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Sommario/riassunto

This fascinating glimpse into South America's past focuses on the works of four European voyagers who came to South America and left a legacy of travel writing in their wake: José Celestino Mutis, a Spanish botanist and doctor; Alexander von Humboldt, a German geographer; Maria Graham, a British historian; and Flora Tristán, a French feminist and labor activist whose father was Peruvian. Each took on his or her voyage as a personal endeavor, and collectively their travels covered the Andes from its northern traces in Venezuela to the southern heights of Chile and Arequipa. Their writing contributed to the construction of a complex map of the Andes in which many levels of physical and social geography may be read. By analyzing the travelers' narratives, illustrations, and maps, Ángela Pérez-Mejía unravels the rich complexities of the colonial travel experience, explores its impact on both the object of description and the traveler's subjectivity, and the collective readership seeking a discourse of nationhood.