



# DO YOUR OWN NOMEDIA

*« Art is what is not here though it should be. »*

(Romain Gary)



# The Misplaced Continent

*instructions for writing*

Welcome to Nomedia !

« The Misplaced Continent » is the name of an ongoing creative writing workshop that invents and keeps on inventing Nomedia. During its initial stage (2006/7), its contributors (the *Foc's'les*) produced several texts, some featured in *La Bibliothèque nomédienne* (published in French by L'Atalante, 2008) - that set up Nomedia. These documents were written following three guidelines :

- 1) to respect the consistency of at least one of the previously existing documents ;
- 2) to stand for some authoritative figure, whoever it was, even an imaginary one ;
- 3) not to be a direct testimonial given by someone from Nomedia.

The project's third step (the second one being the book itself) will consist of filling in all the socio-cultural-historical detail that makes up this utopia. This could be cultural events, nomedian plays, nomedian music concerts, modern art, cuisine, practical inventions, architecture, transport, mores, etc.

To help you in your research and elaboration, please find three "formulaes" that you should feel free to apply as you see fit :

- 1) Nomedia's land is ruinfree ;
- 2) Nomedia's culture is ritualfree ;
- 3) Nomedia is always *a bit* beyond our ordinary fantasies.

This is an adventure, not a tourist package ; which implies that we know where we are coming from but not where we are going. Feel free to partake in it. Sent documents (*.doc* or *.rtf* or *.odt*) will be read by me (or by other *Foc's'les*, were their mass to become too critical) ; some of them will be tidied up and published on line for free consultation. Come Summer 2009, we'll sort them out and select the ones to be published in a second volume of *The Nomedian Library*... provided our publisher agrees. It all hinges on where your imagination and inventivity can take you.

Bon voyage !

*Alfred Bondry*  
(*captain sans cap*)  
✂ *The Foc's'les*

**Here are a few tips for those who wish to explore their own Nomedia (whether it be internal or external).**

1. Select a document among those previously existing (preferably the founding text called "What if La Perouse did find what he was looking for?", but this is not compulsory). You will use this text as a backdrop to your world.

**A variant :** *you may also start with writing your own founding text, telling how your main narrator(s) heard of Nomedia for the first time.*

2. Describe your main narrating character, along with their defining attributes : occupation, origin, social status and expectances, links to Nomedia, time of living, personal relations... (this step should be easier for those who practice or used to practice Role playing games - you might as well use the system of character creation of your favorite game).

3. Start with a short groundwork text where you will develop the notion of Nomedia that your hero or heroine has in heart - let's call this *The Aspiration*. It could be, for instance, the narrative of a trip preparations, or a project report, or a scientific study or survey, some rumour, a paper article, a dream...

4. Should your first account inspire you right away, proceed to other steps in any order you see fit - you are responsible of the inner consistency of your invented world. In case you don't feel like doing this, just follow some linear and simple plot instead - for instance, write a travelog.

5. If your first story does not inspire you enough, write it again with a new leading character, or the same one but with something important being changed (occupation, time, age, gender, nationality...). Or else, make use of the previously existing texts (published in the book or on the website), picking one of its characters or situations or premises. In such occurrence, it belongs to you to respect the consistency of this story, or to justify the inconsistency you will have induced.

**Note :** no step is necessary *per se*. You may forget some of them or take them in any order you like. The following documents will help you in this - feel free to improve them with any new ideas.

# APPENDIX

## 1. A few types of narratives :

- explorers' accounts (travelogs, memoirs, lectures)
- excerpts from classical works "mentioning" Nomedia
- correspondence between settlers in the Pacific and their family
- trading documents
- maps and portolanos
- sketches, drawings, paintings
- moral studies, love rites
- plays, living shows
- poetry, songs, music scores
- linguistic studies of their languages and idioms
- recipes, daily costumes
- games, folklore, manners, clothes
- birth/death rites, education
- architecture, technologies
- philosophy
- theological, psychological, psychoanalytical, canonical interpretations
- anthropological survey (*in absentia*)
- "Nomedianists", or people living *a la* nomedian way
- apocryphal stories
- dreams of Nomedia
- ...

## 2. Points of view and various narrators :

- navigators & crew members : sailor, deckhand, marine, gunner, surgeon, botanist, writer, cartographer, draughtsman, carpenter, fisherman, interpreter, embarked native, chaplain, servant, missionary, nun, officer's wife...

- slaves, runaways, refugees, deserters, exiles (willing or not)

- people in debt, criminals, wanted persons, prostitutes, High School dropouts

- diplomats, politicians, religious people, journalists, spies

- settlers, families, traders

- ship owner, slave trader, India Company shareholder (british, dutch, french, swedish...)

- scientists : botanist, geographer, naturalist, geologist, astronomer, oceanographer, meteorologist, anthropologist, linguist, psychologist

- engineers, mechanics, builders, architects

- treasure hunters, adventurers, historical figures

- artists, *entrepreneurs*, investors, sponsors, spoilt people

- natives, lost tribes, creoles

- imaginary creatures : aliens, time travellers, animals, chimeras

- secondary viewpoints, developed by people who analyze those seeking for Nomedia...

### **3. Steps to search and explore Nomedia :**

1. definition/description/presentation of the main narrator(s)
2. due preparations for the trip
3. aboard the vessel
4. tentative progress - a first failure
5. impostures - a mistake on the target or with the method
6. an encounter with a "first hand" witness
7. landing Nomedia
8. first explorations
9. first contact
10. settling & survival
11. back to the known world
12. unearthed stories - re-interpretations - memories collection
13. commenting other Nomedias