

## REPRESENTATION OF THE AMAZON BY NOVELISTS AND TRAVELERS

Principal Investigator (PI): Marcia Azevedo de Abreu

Institute of Language Studies / University of Campinas (UNICAMP)

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US PI: Leopoldo Bernucci (University of California Davis)

Brazil co-PIs: Leopoldo Bernucci, Orna Messer Levin (University of Campinas)

France co-PIs: Cláudia Poncioni, Brigitte Thiérion (Sorbonne Nouvelle III)

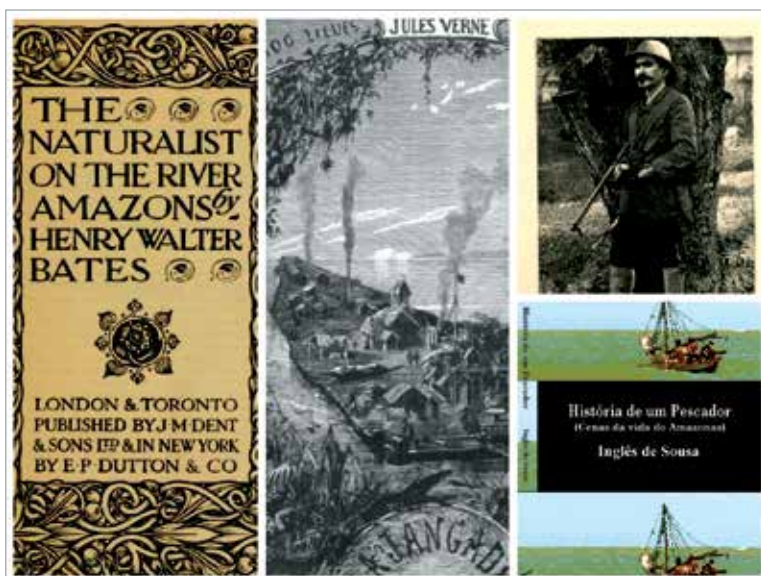


Figure 1. From top and left, clockwise: 1) Henry Walter Bates. *The Naturalist on the River Amazons*, 1863; 2) Jules Verne. *La Jangada*, 1881; 3) French explorer Henri Coudreau on one of his Amazon expeditions; 4) Inglês de Souza. *História de um pescador*, 1876

The project “Representation of the Amazon by novelists and travelers” is related to a Thematic Project called “The Transatlantic Circulation of Printed Matter – The Globalization of Culture in the 19th Century”, also financed by FAPESP (2011/07342-9), which in turn is part of a larger international project developed under the same title. It aims to produce better knowledge about printed matter and ideas circulating among England, France, Portugal, and Brazil during the “long nineteenth century” (1789-1914). Its main objectives are two-fold: (1) to identify and analyze the cultural, political, and economical processes set in motion by the movement of ideas and printed matter on a transnational scale, and (2) to examine the appropriation of these ideas in those four countries.

More specifically, its goal is to clarify the multiple circuits made by books and periodicals from Europe to Brazil (and vice versa) and the paths that printed matter traveled inside Brazil. It also aims to measure the speed and intensity in which works, people, and ideas moved back and forth between England, Portugal, France, and Brazil, evaluating the synchronicity of the interest aroused by the same books in different places. Finally, it hopes to identify the public for these works and to examine the critical reception received by them throughout the nineteenth century. The project “Representation of the Amazon by novelists and travelers” examines the circulation of books about the Amazon written by novelists and naturalists, their reception in journals and magazines published in Brazil and abroad, and read by a Brazilian audience. It also aims to compare the literary Amazonian fiction (especially that produced by the Brazilian novelist Herculano Inglês de Souza) to the written accounts by a group of French travelers who visited the Brazilian Amazon between 1860 and 1910. Instead of considering the unilateral flow of ideas and goods from Europe to Brazil only, emphasis shall be placed on the notion of circulation and its relevance as a movement between Europe and Brazil. In other words, this research privileges connection rather than *dependence*.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS TO DATE AND PERSPECTIVES

In the nineteenth-century Europe, the fascination for the Amazon region was felt among literate people, but more importantly among travelers and writers. Notions such as exotic beings, haunting memories, and utopian landscapes became part of a European invention, often times applied to the Amazon region as well. In France, well-known writers such as Jules Verne, just to mention one of the most read in France and Brazil, find the relevance of the role that travelogues on remote and exotic places play in general in novels. Brazilian novelists also dealt with the Amazon region as part of the effort to build a national literature. Herculano Inglês de Souza, a pioneer in fictional and Naturalist representation of the Amazon, is credited as the first major Latin American novelist and short-story writer ever to depict scenes of commercial and labor practices, customs, missionary work, legends, and spiritual manifestations among

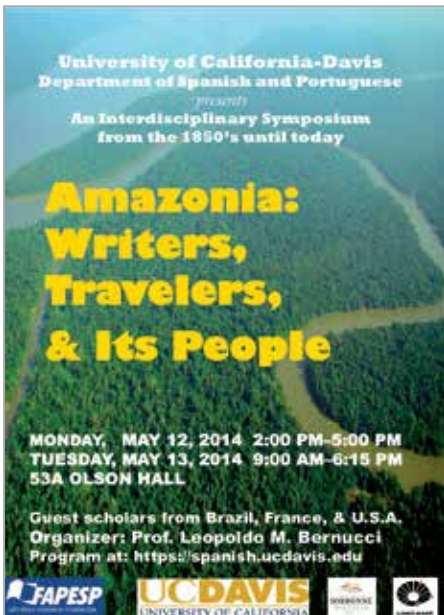


Figure 2. Poster of the Symposium "Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People", 2014

have, of Amazonia as an "exotic" place. These issues were debated in the first colloquium held by the project in Davis, California, on May 2014, called "Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People." At this interdisciplinary symposium, we discussed the relation between accounts by foreign travelers, novels, theatrical plays, newspapers, and magazines about the Amazon.

natives and immigrants living in the Amazon region, particularly in his home state Pará. Likewise, the scientifically oriented impressions French travelers have recorded of the Brazilian people in the Amazon region captured the imagination of thousands of readers, both in Brazil and France. In each case, these accounts further shaped the images and stereotypes that the French and coastal Brazilians had, and in fact continue to

## MAIN PUBLICATIONS

Abreu M. 2014. Armchair literature: possible sources of 19<sup>th</sup> C. Amazonian Fiction. *Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People*.

Bernucci LM. 2014. Eyewitness travelers: torture in Amazonian rubber estates. *Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People*.

Levin OM. 2014. The 'North' in the view of 19<sup>th</sup> C. Literary critics in Rio de Janeiro. *Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People*.

Poncioni C. 2014. Una comedia arqueológica: a estátua amazônica de Araújo, Porto Alegre. *Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People*.

Thiéron B. 2014. Olhares sobre a Terra e o Homem da Amazônia: um imaginário em construção. *Amazonia: Travelers, Writers, and its People*.

### Márcia Azevedo de Abreu

Instituto de Estudos da Linguagem  
Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP)  
Rua Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, 571  
CEP 13083-859 – Campinas, SP – Brasil

+55-19-3521-1511  
marcia.a.abreu@gmail.com