I who in 1572 was murdered for organizing one of the largest indigenous revolts and whose echoes reverberate in the Tupamaro guerrillas. The rising of Túpac Amaru II had an immediate effect in the form of similar revolts in which indigenous people, mestizos, mulattos, and free Africans united—basically in protest against taxes—in Argentina (Córdoba, La Rioja, Tucumán), Bolivia and Paraguay (Alto Perú, La Paz), Peru (Arequipa, Jujuy, Salta, Huanca, Huancavelica, Tungasuca, Tinta, etc.), Ecuador (Quito), and Nueva Granada (Socorro, San Gil, Vélez, Zipaquirá).

3. The documents written by Túpac Amaru and his wife should be read in relation to other texts such as those of El Inca Garcilaso and Guamán Poma de Ayala which were constructed as palimpsests in which Spanish and Inca cultures are superimposed at various levels. In this paragraph alone, one can observe the mixture of lineages, geographic concepts, and languages, as well as the way the Inca derives his authority to govern his own ethnic group from an appeal to a divine design, “by the grace of God,” thus employing the classic style of territorial justification imposed by the Spaniards in the Americas.

4. As is analyzed by Rolena Adorno in her book *Guamán Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru* (1986), in Guamán Poma’s mapamundi Cuzco is situated as the center of the universe and the territories are divided according to the coordinates of Tawantinsuyo. Guamán Poma thus transforms the conventional European model of geographical symbolism into a four-faceted image of the Andean universe.

5. Benedict Anderson, in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, analyzes how censuses and maps are indispensable

weapons for any government, the basis for real control of tax collection and thus of political control. Joseph Pérez (1977) relates the taxation to indigenous uprisings: "Túpac Amaru explicitly protested against the forced buying of merchandise and against the abuses of the *corregidores*, against the *mita*. He requested that the Indians of Tinta be exempted from service and insisted that the Laws of the Indies be observed. . . . By years 1779–1780, Túpac Amaru had decided to move on to armed rebellion against the abuses to which the Indians were subject. In those same years José Antonio de Areche, *visitador general* of the vice-royalty of Perú, arrived in Lima with orders to put into practice the new economic policy determined by the Minister of the Indies, José de Gálvez. As is well known, this policy aimed to increase the profits of the state in the colonies and, in conformity with that goal, to reinforce the existing treasuries and create new forms of taxation." It was this *visitador* José Antonio de Areche who, in dictating Túpac Amaru's death sentence, accused him specifically of inciting the various castes and of protesting against taxes.

6. Denise Albanese, in her book *New Science, New World* (1996), establishes the connection between the New World and the configuration of a new concept of science generated by the Enlightenment. She analyzes the mechanisms through which the Enlightenment generated a science of geography based on the observations of travelers, classification, and the consequent establishment of power based on scientific knowledge.

7. Latin American historiography has traditionally seen the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century travelers as producers of scientific and ethnographic knowledge that informed the creation of local history and geography. "Andrés Bello, from London where he had resided since 1810, was ahead of the Hispano-Americans in seeing the value which travel books would offer as a source of information" (Medina 1962, xviii).

8. The word *geography* is used here in its etymological sense of "writing of territory" and includes the many ways of representing a territory and its people: maps, illustrations, and travel narratives.

9. Edward Said explains it this way: "By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Europe—and in this Britain leads the way—had begun the industrial transformation of its economies; the feudal and traditional land-holding structures were changing; the new mercantilist patterns of overseas trade, naval power, and colonialist settlement were firmly established; the bourgeois revolution had finally entered its triumphant stage. All these things gave the ascendancy of metropolitan Europe over its far-flung and distant possessions a profile of imposing, and even daunting power. By the beginning of World War I, Europe and America held 85 percent of the earth's surface in some sort of colonial subjugation. This, I hasten to add, did not happen in a fit of absentminded whimsy or as a result of a distracted shopping spree" (Said 1990, 71).

10. The idea of the "writing situation" is offered by Barthes in his only travel book, *L'Empire des signes*, in which he recognizes the influence of Japan upon himself as narrator, as opposed to the idea of a subject as producer of the idea "Japan." Barthes says: "The author has never, in any sense, photographed Japan. It would rather be the opposite: Japan in fact blinded him with multiple flashes, or even better, Japan

afforded him a writing situation. This situation is the very one in which a certain disturbance of the person occurs, a subversion of earlier readings, a shock of lacerated meaning" (Barthes 1993, 11).

11. Here I am following the reading proposed by Mary Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World* (1988): "This book . . . does not concern itself with frankly imaginative literature, but with the fraught project of translating one's own actual travel into a written record with attempts, ranging from the devoutly earnest to the artfully mendacious, 'to tell'" (2).

12. This is a pioneering book in the field, which analyzes how female travelers and their texts are distinctly different from those of male travelers precisely because of the options society permits a woman and the restrictions it imposes on her. Women's access to private worlds such as kitchens and servants' quarters, convents and charitable institutions, along with the impossibility of traveling alone or the insecurity they suffer, are determining factors in the production of female travelers' texts.

PART I. INTRODUCTION TO PART I

1. A good deal of the contemporary criticism of travel writing locates itself theoretically within a questioning of the colonial discourse generated in the relations of the West with the territories colonized during its expansion. According to Porter, this tendency can be traced as far back as Diderot and his *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville*. The French philosopher criticized the judgments of the French traveler about the communities he visited, and questioned the load of moral presuppositions under which he viewed them. Porter argues that ever since the eighteenth century travel history has generated a criticism of the cultural and moral imposition it represents, a criticism that has developed into the present form of criticism of the colonial discourse. According to Porter, the *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* has its equivalents in the twentieth century in the form of Derrida and his "The Violence of the Letter: From Lévi Strauss to Rousseau," in which he also analyzes a discourse produced about "the other" within a context of colonial dependencies.

2. Carl Linné was better known by his Latin name Linnaeus, which he adopted for his scientific work. In his famous study, the Swedish naturalist outlined a classification system designed to organize all the earth's plants into categories, which constituted a key event for the Enlightenment and for the development of natural science. As Mary Louise Pratt reads it, this is one of the events that mark the beginning of a new planetary consciousness which lies at the base of the construction of modern-day Eurocentrism. Thanks to scientific projects such as this, the world was organized and classified around one center of knowledge: Europe and its "Age of Reason."

3. Foucault in his study *L'Archéologie du savoir* examines the epistemological change the eighteenth century signaled for the West. The question about nature and the classification systems which arose during this era determined a specific form for articulating the discourse of human knowledge. Foucault also points out, in his chapter of *Les Mots et les choses* about the generation of classification systems, how the moment in which the mapping of the globe was completed, there arose different sys-

tems of classification that constituted a radical change in the manner of studying natural history, so that the interest in studying nature became central for the eighteenth century; it should not be forgotten that Rousseau was also a botanist.

4. A reading of Mary B. Campbell's book gives us an idea of how, before the beginning of European expansion, "the other world" was not necessarily the place of barbarity or ignorance. The discourse of the intellectual inferiority of the races and continents, and in particular of America, was configured in definitive form during the eighteenth century.

5. The first time that the Spanish government opened its territory to travelers of other nationalities was for the French expedition of La Condamine, and this constituted a diplomatic triumph over the Spanish fear of foreign intervention in American territory. The Spanish court's obsession with closing its territory to foreign espionage sharpened after 1713, when it lost to England control over the traffic in slaves. According to Fernández Retamar, since Spain's imperial expansion with the discovery of America and the subsequent Bull of Alexander VI which gave to the Catholic kings divine right over half the globe, the other European kingdoms dedicated themselves to combatting this absolute power and attempting the penetration of American territory (Fernández Retamar, "Against the Black Legend," in *Caliban and Other Essays*, 56–73).

6. Spain was always suspicious of the presence of foreign travelers in American territory, but the suspicions increased toward the end of the eighteenth century when the winds of independence were a reality and the ideas of the latest moment of the Enlightenment, that of revolution, were seen as one of the causes of this discontent. When Humboldt went to visit Mutis in 1801, the viceroy wrote an official communique to Spain in which he said, "As in the present times the intervention in these countries by able and educated foreigners is, in any manner, a delicate situation, thus even in the case of scientific endeavours executed sincerely toward that end they may acquire knowledge which, perhaps, it would be better to reserve; though I would not fail to carry out that which has been so expressly ordered by his Majesty and which, as I have said, I do not have sufficient cause to question, still I have resolved to be on the watch as to all of their steps and to confidentially warn the governors of the territories through which they pass" (Gredilla, *Biografía*, 172).

7. The expeditions of La Condamine in 1735, of the Austrian Nicolás José Von Jacquin in 1755, Malaspina's voyage of circumnavigation of America, the presence of scientists such as D'Elhuyar, Jorge Juan, and Antonio Ulloa, to name but a few, were essential to scientific knowledge of Spanish America. But it was not until the voyage of Alexander Humboldt and Aimé Bonpland, and the texts this produced, that the scientific image of all South America was consolidated and the doors of the continent opened definitively to Occidental knowledge.

CHAPTER ONE. MUTIS, OR THE TRAP OF *MUTISIA CLEMATIS*

1. Since the "discovery" of the American continent by Europeans, the travelers from that side of the Atlantic have suffered an irresistible attraction for the

immense promise that America, in its varied forms, has been. Many of them never found their way home, and so changed a voyage into an establishment of residence. That tendency aided the survival of an old legend: "The ancient cosmographers, from Aristotle to Ptolemy, insisted that of the five circles into which the Earth was divided, the third—the *torrid zone*—was uninhabitable. Woe to the European who dared approach the equinoctial line! . . . But how could one resist the call of the Torrid Zone if upon one of its mountains, situated far toward the limits of the west, the Terrestrial Paradise could be found? That fabulous and paradoxical belief was revived by the great voyages of discovery. The western Indies were scattered about the equinoctial line, yet they appeared to be habitable nonetheless. Did this mean that Europeans could pass unscathed through such regions? Not so. The New World was indeed habitable, but on the condition that one would never want to return to the Old. In effect, those who ventured into the Torrid Zone contracted a syndrome that made it difficult for them to leave: 'the American malady,' or *Morbus Americae*" (Antei 1993, 9–10).

2. All quotations from the journal are taken and translated from Guillermo Hernández de Alba's definitive edition, *Diario de observaciones científicas de José Celestino Mutis, (1760–1790)*, second edition, 1983, published by the Instituto Colombiano de Cultura Hispánica. I also make use of "La vigilia y el sueño de las plantas," a text attached to the 1982 edition of Gredilla's biography of Mutis. Gredilla explains that Mutis wrote this text as part of his personal journal, but it had never been published in this context before because it had been seen as something of exclusively scientific interest. Besides these two texts, there also exist pictorial publications and many documents written by Mutis in relation to the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada; these will not be studied in my current work. The *Diario de observaciones científicas de José Celestino Mutis, (1760–1790)* and "La vigilia y el sueño de las plantas," as will be seen in my analysis, are indeed full of botanical documentation, but they were written by Mutis as his personal travel journal, which he kept separately from his work papers.

3. Aside from the internal and external political clashes confronting the various successors to the throne of Spain, which cause the century to stand out as one of conflict, during the eighteenth century the country experienced an internal transformation on the level of civil and ecclesiastic institutions, especially in the educational centers that influenced—among many others—the scientists. Father Feijoó, although loyal to his extremely traditional scholasticism, became the figure most receptive to experimental knowledge, and this was key for the travelers of the era. The bibliography on the Enlightenment in Spain is extensive, but Gaspar Gómez de la Serna's text *Los viajeros de la ilustración*, has specific information along these lines.

4. Humboldt also participated in defense of Mutis in the argument that sprang up years later between Mutis and Sebastián López Ruiz over who had discovered the quinine-bearing cinchona in the outskirts of Santa Fe de Bogotá. In a letter from Humboldt to López Ruiz, which is among Mutis's papers, the German scientist wrote: "But the frankness natural to my nation and my character impels me to add that this enjoyment has many times been interrupted by the passages pertaining to the noted naturalist of Santa Fé, with whom I am joined by the closest ties of friendship and gratitude."

5. The Spanish eighteenth century and its role in the European Enlightenment is a subject and an argument all to itself. Gaspar Gómez de la Serna asserts in his book *Los viajeros de la ilustración* that a first glance at the historical structure of the eighteenth century will reveal, before all else, Spain's late plunge into the historical waters of the Age of Reason as such. In fact, because of the conflicts around maritime and territorial protection of the vast empire, and the innumerable internal conflicts, it was not until Charles III (1761) that enlightened despotism concerned itself with scientific projects.

6. Jean Baptiste Boussingault was a French traveler invited by the government of Gran Colombia to undertake a voyage and a geographic diagnosis of the new republics. His travel book *Viajes científicos a los Andes ecuatoriales* (Paris: Lasserre, 1849), is a geographical treatise and a description of customs. This text continues the work of the eighteenth-century scientists but also participates in a new modality of Latin American travel books that would become very popular in the nineteenth century. In this type of text, descriptions of local customs are included along with scientific information and reports on possibilities for commercial exploitation.

7. At the time of Mutis's death, Nueva Granada was in the middle of the independence wars. The archives of the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada were sent to Madrid and many of them were lost. Their publication has been unsystematic and extremely slow. Mutis is a historical character largely unknown in Spain but remembered in present-day Colombia as a founding father and as a scholar. Colombian historian Guillermo Hernández de Alba has undertaken a detailed study of his documents, of which the majority are in the Royal Botanical Garden of Madrid; it was one of the directors of the Garden, Antonio Gredilla, who wrote the most-cited biography of the scholar. The Botanical Garden of Bogotá bears his name, and in the celebrations of the five hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, that institution created a program called Return to the Botanical Expedition, whose only function is the dissemination of his works. To mark the year 1992, both countries issued handsome editions of the graphical material of the expedition and attempted an artistic recovery of the engravings that have been preserved.

8. The Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada has been seen as a project of the enlightened Bourbons to continue with the *Natural History of America* begun during the reign of Philip II and continued under Ferdinand VI, which basically aimed to find products that would permit Spain to compete with England and France in the new international markets (González Pérez, *Francisco José de Caldas y la ilustración de la Nueva Granada*, 24). Botanical expeditions were also launched in Peru in 1777 under the direction of José Pabón and Hipólito Ruiz, and in Mexico in 1787 led by Martín Sessé, José Mariano Mociño, and Vicente Cervantes.

9. It is worth citing excerpts from the descriptions of some of these figures in Guillermo Hernández de Alba's *Cómo nació la República de Colombia*. Hernández de Alba, a Mutis scholar, is one of Colombia's most traditional historians: "Jorge Tadeo Lozano was an officer of the Spanish Guard, and withdrew to join the patriotic army. He was one of the first of the rebels who deposed the legitimate authorities . . . member of the Electoral College . . . author of several seditious pamphlets including *El Anteojo*. He was executed by firing squad and his property confiscated. . . . Salvador

Rizo came to this capital with Bolívar's army and stood out for his wickedness and depraved opinions. He persecuted all those who sided with the King. . . . He was executed by firing squad and his goods confiscated" (84). "Morillo the Pacifier, like the Barbarian who burned the Library of Alexandria, could not forgive the scholars, and Caldas in this sense was a great criminal; he paid with his life for this inexcusable offense in an American" (102).

10. In fact, the most circulated edition of the *Diario* is that of Marcelo Frías, which goes only up to the year 1764. The prologue to Hernández Alba's edition contains an apology to the reader, because after '64 "the picturesque tone of the travels is lost" and in general Mutis is remembered as a botanist rather than a traveler.

11. In her chapter on Humboldt, Mary Louise Pratt explores the representation of the Enlightenment subject in contrast to that of other travelers whose goal was to buy or to conquer. According to her work, the enlightened traveler, in representing himself as a weak scientist rather than a strong warrior, privileges his science over his physical strength.

12. Several things may unite this period. During that time, Mutis was the viceroy's physician and began to participate in the intellectual life of Nueva Granada. From his arrival in Santa Fe, he joined the educational institutions of the viceregal capital and took on innumerable tasks. Among other things, he created the first university program in medicine, was professor of mathematics, created the first department of astronomy and assembled dictionaries of the indigenous languages. The Mutis of this period was a shock to the parochial life of the viceroyalty. It is known that, from his position in the Colegio del Rosario, he was the first to teach the Copernican system in spite of the church's support of the Ptolemaic one. In response, the Dominicans in 1775 presented a complaint to the tribunal of the Inquisition in Cartagena de Indias, accusing Mutis of "opinions opposed to the purity of the Catholic Faith" (Gredilla 1992, 59). He was found innocent, however.

13. During this period Mutis gave up the life of doctor and professor, retired to Mariquita with his group, and organized his life and his account around his companions and plants. According to Gredilla's biography, "They would work nine hours a day maintaining profound silence in the office in which each member, in his own designated place, was busy drawing on paper—now with pencil, now with colors—that plant he had in front of him. Wages were paid weekly, with deductions for losses resulting from individual errors" (Gredilla 1992, 153).

14. Guillermo Hernández de Alba notes in his transcription of the journal that in 1766 a company was formed in Santa Fe de Bogotá to develop the mine known as San Antonio, located in Montuoso Baja. The company was made up of various members of the viceroy's cabinet, Mutis among them (*Diario de observaciones*, libro I: 180). This marked the beginning of his prosperous career as a mine manager, which he would carry on until the beginning of the expedition.

15. This substance in the bark of the cinchona tree, native to America, yielded a strong remedy for fever that became an important medicine in the nineteenth century, generating large-scale exploitation and commercialization. In his book, *Quinas Amargas: El sabio Mutis y la discusión naturalista del siglo XVIII*, Gonzalo Hernández de Alba offers a broad panorama of what the discovery and use of quinine meant for the

economic transformation of Nueva Granada. He says that from 1616 on the Spanish government had information about a particularly curative plant, which at different times and places had been called “countess’s powder,” “priest’s powder,” or “Jesuit powder,” and was used to treat various cases of infections. La Condamine described the plant in 1738, but it was Mutis who discovered its presence in the outskirts of Santa Fe de Bogotá and determined the major curative effect of its use in fermented beverages. It was thanks to his sending a sample to Linnaeus, in 1773, that Humoldt got in touch with him.

16. It is not unusual to find doctors’ travel narratives containing reports of their attempts to get indigenous people to reveal the secrets of the local remedies, and of the indigenous people resisting giving these up. The doctor Francisco Hernández’s statement is often cited: “The natives hold this plant (the *chuprei*) in great regard and hide its properties behind much secrecy; but with diligence and care we managed to draw them out” (*Quinas Amargas*, 10).

17. Production resumed forty-five years later and, according to Hernández de Alba, caused an ecological disaster in the area. Finally, the British naturalist Richard Spruce took some germinated plants to India; by the end of the nineteenth century this British colony had the world monopoly on quinine production.

18. It should be remembered that Caballero y Góngora was the strict viceroy whom Charles III sent to Nueva Granada to impose an iron fist on the comunard uprisings that had spread throughout the territory—and also that he was the “enlightened despot” whose function was to promote development of the sciences in Nueva Granada. Nonetheless, it is a historiographic commonplace that the creole ideologues who would command the intellectual independence movement in the vicerealty developed within the Royal Botanical Expedition of the New Kingdom of Granada.

19. Jorge Orlando Melo, in his book *Predecir el pasado* (1992), categorizes all of the following—the publication of Mutis’s text “Method of Treating Smallpox” (1782), the chair in mathematics of the Colegio de Rosario, the proposal in favor of Copernican teachings, the arrival in Nueva Granada (orchestrated by Mutis) of the famous chemist D’Elhuyar, the arrival of German miners, and the discovery of the quinine cinchona near Bogotá—as events that changed the colonial mentality to a degree that had sociopolitical ramifications.

CHAPTER TWO. HUMBOLDT: THE SILENCES AND COMPLICITIES OF CARTOGRAPHY

1. One of the circumstances that distinguished Humboldt and Bonpland’s voyage is that such an ambitious and significant expedition was carried out entirely independently, financed by a family inheritance which Humboldt received on the death of his mother in 1797, when he was nearly thirty years old. After attempting to mount scientific excursions to Egypt and India, which failed due to problems of international politics, Humboldt and Bonpland finally won the support of Spanish prime minister Mariano de Urquijo, who obtained permission for them to travel through the colonies without restrictions, under the authorization of Charles IV.

2. This was a tense political moment throughout the colonies. In Nueva Granada the Communal movements had revived, and the creole landlords were tired of restrictions on foreign commerce and of taxes and political restrictions imposed by the viceroyalty. A number of creoles were in Europe, seeking aid from the governments of England and France. In Santa Fe itself, Antonio Nariño was in prison; known as a precursor of the independence movements, Nariño had translated the French declaration of the Rights of Man into Spanish and distributed it clandestinely. On top of all this, all of Latin America and the Caribbean were in a state of tension over the growing revolts of runaway slaves in Suriname, the successful slave uprising in Santo Domingo, and the constant revolts on the haciendas.

3. The work of encyclopedic dimensions that Humboldt proposed required a geographic expedition to equatorial regions because it was to be a comparative study of the different climatic regions of the globe and the creatures that inhabited them. The geographer's plan included drawing the entire globe according to the new geographic concepts in which a map should approach arithmetic accuracy. This was possible thanks to development of new instruments of measurement, especially the invention of the chronometer in 1761 by John Harrison. (See David S. Landes, *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*.)

4. The first edition of what was originally called *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent* . . . was issued in France. In fact it was a series of publications which totaled thirty volumes in all. The first to be published, soon after the travelers' return to France, was the volume on the geography of plants, dedicated to Mutis, which appeared in 1805. The last, covering the history and geography of the New Continent, appeared in 1836. Establishing the exact dates and editions of Humboldt's work is a research project in its own right. A good reference on this subject is the bibliography prepared by Charles Minguet for *Cartas Americanas* (Ayacucho, 1980).

5. Humboldt must be seen in relation to Goethe. They were personal friends, and Humboldt based his text on the geography of plants on Goethe's concept of "morphology." The chain extends to Darwin who, as a student at Cambridge, read *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales* and wrote that reading this book had awoken in him a fever to add even the humblest contribution to the natural sciences. Humboldt and his American voyage lie at the heart of the scientific development that has shaped the geographic vision of the planet.

6. For my analysis of the illustrations, I am using the *Atlas pittoresque du voyage, plus connu sous le titre: Vues des Cordillères et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique*, and *Atlas Géographique et Physique*, which originally appeared in French as part of the general collection on his travels to the Americas, known as *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du Nouveau Continent, fait en 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803 et 1804 par Al. de Humboldt et A Bonpland, rédigé par Alexandre de Humboldt avec un Atlas Géographique et Physique* (Paris: Librairie de Gide, 1814–1834). For the *Relation historique*, Humboldt's narrative of his travels, I am citing the English translation by Helen Maria Williams, *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent, during the years 1799–1804* (New York, 1966 / London, 1818). For his correspondence, the collection *Cartas Americanas* (Ayacucho, 1980), selected by Charles Minguet with translation to Spanish by Marta Traba.

7. After their return from America, the two travelers' destinies diverged markedly. Bonpland became the gardener of Josephine Bonaparte's Jardin Botanique and developed an intimate relation with the Empress Josephine, under whose care the garden was. After Josephine's death, Bonpland traveled to Argentina and then, while on a botanical expedition to Paraguay, was arrested by the dictator Francia who held him for fifteen years, deaf to all international petitions for his release. Finally freed, the French botanist refused to return to Europe. He shut himself in a garden, cultivating exotic roses to the end of his days.

8. Humboldt is often described as someone divided both geographically and ideologically: "Humboldt was a man divided. Split between his aristocratic origins (Prussian military family, French Protestant on his mother's side) . . . and his immensely cosmopolitan culture . . . as well as his unwavering adherence to ideals of the French revolution. . . . While he was always in demand among kings and princes, the majority of his friends, in Europe as in America, were democrats, republicans loyal to the idea of the eighteenth century and of 1789" (Charles Minguet, prologue to *Cartas Americanas*).

9. For obvious reasons, this allegory has stimulated a variety of readings. Mary Louise Pratt, for instance, reads the image of America as a "warrior," while Halina Nelken, in a detailed study of Humboldt's iconography, reads it as a woman warrior. Really there are no definitive signs that make the figure either feminine or masculine.

10. For a broader treatment of the representation of America in global cartography, see José Rabasa, *Inventing America: Spanish Historiography and the Formation of Eurocentrism* (1993).

11. Michel de Certeau, in *The Writing of History*, describes this allegorical illustration of Vespucci's arrival as one at the level of myth because it inaugurates a new function in Western writing: the writing of conquest (xxvi).

12. Though Humboldt's is the text that was consecrated as the authorized version of America in the nineteenth century, his was in no way the only expedition that had proposed to write the geography of the region. During the eighteenth century, the continent received such scientific travelers as the Ulloa brothers, La Condamine, Mutis, D'Elhuyar, and many others who were continuing a tradition begun in the sixteenth century by Padre Acosta and his *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1590). Humboldt's biographers have shown how his exhaustive scientific and humanistic education was fed by readings of earlier travel texts: "Humboldt lived his early years in the era in which the great European powers poured their efforts into voyages to discover and explore lands and seas. Memorable times, in which the unfortunate expeditions of . . . D'Entrecaseaux, Bligh, and Malaspina did not discourage the famous and fruitful journeys of the intrepid Byron, Wallis, Carteret, Bougainville, and Cook. The narratives of these voyages awoke Humboldt's enthusiasm for scientific study of unknown regions; a decisive influence was his friendship with Forster, who returned as naturalist from Cook's memorable circumnavigation" (*Por tierras de Venezuela*, XVII).

13. William Robertson (1721–1793) was a Scottish historian who wrote a history of Scotland and a book on the emperor Charles V. He also wrote *History of America*, widely read in the eighteenth century, based on travelers' texts and strongly criticized later because its author had never been to America.

14. *Codice Vaticanus*, copied in 1566 by the Dominican friar Pedro de los Ríos, is in the Vatican Library. *Codex Borgianus de Veletri* is in Rome, and *Codex Mexicano* is in the Library of Berlin.

15. See Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983).

16. Our translation.

17. I am not referring precisely to a governing social class, because it is difficult to speak of social classes in this period of political redefinitions. As José Escorcia's "La formación de las clases sociales en el período de la independencia" shows (Colmenares, *La independencia: ensayos de historia social*), the boundaries of the classes of Nueva Granada were being redefined at this time when slave laborers gradually came to form part of the paid work force or the population of runaways. The independence wars modified landholding to a certain extent and established new tax systems; the creole commercial class changed because of the opening to international commerce. Nonetheless, the colonial caste structure lingered on for many years. It is a fact that the educated creole class was in charge of political administration, at least in metropolitan centers.

18. The economic dynamics of the colonial era, slavery, and the Spanish obsession with "purity of blood" had produced a society highly stratified into castes. This ethnic stratification, of course, was present in the formation of the independence discourse. It has been said that Bolívar feared the emancipation of the slaves more than he feared a Spanish attack.

19. The Africans, who constituted an important presence in Nueva Granada but disappeared completely from the graphical representations of the atlas, inspired in the valiant traveler one of the few moments of terror in his voyage, summarized in a letter to his brother dated April 1, 1801, in which he tried to explain the rigors and dangers of his journey and related an encounter with the maroon slaves (runaway slaves) of Cartagena (*Cartas*, 79); he also describes this in the *Voyage* (vol. III: 543).

20. The iconography generated by the figure of Humboldt is enormous. Many of the prints that he inspired show him in the jungles of the Orinico, surrounded by naked native people and wild animals. Whenever the traveler is depicted in America, jungle and natives surround him. See Halina Nelken, *Alexander von Humboldt: His Portraits and Their Artists: A Documentary Iconography*.

21. In *La voz y su huella: escritura y conflicto étnico-social en América Latina, 1492–1988*, his analysis of orality in Latin American history and literature, Martín Lienhard demonstrates how the enormous oral contributions of multiple American ethnic groups are present in many and varied types of cultural manifestations. But, he adds, they have been stubbornly ignored by canonical readings of literature and history, which reduce those cultural productions to simple re-elaborations of knowledge and style imported from Europe.

22. Humboldt's text recognizes that for the indigenous peoples, European dress also represented a social code. He tells in his journal how the native American he brought back to Europe was very surprised to see a peasant toiling with his hat on, and thought he must be in a very poor country where the masters had to work their own land. The only ones to wear hats in the jungles of the Orinoco were the "masters."

23. The authors of *Reading National Geographic* (1993), analyze the nudity of the groups considered “natives” by contemporary geography, and how this is a nakedness to which the West has become accustomed because it has more to do with structures of power than with the cultural implications of the nudity of Western groups.

24. For a discussion of the development of racism in scientific concepts, see *The Racial Economy of Science: Towards a Democratic Future*, edited by Sandra Harding (1993). In *Imperial Eyes*, Mary Louise Pratt analyzes how the mentality of the Enlightenment codified racism in the terms of the natural sciences, guaranteeing its existence with the power of science.

25. Nelken’s *Alexander von Humboldt: His Portraits and Their Artists: A Documentary Iconography* (1980) includes prints made by Europeans on the theme of Humboldt’s American journey which depict women cooking or working in encampments in which large groups of indigenous people may be seen.

26. “His democratic conviction, his insistence on the human rights claims of the French revolution of 1789, and his everlasting humanity can not be overlooked, to him the most important principles. Therefore his physical geography as his most scientific goal was instrumental to humanity and the liberation of suppressed human beings” (Nelken, 9).

27. In his historical novels, especially *El siglo de las luces* (*Explosion in a Cathedral* in English translation), Alejo Carpentier criticizes the way neocolonial aspects of the French Revolution have been praised by the Latin American historical tradition as a positive European influence on the independence movements (See Echevarría, *El peregrino en su patria*, 277–355).

PART II. INTRODUCTION TO PART II

1. For a comprehensive study of the image of America as a woman, see *The Wild Woman: An Inquiry into the Anthropology of an Idea*, by Sharon Tiffany and Kathleen Adams (1985). Catherina Lutz and Jane Collins, in their book *Reading National Geographic* (1993), analyze the masculine gaze which feminizes native cultures. Mary Louise Pratt, in the chapter “Eros and Abolition” of her book *Imperial Eyes*, examines the construction of the native woman in the erotic gaze of the traveler.

2. For an account of the graphical representation of America, see *Imagen de América* by Electra and Tonatiúh Gutiérrez (1996).

3. See *The Blessings of a Good Thick Skirt: Women Travellers and Their World*, by Mary Russell. The introduction, “A Most Excellent Reason,” summarizes women’s motives for travel throughout the ages. In the particular case of the Americas see: *Women in the Conquest of the Americas* by Juan Francisco Maura, 1997.

4. Jane Robinson, in her book *Unsuitable for Ladies: An Anthology of Women Travellers* (1994), includes Maria Graham in this group.

5. Far from desiring to idealize this new modality of European expression, Mary Louise Pratt (1992) has coined the term “the capitalist vanguard” to identify those European travelers who “descended on South America by the dozen. Men, women,

scientists, soldiers, speculators, they were all thrilled to be there. . . . By the 1820s, the South American revolutions, in which Britain and France were major military and monetary participants, had become a source of immense interest in Europe" (146).

6. As Pratt analyzes: "The revolutions were also what made travel possible, and the commercial opportunities they opened created a momentum that easily rivaled Humboldt's scientific and aesthetic passions. As other commentators have observed, the wave of South American travellers in the 1810s and 1820s were mainly British and mainly traveled and wrote as advance scouts for European capital" (Pratt 1992, 146).

7. See Hamalian 1981 and Russell 1986.

8. See Foster, chapter 2.

9. See Simon Gikandi (1996), Ann McClintock (1995), Chaudhuri and Trobel, eds. (1992).

10. For a deconstruction of the homogenous and monolithic feminine subject, see Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (1991) and Oyèrónké Oyèwùmí's fascinating book *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses* (1997).

CHAPTER THREE. GRAHAM: THE WHITE DAUGHTER OF THE EAST, OR A FOREIGNER IN INDOMITABLE LANDS

1. The first edition of this book was published in London in 1824. It is a rare item, difficult to consult. My citations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from *Journal of a Residence in Chile and a Voyage from Chile to Brazil in 1823* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969).

2. Colonial power throughout the Andes had been crumbling since the 1780 uprising led by Túpac Amaru in Peru. In April 1818, Chilean patriots defeated the Royalists in the Battle of Maipo, and in November the Chilean fleet sailed for Peru to support San Martín's campaign for liberation. In 1820, the naval forces were united. In 1822, when Graham arrived in Chile, there was open rivalry between Bernardo O'Higgins, Director of Chile, and San Martín, who had just triumphed in Peru. In 1823, when she left the country, the first Chilean constitution was signed, establishing a representative government.

3. The influx of English travelers to the Southern Cone during the nineteenth century, a product of the British interest in establishing markets and commercial routes that would finally open the Pacific to international commerce, is a much-studied phenomenon. See Noel Jitrik (1969), Estuardo Núñez (1989), José Toribio Medina (1962), and Adolfo Prieto (1996).

4. In British eyes, Latin America represented a large and available market. By 1840, it absorbed 35 percent of English textile exports. This growth was accompanied by the establishment of English businesses in Latin America. By the second decade of the century, more than 150 businesses operated in Latin America (Wolf 1982, 278).

5. Female travelers who wrote travel narratives during this period were sometimes “de-authored” by their editors or translators. In her biography of Graham, Gotch recounts that the first English review of the Indian travel book presented the writer as “another” of the young Englishwomen who had gone to India in search of a husband. According to the biography, the note bothered her and she responded angrily. The curious fact is that something known as “The Fishing Fleet” did ply between England and India at the time, made up of ships full of women seeking husbands among the prosperous businessmen of the East India Company. The reviewer must have taken her for one of these. Even such a recent history book as Avila Martel’s *Cochrane y la independencia del Pacífico* (1976), which is among those in debt to Graham’s narrative for a good deal of information, expresses the qualification that her reports are “approximate” (263) because there may have been a love interest between the political leader and the traveler.

6. Many Englishmen with ties to Chile parade through Graham’s pages, but only two of them require identification here. The first is her husband. Captain Graham had been sent to Chile, according to Gotch, because “British interests in that turbulent coast were to be watched” (184); Mavor writes that he had “orders to keep a godfatherly eye on British trading interests in that unreliable part of the world” (xi). The second is Lord Cochrane, an English officer hired to command the Chilean navy. He arrived in Chile in 1818 and fought in the wars of Peru and Chile. He was successful in his organization of the navy and his military strategies, but he came in conflict with the local powers. Then he served in the Brazilian military and, years later, took part in the Greek liberation war.

7. As demonstrated in the studies that make up the collection *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains* (Christopher Fox, ed., 1995), the basis for the formation of the various disciplines now known as the social sciences was redefined during the eighteenth century, which saw the emergence of an enormous interest in studying human beings and their social behavior from a scientific point of view. This same rhetoric gave rise to conceptions of “civilization” and “progress” that implied the organization of communities in accord with a hierarchy of development whose reference point was Europe. Nonetheless, eighteenth-century classifications were carried out largely through brutal methods of collecting species in Africa, Australia, South America, and the North Pole. In his article “How to Prepare a Noble Savage: The Spectacle of Human Science,” Christopher Fox analyzes sciences such as anthropology which have their beginnings in the “head hunters” and the collections of dried or stuffed plants, animals, and humans that European naturalists gathered for their research purposes.

8. This item comes from the reminiscences that Graham dictated to Caroline Fox from her sickbed between 1836 and 1842, which form part of the only biography of the author: *Maria, Lady Callcott, the Creator of “Little Arthur,”* by Rosamund Brunel Gotch (1937).

9. It is worth remembering that England had established its first commercial contacts in India in 1684, and since 1765 the East India Company had possessed the “dirwan” (sales taxes) of all the provinces to the east of the Ganges as well as full freedom to trade without paying taxes throughout that vast area of the most populated

provinces of the peninsula. England's mercantile success led the process of European expansion and brought enormous profits to the new class of English merchants. Hence the Crown's interest in active intervention to liberate the colonies from Spain so as to open new markets.

10. See Medina (1962), Azara (1982), Goodman (1972).

11. The image of the fallen sparrow in the antipodes is a reference to *Hamlet*. In Act V, Scene 2, line 213, when Hamlet prepares for his duel with Laertes, and Horatio tries to dissuade him, Hamlet says, "Not a whit. We defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow" (Shakespeare, *Cátedra* bilingual edition, 1992, 684–85).

12. See *The Witness and the Other World: Exotic European Travel Writing, 400–1600* (1988).

13. Diego de Almagro (1475–1538) accompanied Francisco Pizarro in the conquest of Peru (1478–1541).

CHAPTER FOUR. TRISTÁN, OR THE INCENDIARY GEOGRAPHY OF A PILGRIM PARIAH

1. The first edition of *Les Pérégrinations d'une paria: 1833–1834* was issued in Paris in 1838 by Arthus Bertrand. Most of my citations are taken from the English translation by Jean Hawkes, *Peregrinations of a Pariah* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), which consists of selections from the original text. The complete text is not available in modern editions in either English or French; it has had more luck in Spanish, with complete modern editions published in 1941, 1946, and 1984. Passages not included in Hawkes have been taken from other sources as indicated.

2. Curiously, the event has not been mentioned by Tristán's Latin American commentators: Silvina Bullrich, Luis Alberto Sánchez, or Magda Portal. Nor does it appear in the biography by Dominique Desanti, but it does appear in one of the most comprehensive studies of Flora Tristán's work, Máire Cross and Tim Gray's *The Feminism of Flora Tristán*, and also in Laura S. Struminger's *The Odyssey of Flora Tristán*.

3. From 1785 on, after the indigenous uprising led by Túpac Amaru, the viceroyalty of Peru was in a precarious internal situation, made more so by the independence wars. In 1820, José de San Martín, after leading Chile to independence, went to Peru at the head of a liberation force and defeated the royalists. In 1821, San Martín took on the title of Protector, until 1822 when he definitively withdrew and left the country in the hands of the Congress. In 1823 the first constitution was proclaimed. Bolívar entered Peru in 1824 to combat the internal disorder generated by the royal armies' reconquest, and after the victories of Junín and Ayacucho he was named president for life. Between 1829 and 1833 the country went through a period of civil wars. Those conflicts were temporarily stilled in 1834 with the presidency of Luis José de Orbegoso. In 1834 a liberal reform of the constitution and an economic boom resulting from the exploitation of guano put Peru in a privileged position among South American countries. The collapse of international guano prices at mid-century brought this prosperous period to a noisy finale.

4. To avoid confusion, I am identifying these prologues as “first,” “second,” and “third.” The first is the one beginning “To the Peruvians . . .”; second, “God has done nothing in vain . . .”; third, “Before beginning the narration of my journey.” Citations of the first, which does not exist in any modern English or French edition, are our translation from a microfiche of the original French edition. Citations of the second and third are from the translation by Claire Goldberg Moses and Leslie Wahl Rabine in their book *Feminism, Socialism, and French Romanticism* (1993); they identify them as “Forword” and “Preface.”

5. “*Peregrinations of a Pariah* in which she chronicled her experiences during her voyage to Peru . . . marked a turning point in Tristán’s life” (8).

6. Since the organization of the Coloquio Internacional sobre Flora Tristán in 1945, the Peruvian historian Magda Portal has devoted herself to the task of reclaiming the memory of Flora Tristán as a combative woman who criticized the country from her female point of view. In 1979, several Peruvian feminist groups, among which Portal was a leader, decided to found El Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán with the initial goal of publishing Peruvian feminist works, beginning with the publication of *Flora Tristán una reserva de utopía* (1975). The group has continued its editorial work and diversified its functions as well. The Centro now coordinates several women’s centers and an international information center.

7. Most texts that analyze Tristán’s work also recount her biography. The information presented here is synthesized from data in the following biographies: Dominique Desanti, *La Femme Révoltée* (1872); Eléonore Blanc, *Biographie de Flora Tristan* (1845); Jules L. Puech, *La Vie et l’oeuvre de Flora Tristan* (1925); Luis Alberto Sánchez, *Una mujer sola contra el mundo* (1987); Magda Portal, *Flora Tristán, precursora* (1983); Jean Baelen, *La Vie de Flora Tristan: Socialisme et féminisme au XIXe siècle* (1972).

8. Laura Struminger asserts that all other sources are incorrect and Tristán’s mother’s real name was Ann-Pierre Laisnay (7).

9. Bolívar was then a young man of twenty, touring Europe with his mentor Simón Rodríguez as part of his process of education. Aimé Bonpland had returned from his voyage to the tropics with Humboldt and belonged to the group of Latin American intellectuals in Paris. A possible romance between Flora’s mother and Bolívar has been the subject of much literary speculation; a book by Carlos Mejía Gutiérrez, *Bolívar en París: o una leyenda de amor* (1986) is dedicated exclusively to demonstrating that Flora was Bolívar’s daughter.

10. The changes in divorce law reflect the larger legal changes in France after the Revolution and during the restoration of the monarchy. The first law allowing divorce, adopted in 1792, was revoked in 1814 by Louis XVII. In 1824, with the ascent to power of Charles X, the laws became more stringent, barring women from managing their own finances. These laws remained in force, with variations, until the law of divorce was revived in 1884. Sandra Dijkstra asserts, “If the revolution marked the culmination of a period dominated by feminist energies, so the period which followed marked their repression. In effect, with the institution of the Code Napoleon, a married woman had no civil or economic rights at all. Her person, her children, her fortune, were all in her husband’s control. The long tradition of French women’s

involvement in commerce, dating back to medieval times, was broken . . . illegitimate children and their mothers were left to fend for themselves" (9).

11. In 1835 the incipient workers' movement had been destroyed by the *Loi sur les Associations*, approved in April 1834 to strengthen the *Loi de chapeleir* which had not been sufficiently effective in preventing workers' organization and protecting the freedom of the manufacturers. This new legislation and its accompanying judicial repression forced the republican movement underground. When Tristán left France for America, the republican movement was still a significant voice. When she returned, she witnessed the trials of republican leaders. During her absence, the government had faced the Lyon uprising of 1834, which ended in a massacre, as had the uprising of the Rue Transnonian in Paris the April before (Dijkstra, 57).

12. Once she was freed from her husband's harassment, Tristán's public life flowered. Sales of her book grew rapidly, thanks to the publicity generated by Chazal's trial. Tristán's small apartment on the Rue de Bac became a meeting place for radical intellectuals (Cross and Gray, 9).

13. Sandra Dijkstra makes an interesting analysis of *Promenades* as a pioneer Marxist book that reveals something of that movement's early ideological development. She demonstrates that Engels had read *Promenades*, which was in its fourth edition when he arrived in London. She also analyzes how his book on the conditions of the English working class shares a lot with Tristán's book on London's marginal neighborhoods, and even contains some identical items such as the dedication to "the working class," the use of a geographic division of the city to illustrate the class struggle, and many ideological concepts. Nonetheless, there was a part of Tristán's book that did not interest Engels: the assertion that women were the proletariat of the proletariat, which Tristán based on her analysis of the oppression of the wife and the prostitute. This is one more example of the division of three movements that began from similar sources: feminism, utopian socialism, and Marxism (*Flora Tristán: Pioneer Feminist and Socialist*, 148–62).

14. Jill Kuhnheim offers a fine analysis of this text as the culmination of Tristán's essay writing. Kuhnheim says that Tristán's essays grow out of her autobiographical writing, culminating in the political essay, where her personal experience has undergone a process of mimesis with that of the workers ("Pariah/Messiah: The Conflicted Subjectivity of Flora Tristán," 34).

15. According to Desanti's biography, Tristán contracted a combination of cholera and typhus which resulted in a stroke. Her death was tragic, and it took place during her tour to publicize the labor and feminist cause. These two factors contributed to her being remembered as a sort of socialist martyr.

16. Contemporary interest in Flora Tristán has grown since the publication of Puech's biography in 1925. The First European International Colloquium on Flora Tristán, organized by the University of Dijon (France) in 1984, gave an important impetus to the study of this figure from a variety of disciplinary points of view: as a socialist leader, as a feminist, and as a writer. The event was promoted especially by Stéphane Michaud, a scholar of her works to whom we owe the recovery of her letters, essential texts, and bibliography. André Breton also contributed to awakening interest in Tristán through the publication of several of her letters. Jean Baelen pub-

lished an important biography in 1972. In Latin America, Magda Portal and Luis Alberto Sánchez were pioneers of the rediscovery of Tristán, and in the ensuing years Silvina Bullrich and Rosario Castellanos have written about her. In Chile the hundredth anniversary of her death was observed in 1944, which helped to encourage new editions of *Pérégrinations*. Contemporary feminist studies of French feminist precursors and the Saint-Simonist movement have also paid ample attention to her.

17. The power of the Tristán Moscoso family in Peru should not be underestimated. Besides owning large haciendas in Arequipa, Don Pío Tristán had been a very powerful man during the last years of the colony, and he continued to be so in the republic. As a boy, he accompanied his father in the campaign against Túpac Amaru and Túpac Catari, and he later joined the Spanish army and traveled to Spain where his brother Mariano, who had an influential position in the court, arranged his release from the army and sent him to France to complete his studies. Pío Tristán interrupted his studies to return to America and fight in the independence wars on the royalist side. He served for a time as an aide to Viceroy Melo, and took part in the battles against the patriots in Upper Peru. From 1815 to 1817 he was quartermaster-general in Arequipa. After a brief term as viceroy, not approved by the king, Pío Tristán decided to renounce the royal army. In the republic, he was Prefect of Arequipa in 1835, Minister of War and Navy in 1836, and President of the Southern State of Peru in 1838 (Zegarra-Meneses, *Arequipa en el paso de la colonia a la República*, 1973).

18. The word *pariah* comes originally from the Indian language Tamil, in which it meant someone who plays the drum in the street to make a living. It was used in southern India and in Burma to refer to members of an inferior caste who were usually workers or servants and were denied all rights.

19. The book *Feminism, Socialism, and French Romanticism*, which examines the relations among those three movements (crucial to reading a writer such as Flora Tristán), presents the Saint-Simonist school this way: "They pledged themselves to develop his ideas for a world order based on peace, love and cooperation. Having first developed the more rationalist elements of Saint-Simon's ideas on social and economic justice, they had, by the late 1820s, begun to emphasize the more romantic elements of his work and especially his ideas for a 'new religion' based on love. Women and the sociosexual relationship between the sexes then emerged as the movement's central concern" (6).

20. "She is both a victim of society and superior to it, demonstrating traits of the alienated romantic subject" (Kuhnheim 1995, 28). Basing herself on the approach of Susan Kirkpatrick, Kuhnheim analyzes the creation of Tristán's subjectivity. Kirkpatrick says there are three principal archetypes in the romantic subjectivity: the Promethean subject, the socially alienated subject, and the divided subject. According to Kuhnheim, the subject created by Tristán in *Pérégrinations* is a superimposition of all these models, which she defines as the romantic alienated subject. From here on I will refer to Flora Tristán's "romantic subject" in reference to this definition.

21. Grewal is part of a line of travel literature theorists who take off from James Clifford and his text "Notes on Travel and Theory." Clifford analyzes the concepts of "Home" and "Abroad" used in Paul Fussell's classic text *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars*, which draws a distinction between "Home" and "Abroad" cor-

responding to that between “self” and “other.” Clifford speaks from the point of view of postcolonial criticism and establishes the importance of distinguishing the correspondences of those terms within the multiple particularities the subjects of a travel book may present.

22. According to John Lynch’s analysis of the South American republics and their role in the continent’s independence (*The Spanish American Revolutions, 1808–1826* [1973]), Peru was “the problem child” (268) because its leaders kept changing sides between royalists and republicans, and its internal civil wars proliferated. Peru had won its independence in 1824, at Ayacucho, the last great victory of Bolívar (preceded by the campaign of San Martín), after which Bolívar had been named dictator-for-life. From then on, Peruvian discontent escalated. By 1830, all the countries had come into conflict with the Liberator and were in political chaos (Lynch, 293). In 1834, a civil revolution broke out in Lima because of the overthrow of president Bermúdez, who had been supported by ex-president Agustín Gamarra, himself recently overthrown. Orbegoso represented the opposition, and during the year that Tristán spent in Arequipa, Orbegoso approached this city in search of economic and military support from the ruling class. Southern Peru, and Arequipa in particular, were always indecisive about the republican cause and had strong royalist groups within the new republican governments. According to Bonilla and Spalding (1981), “Independence came to Peru at a time in which its elite had not clarified or developed a consciousness of itself. . . . The Peruvian upper classes were famous for their Hispanicism, and this . . . appears to have been alive and well at least until 1880” (107). Such was the political and social climate that Flora Tristán experienced in Peru. She describes all these backs-and-forths in her chapter, “The Republic and the Three Presidents.”

23. A decree of August 12, 1821, abolished the slave trade in Peru and declared the law of the “free womb.” It also ordered that a certain number of slaves had to be manumitted each year, with the state compensating their owners. The Constitution of 1860 declared that no one could be born a slave in Peru, but Lynch points out that the landlords opposed the laws and slavery in domestic service continued (275).

24. Pacha Gamarra was the wife of the ex-president, General Agustín Gamarra, who had been in power from 1829 to 1833 and was under siege from the opposition when Tristán arrived in Peru. He would be named president again in 1839. His wife, who had great influence in his first government, was referred to as “*la presidenta*.”

25. As Leslie Wahl Rabine says in “Feminist Texts and Feminist Subjects,” in which she explores the writings of some Saint-Simonists and Flora Tristán, “[I]n the case of author as referential person and author as subject produced by writing, the relation was one of conflict and contradiction more than representation and identity. These contradictions between the text and the lives of the Saint-Simonian feminists are themselves productive. In their utopian vision the women sought not only to build a new society but to build one in which the textual selves could be realized as socially recognized individuals” (5).

26. She also takes advantage of the opportunity to criticize her great rival George Sand for not assuming her feminine subject and hiding behind a masculine pseudonym.

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