The paper proposes a cartographic figure—a map—to account for the dynamics of Latin American literature. The paper also attempts to account for the discontinuity between modern and postmodern cultural paradigms by suggesting how such a map may be modified with the advent of globalization.

I.

It seems to be the nature of colonial enterprises, not only that they must be recorded in writing but that they are written in motion, since the metropolis and the colony are often worlds apart. Colonial officials, friars, expeditionaries, travelling scientists, ethnographers—even “natives” themselves—have been known to put pen to paper in order to carry out a variety of purposes, ranging from enacting royal orders, to making personal claims and attain recognition for services rendered, to describing the local geography and the native way of life, to complaining about the treatment received by the colonial authorities. These reports crisscross continents and oceans in an ever-expanding web of writing that future archivists and historians will be at pains to classify. But before they come to rest in the archive colonial reports are world-weary testimonies and agents of a process in motion. The vast colonial archives of Spanish America have their origin in a log written aboard a ship on the return leg of a transatlantic voyage. The seafaring motion of Columbus’ document—the first textual bridge between America and Europe—is replaced in later stages of colonization by the different rhythms of fluvial craft and mule trains.

Latin America was for three centuries a vast colonial enterprise administered by a remote European monarchy through a network of cities extending from the shores of the new territories inland. These cities—the prototypes of the lettered enclaves of the postcolonial period—were islands of European purpose in a sea of native bewilderment. After the wars of independence in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the creole élite that filled the political void left by the vanquished colonial administration undertook the twofold task of politically organizing the new nations and inserting their economies into the world market through the production and export of raw materials. These activities were two different faces of a single modernizing project that split the élite into conservative and liberal groups. The latter advocated free trade and prospered in urban settings, especially in port cities; the former defended vested interests and made themselves strong in the regions of the interior, which made regionalism—already aggravated by the difficult geography of the territories in question—one of the great obstacles to nation-building. The nineteenth century was a period when the central governments of the new republics, ruling from the capital city, tried to assert their authority over the provinces and the hinterland, a process that continued into the early decades of the twentieth century and that is amply reflected in the literature of the period.

Nation-building was not helped by an export economy that privileged the outward flow of goods at the expense of the development of internal markets. The latter would have helped provide territorial cohesiveness at a time when foreign capital and foreign technology were the basis of macroeconomic life in the new republics. The insertion of the local economies in the world market, however, did stimulate the taste for imports and introduced new standards of distinction in a postcolonial environment undergoing the stress of modernization. In Esteban Echeverría’s El matadero (one of the defining works of mid-nineteenth century Argentine literature, published in 1838), the enlightened protagonist is victimized by a horde of locals because he strays into the wrong neighborhood wearing the wrong (imported) clothes. A few decades later Horacio Quiroga, precursor of Borges and Cortázar in the genre of the short story, joined a jungle expedition dressed as a European dandy and provoked the irritated hilarity of his fellow expeditionaries. More generally, as two cultural historians write: “...the sphere of consumption, and in particular the use of domestic and imported goods, is one of the key contexts in which images of modernity were stated, contested, and affirmed in postcolonial Latin America” (Orlove 9). Imported commodities played an
important role in constructing social identity but their allure transcended the purchasing power of any particular social class and enveloped society as a whole, because modernity in Latin America shared one defining trait with the older colonialism, namely, that its center was in Europe and therefore prestigious objects and discourses had necessarily to come into the country from across the Atlantic and, later, from the United States.

For reasons, then, having to do with the legacy of colonialism, its role in the nation-building process, and the allure of modernity, Latin American literature has historically been caught between two opposite directions: a transatlantic one, which gave access to imported cultural goods originating in the European capitals and especially Paris, and a regionalist one, involving the routes leading to the interior of the national territory, which means that modern and early modern Latin American literature can be plotted on a map consisting of three cardinal points: the European metropolis, the national capital, and the regions of the interior, which are a mixture of province and frontier depending on the aspect that the hinterland takes on when viewed from the city. This map generates six basic itineraries along the three major axes (metropolis, capital, interior) that in their totality make up a modern and early modern literary geography of Latin America and includes both the cosmopolitan and regionalist directions. My argument is that this cartographic figure is of heuristic value in the study of Latin American literature but that it must be adjusted in the light of contemporary theories of postmodernism and globalization. In this article I attempt a survey of the literary territory represented by the map in order to conclude with some suggestions as to what a postmodern reading of the map might look like.

II.

If the New World was discovered at the end of the fifteenth century, it was rediscovered at the beginning of the 1800s by the European travelers of the Enlightenment who turned up in the "New Continent" (such was Humboldt's designation) at the very moment when the independence of Spanish America opened up vast territories for the expansion of capitalist trade and investment. Many critics have remarked on the connection between the writings of these travelers --geographers, physicists, naturalists, and engineers for the most part-- and European expansionism in Spanish America and Brazil. Mary Louise Pratt, for example, claims that some modalities of travel writing constitute the avant-garde of capitalist penetration of the newly available American territories (Pratt 1992). In the same vein, Jean Franco, speaks of the British travelers to South America in the first quarter of the nineteenth century as "capitalist missionaries" whose aim was no other than the informal colonization of the continent (Franco 1979). The accounts of explorers and scientists had a wide readership in Europe but also left an imprint on literary production in what was soon to be called Latin America. According to González Echevarría, the naturalists' accounts of their American sojourn functioned as a legitimating device for local narratives that grounded their authority on the prestige of science: "Facundo de Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1845), Francisco de Anselmo Suárez y Romero (1880) y Os Sertões de Euclides Da Cunha (1902) describen la sociedad y naturaleza latinoamericanas a través de las coordenadas conceptuales de la ciencia decimonónica" (Mito y archivo 12).

The most distinguished and influential of all European travelers to the New World was Alexander von Humboldt, who spent five years in the field and whose achievement has been aptly summarized by a contemporary travel writer: "Humboldt transformed the state of knowledge. He travelled fifteen thousand kilometers around the northern coastlines and interior, on the way collecting some sixteen hundred plants and identifying six hundred new species. He redrew the map of South America based on readings supplied by accurate chronometers and sextants. He researched the Earth's magnetism and was the first to discover that magnetic intensity declined the further one got from the poles. He gave the first accounts of the rubber and cinchona trees. He mapped the streams connecting the Orinoco and Negro river systems. He measured the effects of air pressure and altitude on vegetation. He studied the kinship rituals of the people of the Amazon basin and inferred connections between geography and cultural characteristics. He compared the salinity of water from the Pacific and the Atlantic and conceived the idea of sea currents, recognising that the temperature of the sea owed more to drifts than to latitude" (De Botton 103-105). Humboldt was the undisputed authority for generations of European and American writers, travelers, and scientists because --as Pratt remarks-- "his writings were the source of new founding visions of America on both sides of the Atlantic" (Imperial Eyes 111). There is hardly a European traveler to South America in the nineteenth century who fails to quote Humboldt on this or that score, even when said travelers explore places where their mentor never set foot. Bolívar met the Baron in Paris and paid homage to him as "a great man who with his eyes pulled America out of her ignorance and with his pen painted her as beautiful as her own nature" (Pratt, 112). Darwin was also impressed by the Baron's exploration of South America and wrote that Humboldt's Personal Narrative was the most meritorious book he had ever read (Prieto 16).

The European naturalists were welcomed in the cities by local intellectuals and scientists but the bulk of their experience of the Nuevo continente took place in the back country. It isn't hard to imagine that for the intrepid naturalists the scientific journey was an adventure, a voyage of exploration not too different from the one that centuries before had been undertaken by friars and conquistadores. Starting from their European capitals the...
naturalists scattered themselves throughout the American landscape and explored some of its most hostile places: the Colombian and Venezuelan llanos, the Amazon jungle, the snowy peaks of the Andes, remote Patagonia. Their voyage, undertaken on behalf of science and colonial interests, joined together two clearly differentiated and even antithetical extremes: the dream of civilization and the nightmare of barbarism, or at least it was so construed by local intellectuals throughout the continent engaged in giving shape to their unruly polities.

The most prominent among these intellectuals were Domingo F. Sarmiento in Argentina and Euclides Da Cunha in Brazil, authors of the two most influential works of the nineteenth century, both of which trace a discursive itinerary that goes from the national capital to the interior of the country but that is explicitly modelled on metropolitan discourse. In Sarmiento's Facundo (1845) the city is opposed to the "desert," while in Da Cunha's Os Sertões the opposition is between the cities of Brazil's Atlantic coast and that other interior desert called the sertão.

The opposition between the city and the plains firmly inscribed at the center of Facundo reflects a broader opposition between Europe and America and between civilization and barbarism. Sarmiento states that the cities of his time and place are surrounded and oppressed by the desert. He also describes the city as the center of civilization and as a stage for the "elegancia de los modales, las comodidades del lujo, los vestidos europeos, el frac y la levita" (31), articles of clothing that if worn outside the proper boundaries condemn their owner to the brutality of the barbarians. About Buenos Aires in particular Sarmiento states that all the progress of civilization is accumulated there but that the desert is a terrible "conductor" to distribute it in the provinces (26). Therefore, and because of its location in a hostile environment, Buenos Aires cannot become the world emporium it is destined to be. Between the city and the countryside, then, there is a hostile and violent antagonism: "parecen dos sociedades distintas, dos pueblos extraños uno de otro" (31).

Sarmiento's book was one of the models for Da Cunha's Os Sertões, published a little over half a century later. Both works describe the confrontation between the intellectual and an "autochthonous" character who is invested by the authors with all the traits antithetical to civilization. In Sarmiento this character is Facundo Quiroga, the barbarian caudillo of the interior; in Da Cunha, it is Antônio Conselheiro, an itinerant mystic who wandered around the Brazilian backlands at the end of the nineteenth century proselytizing against the emerging republic for its separation of Church and State and other perceived sins of liberalism. Eventually the preacher's converts numbered in the thousands and built a fortress in Canudos that was finally razed by the army in 1897, with the death of half of its occupants. Even though Sarmiento was a liberal and Da Cunha a positivist, both appeal to the same rhetoric of civilization and barbarism and project it against the geographic diversity of their respective countries. If Sarmiento talked about two "strange peoples" who coexisted in the same national territory, one in the city and the other in the country, Da Cunha refers to Brazil as a "geographic fiction." The narrative discourse of Os Sertões is structured in terms of several correlated oppositions: coastline/desert, science/religion, European race/inferior races.

But these oppositions do not remain stable throughout the book because as the author --a war correspondent -- travels through the sertão and becomes more familiar with the region's physical and human geography, his initial prejudices and faith in positivist science falter and are replaced by a more complex vision of Brazilian reality, one drawn from an original knowledge of the country and not exclusively derived from European science. For example, Da Cunha's closer scrutiny of Brazilian race formation in the interior of the country allows him to discard Broca's "anthropological law" as too rigid and abstract to be of any use in the context of Brazilian society. And Da Cunha also points out how useless and self-defeating European military theories are when applied to the geography of the sertão and to the nature of the enemy, who waged a protracted guerrilla war against an army equipped with the latest European war technology.

What Da Cunha does with the European interpretation of local and national Brazilian reality, which the urban intellectual himself brings on his voyage through the backlands, is to "tropé" it, to reorient it, to deviate from the accepted metropolitan norm in a gesture which is legitimated by the "original" condition of the "New Continent" and that in turn legitimates the intellectual's role in nation-building. This troping is a general condition of cultural discourse in Latin America. Projects and ideas adopted by the local intelligentsia seek their legitimation in European expertise but they acquire cultural authority only to the extent that they distance themselves from their European models and make themselves available as national projects, as discourses bearing on an original cultural identity. With respect to Sarmiento, González Echevarría puts it this way: "Para que Facundo sea inteligible tiene que pasar por las categorías y clasificaciones de la ciencia moderna, pero para ser original... tiene que escaparse de ellas" (389).

III.

The journey from the capital to the interior continues in the Regionalist novel (or novela de la tierra) of the 1920s, a genre dominated by José Eustasio Rivera's La vorágine (1924) and Rómulo Gallegos' Doña Bárbara (1929), both...
of which transport the urban man of letters to the hostile environment of the backlands. Gallegos’ novel is an allegory of the struggle between civilization and barbarism but one in which these terms do not stand in the same relation to each other as they do in Sarmiento’s *Facundo*. The novel’s protagonist --endowed with the transparently allegorical name of Santos Luzardo, equally as obvious as the name of his antagonist Doña Bárbara-- is set on leaving behind the backwardness and political violence of his country and settling in Europe when certain events lead him to his abandoned *hacienda* in the countryside. The land is being taken over by his neighbor Doña Bárbara who represents the forces of backwardness and superstition in the novel. Santos Luzardo decides to make a fight of it and make the land productive once again. He tames the forces of nature by defeating Doña Bárbara’s designs and molding the wild Marisela into the kind of heroine typical of the 19th century “national romances,” that is, the type of woman who subordinates her romantic life and her maternity to some kind of national ideal, usually involving the reconciliation of racial, ethnic, or social contradictions (Sommier, *Foundation Fictions*). Doña Bárbara has been read as an argument in favor of mestizaje and popular nationalism at a time when Juan Vicente Gómez, the “tyrant of the Andes,” ruled Venezuela on behalf of the large landowners and international oil companies.

Gallegos's biographers usually point to a trip made by the author in his youth to San Fernando de Apure --a town on the banks of the Apure river that was famous at the turn of twentieth century as an outpost for the export of egret feathers to Europe and the United States-- as the original inspiration for *Doña Bárbara*. José Eustasio Rivera, author of *La vorágine*, was a traveler at the service of the Colombian state who took an official trip to the border region between Colombia and Venezuela to survey the limit between both countries two years before publishing his signature novel, chapters of which he wrote in a jungle settlement. It is likely that Rivera, like his protagonist, went over some of the ground reconoited by Alexander von Humboldt more than a century earlier, since the route taken by Rivera's protagonist in the novel --over the Andes, through the llanos, and into the jungle-- parallels the itinerary of the German scientist. At any rate, Arturo Cova is a fugitive from Colombian justice who absconds with the woman who is the source of his troubles and is eventually "devoured by the jungle," as a metafictional report included in the novel attests. Rivera's protagonist has fallen prey to the brutality of the jungle, where the destructive forces of nature are amplified by the greed and ruthlessness of the slave drivers charged with extracting the resin from the rubber trees. The novel denounces the exploitation of labor in a part of the country beyond the effective control of the central government and calls attention to the penetration of the national territory by foreign entrepreneurs.

City and hinterland conflict in yet another way in *La vorágine* and in the *novela de la tierra* in general, and that is on the level of speech. There are two linguistic norms at play in these texts, one clearly superior to the other. There is the speech of the author and, in quotation marks (and in a glossary appended to the original editions of both novels), the language of the people, of the popular characters who appear in the novels and live beyond the cultural reach of the capital. Textual diglossia is a symptom of the intellectual's uneasiness in the face of the popular subject and of the novels’ aporetic attempt to represent the autochthonous, since such an endeavor inevitably involves an external perspective. The journey that connects the capital with the border regions of the interior attests to the political asymmetry of speech norms and can easily evolve into a pedagogical one financed by the state and meant to educate the rural populations of the interior.

Tracing the route opposite to that followed by urban discourse into the hinterland to colonize it or draw renewed vitality from it involves imagining the civilization/barbarism antithesis in reverse, or the barbarian riding into the city. In “Historia del guerrero y la cautiva” Borges imagines just such a situation when he stations the barbarian Droctulft in front of the dazzling city of Ravenna, from where he admires the patterns and figures of urban space. The figures of the city remain illegible to the barbarian but he nevertheless submits to this new magic and dies fighting against his former comrades who wanted to burn the town down. This text does trace the incursion of the warlike nomad into a city but it is still in the city that discourse is located. Droctulft’s story comes out of a chain of written sources and one of his descendants --it is said-- may have engendered Dante Alighieri in the future course of time. Furthermore, the traces of the barbarian’s life are to be found in an epitaph on his grave, without which epitaph (unreadable to the barbarian) Droctulft would have drifted off into obscurity. The question, of course, is --to repeat a topic of postcolonial criticism-- can the subaltern speak? It is easy to imagine, for example, the characters found in *Facundo* or *Os Sertões* --the gauchos, indians, mestizos, and caboclos-- retracing the steps of the authors of those works and crossing over into urban environments, but it is harder to imagine them speaking with any kind of political or cultural authority, unless, of course, they enter the city as victorious revolutionaries, like Villa and Zapata did in the course of the Mexican revolution.

If the path to the interior is fraught with different forms of violence that threaten national integrity (that of caudillismo, of rebellious peasant masses, of greedy landowners and middlemen, and --in Borges-- of frontier wars), the routes connecting the capital to the province propitiate the juxtaposition of two different forms of time, the slow time of customs and traditions impervious to change and the frenetic pace of an urban landscape continually reshaped by demographic change and technological invention. The contrast between the city and the province is a
classically Balzacian theme but also one constitutive of Latin American literature, and not just in the nineteenth century as works such as Sarmiento's *Recuerdos de provincia* or Cirilo Villaverde's *Excursión a Vueltabajo* would seem to indicate.

In the 1930s Mexican poet Salvador Novo defined the province in the most dialectic way possible, as having that which the capital lacks and as being that which the capital is not. Mexico, he says, is a country divided into two parts: the capital and the province (in the singular). In the capital one finds all the inconveniences but none of the advantages of the great cities, whereas the province lives in timeless plenitude. But since private lives and the life of the nation are subject to the rhythm of modernization, the city grows and spreads its tentacles over the whole of the national territory. Cuautla, Cuernavaca, Puebla are becoming nothing but colonies of the capital. Guadalajara is an epicene province, split between the provincial past (signified by good food and the institution of the tertulias, which lives on) and the life of the modern city, underscored by the availability of good shopping. The poet confesses knowing few of the actual Mexican provinces but declares his unadulterated love for all of them: "Fuera de México todo es Cuautitlán." The provinces (in the plural) lose their individual traits to become a geographical archetype: the province, defined as all that the capital city ceased to be long ago. And yet Novo's nostalgic recovery of this timeless archetype is undermined by his displeasure at those pariahs who "clumsily" leave their native provinces to move to the capital, making life unpleasant for all. Why are these people forced to migrate, one wonders? Why are they blind to the "sweet charms" of provincial existence? Novo's panegyric to the province ends with a curious allusion to provincial writers who pay homage to French letters as an argument on behalf of cosmopolitan writers like himself who also have a taste for French literature and are excoriated by nationalist critics as *descastados*. The substance of the argument is that if the writers closest to the traditional heart of Mexico can look beyond the national borders for literary inspiration, then cosmopolitan writers from the capital should not be held in contempt for succumbing to the same vice.

Novo was a poet born and raised in the city and one of the founders of *los Contemporáneos*, a group of avant-garde poets of the 1920s who incorporated the forms and styles of international Modernism into Mexican literature. The provincial poet *par excellence* in Mexico is Ramón López Velarde, a transitional figure between late modernismo (of the Spanish American variety) and the early avant-garde. López Velarde was born in Jerez de la Frontera (Zacatecas) and produced three books of poetry (the last one published posthumously) before dying at the age of thirty-three in Mexico City, where he spent the last seven years of his life. Octavio Paz calls him a "poeta de la provincia" and adds: "La provincia es uno de sus temas. O mejor dicho: es un campo magnético, al que vuelve una y otra vez, sin jamás regresar del todo. Pero no sólo lo mueven sus sentimientos; la provincia es una dimensión de su estética. La vida de las ciudades y villorios del interior... le ofrece un mundo de situaciones, seres y cosas no tocado por los poetas del 'modernismo' ([Cuadrivio] 84). And Carlos Fuentes pays homage to the poet in one of the chapters of his *Cristóbal nonato* (III, 4) in which the narrative is interlaced with lines from López Velarde's poetry.

Not that López Velarde was a provincial poet in the pejorative sense of the term. His poetry is, in fact, a creative peripheral reading of French Symbolism and particularly of Baudelaire, whose influence on the Mexican poet has been elaborately discussed by Octavio Paz (cf. supra). López Velarde's poetry represents the intersection of a provincial Mexican aesthetic with the cosmopolitan style of the French poetry of his time, and is therefore situated in the axis that connects the province with the metropolis. Something similar can be said of the Peruvian poet César Vallejo, who left his Andean hometown at an early age, first to study in the provincial city of Trujillo and later to try his luck in Lima. In 1923 Vallejo left for Europe and eventually died in Paris without ever returning to his native country. His poetry is a remarkable mixture of archaic Spanish and experimental avant-garde images. His first book (*Los heraldos negros*, 1918) contains a mestizo poetry that blends cosmopolitanism and indigenism. His second and most radical book (*Trilce*, 1922) is a corrosive attack on conventional notions of harmony and poetic form and represents a break with poetic tradition. The book internalizes that break as rupture in each poem and makes it the dominant rhetorical trope. Once again, the contrast between radical avant-garde forms and a provincial cultural background --made explicit in themes, settings, and turns of language-- proves to be one of the work's most distinguishing traits. It is instructive to compare Vallejo's poetic discourse with that of "Europeanized" Latin American poets from the same period, namely Vicente Huidobro and Oliverio Girondo: the former represents the intersection between the province and the metropolis while the latter two are located on an axis of cosmopolitan exchange.5

In narrative prose, it is the Argentine Juan José Saer --born near the provincial capital of Santa Fe-- who best exemplifies the cosmopolitan orientation of provincial literary identities. Saer began to publish his stories in 1960 but was completely overshadowed by the Boom. Even in his native country he failed to find a ready-made audience because he was identified with a provincial cultural and artistic milieu. But in the last two decades Saer has become one of the prime movers of Argentine fiction and a writer recognized in Europe as well as in Latin America and in the U.S. critical academic establishment. Saer's novels comprise one of the most coherent bodies of work in
Spanish or any other language. They combine a "difficult," sometimes hermetic, almost impersonal style with an unremitting sense of place, not in any national or continental sense (Saer is not a "Latin American" writer) but in the sense of an authorial figure deeply attached to a certain locality. Saer's first book was called *En la zona* and the last one published during his lifetime *Lugar*, titles that give ample evidence of the extent to which the author's fiction is grounded in a sense of place. And yet Saer's place is determinerlized, lacking any nativist essence, synecdochic: the part contains the whole just as the whole contains the part. Not surprisingly, Saer's "provincial" narrative is astoundingly cosmopolitan, evoking "world" writers like Thomas Bernhard, Musil, Kafka, Faulkner, Robbe-Grillet, and other proponents of negative aesthetics.

Saer's version of negative poetics unfolds in three chronological stages. In the 1960s negation is identified with the tenets of Italian Neo-Realism and with existentialist nihilism. It is mobilized particularly on the level of content where it is revealed in ways that transgress social and moral norms: suicide, murder, adultery, madness, etc. But negation is also displayed on the formal level, as the subversion of conventional structure (especially of the lineal plot) and in the deliberate profusion of trivial detail. In the following decade Saer becomes radically experimental and negation, which reaches its maximum density in *Nadie nada nunca* (1980), takes on a formal character. The novels of the 1980s are variations on an already consolidated poetics of negativity. The third stage of Saer's negative poetics comprises the author's two most recent novels (*La pesquisas* [1994] and *Las nubes* [1997]) and involves a reassessment of formal negation through the recourse to genre: detective fiction and the adventure novel, respectively. The readerly expectations generated by these well-known formats, however, are subverted by the "unsatisfactory" ending of the stories. In 1968 Saer left Santa Fe to live, teach, and write in France, where he recently died. Many of his texts reproduce in their content—with different degrees of irony—the vicissitudes of the outward journey from the provincial locality to the French cosmopolis, as well as its backwash, the return to the province from the navel of the world.

The route that connects the national capital with the foreign metropolis, and especially the Latin American capitals with Paris—emblem of culture and modernity for generations of Latin Americans—would seem to allow only for one-way travel, since when French writers have shown interest in the region they have directed their steps to the interior of countries like Mexico, Ecuador, and Brazil in search of the sacred or magic knowledge that the European continent could not provide for them. While it is true that a mood of decline compelled many European artists to turn to primitive cultures for inspiration and a sense of renewal after the Great War, it is also true that a handful of French intellectuals found a temporary home in Buenos Aires at the time of the Second World War thanks to the hospitality of Victoria Ocampo and her cultural review *Sur*. So while Henri Michaux boarded a ship for Ecuador in 1927 and Antonin Artaud headed for the Mexican desert in 1936 to dwell with the Tarahumara Indians and share in their hallucinogenic rituals, other intellectuals like Roger Caillois, Valèry Larbaud, and Drieu La Rochelle trekked to Buenos Aires and did their part—a particularly significant one in the case of Roger Caillois—in bringing Latin American literature to a formerly indifferent public back home.

It is a fact, however, that the Parisian voyage ritually undertaken or dreamt of by so many Latin American writers was not fully requited by their French counterparts, who had little interest in or use for the cities of the region. The myth of Paris picks up steam in the second half of the nineteenth century, becomes a central influence in turn-of-the-century modernismo, and lasts well into the 1960s, the decade of the 'boom' of the Latin American novel. Mario Vargas Llosa admits not to be sure whether in the sixties Paris was still regarded as the capital of culture but he goes on to assert that he spent his teenage years dreaming of the City of Lights ("Cuando Paris era una fiesta"). One of the great novels of the sixties—Cortázar's *Hopscotch*—is structured as a metaphysical and esoteric dialogue between Paris and Buenos Aires, a structure similar to a later novel by Carlos Fuentes—*Distant Relations*—that brings Paris and Mexico City together in a Gothic embrace. And some of the best work of Peruvian novelist Alfredo Bryce Echenique—author of a *Guía triste de París*—portrays the sentimental education of Latin Americans who intrude into French space. Other novels weaving together and contrasting Latin American with Parisian locations are Manuel Scorza's *La danza inmóvil*, Héctor Bianciotti's *Como la huella del pájaro en el aire*, and Jorge Volpi's *El fin de la locura*.

One must assume that the historical image of a city evolves through time and that the Paris of 1968, for example, held a different kind of attraction for Latin Americans than did the Paris of Baudelaire and Haussman. The prestige of French culture at the end of the nineteenth century can be partially explained in terms of a historical double-bind that held Spanish American intellectuals captive between two undesirable options: the cultural models inherited from the former colonial power and the materialism of the United States, a country that was looming large in the horizon as an expansionist power and had already taken over a third of the Mexican territory.

For this and other reasons the trip (or pilgrimage) to Paris became a rite of passage for writers of many ilks and a social ritual for wealthy families. In his memoirs José Donoso evokes some of the more amusing incidents of travel for Chilean families who had to cross the Andes, catch a train from Mendoza to Buenos Aires, and from there board
a ship to Europe, when he notes that in the twentieth century his family's European voyages were not like those of yore, when families took along an army of servants, a cow for the children's milk, and a cage of hens that laid blue eggs (Conjeturas sobre la memoria de mi tribu 41). Parisian high society welcomed wealthy and cultured visitors from across the ocean but reserved pejorative epithets (métèque, rastaquouère) for the average Latin American guest. At any rate, a small army of transatlantic journalists, poets, novelists, diplomats, exiles, and translators formed veritable colonies in certain parts of the city and, in effect, created their own topography and map of Paris, as Beatriz Colombi details in Viaje intelectual (187).

Paris became, not just the stage for the friendships and rivalries and successes and failures of some of the most important Latin American cultural personalities of the period, but also one of the great literary themes of the fin de siècle. It is hard to find a writer who failed to treat the cosmopolitan myth of Paris in poetry or prose. One of the less predictable strains of the Parisian thematic complex is the pathological city, the city as nervous breakdown, an image illustrated by some lines from Dario's "Epistola a la señora de Lugones:" "Y me volvi a París. Me volví al enemigo/terrible, centro de la neurosis, ombligo/de la locura, foco de todo surménage./donde hago buenamente mi papel de sauvage/encerrado en mi celda de la rue Marivaux/confiando sólo en mi y resguardando el yo." Paris was also the very epitome of decadence and vice for some of its Latin American guests, like Chilean writer Joaquín Edwards Bello, whose novel El monstruo (1912) is about the introduction into Parisian society of a recent Chilean arrival, the scion of a noble family and the product of a Jesuit education who very soon makes the acquaintance of a degenerate cast of characters including a homosexual and drug-addicted Russian duke, a nymphomaniac American heiress, a famous boxer, and a son of playwright Edmond Rostand who in his erotic adventures was only successful with the "courtesans affected by the Lesbian vice." The thematic of vice and neurosis is clearly a reminder of works like Max Nordau's Degeneration but also reveals a libidinal motivation for the trip to Paris on the part of writers from across the ocean for whom being modern also meant giving free rein to pleasure and exploring the limits of sexual behavior. The European metropolis was the site of erotic desire and the place farthest removed from the constraints of provincial and indeed national life, which does not prevent a Mexican critic from ironically stating that the most provincial moments of modernista poetry in Mexico are precisely those that seek to embody cosmopolitan eroticism (Aguilar, La democracia de los muertos).

The point here, though, is that a new sexual ethic was coming into Latin American societies with the onrush of modernization, one that was not necessarily received with open arms by the more traditional social sectors and whose conflictive traces can be seen most clearly in women writers like Delmira Agustini and Alfonsina Storni. Writing on the first of these two poets, Cathy Jrade says: "The sexual freedom that had been probed quite openly by the European decadent authors of the nineteenth century had received a mixed welcome in Spanish America. Many writers could not overcome their Catholic upbringing and their sense of guilt" ("Modernization, Feminism, and Delmira Agustini" 89). Darío --a poet dear to Agustini's heart-- was one of these writers, as some of his late poems plainly attest. But the same could be said of any writer whose "modern" sensibility collided with the traditional upbringing of his or her intended audience. Jrade points out, for example, that Agustini's overtly erotic poetic persona clashed with her girlish society pose as la Nena, and other critics have noted that male and female homoeroticism was stigmatized by the medical discourses of the time as being contrary to the interests of the state.

Of course, the myth of Paris as a cultural or personal promesse de bonheur has a darker side to it which was not ignored by the very same travelers who sojourned in the French capital and celebrated its glories. Darío, for example, warns potential visitors not to exchange their native soil for the streets of Paris unless they bring plenty of gold with them. Otherwise, they will only experience misery, hunger, and rejection, a lesson that was bitterly learned by Horacio Quiroga in his one and only trip to Paris and that he recorded in a travel journal. Quiroga was so penniless in Paris that he couldn't afford ten centimes to buy a new notebook in which to continue his journal entries and had to depend for food on the charity of friends and creditors, whose only wish --if one is to read between the lines-- was to see the embarrassing visitor back in his own country. Quiroga's Diario de viaje a París is an enlightening example of the route connecting the Latin American periphery with the European metropolis as well as an unintended moral tract on the hubris of an inexperienced and provincial Uruguayan dandy. The author's later writings, set in the jungle region of Misiones where he eventually settled after living in Buenos Aires for some years, reject the decadent tone of his early texts and constitute a telling instance of a journey in the opposite geographical and cultural direction, from the capital to the hinterland. The provincial desire for Paris, or for Proust, to be exact, is the theme of one of José Donoso's most overlooked nouvelles, "El tiempo perdido," in which a group of Chilean bohemians pretend they are characters in Proust's novel and that the Santiago of the 1940s is the Paris of the Belle Époque.

Other prominent writers from Latin America made the trip to Paris in the 1920s and went back to their respective countries with a new cultural vision. Two such writers were Miguel Ángel Asturias and Alejo Carpentier, both of whom departed from homelands populated by what we may call "ethnographic subjects," namely, the Amerindians of Asturias' Guatemala and the Afro-Cuban population of Carpentier's Cuba. Back home these writers had direct
lived contact with the ethnographic subaltern and Carpentier had begun to write an ethnographic novel about Cubans of African descent while he did time in jail for subversive activities against the Machado regime. But it was in the Paris of "ethnographic surrealism" that Asturias and Carpentier found an artistic rationale for the representation of native and African Americans, and a new cultural function for them as a repository of an original American identity. Asturias had written a conventional analysis of the "indian problem" before leaving Guatemala, a study very much indebted to Positivist theories of racial difference that ignores the economic foundation of the problem and that proposes immigration and mestizaje as a solution to the physical regression of the indian race as a result of poor living conditions, manifested in alarming rates of malnutrition, alcoholism, and disease. (He later regretted his suggestion, realizing that immigrants would become masters of the indian in the kind of racist and class-conscious society that Guatemala has been throughout the twentieth century.) In Paris he wrote over 400 articles for various Latin American and Spanish newspapers, attended classes at the Sorbonne, and met the French translator of the Popol Vuh, after which he himself collaborated in a Spanish translation (from the French) of the foundational book of the Mayas and began writing his Leyendas de Guatemala (1930), stories inspired by the Mayan myths of creation and written in a mestizo Spanish. These same elements reappear in the author's masterpiece Hombres de maíz (1949). The Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz had just introduced the term transculturation into the ethnographic vocabulary in his Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar (1940), a term that would later take off and proliferate in the fields of literary criticism and cultural studies, and Asturias' major works are commonly read as particularly rich examples of a transculturated narrative where the imperatives of the cosmopolitan avant-garde meet the demand for a local cultural identity.

Something similar can be said of Carpentier, who lived in Paris between 1928 and 1939, collaborated with Breton's Révolution surreалиste and Bataille's Documents, and came back home endowed with a new cultural vision that he was to call marvelous realism, to distinguish it from the Surrealist quest for the "artificial marvelous." In Paris Carpentier wrote a significant number of chronicles that in many cases displayed an unusual interest and expertise in various forms of music, including the classics, jazz, and the Afro-Cuban rhythms that were then in vogue in some European capitals, including the French Mecca. Carpentier's take on Paris was that of an American guest (descended from a French father) who was not about to be hoodwinked by the city's prestigious mythology nor shocked by the cold-shoulder treatment given visiting indigent writers. It was simply ironic: "Well before Carpentier's return in 1939, when he set out to write a full-fledged 'manifesto of American autonomy' announcing the dusk and decay of Europe, his articles from France brimmed with jaunty satires on 'the cosmopolitan enchantment with the Latin Quarter,' its students with their 'oversized pipes and little beards carved to a point,' where Nordics locked elbows with Russians, and the inductees from 'Our America' [made] sure to be seen with the blondest women around" (Brennan, At Home in the World 273). Before writing that "manifesto on American autonomy" that would turn Surrealism on its head --the prologue on lo real maravilloso americano-- Carpentier had to return to the Caribbean and make a stop in Haiti, just as before writing his landmark novel Los pasos perdidos he had to settle in Venezuela and become acquainted with the geography of the country's interior. Carpentier is an author who was already back from Paris while he was in Paris. His critique of Surrealism as an artificial aesthetic became a most creative attempt to define an autochthonous identity for the Caribbean and Latin America at a time when several countries in the region were experiencing the rise of a state technocracy, the influence of U.S. mass culture, and a policy of rapid economic industrialization.

Conclusion
Reading this map of modern and early modern Latin American literature from a postmodern perspective implies a displacement or transition between the notion of transculturation (as it appears in Ángel Rama’s influential Transculturación narrativa en América Latina [1982]) and that of hybrid cultures proposed by Néstor García Canclini in Culturas híbridas: estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad (1989). In this article I can only sketch such a reading.

Rama’s book deals with regionalist writers who submit the interior cultures of the continent to a modern revision and thus keep them relevant and alive in a progressively globalizing world. The term "transculturation" had been used by Fernando Ortiz in reference to the various ethnic and cultural strains that came together to form Cuban national culture and is transplanted by Rama to the study of literature and, specifically, of authors such as García Márquez, Juan Rulfo, Marcio Souza, Guimarães Rosa, Carpentier, Asturias, and José María Arguedas. Rama does not separate the anthropological meaning of transculturation from its more restricted literary use. His handling of the term takes into account a broad range of factors (including economic ones) that play a role in creating regional identities. Literary transculturation, in fact, appears as a reflection of a larger historical process by which the modernized cities of the continent (which have already absorbed the impact of external metropolitan forces) turn to their interior cultures in order to expand their modernizing influence throughout the national territory. Rama defines the options given to the regional cultures by the advance of modernity in stark terms: they can either fold back into themselves and wither, acculturate themselves to modernity and die out, or undergo a transculturation process. This process involves the singling out of local cultural elements able to accommodate the onrush of modernization
and form new cultural "hybrids" that will renew the cultural legacy of the past without losing touch with traditional identities (28-29).

Rama identifies some general traits of literary transculturation by focusing on the linguistic, formal, and thematic evolution of the Regionalist novel beyond its heyday in the 1920s. In the hands of later regional writers like Rulfo and Argüedas the diglossia that characterized novels such as Doña Bárbara and La vorágine (works that were published with a glossary explaining the peculiarities of local and regional speech) is discarded, with the result that authorial speech and the speech of the characters meet on a single level and respond to the same linguistic norm. The formal structure of the Regionalist novel, to continue, followed the narrative conventions of French Naturalism; the transculturated novel, on the other hand, accepts the avant-garde innovations of international Modernism and breaks up the standard chronology, narrative perspective, and the ideological presuppositions of its now outdated model. Transcultural writers combine the latest formal innovations of the avant-garde with an oral language derived from local popular sources, as is plainly the case with Argüedas, Guimarães Rosa, Rulfo, and García Márquez who among them draw on sources as diverse as the Quechua of the high Andes, the accent of the sertão, the peasant speech of Western Mexico, and the local idiom of Colombia's Atlantic coast. And in terms of transculturated thematic traits, Rama singles out myth as the great meeting point -- the *commonplace* -- between cosmopolitan and regionalist writing.

Rama's geography of transculturation can be plotted on the same map as the one deployed in this article. Rama states that interior cultures can sometimes be directly exposed to metropolitan forces but that more frequently those forces are transmitted to the interior by the national capitals, especially when they are port cities like Buenos Aires or Rio de Janeiro. (In a case like Colombia, as García Márquez has often argued, the cities of the Caribbean coast have been more "modern" than Bogotá, the capital stuck on a high valley in the middle of the Andes and less open to cultural exchange). Again, transculturation occurs in two stages, one that takes place in the city and the other (and later one) in the regions of the interior. Sometimes both are one, as when provincial writers head for the cities and mix with their urban counterparts in groups where modernizing impulses and local traditions coexist in different proportions.

So the three cardinal points I have identified as constituting the map of early modern and modern Latin American literature are clearly implied in Rama's argument about transculturation, though Rama privileges the route leading from the foreign metropolis to the regional interior and passing through the national capital or the nearest modernized urban center. The reason why this route is heavily travelled by the author is that his major concern is the originality of Latin American culture and literature, an originality compromised by the advance of the irresistible force of modernity: "nuestro propósito es registrar los exitosos esfuerzos de componer un discurso literario a partir de fuerzas tradiciones propias mediante plásticas transculturaciones que no se rinden a la modernización sino que la utilizan para fines propios" (75). The trope used by the Brazilian *modernistas* in the 1920s to account for transculturation and secure a national identity distinct from yet fed by European modernity was that of cannibalism. Interestingly, at a certain point in his book Rama "travels" to the Brazilian Amazon where he almost loses his grip on the concept of transculturation as a process that is always already a part of cultural identity, as we can surmise from references such as the following: "Los testimonios antropológicos del último medio siglo... han permitido acceder a las fuentes originarias de la peculiaridad cultural amazónica" (81-82), a statement which cannot but evoke the failed attempt by Carpentier's protagonist in *Los pasos perdidos* to find the source of historical and cultural identity in the heart of the rain forest.10 One wonders where transculturation goes after literature is divested and relieved of its charge to embody the myths of origin that have grounded national discourse in Latin America since the first quarter of the nineteenth century, a situation which is more and more the case with Latin American literature since the 1960s, in which this earliest and most compelling form of legitimation begins to evaporate as both fiction and non-fiction start to depend more and more on communities other than the national for their cultural authority: ethnic, racial, and gender communities as well as communities of mourning (postdictatorial narrative) and communities of age, the youth "market" that legitimates emerging writers (like the McOndo group of the mid-nineties) vis-à-vis what's left of the traditional "lettered city."

The greatest merit of Rama's work is its advocacy of a *vernacular modernity* for the Latin American region, one that doesn't reject Eurocentric modernity but that does not submit to it either. Granted this, and granted also that Latin American criticism has always needed some sort of theory bearing down on racial, ethnic, and cultural mixture, how do we explain the critical consensus that transculturation has become aperotic and reached the end of its life cycle? One reason for the perceived obsolescence of the concept is given above, namely that Rama's reliance on national identities is out of synch with globalization theories that advocate a diluted role for national self-determination. What's more and worse is that by focusing so intently on the three-pronged map consisting of regions, national capitals, and foreign metropolises Rama fails to consider the new "communities of belonging" that have emerged with postmodernism.
Another reason why transculturation has exceeded its life-cycle is that Rama focuses on literary narratives at a time when literary studies have been eclipsed by cultural studies. The problem is not so much the putative antagonism between literary and cultural studies --which often depends on the politics of the critical establishment-- but that the gap between writers and the illiterate masses they purportedly represent is left unexamined. Rama's discussion of literary diglossia takes into account that writers belong to the cultured élites whereas their characters and ideal readers might not, but it's not clear that the modernization of regionalist literature conveys a similar social and political modernization of the regions in question.

Rama is known as a populist critic and transculturation is meant to function as a defense of popular culture when subjected to the hegemony of Eurocentric modernity, but transculturation also functions as the theoretical and epistemological basis of mestizaje, as Cornejo Polar has noted, which means that the concept too readily absorbs the violence of the encounter at the origin of racial mixture and too quickly harmonizes the social discord at its root ("Mestizaje, transculturación, heterogeneidad"). Popular cultures in Rama, furthermore, are preferentially located in the outlying regions of the national territories, although Rama is quite conscious of the massive migrations to the cities that began in the 1950s throughout the continent. Today, the location of popular culture has changed as the effective result of the progressive expansion of the mass media all over the region. Cultural theorists insist that it is more difficult today than ever before to separate popular and mass cultures because the media carries them both.

In Transculturación narrativa the only media mentioned is that of print. Finally, Rama's populism is grounded on the dependency theory of the seventies and on its center-periphery model, which has been discarded by globalization theorists not because hegemonic domination has evaporated with the advent of the global village but because it has become dispersed.

Now, the postmodern version of transculturation is the trope of hybrid cultures proposed by Néstor García Canclini in a book that locates "cultural reconversion" --the process by which hybrid cultures are formed-- as the contemporary link in a fairly continuous genealogy that goes back to colonial times and that includes notions of religious syncretism and racial mestizaje as well as transculturation proper. Canclini's work, though, goes beyond the issues involved in the modernization of regional cultures --which had been the focus of Rama's book-- and concentrates instead in the multiple interactions among cultural spheres --those of high, low, and mass culture-- that during modernity were conceived of and institutionalized as separate. Spheres that furthermore had their own forms of legitimacy and were supposedly located in separate geographies, with popular culture reaching its peak of authenticity the closer it got to the traditional anthropological village. Canclini shows that the location of culture is much more fluid than academic specialists could account for before the coming of age of interdisciplinary studies, when literary experts had high culture as their domain, sociologists dealt with mass culture, and anthropologists were charged with studying rural folklore. The postmodern transformation of all these disciplines and the creation of new bridges among them (that is, the emergence of cultural studies as an academic discipline) is both cause and effect of the mobility of cultural objects in the contemporary world.

Unlike Rama, Canclini relegates literary production to the background because the effective catalyst of cultural transformation is the media and the new communication and information technologies. Canclini does not neglect the importance of global flows involving people and capital (Appadurai's "ethnoscapes" and "financescapes") but does imply that the main distinction between transculturation and hybrid cultures is bound to the effect of global "mediascapes: "¿Cómo entender el encuentro de artesanías indígenas con catálogos de arte de vanguardia sobre la mesa del televisor? ¿Qué buscan los pintores cuando citan en el mismo cuadro imágenes precolombinas, coloniales y de la industria cultural, cuando las reelaboran usando computadoras y láser? Los medios de comunicación electrónica, que parecían dedicados a sustituir el arte culto y el folclor, ahora los difunden masivamente. El rock y la música 'erudita' se renuevan, aun en las metrópolis, con melodías populares asiáticas y afroamericanas" (14). Canclini does not disguise the fact that a lot of this "reconversion" is dictated by market forces but these forces are no longer conceived as penetrating vulnerable peripheral cultures from some alien outside (as the dependency theory implicit in Rama's book had it back in the seventies) and levelling cultural identities. On the contrary, his research into the state of popular culture in Mexico leads Canclini to de-emphasize dependency theory and to posit that modernization is not the death sentence of popular identities, just as the idiot-box is not fated to blunt refined cultural sensibilities. Canclini's work does question patrimonial and official versions of national and cultural identity but leaves open the possibility that collective identities can be deterritorialized and that one can be Mexican --as he demonstrates in the section on border cultures-- anywhere in the world.

It will be noticed that both Rama and García Canclini imply travel and displacement in their theoretical constructs but that the speed of travel varies from one work to the other, travel being noticeably slower in Rama than in Canclini's postmodern landscape because the space between and among the various destinations is wider and communication across space more precarious. Although the locations of transculturation (metropolis, capital city, province, frontier) can never be conceived as totally independent and self-sufficient monads, their identities are distinct enough that each can become a myth for the others. Geography itself, which is so important in nineteent-
and early twentieth-century writing, is compressed by the accelerated flow of messages, capital, and peoples that define globalization. In Canclini's work it seems that all variations of regional geography are condensed in the city, which is the new destination for the anthropologist and a new --yet not necessarily hospitable --home for provincial and rural migrants and for all manner of extramural outsiders. Indeed the speed of travel and communication in the global environment makes it difficult to conceive of separate and independent routes through which people and discourses travel in the contemporary world, and thus a map with clear-cut itineraries becomes a hindrance more than a help in marking out the deterritorialized space of globalization.

Notes

1 Quiroga was accepted as the photographer of an expedition to Misiones in 1903 led by the poet Leopoldo Lugones, who left an erudite record of the findings in *El imperio jesuítico*. Quiroga's biographers have left a detailed record of the writer's adventures and misadventures in his first trip to the jungle. See Delgado & Brignole, *Vida y obra de Horacio Quiroga*, pp. 140-54. 

2 I use the term "interior" advisedly since there are countries (like Colombia, México or Bolivia) whose capital cities are themselves located in the interior of the territory. The term "region" works better in these cases to designate the parts of the national territory that are remote enough from the capital to display separate identities and/or to generate problems for the political and cultural elites of the capital. For a historiographical approach to regional identity, see Venegas Delgado in the bibliography.

3 Da Cunha's *Os Sertões* was published in 1902 but deals with a peasant uprising against the newly proclaimed Brazilian republic.

4 The words are actually the same: *desierto, desertón, sertón*. 

5 The most exciting reading of Vallejo's poetry, and one that follows the geographical outline suggested here, is José Cerna-Bazán's *Sujeto a cambio*. See bibliography.

6 Ocampo's review was the center of cosmopolitan literary culture in Buenos Aires and accepted guests and collaborators from all over the world. Graham Greene, for example,dedicates *The Honorary Consul* to Victoria Ocampo "with love, and in memory of the many happy weeks I have passed in San Isidro and Mar del Plata." In this novel geographic and cultural space is triangulated in terms of the three cardinal points delineated in the present book: the protagonist's father undertakes the voyage from the European metropolis to one of the northern provinces of Argentina and travels periodically to Buenos Aires to see his mother and mingle with the British colony in the capital. There are also references to frequent (and clandestine) border crossings between Paraguay and Argentina. Greene's novel is a type of *consular* fiction where cultural geography plays a major role.

7 This same critic writes: "Los viajes fueron un estímulo central de la experiencia modernista… No sólo los viajes prestigiosos a Europa o los espectaculares a países lejanos; también los viajes más disponibles: de la provincia a la capital y de regreso" (164).

8 The diary was published posthumously in 1950 with an introduction and notes by Emir Rodriguez Monegal. This edition has been reprinted as *Diario de viaje a París* (Buenos Aires: Losada, 2000).


10 "In this novel, what at first appears to be a journey back to the source of Latin American history and culture will be constantly and inevitably undermined by the travelling which the theory is supposed to uphold, a travelling that makes the theory possible, but which at the same time precludes any notion of immediacy" (Rosman, *Being In Common* 33). 

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