

POETRY IN MOTION:  
A MEXICAN VICEREINE'S VERSE TRAVEL DIARY (1757)

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On August 4, 1755, the soon to be forty-second viceroy of New Spain, Agustín de Ahumada y Villalón, Marqués de las Amarillas, set sail from Cádiz on the transatlantic voyage that would take him to the New World to assume his post.<sup>1</sup> Travelling with him was his wife doña María Luisa del Rosario de Ahumada y Vera, their young son, and a retinue of some sixty-six persons.<sup>2</sup> They were conveyed by the Spanish ship *América*, escorted by the *Dragón* and the *Infante*, in a journey lasting 56 days. The party landed safely in Veracruz at the end of September and, after two weeks of rest and an elaborate welcome in that port city, began the laborious journey westward (and upward) to the viceregal capital, Mexico City.

Their five-week overland journey followed the same ceremonial itinerary that had been traced by entering viceroys since the sixteenth century. It included stops, each with days of festivities, in the symbolically significant cities of Tlaxcala and Puebla. In Otumba, outside the capital, incoming and outgoing viceroy met. After the obligatory visit to Guadalupe and the shrine of Mexico's patroness, the viceroy entered Mexico City, where he and his wife were treated to weeks more of sumptuous festivities. Among the events were the ceremonies surrounding the two triumphal arches erected in the city, whose elaborate iconographic programs compared the Marqués to Aeneas and other classical heroes, in effusions of praise that included, as was customary, recommendations in the art of good government.

The story of this journey by sea and land is told in a lengthy poem<sup>3</sup> composed by the Mexican Creole Antonio Joaquín de Rivadeneyra Barrientos, and published in Mexico City two years later (1757) with the title *Diario notable de la excelentísima señora marquesa de las Amarillas, virreyna de México, desde el puerto de Cádiz hasta la referida Corte...*<sup>4</sup>

As the title indicates, the poem pretends to be a diary written by the vicereine herself, in the form of a letter in verse addressed to an unnamed female friend.<sup>5</sup> The *Diario notable* represents an unusual amalgam of genres: on the one hand, it has much in common with the numerous *relaciones* of viceregal entries that Creole authors composed in the colonial centuries. As they paid elaborate homage to the newly arrived Peninsular dignitaries, these *relaciones* articulated their Creole authors' concerns, prerogatives and aspirations through an elaborate Baroque poetics. On the other hand, the *Diario notable* seems to assume the exterior form of the varieties of intimate, first-person travel diaries and letters that flourished in the eighteenth century—genres grounded in the personal experience, powers of observation, and curiosity of the traveling subject. The *Diario notable*, then, seems to be characterized by a series of shifts, which this essay will explore in greater detail: from Baroque to Enlightenment sensibilities, from the third-person *relación* to the first-person letter or travel journal, from prose to poetry, and from Creole to Peninsular (and back to Creole) subjectivity.

### *A Creole Ghostwriter*

Antonio Joaquín de Rivadeneyra Barrientos (ca. 1710-?) was born in Puebla de los Ángeles of aristocratic parentage. He graduated from the *colegio mayor* of Santa María de Todos Santos of the University of Mexico in 1731, and served as an *abogado* for the Mexican Audiencia and the Inquisition. His ambitions brought him to Spain where he earned the favor of Fernando VI and the king's powerful foreign minister José de Carvajal y Lancaster. The Spanish monarch promoted Rivadeneyra to *fiscal* for the Audiencia of Mexico, and in that new capacity he returned to Mexico as part of the retinue of the Marqués de las Amarillas. He would eventually be appointed *oidor* of the Audiencia. His major published works, in addition to the *Diario notable*, were the long didactic poem *El pasatiempo* (1752), dedicated to Carvajal y Lancaster and written for the edification of the latter's nephew, a poem which recounts—no less—"the most notable sacred and profane events from the creation of the world until the reign of Fernando VI" (Beristáin 3:23; my translation); and the *Manual compendio del Regio*

*Patronato Indiano* (1755), which synthesizes and affirms the royal prerogatives inherent in the *patronato real* which gave the Spanish crown sweeping powers, at the expense of the Vatican, over administration of the Church in the Spanish American colonies.<sup>6</sup> The timing of the publication of the *Manual*, and the fact that it was warmly received by Fernando VI who underwrote its publication, suggests that this work had more than a little to do with Rivadeneyra's appointment as *fiscal* of the Mexican Audiencia in the same year.<sup>7</sup>

These spare bio- and bibliographical data would seem to indicate that Rivadeneyra was a particularly successful Creole aspirant to power and position. His aristocratic lineage, strategic literary endeavors, success at court, and rapid ascent in the colonial bureaucracy, all perhaps help to explain the easy familiarity with which he addresses the Marquesa de las Amarillas in the *romance* that serves as a preface to the *Diario notable*, despite the obligatory formulas of humility with which the poem opens:

Con ese ángel (Gran Señora),  
que es memoria muy amada  
y muy tierna de aquel otro,  
su amigo que a Dios alaba,  
    va ese diario que ha salido  
(por más que yo lo deseaba)  
tardo, como mi fortuna,  
largo, como mi esperanza.  
Para que obra tan humilde  
pueda en algo seros grata,  
vuestra bondad generosa  
sea madrina de mis faltas. (Rivadeneyra, *Viaje* 219)

In these opening lines, Rivadeneyra indicates that he is sending the poem to the Marquesa via his son, a friend—probably a shipboard friend—of the son of the Marqueses de las Amarillas. The little Marqués, we know from other sources, took ill and died at age two, just weeks after the viceroy's formal *entrada pública* in Mexico City in February 1756, resulting in outpourings of condolence in the capital, and the retirement of the new viceroy and his wife from public view for some months.<sup>8</sup> This sole allusion to the boy in the *Diario notable* is

an important framing reference for the work: besides enabling the author to establish a tone of intimate confidence with the vicereine and her family, it prefaces the narrative of a triumphant journey that will end with a description of the pageantry surrounding the Marqués's investiture as viceroy. The poem completes and monumentalizes, as it were, the ceremonies marking the beginning of the reign of the viceroy, ceremonies that were scarcely concluded when tragedy struck the viceregal couple.

After this preface, the *Diario notable* shifts to a new first-person narrator, the vicereine herself, who becomes the poem's journeying and observing "I." Explicit references to the author disappear, except in one moment in which he resurfaces as an incidental character in a vignette of shipboard life. Off Cuba, the Marquesa and select members of her retinue aboard the *América* endure the terrible heat by playing *tresillo*, "a cuyo juego concurrieron sólo / Rivadeneyra, Ulibarri, y Bartolo" (*Viaje* 227). The author is thus careful to indicate that he was among the Marquesa's preferred companions aboard ship—a move nearly as confident and even presumptuous as assuming her very voice and identity in this ghost-written diary. At the same time, the author remains a shadowy but self-affirming presence in the poem—the poetic wit who displays his talents in the florid set-pieces that punctuate the work, and who inflects the Marquesa's imagined point of view with Creole sensibilities and perspectives, as we shall see below.

### *The Voyage by Sea and Land*

Narratives of viceregal entries do not normally begin with the sea voyage from Spain, which was not part of the ceremonial itinerary and therefore was of less interest to Creole authors; but since Rivadeneyra frames his text as a travel diary, the departure from the vicereine's home shores is the logical beginning. The Marquesa assumes the narrative voice in a long apostrophe to her homeland in densely woven figures based, in Calderonian fashion, on the four elements: earth (the vicereine's *tierra amada*), air, water, fire. This is the first of the poem's several lyrical set pieces; it functions as nearly an autonomous text within the larger work, with its own defined literary

topos—the traveler's farewell to her native land—and metaphorical structure.

Another set piece within the sea voyage narrative also deploys high-Baroque poetic discourse. As the ship sails along the coasts of Hispaniola and Cuba, the vicereine gives rein to “vana fantasía / que la tristeza engaña” (*Viaje* 227) and in her imagination sees those wild and fertile shorelines as populated with figures from classical mythology. The poetic language becomes denser, more allusive, more syntactically complex:

Allí de Adonis lastimosa muerte  
que le condujo a la tirana suerte  
del jabalí cerdoso,  
me pareció mirar cuerpo oloroso  
de una flor delicada en sus carmines  
vergüenza dar a todos los jazmines:  
que pálidos al verlo, a su olor yertos,  
de pura envidia se quedaron muertos. (*Viaje* 228)

But such lyrical moments in the *Diario notable* seem largely ornamental; they are flourishes to a poem that is in other ways prosaically narrative. Just after the mythological fantasy described above, the narrator evokes a mundane event—if exciting for passengers near the end of a long sea voyage with depleted rations:

No bien el veinte y dos todos nos vimos  
en ella [the Bay of Campeche], cuando alegres nos pusimos  
a la capa, por ver los marineros  
pescar hermosos pargos, lindos meros... (*Viaje* 229)

Unlike the highly aestheticized descriptions of humdrum events in, for example, Góngora's *Soledades* (including passages on fishing), here the poetic language flattens and becomes more prosaic as the poem reverts to a first-person travel diary.

A similar shift from the highly aestheticized and poetic to the everyday and prosaic can be found in the sea voyage narrative's final set piece: the portrayal of the storm that the *América* endures just off the port of Veracruz:

el fiero Aquilón rompiendo el muro,  
 en donde a buen seguro  
 la cárcel de Eolo lo tenía encerrado,  
 y de furor, de cruda saña armado,  
 palos, jarcia, y velamen castigaba;  
 irritado, a cruzir los obligaba... (*Viaje* 230)

The description of the storm continues in this vein for some thirty lines, but ends in a decidedly unpoetic fashion, as the Marquesa de las Amarillas makes a small joke at her own expense:

a todo el que me viera,  
 sin duda alguna vincular pudiera  
 la palidez funesta a mis mejillas  
 el título más propio de *Amarillas*. (*Viaje* 230-31)

Here the contrast with another set of narratives of the journey of an incoming viceroy can be illustrative. These narratives describe the 1640 entry of the Marqués de Villena, who was to serve as viceroy of New Spain for just two years.<sup>9</sup> Like the *Diario notable* of the following century, these two *relaciones* narrate a new viceroy's transatlantic crossing, followed by the ceremonial journey by land from Veracruz to the capital. The narrators of the 1640 trip were the Spaniard Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Medina (the viceroy's chaplain who shared his journey), and Matías de Bocanegra, a Creole Jesuit based in Mexico City.

Gutiérrez de Medina and Bocanegra inscribe their accounts of the terrifying storms that beset the 1640 journey within a discourse of the miraculous and the providential. Off the Canary Islands, the viceroy's little fleet is battered by a gale, but the Marqués de Villena's prudent measures ensure that the imperiled ships stay afloat and together. Divine intervention complements the viceroy's quick thinking. Amidst the crisis of the storm, a noblewoman of the party gives birth, but she is unable to nurse, and the child's survival seems doubtful. Opportunely, into the viceroy's cabin enters a little female dog that has just given birth to pups and seems eager to help. She is made to nurse the hungry baby, and does so successfully and

contentedly, disdaining her own pups, for 22 days across the Atlantic. The baby thrives (Gutiérrez de Medina, 22-24).

Both narrators of the 1640 voyage recount new miracles on the other side of the Atlantic. The viceroy's fleet is assailed by another storm in the Gulf of Mexico. Fortunately, the viceroy's flagship is carrying relics (a splinter of the Holy Cross, a finger of San Andrés). The devout viceroy is serene. Still more providentially, a Franciscan friar, much loved by the viceroy for his saintly ways, chooses this moment to die. When his body is cast into the sea, it refuses to sink amidst the crashing waves. The storm quickly subsides, and the good Franciscan's corpse floats off peacefully over the horizon. "*Qualis est hic, quia venti & mare obediunt ei?*" Gutiérrez de Medina cites (41).

Framed by these two miraculous events are accounts of the viceroy's extraordinary devoutness, although his tastes are far from austere. For the feast of Corpus Christi, he organizes elaborate ceremonies and festivities aboard ship: masses, music, theater, and most importantly, poetic contests. High atop the mainmast of the viceroy's flagship, a stanza of verses celebrating the Eucharist is unfurled, to be glossed by all the poetic wits aboard the various ships, with rich prizes in the offing for the winners. Bocanegra waxes poetic on the results of this *certamen*, praising the seafaring poets who wrote

con tanta fecundidad, agudeza, i copia de versos, que ia las aguas salobres pudieran blasonar de Castalias, i las Naiades acreditarse de Musas, creiendo que en los arboles de las Naos venian enxertos los laureles con q[ue] se corona el Parnaso. Traduzida sobre montañas de agua selva mobil de tan luzidos ingenios...  
(f6r)

Both accounts of the 1640 sea voyage of the Marqués de Villena unfold as a series of connected themes: the imperiling storm, the courage and faith that sustain the voyager, the delivering hand of Providence. The Marqués's flagship itself is highly textualized, converted into an emblem of salvation: not only a conveyance to port, the ship is understood as the standard bearer, literally, of redemptive religious signs. These signs are produced and consumed in poetic acts in which, in Baroque fashion, faith and wit are intertwined.

By contrast, in the 1757 *Diario notable* the Baroque is mostly—as noted earlier—a decorative holdover. Rivadeneyra’s poem may deploy the language and devices of the Baroque to evoke the storm at sea, but there is no allegorization or moralization of the event, nothing miraculous, no lactating dogs nor floating Franciscans. The passengers are scared and sick, not tested or transformed, and their ordeal ends because the storm does before the ship has a chance to sink. The *América* limps into port and the passengers, green from the experience (or perhaps yellow), are eager to go ashore; they fidget while the welcoming party comes on board and greets them at length. Once again, the poetic gives way to the prosaic.

Even the *Diario notable*’s references to theater aboard ship offer a telling contrast to the narratives of Gutiérrez de Medina and Bocanegra of a century before. Off the Canary Islands, the sailors of the *América* perform a ritual pageant as they cross the Tropic of Cancer. One of the sailors, dressed as Neptune, convenes his court, and his courtiers must beg his permission to cross the line into the tropics (a variant of a common ritual among sailors, then and now; see illustration for a nineteenth-century version).



"Crossing the Line," *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages of His Majesty's Ships 'Aventure' and 'Beagle.'* London: H. Colborn, 1839.

Courtesy of the Poetry Collection, University of Buffalo.



The vicereine is not impressed:

nunca se vio Neptuno más helado;  
 pues ni él, ni doce más que le siguieron,  
 y del palo mayor se desprendieron,  
 entre varias figuras  
 que retrataron bien sus contexturas,  
 hicieron cosa que notable fuese,  
 ni que con gracia alguna divirtiese. (*Viaje* 224-25)

More to the liking of the vicereine are the refined dramatic pieces (a *loa*, an *entremés*, and a *comedia*) performed on deck by the ladies and pages of her party for her birthday and that of her husband. These representations aboard the *América* in 1755 retain the Baroque taste for the theatrical, even amidst the hardships of an ocean voyage. But they are entertainments, distraction from boredom, acts of courtly homage. The vicereine judges them on their artistic quality and their capacity to amuse. Unlike their 1640 counterparts, these festivities are not part of the allegorized fabric of the voyage itself, in which religious faith, exteriorized through collective acts of artistic wit, ensures safe passage to port.

After recounting the disembarkation of the Marqueses de las Amarillas and their retinue in Veracruz, the *Diario notable* takes up the story of their itinerary over land to Mexico City, recording with reasonable precision the dates and distances covered, as well as the types of reception—from modest to festive to fastuous—that greeted them at each stage. In Veracruz they were feted and housed by the governor for fourteen days. From there they travelled, first by carriage, then by mule-born litters, to la Antigua Veracruz, la Rinconada, Venta del Plan, Jalapa (where they spent four days as guest of the Alcalde Mayor), las Vigas (where they were met with fine carriages to continue their trip), Perote, Tepeyahualco, Quapiastla, and Guamantla (Huamantla), in each spot being greeted humbly by the populace and graciously by local officials. On 23 October they arrived in Tlaxcala, the second of the great ceremonial stops after Veracruz on the way to the capital, where three days of more elaborate ceremonies and festivities awaited them: processions, a triumphal arch, bullfights, religious functions. Puebla was the next stop, with

an even more elaborate *entrada pública* for the Marquesses—two triumphal arches, a *Te Deum* in the cathedral, fireworks, torchlight cavalcades, theater, and visits to *colegios* and convents. After eight days there, the Marquesses departed for Otumba—where the baton of power was passed from the outgoing viceroy—via Cholula and Guajozingo (Huejotzingo). On November 9, the Marquesses and their retinue arrived at the sanctuary of the Virgin of Guadalupe on the capital's outskirts to pay homage to Mexico's patroness, and from there processed to the Viceregal Palace, where the Viceroy took his oath before the *oidores* of the Audiencia. Following three days of banquets, theater and concerts, the Marquesses rested for two weeks before another two weeks of public festivities resumed (the poem spares the reader the details).

All of this was but a prelude to the viceroy's official *entrada* in the capital, which was celebrated on February 3, the description of which forms the *Diario notable's* spectacular finale: the center of the city was decked with rich trappings, balconies and windows were thronged with onlookers, and the streets were thick with carriages and pedestrians. The viceroy processed with all the luminaries of the capital to the ceremonies at the triumphal arches erected by the *cabildo* (where he received the keys to the city) and the cathedral. After the solemn *Te Deum* sung in the latter, the Marqués returned to the palace to artillery salvos fired in celebration. The poem closes with the new viceroy seated in splendor, and with prayers offered by the narrator for his prosperous reign.

At first glance, the narrative of the viceroy's trip from Veracruz to Mexico City, and especially the description of the ceremonies in Tlaxcala, Puebla and the capital, would seem to conform largely to the genre of the *relaciones* of viceregal entries. But there are significant differences. Interspersed in the narrative are nuggets of description more appropriate for a travel journal—small observations of sights along the way, customs observed, hardships encountered. An example is the uncomfortable form of conveyance which the Marquesses had to endure soon after leaving Veracruz:

Es ésta una litera  
 de dos mulas tirada a la ligera,  
 que la una por detrás, la otra por delante,  
 llevan a todo paso al caminante  
 metido en un cajón, cuyo desgaire  
 carga toda la máquina en el aire,  
 en un continuo horrible bamboleo  
 que me causó muchísimo mareo. (*Viaje* 233)

In another place along the road, the Marqueses and their companions are beset by

[...] unos demonios de mosquitos  
 zancudos, rodadores, jejenitos,  
 que antes que por su cuerpo descubrirlos  
 su molesto agujijón hace sentirlos. (*Viaje* 234)

The narrator notes with appreciation an entertainment performed for them at another humble stop along their journey:

[...] el baile, que a su usanza  
 nos tuvieron los indios, una danza  
 de tan buen gusto, de donaire tanto,  
 que (no te cause espanto)  
 no le va a deber nada  
 a la más celebrada,  
 ya de la antigüedad las convivales,  
 militares, sagradas, o teatrales  
 se traigan a la cuenta,  
 o las que hoy en día inventa  
 en las cortes el arte más limado. (*Viaje* 236)

To claim that Rivadeneyra wrote with the eye of an ethnographer or the curiosity of a natural scientist would be to overstate the case. Yet in such moments as these, the *Diario notable* seems to shift its attention from the ceremonial and programmed to the random and spontaneously observed—from the Baroque *relación* of viceregal entries to a more eighteenth-century style of travel journal or letter, intimate in tone but empirical in spirit. Perhaps these moments reflect an evolution in New World travel itself; by the mid-eighteenth

century, the Spanish crown was encouraging systematic attempts to gather information on the lands and peoples of its American possessions, including in the form of commissioned expeditions such as that of La Condamine, sent to South America in the 1730s to measure a longitudinal degree at the Equator and thus help determine the shape of the earth, a journey which spawned numerous important textual accounts in Europe.<sup>10</sup> A certain critical spirit also is detectable in the *Diario notable*. Rivadeneira's poem anticipates, if tentatively, works like Cadalso's *Cartas marruecas* (1789) which uses the device of the fictional trip and the epistolary form to effect a satirical analysis of Spain. Throughout the eighteenth century, journeys both real and imagined were of course a staple of satirical literature, from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), to Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), to (an important American example), Carrió de la Vandra's *El lazarrillo de ciegos caminantes* (1775?). The *Diario notable* also shares a kinship with travel writing by elite women, which emerged as a prominent genre in the eighteenth century—for example, the well-known *Turkish Embassy Letters* (pub. 1763) by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who accompanied her husband to Constantinople when he was appointed British ambassador there in 1716.

### *The Vicereine's Gaze and Creole Subjectivity*

Similar to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the vicereine-narrator of the *Diario notable* enjoys a uniquely privileged and yet conveniently displaced point of view; she is an object, along with her husband, of the ceremonies being offered along their route, but she is not their principal object. She is near the center of events, and herself observed, but enough to the side to afford freedom and time for attentive looking on her part—whether at the fine figure her husband cuts, the curious or splendid sights during the journey, or even the crowds who are in turn gaping at her. But the vicereine's glance does not penetrate much beneath the surface of things. For example, she does not engage the metaphorical substance of the triumphal arches that she describes only in passing; the poem differs significantly from those *relaciones* of viceregal entries that devoted disproportionate attention to the description of these structures, and to decoding the political meanings

embedded in their iconography.<sup>11</sup> The *relaciones* constituted, in essence, the “last act” of the ceremonies in which the arches played a major role.<sup>12</sup> In this sense, the *Diario notable* has a certain realism—it pretends to be what the vicereine narrator saw and understood in the fleeting moment, and later recalled and recorded in a letter to a friend.

As in the narrative of the sea journey, the narrative of the journey by land from Veracruz to Mexico City in the *Diario notable* contains a series of descriptive set pieces, characterized by a more accentuated aestheticism and a certain autonomy of metaphoric, allusive and metric structure. The first of these is the lengthy (some seventy-five lines of verse) description of Puebla’s cathedral, interposed in the narrative of the viceroy’s ceremonial welcome in that city. The cathedral is contrasted (favorably) with the seven wonders of the ancient world, and its imposing architecture and its sumptuous exterior and interior decoration are evoked in densely Baroque language and with constant references to classical mythology. The second set piece describes Guadalupe, the poem suddenly (and very late in the game) shifting in metric form from “selva (silva) libre” to *octavas reales*. First the poet describes the sanctuary and its surroundings, and then offers an extended ekphrastic review of the sacred image of the Virgin; the prominence of the theme in the poem is hardly surprising, given the flowering of devotions to the Virgin of Guadalupe in New Spain in the early decades of the eighteenth century, and the concerted efforts of Creoles and the Mexican clergy to promote her cult, which in 1754 “culminated in pontifical recognition of the patronage of Guadalupe over New Spain.”<sup>13</sup> Following these thirteen *octavas reales* are another thirteen, which take the reader from Guadalupe to the city itself, and constitute the third descriptive set piece of the overland journey, a *laudatio urbis* of the capital in the spirit of Bernardo de Balbuena’s *Grandeza mexicana* (1604) and which touches on many of the same topics as that well known work: Mexico City as “centro del Orbe,” city of eternal spring, and so on.

These three descriptive set pieces are so strikingly self-contained, so seemingly detached from the narrative that joins them, that they almost seem autonomous poems (and indeed the different metric form employed in two of them may be a hint that they were separately

conceived poems that Rivadeneyra incorporated into the larger text). Their preponderance within the larger narrative of the viceregal *entrada* almost seems to reduce the latter to a pretext, a kind of thread upon which to hang the poem's real jewels. If in the typical *relación* of a viceregal entry, the more richly descriptive or ekphrastic passages might be devoted to an ephemeral monument erected in honor of the viceroy—the heroic arches, principally<sup>14</sup>—in the *Diario notable* the most lengthy passages, narrated in lavish painterly language, is reserved for monumental artifacts or structures of New Spain, or for the capital city itself. Ultimately, these passages have little to do with the imagined perspective of the vicereine-narrator, and much to do with the Creole subjectivity of the poem's author.

In the typical *relación* of viceregal entries the narrator's gaze seems to rest, as if from a fixed position, on the viceroy as he processes through the symbolic spaces and ceremonies that the text deciphers as it describes.<sup>15</sup> But in the *Diario notable*, the journey of the viceroy is told from the perspective of the viceroy's consort, as she moves through space and records rapidly changing impressions, whether of welcoming ceremonies or incidental occurrences and sights along the way. Her gaze is directed and controlled by the Creole author of the work, and is used to set up the descriptive set pieces mentioned above. In the poem's spectacular, final set piece, the directed gaze of the vicereine seems to become refracted among the inhabitants of the capital, as she observes them staring in wonder not at the viceroy (who mostly disappears at this point in the narrative) nor even at her, but at themselves, and at their own city magnificently decorated for the viceroy's official *entrada*. The city's fair ladies appear in windows “dudando si es a ver, o si a ser vista; / pues al buscar objeto en que saciarse, / va a añadir otro objeto en que mirarse” (*Viaje* 254). The Indian from the countryside, “hecha su vista / sólo a la seca, enmarañada arista / de poble humilde choza, / de observar no acababa tanta cosa” (*Viaje* 255). Each running board on the coaches that crowd the thoroughfares becomes “un portátil balcón” from which their owners can catch a better look at their city; each horse “en lo que cada dueño busca, o halla, / le ofrece en sus espaldas atalaya” (*Viaje* 255). Each pedestrian jostles with countless others “sin mirar lo que pisa, / para sólo mirar lo que divisa” (*Viaje* 254). And if in the press of the

through a pedestrian should fall down, "bien que cobrarse prontamente pueda, / para mirar mejor, así se queda" (*Viaje* 255). The poem's finale evokes an astonished populace in a collective act of self-admiration, as if the city itself gazed at its own reflection in the surrounding lake: "a México le sirve el agua pura / de espejo a quien consulta su hermosura" (*Viaje* 250).

If for the imagined vicereine-narrator, her journey is a "going out" to the periphery of empire, for the Creole author Rivadeneyra the journey is a "coming home" to a place which, in Creole fashion, he has re-centered within the terrestrial globe, a new Rome to which all roads lead, a seat of power, splendor, and culture which draws the admiring gaze of its own inhabitants. Like Balbuena a century and a half earlier, Rivadeneyra seems to use the poetical *laudatio urbis* both to reflect Creole pride and to curry favor with the local Creole and the newly arrived Peninsular power elite. Like Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz of a couple of generations before, Rivadeneyra deploys his poetic talents to cement his relationship with the viceregal couple by focusing on the viceroy's consort. As Sor Juana often did, he assumes, in the poem's preface, a tone of familiarity mixed with deference towards the vicereine; but then in the body of the poem he goes Sor Juana one better and assumes the vicereine's voice and point of view—indeed her very identity—in the ultimate act of both narrative intimacy and narrative control.

Despite these resemblances to Balbuena and Sor Juana, there are qualities in the *Diario notable* that distinguishes it from the work of these early-and high-Baroque Creole forebears. As we have seen, Rivadeneyra's poem seems inflected by some emerging eighteenth-century trends in travel writing, which were based on the recording of the individual, intimate experience of the traveler, his curiosity, and his desire to classify, understand, and even critique or satirize what he observed. Moreover, perhaps the *Diario notable* gives a novel, eighteenth-century twist to the standard practice of praising (and recommending) forms of viceregal virtue found in the *relaciones* of viceregal entries. By assuming the identity and point of view of the vicereine, Rivadeneyra finds a way of embodying new virtues: not the ones traditionally ascribed to kings and viceroys (religious devoutness, prudence, moderation and clemency), but the virtues of

an observant, critical sensibility, an openness to new forms of experience, the ability to balance personal sentiment with official duty, and even an arch sense of humor—virtues more congenial to an emerging Enlightened age.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>This article is an expanded and revised version of a paper given at the symposium “Moving Worlds of the Baroque,” a Chancellor Jackman Program for the Arts Symposium at the University of Toronto (11-13 October 2007). The author thanks Professor Kenneth Mills and the other organizers of the symposium for the invitation to participate. The author also thanks another participant in the symposium, Peter Mason, who kindly brought to the author’s attention the illustration from Fitzroy’s *Narrative of the Surveying Voyages...* contained herein.

<sup>2</sup>The “expediente de información y licencia de pasajero a Indias” for the voyage lists sixty-six people besides the Marqueses and their son (Archivo de Indias, Contratación 5497, no. 2, R14).

<sup>3</sup>Some 1400 verses, mostly in what the author alludes to as *selva libre*: “Y que sea en selva libre no se espante, / si es toda selva libre a un caminante” (*Viaje* 221). This form, consisting of freely alternating heptasyllabic and hendecasyllabic lines in rhyming couplets does not correspond to the modern definition of *silva libre* which approximates that of *verso libre*. The form used by Rivadeneyra is virtually identical to what is called—idiosyncratically—an *ovillejo* in Sor Juana and some other poets.

<sup>4</sup>The poem was republished in 1914 with a brief but informative preface by its editor Romero de Terreros y Vinent (see *Bibliografía general*). In citations this essay follows the 1914 text but with modernized spelling and punctuation.

<sup>5</sup>A prose diary of the portion of the trip of the Marqués de las Amarillas from Veracruz to Mexico City was composed by Diego García Panes, a Spanish military officer who formed part of the Marqués’s entourage. García Panes alludes to the *Diario notable*: “Al mismo tiempo escribió en verso otro semejante Diario Don Antonio de Rivadeneira y Barrientos, que fue en el mismo navío de guerra a América a servir el empleo de Fiscal en la Real Audiencia de México, sujeto muy conocido por su mérito y cultura literaria, autor de la recomendable obra del Real Patronato y la del Pasatiempo. Tengo dicho poema del Diario, escrito en nombre de la Virreina doña María Luisa de Ahumada, Marquesa de las Amarillas, para remitirlo a la Corte a una amiga suya” (García Panes 68-69).

<sup>6</sup>Shiels (1961) offers a comprehensive study of the *patronato real* and cites extensively from Rivadeneyra.



<sup>7</sup>The information on Rivadeneyra in this paragraph is taken from Beristáin de Souza's *Biblioteca hispano-americana setentrional* (3: 23-24) the principal—virtually the only—source of biographical information on the author of the *Diario notable*.

<sup>8</sup>The *Diario de sucesos notables* by José Manuel de Castro Santa-Anna tells the story of the little Marqués's illness and death, and his parents' retirement from public view and gradual reintegration into public life, in entries from February through June, 1756.

<sup>9</sup>In 1642, the Marqués de Villena was arrested and relieved of his post by the crown, charged with financial mismanagement and suspected of collusion with the rebellious Portuguese. The controversy surrounding him may help explain the production of such highly partisan works as those cited here by Gutiérrez de Medina and Bocanegra, which seem to go beyond the usual *relación* of viceregal entries in their praise of the Marqués de Villena's protagonism within his providentially inscribed voyage.

<sup>10</sup>Prominent among these was the *Relación histórica del viaje a la América meridional*, published in Madrid in (1748) by the principal Spanish participants, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa, "an enormous compendium of information on many aspects of Spanish colonial geography and of Spanish colonial life" (Pratt 20).

<sup>11</sup>In his analysis of the genre of the *relaciones de fiestas*, Rodríguez Hernández notes, "la descripción minuciosa de los monumentos de arte efímero se comprende porque en ellos se compendia en lenguaje simbólico el grueso del programa ideológico-panegírico de la fiesta, es por eso que los emblemas y alegorías ocupaban varias páginas en la relación. La escasa o nula atención que merecían al cronista los divertimientos populares—carreras de caballos, bailes—se explica porque éstos poco contribuían al discurso encomiástico" (162).

<sup>12</sup>In the words of Rodríguez Hernández, these *relaciones* "son continuación y conclusión de la fiesta" (129).

<sup>13</sup>Lafaye ([1974] 1976, 88). Lafaye's is the classic work on the topic of the importance of the Virgin of Guadalupe cult to the development of Mexican nationalism and identity. In Chapter 6, Lafaye reviews many of the textual manifestations of Creole promotion of the cult. Rivadeneyra's poem is not mentioned, but certainly seems to belong to this textual tradition.

<sup>14</sup>See Rodríguez Hernández (162-64) for the theme of *ut pictura poesis* in the *relaciones de fiestas*.

<sup>15</sup>That the viceroy should be the object of the narrator's gaze makes sense in the context of what Cañeque posits regarding the importance of the visibility of the viceroy in public ceremonies: "On his displayed body, exhibited in processions, surrounded with brilliance and splendor, royal authority was legible to all. This production of magnificence was perfectly

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regulated and formed part of a ritual, a 'viceregal epiphany'... [I]t was spectacular and had to be seen by all as the triumph of the sovereign power that had sent the viceroy; his body, constantly exhibited through the streets of Mexico City, was made a visible announcement of the king's power" (121).