JULES VERNE'S TEXTUAL MAPPING: PLOTTING GEOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

JULIA ELIZABETH RAMALEY MASTRO: Jules Verne's Textual Mapping: Plotting
Geography
(Under the direction of Dr. Hassan Melehy)

Jules Verne designed his series of *Voyages extraordinaires* around the premise of

painting or depicting the earth. It is with this in mind that I explore the idea that Verne is a

geographical writer whose style reproduces a voyage, or an itinerary, that creates overlap, or

a space of communication, between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. The product of

this overlap, or this style, is what I term *the textual map*, which is a metaphor for the reading

experience as a compilation of movements through a geographical location described

textually. The textual map differs from the literary map, therefore, because rather than

linking to or identifying a location in order to assign it a relative place, it assumes a

perspective that is at the ground level so as to describe movement through instead of over a

geographical location. The textual map and the associated literary and geographical

terminology express Verne's style that is nonlinear, an amalgam of his own research, and the

impressionistic manner by which he combines descriptive geographical visions to convey a

space rather than a place, as expressed by de Certeau.

Specifically, I concentrate on *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and

En Magellanie, three of the *Voyages extraordinaires* and in which Verne visits the most

southern area of South America. With each of these textual maps, Verne employs a textual

legend, or a key to reading the geographical novel, and a way for the author to write a

perspective that is part of the geography rather than a view of it from a distance. I classify

three categories of the legend: the identification of the island location, the movements of the characters who inhabit the island and the author's own narrative voice. Studying these aspects of Verne's writing and the textual map, or studying Verne as a geographical author, allows for an interdisciplinary approach to reading an author who was himself interdisciplinary in the sense that he crossed traditional lines of discourse and applied his research in a product-oriented manner.

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CHAPTER I: PLOTTING GEOGRAPHY

> Mon but a été de dépeindre la Terre, et pas seulement la Terre mais l'univers, car j'ai quelquefois transporté mes lecteurs loin de la Terre dans mes romans. Et j'ai essayé en même temps d'atteindre un idéal de style. On dit qu'il ne peut pas y avoir de style dans un roman d'aventures, mais ce n'est pas vrai; cependant j'admets qu'il est beaucoup plus difficile d'écrire de tels romans dans un bon style littéraire que les études de caractères qui sont tellement en vogue aujourd'hui. (qtd. in Compère and Margot 92)

These words published in *McClure's Magazine* in 1894 from an aging author past the peak of his success and giving what the journalist refers to as an "account of his life and work," are some of the most often quoted in scholarly work on Jules Verne. Undoubtedly, this in part can be attributed to the verifiability of the source, the sincere interest that the journalist Robert Sherard seems to have in Verne and the author's apparent candor in his responses. Indeed, this really does seem to be "Jules Verne at Home," and scholars particularly interested in the biographical details of the author of the *Voyages extraordinaires* look to such words for clues about the mind that penned the highly successful series of stories depicting voyages to all parts of the world. Does this approach overlook or simply take for granted, however, the meaning of the words themselves? According to Verne, his goal as a writer was to paint the earth with a certain literary style. A quick perusal of the various titles composing the *Voyages extraordinaires* reveals that in fact the novels do seem to paint the earth by traveling around it, into its depths, through its oceans and skies and to many of its lands both near and far. Painting or depicting such extreme voyages became

Verne's specialty and from this concentration came a certain literary style predicated on the importance of representing movement through a geographical location.

Of course, Verne in fact hoped to attain an ideal of style rather than just a certain or a particular style, but the subjectivity of the assessment of what is conceptually ideal seems to have always been a difficult task in the critical evaluation of his writing. Although he had achieved worldwide popularity during his lifetime, Verne was never admitted to the Académie Française, for instance; nor was he bestowed entry into the Légion d'Honneur for his literary contribution but instead for his public service. And although his novels can still be found on bookstore shelves and are adapted into movies with surprising regularity, mine is one in only the second generation of university theses on Verne, who nonetheless died over 100 years ago.[1] Outside the world of academic scholarship, his novels have inspired every generation of more average readers, which culminated in some of the more popular Disney live-action films of the twentieth century, and his name is known the world over. Putting aside therefore the question of how good or bad an author Verne was or how well he met the definition of some ideal of style, I propose in this dissertation to discuss a different approach to this question of style and the study of the series of the *Voyages extraordinaires*: geography. A geographical approach to the author logically follows from Verne's reported words quoted above, for I do not find in them only a psychological revelation worthy of biographical notice. I understand an author interested in honing a literary style up to the

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[1] Speaking in terms of generations may be rather anecdotal, but A. Evans summarizes the research done on Verne in *Jules Verne Rediscovered*, noting particularly that most of the scholarship on Verne came in France after 1960 (3). He adds that his own work, coming from his doctoral thesis completed in 1985, is to be "a kind of academic stepping-stone, a bridge bringing together two separate worlds of Vernian scholarship: those badly outdated and rather shallow studies heretofore available [in] America, and the vast and infinitely richer resources of recent efforts in Europe" (4-5). Indeed one might say that A. Evans's work was this bridge, and in the wake of the European and the American work from the second half of the twentieth century, a new upsurge of dissertations and scholarly publications began appearing, continuing to the present.

challenges of painting or depicting the earth in an engaging written narrative, of plotting geography.

To narrate or to plot geography, Verne relies on the only tools at his disposal, words, for as an author he must work within the available medium to depict textually or to map an itinerary destined to explore the earth. Consequential to this exploration and the choice to recount the itinerary of the voyage itself by concentrating not on the final arrival at the end point or destination but on the numerous aspects of the textually depicted physical negotiation of space and place along the way, Verne's words come together to travel *through* geography by engaging in a process of movement within the elements of its composition, be they geographical or literary. Of course, since these same elements are in fact only expressions of words themselves once they are transferred to a space within the fictional world of Verne's literary creation, the many aspects taken from the ordinary world of his research and of scientific fact or geographical place locations retain their defining characteristics as points of reference, but are renegotiated by Verne who makes use of them in order to legitimize the exploration of the unknown blank spots on the map of the world. Stated otherwise, somewhere between the ordinary world that Verne references as he depicts or paints the earth, and the resulting *Voyages extraordinaires* happening in the fictional world, a process takes place through Verne's writing that is a narrative interaction and negotiation of the linguistic expression of space itself. The ordinary world of fact and definition and its fictional counterpart intermingle within this space as the author narrates an itinerary through its geography – both a place in the ordinary world and a space in the fictional one – bringing it to life and producing what I name in this dissertation the textual map.

Geography as a science has long been associated with description and with maps, but it is only within the last thirty or so years that geographical and literary studies have begun to be seriously considered together on occasion. This legitimization of the possible interaction between the two domains has significantly helped to make possible the consideration of space as it is produced in a textual form, and scholars of both literature and geography have enjoyed the new perspective this combination offers. In the case of Verne, this is particularly fortuitous because the entirety of the *Voyages extraordinaires* is exemplary of the artistic textual reproduction of the geographical world. More specifically, Verne writes the exploration of the blank spaces on the map of the world – the unknown lands and seas, *les mondes connus et inconnus* – that might only be expressed linguistically through the author's approximation based on previous study of other textual sources. It is a new exploration premised on research, but also on restating prior observation and experience; and therefore in many ways it becomes comparable to the execution of a map of something relatively unknown in the manner of old mapmakers who worked from oral or textual description drew approximations and revisited preceding versions to complement their current work. This process of creating a map, which also involves engaging the user of the map when the product is finished, exploded in Verne's literary endeavor and is the creation of what I find to be the particularity of his style and the subject of this dissertation.

The textual map that I propose here is a metaphor for reading, and particularly for reading Verne. It must be a metaphor because although Verne certainly worked with maps, included some of them in his books and took it upon himself to explain the blank spaces of the earth, he ultimately produced a series of texts rather than an image of the planet. On the other hand, the distinction between the visual production and the textual production should

not be held up as some sort of proof that Verne's project was not geographical, for such a conclusion would hastily ignore that much of geography – and even early cartography – was communicated by description and therefore rhetorical. Even today, sitting in front of Google Earth mapping my neighborhood, for instance, I the mapmaker have the ability to choose the content and presentation of the product. This is a rhetorical decision, indicating how the map becomes representative of figurative language, be it symbolic, iconic or textual; for indeed were I to explain the map verbally or textually, I would need to make additional rhetorical choices. The combination of the map and the text, the metaphorical value of the association, is therefore ground in the similarities of their production and their use, or their ability to represent ideas or concepts in a figurative manner.

With the above in mind, the textual map as I define it is a geographically inclined literary program that the author creates and the reader interprets through a series of textual negotiations or movements through a possible topography. Destined for a wide audience – a vulgarization, the textual map is factual enough to appear true, but this built-in intertextuality is itself plastic and an invitation for the reader to observe and participate in the construction of a possible reality to fill the unknowns, to expand the known universe. A compilation of sorts, or a map full of textual legends and explanations filling the unknowns and referring back to the knowns, the textual map represents a voyage predicated on prior knowledge but which does not limit itself to a bird's eye view, moving instead through the lands themselves as they are described. This movement through space is particularly important, for it differentiates the textual map from something less personal: it creates an experience from the process of the combination of discourses and perspectives that Verne unites and plays with to explore the unknown. The location of this process or this negotiation is somewhere between

the ordinary and the fictional worlds, or between the defined places of fact and the practice of a mobile space of the imagination where nearly anything is possible.

The textual map expresses the narrative of a geographical location and the expression of the active reading and writing process that progresses through an area, observing and interacting with it to move between the known and the unknown, an ordinary and an extraordinary or fictional geography. In what we tend to think of as a "normal" map (that is to say some sort of a visual image) the legend that explains how to interpret it is designed to bridge the gap between the reader and the text (map). The same is, of course, true for a textual map, but because the map itself is more complicated – representing multiple narratives – the legend is also more complex. Nonetheless, the principles of bridging the gap between text and reader remain its primary purpose, and I delineate three categories of the legend that identify the story and guide the reader. The first is a set of limits imposed by the perception of geography and location as a place in the ordinary world but separated from it by a shift in awareness that concentrates on the location itself rather than its position relative to other locations. This invests a space through which to move in the fictional world. The second category of legend fills in the limits of the space with characters who promote motion within the environment or topography. The third and last category is the author's style or manner of writing that expresses a variety of perceptions and possible information about the location; the author's own legend or reading of the geography. These three qualities combine within the text to position the narrative at the topographical level of experience by motion through it rather than over or above it. In doing this, Verne observes and expresses the negotiation of the known and the unknown in a shared space between the ordinary and the

fictional worlds as it is represented within the textual map, and renders the construction of such a space traceable by the qualities that compose the textual legend.

To discuss the textual map and the textual legend for all of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* would entail a project extending beyond my current time restrictions, therefore I frame a discussion of both concepts around three of Verne's stories that take place in approximately the same geographical location, the Cape Horn Archipelago.[2] In *Deux Ans de vacances*, a young group of boys find themselves shipwrecked on Hanover Island off the coast of Chile, but they are under the mistaken impression that they are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean and therefore very cut off from outside aide. Hanover is the northernmost of the three island locations I discuss, and although its association with the Cape Horn Archipelago might be argued, it shares many of the characteristics of the region, being one of the numerous uncharted islands that many commercial shipping ventures neared and passed while making their way around the Cape, either through the Strait of Magellan, through Drake's Passage or around the Horn itself. It is therefore very much part of this end-of-the-world location. The other two stories share the idea of the *bout du monde* more explicitly. In *Le Phare du bout du monde*, Verne recounts the tale of what happens when a newly erected lighthouse on Staten Island is captured and all but one of its keepers killed. This sole survivor must keep himself alive and stop the pirates' departure until the boat from the mainland returns months later. Finally, in *En Magellanie*, a mysterious anarchist who wants nothing more than to be left alone saves a shipload of settlers wrecked in the islands between Cape Horn and South America. He ultimately becomes their leader, and establishes a new nation on Hoste Island, which has recently been given to Chile in a treaty between it and

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[2] This should not be misinterpreted to imply that the concept of the textual map is limited in the Verne corpus to these three novels. The decision to concentrate on three stories here is one of practicality, and if I do not specifically study other novels in the series I am nonetheless aware of their content and style.

Argentina. The choice of these three island stories comes from their similar location, for each is in some ways revisiting a previous geographical exploration; with similar climates and elements to contend with, each is a sort of reflection of the others. Possibly more important than this is, however, the interesting aspect of their position as part of an archipelago.

After Chapter II, in which I discuss the textual map, and Chapter III, in which I explain the mechanics of the textual legends – the establishment of limits, the role of the characters and the ways in which Verne the author speaks directly or indirectly in his text – in Chapter IV, I return to the more difficult question of style and the reception Verne has received by the reading public. This brings the discussion of style and geography full circle, for Verne's particular affinity for the archipelago and its indefinable nature reflect the quality of his writing and geography. By writing about a location like an archipelago that remains unknown, not firmly defined, Verne enjoys more flexibility to use his writing to explore on the experiential level and to in fact craft a textual geography by making a space rather than pinning down a place or a point on the map. Neither an island nor a continental location but somewhere in between, Verne's geographies come to life and contain within them a mobility that he expresses through a combination of discourses and styles that I liken to a technological application of language. For within the destabilized location, he renegotiates the association of words and meaning for countless numbers of readers while also revealing the textual process of this very same. Yet this freedom is part of the problematic of Verne, for within this style exist so many references and pieces of others' work that Verne himself is sometimes lost, which leads to potential misunderstanding of his style. Slipping between discourses, between genres, between movements and narratives, his textual production is a

geographical exploration that is not only a geography of a blank space on earth, an unknown, but also a geography of language and its use or its productive value.

The concept of the textual map is born from the unknown, the spaces in between and the frontiers where language itself is forced to navigate through meaning. A narrative location in which various geographies interact to negotiate movement between the known and the unknown, the textual map is the location for language and words that are chosen specifically for their practical application and their accessibility by a broad reading public. Such a use of words becomes akin to technology, an interactive production destined for a particular use but which lends itself to new applications while opening up the possibility to appeal to and incorporate within it a large number of discourse sources. The textual map echoes and reflects therefore the question of genre because it comes from a style of writing that goes beyond the faithful description of one world – ordinary or fictional – and it encourages the exploration of a space that seems open to limitless possibilities rather than one strict interpretation. This is how Verne plots geography, making of it a mobile element to explore the process of writing a space.

CHAPTER II: INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL MAP

Much like the exploration of the earth by navigators, mapmakers, scientists, commercial agents, privateers and pirates, the exploration of a dissertation that promises to discuss Jules Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* within a literary and a geographical framework requires a stout heart to reconcile the waves of incorrect information, the storms of speculation and the built up sand bars of apparent facts – both real and fabricated – that can drag one down with Nemo to the depths of the ocean or leave one shipwrecked on a desert isle. Island or continent?[3] If only the answer were so clear.

Verne's own style can often reflect a certain encyclopedic nature, which in turn influences the framing and definition of the concept of the textual map that I begin to construct in this chapter. As I do so, I communicate a certain quantity of background information on the history of maps, geography and the *Voyages extraordinaires*, with special attention paid to the knowledge Verne and his contemporaries had about the Cape Horn Archipelago because it helps to place the textual map within both geographical and literary contexts. Since the textual map I propose is a sort of narrative space working between the two – in a sense mirroring Verne's own literary production that has never fallen squarely into one genre or another but references many and garners therefore a disparate readership[4] – understanding both contexts is imperative to relating to their combined effect. The concepts

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[3] This is a rather famous question in the Vernian world and often refers to Cyrus Smith and his colleagues in *L'Ile mystérieuse* determining whether they were shipwrecked (balloonwrecked) on an island or a continent. The answer was of pivotal importance to their tactic for survival. The question is repeated by the boys in *Deux Ans de vacances*, and the answer again shapes their tactic for life on the island.

[4] I specifically address the question of genre and Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

that combine to create the textual map are part and parcel of the world, literary and geographical, in which Verne wrote. Each one is a voice that participates in an intertextual construction that Verne forged together to map his world of knowns and unknowns[5] in a textual fashion, but nonetheless with the regularity of a cartographical[6] endeavor.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the conception of the textual map and to elucidate certain qualities in Verne's writing that lend to the production of the textual object something of the visual map exploded into an interactive exploration of what is possible in a location that is legitimized by its place in the real world, but that is transformed by movement into something more, an interpretive space. Between the place that is the ordinary world dot on the map and the space that is Verne's fictional world representation lies a geography that is hills and rivers and other topographical accidents that exist in both worlds, and in which originates the excuse for a story. The process of compiling this story, its construction and therefore its narration, is the textual map that negotiates the reader's movement *through* the shared geography.[7]

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[5] The terminology of *knowns* and *unknowns* is a nominative form of the concept of what is known or unknown. I give preference to the nominative form in this dissertation for the grammatical simplification it offers as well as the conceptual preference it affords by implying a spatial reference. Specifically, in studies of Verne's work the terms have been popularized as associated with the subtitle of the *Voyages extraordinaires* series, as they explore the *mondes connus et inconnus*.

[6] Cartography is loosely defined as the process of making maps. It requires a certain level of regularity and discipline because the image must adequately show the map user the information it contains.

[7] The definition of the term *geography* varies according to context and usage. Since the term is used widely, a popular or broad definition such as the one offered in the *Oxford Compact Dictionary*, (http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/geography), should be helpful. Generally, geography can be understood as the study of the physical features of the earth and of human activity as it relates to these and/or the relative arrangement of places and physical features. This definition better lends itself to the sense of geography as it is used in this dissertation than the definitions in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which offers: "1. a. The science which has for its object the description of the earth's surface, treating of its form and physical features, its natural and political divisions, the climate, productions, population, etc., of the various countries. […] c. The subject-matter of geography; the geographical features of a place or region; the range or extent of what is known geographically."

Certainly one can argue that the textual map is a simple metaphor for an approach to writing and reading, for indeed the tactics employed to create the fictional world through narration lie first at the author's feet before reaching the reader. And I would not argue against this, for a map is itself a metaphor, representing something that it is not. However, it is my assertion that the relationship between map and text in Verne's works is more complex and richer because the subject matter for the novels was geography itself. Under the guise of visiting the entire ordinary world in order to discover the contents of the blank spots on the maps – in other words, starting with the (incomplete) map itself – Verne explores what *might* be there, what is *possible*. He does this textually, in part by borrowing heavily upon multiple discourses, scientific and otherwise, that reaffirm the verisimilitude of the area by touching upon what is known to exist elsewhere. Incessant references to the ordinary world counterbalance the disconcerting feeling of the unknown that the reader might experience as Verne places him or her within (rather than above) the geographical landscape he describes. Observation and description at eye level rather than omniscience from a bird's eye view high above give the reader and author a perspective that does not distance itself from the landscape, moving *through* it instead. I refer to the narrative tactics used to accomplish this as a textual map, which I define as a geographically inclined literary program that the author creates and the reader interprets through a series of visions and reproductions or movements through a possible topography. Destined for a wide audience – a vulgarization, it is factual enough to appear true but this built-in intertextuality is itself plastic and an invitation for the reader to observe and participate in the construction of a possible reality to fill the unknowns, to expand the known universe. A compilation of sorts, or a map replete with textual legends and explanations written into the unknowns and referring back to the knowns, a textual map

represents a voyage predicated on prior knowledge but which does not limit itself to a bird's eye view, moving instead through the lands described.

It is generally more common to consider the relationship between geography and literature in the opposite fashion, even perhaps going to the extreme of doing as my neighbors did on a recent trip to Dublin, visiting various locations associated with James Joyce and his *Ulysses* or reading Dickens and then visiting the new Dickens World theme park to theoretically experience the London depicted in the novels.[8] Such endeavors may or may not be what one might call scholarly, but they do indicate the curious relationship that exists popularly between literature and geography. However, although such locations mentioned in the text are certainly mappable – both before and after the writing of the novel – in many cases they often remain supporting details within a narrative that has an agenda other than geographical exploration. Verne, on the other hand, uses maps as a springboard to explore geography. He wants to move through it, get on his hands and knees and see what it is really like, not catch a quick glimpse of it from above in passing. I specifically address a number of ways he accomplishes this in the next chapter on what I call the textual legend, which refers to narrative techniques for reading geography. However before addressing the specifics of Verne's style, I attempt a broader explanation of the relationship between literature and geography in the current chapter, which I divide into three sections. First, in "Roman de la Terre" and its subsections, I explain the importance of geography in Verne's life and in his writing, eventually introducing the concepts of *place* and *space* as defined by de Certeau and which I find differentiate the regular map from the textual one. Next, in "Ob Terras Reclusas" and its subsections, I investigate more thoroughly the relationship between

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[8] Obviously, such endeavors are destined to promote tourism, but it is nonetheless a tourism that is inextricably tied to the literary world, because it would not exist without the textual medium through which the locale is negotiated.

literature and geography historically and in the present, as well as a few of the ways in which

Verne's interactive style reflects the map's representational qualities. Finally, in "Locating

Verne's Sources" I speak at length about the specific area of the Cape Horn Archipelago,

which is the general location of the three novels I concentrate on in this dissertation. This

may seem a peculiar addition, but an understanding of the ordinary facts helps to clarify the

steps Verne takes to move between them and the fictional world as it is imagined.

II.A. Le Roman de la Terre

Despite the fact that his characters visited nearly every location on earth, Verne

himself kept his feet solidly planted on the ground. In fact, just getting him from his home in

Amiens to Paris became more and more difficult as he aged. This apparent complacency

should not be misconstrued as a lack of interest in the world around him. On the contrary,

Verne spent hours every day reading papers and magazines containing reports from around

the world.[9] The information he gleaned – and noted assiduously – from these sources

became his points of reference, allowing him to remain contemporary within the pages of his

stories and write convincingly about far-away locales that he had never seen. Such literary

voyages – as opposed to Verne traveling there himself – became part of the textual map, the

definition of which I construct throughout this chapter, for they and the importance of

geography in his writing help to explain how his program differs from those of other authors.

Verne was not unlike many of his contemporaries, for numerous nineteenth century

geographers were still of the armchair variety, meaning that they compiled and consulted

written sources about a location rather than visiting it themselves. However, geography itself

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[9] See Compère and Margot for the many comments Verne makes in interviews about his writing routine and his research habits.

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was changing during the century as those who practiced it endeavored to legitimize or redefine their field of study. This can generally be attributed to expanding horizons, the relative ease of transportation and political changes on the global scene that made geography interesting to a larger number of people, including the layman. Verne tapped into this general interest in geography and was fortunate enough to have a number of geographer friends who could help him. In fact, as I discuss in this first section, geography became the primary theme of Verne's work. Rather than concentrating on psychology or sentimentality – both of which require a level of what he considered implausible omniscience – he used geographical information taken from the ordinary world as a springboard to spark the imagination and create a new perception of that same geography, but within the fictional world. Topographical accidents of the landscape itself become excuses to create a story that the reader follows through the vehicle of the character, who is little more than an extension of the landscape. Verne did not write another *Comédie humaine*, preferring the *Comédie terrestre*, or as Dekiss calls it the *roman de la terre* (*Enchanteur* 52).

*i.*To Paint the Earth

Verne's novels are generally associated with the scientific advances of his time, which comprised his subject matter. [10] In particular, he had a predilection for the burgeoning domain of geography.

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[10] Verne often elaborated upon the scientific advances or made reference to the more fantastical of machines of his time, so has often come to be associated with science fiction (understood as fiction about science). Although this has certainly helped to keep him current both in bookstores and in literary criticism (see *Science Fiction Studies.* 32.1 (2005) for example), critics such as Boia would argue that Arthur Conan Doyle deserved the affiliation of the father of science fiction more for *The Lost World*. Many others argue for H. G. Wells. The question of paternity aside, the link made between Verne and science fiction has arguably hurt the perception of Verne's work as much as it has helped it, for it has pigeon-holed him into one genre. I pursue the question of genre and science in Chapter IV of this dissertation.

When writing my first book, 'Five Weeks in a Balloon,' I chose Africa as the scene of action, for the simple reason that less was, and is, known about that continent than any other; and it struck me that the most ingenious way in which this portion of the world's surface could be explored would be from a balloon.[11] I thoroughly enjoyed writing the story, and, even more, I may add, the researches which it made necessary; for then, as now, I always tried to make even the wildest of my romances as realistic and true to life as possible. (qtd. in Belloc)

If the subsequent choice and continuation of this subject matter is not entirely his own and at least partly due to the influence and power of his editor Pierre-Jules Hetzel, Verne's passion for geography nonetheless remains the guiding principle behind his *Voyages extraordinaires*. As early as 1863, with the publication of Verne's first novel, *Cinq semaines en ballon*, the story of a balloon journey across what was then an almost completely unknown African landscape, the geographical influence is clear and the fictional creation is commended for its factual basis in the respected *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

Les grandes découvertes des plus célèbres voyageurs constatées et résumées dans un rapide et charmant volume de science et d'histoire – de l'imagination et de la vérité – voilà ce qui distingue le brillant début de M. Jules Verne. Son livre restera comme le plus curieux et le plus utile des voyages imaginaires, comme une de ces rares œuvres de l'esprit qui méritent la fortune des Robinson et de Gulliver, et qui ont sur eux l'avantage de ne pas sortir un instant de la réalité et de s'appuyer jusque dans la fantaisie et dans l'invention sur les faits positifs et sur la science irrécusable. (qtd. in A. Evans, "Canon" 11)

Thinking back on his life and career in interviews with journalists Marie Belloc and Robert Sherard among others, Verne affirms that his interest in geography began at an early age and inspired his writing. "Well, I had always been devoted to the study of geography, much as some people delight in history and historical research. I really think that my love for maps and the great explorers of the world led me to my composing the first of my long series of geographical stories" (qtd. in Haining 21). A good fifteen years before his death, Verne can

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[11] Although a balloon would seem to offer only a bird's eye view, which apparently undermines the argument for the textual map, the character's interaction with the topography when they landed along their way exemplifies the importance of the nature of the voyage rather than the sole concentration on the arrival at a destination.

already sum up his career in an 1889 interview published in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. "Vous savez, mon vœu est de dépeindre toute la surface de la Terre, c'est-à-dire de peindre la Terre dans mes romans – voilà mon plan" (qtd. in Compère and Margot, *Entretiens* 60).

Given the wide range of past and current scholarly interest in Verne's writing, from the political with Chesneaux to the social with Minerva to the literary with Compère or Unwin, it is telling that there is agreement on the pivotal importance of geography in Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*. "Les voyages verniens sont depuis toujours au centre de l'attention critique, puisque la partie essentielle de son œuvre relève de la littérature géographique" (Minerva, *Utopie* 23). Minerva sums the relationship up nicely, but most other scholars have at a minimum commented on the importance, tracing the author's interest in the science back to his youth, when, as a schoolboy, he won prizes in the subject (Harpold 22). Yet others mention his arrival in Paris as a young man, meeting the famous Arago brothers and the photographer and heavier-than-air flight proponent Felix Tournachon, alias Nadar.[12] Later, his first novel published, Verne joined the Société de Géographie de Paris in 1865, becoming member 710 and rubbing elbows with the great geographers of his day.[13] And I would of course be remiss not to quote the landmark preface to the *Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras*, in which Verne's publisher P.J. Hetzel lays out the plan for the rest of Verne's literary career.

> Les romans de M. Jules Verne sont d'ailleurs arrivés à leur point. Quand on voit le public empressé courir aux conférences qui se sont ouvertes sur mille points de la France, quand on voit qu'à côté des critiques d'art et de théâtre, il a fallu faire place dans nos journaux aux comptes rendus de l'Académie des Sciences, il faut bien se

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[12] The name of Michel Ardan, a main character in the Verne novel *Autour de la lune*, is an anagram of Nadar. Ardan and Robur both exemplify the heavier-than-air possibilities.

[13] It is noteworthy that one of Verne's most famous characters, the geographer from *Les Enfants du capitaine Grant* (1865), Paganel, is presented as the secretary general of this important geographical society.

dire que l'art pour l'art ne suffit plus à notre époque et que l'heure est venue où la
science a sa place faite dans la littérature.

  Le mérite de M. Jules Verne, c'est d'avoir le premier et en maître, mis le pied
sur cette terre nouvelle. [...]

  Les œuvres nouvelles de M. Verne viendront s'ajouter successivement à cette
édition, que nous aurons soin de tenir toujours au courant. Les ouvrages parus et
ceux à paraître embrasseront ainsi dans leur ensemble le plan que s'est proposé
l'auteur, quand il a donné pour sous-titre à son œuvre celui de *Voyages dans les
mondes connus et inconnus*. Son but est, en effet, de résumer toutes les
connaissances géographiques, géologiques, physiques, astronomiques, amassées par
la science moderne, et de refaire, sous la forme attrayante et pittoresque qui lui est
propre, l'histoire de l'univers. (qtd. in Compère, *Ecrivain* 20)

In light of this mission statement of sorts, many biographers and scholars have in the past and

continue today to refer to Verne's work using the label scientific fiction[14] or scientific

romance, a phrase which may or may not have its origins with Verne's friend, Alexandre

Dumas *fils*[15] and which is at least partly responsible for the confusion relating to Verne's

relationship with science fiction. I agree, however, with Dekiss that the better label or

classification is *roman de la terre* (*Enchanteur* 52) because even though the voice of

scientific discourse – chemistry or physics, for example – flows throughout Verne's most

famous novels, it is not omnipresent throughout the series, nor does it ever take primary

importance and overwhelm other voices. Rather, science is a method or approach for

observation, which happens against the backdrop of different locations on the earth. "The

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[14] See A. Evans' "Science Fiction vs. Scientific Fiction in France: From Jules Verne to J.-H. Rosy Aîné" to
better understand the difference between scientific fiction and science fiction. A. Evans explains that in
scientific fiction, science is used as a didactic tool to implant scientific knowledge. In science fiction, the
author uses science for "purely *fictional* purposes." It is used for plot progression and verisimilitude building.
"In all cases, SF does not seek to teach *science* through/with fiction, but rather to develop *fiction* through/with
science. The *raison d'être* of science in the narrative process itself shifts from primary position to secondary,
from subject to context. It seeks no longer to address the reasoning intellect but rather the creative imagination"
(1).

[15] Dekiss notes that "Jules Verne rappelle à de nombreuses reprises qu'il écrit des romans géographiques. Le
terme de "Roman de la science" est attribué à Alexandre Dumas par divers biographes. Volker Dehs note à ce
sujet que cette attribution à Dumas reste une hypothèse" (Dekiss, *Enchanteur* 52).

real thrust of Verne's works, their *raison d'être*, was to explore the globe" (Butcher, *Biography* 258).

The exploration of the globe requires forays into the unknown, and Verne's use of the science of geography is more complex than merely didactic. Geography as a process of writing the earth or reproducing the physical experience with words enacts a narrative process that shifts emphasis from the ordinary world of cognitive functioning of the intellect to the fictional world of the creative imagination. In a sense, this is one of the few instances where Verne's style actually does resemble that of science fiction, in which some would argue the purpose of science is to spur the imagination rather than to be didactic (A. Evans, *Science* 1). When Verne began writing, much of the map of the world still contained a series of blank spaces, with little or nothing known with certainty about the geography or the people who inhabited such lands as the interior of Africa, South America or the Polar Regions. With his first novel, *Cinq semaines en ballon*, Verne began a pattern of investigating these blank spaces – or at least sending his characters to explore them. Like diplomatic envois, they travel through new lands, observing, acquiring knowledge about the blank spaces, and relating their findings back to the known ordinary world from which they come. In some ways, their explorations resemble Verne's own; for, of course, theirs is also a literary journey based on science, but nonetheless a fictional construction.

Unlike his characters, although Verne himself enjoyed his various trips on his yachts and a few grander tourist excursions now and then, he did not travel widely and wrote his texts based on other written sources available to him locally or by subscription (Butcher, *Biography* 285). In this sense, he was like any of us looking down at the pages of an atlas or a map, wondering what could possibly be in that blank unknown and maybe even a bit

overwhelmed at the thought, but willing to let imagination give it meaning. Butor was the first to put into words the exact sentiment.

> Il est le premier à avoir su faire passer dans les mots, non seulement le véritable amour des cartes et des estampes, mais ce trouble aussi que nous pouvions éprouver enfants, à feuilleter manuels de physique, chimie et astronomie, de pauvres livres laids, trop forts pour nous, mais pleins de mots nouveaux, de figures indéchiffrables et de promesses. C'est dans une certaine science qu'il trouve la matière de ses déclarations, renouvelant ainsi totalement l'imagination du savoir, […]. ("Point" 132)

Colonialism, Antarctic and Arctic exploration determining the continental or maritime nature of the two Poles and other expeditions to the heights of the mountains and the depths of the oceans shrank the blank spaces on the map over the approximately forty years of Verne's long literary career. Fortunately, the literary approach that Verne had chosen as a young author, finding his best information in other written sources rather than personal travel, allowed the less mobile, aging author to continue to follow new discoveries with excitement and maintain the rigorous pace of Hetzel's publishing program, writing about present, current discoveries and contemporary subjects (Minerva, *Utopie* 181).[16]

With this research style, it is no surprise that Verne himself even dabbled in non-fictional geography at Hetzel's request, publishing *La Géographie Illustrée de la France* in 1868, near the beginning of his career, and the three-tome *Découverte de la Terre: Histoire générale des grands voyages et des grands voyageurs*, whose publication (1864-1880) was prolonged and interrupted by the Franco-Prussian War. Much of these works is relatively forgotten or purposely overlooked by scholars because both efforts were collaborations. In the first case, Hetzel asked Verne to replace Théophile Lavallée, who had taken ill and would die a year later. Verne acquiesced, but a lot of the work was actually done by Edmond-Yvon

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[16] This is undoubtedly a part of the reason his contemporaries in the sciences held Verne's writing in high esteem.

Dubail (Butcher, *Biography* 255). In the second case, Verne wrote the first tome, covering exploration and discovery up to the eighteenth century, but then had to collaborate with Gabriel Marcel from the Bibliothèque Nationale on the other two because he was simply already too busy trying to keep up with his demanding contract with Hetzel for the series of *Voyages extraordinaires*. Nonetheless scholars such as Weissenberg, Thompson, Huet and Minerva continue to mention these nonfiction works today because Verne was assiduous in his research methods for his novels and these works, particularly the *Histoire générale des grands voyages et des grands voyageurs*, undoubtedly familiarized Verne with a large body of knowledge about the lands his fictional characters explored. Indeed Minerva points out that a great number of the Antarctic explorers or voyages mentioned in *En Magellanie*, for example, appear in the *Histoire générale des grands voyages et des grands voyageurs* ("Sguardo" 259). I have also found the three tomes of exploration and navigation to be an invaluable and frankly interesting resource, and I will take them up again when I discuss Verne's sources for information on South America and the many echoes between this nonfiction work and the fictional *Voyages extraordinaires*.

Over the course of his career, Verne's known world shrank as the speed of communication and travel grew.[17] Distances that had previously seemed impossible and therefore unknown were shrinking; author, editor and general public alike expected that the world might be described because it could be experienced either immediately or textually. Responding to this new world, Hetzel's preface to the *Géographie Illustrée de la France* begins to reveal the approach the editor and the author take in painting the world.

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[17] During the mid to late nineteenth century, the likes of Thomas Cook began to act as an intermediary between individual travelers and those who would serve them along their way (hotels, railroads, and so forth). This new tourism industry, along with technological advances, improved infrastructure and greater mobility due in part to fewer working hours made it possible for people to travel farther in less time.

> Notre civilisation est douée d'une force si expansive, est armée de moyens si puissants, et de puissance si rapidement croissante qu'aucun pays, si reculé qu'il soit, ne saurait échapper à ses investigations, se soustraire à sa domination. Le jour n'est plus bien éloigné où elle aura fouillé, jusque dans leurs dernières profondeurs, les mystères des pays encore inaccessibles. Ce n'est pas là une vaine hypothèse, c'est une certitude. (qtd. in Huet 12)

Although you or I, with potentially perfect hindsight, might find Hetzel's words subtly smacking of colonialism and dreams of expanding European dominance, Verne's own desire to paint the world was far less emotional and more purely geographical. The Italian writer Edmondo De Amicis, who visited Verne in his later life, reported what Verne often stated to friends and reporters that rather than first choosing his characters, he began with a location about which to write. Not character studies, his novels were geographically based.

> A l'inverse de ce que je croyais, il ne se lance pas dans des recherches sur un pays après avoir imaginé les personnages et l'action du roman qui doit s'y dérouler. Au contraire, il se livre d'abord à de nombreuses lectures historiques et géographiques relatives aux pays mêmes comme s'il n'avait rien d'autre à faire qu'une description étendue et détaillée: les personnages, les faits principaux et les épisodes du roman surgissent pendant ses lectures […] (qtd. in Boia, *Paradoxes* 30)

For this reason, as well as others that I will bring to evidence over the course of this dissertation, I maintain that Jules Verne wrote textual maps of the lands and seas of the earth. By textual map, I understand a narrative of a geographical location somewhere in the ordinary world ("reality") that creates a space or sort of map through which the author can negotiate a fictional geography that maintains the authenticity of its location in the ordinary world, but in which nearly anything is possible. The textual map is therefore an aide in exploration of the unknown, a method of referencing the known in order to move through the unknown.

The decision to base my discussion of this production in geographical terminology as opposed to psychological or purely narrative, for example, stems from Verne's own interest

in the subject, which he used not only for descriptions of individual locations but also to plan the entire series of the *Voyages*. Butor points out indicators to this effect in his "Point supreme," mentioning that the itineraries followed by the *Voyages extraordinaires* pursue a specific and planned tight pattern on the globe, intertwining and interweaving so as to cover much of its surface (136). Petel adds that it is certain that Verne wanted to transmit knowledge about the globe to his public (42). However, it is Terrasse who rightly defines the series, reminding the reader that Jules Verne "[…] a pendant toute son existence été amoureux des cartes de géographie. Il en a semé ses romans si bien que l'ensemble de son œuvre illustrée constitue une sorte d'atlas et que le lecteur finit par partager sa passion" (29).[18] Although he is certainly referring primarily to the illustrated maps interspersed with the descriptions of the *Voyages*, not all maps are visual, for if they were how would a blind person navigate through a known or unknown area? Or how would I explain to a lost student on campus how to find their classroom building? The mapping medium and the theoretical terrain it covers can vary, creating a variety of reading experiences, as Conley, for instance, reminds his reader in *The Self Made Map*. Mignolo adds in his work on the Renaissance that it is important to understand that the map is more limited than what exists, for the inclusion of all detail would be overwhelming and render the map useless. The mapmaker therefore works with description, which does not include everything in existence (227). Maps are neither completely visual nor all-inclusive, but they are referential and like the *Voyages extraordinaires* there is more to them than published illustrations.

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[18] The reader interested in Verne's maps or mapping projects inspired by Verne's novels will enjoy Garmt de Vries' Jules Verne Collection at (http://www.phys.uu.nl/~gdevries/voyages/world.cgi).

If one can detect a budding interest in geography at the end of the eighteenth century,
with the idea of a geographical society dating back to 1785 in France, widespread public
interest in the science emerges in the nineteenth century. In 1821, the Société de Géographie
de Paris was founded in response to a perceived need for better maps and the mounting desire
to launch missions of exploration to unknown lands, particularly to the inner African
continent. Although the general public initially perceived the group as elitist, the Société
attracted a completely new sort of member during the Second Empire (1852-1870), the more
modest social strata represented by the functionaries, state employees, mid-level army and
navy officers, businessmen, bankers and colonial employees. In 1871, the first International
Congress of Geography was held in Angers. A little more than a decade later, the Paris
Société had 2,500 members, all geographical societies counted together in France had about
10,000 members, and there were some 30,000 members of other geographical societies
worldwide (Duclos 215). Quantitatively speaking, such numbers reveal a sharp interest in
geography in France itself and relative to the rest of the world. They also support a wide
prospective readership for literature related to geography, something Verne's profit-minded
publisher, Hetzel, quickly understood.

Despite the benefit it would certainly bring to them in increased public interest, one
might think that the scientific community would have eschewed Verne's fictional
popularization of contemporary science during his time. However, the following review
from the *Année Géographique* demonstrates quite the contrary.

> Il est bien difficile que la science et la fiction se trouvent en contact sans alourdir
> l'une et abaisser l'autre; ici elles se font valoir par une heureuse alliance que met en
> relief le côté instructif de la relation tout en laissant son attrait au côté d'aventures.
> Les plus habiles y trouvent à apprendre, et la masse des lecteurs y puisera presque à

son insu, des notions irréprochables que bien peu auraient été chercher dans des livres d'un aspect plus sévère. J'ajouterai, et c'est là pour moi le plus grand mérite des compositions de M. Verne, que loin d'éloigner des lectures plus graves, elles y attirent plutôt d'acquisitions variées dans les récits d'un voyageur instruit qui est en même temps un conteur spirituel. (qtd. in A. Evans, "Canon" 12).

This attitude reveals more than just the scientific community's sentiment towards Verne. It also references the increased public awareness of other lands and new scientific advances, as well as the acceptance of texts other than the strictly scientific – *des livres d'un aspect plus sévère* – by which information might be widely disseminated to a public whose members were experiencing in a very real sense the expansion of their horizons during the course of the nineteenth century. The industrial revolution changed the individual's daily experiences, new discoveries and new technologies opened up the possibility of travel to places once thought impossible to reach and colonization brought new urgency to the need for correct – or at least improved – information and maps (Weissenberg, "Autour" 28-29; Toumson 118). Logically, a new set of literature came in step with these new horizons. Reclus, Flammarion and Figuier were among but a few authors who penned their scientific work with the general public in mind. Even Hetzel, who wrote under the pseudonym P. J. Stahl, noted that one travels "pour courir après l'imprévu et faire les yeux doux au hasard… Nous espérons bien vous conduire au bout de ce monde et même un peu dans l'autre […]" (qtd. in Gamarra 113). The artifice around which an author planned his or her work shifted in light of the public's changing and more educated, broadening taste. Gone were the days, for example, when one could claim to have blindly stumbled across a dusty sentimental manuscript in an attic. Rather, authors preferred to frame their stories in scientific discourse, a public meeting, a press release or a similar sort of event (Citti 73). Science became a legitimate reason for writing.

The exploration of science and the deliberate involvement of the reading public as part of the justification for the text itself might come as a surprise if one has forgotten that these authors' large volumes consolidated today on numerous library shelves often first appeared serialized in the press, which made them widely available in a manageable format. Compared to the past, the average individual had relatively greater access to information and was becoming more aware of his or her relation to others, both as a consumer able to purchase new products from abroad and as a citizen belonging to a particular nation. In the history of geography, one often points to the need for better maps and better education as a driving force for the popularization of the science, but in reality many of the reasons for the growing interest in geography can be reduced – and probably oversimplified – to increased individual self-awareness and the process of nation-building (Robic, "Vue" 347). In this environment, one cannot remove the human aspect from science, and popular myths and legends emerge, or are at least revealed, through the process of literary vulgarization of the history of the earth and geography (Minerva, *Utopie* 53, 55). Verne, whose literary purpose is to remain as contemporary as possible within the geographical framework (Huet 11), reflects the many sides of the scientific conscience of his time; he is fascinated by new advances and techniques, yet still taken aback by the mystery of it all (Coutrix-Gouaux, "Mythologie" 13).

> Si l'effet vernien réside en partie dans ce *jeu du contexte*, les règles doivent trouver leur inspiration, du moins leur acceptation, dans une imagination commune à Jules Verne et à ses lecteurs, et qui forme le contexte de ce contexte, selon les conditions qui prévalaient pendant les années 1850 et 1860. On pensera d'abord au contexte d'un *état d'esprit* scientifique qui fait *autorité* et domine l'opinion des journaux; ensuite aux politiques éditoriales de la presse et des publications à large public; par conséquent au corpus des plaisirs de lecture avérés et rémanents pour ce public (DeFoe, Dumas, Fenimore Cooper, Gustave Aimard... et tout ce qu'il aimait retrouver sans le reconnaître d'emblée); et enfin les opinions régnantes, politiques et morales. (Citti 69)

Of course, in addition to the other contemporary events Verne took advantage of in his writing, it is necessary to mention that not all of Verne's sources were non-fictional. Generally speaking, any popular source was acceptable to him (Unwin, *Journey* 56), and as Butcher points out, probably the most influential fictional writers for Verne were Poe and Cooper. Neither of these authors were conventional, and Butcher argues they may have specifically influenced Verne's desire to avoid implausible omniscience and narrate instead through observation or the observable (*Biography* 209). Thus the previously mentioned individual reader's self-awareness finds its corresponding reflection in the author's own awareness as working within the world his descriptions inhabit. Moving through a location, employing techniques of narration that work within the context of the geographical and fictional landscape rather than trying to dominate it, Verne writes an intertextual conversation of sorts using a style that guards its authenticity while venturing into the geographical unknown. But in light of the author's awareness of context, why does Verne choose geography instead of a more sentimental, psychological or simply human theme in the vein of Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* or Zola's Rougon-Macquart? Quite simply, Verne said he was not interested in such things.[19] Moreover, when as a young author he did try to explore the more personal side of one of his characters, Michel Dufrenoy in *Paris au XXe siècle*, Hetzel flatly told him not to bother again with such an effort, that he had failed at it (Unwin, "Negotiating" 13). The choice to pursue geography rather than sentimentality or psychology reflects the inability to directly observe the unknown of the human "heart." Unlike the heart,

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[19] In the first of two interviews with Sherard, Verne states, "I am no very great admirer of psychological novel, so-called, because I don't see what a novel has to do with psychology, and I can't say that I admire the so-called psychological novelists" (qtd. in Compère and Margot 92).

even the most unknown of geographical locations is theoretically observable and describable through Verne's tried and true method of gathering description from other textual sources.

iii. **The River that Flows in Two Directions**

As a young boy in the shipping port of Nantes, Jules Verne lived on an island in the middle of the river. With the coming and going of each tide, the direction of the river's flow would change, and superstitious voices whispered that the boy's island would someday be swept out to sea because of its odd surroundings. Butcher offers this as one possible explanation for Verne's persistent confusion and somewhat compulsive insistence about direction as an adult (*Biography* 14-15). This mistrust in his own ability to observe seems to coincide with Verne's writing style, for his sources are always secondhand and only on the rarest occasions did he travel to or witness firsthand the subject matter or location for his novels. It might be difficult to imagine that this approach to writing about geography – never actually visiting for himself – would succeed, but Dupuy points out that most serious nineteenth century geographers did not have the luxury of traveling to the locations they describe and relied instead on secondhand sources in the form of stories or narratives and sometimes imperfect empirical data (*L'homme* 33). Obviously, such an approach contains inherent flaws because it often cannot filter out false information and will instead perpetuate it, but one worked with what was available.

What Minerva refers to as Verne's "*vernis scientifique*" is therefore the author's careful choice of his sources from among the perceived best available in the domain of travel and discovery (*Utopie* 182). Certainly, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Verne could take full advantage of the many naturalists and explorers returning from the last of the great voyages of circumnavigation (Duclos 212). As concerns Africa, the names of Stanley

and Livingston and Richard Burton were contemporary, as well as Humboldt and Crevaux for northern South America (Gamarra 96-97). And although there is mixed opinion on the possible influence of Darwin, it is worth mentioning in passing that his theories were also gaining entry into the popular domain during Verne's publishing lifetime.

Two individuals in particular deserve special mention for their influence on Verne: Jacques Arago and Elisée Reclus. In 1851 as a young man, Verne was introduced to Arago by the family friend and mayor of Nantes, Evariste Colombel. Arago, who was by then nearly blind, had traveled around the world on the *Uranie* in 1817 and used astronomy, physics, chemistry and geology in his quite popular writings about his journeys. His brothers were equally colorful characters: Jean participating in the Mexican War for Independence, François in the California gold rush and Etienne in the Paris Commune. François Arago was also the influential director of the Paris Observatory and had measured the arc of the meridian of the earth. But it was Jacques who took Verne under his wing, inviting him to his house and in so doing giving him the opportunity to meet some of the most influential travel writers, geographers and scientists of the time. And it was Jacques who published the *Note scientifique de voyage au bout du monde*, which echoes Verne's future use of the phrase "end of the world" for *En Magellanie* and *Le Phare du bout du monde* (Minerva, "Sguardo" 257).[20]

Another great influence on Verne was Reclus, a political anarchist and widely recognized geographer whose 19-volume *Nouvelle Géographie universelle* brought the world to the fingertips of the average person. Although it is possible that the two men met through common friends in the publishing or the geographical world, or even at a punch in the

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[20] *En Magellanie* was originally titled *Au Bout du monde*.

summer of 1884 during Verne's last trip through the Mediterranean, their encounter remains

unsure (Butcher, *Biography* 273). However, as Dupuy has carefully investigated in *Jules

Verne: L'homme et la terre*, Reclus's name is used as irreproachable scientific evidence in

nearly a dozen of Verne's *Voyages* starting in 1885. It is not my purpose here to pursue their

relationship further than simply in passing, but I would suggest that a study of the two men

could be quite fruitful for the consideration of their scientific method as well as potential

political indications that might come to light in Verne's work. Leave it for now that Verne

considered Reclus a solid source of information, often mentioning his name in interviews

along with those of Arago and Verne's other sources. In the first "Jules Verne at Home"

interview with Sherard, Verne says he has "toutes les œuvres de Reclus[21] – j'ai une grande

admiration pour Elisée Reclus – et tout Arago. Je lis aussi et relis, car je suis un lecteur très

attentif, la collection *Le tour du monde* qui est une série de récits de voyages" (qtd. in

Compère and Margot, 92).

While I am on the subject of Verne's influences and library, which was of course only

a small part of the information to which he had daily access, in addition to most of Reclus

and all of Arago, Verne also owned *Stielers Hand Atlas* by Julius Perthes, *L'Atlas sphéroïdal

et universel de Géographie* by F.A. Garnier, the *Tour du Monde* and the *Bulletin de la

Société de Géographie*. Still under the same heading of geography and geology, he had

Amiot's *Géographie descriptive* and Malte-Brun's *La France illustrée*, as well as De

Boucheporn's *Etudes sur l'histoire de la terre*. Adding to his collection was the *Magasin

d'Education et de Récréation*, the *Musée des familles*, *Nature*, *La Science pour tous*, and

L'Univers pittoresque. And finally, of particular interest in this study, which will eventually

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[21] Actually, he was unable to obtain the last volumes of the *Géographie* before his death.

take us to South America, Verne owned Dumont d'Urville's *Voyage au Pôle Sud* and Comte H. de la Vaulx's *Voyage en Patagonie* (Kiszely, 44-45). These are by no means a complete list of the contents of the author's library, but it does give one the idea of the important variety of resources at his immediate disposal that would enable him to "voyager sur la carte, voyager par les livres, voyager en écrivant" (Boia, *Paradoxes* 29).

Finally, I come for a first time to South America and the lands on which this dissertation will specifically concentrate. Verne had a distinct interest or fascination with South America. His Uncle Prudent Allotte de la Fuÿe, at whose house Verne spent childhood holidays, was a retired slaver and had done business in Venezuelan trading ports. Verne idolized the man for his great health and his distant adventures (Butcher, "Introduction" 12) and undoubtedly tried to recapture some of his uncle's character and adventures in his *Voyages extraordinaires*. Moreover, one notices that once he began formulating his series of voyage stories, attempting to visit or paint each country or region only once, there were certain areas that attracted return voyages: Scotland, Oceania, the Poles and South America being his favorites (Unwin, *Journey* 28). It is therefore not unreasonable given Uncle Prudent's influence and the multitude of voyages Verne writes that he explores the Cape Horn region in more than one text. Paumier aptly affirms that Verne "avait une certain fascination [...] pour ces régions de Patagonie, du détroit de Magellan au cap Horn en passant par la Terre de Feu. Peut-être en écho à son *Histoire des grands voyages et des grands voyageurs* (1878), elles lui inspirent quelques belles pages dans pas moins de sept romans![22] [...] Mais c'est l'extrémité sud du continent qui inspira le romancier" (171-172).

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[22] Paumier lists the following seven: *Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant* (vol 1), *Robur le conquérant*, *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Sphinx des glaces*, *Le Phare du bout du monde*, *Les Naufragés du Jonathan*, and *En Magellanie*. This effectively counts one story twice since *Les Naufragés du Jonathan* and *En Magellanie* are different versions of the same story, the first being largely Verne's son's creation based on his father's unfinished

Maybe this is because at the time, according to Reclus, Chile could be compared to a Renaissance country with a bright future both on its own as well as in relation to and as an active participant in the rest of world commerce ("Républiques" 979-980). Or maybe Verne simply saw there what the Chilean Francisco Coloane saw a century later, a land waiting to be painted. "December nights in the Strait of Magellan are very short. After a livid, enchanting twilight that lasts until almost midnight, the darkness begins to stretch out indecisively, but it still has not finished *painting* shadows over the earth when already the tenuous splendor of dawn appears in the east, which will quickly emerge full and radiant with its bejeweled light" (85, my emphasis).

iv. L'enfant amoureux de cartes et d'estampes

Before going any further in the study of Verne's geography, a discussion of the supposed human side of Verne's writing imposes. As mentioned previously, Verne reflected the spirit of his contemporaries and their public and professional interest in geography. A certain number of Verne experts have therefore extrapolated from the author's timeliness and choice of narrative something beyond the geographical, a political or social motivation behind his writing. Among some of the most notable are Dekiss, who sees in Verne's stories humanity's little bit of eternity (*Enchanteur* 136-137), and Chesneaux, whose interest lies in humanity's mastery of the planet. Although their approaches differ, both critics attempt to ascertain how Verne understood the social and political society in which he lived and the ways in which he expressed these perceptions through his writing. Although this is certainly

manuscript, *En Magellanie*. Although I agree that the two stories are so different that one could count them as two, Dumas and a strong number of other critics choose to ignore Michel's work.

interesting – and particularly so when considering the social tones of his later novels[23] – I

maintain that any discussion of the domination of the earth can be equally applied to a

geographically oriented literary project that has as its goal the reformulation of what is

already known about the ordinary world to create a narrative map through which new

discoveries can be made, namely the unknown through the fictional world. Therefore, if like

Chesneaux one chooses to see in Verne the Saint-Simonian message of knowledgeable

exploitation of the globe and the mastery of nature according to scientific principles for the

benefit of all humanity (*Politique*, 61), I will concede those elements. However, in the place

of analyzing the "mise en valeur systématique du globe" (*Regard* 101) as social commentary,

I argue that the *Voyages extraordinaires* are at their foundation a geographical work.

Therefore, they represent primarily an active textual exploration of the world, an atlas or

series of maps that narrate movement through a land that one can locate on the globe but that

exists beyond that in fiction.

To help explain the way the textual map negotiates a location that is concurrently

between and touching both the ordinary and the fictional worlds through narrative, I find it

useful to consider the distinction de Certeau makes between *place* and *space*.

> A place (*lieu*) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements
> are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two
> things being in the same location (*place*). The law of the 'proper' rules in the place:
> the elements taken into consideration are *beside* one another, each situated in its own
> 'proper' and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an instantaneous
> configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability. […]
> A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction,
> velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile
> elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it.
> Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it,
> temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or

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[23] One should remember that the last of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, published after Verne's death, were
rewritten by his son who was much more socially liberal and politically engaged.

contractual proximities. On this view, in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization, transformed into a term dependent upon many different conventions, situated as the act of a present (or of a time), and modified by the transformations caused by successive contexts. In contradistinction to the place, it has none of the univocity of stability of a "proper."

In short, *space is a practiced place*. (*Practice* 117)

I will return many times to the difference between space and place during the course of this dissertation, working with its different aspects and their ramifications for a study of Verne's work. As it concerns the case at hand (or Verne's level of interest in human projection within his work) although it is obvious that the easiest way for an author to practice a place and make it a space is through human intervention by means of his characters, I have already mentioned Verne's lack of interest in psychology or sentimentality in novels, and I will look more closely at the relative unidimensionality of his characters in the next chapter. However, since characters generally and traditionally remain the author's easiest agent for narrative movement, if one considers some of the more famous Vernian characters like Nemo or Fogg, what role do they play in their respective novels? They act like the narrative vessels they are, the author's tools, for their presence is actually an excuse for movement, a vehicle by which the author and reader progress through a geographical location. Their "character" changes little more than my car's, but like my car they make my movement possible, the textual result of which concurrently narrates an ordinary world location, a place, and a fictional world space.

A necessary digression must be made here, for when discussing Verne and vehicles one tends to think more often of his quasi-inventions like the *Nautilus* than of his characters; but the machine and the human share the characteristic of being a useful tool for the author. Verne's famous machines are actually only simple means to an end, or comfortable vehicles

in which one can travel in order to effect a geographical exploration (Chesneaux, *Politique* 38-39). Yet the average reader persists in seeing in these awkward contraptions something exceptional, futuristic and even social in nature or spirit either because of the film adaptations of Verne's books or because the imagination easily attaches itself to the image of a large, mysterious mechanical object – even one based entirely on Verne's contemporary technology. This is not to say that these contraptions are unworthy of our interest or awe, for indeed as A. Evans rightly points out "[t]he real originality of these 'dream machines' lies […] in their role as stepping-stones to a sense of wonder. They are the '*objets privilégiés*' that bridge for the reader the industrial with the artistic and the scientific with the sublime – objects that add not only verisimilitude to Verne's narratives but also an element of fantasy and *poésie*" ("Dream"). Weissenberg agrees that these steam-based machines are not prophetic but are rather a reverie of poetic inspiration ("Autour" 38). A mind's playful combination of what is and what could be, the machines are a mixture of fantasy and real. As such, the technology of the machine interacts between and with both the ordinary and the fictional worlds and "les machines dénudent le procédé narratif: une machine véritable joue le rôle de la 'machine' de l'intrigue. La mécanique textuelle se montre sous la forme d'une construction de pièces métalliques […]" (Compère, "Machines" 96).

Like Verne's machines, the purpose of his characters – many of whom are simply formulaic and lacking in originality – is vehicular and geographical in the sense that they are conceived to depart for a destination and return home again (Citti, 77-78). If, during the course of their voyage, they encounter or enact a political or social situation that one might call universal or intrinsic to humanity as a whole, I maintain that this is a branch – but not the trunk, which remains geographical – of Verne's desire to put within his *Voyages* all the

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knowledge available to him at the time of writing. It is not incorrect therefore to see in Verne

a concentration on the history of the universe (Butcher, "Self" 25) or a political history

(Chesneaux, *Regard* 16), for these are expressions of Verne's "tendance à fictionner le réel, à

projeter dans les récits et descriptions qu'il lit des personnages et des événements

romanesques" (Compère, *Ecrivain* 46). However, his characters are secondary to the *récits*

et descriptions; they are observers who filter the accumulation of knowledge, which Verne

portrays in the fictional world rather than the ordinary one, fusing the real and the imagined

to create a fictional universe of knowledge (25). The characters are reduced therefore to

simple conveyors of information, guides through the textually defined exploration of the

Voyages extraordinaires.

This approach to characterization has the additional benefit of reconciling one of the

most nagging problems in scholarship on Verne, the contradictory or even unacceptable

attitudes and behaviors of characters from one novel in the series to another. Rather than

concentrating on questioning the motivation behind the mechanical regularity of Fogg's

movements or Nemo's relative cruelty when facing his enemies, the reader who sees in these

characters excuses for movement rather than repositories of humanness can instead consider

the two stories as explorations around the world and through the seas, and is no longer left

puzzling over how such an inhumane character could possibly exist. Instead, the reader is

freed to ask the more pertinent question, what qualities would a character require in order to

go around the world in accordance to a demanding 80-day timetable or move through 20,000

leagues of relative solitude under the oceans' waters? As I mentioned before, Verne avows

that his first inspiration was location, only secondarily filling in characters who would live

there. Thus the chronometric timetable demands Fogg, and the oceans call to a man who is

no man (*nemo* in Latin), but who gives the excuse to be mobile in a mobile element (*mobilus in mobile*); each is an excuse for linguistic movement within narration, the production of the text itself.

II.B. Ob Terras Reclusas

Revelatory of some of the inherent vagueness of geography, the Royal Geographic Society of London's inscription read *Ob Terras Reclusas*, which can be understood as either *to* hidden lands or *from* hidden lands, and thus contains within it both the unknown and the known (Michie 5). Indeed, although the Greeks appear to us to have defined the organizational limits of space, or their *Herm*, and the fence or wall around their world, or the *orbis*; in 1835 a certain Colonel Jackson noted that maps themselves could be deconstructed because they are nothing but highly conventional ways of representing a landscape. The human perception, on the other hand, is partial, relational and subjective (Michie 9). If so – and I agree that it is – humans might find themselves more interested in what lies outside the borders of the known; the monsters, deserts, beasts, bogs and frozen seas that ancient Romans took poetic license to create in order to emphasize the fate of anyone with the hubris – defined as overflowing one's bounds – to transgress the barrier between the known and the unknown (Gillies 3, 10; Romm 17).

In this next section, I explain the relationship between literature and geography with particular concern for the ways in which the general public perceives maps versus the possibility for interaction with the space that the mapmaker attempts to represent, but which requires more imagination than it does science to grasp. Perception, whether through a map or a literary text, is a key to the narration or the representation through which the space is revealed, for it incorporates a sense of movement through the area. Verne brings this to his

stories by including multiple discourses, each a forgery of some other source, that move

metaphorically beyond the limits of what has been previously established. In doing so, he

creates a world in which anything is possible because locations on a map are not defined as

simple places, scientifically relational dots on a planar surface meant to represent the

ordinary, verifiable world. Verne writes descriptions instead, plunging the reader into an

interactive relationship with a geographical space that is all about movement, represented

linguistically through the use and reuse of language.

i. Tactic and Style

Today, one remembers Verne primarily as a writer of novels, but a significant

percentage of his income actually came from the theatrical adaptations of a few of his most

famous texts.[24] Although true spectacles – complete with elephants and challenging staging

– such elaborate productions recall to mind that Verne did not content himself to a formulaic

or simplified travelogue but instead searched for authenticity and style in his writing. He

makes this clear in the rest of the quote I cited earlier.

> Mon but a été de dépeindre la Terre, et pas seulement la Terre mais l'univers, car j'ai
> quelquefois transporté mes lecteurs loin de la Terre dans mes romans. Et j'ai essayé
> en même temps d'atteindre un idéal de style. On dit qu'il ne peut pas y avoir de style
> dans un roman d'aventures, mais ce n'est pas vrai; cependant j'admets qu'il est
> beaucoup plus difficile d'écrire de tels romans dans un bon style littéraire que les
> études de caractères qui sont tellement en vogue aujourd'hui. (qtd. in Compère and
> Margot 92)

Adding that with the exception of Maupassant and Daudet he is unimpressed by the *romans*

psychologiques that were popular at the time, Verne emphasizes the importance of style as a

device or technique that distinguishes exceptional authorship or narrative from the rest. Yet

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[24] Many a scholar, like Verne's own son, has expressed a certain sense of outrage at how little income the
author made on his novels.

despite the clarity Verne shows in being able to step outside of his writing and see its

inherent difficulties – including the very real problem of not being able to travel to far away

lands – he seems to quickly discount the powers of the human mind to voyage in a world of

imagination. Just as his machines are based in the available technology of his time, Verne

persists in anchoring all of his works in his contemporary world and rarely deviates.[25]

However, his insistence on the physical world, rather than a hindrance to the formulation of

an original style, actually lends itself through Verne's pen to the author's creativity, for he

makes the most of the world before him, finding style and authenticity in factual information,

which he then utilizes as a sort of touchstone or anchor in the ordinary world against which

movement through the fictional one can be measured. De Certeau mentions this sort of

authorial behavior in his introduction to Verne's non-fictional *Les Grands navigateurs du*

XVIIIe siècle,[26] in which he discusses the author's tactic for reorganizing navigational and

historical source information in a rather circular referential system that more official parties

like the French government might filter through in order to construct a linear function

("Ecrire" xiv). This ability of Verne to leave traces of his passage, much like Hercules' *Non*

plus ultra[27] acknowledgment and transgression of the previously considered limits of the

known world, imply to the reader an authorial approach akin to de Certeau's strategy – a

placeholder that can be isolated from and subsequently define exterior relations – as he

defines it in *The Practice of Everyday Life* (xix). However, a strategy assumes power, and

although one might assume that Verne as the author would have power over his own words,

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[25] Certainly, one can argue that *Paris au XXe siècle* is in fact this deviation. Hetzel's completely negative reaction to the manuscript, however, squelched Verne's continued dalliance in such fantasy.

[26] This is the second volume in the series *La Découverte de la Terre*.

[27] According to Homer, Hercules wrote this at the Straits of Gibraltar, beginning a tradition of going beyond the limits (Toumson 119).

given the multiplicity of sources and discourses that he must contend with and try to include, his writing style would seem to be better associated with de Certeau's tactic, which holds no power of its own, but insinuates itself into another's place, seizing opportunity when it is available (xix). The tactic approach to understanding Verne's writing style allows for his inclusion of linearity or the appearance of strategy that names and delimits the ordinary world in much the same way Hercules' graffiti does in marking the Straits of Gibraltar, but it actually produces something else by going beyond the limits of the ordinary into the fictional world.

> La relation de l'ouvrage avec les 'source' et les 'originaux' n'est donc pas commandée par la recherche d'une origine, d'une nature ou d'une vérité qui serait là *avant* et *derrière* les documents. C'est une composante et un ressort de l'histoire qui peu à peu remplit de mots les vides du monde, multiplie et précise les représentations (cartes géographiques, mises en scène historiques, etc.), et 'conquiert' ainsi l'espace en le marquant de sens. De ce point de vue, la série des *Grands Navigateurs* ne fait pas exception dans l'œuvre; elle ne constitue pas une étude de géographie historique à isoler des romans d'aventure. Elle n'a d'exceptionnel que le fait de rendre visible un procédé général de fabrication: l'enchaînement de l'imaginaire et de la collection, autrement dit le travail de la fiction à l'intérieur d'une bibliothèque. […] Au commencement, il y a le graphe en qui se replie une navigation passée-perdue et dont le roman va déplier le secret en une variante nouvelle. (de Certeau, "Ecrire" iii, iv)

However, in order to travel beyond the so-called limits into unknown territory, one might feel more at ease with a good guide, a good set of references, or at the least a fairly solid idea of what one *might* expect during the course of the trip. This is the known, the scientific data that threads its way through the story even as the characters themselves confront the unknown in the form of new lands and adventures. In the sense that Verne prepares his characters for any and all occurrences, critics such as Butcher maintain that Verne is trying to resume all the knowledge of the world in order to realign or to reveal a plot ("Ligne" 123-124). This is the appearance of a strategy, but it is quickly turned on its ear as a tactic of necessity. The universe Verne describes is just like the geographical explorations

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and discoveries of his time – in perpetual expansion thanks to a constant influx of new information coming from returning voyages of exploration and general scientific discoveries. To adequately represent such an incessantly growing kinetic environment, Compère argues that Verne chooses a hybrid form of realism, Barthes' *semblant*, or discourse that mimes other discourses (*Ecrivain* 75). Theatrical, a representation that is a production in the sense that like a tactic it takes advantage of the moment and information available, Verne's style becomes a forgery of his many sources, fluidly adapting to the author's changing needs and the many unknowns he and his characters and his style move through during their literary journeys. As a result, the style of the *Voyages* reflects the author's growing awareness of globally expanding horizons, a new sense of consumerism by which one extrapolates his or her tactic for production (reading or writing) from available sources. It also creates the sense that it is within his ability, and that of the reading public, to move in security beyond the known into the unknown, well equipped, with but not limited to, maps and previous examples upon which to reconsider and (re)present physical observations and descriptions of the landscape they travel through.

Somewhat predictable or even formulaic, Verne's novels shape themselves after stories of stories, or the repetition of previous voyages. Always with a certain degree of distance, like a theatergoer watching a play, such an approach holds interest in that it is reminiscent of tactics employed by early mapmakers who could not gain a bird's eye view of their subject. They generally assumed therefore that any new topographical feature – an island or continent for example – would undoubtedly share a certain number of similar traits with what was already known. If, on the first attempt to map, one did not reproduce all the features in quite the right manner, no harm was done because it was accepted that new

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information would be added at each successive attempt until full knowledge of the subject

was gained (Clareson 5). With each encounter, the topography of the area becomes better

represented cartographically and geographically, adding to the relative quality of the

reproduction when gauged against other knowns. Likewise, each addition to Verne's literary

world, each *Voyage extraordinaire*, reduces by expanding upon the simple use of symbolic

placeholders like a whale to represent the ocean or iconic women to represent various lands

like Asia or America. Each *Voyage* creates a sense of space, of movement through an

unknown land rather than simply over it. Ironically, it is also a reduction of the unknown that

makes Verne's texts possible, a *peau de chagrin*, a huge wealth of possibility but shrinking in

size, notes Butcher ("Ligne" 123). But if the ordinary world appears to shrink, the

abundance of information that becomes commonly known offers Verne new perspectives

from which to write. Therefore, looking at it as a *peau de chagrin* is not entirely fair, for this

point of view limits the scope of Verne's writing to one perspective. Such an assumption that

there is only one perspective or way of understanding the information plays into established

strategies for reading and composing maps, moving from left to right and top to bottom or

putting the "most important" area in the center, for example (Mignolo 230-231, 279).[28]

However, it ignores (does not recognize) that once the perspective is changed from a world

view to a local one, the perceived center of the map and area of greatest interest is the

location where one is at the time. The scale changes and readjusts one's perception of what

is known and unknown, opening itself to more detail and greater description. Fulford

discusses a similar phenomenon taking place in the nineteenth century that broke the world

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[28] Historically, these "most important" areas were Jerusalem on T and O maps and later, whatever country designed the map so as to confirm its importance in the world. Mignolo argues that the geometrical grid laid over the landforms in a world map give us the impression of unbiased science in the conception of the map, but that the center of the map still reveals a prejudice for certain nations over others (233).

into zones in order to make them more approachable to those who would travel to them (12-13). Given this new scale, Verne, like a mapmaker returning to an older map with new observations, performs a sort of stylistic juggling act within the pages of his text. A variety of voices *seem* to speak together, *semblant*, borrowing from each other while adding new information that coalesces into a narrative performance that moves between the known ordinary world and the unknown extraordinary or fictional one to create a reproduction of a geographical space, a map made of words rather than images, or simply a textual map.

ii. Cartography and Geography

At this point, a few words of explanation regarding cartography and geography might be useful, particularly since the two are often conflated. Although one can find a certain number of examples on the subject of when cartography and geography could be split into two separate domains, one of the more interesting is the story of Charles Dupin, a cartographer who in 1826 mapped illiteracy in France. Before this map, cartography had been seen interpreted as a sort of extension of the body of the king. But mapping illiteracy meant that the land ceased to dictate the substance of the map and that the king could no longer impose his control over the contents. The map produced was neither mimetic nor constitutive of political order (Dainotto 35). Recalling the terminology of strategy and tactic, Dupin's map was not a strategy for it worked with consideration for the confines of its perceived representative capacity, its *scientificité*, to encourage the extrapolation of its contents. Doing so, it passed out of the domain of cartography to that of geography, which is not to represent but to conceive a discourse (35). Cartography and geography are different domains and quite distinct in their taxonomic ability. Cartography is much more quantifiable, more rational, and more logical for its power to find a quick equivalent or a

series of equivalents to represent a larger object. Geography is more flexible, more fluid, and generally more open to subjective or stylistic interpretation. If I have to some degree chosen to conflate the terms by using the term map when describing geography, it is because maps are a part of geography, and also because Verne likewise often conflates his scientific approaches and his stylistic endeavors as he recombines and forges discourses that *sound like* they are authentic, *semblant*. Not a scientist himself, his application of scientific facts is sometimes quite flawed for lack of understanding or simple stylistic desire. Mapmaking in Verne's writing is therefore not limited to the pragmatic (documentation, navigation, mimesis) nor to literary functionality (verisimilitude, projection of an imaginary, narration), but instead blurs and shifts between these seemingly opposite forces (Harpold 19). In other words, given Verne's free use and the resulting interchange produced by his appropriation and association of multiple discourses, or reproductions (maps) of a location, Verne's style supersedes traditional labels. Although I have nothing better, a cartographic term like map when used in relation to Verne should no longer be understood as solely a pictorial reproduction. Like the map of illiteracy in France, it has become something more because it instigates discourse and transgresses traditional limitations.

Certainly, one could argue that no map is as straightforward as we have been led to believe.[29] After all, each has a dialectic, circular relationship with what it represents and the mapmaker must choose which graphic representations and iconic devices to use in order to facilitate a spatial understanding (Gillies 70). Moreover, the mapmaker decides which features (hills, valleys, and so forth) to include and which to ignore or hide (Clavel 101).

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[29] Dainotto recalls that education creates the environment for a person's understanding. The way an individual learns or has things presented to him or her directly affects his or her perception of them later (63). This is relevant in the discussion of a map, for we all generally believe that we know how to read a map and that there is one proper way to do it.

"[W]e need to think more seriously about how maps conceal as much as they reveal in the space of novels and the worlds they represent. They are built around selections, omissions, classifications, and hierarchies that are ideological. Like the novel, they can create effects of simultaneity, produce the illusion of reality, and even give shape and meaning to something as abstract as a nation," writes Bulson (41). His words are equally applicable to maps in general, and as Dainatto points out even more so during the nineteenth century when cartography and geography were evolving.

> Modern cartography begins then, in the nineteenth century, with a 'weak' scientific power to represent but also a strong rhetorical will to persuade. Hills and mountains have disappeared behind the rhetorical goal of the map maker, but the lack of iconic content should not be taken as a deficiency or defect: Aristotle himself (*Nichomachean Ethics*, 1094b, 12-17) remarked that one should not expect to find factual precision in rhetorical discourse, just as it would be impossible to expect that factual precision would carry the persuasive force of rhetoric. Accordingly, one should know what to expect from a nineteenth-century map: not geographic or mimetic objectivity, but the traces of a true rhetorical discourse perfectly organized along the lines of thematic places and *topoi*. In this novel discourse, which geographers aptly call 'thematic cartography,' the map is the *inventio* of argumentative *loci* that articulate ideas, stories, themes, and all manner of social preoccupations. (38)

The socialization of the map was not entirely new to the nineteenth century, however. Gillies discusses the importance of description and icons in the presentation or the staging of the map's meaning, reminding his reader that the mapping process is not only a representation of surface area, but also an idea of the area (162-163). Conley goes even further, arguing for the revelation of the self in maps produced during the Renaissance (6). Without digressing further, perhaps a more tangible example than Conley's of the way in which the interpretation of a map is not as straightforward as one might think is Gerard Mercator's "Orbis terrae descriptio." This particular mapping project is interesting for two reasons. First of all, Mercator succeeded in changing the meaning of continent from the traditional

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terra continens (meaning a firm land not enclosed by water, not an island) to instead mean a huge island (Gillies 161). He somehow managed to negotiate four continents out of this: America, Africa, Asia and somehow a separate Europe (162). Secondly, poetically reminiscent of the four corners of the earth, and mapped not unlike this, the map itself was not a true representation. In fact, the wrongness of it actually lent itself to better usage by sailors who navigated through the lands and seas it represented using a series or chains of relations. By being untrue or inaccurate it became truer (Peters 39-40).

> Even as cartographic history appears to be taking a decisive step toward greater objectivity, Mercator is suggesting that the power of maps has little to do with their content or the extent to which they do or do not correspond to our ideas of reality. Instead, it would appear that cartographic effectiveness derives from the relations of epistemological authority they create between themselves as texts and their viewers as practitioners of their logic. Maps can be quite literally wrong – although it is precisely my point that maps do not function in the domain of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, but rather in varying degrees of successful persuasion – and still maintain a discursive relation between map maker and map reader that valorizes the former as one who knows. Though it does not necessarily tell us anything at all about the geographic properties it represents, the successful map creates a compact of trust on behalf of its users: it denotes place while simultaneously connoting its own discursive authority. (40-41)

As I mentioned briefly before, Conley uses this aspect of the mapping project to trace the emergence of the self in literature, studying maps within literature as points at which the discourses of geography and literature meet, concentrating on the graphic (written) nature of both as they work within space (4, 6). Although he and I are working with different sorts of maps, Conley's arguments resonate my own in interesting ways. For instance, cartography and writing that he terms "cartographical" were adapted through the early modern period to manipulate the same view of a thing by creating an illusion, a perspective, of how the map is "supposed" to be read, and to engage the reader to do so. "The perspectival object is the concept that shifts the spectator from a passive role to that of an engaged traveler who moves

through the time and space of a given body of words, images, and sensation. The concept offers cardinal points, markers and signposts that grant passage into vital and marginal areas where imagination, fact, history, and the self are combined" (17). This changes the perception of the unknown, creating a sort of relationship with it where there was once only half-named doubt (13). There is also a sort of relationship with the self that he delves into as he explores the ways in which the reader of the map or the text is empowered through the illusion of movement to locate him- or herself within the area represented (22). "The subject uses the illusion of a given spatial and historical order to create an imaginary world of impressions that tie his or her body to a *mobility* of space and place. New connections are made by virtue of the pictogram that moves between inherited orders of geography and sense of growth *into* a map that is at once recognizable, collected, and personal" (20). Like Mercator's map that the sailors used through a series of relations between one location and the next, Conley argues the author who wishes to travel with his or her reader to an unknown location must do so through a series of connections created through the combination of markers and signposts, or ways of relating to the text. In my own study, these markers are the *place* of the geographical location, and the reader's involvement makes the place into a *space*. Of course, the author also renders the place a space by transforming the perspective from one that considers the relationship with the unknown as unknowable to one that uses language to make it attainable via a series of moves that can be confirmed in the ordinary world outside of discourse (12). Gillies supports this notion that poetic geography, or geography that is a linguistic voyage to a location one has not traveled to in the ordinary world, is a way to explain the unknown by using comparisons to what is familiar (5).

Verne's textual medium allows him to voyage beyond Hercules' gates, to explore and approximate the unknown by using a reaffirming style that resembles scientific discourse, but that is no less figurative than the *Hic sunt dracones* (or the dragons themselves) early mapmakers used to mark unknown waters as inhabited by sea monsters. By mixing figurative and scientific styles, Verne re-opens this imaginary to exploration through his writing about the earth (Harpold 30-31). In this, he creates textual maps, literary documents representing the *mondes connus et inconnus*, that know no real limits and retain a fluidity and flexibility of regard that originally garnered and has helped retain their popularity. Unlike a standard geography that limits itself to the finite world, Verne's textual geography, based nonetheless on a cartographic system of regularity, is a timeless description of the living, animated earth (Andreev 47). Certainly, within this system one quickly recognizes Verne's techniques of forged authenticity – geographical coordinates, mentions of illustrious travelers, scientific digressions, concentration on detail – all of which are reminiscent of a cartographical, rational desire to document and represent (Minerva, *Utopie* 24-25; Harpold 30). The textual map, however, opens it up to a more interpretive, representational form that the genre of the novel best produces thanks to its narrative ability to incorporate multiple discourses. The term textual map that I employ in this dissertation reflects Verne's geographically inclined literary program that dared to go beyond the limits of his contemporary geographical and literary counterparts to attempt a series of novels in which the theater of action was the world itself. As ambitious as the *grands travaux* like Lesseps' Suez Canal, Verne's project fell squarely into his contemporary geographical context. Although referring to his own work rather than Verne's, a quote from one of the most influential geographers of the end of the nineteenth century, Vidal de la Blache, reveals in his

1894 *Atlas générale d'histoire et géographie* the extraordinary possibilities of "writing the world" at this time.

> Au seizième siècle, les cartographes se plaisaient à inscrire au frontispice de leurs œuvres les titres pompeux de 'Théâtre du Monde,' 'Miroir du Monde.' Le temps de ces qualifications est passé; mais pourquoi un atlas de nos jours, quand certes les rapports des choses apparaissent en plus grand nombre en en meilleure clarté, ne prétendrait-il pas stimuler la curiosité et offrir matière et réflexion ? (qtd. in Robic, "Vue" 345).

iii. The Old New Science

The story of geography as an accepted and practiced science in France is certainly more complicated than I need to elaborate at this juncture, however, a certain amount of information about it will aid significantly in the understanding of Verne's writing style and his authorial guidelines. It is often said that France remained relatively uninterested in the teaching of geography until after losing the Franco-Prussian War, which it blamed in part on the average French soldier's relative lack of knowledge about the landscape in which he was fighting. It certainly is the case that maps sprang up in French classrooms during the Third Republic, but I have already mentioned that geographical societies were already being formed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, so in some way interest in geography must have existed before the 1870s – not to mention that Verne's first novels also predate this military loss. Of course, geography as a science goes back to the ancient Greeks and geometry, or the measurement of the earth. Geography – or literally writing about the earth – logically complements these mathematical observations. Unwin points out that the ancient Greeks faced the same uncertainty and problems regarding the definition and the use of their observations as did the French (and other Europeans) in the nineteenth century (*Place* 45). Ptolemy, for instance, deciphered the first map of the globe using a system of regular

parallels and meridians. His interests and contributions did not stop at the cartographical representation, however, and he also felt it necessary in writing about the earth to consider the topographical descriptions – including human occupation – as well as the mathematical and cosmological placement of the earth within the larger universe (53-54). Strabo, on the other hand, worked for a "comprehensive" geography including ethics and politics, or the perceived reality of the human world (Toumson 102). These two opposing traditions, along with mathematical precision and cartography from Eratosthenes, were relatively forgotten until the late thirteenth century when Maximus Planudes, a monk at the Chora monastery in Constantinople, rediscovered Ptolemy – minus the maps (Unwin, *Place* 61). For the next hundred years, monks worked diligently to translate the work and to recreate maps that would accompany it *based on the descriptions*. Of course, in doing so, they uncovered a few inherent flaws in the Greek understanding of the world, such as the total confinement of the Indian Ocean. At just about the same time, the great voyages of discovery began, very much influenced by vestiges of Greek thought (Dathorne 3).

One needed good maps to travel far, and most of the first charts and atlases were principally produced to enable ships to sail to faraway China, India and the Americas (Unwin, *Place* 63). Beginning with Louis XIV and continuing to the nineteenth century, what we now know as cartography and geography were effectively synonymous for their shared purpose (Toumson 116). That should not imply, however, that discussion did not arise concerning whether geography should take a more human or a more mathematical approach. According to some traditionalists, if it extended beyond more than just measurement, it could not claim to be a pure science like mathematics. However, to include the human aspect meant treating geography as a subcategory of philosophy. Various

compromises were proposed, and in the seventeenth century, Varenius first attempted to

portray geography as a combination of three absolute characteristics of the earth (terrestrial),

a relative or respective consideration of celestial phenomena (celestial) and a comparison of

different places on the earth (human). Although his ideas – a sincere attempt to bring

pleasure to the otherwise utilitarian study – found favor for a while, the polemic soon

resurfaced and specialists argued for either pure math or pure human study of geography, but

not both (Unwin, *Place* 67-69).

With the Enlightenment and the subsequent desire to formulate educational plans

came again an attempt to reconcile the competing strains of geographical thought. Models

for mathematical, moral, political, commercial and theological geographies were being

discussed (Unwin, *Place* 71-72), and had an advantage over one linear history because they

fostered concurrent consideration of events (Toumson 103). This quality of geography lent

itself to education because it gave a fuller appreciation or almost personal perspective of

events than the linear model (102). This human side of geography, or the inclusion of human

occupation of the earth as a primary component of the science, would never again risk

exclusion. Humboldt and Ritter, the "fathers of modern geography," both emphasized the

human and physical elements in their work – albeit to differing degrees – and were influential

in the idea that observation was of central importance to human nature in the learning process

(Unwin, *Place* 78). If, after the Franco-Prussian War and some ten years after Humboldt's

and Ritter's deaths, maps sprang up in classrooms all over France, I contend it was less an

effort to teach geography than to teach basic cartography – a word first formulated in 1877

by the Viscount of Santarem (Jacob, *Empire* 39). Cartography, removed from geography, is

conceptually concrete and therefore easier to teach in the primary and secondary levels.

Moreover, given that the second chair in geography was not offered at the Sorbonne until 1892, it is hard to believe that those teachers who sought advanced education were able to study geography adequately enough to teach its subtleties and instead found themselves teaching primarily cartography, following the pedagogical advice of those like Buisson, who published a monumental dictionary of pedagogy in 1882, the same year the Jules Ferry laws were passed in France.

> La carte est à l'enseignement géographique ce qu'est la collection d'images à l'étude d'histoire naturelle, ce qu'est la collection de poids et mesures à l'enseignement de la langue. Ce n'est pas seulement un moyen de représenter les objets à étudier, c'est le seul moyen d'en acquérir une certain notion, la condition sans laquelle on n'aura jamais que des mots dans la mémoire et non des idées dans la tête. (qtd. in Jacob, *Empire* 439)

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, the old new science of geography became defined and legitimized in France and Europe in general. The first chairs in geography appeared in the 1870s despite the much earlier formation of academic societies and popular general interest. Geographers like Dubois, Lapparent, Vidal de la Blache and Reclus disputed the role of mathematics, geodesy, cartography, climatology, biology, botany, zoology, philosophy, sociology, ecology, colonialism, and so forth within the fledgling science at the university level and in society at large, and particularly in light of the geographer's expanding role in the imperialist model. Indeed, the aforementioned second chair at the Sorbonne was specifically in colonial geography, and "geography was the discipline of exploration, and geographers frequently the servants of imperialism" (Unwin, *Place* 79). Certainly, imperialism plays a great part in the defining of geography as a science – just as it had done with the creation of geographical societies, however, Robic reminds the modern reader that there is a sort of geographical trilogy of the physical, political and economic at play. The first two date from the eighteenth century, while only the last comes

from the nineteenth, so one simply cannot credit all of geography's popularity to colonialism (*Milieu* 125). Ultimately, the science – like its own history – is complicated due to its expansive nature that invites other disciplines under its umbrella, but it is this inherent complication that makes it such a rich domain for an author like Verne.

iv. Literature and Geography

> La littérature embrasse les valeurs de l'espace. Elle exprime aussi bien celles qui relèvent du projet vital de base d'une société (exister, habiter, se défendre, survivre) que celles répondant à ses aspirations les plus intimes, à ses croyances. D'ailleurs, nous l'avons vu et les géographes insistent sur ce point, ce ne sont pas les lieux, les paysages ou les territoires qui définissent la culture, voire la littérature, mais au contraire, c'est l'espace géographique qui naît de la projection du système socioculturel sur le système écologique. Le domaine du possible donc pénètre le champ du réel et le transforme à sa guise: les artistes, les écrivains, les poètes, tracent les cartes, définissent les contours de l'infini, prononcent les mots de ce qui était indicible. Ils devancent leurs communautés (et les communautés de leurs lecteurs), ils les entraînent à modeler la réalité brute de l'espace pour qu'il devienne le *mi-lieu* où leur vie matérielle et spirituelle peut éclore. (Emina 19)

The relatively modern idea that literature and geography are distinct domains seems odd when one remembers that the ancient Greeks, and to a lesser degree the Romans, considered geography a primarily descriptive science or a literary genre rather than a branch of physical science (Romm 3). If certain would-be geographers such as Cicero, who in 59 B.C. complained in a letter that a geographical subject was too hard to explain and offered too few opportunities for literary embellishment (3), might compel the separation of the two areas of study, sixteen centuries later the *géographe ordinaire du roi* Henri IV and Louis XIII, Nicolas Sanson, remained an armchair geographer filtering through previous works done by others in order to execute his own cartographies (Peters 29). In very recent times, the geographer Claval has reaffirmed this link, stating that from ancient times to the present, geography has been a study built upon the work done by one's predecessors (*Pensée* 8-9).

"Il est donc tout naturellement apparu nécessaire de faire précéder le raisonnement et la démonstration d'un bref tableau des sources dont on dispose," (16) he reminds his reader while adding that geography is not the work of individuals but a collaboration of voyagers, narrators, navigators, calculators and commentators (16-17). The necessity for erudition that Claval argues for, and which centuries of geography would support, can and has been often enough made an insult to geography itself because, unlike the "hard sciences," geographers work with descriptions. Working in a sense horizontally from description to description – as opposed to digging for *the one* answer vertically – geographers compose a sort of collage that should give some sort of an explanation (Brosseau 86-87). The implication made by those who would mean to insult geography is that the various descriptions are random in nature, or worse yet that they are literary embellishments the likes of which Cicero wished to include.

For the last part of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries therefore the aspect of erudition was temporarily put aside in geography – although Verne's writing certainly retains the quality in its references – placing the science's faith in its conception of reality (Claval 12). But in the 1970s as scholars of literature began to consider the aspects their studies shared with geography, geographers themselves began to take an interest in how literature could enhance their geographical work by giving it a "sense of place" (Brosseau 17, 27; Chevalier, *Géographie* 17).

> Longtemps négligés par les géographes, les rapports entre littérature et géographie, et plus particulièrement les apports possibles de la littérature à la connaissance géographique, sont évoqués assez souvent […]. Ceci en raison d'une aspiration – en quelque sorte symétrique du développement de l'information et de la géographie quantitative – à une géographie plus vivante, plus proche des réalités quotidiennes. (Chevalier, *Pensée* 5)

This is, of course, a marked deviation from the quantitative aspect of science, but the consultation and inclusion of literary sources could, as Claval points out, reveal what it feels

like to be in a place and give the impression of experiencing it (*Littérature* 109). "La littérature est ainsi le meilleur révélateur de la structure complexe des représentations du monde […]" (121).

Were it not for the growing interest in the convergence of literary and geographical studies over the last 30 or so years, one might assume that Claval, Brosseau and Chevalier work in a bubble of sorts, and that their ideas do not represent mainstream geography. Among scholars I have quoted recently in this dissertation, Gillies uses geography and literature to study Shakespeare, Conley studies the emergence of the self through cartography in early modern France, Peters concentrates on allegorical cartography and Bulson reconsiders the creation of spatial understanding within fiction. And Unwin's *Jules Verne: Journeys in Writing*, which makes a study of the interplay between geography and literature, recalls the importance of geography in Verne's literary program. Within this context, it must be noted that Chevalier specifically notes Verne as having written some of the very few geographical novels (*Littérature* 10). Of course, a study of the similarities between the two domains is not to imply that literature and geography are one and the same, for Chevalier again reminds his reader that authors of fiction tended to romanticize their geographical locations. "Il faut enfin que le monde dépeint par l'écrivain ne soit pas, consciemment ou non, déformé par l'imagination ou la passion. La Provence de Giono n'a jamais existé; le Bordeaux de Mauriac est tout aussi déformé et incomplet que le Lyon de Béraud" (*Pensée* 33). Moreover, he adds that despite abuses such as the *Nouvelle Héloïse* being improperly copied by nineteenth century tourists to describe Lake Geneva, geography and literary studies remain separate domains (164). Separate or no, he and other scholars in both fields support the examination of the ways in which one influences the other, marking a return to

the overlaps between the two. For instance, Dardel praises the geographer Vidal de la

Blache's *poetic* language: " [l]angage direct, transparent qui 'parle' sans peine à

l'imagination, bien mieux sans doute que le discours 'objectif' du savant, parce qu'il transcrit

fidèlement l''écriture' sur le sol" (qtd. in Brosseau 37). And like Verne, who de Certeau

points out often referenced his predecessors in geography or cartography while working on

the *Les Grands navigateurs du XVIIIe siècle* so better to negate their abilities or findings

(*Ecrire* VI-VII), geographers from ancient times sifted through travelers' tales and narratives

in order to separate fact from fiction, sometimes purposefully choosing to include the

*in*credible along with the credible, "revealing that the geographer's science and the

storyteller's art, in many periods of antiquity, could not be fully detached from each other

(Romm 5). Nor, I would argue, is this a particularity of one period in history, but rather a

relationship between geography and literature that has continued to the present.

For example, Claval reminds us of the era of the *grand voyage scientifique*, which

seems exemplified by Cook and Bougainville,[30] both of whom waxed poetic relating the

stories of their explorations (Claval 23). Their language changed the perspective of what the

voyages were really like, adding interest to the ship log book entries by vulgarizing the

scientific information in order to attract and keep a larger reading public (22-23). Fulford

adds that this poetic mixture of journalism or travel writing with fiction and the

popularization of Cook's travels in England actually benefited scientists[31] because by shifting

the interest from something akin to imperialism[32] to a more benign and even romantic search

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[30] For a comparison between Bougainville's style(s) and other travel journals kept by his shipmates, see Etienne Taillemite's *Bougainville et ses compagnons autour du monde : 1766-1769, journaux de navigation*. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1977.

[31] The term scientist was coined in 1833 by the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

[32] Michie and Thomas remind their readers that imperialism is comparable to the phrase "knowledge is power," in the sense that the more one knows about a location, the more one has power over it (9). In the case of Cook's

for knowledge, the public could feel good about these expeditions (4-6, 10). The scientific

and the literary truly overlapped because "[d]ès qu'ils sont constitués par la langue, la parole

et l'écriture, ou qu'ils sont appréhendés par lecture, tous les espaces ou les mondes sont

imaginaires, même quand ils renvoient à une géographie repérable sur le terrain" (Grassin

xi). Chevalier adds:

> Il faut pourtant reconnaître qu'il n'y a pas de barrière absolue entre les œuvres
> d'imagination, dont le roman est devenu l'élément essentiel, et d'autres genres
> littéraires: essais, biographies plus ou moins romancées, mémoires, souvenirs et
> journaux intimes, correspondances, récits de voyage, etc. Même les relations de
> voyage ne sont pas, nous le verrons, toujours exemptes d'éléments purement
> personnels, voire d'affabulations (ce qui n'empêche pas de regretter que les
> géographes les aient souvent utilisées avec une excessive discrétion. (Chevalier,
> *Geographie* 14)

Geography and literature seem to intertwine inexorably and in relatively recent years,

scholarship has begun to take seriously geocriticism, defined by Grassin as the science of

literary spaces (1).[33] If not for the addition of the word literary, one would think looking at

the remaining terminology, science of spaces, that his definition should apply to geography

itself. Indeed, his longer explanation deserves to be quoted here before I discuss the term

literary map, which should be understood before I continue to define my own textual map.

> Comme science des espaces humains, la géocritique relève des sciences
> postmodernes dont l'objet est relatif au sujet qui en fait l'expérience; des sciences qui
> posent, déposent, construisent et déconstruisent leur objet au fur et à mesure qu'elles
> progressent; des sciences dont l'objet évolue avec la culture et qui évoluent avec leur
> objet, qui sont transformées par les mutations de leur objet. Leurs méthodes ne sont
> pas tellement différentes de celles des sciences prétendues exactes tant qu'il s'agit
> d'observation et de description, à ceci près que les phénomènes émergents (on
> pourrait tout aussi bien dire: poétiques, littéraires, spatiaux) ne sont pas, par
> définition, reproductibles en laboratoire; elles s'en séparent aussi par la théorisation
> qui ne vise pas à l'établissement de principes déterminants. Le travail

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travels, Fulford stresses that the reading public's impression of his voyages was that he had acted for benevolent reasons. He appeared to advance geographic or scientific knowledge without exploitation or violence (10).

[33] Grassin specifies a preference for the word *science* over *study* or *description* because these are too vague, and he adds that space is both space and literary space, with the text itself being literary.

d'interprétation auquel elles aboutissent ne permet pas d'expliquer la réalité par référence à des lois transcendantes, mais de comprendre, toujours un peu mieux, les processus par lesquels des faits supérieurs à la combinaison de tous leurs antécédents imaginables sont arrivés à émergence; la vie émerge ainsi, par exemple, de la matière, et la pensée humaine de la biologie, le mot de l'ensemble des phonèmes, le poème de l'agencement inédit des mots, sans qu'aucune causalité, qu'aucune logique ne permette d'expliquer ce surgissement. (V-VI)

Although he is discussing the resemblance between geocriticism and the scientific method, Grassin's discussion of their similar methods echoes those used in geography as well as in literary criticism, drawing attention to the process of reading and writing a literary text whose subject is geographical. In France, Chevalier tells us this relationship between geography and literature has been used either with the belief that geography forms the personality of a writer and the regional characteristics he or she writes about – thus Flaubert writes about Normandy because that is what he knows best – or in order to better understand inhabited space and the literary incidents described within (*Littérature* 4). The first of the two ideas is somehow easier to grasp, and led around 1960 to André Bourin's term *géographie littéraire*, in which an author is presented in relationship with the places in which he or she has lived (7). Inspired by Taine and determinism, this literary geography did not at first find favor with current thoughts on social sciences, so it recreated itself to concentrate on the imaginative relationship, a sort of personal mythology between geography and the literary work (9).

One of the most interesting attempts to connect literature and geography by taking into account the personal aspect of the spatial imagination comes from Bulson, who speaks to the topic of the literary map, a term coined in the late nineteenth century. Curators with the Library of Congress defined the literary map for a 1993 exhibition by the same name.

A literary map records the location of places, associated with authors and their literary works or serves as a guide to their imaginative worlds. It may present places

associated with a literary tradition, and individual author, or a specific work. Some maps highlight an entire country's literary heritage; others feature authors identified with a particular city, state, region. Maps can feature real places connected with an individual author, literary character, or book, such as those featuring Jane Austen's England, Sherlock Holmes's London, or the settings in *Moby Dick*, or they may show wholly imaginary landscapes such as Oz, Middle Earth, or Neverland. (qtd. in Bulson 22)

The progression of the definition itself seems to follow the evolution of the aforementioned literary geography, beginning with an author's personal relationship and ending with the reader's perception of the location. Indeed Bulson is interested in and composed the idea of the literary map around the way in which apparently rather "useless details" that clutter the representational space of the novel are translated into representational space on a map, giving readers something from which to visualize form and narrative design (3). As an example, consider Dickens' or Holmes' London and the many attempts by the reading public to pinpoint (find) locations within the city where the action of a story takes place. A different kind of example of this sort of literary map is the author's reference to and use of the map within the text as a sort of convenient way of establishing a logical beginning, middle and end (8). In short, these literary maps are highly accessible to the reading public because they appeal to the visual and the logical interpretive abilities of the reader who somehow sifts through the abundance of information presented by the author to follow an itinerary that in some way corresponds to a verifiable state. In Bulson's study, which concentrated on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as urbanization forced the average person to distinguish new features and discover new methods for describing and getting around a city, the cartographical representation empowers the reader by giving him or her the feeling of being oriented (20). "Locating fictional spaces on a map allows readers to transform fiction into practical knowledge" (4). The practical knowledge that one might garner from a literary map

is not limited to a simple *aide-mémoire* – despite the fact that such mapping endeavors are quite popular in academic settings since they present a location that can then be further analyzed (6) – for it is a participatory exercise for the reader to orient himself or herself within the many details of the text (20). The literary map is the product of the spatial engagement of the reader with reality by making it representational (15). "No matter how fantastic, surprising, magical or ridiculous novels may seem, the literary map was a way to stave off skepticism of readers" (21).

As an example of the above, consider the excitement around Fogg's eighty-day voyage around the world and the sheer number of people who followed (on paper) – and copied[34] – his journey. Readers were genuinely interested in tracing the route on the map and in projecting the possibility of *actually* completing the trip in eighty days or less. Even in our present time, de Vries' website (http://www.phys.uu.nl/~gdevries/voyages/world.cgi) allows the curious to map most of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*. However, the transference of the textual experience to the map (the literary map) is not my primary interest, and I discuss it mainly as evidence for the interplay and relationship between the textual and the cartographical mediums. "Maps succeed not only because they are science, but also because they are metaphors," reminds Peters (35). Unlike the literary map that is a reference tool supporting a text, the textual map is a metaphor for the way one reads, an interpretive tool of sorts that instead of asking the reader to pinpoint places on a map, helps him or her to imagine spaces that are *possibly* on the map, reproductions of the places on the map, but not limited to one definition or one known value. Thus "[…] cartographic reasoning inspires both the graphic and the imaginary forms of literature" (Conley 2). The

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[34] One of the most famous of these people is the journalist Nellie Bly, who completed the trip in seventy-two days and met Verne while on her travels.

author of a novel therefore seems to "speak" to the reader, engaging his or her participation in a conversation that is not real, for the author is not really speaking but instead communicating through print, a reproduction of speech just like a map is a reproduction of a landscape (3-4). Therefore, a map and a novel are, in at least one sense, on equal footing as representations that use a printed form. Conley adds that "[c]artographical writing serves as a guide or compass for verbal plotting, but it also betrays its agendas by turning the reader's gaze toward a productive consideration of its visible form" (22). In other words, texts like Verne's that are meant to represent the exploration of the world actually make the reader reconsider his or her approach to reading the text. Perhaps more importantly, in the case of a geographically inclined author like Verne, rather than hinting at information about the author himself or the region he describes – both of which would imply a literary map and something that could be represented as known by being mapped – the author concentrates on what is not known, writing ways of moving through it all the same. This is the textual map.

v. **Writing a Map**

Maps are tricky. Remembering Buisson's pedagogical claims for the wonders of maps, one realizes that to the layman a map appears to be completely truthful, free of error and of unknown (Jacob, *Empire* 352). Yet one has but to look at André Thevet's maps based on Antonio Pigafetta's recounting of Magellan's first voyage through the Strait bearing his name to realize the author of the map could not begin to give any proper form to the multitude of small islands making up the South American archipelago. Each is entirely a flight and fancy of the person drawing the map (Jacob, "Isles" 12), who is working moreover from a narrative and never visited the area himself. Of course, one might argue that this example, just like any *portolani* sailing chart from early Mediterranean exploration, is too old

to be relevant in a discussion related to nineteenth – almost twentieth – century geography. However, both Thevet's maps and *portolani* in general reveal one of the fundamental truths of cartography, which is that with each visit, travelers add to their collective knowledge and subsequently ameliorate the quality of the map depicting the area. This very act of amending the map proves the fallibility of the layman's perception that the map is always correct. Rather, the map is representative of the strange, blurry line that exists between the known and the unknown, for by its nature as both subject in its own right and object representing another subject, it must contain references to both. How the mapmaker and the public negotiate this information reveals to a certain degree society's estimation of a map's accuracy at the time of its conception and use (Jacob, *Empire* 347), which points again to the fluidity of the relationship between a geographical location as a place and the map the author and reader produce that takes into consideration the concept of place, but that discloses the uncertainty of it, leaving instead room for revision and alternate possibilities.

Just as the mapmaker might create a place he or she has never seen, the map itself is a performance, for it puts something on paper that is not really there. It gives the impression of a visual totality from a bird's eye view, across which a trajectory can easily be traced. A bit like a historical portrait, it is a thing in its absence (351). But the map's presence goes beyond simply what it represents; it is also present in its own image (36). A map used for information gathering is therefore an object of mediation, an interface with the actual location depicted (29). A map seen and contemplated for the image that it is, however, is an invitation to the imagination, a work of art inviting the spectator to dream up an event to accompany each change in topography. "Tout accident topographique devient prétexte à une péripétie narrative: les sinuosités graphiques, tous les éléments qui introduisent le désordre,

la dissymétrie, les irrégularités dans le tracé sont des 'événements' qui génèrent des événements narratifs" (365-366). By choosing to consider the map as a series of events, movement through accidents in topography, the author chooses how to negotiate that movement and how to include the reader in a discursive operation that goes beyond describing one thing in relation to what is around it, adding information on how to approach the area and move through it. De Certeau emphasizes the difference between this sort of a map, or what he terms a tour or an itinerary, compared to a totalizing planar observation (*Practice* 119). The first is a narrative operation that moves between the totalizing map and the descriptive itinerary, between scientific discourse and ordinary culture in a way that implies a real location through representation (120). The second searches only to name one place in relation to another. To differentiate the two, consider the difference between Verne's famous geographer, Paganel, who both traces the places he visits – making a map – but also explores them by moving through them within the textual narrative – following an itinerary.

As this point, one might wonder why I do not concentrate on textual itineraries instead of textual maps. After all, it would seem the better choice given its openness to narrative. However, an itinerary is a type of map, and deferring to the broader term is not incorrect. Moreover, the itinerary more strongly implies narrative than the visual image; and although I concentrate on the narrative aspect, since Verne's subject is geographical and written to appeal to a primarily visually-oriented audience who anticipates learning geographical knowledge about the location, and who indeed might consult a world map to locate the area in question, Verne's "itineraries" do not lose their map-like qualities entirely. Instead, through the rhetorical devices of the map and the narrative, they reveal their own

construction and the geographical location taken from the ordinary world and transferred into

the fictional one. Like Conley's signature of the self that resides within the borders of the

map, along its edges (20-21), Verne's textual maps explore perspective by shifting the

intersection of time and space *to* the geographical location being explored. Similar to the

perspective created by a T and O map in which the narrative or the fictional explanation and

the geometric projection overlap, Verne combines the ordinary and the fictional worlds. The

resulting map is capable of not only marking the frontiers of a world but also of creating it

(Toumson 117). This textual map moves the reader to the street level that interests Bulson,

or in this case the ground level at which perspective is limited to experience and any map that

comes from the reading process is more felt or seen on the same level – like early

navigational charts – than it is laid out in two-dimensional form from above (Bulson 122).

Being on this level during the reading process can be disorienting because it requests the

negotiation of signs and landmarks for meaning, but rather than an impediment, this quality

is actually useful in investigating the textual map. "Cartographical disorientation, which

challenges the rationalized perspective that so many were used to, emphasizes the human

dimension of mapmaking and demonstrates that all maps rely on rhetoric and artifice

parading around as objective science" (122). Choosing a place on earth about which to write,

Verne moves back and forth between the ordinary and the fictional worlds using what the

reader recognizes already to explain what he or she does not – to describe or create the

textual image the reader will understand via the movement from one page to the next through

the map become text.

Recognition, or a sense of the familiar repositioned as point of entry to the unknown,

leads the reader of both map and text to follow an itinerary through a geographical

environment that becomes more complete with each observation, each description. The printed word or cartographical image assumes a theatrical, productive quality when presented to and represented by the reader. Neither one iconic image, nor one title, nor any one anything – for *one* implies a fixed, defined place – can adequately portray the space created by the variety of descriptive agents working together to create the possibility of the reader's movement through the textual or narrated visual medium. Yet one might ask whether and how we might feel that we are moving through a map, for our education has taught us that maps are simple reference tools, irreproachable and benignly factual. In light of this (mis)perception, propagated by nineteenth-century school teachers capable of grasping cartography, but not necessarily geography, as I mentioned earlier, perhaps we should again consider what a map is against our common beliefs about it.

It can generally be agreed upon that the map is a tool that usually puts features in their place, thus giving them a relational identity of sorts. A map consolidates and names information like mountains, streams, rivers, oceans and towns and this consolidation makes the map appear somewhat monotonous. But what if rather than limiting the discussion to maps such as those that adorn the inside covers of the average high school history books – like that of the fifty states and their capitals – we instead thought of those maps that appeal to the imaginary, that speak of endless possibility? I am speaking here of maps such as one might see in very old books, the kind with symbols and icons designed to enhance the map's representational qualities and explain not only the name of a location but its character as well. For example, a great serpent lies in wait for an errant ship, confirming the dangers of travel into the unknown. Or the border of a map contains images of the various peoples who

are said to inhabit the earth, such as in Blaeu's *Americae nova tabula*.[35] Or somewhere in

Magellania[36] the mapmaker might place large amounts of fire, a Tierra del Fuego, confusing

the ends of the earth with simple volcanic activity associated with the Andes Mountains. In

addition to these old maps, I am also speaking of a new sort of map, like those available

through Google Earth, that affords its user more than a bird's eye satellite view, offering also

a variety of visual choices and approaches, and going even so far as to allow the user to

(re)construct a new image in what appears to be three dimensions. Within this new

application of the map, the user interacts with and reacts to the topographical information

encountered, much as the sailor who had to choose whether to transgress sea-monster

infested waters. In both cases, the old map and the new Google Earth, the map becomes a

tool to narrate a story that is interactive and geographical in nature. It is truly geo (earth)

graphic (writing), for it evokes any number of possible stories and descriptions given a

topographical location.

Shakespeare once said that all the world was a stage, which taken in consideration of

the maps discussed above implies that stories may be found anywhere. Although I do not

pursue the theatrical analogy much further, early books of maps seemed to follow this same

theatrically-inclined line of thought, for until Mercator's popularization of the term *atlas* in

1595, such compilations had been published as theaters of the world (*theatrum orbis*). Like a

theatrical presentation, and in sharp contrast to a god carrying the globe on his shoulders,

these early *theatrum* were not thematic, but proposed a compilation of all knowledge based

on the author's inclusion of various perspectives. Much as early cartographers compiled an

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[35] This is just one example among many. See, (http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/1665b5.jpg) for the image.

[36] The term *Magellania* to name the area previously known in English as (the) Magallanes has been attested since 2002 with the translation of *En Magellanie* as simply *Magellania* (Butcher, *Lighthouse* 149).

image based on previous observations – both visual and narrative – the *theatrum* led the reader from one map to another following a preconceived plan or "voyage" and often with textual introductions and transitions (Jacob, *Empire* 106-108). Unlike the purely utilitarian map we so often think of today, works like Braun and Hogeberg's *Civitates Orbis Terrarum*, published between 1572 and 1617, invite the reader to travel the world through a veritable role-playing opportunity based on texts and maps. Although the authors certainly see the utility of the information they are presenting in the maps, they also highlight the pleasures and enjoyment of travel (108-109). In this case, as with most other map compilations, each addition is meant to build upon its predecessor, just as each new publication of the work is meant to improve upon the last by synthesizing ever more knowledge within its pages. With more information at its disposal, both visual and textual, the compilation becomes better able to create for the reader a space that he or she had never seen before, and all from the comfort of a favorite chair in front of a toasty fire at home.

Of course, Verne has been associated with this sort of armchair travel since 1874 when the journalist Renaud said of him that he took us on a trip around the world, "[l]e tour du monde en pantoufles" (qtd. in Margot, *Temps* 62). It is perhaps interesting to digress a moment here and note that Bulson discusses tourism in regards to his literary map, noting that literary guidebooks became popular in the nineteenth century (26-27).[37] Likewise, Chevalier notes the influence of tourism on the literary descriptions he would use to supplement geographical information (*Littérature* 11). It would seem that as people's potential for movement became greater, so did the influence of their descriptions and the way that space was negotiated in a textual manner. Recall Chevalier's reminder that "il n'y a pas

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[37] He makes special note of John Murray and Karl Baedeker, who wrote highly popular literary guidebooks in the 1870s. These were not self-contained manuals for the practical side of touring, but were instead supplementary reading for the discerning traveler, an account of literary landmarks.

de barrière absolue entre les œuvres d'imagination, dont le roman est devenu l'élément essentiel, et d'autres genres littéraires: essais, biographies plus ou moins romancées, mémoires, souvenirs et journaux intimes, correspondances, récits de voyage, etc." (Chevalier, *Geographie* 14). The armchair tourist, like Verne himself, might not benefit from going to a location and seeing it firsthand, but he or she certainly had an overwhelming amount of textual information capable of reconstructing an image of the space within his or her own imagination, traveling by proxy, benefiting from a compiled narration. "La navigation est d'abord le travail de déplacement, d'altération et de construction entrepris de l'espace 'inventé' par un autre avec les extraits de *Voyages, Découverts, Histoires, Journaux* et *Relations* du XVIIIe siècle. Une bibliothèque circonscrit le champ où s'élaborent et se déroulent ces voyages," proposes de Certeau ("Ecrire" II-III). Unlike a straight-line historical plotting where one is followed by two and *A* is followed by *B*, this textual compilation, this library of sorts that de Certeau describes, includes all aspects of the voyage. However, much of it can be lost in the telling of it, *le récit*, which attempts to meet reader's expectations (xiv). In the case of the great voyages of discovery, the expectation of scientists and leaders in cities like London and Paris was to extrapolate a line of discovery, a history of knowledge (ix). Although this same line applies theoretically to the construction of a novel with a beginning, a middle and an end, the frequent and abundant references Verne makes to other texts and other voyages seems to imply his interest in the digressions just as much as the main plot line.

A digression of sorts, textual intervention accompanies most maps. It may be as simple as a title or as complicated as a detailed explanation of the various features presented. The choice about where to put this information and how to write it, like the choice about

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where (or whether) to indicate sea monsters, is often based on a combination of the information available as well as a wider social appreciation of it, or the combination of scientific and figurative discourses. In this sense, all maps play to their reader's expectations, just as Verne did when he wrote geographical stories at a time when the public had a great interest in the sciences. Although their perceived utility may be a production of social custom, maps – and their authors – can also carefully manipulate the information presented. For instance, rather than putting sea monsters in the expansive oceans, cartographers began to fill the space with written explanations of the known features represented nearby. In this way, one could avoid the dreadful feeling that the oceans were vast unknowns because they had been written in and "contained" something, a textual legend that described the rest of the map. But the oceans were not the only location for textual intervention, which mapmakers interspersed throughout the production according to the necessities of factual fidelity and the aesthetics of arrangement – choices that are essentially narrative. As the eye sweeps back and forth across the page from the text to what it describes, the map becomes an intertextual and almost rhapsodical composition of the story it represents, which is itself a compilation of knowledge (Jacob, *Empire* 324). A map with such a legend, interspersed among the features rather than tightly boxed up and placed off to the side, indicates a map with something that is yet unknown, incomplete, unfinished and not entirely rational (321). Rather than limiting knowledge, defining a place or something that is known, such a map designates an area that is mobile in which many possible spaces coexist discursively. It invites narrative, description and discussion that negotiate the ordinary and the fictional worlds.

vi. More Than One Geography

The textual map I propose may have affinities with cartographical concepts and interpretation, but its characteristics do not reside with this set of geographically related traditions alone. Geography is also a narration and a textual document that has a solid historical tradition. In this day and age when maps are inextricably linked to geographical explanations, one might have difficulty conceptualizing an entirely text-based geography. However, remembering that the technological difficulties involved in the reproduction of maps are greater and more costly than the same for the reproduction of text, the preferred widespread dissemination of geography in a textual format is logical. For example, I have already used the adjective *rhapsodical* to describe the dance of the eyes across the page of the map, from text to image and image to text. The adjective, although justly placed in that setting, is reminiscent of the rhapsodes recounting by memory Homer's *Odyssey*, itself a story of geographical voyage from one island to another. Memorized because that was the technology for repetition most widely available at the time, the *Odyssey* is not without comparison to Verne's *Voyages* for the tracing of an itinerary from one island adventure to the next.[38] But let us not forget that the *Odyssey*, like so many poems from its time, was also memorized by students learning their lessons. "La poésie, la mémoire et les techniques du commentaire littéraire contribuaient à esquisser une image mentale du monde dont les techniques de l'époque ne permettaient pas de diffuser les cartes matérialisées. En grec, *géographie*, l'écriture-dessin de la terre, n'a jamais désigné exclusivement la carte, mais aussi le traité descriptif" (Jacob, *Empire* 468).

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[38] Michel Serres especially follows the poetic similarities between the two voyages in *Jouvences sur Jules Verne*.

Today, the Internet-connected, satellite-watching modern reader, for whom nearly any map is a mouse click away, might marvel at the quaint backwardness of those ancient students memorizing the *Odyssey*. And yet I would suspect that most of us have read it, and maybe even memorized parts of it. But which version, which translation did I learn? Was it the "correct" one or had it been rewritten – vulgarized? In fact, it is the vulgarization of the subject that is the core of many geographical descriptions, for part of the vulgarization is making the subject relevant to a wide audience, touching therefore many interests at once, rather than simply limiting itself to a single historical linearity. As an example of this, the Greek *Periegesis*, an ancient travel narrative that is entirely descriptive in its explanation of the world, has been updated through time and can still be found in some English and French textbooks (Jacob, "L'œil" 25-26). Indeed, much of geography's own history is that of vulgarization, or the use of some sort of "voyage" as an excuse to pass through and in front of a series of places, including its people, flora and fauna (24). The geographer in this scenario is the guide from whose descriptions one will be able to recognize a location by its description alone (Unwin, *Journey* 63). Verne's works draw therefore on a long tradition of both vulgarization and narrativization of geography. The many *Voyages extraordinaires* as well as the descriptions within each one, considered individually or as a series, create an "imaginary atlas" that edifies while piquing the reader's interest in the geography described (Terrasse 33).

The production of geography therefore is not exclusively tied to cartographical representation. If we have a tendency to think it is, this impression comes in part from nineteenth-century realist tendencies that sought a maximum of supporting details – such as maps – to shore up the illusion of a total reality or the essence of the real, or the reasonable

(Robic, "Vue" 363). In the literary world, this would ultimately lead a number of authors to naturalism and an excess of detail that would maintain within the fiction an image that was probable or that no doubt could exist. Verne, having learned some of his style from Poe and clinging, at least in part, to Romanticism, sought instead to express something that was more possible than probable. As a result, one finds in Verne an interestingly plastic, moldable world that can take on new shapes and dimensionality in order to better complete itself, to better recover the discoveries it holds within its landscapes and to convey everything possible about the real without ever searching to discover its essence (Unwin, "Fiction" 50). Rather than concentrating his efforts on exemplifying the nature of a geographical location in the ordinary world, or defining a place, Verne employs narrative to create a space by combining representations of the location in a fictional geography that allows the exploration of the unknown by its lack of insistence on *one* known truth.

vii. **The Real and the Imaginary**

"La poétique de Verne est qu'il rend le réel imaginaire et l'imaginaire réel" (Minerva, *Utopie* 184). The geographical space that appears to be Verne's subject in the ordinary world and the literary space he creates in the fictional world overlap, interplay and inextricably link together in a complex story that goes beyond the simple adventure or cartography (Yotova 209). The simple maps from the ordinary world are like the shadows in Plato's cavern – shapes on the walls, some sort of recognizable information, but leaving the substance of the shadows to the imagination, for their form cannot show the real. Faced with a simple map – like shadows – one does not possess enough information to really know the subject or to complete the blank spaces on the map (Dupuy, *L'Homme* 95). The known, which is in this example the visual stimulus, may be a primary information-gathering tool of observation, but

it cannot be transmitted or communicated without recourse to language or another representative system. Blank spaces on this sort of simple world map cannot be filled in, but must be left as they are. However, with the inclusion of multiple verbal discourses and communication between individuals about the information, the blank spaces can be filled with approximations of known discourse or something familiar, transmissible and emotive (Garane ix; Dathorne 2-3). The resulting product that is part of an author's style is of particular interest to the critic looking for meaning in an author's writing, but Verne also uses it as a reminder that we are forever destined to reuse language to re-explore, rename, redefine and re-align the various sectors of knowledge at our disposal. Thus as he describes ordinary geography, he creates fictional geography using a tool that is itself like a map in that it is only a system of reference – at once real and imaginary (Compère, "Poétique" 73). To find its meaning, one must forge together multiple discourses of approximation that might *possibly* fill in the blanks.

Paganel, Verne's famous geographer who learns over the course of a trip around the world that the information in books can be flawed, serves as an easy reminder that a map alone does not suffice if one's goal is to "paint the earth." To do so requires the description of horizons, views, verticality and depth; in short it requires a subtle narrative mix of the imaginary and the real. Jumping between the imaginary adventure to the location on the map, Verne sews his stories together in such a manner that the reader's perspective encompasses both the referential point-by-point linear plot advancement and the stylistic pauses full of detail that inscribe the unknown with meaning. Along this series of perpetual rebounds (Gamarra 247), Verne's stories create a self-aware geography all their own (Compère, *Approche* 7). The landscape changes with the literary necessity as volcanoes

surge, oceans roar and plains extend forever (Escaich 73, 77, 78). Light and color fuse and roil, creating balance and contrast reminiscent of the plastic arts that surpass the verbal in the expression of the sublime (A. Evans, "Exploring" 274). The *Voyages extraordinaires* are however more than a vehicle for contemplation; they embrace Romantic exoticism and the *possibility* to open up to otherness – other lands, other plants, other animals, other customs and other ways of thinking (274).

Almost anything is *possible* in Verne – provided it not exceed the limits of the imaginable as an extension of the contemporary, of course. In the sense that he seems to explore contradictions, Verne is not particularly a realist in the nineteenth-century literary sense of the term, but neither is he a Romantic because of his insistence on Realism. Rather than trying to know the world, he is simply transferring the scientific observations available to him into a novelistic setting, but without the hard scientific formation necessary to do so with much more than literary success (Roboly 169).[39] Considering the difference between what is probable and what might be possible, Verne may cloak his stories in the domain of the probable, but he actually seems less interested in this than in what is possible, for the probable decidedly lacks imagination, substantially reducing the author's chances to recombine discourses and worlds to create a literary style. Certainly, he does not want to stray too far from reality, but he does want to play with it. The possible is more flexible, more inviting, and less constricted to the known. In the world of the possible, one can explore through language both the great unknowns and the knowns at the same time, using complementary approaches. Therefore, it is possible to consider that Verne is a man of his

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[39] Although his stories are full of scientific details and lessons of sorts, one should err on the side of caution before attempting some of his experiments. Provost Tom Isenhour, Professor of Chemistry at the Old Dominion University, expressed strong concern during the 2006 meetings of the North American Jules Verne Society for the safety of the characters in Verne's *L'Île mystérieuse* who were playing with recipes for explosives.

time, orienting his writing to the events of the nineteenth century (Compère, *Ecrivain* 9), considering the natural world and humanity's relationship with it (Chesneaux, *Politique* 30) or the insularity or guiding principles of humanity itself (Minerva, *Utopie* 21). However, he formats his stories along the lines of the possible rather than restraining himself to the probable, enlarging rather than diminishing the stories' universe. The unknowns, the blank spots on the map are not places to fear, but are instead places of opportunity for the reader to enter another world where anything is possible because the rules that govern reality are not the same (26). In these other worlds, Verne simply makes things up. "Fiction exists not despite its adherence to the known realities of our universe, but through and within those realities. They [the realities] justify and sustain it, for they are themselves the ultimate infinitely self-regenerating narrative" (Unwin, "Fiction" 53).

If cartography is, as Chesneaux says, the "acte par excellence de prise de possession du monde naturel par l'homme" (*Politique* 27), Verne's textual maps – or his narrative geographical representations of a location – are the opportunity for the author to reconsider the many aspects of the known world and expand the literary universe beyond the boundaries of realism to explore the unknown. This is the modernity of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, not the mechanically awesome means of travel, but the spiritual necessity of travel (Orfila 399). Moving along an itinerary replete with description and adventure (interactions with the topographical location), travel expressed as the narrative, the textual map supersedes the confines of the realist, historically probable project, allowing the author and the reader to engage with an imaginary and explore a multidimensional fiction (Citti, 69).

II.C. Locating Verne's Sources

The final section of this chapter concentrates heavily upon the knowledge that Verne had of the Cape Horn region when he was writing. This information reflects the ordinary world, or what was generally believed to be true about the area, and it is important since the author uses it as a touchstone, coming back to it at intervals so as to achieve greater verisimilitude. This section also hints at the interesting flexibility of this group of islands scattered where the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans meet, a topic I return to in chapter four. As part of the textual map, these details taken from the ordinary world set up the possibility for narration, for description and observation produced by movement through the geography of a fictional world.

i. Interactive and Isolationist

Verne only rarely wrote about his own country, preferring to situate his stories abroad. This decision is understandable and follows the program of the geographical discovery of the planet if one considers that to write about France would have been to write about what Verne and his readers lived every day. By going outside of France, the author could engage a world open for interpretation, where the lands encountered were free of French social, economic and political concerns (Chesneaux, *Politique* 86). The sea and the pointillist assortment of islands that dot it became the *milieux libres* of preference for Verne, who attributed to these locations broad horizons of new social order (85). Part of the virtue of such desert island locations – for in the nineteenth century many Pacific islands in particular were still just being discovered, and a good number were thought uninhabited – is that they offered no resistance to real or literary colonization. No inhabitants meant no conflict over territory, and Verne was decidedly against military and government action that

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he considered factice or simply arbitrary (Vierne, *Verne* 51). By choosing uninhabited lands, he paints the earth in a way that puts every reader in the same boat, so to speak, allowing free play of discourses without peremptorily choosing those that will dominate.

The decision to move the action to distant lands has the additional bonus of allowing Verne to imagine the contents of all the blank spots on the globe. Of course, there would be fewer and fewer of these over time, for through exploration just like that in Verne's own geography, there would be less and less that would remain unknown. However, it is worth remembering here that Verne explored the unknowns by creating a space through which reader, author and character alike move and thus produce what is known of the location in the *fictional world*, but maybe not in the ordinary one with its larger concern for *place* rather than *space*. This is not to say that Verne's world of the *Voyages* and the projects of the ordinary world remain separate from one another. On the contrary, as de Certeau shows us with the process of writing and rewriting in *Les Grands navigateurs du XVIIIe siècle*, Verne's project is intertextually related to the ordinary world. In fact, Verne's work reflects the play between the known and unknown worlds and their interaction through the author's literary combinations that lessens the reader's fear(s) of the unknown, thanks largely to the power of imagination (Minerva, "Sguardo" 265). At the invitation of the author, who has already given reign to his own creativity, the reader participates in a voyage of observation. As with the map I discussed earlier in which the vast expanses of the ocean were filled with explanatory or descriptive text, forcing the reader's eye to go back and forth in an elliptical voyage across the page, the textual map that Verne produces is an evocative production designed to play intertextually back and forth between the ordinary visual word or image and the thought it suggests in the fictional world. To do this, he utilizes the many tools he has at

hand, from scientific discourse to an inserted map to the adventures of the plot itself,

recombining the many influences applicable to a scenario in order to narrate geography in the

Voyages extraordinaires (259).

The use of distant lands also allows the author to insert with legitimacy actual maps

of the area. With a few exceptions including the (in)famous example of the switching of the

location of a town for narrative convenience in *Michel Strogoff*, Verne was basically faithful

to available contemporary information (Petel 44). A. Evans, Harpold, Compère, Butcher

and, to a lesser degree, Weissenberg have all made special studies of the maps in Verne's

novels, and I will only briefly discuss them here to acknowledge them as a support or a

secondary intertextual device playing a part in Verne's overall literary production. If I do not

go into greater detail, it is because of the three novels I am primarily interested in; only one

was published originally with a map, *Deux Ans de vacances*. The other two, being

posthumous and also published for a diminishing readership, did not contain maps in the

original publications.[40] Interestingly, of the two maps that were to be used in *Deux Ans de*

vacances, only the imaginary one of Verne's own creation made it into the final text. Hetzel

fils believed that the other, which depicted the disputed boundaries between Chile and

Argentina, would be too politically controversial for publication (Weissenberg, "Carte" 30).

Would the publisher's rejection of the map influence Verne's choice to return later to a

politically oriented story related to this very same treaty between the two countries in *En*

Magellanie? I believe it is possible, after all "Vernian voyage is the fictional means whereby

the process of global mapping is transformed into narrative discourse, and vice versa" (A.

Evans, *Rediscovered* 117).

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[40] The maps one now finds included with certain editions of the *version d'origine* of *En Magellanie* come from the Rochas article cited in the bibliography of this dissertation.

Part of Verne's personal process of global mapping was his choice of location and the information available to him on which to base his stories. We know from interviews that through his various resources he collected a vast storehouse of information on note cards, which he pulled out and used for his *Voyages* when and where applicable.[41] Unfortunately, these cards along with most of his personal papers were purposely destroyed by the author during his lifetime. Among the items that Verne kept, however, was a strange map of the southern part of South America. For many years, critics assumed its relation to *Le Phare du bout du monde*, but Weissenberg revealed that it was actually tied to *Deux Ans de vacances* ("Carte" 54). That Verne kept this map for nearly twenty years indicates that it held some particular importance to him. The 1887 letter Weissenberg cites as accompanying it from Hetzel *fils* says simply: "Je vous envoie comme suite à notre conversation, une carte américaine publiée sous les auspices du gouvernement de la Plata, qui vous montrera que la Patagonie, comme je vous l'ai dit, n'existe que sur les cartes françaises. Sur cette carte comme sur les cartes yankees, le Chili, la confédération argentine se considèrent comme chez eux jusqu'au cap Horn." Reading between the lines, maps are arbitrary, subjective and even duplicitous in their representation of an area. The boundaries between Chile and Argentina, as well as the land that they may or may not contain, although technically recorded or mapped to some varying degree of exactitude since Magellan's discovery of the Strait in 1520, remained nonetheless in 1887 one of those unknown blank spots on the globe that Verne hoped to paint. Ironically, for all of its apparent desert solitude, the area around Cape Horn and the Strait of Magellan was also one of the most important locations for global commerce in the nineteenth century.

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[41] This information is quoted in many locations, but is most often taken from the Sherard interview that I have previously cited in this chapter.

ii. The End of the World as He Knew It

Before writing *Deux Ans de vacances* (1888), *Le Phare du bout du monde* (1905) or *En Magellanie* (1909) Verne had already traveled through the Cape Horn archipelago many times in the three volumes of his *Histoire des grands voyages et grands voyageurs*. Certainly, as I have already acknowledged, he shared the authorial responsibility with Marcel, but it can certainly be assumed that he walked away from the experience with an improved knowledge of the area, as well as an important series of references at hand. Additionally, for the two later novels, Verne also consulted Hyades' "Une Année au Cap Horn" and Rochas' "Journal d'un voyage au détroit de Magellan," both of which were published in one of the author's resources of preference, the *Tour du Monde*. Before I continue to explore the concept of the textual map and Verne's writing, it will be useful to devote a certain amount of space to the sort of information these sources contained because it echoes in the three novels and can therefore be read as part of the textual map itself.

For instance, thinking specifically of *En Magellanie*, one might find a strange similarity between Verne's estimation of the last of Fletcher Christian's sailors, Smith, who, after having lived an "evil" youth without a sense of obligation or law, became the leader by morality and justice of a thriving community (*Explorers 19th* 203), and the Kaw-djer, the anarchist-turned-ruler of a somewhat misfit colony. Or in addition to being inspired by Jean Orth, the lost brother of the Austrian archduke, it might be interesting to see in this Vernian character a reference to the story of a German-Swiss man named Niederhauser who had gone to Patagonia to hunt seals, but who ended up deserted by his fellow crewmen and spending three months among the native Indians (Verne, *Explorers 19th* 340-341). He left the area with d'Urville's expedition – to which Verne makes significant references – and had even

learned some of the Indians' language, as did the Kaw-djer who is the main character in *En Magellanie*. Then there is the question of the name of the ship in *En Magellanie*, *The Jonathan*, which was coincidentally the name of the Indian guide for Hyades' group (405). Hyades also mentions that there is a sort of witch doctor character among the Indians who, as a part of his healing, blows on the hand of the patient (414). It seems an unimportant act, but Verne emphasizes the Indians' blowing in a significant manner when dealing with the death of the man attacked by the jaguar. I propose therefore to elaborate – or digress – upon the various echoes that the voyages of discovery to the Cape Horn area had on Verne's textual maps, with an emphasis on the way in which Verne used them in his writing to pass from the known to the unknown.

As concerns the Indians of the region, if Hyades mentions a witch doctor sort of character, it is more a counter-example than one of typical behavior. Indeed, he and Rochas agree that there does not seem to be an organized religion as the Occident might understand it (Rochas 224; Hyades 413) and that death and dying do not seem to carry any particular fear (Hyades 406). On the other hand, the Indians are superstitious. Hyades speaks of an animal's cry in the night that is supposed to be a bad omen (413), and Verne recounts Bougainville's story of a young boy who died after eating glass beads. He had eaten them because it was a talisman to put things down one's throat (*Navigators 18ᵗʰ* 92). He also relates the story of another Indian who braves d'Urville's camera, an object in which his comrades feared witchcraft (*Explorers 19ᵗʰ* 342). The question of religion and superstition aside, the Indians were generally highly regarded for their moral character. In fact, the Indians of Tierra del Fuego – and here a certain distinction must be made between the poorer tribes who roamed the islands and the richer and more aggressive tribes who remained on the

South American continent proper (Rochas 235) – were considered peaceable, gentle, helpful and honest (Verne, *Explorers 19th* 340; Hyades 416). If it had never occurred to them to use the natural resources at their disposal (Hyades 407), neither did it cross their mind to take advantage of the generosity of others (415). Of particular interest or importance because it is mentioned in *En Magellanie* is Duperrey's remark in the nineteenth century that if they had nothing else, the Indians at least had maintained their independence since their first encounters with explorers in the sixteenth century (Verne, *Explorers 19th* 262). Hyades agrees and returns to this theme throughout his article. "Le caractère qui domine dans les mœurs de cette singulière peuplade, c'est l'amour immodéré de la liberté et la haine de toute contrainte" (410). They will, he argues, leave the civilized life the missionaries try to ease them into in order return to their life of wandering, which, albeit wretchedly poor, is nonetheless *free and independent* (394-395, my emphasis).

Their good character aside, it is the physical characteristics that Europeans had first remarked when traveling through the land of fire, Tierra del Fuego, where the Patagonians, or the people with big feet, lived.[42] These purported giants turned out to be smaller than the average European, but apparently of a different proportion, which made them look taller when on horseback (Rochas 214). Wide in the torso and the head, according to Bougainville (Verne, *Navigators 18th* 89-91) and small in the extremities, the Indians were generally described as most destitute (92 and 119). If certain tribes, those who were stronger and generally on horseback, found a limited success in raiding their neighbors (86-87), most lived unsheltered and relatively unclothed (119), living off scraps of raw putrid fish washed up on the beach by storms (42). Also remarked upon by more than one voyager were the red and

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[42] It should not be necessary to mention this, but I will do so anyway. The Patagonian's big feet and many other descriptions were misperceptions on the part of early explorers.

yellow paint and the white lime powder used to decorate their bodies (Verne, *Travelers* 287; *Navigators 18th* 35-39; *Explorers 19th* 340). Neiderhauser, the German-Swiss who had lived for months amongst them, said this was their war garb. Is it not retrospectively ironic that so many explorers would have encountered it without realizing the importance? On the other hand, as Verne himself points out and as Reclus supports in his article on Chile, the migratory nature of the many tribes roaming the area around the Strait of Magellan means that no one description can apply to all of the individuals (Verne, *Travelers* 364; Reclus, "Chili" 767).

Beyond the mysterious stories of the indigenous peoples that explorers brought back, they also returned with stories of shipwrecks and impossible weather. Five years after Magellan's first voyage through the Strait, the region was already mentioned as the *fin des terres* (Reclus, "Chili" 697), a phrase reminiscent Arago's aforementioned *Note scientifique de voyage au bout du monde* that inspired the working title *Au Bout du monde* for what became *En Magellanie*. Indeed, explorers who ventured this far south often found themselves at the utter mercy of the elements. Freycinat returning from Australia and New Zealand tells of having to purposely ground the *Uranie* into Penguin Island, near the Falklands, so as to avoid the driving wind and currents crashing him into the land, which would have destroyed his ship and the scientific collections aboard and risked the lives of all the sailors (Verne, *Explorers 19th* 246-247). As it was, he and his crew – of artisan sailors who knew many trades and were thus handy in making what they needed to survive and even to build a new ship – spent the season making the best of things until another ship happened to pass by.

From early on, the question of whether to go through the Strait or around Cape Horn drew various explorers to the area to attempt to map better and to experiment with both options. In fact, the Dutch had such a strong control of commerce that they had put a tax on any ship sailing to India via the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa) or the Strait of Magellan. Looking for another, untaxed route, the Dutch merchant Lemaire and the mariner Schouten financed an expedition to find what became an alternative – the Strait of Lemaire and Cape Horn, the anglicized spelling of the town of Hoorn where the expedition was fitted out (Verne, *Travelers* 388-389). Others sought passage through one of the lateral canals, or the many inlets and outlets that run a labyrinth through the many small islands of the area.[43] Drake, Cartaret, Bougainville, d'Urville, Byron, Freycinat, Weddell, Cook and many more equally famous and infamous navigators and explorers spent months in and around the waters of the Strait either purposely making hydrographic and meteorological readings or simply taking advantage of the opportunity to do so while repairing their ships that were often damaged in the persistently stormy seas or on sand bars. A few items of note include Byron and Bougainville's estimation that although the Strait was reputed as dangerous, in their opinion it was safer than the alternative route around Cape Horn (Verne, *Navigators 18th* 44). However, it was most dangerous to try to enter the Strait from the Pacific side because in addition to the entry being hard to spot, the prevailing winds and currents worked against the ship and often led it off course (Rochas 228). This is, of course, exactly what happened to Verne's *Jonathan* in *En Magellanie*.

Tied to the interest in the Strait and to commerce in general was the myth of the southern continent. In the early nineteenth century (1822-1823), Weddell had managed to

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[43] As previously stated, Thevet's maps, based on Pigafetta's recounting of Magellan's first voyage through the Strait, exemplify that the depiction of each island is a flight and fancy of the narrator, for it was impossible to exactly capture each one of the multitude of small islands as they were described (Jacob, "Isles" 12).

make it to about 70°S and had noticed that despite the rough waters and floating ice, the temperature seemed to be warmer, indicating the possibility of a nearby continent. Just as it was important for commercial reasons to ascertain the possibility of a passage across the North Pole, it was equally tantalizing to investigate a route for ships to the south. Many "Antarctic" expeditions were launched in the 1830s, most famously for the French was d'Urville's, to which Verne makes frequent reference. Even if none of these missions found a southern passage and established instead that Antarctica proper was a continent rather than a sea, they combined to improve the geographical and scientific knowledge of the area and revealed the strategic and commercial importance of the *bout du monde*.

In his descriptions of the area, Verne often reminds us that seasons are reversed in the southern hemisphere, which also allows him to persevere in a returning discussion of temperature and meteorological information. Rochas and Hyades, who lived a year in the Cape Horn Archipelago, make significant statements about the temperatures being rather constant: 7° Celsius or so in the summer and approximately 3° in the winter, with an average of about 5° (Hyades 408). Who would have thought the temperatures so moderate so close to the Antarctic? Rochas argues for lower temperatures, dipping down to -3° in the winter, and a coldest temperature in June of -11° (220). Whether one looks at one set of data or the other, if correct, it is feasible for an author to locate a Robinsonade[44] in this territory. Moreover, although Auriol argues that Verne's flora and fauna descriptions are undoubtedly faulty in their overabundant richness (77), most of the year the area receives a beneficial southwest wind from the Antarctic. As the cold air rises over the mountains of the Andes –

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[44] The term Robinsonade originates in reference to Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. Like Defoe's plot, it is a story depicting the survival of characters shipwrecked in a desert location. I discuss this at greater length in the following chapters.

which Reclus maintains geologically includes the islands of the Cape Horn archipelago down to and including the Cape and Staten Island – rain falls in abundance over the western side of the territory. Unfortunately, the growing climate is better in the eastern part, but cities like Punta Arenas that are just in the middle do quite well (Rochas 234; Reclus 753-755). Average weather, which Rochas actually compares to Paris (222), allowed for an adequate animal and plant life to sustain small colonies.

Unlike Paris, the "distinctive character" of the area's weather and the danger to potential or real Robinsons and explorers came from rapid and dramatic changes in climate (Verne, *Navigators 18*[th] 91). Impossible to forecast and quite dangerous for their suddenness and ferocity, many a ship found itself with a broken mast or heavy water damage as a result of being tossed about by the wind, hail, fog, rain and towering waves; the victim of this meteorological danger.[45] Even Rochas' party found itself temporarily stranded as a result of a storm; stumbling upon the wreck from another ship on the beach (228).

A land of Indians who remained free, of weather that despite its moderation was not only seasonally our opposite but also unpredictably deadly and of numerous unknown and uncharted islands, the area in and around the Cape Horn Archipelago really must have seemed the end of the world and a land in which European ideas of order and society did not apply. Had not Magellan himself quickly done away with potential mutineers shortly before entering the Strait? Drake followed suit during one of his own voyages. De Noort also relates having met a ship of men who had abandoned one of their officers. And of course the

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[45] As an aside, it is interesting to note that Verne discusses in his volume on the *Explorers of the Nineteenth Century*, that d'Urville's scientific measurements of wave height at 35 feet contradicts Arago's calculations of a maximum of 5-6 feet. He uses this as an example of the importance of first-hand knowledge (348). Although Marcel wrote most of this volume, it nonetheless carries Verne's name and is therefore interesting for the fact that the comment would seem to go against the Arago family reputation.

infamous Bligh passed through the area – while the crew still thought well enough of him.

Regarding such acts of high-seas law and the possibility of real Robinsons, Verne digresses:

> N'y a-t-il pas, dans ces actes que nous voyons commettre si fréquemment à cette époque par des navigateurs espagnols, anglais et hollandais, un signe des temps ? Ce que nous traiterions aujourd'hui de barbarie épouvantable semblait sans doute une peine relativement douce à ces homme habitués à faire peu de case de la vie humaine. Et cependant est-il rien de plus cruel que d'abandonner un homme, sans armes et sans provisions, dans un pays désert ? Le débarquer dans une contrée peuplée de féroces cannibales qui doivent se repaître de sa chair, n'est-ce pas le condamner à une mort horrible? (*Découverte premiers* 397)

Death seemed nearly certain in this part of the world. Indians died, missionaries died, explorers died, seal and whale hunters died, settlers died. In fact, one of the most infamous yet strangely inviting anchoring locations on the Strait is Port Famine. Founded in 1584 by Sarmiento de Gamboa, this settlement and fortress was intended to become the commercial key to the Strait for its strategic and rich location for refitting and restocking ships.[46] The 400 settlers were well-equipped and would have succeeded had they ever been able to leave the fortress to tend to their fields. Instead, three years later when the pirate Cavendish was passing by, only 21 survivors remained. The rest had died of hunger or had been killed by the Indians while tending their fields or while attempting to travel north in search of help (Verne, *Travelers* 369; Reclus, "Chili" 702).

> Naguère les bords du détroit de Magellan et la Terre de Feu étaient considérés comme voués à la solitude et à la mort. Les fréquents naufrages qui ont eu lieu sur les promontoires et les écueils du pourtour insulaire, les récits des marins, relatifs aux tempêtes du cap Hoorn, à ses pluies et à ses froideurs, enfin les vastes déserts de l'intérieur, les neiges et les glaciers des montagnes côtières, avaient fait à cette terre extrême de l'Amérique du Sud une réputation terrible, ainsi qu'en témoigne mainte dénomination du littoral: Port Famine ou Puerto Hambre, dans le détroit de Magellan; la baie 'N'entre Pas' ou No Entras, dans l'île Darwin; et, sur la Terre de Feu, Anxious Point ou 'Pointe des Anxiétés.' (Reclus, "Chili" 798-799)

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[46] In the nineteenth century, the American Cunningham reinvented the utility of Port Famine's location. He improved on a makeshift post office – literally a box full of letters from sailors writing back to Europe. As ships passed, they picked up letters whose destinations matched their own (Verne, *Explorers* 337-338).

Beyond the generalizations one can make about the area, a few specifics regarding Chile and Argentina might prove useful. First of all, many voyages of circumnavigation mention stopping at Juan Fernandez Island in the Pacific. It was in this general area that Captain Rogers found Alexander Selkirk, the inspiration for Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.[47] Moreover, on the way to this island, many a ship would have passed near Hanover Island, the location for *Deux Ans de vacances*. A real island that did not in the least resemble Verne's butterfly-like drawing, Hanover would have been more visited and more visible than Verne portrays it. However, it also is part of the labyrinth of islands and inlets that remained among the last in the area to be thoroughly explored.[48] Like Hoste Island, the primary location for *En Magellanie*, the rest of the Strait and Staten Island in the Atlantic where *Le Phare du bout du monde* stands; Hanover Island is a subtle mix of the real and the imaginary, the known and the unknown woven together to create a story out of geography, a textual map of the area. Yes, the three locations exist. Yes, Chile and Argentina split the territory in an 1881 treaty. Yes, as part of the Andes range, a certain amount of gold or other ore deposits were being discovered. Yes, a lighthouse was constructed on Staten Island in 1884. And yes, there is even now one on Cape Horn. But how does Verne treat these facts in his novels? How does he create a textual map out of these pieces of information?

The textual map is an opportunity for the author to explore the possible and to expand the literary universe through the movement back and forth between the known and the unknown, to embroider fact and fiction in an engaging and inviting manner. Indeed, the

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[47] Verne offers in *Famous Travels and Travelers* another possible inspiration for the famous Robinson in a man named Dampier who in 1684 traveled too far inland on Juan Fernandez looking for a Nicaraguan Indian who had been deserted there in 1680. His captain did not realize he was not on board and simply sailed away without him (410-411).

[48] See Auriol's article for a complete list of differences between the fictional and the real island.

textual map is an invitation to the reader to participate, to construct, to imagine. It purposefully goes beyond the factual place holders, which Verne finds dull, and embraces the more colorful and interesting imaginary of the descriptive itinerary. "Tâche ingrate, peu agréable pour le lecteur, mais difficile pour l'écrivain, qui doit respecter les faits et ne peut égayer son récit par des observations personnelles et des anecdotes, parfois piquantes, des voyageurs" (*Découverte 19e* 291-292) laments Verne while recounting Duperrey's voyage, which had assumed a strictly factual place-oriented tone after leaving Chile. Although attempting to remain factual and basing his *Voyages extraordinaires* in the present, Verne enjoys using a variety of different information, discourses and sources in his writing, redrawing the boundaries between fiction and reality (Unwin, "Negotiating" 5). If Verne *says* that he believes that the voyages around the earth are finished and that therefore discovery was complete (*Découverte 19e* 421, 423), he nonetheless eloquently argues that this knowledge be put to rethinking boundaries. "Voilà notre tâche, à nous autre contemporains. Est-elle donc moins belle que celle de nos devanciers, qu'elle n'ait encore tenté quelque écrivain de renom?" (423).

But it *had* inspired an *écrivain de renom*, an arguably great writer of fiction, Verne himself, who recognized in the positivist or the scientifically observed ordinary world and ordered cartography a springboard for his adventurous leaps into the unknown, a geography of the fictional world. Working back and forth between the ordinary map or the scientific or factual discourse and the fictional tale, the author makes the unknown known (Compère, "Poésie" 73-74). Butor was one of the first to really notice this, affirming that to write about either a purely factual world or a purely fictional world was feasible enough, but that Verne did it in such a manner that the boundaries between them were blurred, impossible to discern.

"Le rêve accompagne et suit la description la plus positive sans que la moindre faille se produise entre eux deux" ("Point" 40). In one sense, this explains part of Verne's occasional reputation as a Saint-Simon-influenced positivist writer, for the *grands travaux* and observable or documented scientific information form the crux of the known world on which rely Verne's jumps into the unknown. Dumas and others have noted, however, that Verne's information was not always of the highest perfection and served more as an excuse for the author to write poetically than scientifically (*Voyage* 95). Certainly, Hetzel's mission statement for the *Voyages* had been to explore the known and unknown worlds, but it was Verne who came up with the unique style that, while seeming to echo the ideas *en vogue* (Vierne 52), found ways of placing them in new locations while maintaining the characteristics necessary to insure their recognition by readers (A. Evans, *Rediscovered* 63-64) and created a geography that takes its form from the "mouvement du va-et-vient de la carte au réel, dans cette reconnaissance de l'un dans l'autre" (Chelebourg, *L'œil* 29).

Verne's textual maps are interactive, active and full of movement, representing as a part of their production a set or many instances of established observations and facts. His novels do not concentrate on the final product, the end result or the naming the known world, concerning themselves instead with the process of discovery, the observation of the world, using the known to make the unknown less extraordinary and playing with the unknown to make the known world more interesting and less ordinary (Butcher, *Self* 16; Huet 12). On the surface, Hetzel had devised a very "safe" literary project for the benefit of his young readership (Harris 111), and one that Verne himself seems to support when he claims in *The Great Explorers of the Nineteenth Century* that the last voyage of discovery brought an end to global exploration, basically rendering the earth completely known (376). Indeed, it might

seem a rather static situation if one overlooks the fact that within the greater theater of the

known world waited still numerous individual unknowns; but "armed" with knowledge, the

reader could explore them in a scientific manner, that is to say, by reaction and observation.

> Du moins les progrès de l'homme dans la connaissance de sa demeure sont-ils incontestables. Aux origines de l'histoire, l'horizon entourant chaque peuplade lui paraissait la borne du monde, de tous les côtés elle était assiégée par l'inconnu. Maintenant la science de tous profite à chacun. Il n'est pas un homme d'instruction moyenne qui n'a la sensation de vivre sur une boule terrestre dont il pourrait faire le tour sans avoir à lutter contre des monstres et sans rencontrer des prodiges. (Reclus, *L'Homme* 19)

Working from and with numerous examples, concentrating concurrently on the larger picture

and also on the larger scale,[49] Verne's style engages the reader to recognize the familiar and

move from it to the unfamiliar through a pleasant – if adventurous – tourist-like voyage

(Sadaune 20).

Criticizing early explorers for too rapidly traversing the lands and seas they

encountered, Verne advocates for real study and scientific observation as the only way to

understand the entirety of the geography of the world – people included – and to build upon

or within it further observations based on specifics (*Travelers* 381-382). Verne would make

of this experience a textual map, a geographical location described in a narrative that is

flexible enough to interact with each and every new situation thanks to the multitude of prior

examples and discourses on which it is based. Not a totality in the encyclopedic sense of

knowing everything or in the social sense of representing everything, but certainly a totality

whose only limits to the acceptance of *possible* knowledge, *possible* experience and *possible*

adventures are linguistic. Nineteenth-century society generally felt itself capable of

mastering the earth through scientific observation (Vierne 58-59) and Verne's unique mix of

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[49] One must remember that a large scale map actually covers a small area, and a small-scale map covers a large area. If the terms have become confused in popular writing, the geographic nature of this paper demands the proper usage.

discourses allowed him to move in his narrative from this bird's eye view of the map to an

in-depth exploration of every subtlety of contour – each one an invitation to adventure and to

poetic discourse, unhindered by the limits of the imagination or the two-dimensional map.

iii. The Cape Horn Archipelago

After the opening of Verne's theatrical adaptation of *Le Tour du monde en 80 jours*,

one critic wrote that Verne took the audience on the, "tour du monde en pantoufles" (qtd. in

Margot, *Temps* 62). Although I doubt anyone in the audience that night wore their bedroom

slippers, Verne's unique writing style enabled him to send his readers to any destination

around the world without leaving the comfort of their own home. Like a compilation of

maps, Verne's novels unfold one page of description after another, one scientifically

supported voice networking with another, through an interactive and provocative topography.

If at first Verne's mapping gaze tends to take in the widest possible view (Harpold 28;

Minerva, "Sguardo" 260), it soon preferentially begins to share characteristics that are

primary to the imaginative part of the story (Minerva, "Sguardo" 261); for similar to

consulting a number of maps, an atlas or its predecessor the *theatrum*, this is not a question of

quickly flying above one map, but is instead one of traveling *through* it.

> L'atlas est un dispositif qui permet de concilier le tout et le détail. Il est régi par une
> logique cumulative et analytique, qui conduit de la vision globale aux images
> partielles. L'atlas est une suite ordonnée de cartes et, en passant du singulier au
> pluriel, la carte prend un sens nouveau, devient un objet différent. L'atlas se prête à
> une forme différente de maîtrise du monde, plus intellectuelle et encyclopédique, sans
> négliger les enjeux symboliques de cette capitalisation du savoir géographique dans
> l'espace privé. (Jacob, *Empire* 97)

Not particularly useful for travel, but nonetheless filling an educational and social lacuna, the

atlas, like the *Voyages extraordinaires*, becomes what Serres calls a sort of manual of

manuals (Unwin, *Journey* 26). Likewise, describing lands that are already known or giving

clues to possible whereabouts in the case of a shipwreck, Verne's locations are always extensions of what is already known and nearby. "I mondi di Verne non sono luoghi fantastici, ma il prolungamento letterario delle terre conosciute che li circondano. Sono quelle che c'è oltre, sono i territori ancora avvolti nel mistero. [...] La finzione geografica espande e completa la realtà" (Minerva, "Sguardo" 260). The all-important tie from the fictional back to the ordinary world diminishes the potential for a feeling of solitude (Pessini 38). The link between the two is established via a series of maps, a sense of active movement and participation that comes from a shared discourse established through the pages of an atlas, a narrative, or what I simply call a textual map.

A part of what differentiates a textual map from a map as an image is the reliance upon intertextual supports that reinforce more than just the meaning represented by the map, but also the history or the way in which one arrived at that meaning. A search for verisimilitude, the text becomes a corroborative vehicle that is interpreted like a map because the reader must follow through the text the contours and spaces described (Harpold 32). Moreover, within those spaces one sees a return to the mapmaking strategy of writing in the oceans, filling the blank space by using it to link together the rest. In the *Voyages extraordinaires*, this "ocean" space is filled with scientific discourse meant to sustain and project the author's textual endeavor (Unwin, *Journey* 58). Specifically, these voices of support, these "borrowings" are imprints of previous journeys or previous knowledge and thus reinforce the concept that all voyages, just like all literature, just like all maps, are returned to over and again, repeated and refined over the course of time. Therefore, since the subject itself is a replication, or not an original, no literary work about it will be entirely

original either and must borrow on previous examples. Bringing in this "murmur of many voices" adds verisimilitude to the work and legitimizes the endeavor as a whole (59).

"Jules Verne, on le voit, s'il se passionne certainement pour la géographie, la traite beaucoup plus comme un instrument de création que comme un objet scientifique dont il faudrait rigoureusement rendre compte à ses lecteurs. Il ne cesse de 'jouer' avec cette précision géographique qui s'affine tout au long de son siècle" (Sadaune 21). Geography, like literature itself, has no real limit to Verne, for geography is what one *does*, an active endeavor rather than a passive acceptance (Harpold 32). Like a movement back and forth across a map, or through the pages of an atlas, Verne's writing style can be read as an active participation by multiple sources, a graft of sorts, or a "personalized" borrowing (Unwin, *Journey* 57). In a different fashion, but nevertheless in seeming agreement with Flaubert, Verne recognizes that nothing is truly original in a text; that it is all recycling (17). Writing about locations on the globe, using the science of geography that has come to include within it many other sciences like zoology and botany, Verne has a wealth of information at his disposal and is free to arrange it according to his own literary wishes (27). Self-cannibalizing or simply repetitive, Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* refuse linearity and cover instead a circular pattern, just as does his writing. But this creates a tension that Verne cannot escape, for if each voyage of discovery is not a new discovery, but instead the repetition of another, nothing is discovered (Harpold 34). I ask whether that is not sufficient discovery. After all, even Verne's contemporaries did not know how to classify his writing. Agreeing with Unwin that Verne is writing in the margins of geography and literature (*Journey* 16), following a circular or elliptical pattern back and forth from one discourse to another, without really residing in either, creating a textual map; I find it important to reconsider location in

his stories when they purposefully return to an area; in this case, the Cape Horn Archipelago, about which Verne wrote five times.[50]

The Cape Horn Archipelago that Verne recreates in *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* is an area that is stuck between definitions. Whether part of the South American continent, or simply a sprawling group of islands, Hanover, Staten and Hoste Islands lie nearly as far south as possible without being in Antarctica, without being polar. They are the end of the world (Minerva, "Sguardo" 264), a mystery of sorts (Escaich 77), a transition point between land and sea, Atlantic and Pacific, East and West, North and South. The area's first serious exploration[51] resulted from a search for understanding about the earth itself. Was it hollow as proposed in Seaborn's *Symzonia* (Seeds 75)? Was New Zealand – originally named Staten Land by Tasmin – a vast southern continent? Continued exploration accompanied a search for refinement of existing knowledge through a better understanding of the Strait or the Cape, the last refueling and refitting station during European Pacific or Antarctic expeditions. On the edge of the world and between two worlds, the Cape Horn Archipelago – unlike most other locations – was an area of constant transition and movement both in the ordinary and the fictional world.

II.D. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to arrive at the definition of a textual map by examining aspects of geography, cartography and Verne's literary project against the background of the known world and the public for whom the author wrote. In a number of

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[50] As a reminder, in addition to the three novels of primary interest, *Les Enfant du capitaine Grant* – although taking place further north in Chile and Argentina – is often listed among the novels in this general area, along with *Robur le conquérant*, in which the airship flew over Tierra del Fuego.

[51] By "serious exploration," I mean investigation of the area as a destination rather than a point of passage on a larger world voyage.

ways, the result of this research is a mirror of Verne's own writing style in that I have found myself attempting to incorporate a number of different discourses into one project. Like Verne, I have recycled a fair amount of what others have said, and also fallen into the occasional long digression that my reader may have skipped. However, my effort does not result in a textual map, for unlike Verne my goal is not a narration that goes in circles in order to explore the space between the fictional and the ordinary world through geography.

Instead, it is my hope that in this chapter I have explained how I arrived at the definition of the textual map, its relation to literature and geography and how it differs from and is similar to other pairings of the two. A textual map is a geographically inclined literary program that the author creates and the reader interprets through a series of movements through a possible topography. Destined for a wide audience – a vulgarization, it is factual enough to appear, true but this built-in intertextuality is itself plastic and an invitation for the reader to observe and participate in the construction of a possible reality to fill the unknowns, to expand the known universe. A compilation of sorts, or a map full of textual legends and explanations filling the unknowns and referring back to the knowns, a textual map represents a voyage predicated on prior knowledge, but which does not limit itself to a bird's eye view, moving instead *through* the lands described.

As I admitted earlier, the textual map can be understood as a metaphor for literary production, both reading and writing. It is a way of examining what lies between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, the ways of bridging the gap between them. It is narrative that transforms the simple reference point on the map into something that one can travel *through*, move within. It is the description of a space with all its many dimensions enhanced and supported by various discourses, which are themselves narrative tactics as Verne makes

the best of the information he has on hand, working it all together to produce a text in which anything is possible because no one discourse has control over the others. This is Verne's style, a compilation of many others that forges and reuses language with the interesting result of exploring what is yet unknown. Yet the reader does not feel much trepidation in this exploration, and one might ask how, without an omniscient narrator guiding the reader's perception, does Verne direct the reader through the geography of the fictional world? The next chapter explores some of the ways he accomplishes this, grouping them for the purposes of this dissertation as textual legends, or keys used to negotiate the meaning of a map as it is read.

CHAPTER III: INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXTUAL LEGEND

In the previous chapter, I proposed the concept or the metaphor of the textual map to understand the *Voyages extraordinaires* as a primarily geographical work that negotiates a narrative space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. An active rather than a passive stylistic approach, the textual map expresses movement *through* rather than over geographical terrain, with the purpose of exploring the land rather than simply using it as a backdrop for a story. This map becomes an itinerary, more than one single point or location, more than one view; it is a compilation or a vision that incorporates multiple perspectives and discourses as part of a space that is lived or experienced. The space is not limitless, however, and neither is the freedom of linguistic recombination that Verne has as the author. In this chapter, I intend to explore the barriers or the limits that are part of the text, for it is important to understand how their presence creates a sense of legitimacy and credibility to the geographical work, distinguishing it from pure fantasy, allowing it to co-exist in the ordinary and fictional worlds. In this sense, they help to negotiate the space between these two worlds, serving the textual map as a sort of legend or a series of knowns against which to reference the unknown, and subsequently to promote the possibility of the fictional geography through the exploration of its space.

The textual legend can coalesce around any number of identifiable traits adequately grounded in the ordinary so that their reappearance and use in the extraordinary does not ring false, instead serving as a system of guideposts and indicators. In this chapter I attempt to classify these under three broad categories of organization, the first of which is the

observation and the verification of geographical limits with regards to the narrative action. Stated otherwise, the theater of action is limited to an island or a particular geographical area. This definition of boundaries or limits is the framework for the ensuing story, a sort of distinction between the known and the unknown worlds, and it also becomes the reason that guides the characters' actions within Verne's plots. The characters themselves compose the second broad category of textual legend. Often they lack sentimental qualities in the sense that unlike a Jean Valjean or a Rastignac, their author does not delve into their emotional makeup for the sake of revealing that same. Verne nevertheless chooses them as representative of the location, as coming from it. Although they are obviously also reflections of Verne's own nineteenth-century France, the characters' purpose is not to reveal their social *place*, but instead to negotiate through movement a geographical *space*. Therefore, the narration of the way in which they behave or act, the way in which they perceive their environment supports the nature of the geography, it reaffirms the truthfulness of the story and legitimizes the fiction. Through the characters, Verne renders his geography credible *rather than the other way around*. Complementing the geographical boundaries and the characters that fill them in, the third category of the textual legend is the author's style that invites his readers' critical participation in the literary production. This includes direct address, choice of punctuation or grammar and references to other texts outside of the *Voyages extraordinaires* that are significant in facilitating the passage between the known and the unknown worlds.

III.A. The Geographical Limits

One of the first things I did when I started thinking about this dissertation was to try to find Hanover Island, Staten Island and Hoste Island on a map. I wanted to know where

these islands fit into the larger picture of the world as a whole. I wanted to be able to place Verne's descriptions within another context as part the ordinary world. After a fair amount of searching – for this area still is the end of the world – I was able to do so to a limited degree. But what if I had not been able to? Would Verne have supplied me with enough geographical information taken from the ordinary world to properly define the area? Yes, he did, provided I accept the fictional geography produced by the textual map, which is itself designed to supply the reader with the information he or she needs to have in order to pass between the known and the unknown, to become familiar with the geographical limits of the area.

Following the characters' experiences as they become familiar with their islands, Verne designates the geographical limits using two different perspectives. The first is the gathering of information and facts by looking outward away from the island, towards something (anything) else. Generally fruitless because of the desert aspect of the island locations, Verne's alternative perspective is to turn attention away from the common void or absence that surrounds the island and consider instead what makes up the island itself. This accesses the physical and narrative opportunities and limits inherent to the location. In this perspective, where all views are turned in on themselves, self-reflexive and self-referential thought of boundaries ceases as they become fluid and meld into one another like the sky and the water in an impressionist painting. This perspective is narrative, negotiated through the use of language, which allows for constant transfer between the known and the unknown. Anything seems possible within this space, save of course at the edge of it. For at the edge of the island where the perspective might again turn outwards, the limit between the ordinary and the extraordinary worlds persists as it might express the island within a larger system.

i. Geographical Limits – Looking away from the Island

Escaich was the first to seriously consider the evocative effect of Verne's landscapes, and even if he does tend to occasionally over-romanticize the *Voyages*, his insights are nevertheless of great utility because he underlines the significant importance of the elements and the finer detail Verne makes sure to convey when describing, for instance, the sky, the coast or any horizon (90-91, 99 for example). Verne's attention to detail and the similarity of perception from one novel to another expresses an almost obsessive interest in the geographical limits imposed on the participant – observer, author – by the physical location. Indeed, in order to resist slipping into the realm of the impossible, Verne's novels must appear to remain true to their physical location and the factual geographical knowledge available at the time. Almost automatically – as if they are looking to locate themselves within a larger system – the characters first explore an outward-focused horizon that contemplates their location in relation to the rest of the earth: its mountains, air, water and other elements. This accomplished, and whether or not it allows them to identify their location within a broader system, the character's concentration then turns toward an island-only horizon, considering the various factual attributes of the location as a system by itself. In both cases, the perception is of a closed system; one that limits itself to the immediately observable, that can or ought to be known and that is definable. Pure description, the establishment of such horizons or boundaries resembles excerpts from travel journals or sailors' stories, and if they offer any inkling of the psychological temperament of the characters or the adventures to be encountered, it is not obvious at a first glance – for it must be remembered that Verne began by choosing the location followed by the characters he felt

fit it. Keeping this in mind, consider the three island locations that serve as the framework

for *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*.

In the first case, the young shipwreck victims make a number of explorations to try to

discern whether their boat, the *Sloughi*, has landed on an island or a continent, ultimately

concluding that they are somewhere in the Pacific and far away from their actual location on

Hanover Island just west of South America. Naming this land Chairman Island[52] after their

New Zealand boarding school, the children discover it has a low topography that offers little

opportunity to see beyond the water – both lake and sea – that surrounds them.

> Cette région était plate jusqu'à l'extrême portée de sa vue. La falaise en formait la
> principale hauteur et son plateau s'abaissait légèrement vers l'intérieur. Au-delà,
> quelques tumescences bossuaient encore le sol, sans modifier sensiblement l'aspect
> du pays. De vertes forêts le couvraient dans cette direction, cachant sous leurs
> massifs, jaunis par l'automne, le lit des rios qui devaient s'épancher vers le littoral.
> Ce n'était qu'une surface plane jusqu'à l'horizon, dont la distance pouvait être
> évaluée à une dizaine de milles. […] Puis au-delà d'un nouveau cap très allongé, il
> [le littoral] se concavait en formant une immense grève sablonneuse, qui donnait
> l'idée d'un vaste désert. […] Etait-il [le garçon] dans une île ? était-il sur un
> continent ?... il n'aurait pu le dire. […] En effet, à la plus lointaine portée de sa vue,
> au-delà du dernier rideau de verdure, il distingua très nettement une ligne bleuâtre,
> qui se prolongeait du nord au sud sur une étendue de plusieurs milles, et dont les deux
> extrémités se perdaient derrière la masse confuse des arbres. […] Puisque la mer
> s'étendait à l'est, plus de doute ! Ce n'était pas un continent sur lequel le *Sloughi*
> avait fait côte, c'était une île, une île isolée sur cette immensité du Pacifique, une île
> dont il serait impossible de sortir !... (*Deux Ans* 88-91)

But the discovery of a map drawn by a certain François Baudoin, a Frenchman[53] who had

lived on the island at the beginning of the century, gives the children the ability to see the

island from a bird's eye view as a unity from above. Of course, the Frenchman had never

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[52] In the story, the children name the island. The name of the island as it appears on maps accepted by the rest of the world is Hanover Island, which one discovers near the end of the story.

[53] It is of a passing geographical interest that this Frenchman was apparently from the port of Saint Malo, which had strong ties to the Falkland Islands, also known for a while as the *Maloines*.

seen the island from this perspective, nor would the boys.[54] His cartographical rendering

must therefore be considered and utilized in much the same manner as early cartographers'

attempts to map new lands by visiting and revisiting the subject. Over the course of his years

on the island, the Frenchman had the opportunity to consider and reconsider his location by

moving through it. His investigations created an active space in which he lived and died, and

to which the boys attach a series of place names as they interpret and incorporate the map

into their own experiences. The map's discovery does not change their predicament since

they are still shipwrecked, but it does establish a precedent, acknowledging something (or

someone) from outside their group, but who nonetheless is very much a part of the island as

it relates back the rest of the immediately observable world. This helps give them a

perspective, a definable space located within a larger unknown. Having obtained an idea of

their limits looking outward and away from the island, it becomes possible for them to begin

to interact with the island and for Verne to construct the story of the island. Indeed, their

decision to leave the boat and move inland closely follows the discovery. By following in

the footsteps of another, they are less alone and less at the whim of uncertainty because they

do not need to focus their energies on what or who might be coming from outside the island.

Rather than spending all their energies thinking of the unknown and looking outwards hoping

that the horizon might change, they are able to scientifically observe and interpret their

location and the sort of life that is possible on their new island home.

> Elle [l'île] était de forme oblongue et ressemblait à un énorme papillon, aux ailes
> déployées. Rétrécie dans sa partie centrale entre Sloughi-bay et une autre baie qui se
> creusait à l'est, elle en présentait une troisième beaucoup plus ouverte dans sa partie
> méridionale. Au milieu d'un cadre de vastes forêts se développait le lac, long de dix-
> huit milles environ et large de cinq – dimensions assez considérables pour que Briant,

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[54] There is one exception to this. Bryant strapped himself to a kite, which allowed him something of a bird's
eye view of the island.

Doniphan, Service et Wilcox, arrivés sur son bord occidental, n'eussent rien aperçu des rives du nord, du sud et de l'est. C'est ce qui expliquait comment, au premier abord, ils l'avaient pris pour une mer. […] La seule hauteur un peu importante de cette île paraissait être la falaise, obliquement disposée depuis le promontoire, au nord de la baie, jusqu'à la rive droite du rio. […] Enfin, si l'on s'en rapportait à l'échelle tracée au bas de la carte, l'île devait mesurer environ cinquante milles dans sa plus grande longueur du nord au sud, sur vingt-cinq dans sa plus grande largeur de l'ouest à l'est. En tenant compte des irrégularités de sa configuration, c'était un développement de cent cinquante milles de circonférence. (142)

In this novel, which is the first published of the three discussed in this study, the characters have an actual map to consult, but its quality and accuracy must be verified through experiment and observation by the children who believe themselves somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Within the horizons imposed by the land, water and atmospheric topography of Chairman Island, the children can attribute a meaningful location, or at least limitations, to their island – even if their conclusion remains inexact – for their observations enable them to consult the Stieler[55] atlas that was onboard their ship, and in so doing to make educated guesses about their possible location. In addition to their cartographical research, the flora and the fauna as well as meteorological information contribute to their findings, and even if Auriol argues that it is all too good to be true, such information nonetheless helps to create a map of words that gives a sense of limit or point of departure that is observable and therefore can be considered known. As a part of the textual map, this known frontier is a sort of base, part of a legend or a key to understanding the new land within – and yet separate from – the larger world system. The impression of reassurance this evokes, the sense of knowing something, allows attentions to be turned to the exploration of what is not yet known, or is still unknown.

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[55] As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is one of the volumes in Verne's own library.

If the boys in *Deux Ans de vacances* had to wonder for two years about their exact

location, the whereabouts of Staten Island are hardly a mystery. Although generally matter-

of-fact in tone, the first chapter of *Le Phare du bout du monde* begins on a poetic note, but by

the end of the first paragraph the author supplies his first dose of quantifiable data.

> Le soleil allait disparaître derrière la ligne de ciel et de mer qui limitait l'horizon à
> quatre ou cinq lieues dans l'ouest. Le temps était beau. À l'opposé, quelques petits
> nuages absorbaient çà et là les derniers rayons, qui ne tarderaient pas à s'éteindre
> dans les ombres du crépuscule, d'assez longue durée sous cette haute latitude du
> cinquante-cinquième degré de l'hémisphère méridional. (19)

The second chapter picks up this same note and elaborates on the geographical location,

isolation and general description of this rock near the Lemaire Strait upon which the

government of Argentina has decided to build a lighthouse for the protection and security of

all ships passing between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Unlike *Deux Ans de vacances*

in which one does not know the exact location of the island, in this case Verne barrages his

reader throughout the first few chapters with information about the physical location. The

same is true in *En Magellanie*, where Verne carefully describes the intricacies of the

waterways and islands of the area. The precision of the quantifiable information should not,

however, make one overlook the other descriptions that abound and help give depth and a

sense of limitation or horizon to the narration which, like that of Chairman Island, obliges

action within a limited space that is defined geographically.

Verne compares Chairman Island to a butterfly, and Staten Island will also have its

animal shape. Although this changes nothing for the understanding of their surroundings for

the characters in the book, it does indicate a certain bird's eye view of the island; one which

attaches itself not only to an image but also a certain connotation that, if one believes Verne

first chose geographical location then his characters and plot, would easily influence the

nature of the ensuing story: a butterfly for a story about children, a crustacean with its tail

bent for a story about pirates, and (later in *En Magellanie*) a sphinx for a story about

leaders.[56]

> En plan géométral, cette île offre quelque ressemblance avec un crustacé. La
> queue de l'animal se terminerait au cap Gomez et sa bouche serait figurée par la baie
> d'El Gor dont le cap Tucuman et la pointe Diegos formeraient les deux mâchoires.
> Le littoral de l'île des États est extrêmement déchiqueté. C'est une succession
> d'étroites criques inabordables, semées de récifs qui se prolongent parfois à un mille
> au large. Il n'y a aucun refuge possible pour les navires contre les bourrasques du
> sud ou du nord. C'est à peine si des barques de pêche pourraient y chercher abri.
> Aussi, que de naufrages se sont produits sur ces côtes, ici murées de falaises à pic, là,
> bordées d'énormes roches contre lesquelles, même par temps calme, la mer, soulevée
> par les longues houles du large, brise avec une incomparable fureur.
> L'île était inhabitée, mais peut-être n'eût-elle pas été inhabitable, au moins
> pendant la belle saison, c'est-à-dire les quatre mois de novembre, de décembre, de
> janvier et de février, que comprend l'été de cette haute latitude. (*Phare* 36)

Through such descriptions, which are for all intents and purposes meant to be factual in

appearance and nature, Verne's use of the ordinary and the known geographical location

becomes a cadre or a framework from which the fictional action will not deviate. Rather, as

the action progresses, the narrative utilizes the information presented within the ordinary

geography as a sort of reference, as part of the legend accompanying and explaining the

location. Like Conley's signposts (17) and the Frenchman's map in *Deux Ans de vacances*,

the reader's recognition and consideration of these perceived factual indicators allows him or

her to accept the ordinary world location or place as it is related to the outside, and to

consider primarily how the narrative creates a space for that location within a fictional world.

Certainly, restricting the action to a known location is a limitation, but it is also a

manner of automatically adjoining a sense of the possible to the geography and the story at

hand. By setting the limits early, but fixing a set of ordinary geographical horizons beyond

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[56] The comparison between animals and geographical features is in fact quite common practice. Recently, I
found a description of Navarin Island as a walrus (Murphy 14).

which the characters cannot see or venture, Verne solidly sets forth in these novels a sense of the real, a sense that the ensuing scenario is entirely possible, not fantastic, but indeed a function of the geographical location in which it is born, to which it is tied and which can now shift from a place in the ordinary world to a space in the fictional one. Once this is accomplished, the limits imposed by relation to the ordinary world actually support the events that will come to pass in the fictional world by explaining their relevance to the geographical location. That there were pirates hiding out on the other side of the island, that they would kill to keep the lighthouse dark and that Vasquez, the sole remaining keeper, should find an escape and a way of surviving against the odds, seems possible given the island's unique geographical isolation, which is nonetheless constantly referenced as being along one of the most important commercial shipping lanes in the world at the time.

As I mentioned in the previous chapter, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* share the concept of the *bout du monde* in their creation, but if the first claims it in its title, the second is a search for the real ends of the earth; and if the story's main character, the Kaw-djer, is forever looking further southward, Verne concentrates much of the geographical explanation on explorations already completed in the area. Indeed, a work in progress for the reason that the author died before sending the book to the publisher,[57] *En Magellanie* retains an abundance of rambling and didactic geographical detail reminiscent of Verne's three-volume series of world exploration cited in the previous chapter as one potential source for his fictional work. But it is just this rambling that allows the mind to float through the canals from one rocky island to another, imagining a certain amount of

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[57] Although some would argue that *Le Phare du bout du monde* was also a posthumous novel, for it was actually Verne's son Michel who oversaw final proofs, the author himself did at least send the first draft to Hetzel *fils* shortly before his death in 1905. Although I suspect that Verne would have made further changes to the novel, it can at least be said that *Le Phare du bout du monde* was more complete than *En Magellanie* at the author's death.

freedom within the confines of the rough waters and inhospitable landscape. And it is this same freedom for which the Kaw-djer endeavors, to the point of considering a suicidal jump from Cape Horn, the last bit of rock attributable to the South American continent, the end of the world.

> En examinant la carte de cette région si tourmentée, brisée comme si elle se fût cassée en mille morceaux dans une chute, comment ne pas éprouver le même sentiment que Dumont d'Urville, lorsqu'il dit :
> 'Quand on contemple ces merveilleux accidents du sol, l'imagination se reporte involontairement à l'une des révolutions du globe, dont les puissants efforts durent morceler la pointe méridionale de l'Amérique et lui donner la forme de cet archipel qui a reçu le nom de Terre de Feu, mais quel fut l'agent mis en œuvre par la nature pour opérer ces résultats, le feu, l'eau, ou un simple déplacement des pôles ?' (*En Magellanie* 154)

Such a horizon, the limits created by geographical descriptions Verne conveys, accentuates the narrative potential within the location by emphasizing both its individuality as the end of the world and also its mobility or the internal sense of movement that makes it at the same time part of and distinct from the ordinary world. Indeed, two pages later, as the Kaw-djer looks even further south at the empty water, he first hears the *Jonathan's* distress signal, which will rouse him to action other than suicide. Rather than looking outward in search of some nonexistent place in the ordinary world but without an identity, an unknown that has yet to be discovered, he uses and becomes part of the geographical space in which he and the narrative move. Certainly the ordinary world limits of Magellania remain, but it is clear that the story will not – indeed cannot – inhabit another location, for it is a product of this space created either by d'Urville's fire, water or the displacement of the poles, or by the movement of the Kaw-djer through its fictional geography.

Geographical descriptions of the ordinary world form the framework for each of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, defining the first set of limitations or boundaries that are the

foundation for the ensuing story and if not its *raison d'être*, they at least act as its legitimatization. These limits that Verne uses to acknowledge the known within the unknown comprise the building blocks of the textual legend, which is itself a reference system or negotiation that organizes movement forward in the story and re-evaluates the perception of the unknown, accepting its presence as both a part of and a border to the narrative space within the fictional geography. Thus the legend aids in the transgressions of boundaries between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, using perceived fact or places in the ordinary world to indicate the limits of the narrative, which describes movement within a space in the fictional one.

Geographical limits defined by looking away from the island, acknowledging boundaries that would seem to delimit the space in which action can possibly occur limit the geographical scale of the narrative to a particular location. But this is not a negative aspect in the relationship between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, for once it is established that movement in the outward direction is not possible, focus is turned inward towards what is possible within the geographical limits of the island (or area) that can be accessed through movement within the space. In a sense, relating to the world outside the boundaries ceases to matter in the immediate because external measurement of time or linear organization means little within the new narrative context, which takes advantage of the moment rather than persevering in trying to place itself relative to others in a larger system. Much like de Certeau's distinction between strategy and tactic (*Practice* 35-37), this equates within the plot to an acceptance of the situation as something new that is unknown, an opportunity to make the best of the situation and explore the islands' possibilities.

ii. Geographical Limits – Looking Toward the Island

Given the understanding in all three cases, *Deux Ans de vacances, Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*, that no immediate influence would seem to arrive from outside the limits of the respective islands, the occupants all come to the conclusion that they must make a set of observations about possible horizons, looking inward toward the interior of the island, much as they did looking outward across the land and sea. This is simply to say that the geographical particularities of each island create a different plot in each story. In the case of the children on Hanover Island, their conclusion, based on the ways in which the island presents itself – meteorologically, topographically and on François Baudoin's map – forces them to decide how to react to their environment and interact with it and amongst themselves in order to secure their survival and even benefit from their experience. The island pushes them to look inward to measure and evaluate their own strengths and abilities in light of their geographical surroundings. Likewise, but under very different circumstances, Staten Island and its lonely state, with its pirates and forlorn appearance – despite the positive effect the lighthouse is *supposed* to have on the area – does not allow any of the heroes or villains to really look outward away from the island. Instead, they are irreversibly linked to their surroundings, and their ultimate fate becomes tied to their inability to escape their location. While this leads Vasquez and John Davis to desperate heroism, it leaves Kongre and Carcante in simple desperation. Similarly, the Kaw-djer finds himself unable to flee the life he has led at the end of the world when Chile and Argentina split Tierra del Fuego between them in 1881. His fate seems inextricably tied to the island's independence, and once that is gone he feels the need to flee further south or even to kill himself. But he cannot feasibly go further south, and the *Jonathan* and the nearly one thousand passengers it brings crashes into

the Kaw-djer's life, forcing him onto the shores of Hoste Island, where he becomes both a gracious and guiding host, as well as a welcome guest. No matter the role, the limitations imposed by the geographical location push the characters to concentrate on the shorter-view horizons of their immediate surroundings.

This movement from the bird's eye view of the broader horizon, or what one might see on a world map for instance, to a more specialized concentration on a smaller area is not unlike the progression I spoke of in the previous chapter where one travels through an atlas or through a map that has intertextual qualities such as sea monsters or other icons, text written within the oceans, or where one map builds upon or complements another in a compilation. Images abound, movement catches the eye and explanation mixes with imagery as Verne narrates particular areas of the world evoked by the mapping project. Certainly, this process is not entirely geographical in the sense of the seemingly simple division between land and water. Both the lighthouse on Staten Island and the one that will eventually be built by the Kaw-djer on Cape Horn are reminiscent of positivist nineteenth-century *grands travaux*, in the tradition of the Suez Canal (Chesneaux, *Regard* 112).[58] However, even their addition to the story is at least scientific if not geographical, for they allow the author to explore the history of the endeavor and fantasize through the associated vocabulary about the various possibilities, which just happen to include, in these two cases, the geographical difficulties of the area (*Politique* 29). The action of the three stories, as it is so often in Verne, boils down to the exploration of the validity of some scientifically arrived at hypothesis or theory (24). But as Citti points out, all the facts and the figures become like the *imparfait*, the background that will be subsumed by the ensuing story (68). The exploration

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[58] It is worth mentioning that the engineer who executed the Suez Canal, Ferdinand Lesseps, is primarily responsible for Verne's nomination to the Légion d'Honneur.

of the factual proposition is all done through the imaginary. "La liberté du romancier est primordiale. Le plaisir du lecteur est lui aussi primordial. Quand l'une permet grandement l'autre, les géographes ou les historiens sourcilleux ont peu de choses à dire" (Gamarra 8). This exploration of what is not linear or scientific, but only what references them allows for free movement between the known and the unknown within the textual production.

Through this constant movement, Verne renders a text that does not define boundaries in a clear-cut fashion. Like an impressionist painting, the sky melds with the sea, and the land itself is capable of slipping away in games of fire or water. It is not surprising therefore that critics have, over the years, found complementary and quite distinctly opposite support for their arguments about Verne's writing, his politics and his approach to his societies. It is not my intention to summarize in detail these various arguments here; although I am sure that aspects of one or the other can be recognized as an influence to my work. However, it is worth specifically mentioning at this juncture that Verne, despite his bourgeois lifestyle and outlook, holds a critical view of meaningless boundaries. Thus we have his famous *Dix heures en chasse*, a short reading done for the Amiens Academy, in which he argues that if he has hunted a bird onto another person's property, why should he not be allowed to shoot it just because it is on the wrong side of the fence at that moment in time? On the other hand, he argues strongly against various forms of communal life in *En Magellanie*, preferring to designate private property, which is then the responsibility of the owner. This choice is, however, specifically made in order to avoid abuse (Boia, *Paradoxes* 189). Verne's choice of island locations is therefore of particular interest, for islands come automatically with a natural frontier, the sea. Moreover, as I have already mentioned, most of Verne's islands are uninhabited until the castaways arrive. Certainly, this simplifies colonization because

nobody need be displaced, but by the same token, it also avoids the creation of artificial

boundaries between peoples. Chesneaux is therefore correct in arguing that the islands, like

the sea, can become *milieux libres* (*Politique* 85).

However, if the island is free, the castaways always seem to eek out a significantly

more-than-meager existence, creating for themselves a comfortable nest. Whether it be the

children whose ship was well stocked and who stumbled upon François Baudoin's cave

before winter hit, Vasquez, who followed the pirates to their (again) well-stocked cave of

plundered provisions and clothing that he could take back to his own quite adequate cave, or

the survivors of the *Jonathan*, who arrived with everything they needed because they were

already *en route* to a similar colony in South Africa, the castaways all arrive like tortoises,

carrying their shells and their supplies on their backs, ready to settle anywhere – be it in the

known or unknown. Indeed for these tortoises no difference exists between the known and

the unknown, there is no artificial barrier between them in Verne's writing or on his islands

(Chesneaux, *Politique* 179). Of course, there is the sense that the island is a sanctuary of

sorts after the rigors of the voyage that it took to get there (Minerva, *Utopie* 32) and it

certainly does offer protection, but any boundary between the known and the unknown is in

constant negotiation as the settlers interact with and move through their environment. A

paradoxical location, the island plays both the role of liberator, as it makes it possible for the

characters to take their destinies into their own hands and explore the unknown, and the role

of prison for the very reason that it offers freedom, which allows the settlers to continue to

trust in any preconceptions about their location and the workings of the world (Taussat 119).

But with the choice to look inward toward rather than away from the island, what lies outside

the island becomes both known and unknown at once, for the decision is made to ignore (to

not know) what lies outside of the barriers, which everyone *knows* is unknown. In the case of the boys in *Deux Ans de vacances*, this means that they will spend two years believing they are lost in the middle of the Pacific Ocean somewhere, when they are actually only a few miles from South America. In *Le Phare du bout du monde*, this leads the pirates to think they will get away without any interference from the third lighthouse keeper, until he nearly sinks their boat. And in the case of *En Magellanie*, the Kaw-djer knows all along that only a dictator or some very strong leadership will work, but he refuses to act until disaster hits. These characters "know" all along that the reduced space in which they move is not real because it does not relate to the rest of the world. Nevertheless, they choose to move within this limited space, explore it, create it, work with it as a separate entity rather than reducing it to some part of an unknown larger whole, which would reduce it to a simple place.

The textual legend, like the textual map, is a product of the narrative interaction between the ordinary and the fictional world geography that it is meant to represent. It is therefore carefully anchored in two worlds, the known and the unknown; for in its most obvious stage as an indicator of the limits of a geographical form, it appears to solidly represent the ordinary world and maintain a link to it. In this way, the geographical limits of an island can be marked so that the narrative might turn inwards, to the characters and their movement through their new location. This inward-facing perspective that sums up the qualities of the island helps to create a narrative that acknowledges some difference between the known and the unknown, but confuses these same during subsequent exploration, where lines and divisions are blurry within the fictional geography created by narration. Nevertheless, the resulting movement through the known and the unknown within the space of the textual map helps the reader identify Verne's ordinary and the fictional worlds'

geographical limits, which in turn reflect on the entire literary program of the *Voyages extraordinaires*.

III.B. Filling in the Blank Spaces with Characters

Inside the blank spaces of fictional geography lying within the limits defined by ordinary geography, Verne writes characters that he believes appropriate for the location. This approach – although befitting the author of a geographical set of stories like the *Voyages extraordinaires* – has over the years provoked a certain amount of criticism, for most of Verne's characters are blatantly more textually useful than emotionally engaging. Of course, certain heroes such as Smith (*Île mystérieuse*), Fogg (*Le Tour du monde en 80 jours*), Nemo (*20 000 mille lieues sous les mers*) or Ardan (*De la Terre à la Lune, Autour de la Lune*) have traditionally garnered interest among Verne's readers. However, their fame is more a question of their accomplishments or their perseverance and geographical movement than their psyche. Unlike other nineteenth-century writers such as Zola or Flaubert, for instance, who concentrate on the emotional or sentimental side of their characters, Verne's approach to characterization is rather mechanical, and this renders the majority of his characters relatively artificial.[59] "On le sent [Verne] quelque peu détaché de ce qu'il raconte, préoccupé essentiellement de faire tourner la machine, et sans s'interdire parfois un regard ironique sur ses propres histoires" (Boia, *Paradoxes* 18-19). This artificiality does not exclude interest

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[59] Although cinema has created a privileged familiarity with Verne's most famous characters, they remain often marginalized in the stories. In particular this occurs as a result of their scientification. Foucault, for instance, finds that Verne's *savants* are not his heroes (9). Raymond and A. Evans also discuss the *savant*, noting in particular that while they are the center or the nucleus of the group of explorers, they are also type characters, or classifiable (*Odysée* 49; *Rediscovered* 82). Boia notes two primary "absences" in Verne: psychology and social milieu. This differentiates his agenda from that of Zola, for instance, who also wrote about industrialization, but often in regards to its negative consequences on the family or society. Boia adds that "[l]es personnages verniens sont plutôt des 'types' que des personnes individualisées, des types 'fixes', avec leurs traits simplifiés et saillants, touchant parfois à la caricature, et leurs comportements stéréotypés. Ils parlent, gesticulent et agissent ; mais pour ce qui se passe dans leurs têtes et leurs âmes, l'écrivain se montre plus discret : on dirait que cela ne serait pas de son ressort" (*Paradoxes* 16).

and even necessity – indeed any mechanic will admit that all pieces of an engine have to be there for it to work right – but it does mean that Verne's characters are often simply fictional devices, a sort of illusion (Unwin, *Journey* 170, 173). Like Pinocchio, they are puppets relying on someone else, but unlike Gepetto's wooden boy, they do not run away in search of their own identities. Many of Verne's readers have traditionally been young, but the author was not writing a *Bildungsroman*. Rather, these characters are locations for a sense of energy resulting from the motion of their trajectory through a series of adventures to which they are uniquely suited because they are a product of that same geographical location. Thus they give another dimension to geography rather than defining themselves by it.

Indeed, Verne's characters often display "types" with a certain number of repeating patterns from one to the other. For instance, throughout the *Voyages extraordinaires*, one of the most common character types is the scientist or the aforementioned savant, whose function is to reveal the area to which he has been sent. He – for, admittedly, Verne prefers male characters over females in the lead role – stands steadfast and optimistic in the face of whatever challenges await ahead (Diesbach 43), instructing and aiding his fellow travelers along the way (41). A firm believer in fair play and justice (40) he is nonetheless often perceived as being somehow above his fellows (Taussat 123-124), but he does not often realize this fully, for his perception is Romantic (A. Evans, *Rediscovered* 75). A mixture of the savant and the Romantic, he often seems to stumble into his adventures in direct relation to and as a result of his interests (Foucault 9), and his purpose in the story revolves around the continuation of the action and an avoidance of entropy or stagnation rather than the development of a sentimental program (10). If it appears his actions reshape and reform the

world, one must remember that the world is a plastic, literary one and that his actions in fact depict it by an economic use of the character's traits (Purvoyeur 291).

i. Deux Ans de vacances

A number of readers might find fault with the opinions expressed above, arguing that Verne does write a number of engaging characters, like Nemo or Fogg. Indeed I do not mean to discount the role of the characters, and maintain that no matter how automated or unemotional they might appear, they nevertheless are a very important part of the textual map, bridging the ordinary and the fictional worlds by sharing traits from both. Moreover, I propose that even if Verne's characters never assume the same life of their own as perhaps Maupassant's or Flaubert's,[60] they become particularly intriguing after 1886 as both public interest in science was waning and Verne suffered a number of personal problems that led to what many critics see as a decline or at least a change in his writing (Chesneaux, *Regard* 228).[61] Although most of his famous characters predate this period, Verne is given more freedom afterwards, yielding him characters like Kongre or the Kaw-djer that do not fill previously established molds, but who nevertheless remain rather automatic or rigid despite addressing issues that were perhaps more social in nature. In the case of the three novels I discuss in this dissertation, all were published after that date, the first being *Deux Ans de vacances* in 1888, a story concerned with the social aspects of a larger group shipwrecked on

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[60] The question of a lifelike or an engaging character is never simple, since it is ultimately a matter of personal taste. It is further complicated in the case of Verne, and particularly in the United States, because of the importance of the cinematic adaptations of his novels. The visual medium renders the character more accessible than the purely textual, and a character like Nemo can find himself given new life in Stephen Norrington's *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (2003), for instance.

[61] Because Verne wrote ahead and stockpiled his novels in advance of publication, this is a somewhat arbitrary date. However, it has traditionally been noted as a distinctly difficult year in the life of the author, and is conventionally used to mark a turning point in the direction of his work. Among other things, this year Verne's nephew, Gaston, tried to kill him, his editor Pierre-Jules Hetzel died and Michel Verne further dismayed his father by divorcing his first wife to marry his very young mistress.

a desert island. Verne's preface to the novel aptly introduces the scenario and the author's

motivation to write the story:

> Bien des Robinsons ont déjà tenu en éveil la curiosité de nos jeunes lecteurs. Daniel de Foë, dans son immortel *Robinson Crusoé*, a mis en scène l'homme seul; Wyss, dans son *Robinson suisse*, la famille; Cooper, dans le *Cratère*, la société avec ses éléments multiples. Dans l'*Île mystérieuse*, j'ai mis des savants aux prises avec les nécessités de cette situation. On a imaginé encore le *Robinson de douze ans*, le *Robinson des glaces*, le *Robinson des jeunes filles*, etc. Malgré le nombre infini des romans qui composent le cycle des Robinsons, il m'a paru que, pour le parfaire, il restait à montrer une troupe d'enfants de huit à treize ans, abandonnés dans une île, luttant pour la vie au milieu des passions entretenues par les différences de nationalité, – en un mot, un pensionnat de Robinsons.
> D'autre part, dans le *Capitaine de quinze ans*, j'avais entrepris de montrer ce que peuvent la bravoure et l'intelligence d'un enfant aux prises avec les périls et les difficultés d'une responsabilité au-dessus de son âge. Or, j'ai pensé que si l'enseignement contenu dans ce livre pouvait être profitable à tous, il devait être complété.
> C'est dans ce double but qu'a été fait ce nouvel ouvrage. (7)

This novel marks a sort of departure for Verne, since many of his earlier Robinsonades had

involved a smaller number of castaways. Moreover, the characters represented here are, by

virtue of their young age, more likely to need to work with each other and to combine their

strengths and talents in order to survive. Even the boys who become – by virtue or by

election – leaders to the others are shown working in consultation to gain a consensus before

acting (A. Evans, *Rediscovered* 74). Differing from his earlier Robinson-inspired stories, in

this one the boys are threatened not only by outside forces (pirates), but also – and maybe

more gravely – by internal dissention.

To better understand the dynamics of the situation, as well as how the characters

ultimately participate in the creation of the textual legend and resulting map through narrative

that describes a tangible representative or guide through which to perceive the geography, it

will be useful to discuss what Verne tells of them. With the exception of Moko, the black

cabin boy who came with the ship, all the Robinsons are from the Chairman Boarding House

in Auckland, New Zealand, and all but the American, Gordon, and the two French brothers, Briant and Jacques, are of English descent. Of these English boys, the two most important names to remember are Doniphan and Service. The others – Cross, Wilcox, Webb, Baxter, Garnett, Jenkins, Iverson, Dole and Costar – primarily tend to reinforce the personalities and decisions assumed by the rest of the group. The most important characters are also primarily the oldest, but their distinction lies not only in their age but also in their abilities to lead the others and/or to ameliorate their general situation. Thus, in chapter one while most of the boys cower paralyzed with fear below decks, Moko, Gordon, Briant and Doniphan successfully bring the small ship, the *Sloughi*, through the storm to rest on a sand bank near an island. But already in chapter two, dissention begins as Doniphan – who is always followed by Cross, Wilcox and Webb – begins to break off from the group. "Ils se groupèrent à l'avant et causèrent à voix basse. Ce qui apparaissait clairement déjà, c'est qu'[ils] ne semblaient pas d'humeur à s'entendre avec Briant. […] Mais ils avaient toujours eu la pensée que, dès qu'ils seraient à terre, ils reprendraient leur liberté d'action – surtout Doniphan […]" (Verne, *Deux ans* 27-28). They do not ultimately break away from the others until well into the novel, and only then for a short period of time because the existence of the entire group is threatened by the arrival of pirates. Excluding this separation, Doniphan participates as a member of the group by his ability as a hunter.

Gordon, the American without a family, who occasionally refers to the island as "son île" (162) – something of a clue to the island's location[62] – does not think it such a bad place and tries to find the best in a difficult situation, making the island as home-like and convivial as possible during his tenure as the first elected *chef* of the group. Briant – the second elected

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[62] The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 claimed the United States of America had interest in the affairs of the entire Western Hemisphere.

chef – also endeavors to maintain a peaceful balance of interests, despite the obvious dislike Doniphan (Cross, Wilcox and Webb) show towards him. "Il était résolu, cependant, à opposer une résistance absolue à tout acte qui lui paraîtrait compromettant pour ses compagnons" (87). He also maintains a resolve to make up for his brother Jacques' secret fault (315); for it was he who undid the boat's mooring in New Zealand, allowing them to drift out to sea to be caught in the storm. Moko, the cabin boy turned cook turned sailing expert, remained for a long time the only castaway besides Jacques and Briant to know this fact, which he kept entirely to himself after urging Briant to pardon his brother, who felt gravely sorry for his actions (294-295). Finally, for a touch of humor, Service deserves mention for his one-liners and general good humor, as well as his perpetual references to various other Robinsons, and his attempts to discern in the boys' experiences a reflection of their literary predecessors (47).

Returning to Verne's preface, *Deux Ans de vacances* is an experiment in the combination of different nationalities and abilities in the face of difficulties that would appear insurmountable given the level of experience (age) of the castaways. This is not to say that it is a story of nationalism (French, English, American), for ultimately it is that trait in Doniphan and his friends that poses an important danger to the success of the community. Rather, the accent is placed on a sort of supra-nationalism that supersedes the others. If echoes of their origins continue to play a role in the story, it is a superficial picture frame not dissimilar to some of Verne's more openly nationalistic stories like *Mathias Sandorf*, in which critics like Chesneaux see the author's intent to support nationalistic struggle (*Politique* 45-47). Rather than seeing this picture frame as a support for specific nationalism, I actually see it as a support for an idealist reconstruction of a world without factions, in

which all parties work for the establishment and the improvement of the group. Possibly Saint-Simonian, such a view of the boy's newly found island home offers them the possibility to recreate their own version of humanity, using a hodgepodge of ideas from their individual backgrounds. Certainly, much of what they create differs little from their days at the Chairman Boarding School and their social moral structure, but it is nonetheless an opportunity to live in a new society (Gilli 22).

Certainly, given Verne's disgust for Rousseau and his "detestable" ideas (qtd. in Chesneaux, *Regard* 25), as well as his preference for social Wyss over Defoe, I have to think it unlikely that his Robinsonades would glorify the savage man or other similarly basic origins. Rather, for all the unlikelihood that a group of eight- to fourteen-year-old boys could succeed, Verne gives them the geographical location and the supplies they need in order to do just that. It is undoubtedly an improbable scenario; for what are the chances that the ship's captain and his entire crew would have gone ashore leaving the boat untended, that nobody else in the harbor would have noticed the boat floating away, that the boys themselves noticed nothing until it was too late, that they would have just the right skills and supplies to successfully arrive at and settle on Chairman Island, and so forth (Auriol 75-76)? Yet they do, and in their success they lose their individuality to the benefit of the group, like so many of Verne's heroes (Macherey 205).

Although the writing of *Deux Ans de vacances* precedes Verne's election to the Amiens *conseil municipal* in 1888, a quick survey of Verne's political leanings and his election to this post are undoubtedly relevant – even if, as Compère and others remind us, one should not confuse the author and his opinions with his literary work ("Conseiller" 139-140). In any case, in 1888 Verne decided to run on the radical *républicain* ticket – what Noel

refs to as the "loup-garou ultra-rouge pour la bourgeoisie" (242) – alongside the widely

respected Mayor Frédéric Petit, who had apparently attended the 1871 *Internationale* but was

never prosecuted for this (Compère, "Conseiller" 129). However, when the newspapers

began to call Verne a *républicain*, he promptly responded to the contrary, claiming he wanted

a purely administrative mandate to fight against municipal intransigence (131). In private, to

his friend Charles Maisonneuve, he is more complete in his explanation.

> Mon unique intention est de me rendre utile, et de faire aboutir certaines réformes
> urbaines. Pourquoi toujours mêler la politique et le christianisme aux questions
> administratives ? Tu me connais assez pour savoir que, sur les points essentiels, je
> n'ai subi aucune influence. En sociologie, mon goût est: l'ordre; et politique, voici
> mon aspiration: créer, dans le gouvernement actuel, un parti raisonnable, équilibre
> respectueux de la justice, des hautes croyances, ami des hommes, des arts, de la vie.
> Crois bien que je ne cache pas ma façon de penser sur les lois d'exil: je suis résolu, de
> même, à défendre en toute occasion, la liberté de conscience de chacun. Donc ce que
> tu veux bien appeler « mon prestige » ne pourra que servir les causes respectables.
> (qtd. in Chesneaux, *Politique* 14-15)

Chelebourg calls this Verne's "politique oxymorique," ("Conservateur" 51), and it generally

sums up the author's desire to put parties and labels aside in order to work together, to be

practical rather than ideological (45).

Of course, over the years the tendencies in his work, combined with the ambivalence

of the man, have led many to read Verne as either a man of the left (Chesneaux) or a man of

the right (Boia), but he consistently expresses the need for order and balance – both of which

Verne states himself in the letter to Maisonneuve. As time passes, his politics change very

little, and early on he expresses his desire for social peace (Dumas, *Jules* 164). "J'espère

bien que l'on gardera les mobiles quelque temps à Paris, et qu'ils fusilleront les socialistes

comme des chiens. La République ne peut tenir qu'à ce prix et c'est le seul gouvernement

qui ait le droit d'être sans pitié pour le socialisme, car c'est le seul gouvernement légitime"

(165), states Verne in an 1870 letter to Hetzel on the subject of socialist revolution. In 1896,

running for his third council term, he wonders whether he will win against the radicals and the socialists who have combined forces (166). Indeed, against these parties, the *républicains* seem more moderate and less *loup-garou* like, but no matter what ticket he officially runs on, Verne believes in the unity of the nation through the Third Republic (Trikoukis 7). He estimates that the government can reduce the agents that cause fractures in society, considering at one end of the spectrum the social workers party movements and at the other the maintenance of established social values that may no longer serve the general good (Compère, "Conseiller" 139). As a politician, he wants to seriously consider the questions and difficulties that face his society (Minerva, *Utopie* 124) in order to create and maintain laws that are equitable and respectful to all (Dumas, *Jules* 169). It would be unjust therefore to associate Verne with one party or affiliation, and more appropriate to consider the distance he maintains from all of them, as if reminding us of his independence (Chesneaux, "Gauche" 94).

Order and balance from independence? Yes, in fact in considering the characters in *Deux Ans de vacances*, I have until now avoided discussing the adults who enter the scene at the end of the book and provoke a complete change in the boys' society. Certainly, the threat the pirates pose is without argument a reason for change, but already the appearance of Kate and Master Evans have profoundly altered the perception the boys have of the their predicament and their ultimate fate. Island or continent? The answer to this question (island) determined the boys' decision after their shipwreck to look to their own strengths and the island's resources in order to protect their survival. In the middle of the Pacific – or so they thought – they were free to decide for themselves how to manage their affairs and their lives. In a way, they were on a vacation of exploration, and I the reader was on vacation with them,

content to let them show me their island one adventure after another. For this is what *Deux Ans de vacances* is all about, an excuse to show the reader, to narrate a geographical location while it is being discovered. The characters make a key, a sort of legend the reader can refer to and interpret, rendering the exploration easier to follow and more accessible, for one has the impression of being part of the boys' group. Together, the boys, the author and the reader discover and name the blank spaces on the map and give fictional world Chairman Island (not ordinary world Hanover) a geographical identity all its own. This dynamic begins to change with the arrival of Kate – whom Service would like to call Vendredine, in honor of Defoe (375) – and is turned upside down when Master Evans reveals their true location, just a short distance from relative civilization. These two one-dimensional characters, whose literary objective is to simply get the children off the island, quickly bring the entire scenario back to the stark reality that the children are children and that their entire island – like their independence – is a fantasy. Master Evans may find the names they have given the island's features to be pretty (430-432), but he will nonetheless replace them in short order with the official set taken from the atlas. The result is that at this point the illusion of one whole Chairman Island shatters into two distinct islands, the ordinary world geographical place of Hanover and the fictional geographical space of Chairman. In the first, the exploration comes to a halt and the boys go home. In the geography of fiction, however, the literary creation lives on not only in Verne's *Deux Ans* but also in the boys' later reproductions in speeches and written records of the island and their adventures, in which undoubtedly the geography of Chairman Island takes precedence over that of Hanover because it is their narrative space, not a named place on the map of a larger area.

As a part of the textual map, or a geographically based literary program that invites participation by moving through space for narrative interpretation of the ordinary and fictional worlds, the characters in *Deux Ans de vacances* are a textual legend or key that bridges the gap between some small island, a place in the ordinary world and the space they move through in the fictional world because the characters foster an environment of credulity. Despite their obvious differences, each of the boys reinforces the exploration and description of the blank spaces, the island, the unknown. Through the combination of their discourses (Briant and Jacques' sense of responsibility, Doniphan and his friends' grandstanding and hunting, Gordon's wish to stay and Service's somewhat comical insistence on referring to the literary Robinsons) they interpret what the average reader might experience if put into a similar situation. Yet somehow they do not become our friends. Verne does not dwell on their most inner feelings or what makes them tick, using their presence instead to create movement through the geography of their island, Chairman Island, a blank space full of adventure somewhere in the Pacific, and Hanover Island, the name of a place one passes on the way to somewhere else. Working with references in both the fictional and the ordinary world geography, the textual map, the narrative Verne creates in *Deux Ans de vacances* is accessible in part by the characters' relation to their surroundings, a sort of key or legend to be referenced as Verne moves through the topography of the island.

ii. Le Phare du bout du monde

Although Chairman Island retains a stronger literary life than Hanover thanks to the boys' talks, it is true that once the real location is known, the story seems basically over because the only unknown is how to get off the island. This recalls a general filling in of the blank spaces of the world, which was happening with great rapidity during Verne's 40-year

literary career and which posed a potential problem for the author whose specialty was the unknown. By the turn of the century when Verne was writing *Le Phare du bout du monde*, the area he was interested in exploring was already fairly well mapped as a result of numerous international and national scientific and commercial expeditions. However, the qualities of the location could not be depicted adequately in the form of an image alone, which could not capture the qualities that made it an inhospitable and uninviting environment. So despite advances in geography and exploration, Verne still had the freedom to create through his literary expeditions a textual map, complete with a new legend for Staten Island that included but also went beyond the topographical outline to make one small corner of the island a scaled representation of the area. Likewise, just a small number of characters comprise the entirety of the population of this well-charted island right off of major sea lanes and theoretically open to outside communication and influence. On the side of the "good guys" are Vasquez and John Davis. Although their adversaries are more numerous, only two have a remarkable role: Kongre and Carcante.

All four are what Huet would describe as people without nations (13), for in one way or another Staten Island – an ironic name as a state for men without countries – becomes a sort of temporary home to the four alienated men and those they lead. Contrary to Pillorget's reference to Verne's alienated scientist who, like Robur, takes his ambition too far (21), these men just seem to have moved too far south on the map. They are at the end of the world, *au bout du monde*, and their story is less about their psychology than it is an almost apathetic waiting game to see who will be the last person standing. Although some critics like Heuré might argue that vengeance drives the novel's action (83), I argue that it is actually a question of being at the end of something: a map, one's rope, one's patience, for instance. Although

in killing the first two lighthouse guardians, Kongre's band of pirates is gratuitously violent,

they do not make any particular effort to find the third, preferring to believe he will just die

of exposure to the elements. But of course Verne forms Vasquez from these elements, from

the geographical location, so he does not succumb any more than Kongre and his men, who

had lived for years on the other side of the island. Vasquez, for his part, prefers to leave

Kongre's men alone until, accompanied by the shipwreck survivor John Davis, he feels that it

is absolutely necessary to stop them. Even at this juncture, they choose a rather safe way of

handicapping the pirates' escape, shooting their boat just above water line rather than sinking

it outright. Only *at the end*, when all other options have been eliminated and the pirates are

going to escape from the island, do both parties choose open violence and effrontery.

Kongre and Vasquez's parallel suspense stories, which Butcher correctly identifies as

backdrop to the natural forces at work (*Lighthouse* xxii), and which I would add are a major

aspect of the location, nonetheless begin to adequately exemplify the lone individual and the

lone location: they are isolated and in many ways unknown; but they are neither *a*lone nor

*un*knowable. Verne makes them accessible, adjoining to them a referential legend – based

somewhat on the premise of good versus evil – that adds depth and understanding to the

picture the author creates from this easily overlooked, but battered and disputed rocky island

at the end of the world. Again, as with *Deux Ans de vacances*, the author uses the characters

as a legend or a way of organizing geographic observations that shape the narrative

expression of the island, or the fictional geography that the textual map creates as the

characters move through the location by experience.

Introducing the location, Vasquez provides an initial look at the island. At first

glance, this introduction seems rather matter-of-fact, but it actually foreshadows the pirates

assuming control and the obvious realization that the island is not the solid and unshakeable

location one might think.

> "Et nous dessus [l'île], répondit Vasquez, en se frottant les mains, après avoir humé
> une longue bouffée de sa pipe, qui l'enveloppa d'une épaisse vapeur. Vois-tu mon
> garçon, nous ne sommes pas ici à bord d'un bâtiment que la bourrasque pousse et
> repousse, ou, si c'est un bâtiment, il est solidement mouillé à la queue de l'Amérique
> et il ne chassera pas sur son ancre !... Que ces parages soient mauvais, j'en
> conviens ! Que l'on ait fait triste réputation aux mers du cap Horn, c'est justice !
> Que, précisément, on ne compte plus les naufrages sur ces côtes, et que les pilleurs
> d'épaves n'en puissent choisir de meilleures pour y faire fortune, soit encore ! Mais
> tout cela va changer, Felipe ! Voilà l'île des États avec son phare, et ce n'est pas
> l'ouragan, quand il soufflerait de tous les coins de l'horizon, qui parviendrait à
> l'éteindre ! Les navires le verront à temps pour relever leur route ! Ils se guideront
> sur son feu et ne risqueront pas de tomber sur les roches du cap Tucuman ou de la
> pointe Several, même par les nuits les plus noires ! C'est nous qui tiendrons le fanal
> et il sera bien tenu !" (Verne, *Phare* 22-23)

He continues that after forty years as a sailor, he is ready to be the lighthouse keeper at the

end of the world, specifically using the phrase (23-24). The idea that he is somehow at the

end of life and at the end of a career does not, however, imply that he more than hesitates to

save himself when the pirates arrive, kill the other two keepers and make for the lighthouse.

Rather, he quickly estimates their intentions and prepares to leave; nevertheless thinking in

the back of his mind that maybe one day it will be in his ability to right the wrong that they

have done (120-121). Once safe, he cries not for himself but for his friends, the lost

lighthouse and the eventual ramifications this new presence – and absence – will have on the

island (123-124), for the geography of Staten Island has not changed as a result of the pirates'

incursion, but its inhospitable and unknown qualities are more pronounced, more immediate

as Vasquez is put in the position of having to move through and interact with his surrounding

geographical location. Later, he begins to think of personally avenging his friends, but then

comes to the decision that a better solution would simply be that the pirates still be there at

the return of the Argentinean ship with supplies and replacements (159-160).

The solution seems acceptable, for indeed Vasquez has been living comfortably enough off the pirates' provisions that are stored in a cave nearby his hideout, and why risk extra danger without need? John Davis, who joins Vasquez as the sole survivor of a shipwreck caused by the pirates' extinguishment of the light, and who has all the energy and all the reason in the world to seek vengeance, agrees with the decision to maintain this status quo. The island, despite its violent location between two oceans and its desperate inhabitants, therefore remains during most of the novel in a state of relative calm perpetuated by a general sense of apathy and waiting for something to happen. Few ships pass, the weather does not particularly vary and time seems to both stand still and slip by; for if nothing else changes, each day brings the characters one day closer to the return of the Argentinean ship. Salvation for Vasquez and John Davis, this would be imprisonment and/or death for the pirates who have learned to live – indeed thrive – at this violent and deadly meeting place of oceans.

Although Chesneaux has over the years found it necessary to soften some of his opinions regarding Verne's possible leftist leanings, he is entirely correct in stating that Verne had a certain appreciation for the "bad guy" or the outlaw (*Politique* 58).[63] Undoubtedly, this sympathy is in part a desire to keep the story moving; but it also allows the author to explore the lone individual, as physically present in the story as a mountain or an island, arms crossed, head held high, staring down the elements and anything else that might get in his way ("Modernité" 65-66). This silent image, seen over and again in Verne's writing, poses a challenge to the bourgeois lifestyle that the author otherwise seems to

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[63] It is worthy of noting that one of the reasons for this change of heart was the discovery that Michel Verne rewrote his father's last books. Since Chesneaux's interest in studying the *Voyages extraordinaires* was in great part due to his rediscovery and rereading of *Les Naufragés du Jonathan*, which was Michel's rewrite of *En Magellanie*, it is no wonder that his conclusions were biased in this direction.

exemplify, in which everyone has his or her place, and roles are maintained in order to guarantee social peace and stability (Minerva, "Contro" 114-115). But seen through the fictional form of the novel, the outlaw invites the critical consideration of his actions from a distance, in a skeptical and almost scientific manner that relates the character to his surroundings (Minerva, *Utopie* 127; Chesneaux, "Modernité" 65-66). Can this explain why I almost wanted Kongre and Carcante to escape? Can it be that, interpreted against but in relation to the island itself, these outlaws become the only hope for escaping from, while also exemplifying, this *bout du monde*?

Neither Kongre nor Carcante speak much during the course of their adventures at the lighthouse. They are men of action, and men about whom others speak. For instance, Verne mentions that the name Kongre is well known in Patagonia, and that Dumont d'Urville had received an Indian by that name on his ship while exploring the area. However, this Kongre is not Indian, which leads one to suspect that he has a hidden identity (Verne, *Phare* 72). Indeed, Verne goes on to say that Kongre and Carcante undoubtedly fled to this part of the world, the *bout du monde*, to escape British, French or American ships under orders to catch pirates (89). Once there, they found themselves without a ship and unable to depart. This fact, that they – as much as Vasquez and John Davis – are prisoners to the island, makes them bent on their escape, single-minded, unwavering and dangerously capable of success (Chesneaux, *Regard* 130). Kongre is seconded by Carcante, whom one suspects even more threatening than his leader because he always appears alert, constantly on the lookout for trouble and weighing the pirates' various options (210, 222). It is not surprising therefore that they rename the boat they capture the *Carcante*, for, like him, it should be able to bring them all to safety and back to their pirating and pillaging ways as a negotiator of the

landscape they come from. Yet it is Carcante who dies first at the hands of Vasquez and John Davis, while Kongre runs away to hide on the island. There is nowhere left to hide, though; and he has no provisions. Very much at the end of the world, desperate, he makes one last dramatic appearance in the novel and on the island. He appears one evening standing on a cliff at sunset, and while the authorities, led by Vasquez and John Davis, move to bring him into custody, he shoots himself in the head, falling into emptiness. "Le misérable s'était fait justice, et maintenant la marée descendante entraînait son cadavre vers la mer" (265). A harsh ending, but not atypical of Verne for whom the individual must be able to live in freedom, which he enjoys within a society of likeminded individuals (Gilli 45).

This ending recalls once again that the novel is steeped in violence. Butcher refers to it as a game of chess (*Lighthouse* 38-39), but while this explains the strategic aspect of the game in question, it does not adequately express the underlying indecision regarding the moral dilemma of who should win: the good guys or the bad? For ultimately – and here Butcher is correct – Verne shows through the interaction between the two sets of characters that there is no perfect solution, no fine line or frontier between right and wrong or good and evil (38-39). Instead, the criminal and the social elements of Staten Island's society – or the little there is of it – reside in relative apathy for months, allowing the other side the freedom to gain in strength. Chesneaux often speaks of a questioning of social custom and its institutions in Verne's novels (*Lecture* 84), and I would agree that in this case in particular, the complexity and the impossible reality of the "what if I were in their shoes?" argument renders a firm decision on the story's moral difficult. However interesting these psychological aspects of this story may be, my interest lies in how the characters play a role in the legend accompanying the textual map.

Le Phare du bout du monde, translated into English as (*The*) *Lighthouse at the End of the World*,[64] is the story of an island at the intersection of two oceans. It is a contested location, both by the elements that batter its shores and by the two sets of characters who inhabit its territory, helping to differentiate its known from its unknown qualities. On the one hand, Vasquez and John Davis depict the necessity for social order, an endeavor they promote through the re-illumination of the lighthouse and the elimination of the pirates for the benefit of all who pass through the area. When they are in control, Staten Island joins the ranks of the known entities on earth, a small island and a simple *bout du monde* – bit of earth rather than an end of the earth. It and its lighthouse, like Hanover Island in *Deux Ans de vacances* when the boys learn their true location from Master Evans, are places within an ordinary geography based on scientific observation and relative accuracy. But the addition of the characters – who one must not forget are themselves reflections of the geography – creates a new way of reading the landscape. Rather than moving over it, the narrative moves *through* it, observing Kongre and the pirates and Vasquez and John Davis as they react to and interact with the island. Their approach or way of dealing with the island produces a legend, or way of reading geography that both references the ordinary world and uses it to create a livable fictional world space. Although the fantasy, the image of the lone individual, the pirates' end of the world, *bout du monde*, slips away as Verne reincorporates ordinary world images, filling in the blank spaces on the map of Staten Island with a lighthouse, its keepers and little that gives the appearance of being unknown, the fictional Staten Island retains the quality of a more complete production, more alive for being less regulated by outside

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[64] The most recent translation by William Butcher does not include the definite article in the title. Butcher explains in the October 9, 2007 Jules Verne Forum (http://jv.gilead.org.il/forum/2007/10/0016.html) that one of the primary reasons for the omission of the article was to distinguish this translation from previous translations made of Michel Verne's version. See the appendix for further information on Michel Verne's literary career and additions he made to his father's work.

forces.[65] A space rather than a place, it is a geography locked in a perpetual confrontation, expressed by Verne, who writes his characters' movement through its topography.

iii. En Magellanie

Although Verne's primary goal in writing the *Voyages extraordinaires* always remains the promotion and investigation of science, it is undoubtedly clear by now that what one often thinks of as "pure science," which boils down to mathematical expressions does not take priority in Verne's work. Rather, as I have already stated, the work revolves around a geographical exploration of the known and the unknown worlds of the earth. If, within the course of these investigations, quantifiable or mathematical science has a role to play, Verne includes it. But I trust it has become clear that the social sciences played a significant role as well. Already in *Deux Ans de vacances*, the organization of the colony is a sociological experiment. Again, in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, the question of social organization and personal liberty forms a large part of the motivation given for the characters' actions. But if the author uses the social sciences to explain his characters' actions and to perpetuate the story, I insist that it is ultimately with the goal in mind of creating a geographical legend that interprets narratively a part of the world that would otherwise remain unknown. Even in the case of *En Magellanie*, in which the political and social currents are stronger than mere allusion, in fact coming down in judgment on political ideology, I argue that the ultimate product or discovery is geographical, and that the social currents, which were widespread at the time, are a vehicle for expressing that geography as part of a legend that negotiates the transition from place to space. Therefore, when I discuss politics, it is to better help explain

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[65] See Butcher's introduction and notes to *Lighthouse at the End of the World*, in which he discusses the many significant differences between Verne's literary Staten Island and the ordinary one.

the movement between the known and the unknown in this location *au bout du monde*, which seems to be a perpetually fluctuating limit to the world.

We say in English that something is on the fringe when it is so far to the extreme side of more popular thought that it seems radical or almost immeasurable using a common scale. I have already alluded to Chesneaux's strong belief that Verne was a closet leftist, and some of the most important evidence for his argument comes from *Les Naufragés du Jonathan*, which is Michel Verne's rewrite of *En Magellanie*.[66] In truth, already during Verne's lifetime his name is associated with certain politically liberal people. As I have already mentioned, his first election to the Amiens *conseil municipal* was on a radical *républicain* ticket, and there is a growing belief that he may have met the anarchist geographer Elisée Reclus (Butcher, *Biography* 273). Moreover, that meeting may have been one at which Reclus proposed a toast to Louise Michel, another anarchist who, coincidentally and despite evidence to the contrary, was falsely rumored for many years to have penned *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* (Chesneaux, *Regard* 123). This rumor is interesting, however, for it raises the question of collaboration, which I have already addressed in regard to Verne's non-fiction texts, but return to here because *Les Cinq cents millions de la Begum* was originally *L'Héritage de l'Angel*, written by the exiled ex-Commune leader, Paschal Grousset, also known as André Laurie or Philippe Daryl. Although Verne's grandson finds very little of the original work remained in Verne's version (Jules-Verne 368), their collaboration through their mutual publisher Hetzel – himself a once-exiled and liberal-minded man – indicates at the least a level of awareness on the part of Verne of some of the more radical social issues of

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[66] See the appendix for a short discussion of these two novels and Michel's authorial career.

the time.[67] Minerva supports this, adding that these influences can be seen in references

made in a number of his novels (*Utopie* 127-128).

Quickly listing some of the socialist names with which Verne has been associated

over the years, one finds in addition to those already named: Jean Macé (with whom Verne

collaborated on the *Magasin d'éducation et de recréation*), Lesseps (who built the Suez

Canal), Nadar (the photographer and heavier-than-air flight proponent, Felix Tournachon),

Guéroult (a journalist and disciple of Enfantin), Charton (the director of the *Tour du monde*),

Duveyrier (an explorer of Africa), David (a musician who accompanied Enfantin to Egypt)

and the Doctor Guépin from Nantes, who has certainly gained more renown as a potential

associate of Verne's than for his *Philosophie du XIXe siècle, étude encyclopédique sur le*

monde et l'humanité (Chesneaux, *Politique* 72-73; "Gauche" 94).[68] Verne's awareness of

social issues would have also come from experience as a politician in Amiens as well as

through his literary and social contacts. When, as I have already mentioned, in the election

of 1896 he showed concern regarding the joining of the radical and socialist forces, he is, in

fact, actually making a reference to the growth and evolution of the anarchist movement in

France, which had begun in the early 1880s, but whose influence had blossomed in the 1890s

and to which Verne had been exposed. Even in the town of Amiens, the social movement

could be felt. For instance, from 1882 to 1888 the *Citoyen* was published by strong

supporters of the radical Guesde (Huet 146). Years later, in 1898 the police were called to

remove a group of anarchists who had invaded the *conseil municipal* meeting. Much to the

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[67] Huet remarks that the collaboration must have been successful enough in Verne's eyes to make his joining the very leftist Comité Daryl worthwhile in 1888 (78).

[68] In Verne's unfinished work that his son completed and named *Les Aventures de la Mission Barsac*, the author reveals another "radical" inclination in supporting the universal language of Esperanto, which Reclus endorsed as well.

approval of Verne – a member of the *conseil* – the police were heavy-handed in how they

dealt with the lack of order (Compère, "Conseiller" 137-138). On the other hand, although it

might be less "romantic" than associating Verne with the likes of Bakunin – whom he may or

may not have ever met – it is nonetheless true that Verne's acquaintances and influences also

came from the right. For instance, he was strongly anti-Dreyfus, associated occasionally

with royalty and even met Pope Leo XIII (Chesneaux, *Politique* 91). While critics have

wrestled with these opposing influences on Verne as an author and on his work, never really

deciding which side of center to place them, Boia finds a diplomatic approach. "Il n'est pas

question d'ignorer la présence de certains motifs similaires chez Jules Verne et les socialistes

de son temps. Dans toute époque, les idées circulent, s'entrecroisent, se combinent… Mais

rien ne justifie d'imaginer des motifs spécifiquement socialistes dans l'œuvre vernienne"

(*Paradoxes* 186).

Fortunately, in *En Magellanie*, the social subject of the novel would not seem to

necessitate that I *imagine* anything of the sort, for Verne casually mentions some of the

biggest names in socialist thinking from his century: Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon,

Lassalle, Marx and Guesde (141-142). He also seems to quote a definition of socialism that

the Kaw-djer aspires to achieve: "Cette doctrine des hommes dont la prétention ne va à rien

moins qu'à changer l'état actuel de la société, et à la réformer de la base au faîte sur un plan

dont la nouveauté n'exclut pas ou n'excuse pas la violence" (140-141). But he does not

name his source, and obviously the opinion contains bias. Then with each name, he gives a

brief explanation that coincides with widely available information on these socialists.[69]

Finally, he adds that "[…] aucun d'eux ne veut tenir compte des contingences de la vie; leur

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[69] Charléty, Minerva, Gilli and Maîtron, for instance offer additional information regarding these names.

doctrine réclame une application immédiate et brutale; ils exigent l'expropriation en masse; ils imposent le communisme universel. […] Peuvent-ils encore feindre d'ignorer que ce qu'ils appellent injustement le vol mérite le juste nom d'épargne et que cette épargne est le fondement de toute société ?..." (142). Point and counterpoint, in a novel replete with socialist discussion, Verne attempts to avoid uninformed promotion of the social theories he is borrowing, using them instead to inform his characters and the rugged geography from which they come.

Ultimately, Verne conflates the many socialist movements that coalesce in the latter half of the nineteenth century, but he eventually chooses one under which to categorize the Kaw-djer: anarchism. It is therefore worthwhile to quickly sketch the relevant history of anarchism in France in order to explain this enigmatic character, himself a key to the Cape Horn geography. Jean Jules-Verne, the author's grandson and a jurist, offers the following definition of anarchism. "L'anarchie suppose que l'homme doit être affranchi de toute tutelle parce qu'il est assez sage pour se gouverner lui-même. Elle poste qu'en absence de tout système l'homme ne dominera pas son semblable, et qu'il consentira volontiers à ce que chacun ait sa part des biens de ce monde" (*Jules-Verne* 366). The inherent problem with this system becomes evident with each difficulty the Kaw-djer faces, and in *En Magellanie* it is the ex-sailor and minor character, Tom Land, who finally explains it to him. "Voyez-vous, Kaw-djer […], quand j'ai économisé sur ma paie, ce n'est pas pour que le camarade qui a mangé la sienne, vienne encore boire la mienne! Ce que j'ai gagné ou économisé n'est à personne autre qu'à moi, ou bien je ne travaillerais pas et je me mettrais à la charge des autres (Verne 290)." If it takes the Kaw-djer a while to understand what he needs to do in

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order to save his island's community, the role anarchism played in France is not so easily defined.

The First International (*Congrès de l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs*) was held in 1866 in Geneva. After the French Commune, the Marxists splintered from the group in 1872 because they believed that the workers needed to take over and use to their benefit the existing government apparatus, whereas the anarchists saw in this the threat of a repetitive abuse of power. Around 1880, and at about the same time as the ex-Communards returned from exile, the anarchist movement gained strength and notoriety (Maitron 130, 139). However, despite the creation of an anarchist "party," their philosophy of non-organization made it difficult to create a strong political faction (116). On the other hand, a few sensational individualist actions created a sense of growing, spiraling violence. Among the most noteworthy, Emile Florion tried to kill Jules Ferry in 1884 (210), Charles Gallo threw a bottle of acid and shot at people working at the Bourse – coincidentally Verne's old stomping ground (211) – Ravachol began bombing a variety of hotels and other establishments in 1894 (212), Vaillant – who had just returned from Argentina – attacked the Chambre de Députés in 1893 (231) and Caserio killed President Sadi Carnot in Lyon in 1894 (247). The death of the president and the wide sweeping trials in Lyon that same year brought a severe crack-down on anarchism in France, an end to much of the violence and a readjustment of the methods used by the anarchists to attract support. When Verne mentioned this new approach of radicals and socialists joining forces in reference to his 1896 election (Dumas, *Verne* 166), he underlined a shift in anarchist thinking at the end of the

nineteenth century when they actively appealed to the working classes and organized within union organizations (Maitron 322).[70]

Verne would have been very aware of this sense of general unrest as a member of the *conseil municipal*, but even without this exposure, the press would have given him sufficient information. Indeed, in addition to the numerous militant actions, the press also reported during these years on the various communes initiated by anarchists impatient to see their anti-state in action (382). A few items of note include the occasional placement of these communes in South America (382-383), the principle of working and receiving according to one's abilities and needs (386), the problem that seed or start-up money was always lacking (386), a trend towards the adoption of cottage industry over agriculture (387), a lack of women (406-407) and the general realization that success could only come to the community if everyone agreed to "travailler beaucoup et manger peu. Et dans toutes les colonies sans exception, des disputes jaillirent de cet état de fait" (406). The events of *En Magellanie* in the light of such reports seem to be something of the rule rather than the exception.

Anarchy, or the sphere of life that takes place outside of *archy* or domination (Clark 62), touched some 100,000 people in France in 1890 and counted among its militant members some thousand, and another four thousand who specifically sought out liberal ideas in newspapers and pamphlets (Maitron 130, 453). Moreover, the anarchist mentality did not touch only one layer of society, but instead found adoption by many (Pessin 18). The anarchists who were using fire and bombs were not therefore simple outlaws or hooligans out to cause trouble. Rather, they were marginalizing themselves from society for a purpose

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[70] In fact, both of Verne's towns of residence – Nantes and Amiens – were locations for important anarchist conferences. The Charte d'Amiens (1906) distinctly separated the workers from their employers, designated the eight-hour workday and most importantly adopted the general strike plan as the preferred worker's action against the state (Maitron 317, 322).

(10), to fight the three obstacles to anarchism and humanity's liberation: politics, economics and religion (94-95). Although there is a stereotypical nomadic, *trimard* anarchist image of the lone stranger walking from town to town, sleeping under the stars, for whom the attributes of social life bear no interest (79) and who knowingly takes two steps back for every one step forward in his search for liberty (84), a survey of 170 anarchists in 1895 revealed a few less romantic commonalities. Generally, they were "*révoltés*" with a strong love of liberty and a sense that individual action – such as bombings for instance – was acceptable. On the other hand, they all showed a strong love of others – no matter what their profession – and a character that was logical, studious and had the spirit of proselytism. Excepting proselytism and violence, the Kaw-djer fits this general image of the anarchist. Moreover, he fits the *trimard* image as well, for he is a wanderer and once he starts to lead the colonists, for every step forward he does seem to take two back. Although lengthy, a final quote from Pessin seems relevant for its summation of anarchism, anarchists and by extension the character of the Kaw-djer.

> Ainsi se trouve justifiée d'abord la méfiance: ces hommes sont des inconnus, des étrangers et de surcroît des vagabonds (élément 1), à la fois donc exclus et avides de bouleverser des existences dont ils ne savent rien et qui ne les concernent pas. Leur violence sauvage (élément 2), leur absence de toute considération politique, diplomatique, leur maximalisme, font d'eux des victimes de leur manie de l'affirmation: affirmation de soi qui seule peut justifier d'entrer en violence sans raison, et qui se poursuit dans leur goût immodéré pour la proclamation (élément 3), cette jouissance de formules jugées creuses par des esprits jugés faibles. Hors l'avatar d'un succès démagogique passager (élément 4), ceci ne peut conduire, constate-t-on, qu'une marginalité errante, une existence misérable, qui ne promet qu'échec et soumission, à moins qu'elle ne s'achève en banditisme pur et simple (élément 5). Enfin le paradoxe de l'anarchie est de rencontrer dans ce milieu un nombre considérable de gens cultivés et distingués (parfois même des Princes authentiques comme Bakounine et Kropotkine, des savants reconnus, comme Elisée Reclus, etc.), ce qui rend pour lors la compréhension du phénomène tout à fait incompréhensible (élément 6). Voilà bien résumés, de manière complète et suffisante, la figure, le parcours et le destin de l'anarchiste dans son image la plus répandue. (40)

If I have spent so much time on the nature of anarchism in a section that is otherwise supposed to describe the characters of the novels as part of the textual legend, it is because in *En Magellanie*, the Kaw-djer is the embodiment of a system of ideals around which the other characters seem generally little more than pantomimes. Understanding this, one better grasps his character and the ways in which he represents the geographical location of Magellania, which at the time the story takes place, is one of the last ungoverned and unclaimed lands on earth. It is a land over which the Kaw-djer's cry, "Ni Dieu ni maître!"[71] can ring true against a geography of battered rocks, swirling seas, constant shipwrecks, fickle weather and vast expanses of nothingness. Yet in this land governed by neither god nor master – a space rather than a place – the necessity for rule and for the naming of some sort of known grows ever more powerful. The Kaw-djer avoids the necessity of seizing control and becoming a *chef* for as long as he can, for as long as Hoste Island can avoid becoming just another spot on the globe. But the ordinary world would appear to supersede the fictional, reducing the island and its inhabitants to a historical status that eschews outside participation. Although it is certainly true that the fictional geography is interrupted by that of the ordinary world in the other two texts, given the less adventurous and more serious (historical) tone in this case, can I speak therefore of a textual map? Or does this map of words become too much a historical document of reference?

Certainly in this case the geographical worlds described by the text teeter between the ordinary and the fictional with an almost surprisingly regular tension. Back and forth, the

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[71] The Kaw-djer's cry is actually a slogan from the doctrine of Auguste Blanqui, who started a journal of the same name in 1880 (Natal 9). The doctrine greatly influenced the socialist revolutionary party that Vaillant, who attacked the Chamber of Deputies in 1893, espoused. Bakunin explains that the concept of God, or any god, was problematic for the anarchists because such a being would render man its slave and infringe upon mankind's liberty. Therefore, for mankind to be free, God does not exist – and if He did exist, mankind would have to "s'en débarrasser" (Pessin 113).

text vacillates between the literary and the scientific. At the point where the Kaw-djer assumes full governing power, Verne seems to have written a treatise on government or on sociology rather than a geographical narrative. But the story is not over, for the Kaw-djer has a lighthouse built on Cape Horn, and on the day of its inauguration, he discovers that the gold that had come so close to ruining Hoste Island is also present at Cape Horn. If the discovery is publicized, this island will also be ravaged by those looking for personal gain through property. The island will become nothing more than a place, a dead-end location, a magnet of sorts to which the world's oceans will bring many to perish. History repeats itself, or so they say. But geography in Verne's fictional world of *Voyages extraordinaires*, albeit delimited by the ordinary world, contains the freedom within its blank spaces to imagine other possibilities. As it turns out, despite becoming *chef*, the Kaw-djer is still an anarchist, not bound to a state, and he kicks the gold nugget off the cliff to sink in the waters below. Cape Horn will not be a simple dot on the map, but will again and again serve as a vector of movement through a labyrinthine part of the world. From Cape Horn, the Kaw-djer had previously seen the *Jonathan* and decided not to kill himself, to save the passengers, and now from Cape Horn's lighthouse, a beacon of light will guide other ships along their voyages, making further movement possible. Therefore, the textual map is certainly applicable in this case, as is the textual legend that closely follows the Kaw-djer's character as he negotiates his own movements between the ordinary and the fictional worlds.[72]

Returning to Jean Jules-Verne's definition of anarchism I quoted a few pages ago, how can I say that the Kaw-djer as *chef* – therefore not allowing the Hoste inhabitants to govern themselves and not giving everyone the chance for his or her part of the profit (*les*

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[72] It is worth remembering that *En Magellanie* is an unfinished work. One can imagine that a rewrite would have added imagination and potentially made it less fact-driven.

biens) the gold would bring – is still an anarchist? After all, most critics say the opposite.

Dekiss points out that in addition to being a sort of descendent of Captain Nemo or Dr.

Antékirtt (*Mathias Sandorf*), the Kaw-djer shares the important similarity with Ayrton (*Ile*

Mystérieuse) of being one of the only Vernian characters to question his existence and

change it (*Enchanteur* 334). The reason for this change comes partly from the Merritt

brothers, themselves anarchists who want an oxymoronic anarchic state so that their minority

can profit from the work of the others (Chesneaux, *Regard* 138). Boia adds that change is

also partly due to the Kaw-djer's realization that his dream of a free society is unrealizable

against the reality of human imperfection and irreconcilable interests (*Paradoxes* 271). At

the beginning of the text, this knowledge sends him to rocky Cape Horn to jump to his death,

but he is too much of philanthropist (Solal 247) and not enough of a misanthrope (Lanthony

7-8) to end it all. Rather, whenever he is needed, he is there to help, as implied by his name

which in the Indian dialect means friend or the *bienfaiteur* (Verne, *Magellanie* 29). How can

he be an anarchist? By the end of the book, he accepts that human nature is faulty and that

the ideal life of anarchist liberty he imagined cannot be. He opts for a better life for himself

and his followers, albeit one that is ordered (Minerva, *Utopie* 155).

I still maintain the Kaw-djer is an anarchist for two reasons. First, the gesture of

kicking the gold nugget over the cliff, although paternalistic and therefore *chef*-like, actually

places the Hoste Island inhabitants in a relative state of equality. Rather than concentrating

on and losing themselves in immediate individual profit and gain, which leads to everyone's

detriment in anarchism, they are free to find their own identities and participate in their own

productions. Secondly, as I have stated previously, Verne confused the various –*isms* that are

named in this book. One can assume that some of this might have been straightened out

during rewrites before publication – *En Magellanie* not being much more than a manuscript –

but it is quite likely that Verne had somehow lumped together anarchism, socialism and

communism. In any case, the Kaw-djer is no more the *chef* of Hoste Island than Hoste Island

is an independent country in the ordinary world. The Kaw-djer is an anarchist because the

land he governs only exists as a country within Verne's fictional geography. Certainly,

Hoste Island figures on the map of the ordinary world, but that is not where Verne's

characters move about. The Kaw-djer, his Indian friend Karroly, Karroly's son Halg, Mr.

Rhodes and his family, Tom Land and every other survivor from the *Jonathan* reproduce a

geographical location by virtue of their presence, but they are no more "real" in the ordinary

world than their nationality. Verne was a writer of fiction, who used the ordinary world as a

backdrop, a jumping off point, a springboard to the fictional one. If, in this case, the

backdrop is particularly political, the ideology of the politics is simply a means to an end,

which is a means itself as a process for journeying through a fictional world that references

our ordinary one.

iv. Character Legend

As part of the author's geographical legend that recreates the area of the world that is

his subject for a particular installation of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, the characters play a

significant – albeit often one-dimensional – role. Their simple presence and reaction to the

country around them fills in the ordinary geographical limits discussed in the first part of this

chapter. In a sense, they personalize the topography, rendering it a more complete

geographical picture open for interpretation by the characters that react and interact in such a

manner as to pass between the unknown and the known. Part of the textual legend, part of

the key to reading the map or the story, the characters allow us to follow the literary

translation from the reality of Hanover Island to the fantasy of Chairman Island, from a lighthouse on a rocky island to the theater for a pirate story, and from Hoste Island as a dead end to a vector for movement: the means, not the end. Within the limits set by ordinary world geography, Verne inserts characters who may not be as emotionally or sentimentally complete as those of some of his contemporaries, but he gives them enough life to move between fact and fiction. In this sense, they serve as part of the textual legend or the key to reading Verne's novels, not as agents of sensibility, but as glimpses of how in the literary world one moves from the ordinary to the extraordinary, the known to the unknown, ultimately creating two distinct worlds that are linked together by the narrative of the textual map.

III.C. Reading Literary Legends

As I stated at the beginning of this chapter, the textual legend is composed of three major parts: the geographical limits, the characters that fill in the blank spaces and the author's style that textually reproduces movement through the geography of the textual map between the known and the unknown. In presenting these three categories, I have attempted to move from the wider focus of the geography to the more specific information related to the characters. In the rest of this chapter, my focus becomes even more specific as I concentrate on the ways in which Verne uses language to represent the experience of the stories using vulgarization, multiple discourses, direct address to the reader, uncommon punctuation and intertextual references. The choices the author makes regarding the compilation and inclusion of these five aspects of his textual production influence the story's reception, which is particularly important for this author, whose editor insists on the didactic aspect of his work. Indeed, this is one of the most interesting aspects of Verne's writing, that he was able

to create a popular fictional world that still today enjoys a strong readership *despite* his contractual and editorial obligations.

i. Vox Verne-acular

Verne's characters lack a strong sentimental or emotional nature, but then again Verne is not interested in why they do what they do, but in how they do it: instinctively, secretly, voluntarily, unconsciously, and so forth (Butcher, *Biography* 226). He is interested in their action, in what they do and say, and also in what they do not; for within what remains unsaid, unknown or unfinished, holes in the narrative process can appear that reveal the author's literary choices as he constructs the text (Unwin, *Journey* 175). For many years, Vernian scholars have analyzed his characters' actions as representative of positivist or scientist thinking, relating them back to Saint-Simon, Fourier or Proudhon (Chesneaux, *Lecture* 71). Although it is not incorrect to take this approach – after all, Verne did hold in high esteem the *grands travaux* like the Suez Canal, and he recurrently addressed the theme of the discovery of Nature through experimentation and objectivity – concentrating on this popular subject matter that fit perfectly into Hetzel's *Magasin d'Education et de Recréation* overgeneralizes the *Voyages extraordinaires* by limiting them to one theme and ignores the author's ability to work creatively within the constraints of his contract and his own desire for style.

Verne's subject matter certainly reflects the popular tastes and expectations of his reading public (Minerva, *Utopie* 172), including the oxymoronic sway back and forth between a more traditional system of government and values and the relatively new popularly oriented one (168), but does Verne see this? "On a toujours dit que la politique et la science ne sont pas du domaine de l'art. Il me semble que rien ne convient mieux à l'imagination

d'un poète que la science; et pour ce qui est la politique, c'est sûrement faisable. Mais,

comme je l'ai déjà dit, je suis à part" (Verne qtd. in Compère and Margot 231-232).

Certainly Hetzel's influence and sometimes overly strong arm kept his author "mainstream"

instead of allowing him to write on more impossible subjects like the future (Harris 110), but

did he really keep Verne separate from politics?[73] Some of the answer reveals itself in their

correspondence, particularly concerning *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers*, in which the editor

firmly refuses the author's original ending as well as Nemo's nationality. But without

deviating too far astray from the three chosen texts at hand, let us just assume that Hetzel did

keep him a-political, and that Verne was correct in feeling after a few years of writing that he

had nothing else "extraordinary" to say and would have to resign himself to recombining his

older stories (Butcher, *Voyage* 4). Fortunately, Verne's literary program by its very nature

does not allow this in too exaggerated a form, for his goal is to explore the entire globe,

which indicates an *a priori* change of venue and of subject. His approach to writing, basing

the story on the geographical location, forbids simply rehashing an already-told-tale, even if

the *feuilleton* adventure story format would lend itself nicely to such an automatic, dare I say

mechanical, program. Instead, Verne innovates what Unwin refers to as an expansionist

writing style that "moves [the novel] very conspicuously toward new artistic frontiers, at the

very same moment as it depicts within its pages the exploration of remote geographical

frontiers. The writing process itself expands outwards and conquers new spaces, imitating at

the stylistic level that sense of a quest for new territory that is embodied in so many of

Verne's heroes" ("Negotiating" 13). Not only does Verne not limit himself to returning to a

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[73] The editor in the nineteenth century had a good deal of control over the author's product, for it was he who had the clientele, the contacts and the collection that were necessary for successful publication (Compère, *Ecrivain* 30).

place as it is defined already, but his writing style indicates a talent for new productions coming from the recombination of pre-existing textual forms.

In the previous paragraph, I assume that Hetzel, *père* and then *fils*, succeeds in keeping Verne out of politics in most of his *Voyages extraordinaires* and quote the author himself who says he is not involved in them; but given the political forays he takes in a number of his novels, for instance *En Magellanie*, and Unwin's estimation of his expansive style, maybe it would be better to reconsider the author's entire approach to literature. Writing primarily for the popular *feuilleton*, Verne vulgarizes everything from science to high literature (Gilli 61) while satisfying the moral and didactic requirements of society and his editor (A. Evans, "Exploring" 266-268; *Rediscovered* 37-38). Coincidentally, this is again vulgarization because nineteenth-century society recognizes the need to teach children social skills outside of the church. In any case, to accomplish this vulgarization, he simply fictionalizes his topics by putting distance or space between the original and the textual copy, and then he explains how to move through that same space by supplying legends or negotiations that address both the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Far from art for art's sake, in which the reader is casually abandoned, Verne's art is "modern" because it admits coming from a number of sources, explains in layman's terms the structure of those same and ultimately reveals the essentials of their construction, their particularities and their communicative effects: their fiction (Unwin, "Negotiating" 14). This approach has the potential to give all factual information equal consideration, and therefore politics would be no different than science, or art. Indeed, Verne's self-appointed task appears to be to bridge the gap between those who think in terms of industrialization and science and those who think in terms of art (A. Evans, "Canon" 20).

Despite the improbabilities that ensue from this idealistic approach – some of which are undoubtedly responsible for Verne's affiliation with science fiction[74] – the author remains convinced that the novelist's duty, like the journalist's, is to instruct rather than offer dramatic insights into character (Unwin, "Negotiating" 12). This instruction logically cannot reference what has not yet happened, but it can and does cull together what has already been and the ways in which it has been described in other texts. Thus, for Unwin, the journey in Verne is a journey about writing, in which each new journey is a trip back through its old predecessors (*Journey* 41). H.G. Wells seems to recognize and to reaffirm this as he discusses his own literary predecessors. "The interest Verne invoked was a practical one; he wrote and believed and told that this or that thing could be done, which was not at that time done yet. He helped to imagine it done and to realise what fun, excitement or mischief would ensue" (qtd. in Haining 62). The fun, excitement and mischief refer not only to the reception of the finished product, but also to the author's enjoyment as he mixes and combines sources at hand to create a new sort of text that is an amalgam of its predecessors.

The death in 1886 of Hetzel *père* certainly gives Verne more artistic freedom, but the author's basic style does not change. He still vulgarizes – even plagiarizes – scientific and literary sources, stringing them together to make a compilation of words destined to entertain and to educate his reading public. To do this, he follows an approach not unlike John Dewey's to educational science, which did not insist on remaining faithful to Lord Kelvin's advice that "[i]f you can measure that of which you speak, and can express it by a number, you know something of your subject. If you cannot measure it, your knowledge is meagre

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[74] On the other hand, many of the clearest examples used by Vernian critics to support the author's science fiction affiliation have actually come from texts written or rewritten by Michel Verne under his father's name. "J'admets la fantaisie dans la science, mais encore faut-il que la première ne contredise pas la seconde," says Verne in a letter to Hetzel about one of Grousset's novels (qtd. in Vierne, *Jules Verne* 65).

and unsatisfactory!" (qtd. in Sadler 97). After all, to follow such advice is to eliminate the social sciences from the domain of science (95) and render impossible the compilation of a work incorporating anything that is not reducible to one meaning. Contrary to this overly Realist distillation of the text, Verne chooses a process of literary relativity in which each element is taken on a case-by-case basis and referenced according to its placement in a larger field (98). Doing this, he becomes a literary vulgarizer, a popular wordsmith forging together an assortment of thoughts and ideas to fabricate a literary text that still shows its sources through the soldered joints.

Of course, Verne the vulgarizer cannot always adequately explain how he arrives at fiction from science, nor can he always explain the science. A certain amount of unknown inherently remains within the novels. "M. Verne possède, à son insu peut-être, une précieuse et très rare qualité: il ne croit pas comprendre quand il ne comprend pas" (Badoureau 10). Although Badoureau's quote refers to a particular set of calculations with which he helped Verne, his words equally apply to the realization that no author grasps all or can adequately address all aspects of every subject. However, the author does possess a set of tools that can create the illusion of understanding, language. Thus, by filling his pages with words and discourses, Verne creates the illusion of the known by placing new adventures against an apparently verifiable backdrop of the probable. But this mechanical, Newtonian approach to life does not take into account what Verne's character Phileas Fogg referred to as *frottements* or those moments of interaction with real human communication (Butcher, *Voyage* 116). These *frottements* are therefore subjective and open to interpretation outside of the probable, allowing all manner of possibilities. They are the fiction or the ways in which one can choose to organize words in order to create various meanings; they are the novel in which, as

Butor points out, the primary guarantor of the information presented is the novel itself (*Repertoire* 8). Realism and an artistic design based on Realism, or the sincere observation of the world, is put in doubt and no one linguistic code perfectly represents an object. "Jules Verne ne cesse de dire l'homme avec les autres hommes et avec tous les objets du monde et avec tous les temps. Il dessine donc les possibles" (Bessière 3).

In a century of scientific experiment and re-evaluation of knowledge, the novelist has an almost unique opportunity to push what is broadly considered factual beyond the traditional limits. The novel becomes a location for experimentation (Citti 72) in which traditional linearity of ideas is not necessary because along the line between the knowns in the world lie many unknowns (Butcher, "Etranges" 132). As the author composes his novel, he reassures the reader of the solidity of the known by anchoring it in mainstream science (A. Evans, "Exploring" 275), but mediates this knowledge in a fictional world in which the known and the unknown overlap so thoroughly as to throw doubt on the entire voyage (Unwin, *Journey* 33), which then fills the literary product with a sense of uncertainty. With each successive voyage of discovery, with the ever-diminishing uncertainty in the physical and experimental world, the novel becomes a privileged location of production for the unknown, for its very technique is the fictionalization of the supposedly observable (Fauchaux 81).

Chelebourg, referring to the Kaw-djer's cry, "Ni Dieu ni maître!" argues that Verne creates in *En Magellanie* an affirmation that is actually the negation of a negation. The Kaw-djer's words negate two concepts – God and master – but the Merritt brothers reveal what the society on Hoste Island would be like under anarchism. This negative society that would result from such an application or understanding of anarchism would be detrimental to

everyone because the Merritts would be self-serving masters. Therefore, the Kaw-djer has to take power in order to negate the negators, or to maintain the principles of independence and anarchism by seizing power ("Conservateur" 50-51). This idea of a negation of a negation (an-anarchism?) is particularly compelling, for it hints at how the unknown can become the *not* unknown, or in fact something akin to the known and yet strangely unknown because, while two negatives multiplied mathematically yield a positive number, the fictional world is not so predictably linear or perfect. Old ideas and boundaries can be transgressed, and new ones that replace them can quickly be transgressed also, for having become known. The world can become fluid and shifting, imperfect in its representation for always being a negation of a prior negation; and rather than rehashing a world of stasis and contented self-sufficiency, the author could create an exciting self-regenerating world in which the possibility always exists to explore its imperfections (Harris 119-120).

The *Voyages extraordinaires* refuse complacency and limitations, preferring liberty and the constant possibility for renegotiation and change, for the creation and the exploration of a perpetual unknown through language and its vulgarization. The reading experience, being an active participatory exercise in the literary production, and the circular sort of cognitive movement between the known and the unknown, between fact and fiction, allows for a broad spectrum of interests among Verne's readers. Unlike other novels published in the *feuilleton* format, which Tadié argues are often geared to a unique social idea popular at a specific time only (17, 25-26), Verne's adventure stories engage a wide public because the writing style is the coalescence and condensation of a number of discourses vulgarized, and therefore removed from their proper place in society. Yet despite the ultimate vulgarization, the roots of the original discourse can still be felt, deciphered by those who would care to do

so. The bridge between the known and the unknown, or in the case of the textual map, the narrative that transitions a location in the ordinary world into a fictional world space inhabited by language and discourses in constant motion that act and interact with each other much like characters in a novel, the textual legend is a key to understanding better the construction of the text, which is itself a product of the geographical location.

ii. **Para literati or Discourses**

As I discussed earlier in this chapter, Verne's characters often seem to be mechanical and utilitarian negotiators of plot and movement rather than carriers of great emotion. In addition to this benefiting their ability to represent the geographical location from which they come, the characteristic helps them to work within a varying array of types and levels of discourse without appearing out of place or awkward. Although it is not my purpose here to discuss all of these discourses, a number require mention for specifically revealing the literary patchwork of Verne's texts, exposing their compilation. First among these is what I simply call name and fact dropping that is an effort to create verisimilitude, but one in which these items of information are dropped into the text in appropriate places as if they just belonged there. Such factual information might include weather reports, maritime information like the next tide, the passage of boats off of Staten Island or the remembrance that in the southern hemisphere summer is in December and winter is in June. Sometimes the information contains more detail, like when Briant in *Deux Ans de vacances* discovers the piñon pine, knows what it looks like, its name and that the nuts are not merely edible but good-tasting (Verne 288). Of course, one might question the final truth-value of the information presented as factual, but it is nonetheless dropped into the story in such a manner as to support the illusion of reality by giving it substance. It is also often given in a language

that is used by the characters themselves, what Compère calls transcriptions (*Ecrivain* 60).

Therefore, in *Deux Ans de vacances*, place names are given in English because most of the

boys are English. In *En Magellanie*, the Kaw-djer is referred to by his Indian-given name.

Ships in both this book and in *Le Phare du bout du monde* are called *aviso*, and other Spanish

names (*bolas, ajoupa*, *rio*) percolate through the novels. The characters, of course, all have a

brilliant mastery of these various languages and do not hesitate to use them. This has the

effect of leveling all discourses, making them appear equally accessible to everyone no

matter what their background or training. Drawing no particular attention as being different

or extraordinary, the combination of discourses creates an overall sense of verisimilitude

because it does not seem out of context or unreal. Of course, this does not imply that

everything seems real either. "Le mot est dit: ce n'est pas le réel qui préoccupe Jules Verne,

mais le vraisemblable. Le vraisemblable qui n'est souvent qu'un travestissement de

l'invraisemblable" (Boia, *Paradoxes* 64). It is certainly unrealistic to mix up languages and

facts the way Verne does, but he disguises the non verisimilitude, producing the verisimilar.

Compère correctly remarks that the real in Verne is "dénaturé" to support the fiction

and to underline the ambiguity between what is real and what is imagined (*Ecrivain* 88). I

would ask then the related question: is the fiction then "naturée" in order to support the real?

After all, in fiction the goal of the author is the suspension of the reader's disbelief, but Verne

constantly seems to try to prove to his reader through the insertion of scientific facts or

names that what he or she is reading is truth, not fiction (Unwin, *Journey* 10). In so doing, he

brings his reader up short to an uncomfortable pause that draws attention to the fact that in

the *Voyages extraordinaires*, the author purposefully "jostles together" various poetic and

scientific discourses in order that the ambiguity of the literary register rubs off on the

scientific, whose own matter-of-factness transfers to the literary (178-179). Likewise, the scientific discourses change the literary by making it appear to be truthful when it is not. Neither dominates completely in Verne's writing, for rather than attributing to one or the other a sense of vertical mobility by which one would be placed above the other or given a greater importance, Verne sees in them both the prospect for limitless horizontal mobility. Fiction and the real are both changed from contact with the other, but the result opens the novel up to possibility and evolution by recombination of multiple discourses rather than domination by one.

Part of opening up the text is making it a location for free interplay between the ordinary world and fiction. One aspect of this location is the acceptance of name and fact dropping as if it were not so extraordinary for these characters to be so knowledgeable. Another aspect is the characters' own retelling of their stories, for rather than standing out as odd against the general plot, their productions fall directly and naturally into the storyline. This reinforces the notion in Verne that texts are always circulating, always available for borrowing (Unwin, *Journey* 71). The talks and the stories done by the boys at the end of *Deux Ans de vacances*, like the daily log held by the lighthouse keepers in *Le Phare du bout du monde* and even the reading done by the Kaw-djer before *En Magellanie* begins, disclose a sense of self-awareness in Verne's writing that references a literary world without limits (Compère, *Ecrivain* 121, 123). Interestingly, when Verne relates his characters' literary accomplishments, he reproduces a guiding trend of non-appropriation that the characters generally follow as they learn to live in an area. The analogy might be made between one happy medium in human geography and the other in textual geography.

> Si la nature peut facilement accaparer ce que l'homme crée, il peut, de son côté,
> fondre ses productions dans l'environnement au point qu'on ne les distingue que très

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peu, voire pas du tout. Aussi, l'artifice humain n'est-il pas 'l'ennemi' du monde naturel, et les deux entités peuvent cohabiter dans la plus profonde harmonie; la civilisation et le progrès, ainsi que leurs empreintes ou leurs manifestations, ne vont pas toujours à l'encontre de la nature: tout est une question d'adaptation, de respect, en somme d'intelligence. (Sudret 196)

The intelligence Sudret mentions above brings to mind two aspects of Verne's work: that "la production du récit se confond avec une interrogation sur la situation de l'homme dans le monde moderne" (Chardel 95) and that no matter how unscientific or "wordy" the medium of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, they inextricably rely on scientific discourse. The first critic to seriously analyze the various discourses in Verne was Foucault, who remarked on how scientific discourse seemed to be imported through the narrative into the fiction – or the author's arrangement of the story – directly from the fable – or the events of the story in the order of their happening (9). In other words, the scientific discourse is not only autonomous but also disruptive because it does not flow nicely into the fiction, preferring to interrupt it. Thus, in the opinion of some (editors, translators, readers in a hurry) it can be skipped. On the other hand, studying Verne in relation to pedagogy, A. Evans adds to this initial estimation a more careful investigation of the sorts of scientific discourse: direct exposition (unmediated pedagogy often in block insertions), semidirect exposition (narrator intrusion) and indirect exposition (character speech or *vox populi*) and argues these multiple discourses cannot be skipped (*Rediscovering* 109). Unwin generally agrees with A. Evans, but adds that instead of Verne simply taking advantage of an opportune moment to insert a bit of pedagogy, the author is actually questioning his reader and giving him or her the opening to skeptically consider a new discourse in order to discover the resonances between it and its literary cousin (*Journey* 193-195). He argues that the average reader expects a nice, seamless text that has all the answers and asks no

questions, but that the insertion of scientific discourse in Verne's works shows the reader the seams of the text, draws attention to them, and even asks the reader to be critical (198).

The mixture of discourses in Verne can create a somewhat chaotic effect by their proliferation (Unwin, *Journey* 200), but to counter this *polyphonie* (Compère, *Ecrivain* 57) of competing and complementary voices that are intent on creating the most complete picture possible (Gamarra 257), Verne maintains a set of scientific and narratological limits (A. Evans, "Exploring" 271-273). He does not create science, but uses it as a bridge between the known and the unknown worlds (271). Geographical discourse borrowed from the ordinary world therefore also acts as a bridge between worlds, specifically to the fictional one. It becomes a representation, a tool to be used in deciphering the geographical reproduction in fiction. Complementary to scientific discourse is the literary, for Verne does not always give his characters just the right word to describe something, writing instead that words fail them or that they ask themselves how one of the great authors like Hugo would have put it (273). Again, Verne draws attention here to the literary production in a way that leaves all possibilities open, for one can never know how Hugo would have said something that he did not. Yet his presence, just like that of scientific discourse in any of its forms, reveals that the novel represents a fictional world, accessible via a discursive bridge that behaves as a textual legend.

iii. The Author Speaks

Although Verne is certainly not the first author to take a step back from his novels and intervene with a pseudo-external viewpoint, it is remarkable the extent to which he uses the technique. Whether as a "doubting Thomas" narrator, whose skepticism ultimately brings credibility to the information proposed (A. Evans, *Rediscovered* 131), or the phatic

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narrator whose use of first- and second-person pronouns creates complicity between the reader and the novel (122), Verne's narrators are almost always limited by their own observations rather than given the great power of omniscience. Theirs is a deductive role, driven by skepticism and a sense of irony or doubt that often finds refuge in direct phrases like "on le sait" or "il est vrai" in order to validate the narrator's observations, incorporate scientific fact and invite the reader's participation (Compère, *Ecrivain* 85-87). Of course, the technique is contrived and the reader is no more invited to form a real opinion than the narrator is to find true fault with his observations. However, the scenario does at least pretend to open the novel up to a participatory experience – albeit mediated – that is worth investigating as an indicator of Verne's style and its implications as a bridge between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, a narrative textual legend within the textual map.

One of the most noticeable devices used by Verne is the question addressed to no one in particular – and, by default, to the person reading the question, or the reader. Often emotionally charged, the discursive level of the question can range widely from something *almost* akin to free indirect discourse to the simple determination of events. For instance, in *Deux Ans de vacances*, Verne imagines the various questions a ship's captain *would have asked* had he stumbled upon the *Sloughi* in the middle of the ocean.

> Qu'était-il donc arrivé? L'équipage avait-il disparu dans quelque catastrophe? Des pirates de la Malaisie l'avaient-ils enlevé, ne laissant à bord que de jeunes passagers livrés à eux-mêmes, et dont le plus âgé comptait quatorze ans à peine? Un yacht de cent tonneaux exige, à tout le moins, un capitaine, un maître, cinq ou six hommes, et, de ce personnel, indispensable pour le manœuvrer, il ne restait plus que le mousse!... Enfin, d'où venait-il, ce schooner, de quels parages australasiens ou de quels archipels de l'Océanie, et depuis combien de temps, et pour quelle destination? (12)

Behind the factual nature of the questions designed to determine how it is that this boat of boys found themselves alone in the middle of the raging sea, the rapidity of the questions as

well as the imaginative nature of the possible scenarios offered reveal a level of emotion –

almost panic? – that might be attributable to a ship's captain, but is more likely an offshoot

reflection of the boys' state of mind or an onlooker's concern, indicating a level of

participation in the events of the story.

Likewise, when the boys find the skeleton of François Baudoin, Verne uses a list of

questions to follow the logical ramifications of the discovery for the boys' existence on the

island. Thus, one question follows another after another, each slightly less specific to the

skeleton and each slightly more concerned with what it could reveal about the boys' own

situation.

> Quel était l'homme qui était venu mourir en cet endroit? Était-il un naufragé, auquel
> les secours avaient manqué jusqu'à sa dernière heure? Était-il arrivé jeune sur ce
> coin de terre? Y était-il mort vieux? […] Puisque c'était sur un continent que cet
> homme avait trouvé refuge, pourquoi n'avait-il pas gagné quelque ville de l'intérieur,
> quelque littoral? Le rapatriement présentait-il donc de telles difficultés, de tels
> obstacles, qu'il n'avait pu les vaincre? (135)

Proceeding in such a manner, the boys, narrator and reader finally come to some sort of a

solution, which may not be the answer to any of the questions asked, but which does

nonetheless move the boys from outside the cavern to inside, where they will find their new

home. It also allows Verne to further implicate and expand identification and emotional

interest in the subject asking these questions and introduce a scenario in which a new

"voice," the map of the island, can be presented. "Quoi qu'il en fût, il était nécessaire de

visiter la caverne avec le plus grand soin. Qui sait *si on n'y trouverait pas un document*

donnant quelque éclaircissement sur cet homme, sur son origine, sur la durée de son

séjour !... À un autre point de vue, d'ailleurs, il convenait de reconnaître si l'on pourrait s'y

installer pendant l'hiver, après l'abandon du yacht" (my emphasis 136). The Frenchman's

map answers some of these questions, but begs others as the boys continue to explore.

In addition to the general abundance of questions in Verne, the preceding examples and decision reveal another aspect of Verne's style, his use of the *imparfait* tense and the conditional mode to maintain a certain hypothetical distance that allows for almost any possibility in the chain of events. Thus, when Moko believes he sees land, "[n]e se trompait-il pas?" (22). Once the decision has been made that it is land, "[e]n effet, dans le cas où cette terre *serait* une île, comment *parviendrait*-on à la quitter, s'il *était* impossible de renflouer le schooner […] Et si cette île *était* déserte […], comment ces enfants, réduits à eux-mêmes, n'ayant que ce qu'ils *sauveraient* des provisions du yacht, suffiront-ils aux nécessités de l'existence?" (my emphasis, 29). It is worth notice, however, that slipped in amongst the hypotheticals are two markers that reduce the emotive distance: the use of *on* and the use of the future *suffiront* instead of the conditional, one of many clues Verne drops about the boys' new home.[75] Indeed, in Verne the implicative *on* is everywhere, marking the inclusion of the reader with some combination of the narrator and the boys on their adventure. "On ne l'a pas oublié, l'opération du cerf-volant avait été suspendue" (392) – reader, narrator and boys. "Qu'on ne hausse pas les épaules devant l'idée de ce brave et audacieux garçon!" (393) – reader and narrator. Interestingly, the flexibility of *on* can also appear to simply refer to the boys. "On fit halte, […]. On déjeuna de bon appétit, sans avoir trop à se plaindre de ce premier essai culinaire de Service. […] Cela fait, on franchit le creek, et comme on put le passer à gué […]" (234-236).

It seems that the boys, the reader and the narrator are all marooned on the island together, and that Verne is using the linguistic tools at his disposal to argue this very same, for balancing out the hypotheticals and supporting the implications of *on*, he uses a

[75] One such clue is Gordon's reference to the island as "son île" and seeming to assume it is American (162). This is, of course, a play on the multiple meanings of American as well as possibly an oblique reference to the Monroe Doctrine.

significant number of supporting commentaries designed to reinforce a belief in the events as they are described. "On comprend […]" (51), "il est vrai" (51), "[v]raiment" (275), "ce qui fut touchant" (275), "[i]l va de soi" (261), "[d]écidemment" (253), and so forth reinforce the truth value or the verisimilitude of the narration and the narrative process or style Verne uses to implicate his reader by playing with the distances and the relationships between the various parties: narrator, reader and character.

Although Verne's tone generally changes over the next twenty years of his career – and some critics might argue that comparing *Deux Ans de vacances* to *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* is like comparing apples to oranges – besides sharing a general geographic location, the three novels also share stylistic aspects like the ones I have already mentioned. Certainly, in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, the serious subject matter affects the approach the author takes, making it a bit less light-hearted for instance; but it is nonetheless possible to locate the same devices as in *Deux Ans de vacances*, plus a few more.

One of the most impressive differences between a novel like *Deux Ans de vacances* and *Le Phare du bout du monde* is the author's presentation of what is hypothetical and what is apparently certain. In *Deux Ans de vacances*, seemingly everything is hypothetical and nearly anything is possible at the beginning of the novel, but as the boys' situation becomes more clear and as they become more a part of their environment, their circumstances become more certain, more predictable. The contrary is true for *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*, both of which begin in a manner that makes them appear certain and unflinching, but which shifts to the hypothetical and the doubtful as the stories progress. In part, the author accomplishes this shift through his choice of verb tense and mode. Early in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, Verne is already using his slippery-meaning *on*, but here in the

future tense, indicating a certainty and practically an imperative. "On notera que Vasquez aimait à parler sur ce ton de bonheur avec son camarade" (Verne 21). A few pages later, he uses the *imparfait*, but it is the verb *falloir*, and therefore once again reflecting a necessity rather than a hypothetical (23). Finally, in a paragraph that can only be retrospectively identified as foreshadowing the upcoming action, Verne uses the conditional, but without any accompanying *si* clause. "En somme, pendant toute sa relâche, le commandant Lafayate n'avait rien eu à craindre au fond de cette baie très abritée contre les vents du nord, du sud et de l'ouest. Seuls, les gros temps du large auraient pu le gêner. Mais au début de la saison, il y avait lieu d'espérer qu'il ne se produirait que des troubles passagers sur les parages magellaniques" (26).

Until the introduction of Kongre and his band of pirates, any *imparfait* – albeit hypothetical – only hints at some remote other version of events, but without seeming to put much support behind it. "Il n'est pas inutile de rappeler que la sécurité des trois gardiens paraissait être complète, si isolée que fût l'île des Etats, à quinze cents milles de ce port de Buenos-Aires, d'où pouvaient seulement venir le ravitaillement et les secours" (48). Certainly, the additional logistical information might remind one of a certain Stephen King book in which an off-season hotel caretaker finds himself snowed in, but the tone up until this point in the novel has been all optimism. Even the foreshadowing of the pirates' murderous use of the lightning rod on the next page (49) does not seem ominous. After all, "toutes précautions avaient été prises en prévision de l'arrivée de gens suspects dans la baie d'El Gor" (48). But with the first words of chapter four, "La Bande Kongre," Verne begins to use the *imparfait* and conditional to create an alternative series of events, to imagine how things might have otherwise gone.

Si Vasquez, Felipe et Moriz se fussent transportés à l'extrémité orientale de l'île des États, ils auraient constaté combien ce littoral différait de celui qui s'étendait entre le cap San Juan et la pointe Several. […] Dans tous les cas, si ces travaux [de construire un autre phare] eussent été entrepris en même temps sur les deux extrémités de l'île des États, cela eût singulièrement compromis la situation d'une bande de pillards qu's'était réfugiée dans le voisinage du cap Gomez. (69-71).

The most *imparfait* and conditional use, of course, comes with the self-examination that accompanies Vasquez after he has been forced to flee from the lighthouse. Although the passage is lengthy, quoting it in its entirety underlines not only the use of the *imparfait* and the conditional, but also the author's use of the question form.

Quant à retarder son départ [la goélette des pirates], lorsqu'elle serait prête à reprendre la mer, comment Vasquez aurait-il pu y songer ?... Oui, si quelque navire venait à passer à petite distance du cap San Juan, il lui ferait des signaux… au besoin, il se jetterait à la mer pour le rejoindre à la nage… Une fois à bord, il mettrait le capitaine au courant de la situation… et si ce capitaine disposait d'un équipage assez nombreux, il n'hésiterait pas à donner dans la baie d'El Gor, à s'emparer de la goélette… Et si ces malfaiteurs s'enfuyaient à l'intérieur de l'île, la quitter serait devenu impossible pour eux… et, au retour du *Santa-Fe*, le commandant Lafayate saurait bien s'emparer de cette bande ou la détruire jusqu'au dernier homme !... Mais ce bâtiment arriverait-il en vue du cap San Juan ?... Et, à moins qu'il ne passât à quelques encablures, les signaux de Vasquez seraient-ils aperçus ?...
En ce qui le concernait personnellement, d'ailleurs, bien que ce Kongre n'eût aucun doute sur l'existence d'un troisième gardien, il ne s'en inquiétait pas… il saurait échapper aux recherches… Mais l'essentiel était de savoir s'il pourrait assurer sa nourriture jusqu'à l'arrivée de l'aviso, et il se dirigea vers la caverne. (136-137).

As with the series of questions regarding François Baudoin in *Deux Ans de vacances* that lead the boys to drop their hesitations for the moment and treat the more urgent need of exploring the cavern, here once again at the end of the long series of questions, Vasquez decides to take an action that addresses his immediate needs. (And ironically, it involves exploring a cavern). More importantly, in looking back over the questions, can I, the reader, actually be sure who is thinking these things? Am I really listening to an internal dialogue by Vasquez, or is it instead Verne who is imagining "comment Vasquez aurait-il pu y songer?" (136). The answer should be clear, but it is not, which only renders the ambivalence of the

discourse that much more interesting, for throughout the *Phare du bout du monde*, Verne never allows the narrative to get out of his control and guides it from one event to the other using a string of transition words. Even in the quote above, "d'ailleurs" and "mais l'essentiel" reveal the narrator's presence. Turning at random to the beginning of chapter nine, and scanning the first few words of each paragraph, I see Verne's hand in the transitions: *depuis*, *cependant*, *on le voit*, *d'ailleurs*, *en effet*, *au moment où*, *du reste*, *voici donc*, *il convient de dire* (155-158). These small words, inserted with great frequency in Verne's texts, move the action along while reinforcing its verisimilitude by creating a logical flow from one event to the next.

But Verne's voice and input in the creation and flow of the story go beyond these transition words. As I have already discussed, in *Deux Ans de vacances* he asks questions that seem to come from the logical course of events, and in *Le Phare du bout du monde* his voice is even more likely to be implicated. Although not as common here, *on* resurfaces just prior to a dated incident (February 16) that answers a number of Vasquez's questions about the pirates (160) and begins to swing the balance in his favor by joining another victim's fate to his, that of John Davis. Closely following this reference to *on*, Verne writes: "Ah! s'il l'avait pu, s'il n'avait dépendu que de lui de défoncer sa coque, en la coulant dans cette crique…mais c'était impossible" (161). Do these words come from Vasquez as free indirect discourse? Are they Verne's as he projects the view of an outsider in the story? I argue that both solutions are possible, and that this is another form of direct address employed by Verne, and even more so in his later novels, where he is less likely to make a pointed declaration or ask a straight-forward question. [76] Rather than relating to his audience with

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[76] It is my own personal reading that Verne's voice does poke through in the middle of Carcante warning Kongre about the arrival of the *aviso*. "Car voilà bientôt deux mois que la *Carcante*… - ah ! je n'ai point oublié

first- and second-person pronouns, Verne has decidedly slipped into the specifically ambivalent *on*, and is writing for *one* or, more often, for *we*, assuming the plurality of the subject.

This same plural *on* recurs in *En Magellanie*, where again its definition as a subject remains rather ambiguous. "Et même le malheureux respirait-il encore?... On pouvait en douter à voir l'effrayante pâleur de son visage […]" (Verne 33). And again, alongside this use of *on* is the *imparfait*, which allows everyone to imagine that maybe he actually has stopped breathing. In addition to this flexible *on*, Verne in *En Magellanie* also unveils and opinionated *on*, which seems to ask for a concurrence of opinion. It is this *on*, that introduces a historical section about Dumont d'Urville's voyages through the area in the famous *Astrolabe* and the *Zélée*. "On ne lira pas sans intérêt les quelques détails qui vont être donnés relativement à cette mémorable campagne, si honorable pour la France" (70). Although I can certainly imagine Verne's strong interest in the next six pages of geographical exploration, I can also imagine a person less interested, who the author tries to include, using *on* to mean *we* (74), as if Verne and his reader were truly along on the voyage. The opinionated *on* resurfaces throughout the text, reminding us that the nature of the subject is less open for negotiation and that fewer hypotheticals seem possible. Instead, even if it is "de notre temps" (76), and even if "[o]n n'ignore pas les théories des socialistes qui ont laissé une empreinte indélébile dans l'histoire de leur temps" (141), *on* is an "on le répète" (82) and an "on sait" (194) transition word bearing an inarguable level of authority. It becomes the same as "il faut savoir" (96), "il va de soi" (109), "on ne s'étonnera pas" (109) and "il n'était que trop évident" (192).

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son nouveau nom, cette fois [..]" (208). It is widely known that by this time in his life, he was forgetting the names of places and characters as he was writing. See Dumas's introduction to *En Magellanie* for more information.

On the other hand, if the use of *on* appears to limit the discussion to a tightly-controlled viewpoint, the text – albeit unfinished – contains its share of *imparfait* and conditional as well as direct questions like those I have discussed relative to *Deux Ans de vacances* and *Le Phare du bout du monde*. Thus, when Karroly and the Kaw-djer try to guess at the reason for the *Jonathan's* perilous course towards the rocks, their suppositions and the information about the ship's state are in the *imparfait* and the conditional. This casts a level of doubt, a sense of the unknown, and only guesses can be made about the Kaw-djer's decisions and the political question around which the plot of the novel turns – no matter what the verb tense. "Peuvent-ils [les socialistes] donc feindre d'ignorer que ce qu'ils appellent injustement le vol mérite le juste nom d'épargne et que cette épargne est le fondement de toute société?..." (142). The questions remain unanswered, but suppositions abound.

Beyond these repetitive aspects of Verne's voice as an author coming to the surface, *En Magellanie* has an interesting particularity in an abundance of negation that goes far beyond the Kaw-djer's famous "Ni Dieu ni maître." It is as if the author's tactic in defending his own point of view is to anticipate the opposite and negate it before it can be expressed. For example, bringing the dead Indian back to his camp raises the question of spirituality and God.

> […] *N'*avaient-ils *pas*, au contraire, renoncé à leurs superstitions, à leurs pratiques d'autrefois pour se convertir aux enseignements de la religion chrétienne, […] ?
> En tout cas, s'ils avaient été arrachés aux idolâtres ataviques, si la foi s'était propagée jusqu'à eux, ce *ne* pouvait être au Kaw-djer qu'ils le devaient. Si c'était un bienfaiteur qui les visait, ce *n'*était *pas* un apôtre. On *n'*a *pas* oublié la formule d'*a*théisme et d'*an*archie […].
> *Non*! ce *ne* serait *pas* ce Blanc d'origine européenne ou américaine, – on *ne* saurait – […]. (My emphasis 53-54)

Negative after negative, the narration proceeds from one to the next through the negation of possible interpretations, suppositions or hypotheses, with a particular emphasis on the word *non*. The subject of negation can be serious, emotional or simply a statement of fact. In discussing the Kaw-djer's mental state, Verne explains Karroly's reasons for worrying.

> Cependant, il *ne* s'apprêtait *point* à s'embarquer sur la chaloupe. La *Wel-Kiej*, dégréée, restait au fond de la crique. Il *ne* parut même *aucun* navire en vue de l'île, et Karroly *n*'eut *point* de pilotage à faire. Ce *n*'est *pas* sans appréhension, d'ailleurs, que l'Indien se fût éloigné. […] Le laisser seul, en proie à un si effroyable découragement, Karroly *n*'aurait pu s'y résoudre. Il eût trop craint de *ne plus* le retrouver à son retour. (My emphasis 147-148)

Perhaps far less serious than a potential suicide, however, is the negative used to describe the landscape. "Cette île de Horn n'est à peu près formée que de roches énormes […]. Le cap ne domine le niveau de mer que de près de six cents mètres" (156). But from this negative location, the Kaw-djer will build a fire large enough *not* to be missed. "Nul doute que le foyer allumé par la main du Kaw-djer n'eût été vu. À bord du navire en détresse, on ne pouvait ignorer que la terre n'était pas à plus d'un mille sous le vent, […] le navire n'avait pu se déhaler au large. Et, maintenant, à demi désemparé, il ne lui restait plus de salut qu'en se jetant à travers les passes de chaque côté de l'île Horn" (166). In this end-of-the-world location, it is easy to find examples like "nul doute," "pas une embarcation," "ni canot d'écorce ni pirogue," "ni des îles […] ni d'aucun point du littoral, ni d'aucune saillie […] ne […]" (37). This is a world turned upside down and backwards – as Verne so often reminds his reader by referring to the weather and the seasons – and often notions are expressed negatively rather than positively.

Colloquially speaking, the glass is not half full, but the realization that Verne is creating this negative world acts in a similar way to his other interjectional tactics. Less noticeable than *on* or the hypothetical *imparfait* and conditional because the critical reader is

less trained to search it out, the negative nonetheless engages because often it expresses an opinion. Although this is not always the case – and the examples given certainly reflect perceived fact as much as opinion – only the people on the ship could say if the fire was large enough to see and only fate (or the author) could say what their chances were for survival. In both cases, the lack of an omniscient narrator leaves the observations at hand, which are nothing more than opinions about what is possible, but maybe not probable. This reinforces the other ways in which the negative engages, for as a result of its overuse, the reader almost cannot help but be drawn up short as he or she hesitates to understand the meaning behind the way of speaking. Much like scientific discourse, which is almost an intrusion that becomes an opportunity for reflection, the negative in *En Magellanie* engages the reader to transition between the known and the unknown by wondering if it is really negative, or not.

Negation, *on*, *imparfait*, conditional, implied authority, direct questions and imperative combine in Verne's style as he narrates through a world of his creation. Like a group of tourists or pilgrims following an itinerary, he stops short, questions and enjoys the descriptions that consider the possibilities associated with the various locations traveled through linguistically. Verne speaks in order to narrate the passage from a geographical location in the ordinary world, a spot or a place on the map, to the same spot as he paints it with its blank *space* in a fictional world that can be moved through. The resulting text about a geographical location is a textual map, created by narrative and therefore accessible and decipherable through textual legends, one of which is Verne's own words addressed to his reader.

iv. **Three Points…Ellipses**

One aspect of Verne's style that has received amazingly little attention is the author's common use of ellipses in somewhat uncommon locations. Remembering that Verne writes during a period of heavy Realist influence, one would assume that he would search out exactly the right word to express each aspect, sentiment and nuance of the situation he describes. While it is true that he does indeed often find a specific word or phrase that adequately represents the scene, he recurrently turns to ellipses to fill in the blank geographic space – by creating a new typographic one. The new blank on the page, a physical blank occupied by three dots, generally does one of two things: either Verne draws the narration up short at a point where the plot risks turning in a new direction, or he creates a transition or a bridge to slip from one idea to another without a break. In either of these apparently divergent cases, the ellipses encourage the assimilation of the known and the unknown rather than their separation. In a manner of sorts, they are almost a visual representation of the textual map, the space of narrative between the known and the unknown, between the ordinary and fictional worlds.

Verne manages to write nearly two pages of *Deux Ans de vacances* before the first ellipses, all of which are here accompanied by either exclamation points or question marks. "Tiens-toi solidement Doniphan, ajouta-t-il, et ne perdons pas courage!... Il y en a d'autres que nous à sauver !" (Verne 11). Further on the same page one can almost hear the hesitation after each call, "Briant?... Briant?...." In response: "[v]eux-tu bien redescendre avec Dole,… et plus vite que ça!" in which the ellipses mark another sort of hesitation, almost as if the boy talking is distracted – by a deadly storm on a battered boat perhaps – but nonetheless trying to move on to the next logical step, to move from the known to the unknown. "Et les

autres?..." again marks a question in which the ellipses create the anticipation of an answer. "Attention!..." followed by "[r]entrez… ou vous aurez affaire à moi!" again creates hesitation and anticipation that is palpable by the broken rhythm of the words that are simply not supplied and the visual effect that the blanks have on the page.

Often ellipses accompany conversations in this novel, in fact adequately representing common speech patterns by which thoughts and enunciations tend to trail off without a definite end, or in which the speakers seek affirmation of their ideas in the agreement of their interlocutors. In a novel in which adolescent boys try to determine how to survive and what strategy to adopt in ordering their social roles, hesitation and affirmation would likely be sought by all – even the likes of Doniphan – for the characters would have a sincere doubt of their situation and their abilities. One sees this when Moko first spies land and the ellipses underline the boys' hesitation to believe it (22), or when they all must decide the best way of making it to the island from their sandbar (27). If in these cases the answer eventually reveals itself, filling in the blanks, on occasion it does not, as when Kate says she will go back to scout for the pirates. Verne could have employed the *imparfait* and conditional to bring attention to the various what-ifs, but instead chooses to put the words – or rather the ellipses – in the dialogue from the boys. "Cependant, Kate, dit Gordon, si vous retombez entre les mains de Walston?... […] Et si ce misérable se défait de vous, ce qui n'est que trop probable?... dit Briant." In response: "[s]i Evans avait eu la possibilité de s'échapper, répondit Doniphan, ne l'aurait-il pas déjà fait?... N'a-t-il pas tout intérêt à se sauver ?..." (389). In each case, the second half of the statement remains unspoken; it is possibly beyond the boys' comprehension, and undoubtedly outside of their liking. Their thoughts trail off, the conclusion left to the imagination.

At other times, and again in agreement with speech patterns, the ellipses mark moments of extreme emotion felt by the boys. Whether this is excitement concerning the possibility of fishing, exploring and just plain stretching one's legs (64), or a dispute over the leadership of the community (336-337), the ellipses give a staccato to the flow of the dialogue, creating an emphasis from within rather than from an omniscient narrator's commentary. Indeed, throughout even the most dramatic of scenes, such as Jacques' admission of guilt regarding the *Sloughi* mysteriously drifting out to sea (403-405), the narrator's comments are held to a minimum while the ellipses proliferate.

This is not to imply that the narrator remains entirely silent, for as I have discussed earlier, Verne is not silent. Peppered into his comments, as well as the dialogue between the characters, one stumbles across ellipses that build suspense and sympathy with the characters. Looking a first time at the map drawn by François Baudoin, hoping against hope to find that they were not on an island, the boys' dialogue cedes to the narrator's description of the map. "Au-delà de la rive opposée du lac, c'étaient encore d'autres forêts, qui s'étendaient jusqu'à la lisière d'un autre littoral… la mer le baignait sur tout son périmètre. […] Ainsi la mer entourait de tout part ce prétendu continent… C'était une île, et voilà pourquoi François Baudoin n'avait pu en sortir !" (141). The ellipses represent the narrator's own hesitation as he thinks through the information and arrives at a conclusion, that the answer to the question is island. With each point, Verne discloses the narrator's thought process moving one step further, observation, cogitation and hypothesis. Again, the narrator is moving *through* the geography or the information at hand, negotiating through the known and the unknown rather than scanning it from above to magically arrive at a conclusion.

Likewise, *Le Phare du bout du monde* is a novel in which Verne gives his characters substantial amounts of dialogue, and in which can be recognized the same use of ellipses to represent natural speech patterns as the speaker trails off, either choosing not to finish the thought or finding it picked up by an interlocutor. The technique is remarkable for its absence in the first few chapters of the novel, however. As I noted earlier in discussing the use of the *imparfait* and the conditional, it is not until the introduction of Kongre and his pirates that doubt creeps into the story, and therefore it is not until about this same point that Verne begins to use ellipses to express the unknown that is here particularly emotionally charged. Even the likes of Kongre, who has no qualms about the brutality of his acts, does not complete his sentences when describing his intentions for the lighthouse keepers.

> Avant l'arrivée de cette goélette, j'étais décidé à reprendre possession de la baie d'El Gor, et, après avoir remonté jusque-là, il ne sera pas difficile de nous débarrasser de ces gardiens… Seulement, au lieu d'arriver par l'intérieur de l'île, en évitant d'être aperçus, nous arriverons par mer, ouvertement. La goélette ira mouiller dans la crique… On nous y accueillera sans rien soupçonner… et…" (Verne 107).

Having explained that these men are dangerous pirates, Verne creates a sense of how to fill in the blanks – the pirates intend to kill the keepers – but the space created by the ellipses expresses the meaning without words so as to reproduce better the general movement from the ordinary to the fictional world. Of course, for anyone who did not understand, a gesture follows "auquel Carcante ne se méprit pas" (108). Again, the specific gesture is unknown, but unmistakable. "A moins d'un miracle, comment Vasquez, Moriz et Felipe échapperaient-ils au sort qui les menaçait ?..." asks the narrator whose own use of the ellipses leaves room for doubt about their survival (108).

Vasquez, the lone survivor of the three keepers, later wonders about the intentions of the pirates and their motivation for killing his friends and taking over the lighthouse. Again,

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punctuated by ellipses, this series of questions reveals the speaker under an intense emotion and confronted by the decision about how to attempt to guarantee his own survival against the overwhelming odds created by the pirates and the elements combined. "Mais d'où venait donc cette goélette, et quel équipage de bandits avait-elle à bord ?... Est-ce qu'ils s'en étaient emparés, après avoir massacré son capitaine et ses hommes ?...." The narrator adds, "[c]es questions pressaient à l'esprit de Vasquez, sans qu'il pût les résoudre. […] De quel côté dirigerait-il ses pas ?... Ses provisions s'épuiseraient vite…" (124-125). Vasquez's predicament is obviously dangerous, and these words and ellipses beg the consideration of the keeper's various options for survival. But how will he make it? The unknown outcome, Vasquez's eventual survival, must be nearly impossible in the ordinary world, but through the narrative circulation Verne employs between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, Vasquez succeeds as Verne uses the blank spaces to remove the necessity of only one outcome, to avoid leading to a defined place and to instead offer the possibility for movement through an alternate world.

In this story of good versus evil, Verne offers insight into the pirates' doubts and hesitations, as well. Again, the ellipses add to the expression of the characters' emotional state by revealing the uncertainty and the precariousness of their situation. Oddly, this allows a certain amount of sympathy and concern regarding the countdown to the arrival of the *aviso*.[77]

> Si nous n'avions pu réparer les avaries, qui sait combien de temps encore il aurait fallu séjourner dans l'île… et, avant l'arrivée de l'aviso, revenir au cap Gomez… […] et même la situation eût été bien autrement grave!... En voyant le phare sans gardiens, le commandant du *Santa-Fé* aurait pris des mesures… entrepris des

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[77] Most critics who write about *Le Phare du bout du monde* make note of the moral conflict or the agon created by a certain desire to see both sides succeed, which is of course impossible.

recherches… fouillé toute l'île, et qui sait s'il n'aurait pas découvert notre retraite?...
Et puis, n'aurait-il pu être rejoint par le troisième gardien qui nous a échappé…. (207)

The pirates, like Carcante, who says the above, have not changed and are still as violent and

dangerous as ever, but the use of ellipses in their conversation gives it a sense of naturalness

that feels like sincere communication. Verne creates a moment that exposes a bit of their

world and a better understanding of their point of view. As the pirates' plan to leave the

island is foiled by Vasquez and John Davis, the author again uses ellipses to express the

strong emotional state of frustration, doubt and plain fear that the pirates find themselves

facing. Again, the blanks that this creates leave open many possibilities as to how the story

might come to an end.

> Au moment même où ils allaient définitivement quitter l'île, un dernier obstacle les
> avait arrêtés!... Et, dans quatre ou cinq jours, l'aviso pouvait être en vue de la baie
> d'El Gor!...[…] Savait-on si une nouvelle attaque ne se produirait pas?... Savait-on
> si quelque troupe nombreuse, supérieure à la bande de Kongre, n'avait pas
> récemment débarqué sur quelque autre point de l'île? Savait-on si la présence de
> cette bande de pirates n'était pas enfin connue à Buenos-Aires, et si le gouvernement
> argentin ne cherchait pas à la détruire?... (222)

Unlike *Le Phare du bout du monde* or *Deux Ans de vacances* in which one finds

significant dialogue between the characters, in *En Magellanie* Verne relies heavily on the

narrator to express the events of the story. Indeed, the whole tone of the novel is different

from the others, but the way in which Verne uses the ellipses does not change for the most

part. Particularly in the conversation between the Kaw-djer and Karroly after the latter's

return from a piloting trip, during which he found out that Chile and Argentina had agreed to

divide Tierra del Fuego, the author passes from the use of ellipses to represent the

conversation trailing off to their use to create a pregnant pause for the contemplation of a

new direction for the story or a new piece of information previously unknown (Verne 111-

115). Will the government agents come interrogate the Kaw-djer now that his island is no

longer free, or will he follow his gaze further south, to the "désertes régions de l'Antarctique qui échappaient encore à l'exploration des plus intrépides découvreurs…" (114)? In either case, the Kaw-djer is no longer in his element; he has lost whatever control or whatever place he had.

The great doubt that hangs over the Kaw-djer's liberty seems to reside in the community he helps to found with the *Jonathan* survivors. Through the narrator, the Kaw-djer's anger, as well as his uncertainty, reveals itself as he lists the sort of society the Merritt brothers want.   "Leur convenait-il donc, et dans l'espoir d'y mieux assurer le triomphe de leurs doctrines, de rester sur cette île redevenue indépendante?... Une propriété commune… le collectivisme imposé aux émigrants, en attendant l'anarchisme… une terre de refuge pour tous ces libertaires et fauteurs de désordre que repoussent les nations civilisées!... Quel avenir !" (249). In fact, ellipses abound every few sentences in the chapter titled "Un chef" in which the Kaw-djer must decide whether to abandon his anarchist principles and become the leader of the population of Hoste Island, defending them against people like the Merritts. The abundance of ellipses impede the flow of the narration and the reading process, slowing them down and forcing the consideration of the reasons for their inclusion and the Kaw-djer's hesitation, a process that gives insight into the character as it represents his movements.

Once accustomed to looking for the ellipses in Verne's novels, it is interesting to notice when he does not use them. For example, in *En Magellanie* while discussing the Kaw-djer's mysterious origins, Verne takes a few pages to describe the geographical location of Magellania, then proposes without any ellipses that this is probably the reason for the Kaw-djer's choice to live there.

> Était-ce donc la raison déterminante dont s'était inspiré cet étranger pour s'expatrier en cette contrée lointaine? Quel motif – et combien grave, c'est probable, – l'avait obligé à quitter son pays d'origine, volontairement ou involontairement? Dans tous les cas, pas un seul de ces êtres à peine civilisés auxquels sa société semblait maintenant réduite, ces Fuégiens dont il partageait l'existence, n'eût songé à le lui demander. D'ailleurs, il est probable que la demande fût restée sans réponse. (81)

No ellipses and no doubt, despite the question marks. Instead, Verne makes a plain, matter-of-fact statement in which the word *probable* surfaces twice in order to reinforce the important idea that the Kaw-djer has purposefully fled to the ends of the earth. Again, after the longish discussion of the various flavors of socialism and the ways in which the Kaw-djer's own beliefs coincided or split from these others, Verne leaves no room for doubt about the Kaw-djer's motives. Only one paragraph between "[i]l convient de reconnaitre […]" (142) and "[…] jusque dans ses raciness!" (146) contains ellipses paired with "peut-être" (144), referring back to the Kaw-djer's possible reasons for leaving his homeland. Given the rest of the story, one can imagine these reasons are plausible, but they, of course, will always remain unknown. For the rest, Verne intends that these statements simply be accepted as fact about the Kaw-djer's history, for this is part of linear or place-oriented discourse from the ordinary world.

Verne's use of ellipses marks an oddity in the narrative, for unlike the other keys or textual legends I have discussed that rather overtly negotiate a better understanding of the story, the ellipses actually seem to force something to remain unknown. The three points may represent an emotion, an outcome, or a question, visually inserting a new, blank space typographically to textually represent the possibility of interplay between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Highly rhetorical, the ellipses punctuate their linearity visually and would therefore seem to stand in for a definable place; much like a line on a map relates one point to the next. But Verne does not use them in quite this manner, preferring to insert them

to emphasize the unknown and create a sense of both its eventuality, as well as the possibility to move through it creatively.

v. **Cross-References**

Compère once said that the "œuvre de Jules Verne n'est pas une représentation littéraire du monde; elle en est la transformation littéraire" ("Conseiller" 140). As a part of the process of this literary transformation, in which not only the real or scientifically observable aspects of the world, but also the potentially fictional or fabulous sides of it find themselves distanced from their place in the ordinary world, Verne attributes a level of equality to all of his sources. Whether factually or fictionally based, by uniting them in the *Voyages extraordinaires*, he removes them from their specific roles as place-holders. Although they continue to reference these places, the definition is no longer the end or the answer to a question. Instead, Verne takes this information from the ordinary world and renders it a part of the intertextuality that combines the known and the unknown, the scientific and the literary in one geographical space of literary transformation through cross-references.

It is no accident that *Deux Ans de vacances* recalls *Robinson Crusoe* or *The Swiss Family Robinson*, for even if the title does not share the Robinson name, the text itself contains references to these stories – starting with the author's own preface! Verne's introduction aside, the character Service – whose favorite reading is exactly these two texts (Verne 47) – periodically compares the boys' adventures with those had by other Robinsons. Particularly at the beginning, it is nearly impossible to forget such models. From the *Sloughi*'s library, Service made sure to save the two volumes of Robinsons from the ocean (68) in sizing up the location of their shipwreck, Service (again) reminds everyone they are

not nearly so bad off as were the Robinsons (80); Gordon later brings up Alexander Selkirk,

upon whom Defoe based his Robinson Crusoe, and ironically comes quite close to

identifying the boys' location (95);[78] and finally even the narrator refers to their life as "une

vie de Robinsons" (104). Again it is Service who invokes the Robinsons when the boys

catch a nandu, a cousin of the ostrich.

> – Et qu'en ferons-nous?… demanda Cross.
> – C'est bien simple! répliqua Service, qui ne doutait jamais de rien. Nous la
> conduirons à French-den, nous l'apprivoiserons, et elle nous servira de monture! J'en
> fais mon affaire, à l'exemple de mon ami Jack du Robinson Suisse!'
> Qu'il fût possible d'utiliser l'autruche de cette façon, c'était au moins
> contestable, malgré le précédent invoqué par Service. Toutefois, comme il n'y avait
> aucun inconvénient à la ramener à French-den, c'est ce qui fut fait. (179-181)

Later, he discovers that Jack's experience riding the beast might have been slightly

exaggerated, and he ultimately gives up on keeping the bird; but for many months he insists

on making absolutely no distinction between fact and fiction, believing that if Jack Robinson

could do it, it could be done. The Robinsons are mentioned – primarily by Service – here

and there throughout the text: when the boys name the landscape (198); again, regarding

Brausewind, the nandu – named after Jack's ostrich (225); regretting the absence of parrots

on the island (236); as a guide in the search for a sugar substitute (260); as part of the boys'

studies (318); regarding the boys' idea for a kite (362); in the desire to rename Kate

Vendredine as well as in reference to savages coming to ruin the Robinsons' peaceful

existence (375); and finally again in reference to their "vie de Robinsons" (491) at the end of

their adventure, when they are sailing for South America and safety.

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[78] He mentions the Juan Fernandez Islands, on which Selkirk spent four years, as well as a host of others more or less along the coast of Chile and therefore not far from Hanover Island.

Given the numerous times the reference occurs, maybe a few words could be said on the general topic of the Robinsonade in France in the later nineteenth century.[79] When Defoe published *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719, he inaugurated a new literary form by combining the story of solitude with the travel narrative in a five-step program: shipwreck (or abandon), a return to one's origins, reconstruction, some experience with otherness or a threat and finally reconciliation (Vergnioux 196). It was Wyss and his *Swiss Family Robinson* (1812-1813) who came up with the Robinson group model that would be so often copied throughout the nineteenth century by those hoping to teach morality or life's lessons to a younger audience (Pessini 31). For example, in a group like the Wyss Robinsons, the passage of time and the completion of work can be enjoyed for the sense of accomplishment, which is in complete opposition to the sense of drudgery and necessity felt by the lone castaway, Crusoe (39). Editors like Hetzel, who unabashedly rewrote Wyss in his *Nouveau robinson suisse* (31), understood that the adventures in isolation of a social group, as opposed to the philosophical musings of the individual, were more interesting to his young target audience (Taves "Robinsonade" 25). Verne himself claims in his "Souvenirs d'enfance" that he has a preference for Wyss himself.

> Or, de tous les livres de mon enfance, celui que j'affectionnais particulièrement, c'était le *Robinson Suisse*, de préférence au Robinson Crusoë. Je sais bien que l'œuvre de Daniel de Foë [sic] a plus de portée philosophique. C'est l'homme livré à lui-même, l'homme seul, l'homme qui trouve un jour la marque d'un pied nu sur le sable! Mais l'œuvre de Wyss, riche en faits et incidents, est plus intéressante pour les jeunes cervelles. C'est la famille, le père, la mère, les enfants et leurs aptitudes diverses. Que d'années j'ai passées sur leur ile [sic]. Avec quelle ardeur je me suis associé à leurs découvertes ? Combien j'ai envié leur sort! Aussi ne s'étonnera-t-on pas que j'aie été irrésistiblement poussé à mettre en scène dans l'*Ile mystérieuse* les Robinsons de la Science, et dans *Deux ans de vacances* tout un pensionnat de Robinsons. (qtd. in Touttain 60).

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[79] I return to the genre of the Robinsonade again in the next chapter.

In his biography of Verne, Butcher adds to this a handful of Robinsons from Verne's childhood: Mme Mallès de Beaulieu's *Twelve-Year-Old Crusoe* (1818), Mme de Mirval's *Robinson of the Desert Sands* (1837), Alexander Selkirk's and Louis Desnoyer's *Adventues of Robert-Robert*, Ernest Fouinet's *Crusoe of the Ice* (1835), Catherine de Woillez's *The Misses Robinson* (1835), Captain Frederick Marryat's *The Wreck of the Pacific* (1836) and *Masterman Ready* (1840), and Fennimore Cooper's *The Crater* (1847). Despite the influence of the social Robinson that Verne will emulate in his own texts, he admits in an 1895 interview with Marie Belloc that none of it would have existed without the original.

> 'Yes, indeed, notably with that classic, beloved alike by old and young, *Robinson Crusoe*; and yet perhaps I might shock you by admitting that I myself prefer the dear old *Swiss Family Robinson*. People forget that Crusoe and his man Friday were but an episode in a seven-volumed story. To my mind the book's great merit is that it was apparently the first romance of the kind ever perpetrated. We have all written *Robinsons*,' he added, laughing: 'but it is a moot question if any of them would have seen the light had it not been for their famous prototype.' (qtd. in Haining 23)

Robinson Crusoe and the *Swiss Family Robinson* certainly serve as models for many of Verne's works, for the interest in a good number of them revolves around the establishment of some sort of society following an isolating incident like a shipwreck. Interestingly, as Pourvoyeur (279) and Compère (*Approche* 81-82) both note separately, the Robinsonade is also an eighteenth-century economic experiment in which the island becomes a microcosm of the entire world (114), an isolated location in which the characters take inventory of their possessions as part of the Robinson experience.[80] Of course, as Unwin points out in reference to Service's ill-founded attempts to apply the fictional Robinsons to the boys' (fictional) experiences, life does not match art (*Journey* 207). On the other hand, in a way it does for Verne, as a Robinson himself who complains to Hetzel that the editor is

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[80] This interest in the economic or commercial side of the island is also Marx's reading.

constraining him in his subject matter. "Evidemment, je me tiendrai le plus possible dans la géographie et le scientifique, puisque c'est là le but de l'œuvre entière […] mais je tiens à corser le plus possible ce qui me reste à faire de romans et en employant tous les moyens que me fournit mon imagination dans le milieu restreint où je suis condamné à me mouvoir" (qtd. in Minerva, "Sguardo" 257). I had always read this quote in the way so many others have, as a complaint about the educational design of the *Voyages extraordinaires*. Reflecting upon Unwin's expansion of Vernian criticism to include his style and the way in which he explored the very art of writing, I interpret it differently now. I am equally likely to see it as an expression of Verne's own decision to take stock of his tools – science, literature, the vast number of texts that preceded his own – and to use them to put together a family of texts, or a series of intertextual relations that move between the geographies of the ordinary and the fictional worlds through the mechanism of narrative, the textual map.

Indeed, if *Deux Ans de vacances* is the most obviously Robinson-inspired text of the three under consideration here, the other two are no less intertextual. Nor indeed is the only intertextuality in *Deux Ans de vacances* its recall of the Robinson theme. The fact that François Baudoin is from St. Malo is reminiscent of some of the first French explorers of the area and the other name for the Falklands, the Maloines. The use of English to name locations on the island may be a simple bit of realism, but it is also a reminder that the boys mostly come from an English background with an English upbringing that is described at length in the first few chapters of the text. Even Kate, referring to the Far West and naming the boys her papooses, is a reference to another place and a different world, but which nonetheless influences the compilation of the fictional world of Chairman Island.

Le Phare du bout du monde is much more difficult philosophically to deal with than *Deux Ans de vacances*, but intertextually it is simpler because it is based on facts that one does not even have to know before picking up the book because they all seem to be included within its pages. However, should it be necessary, Staten Island's history of exploration, Dumont d'Urville's voyage there and the construction of the lighthouse are all items that can be verified against other sources.[81] On the other hand, it seems to hint at another sort of intertextuality that might be recognizable to the local Indians, who are the only ones to know the land well. When read carefully, it seems in certain passages that the Indians avoid El Gor Bay, only going there in the nice season when the weather is hospitable (41). "Les quelques Fuégiens ou Pêcherais qui s'y transportaient parfois pendant la belle saison n'y faisaient point un long séjour. La pêche achevée, ils avaient hâte de retraverser le détroit de Lemaire, et de regagner le littoral de la Terre de feu ou les îles de l'archipel" (48). A few pages later, in the introduction to the character Kongre, Verne reveals that this name is actually fairly common to the area (72), and that the pirate Kongre lived among the Pêcherais for a while, taking ten or so of the most worthless with him to pillage when he left (73). Without a doubt, the local Indians would know to avoid El Gor Bay and the dangerous men who make it their home, and much is hinted at by Verne's indications of danger.[82]

Verne's sense of intertextuality is flexible, and many critics like Compère have remarked that a reference in one text might come from another in the *Voyages extraordinaires*. The world in which Verne's characters live is one in which all texts are

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[81] Butcher, in his introduction to the English translation, remarks that Verne significantly changed the geography of Staten Island to suit his needs as a writer, and ironically in a way that would have completely rendered the lighthouse useless.

[82] I cannot support this, but would add that a quick Internet search on the word *kongre* produces references to the word *congress*, or *congrès* in French. Considering that Kongre is in some ways an evil double of the Kawdjer, could this be a reference to the Jura Congress, *Congrès International*, and anarchism?

equally weighted and equally likely to be cited ("Coquille 166, 171). Writing a genre of

exploration and an exploration of genre (Unwin, *Journey* 207), words are given the power to

change meaning and change the readers' perception of the object, person or landscape

described (90). The world, being made up of words circulating already through previous

texts must be recycled into a new world of words in Verne, and the way they come together

can change the entire text (92). Thus, Verne writes *Le Phare du bout du monde* about a

lighthouse that undoubtedly has a name of its own in the ordinary world that is less poetic,

but which, on the afternoon of March 9th, Captain Lafayate prepares to leave in complete

security to the new keepers of "le Phare du bout du Monde" (266). These words, the last

words of the text and the title of the book, become a reference of their own, a definition of

the lighthouse and its location in both the ordinary and the extraordinary or fictional worlds.

Supporting the importance of this landmark, Verne refers back to it in *En Magellanie*,

arguing for the utility of a lighthouse on Cape Horn to guide ships coming from the west the

same way the one on Staten Island does for ships from the east (Verne 166). Again, the

history of the area as it relates to France is mentioned in a reference to the *Wel-kiej*, or

Karroly's boat, resembling a sardine boat from Brittany (42). It is certainly an oblique

reference, but one that nicely complements the history of the area. As regards this history,

again the reader receives an overview in chapter three of the important voyages of

exploration, including Dumont d'Urville's *Astrolabe* and *Zélée* (61), as well as the story of a

Swiss or an Englishman who had lived among the Indians for a while (75). Verne's *The

Great Explorers of the Nineteenth Century* mentions this somewhat mysterious individual,

Neiderhauser, who had left Europe to seek his fortune in the United States and through a turn

of misfortune ended up an abandoned seal hunter in Tierra del Fuego (341-343). Is this

Kongre from the *Phare du bout du monde*? Or is it instead part of the Kaw-djer from *En Magellanie*? Looking yet further for intertextual references, there is, of course, the name of the ship, the *Jonathan*, which was also the name of an Indian that Hyades had met during his visit (Hyades 405), the reference to the name *Tierra del Fuego* as the land of fire when the Kaw-djer lights the bonfire to warn the *Jonathan* of the danger of land (Verne 165), and the coincidence of both the *Jonathan* and the *Maule* (from the *Phare du bout du monde*) being registered in San Francisco, which was the most important western United States port for traffic going around Cape Horn at the time. Searching still deeper for references, in Hyades' article that Verne had obviously used as a source of information (Dumas, "Testament" 9), the doctor mentions that the Indians do not fear death, but that there is a strong fear among them of a certain animal howl at night. It brings evil, so when they hear it, they pack up and leave as soon as possible (413). Verne mentions that at night while the Kaw-djer is transporting the dying Indian to his camp, he hears more than once "quelque rumeur" from somewhere that stops him from dozing off (46). Is this the animal's howl?

If Verne's reader did not have a familiarity with the Indians and their ways, he or she would undoubtedly still recognize in the first few chapters of *En Magellanie* an eerie reference to death. As Dumas points out, the Kaw-djer and Karroly both share the first phoneme of their names with Caron, the god of the underworld ("Nuit" 20). Moreover, the camp they are headed for is named Wallah,[83] an anagram for *Wal-hal* (Walhalla in English),

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[83] I strongly suspect that Verne is referring to a place called Wulaia on the western side of Navarin Island. "There, more than anywhere else except Ushuaia, whites and natives interacted most extensively and unfortunately. Robert FitzRoy, captain of the *Beagle* (with a young Charles Darwin aboard), tried to establish a Christian mission at Wulaia in the 1830s. In 1859 (the year Darwin published *On the Origin of Species*) the topsail schooner *Allen Gardiner* brought seven hopeful, feckless missionaries to pick up where FitzRoy had left off. The party built a little church on the meadow while the natives watched the proceedings, pilfering whatever wasn't nailed down. Not one of the missionaries spoke a syllable of Yahgan, but they felt confident that the Word of God would cross the language barrier to protect them. It didn't" (Murphy 8). The story of their ensuing murders was sensational enough to be known of by the world.

where the dead heroes go (20). He goes even further along this line of thought, recalling that

the Indian is a Pêcherai, a name which Verne references as coming from their fishing habits

(*Magellanie* 80), but which Dumas associates with the phonetic similarities between a

pêcheur (fisher) and a *pécheur* (sinner) (20). Verne's interest in cryptograms, puzzles and

plays on words or translations of words is widely accepted as an influence on proper names

in his work (Compère, *Approche* 33). Even a less intellectual and more sentimental

approach, such as Bachelard's in *L'Eau et les rêves* when he discusses death and Caron (100-

109), seems to romantically apply to this novel about death, suicide and the last voyage.

"Quand un poète reprend l'image de Caron, il pense à la mort comme à un voyage. Il revit

les plus primitives des funérailles" (109).[84]

Primitive or not, after the first few chapters the tone moves from an almost dreamy

meandering to a text that Dumas calls, in his introduction to the novel, Verne's political

testament. Indeed, a certain intertextuality is implied by the abundance of names of political

thinkers that Verne mentions, but his political references are at times even more subtle. For

instance, the Kaw-djer has a Latin devise, *Sollicitoe jucunda oblivia vitoe*, loosely translated

to "Les oublis heureux d'une vie tourmentée" (Verne, *Magellanie* 145), and the comparison

has often been made between him and Captain Nemo, who also had a Latin devise, *Mobilus*

in Mobile. More subtle still is the oddly amusing chapter in *En Magellanie* in which one sees

the character of the two representatives from Chile and Argentina while they attempt to come

to an agreement regarding the division of Tierra del Fuego. Verne quickly slips in that "[…]

il s'agissait là de personnages d'origine espagnole et que peut-être le sang des Don Diègue et

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[84] Although it is tempting to apply the idea of burying the series of the *Voyages extraordinaires* with this final voyage, it should be noted that the novel was actually written seven years before Verne's death, and it was not the last *Voyage* he penned. Ultimately, the decision to make it the last in the series – if one does not include *Les Aventures de la Mission Barsac* – was Michel Verne's. Please see the appendix for more information on Michel's career and his father's work.

des Don Gomès coulait dans leurs veines…" (125). Remembering that Verne began his

career in the theater will undoubtedly recall a possible reference to *El Cid or* Corneille's *Le*

Cid, in which power rivalry turns to tragedy. Moreover, the Arabic word *cid* loosely

translates to *sir* or *lord*, but taking a few more liberties in translation, it could just as

meaningfully translate the idea of a *chef*, which, of course, is what the Kaw-djer becomes.

Soriano was the first to look in depth at the sonorities and word plays in Verne's

texts, finding for example *cadre* as connotation coming from K(aw) red(j) (348). Both he

and Gamarra comment on the abundance of *K*s and *k* sounds (Soriano 334, Gamarra 190-

191), and Dekiss offers that the word *Kaludjer* means monk in Serbo-Croatian (*Enchanteur*

335). It has also been suggested to me that Abdel Kader carries a similar phonetic name as

the Kaw-djer and stands as a symbol of and agent for liberty.[85] Referencing Verne's other

stories, Dumas points out that in *Face au drapeau*, Count d'Artigas-Karraje is the anagram of

Austria (AuSTRIA-ARTIgAS) and that the Kaw-djer is another anagram, off by two letters,

to Karraje (KARraJE-KAdwJER) [sic], with the two letters *je* for JEan d'Autriche. He sees

in these two characters the two faces of this same person, who mysteriously disappeared in

the Cape Horn region ("Testament" 8).

Jean d'Autriche or Jean Salvador was a Hapsburg arch-duke of Austria who

renounced his claims in 1889 after being implicated in an assassination plot known as the

Mayerling Affair. He fled, took the name Jean Orth and lived freely. In 1890 or 1891, while

traveling on the *Marguerite* through the waters around Cape Horn, he is said to have

disappeared and was presumed dead – although Lengrand argues that Orth actually survived,

living in Argentina until his death in 1909 (144-146). Whether he died or not has no bearing

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[85] This suggestion was made by Dr. Jean-Jacques Thomas of Duke University during the course of early
discussions regarding this work.

here because the assumption was that he was indeed dead. The fuzzy link from the Austrian throne to Verne's Amiens house becomes clear through the author's correspondence and interviews, for in 1884 during his last voyage on his third yacht the *Saint-Michel III* in the Mediterranean, Verne is approached by a gentleman going by the name Louis, Count of Neudorf,[86] who shares the author's love of the ocean and enjoys his *Voyages extraordinaires* greatly. As it turns out, this gentleman is actually Louis Salvador, Jean's brother, and over the years the two writers – for indeed Louis writes geography based on his own voyages – share a fair correspondence, and Verne even uses him as a reference in *Clovis Dardentor*. While it is generally agreed upon that Orth is the model for the Kaw-djer (Henrich; Dehs "Interview"; Huet; Dumas; Compère and Margot), it remains unknown whether Louis ever knew.[87]

While on the subject of intertextuality, one final thread that runs between *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* deserves mention: the jaguar and the guanaco. Neither has a very large role, but where they appear, they are important. In *Deux Ans de vacances*, the episode in which Briant saves Doniphan from the attacking jaguar is pivotal to their reconciliation (377-378), and the guanaco that the boys find that was killed by a bullet alerts them to the pirates' presence nearby their cave (418). Likewise, although the lighthouse keepers in *Le Phare du bout du monde* discuss hunting guanaco, they decide against it (59-60). Therefore, when one dies of a bullet wound not far from the lighthouse, they know they are not alone on the island (67-68). And of course, in *En Magellanie* it is a

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[86] Verne himself was traveling under the name Prudent Allotte, a reference to his beloved and inspiring uncle (Butcher, *Biography* 275).

[87] The two dissenting opinions on the origins of the Kaw-djer seem to be Costello, who argues for Reclus (210), and Chesneaux, who argues for Kropotkin (*Politique* 97), whom Verne would supposedly have met through Reclus. Personally, I would argue that any literary character, no matter how based he or she is in reality, assumes traits from a variety of sources, making the final literary product an amalgam.

guanaco and a jaguar, which are named as the only two important animals in the region (37), that open the story as the Indian hunter becomes the hunted (23-26). Moreover, Verne makes a point of following Karroly back to get the jaguar's body (34, 42), the beating it takes at the hands of the Indians (52) and Karroly recovering it again (55) so that it can presumably be traded for supplies. These two animals in these three texts become scapegoats, messengers of change. Only one of them escapes after delivering his message: another jaguar in *En Magellanie* that young Mr. Rhodes shoots at and misses, fracturing the rock base of Hoste Island and revealing the presence of gold (312). Again, the animal indicates a pivotal moment in the story.

Intertextuality or cross-referencing, either term recalls Verne's propensity for including other texts within his own, removing them from their proper environment but referencing their importance as already textual and thus already residing in a literary or textual world. This helps to legitimize his own *Voyages extraordinaires*, and as a textual legend, it exemplifies the possibility of transition between the ordinary and the fictional worlds through narrative means. The Robinsons, Jean Orth, jaguars or sonorities, each reference serves to bridge the supposed separation between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. They do so by creating a sense of credulity that legitimizes Verne's current endeavors, acknowledging a sense of place, but using this to establish a textual legend designed to negotiate the narrative interaction between worlds by showing the *processes* – not the results – of moving through them, and reminding the participants in the voyage that similar excursions have been made before.

III.D. Conclusion

In the previous chapter, I proposed the concept of the textual map to express the narrative of a geographical location and the way in which the concept expresses the active reading and writing process that moves *through* an area, observing and interacting with it to move between the known and the unknown, an ordinary and an extraordinary or fictional geography. In what we tend to think of as a "normal" map, that is to say a visual image, the legend that explains how to interpret it is designed to bridge the gap between the reader and the text (map image). The same is, of course, true for a textual map, but because the map itself is more complicated – representing potentially multiple narratives – the legend is also more complex. Nonetheless the principles of bridging the gap between text and reader remain its primary purpose. In discussing *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*, I have broken down the legend into three categories that define the story and guide the reader. The first is a set of limits imposed by the perception of geography and location as a place in the ordinary, world but separated from it by a change in perception that concentrates on the location itself rather than its relative position. This invests a space to move through in the fictional world. The second fills in those limits with characters who promote motion within the environment or topography. The third, and last, is the author's style or manner of writing that expresses a variety of perceptions and possible information about the location. These three qualities combine to position the narrative at the topographical level of experience by motion *through* it rather than over it. In doing this, Verne observes and expresses the negotiation of the known and the unknown in a shared space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, or within the textual map, and renders the construction of such a space traceable by the qualities that make the textual legend.

Obliged to respect the limits of known geography and the ordinary world – or at least to give the appearance of doing so – Verne legitimizes his text by basing it in the ordinary world and verisimilitude. In part this is done by choosing locations that one can actually find on a map, and in part this is done through perspective and description. Initially, the author describes a perspective that looks outward or away from the geographic location, which is inevitably an island. This establishes fairly firmly a limit in that direction, an impassible boundary to the action of the story. The perspective then turns inward, toward the island itself to explore the more ordinary geography there: mountains, creeks, trees, and so forth. Again, these explorations represent limits because they indicate the possibilities for interaction between the characters and their previously ignored or unknown geographical location. A sort of product of interaction and observation, however, these limits are fluid and an opportunity for narrative creativity. Therefore, rather than limits remaining simply some sort of bird's eye view of the island, they also allow the reader to assume a perspective that moves through and interacts with the ordinary geography, which gives it narrative significance in addition to establishing a framework around which to build the story.

The physical boundaries of the island itself established, Verne follows the movement through the geography by describing the characters as they inhabit it. Although the story Verne tells does not revolve around the psychological or the sentimental profundity of these characters, they are a vehicle for geographic narration. Through their perceptions and reactions, Verne explores the human aspect of geography, the formation of societies, the creation of identity, and so forth. In other words, he records the fictionalization of the landscape. Therefore, even when Verne writes about social issues like anarchism, or when he describes the ambivalence of Vasquez or Kongre, or the boys' conceptualization of their

island, he is nonetheless discussing these subjects as a part of the ordinary geographical location that is known but in the process of becoming fictionalized through the process of human interaction with it.

Not all of the human interaction comes from the characters though, for one of the most important is the author's own. I discuss five aspects of Verne's style that can roughly be classified as vulgarization, discourses, word choice, punctuation and intertextuality. In many ways, these categories overlap. For instance name dropping is just as much intertextuality as it is verisimilar discourse, and often the author's ellipses accompany questions. This is not detrimental to my argument, for Verne's style and the choice of presentation and arrangement he makes of the words he chooses bridge, by means of the textual legend, the ordinary world of facts and places and the fictional world of Verne's creation and spaces. Vulgarization and verisimilitude help fictionalize the many aspects of the ordinary world that Verne includes, moving perception from the known to the unknown, entering the fictional world. Fact and fiction merge together and at times we (*on*) become part of the action and at others we (*on*) have to consider critically what Verne suggests by asking questions, filling in the blanks or contrary thoughts, or considering other possibilities.

"Donnez à un petit Anglais la moitié de *Vingt mille lieues sous les mers* à lire dans sa langue maternelle, et présentez-lui l'autre moitié en français, il se débrouillera pour essayer de comprendre" (qtd. in Touttain). Rudyard Kipling, himself a highly successful writer from the end of the nineteenth century, may be referring in the previous quote to the adventure aspect of Verne's writing, as this is so often how Verne is classified as an author of genres or sub-genres. However, I propose that instead of only considering the quote as referencing the boy who is so enthralled by Verne that he is determined to find a way to read it, one might

instead understand the words to mean that Verne's text also lends itself to being accessible and engaging to its audience, who is placed by Verne in an interactive role as part of the production of the text. Having generally set forth the concept of the textual map and its legend in this and the previous chapter, I pursue these ideas combined with both Verne's popularity and his writing style as I investigate in the next chapter the importance of the author in the literary tradition.

CHAPTER IV: INTRODUCTION TO THE ARCHIPELAGO

In the previous chapters, I have laid forth an argument for the textual map and the legend that makes it accessible, as they relate to Verne's writing style in *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*. I have also allowed that by thinking of each of these three *Voyages extraordinaires* as a textual map that is inextricably tied to the sinuosity of geographical exploration, rather than as simple journalistic novels describing one point after another along a line, the textual map is a metaphor for an approach to reading Verne. It represents the narrative that transforms the simple reference point on the map into an occupiable space through which movement is possible. A compilation of overlapping perspectives and discourses, the textual map bridges the ordinary and the fictional worlds, belonging neither to one nor to the other completely, but partially to both. Therefore, Hoste Island is a place on a map in the ordinary world, identifiable in relation to other islands or waters around it, but it is also a location in the fictional world of *En Magellanie*. Verne's story does not limit its vision to only one world or the other, combining them in the textual map that recounts their interaction in a geographically aware manner that emphasizes the narrative space produced by their overlapping information.

As a part of this space represented by the textual map, which like any other map or like any other text is a form of representation of the object in its absence, is necessarily an interpretive stylistic device that negotiates words or information so as to trace and facilitate movement through the geographical narrative space. This is the textual legend. Of course,

the textual legend and map do not work exactly as would a map depicting the route from my house to the university, for instance. Such a map is probably drawn from a bird's eye perspective and relies on place locations. Although place has its importance in Verne's work – mainly as representative of the ordinary world and a sense of verisimilitude – the textual map acknowledges the limitations imposed by the textual medium while nonetheless exploring its figurative language qualities. Certainly, therefore, the textual map I discuss is a metaphor for the process of reading itself, and of reading geography by moving through it. The notion of the textual map and legend is meant to discuss through narrative this movement as it negotiates geography – a theme at the very heart of the *Voyages extraordinaires* – in the only way Verne could, textually.

In this chapter, I pursue the idea that the textual map is a valuable and relevant tool in the study of Verne's texts because of the importance the author attributed to geography in his work. In addition to the benefits such a discussion has in general regarding Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, it also raises the question of his very legitimacy as a writer, for even during his lifetime, the literary world had difficulties classifying and thoughtfully considering Verne's work as part of a serious literary genre.[88] Since then, he has often been linked to specific (sub)genres like science fiction or adventure or children's stories, but without much

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[88] One mark of success for an author such as Verne was entry into the Académie Française. Although in 1872, the *Voyages extraordinaires* were crowned officially by the Académie, Verne never was. His friend Dumas *fils* told the interviewer Sherard: "J'essaie de faire en sorte que l'Académie reconnaisse ses mérites. Je pousse sa candidature. Mais pourquoi veut-il habiter au bout du monde ? Pourquoi habite-il Amiens ? Les absents ont toujours tort, et ils lui reprochent que son style est mauvais, qu'il n'a pas de style, comme si cela n'était pas une contradiction en soi. Ne pas avoir du style, c'est avoir un bon style" (Compère and Margot, *Entretiens* 69). If the problem truly was being away from Paris, even Verne's nephew's attack could not make him public enough for consideration. "Gaston fut interné. Calmé, il répéta avoir voulu attirer l'attention sur son oncle pour qu'il soit de l'Académie française" (Noel-Martin 240).

serious consideration for his geography as a defining factor in the *Voyages extraordinaires*.[89]

Yet, Verne said that he wanted to paint the earth. Discussing the textual map is, to a degree, a request to have Verne's work reconsidered. It is not, however, an attempt to legitimize him in academic circles that might insist on the definition of one literary "canon"[90] or one approach to reading, for as I hope I have made clear already, Verne did not write about places and positions as ultimate definitions of legitimacy. Specific places had a role in his work, but only insofar as how the ordinary world might participate in the representation of something in its absence, a literary space that is the product of narrative overlap of ordinary and fictional world geography. In this geographically oriented system rendered in a textual manner, the ordinary world geography is important for the role it plays in the creation of the fictional world, which in turn fictionalizes the ordinary world by reproducing it textually. The place is absent, for neither the textual map nor the fictional world geography can precisely identify a relative location that is irrefutable, since any relationships used to make such identifications are also fictional or merely representational. Nonetheless, Verne excels at including these places, using them as indicators of time or distance, but refusing to attribute to them a sense of finality, of definition. This same mutable quality within Verne allows for the transference of his name to be linked to one genre or eschewed from the canon, for his style is to write somewhere between the known and the unknown worlds, *les mondes connus et inconnus*, and

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[89] This is not to say that there has been no geographical interest in Verne. However, until relatively recently with Dupuy, Harpold and even Chevalier, that interest has been limited to geography as a closed vehicle that promoted exploration rather than a mobile element to be explored itself.

[90] I apply the term *canon* in this chapter rather loosely – much as the layman might – for the specific reason that Verne's widespread popularity with a general, as opposed to specifically literary, audience has traditionally reinforced the idea that he deviated from the model texts written before him. Although in recent years, the university and academic community has made an effort to move away from traditional definitions, labels or canons, for the purposes of this paper in which I discuss Verne relative to the specific study of French literature, the term *canon* represents a sense of belonging or acceptance to a preceding larger school or movement. Although at the present time, one can argue that authors try to imitate Verne, I would argue that rather than trying to be like him, they are in fact enjoying the expansive benefits of his style of writing that recombined previous texts in new ways rather than emulating old ones.

the places Verne references belong to a world that is not there. Neither here nor there, neither island nor continent, the three stories chosen for study in this paper characterize this absence well, for the archipelago is not a location but a dislocation, a landform that is neither island, nor continent, nor landform, but from the sea and fluid in its meaning. It is a space.

I have already established that Verne wrote novels of exploration based on the geography of the known and the unknown worlds. The earth, geographical information itself, was the excuse or impetus for each of Verne's stories and the subsequent narrative style. The characters, the action and even the author's commentary are geared to represent the geographical location from a variety of perspectives and with an assortment of observations. In this he follows in the vein of the likes of Bougainville,[91] who embroidered his stories heavily with anecdotes and bits of local color that he combined in such a manner so as to make the telling of the tale, its composition and the way it represents the voyage more important than the daily advance of the ship and its crew from one point to the next toward a final destination. Like Bougainville, Verne references place-bound information in order to contextualize the *Voyages extraordinaires* in the ordinary world, which explains in part his reliance upon the "scientific" or ordinary world location and also the ordinary world ways in which one references location, an ordinary language. This is part of Verne's tendency toward linguistic borrowing or poaching discourse that has already been used and which is therefore unoriginal, or quite ordinary. His own originality does not come from the words he uses, but instead from his talent at reorganizing the discourses of others, rearranging them in a multi-skin overlay. Intercalated within the most ordinary, Verne

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[91] See Taillemite's *Bougainville et ses compagnons autour du monde: 1766-1769, journaux de navigation* in which different versions of the same voyage are set together for comparison. Although much of the factual information remains the same, the quality of the perspective changes as the author's estimation of the importance of events shifts from version to version with time and audience.

compiles the fictional. A place on a map becomes an excuse for a story that is somehow off the map because it is no longer reducible to a single place. Nonetheless, it is an encounter with geography, and proposing geography in such a manner formulates an encounter with language, narrative representation and the textual map.

The linguistic and geographical plasticity resulting from these encounters that Verne compiles raises a certain skepticism regarding the legitimacy of both Verne's literary style and his scientific information. This skepticism and the scientifically organized subject matter, as well as the popular adventure or voyage theme of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, troubled for many years Verne's acceptance into the traditional literary canon. Despite this, he remains one of the most well known French authors, and many of his books are still widely available in print over one hundred years after his death.[92] From my own experience meeting with and talking to other Vernians, it seems that everyone has his or her own personal reasons for appreciating Verne, but that most people do agree on the importance of geography in the *Voyages extraordinaires*. Keeping this in mind, part of the reason for studying Verne and the textual map is that by considering something other than the characters or the plot, for example, the analysis of the story is removed from the sentimental to the geographical, which is often less personal provided that no particular nationalistic or other relationship exists between the person and the land. (And as I pointed out in chapter two, Verne did not particularly care for the sentimental novel). Individual preferences and sentimentality might still be present in discussions of Verne's works, but instead of provoking a purely emotional reaction, the textual map engages in understanding how one explores and reproduces a previously unknown location, a geographical space shared by and

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[92] It is also of note that new translations are coming out every year, with the most recent being Butcher's 2007 release of *Lighthouse at the End of the World*, from University of Nebraska Press.

created through ordinary and fictional world geography overlap. This may not gain the *Voyages extraordinaires* entry into a traditional canon of French literature, nor indicate a genre, nor speak to the validity of scientific knowledge, but it does mimic at a textual level the experience of exploration that Verne describes in his stories as the narration moves through geographical encounters.

The metaphor that is the textual map applies to Verne quite specifically because he was not interested in love stories, war and peace, *bildungsroman*, or most other sentimentality that academic or scholarly readers have generally been trained to seek out in a novel. Verne did not write about humanity, he wrote about the earth. Humanity is present, but only as a way of representing the geographical with words that are flexible enough to relay many perspectives. As part of the literary production, Verne recreates the experiences of the old mapmaker who goes back again and again to add some new bit of information or contour to a map, to change the representation. Call it progressive in the nineteenth century meaning of the term, but Verne uses the resources of the earth to create a new product, an almost scientific application of linguistic movement through space, a geographical novel built on a mixture that even today appeals to a wide variety of people, from geographers to anthropologists to computer scientists to movie makers, for example.

If not traditionally canonical, Verne is at least interesting to a wide readership, and if not a geographer, he is at least geographically literate. His writing projects into geographical spaces on the same level as what is described, as motion through them rather than around or over them. Verne accomplishes this by manipulating ordinary discourse he encounters in his own research into a fictional production. The textual map is the location for this change, and like Verne's writing it is something of an applied science, a technology of sorts, or the

practical application of ordinary knowledge. In the case of the novel, this is the combination

of the ordinary and fictional worlds in a salable product that appeals to a large audience. In

the case of the textual map, this is the process of the production of a representation, a map,

and the negotiations of meaning and variety of perspectives that make it possible. It is an

application of language about science, about discovery and about reception.

In this chapter, I broaden the discussion of the textual map and its legend to consider

the importance of Verne's writing as part of a cultural and literary tradition that includes

geography as an indicator of genre. To begin, I return to one of the recurring questions in

Verne's stories, "island or continent?" Although in *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout*

du monde and *En Magellanie* the answer appears to be island, is the island so simple a

location? Each island is actually part of an archipelago, a sort of hybrid form that is a

difficult concept to define. Therefore, in the first part of this chapter, I discuss the

implications of the archipelago location as it pertains to both the ordinary and the fictional

worlds. I maintain that this end of the world archipelago, *le bout du monde*, is itself symbolic

of the entire textual map as a place between two worlds. Of course, a discussion of the

meaning of specific landforms such as islands requires further consideration of the

potentially social aspect of Verne's novels, a topic I mentioned briefly in the previous

chapter. Some say Verne wrote utopias, others argue he did not. I entertain both of these

opinions as I proceed from a discussion of the island to the topic of the continent, or a

landmass that gives the appearance of solidity. At the same time, I consider the idea of

technology, or applied science as it might pertain to Verne's use of language, for it should

not be forgotten that Verne wrote books based on practical notions, albeit with sometimes

outlandish results. In a sense, his own writing followed this same trend as a practical

application of knowledge, with fictionalizing results. Finally, I return to the discussion of genre and propose that narrative in Verne happens in the space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Once this space between is identified, it seems logical that the traditional discussion of Verne and genre have no clear outcome, for Verne leaves his spaces perpetually open to the readers' input by never really fixing his novels in place – a happy result of his overlay style that has maintained the popularity of the *Voyages extraordinaires* with a wide international audience all these years.

IV.A. Neither Island nor Continent

Compère wrote a fascinating study of Vernian islands in *Approche de l'île chez Jules Verne*, but I think the title itself is just as intriguing as the findings because the concept of the approach need not be limited to the systematic shipwreck scenario Verne employed. It can speak just as strongly to Verne's approach, or his way of expressing landforms, in this case apparently islands. Traditionally, critics like Compère above or Raymond in "L'Odyssée du naufrage vernien," for example, or Macherey, Boia or Pourvoyeur to name a few others have discussed the influence of the island for its importance in the stories' progression and outcome, or the implications of this desert location that might become a microcosm of sorts. Although these and many other similar evaluations of Verne's novels have added depth to the study of the author's works, they tend to follow what I consider a rather traditional view of literary scholarship in which one considers the geographical location as a backdrop or scenery against which the real action takes place. Geographers like Chevalier signal this potential literary pitfall in their own scientific field, for these fictional locations create an image that is not factually correct, albeit possibly quite appealing to a tourist. Literary geography only carries greater possibilities "lorsqu'il s'agit d'écrivains géographes, proches

de la géographie ou ayant utilisé les travaux des géographes," (*Littérature* 11) comments Chevalier who notes that Verne was one of these geographical novelists (10). Taking this into consideration, an appreciation of geography in Verne should not simply default to seeing it as background. And although Moretti, in his *Atlas of the European Novel 1800-1900*, comes closer to an understanding of geography as it is applicable to an author like Verne, proposing that a location becomes the scenario, the excuse or the reason for the action in the story since "…each space determines, or at least encourages, its own kind of story," (70) I maintain that the association between ordinary and fictional geography in the *Voyages extraordinaires* is even tighter. While giving the appearance of choosing a solid place, a definable location that is reducible to a dot on the map, Verne actually narrates movement through a geography, a series of observations fraught with tension in the form of polyphonic discourse and non-canonical (popular) affiliations such as those discussed in the previous chapter. The result is not a geographical production that projects an image from above, a place-bound geography that is a great puzzle of interlocking and interrelating pieces. Instead, it is a compilation of observations at the level of the unknown, the textual map between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Asking whether one is on an island or on a continent assumes new importance in this situation, for the answer becomes more than the backdrop against which the rest of the plot will unfold or the place that legitimizes the action by giving it a sense of belonging. The answer is never really possible because the location is an entire theater of action, a space that is not reducible to a point but which is in constant movement as a product of linguist renegotiation of meaning, a figurative representation. In the cases of *Deux Ans de vacances, Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* the landform itself, the archipelago, exemplifies this quality of remaining indefinable.

The question of definition can be approached in a number of manners. For instance, a relatively strong interest in the relationship between geography or cartography and literature exists in the discussion of the discovery and exploration of the New World and the forms or methods used to express this information to the Old World. Although much of such discussion tends to consider the power of the map as a colonizing factor, which is interesting but not entirely germane to the core subject of this dissertation, certain aspects of the argument do pertain to the representative power of the map and the ambiguity of the landform itself. Among the most interesting of these, Toumson writes in *L'Utopie perdue des îles d'Amérique* about the ambiguity created by the discovery of America first as an island, rather than the larger continental mass currently known as North and South America. In his estimation, mistaking the island for a continent added to the fictional identity of the New World. Indeed, later evidence of such fictionalization are evident in the simple names of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego that more than hint at the mythological aspect of the *bout du monde* shared by the three novels I study, for the Indians who inhabited these areas are not the large-footed fire breathers depicted in tales. Toumson parleys the initial misconception about the nature of their location made by Columbus and his crew into a discussion of the three landforms: island, continent and archipelago. According to his argument, if the island represents an escape and the continent some sort of ordinary world, the archipelago is neither one nor the other (73, 39). Toumson's mythological, interpretive manner of discussing the three sorts of landforms is significant to the nature of the textual map because it reflects the ambiguity of the location around Cape Horn. It also reveals something of Verne's writing style, which as I have discussed before seems to slip between genres as well as employ

multiple overlying discourses that create impressions, or a space, rather than a particular place that is consistently definable relative to another.

After Verne's death, his nephew Maurice said of his uncle that he had had three passions in his life: freedom, music and the sea (Costello 141). Each of these is reflected in his writing, but it is the sea that is most interesting here because etymologically the archipelago is not defined by the landforms (the many islands) themselves, but by the sea. Therefore, although we today commonly understand the word *archipelago* to mean a group of islands like Hawaii or Indonesia, this is in fact a misapplication of the word. The word *archipelago* is formed by combining *archi*, meaning of the first order, with *pelago* or sea, and more specifically the high sea that is wide and deep. Etymologically speaking, the archipelago is therefore not a description of the landforms, but of the sea that contains them (Toumson 59). Moreover, the Greek word *pelagos* also means a bridge, so the archipelago is the supreme (*archi*) link rather than a division or a break. Unlike an island that is often associated with utopia or at least an escape from something, or a continent that reflects necessity (73), the archipelago suspends definition by neutralizing oppositions (61). It is neither island, nor continent, nor sea, nor land, and yet it is all of these, or none of them depending on the circumstances. To search for a definition is to go in circles, for the archipelago is a progressive form, a contradictory *présent inactuel* that organizes and animates the other, definable aspects of the fable (74-75). The archipelago, like Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, is in between the known and the unknown worlds. It is a topographical feature that inspires narration because it decenters the reader's regard (Jacob, *Empire* 369-370), which in turn invites the creation of new fictional geographies.

Reconsidering the meaning of archipelago, one might remember that in old Phaeacian

sailors' tales, Ocean was not only a place but an actual character. Eventually, the narrative

tradition categorized Ocean as a general sort of story in which the venue, which was an

invented location residing in the unknown, came to represent the narrative itself (Romm

183). Ocean came to stand for a certain class of tales that were mostly or entirely invented.

Oddly, as the process of discovery and exploration of the New World progressed during the

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, certain water spaces on maps seemed to grow larger than

they were in reality, for example the Strait of Magellan (Gillies 167). As knowledge of the

ocean grew, Ocean itself seemed to be less expansive but straits that cut into landforms

seemed to be bigger and more important than they really were. It appears almost as if

navigating on water was better understood than the land that same water intersected, and

therefore rather than acknowledging some unknown, mapmakers perhaps subconsciously

inserted something more familiar, more known. Mignolo states in a similar situation[93] that

the "growing European awareness of a previously unknown part of the earth became a

decisive factor in the process of integrating the unknown to the known, which also

transformed the configuration of the known" (264). Of course, his concern lies in the ways

in which by putting the New World on the map, the perception of the Old World itself

changed during the Renaissance because of the way one had to conceptualize the world

(309). My interest in this research is the representation of the interaction, the map or the

textual map narrative. Although theoretically a yardstick by which to measure progress

(256), by the time Verne is writing about the Cape Horn archipelago, progress itself is no

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[93] Mignolo's interest in maps is particularly tied to their representative power and the ways in which a society's or culture's placement of itself and others is influenced by maps. In the situation mentioned above, he argues that in the process of describing the New World, the Old World is actually inventing it. Although this could be an interesting addition to the study of Verne's geographical work, it does not directly pertain to my immediate research and the narrative of the textual map.

longer about the simple exploration of an area, filling in the blank spaces, it is also about the means of locomotion through it. Although this progress can be reflected through chronology or point-to-point movement, measuring Fogg's trip around the world in eighty days or the Chairman Island boys' two-year vacation for example, the backdrop for his stories or method of timekeeping matters little. The fact that Verne uses words to journey through the events as he narrates reveals the most important movement, and one which is like the archipelago for it is neither fact nor fiction, neither continent nor island: it is both and / or neither, for it is also a part of the sea and therefore fluid in nature. Instead of always building relationships and comparisons, Verne's verbal locomotion is like the archipelago, neutralizing oppositions by employing abundant discourses based on many sources to create impressions rather than definitions, creating a space in many dimensions rather than a single-dimensional place. Karroly and the Kaw-djer's arrival at the location of the dead Indian's village in *En Magellanie* exemplifies this mixture of the senses.

> Il était six heures: la *Wel-Kiej* avait atteint l'extrémité du canal, indiquée par un ensemble d'îlots épars, sur lesquels les pingouins battaient l'air de leurs moignons d'ailes. Aux trois quarts du périmètre méridional se développait l'océan infini, cerclé de lumière par les obliques rayons du soleil. Au nord seulement se dessinait une côte basse, à grèves très plates qui présentaient une grande largeur. En arrière de ces grèves, reculées de deux à trois milles, se massaient des forêts de hêtres, d'un vert tendre dont les rameaux déployaient horizontalement leur vaste parasol. La côte allait à perte de vue, en remontant un peu vers le nord-est, et, à quelque vingt lieues de là, se dessinait son extrême pointe, affilée comme une serpe, qui se recourbait sur l'océan Atlantique. (48)

Although certain directions or indications of place are noted in the above description, most of the landscape is described in terms of movement of some sort, from the development of the infinite ocean, to the coast that continues forever. Likewise, projected movement occupies Kongre's mind in *Le Phare du bout du monde* as he considers escape.

> Une fois dehors, Kongre ne gagnerait pas le large. Il lui suffirait d'une de ces faibles risées qui se lèvent même par les nuits tranquilles, et du courant qui portait au sud, pour longer la côte jusqu'à son extrémité, au milieu de cette nuit très noire. Dès qu'elle aurait doublé la pointe Several, distante au plus de sept à huit milles, la goélette serait abritée par les falaises qui se succédaient jusqu'à la pointe Vancouver, et elle n'aurait plus rien à craindre. (248)

Again, mention is made of reference points that relate one place to others, but the general impression given by the description is one of movement, of making the trip through the waters described. The archipelago location gives Kongre and his men the opportunity to escape even at night, even with the least apparent effort, yet at the same time it offers little escape beyond the island for over their long years there, the pirates have become part of the island, which has in turn become almost like their ship, or the space they inhabit. While they remain there, they remain in between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, on an island that is uninhabited and inhabited, as well as desolate but with a view of fairly high traffic on an important sea lane. Like a map that represents something in its absence, like a textual map that does the same by narrating a geography, the archipelago is both and neither an island and a continent as it floats between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. It is a metaphor for organic movement, or the body's organization that animates it (Toumson 75).

As I have mentioned before, not all of Verne's novels take place on an archipelago,[94] however they do often share a certain sense of mobility as part of the location either through the effort of the characters or through an idiosyncrasy of the earth medium itself, being water or being a landform subject to change, like the volcanic explosion in *L'Île mystérieuse* or the earthquake in *Le Pays des fourrures*, for example. Therefore, the rest of Verne's corpus is not excluded in the consideration of the particularities of the archipelago as a topographical

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[94] Although it is true that not all of Verne's stories take place on such landforms, he does seem to have an affinity for discussing peninsulas and archipelagos. Moreover, even when he does not specifically mention them, he does seem to return to them. For instance, within the Cape Horn archipelago, it is of note that Hoste Island is actually three peninsulas: Dumas, Pasteur and Hardy.

feature that acts itself like a metaphor for the textual map. Both a part of the ordinary world,

or sharing similarities with and thus referenced against the apparent stability of the continent,

and the fictional world of the island that is either a smaller version of the continent or a

product of the sea and therefore of the imaginary, the archipelago is a progressive form that

remains in between. "Aléatoire de l'archipel: quand les îles dialoguent entre elles, avec elles-

mêmes, il y a l'archipel. Quand elles sont tournées vers le continent, l'archipel n'est plus

qu'une île. L'archipel est le lieu d'une contradiction insurmontable, celle de l'île et du

continent. Il est le lieu idéologique commun des fausses résolutions de cette contradiction"

(Toumson 74). Exemplifying this is the explanation Master Evans gave to the children in

Deux Ans de vacances regarding their location.

> A l'est, le détroit de Magellan s'évase par un ou deux goulets, entre le cap des
> Vierges de la Patagonie et le cap Espiritu-Santo de la Terre de Feu. Mais il n'en est
> pas ainsi à l'ouest, – ainsi que le fit observer Evans. De ce côté, îlots, îles, archipels,
> détroits, canaux, bras de mer, s'y mélangent à l'infini. C'est par une passe […] que
> le détroit débouche sur le Pacifique. Au-dessus se développe toute une série d'îles,
> capricieusement groupées […]. [V]oyez-vous, au-delà du détroit de Magellan, une
> île que de simples canaux séparent de l'île Cambridge au sud et des îles Madre de
> Dios et Chatam au nord? Eh bien, cette île, sur le 51° de latitude, c'est l'île Hanovre,
> celle à laquelle vous avez donné le nom de Chairman, celle que vous habitez depuis
> plus de vingt mois! […] Mais entre l'île Hanovre et le continent américain, il n'y a
> que des îles aussi désertes que celle-ci. Et, une fois arrivés sur ledit continent, il
> aurait fallu franchir des centaines de milles, avant d'atteindre les établissements du
> Chili ou de la République Argentine! (446-447)

The individual islands of an archipelago change their nature depending on how one reads

them. Master Evans chooses to see Hanover Island as a place that is identifiable and

locatable on a map in relation to other islands and the South American continent. The

children, on the other hand, spent two years thinking of Chairman Island as an island all by

itself. The combination of the two ideas about location changes the perception of the story as

the ordinary and the fictional worlds overlay one another in a space that is opened by Verne's

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coordination and combination of narrative. This textual map helps navigate through the uncertain geographical environment of the archipelago, or the landform that Toumson calls full of life yet difficult to identify because it is always coming and going, complicated to navigate, decentering and recentering (66). As representative of the textual map, the archipelago commingles geography and narrative, expressing their interaction in Verne's stories, which are themselves compilations of discourse created to suit a geographical location, to paint the earth.

One of the more interesting paradoxical interactions of the archipelago is that in the same sense that it evades definition relative to the island or the continent, being both and neither, it is also both a bridge and a frontier. As regards the second of these terms, Moretti discusses at length the concept of the border or the frontier as it relates to the historical novel, arguing that it is a space of metaphor where two opposing parties or viewpoints meet and must interact in some manner (35-37). He adds that the border is also a location for the unknown, an occasion for one to use figurative rather than factual language to express meaning (45). He points out, as have I, that the unknown on a map might therefore be represented by dragons (44) that figuratively express something that cannot be named because it is unknown. Of course, an actual encounter with a dragon along the border between the known and the unknown has great potential to become a location of comedy, tragedy and emotion caused by change (43). Some reaction is necessary when confronted with a dragon or any other transition or change from the status quo. It must be noted however that Moretti composes his argument around the historical novel the likes of those written by Sir Walter Scott, and although Verne enjoyed Scott he is not often affiliated with him or his historical writing style. Tadié argues, for example, that the adventure novel – a

genre more often associated with Verne – differs from the historical, despite their apparent similarity in the common reliance upon history or historical perspective. "Le rapport du roman d'aventures avec l'Histoire est confus: il lui faut une différence, qu'apporte le temps passé, comme les voyages. Décrire le passé, ou les pays exotiques, n'est pas son but, seulement un moyen" (8-9). History in the adventure novels is one narrative amid many, and it is used by the author in an attempt to give a historical or a chronological place or reference. Hugo and Balzac, for example, use such historical markers to help frame their stories. Tadié's words are therefore more revealing not for their explanation of history but for the mention of the voyage, for indeed history understood as a voyage is a history in perpetual motion. As a means of transport, as a means of relating the story, history becomes part of Verne's *semblant* – to recall the term first used in chapter two – a form of narrative capable of interaction with others by recalling them. A voyage, an interaction, history used in this way loses its historical place-value, for the border is not the end result but a means to an end by being a location through which one moves. History in this sense can therefore be as prone to figurative language as the history that Moretti discusses.

Supporting this concept that a chronological identifier such as history or a definable place such as the dot that locates a geographical feature is in fact not stationary but instead a location of transition, De Certeau argues that there is no spatiality that is not organized by the determination of frontiers or borders.

> By considering the role of stories in delimitation, one can see that the primary function is to *authorize* the establishment, displacement or transcendence of limits, and as a consequence, to set in opposition, with the closed field of discourse, two movements that intersect (setting and transgressing limits) in such a way as to make the story a sort of "crossword" decoding stencil (a dynamic partitioning of space) whose essential narrative figures seem to be the *frontier* and the *bridge*. (*Practice* 123).

The story itself creates the frontier or the border by indicating the transition from the known to the unknown, which Nerlich in his *Ideology of Adventure* argues is part of the acceptance of adventure, to leave what is known and safe in order to have new experiences that include interaction with others (xxi). Crossing the border is actually the creation or enacting of narrative that then searches to locate the border, defining it as a moment of change. Crossing the border acknowledges its presence. In this sense, the border is also a bridge because specifying its difference also indicates its similarity (De Certeau, *Practice* 126-128), thus before a river is crossed it is a border, but once it is crossed it is a bridge because it joins the two sides (127). As part of a story, the border and the bridge actuate stories because they are areas in which interaction between the known and the unknown takes place (126).

The archipelago is both border and bridge, for it is etymologically a location that issues from the sea rather than in relation to land. It is a space that is in between and predisposed to figurative language and representation. Although one can of course map the area in the sense of drawing one island in relation to others and all in relation to some other landmark or imposed scale, mapping the archipelago by itself reveals the landform's predisposition to narrative that, much like the characters in *Deux Ans de vacances*, looks inward toward the center of the island rather than outward toward the sea.

> What the map cuts up, the story cuts across. In Greek, narration is called 'diegesis': it establishes an itinerary (it 'guides') and it passes through (it 'transgresses'). The space of operations it travels in is made of movements: it is *topological*, concerning the deformations of figures rather than *topical*, defining places. It is only ambivalently that the limit circumscribes in this space. It plays a double game. It does the opposite of what it says. It hands the place over to the foreigner that it gives the impression of throwing out. Or rather, when it marks a stopping place, the latter is not stable but follows the variations of encounters between programs. (De Certeau, *Practice* 129)

The boys therefore believe certain things about their island based on appearances, but as de Certeau argues, such impressions are not always solid. Likewise, an archipelago is certainly a part of the ordinary world, but its nature as a space that is not easily definable predisposes it to recount stories of movement rather than marking identification. The narrative that Verne uses to represent it – for one must remember Verne chose location first – is affected by the inherent ambiguities of the land from the sea; it fits into it and becomes a part of it much like a border crossed becomes a bridge.

> Il n'est donc pas impossible pour l'homme de faire en sort que son ouvrage se mêle à l'environnement au point de s'y fondre, quelle que soit sa taille. Même lorsque le lieu est assez étendu, l'artifice humain ne doit pas être destructeur du cadre naturel, et l'une et l'autre ne sont pas incompatibles lorsque les hommes ont l'intelligence et le savoir-faire nécessaires pour que leur implantation se passe bien et leur fasse connaître le bien-être auquel chacun aspire. (Sudret 194)

Although Sudret's words above reference Verne's fictional communities, they reflect the narrative location of Verne's writing, for much as a community negotiates and interacts with a space, Verne puts into communication a linguistic program with a geographical one. Of course, Verne's were neither the first nor the only literary texts to incorporate the geographical. For instance, More's *Utopia*, which is both a description of a community as well as a literary experiment that joined the fictional and the real worlds, is based on the idea of travelogues or letters related to Amerigo Vespucci's travels "as if the first reports returned from the New World with their seemingly fantastical contents, had perforated the barrier between truth and fiction and opened up vast new possibilities for literature" (Romm 219). However, where More used the format to address social concerns, Verne attempted a geographical endeavor.[95]

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[95] I take up the discussion of utopia again later in this chapter.

Working within a location that is a narrative border and bridge, Verne's textual map explores by means of narrative space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds, belongs to no one in particular. Despite this, the textual map communicates meaning in much the same manner as de Certeau's borders, which warn of or address change (*Practice* 127). For instance, in *En Magellanie*, under the gaze of a narrative voice, the landscape that is otherwise inhospitable and desolate is not empty.

> L'un de ces dômes, en forme de ballon, au sommet arrondi, paraissait être le plus rapproché, et, à travers cette atmosphère si fine, si déliée, si transparente, il semblait n'être qu'à très courte distance. Mais ni par son volume ni par son altitude, il n'eût été comparable aux monts qui se détachaient des masses latérales, appuyées sur l'énorme ossature de ce système orographique, ces montagnes coiffées de neiges, plaquées de glaciers éclatants, assez élevées pour pointer jusqu'aux froides hauteurs de l'espace, et dont la cime perçait les dernières vapeurs à plus de six mille pieds au-dessus du niveau de la mer.
> D'ailleurs, de l'impression que cette contrée donnait au regard, il ne ressortait pas qu'elle fût inhabitable. Déserte, oui… abandonnée, non ! (Verne, *En Magellanie* 36-37)

The landscape described is a barrier to exploration that dwarfs the onlooker, but in which he or she finds a bridge to something known, for it may be uninhabited, but it is not deserted. This frontier or border acts as a bridge therefore because it is open or accessible to all rather than owned by one, and as de Certeau recalls, the border between onlooker and scene can be attributed to neither party (de Certeau, *Practice* 127). Property, or a sense of place as differentiated by relations, is not possible. Likewise, it is not possible to define the archipelago, for the entirety of the scene and the movement through it becomes the *making* of space itself, or at least of the literary form of the geographical space. A somewhat classic example of this is the experience shared by Paganel, Glenarvan and his friends who, when the geographer asks what they are doing, receive the response that they are *doing/making* geography, or representing it and recreating the territories they move through (Harpold 32).

Likewise, Verne makes space. "C'est la géographie de Jules Verne, c'est son monde que nous découvrons. La succession des épisodes dramatiques s'inscrit dans un décor qui conditionne les surprises et les rebondissements. Mais ce décor n'est pas figé dans un immuable géographique. Il le conditionne à son tour" (Gamarra 247-248). This idea that the author works with or recreates the place, or the named and relative location on the map, is central not only to my own work on Verne's writing but also to any of the many authors and critics who concern themselves with the relationship between literature and geography, and their subsequent representations. In the course of my research, I have found the ideas of de Certeau to be some of the most practical and applicable in dealing with Verne, grounds his writing in a sense of place using knowledge provided by experts with some authority, as the concept is understood by de Certeau (*Practice* 8). But as soon as Verne ascribes a place, somewhere in the ordinary world, he takes to narrating it as a part of the fictional. The place he mentions is an empty locator of name, latitude, longitude, and so forth. The narratives that describe it give movement to the place, engage it and make geography by creating space. This fluid recombination, like the archipelago, resists definition as it plays with and negotiates its own meaning. The location of this play, this *cour de récréation*, is the textual map created by narrative interaction. According to de Certeau, "*space is a practiced place*" (117), and I would add that the textual map is one as well because it reproduces process, or the practice, of the author's manipulation of geography and space.

Early in Vernian criticism, Farrère and Escaich remarked upon Verne's ability to knead his way through the description of a landscape, particularly in regards to geographical scenes. "Mais dès qu'il veut bien écrire, il le peut, et réussit en se jouant des descriptions proprement aussi magnifiques qu'exactes: et, chaque fois qu'il aborde le récit d'une scène

émouvante ou dramatique, il use de raccourcis saisissants dans leur sobriété, et crée une atmosphère telle que les plus grands artistes du verbe n'en ont guère obtenu de plus vivante" (Farrère 14). Although one might argue that the atmosphere and descriptions referenced are often related to plot or character rather than being strictly geographical, it is necessary to remember that in Verne the plot and the characters are never independent of their geographical location. Therefore every portrayal ultimately refers back to the geography of the area. Whether as a description of the elements or the characters' adventures, intertextual references to other factual or fictional literature, or the interactive aspect of the author-reader relationship, pauses in plot for longer narrative moments represent Verne's opportunity to communicate the geography of the region he describes, by passing through it, by exploring it and ultimately by creating within it all sorts of possibility by fictionalizing it. "La vista diviene visione," (Minerva, "Sguardo" 259), as in the following description from *Le Phare du bout du monde*.

> En avant de ces falaises arides, dont les brisures, les interstices, les failles abritaient des myriades d'oiseaux de mer, se détachaient nombre de bancs de récifs, dont quelques-uns arrivaient jusqu'à deux milles au large à marée basse. Entre eux sinuaient d'étroits canaux, des passes impraticables, si ce n'est à de légères embarcations. Ça et là des grèves, des tapis de sable où touffaient quelques maigres plantes marines semées de coquilles écrasées par le poids des lames au plein de la mer. Les cavernes ne manquaient pas à l'intérieur de ces falaises, grottes profondes, sèches, obscures, d'orifice resserré, dont l'intérieur n'était ni balayé par les rafales ni inondé par la houle, même aux redoutables époques de l'équinoxe. On y accédait en traversant les raidillons pierreux, des éboulis de rocs que les gros flux dérangeaient parfois. Quant à la communication avec le plateau supérieur, des ravins rudes à gravir donnaient accès jusqu'à la crête, et pour atteindre la limite de ce plateau aride vers le centre de l'île, la distance n'aurait pas été moindre de deux à trois milles. Au total, le caractère sauvage, désolé, s'accentuait plus de ce côté qu'au littoral opposé où s'ouvrait la baie d'El Gor. (69-70)

The lengthiness of the preceding paragraph, which begins an introduction to Kongre and his band of pirates by first introducing the land they inhabit – and which inhabits them – allows

the narration to dawdle rather than advancing directly to name the danger that lurks there. In this, it is not unlike an impressionist painting in which objects reflect one another, flowing together in a space that is more than simply positivist, regional geography attempting to expose the link between humanity and the earth.[96] Instead, as Bulson recalls, literary texts have the power to produce images of the world that are fanciful and distorted projections (39) that happen in between the place names (37), or outside of what de Certeau would call the proper, or that which has to do with property or belonging. As Minerva states above, the view becomes a vision. Although this vision or this perspective does not move the events of the story along, it pauses to explore a somewhat circular concept of space that negotiates the known and the unknown by foregoing the straight-line, relationship-constructed bird's eye view (or résumé) of the geography and events. Instead, it is a more interactive, theatrical geography built on multiple views – or maps – that move the reader through them by following action (Gillies 71).

Of course, as Gillies points out, this is accomplished in the virtual sense, which should be no surprise since the *Voyages extraordinaires* are virtual voyages themselves, or literary endeavors that share similarities of form with actual voyages and that also explore language as they attempt to relate them. De Certeau argues that like spoken language, a story is fragmented and polyvalent (*Practice* 125), which allows it to behave much in the same way as historical narratives, appearing to be a fictional space that pretends to escape present circumstances through manipulation (79). In this sense, it is Toumson's *présent inactuel* (74-

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[96] As Bulson and Clavel among others have noted, how space becomes inhabited is, of course, a part of regional geography (Bulson 48). I differentiate my study by concentrating on a fictional world location rather than an entirely ordinary one. Therefore, although Verne's characters are supposed to be tied to the land from which they come, both they and the land are mere representations in the fictional world rather than scientific studies in the ordinary world. Verne is painting the earth, applying a coat or a layer of fiction that differentiates his endeavor from that of regional geography as a study.

75) that I refer to earlier regarding the archipelago, and it is Verne's textual map. A possibly more tangible example of this is the literary maps like those Murray and Baedecker wrote in the nineteenth century and of which I spoke in a previous chapter. Overlaid on top of a landscape that no longer existed, such as Dickens' London for example, such writers enhanced the image with information meant to supplement the experience of the discerning traveler (Bulson 26-27). The resulting text or map was not a matter of a tool for getting around, but for getting more out of the experience, visualizing or reconsidering something that was no longer – if ever – present in the ordinary world, but nonetheless quite present in the fictional.

In this sense, like the archipelago that Jacob remarks decenters vision and creates the opportunity for fictional geographies (*Empire* 369-370), the geography that is written by the author is a space of verbal recombination, or what Moretti might consider reconnaissance (51), that cannot be equated to another, cannot be named, cannot be attributed to one particular spot on the map. In the novel, the action or the description happens in between the place names. The single image map, on the other hand, is the de-socialized place-name locator (Bulson 37-38) that teachers and tourists reference so as to locate a fictional place on a map in order to gain knowledge (4) and to conform to exterior space (Brosseau 8). But Verne is not writing a purely referential series, nor is it purely fictional. "Voyager entre le connu et l'inconnu exige une circularité – va et vient – afin de passer entre le réel et l'imaginaire – de trouver des aspects de l'un dans l'autre," proposes Minerva (Utopie 25). Likewise, de Certeau concentrates on this aspect of movement in discussing Verne's supposedly non-fictional account of the great explorers of the world.

> La navigation est d'abord le travail de déplacement, d'altération et de construction entrepris de l'espace 'inventé' par un autre avec les extraits de *Voyages, Découverts,*

Histoires, Journaux et *Relations* du XVIIIe siècle. Une bibliothèque circonscrit le champ où s'élaborent et se déroulent ces voyages. […] Livre plus proche des 'fictions' de Borgès que des 'résurrections' de Michelet. Les voyages de Jules Verne sont des fictions qui s'écrivent sur des fictions de voyage. En somme, un 'art de la mémoire,'[97] fait des mille et une manières de composer un simulacre avec des reliques. ("Écrire" ii-iii)

Through these relics, de Certeau finds evidence for something similar to what Conley calls cartographic reasoning that "inspires both the graphic and the imaginary forms of literature" (2). A personal form, it generates a certain sense of perspective and reveals the author's attempts to place the unknown into a relative position. However, "[b]ecause the unknown was located by being *named*, it [the unknown] became a form of relation rather than an unfathomable menace or delusion. For writers, it comprised what language always aims at naming without ever being quite able to bring under rational control" (8). In Verne, the result of this irrationality or the ability to nail something down is that rather than remaining only a place that can be named, the space traversed by narrative is one of rather free interaction that gives the appearance of solidity while actually engaging in a figurative exploration of language and geography. Although his interest is more in the graphic aspects of Verne's work, Harpold supports this, saying that "[…] the dynamism and verisimilitude of the world of the *Voyages* are products of the narrative devices that advance its turns and corroborate its rules. The purest example of Verne's spatial idiolect is not a map in the usual sense of that term, but *a text that is read like or as a map*, demanding of its reader similar attention to the contours, filiations, and boundaries it describes" (32).

Although a metaphor for reading, the textual map I propose in this study exemplifies the shared qualities of maps and texts in the sense that one can read them in a similar fashion, keeping one caveat in mind. The map must be an itinerary rather than an exercise in

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[97] De Certeau notes this phrase originating from Frances Yates' *Art of Memory*.

following the dots denoting places, it must resemble the *récits de voyage* Chevalier speaks of

in *Géographie et littérature*, which consist of heterogeneous elements like journalism,

political character studies, technical studies, scientific studies, and so forth (167)that allocate

space for the vista or the view to become a vision rather than hurrying along to the next dot

on the map.

> Il est préférable de distinguer, au sein de l'immense domaine de la littérature de
> voyage, les voyageurs proprement dits, auteurs de récits de voyage plus ou moins
> étoffés, des véritables hommes de lettres tentés plus ou moins incidemment par un
> récit de voyage ou recourant à des souvenirs exotiques dans leurs romans, essais,
> poèmes, etc. On notera par ailleurs, avec Paul Claval (1994), que si les descriptions
> spatiales sont généralement essentielles dans les récits de voyage, elles sont le plus
> souvent limitées dans les romans actuels. Elles risquent en effet de constituer des
> temps morts susceptibles de ralentir l'intrigue… (167)

In translations of Verne's novels, indeed, many of these *descriptions spatiales* are truncated

or removed entirely, supposedly in the interest of saving paper, ink or the readers' attention.[98]

Long descriptions considered by thrifty editors to be simple dead space and thus eliminated

from many novels, are in fact very much a part of Verne's production, for these dead

moments are actually locations in which space is created, pauses in which language explores

new permutations. The textual map he creates is therefore not of the type "constituted as

proper places in which to *exhibit the products* of knowledge, form tables of *legible* results"

(de Certeau, *Practice* 121). The textual map is instead a combinatory narrative that, like the

archipelago, evades definition while nonetheless exposing the various constituents of its

composition within the limits or barriers given by the land and narrative forms available.

"Stories about space exhibit […] the operations that allow it [organization], within a

constraining and non-'proper' place, to mingle its elements anyway […]" (121). Again, it is

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[98] A much cited example of this is *20 000 lieus sous les mers*, in which large chunks of text such as fabulous
fish names are simply gone. This is not the only title that suffered these losses, but it is one of the easiest to
quickly check since the title is popular enough that a modern bookstore will have multiple translations for
comparison, and important differences abound within the first few pages.

helpful to recall how Verne's non-fictional series exemplifies the author's general approach, revealing a movement that is not centered on history or plot but rather one that lays bare the overlap of the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Specifically considering the volume on *Les Grands navigateurs du XVIIIe siècle*, de Certeau writes the following.

> La relation de l'ouvrage avec les 'sources' et les 'originaux' n'est donc pas commandée par la recherche d'une origine, d'une nature ou d'une vérité qui serait là *avant* et *derrière* les documents. C'est une composante et un ressort de l'histoire qui peu à peu remplit de mots les vides du monde, multiplie et précise les représentations (cartes géographiques, mises en scène historiques, etc.), et 'conquiert' ainsi l'espace en le marquant de sens. De ce point de vue, la série des *Grands Navigateurs* ne fait pas exception dans l'œuvre; elle ne constitue pas une étude de géographie historique à isoler des romans d'aventure. Elle n'a d'exceptionnel que le fait de rendre visible un procédé général de fabrication: l'enchaînement de l'imaginaire et de la collection, autrement dit le travail de la fiction à l'intérieur d'une bibliothèque. ("Écrire" iii)

Although de Certeau feels that this disclosure of the fictional process is exceptional within the body of Verne's work, I suggest that it is instead an indication of how to approach the collection of the *Voyages extraordinaires*, for as Peters argues, "modern cartographic representation, though generally positivist in its scientific development, has carried embedded within it another geographic impulse that understands maps as figural language, as, precisely, stories about the physical and conceptual nature of the world" (33). Although Peters is referring to the seventeenth century, the argument carries through to the nineteenth because Verne relied on previous textual examples on which to base his works. His *Voyages extraordinaires* evolved therefore in tandem with modern cartographic representations, gaining popularity during a time when geographical societies and information-gathering technologies such as the telegraph and telephone rendered the world more accessible to the stationary reader at home, who learned about far-off lands by moving through them and exploring them textually. Therefore, it only makes sense that Verne's approach to researching his non fictional and his fictional works would not differ radically.

Maps and narrative, the ordinary and the fictional worlds, the known and the

unknown: Verne commingles these apparent binaries much as the archipelago would

commingle land and sea or island and continent. The space of this creation is the textual map

or narrative that exercises the effects of the transgressions of barriers or limits, using

figurative language that engages a discussion of a human relation with space. Alone, this is

not new. The French philosopher Merleau-Ponty is often mentioned as having considered

the human factor in geography (*Practice* 117), and the tradition of his British counterparts is

to do the same (Brosseau, 32). However, literary studies generally concentrated on

imagology, thematic criticism and mythocriticism, followed by the popularization of

geopoetics and more recently geocriticism (Westphal 13, 16). Is it merely coincidental that

Westphal sees in this last, geocriticism, the archipelago? "La géocritique correspondrait bel

et bien à une poétique de l'archipel, espace dont la totalité est constituée par l'articulation

raisonnée de tous les îlots – mobiles – qui le composent. De tous les espaces, l'archipel est le

plus dynamique; il vit qu'à travers les glissements de sens qui l'affectent et le ballottent à

perpétuité" (18). As a corollary to this archipelago quality of bouncing between all

knowledge, geocriticism, according to Westphal, does not get bogged down in whether a

location is in the ordinary or the fictional world because human spaces do not become

imaginary by integrating literature. Rather, he argues, it is literature that bestows on them

and translates their intrinsic imaginary dimension by introducing in them an intertextual

network, much in the same way Verne does by using multiple discourses, his *semblant*.

> La géocritique, en effet, se propose d'étudier non pas seulement une relation
> unilatérale (espace-littérature), mais une véritable dialectique (espace-littérature-
> espace) qui implique que l'espace se transforme *à son tour* en fonction du texte qui,
> antérieurement, l'avait assimilé. Les relations entre littérature et espaces humains ne
> sont donc pas figées, mais parfaitement dynamiques. L'espace transposé en
> littérature influe sur la représentation de l'espace dit réel (référentiel), sur cet espace-

souche dont il activera certaines virtualités ignorées jusque-là, ou ré-orientera la lecture. (21)

The textual map, a dialectical approach to literature in addition to being a metaphor, is therefore also an example of one understanding of geocriticism.[99] The relationship between the ordinary and fictional worlds resembles a spatial representation that does not simply indicate a one-way movement, but rather a reciprocal motion in both directions that enables each world or perspective to correct, feed and enrich the other, exploring the complexity of human space under the human regard that cannot be confined to a linear or another similarly ordered projection. "Il appartiendra à la géocritique de constituer le lieu en tópos átopos, de l'intégrer dans 'le flux de la variation imaginaire des transformations possibles.' Il appartiendra à la géocritique de tirer profit des enseignements fugaces des arts mimétiques pour mieux entendre le monde, pour saisir – et saisir, ici, n'est pas accaparer – les espaces humains dans leur mouvance, dans leur statut navicule" (39). Likewise, the textual map represents a location of narrative movement in which discourses interact through geographical accidents like crossing a frontier or bridge, or inhabiting an archipelago, as areas of figurative language negotiation.

Like Karroly who guides people through the archipelago's channels but whose dealings with the individual goes no deeper than via the object – as is often the case in Verne's writing in which characters interact indirectly (Butcher, *Voyage* 19) – the canals and the textual map lead through a geographical world that is a combination of the ordinary and the fictional. It is a "map" of mobile landforms, as difficult to identify as the archipelago, and an indication of space as it is represented by narrative. It is the vision of the many views

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[99] Geocriticism is a relatively new, broad and growing field. Although I mention the terminology here briefly, a more thorough discussion of the topic falls outside the purview of this dissertation. My mention of it here is for purposes of acknowledging the potential for study Verne's work offers this critical approach.

overlain upon one another, a discursive combination that reproduces space within a textual medium, resulting in a new geography that supersedes the limits of the ordinary or the fictional worlds as it explores beyond Hercules' gates all the way to the *bout du monde*.

IV.B. Insularity and Utopia

As a metaphor for reading, the textual map is a representation itself and therefore it implies a distance between the map, or Verne's textual production, the original land and the forms used previously to represent it. Verne's texts correlate to what Bessière considers the investigation of possibilities through observations made on the objects with which the author fills his worlds (3-4). In this case, the author has two worlds to fill, the ordinary containing facts and figures from Verne's research, and the fictional containing the story of voyage. The combination of objects from both worlds creates a vision or a space in movement that the theory of the textual map negotiates for critical discussion. However, the theory itself is reminiscent of the representative character of the ordinary map alone, for it commonly appears to replace what it is supposed to merely stand in for. This is a regular occurrence where the concept of the map is applied, for "[t]he epistemological success of maps would thus appear to depend on both a rhetorical exercise (the creation of metaphor) and its simultaneous misapprehension as unrhetorical (the map as used: the map as scientific)" (Peters 41). Thus, by proposing a theory of the textual map, it is indeed possible to find myself in a bind, for I can never prove how the textual map reproduces what I cannot experience completely myself, only how it *seems* to do so through a system of words, or textually.

The bind revealed by this thought – that the theory I use to discuss Verne only seems scientific – has the potential to abruptly halt any further discussion of the textual map, or of

literature itself, save for one thing. The textual map is not the end product of the novel. It is

one means to the end, but it is not the end in and of itself. It recalls the purpose of the

medieval pilgrimage itineraries – the basis for our modern tour guidebooks (Chevalier,

Géographie 169) – that indicated in words or by way of other symbols how to proceed and

what to expect to find along the way (de Certeau, *Practice* 120), but did not predict a

homogenous product from each itinerary. Although the destination for all remained the

same, each pilgrim's voyage would differ along the voyage. The narrative actions within the

context of the itinerary organize space and enunciate focalizing points or barriers (116),

points of interest or moments of contemplative literary description that request that the reader

of the map put it down and look to the original. Strangely reminiscent of Verne's own style

by which he incorporates multiple discourses into the fictional product, these referential

moments allow an interactive play between reader and author, reader and text or author and

text. For example, in the following passage from *Le Phare du bout du monde*, both parties

on the island, the author and the boat commander all come to the same conclusion, but from

different points of view.

> Ce raisonnement très juste [que l'aviso attendrait la lumière pour entrer dans la baie]
> que faisait Kongre, John Davis et Vasquez le faisaient aussi. Ils ne voulaient point
> quitter la place tant qu'ils pourraient être vus du haut de la galerie. Mais ils causaient
> à voix basse, ils se disaient précisément ce que disait Kongre. Le phare aurait dû être
> déjà allumé, puisque le soleil venait de disparaître derrière l'horizon. Et n'apercevant
> pas son feu, bien qu'il eût certainement connaissance de l'île, le commandant
> Lafayate n'hésiterait-il pas à continuer sa route ?... Ne pouvant s'expliquer cette
> extinction, ne resterait-il pas toute la nuit dehors ?... Dix fois déjà, il était entré dans
> la baie d'El Gore, mais de jour seulement, et, n'ayant plus le phare pour indiquer la
> direction, il ne se hasarderait certainement pas à travers cette sombre baie.
> D'ailleurs, il devrait penser que l'île avait été le théâtre d'événements graves, puisque
> les gardiens n'étaient pas à leur poste. (Verne 241)

Through their combined perspective, through the textual map that opens a narrative space for

consideration, recombination and negotiation of meaning, Verne leads toward the recognition

that the boat will not come until the next day, despite the obvious and immediate need for its

arrival. In addition to the everyday quality of common sense of the commander's decision,

Verne creates a narrative in which multiple perspectives state the obvious, without being so.

Rather than blatantly stating that the boat will not come, the narrative approaches the

situation from a number of angles. This results in the exploration of the topography and the

creation of space as it unfolds through movement that is not tied to the arrival at the next

point, the next step, the next place – indeed the impending arrival of the *aviso* – but

movement that instead contemplates negotiating the geographical location at hand. Rather

than concentrating on the ultimate arrival, or the end, Verne writes about the journey along

the way.

Previously, I mentioned that Chevalier remarks upon the modern novel's lack of

spatial descriptions because some readers or editors apparently feel that they are "des temps

morts susceptibles de ralentir l'intrigue" (*Géographie* 167). He does, however, underline the

importance of such spatiality in *récits de voyage*. It follows logically that literature like

Verne's that is based on such stories would rely on these spatial descriptions as well, and that

many pauses, digressions, hesitations and *temps morts* would fill the *Voyages*. Indeed, even

in Verne's non fiction, de Certeau notes a spiral form with regard to the stories of

circumnavigation the author used as source material, adding that much of this sort of

information was generally lost when summarized or catalogued elsewhere in some orderly

manner for the governments in London or Paris ("Ecrire" ix, xiv). Interested in profit and

end results, such organizing bodies were concerned with these navigations so as to better

predict and plan for future expeditions, to avoid danger and to return home safely (Fulford

27). Verne, on the other hand, seems to take great interest in following multiple people

through similar voyages, essentially going through the geographical space again and again. Therefore, he pursues the likes of Roggwein, Byron, Wallis and Carteret, Bougainville and Cook, among others, around Cape Horn, for example, recounting the individuality of each voyage rather than summarily concentrating on the ultimate accomplishment of rounding the Horn and living to tell the tale.[100] In doing so, he recognizes the inherent potential latent in these numerous descriptions, incorporating parts of many of them in is *Voyages extraordinaires*.

In addition to his sources, Verne also acknowledges the role of the author confronted with such archival knowledge, with such a vast unknown world. Indeed, it would seem that in light of such extensive exploration, very little could possibly remain unknown. But, he acknowledges that much does remain unknown, that ideas have yet to be communicated widely to a broad public, and he throws down the gauntlet to perhaps himself to make this happen.

> Ainsi donc, tout est connu, classé, catalogué, étiqueté! Mais le résultat de tant de nobles travaux va-t-il être enterré dans quelque atlas soigneusement dressé, où iront le chercher que les savants de profession?
> Non! Ce globe conquis par nos pères, au prix de tant de fatigues et de dangers, c'est à nous qu'il appartient de l'utiliser, de le faire valoir. L'héritage est trop beau pour n'en point tirer parti!
> A nous, par tous les moyens que le progrès des sciences met à notre disposition, d'étudier, de déficher, d'exploiter! Plus de terrains en jachère, plus de déserts infranchissables, plus de cours d'eau inutiles, plus de mers insondables, plus de montagnes inaccessibles!
> Les obstacles que la nature nous oppose, nous les supprimons. Les isthmes de Suez et de Panama nous gênent: nous les coupons. Le Sahara nous empêche de relier l'Algérie au Sénégal: nous y jetons un railway. L'Océan[101] nous sépare de

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[100] Of course, many of these explorers did not technically round Cape Horn, for this was a dangerous endeavor to be avoided if possible; thus the importance of the Straits of Magellan and the Drake Passage. Meteorological and tidal conditions made any voyage to this part of the world dangerous, however, and would have furnished many an interesting detail for Verne's research.

[101] Although likely that the capitalization of the word *Océan* references the fact that Verne is speaking specifically of the Atlantic Ocean, it is intriguing to wonder whether Verne remembered that Ocean had once been a character.

l'Amérique: un câble électrique nous y relie. Le Pas de Calais empêche des peuples, si bien faits pour s'entendre, de se serrer cordialement la main: nous y percerons un chemin de fer!

Voilà notre tâche, à nous autres contemporains. Est-elle donc moins belle que celle de nos devanciers, qu'elle n'ait encore tenté quelque écrivain de renom?

Pour nous, si attrayant qu'il soit, ce sujet sortirait du cadre que nous nous étions d'abord tracé. Nous avons voulu écrire l'*Histoire de la découverte de la Terre*, nous l'avons écrite, notre œuvre est donc finie. (*Découverte 19e* 423)

Read on a literal level, a statement such as the above seems a progressive estimation of humanity's employ of the planet as it is explored and utilized, but remembering that Verne enjoyed puzzles and playing with words, it seems just as likely that one might read it figuratively, as a reference to what the author can accomplish using raw materials of narrative travelogues and voyages of discovery as a basis for his fictional *Voyages extraordinaires*. Between the names, which de Certeau comments are identifiers meant to imply a level of knowledge about the place ("Ecrire" xi-xii), Verne unearths a sense of possibility through movement and recombination of language and geography, writing contents into the blank spaces of the earth. "Si le texte de Verne crée des effets d'abîme en accumulant des sources, il vise pourtant à combler avec de 'grands navigateurs' les lacunes de la géographie maritime, à établir une carte grâce à des noms propres et *à faire de l'espace une langue*" (ix, my emphasis). The same should be said for his series of *Voyages extraordinaires*.

As part of this endeavor to fill in space, to indeed make a language of space, the spiral shape that de Certeau remarks recalls the discussion of the difference between a point-to-point map and an itinerary. The map implies a beginning and an ending point with a series of steps in between. The itinerary does as well, but with more emphasis placed on the interest of moving along the individual steps. As in the above description from *Le Phare du bout du monde* of the *aviso*'s non-entry into the bay, as perceived from many points of view, Verne's

emphasis on the description and the movement within the scene (space), rather than the jump to the next point (place), lends itself to potentially wider accessibility by a reading public with varying interests, and who might find through the construction of the space an opportunity to reflect on likely outcomes and the movements necessary to realize them. Verne invites this relatively open-ended consideration, which he makes possible by limiting his descriptions to place bound information that is immutable, and that is forever associated with one point in space or time. Indeed, a hundred years after Verne's death, a varied reading public is still interested in his novels, and new film adaptations trickle out of Hollywood with slow, but surprisingly steady regularity.[102] Such popularity is an intriguing aspect of nearly any discussion of Verne's writing, for often what is popular is tied to social importance, which changes over time.[103] Verne, for example, wrote about geography at a time when geography was very popular, and one might even suppose that without geography's popularity the author would not have found the initial international success that he did. Therefore, how can it be explained that readers one hundred years later, who have Internet access to recent satellite images of their own houses, still buy his books? Did Verne tap into something more powerful than simple geography, a sentiment like utopia perhaps?

Various definitions of utopia have been proposed with time and the term has come to mean many things. For the purposes of this dissertation on the textual map, two of the more balanced general definitions will suffice. "L'utopie est la construction verbale d'une

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[102] For example, a new film adaptation of *Voyage au centre de la terre* called *Journey 3D* starring Brendan Fraser is in production.

[103] For example, the most recent adaptation for American television of *L'Ile mystérieuse* made of Captain Nemo a sort of terrorist Dr. Moreau with access to nuclear power. Although while on the high seas, Verne's Nemo was indeed something of a terrorist, once at the island he was trapped. Moreover, in the text, there is no mention of gigantic animals or experimentation to achieve them. Of course, Nemo's sub was driven by a mysterious power, but the source is never revealed. These three aspects of the television movie feed into twenty-first century social concerns about gene research and terrorism.

communauté quasi humaine particulière, où les institutions socio-politiques, les normes et les relations individuelles sont organisées selon un principe plus parfait que dans la société de l'auteur, cette construction alternative étant fondée sur la distanciation née de l'hypothèse d'une possibilité historique autre" (Suvin 57). In this definition, Suvin attempts to incorporate all utopias under one umbrella, and he includes the readers' acceptance of the literary utopia's fictionality as verisimilar.[104] Trousson offers another, apparently more specific, attempt at a definition of utopia.

> Nous proposons donc ici de parler d'utopie lorsque, dans le cadre d'un récit (ce qui exclut les traités politiques), se trouve décrite une communauté (ce qui exclut la robinsonnade), organisée selon certains principes politiques, économiques, éthiques, restituant la complexité de l'existence sociale (ce qui exclut le monde à l'envers, l'âge d'or, Cocagne ou l'Arcadie), qu'elle soit présentée comme idéal à réaliser (utopie positive) ou comme la prévision d'un enfer (l'anti-utopie), qu'elle soit située dans un espace réel, imaginaire ou encore dans le temps, qu'elle soit enfin décrite au terme d'un voyage imaginaire vraisemblable ou non. (24)

Evidently where Suvin hopes to broaden the definition, Trousson hopes to narrow it, for if one might attempt to classify *Deux Ans de vacances* and *En Magellanie* as utopias – but not *Le Phare du bout du monde* – according to Suvin's definition, the first is immediately excluded from Trousson's for being a Robinsonade and so is the second for the same reason, despite its large number of castaways as well as its political aspects. I propose these two dissimilar definitions of utopia to exemplify the difficulty of adequately discussing the concept, for it is used both broadly and narrowly depending on the context and the goals of the critic performing the analysis.

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[104] Were my primary study in this dissertation that of science fiction or utopia instead of the textual map, I would certainly delve more deeply into this branch of literature and the theory that has grown around it. I would encourage my reader to consult Westfahl's introductory chapter to *The Mechanics of Wonder*, for in it he discusses the weaknesses of Suvin's attempt to legitimize a movement in literature by comparing it to something else (traditionally accepted canonical literature) rather than accepting it for what it is.

Minerva, after Macherey and Gilli with Montaclair, has put the most effort recently into the consideration of Verne's possible affiliation with utopia. In all three cases, however, the critics spend more time on *En Magellanie* than on either *Deux Ans de vacances* or *Le Phare du bout du monde*, which is not even mentioned. In general, one takes away from their works the idea that Verne was strongly influenced by the ideas of his times. For instance, he places a strong importance on education and hard work, both of which were popular progressive ideas, and he portrays a strong desire to see things with an almost mathematical regularity. He also tends to create small communities that follow one leader, who is himself a fatherly figure, and the best person for the job. This sort of story does not depict social change, but is the re-creation of the world as the characters would know it outside of their original community, minus the bad influences. Fortunately, it is often the case in Verne that such "bad influences" are usually not present until the point in the story where the characters will soon leave the island, which is an environment of its own. In this sense, Verne does indeed seem to align his stories to some idea of utopia.

However the aforementioned critics also agree that Verne's writing does not fit the exact mold of utopia. In particular, the number of people and the decision to colonize in *En Magellanie* are unusual. Normally, Verne limits the number of his characters to a handful, or enough to represent different strengths and points of view, but not so many as to necessitate a real sense of organization – for if one thing is missing in each society, it is a well-defined system of governance that is more sophisticated than putting all power in the hands of one leader. In any case, in addition to the number of people, *En Magellanie* also seems to circumvent definition as a utopia because the story describes both the shipwreck that forces the settlers and the Kaw-djer to the island but also their more or less freely made choice to

stay and settle it. The involuntary aspect of the initial settlement is troubling as it implies a

Robinsonade rather than a utopia, for the society has no choice regarding its contact with the

outside world. Soon, this does become voluntary, which seems to redefine the story from a

sort of overpopulated Robinsonade to something of a utopia. But again, although on an

island, the society does not cut itself off from outside contact. On the contrary, a great part

of its success is related to the strong commercial relationships it maintains with the outside.

And although certain types of outside contact are not welcomed – namely the gold

prospectors – a presence is always felt. Because of such irregularity within the story, with its

almost utopia-like aspects, Minerva reads it more as a sign of the times than a utopia, seeing

in it a *fin-de-siècle* crisis of thought regarding the almost religious belief in progress (*Utopie*

210).

On the other hand, Minerva also decides that *En Magellanie* could be a partial utopia

because of its references to the *bon sauvage*, America and the creation of a community

around a *chef* (152). Gilli and Montaclair generally agree with this (9-18). Raymond adds

that *Deux Ans de vacances* is also a utopia and more believable than some others because the

ship's hold supplied much of what would otherwise have had to be confected on the island

("Utopie" 8). Finally, Butcher reminds us that by virtue of its location near the fabled and

fabulous Antarctica even *Le Phare du bout du monde* is an indirect reference to utopia

("Introduction" xii-xiii). Nevertheless, all of these works still seem to fall short of meeting a

clear definition of utopia. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to identify them as

Robinsonades.

> En effet on ne saurait oublier que, si utopie et robinsonnade ont plusieurs procédés
> structuraux et plusieurs thèmes en commun, dont le voyage, le naufrage,
> l'insularisme, l'isolement de la civilisation, le retour aux conditions de la vie de
> l'humanité primitive (adoucies en partie par le savoir et le savoir-faire de l'homme

civilisé), la domestication de la nature sauvage de l'île par le travail et la fermeture du périple qui permet le récit, la robinsonnade ne prévoit généralement pas la représentation d'une société, représentation qui est au cœur des préoccupations de l'utopiste. (Minerva, *Utopie* 49).

Therefore, despite a number of similarities, the Robinsonade and the utopia differ fundamentally regarding the reason why the characters are on the island. Indeed, the Robinsonade as a genre takes its name from DeFoe's tale of Selkirk's famous stay on a desert island. Alone for a long time, he was one man not a society, and an exile. Indeed, the Robinsonade, unlike utopia, is forced isolation from society rather than chosen solitude, and it is therefore not desired, nor is it generally permanent. In most cases, the characters in a Robinsonade want to return to their own world. If they make the best of an undesired situation, as they do in Verne's Robinsonades where the characters seem competent and prepared to work together, their actions ameliorate the short term and are not meant to design a new social structure. Therefore, while Verne depicts a society on the island, his interest is more reminiscent of his aforementioned preference for the *Swiss Family Robinson* over *Robinson Crusoe*. The group is already a small, interactive unit rather than one solitary individual, and it is a social factor that reflects the society from which the characters come. Even though his characters are forced onto an island from which they would prefer to escape, they never give the impression of being alone or truly cut off from the world and its ways.[105] They maintain or find an interactive lifestyle among themselves as they await or work for a way of leaving the island. Verne's characters do not despair the way Crusoe does, nor do they find themselves so desperate that they welcome any contact whatsoever over none at all. Kate and Master Evans are happy additions to the Chairman Island boys' society, but the

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[105] Even those characters who feel themselves alone often are not. In *Deux Ans de vacances*, François Baudoin's map represents a real presence for the boys. More often though the isolation is broken by a person: Karroly in *En Magellanie*, John Davis in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, Kate and Master Evans in *Deux Ans de vacances*, for example.

pirates are not. Likewise in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, pirates are obviously unwelcome, a mortal threat, but John Davis and the crew of the *aviso* are welcome because they bring a return to order. In *En Magellanie*, the Merritt brothers, the self-proclaimed but actually self-serving anarchists, and the gold miners are undesirable elements within the colony's success because they upset the balance of equality, order or law. Thus, as one of his most definitive acts, the Kaw-djer kicks the gold nugget off the cliff at Cape Horn because he is unwilling to once again lose his society to outside influences, despite the great commercial value of the discovery.[106] Verne's societies do not avoid all outside contact, nor do they welcome it. Instead, although the island location might theoretically offer what one might think of as utopian shelter from outside elements, these same still manage to infiltrate with varying degrees of success, and must be acknowledged. Verne offers therefore a fairly practical approach to living on the island, and one which evokes a physical and mental interaction with space since it is open to change, and also to new perspectives and negotiation.

Whether one chooses to argue that Verne writes utopia, Robinsonade or neither, he does construct his texts in a circular pattern reminiscent of the coming and going, the here and there, the real and imaginary dialectic that generally builds a utopia. These *effets de réel* move back and forth between the known and the unknown by rearranging or re-presenting accepted social ideas rather than thinking to escape society. Are *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* or *En Magellanie* utopias? "If some conditions for the creation of a utopia appear to be present in Verne's novels, one fundamental element is missing: a break with the existing social order which traditionally underlies the creation of a utopian space (in

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[106] Although much could be said about Verne's dislike for gold, it is out of place here given the two definitions of utopia that would eliminate places like El Dorado from consideration as utopias. On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that in *En Magellanie*, gold is a way of contrasting the Indians' supposedly simple lifestyle with that of the settlers.

its widest sense)" (Capitanio 67). None of the three islands are a utopian space because they do not call into question or exclude Verne's contemporary reality, instead they embrace it. Stuck in this circular pattern that is necessary for the creation of utopia, but that can also become an endless and fruitless search for something that can never be attained (Roboly 136), Verne's texts emphasize the failure of the "ideal" solution to a problem (Boia, *Paradoxes* 270). The anarchist Kaw-djer cannot govern by anarchism any better than Vasquez can act with as much vindictiveness as the pirates. Human imperfection and irreconcilable interests like Doniphan's dislike for Briant invalidate the possibility of utopia because, as Freedman points out, to arrive at one ideal, future solution everyone must work together (64). Rather than utopia, Verne therefore tries to create in his novels some sort of middle ground between the real and the ideal world (Minerva, "Sguardo" 113). This middle ground is the same theoretical space as the textual map, for it is narrative overlap, and it allows for observation from many different angles and approaches, the representation of interaction via objects and movement rather than ideologies and claims of place or a sense of property.

The textual map that paints the world by creating a geography in motion, a narrative of interaction, would seem to argue against Barthes' famous case early in Vernian scholarship in "Nautilus ou le bateau ivre" that the author creates a world that is finite, but that could nonetheless hold an infinite number of objects (*Mythologies* 90). He perceives this as a bourgeois attempt at comfort, control and conquering the environment, an image reinforced by a closed, textual universe, in which, although the character departs on a straight-line journey between two points, he never really explores or deviates from his way of life because he never leaves his home behind (91-92). Other Verne scholars like Chesneaux

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have generally agreed that Verne's characters travel in comfort and that they are collectors of all sorts of odds and ends, but these scholars often disagree with the estimation of a lack of deviation from bourgeois norms. I disagree as well, but not because I would hope to see Verne's characters, or the author himself, espouse a particular political or social platform. Rather, I disagree because within the "infinite number of objects" and the descriptions that abound and sometimes clutter the story, the author moves back and forth between the geographical impositions of the publishing world, including Hetzel's program to use science to explore the known and the unknown worlds, and a narrative style that concurrently explores a geographical place in the ordinary world and the space its movements inhabit in the fictional. The complexity of the tactic, the obligatory re-evaluation and repositioning of the narrative in order to adequately address the fluid nature of the movement *through* rather than around or over geography indicates a constantly adapting, circular pattern rather than a straight line. The character may indeed travel in the greatest of comfort, or at least in a way that reminds him of home, but within the border, or the limit created between these objects and a new geography, Verne crafts a large area of re-cognition, or the space of figurative language in which the author renegotiates the ordinary and the fictional, or the known and the unknown, through narrative.[107]

Re-cognition, or the renegotiation, reconsideration or revision of an understanding of the world's interactions, is undoubtedly responsible in part for Verne's popular longevity. Indeed because Verne's composite style empowers the re-association of meaning, and given the fact that Verne spent his career exploring strange, new worlds – to loosely borrow a phrase from the first *Star Trek* television series – is Jules Verne a father of science fiction

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[107] This space of narrative, like the frontier and the border as well as the archipelago, is geographically recognizable as a concept, but avoids one-to-one definition. Its reproduction is an exploration of movement through it rather than acknowledgement of a sense of proprietary belonging.

rather than a possible writer of utopia? It certainly seemed quite feasible when the lost

manuscript for *Paris au XXe siècle* was found by Gondolo della Riva and subsequently

published in 1994. A look into a desolate future in which humanity seems to have

disappeared under the crush of productivity, this novel had been refused early on by Hetzel

père who very strongly encouraged Verne to avoid such fantasies. This is, however, not the

only text of Verne's that has occasionally been used to associate him with the science fiction

genre. He is widely known for his fantastic machines like the Nautilus, which are based on

actual experiments done by Verne's contemporaries, but which in fictional form remain

nonetheless technologically superior and inexplicable in their engineering. But perhaps

stronger evidence for Verne's association with the genre came from his association with

other future-thinking short stories, despite Hetzel's admonition. New light was shed on this

argument when Gondolo della Riva discovered the original manuscripts for the

posthumously published *Voyages extraordinaires*. Until then, the contribution and changes

that Verne's son Michel had made to the later novels were unknown and in many cases

unsuspected. The son being more interested in science fiction than his father, Michel's

rewriting has created questions of authorship that remain to the present regarding "L'Eternel

Adam" or "Edom".[108] Unfortunately, the confusion Michel's intervention caused reigned

during much of the initial serious critical study of Verne, so in my own research into *En

Magellanie*, for example, I have had to be especially careful in evaluating the critical

arguments.[109] This is neither to nullify scholarship prior to the discovery of the manuscripts,

nor to imply that the work done since is defining either. Rather, it is a reminder that Verne's

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[108] This story takes place in the future and generally discusses the successive rise and fall of human civilizations.

[109] For example, only the most recent *Dictionnaire Jules Verne* correctly associates the title with the action for *En Magellanie*. Previous works of this sort had continued to cite Michel's plot.

authorial career covered forty years of his own lifetime, plus another five through Michel after his death, plus another hundred in film adaptations and literary or other criticism.

To ask whether Verne is a father of science fiction is therefore a difficult question, for it first necessitates an answer to the following questions. Which of Verne's "periods" (pre-1886 or post-1886) should one consider? How much influence do Hetzel, *père* and *fils*, have on Verne's production? What was the author's relationship with his son, and to what degree should one accept or refuse Michel's contribution to the *Voyages*?[110] In my own case, studying *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*, three novels in which the author does not create any impressive machines or inventions, does not place the action in the future, does not cataclysmically end the world with the end of the novel, for instance, to consider Verne one of the fathers of science fiction or even to discuss science fiction seems something of a misplaced effort. Instead, I would support Boia in *Jules Verne, Les Paradoxes d'un mythe*, in which he takes a relatively centrist approach to the question and in which he discusses Verne, Wells and Conan Doyle (*The Lost World*) together, and the difficulties of attributing paternity to science fiction, which is itself a difficult genre to define.[111] Despite this, the association between Verne and science fiction is often made. Capitanio, for instance, approaches Verne more to science fiction than to utopia, but then mitigates her estimation finding that Verne does not fit the genre (70). Lacassin agrees, "Jules Verne simple précurseur parmi d'autres, n'est pas le père de la Science Fiction et ne pouvait pas l'être" (79). Again Boia seems to sum the question up nicely, and since his

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[110] Evidently, some of these questions must remain without an answer, rendering the critical work on which they are based all the more subjective.

[111] Again, Westfahl's first chapter of *The Mechanics of Wonder* helps to explain the difficulty of genre associations and science fiction. In order to accept science fiction as a genre, do scholars need to trace it back to previously accepted literature? Or can science fiction be something new, without a pedigree?

argument has so often followed Verne's own style of maintaining a middle ground, it merits quoting here.

> Mais ce serait mal comprendre sa propre position: le 'père' de la science-fiction n'a presque aucun rapport avec celle-ci. Rien à comparer: c'est une tout autre littérature. Jules Verne reste attaché au monde tel qu'il est, quitte à l'agrémenter d'une dose (limitée et contrôlée) de fantaisie. La science-fiction entend annuler les limites, invente ses propres règles et multiplie les mondes potentiels. Pour elle, la science n'est qu'un alibi. […] Invoquant la science, la science-fiction ne fait que réinventer l'univers magique où tout peut advenir; de plus, ces contes de fées sont fortement idéologisés. Chez Jules Verne, l'insolite reste l'exception, une exception qui ne brise pas les règles, tandis que dans la science-fiction il n'y a plus que l'insolite et une volonté manifeste de mettre en discussion les fondements du monde et de la civilisation. (*Paradoxes* 292-294)

Although it can be argued that Verne's texts, by virtue of exploring *les mondes connus et inconnus*, did indeed create new worlds by using science as the excuse for the exploration, Boia remarks that science fiction stories are strongly ideological, which seems contrary to Verne's occasional utopian tendencies. More importantly, according to the above quoted discussion of science fiction, limits are rendered null, and as I have already discussed in the previous chapter, Verne relies on the existence of limits in reproducing the geographical experience. Indeed, the only limits Verne seems to break through are those imposed on him by genre or academic categorization. Returning to Boia's quote above, in which he offers yet another idea of what might be science fiction, the argument transitions back to utopia and the difference between the imaginative and the imaginary. It is a subtle distinction, but one worthy of mention because utopia, as a dialectical response to ideology or dominant thinking (Mannheim 40), is in fact constrained by the ideology from which it would differ. Applied to the literary utopia, which is a textual production, the author who hopes to connect with his reader is constrained by ideology and the necessity of only referencing what is generally known. The author of a literary utopia cannot deviate too far

from this for fear of creating an imaginary production, or something so far removed from the reading public's understanding of the ordinary world that it is incomprehensible. In search of the imaginative rather than the imaginary, instead of working in vain or toward something *im*possible because it is too far removed from the ordinary world, the author of a literary utopia creates a hypothetical one (Suvin 67). By their very nature, Verne's contractual obligations with Hetzel to use science to explore the known and the unknown worlds forced him to write the hypothetical imaginative or something the public could relate to, not a vain imaginary, and they also kept him within the domain of the possible.[112]

It should not be forgotten that Verne also remained in another domain, the literary. While contemplating Verne's potential affiliation with utopia, it might be prudent to keep this distinction in mind, since literary utopias tend to avoid some of the negatively perceived attributes of their social counterparts. Utopias – both social and literary – are traditionally located on islands or in undisclosed and isolated locations. Around the end of the eighteenth century and with the "discovery" of progress, the social utopia moved in the direction of the future, be it positive or negative. Generally, although such social utopias may sound good, they are almost too good to be true, and during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in particular, the term and concept become more often interpreted as suspicious, and linked with destabilizing social movements (*Paradoxes* 81).[113] Trousson for instance investigates further the difference between the non-place *outopia* and the happy place *eutopia*, specifically recalling the ways in which utopia, as a general concept, was adopted or shunned by the

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[112] One of Verne's few excursions outside of the possible was the play *Voyage à travers l'impossible*, in which popular characters from some of the author's most successful novels travel to different worlds by drinking a potion.

[113] See *En Magellanie*, page 142 where Verne uses the word *utopists* to describe those whose philosophies he attempts to explain.

political movements of the nineteenth century in France after 1848 (10-11). Interestingly, although many authors do lump social, or applied utopia, and literary utopia together, seeing in each the reflection of the other, Trousson does not concentrate on one sort of utopia, distinguishing the literary utopia that he describes as the desire to signify a universe in its fullest manner with the most flexible ways of representing it – a narrative (15).

At first glance, this idea of representing something to its fullest might actually seem contrary to the general understanding of the utopia with its longing for the past, its insularity, its regularity, its geometrical container-like feel, its almost unnatural cleanliness and its suppression of the individual for the sake of the community. But unlike completely ordinary world utopias, the literary utopia is already an exercise in *being* rather than *becoming*. It is *already* written in black and white; the words have already been chosen and published. The literary utopia is a hypothetical construction of how things could, should or would be, and the author who puts together the text conducts an experiment with language, allowing it to give form to the idea. Therefore, once written, a utopia no longer exists because it lacks radicalness (Freedman 73), and it has what de Certeau would call a sense of the proper, it belongs to a particular place. This implies that it also has an ideology, and the literary utopia invites participation in the life of the fictional community (Reedy 171). How adequately does the above describe Verne's writing? Adhering to the traditional and finite security of limits to utopia (Eurich 269), Verne avoids discussing the future because it is still absent, and he often returns things at the end of the novels to the way they were at the beginning (Capitanio 70). He marks therefore an acknowledgement of *place*, and thus to ideology

rather than utopia in the social sense of the word.[114] Differentiating the literary utopia from

this may, however, afford a clearer understanding of the varying opinions regarding Verne

and utopia, for unlike the social utopia that Verne does not embrace, he does show affinities

for something of a literary utopia.

While one may argue for the individual utopian dream of the Kaw-djer in *En

Magellanie* (Minerva, *Utopie* 151), or against it in the case of the rest of the settlers, a group

of ragtag, marginalized individuals who may never find the land they search (159), Macherey

may be correct to label Verne's production a "phénomène idéologique complexe" (184) that

seems to explore somewhere between two extremes and look for no one perfect solution.

Minerva seems to arrive at a similar conclusion, arguing in particular for the complexity of

the times in which Verne wrote.

> Mais l'élaboration de nouvelles sociétés ou de cités idéales ne constituent pas la
> préoccupation fondamentale de l'écrivain [Verne]. La création utopique n'est pas au
> centre de son œuvre. Cette présence 'autre' de l'utopie dans des textes non utopiques
> montrerait les chemins détournés que peut emprunter un imaginaire qui, grâce à ses
> métamorphoses, a traversé les siècles. Critique envers la confiance béate dans la
> possibilité de tout transformer d'après un plan rigoureux scrupuleusement étudié dans
> tous ses détails au point de n'admettre aucune variante, l'utopie de la fin du XIXe
> siècle a perdu cette illusion, en devenant prudente, sceptique, voire méfiante, jusqu'à
> être contaminée par la dystopie […]. (Minerva, *Utopie* 16-17)

Perhaps associating Verne's work with dystopia is a little exaggerated, but certain aspects of

it are as present as are certain aspects of utopia. Referring to Fogg and the *Tour du monde en

quatre-vingts jours*, Butcher makes an interesting and pertinent remark regarding the

importance of time, which can easily apply to utopia, and therefore the difference between

place and space as well.

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[114] His acknowledgement of place should not supersede or undermine his production of a space. Rather, as
explained in the previous chapters, Verne uses place or fact to add verisimilitude or the known to his work in
order to explore the unknown and the interaction of perspectives and movement in a created space.

> Verne's conclusion is that the temptation of the perfect closed system should be resisted, for there is always a blind spot situated between observer and observation, actor and action. The man within the scientist has to accept the extreme contingency attached to the discovery of knowledge; and the scientist in the man must accept personal and temporal relativity, and participate in the looser, partly self-regulatory time of the social system. Time must be left for what Fogg calls the 'frottements' (TM 100) engendered by human intercourse, the repeated *va-et-vient* of real communication. Verne argues that if human beings distinguish themselves from the inorganic through their capacity to reflect, and from the merely organic through their capacity to self-reflect, they must nevertheless ensure that their introspection is not total. Only in this way can man transcend a passive reaction and maintain an active and long term equilibrium with his material, social and intellectual environment. Time and space are one of man's essential concerns. (*Voyage* 116-117)

Rather than writing about groups of people searching to rid themselves of their society or their origins by creating something new, a utopia, Verne writes about societies that engage in a discourse between what is known and what is not, societies that negotiate the textual transition between the ordinary and the fictional worlds in a geographical location that gives the story form. Neither are these closed societies, nor are they passive. These are societies in movement that propels them through a geographical location, creating a space more than a distinct destination or an end result, a space that is dynamic negotiation and narration at the textual level.

Does Verne write utopias? It would seem that he both did and did not, according to the opinion of each scholar. Without a doubt, it is possible to locate within his works various utopian trends such as the island setting or the social organization, but these trends seem limited to individual moments rather than tied to a larger social program, or some sort of invitation to another existence. Instead, the invitation – if one chooses to label it as such – seems to be to participate in something that is in constant motion despite and through the various ordinary world labels and places. The pages of the partly factual and partly fictional text turn under the reader's finger as his or her eyes jump across lines. The island itself

seems on the one hand insular, but on the other continental, since outside influences find expression while eluding easy identification – the result of the archipelago they inhabit. And the author depicts the geography of the ordinary world through a number of perspectives in the fictional one. At least two representations, or products, emerge from this combinatory progression, the novel itself and the textual map. A metaphor for reading the first, the textual map is in some way reminiscent of a utopia, for it represents a non-place, and it is indeed not a place at all, but a space. Inhabited by language and the movement inherent within it, the textual map is, however, not a social space for the characters, and their emotional interactions matter relatively little. They are there, like so many other components of the novel, to paint the earth, and their human-like interaction with geography should be interpreted as an act of perception rather than guidance. Any direction – in a broad sense of the word – within this space is non-linear, or seemingly confused, because the space is itself a circular or spiral coming-and-going between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. The representational textual map cannot be isolated in the manner necessary to make a utopia of it. Nor, as a result of this, can the novel, because despite various utopian characteristics, the reading public following the textual legend is far too implicated in the raveling and unraveling of the plot and story, which is an excuse to explore the geographical location.

De Certeau strongly argues that reading is only one aspect of popular public consumption, that the reading public combines and recombines texts – understood as all aspects of life – and he finds that the world becomes dominated by those who know how to read by incorporating and combining individual ideas into one (*Practice* 167-168). This is relative to the preceding discussion of utopia, as well as the difficulty associated with the textual map, because it is only a representation or this critic's way of reading. The

relationship between the ordinary world geographical location and its textual counterpart in the fictional world gains importance for how it is interpreted by society or a group of readers in general, and what they will produce from it, for consumption comes from production. Chevalier recalls that since ancient times, people have adapted ways of reading the world, of expanding or producing the known by combining the literary voyage and the imaginative story.

> Par ailleurs, il n'existe pas de coupure absolue [*between the literary voyage and the imaginative story*], mais seulement de multiples transitons, encore le récit de voyage d'une rigueur toute scientifique et cette affabulation pure que l'on appelle depuis la fin du siècle dernier le roman d'aventures. Genre souvent considéré comme un peu en marge de la littérature véritable, en dépit de la célébrité d'auteurs tels que Jules Verne ou Stevenson […]. (*Géographie* 177)

It would seem therefore that any language used to investigate Verne's novels or the textual map is a production itself, and much like GoGwilt's fiction of geopolitics, its influence remains well after the original scientific understanding of the relationship has failed. For instance, "[t]he formation of 'geopolitics' over the turn of the century is not a history of geographical institutions. It is, rather, the story of imaginary institutions of geography" (51). By turning the understood relationship between geography and politics on its side, GoGowilt removes the necessity of a binary relationship between the two, accepting in its place multiple possibilities, including ordinary world explorations as well as fictional productions. This is an attractive alternative to traditional binaries, and it expresses the optimism, or the aspect of the attainability of many possibilities, including different interpretations, that is present throughout Verne's writing.

"Cependant, à la progressive découverte littéraire du monde, c'est-à-dire à l'accroissement du nombre des régions et des continents évoqués dans les œuvres littéraires, s'ajoute une connaissance de plus en plus précise des pays et des peuples," notes Chevalier

whose research seeks a historical or linear relationship between geography and literature (*Géographie* 178). But such an argument is place-centered because each step forward builds off the previous arrival. It is all very scientific in appearance, but de Certeau argues effectively that every reading and every reader modifies its object. "The reader takes neither the position of the author nor an author's position. He invents in texts something different from what they 'intended.' He detaches them from their (lost or accessory) origin. He combines their fragments and creates something un-known in the space organized by their capacity for allowing an indefinite plurality of meanings" (*Practice* 169). Does this explain the plurality of Vernians with their wide range of interests? Or does it help explain why the author's work is apparently so difficult to classify within a genre? A space of narrative interaction, is the textual map a geographical location that can be traced on a surface or is it instead a map that both resists and induces new tracings, a vision accessible to multiple interpretations?

> [L]a transmission d'un savoir et des expériences ou voyages d'une vie ne consiste pas seulement à les enseigner point par point et comme lieu après lieu, mais qu'il faut que ces places, banales, s'accrochent, ensemble, dans une vision globale, qui incarne la culture, comme un aimant attire des bribes ou détails de fer pour les associer en un dessin, aussi radieux qu'une aurore boréale: nous voyagerons, dès lors, sur les plans et les cartes de l'espace visité par ces prédécesseurs. (Serres, *Atlas* 15)

Both traceable, but also open to new arrangements, the movement through geography, like through life, coalesces around narrative organization. Likewise, the literary scholar who uses the textual map metaphor to read Verne's narrative finds, within the apparently scientific practice of mapmaking, a system of representation with the flexibility to maintain its appearance of science, or objectivity, while embracing the fictional, much like Verne's own style of writing in his *Voyages extraordinaires*.

IV.C. A Gap in Technology

"The greatest invention of the nineteenth century was the invention of the method of invention. A new method entered into life. In order to understand our epoch, we can neglect all the details of change, such as railways, telegraphs, radios, spinning machines, synthetic dyes. We must concentrate on the method in itself; that is the real novelty, which has broken up the foundations of the old civilization" (Whitehead 95). These words, published in 1967, may not be the most profound to the twenty-first-century reader distracted by the already antiquated technology mentioned. They do, nonetheless, indicate a mindset representative of a society in flux, of a new way of thinking and the realization that expectations are changing. In this sense, they very much echo *fin-de-siècle* France and the backdrop against which Verne wrote, as well as that of the modern day. Therefore, despite the importance of the author's time and the society in which he lived, one of the more interesting aspects of Verne's work is that it is still in wide publication today,[115] at a time when the science and much of the social representation Verne uses is quite frankly outdated. Because of this, I assign less importance in this dissertation to the idea of ideology or utopia, or the author's life and influences in it than other critics may, for the backdrop against which Verne wrote does not seem specific to him. However, such information is not without its merits and most recently Butcher's *Jules Verne: The Definitive Biography* does a fine job of intercalating the author's life with events in his stories, and other similar biographical works have done an equally good job of explaining the author's relationship with his publishers (Hetzel *père* and *fils*), his family, the city in which he resided and for which he worked in local government,

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[115] See the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's list of the top fifty most translated authors at (http://databases.unesco.org/xtrans/stat/xTransStat.a?VL1=A&top=50&lg=0) where Verne is number three after Walt Disney productions and Agatha Christie. One could advocate for the various versions of the Bible being added together as one, moving Verne to fourth position. Either way, the placement is quite impressive.

his research methods and the grueling publishing schedule he maintained for forty years. Although I unhesitatingly acknowledge the role that an author's personal world experience plays in the creation of a literary text, my primary interest lies in the study of the text itself as a production that is an application of language meant to invent new ways of exploring the world, a narrative that, in Verne's case, I call a textual map that negotiates, or rather *re*negotiates the way ordinary and fictional worlds overlap, losing their individual place-bound or proper identity as they recombine in a space borrowed from the metaphorical or the figurative. As a result, Verne's spaces are neither entirely within the realm of science or scientific fact, nor exactly within the domain of fiction. Instead, they are something akin to applied science or applied fiction, experiments of a sort meant to invent something new, a new technology, a new application of known geographical and linguistic forms.

In the previous section, I noted that Boia describes science fiction as the use of science as an excuse for its existence, changing the world by making the impossible possible and altering history or natural law (*Paradoxes* 292-294). He adds that Verne does not do this *per se*, although he certainly is known to change a geographical location in order to better complement a story, completely changing the location of the Staten Island lighthouse and textually erecting a new one on Cape Horn, for instance.[116] Despite the author's changes to geography, natural laws still prevail and even the completely manmade – and Verne-invented – lighthouses behave as lighthouses should, without supernatural effects. This brings me back to my earlier discussion regarding science fiction and Verne's continued association with the genre. I concede the validity of the association, but refuse the one-to-one equality that is too often tacitly accepted for its apparent ease of classification. Indeed, it is not

[116] In addition to Butcher's preface to *Lighthouse at the End of the World*, *The Lighthouse Directory*, (http://www.unc.edu/~rowlett/lighthouse/index.htm) has significant information on both Staten Island and Cape Horn lighthouses.

difficult to see the relationship between Verne and science fiction, since he wrote books about, and based on, science. Beneath the veneer of the facile equation, Verne's writing style is not, however, so straight forward because it is not an expression of science itself, nor is it solely fiction either. Rather, science in Verne is like Ariadne's ball of string proffered to Theseus before he entered the labyrinth. Functionally, it gets one in and out of the active events of a story, which is in fact much larger than that one event. Following it is much like following the logic of theoretical science, with its hypotheses and theorems. It is also the tangible application of what is already in Greek the idea of knotting and unknotting a story. In a sense, the ball of string is a technological device, as well as a literary one. It is the technological application of an otherwise intangible premise about the literary theory of storytelling. Therefore, Verne's style of writing is the application, or the almost mechanical expression, of theoretical science and storytelling technique that come together in the device of the novel. Like Ariadne's thread, the product that is the result of this combination leads one through the process of its production by showing how the theoretical is put into practice, or how the ball of string is unwound by the author and also unwound by the reader or critic.

Might it be possible therefore that Verne is so often mentioned as the father of science fiction because his reader can – consciously or not – perceive in the text some interaction between the theoretical and the applied aspects of exploring the world? Certainly, many Vernians, including A. Evans who coincidentally edits the journal *Science Fiction Studies*, have remarked upon the author's desire to bridge the gap between those who think of industrialization and science and those who think in terms of art ("Canon" 20). My own textual map draws on this idea as well, referring to a space between the ordinary and the fictional world. Within this space of narrative in motion, narrative in action, the theoretical is

both fictional and ordinary, and the applied is a sort of technology of language, a style that is a representation with all its approximations and *semblant* qualities that negotiate new meaning. Conley discusses an equivalent to this space in his own approach to mapping literature, noting that early authors re-explored what was already known, eventually settling on a variety of strategies like the *routier* (book of navigation) or the *isolario* (island atlas) or even sheet maps or atlases. But he argues that these pre-set models fail to satisfy the requirements of authors who want to extrapolate, to insert something other than what is expected, to express themselves in an unanticipated or uncharacteristic manner. Somewhere, he argues, between the author and his expression, lies the self – Conley's primary interest of study (5). Likewise, in the space between the ordinary, or the proper world of places that can be pointed to, and the fictional world of representations, Verne moves his reader through an itinerary that certainly does lead to an end product, but that meanders sufficiently along the way so as to offer multiple pauses for reflection about the very construction of the literary world Verne's words explore while resonating against the background of geographical discovery. He, like Conley's authors who wished to express something more than fact alone, crafts an opportunity to investigate an ordinary world enhanced by the fictional, to move within a world made possible through linguistic expression.

In light of the above, my own textual map may give the impression of being more related to science fiction than Verne's *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* or *En Magellanie*, all of which take place in rather remote settings that could appear at first glance – and with more than a hundred years of knowledge – to have little of what might be considered akin to the extraordinary.[117] The popular expectation that science fiction must of

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[117] Despite a facile, mundane quality, the Cape Horn location is actually quite exotic both for the richness of stories of adventure and exploration that came from the area, the dangers of its navigation and maybe most

necessity be somehow extraordinary is, however, an overgeneralization highly influenced by

science fiction subgenres that have evolved over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first

centuries.[118] Perhaps it would be more appropriate when discussing the contribution of Jules

Verne to science fiction, to remember that his works are some among many early examples –

in the plural. Perhaps, rather than attributing him sole paternity, it would be more honest to

enlarge the field and to share the honor – for honor it is – with the many other authors whose

work exemplified the application of science and language about science in the direction of a

new genre, a new literary space. Looking backwards in the linear progression of the

discussion of the genre of science fiction, Gernsback – another of the touted fathers of

science fiction for his editorial and critical skills in launching *Amazing Stories* – seems to

offer a similar line of thought in his definition of the blooming genre.[119]

> By 'scientifiction'[120] I mean the Jules Verne, H.G. Wells and Edgar Allan Poe type of
> story – a charming romance intermingled with scientific fact and prophetic vision.
> […] Two hundred years ago, stories of this kind were not possible. Science, through
> its various branches of mechanics, electricity, astronomy, etc., enters so intimately
> into all our lives today, and we are so much immersed in this science, that we have
> become rather prone to take new inventions and discoveries for granted. Our entire
> mode of living has changed with the present progress, and it is little wonder,
> therefore, that many fantastic situations – impossible 100 years ago – are brought
> about today. It is in these situations that the new romancers find their great
> inspiration. […] Not only do these amazing tales make tremendously interesting
> reading – they are always instructive. They supply knowledge that we might not
> otherwise obtain – and they supply it in a very palatable form. For the best of these
> modern writers of scientifiction have the knack of imparting knowledge and even
> inspiration without once making us aware that we are being taught. (3)

importantly its proximity to Antarctica. At the time Verne was writing, the exact nature – land or sea, island or
continent – of the area was still in the process of discovery and open to imaginative speculation.

[118] Of course, the fact that Verne's stories were the *Voyages extraordinaires* further lends to the confusion,
creating an additional expectation of the extraordinary.

[119] Westfahl's *The Mechanics of Wonder* particularly concerns itself with Gernsback's contribution to the
definition and contemporary understanding of science fiction.

[120] Gernsback copyrighted the term *scientifiction* to the magazine *Amazing Stories* that he founded. When he
left the magazine, he could not continue to use the term and with some evolution in terminology, we now have
the term *science fiction*.

Although Gernsback argues for a futuristic quality, or vision, his definition – published only 21 years after Verne's death – does not rely solely on what is yet-to-be, but instead on something that is interesting, instructive and artistically developed (romantic) in the presence of the reader. Scientifiction, or what will become science fiction, *engages* science and literature, moving each into the other's apparent domains before the wandering eyes of the reader who participates by consuming and in turn producing new associations, new representations, new productions. De Certeau explores this same sort of idea as he discusses popular culture and the ways in which the reader's consumption is actually a production – albeit temporary – as he or she inscribes new meaning to what is read. "Imbricated within the strategies of modernity (which identify creation with the invention of a personal language, whether cultural or scientific), the procedures of contemporary consumption appear to constitute a subtle art of 'renters' who know how to insinuate their countless differences into the dominant text" (*Practice* xxii). The dominant text, in this case, would be Verne's stories that the reader makes his or her own for an undetermined moment. And, of course, it is also the many voyages and tales Verne himself consulted and poached as he wrote his *Voyages extraordinaires*. A part of enunciation itself, the activity of reading engages more than one party in a shared system of appropriation and interlocution that speaks about some present despite the indicators of past and future (33). It gathers, combines and overlays heterogeneous narrative discourses, recreating a space (on the one level, the novel within which another level is the textual map) in which their interaction is possible. Reading becomes a sort of geography in which places might be recognized, but their interaction is more like Robinson Crusoe's island, a representation of what the character understood, which is in turn a representation of what the author Defoe understood from what

was reported of the sailor Selkirk's experiences. A spiraling effect is created as the references – the apparently scientific, the factual series of events, or the places – become representations themselves, echoing both the fictional and the ordinary world.

Verne was one of the many fathers of science fiction not because he "imagined" the *Nautilus* and other extraordinary devices, but because he knew how to employ *literary* and *scientific* devices in a "scientifictional" manner, which is to say that he participated in a movement that we now retrospectively recognize as science fiction, a trend away from strict genre definitions and proprietary discourses, a space in which the reader interacts with the text and meaning itself becomes representation. Extrapolated from Verne's own work, which is itself an extrapolation of others', comes the inspiration and the sense of optimism that gives one the feeling that it is possible to adapt Verne's novels into film, to write new stories about the same characters,[121] or even to imagine a dissertation based on the premise of a metaphorical textual map of a narrative geographical space. If, on occasion, such films or adaptations seem misplaced, they are all the better evidence of the interesting plasticity of Verne's worlds in which so many readers have found satisfaction.

In recent years, some of those readers are the same who have enjoyed new technological advances such as the Internet, cellular phones or laptop computers. Such technology that brings immediate results to its user through a personal connection helps to explain what even early Verne critics such as Vierne understood when saying that advances in technology give those who use it the feeling that they are much more in control of their environment, of their destiny (58-59). Does that mean that they understand how and why the

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[121] An interesting example of this is the 2005 Editions Mnemos compilation *La Machine à remonter les rêves: les enfants de Jules Verne*, a series of short stories in which modern writers continue the stories begun by Verne, who himself had made a similar sort of attempt with his play *Voyage à travers l'impossible*. In a number of ways, this is much like the plethora of *Star Wars* books that have been inspired by the original film.

technology works? Not necessarily, but many are the computer or software companies now asking consumers what they will do with the technology available, or how they will use it to become producers. The average consumer might be only vaguely aware of how the technology works, or the science that makes it possible, but he or she is actively producing with it in a negotiated, non-specialist oriented system of representation facilitated by a software interface. Theoretical science on the other hand is much like language itself, as discussed by de Certeau, who argues that one cannot get outside of language to discuss it because the discussion relies on language (*Practice* 11-13). However, applied science and applied language, or its use, is accessible to analysis and interpretation because it expects as much, and therefore it is also part of renegotiation and new expression. In the *Voyages extraordinaires*, Verne seems to show his reader how to do this, how to produce something new by applying, making use of or consuming what is already available. This didactic quality is not a newly remarked quality in Verne, for A. Evans discusses it at length, but seeing a technologically inspired application of language does seem a new approach. In doing this, I do not attempt to ignore the references made to technological inventions like the *Nautilus* or the *Albatross*, but rather to extrapolate upon statements like the following from Capitanio. "More evidently mathetic than those of his contemporaries, Verne's texts take to an extreme the nineteenth-century Realist tendency to represent a world that is *a priori* circumscribable, causal and explicable in a way that frequently blurs the boundaries between novel and scientific or technical manual […]" (Capitanio 63). The unknown and the unrepresentable qualities of scientific theory, once applied by being put into words, become a technological sort of representation that is accessible to the reader who then is able to negotiate how to interact with it. Therefore, Verne's technical manual quality has the

reassuring effect of something apparently solid within the movement of the *Voyages extraordinaires*.

This quality resonates at least partially through the characters, but also through the geographical areas described, and around whose description Verne creates part of the textual legend explained in the previous chapter. For example, the following is taken from *Deux Ans de vacances* and portrays the last explored area of the island.

> Ce qui caractérisait l'aspect de ce littoral, c'était l'entassement des blocs de granit. Désordre véritablement grandiose que cet amoncellement de rochers gigantesques – sorte de champ de Karnak, dont la disposition irrégulière n'était point due à la main de l'homme. Là, se creusaient de ces profondes excavations, que l'on appelle 'cheminées' en certains pays celtiques, et il eût été facile de s'installer entre leurs parois. […] Aussi Briant fut-il naturellement conduit à se demander pourquoi le naufragé français ne s'était point réfugié sur cette partie de l'île Chairman. Quant à l'avoir visitée, nul doute à cet égard, puisque les lignes générales de cette côte figuraient exactement sur sa carte. Donc, si l'on ne rencontrait aucune trace de son passage, c'est que très probablement François Baudoin avait élu domicile dans French-den, avant d'avoir poussé son exploration jusqu'aux territoires de l'est, et, là, se trouvant moins exposé aux bourrasques du large, il avait jugé à propos d'y rester. Explication fort plausible, que Briant crut devoir admettre. (Verne, *Deux Ans* 291)

Much like de Certeau's proverbs that are tools for communication marked by their use (*Practice* 21), the series of references in the quote above, from Carnac to Celtic chimneys to François Baudoin, confer more than simple linear historicity, they indicate a manufacture of meaning because they are presented under the guise of conjecture and impression drawn from supposedly objective observation. Applied logic and applied science resonate, filling the space with a geography that is more than a physical presence that is a point on a map, or a destination to which, or around which, one moves. Instead, it is a geography that should be ordinary, but that is instead built upon fictional building blocks or supernatural forces proposed by the *fictional* Briant. The ordinary takes on hues of the extraordinary, but the applied science – the technology – of the re-creation, or the production of the geographical

location as well as of its expression by the author through Briant, reveals the bridge between the artistic and the scientific worlds, the space between the ordinary and the fictional, in which one can almost watch narrative discourses interact.

The intrusion of figurative language in scientific discourse and scientific language in the figurative alters the meaning of enunciation in general, removing the properly grammatical aspect and rendering the resulting text a representation that cannot be associated with one proper location (de Certeau, *Practice* 39). The world of Verne's description is therefore not closed, despite the appearances created by the likes of Paganel, who would chart and plot every movement if possible, or by Fogg, who manages to make it around the world in the eighty days prescribed, but only because a day is "lost" by crossing the International Date Line. Indeed, this second example is quite interesting as part of the discussion of place and space, for as if by magic, the calendar rolls back and Fogg no longer benefits from location but from time itself – or the calculated extrapolation of it – a negotiation of scientific data associated with the earth's movement and man's need to explain it. On a point-by-point basis, a specific date or time can help to place a location, but this systemization seems to lose proper meaning when considering the whole and realizing that a day can ostensibly be manufactured out of nowhere. Verne seems to apply here a tactic rather than a strategy, as understood by de Certeau who argues that while the latter holds an established position or place of power, the former exploits the recombination of heterogeneous elements to create space (*Practice* 36-39). In the case of Fogg, Verne tinkers a hodgepodge of information together, and documents a fortunate eighty-first day within a closed system understood as limited to only eighty.

Yet at the same time as Verne seems to be blazing new paths of discourse combination, many of his characters are only following somebody else's map, or reacting to circumstances that seem relatively out of their control. All of the characters in *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* find themselves in such circumstances. This aspect of Verne's writing confuses the categorization of him under one genre. Like an archipelago that is frontier and bridge, island and continent, and neither one nor the other, Verne's productions reveal the discourses that make them, but also elude their categorization by refusing to respect their proprietary nature. "The 'scientific romance,' [Verne's] invention, is a conflicted form, part romance, part positivist sermon (though its faith often wavers); it operates always in the tension of its stated aims of discovery, survey, and summary. This tension will be irreducible because discovery must always be potentially, and traumatically, at odds with the obsessional satisfactions of survey and summary" (Harpold 34-35). Science and fiction in Verne's novels do not satisfy the requisites of either proper science or proper fiction, falling instead between the gaps into an area of applied discourse, attracting a wide audience by giving the appearance of leveling the field of play between science and fiction through their combination in a shared production or story, what de Certeau might call a decorative container for everyday practices, a metaphor (*Practice* 70).

A technology of sorts, the application of scientific and linguistic theory into practice, an articulated form of negotiation between the author and his research and the author and his readers, Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* assume the appearance of a location based on place, but they actually rely upon the interaction of discourses, or their meaning at the time they are overlaid. This raises another difficulty in discussing Verne, for he is obviously

writing from the perspective of the late nineteenth century, yet despite the many years

between his writing and our reading, he continues to inspire. Somehow, despite being tied to

a linear or historical time period, Verne's work eludes it as well. Again, the comparison

between Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* and a sort of technology is useful, for while both

science and technology are tied to their historical moment in time, the evolution of a

technology – unlike that of theoretical science – is a product of its consumption or its use by

a large, unspecialized audience of readers looking to it with their own interpretations of its

importance in mind.

> Les technologies n'ont aucune réelle autonomie mais se situent toujours dans des
> contextes historiques et culturels déterminés. Elles sont tout autant que le langage,
> des éléments de constitution d'un monde humain et sont intrinsèquement liées à une
> dimension symbolique. Il ne saurait donc être réellement question de neutralité quant
> au sens et à l'interprétation du rapport qu'une société entretient avec ses techniques et
> ses technologies. Toute société crée son monde ainsi que ses repères de sens, et de
> cette création, la technique et la technologie ne sont ni instruments ni causes, mais en
> constituent une expression d'ordre ontologique. La narration semble jouer à ce
> niveau un rôle primordial. Les histoires se racontent, s'écrivent et tendent à orienter
> directement ou indirectement autant les individus que les sociétés elles-mêmes.
> (Chardel 95)

Technology is therefore not only a matter of putting scientific theory into tangible action, its

application requires a communication with the society in which it is supposed to function,

and thoughtful consideration of what lies outside of scientific work, deemed by de Certeau to

be its remainder or culture itself (*Practice* 6). This remainder, that somewhat ironically

defines the whole by being what it is not, constantly voices skeptical criticism that has no

precedence or perceived social authority (7). But, it is this technological application of

knowledge, and the language that negotiates it, that combines and fashions the many

discourses with which it comes into contact, deriving from the experience a sense of

something applicable within a space irreducible to some particular place. Much like the

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Internet, it is a space that is a virtual medium of communication in which one can feel a personal connection with technology and with production by exploring its new uses and the many ways of exploring it. Although the medium is different, Verne's novels reflect a similar approach to an exploration of the unknown, by opening it to investigation.

Certainly, Verne's style harkens back to simple Realism, but somehow by using science as the backbone for making his stories believable (Boia, *Paradoxes* 89), he removes the necessity of credulity from the objects themselves and places it on their description. As Yotova points out, the author's only tool to describe science is language (209), which he must employ within an atmosphere of conflicting discourses that mimic what de Certeau calls the "tactics of consumption" (*Practice* xvii), or in this case, the way in which an author expresses a type of discourse that neither he nor his reader masters, but which one can engage nonetheless. "The known and the unknown are here side by side. The unknown, by dint of its being explored and exposed, becomes the known; and by the same token, the known takes on something of the mystique of the unknown. The essential impetus of Verne's fiction may be an act of taking and appropriation […]" (Unwin, "Fiction" 47).

Does this make Verne the *maître après Dieu* he mentions from time to time in his *Voyages extraordinaires*, the ship captain who bears ultimate responsibility for his vessel? In this case, of course the vessel in question is the series of novels through which Verne's practice of writing may be analyzed. Although Macherey is primarily concerned with the political aspects in Verne, the following statement is nonetheless germane to the linguistic question, for he says that the "acte de l'écrivain est donc fondamental: il réalise une cristallisation particulière, une restructuration, et même une structuration des données sur lesquelles il travaille: tout ce qui n'était que pressentiment collectif, projet, aspiration,

précipite brusquement dans une image vite familière, qui devient pour nous la réalité, la chair même de ces projets, cela seul qui leur donne réalité" (258). The standards and gauges of this Vernian reality do not always match those of the ordinary world, but they do give the appearance of matching because they use a similar language or pattern of language. They seem to match. For instance, despite knowing that the Hanover Island that Verne describes has flora and fauna as well as geography that the Hanover Island off of South America does not, Verne's creativity and the resulting flaws in realism go overlooked by the reader who sees in them relatively minor details in the description of the life of a group of boys on Chairman Island (Auriol 75-77).

The flora and fauna of Chairman Island, the lighthouses that do not exist or are misplaced, the independent nations and the pirates: Verne practices the three elements de Certeau claims define the practice of writing, understood as a transport rather than a discourse, and "the concrete activity that consists in constructing, on its own, blank space (*un espace propre*) – the page – a text that has power over the exteriority from which it has first been isolated" (*Practice* 134). From the place of the page, that is isolated and independent from the rest of the world (element one), the author creates a production that is the steps (words, sentences, pages and so forth) that put into action a whole new space (element two) that reflects the exterior world within the new narration, bringing in passive elements and combining them to become active (element three) (134-135). Many of Verne's critics have remarked upon this, although they have explained it differently. For Butcher, change occurs in Verne's stories in the space between the observer and the observed, which is the blind spot or the Achilles heel to the perfect closed system, for it is the space of reflection and rethinking of ideas based on events (*Voyage* 116). Within the *Voyages extraordinaires*, the

author leads an expedition around the ordinary world as well as around a world of literature. Yet, while Verne seems to bumble along after the likes of Hugo, Scott, Flaubert, Defoe and Poe as he looks for his own style, his own applied science of literature, his own technology of applied writing, he also manages to narrate the interaction of the ordinary and the fictional worlds in such a manner as to inevitably recreate a geographical world that exists only in literature, but that is nonetheless based solidly in the ordinary world. Herein lies some of the contradiction that so often disconcerts critics of Verne who would classify his work as belonging to one genre or another, for he does not belong to one genre but to many and to none (Pasquier 5). Again, although Macherey's criticism searches for the political ramifications, which are not of primary concern here, he is correct in signaling the reader and the critic to look for Verne's style in the space between what it appears to be and what it is (220). Therefore rather than assigning a genre like children's literature or science fiction – both labels having effectively muddied Verne's consideration for the traditional canon of French *literature* – Pasquier argues that Verne's style is indetermination to the excess, in which one can identify relatives of many different genres, not one of which is brought to term and none of which the author really seems to embrace (19).

> Une conclusion s'impose: Jules Verne n'est pas un grand écrivain. Tel énoncé, malgré les apparences, ne met en cause ni la valeur ni l'importance d'une œuvre; il exclut son auteur d'une catégorie historique, celle des 'grands écrivains,' qui implique une position centrale étrangère à Verne. Si le bannir de la littérature était une aberration, le consacrer auteur canonique empêche peut-être de saisir ce qui fait sa grandeur: une œuvre traversée de tensions, qui fait une richesse de sa situation instable aux frontières de la littérature, dont elle nous désigne la mobilité et la fluidité. Une situation peut-être pas sans rapport avec l'engouement qu'elle suscita chez d'autres grands 'frontaliers' de la littérature, Roland Barthes et Georges Perec. (20)

Verne may not be a great canonical writer, but as Pasquier remarks, his work is not without merit, for within it is a tension and instability at the frontiers of literature, mobility and fluidity that express movement.

The concept of the textual map is born from these tensions, these spaces in between, these frontiers. A narrative location in which various geographies interact to negotiate movement between the known and the unknown, the textual map is the location for language and words that are chosen specifically for their practical application and their accessibility to a broad reading public. Such a use of words becomes a technology of sorts, an interactive production destined for a particular use, but which lends itself to new applications while opening up the possibility to appeal to, and incorporate within it, a large number of discourse sources. The textual map echoes and reflects therefore the question of genre because it comes from a style of writing that goes beyond the faithful description of one world – ordinary or fictional – and it encourages the exploration of a space that seems open to limitless possibilities rather than one strict interpretation.

IV.D. The Possibility of Genre

Stemming from the tensions, and inherent to the large number of readers of Verne's *Voyages* over the years, the variety of critical appreciation of the author's works seems to imply that the texts lend themselves to limitless possibilities of interpretation. Chesneaux may thus argue that Verne was a man of the left (*Politique*) while Boia can just as strongly argue for the right or the center (*Paradoxes*), Dumas for Michel's ignominy ("Testament"), Butcher for hidden psychological reflexes (*Biography*), Costello for science fiction, Dekiss for a humanitarian Verne (*Enchanteur*), Huet for a historical author, Vierne for a creator of mythology (*Mythe*), Compère for Verne's polyphonic aspects (*Ecrivain*), A. Evans for his

didacticism (*Rediscovered*) and so on and so forth. I might dare make the pun that Verne's critics are all over the map, since common use of the word geography – often related to a map – applies it not only to the earth, but finds it equally useful in describing relationships between similar items felt to share a terrain, a field. A geography of literature might become therefore the attempt to apply or to define a niche, a location, a place or a genre. A geography of this sort might be realizable in the case of Verne, if only the various critics could agree on the author's position in the tradition of French literature, if only some consensus of canonical quality could be attained.[122] However, to neatly pigeon-hole Verne into an identity is to ignore the variety of opinions regarding his work, the ideas of his many admirers[123] and the widely spread popularization and reappropriation of his stories and his name.

This hindrance to classification of Verne's work is in fact one reason for the importance of an interpretive approach like the textual map that acknowledges and embraces the consequence of overlapping discourses. The textual map, indeed geography itself as it must be applied to Verne's work, is a generative or creative concept rather than a generic or classifying one. Instead of quantifying what the scholar sees based on a comparison between Verne and other authors – a question of relationships – geography in Verne is not only the description of the earth itself against which the author's characters have adventures, it is also a linguistic process and perception that goes into and through the gap between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. Geography then generates a new space, which reveals its

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[122] Again, I remind my reader that the canon is a difficult concept to define or to discuss since it is subjective and relies on imprecise expectations and tastes. Therefore, when I speak of it, I refer to one tradition of French literature. See A. Evans' article, "Jules Verne and the French Literary Canon," for further information on Verne's relationship with the literary canon.

[123] Consult archives from the Jules Verne Forum (http://jv.gilead.org.il/forum/) from Zvi Har'El's Jules Verne Collection (http://jv.gilead.org.il/) for an indication of Verne's influence.

complexities as the author intertwines discourses and perceptions in a manner that would seem to have historically evaded generic classification because it crosses genres with apparent ease, and – perhaps more importantly – because it is intrinsically tied to the reading process during which the reader creates or produces his or her own story from the borrowed material. Indeed, the apparent ease with which Verne juggles scientific and literary discourse encourages his readers along, inviting them to continue by making encounters with new concepts, or the unknown, far less intimidating. Of course, this is part of the mission of the *Voyages extraordinaires* as defined by Hetzel *père*, to educate as well as to entertain. But while Verne's readers were uncovering the complexities of the novels, his critics and the art for art's sake nineteenth-century canon builders somehow failed to see how the texts could become "classics." "Comme la partie immergée d'un iceberg qui est neuf fois plus importante que celle qui apparaît, la valeur littéraire de l'œuvre de Jules Verne s'est trouvée plongée dans la mer de l'oubli. La partie émergée – la plus négligeable – a été seule observée et vite classée sous le nom de fantaisie scientifique sans grand intérêt" (Compère, *Approche* 5).

Times and tastes change, though, and throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, critical appreciations of literary content have continued to evolve alongside styles and genres that were once considered sub par. Nerlich, who writes about the *Ideology of Adventure*, argues, for instance, that the disconnect between what is considered intellectual and what is in fact popular lies at the feet of a sentiment on the part of intellectuals that popularity and intellectual quality do not coincide, a feeling that there is inherently some sort of opposition between the author and the intellectual / critic. He adds, however, that engaged literature like the *nouveau roman* and the avant-garde movement has made it possible to

discuss more popular and accessible literature (174). Perhaps more tellingly, Nerlich signals the value in the adventure ideology of acceptance of what is unknown and what is left to chance, recognition of what is valuable in something that is dissimilar to oneself and elaboration of a system of dealing successfully with loss (xxi). Could we apply this same leap of faith to the literary canon, proposing that it could or should be open to discussion and change as years go by? Nerlich's remarks therefore that adventure novels have been read widely for centuries, despite limited critical approbation, are quite interesting for they exemplify the distance between popularity and academic acceptance.

This recalls Verne's situation, and Nerlich's ideas enrich the discussion of genre and how to read and interpret Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* because, of course, alongside the previously discussed label of science fiction, other critics have applied the very term of adventure novel to Verne's works. Likewise, while ostensibly describing adventure novels in general, Tadié speaks of a number of traits that are often remarked about Verne's style. For instance, adventure novels are not sentimental (19), the hero is formulaic (10), the end of the story is tied up quickly (16) and the story often takes place in the past or in an exotic location that is a means and not an end, a way of introducing a sense of difference (8-9). And quite importantly, whether in the first person or not, the perspective from which the story is told, and therefore the organization of the narration, is from the point of view of the hero who has already lived through the events, now simply recounting his or her tale in a manner designed around the audience (6-7). "Tout dans la narration est organisé en fonction du lecteur" (7). Reading such words, I cannot help but think of de Certeau's discussion of popular culture and the consumer who is not passive, but who is actively participating in the creation of a temporary, homeless but nonetheless perceptible culture, a popular culture that is the

consumer's way of operating (*Practice* xi). "Everyday life invents itself by *poaching* in countless ways on the property of others" (xii). So does the adventure novel.

The remark must be made that Verne himself wrote about the very subject of poaching in the short story "Dix heures en chasse," briefly mentioned earlier. Written in the first person, it is the story of a novice hunter out for a day of shooting with friends. Unfortunately for his endeavor, he seems to be interminably confronted with the warning sign "*Chasse réservée*" and philosophizes about the meaning of boundaries and property. Although he respects the signs, when he does ultimately spot a small bird feather to fire at, he shoots a gendarme's hat by accident, which of course earns him a fine. Despite the character's apparent respect for property, he breaks the law and might as well have poached. Likewise, Verne's writing style poaches that of others, much as popular culture does. However, this should not imply that he was only a writer of popular novels, a genre that Tadié considers the forefather of the modern bestseller and which is tied specifically to the readers, disappearing with them (25-26) because it are tied to a social message, a social meaning that is often linked to social ascension, whereas the adventure novel is not (17). Although the development of the adventure novel in nineteenth-century France certainly coincides with a social movement or a particular culture of expanding empires and scientific knowledge (189), he insists that the model of the adventure story is timeless.

> La pérennité du roman d'aventures est garante de ses lois. Une structure vieille comme la littérature et jeune comme notre espoir supporte la décoration nouvelle que chaque pays, chaque société, chaque génération lui impose. Un genre littéraire, donc; un sous-genre du roman, à moins qu'au contraire le roman d'aventures n'engendre, ne soutienne, ne fasse être toutes les espèces de roman. Car ce que nous avons rencontré chez Verne ou Conrad, d'autres l'ont (comme Bakhtine) cherché chez Héliodore, ou (comme Marthe Robert) chez Cervantès et Defoe: il n'est pas nécessaire de lire tous les romans pour lire le roman; la multiplicité produit le plaisir plus que la connaissance. (205-206).

Thus the adventure seems to repeat a pleasurable story, to follow a sort of pattern. The enjoyment of reading such a text does not rely on discovering the unknown, but instead in the construction of the story of how that unknown is investigated. One hears echoes of de Certeau in Tadié's last sentence, for in the *Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau argues that the reader's pleasure comes from another's adventure. He adds that the moments of pleasure are therefore lost because they do not belong exclusively to the reader, since he or she has no *place* to keep them (*Practice* xxi). The adventure is borrowed from multiple sources, rented by readers who know the "art" of insinuating their own "countless differences into the dominant text" (xxii). In the case of Verne, this process is not only that of his readers who consult / read his textual map as they actualize a narrative space, it is also Verne's own as he writes.

Devoting a certain attention to the adventure novel in this section – much as I did previously with science fiction – has not been to convince my reader that Verne was an author of adventure novels only. Rather, it should be clear by now that my discussion of what are now relatively accepted genres – or subgenres – is not an attempt to classify Verne, but rather an effort to explain how Verne's writing seems to lend itself to these genres, having itself borrowed or interpreted from other fictional and non-fictional sources. Verne's approach to narrative, his ability to combine discourses taken, borrowed or poached from the ordinary and the fictional worlds, generates a space within literature as a whole for his work, but it does not designate or reduce to one genre. Rather, the space Verne creates corresponds to the textual map, an interaction of narratives reliant upon movement and interaction as they "map" the empty space of the unknown. Verne's pseudo-scientific approach cloaks the uncertainty of potentially shifting perspective in the reassurance that the experience of

creating space – explaining it and giving it meaning – can be reproduced from a different perspective or point of view. The experiment can be repeated, and indeed the books have been read over and again by generations. But, within these collective re-readings, our propensity for cataloguing has lent Verne's name to science fiction, adventure stories or children's tales and the gravitational pull of these labels makes many critics or scholars forget that Verne is writing about the blank spaces, the empty spaces, and that each potential reader has his or her own unique perspective. Looking up at the night sky, tradition might have grouped stars into legendary figures – much as tradition has grouped texts within a canon – but when one realizes that the earth is not equidistant from each star in a constellation, that if seen from a different perspective the grouping would not have the same meaning, if any at all, the space between identifiable places becomes more interesting and intriguing than the places themselves. Thus Verne, whose writing produces the reader's awareness of such spaces, continues even today to interest those who find through the narrative interaction, an entry and a sort of map into the blank spaces or the spaces between, and a perspective from which to find a personal relationship, but not a particular genre, by moving through the space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds.

The study of Verne through a geographical perspective, using the metaphor of the textual map by which the reader moves through the space between the discourses of the ordinary and the fictional worlds, is therefore uniquely suited to this author who seems to know how to capitalize on the scientific, literary and cultural movements of his time by rendering them timeless, without insistence upon a particular place, location or relationship to history despite the obvious setting of the second half of the nineteenth century. Verne's writing somehow becomes the production of a map itself, in the sense that it approximates

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the landform it represents without precision, but with the reassurance that that which is

inscribed bears a likeness to what is already known, despite having no real relation to it.

Under cover of probability, of scientific fact or technology as synthesized between the

physical and human worlds, Verne writes a text that is a map itself, a map that is "[…] un

mélange problématique, où la transparence de l'illusion coexiste avec l'opacité d'un support

qui matérialise cette image" (Jacob, *Empire* 41). But of course it is a textual map based on

actual geographic knowledge,[124] yet distinctly aware of the limits of its discursive nature. An

encounter between the ordinary and fictional worlds, the factual information with which

Verne fills his novels is not of necessity separate from the poetic. "Au XIXe siècle, l'idée

que la géographie puisse être de la poésie et de la philosophie n'effrayait nullement les

géographes," writes Cornuault, adding that their perceived necessary separation is a

relatively new idea (12). In fact I have already pointed out in a previous chapter that Vidal

de la Blache's 1894 *Atlas général d'histoire et géographie* asked it readers why an atlas

should not stimulate its readers' curiosity and give them something to think about (Robic

"Vue" 345). Likewise, this same philosophy of interconnectivity provided some of the

inspiration for Hetzel's creation of the *Magasin d'éducation et de récréation* and his

publishing of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, for which he wrote the now famous mission

statement "[…] de résumer toutes les connaissances géographiques, géologiques, physiques,

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[124] Brosseau reminds us that Verne has often been seen as exemplary of a reciprocal and punctual relationship between literature and geography (48-49), Tadié notes Verne's ability to describe best the lands he had never seen (106), Chevalier makes a point of remarking that Verne put geographers in his novels as a literary theme (*Littérature* 10) and elsewhere remarks: "Chacun sait que Jules Verne (1828-1905) n'a pas été seulement le maître du roman d'anticipation, mais, avec ses *Voyages extraordinaires* (soixante romans, souvent de deux volumes), le spécialiste du roman d'aventures et de voyage, disons aussi du roman géographie" (*Géographie* 181).

astronomiques, amassées par la science moderne, et de refaire, sous la forme attrayante et pittoresque qui lui est propre, l'histoire de l'univers" (qtd. in Compère, *Ecrivain* 20).

Of course, here one must remember that this mission statement was Hetzel's, not necessarily Verne's, and indeed the author seemed rather more inclined to use the amassed knowledge as a point of departure rather than an ending for his own production. "Voilà notre tâche [to break down obstacles], à nous autres contemporains. Est-elle donc moins belle que celle de nos devanciers, qu'elle n'ait encore tenté quelque écrivain de renom? (*Découverte 19e* 423) asks Verne in the previously cited quote from his non fictional history of discovery and exploration. Rereading the words, I interpret Verne's sentiment as a metaphor for his own writing. Inheriting and knowing how to work with what is known and what has already been expressed, and despite any perceived obstacles such as potentially the idea that the scientific and the fictional discourses should not commingle, Verne throws down the gauntlet to any writer of talent – namely himself – to make use of this abundance in a forum other than the historical. Hetzel's mission statement for the *Voyages extraordinaires*, considered alongside Verne's actual production, would seem to reveal that while the two agree on the scientific and the educational aspects of the series, Hetzel would prefer to remain in the entirely probable while Verne seems to know how to maintain the appearance of remaining probabilistic while cherry picking his facts and their organization in a way that invites the participation of his own fictional world discursive interjections as the author guiding the imaginative voyage.

De Certeau argues in "Écrire la mer," his introduction to Verne's volume on the explorers of the eighteenth century, for a sort of zigzag pattern even in Verne's supposedly historical work, a *mise en abyme* in which the author references explorers or maps in order to

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replace them with a variant that certainly harkens back to the original, but which has been enhanced by fictional narratives that have become inextricably intertwined with it (iv-vii). The same can be said for Verne's use of geography, for from any rather mundane island locale, Verne produces something very different from the original in the cases of Hanover, Staten and Hoste Islands. Compère analyzes Verne from this angle, looking at the way in which the author moves from a geographical fact to a narrative form that invites fictional enhancement. "Ce genre de description montre parfaitement le passage du réel (la carte) dans la fiction (le texte)" ("Poétique" 74). Geographically founded, but ultimately the production of the interaction between scientific and fictional discourse, traveling through each geographical space is also a voyage through its discursive production, and the author and readers' power to play with and interpret supposedly scientific fact as part of fiction, and vice versa. "Dans les *Voyages Extraordinaires*, la carte joue donc bien un rôle poétique, comme support réel, objet transformé ou création imaginaire. De plus, elle permet à l'auteur de souligner ses procédés d'écriture et de jouer avec eux" (74). Whether by pictorial map or written source, Verne use of geography expresses a new space through the movement of his narrative organization.

Rather than limiting his production to the probable, but nonetheless never leaving it in the way a writer like Wells does, Verne plays with the flexibility of perspective by introducing into his work aspects of scientific and fictional discourses that, despite being melded together, do not inherently complement one another. This leaves a degree of uncertainty in the direction and extent of their interpretation by a reader, whose input the author cannot predict but nonetheless elicits, and on which the *Voyages extraordinaires* rely in order to create a sense of the extraordinary, the possible. Therefore, despite Verne's

insistence upon basing his work in the factual, upon research and scientific theory, his fictional production announces the arrival of literary and critical movements of the twentieth century that do not specifically adhere to definitions of genre or subject matter. In a sense, it announces the impossibility of only one literary canon.

"A good map is worth a thousand words […] because it *produces* a thousand words: it raises doubts, ideas. It poses new questions, and forces you to look for new answers" (Moretti 3). A good map, according to this estimation is not so good if its only design is to get its user from point to point. This idea of the map runs counter to both common practice and logical or scientific thinking that considers the direct route the best. But the textual map is a good map, an explorers' tool that anticipates encounters with the unknown and is predicated on the necessity of movement through geography as part of its reproduction, the words that express it. This puts the map at the level of the experience, and as Bulson notes, "[w]e can learn a lot about the space of the novel and the world it represents by not knowing where we are. But maps will get us lost only if we know how to read them," (131) referring to a strategy that puts the reader at street level to experience the story from the perspective of the characters (107-108). From this perspective, Moretti's good map raises doubts, asks questions and sends the reader on a search for answers. Although very rarely dealing with streets, Verne accomplishes this same by depicting geography and moving through it rather than over it, creating an experience, a space that is not limited by its ties to place locations relative to one another and little more than distant dots on a map. Writing about spaces instead of places, Verne refuses the bird's eye view and avoids limiting discourse or linguistic interaction, performance of language, to a predetermined formula.

Engaging a perspective that promotes participatory encounters rather than trained identification, Verne – perhaps quite unwittingly – explores the assumption of textual legitimacy and literary primogeniture. Certainly, the sources and examples he consulted are well-documented, either by himself or Verne scholars, so it would be foolish to argue that the author was a lone-wolf crusader or even remotely independent from his public and its expectations. On the contrary, he gives the appearance of ascribing or writing in accordance to the limitations of the literary movements of his time, and in so doing of acknowledging his role as something of a compiler of previously used discourses, both literary and scientific. Yet traditional consideration of Verne would not immediately place him alongside the more commonly agreed upon members of the traditional literary canon, his predecessors and contemporaries. The reason for this individuality is often chalked up to the author's own popularity in his time, or the problematic genres of science fiction, adventure or children's literature. Although his work contains aspects of all three of these genres, as well as others, I argue that Verne's individuality comes from his choice to organize his *Voyages extraordinaires* geographically, which results in a representation of space that is acutely aware of itself as an interaction between narrative discourses borrowed from the ordinary and the fictional worlds. The textual map and the associated cartographical and geographical terminology serve as a mechanism for understanding the *Voyages* from the perspective of its participants negotiating that space, the characters who discover the unique qualities of their location and the author who attempts to express these same distinctions to his reader who takes an interest in them.

The literary canon and the question of genre are much like the map itself, expressed by Jacob as a subject in its absence (*Empire* 351), and can attempt a faithful reproduction of

what is known, but how do they represent the unknown, for this is truly absent. Often this

terra incognita can be found on maps to the west or south of what is known, creating a

relationship between the two in which the unknown is identified as what is not known. This

technique of exclusion is much the same as that used by the boys on Chairman Island to

conclude they are on an island, by deciding it is not a continent. Likewise, it is one technique

for dealing with Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, suggesting that because they are not part

of the traditional literary canon, they are not canonical, and that because they have aspects of

one genre, they are not another. But, the boys discover eventually that they are near a

continent, part of an archipelago in fact, and this changes the perception they have of the

space they occupy. They realize that the island they had so long inhabited is both Chairman

Island and Hanover Island, an interaction between the fictional world and the ordinary one,

for how can one island have two names? Their island is at the same time known to them as a

space, but unknown as a place, and as Verne brings the two perspectives – the fictional and

the ordinary worlds – together as the novel closes, he emphasizes the narrative interplay that

becomes the textual map, or the novel, whose mechanism for action comes from movement

through geography, narrative representation that translates to movement between genres in

the literary world.

　　　Jacob and Lestringant remark upon the importance of the credibility of a map and the

ways in which authors make them, insisting in particular both on the impossibility of drawing

the many small islands of the Magellanic archipelago and the importance of their inclusion

for the impression of reliability they attribute to the map as a whole (12-13). From the

fictional details, a new space is perceived to emerge in the ordinary world. This renders the

unknown more known, but not by relating it to something else in order to draw a relationship

between the two. Rather, it works more like an overlay, or, more precisely, multiple overlays. Like an onion, or perhaps a never-ending *mise en abyme*,[125] details or aspects of the ordinary and the fictional worlds lie atop one another, giving depth and perception to a geographical space that is neither completely an island nor a continent, neither representative solely of the fictional nor the ordinary world, a narrative space that likens itself to many genres by including the voice of so many references in its inception. Jules Verne's textual map does not succeed by limiting itself to the small scale[126] view of geography, with its dots on a map and lines drawn to string them together. Verne's textual map succeeds by placing islands and continents, scientific theory and applied technology, literary styles and popular ideas, as well as the known and the unknown together in a large pot and stirring. While perhaps lacking the refined grace of a Maupassant or a Flaubert, Verne has a technique that nonetheless affords a certain amount of freedom of perception, of possible interpretation, because rather than assuming a bird's eye view or total omniscience that aligns itself with the known, his style remains down to earth, a part of it. This point of view obliges writing a voyage through the geography he describes as a narrative encounter within the textual space between the many aspects of the ordinary and the fictional worlds. And this point of view affords Verne the possibility of playing with language in order to create a literary geography in the *Voyages extraordinaires*. "Jules Verne, on le voit, s'il se passionne certainement pour la géographie, la traite beaucoup plus comme un instrument de création que comme un objet scientifique dont il faudrait rigoureusement rendre compte à ses lecteurs. Il ne cesse de 'jouer' avec cette précision géographique qui s'affine au long de son siècle" (Sadaune 20).

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[125] Harpold is particularly interested in this aspect of Verne's writing in general, both stylistically as well as Verne's own use of the word *abyme*.

[126] Again, it is worth mentioning that the small scale map covers a larger area in less detail than a large scale map, which covers a smaller area in more detail.

In light of this play – the creation of these tensions that emanate from the geographical material he both references and rewrites to generate a new space of narrative and interpretation – pinning Verne down or affiliating his work with one genre in particular is forever elusive. Aspects of the adventure novel, science fiction, utopia and more occur in Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, but arguments can be made for and also against each as a guiding principle for his work. The textual map – a geographically oriented interpretation that is also a metaphor for the reading and the writing process – addresses this narrative interaction within a spatial orientation, a geography created by textual movement through a location that is not stable because it is made by experience on the level of the terrain rather than from a distance. Not relying on the factice necessity of single genre allocation or affiliation to a particular literary canon marking its acceptability, this recognizes Verne as geographically literate in the overall organization of his *Voyages extraordinaires* and in the textual process of moving through the landscape each novel describes in a space that is the narrative combination of the ordinary and the fictional worlds.

IV.E.Conclusion

Jules Verne is one of the most widely read French authors by people all over the world. His name has lent itself to many projects as a reminder of inspiration and grand dreams, and even over a hundred years after his death, his stories still manage to attract new audiences, either through new mediums, or as a new generation of young readers discover literature. Yet, as I have pointed out on numerous occasions, an opinion regarding Verne's literary qualities and affiliations seems to evade consensus. To some he is a prognosticator. Indeed, Gernsback in the first issue of *Amazing Stories* states this outright. To others, like Chesneaux who is in constant search of the political, Verne's stories carry social importance.

To Vierne, he represents a certain mythological quality. To continue to list the various Vernes would be to provide an annotated bibliography of Vernian critical study, for everyone seems to recognize his or her own Verne. In recent years, a new generation of critics including Dupuy, Harpold, Minerva, Sadaune, Sudret and Unwin among others, have begun to attempt to understand the mechanism that binds Verne's works together as a series of *Voyages extraordinaires*. Their approaches differ, as do their interests and goals, but they share an awareness that is not limited to a formal attempt to rehabilitate Verne in some way so as to make him part of some literary canon. Instead, they make an effort to become more aware of how Verne writes, how he creates his texts. My own contribution to their effort is the textual map and the importance of the geographical in all of Verne's texts. My purpose is not to make him a "better" writer, but to understand better how he painted the earth with is writings.

Verne is a geographical writer; geography forms the basis for his exploration of the earth. This in turn creates the overlay of perspectives and discourses, narratives, through which Verne's characters and language move and interact within a common space formed by the encounter. Although geographical places, much like scientific facts, taken from the ordinary world abound in the *Voyages extraordinaires*, they are also absent under Verne's pen where they are no longer a part of the ordinary world alone. Instead, they become part of a representation, a stylized version negotiated textually through use of figurative language that creates a multi-skinned overlay map of sorts that explores the spaces between the defined places, the border area, or the gap between the known and the unknown. The textual map is meant to accommodate the consideration and combination of Verne's geographical and textual influences, for whether one argues that he is occasionally a writer of science fiction or

adventure tales, he is always geographically literate. The method he uses for incorporating

that knowledge into his texts is revelatory of his approach to moving through the fictional

world of his texts, concentrating on the voyage rather than the arrival at a destination.

Certainly along the way a number of technical difficulties might occur, or new

technologies might be explored, and the machines Verne relies upon to create movement are

often quite intriguing and imaginative. However, it is just as feasible to discuss the

technological aspects of Verne's writing style as it is to rest in amazement of the machines.

Indeed, Verne manages to capture the essence of technology, not as an amazing tool but as

the author's application of available knowledge. Verne's geographical novels therefore

reflect applied scientific knowledge as it is represented by the author, whose goal is to realize

a reproduction. Much like mapmakers of old who approximated and based new maps on

previous examples, Verne learns to produce a textual map that is, in fact, a sort of composite,

an atlas that reproduces not only the supposed landmass but also the other attempts that have

been made to map it. It is this somewhat troubling polyvalence that makes possible the

association between Verne and a variety of genres. But more importantly, it is the

reproduction expressed by language and discourse about geographical movement that makes

the textual map possible. In turn, by conjoining a spatial discussion with a literary one, the

geographical approach and the textual map facilitates an inquiry into the style of Verne's

Voyages extraordinaires.

With this inquiry a question recurs, island or continent? As narratives interact within

the textual map, as Verne applies a linguistic sort of technology to the textual representation

of a location, removing its identity as a place and allowing it to become a new space, the

question of island or continent assumes a new importance. In the textual map where the

ordinary and fictional worlds are represented, places lose definition as spaces form through movement that is not tied to specific locations. Like an archipelago, the space the textual map represents escapes definition, for it comes from interaction rather than indication. This is particularly of note in the case of *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie*, which all take place around an archipelago that is both at the end of the world, *au bout du monde*, and also at a crossroads between the Old and New Worlds, the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Given this, rather than entertaining a discussion of genre as a classification tool as it pertains to Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, a much more productive inquiry is the author's generation of space, or the way he writes geographically.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

As part of Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires*, *Deux Ans de vacances*, *Le Phare du bout du monde* and *En Magellanie* help to exemplify the process of the textual map, or the particularity of Verne's writing style that expresses the process of geographical and literary exploration. A narrative space of interaction, the textual map locates the negotiation of interchange and communication between the ordinary and the fictional worlds as the author fills in the unknowns or the blank spaces on the map and on the page with a mobile textual production that evades straightforward definition or affiliation. Verne's literary style, his particular use of language associated with his research and goals in writing the exploration of the known and unknown worlds, is not only geographically motivated but also geographical in the sense that it plots an itinerary through a location, making a practiced space from the simple dot on the map. Concentrating on the space between the beginning and the end of the voyage, the area of figurative language and multiple perspectives, Verne moves through his stories on the very level of their manufacture, an exploration in geography and language, movement through the process of their production.

The textual map is a metaphor for understanding this process, and it also acknowledges the primary importance of geography in the *Voyages extraordinaires*, for indeed Verne's task as a writer is to paint the world, filling in its blank spots by exploring them textually. Interactive and reactive, the textual map invites an intertextual conversation of sorts between worlds, creating a location for their exploration by the excuse of an encounter with topographical accidents to be described. The discourses for this exploration

may come from multiple sources, multiple perspectives, and they often encourage new combinations that signify the many possibilities inherent in this space between the ordinary and the fictional worlds. A space rather than a place, the textual map is Verne's recombination of the geography of a place that is the ordinary world dot on the map and the space of fictional world representation; it is the narrative that makes the encounter possible by depicting movement through a location, through a space, through geography.

The textual legend facilitates this movement as it is read. First it does this by indicating the limits of the story, the geographical place in the ordinary world and the process of it becoming a mobile space in the fictional one. The boys in *Deux Ans de vacances* therefore turn their regard inland away from the ocean, no longer relying on a sign of their place in some larger system, but instead concentrating on working within the space they have, Chairman Island. Verne then fills these spaces with characters, another textual legend. These characters are vehicular in nature, designed to show the reader the location, to express the experience of the geography, or almost to personify it. Thus in *Le Phare du bout du monde*, Verne expresses through Kongre and Vasquez the geographical location of the end of the world that is locked in perpetual confrontation between the oceans that batter its shores. Keys to reading the textual map, Verne's characters exemplify how, within the literary production, the author moves from the ordinary to the extraordinary, the known to the unknown, ultimately uniting various discourses into a narrative capable of navigating them both. Finally, as a part of this navigation, Verne employs an interactive, descriptive style that, for instance, recalls other texts or uses *imparfait* or conditional verb tenses and ellipses to leave room for conclusions, reducing the apparent distance between the island space and those trying to make sense of it. Thus the many pauses, questions, negatives and ellipses in

En Magellanie follow natural thought processes as they interpret and negotiate meaning and direction. All of Verne's textual legends are part of an itinerary for travel, for movement through a geography and also through the process of writing, for they create the opportunity for the interaction of discourse and its critical consideration, generating motion and perspective as part of the narrative of the textual map.

Neither island nor continent, belonging to a tradition of popular literature known the world over but somehow eluding full critical or academic approval, Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires* are a geographical creation and an exploration of the application of language or the process of writing. The particularity of the archipelago location in the three stories studied here exemplifies the interconnectivity between the uncertainties of a geographical or an ordinary world that is already in constant negotiation. Already evading definition, such locations lend themselves to the fictional, for they can both reference the factual while investigating the extraordinary. Rather than defining the novels, this generative process is not only a description of the earth through which Verne's characters move, it is also a linguistic process in which geography and the author's poached or borrowed discourses encourage the exploration of the unknown, a space that is many possible productions.

APPENDIX

To talk about Michel Jean Pierre Verne to many fans of his father's work can incite anathema, for this ne'er do well son and *amateur* of Jules Verne contributed significantly to his father's literary career by confusing its later critical interpretation. Chesneaux, for instance, argued vehemently in his *Jules Verne: Une lecture politique*, that there was no reason to doubt the authenticity of *Les Naufragés du Jonathan*.[127]

> Cette authenticité nous semble au contraire confirmée par le caractère même de l'œuvre, à savoir le fait qu'elle regroupe, transcrit en clair et formule systématiquement tout ce qui n'était jusque-là que suggéré discrètement. Nul autre que l'auteur n'aurait pu opérer cette mutation. Il s'agit d'un roman d'une exceptionnelle vigueur, et l'on peut noter qu'il est le seul, avec le *Capitaine Grant* et *L'Ile mystérieuse*, à être construit sur un plan ternaire, plus ample et plus dramatique que la structure bipartite de ses autres romans 'longs'. (22)

Unfortunately for Chesneaux, although Verne had written the first draft of the novel in 1897-1898 (Gondolo della Riva, "Dates" 12), Michel's own correspondence with Louis-Jules Hetzel, or Hetzel *fils*, confirms the business relationship between the sons of the publisher and the author, and their decision to rewrite the posthumous manuscripts (Dumas and Gondolo della Riva). This revelation came many years after the first suspicions of something awry, which began as early as 1909 when the readers "ne reconnaissent plus Jules Verne dans ce dernier roman" and when Michel very narrowly escaped messy litigation against him for *Le Pilote du Danube*[128] in which he referenced a person he met there after his father's death (Dumas, "Défense" 22-23). Still, years later, translators like I.O. Evans remarked that "Verne's posthumous adventure-story, *The Survivors of the 'Jonathan'* differs so greatly from the general run of his work – though surely it could have come from no other pen than his – that little surprise can be felt that, so far as I can ascertain, it has not hitherto been

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[127] *Les Naufragés du Jonathan* was the title under which *En Magellanie* was originally published in 1909.

[128] Jules Verne's original version is now available as *Le Beau Danube jaune*.

translated into English" (7). It was, however, Gondolo della Riva who had the fortune to

acquire, starting in the late 1970s and continuing into the 1980s when the Verne family sold a

number of the original manuscripts with Michel's corrections, the real proof that the son had

significantly modified the work of his father. The realization by the critical public that it had

been duped by Michel for so many years did not sit particularly well at first, but with time

and further research as well as the publication of the *versions d'origine*[129] of the posthumous

novels came a better understanding – if not appreciation – of Michel's contribution to his

father's *Voyages extraordinaires*, and something of an acknowledgement of his own writing

ability.

Already as a (troubled) teenager, Michel had begun "fusing his identity with that of

his father, reconstructing his name as Michel Jules-Verne (sometimes abbreviated as M.

Jules-Verne, convincing a few editors that the "M." stood for Monsieur) (Taves, "Novels"

25-26). An entrepreneur in the making, Michel made no great secret of honing his skills as a

writer, and with his father's support, he sent some of his poems to Hetzel *père* shortly before

the publisher's death (Dumas, "Carrière" 3). Two years later, and again with his father's

help, Michel was able to publish nine short "Zigzags à travers la science" in the *Supplément

littéraire du Figaro*, but it appears that this collaboration came to an untimely end, the

reasons for which are unknown (4). Then again with his father's help,[130] he managed to

publish English translations of a few of his short stories outside of France, but he signed

them Jules Verne. Thus the long-heralded Jules Verne science fiction short stories of "Un

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[129] This is in great part due to the perseverance of Olivier Dumas, the president of the French Jules Verne
Society.

[130] Although Michel's publications are with his father's help, this should not indicate that the two had an easy
relationship. On the contrary, Michel caused Verne many headaches and debts with his personal and public
ventures.

express de l'avenir" and "La journée d'un journaliste américain en 2890"[131] are both

Michel's alone (4-5). Given this, it should be of very little surprise that upon his father's

death, the younger Verne would feel within his rights and capabilities to ameliorate the

unfinished manuscripts for *Le Phare du bout du monde*, *Le Volcan d'or*, *La Chasse au*

météore, *Le Beau Danube jaune*, *En Magellanie*, *Le Secret de Wilhelm Storitz* and the short

stories published in the collection, *Hier et Demain*. Maybe he should not have taken this

route, but despite his many failures in life and the troubled relationship he had with his

parents and family, Michel seemed to have been able to count on his father for help and

occasionally even encouragement. For example, *L'Agence Thompson and Co*, written by

Michel in 1896 at the request of his father, was deemed good enough by the elder Verne to

list it in his own list of works, and to give it his name (Gondolo della Riva, "Dates" 14)!

This full-length novel, as well as the majority of *L'Etonnante aventure de la Mission Barsac*,

should be then properly attributed to Michel.[132]

In the "au lecteur" introduction to *L'Etonnante aventure de la Mission Barsac*,

Michel wrote:

> A sa mort, mon père laissait derrière lui huit ouvrages formant la matière de douze
> volumes, plus un volume de nouvelles. Dans la correction et la mise au point de ces
> romans et de ces nouvelles, tous publiés aujourd'hui, j'ai dû suppléer l'auteur
> disparu. Les lecteurs s'en seront aperçus sans doute, mais assurément, ils ne s'y
> seront pas trompés. Tout ce que ces ouvrages contiennent de bien sont de Jules
> Verne, il est superflu de le dire, et je suis seul responsable de leurs imperfections.
> Mais, du moins, ai-je fait de mon mieux. (qtd. in Dumas "Dernier" 21)

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[131] This story is also known as, "La journée d'un journaliste américain en 2889." It was written with the premise of describing life 1,000 years in the future, and this fact manipulated the title date depending on whether it was published in 1889 or 1890.

[132] Indeed, these two stories are often expunged from the lists of Jules Verne's productions, but then seem to suffer a disappearance into oblivion.

These words, written in 1913, were unfortunately not published in 1919 when the novel finally went to print after the end of World War I. This is a shame, for one might interpret them as an apology of sorts from Michel for having changed his father's work. Indeed, when one compares the most changed of the novels, *En Magellanie / Les Naufragés du Jonathan*,[133] in which Michel made drastic modifications to the plot, introduced dozens of new characters, erased whole chapters and left the Kaw-djer to live out his days alone and bitter at the lighthouse on Cape Horn, some apology does seem in order. His modifications profoundly changed the sense of the work, echoing in it certain almost iconic images from Verne's other novels, and creating a sense of a capstone to Jules Verne's literary legacy, but also enunciating a certain bitterness often attributed by scholars to Verne's frustration at aging. Before Gondolo della Riva's discovery, critics and scholars often held up *Les Naufragés du Jonathan* as evidence that Verne was making some sort of political, social or literary statement. But, it was Michel who was more interested in such things, for it was Michel – and not his father – who was tapped into society with all its hopes, dreams, frustrations, anger and sentimentality.

In light of the difficulty Michel had dealing with his father's fame and his own literary aspirations, perhaps it is fitting to end with the last few paragraphs of *Les Naufragés du Jonathan*, and remember Michel the poetic dreamer who could never match his expectations and who, subsequently, found himself forever in exile.

Le Kaw-djer, face à la mer, parcourut des yeux l'horizon.

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[133] One might argue that *L'Etonnante aventure de la Mission Barsac* suffered the heaviest modifications, since Verne left only a few dozen pages of manuscript at his death. These few pages could never have been published as a complete story. On the other hand, *En Magellanie*, as has been proved by its publication, was complete enough, and therefore I argue that Michel changed it the most.

Un soir, il était déjà venu à cette fin du monde habitable. Ce soir-là, le canon du *Jonathan* en détresse tonnait lugubrement dans la tempête. Quel souvenir !... Il y avait treize ans de cela ![134]

Mais aujourd'hui, l'étendue était vide. Autour de lui, si loin qu'allât son regard, partout, de tous côtés, il n'y avait rien que la mer. Et, quand bien même il eût franchi la barrière de ciel qui limitait sa vue, nulle vie ne lui fût encore apparue. Au-delà, très loin, dans le mystère de l'Antarctique, c'était un monde mort, une région de glace où rien de ce qui vit ne saurait subsister.

Il avait donc atteint le but, et tel était le refuge. Par quel sinistre chemin y avait-il été conduit ? Il n'avait pas souffert, pourtant, des douleurs coutumières des hommes. Lui-même était l'auteur et la victime de ses maux. Au lieu d'aboutir à ce rocher perdu dans un désert liquide, il n'eût tenu qu'à lui d'être un de ces heureux qu'on envie, un de ces puissants devant lesquels les fronts se courbent. Et cependant il était là !...

Nulle part ailleurs, en effet, il n'aurait eu la force de supporter le fardeau de la vie. Les drames les plus poignants sont ceux de la pensée. Pour qui les a subis, pour qui en sort, épuisé, désemparé, jeté hors des bases sur lesquelles il a fondé, il n'est plus de ressource que la mort ou le cloître. Le Kaw-djer avait choisi le cloître. Ce rocher, c'était une cellule aux infranchissables murs de lumière et d'espace.

Sa destinée en valait une autre, après tout. Nous mourons, mais nos actes ne meurent pas, car ils se perpétuent dans leurs conséquences infinies. Passants d'un jour, nos pas laissent dans le sable de la route des traces éternelles. Rien n'arrive qui n'ait été déterminé par ce qui l'a précédé, et l'avenir est fait des prolongements inconnus du passé. Quel que fût cet avenir, quand bien même le peuple qu'il avait créé devrait disparaître après une existence éphémère, quand bien même la terre abolie s'en irait dispersée dans l'infini cosmique, l'œuvre du Kaw-djer ne périrait donc pas.

Debout comme une colonne hautaine au sommet de l'écueil, tout illuminé des rayons du soleil couchant, ses cheveux de neige et sa longue barbe blanche flottant dans la brise, ainsi songeait le Kaw-djer, en contemplant l'immense étendue devant laquelle, loin de tous, utile à tous, il allait vivre, libre, seul, – à jamais. (440-441)

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[134] Is it any coincidence that 13 years prior to 1909 was 1896, the year that Verne indicates for *L'Agence Thompson et Co.*?

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