CHAPTER 9

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A Poetics of *términos*: Lexis and Moral Geography in Ercilla's Expedition to the Extreme South in *La Araucana*

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Language, Body and War[1]

Ibero-American epic poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries symbolically connected the remote geography of the New World with the centre of the empires. The long epic poems were many-layered machines which worked both with the most prestigious models of Renaissance poetry and with a heterogeneous military and bureaucratic archive, in addition to the personal experiences of the eyewitness or soldier. In light of this, the thousands of lines that structured the poems are difficult to reconcile with an ideal monological imperial voice. The 'empire' included profound contradictions, with its militant Christianity and over-burdening legislation, its transatlantic praxis of power and the criticism of war and its interests by theologians and humanists. Epic poems were generally extraordinary artistic representations of those contradictions.

We might say that the great theme of Ibero-American epic was not directly war as such, but rather transgression, in spatial terms. In the *comedia* of the Golden Age, the catalyst for the dramatic action was also transgression, but social rather than spatial. In spite of this difference, epic and theatre shared a number of structuring principles, especially when the long speeches of the epic dramatized the narration, for example through numerous indigenous monologues, but also when the open spaces of epic were dramatized.[2]

Spatial transgression is what usually puts the epic narrative into motion. The poems progress because they are transgressing a space, creating territories and frontiers. This movement contributes to the construction of a particular map of the colonial world, a kind of 'moral geography' which takes shape in a process in which multiple discursive registers and concrete practices of occupation intervene.

Before entering in detail into the subject of this article — the analysis of how the poetic and lexical procedures of *La Araucana* connect the morality and decorum

of the court with the imperial administration of space and the construction of its geography — it is worth pausing to consider a brief example which shows, within a single octave, the poetic operations by which Ercilla enriches the meanings of his text, in this case connecting language, body and war.

In the first part of *La Araucana*, recounting the battle on the hill of Andalicán, the poet introduces brief vignettes of the Spanish warriors: 'el viejo gran jinete Maldonado | voltea el caballo allí con mano diestra' [the grand old horseman Maldonado | airs his horse there with skilful hand] (5.38);[3] '[...] Pedro de Olmos de Aguilera | en todos los peligros se atraviesa' [Pedro de Olmos de Aguilera ventures into all the dangers]; 'Diego Cano a dos manos, sin escudo | no deja lanza enhiesta ni armadura' [Diego Cano with his two hands, without a shield, leaves not a lance erect nor armour intact]; and in this same octave, he introduces us to

> Peña, aunque de lengua tartamudo,
> se revuelve con tal desenvoltura
> cual Cesio entre las armas de Pompeo
> o en Troya el fiero hijo de Peleo. (5.40)
>
> [Peña, although with a stuttering tongue,
> dashes about with such ease
> as Cessius among the arms of Pompey
> or the fiery son of Peleus at Troy.]

The poem doesn't say anything more about Peña the soldier, of whom we do not even know his baptismal name. More than a historical character whose memory is thus preserved — although this could well be the case — the soldier is here an instrument for composing a vignette about poetry and war.[4] The lines about the stuttering Peña outline a particular relationship between language and war in the poetics of the epic, as if loosening the tongue and using the hand were intimately connected actions. We might remember that tongue and hand are the determining elements in the episode of Galvarino's punishment in the second part of *La Araucana* (cantos 22 and 23). In the case of the soldier Peña, in spite of his speech impediment, the poet says that with his weapons 'se revuelve con tal desenvoltura', inserting here, with this etymological repetition — 'revolver' [stir], 'desenvolver' [unwrap], a brief tongue twister in the scene of the body entering into battle. And we as readers enter into the hendecasyllable hoping not to get tripped up.

This way of connecting language with the body and war, drawing us in as readers, defines one of the modalities in which Ercilla and other epic poets intervene in the debates on politics and good government. Epic intervenes not only through the consecrated concepts of the political vocabulary, but because it puts them on the scene — it converts them into material for poetic mimesis — or because it finds another vocabulary, capable of establishing other connections, exploring the experience and testimony of colonial warfare. The poem constructs in this way new horizontal relations between deeds and words, as opposed to the verticality of traditions and genealogies, important as these are in the explicit apparatus of epic poetry. If we return to the passage about Peña the soldier, the first two hendecasyllables move on this horizontal plane of the experience on the battlefield,

as opposed to references to the Latin and Greek world in the last two lines, which move and escape vertically, outlining genealogies and signalling the tradition.

In her study of the first canto of *La Araucana*, Sarah Dichy-Malherme interprets several octaves as cartographic poetry and indicates that these prefigure the martial encounters between Spaniards and Araucanians, as in the case of the famous lines about the two wide seas which 'pasando de sus términos' [overflowing their bounds] futilely aim to join together in the extreme South, battered and prevented by the rocks and waves (*La Araucana*, 1.8).[5] Ercilla conveys — or constructs — not only the physical geography of Chile, but also 'su geografía histórica, política e incluso hipotética' [its historical, political and even hypothetical geography], as Dichy-Malherme indicates. The cartographic discourse is thus 'perfectamente concorde con el registro épico' [in perfect accordance with the epic register] and shares its methods: cognitive and military dominion of space, including the uncertainties and desire for possession generated by the *terrae incognitae*.[6] In addition, the geography of Ercilla's poem, it should be noted, can acquire the characteristics of a dramatic persona, following the tradition of the classic figure of prosopopoeia.[7]

While geography is dramatized, participating in the blows of war, the poetics of the Spanish epic has affinities with the *comedia* of the Golden Age and its techniques, and with decorum, a central concept in the functioning of society and its symbols during the Renaissance and Baroque. And although the word 'decoro', or decorum, does not appear in any of the three parts of *La Araucana* — rightly so, since a war on the edge of the world was one of the most indecorous settings — I would argue that Ercilla's poem sets its limits and redefines decorum, adapting it to the register of the epic.

Decorum, Urbanity, *términos*

In his *Diálogo de la lengua* [Dialogue on Language] (*c.* 1536), Juan de Valdés explained that decorum was 'cuando queremos decir que uno se gobierna en su manera de vivir conforme al estado y condición que tiene [...]. Es propio este vocablo de los representadores de las comedias, los cuales estonces se decía que guardaban bien el decoro cuando guardaban lo que convenía a las personas que representaban' [when we wish to say that someone conducts himself in his manner of living in accordance with his station and condition [...]. This word is characteristic of those who perform comedias, of whom it was said that they maintained decorum well when they kept up what befitted the people they represented].[8] Maxime Chevalier has studied the meaning of the word in its transition from the sixteenth century to the beginning of the seventeenth, comparing Valdés's definition with that of Covarrubias in his dictionary the *Tesoro* (1611), for whom decorum was now 'respeto y mesura' [respect and moderation].[9] Chevalier demonstrates that for the authors of the Golden Age, like Lope de Vega or Miguel de Cervantes, the word signified 'respect owed to persons or things', and that this was the most common meaning, associated with an extension of the concept of court — one which surpassed the vision of Valdés, centred in the city of Toledo — until it became one of urbanity.[10] 'Decorum' is thus close to euphemistic speech in a city context. In Covarrubias there is no praise of

the delights of rural life: the rural world is one of rusticity, barbarism and uncouth speech (*mal decir*, literally 'wrong saying'). Thus, the path of decorum towards urbanity places us within the confines of the city, far from the open fields of epic, but not far from the courtier Ercilla's place of enunciation.

Here, our interest in decorum is in its moral sense: on the one hand, 'morally appropriate' and virtuous conduct;[11] on the other, a collection of customs — as in the 'moral history' of the Jesuit José de Acosta (1590) — which correspond to a specific geographical nature. Moral history is indissociable from natural history; human practices or customs transpire in concrete geographical spaces which, to a certain extent, determine them.[12] Human beings must act with the 'respect and moderation', as Covarrubias would say, which the environment requires and which, in the case of the human practice par excellence, language, is expressed in speaking properly and in urbanity. These would be the ideal customs of the man of the city, a model of Christian politics.

How is this decorum transferred to the Araucanian battle ground? The answer lies, I would argue, in the enormous productivity and flexibility of the word 'término' [term, boundary, place], in phrases such as the 'término discreto' [discreet expression], or in 'consejo, término y cordura' [counsel, balance and good sense], but also in the 'distrito y término araucano' [Araucanian district and boundaries] and, particularly, in 'los términos lícitos pasando' [breaking the bounds of legitimacy], where the word reveals its double implication and symbolic power. As in the tongue of Peña the soldier, the *término* produces the necessary connections for the ideal functioning of the poetic machinery.

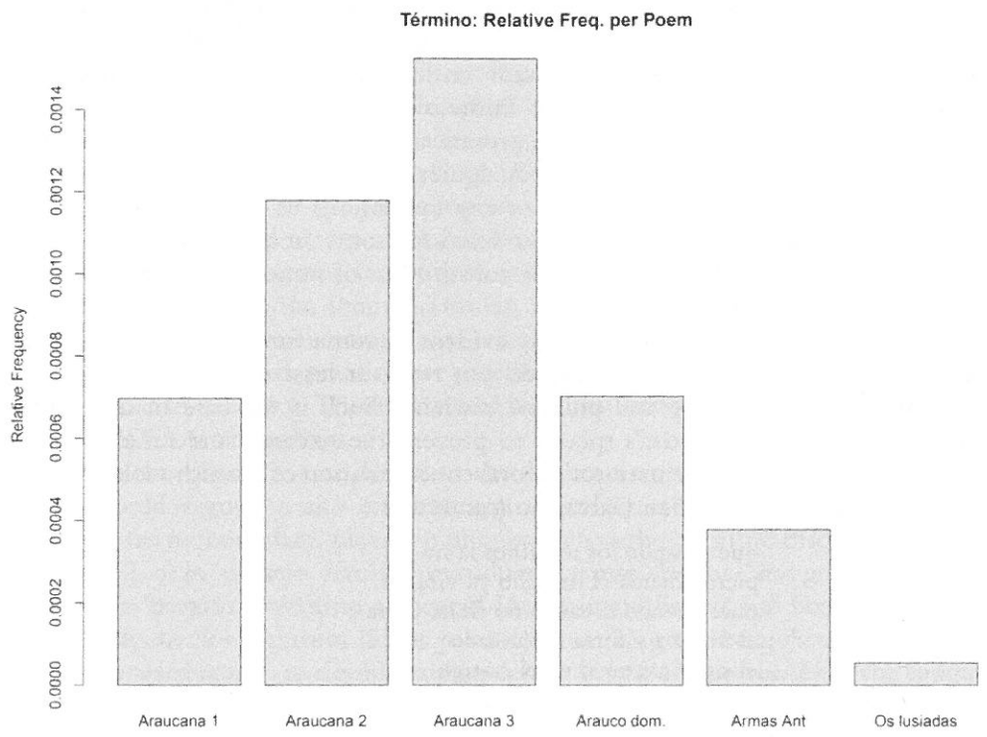
Poetic *términos*: Territorialized Decorum

It is not an easy task to define the word *término*. In the trilingual 1591 dictionary of Richard Percivale, *término* is defined as 'an end, a bound'. In Cristóbal de las Casas's dictionary of 1570 the entry reads: 'Término o linde' [término or boundary]. Covarrubias gives the same definition: 'linde o lindera' [boundary or bounds], that is, the boundaries of fields dedicated to agriculture, but he adds at least two meanings more: 'tomase por el fin de cualquier cosa' [it is understood as the end of anything] and 'hombre de buen término, el que procede con cordura' [a man of good término, he who proceeds with good sense]. The *Diccionario de Autoridades* [Dictionary of Authorities] (1739) enriches or complicates the scenario: it gives some twenty accepted meanings which we can summarize as: 'fin de alguna cosa, material o inmaterial' [the material or immaterial end of something]; 'mojón que se pone para distinguir los límites' [boundary stone which is placed to mark limits]; 'forma o modo de portarse u hablar en el trato común' [form or way of everyday behaviour or speech], which is illustrated by Cervantes's *Persiles*: 'me trataron los cosarios con mejor término que mis ciudadanos' [the corsairs treated me better than my citizens]; 'distrito o espacio de tierra' [district or space of land], exemplified with a quote from *La Florida* (Book 4.1) of the Inca Garcilaso: 'Por mostrar que no temen vuestras armas, pues las vienen a buscar fuera de sus términos' [to show that they do not fear your arms, since they come to seek them beyond their boundaries]; 'paraje señalado o meta fija para algún fin' [indicated spot or fixed goal for some end]; 'tiempo determinado [...] muy usado en lo forense' [determinate amount of time [...] very common in legal speech]; 'límite o confín de un lugar o provincia con otra' [limit or confine of one place or province with another]; 'en sentido moral, se toma por el objeto determinado de cualquier operación' [in a moral sense, it is understood as the determined object of any operation]; 'la voz o palabra propia de alguna facultad u oficio' [the proper word for some faculty or office]; 'estado o constitución de alguna cosa' [state or constitution of something] and its uses in metaphysics, logic, medicine etc.

The weight of the word 'término' is evident in some fundamental episodes in Ercilla's poem, even where the lines do not refer, at least directly, to terrain or geography, but to military and political restraint. Such is the case in the young García Hurtado de Mendoza's speech to prevent the excesses and cruelty of his soldiers (canto 21), or in the narrator's moral condemnation of Spanish violence after the punishment of the Indian Galvarino (canto 26):

> que pasando los términos la ira
> pierde fuerza el derecho ya violado,
> pues cuando la razón no frena y tira
> el ímpetu y furor demasiado
> el rigor excesivo en el castigo
> justifica la causa al enemigo. (21.56)
>
> [since when anger passes beyond its boundaries
> the rights of the injured party lose their force,
> since when reason does not rein in and restrain
> the undue force and fury
> excessive rigour in inflicting punishment
> justifies the enemy's cause.]
>
> como los nuestros hasta allí cristianos
> que los términos lícitos pasando
> con crueles armas y actos inhumanos
> iban la gran vitoria deslustrando. (26.7)
>
> [just as our men, Christians up to that point,
> passing the bounds of legitimacy
> with cruel arms and inhumane acts
> were tarnishing the great victory.]

A quantitative examination of the use of the word *término* allows us to corroborate that in the third part of *La Araucana* — when Ercilla explores the confines of the world and his poem — its frequency is greater than in Pedro de Oña's *Arauco domado* (1596), Juan de Miramontes Zuázola's *Armas antárticas* (*c.* 1608) or Luís de Camões's *Os Lusíadas* (1572).[13] Furthermore, one can note an increase in its use between the first and third parts of Ercilla's poem.



Relative frequency of the use of the word *término* in four epic poems

Although I do not analyse Camões's poem here, it is worth observing the difference in usage of the words *término* and *termo* in the Portuguese in relation to Ercilla, despite sharing the same semantic field. In *Os Lusíadas*, the only four uses refer to cosmographical and naval transgressions, like the equator, the ends of the world or, in a moral sense, the limits of human deeds. One might conjecture that the absence of *términos* in a territorial sense in the Portuguese poem, so emphatic in *La Araucana*, reflects the fundamental difference in the Iberian colonial models during the sixteenth century: Portugal preferred coastal fortifications to penetrating inland.[14]

Some poetic uses of *término* might be exclusive to Ercilla, in that he intensifies the spatial-territorial sense of the word (the physical dimension) and connects it with its moral content, which is understood as an ideal of moderation. Ercilla himself links geography with the character of the Araucanians who, like the Spaniards, were 'amigos de domar estrañas gentes' [eager to subdue foreign peoples] (1.45). But, from the outset, the dominant meaning of 'término' refers to the indigenous territory or its geography. In the 1569 prologue, Ercilla indicates that the Araucanians only held 'veinte leguas de término' [twenty leagues of territory]; although, as he says in the poem, they held 'sujeto | lo más deste gran término' [subject most of this great region] (1.12). Still keeping the spatial sense, it is used to describe Araucanian strategies in war and how a squadron 'moverse de su término no puede' [cannot move from its formation] (1.24). Here the meaning now seems to confuse 'place' and 'condition'. And although the '[...] pena puesta | para aquel que del término saliese' [penalty imposed on anyone who strayed from their position] (4.96) refers to the prohibition imposed by Lautaro so that his men do not abandon their place on the battlefield, the transgression is not without a certain moral connotation. Likewise, when the conquistador Valdivia is captured by the Araucanians, the narrator describes Caupolicán's joy at seeing him 'en el estado y término presente' [in his present state and predicament] (3.64): the word brings together, not without productive overlaps, the condition, the place and the final outcome of the character.[15]

La Araucana shows other understandings of *término*, not related with the spatial-territorial dimension, where the breadth of semantic registers of this word can be noted: 'una cosa | que parece sin término notada' [something that might be noted which seems amiss] (2.37), which the narrator uses to draw the reader's attention to the Araucanian political system which lacked a 'cabeza señalada' [designated head]. The meaning here is close to 'mesura' [moderation], 'racionalidad' [rationality], as becomes clear in another line: 'sin término, sin causa y fundamento' [without término, without cause and foundation] (4.4). Such irrationality can also describe the climate and nature of the south, 'fuera de todo término y concierto' [beyond any bounds and order] (16.23). The 'desmesura' [excess] implicit in these examples adds a moral meaning to the territorial one and the word becomes loaded with reverberations in the poem. Thus, the 'término dudoso' [uncertain outcome], a phrase which is repeated four times in the first two parts, links the actual ending of a battle with the difficulty of its resolution: 'Renuévase el destrozo, reduciendo | a término dudoso el vencimiento' [The destruction is renewed, bringing | to an uncertain end the defeat] (26.18; see also 3.54).

The moral sense becomes clearer when it is closer to Covarrubias's *decoro*: as in the description of Lautaro, 'de gran consejo, término y cordura' [of great counsel, character and good sense] (3.87), or in the Araucanian senate: 'con término discreto' [proceeding wisely] (8.62). Its use in 'le fueron por sus términos narrando' [they were recalling him in their own way] (4.75) — when Valdivia's end is recounted among the Spaniards — refers to style and language and, in this way, also to *decoro*, as in the description of Colocolo's political ability, 'discurriendo por términos y modos | que redujo a su voto los de todos' [discoursing in such a way | that he brought everyone to vote his way] (21.21). The metapoetic octaves which open the eighteenth canto also reveal this link between *término* and *estilo*, or style. Ercilla apologizes for his ill judgement in daring too much: 'que salgo de los términos a tino' [I am fumbling around beyond my limits] (18.2).[16] If the thematic axis of the poem is the transgression of geographic and territorial *términos*, the transgression of poetic boundaries also gives a particular meta-narrative tension to the three parts of *La Araucana*.

Among the most clearly moral usages, that is, where the word *término* carries an adjective which qualifies the customs, behaviour, condition or state of characters or peoples, the following stand out: 'término alegre' [happy], 'alevoso' [treacherous], 'arrogante' [arrogant], 'discreto' [wise], 'desdeñoso' [disdainful], 'furioso' [furious],

'galante' [gallant], 'honesto' [honest], 'inhumano' [inhumane], 'insolente' [insolent], 'rabioso' [raging], 'sangriento' [bloody], 'sereno' [serene], 'terrible' [terrible]. For example, the poet describes the cacique of Ancud — as we shall see in due course — with curly black hair, a white face and 'grave término modesto' [solemn and modest bearing] (36.3).

In one of the most serious octaves in the whole poem, in canto 32, when it is demonstrated that the Spanish violence in Arauco has destroyed 'el esperado fruto de esta tierra' [the fruit hoped for from this land], the poet denounces — in almost Lascasian style — the way in which the Spanish conquests have, in their inhumanity, gone beyond 'las leyes y términos de guerra' [the laws and bounds of war] (32.4). This meaning, as with the *términos* of the metapoetic lines, also alludes to a collection of rules or ways of acting, to order and polity. We could, therefore, term this whole collection of lexical uses as a poetics of *términos*, defined by a basic tension between transgression and decorum.[17]

The ideal poetics of *términos* is, in practice, an exercise in transgressions, in the bounds of the battlefield, in moral restraint and in the norms of the genre. The poet and character Ercilla got too close to the human experience of war and, when he did so, he also transgressed the necessary distance and elevation of the heroic register.[18] In the epic, the demarcation of space, the production of territories which expand the imperial cartography, is fundamental. That process which symbolically defines the field of epic — the 'términos araucanos' [Araucanian bounds] of Ercilla or the 'américos linderos' [American borders] of Miramontes — can be termed *moral geography*.

The *términos* of the Expedition to Ancud

The expedition to the extreme south of the continent, 'al último confín' [to its furthest reach] (34.66), is probably one of the most poetically complex and elusive episodes of *La Araucana* (Fig. 9.1). It is central for the study and appreciation of Ercilla's many projects in his poem, and is something like the final outfall of the geographical and poetic *términos*.

The reader will remember that towards the end of the third part of *La Araucana*, immediately after the execution of Caupolicán, more than one hundred stanzas intervene (34.45 to 36.43) which narrate an expedition towards the Magellan Strait — deliberately imprecise in its coordinates — for the 'conquest' of another new world, once García Hurtado de Mendoza's men have arrived at the southern frontier of the State of Arauco: 'al término de Chile señalado' [to the allotted bound of Chile] (35.4), 'al término del orbe limitado' [to the ends of the known world] (35.5). From there, don García delivers a speech to inspire his soldiers, among them Ercilla, to take possession of 'nuevas provincias y regiones' [new provinces and regions] (35.8). This expedition will make the poet-soldier, for the first and only time, the protagonist and leader of the last advance. This therefore gives particularly intense scope for the construction of the poetic and historical 'yo' [I], within a poem which distinguishes itself precisely through its autobiographical character.

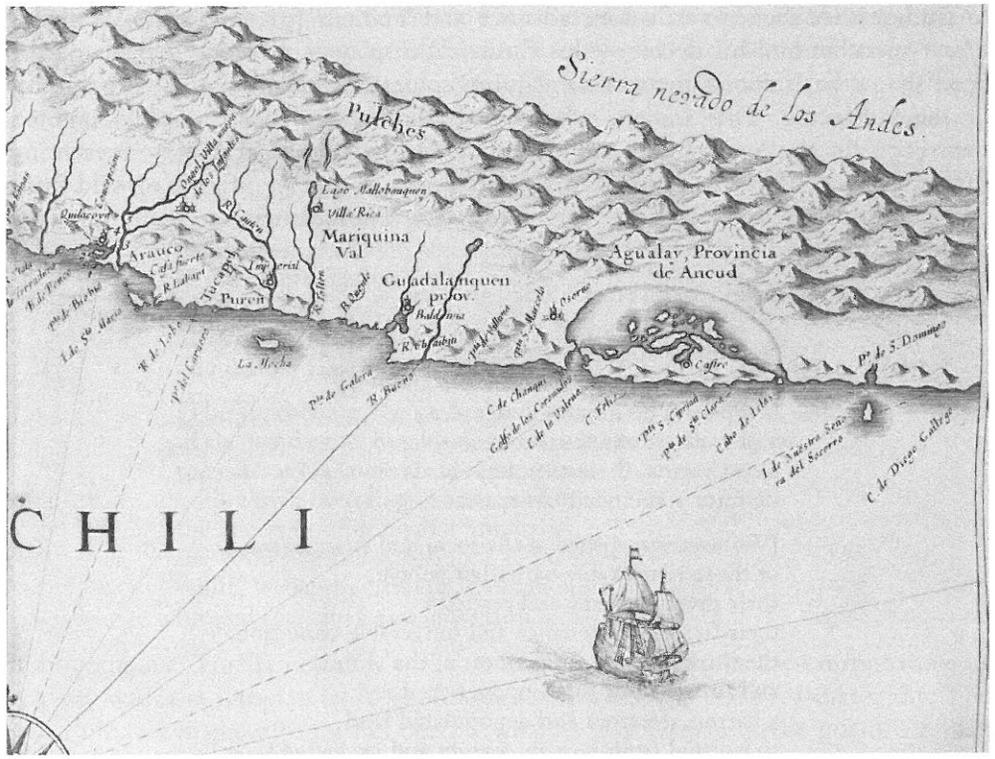


FIG. 9.1. Joan Blaeu, *America quae est Geographiae Blavianae pars quinta, liber unus, volumen undecimum* (Amsterdam: Joan Blaeu, 1662), map of Chili (detail). Courtesy of Special Collections and University Archives, Stony Brook University Libraries.

Critics have indicated that this long episode returns us to an original setting of conquest which recalls that of Columbus, with the bartering of glass beads and bells, and a narrative which has similarities to a *carta de relación*. Beatriz Pastor suggests that this episode condenses a whole century of representations of conquest from a position of 'crítica devastadora' [devastating critique] and shows 'una conciencia profundamente atormentada y dividida' [a profoundly tormented and divided conscience] in Ercilla.[19] The Magellan episode does indeed show the confrontation of the community values of a generous indigenous world and the destruction, evil and injustice of the war which the Spanish bring. The narrator assumes with the expression 'nosotros | destruyendo [...]' [we destroying] a moral tone and the blame for his modernity, expressed in the line 'plantó aquí la codicia su estandarte' [greed planted its standard here] (36.14). This entire episode, with its distance from the historical Araucanian frontier, allows Ercilla to unfold his poet-humanist vision and criticism of war, which might be confused with that of his indigenous characters. Thus, at the beginning of the expedition, the Indian Tunconabala refers to the Spaniards as 'barbudos crueles y terribles | del bien universal usurpadores' [cruel and terrible bearded men, usurpers of goods which are universal] (34.57) and later

on admonishes them to halt their advance and 'cudicia' [greed] (35.16). With his direct speeches and his deceit — his theatrical display of poverty to dissuade the Spanish — the Indian Tunconabala acquires something of the status of an author, or stage director. This Indian, who reveals that he has been a soldier (35.18), constructs for the Spanish a scene of human and geographical misery, presenting himself with a company of Indians disguised as savages and an offering of wild fruits and 'inmundas sabandijas' [filthy vermin] (35.20). The Spaniards remain, like us as readers, astonished at this theatre:

> Admirónos la forma y la extrañeza
> de aquella gente bárbara notable,
> la gran selvatiquez y rustiqueza,
> el fiero aspecto y término intratable;
> la espesura de montes y aspereza
> y el fruto de aquel suelo miserable;
> tierra yerma, desierta y despoblada
> de trato y vecindad tan apartada. (35.21)
>
> [We were astonished at the form and strangeness
> of those remarkable barbarian people,
> their great savagery and rusticity,
> their fierce countenance and intractable condition;
> the thickness and ruggedness of the woods
> and the fruits of that impoverished soil;
> a barren, deserted and depopulated land
> so isolated from human contact and exchange.]

In the centre of this stanza is the 'término intratable' [intractable condition] which describes the radically indecorous condition of the Indians. In the last line there is an insistence on the 'trato y vecindad tan apartada' [isolation from human contact and exchange] of this region which cannot be easily placed on the imperial map. The stanza conveniently brings together moral and geographical terms, thus participating in the politico-spatial order of early modernity. 'Trato' and 'término' seem to become confused, as one can also read in one of the meanings quoted above from the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, with the example of the *Persiles*. Both words fit in the semantic field of customs or moral history. In the same sense, the Ancud or Magellan episode expands the humanistic perspective that appears in other places in the poem, but which here is presented explicitly as a truth which the poet finds on 'el suelo' [the ground] (36.1) and which — as I understand it — refers to the ethnographic register of 'ritos, ceremonias y costumbres' [rites, ceremonies and customs] (36.20) and moral geography.

When the poet-soldier finally comes to know Ancud, 'el espacioso y fértil raso' [the spacious and fertile plain] (35.40) which Tunconabala had taken pains to protect from the Spanish advance, the inhabitants demonstrate a truth opposed to the previous deceptive scene. A young and generous cacique offers them aid and lands. The lines seem to present the reverse image to the previous scene. The inhabitants of Ancud are notable for their size and bearing, their white colouring, their clothes and their speech, as if they brought to the fore the concepts of *decoro* and *urbanidad* which circulated in the cities of Iberia from the end of the sixteenth century. The young cacique also expresses himself with fluency and ease, demonstrating 'estilo' [style], with 'expedido término y lenguaje' [graceful *término* and language], like a court poet:

> Mucho agradó la suerte, el garbo, el traje
> del gallardo mancebo floreciente,
> el expedido término y lenguaje
> con que así nos habló bizarramente;
> el franco ofrecimiento y hospedaje,
> la buena traza y talle de su gente,
> blanca, dispuesta, en proporción fornida
> de manto y floja túnica vestida. (36.7)
>
> [The appearance, the garb, the dress
> of the handsome, blooming young man were all attractive,
> the ease of his language and expression
> with which he gallantly addressed us;
> the generous offering and hospitality,
> the good size and appearance of his people,
> white, well-proportioned, strongly built,
> dressed in a cloak and loose tunic.]

This complex Magellan episode of *La Araucana* connects, in its own terms, the epic register with the Utopian treatise, although this is not the place for that study. The main interest in these pages has been to analyse the *términos* of the poem. Ercilla's use of keywords within the epic genre can be considered an indicator — or a symptom — of some new socio-historical orders experienced by him as a courtier and veteran in Madrid. They express the poetic and political aspirations of Ercilla during some thirty years, from his experience in the Americas to the publication of the third part of his book. The expedition to Ancud is, among many other things, a journey of poetic experimentation and an examination of the limits of his work.[20]

José Toribio Medina studied Ercilla's journey to the Magellan region in a classic article of 1913. Medina — alongside almost the entire critical tradition to date — was certain that this episode had been published for the first time in the posthumous edition of 1597 (Ercilla died in 1594), overseen by Ercilla's widow and the editor Vares de Castro. At the time of Medina, the few copies of *La Araucana* published in 1589 and 1590 in which were 'interpolated' — according to some — the 115 stanzas that narrate the Magellan expedition were not known.[21] I have not yet been able to consult any of these four rare copies studied by Juan Alberto Méndez Herrera, Ángel Álvarez Vilela and Miguel Martínez. Recent works, based on the unpublished thesis of Méndez Herrera, demonstrate that the 115 stanzas were added to the 1589 and 1590 editions by the poet himself during the printing process in the workshop of Pedro Madrigal, in Madrid.[22] Although no scholar has questioned the authorship of these verses, José Durand considered them to be 'viejos borradores que Ercilla desechó hacia 1589' [old drafts which Ercilla discarded around 1589] and suggested that critical editions of the poem should restore the text to its original thirty-five cantos, closing the story with the death of Caupolicán.[23]

The complex problem of the editorial history of the third part of *La Araucana* is directly implicated in the questions about the *poetics of términos*. It is significant here that the cantos on the expedition to Ancud occupied an unstable position in the structure of the poem. Whether we consider them last-minute additions, old drafts discarded by the author or fragments of a fourth part, they appear to be a problem for the author himself. In a structural sense, the expedition to Ancud functions in a similar way to the episodes of Belona or Fitón (in the second part), that is, as flights from the dominant historiographical register. It is also a testimony to the limit of a field of experimentation in the poetics of the epic, where the exercise of both narrating and walking as a soldier had reached their end: geography and poetry were touching their boundaries.[24] In the aforementioned article of 1913, Medina writes that 'Ercilla hasta en sus últimos días veía trabajado su espíritu por los recuerdos de una expedición que marcaba el último límite a que alcanzó en su azarosa vida de aventuras de viaje' [Even in his final days, Ercilla's spirit was exercised by the memories of an expedition which marked the extreme limit his eventful life of travelling adventures reached].[25] That expedition and adventure were not only the office of a soldier, but also of a poet.

Furthermore, the disputed placement of these 115 stanzas in the editions of *La Araucana* (which increased the total number of cantos from 35 to 37) is interesting for the early reception of Ercilla's texts in the viceroyalty of Peru and the Kingdom of Chile, and for the extraordinary importance that the Magellan Strait acquired towards the end of the sixteenth century. Álvarez Vilela argues — without adducing any proof to this effect — that the augmented copies of the 1589 and 1590 editions were made for America.[26] If, as this author imagines, those lines circulated in Lima and their purpose was to undermine or silence the actions of García Hurtado de Mendoza and offer, instead, the protagonism of Ercilla in the Magellan expedition, it would be inexplicable for Pedro de Oña in his *Arauco domado* not to have taken up the episode again, to correct it, expand it and introduce Don García's actions, especially in the foundation of the city of Osorno, which took place precisely during that expedition. However, as Durand pertinently reminds us, Oña's vindication is made 'conociendo tan solo la versión en treintaicinco cantos' [familiar only with the version in thirty-five cantos].[27]

The expedition to Ancud — whether historical or fictional — throws up nothing but losses and achieves no productive result for the imperial machinery, but it is one of the best poetic episodes of the whole work, extremely rich in its possible contacts with other genres and autobiography, and with old humanistic topics actualized by the American experience. In that sense, it contributes to symbolically mapping out the region. However, since it did not register any direct benefits and situated the poet-soldier in the unofficial position of *adelantado* — carving on the bark of a tree, at the end of the world, a physical testimony of his location, which becomes one of the stanzas of the poem (36.29) — Ercilla must have doubted the pertinence of including this episode. In some ways, the account transgressed not only the territorial limits over which the poem ranged (the Araucanian state), but it also left behind its *poetic términos*. As well as doubts over the validity of this episode, we can imagine that Ercilla was confronting the problem of how to close an epic poem, and

how to do so in relation to his autobiography. And if, indeed, as Méndez Herrera affirms, the stanzas on Ancud were added by the poet himself in the printer's workshop, it is necessary to ask ourselves about the motives of that act: were they reasons internal to the poem or historical forces that led Ercilla to insert more than a hundred extra stanzas?

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the region around the Magellan Strait was acquiring greater centrality in European imperial circles. It was to remain, however, a territory which Spain could not claim with the legitimacy of occupation, especially after the tragic attempts of the governor Sarmiento de Gamboa to establish colonies on the Strait in the 1580s. It isn't difficult to imagine an encounter between Sarmiento and Ercilla in Madrid between 1590 and 1591 or that the author of *La Araucana* read some of Sarmiento's manuscript letters or *relaciones* around 1589, and that the decision to insert the episode of Ancud reflected, in that sense, the politics of the court and its forms.[28] In any case, the story of Ercilla's octaves, his poetics and politics continue to pose questions and stimulate our critical imagination. Ercilla's lines, his words and narratives, and his indirect reflection on the politics of the Catholic Monarchy, found in the remote world of the south a space to expand. The intense and varied uses of the word *término* in that context reveal the poetic operations of Ercilla, his connections with the ideals of courtly decorum and urbanity and his insertion into a network of practices, discourses and technologies of power in which his moral geography participates; but they also show us the limits and 'términos excesivos' (34.17) of that machinery, and the flight and loss of the 'yo' in the regions of poetry and in the uncertain *términos* where in 'cómoda estanza' (36.11) — the comfortable place of poetry itself — the soldiers rest.

Notes to Chapter 9

1. I am grateful to the participants of the conference 'Poets of the New World', held at the University of Cambridge in 2015, for their comments on the first version of this piece, to Javier Uriarte for his careful reading and suggestions, and to Imogen Choi for the translation, reviewed by the author.
2. The neo-Aristotelian poetics of the period noted three forms of imitation: when the poet used his own voice, when the characters spoke without the mediation of the poet, or when these two ways of imitating alternated. See Alonso López Pinciano, *Philosofía antigua poética*, ed. by José Rico Verdú (Madrid: Biblioteca Castro, 1998), pp. 139–40, 450. The first form corresponded to lyric poetry, the second to theatre, and the third to epic. The mixed character of the epic allowed long episodes, such as indigenous monologues, to function like theatrical scenes. On the relationship between genres and spaces, Thomas Greene has noted that the epic ideal is expansive and extends over spaces to dominate them; both tragedy and comedy, by contrast, operate in more restricted or closed spaces. See Thomas M. Greene, *The Descent from Heaven: A Study in Epic Continuity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 10–17. In as much as epic poetry reproduces the imitative techniques of theatre (I refer here to the Golden Age comedia), the open spaces get, to some degree, reduced to dramatic scenes and the geography is transformed into scenography, which can facilitate the symbolic control of large territories.
3. Alonso de Ercilla, *La Araucana*, ed. by Marcos Morínigo and Isaías Lerner, 2 vols (Madrid: Castalia, 1979). I always quote from this edition, indicating the canto and octave number. Translations are Imogen Choi's.

4. In the second part of the poem, the surname Peña is mentioned twice, in two almost identical octaves which repeat two hendecasyllables, in cantos 22.25 and 26.26, where Ercilla gives a list of Spanish warriors. Although the name possibly has a historical referent (perhaps Francisco Peña de la Fuente, according to Morínigo and Lerner's index), it seems that the author also uses it out of poetic convenience. Lerner in his edition of the poem (Madrid: Cátedra, 1993) notes the etymologizing repetition of line 5.40e, p. 211.
5. Sarah Dichy-Malherme, 'El primer canto de *La Araucana*: una cartografía épica de Chile', *Criticón*, 115 (2012), 85–104.
6. Dichy-Malherme, 'El primer canto', p. 102. As we shall see, Ricardo Padrón also analyses La Araucana as a cartographic poem in *The Spacious Word, Cartography, Literature, and Empire in Early Modern Spain* (Chicago, IL, and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 44.
7. There is no doubt that the publication of Luís de Camões's *Os Lusíadas* in 1572 influenced the second and third parts of *La Araucana* (1578 and 1589). Camões personified in his poem the resistance of African nature — the promontory of the Cape of Good Hope — in the figure of the giant Adamastor. Although the poem of Ercilla didn't construct a similar figure, partly because his poetic always stayed closer to the historiographical register, the long scene of the poet's voyage to the extreme South — which we will comment on in due course — is an intense poetic exploration of geography.
8. Juan de Valdés, *Diálogo de la lengua*, ed. by José Enrique Laplana (Barcelona: Crítica, 2010), p. 224.
9. Maxime Chevalier, 'Decoro y decoros', *Revista de Filología Española*, 73.1/2 (1993), 5–24.
10. Chevalier, 'Decoro', p. 6.
11. David Mañero Lozano, 'Del concepto de decoro a la "teoría de los estilos"', *Bulletin Hispanique*, 111.2 (2009), 357–85 (p. 360). Mañero summarizes the different spheres of decorum: 1) moral; 2) literary, that is, 'la adecuación de las acciones, palabras, etc., a la caracterización de los personajes' [the adjustment of actions, words, etc., to characterization]; and 3) rhetorical, 'concordancia de elementos que conforman el discurso' [agreement between the elements which make up the discourse], p. 360. Lozano studies the evolution of the concept from Aristotle, for whom the distinct poetic genres were defined by the moral condition of the characters. In sixteenth-century modernity, the classic meaning of decorum did not exert a real pressure on the development of new 'polyphonic' genres like the Renaissance novel or minor theatre, p. 378. We might add that the Spanish literary epic, particularly that on American historical themes, although it affiliated itself with classical models, was in fact dominated by the successful formula of Ariosto.
12. See Nicolás Wey Gómez, *Tropics of Empire: Why Columbus Sailed South to the Indies* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), who studies geographical and climatological features associated with human customs and behaviour in the early texts of colonialism.
13. I have used online versions of the three parts of Ercilla's poem (Colección Averroes), Oña (Espapdf.com) and Camões (Instituto da Biblioteca Nacional); for Miramontes I have worked with my own transcription. The calculation is approximate; relative frequencies are rounded to five decimal places. In the first part of *La Araucana* the word 'término' is used 42 times (total word count = 60,277, relative frequency = 0.00070); 65 in the second (total word count = 55,165, relative frequency = 0.00118), and 50 in the third (total word count = 32,799, relative frequency = 0.00152). I include the 115 stanzas recounting the expedition to Ancud in the third part. In the whole poem it is used 157 times (total word count = 148,241, frequency of use = 0.00106, that is, a little over one in a thousand). In *Arauco domado* it is used 73 times (total word count = 104,064, relative frequency = 0.00070); in *Armas antárticas*, 33 times (total word count = 87,299, relative frequency = 0.00038). In *Os Lusíadas*, 'términos' is used three times and 'termos' once. I am grateful to Nicolás Firbas for his help with the calculations and diagram.
14. The four uses in *Os Lusíadas* are as follows: '[...] que foi buscar da roxa Aurora | os términos que eu vou buscando agora'[he left to seek the ends of the red Dawn which I am now seeking] (4.60); 'o término ardente ja passado' [the burning limit (of the equator) now passed] (5.13); 'os vedados términos quebrantas' [you are breaking forbidden boundaries] (5.41); 'que não passen o termo limitado' [let them not pass the appointed boundary] (6.27). I use the following edition: *Lusíadas, Comentadas por Manuel de Faria e Sousa* [facsimile of Madrid, 1639], 2 vols (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional — Casa da Moeda, 1972).

15. Compare with another two lines from *La Araucana*, referring to Flanders, in which the proximity between 'estado' [state], 'condición' [condition] and 'término' is made more explicit: 'trayendo a estado y condición las cosas | que durarán gran término dudosas' [bringing things to such a state and condition that for a long time they will be precarious] (18.47). Tegualda stresses her beloved Crepino's lineage and his 'condición y término loable' [laudable condition and conduct] (20.70).
16. The expression 'a tino' is equivalent to 'a tientas' [blindly], as Isaías Lerner notes in his edition of *La Araucana*, p. 518.
17. In Pedro de Oña's *Arauco domado* there are similar uses to those of Ercilla, both in the territorial meaning and in the moral: 'término cortés' [courteous bearing], 'término discreto' [wise conduct], etc. Oña also uses 'término' to mean 'style': 'mostrando estilo, término y lenguaje' [demonstrating style, conduct and language] (canto 17.65), or 'sin límite, sin término, sin modo' [without limit, without *término*, without method] (canto 11.99); and 'por tierno estilo y término amoroso' [in tender style and amorous vein] (canto 5.25), where it now belongs to the field of courtesy and urbanity. I use two editions of *Arauco domado*: the unpublished thesis of Victoria Pehl Smith (University of California, Berkeley, 1984); and the critical edition of Ornella Gianesin of the University of Pavia (Pavia: Ibis, 2014), from which I quote.
18. On the distance between the poet and his material, necessary for heroic elevation, see Paul Firbas, 'El sueño en la trama épica: la visión corográfica de San Quintín en *La Araucana* de Alonso de Ercilla', in *Los sueños en la cultura iberoamericana siglos XVI–XVIII*, ed. by Sonia Rose (Madrid: CSIC, 2011), pp. 385–407; and the introductory study to my edition of Juan de Miramontes Zuázola, *Armas antárticas* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2006), p. 74.
19. Beatriz Pastor, *Discurso narrativo de la conquista de América* (La Habana: Ediciones Casa de las Américas, 1983), pp. 540, 547. Pastor argues for an ideological rupture in Ercilla: 'ha dejado de poder identificarse plenamente con una concepción del mundo propia de la Europa del siglo XVI, sin poder, por ello, pasar a integrarse a una realidad histórica y cultural americana' [he has stopped being able to identify fully with a conception of the world which is that of sixteenth-century Europe, without being able to take the leap to be integrated in an American historical and cultural reality], reading in the poet the 'emergencia de una conciencia hispanoamerica' [emergence of a Hispano-American consciousness], pp. 547, 566. If we accept this argument, we would also have to accord a similar consciousness to Camões, bearing in mind the episode of the old man of Restelo in *Os Lusíadas*. The critique of greed, of Latin antecedents, could also reveal a conservative and elite ideological position; but, as Jaime Concha indicated, the reality of the American conquest gave a concrete socio-historical meaning to an old topic. In *La Araucana* greed becomes a structuring principle of the poem, according to Elizabeth B. Davis, *Myth and Identity in the Epic of Imperial Spain* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), pp. 65–66. Ricardo Padrón has studied the Magellan episode as a parody of the genre of *cartas de relación*, with references to Lucian and Ariosto, and a form in which the poet pokes fun at his own identity as soldier and historian (*The Spacious Word*, p. 227).
20. Padrón has also studied *La Araucana* as cartographic literature. In his insightful interpretation of the cartographic strategies of the poem, he concentrates on the multiple meanings of 'estrecho' [narrow, tight; strait, channel] and 'estrecheza' [narrowness, confinement, predicament] to understand the articulation of masculine imperial desire, whose major trope is the unattainable penetration of the Magellan Strait (*The Spacious Word*, pp. 196–201). I believe that 'término' is another of those concepts, of broad register, which serve to encapsulate some of the central drives of the poetics of *La Araucana*. Indicating its proximity with 'decoro' also shows the ideals of the courtly culture of the author.
21. The doctoral thesis of Juan Alberto Méndez Herrera is still unpublished (Harvard University, 1976). I am familiar with it thanks to the study of Ángel Álvarez Vilela, 'La expedición a Ancud en *La Araucana* o la recuperación del mérito por parte de Ercilla', *Anales de Literatura Hispanoamericana*, 24 (1995), 77–89; and for the mention included in a note in José Durand's

article, '*La Araucana* en sus 35 cantos originales', *Anuario de Letras*, 16 (1978), 291–94 (p. 293). According to Álvarez Vilela's summary of Méndez Herrera's thesis, the 'interpolated' or added stanzas have been identified in three copies of the Madrid octavo edition of 1590 and in one of the quarto editions of 1589 ('La expedición', p. 82). See also Miguel Martínez, 'Writing on the Edge: The Poet, the Printer, and the Colonial Frontier in Ercilla's *La Araucana* (1569–1590)', *Colonial Latin American Review*, 26.2 (2017), 132–53.

22. Martínez, 'Writing on the Edge', pp. 141–43
23. Durand, '*La Araucana* en sus 35 cantos originales', pp. 293–94.
24. On the parallels between narrating and walking, see Cedomil Goiç, 'Poetización del espacio, espacios de la poesía', in *La cultura literaria en la América virreinal: concurrencias y diferencias*, ed. by José Pascual Buxó (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1996), pp. 13–25. In the hurried return journey from Ancud, for example, the poet says 'voy pasando por esto a toda prisa' [I am passing by all this with great haste] (36.31). It is possible that the remote southern expanse, being a poetic fiction, had some minimal historical basis.
25. José Toribio Medina, 'El viaje de Ercilla al Estrecho de Magallanes', *Revista Chilena de Historia y Geografía*, 6.10 (1913), 343–95 (p. 357).
26. This argument of Álvarez Vilela merited a note in James Nicolopulos's *The Poetics of Empire in the Indies: Prophecy and Imitation in 'La Araucana' and 'Os Lusíadas'* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p. 272: '[he] gives no indication of how he arrives at this conclusion'.
27. Durand, 'La Araucana en sus 35 cantos originales', p. 293. What edition or editions of *La Araucana* were read in America by Juan de Miramontes Zuázola or Diego Arias de Saavedra? How did Ercilla's poem influence the representation of the Magellan region in *Armas antárticas* or *Purén indómito* (*c.* 1603), respectively? Miramontes recounts that on entering the Strait, Sarmiento de Gamboa went on 'a ver la playa y términos postreros | de los nuevos américos linderos' [to see the beach and furthest limits of the new American borders] (octava 1519), lines which recall the 'término américo indiano' [American Indian limit] of *La Araucana* (34.3), printed in the standard 35-canto version from 1589. A study is necessary to document, as far as possible, which versions of Ercilla's poem were read by American poets at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries.
28. After a storm blew him away from the Strait, where his hundreds of unfortunate colonists remained, Sarmiento de Gamboa was in Brazil, London and Paris, until he was taken prisoner by the Huguenots in France from the end of 1586 until 1590. From his pitiful confinement, Sarmiento sent letters to the Spanish court begging for his rescue and that of the colonists of the Strait, and imagining a new expedition to the south. He returned to Spain in 1590, and from the court continued to write on his plans to travel to the Magellan Strait. We know that at the end of 1591 he worked as the censor of the *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias* [Elegies of Illustrious Men of the Indies], an epic poem by Juan de Castellanos, and published a sonnet in the preliminaries of the translations of Petrarch accomplished by the Portuguese Enrique Garcés, a long-term resident of Peru. Considering the American connection of both men and their work as literary censors, it would not be strange for Ercilla and Sarmiento to have met, but I do not know of any documentation which proves this. See José Miguel Barros Franco, 'Los últimos años de Sarmiento de Gamboa', *Estudios de Historia Social y Económica de América*, 3/4 (1988), 9–28; and Paul Firbas, 'Saberes hemisféricos: Sarmiento de Gamboa y sus textos sobre el estrecho de Magallanes', *Anales de Literatura Chilena*, 16 (2016), 41–57.

CHAPTER 10

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Land and Sea in Juan de Castellanos

Luis Fernando Restrepo

Juan de Castellanos's monumental epic *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias* [Elegies of Illustrious Men of the Indies] is a four-part text that tells the story of the conquest of the Caribbean and northern South America (present day Colombia and Venezuela).[1] Its broad geographical reach is paired with an equally ample historical framework, narrating events from Columbus's first voyage in 1492 to the 1590s urban disturbances in Tunja after the imposition of the royal sales tax [*alcabalas*]. Despite the formal symmetry of its more than one hundred thousand hendecasyllabic lines, composed for the most part in *octavas reales*, it is a highly heterogeneous text that incorporates multiple literary and non-literary genres in addition to the epic.[2] It also includes elegies, eulogies, ballads, pastoral, epigraphs, shipwreck narratives, stories of captivity, pilgrimage tales, maroon narratives, expedition accounts [*relaciones*], testimonies [*probanzas*], histories, chronicles, letters, chorographic descriptions, maps and illustrated plates.[3] Thematically, it describes the American landscape, its flora and fauna, as well as its ethnographic diversity. The major elements are the narratives of conquest and inter-ethnic warfare, and other historical events such as founding of cities, Aguirre's rebellion and Drake's attack on Cartagena. As a *probanza de méritos y servicios* [legal petition for royal favours for the services rendered], the *Elegías* highlights individual participation in the conquest of the Spaniards and identifies their heirs. The text is also rich in details of daily life. These heterogeneous elements make it a text that cannot be reduced to one genre. Here, the monumental blends with the everyday, the literary with the legal, the theological with the scientific, and *eros* with *tanatos*. The initial plan seemed to comprise a gallery of historical narratives dedicated to the lives of the great men in the conquest of America, drawing from the epic, the classical historical tradition as *magistra vitae* and Renaissance funeral elegy. In the first part, the text is organized into fourteen elegies, each divided into a variable number of cantos. After the first part, the text is composed of elegies, eulogies, *relaciones*, histories, catalogues and discourses, organized mostly geographically, narrating the history of the provinces in the jurisdiction of the *audiencia* [administrative centre] of Santa Fe de Bogotá.[4]

The complexity of this text is a living testimony to the effort to endow with meaning the Iberian interactions with unknown peoples and lands and to justify

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The Rise of Spanish American Poetry 1500–1700

Literary and Cultural Transmission in the New World

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