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Between Prussia and the Caribbean: Thinking the World with Humboldt, Ramos Sucre, de la Parra, and Restrepo

Two Stories About Romanticism

For German-speaking intellectuals in the last few years of the eighteenth century, Jena was the place to be. It boasted the largest and most progressive university in that part of Europe, with the likes of Fichte, Schelling, and later Hegel among its philosophy professors.¹ This was where Goethe and Schiller first met in 1794, and where the Schlegels, the Tiecks, the Mereaus, Clemens Brentano, Novalis, and Hölderlin all found themselves living in the highly charged atmosphere of ‘intellectual radicalism’ in a turn-of-the-century liberal university town.² Out of these circles, the story goes, a new and to this day astonishingly influential cultural movement was about to dramatically emerge: German Romanticism. While not confined to German-speaking Europe, Romanticism would go on to ‘enjoy a longer, stronger, fuller and more productive life in Germany than in most other lands’.³

Few Germanists familiar with this origin story are likely to have come across the following radically different genealogy of Romanticism:

Yo creo que como el tabaco, la piña y la caña de azúcar, el Romanticismo fue una fruta indígena que creció dulce, espontánea y escondida entre las languideces coloniales y las indolencias del trópico hasta fines del siglo XVIII. Hacia esa época, Josefina Tascher, sin sospecharlo, tal cual si fuera un microbio ideal, se lo llevó enredado en los encajes de una de sus cofias, contagió así a Napoleón, en aquella forma aguda que todos conocemos y poco a poco las tropas del Primer Imperio, secundadas por Chateaubriand, propagaron la epidemia por todas partes.

[I believe that like tobacco, pineapple, and sugar cane, Romanticism was an indigenous fruit that grew up sweet, spontaneous and hidden among colonial languors and tropical indolence until the end of the eighteenth century. Around that time, Josefina Tascher, unsuspectingly, as if she were an ideal microbe, carried it off [to Europe] tangled up in the lace of one of her headdresses, gave the germ to Napoleon in that acute form which we all know, and little by little, the troops of the First Empire, assisted by Chateaubriand, spread the epidemic everywhere.]⁴

This passage, ripe with sensual metaphors, is taken from an autobiographical novel, *Memorias de Mamá Blanca* [*Mama Blanca's Memoirs*] written in 1929 by Teresa de la Parra (1889-1936) – a Venezuelan aristocrat who spent many years in France, Spain, and Switzerland.⁵ De la Parra begins by imagining Romanticism as a native Caribbean fruit. Far from being a German intellectual or artistic innovation, Romanticism is here an element of native Latin American flora, harvested on

the island of Martinique towards the end of the eighteenth century, and transported alongside other colonial commodities – tobacco, pineapple, and sugar cane – to France, and from there to the rest of Europe. But somewhere along the way, this Romanticism is transformed from a sweet fruit to a treacherous germ capable of starting an entire epidemic, brought to France by the future Empress Josephine, Napoleon's first wife – who was born in Martinique – and soon to be spread further by François-René de Chateaubriand, the founding father of French Romanticism according to literary historians. But such literary historians might scoff at de la Parra's evocative tableau of Romantic genealogy. It isn't serious, they might say; rather than carefully disentangling competing strands of European intellectual tradition, de la Parra just comes up with a whimsical anecdote. What exactly is meant by the 'Romanticism' she describes?

Such a response runs the risk of entirely missing the point of de la Parra's feminist-postcolonial provocation, to use contemporary critical language. Her 'richly transculturated set of images', as Mary Louise Pratt described it, using a term coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in 1940,⁶ subtly mocks traditional origin stories of cultural movements such as Romanticism by reversing the direction of influence often assumed in European studies of culture in several ways. Firstly, and crucially, de la Parra plays with colonial assumptions about the superiority of European culture and civilization over Latin America, a region often reduced to the 'superabundance' of its nature in colonial discourse.⁷ Similarly to other Latin American writers of the era, discussed in Lesley Wylie's study *Colonial Tropes and Postcolonial Tricks: Rewriting the Tropics in the Novela de la Selva*, de la Parra parodies European travel writing 'to forge a postcolonial literary identity for the Spanish-American novel', rather than indulging in 'neo-Romantic celebrations of nature'.⁸ The prescient 'transcultural materialism' of de la Parra's vision, to use Héctor Hoyos' term, puts pressure on Eurocentric – and anthropocentric – notions of historical agency: she puts the global circulation of plants, germs, and objects such as articles of clothing in the spotlight, momentarily displacing the agency of white, European, upper-class men whose thoughts and actions usually dominate accounts of historical and cultural change.⁹ This 'transcultural materialism' is clearly gendered: in de la Parra's tableau, Romanticism is initially disseminated by a woman rather than men, with the account itself also being narrated by a woman.

Moreover, while 'Romanticism' is first compared to the Caribbean fruit harvested to profit the French imperial trade at the expense of its Latin American colonies, stereotypically perceived back in Europe as 'las languideces coloniales y las indolencias del trópico', it in fact turns into a contagious germ that harms the empire – like syphilis, believed to have been imported from Latin America to Europe in Columbus's times, after smallpox and other diseases had been carried from Europe to the Americas, resulting in deaths of a large percentage of the native population.¹⁰ Pratt contextualizes de la Parra's provocation by pointing out that the French exploitation of the natural resources of its Caribbean colonies fuelled the French economy in the time of the French Revolution, an event that overthrew the Ancien Régime and heavily influenced Romantic thinkers and writers all around Europe. Pratt goes on to add that, while 'Westerners are accustomed to thinking of romantic projects of liberty, individualism, and liberalism as emanating *from* Europe *to* the colonial periphery', the political situation in Europe was also 'influenced *by*' and not just 'an influence *on*' anti-colonial revolts, such as the Haitian Revolution that lasted from 1791 to 1804 and led to the country's independence.¹¹ Seen in this light, de la Parra's metaphorical origin story of European Romanticism appears startlingly less whimsical after all.

The mental leap that I asked you to perform when my narrative moved from the Duchy of Saxe-Weimar to de la Parra's eighteenth-century Caribbean island is similarly less fanciful than it might have seemed at first. In the 1790s, Alexander von Humboldt – a budding scientist dreaming of exploring the natural world all around the globe – repeatedly stayed with his brother Wilhelm in Jena, where he struck up a friendship with Goethe and apparently shaped his portrayal of Faust, a restless scholar with a voracious passion for encyclopaedic knowledge.¹² Alexander's last and longest stay in Jena was in 1797, two years before he finally managed to organize an overseas scientific voyage that he had been dreaming of for years. Even though it was not the destination he had initially planned, he ended up setting off on a journey that took him to the Spanish colonies in Latin America, largely in and around the Caribbean. Among Humboldt's many scientific interests was a fascination with Latin American flora and fauna. Perhaps de la Parra's Caribbean 'fruit of Romanticism' is to be understood more literally in this respect too: with regard to his descriptions of nature, Humboldt has been often described as both a 'product' and an 'important exponent' of German Romanticism, and praised by none other than Chateaubriand, who described his *Voyage aux régions équinoxiales du nouveau continent* [*Personal Narrative of a Journey to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent*] as 'un des plus importants ouvrages qui aient paru depuis longues années' ['one of the most important works that have appeared in many years'].¹³ An amusing anecdote about the alleged exchange between Napoleon and Humboldt after the latter's return from Latin America further highlights his reputation as an avid botanist. Asked by Napoleon whether he collected plants, Humboldt confirmed. Napoleon's alleged response, 'so does my wife', referred teasingly to none other than Empress Josephine, the protagonist of de la Parra's story of Romanticism.¹⁴

As we have already seen, scholars like Pratt have advocated rethinking the very concept of Romanticism 'in the light of writers like Humboldt and historical processes like changing contact with the Americas', even going as far as suggesting that 'Romanticism originated in the contact zones of America, North Africa, and the South Seas'.¹⁵ Certainly thinking about Alexander von Humboldt's turn-of-the-century transatlantic journey that took him from Prussia to the Caribbean and back offers a fascinating case study for the present volume, concerned as it is with the theme of border crossing in German Romanticism and contemporary Latin American fiction as a model for the theory of World Literature. Drawing on Chris Warnes's work, Jenny Haase and Joanna Neilly have written in the introduction that 'German Romantic philosophy, Magic Realism, and postcolonial novels [...] are all anti-foundationalist in their refusal to bow to Enlightenment-era empirical, and nineteenth-century colonial, ordering of the world'.¹⁶ But an analysis of Humboldt's journey to Latin America, which has been described as both 'the most significant phenomenon of cultural contact between Germany and the Americas' and 'a central defining moment for German Literature within the World Literature discussion', interestingly complicates this statement.¹⁷ In Humboldt's detailed travel diaries and a flurry of later publications in which he drew on them, from more narrowly scientific papers to bestselling works of decidedly literary quality, we have to do with influential documents of German Romanticism on the topic of Latin America, but also with a record of a real-life act of border-crossing that was directly connected to and dependent on 'Enlightenment-era empirical, and nineteenth-century colonial, ordering of the world'. If, as in Haase's and Neilly's definition, 'while geo-politically aware, [world literature] seeks to reach across temporal as well as territorial borders', Humboldt's texts are particularly complex in that the circumstances of their composition, publication, circulation, and reception heavily relied on geo-

political realities of his day, while also being directly and literally concerned with the crossing of territorial and temporal borders – the latter in fact understood most expansively as the study of deep, planetary, geological time.¹⁸

In the following, I will focus on the relevance of the figure of Alexander von Humboldt and his rich body of work to this volume's theme and the recent resurgence of interest in Humboldt in the wake of the 250th anniversary of his birth. I will present one particularly relevant strand in the scholarship on Humboldt: postcolonial approaches to his work. This will prepare the ground for a reading of two Latin American texts rarely discussed in this context that problematize Humboldt's perspective on Latin America: an essay from the 1920s by José Antonio Ramos Sucre (1890-1930), a Venezuelan poet, scholar, and diplomat, and an art installation from the 1990s by José Alejandro Restrepo (b. 1959), a French-Colombian visual artist, which I will look at in the third and final section of this chapter.

Two Stories About Alexander von Humboldt

The 250th anniversary of Alexander's birth in 2019 was a catalyst for Humboldt scholarship, which – while already impressive in scope and depth before then, but largely confined to a relatively small group of specialists – is now reaching new audiences, both in the broader academic community of Germanists, Hispanists, and comparatists, and the general public. This has been aided on the one hand by large-scale editorial projects, which are now providing the first reliable modern editions of many of Humboldt's texts, and on the other hand by popular biographies, exhibitions, and other public-facing projects. The first category includes *edition humboldt digital*, a digitization of Humboldt's travel diaries led by Ottmar Ette and funded by the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, and the Berner Ausgabe of Humboldt's *Sämtliche Schriften (Aufsätze, Artikel, Essays)* edited by Oliver Lubrich and Thomas Nehrlich.¹⁹ In the second category, particularly notable is Andrea Wulf's 2015 bestselling and prize-winning biography *The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt, the Lost Hero of Science*. The subtitle of Wulf's book captures a recurrent emphasis in academic scholarship on Humboldt: while he is now much less known than, say, Charles Darwin, the importance of his work cannot be overestimated. In the words of Rex Clark and Oliver Lubrich, 'the disparity between the esteemed reputation and the knowledge of his writing is probably greater than with any other author'.²⁰ Humboldt was one of – if not *the* most – famous and the most significant scientists in the world right up until his death in 1859. Without him, it is difficult to imagine Darwin's theory of evolution; he single-handedly initiated several branches of science and furthered many others that had already been in existence. He worked on geography, meteorology and climate, geology, botany, physics, chemistry, biology, and more – virtually all scientific disciplines available at the time in Europe to deepen one's understanding of the natural world. When Ottmar Ette lists more than 30 disciplines that Humboldt was interested in and contributed to, he manages to find examples of fields that start with almost every letter of the alphabet.²¹

Looking at Humboldt's oeuvre as a whole, two principles in his approach to science are particularly striking, especially from a twenty-first-century perspective. First, Humboldt assiduously searched for connections between the different disciplines he was working within, and between individual

observations and experimental outcomes that he carried out himself or found out about from other scientists. He was interested in a global vision of nature rather than merely individual details, and sought to immediately integrate each detailed observation or experiment with the whole picture, the total sum of the knowledge of nature. Already in the preface to the first edition of his first bestseller, *Ansichten der Natur* [*Views of Nature*], Humboldt presented an ‘Überblick der Natur im großen’ [a survey of nature at large] and ‘Beweis von dem Zusammenwirken der Kräfte’ [proof of co-operation of forces] as two of his three overarching goals.²² And since humans are also a part of nature, connections between nature and culture were of primary importance to him too. In fact, and this leads me to my second point, Humboldt believed that a true scientist needed to display a poetic sensibility too, so that he (it is almost always a ‘he’ at this stage) can recognize and convey to others the metaphysical importance of his physical investigations. His third overarching goal, as stated in the preface to *Ansichten der Natur*, was ‘Erneuerung des Genusses, welchen die unmittelbare Ansicht der Tropenländer dem fühlenden Menschen gewährt’ [renewal of the enjoyment which the immediate aspect of the tropical countries affords to the susceptible beholder].²³ The preface ends with a quote from Friedrich Schiller’s *Die Braut von Messina* [*The Bride of Messina*] (1803) about the philosophical perspective afforded by the view from a mountain top. Schiller’s play premiered just four years before the publication of Humboldt’s collection of essays about, among others, the highest mountains of Latin America: science, literature, and philosophy go hand in hand in Humboldt’s vision of scholarship.

Indeed, Humboldt’s texts are likely to take a contemporary reader by surprise because they seamlessly move from, for example, a detailed description of the geological profile and climate zone of a specific terrain to a sprawling, highly literary description of the impressions that that terrain makes on the scientist – here stylized as a solitary ‘Wanderer’, a popular figure in German literature in the early nineteenth century – observing the landscape.²⁴ This is precisely how ‘Über die Steppen und Wüsten’ [‘Steppes and Deserts’], the first essay in *Ansichten der Natur*, opens. When Humboldt writes about different geological formations and climates on earth, he also writes about their impact on the development of human cultures that exist within them. For example, in the closing essay in *Ansichten der Natur* – ‘Das Hochland von Caxamarca, der alten Residenzstadt des Inca Atahuallpa, und erster Anblick der Südsee von dem Rücken der Andeskette’ [‘The Plateau of Caxamarca, the Ancient Capital of the Inca Atahuallpa, and First View of the Pacific from the Ridge of the Andes’], added in the third edition of 1849 – Humboldt writes about the Inca civilization, which he also described at length in his *Vues des Cordillères et Monumens des Peuples Indigènes de l’Amérique* [*Views of the Cordilleras and Monuments of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas*] (1810-1813).²⁵ As the title of his opus magnum – the massive but unfinished work in five parts on which he had been working up until his death – he chose the word *Kosmos*, since he was interested in, and wanted to write about, *everything*. Humboldt’s *Kosmos* went on to become a huge bestseller in Prussia and beyond,²⁶ and, together with his many other writings, has exerted a huge influence on how we think about our planet today – and especially on the representations of Latin America, where to this day there is barely any city without a street, building, or park named after Humboldt.

But Humboldt’s story can also be told in very different terms. Baron von Humboldt – a Prussian aristocrat and heir to a significant fortune – was born in the same year as Napoleon Bonaparte. According to a family anecdote, as a small boy he was asked by Frederick the Great – such were the circles in which the Humboldts socialized – if he wanted to conquer the world like his

namesake, Alexander the Great; young Humboldt supposedly answered: ‘yes, Sire, but with my head’.²⁷ Following his expedition to Latin America, he went on to gain the byname of ‘the second Columbus’.²⁸ Humboldt lived at a time when faraway travels were still of largely colonial nature, embarked on for military or economic purposes. When he lived in London ahead of his Latin American journey, every day he woke up to the sight of engravings in his room depicting ships of the East India Company.²⁹ His own first travels within Europe took him to Poland, a country partitioned – in 1772 partially and from 1795 to 1918 fully – by Prussia, Habsburg Austria, and Russia. In Poland, Humboldt – by then a newly promoted ‘Oberbergmeister’ [‘chief mine inspector’] working for the Prussian ‘Bergwerkdienst’ [‘mining commission’]³⁰ – visited salt mines in the autumn of 1792.³¹ According to Sebastian Conrad, the political and cultural discourse surrounding Eastern Europe, and that surrounding overseas colonies acquired later in the nineteenth century, were strikingly similar in Germany.³² By the time Humboldt failed to join the scientific expedition accompanying Napoleon’s campaign in Egypt, but managed to organize his Latin American voyage as an official envoy of the King of Spain, tasked with reporting back on the economy of his overseas colonial empire, it was arguably not his first brush with Western European colonialism.

At the same time, Humboldt was highly critical of the actions of colonial empires. He disapproved of their brutality towards indigenous populations and exploitation of natural resources; he was one of the first influential Europeans to write critically about the connections between capitalism, colonialism, racism, slavery, and environmental degradation. Even though he did not advocate the abolition, but rather a reform of the Spanish empire, many initiators and supporters of the independence movement in Latin America, including Simón Bolívar, found inspiration in Humboldt’s writings.³³ But some scholars have claimed that ultimately ‘Humboldt’s discursive politics [...] reinforced the worldviews of European, North American, and Creole elites, including their attitudes toward indigenous and black populations’.³⁴ Such a reading of Humboldt’s ‘discursive politics’ was possible partly because he was often more radical in his critique in his travel journals than his published works; he had to be cautious not to alienate his influential patrons, be it Charles IV in Spain, Friedrich Wilhelm III in Prussia, or Nicholas I in Russia, who supported Humboldt’s Russian expedition in 1829.³⁵ In this last case, the tsar’s own agenda was again economic rather than scientific: he wanted to draw on Humboldt’s mining expertise to find out how he could extract more noble metals in his huge empire.³⁶ But Humboldt also met exploited farmers as well as some Polish political prisoners on his journey; he attempted to intervene on the behalf of the latter with the tsar, apparently with some success.³⁷

How to evaluate Humboldt’s position in relation to colonialism? Unlike more recent scholars, who celebrate him for his transdisciplinary openness and progressive worldview that can be glimpsed from (at least some of) his writings,³⁸ in her classic study *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870*, Susanne Zantop focusses not on ‘Humboldt’s explicit intentions, or [...] the contradictions in his own writings’, but rather ‘the impact his utterances [...] would have on an audience reared on the fantasy of natural conquest and natural right of the stronger’, with ‘the fantasy of the potent European penetrating virgin forests and terrains implicit in Humboldt’s exuberant descriptions’.³⁹ Shifting the attention to the reception of Humboldt’s texts shows a huge variability and ambiguity in what has been made of his writings.⁴⁰ It is often claimed that Humboldt’s reception in Latin America has been positive, even enthusiastic, almost

without exception: Jaime Labastida, for example, wrote in his famous 1999 ‘homenaje’ [‘homage’] to Humboldt that ‘todos los países [en América] reconocen en él a su segundo descubridor, su descubridor científico’ [all countries in Latin America recognize him as its second discoverer, its scientific discoverer].⁴¹ But recent discussions suggest that a more differentiated picture is needed. For example, Christian Durisch Acosta concludes his overview of the reception of Humboldt in Ecuador with the following comment:

Eine kritischere Auseinandersetzung mit der Humboldt-Rezeption in den verschiedenen hispanoamerikanischen Ländern wäre [...] wünschenswert. Zumindest in Ecuador, wo eine vergleichsweise schwächere Humboldt-Rezeption vorzufinden ist, war der deutsche Gelehrte bis Ende [der] 60er Jahre ein Ankerpunkt der offiziellen nationalen Identität, die im Kern eine Fortführung der frühen eurokreolischen Identitätswürfe darstellte. Der ‘ecuadorianische’ Humboldt bildete demnach einen Bestandteil der kulturellen Hegemonie im Sinne Antonio Gramscis, mittels derer die traditionelle Oberschicht ihre Herrschaft stabilisierte.

[A more critical examination of the reception of Humboldt in various Hispano-American countries would be desirable. At least in Ecuador, with its comparatively weaker reception of Humboldt, the German scholar used to function as an anchor point of the official national identity until the end of the 1960s, which essentially represented a continuation of the early Eurocreolian concepts of identity. The ‘Ecuadorian’ Humboldt thus contributed to the cultural hegemony in Antonio Gramsci’s sense, by means of which the traditional upper class stabilized its rule.]⁴²

In the same issue of the journal *HiN – Alexander von Humboldt im Netz* on the topic ‘Humboldt und Hispano-Amerika. Vergangenheit, Gegenwart und Zukunft’ [Humboldt and Hispano-America. Past, Present, and Future], José Ángel Rodríguez writes in his contribution titled ‘El culto a Humboldt en Venezuela’ [Humboldt’s Cult in Venezuela] that Venezuelan texts on Humboldt ‘toman el camino del panegírico e ignoran, por lo general, la meditación y crítica del legado humboldtiano’ [strike eulogistic tones and generally ignore reflections on and criticisms of the Humboldtian legacy].⁴³ In his piece on the Mexican reception of Humboldt’s work, José Enrique Covarrubias highlights Juan A. Ortega y Medina’s work in the 1960s and 1970s, which ‘marcaba un hito al formular [...] críticas y mostrar a Humboldt bajo una luz que no era la prevaleciente en las valoraciones previas, a menudo panegiristas y a veces hasta hagiográficas’ [marked a milestone in formulating criticisms and portraying Humboldt in a different light to that prevailing in previous assessments – often eulogistic, and sometimes even hagiographic] and sought to ‘contrabalancear los cúmulos de elogios que habían proliferado en la recepción mexicana de Humboldt durante casi dos siglos’ [counterbalance the excessive praise that had proliferated in the Mexican reception of Humboldt over the course of nearly two centuries], including in Ortega y Medina’s own times.⁴⁴

It is in the context of such scholarly discussions that I would now like to offer a reading of two creative responses to Humboldt’s work produced by two Latin American artists at the opposite ends of the twentieth century. Similarly to de la Parra’s text quoted towards the beginning of this chapter, both employ the resources of artistic provocation to upend narratives of European superiority in the age of Humboldt. I will start with ‘Sobre las huellas de Humboldt’ [In the Steps

of Humboldt], an essay from 1923 by José Antonio Ramos Sucre, a Venezuelan poet, scholar, and diplomat, and then move on to ‘El cocodrilo de Humboldt no es el cocodrilo de Hegel’ [‘Humboldt’s Crocodile Is Not Hegel’s’], an art installation by José Alejandro Restrepo, a French-Colombian visual artist, first displayed in 1994.

Two Critical Responses to Humboldt: Ramos Sucre and Restrepo

Throughout the 1920s, José Antonio Ramos Sucre published a series of avant-garde essayistic prose poems that at first found few admirers in his native Venezuela, but were later rediscovered after his early death in 1930 and celebrated as miniature modernist – or even postmodern – masterpieces.⁴⁵ One of his first works, initially published as a stand-alone pamphlet in 1923 and later incorporated into a larger collection in 1925, was ‘Sobre las huellas de Humboldt’.⁴⁶ An English translation of this little-discussed text has recently been included in the anthology *Cosmos and Colonialism: Alexander von Humboldt in Cultural Criticism*, edited by Rex Clark and Oliver Lubrich. However, the editors’ only reference to it in their introduction is rather enigmatic. It is listed as one of the essays that illustrate ‘the influence of Alexander von Humboldt on cultural criticism in the Americas’, which ‘affected political and intellectual discourse’, and briefly described as ‘an enumerative itemization’ and ‘gigantic anaphor’ – ‘a simple rhetorical method’ utilized ‘to demonstrate the abundance of Humboldtian actions, observations, and achievements that impacted Latin America’.⁴⁷ But in her review of Clark’s and Lubrich’s anthology, Caroline Schaumann singles out Ramos Sucre’s ‘provocative essay’ as one of the ‘exceptional finds’ in the collection because it ‘exposes, in beautiful prose and a clever structure, Humboldt’s gaze as both invariably European and imperialist decades before postcolonial theory emerged’.⁴⁸ Schaumann recognizes the critical edge of Ramos Sucre’s text, which the editors of the anthology seemingly do not.

After five short introductory paragraphs, which I will analyse in more detail shortly, the remaining seven pages of Ramos Sucre’s essay are indeed taken up by ‘an enumerative itemization’ of Humboldt’s activities in Latin America as described in his writings. But the focus is not, strictly speaking, on what Humboldt did, but on his opinions and judgements of what he saw. In the spaces of eight pages, more than 100 different verbs are used to report Humboldt’s impressions and views: he ‘mira’ [‘considers’], ‘sugiere’ [‘suggests’], ‘observa’ [‘observes’], ‘habla de’ [‘speaks of’], ‘emite discretas opiniones’ [‘issues clever opinions’], ‘declara’ [‘declares’], ‘dice’ [‘says’], ‘nota’ [‘notes’], ‘filosofa’ [‘philosophizes’], ‘indica’ [‘points out’], ‘recuerda’ [‘recalls’], ‘cuenta de’ [‘tells of’], ‘describe’ [‘describes’], ‘refiere’ [‘relates’], ‘opina’ [‘opines’], ‘se abandona a la contemplación amarga de’ [‘abandons himself to the bitter thought that’], ‘piensa’ [‘thinks’], ‘allega noticias’ [‘gathers information’], ‘elogia’ [‘praises’], ‘niega’ [‘denies’], ‘maravilla’ [‘marvels at’], ‘ensalza’ [‘exalts’], ‘cree’ [‘believes’], ‘entiende’ [‘understands’], and many more. It is through such lexical inventiveness and the rhythm that it lends to the text that Ramos Sucre’s essay becomes a curious prose poem which condenses, imitates, and ultimately pastiches Humboldt’s performance of encyclopaedic knowledge and erudition: its aesthetic form becomes a critical force.

In the introductory paragraphs, Ramos Sucre firmly places Humboldt in the context of Franco-German Enlightenment and Romantic traditions, casually displaying his deep familiarity with them

as he goes along: he makes references to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Chateaubriand, and Goethe, as well as European artists of other epochs and nationalities: Leonardo da Vinci, Cervantes, and Eça de Queiroz. Ramos Sucre flaunts his own cultural authority while – or, at least partly, *by* – recontextualizing Humboldt's. The tone of the entire piece, set up already in the introductory paragraphs, is ironic, even mocking. In a few broad strokes, Ramos Sucre sketches out the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century obsession with 'l'état de nature' ['state of nature'] and the 'bon sauvage' ['noble savage'] among Western European intellectuals, which was fuelled by the European expeditions to the Americas. Out of this tradition was born a desire for 'el viaje erudito y la excursión remota' ['the erudite journey and the remote excursion'] in search of 'generaciones libres, aventureras y esquivas' ['free, venturesome, and aloof generations']; Alexander von Humboldt belongs to 'la Alemania indulgente y enciclopédica de entonces' ['the indulgent and encyclopaedic Germany of the time'].⁴⁹ He represents 'el pensamiento germánico' ['German thought'], which 'sube constantemente del pormenor a la idea universal, de la observación pequeña al concepto grandioso, a la empresa alentada y quimérica' ['incessantly climbs from the detail to the universal idea, from the minute observation to the grandiose concept, to the inspiring and fanciful enterprise'].⁵⁰ We can see that what Humboldt is praised for in contemporary scholarship – his fervent curiosity about every single aspect of the natural world, his encyclopaedic range of interest, and his desire to connect every last detail and observation to more general laws and theories – is presented as more problematic here: as a possessive, acquisitive, and self-indulgent trait conditioned by a culturally specific value hierarchy.

The title of Ramos Sucre's essay alludes to the beginning of a famous prose poem 'Mi delirio sobre el Chimborazo' ['My Delirium on Chimborazo'] (1822), usually ascribed to Simón Bolívar, where the narrator (or the poetic 'I') first 'busqué' ['sought'] and then 'dejé atrás las huellas de Humboldt' ['left Humboldt's tracks behind'], combining images of the exploration of nature with the achievement of political liberty.⁵¹ Ramos Sucre was the great-great-nephew of Antonio José de Sucre, one of Bolívar's closest allies. The title of his essay implies the act of retracing Humboldt's journey across Latin America in a double sense: both his physical journey in space, and his continual presence in the history of Latin American political discourse. It also needs to be understood as signalling a provocative imitation of Humboldt's style, which is predicated on a certain strand of European tradition – the encyclopaedic desire of a European scholar who dreams of grasping the world in its entirety. But, in Aamir R. Muftić's words, 'the ability to think "the world" itself, whether in literary-critical thinking or other discourses and practices, is hardly distributed evenly across the world, even though its cultivation is an important task and a necessity, given those very asymmetries and inequalities'.⁵² Texts such as Ramos Sucre's essay put pressure on celebratory accounts of Humboldt as one-of-a-kind heroic genius, polymath, and discoverer – symbolized here through the insistent, repetitive syntax of reported speech, where every statement about Latin America needs to be filtered through his legitimizing perspective – by shifting the attention to the broader political and cultural context, described in the opening paragraphs of Ramos Sucre's text, that made Humboldt's pursuits possible – and desirable – in the first place.

It is through this critique of Humboldt's perspective that Ramos Sucre's text can be linked with a much more recent artwork, first exhibited in 1994: José Alejandro Restrepo's video installation 'El cocodrilo de Humboldt no es el cocodrilo de Hegel'.⁵³ Restrepo is one of the most famous contemporary visual artists from Latin America. Like de la Parra and Ramos Sucre, he is deeply

familiar with European intellectual traditions: he was born in Paris and lived and studied intermittently in France, where he met Deleuze and Foucault. When discussing his work, Ivonne Pini makes use of the same critical term that Pratt applied to de la Parra's writing: 'transculturación'.⁵⁴ 'El cocodrilo de Humboldt no es el cocodrilo de Hegel', which was most recently exhibited in 2019 in Bogotá and Berlin,⁵⁵ is one of Restrepo's many works that dramatize European conceptions of Latin America, or 'variations on the theme of American nature and the writing of history', as in the title of Erna von der Walde's essay on Restrepo.⁵⁶ This piece in particular is deceptively simple: its title is written in black capital letters over a scale measuring out 25 feet on a white wall, just above the floor, with two monitors that display a slowly blinking crocodile's eye and a slowly wagging crocodile's tail positioned within the text so that its shape resembles that of a crocodile. Placed significantly higher than this, and in much smaller font, are two short quotes about Latin American crocodiles – one from Hegel, and one from Humboldt:

América se ha mostrado y aún hoy se muestra física y espiritualmente impotente. Sus leones, tigres y cocodrilos, si bien se parecen a los homónimos del Viejo Mundo, son en todo respecto más pequeños, más débiles y menos poderosos.

[America has always shown itself impotent, and still does; not only physically but spiritually. Its lions, tigers and crocodiles though resembling their homonyms in the Old World, are in all respects, smaller, weaker and less powerful.]

Yo renunciaría voluntariamente a la carne de vaca europea que Hegel en su ignorancia cree muy superior a la carne de vaca americana y me gustaría vivir cerca de los delicados y débiles cocodrilos que por desgracia tienen veinticinco pies de longitud.

[I would voluntarily give up beef from European cows which Hegel, in his ignorance, considers superior to that of American cows, and I would like to live near those delicate and weak crocodiles which unfortunately are 25 feet long.]⁵⁷

Hegel's quote comes from his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* [*Lectures on the Philosophy of History*] (1837), where he develops his theory that the 'New World' is less mature and less developed than the 'Old World' in every respect, including its geology, fauna, and flora, and, by extension, culture, politics, and intellectual life. 'Was bis jetzt sich hier [in der neuen Welt, d.h. Amerika] ereignet, ist nur der Wiederhall der alten Welt, und der Ausdruck fremder Lebendigkeit' ['what *has* taken place in the New World up to the present time is only an echo of the Old World, – the expression of foreign Life'],⁵⁸ claims Hegel – which can be visually represented by the image of a weakly crocodile. Humboldt is often celebrated for his rebuttals of such views, widespread at the time, as chronicled by Antonello Gerbi.⁵⁹

But Restrepo's piece presents the difference between these two views in a more ambiguous light. Like de la Parra's tableau of Romantic genealogy and Ramos Sucre's essayistic prose poem, Restrepo's installation juxtaposes images of Latin American nature – in this case, the video clips of the crocodile's two body parts – with European intellectual culture – the quotes from Humboldt and Hegel. In the visual logic of the artwork, Hegel and Humboldt have at least as much in common with each other as what sets them apart. The repetition of the possessive pronoun 'de', further underscored by the alliteration of Humboldt's and Hegel's names, expresses the same kind

of epistemic possessiveness that Ramos Sucre's 'gigantic anaphor' suggests in 'Sobre las huellas de Humboldt'. Seen in this light, whoever is right or wrong about the size of the crocodile is less important – the salient part is that two white European men are engaged in a dispute about the measurements of an animal on a different continent.

In other words, what the sentence 'el cocodrilo de Humboldt no es el cocodrilo de Hegel' does not spell out explicitly, but clearly implies, is that the crocodile does not in fact belong to either Humboldt or Hegel. This is made visually clear through the exclusion of most of the animal's body from its representation in the artwork. What we have are just fragments, quite literally dissected for analysis. It is significant that one of the two fragments is the crocodile's eye: it emphasizes the theme of the gaze, or perspective. The installation also reclaims the power to control the spectator's gaze in other ways. Because the main part of the installation is located at the bottom of the wall, it forces the viewer to look down – but this time not to 'look down' on Latin America, but rather on the presumptuousness of nineteenth-century Europeans looking at the 'new' (to them) continent. As Erna von der Walde points out, 'the dimensions of the installation, its scale, also involve the body of the viewer: if we move close to read one text [Humboldt's or Hegel's quote], we lose sight of the object and of the other text. From a distance, the texts are almost invisible, but we can see the full extension of the animal. Yet, when we think we are grasping it, we cannot see the crocodile'.⁶⁰ Similarly to Ramos Sucre's essay, Restrepo's installation makes it impossible to look at Latin America through Humboldt's eyes without reflecting on the nature of his – and our own – gaze: both pieces enact the dependence on Humboldt's perspective in their representations of Latin America, presenting this dependence less as Humboldt's achievement and more as a cultural problem – the problem of epistemic inequality between different parts of the world, which restricts, impedes, censors, and alters any attempt to 'think "the world" itself', as Mufti would have it.

What lessons can we draw from this exercise in 'thinking the world' with Humboldt, de la Parra, Ramos Sucre, and Restrepo? Our focus on imaginative border-crossings needs to take into account the real-life forces that shape our very capacity to imagine them. Alexander von Humboldt's writings on Latin America are widely considered to rank among the most progressive and respectful acts of cross-cultural encounter in the nineteenth century, but their very existence relied heavily on European conceptions of empirical knowledge and the colonial realities of the day, which left its traces in the texts themselves. In Oliver Lubrich's pithy formulation, 'das problematische Verhältnis von Wissen und Macht hat Humboldt symptomisiert wie auch reflektiert' ['Humboldt was both symptomatic of and reflective about the problematic relationship between knowledge and power'].⁶¹ Even the twentieth-century critical responses and creative counterparts to Humboldt's work that I discussed in this chapter were authored by members of the Latin American elite with unique access to cultural resources. Similarly, we need to reflect on the fact that our own comparative endeavour in this volume on border-crossing and World Literature originates in our own privileged position as members of Western academia.

In this chapter, I argued that we need to counterbalance celebrations of Humboldt's borderless transdisciplinarity and curiosity about other cultures with a critique of the colonial system that produced and upheld him, and from which he benefitted. If he is to become a cultural icon for 21st-century Germany – or indeed Europe, and the wider world – we need to continually

contextualize his legacy as not just an idealistic, progressive exploration of cultural difference, but also one dependent on and reflective of systemic patterns of inequality and exploitation. I would like to close with a quote from Peter Schneider, a German writer who already 40 years ago recognized this dynamic in an essay that has also been anthologized in Clark's and Lubrich's collection *Cosmos and Colonialism*:

Humboldt gehört zu den ganz wenigen Europäern, die mehr in der Neuen Welt zurückließen, als sie mitnahmen. [...] Er legte in der Neuen Welt eine Art des Erwerbssinns an den Tag, die man bislang an Europäern nicht kannte. Was er erwarb, das hinterließ er: Wissen. Dennoch setzte die wissenschaftliche Eroberung der Neuen Welt die blutige durch Cortés und Pizarro voraus. [...] Humboldt konnte seinen Erkenntnisdrang für unschuldig halten, nachdem andere sich zuvor die Hände schmutzig gemacht hatten: die Neue Welt, die er, nur mit wissenschaftlichen Instrumenten bewaffnet, erobern wollte, war erst erkennbar geworden, nachdem sie unterworfen worden war.

[Humboldt belongs among the few Europeans who left more behind in the New World than they took away. [...] There in the New World he displayed a kind of acquisitiveness for which Europeans had previously not been known. What he acquired, he left behind too: knowledge. Nevertheless, the scientific conquest of the New World presupposes the bloody one conducted by Cortés and Pizarro. [...] Humboldt was able to consider his thirst for experience to be innocent because others before him had gotten their hands dirty: the New World that he wanted to conquer armed only with scientific instruments was only ready to be observed once it had been subjugated.]⁶²

It remains to be seen whether the Humboldt Forum, recently opened in the very heart of imperial Berlin as a large museum space that will incorporate the Ethnological Museum of Berlin and the Museum of Asian Art, will successfully contextualize Prussian exploration of the wider world in this spirit.

¹ On its size (it was the largest alongside Göttingen), see Ulrich Rasche, 'Umbrüche – Zur Frequenz der Universität Jena im ausgehenden 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert', in *Die Universität Jena: Tradition und Innovation um 1800*, ed. by Gerhard Müller, Klaus Ries, und Paul Ziche (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2001), pp. 79-134 (p. 97). On its progressive character, see Theodore Ziolkowski, *German Romanticism and Its Institutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 234-35.

² Maike Oergel, 'Jena 1789-1819: Ideas, Poetry, and Politics', in *The Oxford Handbook of European Romanticism*, ed. by Paul Hamilton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 219-239 (p. 237). For the exact dates of all these figures' residence in Jena, see Lothar Pikulik, *Frühromantik. Epoche – Werke – Wirkung* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2000), pp. 67-68.

³ Theodore Ziolkowski, *Stages of European Romanticism: Cultural Synchronicity across the Arts, 1798-1848* (Rochester: Camden House, 2018), p. 6.

⁴ Teresa de la Parra, *Obra (Narrativa, ensayos, cartas)*, ed. by Velia Bosch (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1991), p. 329. The English translation is taken from Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), p. 135.

⁵ For more context on de la Parra's life and work, see RoseAnna Mueller, *Teresa de la Parra: A Literary Life* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

⁶ Pratt, p. 235.

⁷ Nancy Leys Stepan, *Picturing Tropical Nature* (London: Reaktion Books, 2001), p. 18. This trope was also used in the representation of other colonized regions, such as India. See, for example, Pramod K. Nayar, *Colonial Voices: The Discourses of Empire* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

⁸ Lesley Wylie, *Colonial Tropes and Postcolonial Tricks: Rewriting the Tropics in the Novela de la Selva* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), p. 149.

⁹ See Héctor Hoyos, *Things with a History: Transcultural Materialism and the Literatures of Extraction in Contemporary Latin America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).

¹⁰ See Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel* (London: Vintage, 2017), p. 201.

¹¹ Pratt, p. 135.

¹² Andrea Wulf, *The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander von Humboldt, the Lost Hero of Science* (London: John Murray, 2015), p. 37.

¹³ Malcolm Nicolson, 'Alexander von Humboldt and the Geography of Vegetation', in *Romanticism and the Sciences*, ed. by Andres Cunningham, Nicholas Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 169-85 (p. 183), and François-René de Chateaubriand, 'Voyages', *Le Conservateur: le roi, la charte, et les honnêtes gens*, 6 (1820), 31-36 (p. 32), my translation.

¹⁴ See Laura Dassow Walls, *The Passage to Cosmos: Alexander von Humboldt and the Shaping of America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 14.

¹⁵ Pratt, pp. 134-35.

¹⁶ Jenny Haase and Joanna Neilly.

¹⁷ *Transatlantic Echoes: Alexander von Humboldt in World Literature*, ed. by Rex Clark and Oliver Lubrich (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), p. 2, and Paul Nissler, 'A Short Survey of the Creation and Development of Common German-Latin American Space: Humboldt, Emigration, Exile, and Contemporary Interactions', in *German Literature as World Literature*, ed. by Thomas Oliver Beebe (New York: Bloomsbury), pp. 157-76 (pp. 158-59).

¹⁸ Haase and Neilly.

¹⁹ *edition humboldt digital*, ed. by Ottmar Ette (Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften) <<https://edition-humboldt.de>> [accessed 15 October 2020], and Alexander von Humboldt, *Sämtliche Schriften (Aufsätze, Artikel, Essays)*, ed. by Oliver Lubrich and Thomas Nehrlich, Berner Ausgabe (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2019).

²⁰ *Transatlantic Echoes*, p. 2.

²¹ See Ottmar Ette, 'Die Humboldtsche Wissenschaft', in *Alexander von Humboldt-Handbuch: Leben – Werk – Wirkung*, ed. by Ottmar Ette (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2018), pp. 106-112 (p. 106).

²² Alexander von Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur* (Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek, 2019), p. 7. Alexander von Humboldt, *Views of Nature*, trans. by E. C. Otté and Henry G. Bohn (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1850), p. ix.

²³ Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur*, p. 7. Humboldt, *Views of Nature*, p. ix.

²⁴ On the motif of the German Romantic 'Wanderer', see Andrew Cusack, *The Wanderer in Nineteenth-Century German Literature: Intellectual History and Cultural Criticism* (Rochester: Camden House, 2008). Specifically on Humboldt's use of the figure of the 'Wanderer', see pp. 85-86.

²⁵ The first complete German translation was only published in the twenty-first century: Alexander von Humboldt, *Ansichten der Cordillere und Monumente der eingeborenen Völker Amerikas*, trans. by Claudia Kalscheuer (Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek, 2004).

²⁶ See Ottmar Ette and Oliver Lubrich, 'Die Andere Reise durch das Universum. Nachwort', in Alexander von Humboldt, *Kosmos. Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung* (Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek, 2014), pp. 905-920 (p. 919).

²⁷ Walls, p. 15.

- ²⁸ See, for example, Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 168-71, and Walls, p. 13.
- ²⁹ See Wulf, p. 19.
- ³⁰ Ottmar Ette, 'Ein Leben in Bewegung', in *Alexander von Humboldt-Handbuch*, pp. 10-19 (p. 12), my translation.
- ³¹ For the exact dates, see Ingo Schwarz, 'Alexander von Humboldt-Chronologie (22. September 1792)', in: *edition humboldt digital* <<https://edition-humboldt.de/v6/H0002725>> [accessed 15 October 2020]. See also Krzysztof Zielińca, *Polonica bei Alexander von Humboldt* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004).
- ³² See Sebastian Conrad, *Deutsche Kolonialgeschichte* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2019), pp. 97-99. See also Kristin Kopp, *Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).
- ³³ See Walther L. Bernecker, 'Politik', in *Alexander von Humboldt-Handbuch*, pp. 158-65.
- ³⁴ Fionnghuala Sweeney, 'Literary Genres: Travel Narratives and Compilations', in *The Princeton Companion to Atlantic History*, ed. by Vincent Brown, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Laurent Dubois, Karen Ordahl Kupperman, and Joseph C. Miller (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), pp. 307-13 (p. 310).
- ³⁵ See Bernecker, p. 158, and Eoin Bourke, 'The Second Columbus?', in *Cosmos and Colonialism*, pp. 258-70.
- ³⁶ See Christian Suckow, 'Alexander von Humboldt und Rußland', in *Alexander von Humboldt. Aufbruch in die Moderne*, ed. by Ottmar Ette, Bernd M. Scherer, und Christian Suckow (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001), pp. 247-264.
- ³⁷ See Alexander von Humboldt, *Briefe aus Russland 1829*, ed. by Eberhard Knobloch, Ingo Schwarz, and Christian Suckow (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009), pp. 233-234. See also Zielińca.
- ³⁸ See for example Ottmar Ette, 'The Life of a Nomad and a World Citizen: Alexander von Humboldt, Nomadic Knowledge, and the Global Landscape of Theory', *New German Critique*, 43 (2016), 33-53.
- ³⁹ Zantop, p. 167.
- ⁴⁰ See texts anthologised in *Cosmos and Colonialism* and *Transatlantic Echoes*, as well as Nicolaas A. Rupke, *Alexander von Humboldt: A Metabiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- ⁴¹ Jaime Labastida, *Humboldt, ciudadano universal* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1999), p. 3, my translation.
- ⁴² Christian Durisch Acosta, 'Die Humboldt-Rezeption in Ecuador. Ein kulturgeschichtlicher Beitrag zum ecuadorianischen Nationsbildungsprozess', *HiN* 10 (2009), 58-67 (p. 65), my translation.
- ⁴³ José Ángel Rodríguez, 'El culto a Humboldt en Venezuela', *HiN* 10 (2009), 47-53 (p. 48), my translation.
- ⁴⁴ José Enrique Covarrubias, 'La recepción de la figura y obra de Humboldt en México 1821-2000', *HiN* 10 (2009), 92-104 (p. 102), my translation. For the most recent example of such a re-evaluation of Humboldt's relationship to Latin America, see 'The Legacy of Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859): A Critical Reappraisal 250 Years On', ed. by Andrea Aclé-Kreysing and Adrián Herrera Fuentes, special issue, *German Life and Letters* 74.3 (2021).
- ⁴⁵ For more context on Ramos Sucre and his oeuvre, see Daniel Mesa Gancedo, 'La imprecisión de las formas: lirismo y narratividad en la obra de José Antonio Ramos Sucre', *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica* 54 (2006), 209-22.
- ⁴⁶ José Antonio Ramos Sucre, *Obra completa* (Caracas: Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1980), pp. 70-78.
- ⁴⁷ *Cosmos and Colonialism*, pp. 8-9.
- ⁴⁸ Caroline Schaumann, 'Clark, Rex, and Oliver Lubrich, eds. *Cosmos and Colonialism: Alexander von Humboldt in Cultural Criticism*', *The German Quarterly* 86 (2013), 100-01 (p. 100).
- ⁴⁹ Ramos Sucre, *Obra completa*, p. 70. José Antonio Ramos Sucre, 'In the Steps of Humboldt', trans. by Richard John Ascárate, in *Cosmos and Colonialism*, pp. 98-106 (pp. 98-99).
- ⁵⁰ Ramos Sucre, *Obra completa*, p. 71. Ramos Sucre, 'In the Steps of Humboldt', p. 99.
- ⁵¹ Simón Bolívar, *Papeles de Bolívar*, ed. by Vicente Lecuna (Caracas: Litografía del Comercio, 1917), pp. 233-34 (p. 233). Simón Bolívar, 'My Delirium on Chimborazo', trans. by Frederick H. Fornoff, in *Transatlantic Echoes*, pp. 67-68 (p. 67).
- ⁵² Aamir R. Mufti, *Forget English!: Orientalisms and World Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), p. 10.
- ⁵³ A high-resolution photograph of the installation can be seen on the website of the Daros Latinamerica Collection in Zurich: <<https://www.daros-latinamerica.net/sites/default/files/artworks/109.013.jpg>> [accessed 15 September 2021].
- ⁵⁴ María Clara Bernal and Ivonne Pini, *Traducir la imagen: El arte colombiano en la esfera transcultural* (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2012), p. 61.
- ⁵⁵ See Ana Paula Orlandi, 'José Alejandro Restrepo: "A Geografia geografia é uma arma para a guerra"', Goethe Institut Brasilien, <<https://www.goethe.de/ins/br/pt/kul/fok/hja/21676085.html>> [accessed 15 October 2020].
- ⁵⁶ Erna von der Walde, "'Ceci n'est pas un crocodile': Variations on the Theme of American Nature and the Writing of History', *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 15 (2006), 231-49.
- ⁵⁷ The Spanish versions of these quotes used by Restrepo are cited in Bernal and Pini, p. 71. The English versions are cited in von der Walde, p. 234.
- ⁵⁸ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, ed. by Eduard Gans (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1837), p. 83. G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, trans. by J. Sibree (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1861), p. 90.
- ⁵⁹ See Antonello Gerbi, *The Dispute of the New World*, trans. by Jeremy Moyle (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973). On the general relationship between Humboldt and Hegel, see Friedrich Herneck, 'Hegel und Alexander von Humboldt', *HiN* 17 (2016), 83-90.
- ⁶⁰ Von der Walde, p. 242.

⁶¹ Oliver Lubrich, 'Kolonialismus', in *Durchquerungen (Alexander von Humboldt, Sämtliche Schriften, Band 10)*, pp. 407-436 (p. 430), my translation.

⁶² Peter Schneider, *Die Botschaft des Pferdekopfs* (Darmstadt: Hermann Luchterhand, 1981), pp. 44-45. Peter Schneider, 'Message from the Horsehead', trans. by Steven Sidore, in *Cosmos and Colonialism*, pp. 211-229 (p. 222).