

September 3, 1963

Dear Henry Miller:

After reading some really wonderful pages in *The Heart of the Hunter* by Van Der Post I feel that some of the commentaries I sent you in my last letter might well appear to be somewhat petty and small. The man has a big heart and I feel totally won over by him. I want to thank you very much for bringing me into contact with this great soul. No doubt we Latin Americans are not in the same predicament or at least in the same degree of predicament that what is called western civilized man is. We are still far nearer to nature and life in all these instinctive forces so that to excuse myself I would say that that is probably the reason why I felt that the words were not so addressed to us as to a european minded audience. Anyway I simply wanted to tell you that in this second book, even though what I say may be true, I have found many enlightening thoughts that I am grateful to have encountered. Although I have not yet dreamed with the Bushman, perhaps because I am too much of a Bushman myself, I do believe that reading Van Der Post teaches more than one worthless. I read in the newspaper that there has been some trouble with the production of your play in the Edinburgh Festival. I would like to know, if possible, what happened in the end. I lived three years in Edinburgh and have some good friends among the Scots. I wonder whether there is anything that can be done.

My work is beginning to show some fruits. I am keeping up a fantastic correspondence with poets and artists all over the Continent and I believe that the meeting ground which has been started will grow even more steadily with time. In this respect and at the risk of sounding somewhat insistent I would want you to know how much I would appreciate any small article that you could spare us for our magazine "Américas".

You must try to remember that this is an official publication and that I cannot publish everything I would like. One of my articles was recently turned down, funny as this should seem, by the editors.

One thing I have learned in my work is to do what I can however little it may sometimes appear. Always something seems to remain and that little something can grow into something bigger. This is how I started the Museum of Modern Arts in my native Buenos Aires which is today one of the most important organizations for the promotion of our artists. Surely when I ask you for an article it is not you I am thinking of promotion but the magazine itself and in so doing calling attention to the Latin American authors whose works are, alas, almost completely unknown in this country. Any little piece of criticism perhaps of any Latin American author you have ever read. There was an issue of the Evergreen Review devoted to Mexico or a book so interesting like *The Conquest of Mexico* by Bernal Díaz del Castillo which can be found in paperbacks and which would be one way of paying you for having introduced me to Van Der Post. Although Bernal Díaz is a Spaniard I think that book is not only a classic but also it is a magnificent chronicle of the impact of the clash between Spain and the pre-Columbian world. It is a fascinating book even though I am afraid that the attitude has little to do with Van Der Post. Of the classics of my country I could also strongly recommend *Don Segundo Sombra*, a novel that I am also sure would greatly please you. It was edited in English in the Penguin Series and should be easily found in one of the California libraries. The author is Ricardo Güiraldes. This book tells the story of a young boy growing up to be a "gaucho" in the Pampas. It is full of poetry and insight. Maybe you are too busy to undertake any of these suggestions so please do not feel that I am putting you under any obligation.

I eagerly await the second part of *Nexus* and I am sure that that in itself is enough to keep anyone as busy as can be.

I have ambitious plans for the near future: art exhibits, concerts to take place here in Washington, all trying to give an image of Latin America. I will let you know

the dates of these events. Some will take place during this year, others during the next. Should you be near Washington during them your presence would be greatly appreciated.

All the best,

Rafael Squirru, Director
Department of Cultural Affairs

RS:cas

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