

Travel Literature as an Example of Human Flourishing



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Abstract Travel Literature can be a way of approaching *eudaimonia* and an interdisciplinary meeting point. When travelling, the individual is exposed to a multiple encounter experience. On the other hand, travelling is an intergenerational experience, and it will be increasingly so. From this perspective, it is possible to enrich studies by focusing on tourism and globalization, but also on relationships with technology. It is also possible, from this angle, to open new ways of developing new narratives that deepen in the encounter with oneself, with other cultures and that define new values in an ethics of human flourishing. The attempt to synthesize Travel Literature, an “elusive genre”, does not only contribute to sort out a tenuous typology, but also evidences the need to keep thinking about two fundamental dimensions of human existence; the dimension of circumstance, and the dimension of imagination.

Keywords Travel literature · Human flourishing · Hispanic literature · Narrativity · Cervantes

Narrativity can be a form of knowledge, or a tool to build our identity. And the literary description of travels are a materialization of this type of narrativity. Not in a journey forced by circumstances, but the travel dictated by one’s own desires and which determines some sort of personal growth. The *Grand Tour* tradition in Europe is, in a sense, a paradox compared to other many types of journeys that have taken

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place throughout the history of humankind. The encounter with others is also described in it and is, in some ways, a study on otherness.

During travel knowledge expands in multiple directions. It is not only one type of exterior understanding, of the places and the people that the traveler chances upon during the journey. It is also a way of asking individual questions. The pursuit search for certainties begins with our own circumstance that gives shape to our way of learning. This has geographical and temporal variables. The places we visit are located, described, and appreciated based on it and they also help us change our paradigms. Therefore, the journey will allow us to expand them or alter them. In this process we transit through more or less objective spheres that overlap with our inner world. The question is: What does this have to do with human flourishing? The journey as a freely exercised option is one of the keys to deepen in its meaning.

1 Some Chronological Notes

For centuries, traveling was a possibility reserved to only a few, and this explains its fictional success. For a long time, with very few exceptions, there was no place for leisure cruises or scientific expeditions. Most journeys were the result of obligations related to the military or trading activities, or mere survival.

Nomadism, military exploration, migration, and the knowledge of our surroundings are—in one way or the other—phenomena that were part of human condition. These were necessary actions, although among the exceptional journeys of the ancient world it is worth mentioning those of Herodotus of Halicarnassus or Polemon of Athens. Herodotus claimed that he traveled to obtain certainties about those places that he had heard of. About Phoenicia, he wrote:

I moreover, desiring to know something certain of these matters so far as might be, made a voyage also to Tyre of Phoenicia, hearing that in that place there was a holy temple of Heracles (Herodotus., 2002).

The impulse that drove Herodotus to set off on his journeys bears a certain resemblance to the attitude that characterized philosophers of the Socratic school. These philosophers also set themselves apart from the other citizens of the polis, whose motivations were rather pragmatic or linked to immediate purposes. This link, which at first may seem as barely significant, provides an interesting clue.

According to the *Apology* (Plato, 2003), one of the allegations against Socrates is that he distracted younger minds away from public affairs to wonder about the heavens and earth. The big paradox of the Socratic school is that it is there where the scientific pattern is marked: The love for a knowledge lacking immediate or practical applications. And the departure point for this knowledge is, precisely, the awareness of his famous ignorance (Plato, 2003). Building on this carefulness, the Socratic school embarks on a project that seeks to understand the cosmos building on a logical and rational basis. In other words, searching for certainties. These are the foundations—probably invisible—of a new type of knowledge that will also be linked to ethics and aesthetics.

Similarly, Herodotus heralded a new way of traveling, based on the idea of “exploring to look at the world” (*theoríes héneken*), detached from any obligations, which became the prelude to the journalistic article, ethnography and modern tourism. Even more interesting is that his forays had a textual dimension from the start. His travels took him across the Persian Empire, Egypt (as far as Aswan), Libya, Syria, Babylon, Susa in modern Iran, Lydia and Phrygia. With Herodotus begins the tradition of the descriptive voyage and, even more, that of the annotation of the ancient city (Vignolo, 2001). But maybe, at this point, what is more important is that the travel has the possibility of becoming a way of acquiring knowledge, as, for example, Ryszard Kapuściński claimed (Kapuściński, 2008). The relationships between itinerancy and reflective capacity will linger afterwards. The Greek tradition did not stop there, but instead enlightened the West for a long time. The concept of the *kosmopolita*, used for the first time by Diogenes Laërtius, will have an important connection with the experience of the trip (Nussbaum, 2019).

Perhaps religious pilgrimages were another type of journeys that were not necessarily linked to classical necessities. It is necessary to take a closer look at its roots to better grasp the role it played in the history of travel, especially considering that here's where the first travel guides were written (Adams, 1983). It is also probable that the purpose of these pilgrimages was linked to some type of imperative or penance. But the truth is that both their origin and end were far from being merely pragmatic. The first pilgrimages date back to polytheistic antiquity. The Egyptians visited the sanctuary of the goddess Serket or the oracle of Amun in the Siwa desert. The Greeks traveled to Delphi to seek advice from the god Apollo and to the sanctuary of Asklepios in Epidaurus to pray for healing. Mexicans visited the Quetzal temple, Peruvians journeyed—and still do to this day—to Cuzco to partake in the Festival of the Sun celebrations, while Bolivians attended ceremonies held in lake Titicaca (Jarrett, 1911).

Traveling was also a key element in the traditions of all major religions. Buddhists started making pilgrimages to holy sites during the second century BC and the Muslim tradition the pilgrimage to Mecca is also an ancient one, although in this case there is an explicit obligation. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, the pilgrimage to the Temple of Jerusalem—where the Ark of the Covenant rested—finds its roots in the Old Testament. In Christian Occident, there are landmarks such as the journey of Empress Saint Helena to the Holy Land in the third century, the accounts of a Gaul pilgrim's journey or Egeria's pilgrimage in the fourth century. In his work *Church History*, Eusebius of Caesarea also provides an account about of Bishop Alexander's pilgrimage from Cappadocia to Jerusalem.

Other travelers whose accounts could be considered akin to travel guides were the chroniclers. Their antecedents can be traced back to the so-called general histories penned by authors such as Isidore of Seville or Gregory of Tours in the early Middle Ages. Some were commissioned by the ruling monarchies, while others pursued more academic interests. Many of their works are indeed accounts of travels like those by British authors Raphael Holinshed or James Howell in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Álvaro Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Bartolomé de las Casas, or Bernal Díaz del Castillo were some of the so-called chroniclers of the Indies, whose

works built on the legacy of Columbus or Vespucci's travel logs. Although it should be noted that these descriptions are the result of a political necessity to record conquests and new explorations. It is also worth mentioning the travels of explorers or merchants such as Marco Polo, whose *Il milione*, as Luis Alburquerque notes, is a descriptive story that focuses—first and foremost—on the sense of sight (Alburquerque, 2019). In other works Alburquerque also pointed at the differences between literature that includes travel-related passages and travel writing (Alburquerque, 2004).

It was erudite travelers who paved the way for a new type of narrative. With the arrival of the industrial revolution, possibilities also broadened. Since the end of the twentieth Century, thanks to large infrastructures and modern means of transportation, traveling has become democratized and an experience related to leisure, pleasure, and well-being. And this is evidenced by the phenomenon of tourism and the studies around it.

Among the authors that drew inspiration from the exploratory dynamism and enlightened pursuit, in *Emile ou de L'Education* Jean-Jacques Rousseau promoted a pedagogy of exploration and knowledge of the world which he later be applied in *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*. Some of the travel works of the same era were written by authors as relevant as Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1729), Henry Fielding, *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (1755), Louis de Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde* (1771), James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole and Round the World* (1777), John Barrow, *Travels in China* (1804), Melchor de Jovellanos, *Diarios* (1810) or Mesonero Romanos, *Recuerdos de Viaje por Francia y Bélgica* (1862).

The *Grand Tour* tradition, which began in the seventeenth century in Europe before spreading to other continents, was one of the key movements that contributed to expanding the concept of liberal travel. Although always reserved to the most privileged classes, it can be pointed out as a direct precedent of tourism. Afterwards—and this is a crucial point—it started expanding socially, thematically, and geographically, until there came a time where traveling became a type of action aimed at self-sufficiency and personal enjoyment. Obviously, this travel model is also linked to a narrative tradition.

We can easily access many of the travel books published during the mid and late twentieth century. And there is a whole body of travel-related literary works from the last decades of the nineteenth century that is virtually awaiting to be discovered. These works are linked to the *Grand Tour* tradition which saw traveling as a rite of passage for young aristocrats. Only a few could afford to have their experiences published. The description of the technical and scientific innovations of the first industrial revolutions can also help trace a timeline across the different chronological strata which can be extremely useful in a number of ways. For example, regarding the way cities are currently laid out, the knowledge of new cultures, tolerance or appreciation of other cuisines. As Helen Carr noted in *Modernism and Travel* transit facilities developed not only as a result of technological progress, but also of city growth, migrations, and the expansion of trade (Hulme & Youngs, 2002).

2 Literature and Travel in the Spanish Tradition

The relationship between literature and travel is very old. From the time of Homer the narratives included transfers. In the *Odyssey* Ulysses goes through “many cities.” Some of them are Thrace, Libya, or the Italian peninsula. This is how a very special network of trails and navigations is drawn up. This network had a subjective and objective character at the same time. Because in the history of literature many fictional characters toured real places. In the Hispanic tradition, these relationships are maintained.

The Spanish tradition includes the treatment of the trip from its beginnings. For example, in the transfers described in the *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Or the roads that Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar visits in the *Cantar del mío Cid*. In Don Quixote, the hero blooms when he begins to walk. And his travels allow him to meet other people. In these encounters the protagonist makes decisions. These possibilities transform the character and make him a better knight. Cervantes makes a new configuration of virtue. The narrative exposure of a madman to the world of decisions is paradoxical. And this character flourishes by cultivating virtues in the realm of fantasy.

In the contemporary Hispanic tradition, we can cite Miguel de Unamuno, Benito Pérez Galdós, Emilia Pardo Bazán, Camilo José Cela, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, Javier Reverte, or Alfonso Armada. In Latin America we can mention Domingo Sarmiento, José Martí, José Juan Tablada, José Clemente Orozco, Gilberto Owen, Ricardo Rojas, José de la Riva Agüero, Luis Rafael Sánchez, or Alejo Carpentier. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, many authors in Spain and Latin America made numerous trips from new perspectives. From the betrayal of the travel story, that is the non-fiction, we find works such as the *Viaje a Rusia* by Josep Pla, published in 1925. The author, a young journalist, describes Russia at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is the chronicle of a traveler who arrives from Catalonia and who contributes precisely with his new vision of the others.

3 Some Notes on Cervantes

The idea of travel is found in Cervantes’ work in several ways. In the *Quijote* we find it on the routes that the protagonist undertakes. For example, in the *Novelas ejemplares* in the mentions of the routes and places where the characters move. Cervantes projects his life experience and his own travels into his works. There is a very interesting theoretical background in Cervantes’ works that relates travel and movement. This, apparently redundant, is embedded in more complex reflections. In some way the trip is also connected with the inner experience of the traveler. Precisely because every trip is a change, and change affects us. Deep down, Cervantes invites us to experience movement on the moral plane. This idea is found in many of his works. For example, in *La Gitanilla*, one of the so-called *Novelas ejemplares* (Exemplary Novels). In *La Gitanilla* the protagonist is a young

dancer. The prejudice about the young dancers was a reality in the writer's time. But travel is a form of movement. For a long time it was thought that this change could affect people's moral lives. Cervantes exposes a young woman in *La Gitanilla* to two types of movements: travel and dance. And its protagonist has extraordinary moral qualities.

Following this tradition, Cervantes takes the protagonist of the *Quijote* through different places in Spain such as Ávila, Barcelona, Cartagena, Ciudad Real, Córdoba, Cuenca, Madrid, or Seville. Other sites such as Sicily, Ceylon, Brittany, Crete, Germany, Denmark, or Egypt are also mentioned. There is a certain global consciousness in *Don Quixote*, which, adapted to its time and circumstances, is part of a cosmopolitan tradition. This breadth of horizons has generated different ways of approaching the novel.

And on the other hand, there is the impulse or the energy that these journeys have generated in many authors. The real places that drive the creation of fictional places. Or the routes that the characters in the novel have traveled, and that travelers want to follow.

Among the travelers who arrived in Spain following the *Don Quixote* route we find writers such as Théophile Gautier, August Jaccaci, and Waldo Frank. The first of them wrote a book entitled *Voyage en Espagne* (Paris, 1843). In this book the author approaches Spain with the spirit of nineteenth century French Romanticism. The second is entitled *On the Trail of Don Quijote* (London, 1897) and is a much more Cervantine journey. Here Jaccaci proves to be a great reader of Cervantes' novel. Jaccaci follows the same route as *Don Quixote* and is a good example of a traveling reader who recreates the novel with a travel story. Another famous writer who traveled these roads was Waldo Frank with *Virgin Spain: Scenes from the Spiritual Drama of Great People* (New York, 1926).

Jaccaci's work later influenced Hispanic authors. This is the case of Azorín with his *Ruta de Don Quijote* (Azorín, 1905). There the Spanish author proposed a new way of reading the novel by Cervantes. In it the reader goes through the places related to *Don Quixote*. Most are small towns. This attention to the smaller populations is a new way of traveling. It is in some way opposed to the European *Grand Tour*. It is also interesting that a journalist like Azorín cares about these humble places to portray the flow of existence there. Other writers who were inspired by Jaccaci were the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío, who published an article entitled "En tierra de don Quijote" (Darío, 1905). In that sense, the work of the North American author was the initiator of the quixotic literary routes (García Naranjo, 2010).

A new type of traveler is developed, the literary traveler, as Felisa Ferraz (Ferraz Gracia, 2020) has well pointed out. It is very interesting to observe how fiction can generate social phenomena such as the literary journey. In some ways this type of journey is also a path for the encounter with oneself and for human flourishing. The idea of following the same paths as the characters in novels and stories is fascinating. Some readers even confuse fact and fiction. An attempt has been made, for example, to discover the place that the narrator of *Don Quixote* did not remember. And on the route of *Don Quixote*, several towns are crossed that could be the protagonist's

homeland. The *Lonely Planet* guidebook recommends, for example, five essential places on the Don Quixote route: Puerto Lapice, Argamasilla de Alba, Campo de Criptana, El Toboso, Ruidera, and the Montesinos' Cave.

4 The Liberal Travel

We come to an interesting crossroads. From the twentieth century on, the phenomenon of travel favored liberality over formal approaches. As we saw above, with the advent of the industrial revolution, the possibilities of travel also increased. Since the end of the twentieth century, thanks to large infrastructures and modern means of transportation, traveling has become democratized and an experience that can be linked to leisure, pleasure, and well-being. And this is evidenced by the phenomenon of tourism and the studies around it. A definition may help us to delimit the concept. According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, tourism is: “The act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of services”¹ (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2015).

There are several elements that stand out in this travel modality compared to preceding ones. The first is the relationship between temporality and recreation. This definition of “spending time” in search of recreation opens a path for solving the classic paradox between leisure and business. From a philosophical standpoint, for example, travel is an area where more work could be conducted. There is a connection between the reflective leisure of philosophers and their journeys, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau explained in his *Confessions*:

I am unable to reflect when I am not walking: the moment I stop, I think no more, and as soon as I am again in motion my head resumes its workings (Rousseau, 1903, pág. 205).

On this topic and more, we have access to quite interesting works such as *The meaning of travel* by Emily Thomas which devotes passages to authors such as Confucius, Michel de Montaigne, Descartes, Bertrand Russell, David Hume, John Stuart Mill, Henry David Thoreau, or Albert Camus.

Travel as a form of knowledge will be a pattern that many thinkers, writers, and artists will follow. “A journey to strange countries,” wrote Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset “is a spiritual artifice that enables a rebirth of our personality; therefore, a new childhood, a new youth, a renewed maturity, a new life with its complete cycle” (Ortega y Gasset, 2020). This idea is closely linked to the concept of human flourishing. In recent decades, philosophy has also reflected on the importance of narrativity in human development. Some authors who have participated in

¹Tourism. (2015). *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica.

this debate are Edmund Pincoffs (Pincoffs, 1971), Alasdair MacIntyre (MacIntyre, 1981), and Stanley Hauerwas (Hauerwas, 1975).

Tourism as an activity linked to recreation or happiness is also a singular event. Being removed from the realm of obligation, free action in pursuit of pleasure also seems to be the object of a certain level of judgment. According to Anscombe, connecting with that which is necessary is one of the formulas of moral rebirth (Anscombe, 1958). In this line, considering the leisure trip as a necessity may seem preposterous from a merely pragmatic perspective, but it fits into this new formula proposed by Anscombe. And it is an interesting way of connecting the human flourishing with some aspects of contemporary travel.

Another key facet of contemporary travel is that it has been markedly global since its inception. It is true that tourism is such a broad phenomenon that we need to be careful when analyzing it, since its consequences are not always positive. Besides, we here are not referring to mass tourism alone, but also to those individual trips that are possible thanks to a complex and functional travel system. And also, as we will see below, journeys that can be described and which combine a narrative side and human expansion. The tourist trip is a democratization of the *Grand Tour*. Mass travel can also transform destinations to an extent such that the influx of visitors has a detrimental impact on them. This has happened in landmarks such as Venice, Machu Picchu, or Taj Mahal.

In the midst of the twenty-first century, traveling has become an experience within the reach of more than half of the world's population. "Millennials" view it as an enriching activity that adds to their vital experiences and consider it a top aspiration, even more so than saving, according to a report by Bank of America (Bank of America, 2017). In a technologically and linguistically connected world, the best way of learning is traveling. There are many ways to travel, and tourism has become tremendously diversified. A study of the experiences linked to voluntary travel, of its possibilities and its impact on the lives of human beings, would be highly connected to the aforementioned eudaimonic notions.

5 The Narrative Description and Its Value for the Journey

According to Ferrater Mora's dictionary of philosophy, happiness has different definitions (Ferrater, 2005). Aristotle links it to practical wisdom or the exercise of virtue. This definition is very close to the idea of the liberal, narrative journey that we are considering. Going back to some of Hauerwas' tenets, narrativity can be a key to coherence between existence and experience. In that sense, the account of a journey is a way of becoming aware of one's own self and a description of his/her place in the cosmos. And if the world is also an alien one, then the description takes on a special significance. Chancing upon new territories and on other inhabitants enriches us because it enables us to acquire new perspectives that can offer epistemological,

psychological, and social novelties. A world where communication systems enable different ways of traveling, results in many experiences worthy of narration. Here, the trip is open to the possibility of becoming a shared experience, thanks precisely to their texts. These stories will inspire many travelers to set off on these routes and who will write about them again. Other travelers will become readers of the former, weaving in the process a network of interconnected travels and stories, similarly to a river system with its sources, tributaries, and main rivers.

The study of travel from literature has already spawned a literary genre, with works spanning a broad array of fields. A touchstone is Percy G. Adams' book *Travel literature and the evolution of the novel*. From travel guides to blogs such as *Humans of New York*, travel-related publications have taken many different shapes.

Travel writing as a genre is a narrative form that encompasses two descriptive spheres: Its very definition poses a problem that was already present in the reflective genesis of literature. It is a peculiar genre that has roamed across different areas without finding its place in the theory. It has spanned links across a wide variety of fields of knowledge, including social science, botany, cartography, or economics. But these links have lacked philological interest, at least as far as their characterization is concerned. Currently, John Lerner and Luis Albuquerque's works can be considered some of the most pivotal for the genre. Tzvetan Todorov and Paul Fussell are two other seminal authors.

The attempt to synthesize an "elusive genre," borrowing from Luis Albuquerque's, does not only contribute to sort out a tenuous typology, but also evidences the need to keep thinking about two fundamental dimensions of human existence: the dimension of the personal circumstance of imagination.

These considerations will not only help heighten the appreciation for a genre of relevance for literary history, but also develop formulas and tools to maximize the value and enjoyment extracted from it. When traveling, the individual is exposed to a multiple encounter experience. On the other hand, it offers an intergenerational experience. And will become increasingly so in the future.

Following this line of work, we can set forth several notes. Travel writing can be a way of approaching eudaimonia and an interdisciplinary meeting point. From this perspective, it is possible to enrich studies by focusing on tourism and globalization, but also on relationships with technology. It is also possible, from this perspective, to open new ways of developing new narratives that deepen in the encounter with oneself, with other cultures and that define new values in an ethics of human flourishing.

Although the relationship between literature and travel goes a long way back, it was during the second part of the twentieth century when it became an important condition for many writers, as Peter Hulme notes in *Traveling to Write (1940–2000)*. I will also mention here some more contemporary authors who have also written about their journeys: DH Lawrence, Graham Greene, George Orwell, Hillaire Belloc, John Steinbeck, Paul Theroux, Salman Rushdie, or Cees Nooteboom.

This bond became an important part of contemporary travel and later spread to other media such as radio, television, and—today—Internet platforms. Blogs, for example, broadened the spectrum of this narrative to many other social spheres and allowed many to share their experiences with a public forum.

The journey linked to freedom, and ultimately well-being has been addressed from multiple points of view in recent times. One of the areas of work has been, for example, the studies on tourism. This is attested by repositories such as the UNWTO Library. However, due to its descriptive—and therefore, reflective—nature, most of the work has focused on the genre of travel literature. This point of view integrates many intersections, including the travel guide. But perhaps another confluence is possible from ethics and the pursuit of *Eudaimonia* by many travelers.

6 The Liberal Journey and the 2020 Pandemic

The COVID-19 crisis has confirmed that liberal travel depends largely on scientific, social, and technological progress. And this something that has become increasingly clear in the current scenario. This is the first time in contemporary history that the global transportation system has been compromised in such a way. Traveling during these months of crisis has only been possible if justified, i.e., if prompted by some sort of obligation or necessity. The contagion threat has narrowed the possibilities of travel down to what they were centuries ago. The liberal journey is hindered by a world where hazards expose us to situations similar to those that others faced in eras long-gone.

This crisis has also laid bare the relationships between travel and the economic and social system of today's world. The tourism industry accounts for 7% of international trade. According to the World Tourism Organization's forecasts at the time of this writing, international travel is expected to contract by 60 to 80% as a result of the pandemic (Pololikashvili, 2020). When any of the building blocks of the social system falter, so does the liberal journey, and the impact of the tourism industry's crisis ripples across many other sectors of trade and the economy.

But the crisis also has an impact beyond the financial world. It also—and perhaps this is something that should not be overlooked—affects the many people's inner lives. Travel, considered as an experience of rebirth, has been greatly limited during this crisis. The right to travel because one wishes to, to travel in pursuit of *eudaimonia*, is faced with many hurdles. This reality resulted in a feeling of frustration among travelers, among those who have been forced to cancel trips they had planned or who simply are witnessing how their countries, regions, or cities lock down. Thus, a new form of claustrophobia, so to speak, has emerged, likely as a result of the limitations of freedoms, and linked precisely to these experiences that yield an external and internal discovery. All this confirms that the liberal journey has become one of the contemporary formulas for well-being and that confinement is a great disturbance.

7 Some Ideas to Conclude

It is curious that in the philosophical tradition the concept of happiness, understood as the ultimate goal of the action or the end that it pursued, was addressed by ethics. However, ethics' main area of focus since modernity has been the analysis of certain aspects of the improvement of human action: codes of moral order and their consequences. The study of the concept of happiness in its different versions has rather shifted towards the field of psychology, economics, and the social sciences. In the middle of the twentieth century, several authors drew attention to how ethics was focusing mainly on deontology and regulations. We can mention, for example, the works of (Anscombe, 1958), (Gustafson, 1968), (Murdoch, 1970), (Pincoffs, 1971), (Lawrence, 1975), (Foot, 1978), (Stocker, 1976), (MacIntyre, 1981), (Taylor, 1985) and (Hauerwas, 2001) are some of the thinkers who have engaged in a very productive exchange.

On the other hand, authors such as Felicia Huppert, Timoty So, and Martin Seligman have approached the Human Flourishing proposal from a psychological perspective (Seligman, 2011). Seligman also warned about the dangers of a coercive theory that defines happiness as a type of monistic satisfaction and proposes to enrich by means of the theory of Well-Being, interweaving the concepts of flourishing and that of eudaimonia. Travel writing fits here because it helps to learn, develop positive human relationships, foster a vital purpose, and promote new skills making us more resilient.

The bridge that spans between the aforementioned philosophical authors and the new psychological theories merits completion. The journey recounted in a textual way can be a part of this structure, contributed by philology.

The virtues of Travel Writing are not limited to their value works of literature. They are an invitation to think. The possibilities of the journey are multiplied in the questions that lie in its inception. What is beyond our borders? Is it possible that there are others like us? What are the customs in distant lands? These issues, too, drive journeys that are yet to be made, but are present in the imagination of science fiction authors. These considerations will foster not only the appreciation for a genre of relevance for literary history, but also the development of formulas and tools to maximize the value and enjoyment extracted from it. When traveling, the individual is exposed to a multiple encounter experience. On the other hand, traveling is an intergenerational experience, and it will be increasingly so.

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, we can also arrive at several conclusions: the liberal and narrative journey depends on our preventive capacities, scientific development, and global agreements. But above all, on the respect for freedoms and rights. Many people see the traveling experience as a need linked to eudaimonia, and being deprived of it is having an impact on their psychological and moral lives. The contemporary travel system is still fragile and the consumption of narrative travel in light of recent events is a confirmation of our need for well-being.

If philosophical leisure allowed using time to acquire new knowledge, this knowledge also expanded towards the achievement of aesthetics and pleasure. The

former enabled scientific development and, thus, the establishment of progress in many societies. A progress that allows human beings to enjoy freedoms that used to be out of reach, one of them being contemporary travel.

Following this line of work, we can set forth several notes. Travel Writing can be a way of approaching *eudaimonia* and point where different disciplines meet. From this perspective, it is possible to enrich studies by focusing on tourism and globalization, but also on well-being and its relationships with technology. It is also possible to allocate resources to the development of new narratives that deepen the encounter with oneself, with people from different cultures, and contribute to the human flourishing.

My recommendations can perhaps be understood as reading proposals. Reading about travel can enrich our perspective on the world. Not only those descriptions that come from the wonderful fantasy of many authors. Also the reading of non-fictional travel stories, which provide objective data and suggestive comparisons.

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