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A Geocritical Approach to Coloniality and Aesthetics:
Mapping the Spatial Narratives of the Amazon Basin

By

Michael Perrin Wang

Claremont Graduate University
2019

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Approval of the Dissertation Committee

This dissertation has been duly read, reviewed, and critiqued by the Committee listed below, which hereby approves the manuscript of Michael Perrin Wang as fulfilling the scope and quality requirements for meriting the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Cultural Studies.

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Abstract

A Geocritical Approach to Coloniality and Aesthetics:

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Michael Perrin Wang

Claremont Graduate University 2019

Coloniality, or the living legacies and practices of the 500 years of European colonization, has produced racial, political, and cultural hierarchies around the colonial difference dividing East from West, center from periphery, civilization from the Global South. This dissertation examines a particular strand of coloniality in the Western narration and aesthetics of the Amazon basin, particularly the consequences of travel writing, science fiction and cinema of Amazon's tropicity and its enduring effects on spatial cartography. In addressing Western representations of the jungle terrain, this paper focuses on the dichotomous relationship between the metropolitan center and the colonial outer-periphery exemplified by the Amazon basin. I take an alternative approach to understanding spatiality by applying what I call the coloniality of aesthetics to the spatial analysis of tropicity, illuminating the naturalized tendencies that articulate the Amazon as simultaneously a modern physical fantasy perpetually on the verge of colonial conquest and a mythological agent of horror that resists colonial conquest by its continued deferral of meaning production between the antagonism of nature and of civilization. The coloniality of aesthetics elucidates the West's failure to figuratively

conquer the land of the Amazon and suggests that such failures are crafted intentionally to preserve the aesthetics of conquest itself. This paper argues that the ontology of tropicality can be reestablished through a radical territorialization, one that centers the protagonism of the Amazon basin through the revelation of aesthetic modes that focus on the generative qualities of the South American rainforest. In doing so, I hope to expand the role of literary geocriticism through an exercise of spatial decolonization, one that prioritizes the often ignored terrain of the Amazon jungle.

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Dissertation Introduction

Alexander von Humboldt lived his days in the Amazon basin with a childlike wonder, sailing across six intersecting rivers while seeking a water cross current from the Orinoco to the Amazon systems. To his delight, he found himself “in the midst of untamed and savage nature” (Humboldt 1995, p. 151). Humboldt’s journey was documented in travel writing. By the campsite fire, he transcribed the visions and sounds of the jungle, taking note of the space he occupied. Reading Humboldt’s work at the Berlin State Library near Potsdamerplatz in West Berlin, I got the sense that he was drafting a literary cartography. But more than just sketches of lines of longitude and latitude, Humboldt crafted text with astonishing regard to detail. It reminded me of Herman Melville’s masterpiece, *Moby Dick*, where Ahab similarly pores over his maps, outlining his ship’s path toward the white whale with a “heavy pewter lamp suspended in chains over his head..., intently studying the various lines and shadings... with slow but steady pencil trace over spaces that before were blank” (Melville, 1988, p. 198). But whereas Ahab explores ocean geography from the deck of his transport, Humboldt’s literary cartography discloses the real and imagined spaces of the Amazon basin. For Humboldt, travel journalism is a cartographic activity where he shapes the scale and magnitude of landscape, texture and movement, like the sketching of a new map. Just as maps are not arbitrary grid figures upon patches of brown, green and blue, writing is likewise not simply an exercise of letter and word construction. Humboldt understood that telling a story requires mapping out a plot, just as “to ask for a map is to say, ‘tell me a story’” (Turchi, 2004, p. 11).

Mapping Space in the Narrative Forms: the Scripture, the Epic and the Novel

The novel is often seen as the aggregate of the meaning of collective orientation in our social reality. The novel as creative narration both expresses art as representation and art as creation, manifesting a cumulative effect of writing as a practice of literary cartography. The making of meaning in a fictional world through figurative means changes depending on the medium of storytelling, and while the novel is one of the focal points explored in this dissertation, it is preceded by the scripture and the epic. Erich Auerbach, for example, observes in *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, that the illustrative spatial contrast between Homer's *Odyssey* and the Old Testament book of *Genesis*, are different precisely because each story is framed by its respective forms (1946). More specifically, Auerbach examines the differences between the spatial articulations between the two types of works. In *Odyssey*, the nurse Eurycleia discovers Odysseus' scar while bathing his leg and thus identifying him as the King that has at last returned home to Ithaca. This act is followed by a flashback that ties Odysseus to his homeland — a geographically important place in the novel. In contrast, the narration of the scene in *Genesis* where God calls on Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, provides no context, neither time nor place for when and where this crucial event would take place. Homer's epic, in comparison, is a drawn out and lengthy excursion that focuses on the location of where Odysseus incurred a wound, compared to the author of *Genesis* who focuses on imperative human actions regardless of where characters are located in space. Auerbach concludes that these differences underlie two rather distinct approaches to mimesis,¹ two ways of imagining literary cartography. Unlike the *Bible*, Homer's epic presents a totality, or a "worldly"

¹According to Auerbach, *mimesis* is the act of representation of reality in literature and art.

world within the narrative, filled with details, color and shape. Homer's literary map strives to lay out the geographical knowledge in a more or less uniform way (Auerbach 1953).

Lukacs takes Auerbach's comparison further by distinguishing the literary cartography of the epic to that of the modern novel. In *The Theory of the Novel* (1971), Lukacs states that the novel is the literary form of the present, as the novel is typified by fragmentation and open-endedness that allows the writing form to succeed where the epic fails. He writes: "the epic gives form to a totality of life that is rounded from within. The novel seeks, by giving form to uncover and construct the concealed totality of life" (p. 60). The epic, as a form of storytelling, is integrated, or as Bakhtin writes, "the epic past is absolute and complete. It is as closed as a circle; inside it everything is finished, already over" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 16). The novel, in contrast "is the epic of an age in which the extensive totality of life is no longer directly given, in which the immanence of meaning in life has become a problem, yet which still thinks in terms of totality" (Lukacs, 1971, p. 56). Following Auerbach, Lukacs and Bakhtin's efforts to distinguish the novel's spatial dimensions, the novel form suddenly takes on new cartographic opportunities beyond its figurative borders. My work on the narrative Amazon as fiction and cinema benefits from this theoretical approach as I also observe the spatial character of the jungle terrain producing a dominant position and transcending its lettered descriptions from within the narrative text.

From Literary Cartography to Literary Geography

For this dissertation, I use literary geography as an analytical approach to interpret literary cartography. It refers to a field of critical theory that engages in not only the geographical spaces of literature, but where that spatial content is situated in the history of power. Barbara Piatti, in *The Geography of Literature* (2008), for example, produced a historical atlas of colonial

Europe in literature alongside political and social developments from the perspective of cities and nations. In her work, the textual mapping of landscape compliments the physical geographic sciences as a method of reading global-positioning systems and how it creates imagined spaces for literary use. Just as literature can mark the contours of geography, the places themselves are historically imbued with literary hierarchies and discursive meaning. Italo Calvino writes, “a place has to become an inner landscape for the imagination to start to inhabit the place, to turn it into its theater” (2004, p. 167). Literary geography constructs a method of reading that gives attention to the spatial dimension as a producer of real-life meaning, but it also highlights how space affects literary production within the novel. Literature, in this case, becomes a historical site that registers the shifting configurations of social spaces over time so that historical significance is folded into the development of spatial plains of interest. In drafting *Studies in Classic American Literature*, first published in 1923, H.D. Lawrence began his work by conjuring the term “spirit of a place” or *genius loci* to describe the will of a given spatial territory as formed overtime under the direct and indirect control of a spiritual direction. He writes- “Every continent has its own great spirit of place. Every people is polarized in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vial effluence, different vibration, different chemical exhalation, different polarity with different stars above” (Lawrence, 1961 p. 5-6). Lawrence's use of spirit is intended to explain the character and rhythms of different cultures and imply that key 19th century American and European writers write the way they do because the places they write about are perceived as uniquely singular. The spirit of place also illustrates the spatial authorship and readership of literary geography, which is made visible through the reading of text.

Virginia Woolf wrote an early review essay on the subject of literary geography citing *The Thackeray Country* and *The Dickens Country* - two guidebooks that helped fans of William Thackeray and Charles Dickens navigate the regions of England where their novels took place. Woolf notes that the publisher includes similar volumes in its "pilgrimage series," which suggests that the readers will use the guides as references for when their journey through the physical geography of England in search for the real world locations they are familiar with in fictional form. The spirit of a place, in this case, derives from the sentimental pilgrims "who find something stimulating to the imagination in the fact that Thackeray rang this very doorbell or that Dickens shaved behind that identical window" (Woolf, 1977, p. 158). On the other hand, the reader can be "scientific in [their] pilgrimage and visit the country where a great novelist lived to see to what extent he was influenced by his surroundings" (Woolf, 1977, p. 158). For Woolf, the reader's desire to visit geographic locations that appear in fiction results in the diminution of the effective power of the imaginary places established in the reader's mind. To this point, Umberto Eco in *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* argues that literary fandom and the will to visit literary places in the real world is not too useful for either interpretation or criticism (1994). He writes "to be a good reader of Joyce, it's not necessary to celebrate Bloomsday on the banks of the Liffey" (p. 84). The literary cartography of Paris in Eco's work, *Foucault's Pendulum*, reflects a fictional Paris that can be analyzed by Parisian readers who are apt to associate the imaginary places with the ones they might encounter in the city itself. In this case, they are not pilgrims but locals capable of deducing how accurate Eco's Paris is to the Paris they know.

One might also enact literary geography as a form of critique that engages with political and moral reflections of a given landscape. For example, narratives about urban spaces often highlight hardships and injustices in human society such as a city's festering poverty, crime, and

political corruption. But where urban protagonists overcome these diversifying systemic barriers, protagonists of the Amazon fictions mostly conquer the existential drama of life and death in the wild. As a point of reference, Raymond Williams notes how much the city, and its civilized counterpart, the country, “seem to stand for the experience of human communities” (Williams, 1976, p. 1). To engage in spatial reading, Williams invokes the “structures of feeling” to describe a concerted effort toward meanings and values as they are actively lived, and from which specific human relations are “at once interlocking and in tension” (Williams, 1977, p. 132) across a span of space. For example, Williams shows how Charles Dickens creates a new kind of novel, “one that can be directly related to what we must see as this double condition: the random and the systematic, the visible and the obscured” (p. 154), in order to describe how the heterogeneity of the city is understood through the narrative of the novel. Significant work has been devoted to the literary representation of certain identifiable and well-known locations within the colonial center, e.g., Dickens’s London (1859), Baudelaire’s Paris (1857), and Joyce’s Dublin (1922). *Ulysses*, for example, maps the diverse contours of the city of Dublin, providing the reader with a sense of the city’s detailed neighborhoods. In an interview, Joyce once stated that his goal in writing *Ulysses* was “to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth, it could be constructed out of [his] book” (Budgen, 1934, p. 68). Although not a blueprint of Dublin, *Ulysses* opens the reader’s imagination to the “sight, smell, and sound of the city through its narrative mapping” (Miller 2002, p.2).

In contrast to modern narratives about urban spaces, I introduce the Amazon basin as a unique landscape of spatial design in popular fiction and cinema to expand the boundaries of existing spatial studies in postcolonial literature, one that goes beyond colonial centers and colonial peripheries. Unlike a post-industrial urban city like Dublin, the Amazon is a colonial

symbol for the anti-society — a space far removed from the city and its citizenship. The contemporary Amazon jungle, although subject to aerial mappings, deforestation, and modernization, still constitutes much of the plant and animal species, atmospheres, and landscape it possessed 500 years ago. For now, one can observe this quality as the spiritual entity of the Amazon in the literary terms drawn up so far. Due to its relative geographic consistency compared to the rest of the Western Hemisphere, and despite the history of European colonization of the Americas, the aesthetic representations of the Amazon have altered little from Humboldt's journey in the 1800s to Percy Fawcett's travels in the early 1900s to Werner Herzog's fictional Amazon in the 1970s to Eli Roth's sadistic Amazon of the 2010s. Together, these narratives do not mark the passage of time by the visual qualities of the Amazon jungle, but by the clothing styles, technologies and languages of its explorers. While the material reality of the Amazon is made complicated by the subtle environmental, social and economic changes of the jungle, the Amazon can be understood as a unified landscape, one defined by its natural tendencies and physical make up as most often explored in the television show *Planet Earth* (2006) and *Planet Earth II* (2016).

My work benefits from the emerging scholarship on the relationship between space, narrative, and colonial representation. A more general term for the practice of spatial critique is *geocriticism*, which assumes a reflective space where landscapes in the real world collide with the spatial orientation of the fictional story (Soja, 1989). In Gaston Bachelard's 1969 work, *The Poetics of Space*, "the reader of poems is asked to consider an image not as an object and even less as the substitute for an object, but to seize its specific reality" (1969, p. xv). Regarding geocriticism, Both Raymond Williams' *The Country and the City* and Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* employ what Said calls a "geographical inquiry into historical experience"

(Moretti, 2005). This venture into a spatial terrain posits a figurative cartography of colonial masters and their subjects, weaving graphic scenes of the periphery landscape with the cultural and political powers of colonial aggression. What makes a colonial narrative space distinguishable from the city centers of European states is not only the physicality of distance, but “a pause, the resting of the eyes, in which the viewer suddenly apprehends the discrete portion of the scene as something to be interpreted” (Tuan, 1977, p. 5) alongside the brutality of the colonial relations of power. The incorporation of historical domination and exploitation allows even geocriticism to be read from fresh perspectives.

Colonialism and Coloniality, Postcolonialism and Decoloniality

As such, I cannot engage with the literary geography of the Amazon basin without also articulating the body of work around colonialism and coloniality. Coloniality describes the living legacy of colonialism in the contemporary world in the form of economic, political and cultural discrimination that outlived former colonial formations and became integrated in the succeeding social order. Coloniality illustrates a dominant and hegemonic force that was cultivated in the expansion of the European empires over the last 500 years. Colonialism, from which coloniality derives, is “a consequence of imperialism; [it] is the implanting of settlements on a distant territory” (Said 1993, p. 8). Colonialism also refers to the political and economic relationship in which the sovereignty of a nation or people rests on the power of another nation (Maldonado-Torres, 2007, 2008). Likewise, colonialism institutionalized and refined a parallel capitalist development in the management of resources and labor. Race played an essential factor in the development of colonialism as a generation of African slaves was transported through the Middle Passage to the Americas due to a shortage of labor on white-owned lands after the degradation of indigenous peoples. In the academic context, and through the lens of colonialism,

coloniality serves as the central thesis to the "decolonial turn," which according to scholar Nelson Maldonado-Torres, was announced by figures such as W.E.B. Du Bois in the early twentieth century to analyze the pathology of the racial order from "the underbelly of modernization" (2007, p. 262).

Coloniality denotes a long-standing pattern of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that defines culture, labor, inter-subjective relations and knowledge production beyond the temporal and spatial limits of the colonial regime or administration (Quijano and Wallerstein, 1992; Grosfoguel 2011). Coloniality in its contemporary form is not merely the residue of colonial experience, but the particular experience of the socio-historical setting known in Europe as the discovery of the Americas (1992), which created the singular event that operates on the combined hierarchy of power infused through both a biological and racial structure, as well as a labor structure that advanced capitalism. This colonial operation in the Americas became the model of power in the modern global experience (Quijano 2007). Decoloniality is the process of dismantling colonialist influence in both its physical manifestation and mental persuasion that is lodged deep in the psyche of colonized and colonizer alike. While political independence in the colonies mostly took place after World War II, colonial cultural and institutional forces have evolved into modern coloniality. The hegemonic process of control allows colonization to continue, effectively orienting the new nation toward modernization by adopting past colonial practices in their oppressive forms. These programs are vital for the scholarship on decoloniality precisely because they help to illustrate how physical and economic properties in our social order can regulate and naturalize both ontological and epistemological truths that pertain to culture, beliefs, ethics, and for the purpose of this dissertation, the aesthetics of tropicality.

The decolonial turn also marks a stark contrast to postcolonial studies regarding geographical focus, linguistic influence, and area of scholarship. Whereas the writings of well-known postcolonial scholars (Said, Spivak, Bhabha and others) speak to the colonial relationship between the West (primarily the British Empire) and its Asian (primarily India), Middle Eastern and African colonies, scholars of the decolonial turn relate their studies to the regions of Central and South America. When describing coloniality in the context of the decolonial turn, these scholars do not mean neo-colonialism, which refers to the direct lineage of colonial manifestations after territorial decolonization after World War II. Coloniality is an umbrella term that speaks to a complex set of ideas articulating a philosophical inquiry that denotes the conditions of life within the structural binary of humanity and de/non-humanity. More precisely, coloniality branches into more concrete concepts such as the coloniality of being (Mignolo 1995, 2003) and coloniality of power (Quijano, 1991, 2000). These terms together form the decolonial discourse by a group of thinkers² based in the Americas, namely Anabel Quijano, Walter Mignolo, Sylvia Wynter, Ramone Grosfuguel, Oscar Guardiola, Catherine Walsh and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. These scholars together, articulate a power structure that lies at the heart of a Eurocentric ontology of the human. They return to the question of "What is a human being?" posed not as a scientific inquiry, but as a cultural-political one.

Mignolo's "Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality Subaltern Knowledge & Border Thinking" is a key text in this field of study. His work discusses the act of subaltern knowing and border thinking as a response to the operations of colonial difference through the celebratory writings of continental philosophy. Following in the footsteps of other South American writers, Mignolo attempts to reevaluate the center/margin design of world knowledge by prescribing

² These authors and other have formed the Transnational Decolonial Institute.

aesthetic and political norms that might exist in multiple cultural centers that are wholly diverse from the original European center. Like Gloria Anzaldua's writing, Mignolo places his texts and experiences at the crossroads of multiple paths of travel where experiences mingle and intertwine to become richly unique. Mignolo recognizes that the term "border" is vastly used for identity politics. Thus he borrows the term for his own use on historical knowledge production and other epistemological discourses. He cites the example of Wei-Ming's *Tao of Physics*, which argues that the difference between modern physics and Eastern medical practices are superficial ones contained in colonial language. Whereas physics absorbs the weight of Western sciences, Eastern knowledge is relegated to the category of mysticism, exoticism and folklore. Furthermore, Mignolo argues that the decolonization of knowledge is at the same time a decolonization of hermeneutics or the philosophy of understanding and interpretation. He refocuses on the two terms- epistemology and hermeneutics as the dual weapons of modern scholarship that have spun likewise, dual secular-discourses concerning science and the humanities. Mignolo argues that modern history initiated a dramatic turn of events where the coloniality of today does not create a classic dualism of reason and passion, symbolic and semiotic, thinking and emotion as belonging to that of the West and the East. Instead, both dualist positions that were once categorized as Western and Eastern are now consumed by the position of the West, as belonging to the West and produced as Western knowledge. That is to say, the West alone is capable of providing both rational scientific truth, as well as romantic poetry for cultural consumption. For Mignolo, the modern coloniality of the West is represented by the power to take ownership of, or to appropriate, multiple discourses of knowing, not just the highly technological and scientific categories of knowledge.

To combat coloniality, Mignolo and other members of the Transnational Decolonial

Institute have praised the aesthetic practices of authors and artists³ from the colonial periphery and global south, especially those works of art that speak directly to the theme of decoloniality. My work in the literary geography of the Amazon jungle does not take this approach. My subversive strategy involves turning decoloniality as an art concept into a spatial methodology for reading text. I insert the Amazon basin from the colonial outer periphery as a spatial-object, to articulate an aesthetic engagement with the expanded field of the visual and imaginative narratives of the jungle terrain. The Amazon basin is a good candidate for my dissertation because it has a specifically nonhuman subaltern locus of enunciation- a space of influence, descendent of a living earth, indigenous to itself and of the South American continent independent of its cardinal location to Europe. It is not merely a periphery space to the West, but an outer-periphery to both the European center and its colonial territories. The Amazon as a narrative geography in travel writing, fiction and film embraces a totality of paradigms, at once dominant and subjugated, mainstream and repressed, and reflective of a forest horror of fantastical wonder and paranoiac fear. This South American landscape grows unimpeded at the crossroads of geocriticism, narrative, aesthetics and coloniality.

Dissertation Thesis

In this dissertation, I analyze the Amazon basin as a unit of spatiality along two interweaving ontological deviations. In the first instance, the territory is marked by a relational ontology exterior to itself, along a reverse-Copernican trajectory that pins the colonial center in the West. This center conjures a rotating track that locks in its colonial peripheries along its perimeter. The colonial center crafts a 2nd spatial position in the colonial periphery where over

³ Examples of decoloniality in art are indigenous sight-based and public art in Vancouver such as Khabu's Bastion de Mando by the Columbian artist Kiwe Thegnas, or "The Indigenous Guard" by the late painter Denise Thomasos. For further reference see Badger 2013.

the span of five hundred years, the colonized shifts toward modernization. The 3rd spatial position is an outer axis represented by the geography of the Amazon basin. This spatial coordinate is characterized by a permanent barbarism that allows the West to reorient the spectrum between human civilization and the kind of indigenous barbarism that can be pacified. In this first spatial discourse, the Amazon is thus named a colonial 3rd space in reference to its three coordinates in the imaginary geography of coloniality, i.e. center, periphery and outer-periphery. In the second instance, I organize a synthesis of the internal spatial dimensions of the Amazon basin viewed from the lens of travel writing, fiction and film. This Amazon is a geoappropriated territory emerging from Western artworks, unstable in its moral orientation but consistently shocking and horrifying. In this second approach, the 1st space names the physically discoverable Amazon, one witnessed by travelers from the West. Amazon as 2nd space refers to the literary and fantastical renditions of the jungle by novelists and filmmakers. Amazon as 3rd space refers to the imaginary Amazon of the readership and viewership of past and present Amazon narratives. And finally, Amazon as 4th space refers to the folded dimensional space of aesthetic rendering that not only exist alongside the three previous spaces of interpretation, but produce them by its manifestation of the properties of space itself. With the event of the two parallel and related analytical frameworks of spatiality that define what the Amazon is to the West, I name the territory- Amazon as *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*. The number “3” refers to the tropic landscape as colonial 3rd space, and the number “4” refers to its position as aesthetic 4th space. Together, these two ontological positions form the Amazon territory as the coloniality of aesthetics.

Dissertation Chapter Organization

This dissertation is comprised of eight chapters. Each chapter builds from the discourse of previous chapters but also contributes to the field of spatiality from unique perspectives in their own right. Chapter I introduces the narrative world of the Amazon landscape where its spatial features are transferred from late 19th century travel writing to early 20th century fictional novel. The first part of the chapter discusses the influential writing of Raphael Reyes, a Spanish entrepreneur who documented his explorations of the Amazon with exaggerated prose and colorful descriptions. The second part of the chapter explores Arthur Conan Doyle's groundbreaking novel *The Lost World* - a story that follows a Darwinian protagonist, Professor Challenger, into the heart of the Amazon jungle. I discuss how Doyle's scientific romance was inspired by Reyes' work and eventually launched a new Eurocentric binary between adventure protagonists and their geographic object of wonder. Reyes and Doyle, through their different forms of narration, portray the jungle as a literary antagonist that signifies a unified spatial formation in the Western imaginative and set the tone for future representations of the South America territory.

Chapter II explores the filmography of the Amazon as a spatial-object of horror. I discuss the field of "forest horror" and how the South American jungle has been constructed as a narrative antagonism to western human folly. From early black and white titles like *The Lost World* and *Curucu*, to the adventure horror cinema of *Anaconda* and *Cannibal Holocaust*, these narratives portray a gruesome aesthetic that unifies a permanent spatial fantasy across the structural development of the western gaze. Many of these filmmakers also captured all of their footage by traversing the Amazon basin, taking with them the actors, crew and equipment for cinematic production. Like the early travel explorers, they document the hardships of the jungle directly rather than dream up their stories from the comfort of their urban cities. I examine in

depth, Werner Herzog's 1972 film, *Aguirre Wrath of God*, where the madness of the character Aguirre carries an almost symbiotic relationship with the jungle itself. I use Fernand Braudel's term geohistory to describe how these forest horror narratives induce spatial anxiety over the imaginative geography of the Amazon space by its collapsing of the fictional landscape with the real Amazon basin.

While the previous chapters relate the spatial turn in literary criticism to fiction writing and horror films, Chapter III observes the narration of the Amazon landscape as creative geometries of textual mapping. Using the work of theorists Yi-Fu Tuan and Mikhail Bakhtin, I argue that a cartographic reading of the Amazon as spatial-object in narration can reveal the *shape* of the tropics through the cardinal direction of a mapped plotline. Specifically, I exemplify the geometry of the Amazon in three distinct forms: 1) a labyrinthine space, 2) a striated space and 3) a rhizomatic space. I demonstrate how each spatial formation is exemplified in their respective examples- i.e. Doyle's *The New World*, Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo*, and Humboldt's travel writings. Together, these examples show how a reinterpretation of the narrative Amazon as geometric silhouettes can help to alter their place as merely backdrop to human action. The next chapter continues to clarify the ontological significance of the Amazon basin as a heightened spatial-object by referring to Deleuze's concept of *territory* and Heidegger's notion of *dwelling*. Territory for Deleuze is comprised of material actions, rhythms and repetitions that play out in the world with or without human interpretation. The Amazon territory is thus comprised of self-defined directions and dimensions, and not merely a part of a social environment. The Heideggerian notion of space compliments territory by injecting Deleuze's spatial body with a presence, or what he calls a "being-in-the-world" as existing in a dwelling in place. This chapter takes a more meditative approach to examining the Amazon space as more than a geometric

form of narrative unfolding. I argue that the signature expressions of Amazonian form and color are illustrative of a more fundamental, constitutive mark of spatial ontology. And while Deleuze's territory recognizes the Amazon's material functions, Heidegger's dwelling gives that material body an existential significance in human literature and cinema. By adding Deleuze and Heidegger to the discourse, the Amazon narrative is reimagined as a set of unique physical and aesthetic markings. The tropics becomes self-referential both outside and inside the aesthetics of representational texts and images, as the Amazon jungle become a primary space, or a spatial-object whose position takes priority over the protagonism of European travelers.

Chapter V examines a more contemporary spatial turn in urban geography, exemplified by the work of geocriticism. I document several important trends of geocriticism and conclude that the work done is best described by the term *domestic* geocriticism. These examples of geocritical discourse apply only to the European urban and rural binaries of spatial setting and are not applicable to the South American tropics. I provide different versions of domestic geocriticism identifiable by the presence of a centered spatial protagonist- e.g. Gaston Bachelard's homebody, Walter Benjamin's flaneur and Michel de Certeau's pedestrian. I discuss the shortcomings of the tactics and strategies that these authors implore for their European protagonist and how these stratified experiences break down in the narrative of Amazon landscapes. As a response to Chapter V, the next chapter examines the narratives and aesthetics of spatial borrowing in the context of postcolonial studies. Specifically, I discuss Edward Said's influence in geocriticism through colonial literature and cartographic mapping. Both Said's critique of *Mansfield Park* and Chinua Achebe's dissection of *Heart of Darkness* addresses the spatial fragmentation between the European colonial core and the areas of colonial periphery. From this position of postcolonial studies, I examine the legacy of Said's *Orientalism* and

parallel his work to my undertaking in the borrowed cultural space of aesthetics, or *tropicality*. The last section of Chapter VI invokes a discussion on cultural appropriation as I introduce the term geoappropriation, or the brute mimicry of a colonial periphery landscape by the cultural forces of the colonial core.

Chapter VII and Chapter VIII expands the discourse of the tropics and tropicality by folding the previous chapters into a system of spatial units, collectively called the coloniality of aesthetics. The phrase is divided into two parallel spatial formations. The first spatial formation is composed around the term coloniality, observed in Chapter VII. In this iteration, I discuss the notion of the *coloniality of being* presented by Nelson Maldonado-Torres through his reading of Enrique Dussel. I then return to the field of fiction and cinema to exemplify the film *Medicine Man* and the novel *State of Wonder* to demonstrate how the narrative Amazon illustrates the outer periphery of the colonial paradigm. I name this literary configuration of the Amazon the outer-periphery - or 3rd space coloniality, after the 1st space of colonial core and 2nd space of colonial periphery. The second spatial formation is produced around the term aesthetics, observed in Chapter VIII. In this section, I discuss aesthetics as four spatial maneuvers that the Amazon undertakes in its narrative form. Amazon 1st space is the encountered spatial-object of the basin upon discovery and exploration. Amazon 2nd space is the authorial space of the literary sphere of descriptions, visuals and annotations by travelers, writers and filmmakers across the centuries. Amazon 3rd space is the imaginative craftwork that deviates from the readership of the narrative tropics as fiction. Finally, Amazon 4th space is the inwardly folded aesthetic space that permeates across the previous three spaces of narrative contact. I name this 4th space the space of *aiesthesis*, which renders the Amazon both imaginable and knowable through the lens of aesthetics and fiction. Amazon as 4th space *aiesthesis* is configured through the very fabric of the

jungle terrain by its oscillating frequencies between its differentiated bodily parts, and among its 1st, 2nd and 3rd aesthetic space iterations. Combining Chapter VII's three colonial spatial positions and Chapter VIII's four aesthetic positions, I form an Amazonian spatial grid called *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*, where 3rd space coloniality and 4th space *aiesthesis* intersect in the epistemology of the Amazon geography.

In the last Chapter, I argue that 4th space *aiesthesis* dominates the immediately visceral and textual position of the Amazon *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*. The Amazon as territory takes on the immediate color, shape and mass of the metaphysics of space by iterating a prime position of affinity with cinema's lens of power. The lens of power is significant because it exposes both the human protagonist, along with their *spirit-ego*, and the territory's *spirit-history* as a part of the *aiesthesis* of their performance. I return to Herzog's *Aguirre Wrath of God* to demonstrate how to read spatial *aiesthesis* through the power of the filmic lens. I argue that Aguirre, through the presentation of the lens, becomes a part of an Amazon appendage. And when that filmic figure of Aguirre meets the wondering eyes of cinema's audience, the aesthetic 2nd space of authorial intent and 3rd space of interpretation collides predictably, conjuring aesthetic residue from within the folding of 4th space *aiesthesis*. In conclusion, I hope to make a small contribution to the development of a decolonial methodology for reading and interpreting spatial terrain and their attached literary and cinematic spaces. These nine chapters cover a significant range of philosophy, criticism and cultural content, but taken together, they emphasize the potency of spatial studies and hopefully garner new interest in the territory of the Amazon basin.

PREFACE

The Amazon Basin Explored: 1500 – 1900

The Amazon basin rises in the Andes Mountains to the west of the basin downwind from which trickles of rainwater flows into its main tributary and onward toward the Marañon River in Peru finally flooding eastbound to the mouth of the Atlantic as the second longest river in the world. If the Amazon often seem like a landscape without history, it is perhaps because so much of its past has been recycled into mythology, from its rivers to the plants and animals that reside within its forest. As early as 1910, inspired mainly by Spanish, Portuguese, French and German colonial explorations, fictional narratives began to disseminate a traditional version of the South American basin, a boundless greenery that holds great truths buried in its earth. The emergence of the landscape as literary fantasy owes much to two developments: the continuous temporal and spatial *ahistory* dictated by a corresponding aesthetic representation, and simultaneously the struggle for modern geographical identity five hundred years after the colonization of the Americas. Amazonian images and narratives told by authors and filmmakers from the colonial center are deeply rooted in relations of power. These stories, across a limited variation of themes, tropes, and character developments have altered the epistemological pattern of the Amazon, and have since invited a uniform model of spatial identity to emerge from travel writings of the 17th and 18th century to fictional accounts of the 21st century. This act of cultural production integrates a historical development in the documented report of those who traveled the Amazon in the early days of the colonial order and continues to affect the aesthetics of literature and cinema of the Amazon on the material and ideological level.

The Amazon Basin as Hoarder of Wealth

The period of Hispanic rule over the Amazon from the 1500s onward paints a pastoral world where the humanistic excitement to discover spurred an equally desperate urge to take ownership over the riches of the land. Before Conon Doyle's fantastical prehistoric survival adventure into the Amazon, the basin was first eyed by the West from the bow of a Spanish warship, captained by Vicente Yanez Pinzon (Wade, 2004). A veteran of Christopher Columbus' first voyage to the New World in 1492, Pinzon chartered a fleet toward the southern Atlantic in February of 1500 where he encountered the Amazon's freshwater source from over a hundred miles out to sea, where the millions of tons of silt and dust washed down the vast alluvial floodplains and the fields of the Amazon from the Andes mountains to the ocean (Descola, 1957). The main jugular and its estuary flowed the color of earth right to the frame of Pinzon's fleet beating northward along the coast of present-day Brazil. The crew aboard the caravels had already noticed that the salt water of the Atlantic had taken on a distinctly brownish cast, and when the sailors reeled up buckets of fresh water, Pinzon ordered the flotilla to turn to port and lookouts posted to scan the western edge of the world where the ocean met the blue of the sky to search for any sign of landfall. They first sighted shorebirds, then flotsam in the water, and when the cry came from the top of the rigging, Pinzon eyed outward to the edges of a rainforest, which he christened Santa Maria de la Mar Dulce — "St. Mary of the Freshwater Sea" (Diaz, 1963). Snaking by the many small islands that lie in the mouth of the Amazon, Pinzon sailed some one hundred miles further landward and when he planted his boots on the ground of South America, he staked the flag of Spain and claimed the area for the Crown of Spain, for Ferdinand and Isabella, Los Reyes Catolicos.

The first major Spanish expedition of South America avoided the Amazon for good reasons, and instead aimed at the vast riches of the Inca Empire and the subsequent conquest of Peru (Lockhart, 1994). It wasn't until 1540 that Francisco Pizarro, the Spanish conquistador who led the invasion that conquered the Inca Empire, conducted a well-funded third expedition that explored the length of the Amazon River (Edwards, 1847). Pizarro charged his brother Gonzalo with the task of leading 350 Spaniards and 4,000 Indians in a grand expedition east of the continent looking for a rumored forest of cinnamon trees. For months Gonzalo traversed the cold winds of the high cordillera, the heat waves of the lowland jungles and the miasmatic swamps of the basins. They kept on even after the discovery of large patches of cinnamon trees, trees they harvested, cinnamon they left behind because there were rumors that a gold city was just over the next hill (Furneau, 1970). This expedition became the genesis of the primary Amazonian lore as a vast wetland that cradled a cityscape of hidden wealth. Instead of gold and jewels however this first expedition found only endless riverways, and soon their numbers dwindled, and their will became ruined by privation and starvation and finally death. One year later, the few explorers left alive found themselves at the crossing of the Napo and Coca rivers⁴, led by Gonzalo's lieutenant, Francisco de Orellana (1970). After another six months floating on the main river stream, the survivors became the first white men to traverse the river that Orellana later christened the Amazon River. On that river Orellana would later die during a second Spanish expedition searching again for the city of Gold.

The second European to descend the full length of the Amazon was Lupe de Aguirre, who alongside his commander, Pedro de Ursua, searched for El Dorado in the headwaters in 1560 never to return (Minta, 1994). Seeking fame and fortune, Aguirre arrived in the

⁴ A location near present-day Puerto Francisco de Orellana.

vicerealty of New Granada, now Colombia, in the aftermath of a smallpox outbreak that nearly wiped out the indigenous population. The Aguirre Expedition famously produced in film under the direction of German director Werner Herzog in 1972, departed Lima in February 1559. The first party to leave the capital comprised of shipbuilders and native workers as their mission was to cross the Cordillera to the Rio Marañon to build transport vessels for men, horses, and supplies needed for the expedition, followed by Ursua and his commanders. Aguirre's travels were documented by Friar Pedro Simon, who interviewed first hand, Francisco Vasquez, a surviving member of the journey up to the island of Margarita before Vasquez made his escape from what he saw as a suicide march after Aguirre's mutinous murder of Ursua. By Vasquez's account, Aguirre was driven mad from heat and exhaustion and plotted to consolidate power in the midst of their travels (Morison, 1974). He hatched a scheme not only to kill Ursua but also betray his Spanish king and overthrow the government in the Viceroyalty of Peru. He would deploy his troops through the Amazon downriver to the Atlantic and proceed northwest along the coast to Panama, and cross the isthmus to the Pacific and sail south to liberate Peru. Senior members of the expedition signed on to the scheme only after they were promised the lion's share of the gold they would find along the way.

Later on in that journey, Aguirre feared mutiny from his men when supplies ran low and disdain began to brew in his inner circle. Aguirre continued to execute those he suspected would betray him. In July 1561, almost two and a half years after leaving Lima, Aguirre arrived at the mouth of the Amazon and the Atlantic Ocean still without any signs of a golden city. For the next four months, Aguirre traversed the unexplored mountains and jungles of present-day Venezuela and Colombia, to make his way back to Peru. Along the

way, he terrorized the locals for food and shelter. Meanwhile any resistance was met with torture and gruesome deaths (Minta, 1994). Even those close to Aguirre were not immune to his sadistic whims as some fled and others executed for attempted abandonment. Mass desertion followed. On October 27, 1561, a small group of subordinates entered Aguirre's tent and shot him dead, just moments after Aguirre stabbed his daughter to death because he thought her existence in the Amazon was meaningless without his guidance.

While Friar Simon's published work warned future adventurers of the dangers of the Amazon and the greed and ambition of the Aguirre Expedition, nothing deterred subsequent searches for El Dorado. Of the several quests in the Amazon that followed, which only built on the mythical golden city that remains to be found, a joint Spanish and German expedition led by Ambrosius Ehinger navigated now Colombia and Venezuela for three long years while his men died of fever and starvation (McIntyre, 1999). Following this expedition, the historical narrative of the European colonial powers, especially that of Spain, conjured up an extensive literature around the legend of El Dorado including fictional maps and theoretical locations of the golden city, contributing to a death spiral of ill-advised logic, romancing of the jungle and subsequent death of future European treasure hunters.

Almost a full century since Orellana traversed the Amazon River eastward and downstream, Captain Pedro de Teixeira, from his base in Sao Luis, Brazil, started his journey in the reverse direction by rafting upstream against the current of the main tributary. Representing his Portuguese government and in full competition with Spain for South America's resources, Teixeira gathered a fleet of forty-seven large canoes carrying 1,200 rowing sailors. After eight months of up-current paddling and another five months of hiking, Teixeira's crew reached the town of Quito, the starting place of both Orellana and Aguirre.

Teixeira's linkup with the Spanish town, for the first time, injected a dose of competitive enthusiasm from his Spanish counterpart, to outdo Teixeira by gathering more knowledge of the basin on a return trip back downriver. As noted by the survivors of the previous two journeys led by Orellana and Aguirre, the expeditions had been too involved with survival to take a detailed note of the environment. Aguirre's mind was so preoccupied with mutiny and betrayal that he paid no mind to the land he passed or what grew on it. With the intention to document their journey and explore the different paths of the Amazon river, a Spanish expedition departed from Quito on February 16, 1639, this time with better equipment and workforce, and the intention to survey, measure, document and witness the details of the Amazon previously overlooked. The Amazon River was suddenly subjected to one round of expedition after another. Although cross-continental travel remained difficult, the alluvial patterns of the basin were carved by repeated navigations both upriver and downstream. Thus began the scientific endeavor to document the Amazon as an object of geographical and biological inquiry.

The Amazon Basin as Nature's Laboratory

Starting in the 18th century, the Amazon became more than just a mythical land that camouflaged a city of gold. Up until that point, popular narratives regarding the Amazon Basin conjured up images of an impenetrable jungle populated by giant snakes and shadowy jaguars, and armies of fish in the water that can reduce a large mammal to skeletons in minutes. Other accounts focused on the savagery and primal nature of the natives, their curare-tipped arrows and their cannibalistic appetite. These tales were told mainly by conquistadors and magistrates of the Spanish court tasked to govern the Empire's South American territories, and one can imagine the political weight these accounts held in light of

Spain's centuries of colonial harvesting (Bates, 1984). Alongside tales of riches that satisfied the imagination of the Spanish court and thus their continued financial support of the colonies at hand, there began the systematic dissection of the Amazon by another investigatory archetype of the colonial hegemony — that of the towering historical figure in the canons of natural science.

In no small degree, Amazon's scientific narrative in the 18th century reflected the power struggles of the European empires (Elliott, 1963). Unlike the thirst for wealth that fueled the earlier Spanish and Portuguese expeditions, the French Academie des Sciences took part in an international debate on whether the diameter of the Earth was greater around the equator than the distance between the North and South poles (Burnes, 1966). In the Age of Reason, the feud between the Cassinians and the Newtonians was backed by both patriotic pride and honor, as well as national financiers who funded multiple sailing expeditions for the sake of grounded scientific truths. The first scientific expedition (and also non-Iberian party) into the Amazon was conducted by the French Academie in November of 1737, led by the geographer Charles-Marie de la Condamine, astronomer Pierre Bouguer, and mathematician Louis Godin. Instead of armors, canons, and guns, these scientists brought microscopes, telescopes, and astrolabes, ready to document all information about the natural world. However, despite their initial intentions, the journey's outcome had more in common with Aguirre's now infamous adventure. This equatorial study expedition would experience death by illness, accident and murder, marriage and madness, and a desire to return to France via the Amazon routed in three separate journeys and finally all concluding in the year 1770, a full thirty-three years later. Aided by mission stations and officers from the Spanish Navy, the French expedition started in Quito but was soon ravaged by a malaria outbreak 8,000 feet

above sea level causing all the native Indians to depart the scientific camp. Some in the Spanish population of 6,000 residing in Quito also suspected that the French instruments, theodolites, maps, and octants were all used to find the ever-elusive city of Amazonian gold. In the face of disease and suspicion, the team continued to survey the land, documenting plants, atmospheres, and architecture of native pyramid mounds. By 1743, Condamine's team of scientists was massively depleted, with two men departing back to France, two men diagnosed with heat stroke and subsequent insanity, one leaving for Lima and two marrying local Peruvians. Condamine decided to return to France first via the main river, leaving his team in the leadership of Jean Godin and Isabela Godin. For the next fifty years, the European scientific history of South America would be carried on the backs of Condamine, Jean Godin, and Isabela Godin and the knowledge collected from their three separate trips.

The wealthy and well-connected German explorer Alexander von Humboldt continued to build on the famous French explorations of the Basin with his own brand of scientific enthusiasm in 1799. Humboldt had consumed all of Condamine's and the Godins' accounts of the region and concluded that the French had scarcely scratched the surface of the closed Iberian kingdoms across the sea (Humboldt, 1995). The Spanish had now been in the New World for 307 years, and save for their uneasy alliance with Portugal, they had resisted foreign involvement for the most part. Unlike Condamine who had received legal permits for his expedition in the Spanish court, Humboldt acquired his permission through his close acquaintance with Spain's principal minister, Mariano Luis de Urquijo (Hemming, 2008). When Humboldt arrived at the port of Cumana in July 1799, he was immediately granted free reign over all of Spanish controlled South America as well as North and Central America. With his team of scientists, Humboldt first explored Havana and adjacent lands in

the Caribbean, and then after half a year in the New World, he moved to the interior of South America. There, Humboldt was determined to answer the one major question posed by Condamine about the Amazon: where the Amazon Basin first connect with the many branches the Orinoco river system. Humboldt's inland expedition began on February 7, 1800, where he started first with the exploration of the Llanos, a formidable flatland that was either baked dry during the drought season or drowned in flood waters during the raining season. Humboldt continued along the Orinoco region documenting the growth of milk trees where natives drank from their saps and the phenomenon of electric fish that could stun or kill a horse during a river crossing. His team would eventually collect 12,000 specimens and travel 1,500 miles on their journey to find the link between the Amazon and Orinoco system. Humboldt himself would finally publish thirty volumes on his South American tours, which absorbed the majority of his inherited wealth and lasted 30 years (Smith, 1994).

Standing on the intellectual shoulders of previous explorers, English botanist Richard Spruce arrived in the Amazon in 1849 to start his geographical expedition both in collaboration and competition with fellow United Kingdom naturalists Alfred Russel Wallace and Henry Walter Bates. Spruce gains his claim to fame with the extracting and cultivating of the cinchona trees, where were discovered to obtain curative properties. The sixty-five species of cinchona trees, native to the Amazon, is mostly part of the *Rubiaceae* family, sprouting in areas of high humidity and constant rainfall. Spruce spent his career extracting the cinchona bark and turning its properties to powder, via extraction or infusion. Funded by the British Crown and the Royal Geographical Society, Spruce, Wallace, and Bates played a pivotal role in the commoditization of the various Amazon species in the field of medicine (Rosolie, 2015). By the end of their careers, the three men had achieved in the Amazon what

Charles Darwin had accomplished in the Galapagos, and became world-renowned experts in natural selection in plants, animals, and insects of the Amazon. Other British geographers and naturalists followed in their footsteps to help cultivate, extract and package various natural resources from the Amazon. Clements Markham, for example, was a British seed collector who mastered the growth of Amazonian plants in British greenhouses. Henry Wickham encountered rubber tapping on his second expedition and sowed the seeds for Britain's own lucrative eastern rubber plantations in the early half of the 1900s (Wolf, 1936; Coates, 1987).

The Amazon Basin as Fictional Narrative

The beginning of the 20th century marked a distinct breakage with how the West viewed the Amazon. Whereas the Spanish and Portuguese sought its hidden treasures, and the French and German expeditions satisfied their scientific inquiries, the British and later American interests in the Amazon redefined its landscape through the aesthetics of fictional narration. In the thick of the rubber boom in South America, British author Arthur Conan Doyle published his 1912 novel, *The Lost World*, which finds Professor Challenger leading a research team deep into the Amazon rainforest to a plateau where they discover living dinosaurs and other prehistoric life forms. The novel spun a sequel in Greg Bear's *Dinosaur Summer* published in 1998 where an Amazonian dinosaur circus forces the Belzoni family to navigate human politics and capitalist enterprises (Bear, 2014). The two novels have South American dinosaur-horror in common, yet they are written eighty-six years apart.

While Doyle's Professor Challenger magnifies the imaginary landscape of Amazonian spatiality through the sheer wonder of discovery, Bear's teenage protagonist, Peter Belzoni recenters the reader's attention from the horrors of the Amazonian creatures

back to the unhindered development of Western identity in the face of the fantastical. From Doyle onward, authors and filmmakers alike have decorated the Amazon Basin with many types of colonial symbols and imagery. More than eighty pieces of fiction ranging from novellas such as *Journey to the River Sea* (Ibbotson, 2016), to novels such as the recent bestsellers *The Testament* (Grisham, 1999) and *State of Wonder* (Patchett, 2016) to two waves of European and American films between 1972 and 2017 including Herzog's adventure-dramas *Aguirre, Wrath of God* (1972) and *Fitzcarraldo* (1982), and horror films *Anaconda* (Llosa, 1997) and *The Green Inferno* (Roth, 2015) have compounded a renewed interest in the Amazon. These narrative forms of aesthetics build off of the colonial tropes of European exploration and solidify the aesthetic quality of the Amazon into a permanence reflected by its characteristics of antagonism, fulfillment and that object of desire. My research begins a discourse to navigate this field of narrative aesthetics, and I hope to explore the Euro-American imaginary of a land that has long been misplaced as a traditional colonial periphery.

Chapter I

From Travel Writing to Scientific Romance

Introduction

For 400 years, the Amazon Basin lived in the Western imagination as a space of spectacular wonder, generating overlapping European interests over its potential wealth and hidden mysteries. This jungle landscape in South America constitutes what Mary Louis Pratt calls “contact zone” — a place of colonial encounter in which geographically separated peoples make contact and establish among themselves “relations based on coercion, inequality and intractable conflict” (Pratt, 1992, p. 6). The Amazon is a thoroughly unique colonial geography even amongst the vast regions of the Western Hemisphere. Historically, Western explorers examined the tropics as an ulterior region located on the outer dark of civilization, a wilderness intrinsically located along both an ideological and geographical frontier. For European travelers like Orellana, Aguirre, Humboldt, and others who have had an exploratory firsthand account of the frontier jungle, the concept of wilderness is further bleached with dominant images of the Amazon as economic and symbolic repositories that offer opportunities in the advancement of their European visions. One of these visions materializes in Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World*, a novel that takes the reader from the outer region of the romanticized jungle, toward its internal body, or the heart of the plateau where the deepest mysteries and terrors lie in wait. I demonstrate how this binary iteration of the Amazon in Doyle’s work both unifies the role of the

Amazon as a spatial object of scientific romance as well as bridges the gap between early travel writing with science fiction literature.

This first chapter is a historical project that reveals the significance of literary spatial features applied to a geographic location seemingly lost in time, and articulates its implications for future representations of the South American jungle. First, I introduce the writings of Raphael Reyes, a travel entrepreneur whose documentation blurred the lines between travel writing and fictional storytelling. I then discuss Doyle's scientific romance and how this early literary genre was inspired by Reyes' work and eventually launched a new Eurocentric binary between adventure protagonists and their geographic object of wonder. I discuss the role of the Amazon as both an object of antagonism in a narrative arc, and its specific role as a fantastical jungle place in the genre of scientific romance. The final section analyzes the Amazon landscape as a literary antagonist characterized by two fantastical spatial features: an inner geography of darkness and mystery, and an outer region of natural beauty. Together, Raphael Reyes and Arthur Conan Doyle, the two authors under analysis, contribute significantly to the development of the Western imaginary of the Amazon basin.

The Travel Writing of Raphael Reyes

Curiously, the bridge that gapped European travel writing and the first European fictional novel that takes place in the Amazon was two little known autobiographies called *Through South America: Explorations of the Reyes Brothers* (1902), and *Memoirs* (1911) written by General Raphael Reyes, an entrepreneur and explorer of Spanish and Colombian descent. Reyes and his brother acquired a fortune exporting quinine, a bitter crystalline compound present in cinchona

bark⁵. In 1874, Reyes explored the rainforest of the southeast Colombian Amazon region, searching for an alternative route to the Atlantic Ocean. He inaugurated steam navigation on the Putumayo River and began to export quinine alongside other goods including rubber. In his memoir, Reyes proclaimed himself a hero of progress and a champion of the civilized European world. He writes, "If some years ago, the territories of which I am talking about had only a local and relative importance, it is not the same today, because the development of navigation and commerce and the growing needs of humankind demand that they don't remain ignored and unproductive... so I bring the world to them" (Reyes, 1902, p. 13). Reyes' autobiography articulates a characteristic of European ontology in late 19th century travel writing, one that is fundamentally different from earlier exploration writing. In 17th and 18th century travel writing, the preoccupation with truth dominated the posture of the narrator. Procedurally, travelers recorded details and collected samples from the tropics, and then such data were organized alongside testimonial data into a classification of the natural order to impose clarity and definition on the wild growth of the traveled region. Under the influences of geographer Charles-Marie de la Condamine, a naturalist narrative took shape in the form of species collection and data assemblage (Koerner, 1996)⁶.

In contrast, Reyes's work engages with Eurocentricism not through scientific discovery, but through the act of revelation by a central subject in order to accumulate relevance for the deed of exploration itself. Reyes was a capitalist in the business of extraction, merchandizing and exportation. Whereas previous travel volumes at least hid under the auspice of the joy of

⁵ First used as a treatment of malaria, then used by the British as an aroma component of tonic water and bitter lemon drink mixers made famous by the cocktail gin and tonic.

⁶ One section in K.W. Koerner's *The Pleasures of Counting* outlines and celebrates the way nature is captured through a process of numbering, ordering and cataloging through an accumulation of its parts. Later on, I argue how this romanticizing effort gives the illusion of mathematical accuracy and scientific truth.

adventure and the curiosity of scientific discovery, Reyes' work organizes himself a hero of the civilizing process through denotative measures. In his own words, Reyes became a protagonist in contrast to the bulk of the European populace due to his daring personality and determined will to venture. His path to success is dependent upon himself as the central figure of his narration. In the formulation of the self as a dominant subject once unhindered by geographic design and nature's brutal materialism against which human life is cast irrelevant, Reyes assumes the form of a hero figure, transcending the details of the travel process, toward predictable triumph.

A remarkable feature of *Memoirs* is the chameleon-like morphing portrayals of the rainforest that is mentioned in connection with the practice of rubber extraction. These descriptions appeal to metaphors in which the Amazon is alternatively described as the parallel imagery of the Garden of Eden as well as a curse of God. Reyes' biblical imagination limits his dimensional appeal of the rainforest solely based on the success or failure of his extraction of mercantile commodities. While Reyes' narrative tropes play a fundamental role in the discourses of narrative history⁷ (White, 1978, p. 3), his work also sets aside a narrative reality that creates the conditions of possibility for a fictional Amazon to materialize out of the epoch of South American colonization. At first glance, Reyes' descriptions of the Amazon are self-reflexive and tampered by the capitalist goals of his business ventures. He illustrates the Amazon from the vantage point of a distant tree in the eastern Andes. He writes:

I climbed to the top of these [trees] to explore the horizon, in front of me, to the East, an unending and immense ocean of verdure expanded itself, not a mountain rose there, not a hill, it was plain as the sea, where it goes to die on the Atlantic shores (*Memorias*, 1850-1885).

⁷ Hayden White's *Tropics of Discourse* discusses the usages of narrative history from the perspective of literary criticism. He criticizes historians who assume first-person history writing is indicative of truth, and argues that history, especially auto-biographical history is always performed from a perspective. A "discourse", for White, is comprised of voices from human history that help us make sense of a time and place. I argue that while Reyes' work is "a perspective", it is also referred to as primary perspective, one so prevalent in Amazon's history that its distinction from notions of "fact" or "truth" becomes less significant due to its interpretive usage by subsequent writers.

His descriptive strategy is at first characteristic of the one deployed by Humboldt, who “customarily organized for the spectator his articulation of a grand landscape from a distance like an artist toward their painting”⁸ (Stephen, 2001, p. 37). In one of his first descriptive capacity, Reyes uses a conventional metaphor of the virgin lands to legitimize from the onset his endeavor to make a colonial impact. However, here, one can read in his work a reimagined and new discourse regarding the rainforest:

Those virgin and strange forests, those vast places captivated and attracted me in order to explore them, traverse them, reach the sea and open roads for the progress and well-being of my homeland they [the rainforests] were entirely unknown to the people who lived in the mountain range and the idea of penetrating them caused me fear and popular imagination populated them with wild beasts, with monsters, besides the numerous tribes of savages cannibals who were there. The widespread fear for these rainforests was so huge that after ten days of walk my companions or hands manifested that they would not continue because we were reaching the region of the forests, of the savage cannibals and the infernal spirits of these rainforests.

For Reyes, the forested land symbolizes the texture of a blank canvas from which he carves out his epistemological empire despite the existence of regional mappings, explorations, and narratives from prior explorers. Reyes pretends he was the first explorer to traverse the Amazon. His writing contemplates a clean start, emphasizing the symbolic magnitude of *first* discovery. Remarkably, his writing draws little to no references to the long tradition of Amazonian travel writing, almost erasing European colonial history with the stroke of his pen. The significance of first exploration draws a stark contrast to previous Amazonian travel writings from Aguirre, Humboldt and others who upon their

⁸ Nancy Leys Stephan, in *Picturing Tropical Nature*, encourages historians to read travel writers like Humboldt, and in this case Reyes, like one would a painted canvas. Taking note of White’s caution in reading travel writing as scientific, Stephen seem to read Humboldt’s nature as art. I argue that in reality, readers of Humboldt and Reyes interpret the Amazon as some combination of both by navigating and substantiating the space between aesthetics and fantasy.

contact with the tropics, all acknowledge with a degree of gratitude and sincerity, the trailblazing efforts attempted by previous generations of Europeans.

Reyes writes as a trailblazer, crafting a virgin text out of virgin lands.⁹ He antagonizes both the natives who reside in the tropics as well as the bleak historical documentations realized by his European predecessors. I argue that this spoiled act of literary unsportsmanlike conduct opened the path for fictional authors to create their own fantasies upon the geography of the Amazon. Reyes' writing is grounded on the premise that the Amazon can remain a literary "virgin" land in spite of previous European explorations. His texts provide a conduit for organized fictional storytelling by imbuing the gift of immortality to the Amazon basin, recalibrating its newness each time a new set of colonial eyes gaze upon its canopy. Reyes' travel writing implies that the condition by which one judges the nature of the Amazon jungle, could be postponed indefinitely, left to the task of future explorers and the ones that come after them. Unlike the previous authors of Amazonian travel writing, who by all accounts set out to make a definitively exploratory description of the world they observed, Reyes articulates a diversifying effect, one that generates an infinite space for textual description beyond the limitations of the Amazon in both physicality and resource production. Reyes fabricates a myopic newness to the identity of the Amazon, which paves the way for the fiction genre of scientific romance. With inspiration from Reyes' work, Arthur Conan Doyle would soon after, publish his jungle adventure novel, and universalize the Amazonian tropes by constructing the

⁹ As an entrepreneurial colonizer Reyes initially feminizes the Amazon, organizing the rainforest into a passive other of which he takes possession first with his gaze and further on with his exploratory deeds. Here, the landscape is produced as "a visual ideology" (Blair 2001) that privileges the colonial gaze over the geography in question. In Reyes, the male gaze becomes hierarchically situated to seduce and conquer. Reye's patriarchal images remain in the language of conquest as he "loved nature, even more when it is wild and virginal... which offers to him, besides its treasures, the almost sensual joy of receiving him as a groom." (Lemaitre 1955).

ecology of the tropics as ahistorically untouched, merging all the variations of its epistemology of the past four hundred years of European exploration.

Arthur Conan Doyle's Scientific Romance in the Amazon

Arthur Conan Doyle's novel, *The Lost World* (1912)¹⁰, is a representative benchmark of the scientific romance genre of the early 1900s English novel. In the wake of the Edwardian and Early Modern period of Western literature, and the exodus of European migrants to the Western Hemisphere through Ellis Island where many sought to start a new life, Doyle began to sense the wavering of the British Empire. Adventure stories, for Doyle, became a mode of critique, with its emphasis on sequential trials of strength, page-turners illustrating action and a commitment to the joys of adventure shared between male friends. *The Lost World* introduces a British superhero, the motivated and energetic Professor Challenger, and his platoon of modern men¹¹. Together they journey back to a Jurassic Age within the mystical confines of the Amazon tropics. The novel "sets an example of adventurous comradeship for the isolated men who have come to exist in contemporary society" (Jaffe, 1993, p. 23). The novel begins with Professor Challenger's contentious nature, introducing to the reader the narrator-author, Edward Malone, who believes that the "injunction for restraint have been withdrawn unreservedly from Professor G.E. Challenger." While Challenger is introduced immediately as larger than life, the novel portrays the world of the United Kingdom as infinitely small, bourgeois, and boring. On page one, Edward Malone illustrates a British society where the middle-class rules with predictable mediocrity. For example, the narrator describes his fellow men as "a fluffy, feathery, untidy,

¹⁰ Published more than a decade after Reyes' *Through South America: Explorations of the Reyes Brothers* (1902), and one year after Reyes' *Memoirs* (1911).

¹¹ Doyle's female characters in this novel are permanently identified with the civilized world of the boring middle class. Gladys Hungerton, the lady of romance, is shown to be little more than the stereotyped suburban housewife, the "little" woman fit for the "little" man. Challenger's wife, of whom more might be expected, is described as a fussy "enraged chicken."

cockatoo; perfectly good-natured, but absolutely centered upon his own silly self" (p. 3). In contrast, Challenger leads his men into adventure, bonding with them through their mutual experience of masculine exhilaration and survival across the Amazonian unknown.

Challenger's protagonism is also a representational hero of Doyle's time, presenting to the audience a working definition of a scientific hero. Lauren Robbins¹², in *Science and The Lost World*, writes, the [hero], always male, is a character who is in actuality, a scientist embarking on a quest, the premise of which is generally based on a previous hypothesis or claim" (p. 78).

Challenger proves Robbin's point when he states his position on scientific objectivity, saying that "the true scientific mind is not to be tied down by its own conditions of time and space... it disregards so petty a thing as its own physical dissolution as completely as it does all other limitations upon the plane of matter" (p. 259-260). The implication for the scientific hero is that scientific truth is situated in the building of objective evidence. German critic Stefan Lampadius¹³ cites *The Lost World* as one of the most influential works of the 20th century precisely because it introduced to the public the rise of evolutionary theory as a cultural phenomenon. Lampadius writes, "Evolution was not just another new scientific theory, but embodied a new, fresh spirit that was not afraid of traditional authorities in its search for the origins of the living world. Doyle's own memoir, *Memories and Adventures* suggests that "these were the years when Huxley¹⁴, Darwin, Herbert Spencer and John Stuart Mill were our chief philosophers, and that even the man in the street felt the strong sweeping current of their thought"

¹² Lauren Robbins' dissertation on the intersection of Doyle's work and science demonstrates her understanding of the notion of early 20th Century European scientist-hero. This work illustrates the masculinity of both science and fiction through the understanding of protagonism in Jules Verne and Arthur Conon Doyle.

¹³ In the late 1950s, Stefan Lampadius and other European naturalists reflected on the influence of Darwinian evolutionary theory on the fictions of H.G. Wells and Doyle. He celebrates Darwinian materialism as an overwhelming achievement, least of which, is due to the rise of scientific adventure novels such as *The Lost World*.

¹⁴ Thomas Huxley was a English biologist. He is known as "Darwin's Bulldog for his staunch advocacy of Darwin's theory of evolution.

(p. 69). These men of science are Professor Challenger's precursors, and where they went in the real world, they left unfinished business, unexplored regions for follow-up expeditions. Doyle gives Challenger an air of scientific confidence and authority over the British public. His Amazonian journey begins as an adventure of fact finding, research and a revelation of Darwinian truth. Lampadius notes that by the 20th century, unmapped places in the world became increasingly rare. He writes, "Interior Africa, South America and the Arctic regions still offered some blank spaces on the world map and were therefore favorite settings for such adventure stories at the time" (p. 72). Lampadius' thesis is that the history of imperialism and scientific discovery converted from separate origins of human advancements, and while Doyle's novel reflects the cultural acceptance of evolutionary thinking, the question of "romantic" discoveries of unknown worlds still baffled the average Victorian man. This point is relevant for my work because Doyle's novel not only celebrates science, but also articulates the moral ontology of the scientific protagonist as physically strong and mentally willing to conquer in the face of adversity and villainy, thus reimagining the Amazon beyond scientific and imperialist visions.

Popularity in Doyle's work has been attributed to the notion that adventures address some of the issues that occupy the Victorians in an increasingly fragmented society on a path toward urbanization. Several literary scholars have observed the relationship between adventure fiction and Victorian social turmoil. For example, historian Stephen Knight¹⁵ articulates the relationship between adventure fiction and class in his book *Form and Ideology in Fiction*. He emphasizes a connection between the "structure of the story and the ideology of the audience that consumes it," (p. 2). In *Challenger*, Knight reads the tendency of bourgeois professionalism, which fuses a materialistic worldview of science with the egalitarianism of a working class work ethics, and in turn, corresponds to the disdain for lazy aristocracy. Challenger is the ideal Victorian protagonist,

¹⁵ British journalist best known for his 1976 work, *Jack the Ripper*.

exercising a positive scientific will with his power to discern truth from falsehood, fact from fiction. What is missing in Knight's work, according to Victorian literary scholar Rosemary Jann¹⁶, is a reading of the external signs of a physical body to Challenger's moral-scientific heroism. Jann notes that imperialism and the woman question are central themes in all of Doyle's writings, lease of which is the establishment of a powerful, patriarchal hero. From this, I draw inference that the Amazon body represents the physical embodiment of Challenger's object of desire with which he establishes a romanticist connection.

Challenger's romance with the Amazon is organized by a system of scientific deductions, identifications, categorizations and characterizations. These acts of judgment relies, in the words of Jann, "on the posited but seldom tested validity of indexical codes of body and behaviour that allow" (p. 21) Doyle's male character to exercise social control over a place or thing. Although Jann describes specific examples from Doyle's famous detective protagonist, Sherlock Holmes, and his position over the bodies of sub-characters, I argue that this same pattern of deduction is applicable to Professor Challenger's heroism over the body of the Amazon tropics. Challenger's narrative arc in the Amazon adventure becomes the central mechanism of the modern disciplinary regime where the land-body of the tropics becomes subject to Challenger's observation. By observing the smallest of details and placing them in the context of scientific romanticism, Challenger imposes "the fixity and naturalness of the social order" of the Amazon and places it into a "continual reiteration of normalcy" (Jane, 1990, p. 686). Thus the consistency of Doyle's narrative relies on the consistency and objectivity of the Amazon space as a unified body of desire for Challenger and his team. This iteration of the hero's gaze, and its connectivity with the object of desire allows for a powerful and reckonable character to emerge in the

¹⁶ Jann's work focuses on social and gender issues in Victorian adventure fictions. She is known for her work on Sherlock Holmes' detection methods in real conceptions of crime and social order, which affects the reader's assumptions about the nature of female sexuality.

adventure novel as both scientifically objective and personally relatable. Jann suggests that Doyle's use of this tactic means that author desires to submit the entire social body to a uniform degree of narrative coding. In the case of *Challenger*, the Amazon difference is defined by its deviation from not just *Challenger* the rational thinking human subjectivity, but also from the civilized location of the West, where rational heroes like *Challenger* is readily cultivated.

As a scientific romance novel, *The Lost World* organizes a scientific field of inquiry at the very beginning. Before Doyle properly enters the spatiality of the fantastical and fictional lost world, he gives his readers a properly scientific monologue on the temporal coordinates of *Challenger*'s travel. Regarding the Amazon, Doyle writes — "from December to May is the period of the rains, and during this time the river slowly rises until it attains a height of forty feet above its low-water mark. It floods the banks, extends in great lagoons over a monstrous waste of country... About June the waters begin to fall and are at their lowest at October or November. Thus the expedition was "at the time of the dry season when the great river and its tributaries were more or less in a normal condition" (p. 35). Given Doyle's training as a field doctor, one would guess that even his fantasy novels are to a certain extent when possible, scientifically precise and technically descriptive. However, he tends to invent what he needs for the story and make very little use of scientific devices or how they work. *The Lost World* contains little scientific tools or explanations of how certain feats are achieved but instead, utilizes the atmosphere of science relating to a more general fictional logic. For Doyle, science becomes a territory, not of rational engagement, but for usage in the fantasy aspects of the narrative's unfolding. Whereas early explorers become disillusioned and conjure up fantasy to reflect the psychological damage they endured due to the length of stay in the Amazon, Doyle's Amazon already possess these fantasies independent of psychically traumatic human illusions. Doyle's

tale does not claim scientific veracity because its use of realism extends as far as Challenger's arrogant proclamations. The reader takes Challenger's words and visions as believable in the visceral sense, and for the functioning of the story. Science becomes a backdrop, the wall from which Doyle's adventure hangs. Therefore as a genre, the "romance" aspect is not codified in the realm of scientific probably, but in the fantastically possible and in Western man's relationship to that very illusion of possibility.

With the introduction of his hero, Doyle sets up the parameters of narrative discourse within the novel's location. Doyle outlines several key thematic vantage points of interest between Challenger and the location of the story. First, he announces the foundational reason for the driving force of Challenger's explorations. The point of his adventure, Doyle writes, is a discovery that could be deemed "classical in the scientific history of the world." This mission of discovery immediately conjures up the scientific travel writings of early Amazonian explorations. Initially, the object of Challenger's journey was to "verify some conclusions of Wallace and of Bates¹⁷, by observing their reported facts", by unfiltered eyewitness accounts verified by his own team members. In this, Doyle organizes his narrative as an operation toward scientific and objective ends. Here, the Amazon is not yet characterized as an antagonistic foe, but simply an object of study. Second, when Challenger's journey turns hostile, Doyle organizes another set of parameters to distinguish the Amazon as a bona fide villain to Challenger's protagonism. Doyle delivers this physical antagonism more concrete by breaking up the terrors of the tropics into units of danger; e.g. flying creatures, land reptiles and ape-men tribes. The lost world of the Amazon alone is not enough to antagonize Challenger because simply finding the "lost" would not surmount to a difficult challenge. Doyle explains, "in a little-known backcountry of the

¹⁷ Two famous English naturalists of the 1800s who gave the first scientific account of mimicry in animals. They published "The Naturalist on the River Amazon" in 1863.

region, [Challenger] seeks the materials for that great and monumental work upon zoology which will be [his] life justification" (Doyle, 1912, p. 15) for living a fulfilling and active life. In this, Doyle's fiction personifies a subjectivity from the spatial geography of the jungle terrain.

Amazonian Body as Animalistic Antagonism

In *The Lost World*, the Amazon becomes one of the first great geographical antagonists of the scientific romance genre in literature. Science fiction, in general, was already well established by the time Doyle began to write his novel. Jules Verne (1870) and H.G. Wells (1895) are often credited for making early contributions, followed by Doyle. Although *The Lost World* is considered a scientific romance novel — “science” being a subject of the novel and “romance” being an intended gesture toward comradeship — the relationship between protagonist and the explored geography is here portrayed as antagonistic¹⁸. Here, the premise of the novel is set upon the intimacy between the object of scientific desire and the men who take pleasure in its revelation. For Doyle, the Amazon basin becomes an engaging location due to the travel writings of those before him. Within the territory of the Western Hemisphere, i.e., the New World, which already exists on the cardinal outskirts of the colonial periphery¹⁹, hides a *lost world* staged to be even more mysterious than all of the rest of the colonial lands north and south of the territorial continent. Doyle lays bare the geography of Challenger's domain — a region in the upper-center Amazon that is described as a prehistoric land. The lost world motif had been explored by Rider Haggard in *Kino Solomon's Mines* (1895) and even earlier by Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883). However, unlike the previous renditions of a lost “X” coordinate on a map, the region that piques Challenger's interest is an undisclosed center territory

¹⁸. Traditional notions of the scientific romance genre articulate a romance between the main characters and the land they traverse, e.g., solar systems, exoplanets.

¹⁹ A distinction from the colonial center, the colonial periphery is discussed in Chapter VII.

within a real geographic location 2,123,562 square miles in size. In this, Doyle lost world exists as the smaller, but fully concentric mass of land within the larger New World.

In *The Lost World*, the inner Amazon basin soon morphs from a scientific object into a fantastical subject. This new character of spatiality is no longer simply an object of observation and exploitation, but one of wonder and fear. The inner Amazon is prearranged as fantasy that comes alive on Doyle's pages, regenerating itself as the main character, its plants and animals becoming its limbs, their actions direct, coordinated and intentional. Although Amazon's physical limitation is defined by its geographic boundaries, its quality and character is limitless, defined by its inaccessibility. Challenger recognizes the material facts of the Amazon, that "the country around parts of the land is still only partially explored, and that a great number of tributaries" remain uncharted. Challenger states to a colleague regarding the Amazon — "the river rises and falls the best part of forty feet, and half the country is a morass that you cannot pass over" (p. 30). The jungle is articulated as at once bounded by its outer physical limits and unbounded by the mystery of its inner inaccessibility. Another example shows how Doyle demonstrates this ontological duality. He sketches an internal discourse between a minor character, Mr. Summerlee, a veteran Professor of Comparative Anatomy, and Challenger. Mr. Summerlee desires to know how Challenger's new scientific claim had not been already recorded by previous explorers of established scientific repute, to which Challenger claims, "the Orinoco passes some fifty thousand miles of country and that in so vast a space it was not impossible for one person to find what another person had missed." Doyle takes this confrontation to illustrate how the Amazon can remain new and unexplored for every generation of adventure seekers despite past revelations, conjuring up Reyes' explanation regarding his own novelistic view of the region. Another of Challenger's claim details how the Amazon is a "water-

way running through a forest that is very near the size of Europe” (31). Extrapolating the experience of a familiar European readership, Challenger marks his claim against the great distance of a relatively unknown land. Challenger says, “you and I could be as far away from each other as Scotland is from Constantinople, and yet each of us be in the same great Brazilian forest.” (31) Both Reyes and Doyle imply that no two explorations into the Amazon are the same, that each experience is as genuine and freshly grounded as if discovering the land for the first time. The geography of the tropics in its physical space becomes physically reachable but strategically unconquerable.

Read traditionally, *The Lost World* is about the scientific triumph of the civilized protagonist against the brutality of the Amazon. The geography of the Amazon, is not meant to be a major character in the novel, but simply a location to test out the heroism of Doyle’s characters. Professor Challenger, an unpredictable and often violent character, circumvents bureaucratic rules and institutional regulations. He cannot be contained, either by "small rooms nor by moribund ideas.” (Waugh & Greenberg, xi) Within the confines of a lost world of prehistoric beasts, Doyle fully rationalizes Challenger’s human potential. Doyle takes his main character out of the social norm of Great Britain, a society whose petty routines and emphasis on respectability frustrates the author. Challenger is presented as a modern colonizer-explorer with dreams of grandeur, whose resolute character makes him predictable in a presumably unpredictable environment. Challenger’s vision for an active and rewarding human society becomes fulfilled with the full presence of the Amazon jungle, "a fascinating dream-like atmosphere," one "that the imagination of man could not conceive" (Doyle, 1912, p. 81). Here however, Challenger conceives precisely the inconceivably desirable, as such defines the very reason for his expedition in the first place. It is insufficient to argue that his prejudice against the

Amazon derives solely from a colonial binary discourse on civilization and barbarism. Doyle's Amazon is first and foremost a visceral natural force. In its early chapters, Doyle describes this Rousseauian vision of nature as an anti-social space imbued with a perfect natural balance between each of its components from the geography of its terrain to its plant and animal life. Unlike Reye's moral characterization of the jungle, Doyle makes a judgment of aesthetics, calling the region "a verdant paradise of a thousand shades of green" (Nordon, 1966, p. 330)²⁰. This visual marking gives the Amazon a formal character from which it can mature as a main antagonist as the novel progresses.

Once Challenger enters the inner Amazon, or the lost world territory of the forest, nature's balance is disrupted with scenes from a Darwinian nightmare. Chapter VII, titled "Tomorrow We Disappear into the Unknown" articulates the second thematic coordinate for Challenger's adventure. Like a human character, Doyle's Amazon possesses an impressionable façade, followed by a passage toward an inner core that reveals its truth of character. Predictably, this nature of the natural world is located in the hidden part, the inner area of the Amazonian body. Moreover, unlike Challenger whose inner thought character is consistent with his outer bodily actions, the Amazon is deceptive. The region of the basin described here is also a material frontier between rational European colonial operations, such as Reye's rubber trade, and an alien world where no European has set foot on. Challenger describes a border that is a "no man's land, which is formed by the half-defined frontiers between Peru, Brazil, and Columbia" (p. 32). On the outer side of the border, European merchants have staked their claim where "the wild rubber tree flourishes and has become a curse to the natives which can only be compared to their forced labor under the Spaniards upon the old silver mines of Darien" (p. 32). In the inner Amazon,

²⁰ Pierre Nordon was Doyle's biographer. He published *Conon Doyle* in 1966 and included in the book are Doyle's notes on the Amazon Basin.

however, Doyle marks Challenger's indispensable moral apparatus in his hatred toward the rubber barons. Doyle describes the rubber traders as a "handful of villainous half-breeds that dominated the country... terrorizing them with the most inhuman tortures," (p. 32). By crossing into the central plateau, Challenger at once steps away from the deplorable behavior of his capitalist countrymen, drawing a moral distinction from their capitalist misdeeds. For Doyle, the "unknown" does not necessarily mean pre-colonial, as such context implies eventual colonization. The Amazon's unknown represents the fantastical in nature, an anti-episteme by which scientific discoveries are made possible, and by which moral and exemplary apparatus becomes a pursue that materializes out of the human condition toward wonder. Doyle welds together the moral character of his hero and the scientific inquiries of his curious mind along the border of the lost world, foreshadowing an act that perhaps alters Challenger's very integrity toward the end of the novel.

Doyle's outer Amazon, where the barons extract their rubber, is warm and inviting, lit by an "occasional golden ray of sunshine that shot downwards to trace a thin dazzling line of light amidst the majestic obscurity" (p. 17). Traveling through it, Challenger sees "vivid orchids and wonderful colored lichens smoldered upon the swarthy tree trunks... upon the golden allamanda... the effect was a dream of fairyland (p. 19). The Amazon center, where Challenger's team ends up is darkly mysterious and horrific. Rivers start to narrow rapidly, skies darken in the day and "the points of the compass are carefully confused" (p. 46). As Challenger's crew snakes further into the main of the basin, they are suddenly met with a dreadful forest where "the trees grew so thin, and their foliage spread so widely that [they] could see nothing of the moonlight (p. 53)". Later the crew hears a "shocking clamor, which filled the air with mephitic, musty odor" (p. 56). From here, Doyle begins to introduce mythical creatures in detail. In describing an

encounter with pterodactyls, Challenger gages with “gargoyle-like birds born from leathery, yellowish eggs” (p. 166). These creatures are so terrifying that Doyle invokes the image of Dante's hell to help him describe the "crawling flapping mass of obscene reptilian life” that fills the sky (p. 167). They are “tall, grey and withered, more like dead and dried specimens than actual living creatures” (p. 167). Doyle’s passage describing the lost world is filled with demonic imagery Gothic and crude, and in stark contrast to the pastoral vibrancy of the earlier writings describing the New World. In another example later in the novel, the adventurers encounter a carnivorous dinosaur by the campfire. The dinosaur’s head strikes them as "a vision of a horrible mask, like a giant toad's, of a warty leprous skin and of a loose mouth all slobbered with fresh blood" (p. 178). With the aid of a firebrand, the Challenger manages to drive off the beast. On the very next day, Malone, the narrator from Challengers group, is on his way back from a solitary reconnaissance when he slowly realizes that he is being tracked by a creature in the dark.

Doyle writes from the viewpoint of Malone:

"With my knees shaking beneath me, I stood and glared with starting eyes down the moonlit path which lay behind me. All was quiet as in a dream landscape. Silver clearings and the black patches of the bushes — nothing else could I see. Then from out of the silence, imminent and threatening, there came once more that low throaty croaking, far louder and closer than before" (p. 207).

At the end of the chapter, Malone escapes but realizes that his chase under the forest plateau was but an illustration of his mind. In other passages, Challenger describes "a snake the cast skin of which deep purple in color was fifty-one feet in length... a large black moth... that gigantic and grotesque stegosaurus... the iguanodon and the pterodactyl, terrible carnivorous dinosaurs... huge ferocious bird, the phorusrhacos and the great elk which still roams upon the upland... and the monstrous three-eyed fish lizards” (p. 94-95).

At the end of the novel, Challenger and his team discover that the lost world is divided

into two warring tribes of humanoids — the fearsome ape-men representing the missing link in human evolution, and the Accala Indians, "little, climbing red fellows whose skin glowed like polished bronze" (p. 231). The ape-men on the other hand, are much more primitive. Doyle writes, "above the eyebrows, the sloping forehead and low curved skull of the ape-men were in sharp contrast to the broad brow and magnificent cranium of the European, " (p. 232). It is then revealed that the Amazon lost world is a plateau that was severed from the mainland and by virtue of its position, has been compressing time thus the under-evolved ape-men battle their modern successors for territory all the while avoiding predatory dinosaurs. Doyle's Amazon, in contrast to early South American travel writing, is steeped in the descriptive horror of science fiction.²¹

Conclusion

As an active antagonist in the literary genre of scientific romance, the Amazon basin becomes an entity that embodies both a physical spatial coordinate in the world as well as a literary adversary position in the novel against its human protagonists. For Challenger, the Amazon is additionally segregated by an outer natural beauty and an inner terror that belongs to a pre-human time. This double layer of spatial mystification allows Doyle to generate fantastical graphic depictions through the eyes of his protagonist-explorers. Doyle's inner Amazon is not just ancient and mystic, but it takes on the characteristics of the creatures residing there. The pterodactyls, stegosaurus, and ape-men become limbs by which the inner Amazon strikes out against its wondering intruders. For Challenger, this wild country exists in sharp contrast to Reyes' outer Amazon where the rubber barons operate. Doyle's description of the Amazonian body takes the reader from the outer skin of the jungle, toward its internal body and finally to the

²¹ I explore this theme in Chapter II alongside both classic and modern horror films that take place in the Amazon tropics.

heart of the plateau where the deepest mysteries lie in wait. At the core of the basin, the forest takes on a radically different trait, one that anthropomorphizes the whole of the region into a unified character with its own initial appeal, personality, and disposition. Doyle's inner Amazon is a stagnant atmosphere of horror, and when personified, transforms a quantified space into a qualified persona.

As Challenger returns to Europe, he is exhausted but beaming with delight upon reflection of his grand adventure. Challenger has survived the dangers of the jungle, and in the struggle for his very life, he bonded with like-minded adventurers. Challenger, with his ability to live in both worlds — civilized Europe and the brutish Amazonian lost world — brings a specimen of a baby pterodactyl to London. When Londoners skeptically questioned his tale, he calmly unveiled the caged beast to a silenced and stunned crowd of onlookers. Upon his return, Challenger is once again the rational scientist, bringing proof of his unbelievable tale. Even though Challenger fluidly traverses both the barbarism of the jungle as well as the socio-cultural atmosphere of the city, he ultimately requires the admiration of his fellow Londoners. In contrast to Challenger, who eventually returns to his civilized social circle of scientists and adventurers, the Amazon stays where it has always been, waiting to host the next Western hero.

Chapter II

The Spatial Turn and Amazon as Spatial-Object of Horror

Introduction

The spatial turn in literary and cultural studies presents a unique opportunity to engage with the experience of spatiality as a key concept in critical analysis. Whereas in the 19th century, when temporality as a discourse overshadowed how thinkers addressed the concept of space, the spatial turn of recent decades attribute a different kind of aesthetic sensibility, one that not only puts physical and literary spaces in the foreground of critique but helps to demystify spatial concepts like borders, distance and meaning production concerning spatial affiliations. Colonization, with the aid of developments in linear perspective and cartography in navigation, systematized the European age of exploration, leading to conquest and distribution of land in the hundreds of years that followed. Spatiality as a concept, however, also contributed to a variety of theoretical approaches to literary studies that readdressed meaning production in the West's imagination of the colonial periphery. Following my examination of Doyle's novel as one of the first works of Amazonian literary spatiality, I continue to address the concept of space in this chapter with an assessment of the Amazon's cinematic production of forest horror. This chapter argues that the spatial cartography of the Amazon is organized by the filmic subgenre of "forest horror", with each subsequent contributing horror film regurgitating the mythology of the jungle as a site of primeval spatial-object both deceitful and seductive. I highlight the history of horror cinema in this regard because of its significant role in contemporary narrative formation to that of the Western imaginary. While Doyle's scientific romance introduced the West to Amazonian

fiction, 20th century horror cinema naturalized the tone and function of a visualized Amazon with tropes still largely visible in the 21st century.

In the post-*Lost World* era of scientific romance, forest horror has become a specific sub-genre of horror in popular culture, especially in film entertainment as a spatial imagination of the Amazon landscape. This chapter reinterprets the literary spatial turn by its application in horror films that take place in the Amazon jungle. I first explore the history of forest horror in American cinema from *The Lost World* to *Anaconda*, focusing on the iteration of spatial horror in the form of monster flicks. I then trace the variations of the forest horror theme in the development of Amazonian cannibalism as a site of fictional spatiality and how such iterations blur the line between perceptions of space and object, myth and fact, and ultimately induce a “spatial anxiety” onto the film audience. I then introduce the film *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* to demonstrate a more abstract element of Amazonian horror in Werner Herzog’s narration. I conclude this chapter with the argument that all three examples of horror forest in the Amazon- the monster, the cannibal, and the abstract, contributes to the notion of geohistory, which permanently stabilizes the Amazon basin to fulfill its narrative trait in the Western imaginary as a spatial-object of horror.

Forest Horror and Forest Monsters

Horror films are cinematic narratives that seek to elicit fear from the exposition of macabre and supernatural forces found in its storyline. Film scholar Dominique Strinati characterizes the field as that which “represents the need for suppression of certain disturbing desires that need to be contained” in the form of a fictional narrative (Strinati, 2000, p. 82). Three forms of horror often overlap in this narrative account: the uncanny, the marvelous and the fantastic. The uncanny contains elements of supernatural forces, allowing viewers to explain the

story in their own way yet the laws of reality remain undisturbed. The marvelous is seemingly irrational and incomprehensible but can be explained by a new law of nature introduced in the narrative to clarify certain phenomenon. Film critic Noel Carroll²² especially focuses on the notion of fantastic horror, which does not always allow for a clear understanding of plot points but offers several alternative rules of engagement including the introduction of paranormal rationale (1990). Carroll's work on fantastic horror draws from Tzvetan Todorov, who argues that the fantastic lies in the audience's uncertainty of whether certain objects and events are natural or supernatural, and thus experience the discomfort of not attaining a resolve. On horror, Todorov writes:

First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by a character. Third, the reader must adopt a certain attitude with regard to the text: he will reject allegorical as well as 'poetic' interpretations. These three requirements do not have an equal value. The first and third actually constitute the genre; the second may not be fulfilled. (Todorov, 1975, p. 33).

While the modern horror genre in film has somewhat progressed from the structuralist outlook of Todorov,²³ his genre categories are useful to determine patterns in classic horror discourses, including ones pertaining to horror films that take place in the Amazon jungle.

Forest horror is a film sub-genre that has taken many forms as well. These films have introduced many classic antagonists including the original *King Kong* (1933) and the first swamp monster (*Creature from the Black Lagoon*, 1954). Other examples include John Boorman's male melodrama in the Georgian wilderness (*Deliverance*, 1972), a shoestring budget documentary (*The Legend of Boggy Creek*, 1972), a film about city-dwellers lost in the woods (*Rituals*, 1977),

²² Noel Carroll offers the first serious look at the aesthetics of horror. He sees horror as a "transmedia" phenomenon, and tries to account for how people can find pleasure in the experience of fear.

²³ Many criticize Todorov's model for genre theory, arguing that a structuralist position leaves little room for films that cross genres or that audiences emotionally identify as horror.

an eco-horror classic (*Long Weekend*, 1978), another swamp monster (*Swamp Thing*, 1982), a set of demonic horror-comedies (*The Evil Dead I, II*; 1981, 1987), a murderous camping trip (*Just Before Dawn*, 1981), breeding dinosaurs (*Jurassic Park*, 1993), the infamous haunted woods story (*The Blair Witch Project*, 1999), alien hunters (*Predator*, 1987), and a disturbingly controversial Lars von Trier forest horror classic (*Antichrist*, 2009). The deep dark woods have the ability to stir a wide range of discomfort and emotional agony in its sheer size and form as a geographic location that is so rich in life but perhaps quite unfriendly to civilized human progress. Children's tales and young adult fiction often conjure up the narrative trope of the scary forest (*Little Red Ridinghood*, 10th century; *Hansel and Gretel*, 1812; *The Gruffalo*, 1999; *Harry Potter*, 1997-2007). Disney films have also illustrated sorrow and death in the forest with the death of Bambi's mother (*Bambi*, 1942), the shadow of an evil dragon amongst thorny trees (*Sleeping Beauty*, 1959), abject poverty in the woods (*Robin Hood*, 1973), a vicious wolf pack attack (*Beauty and the Beast*, 1991), the bleak side of colonization (*Pocahontas*, 1995) and Clayton's swinging body hung by vine strangulation (*Tarzan*, 1999). These popular cultural icons generalize the term "forest" or "trees" as any mass territory of greenery but absent from its physical spatial coordinates is the coordinate of a scientific definition of what the jungle actually represents. The Amazon tropical rainforest, in scientific terms, is a moist broadleaf forest in the Amazon biome characterized by high humidity, with annual rainfall between 250 and 450 centimeters (Marietta College, 2018). The entire basin of the forest encompasses two million seven hundred square miles of land during dryer months as much of it is submerged during the rainy season. The region represents over half of the planet's remaining rainforests and comprises the most complex biodiversity in its sixteen thousand tree species alone (Field Museum, 2018). The Amazon as forest-horror, illuminates its own unique set of stereotypes and thematic gestures.

Forest horror as a filmic sub-genre at large can be traced to one of the original silent fantasy monster adventure films, *The Lost World* (1925),²⁴ which like Doyle's novel, takes place in the Amazon tropics. The film is produced by First National Pictures, a major Hollywood studio and stars Wallace Beery as Professor Challenger. Much of the film borrows from the stop-motion photography of 1918's *The Ghost of Slumber Mountain*, where animated dinosaurs move in clumsy graphic stills without the presence of human actors. Compared to the novel, the most notable difference is the physical presence of the Amazon itself as a spatial entity. *The Lost World* as a film product, due to its restricted budget and limited technology of its time, lacks the visual vividness of the Amazon as a fully personified three-dimensional terrain. The motion picture uses staging and painted background to produce an illusion of a field of depth. It employs stop-motion animation- or model and object animation, which prefers the use of manipulated objects in set motion from one sequence to the next in conjunction with the visual sensation of live action movement (Selby, 2013, p. 143). In the film, only the creatures are cast as stop animation objects using three-dimensional models whereas human actors act in a separate footage to induce an interactive effect via reel editing. The narrative trajectory of Challenger and his crew in the film seems almost comical in front of the geographical illusion that makes up the spatial coordinates of where the animated dinosaurs reside. The Amazon jungle as props and sets presents a quality of performance staging in its representation of the real Amazon, but it also illustrates a civilizing product in the creative efforts the special effects crew utilizes to put dinosaur and human on screen. This early film highlights animated monster action, each step of a leg or swipe of their claw is met with an actor's scream. In contrast, Doyle's novel exudes a lived reality of the Amazon due to Doyle's sourcing of the many descriptive travel writings published

²⁴ Several new film adaptations of the novel have been released- including *Return to the Lost World* (1992), a 66 episode of the TV series Sir Authur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (1999-2002), and a two-part BBC film (2001).

before his book. As explained in the previous chapter, Doyle's Amazon pushes the landscape of the jungle to the forefront of his cartographic imagery of the novel's background. Each plant, insect, dinosaur, and ape-man appears out of the wilderness like a limb from a massive jungle body. There is the sense that Doyle's Amazon is a unified land of terror, a movement from a collective consciousness. Hollywood's Amazon in 1925 lacks this materialist quality, or what Foucault calls an "epoch of space" that resides in the historical moment. Here, the Amazon landscape is fake, static and purely symbolic of the photographic moment of an ahistorical Amazon. The prop of the jungle is still and lifeless because it does not respond to either the animation of the model dinosaurs or the horrified reaction of the European traveler. Regarding the role of space, Foucault writes:

"The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history: with its themes of development of the suspension, of crisis, and cycle, themes of the ever-accumulating past, with its great preponderance of dead men and the menacing glaciation of the world.... We are in the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed. We are at a moment when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and interests with its own skein" (Foucault, 1986, p. 22).

The Amazon as portrayed in this early film, although a part of film history, nonetheless corresponds to a flat spatial texture that lacks the momentum of Doyle's literary techniques. Whereas early travel writing flows continuously onto the pages of *The Lost World*, unifying the Amazon into a colonized space as an object of exploration, the 1925 film disqualifies the Amazon as a significant role player and forefronts the technological achievements of moving dinosaurs in celebration of filmic effects in the motion picture. The film represents the tropics with an embodiment of immobility, static in limited motion at best, and arranging space in an overall lack of spatial flexibility. The Amazon jungle of 1925 has become both a literally

materialist and romantically symbolic background, a stale wall situated just behind a slew of actors and dinosaurs in stale action.

Hollywood's second attempt at portraying the Amazon came in 1956 with *Curucu, Beast of the Amazon*, introducing a birdlike monster living in the uplands of the basin. Dean, a plantation owner, is accompanied by Dr. Romar in search for a cancer cure. The foreigners are guided through the jungle by Tupanico, a local guide, who turns out to be the legendary Curucu whose mission is to return his village to the old ways before colonization brought trade and disease. In the end, Curucu is killed and its head shrunken by Indian allies of Dean and given to the protagonist as a parting gift. *Curucu* was a radical departure from *The Lost World* as the jungle scenes were all exclusively shot in Eastmancolor, on location in the Amazon in rural Brazil with an estimated budget of \$155,000. The film implements terror elements of the traditional monster flick, creating a paradoxical effect in attracting the audience with elements generally considered repulsive and incendiary in real life. In horror films, this element of human emotion becomes a point of attraction (Prohaszkova, 2012), or what Aristotle refers to as "a catharsis" (Frank, 1957), a purgation of human emotions through the experience of tragedy and sadness in dramatic art. Motion in real space gives *Curucu* a sense of urgency as the Amazon lays bare the conditions of human bodies in real time. On-location filming becomes a critical factor in the transformation of narrative storytelling into visual storytelling by giving its audience a three-dimensional reality of the Amazon jungle. The topography of the tropics, in turn, generates physical effects on the inhabited characters. Dean is seen riding a boat in the heat of day, and he subsequently wipes a line of sweat from his brows. His shirt is soaked in the humidity, and even Dr. Romar's makeup seems to melt in a close-up scene of her face. Whereas Doyle mentions little of the exhausted physical conditions of Challenger and his crew, *Curucu*

illustrates the visuals of fear and loathing in the Amazon not only through the representation of a fierce mythical monster but the daily physical conditions of the protagonists who traverse the jungle on and off screen.

Early films about the Amazon tends to reflect major forest horror tropes of classic monster films in their black and white images of animated model objects and creature costumes that look amateurish in modern film standards. With the invention of computer animation and color film, the blockbuster project that captured the contemporary imagination of the potential terror of the Amazon jungle is none other than 1997's *Anaconda*, a Hollywood production featuring popular music diva Jennifer Lopez, rapper Ice Cube and actor Owen Wilson. Columbia Pictures hired Luis Llosa, a Peruvian director to helm the project and lead the oddball crew through this mess of horror adventure featuring a giant anaconda as the main non-human antagonist. At the start of the film, a panic-stricken man clings to wet rocks behind a waterfall and loses his grip, then plummets down into a dark gorge where an anaconda, coiled around a giant tree, darts out and snatches him in midair. In its fury, it uproots the tree, sending it smashing onto a rickety riverboat carrying a documentary film crew. Terri Flores (J-Lo) and crew searches for the missing humans for the duration of the film as her team bickers over perfunctory human dramas and is eaten dead one by one by the anaconda leaving two survivors to take revenge on the snake by fire and ax. Unlike the model dinosaurs of *The Lost World* and the human puppet of *Curucu*, the anaconda is an actual living species of the boa family. Perhaps the best-known account of a "giant anaconda" comes from the intrepid explorer Percy Fawcett (1867–1925). While rafting near the confluence of the Río Negro and Río Abuna in 1907, Fawcett encountered a mammoth snake. Fawcett claimed to have killed the animal, which measured an astounding 62 feet in length (Warner, 2009). Other early notable Amazonian

accounts of giant snakes have been recorded, including 1932's report of a four feet thick snake killed by the Brazillian Boundary Commission, 1948's citing in Manaus Brazil, and Joaquim Alencar's famous photograph from 1949 in the Rio Abuna (Grann, 2009; Shuker, 2013). 1997's giant boa in *Anaconda* is exaggerated to effectively induce anxiety and terror for a film's audience experiencing a computer-generated imagery, appearing out of murky water, vanishing, then lowering silently from a tree vine moments later. But for the audience, the difference between real accounts and CGI film effects become largely irrelevant.

The anaconda as a fantastical beast in film alters the narrative of Amazon's spatiality to some degree considering the history of scientific documentation of the species since colonial exploration. Consider that like *Curucu*, much of *Anaconda* was shot in the Amazon, around Manaus in Brazil. The spatial narrative of the film blurs the line between fantasy horror and the real possible danger of encountering snakes in the wild. The scale of the filmic snake to the real anaconda is not the only subtext in this horror illustration. Audiences can imagine that a giant snake can hunt across large territories, slithering from lagoon to the forest floor and up trees with ease. Compared to the clumsiness of human actors and their parallel characters who need boats and machetes to traverse even small stretches of the jungle, the anaconda is much more mobile in their natural habitat. The seemingly logical device of human reasoning, through which we deduce that all of the spatial fabric of the Amazon basin becomes a hunting ground for the giant anaconda, triggers an irrational emotion induced by the premise of the film. Thus the audience assembles the monster anaconda as an object of horror that overlaps congruently with the spatial terrain of the film experience- i.e., the totality of the Amazon itself on and off screen, as the spatial-object of horror. The immediate danger to our protagonists' wellbeing is not the snake per se, but a harsh environment in reality as well as on the set of the film, which is constructed in

such as way that the snake can kill a human with the utmost ease. The antagonism between the CGI snake and its victims, and between a possible real snake and the unsuspecting actors and film crew, warps together into an overlapping moment of horror. On screen, the horror is realized with each kill. In an early scene of the film, the snake squeezes Mateo against a tree trunk breaking his back, later it drags Gary underwater where the river drowns his screams. Another character trips on a tree trunk as the snake catches up and devours him. At the end of the film, when the CGI snake is killed, audiences are left with a gut-wrenching feeling as the camera pans up to the horizon casting a quiet image of the day's sunset, leaving us the notion that the tropics is home to countless more monsters.

Forest Horror and Forest Cannibalism

The most dominant terror-inducing film trope in the forest horror sub-genre is the notion of the cannibal tribes. One of the first recorded instances of cannibalism practiced by an Amazonian tribe is attributed to a Spanish missionary in 1781, where its written- "When [the Kanichana] captured prisoners they either kept them as slaves or roasted them to devour them in their banquets" (Metraux, 1942, p. 80). Percy Faucett's 1906 expedition, where he left Riberalta accompanied by twenty desperadoes and native guides, also ran into Pacaguara Indians who are said to eat their enemies for ceremonial purposes. Until the 1960s, two tribes, the Kanichana in the southern Mojo plains and Parintinin of the northern Amazon, are the only two credible documented instances of cannibalism in over four hundred years of Amazonian travel writing. Despite little evidence, and not a single eye-witnessed account, Westerners have often exaggerated this practice to justify the conquest of indigenous populations. In 1960, anthropologist Pierre Clastres spent time studying the Guayaki tribe and witnessed ritualistic cannibalism when members of their family died (Clastres 1974, p. 313-315). The practice of

cannibalism was however documented in various European expeditions that had turned violent including the infamous 1617 expedition led by the Englishman Walter Raleigh. Lost and exhausted, the two hundred and forty men cooked and ate each other to fend off starvation (Hemming, 1987).

In *Memorias*, Reyes charted his own “moral topography” when discussing the topic of cannibalism. He classified different groups of Indianness in order of descent reflecting a schema of linear evolutionism based on cultural traits and practices. The Kamtsa in the Sibundoy valley in the eastern Andes is considered semi-savage, while the Putumayo is seen as savage. At the bottom spectrum, are tribes designated as savage cannibals, while the lowest designation belong to the nomads. In turn, Reyes linked the Andes and highlands with semi-civilization and the rainforest and lowlands with savagery (Reyes, 1986). In 1902, Reyes himself testified at the second Pan American conference that his own brother Nestor who disappeared in the rainforest, had been devoured by the Uitoto tribe. These powerful colonial montages were propagated in the public sphere in Europe, as they suited the interests of the rubber entrepreneurs in South America as their civilizing mission justified their exploitation of the local tribes.

Later in the century, the cannibalistic Amazonian theme reappeared in two notorious forest horror films, *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980) by Italian director Ruggero Deodato, and a homage film to Deodato’s work, *The Green Inferno* (2013) by American veteran Eli Roth. Filmed primarily in the Amazon rainforest of Colombia alongside indigenous tribes interacting with American and Italian actors, *Cannibal Holocaust* tells the story of a missing documentary film crew gone absent in the region. When a rescue mission is assembled, lead anthropologist Harold Monroe recovers the film crew's lost reels, and upon viewing the contents of the reels, Monroe discovers the unfortunate fate of the film crew which gives rise to the title of the film.

Cannibal Holocaust is known for its graphic violence involving tribal cannibalism and was banned in many countries for its brutality and gore, and violence toward animals. Similarly, *The Green Inferno* follows a group of environmental activists and college students after their plane crashes near a cannibalistic tribe in the Peruvian jungle. Once again, shot in the Amazon- Peru and Chili, Roth uses indigenous people to fill the role of cannibals from an unnamed tribe. Meredith Borders, reporting from the film festival Fantasia Fest, writes, "*The Green Inferno* never lets up: it barrels ahead, exuberant and relentless in its brutality, never giving the audience a second to unclench. It's a feast for gorehounds, one with an unsubtle message about the way that uninformed activism harms more than it helps." Together these two films are noteworthy in the way they contribute to the spatial turn in critical literary analysis in that they induce what Robert Tally calls "geographic anxiety"²⁵ (2013, p. 14), where emotional anxiety is illogically and permanently fixated onto a spatial terrain.

The cannibal films exemplified above represent the territory of the Amazon as a single tangled entity and lay the foundation for a narrative spatial turn toward a set of identifications both narrow in scope and unapologetically permanent. Like the previous set of horror signifiers, i.e. the monster anaconda, cannibals are presented as belonging to the whole of the Amazon basin, permeating across all native tribes without providing much position and context to this unbearably cruel act of human flesh eating. The horror induced is not merely against the repulsion of blood-faced savages, but for the act of eating itself as an immoral and taboo function of the uncivilized. Worse than murder, cannibalism captures the old colonial logic that Indians are perhaps not human after all, for no human would eat another in a rational social gathering. The tension between savagery and civilization rises anew in this moral conundrum — for if the

²⁵ Geographic anxiety is the cumulative effects of an audiences' cautious attitude toward a specific spatial terrain. In the example of forest horroe, it is the forest space that causes the unease.

natives are human, they would not engage in cannibalism; and if the natives are not human, then their act of eating would not be categorized as cannibalism due to their non-human identity. Any naturalistic and universal explanations regarding this particular Amazonian narrative would subsequently turn to the historical context by which these Indians cannibalize. Faced with this implication, the Westerner as critic can only blame the immoral act of cannibalism on the Amazon basin, the environment in which the cannibals live. This characterization situates the Amazon at a particular moral center from which it asserts influence onto and domination over its human subjects.

Forest Horror and the Wrath of God

Inspired by Lope de Aguirre's 1560 expedition to the tropics, Werner Herzog's 1972 film *Aguirre Wrath of God* is another example of the horror forest trope in cinema. Much of the events of Herzog's *Aguirre* are speculative, although it was inspired by the journal writings of Gaspar de Carvajal, a chaplain who was not on the actual expedition but took notes from several survivors of the journey. As author Thomas Hollo writes, *Aguirre* "is inspired more by the legends that have been built up around the story of the Ursua expedition as well as the filmmaker's imaginative extension... of myths" (Hollo, 2005, p. 29). Once again the director, actors, and crew made the long journey from Europe to the Amazon to film on location in Peru. This time, the object of horror is no beast, nor tribesman, but the megalomaniac Don Lope de Aguirre played by the unpredictable actor Klaus Kinski. The entirety of the film's duration, scene by scene, reveals the nuisance of human possibilities measured against the decisively uncomfortable environment of the Amazon basin. The film tells the story of a Spanish expedition to find the legend of El Dorado. Herzog's tale begins with a narrative message: "After the conquest and plundering of the Inca Empire... the Indians invented the legend of El Dorado..."-

white words stitched on a background of blood-red coloring, foreshadowing the death toll to come. Here, the filmic lens channels a vision toward a historical generality of the Amazon basin, unable to directly articulate any sense of the present, and consistently imprecise of exact details and literal truths about its existence. The Amazon is captured with handheld cameras on location, its foliage, vines and trunks jacketing the entirety of the lens from frame to frame. Whereas *Cannibal Holocaust* contained many scenes of open fields, spaced out villages and arching skylight, *Aguirre's* Amazon is dense, dark with vegetation and loud with animal noise. One scene shows a line of conquistadors sliding down the narrowing haze of the mountainside snakelike and almost invisible next to the giant leaves they pass. The matter of colonization is not lost, for the soldiers drag with them a column of native slaves, framed in mist and smoke. In these early scenes, the colonial history of South America pulsates across the screen.

In Herzog's jungle, the Amazon looks and acts as the Amazon does, unchanging to the human eye across the centuries of colonial exploration. The audience gets a sense of the historical moment through the ghostly presence of cinematic technology, but much of the greenery of the jungle is presented as a backdrop. As Herzog's camera tracks Aguirre and his troops in the landscape of dense foliage and curving rivers, the audience acquires a fictional sense of the ideal form of the Spanish colonizer from within the basin. The resulting contrast on viewership illustrates the visual personality of a possessed Klaus Kinski, the actor playing the historical figure of Aguirre. The lens reveals not only Kinski and the film character of Aguirre in his historical generality, but the qualitative spirit Aguirre personified. The camera modifies his presence from the larger environment of the rainforest to reveal the singular persona of Aguirre the conquistador and all his delusions and ill will. Throughout the film, Aguirre becomes a catalyst in which his egotistic and neurotic self plays out in his negotiation with the jungle

environment. Faced with malaria, starvation and exhaustion, Aguirre manipulates, taunts and rules his underlings with immense cruelty, like a man possessed by a supernatural force. In the duration of the expedition, the audience witnesses the acts of a malicious dictator careless of the moral complications involving life and death as he descends toward madness and self-destruction.

Aguirre starts his journey as a charismatic lieutenant, keeping order and doing his commander's bidding. His predatory impulses are absent at the beginning of the film, just as his wrathful madness has yet to arrive in the middle of the narrative. As the movie unfolds, Aguirre slowly descends into lunacy, as if his character demonstrates some symptom of sickness. The more the camera lens draws from the intensity of the jungle, the more aggressive Aguirre becomes. The peculiarity of power here is measured by the rawness of its scenes alongside the potency of imaginable affect stemming from what the lens does not capture off-screen. Much of the film's action, orchestrated by the landscape of the jungle, is initiated on the edges of the scenes filmed. In one instance, Aguirre hears human whisperers from behind a line of trees where no humans are. In another, poison arrows zip through their marching column from invisible natives lurking on their flanks. The invisibility of the Orinoco River itself, where it comes from and where it flows toward, is only assumed but not revealed. The Amazon basin expands much bigger than what Herzog and his film crew can articulate onscreen, and its rivers run much longer than where Aguirre's life ends with his last dying breath. In the final scene of the film, Aguirre alone remains alive on a drifting raft that's been overrun with monkeys. The deranged Aguirre tells them, "I, the Wrath of God, will marry my own daughter, and with her, I will found the purest dynasty the world has ever seen. Together, we shall rule this entire continent. We shall endure. I am the Wrath of God... who else is with me?" The final scene is of Aguirre waiting for the monkeys to respond. The Amazon in *Aguirre* becomes the devil who

whispers devilish words to Aguirre, driving him to mutiny, to desiring his daughter, toward insanity. The audience is able to forgive Herzog for his insane filming practices on set and Aguirre for his crude lunacy because these men have been altered by a dark landscape unfit for civilized men. The trouble with Aguirre can be shifted toward the contextual positionality of his mortal being. Audiences are drawn to the origin and culprit of Aguirre's moral descent and Herzog's infamous lack of patience during the filming process. These men have been seduced by the wrath of the Amazon, their minds ruined and their bodies perished.

Critical engagement with Herzog and his filmic landscape has generally praised his use of visually dark overtones and the subversive ways his films represent a landscape of horror. In Les Blank's documentary *Werner Herzog Eats His Shoes* (1980), Herzog imposed his idea that the human race will become extinct as a civilization if we fail to produce adequate images. His depiction of landscape, especially in the case of *Aguirre*, belongs to what Brad Prager²⁶ describes as Herzog's archeological quest through "violated terrain in pursuit of something new" (2007, p. 91). The "something new" in Herzog's attention to landscape speaks to Prager's thesis that Herzog's survey of geography mediates his "own cinematic aesthetics over the reifying effects of capitalism" (p. 92). A general rejection of capitalism by artists such as Herzog hold some merit, as the pace and action of the film qualify its production under the category of "art film" rather than "blockbuster" cinema. Prager points out that Herzog's signature craft is reflected not in the pace of his movies, but in the anthropomorphism of his non-human characters. For Prager, audiences of Herzog "are expected to project the physical characteristics of human forms and faces upon the surface of the Earth," (p. 101) thus associating immoral representations of the jungle as a fallacy of human civilization and not as a quality of nature.

²⁶ Prager is Associate Professor in Film Studies at the University of Missouri, and is a leading scholar of Werner Herzog working in the English language.

Regarding the characteristics of Aguirre and the Amazon, critics have equally applauded Herzog's efforts at revealing the madness of both. Pager even goes as far as arguing that in Herzog's work, the landscape makes the character, in that "sublime settings are the bed upon which sublime manias are created" (p. 20). Pager implies that Aguirre's boisterous character can only be fully realized in the equally boisterous Amazon jungle. The jungle activates Aguirre's animal impulses, alluding to a hegemonic relationship of mutual consent. In a director's interview, Herzog says "I just took the most basic facts that were known about the man and spun my own tale" (Cronin, 2002, p. 77). It's not a stretch to add that Herzog also took the most basic facts about the landscape and spun his own version as well. In the Herzog's *My Best Fiend* (1999), a documentary about the tenuous relationship between actor Klaus Kinski and the director, Herzog remarks how he wants "to film a landscape with almost human qualities". As a result, *Aguirre's Amazon* appears as "a dangerous force, threatening by the very nature of its cosmic indifference to man" (Horak, 1979, p. 226),²⁷ and thus the madness of the conquistador is reflected in the madness of the landscape and vice versa.

Forest Horror and the Geohistory of the Amazon

Fernand Braudel's notion of "geohistory" (1972, p. 20) is especially helpful to clarify the relationship between an induced territorial anxiety and the complex nature of the Amazon as forest horror expressed in both the physical horror of monsters and cannibals, as well as the more abstract horror of the forest itself. Geohistory is the narrative of a location in its relation to the humans that habit that land in question. Europe for example, has a well-documented historical narrative from Feudalism to the Industrial Revolution, from the significant changes between the World Wars to a modern history of capitalism and globalization. Subsequently, if a paranormal

²⁷ Jan-Christopher Horak is the Director of the UCLA film and television Archive, critic and curator.

horror film is produced to illustrate such a familiar landscape, one that alters the visuals of European cities and its people, audiences will eagerly engage with the film as pure science fiction and fantasy. The film *28 Days Later*, for example, depicts a ruinous London festered with vicious zombies. While the film experience is terrifying, audiences leave the theater entertained and are able to recalibrate their minds to reflect on the reality of London as a modern terrain undisturbed by the walking dead. The geographic characteristic of London as a bustling contemporary metropolitan does not falter in its core identity upon one's viewing of *28 Days Later* partially due to audiences' familiarity with the reality of the city. Audiences will leave the spatial organization of the city of London intact even after viewing such a distorted representation of the place. On the contrary, the phenomena of monsters and cannibalism, and the horrific effect such images induce on the audience contribute mightily to the spatial confusion of the actuality of the Amazon terrain in its present condition. Geographic anxiety produced from these forest horror films can serve to enhance a naive sense of spatial categorization especially for the majority of the Western population that have never laid eyes upon the Amazon basin.

While the spatial turn in modern literary theory is an acknowledgment of the degree to which matters of space, place, and mapping had been under-discussed in the critical literature of the past, a colonial territory like the Amazon is nonetheless represented by fictional fabrications such as the forest horror films we've encountered so far. These films engage with the affinity of space inadvertently by constructing the site of horror as a historical terrain that resides on both sides of the camera lens. Consequently, the notion of a spatial turn from a temporal delineation to that of a spatial one is organized to differentiating effect in the Amazon terrain. I have argued that the moralization of the fictional horror forest can reduce the spatiality of the Amazon to the

status of an immoral landscape. The ethical failings of the cannibal tribe, for example, can be associated with the wretched space from where the Indians are born and raised. We observe this attribution of blame after the credits of *The Green Inferno*, where a white character is situated in the middle of the jungle floor, staring malevolently onward with streaks of yellow paint on his face. He has come to accept his identity as a newly adopted tribal member. The Amazon has tainted his mind, just as it had altered the human quality of the tribe's other members. Likely, in *Aguirre*, the Amazon has tainted the character of Aguirre in similar fashion. These filmic phenomenon as geohistory represents the spatial fabrication of the jungle, to the extent that the Amazon is viewed as a holistic embodiment of horror living within, and at times beyond, a paradigm of good and evil.

This view of the Amazon space as an immoral agent is in direct contradiction to Reyes' notion of the Amazon as an untouched "Garden of Eden" (Reyes, 1986, p. 127). Like many travel writers navigating the basin, Reyes documents the wilderness of South America in an optimistic light, conjuring up notions of unscathed paradise and pristine nature. The figure of Eden, often used to describe the basin, corresponds to a pre-human stage of the earth where nature exists in perfect unison and all its parts harmonious. Amazon as Eden gives the place a transcendent and spiritual dimension, its forest unblemished by human touch, a primitive nature like "on the seventh day of creation when the sovereigns Adam and Eve emerged there." (1986, p. 127). The cannibalistic Amazon in contrast manifests as an entity beyond human rationale, a place of evil where no civilized humans could live. Whereas the Amazon of *Anaconda* is villainous, deceptive and cruel, and the Amazon of *The Green Inferno* is a Biblical hell infested with unholy savages, the Amazon of *Aguirre* is an abstract entity beyond the physical

manifestation of monsters and cannibals. This last position is expanded further in Chapter IX, when I return to the Amazon of *Aguirre* in more detail.

Conclusion

Amazonian forest horror films collectively represent a major lineage of narrative practices and tendencies that paint the Amazon basin as an inhuman realm of dread. Although different horror tropes and techniques populate these films that technologically, represented their respective decade of filming, they nonetheless help to organize a unified assemblage of Western representation of the Amazon as absolutely terrifying, and on occasion, unholy and biblically evil. The spatial cartography of the basin itself, when brought to life by the cinematic lens, necessarily orders the logical implications of the origins of horror from within the plot of each cinematic expression. While the primary object of horror in these films is personified by a significant adversary — e.g., the carnivorous dinosaur, the fish monster, the giant snake, the native cannibal, the mad conquistador — the origin of evil that gave birth to each unholy antagonist can all be traced to the geographical coordinates of the Amazon basin. For audience members, each fright is a reminder of the logical conclusion that one should simply stay away from the jungle, for the Amazon breeds all kinds of nonsensical terrors, monster and human, physical and psychological. Historically, the Amazon, as a spatial-object of horror, is a relatively new phenomenon that came to being in its entirety with the publication of *The Lost World*, and subsequent visual cinematic narratives that featured the visual sensations of the tropics filmed on location. While previous colonial travel writings touched on elements of terror, the Amazon basin was recognized primarily as a pre-colonial New World, a medicinal paradise or an economic opportunity. With the invention of the cinema, the Amazon has quite dramatically

shifted from a representation of a curious New World to a descent into a hazardous and wicked Lost World.

Chapter III

The Geometry of Textual Mapping in Representations of the Amazon

Introduction

John Muir, the influential Scottish naturalist, environmental philosopher and “Father of the National Parks” (McGuckin 2015) yearned “to see tropical vegetation in all its palmy glory” and experience the profusion of life, plant and animal, so vividly described in Humboldt’s published writings.²⁸ Muir eventually followed Humboldt’s footsteps to South America, and like Humboldt, he became an advocate for preservationism. Like the fictional Challenger and the real-life Humboldt, Muir was an explorer in the professional sense of the word, putting all of his resources to journeying the earth. In the Amazon, Muir found what previous Western protagonists left behind — a natural wilderness so extraordinarily different from the cities and towns they lived that a preference for one would mean the negation of the other. For men like Muir, the Amazon became an anti-society, free of human bickering, political strife and civil unrest. Muir’s publications read like literary cartography, enhancing the visual sensation of a wild Amazon by plotting out descriptive coordinates for what he had seen with his own eyes. In a Darwinian landscape where “man is ever wrestling with nature” (Muir, 2001, p. 217), Muir provides not only a mapping of the jungle terrain, but also a geometry of textual mapping in the

²⁸ See William Bade’s “Introduction” to Muir’s posthumously published travel diary, *A Thousand-Mile Walk to the Gulf*, xix.

characterization of the Amazon. Modern²⁹ novels' descriptive representations of the Amazon jungle largely adopt the literary cartography of Muir's style of travel writing. These fiction authors are evidently not as adventurous as their traveling predecessors, but their writings organize spatial features into vivid text and convey a series of imaginative geographies through what I call the *narrative geometry of a place*, or the shape of space generated by the genre of fiction storytelling. These fictions provide the reader and audience of the Amazon narrative a geometric guide to the sheer physicality of the jungle, a terrain with shapes and borders, and a sense of direction.

This chapter first introduces textual mapping as a form of literary cartography by examining the work of key spatial theorists including Yi-Fu Tuan and Mikhail Bakhtin. I argue that literary cartography simulates the Amazon as a spatial-object that confers not simply a characteristic of a cultural genre such as the example of forest horror from Chapter II, but an actual shape with borders, limitations and map-like qualities found in narration itself. I then reflect on the ways that previous theorists have attempted to organize textual mapping framed around the form of writing — e.g. travel writing, the epic, and the novel. I argue that the form of writing can drastically alter the narrative geometry of a place, and that fiction writing of the jungle can both create and be the result of a variety of warping Amazonian geometries. I end the chapter with a discussion of the organizational dimension to literary cartography, and the deployment of spatial geometry exemplified in the Amazon narrative in three distinct shapes: a labyrinthine space, a striated space and a rhizomatic space. My work is bolstered by my reading of a group of Deleuzian concepts that help to challenge current iterations of literary cartography. By rereading Deleuze's spatial form, I imprint the imaginary space of the Amazon with these uniquely geometric functions to reveal the fact that geometric space itself constructs the fictions

²⁹ I assume Lukacs' definition of the modern novel as the currently dominant form of literature.

of the Amazon as much as fictions make narrative geometry. Through the intersectional analysis of spatial formation and literary genre, I demonstrate that the ways narratives are constructed about the Amazon jungle is vitally dependant on the kinds of spatial geometries that are set in place. This analytical approach to spatial form reveals the limitations that govern the narrative tropes of the Amazon, which not merely exemplify the limited human experience of sight and sound, but the narrative limitation of literature and film as mediums of physical space.

Textual Mapping as Literary Cartography

The field of literary cartography introduces the storyteller as a mapmaker, thus to read a novel as a map is to prioritize spatial thinking as a method of approach. The exercise of literary cartography involves the extraction of textual meaning according to the intentions of their spatial coordinates. To come into contact with a textual space in literature, the author situates in the moment of writing just as the reader situates in the moment of reading. In *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (2001), Yi-Fu Tuan³⁰ notes that any given portion of a sentence becomes a “space in our minds once it occasions a pause, resting of the eyes, however brief, and transforms the words into a meaningful spatiality” (p. xi). While reading Herodotus’ *Histories*, French historian Francois Hartog once observed that a story is the combination of both the geographical project of the surveyor and the efforts of a rhapsode³¹. A world comes alive after it has been surveyed and stitched together into a new space of unity and coherence. Writing becomes a mode of world making, or at least world-representing. As a writer describes the intricacies of that world, elements of its peoples, things and places become rational and meaningful to the reader. Narrative would seem more closely tied to time, as a movement in time

³⁰ Tuan foregrounds the importance of language in the making of a place. For Tuan, texts such as poems, novels, letters and myths are understood as fundamental elements in producing geography (See Tuan, 1991).

³¹ A term used in its technical or etymological sense of a “weaver”, as one whom thus weaves disparate parts into a whole.

also paces the plot of the story along, but temporality of the plot does not necessarily exclude a spatial form through which a major element of the story is presented (see Frank, 1991). To comprehend plot as an effort in mapping is to observe the spatiality of the story. If narrative is the “central function or instance of the human mind” (Jameson, 1981, p. 13), then narrative must also be a spatial-temporal world. Peter Turchi’s³² *Maps of the Imagination* (2004) articulates how literary and cartographic practices can overlap and be infused into a single practice even if the author is unintentionally enacting a spatial form. Turchi illustrates five general categories that narrators and mapmaker engage in: "selection and omission; conventions departure; inclusion and order; shape, or matters of form; and the balance of intuition and intention” (p. 25). In consideration of literary cartography, these practices³³ are foundational to space making, especially when charting a territory based on real geography outside of fiction.

When diagnosing the geometry of literary cartography, one must also consider how the device of the “chronotope” (Bakhtin, 1981) affects a given literary landscape. The term is developed by Mikhail Bakhtin³⁴ to mean "time-space," referring to the relationship between historical time and geographical space in literary genre. “Within the literary chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 84). For Bakhtin, the novel allows time to become aesthetically visible and space to be responsive to the movement of the plot. The author creates entire virtual worlds in the novel, and must draw from the spatial organizing categories of the real world to produce the fiction world.

³² Turchi first posits the idea that maps help people understand where they are situated in the world. He describes how maps rely on projections in order to portray a three-dimensional world on the two-dimensional flat surface of paper, which he then relates to what writers do in projecting a literary work from the imagination onto the page.

³³ I come back to these concepts in the last section of Chapter III when I exemplify the three different narrative shapes of the labyrinthine, the striated, and the rhizomatic.

³⁴ Bakhtin is a Russian literary critic whose work includes the concern with the distinctive qualities of spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in the novel.

The chronotope brings space, time and literary genre together in a conceptually integrated way as one can use the generic techniques of the novel to reflect on the processing aspects of this “formally constitutive category of literature” (p. 84). I argue that the way chronotopes enter literature is by way of genre formation. Genre is specifically important because it can determine the thematic trope of literature across many works. Pavel Medvedev writes that for the fiction novelist, “the reality of the genre is the social reality of its realization in the process of artistic intercourse . . . [as] the genre is the aggregate of the means of collective orientation in reality” (Medvedev, 1978, p. 135). For example, a scientific romance genre as explored in the first chapter maintains its intrinsic chronotope in the pacing of its characters' adventures due to the expectation of its exploratory path of travel. Genre is only maintained as such because its characters spend the majority of their time on the frontier exploring a given spatial terrain. In my examination of the Amazon basin, the characteristics of the jungle landscape remain largely intact, consistent across a large collection of fictions and cinemas, but its chronotope in each story shifts partly according to its genre formation.

In probing the West's representation of the Amazon, I find it useful to explore different visualized themes of space in literature in order to understand how chronotope is activated in text. Recall that in Chapter II, the dominant forest theme of the horror stereotype casts Amazon spatial ontology³⁵ in a negative light, conjuring up old colonial notions of savagery and barbarism. This repeating trope is in some ways a stable and definitive characteristic of the South American jungle even though the focal point of antagonism shifts subtly with each iteration of Amazonian cultural production, from textual narrative to spatial narrative, travelogue to novel, novel to film. While generally, these narratives of travel may shape colonial formations of knowledge (Kaplan,

³⁵ The question of ontology pertains to a given nature of the Amazon, or how the Amazon manifests literally in the world and figuratively in the novel.

1996), they also craft the Amazon landscape in strikingly unique geometries, as I will demonstrate in the next section.

The protagonist's physical act of travel also becomes relevant to identifying patterns of chronotope in the narrative. A character's act of travel is regarded as not merely supplemental to the production of literary mapping but as pervasively constitutive of them. Protagonists like Challenger and Humboldt alike imply in their experiences of travel that the marking of an Amazonian identity was always based on their own journey's chance of encounter. Each travel experience can share similar visual markings — the bend of a tributary, the top of tree lines, and the species of animals — even if they take different paths of travel. The success of their journeys enforces these experiences, as they are shared as repeated encounters, which in turn heighten future expectations for jungle travel. The spatial configuration of the Amazon basin relies on both narrative theme and character action to shape its geometric configuration. In the next section, I illustrate three examples of spatial geometry in the Amazon chronotope.

Deleuzian Spatial Geometry as a Consequence of Literary Deployment

The narrative geographies of the Amazon basin, in its formal structures, e.g., travel writing, fiction and film, cannot be reduced to a single primary representation even though it is often subsumed under the general theme of forest horror for the Western audience. One fruitful way to discuss the thematic question of the chronotope is to assemble the narratives of the Amazon tropics into various spatial geometries. I borrow terminology from Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to examine three spatial topographies by reimagining the Amazon as 1) a labyrinthine space,³⁶ 2) a striated space³⁷ and 3) a rhizome space.³⁸ I use these markings as types

³⁶ A place of maze with a hidden center.

³⁷ A place of directionality with a linear order.

³⁸ A place of diversity without a focal point.

of spatial geometries³⁹ that carry certain shapes and textures of encounter within the Amazon topography as a totalizing space of reference. These concepts are open-ended and continuously developing as both space-in-process, i.e. space that take on different forms depending on the analytical usage of its presence in narrative; as well as space-as-process, which suggest that these shapes are changing geometries that can produce unstable significances in text. These geometries are significant to my work because they provide insight into the kinds of spatial limitations that govern the narrative forms and tropes of the Amazon. The forest's geometry reveal that space and narrative are co-dependent and intersectional, and just as genre of writing crystallizes Amazon's spatial format, its spatial shape can reveal the logic of its narrative construction. Below I exemplify each geometry of tropical spatiality with a different narrative form. I first return to Arthur Doyle's *The Lost World* for a representation of a labyrinthine space where the center of the jungle, a time-warped plateau, symbolizes the core spirit of Amazonian identity. I then introduce Herzog's 1972 film project — *Fitzcarraldo*, to illustrate how a menacing jungle is transformed into a striated spatial geometry for a more focused interpretation of the tropical jungle onto its narrative composition. Finally, I return to Humboldt's travel writing, which demonstrates the Amazon to be a primarily rhizome space, as his work de-centers the tropical landmass by recalibrating significance to his own first-hand experience of the jungle based on his whereabouts.

a) Amazon as Labyrinthine Space

A labyrinth space generates two varieties of routes; the first type of path is liberating and emerging toward a sequence of accurate markings leading to a desirable goal, while the second type is deceptive by design leading toward disorientation and dead ends. The Greek Labyrinth,

where Daedalus built a great maze for King Minos of Crete to hold the mythical Minotaur, is an elaborate design (Doob, 1992).⁴⁰ Other notable maze-like structures such as the Egyptian labyrinth (Herodotus, *The Histories*), the Lemnian maze (Saward, 2003), and the Chakravayuha of India (Bouford, 2018), are introduced in historical texts as calculated architectures and pathways that serve as trials for heroes, defenders of sacred spaces, traps for malevolent spirits or halls for ritual dances.⁴¹ A labyrinth, unlike the design of an open-floor space, designates a more coordinated built effort, one prearranged to feature a centered destination, illuminated by its multiple paths of travel. The idea of the labyrinth space has also been applied to postmodern novels such as Craig Adams' rendition of *Dans el Labyrinth*, where a single novel generates "possible fictions through the repetition of characters, objects and places so that each iteration, and subsequent reiteration, renders any opposition between them impossible" (Adams, 56). In Walter Benjamin's description of Paris, the capital of the 19th century, the topography of the convoluted architecture of the Arcades project is described as folding and overlapping spaces designed for social interaction. Benjamin claims the city a labyrinth to extract a layered urban commodity culture of "a ruined modernity (Gilloch, 1996, p. 67-78). Similarly, Scottish writer James Traill describes 19th century Cairo as the quintessential Oriental city, a labyrinth for European travelers with its display of quarters, boulevards and shops (1896). He warns visitors that no other city could "become so hopelessly disoriented with so little trouble" in its "magic labyrinth of winding ways" (p. 16). The human-made labyrinth — the maze, the temple, the bustling city — carries with it symbolisms of disorientation in parallel existence with the

⁴⁰ Doob is a historian who charts ancient and medieval labyrinths and their distinct structural shape based on perspective. For example, a maze-trekker's vision ahead and behind is severely constricted, while the maze-maker may know the topography of the paths even without walking through it. From each perspective, the maze appears different and evokes different emotions (See Doob, 1992).

⁴¹ For a history of mazes, see Julie Bouford's 2018 book, *The Curious History of Mazes: 4000 years of Fascinating Twists and Turns*.

advances of human civilization. The labyrinth as a built space becomes a symbol of architectural triumph and human celebration, its complexity of design reflecting the intelligence of human proposes and labor. Conversely, mazes as geometric structures perceived to be nature-made might hold different connotations.

The Amazon basin as a geometric labyrinth is illustrative of the textual structure of an adventure story, especially one that assesses the integrity of its human protagonists. Through trial and error, advancing and backtracking, human explorers journey across the many curvatures of plotted points to great narrative effect. For the traveler of the tropics, the winding paths of the labyrinth space become an ideal design path because an elongated back-and-forth travel extends the journey and allows travelers to experience more of the jungle. Unlike an open desert, the tropics loop together winding rivers, vines and trunks, cutting off routes and opening up new ones. The cartographic display of confusion and disorientation stretches from one jungle scene to the next, misguiding adventurers toward certain death. The Amazon travel narrative reveals the jungle as a maze made for a trial, its twisting and meandering routes intersecting one another seemingly without reason or end. For example, Arthur Conan Doyle's Amazon labyrinth is manufactured to form specific sets of borders between an outer jungle, an inner jungle and finally, a core at the center of the basin. He starts at the entrance of the forest, passing a road sign staked to the earth in Spanish. He travels past the outer Amazon where merchants extract from the rubber trees. He zigzags past the outer region until he reaches the inner jungle where even sunlight is swallowed by its density. From there, he routes a path into the Lost World, a center plateau where monsters live in an alternate timeline. Challenger organizes the Amazon into an object of discovery through a platform of layered levels. At its center, Challenger unlocks the jungle's mystery, revealing a treasure of knowledge available only to those who have completed

the trial. In describing their harrowing path of travel, Doyle writes in the voice of his narrator, Edward Malone:

Advancing in single file along the bank of the stream, we soon found that it narrowed down to a mere brook, and finally that it lost itself in a great green morass of sponge-like mosses, into which we sank up to our knees. The place was horribly haunted by clouds of mosquitoes and every form of flying pest, so we were glad to find solid ground again and to make a circuit among the trees, which enabled us to outflank this pestilent morass, which droned like an organ in the distance, so loud was it with insect life. (p. 116)

The paragraph is crafted with imageries of prolonged travel, which describe the stream, the insects, the land and the active motions of Challenger's team. Another author would have perhaps taken their time, illustrating this physically demanding scene onto a few pages of work. Doyle, however, moves his travelers along a winding path, hurdling challenges and moving them forward and back after trial and error. Doyle's use of "circuit" and "outflank" implies speed, dexterity and nonlinear travel. Not only is the Amazon a maze of routes and obstacles, Challenger's crew knows how to glide past these obstacles all the while going in the right direction. Compare this depiction of adventuring with Humboldt's, where the latter is cautious and observant. At some point in the novel, Challenger is sprinting, picking up speed the closer he is to the plateau. He later abandons his compass, a measurement of linear directionality, and dashes toward the distant center of the jungle maze to claim his price.

There are, undoubtedly, "minotaurs" in Challenger's labyrinth. The aspect of trial and tribulation in Doyle's narrative only increases the effect of the geometric topography of the jungle, thus highlighting the Amazon tale as a narrative congruent with human struggle and triumph. In Doyle's jungle, knowledge is produced alongside the winding path of travel that eventually gathers at the center of a physical point of reference where a population of dinosaurs is finally revealed. It's as if the closer Challenger gets to the center of the Lost World, the more "true" his experience of the jungle appears to be. The outer jungle becomes less factual and more

representational of a tribulation, shielding the inner jungle from discovery. A revelation of knowledge centers the Amazon geometrically as a labyrinth structure, just as much as the Amazon terrain centers Doyle's revelation in a textual climax toward final discovery. The dinosaurs living at the core of the Amazon Lost World becomes the material reward of adventuring toward the completion of the labyrinth, an exceptional knowledge or ultimate truth rather than common information, gifted by the labyrinth structure to Challenger and his crew. Unlike Humboldt's travel writing, where the travel experience itself is the site where knowledge is produced, Challenger's voyage of inquiry seeks a secretive coordinate at the heart of the labyrinth geometry. Failure to reach the core of the inner jungle results in the failure of the adventurous expedition.

b) Amazon as Striated Space

Reading the Amazon as striated space organizes its geographic topology through the process of transgressivity, a term first described by French theorist Bertrand Westphal as a paradoxical approach to analyzing geography. Westphal borrows the terms *striated* space and *smooth* space from Deleuze and Guattari, arguing that such descriptions of landscape are “analogous to that of heterogeneous and homogeneous thinking” (Westphal, 2011, p. 39). Whereas striation implies the restrictive ordering of space into units of measurement, smoothness suggests the ease that comes with freedom of movement. Smooth space is organized by a point of view that envisions the totality of terrain from a perched position where the horizon is visible. Although this overview smoothes out the details of the smaller parts of space, such rendering is constantly threatened by the striation that “civilized, settled society imposes” (p. 40) in order for humans to function inside that space of interest. Striated space becomes a tactical viewpoint of heterogeneity and flux, while always subject to a return to the overview of

homogenized smoothness. The narrative Amazon presents a unique example to the destabilizing aspect of the striated spaces viewed from human perspectives. On the one hand, smoothness can be read into the textual foreground of Amazonian literature where the writers of the Amazon facilitate the homogenous entity that is named the Amazon in terms of its dangers, its curses and its secrets. On the other hand, striation can be determined by the overcoming of contextualized hardships much as the hero overcomes the Minotaur in the labyrinth. Reading striation as a shape-forming device allows the critic to access the synopsis of narration and designate geometry from relevant plot texture. But more than a visual shape of plot, I read striation into the spatial cartography of the Amazon to assemble a more extensive mapping of its possible geometric form. Thus in organizing the literary Amazon, I propose two ways to implement striated space as a geometric form. Firstly, striation in spatiality is possible in the Amazon's descriptive texture in direct relations to the human protagonists — especially in the way the jungle is perceived as fluctuating from harmonious to turbulent, depending on characters' interactions with the jungle. Secondly, striated space is present in the way that textual plot focuses the Amazon as organized turbulence around linear but coordinated points of interest, setting up challenges to human ingenuity and labor.

The 1982 West Germany film *Fitzcarraldo* directed by Werner Herzog highlights Klaus Kinski in the role of rubber merchant Fitzcarraldo, who tries to access a rubber territory in the jungle by hauling a steamship over a steep hill between two transporting riverways. The film was shot in Manaus, Brazil, and involved the lifting of an actual three hundred and twenty-ton steamship over a hillside without special effects. In the first scene, Herzog pans his camera across a large crest of the earth covered in vegetation and haze. The smooth texture of the landscape is only disrupted by the bright flashes of distant lightning. The second scene shifts to a

small wooden boat sailing across a calming night creek. Recall Deleuze and Guattari's maritime model of smooth and striated earth, where "the sea is smooth excellence, and yet ... the first to encounter the demands of increasingly strict striation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 479) as humans attempt to map its vast distance with tools of measurements. Topological developments in European navigation systems, the authors argue, are responsible for the striation of gridded spaces upon the surface of the world. These digressions compose parallels and meridians to map up the many paths of travel between and within oceans and continents. Herzog paves a navigational path from the space of the sea for his boat to arrive on shore, a path already organized as a matrix upon which navigations between charted points are made possible. At the beginning of the film, the forest of the Amazon, unlike the twilight water path, has yet to be charted by Fitzcarraldo. And until the Amazon space "is counted in order to be occupied" (p. 361-62), the terrain remains smooth to the overseer looking from the outside in. Human ingenuity and technologies of travel, in the case of *Fitzcarraldo*, becomes the tools by which the tropics become striated. Kinski's Fitzcarraldo is at first curious of the Amazon Indians, playing to them opera music from his gramophone. His own obsession with Romantic opera, even while traveling in the jungle, demonstrates his expressed superiority of the spiritual power of Europe over the material rendering of his natural surroundings (see Lonker, p. 37). Fitzcarraldo's preference of opera music in the jungle represents "hegemony of both content and form" (Mosley, 43), a strategy for the construction of striated space. His gramophone becomes the first instrument for the charting of the river paths, his music blasting over the ripples of water carrying the declaration of his presence to the unknown world. As he traverses the rivers on the deck of his steamship, the gramophone stands next to a gathering of small furniture, pragmatic in its position to help chart Fitzcarraldo's path. Fitzcarraldo's gaze parallels the operatic tune of

rising vocals, gazing over new units of space in front of his path, making way for the cartographic mapping of the river ways that is sure to come.

When Fitzcarraldo is absent from the screen, the Amazon is portrayed as a visually smooth landscape, a nature in its natural light. Herzog shows the jungle in its smooth status, an arbitrary settling of plants and animals in their way of life. When the camera shifts back to Fitzcarraldo's steamship, turning the corner of a river bend, the smooth space of uncharted jungle becomes a perceived spatial-object with its own visible horizon. Fitzcarraldo looks across the bridge, transforming the river into a pathway for human travel, altering the jungle with striated texture. And as he passes, the Amazon left behind becomes once again a smooth space of green jungle, but at the same time, becomes a permanently known route on a new map. Back and forth, the smooth and the striated struggle continue well into the plot of the film while the audience is left with a provocative "thinking [that] takes place in the relationship of territory and the earth" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 85). If territory is striated with human marking, then earth is smooth absent of human touch. For Fitzcarraldo, the smooth earth of the Amazon becomes his main challenge as he desires to sail his steam engine from the Ucayali River to the Pachitea River. From there, he seeks to access an unclaimed parcel of land rich in rubber trees to finance his jungle opera house. A major plot of the film has Fitzcarraldo dragging his steamship from one river, up and across a hillside portage, to an adjacent river. The main challenge to Fitzcarraldo, as well as to Herzog in the filming process, is how to use indigenous labor to drag a ship across a forty-degree slope for hundreds of meters. The main antagonist to this project, unlike previously described antagonists of the Amazon, is neither animal nor human, but the unit of uphill space between the two rivers. That specific parcel of the jungle, where two rivers flow alongside but don't intersect, becomes a subject of transformation from smooth space to striated space. Fitzcarraldo's presence changes

the land by objectifying the sloping hillside as his greatest obstacle. Whereas the smooth space of the land is "occupied without being counted," the striated space suddenly possesses the characteristic of vertical slanting, and by measurement of its height, becomes a space counted in order to be occupied" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 361-62). In this second instance of the striated space, the small unit of the hillside becomes a human marking in the world.

In this section, I've identified two types of striated space in the narrative topography of *Fitzcarraldo*. First, striated space is inferred by the metric area of the Amazon, where Fitzcarraldo travels across a mapped river path playing his opera, navigating a passageway to unexplored lands. Second, striation occurs at the plot junction where Fitzcarraldo is unable to accomplish his goal due to a parcel of hillside terrain separating the two river ways. While the jungle landscape as a whole can be seen as smooth space, the coordinate of the forty-degree hill resides in the metrically calculated reality of a striated territory, which is informed by Fitzcarraldo's antagonism. When the steamship finally snaps its support beams and rolls back down the hill, it shatters into wooden shards and is left in the jungle to rot.⁴² I argue that the two instances of striated space in *Fitzcarraldo* illustrate a different kind of geometric form for the narrative Amazon. Whereas the labyrinth space features many routes that gather toward an epicenter of significance, striated space is much more narrow and predictable in scope precisely because it is marked by a coordinated collection of human measuring tools real and symbolic. A striated jungle is more visceral as measurements of its terrain follows the traveler, the steamboat and the phonogram, up to the traveling path highlighting that path, and designating other smooth spaces of the Amazon temporarily insignificant. Striated space is a humanistic space, one that allows the human traveler to make sense of the present location. Striated space is often illustrated

⁴² The wooden ship is first abandoned by Fitzcarraldo in the film, then by Herzog's film crew in post-production.

as a jungle obstacle in the form of a plot point — e.g. a dead end path, a flooded river, a slippery hill. Thus striated space is much narrower in scope, providing the reader with only one path of travel and one narrative direction based on the physical confines of the protagonist, whereas the labyrinthine space harbors on the possibilities of multiple paths toward a spatial center of interest.

c) Amazon as Rhizomatic Space

The third spatial geometry representative of the Amazon jungle is also borrowed from Deleuze and Guattari's work. In the tropical forest, plant and animal life, as well as non-living objects like stone and water, exemplifies a spatial configuration of "assemblages," which form part of a larger network that encompass other heterogeneous entities that "differ in rhythm and speed" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 4). Like the formation of a crystal in which its density is compressed with layers of minerals, the rhizome is a relationally interconnected reality defined by the spatial formation of dynamic layers in a diversified and altering environment. As opposed to an obsolete reality separated by traditional scientific categories rooted in arboreal metaphors, Deleuze and Guattari regards the rhizome space as forming the conditions of possibility for "a multiplicity that has neither subject or object... this horizontal space contains only determinates, magnitudes and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing" (p. 8). As numerous layers of appendages emerge in the forest, the impact of phenomena fundamentally changes the physical reality of the space over time in ever more complex and unpredictable ways. In contrast, human narratives tend to "over signify breaks separating structures," subjects and points of contact. Immanent change in Amazon assemblages attach and break down, "increase in the dimensions of a multiplicity that necessarily changes in nature as it expands its connections" (p. 8) and altering the ontology of each part and their relations to one another. Cartographically, a rhizome is "a map, not a tracing...; it is entirely oriented toward an

experimentation in contact with the real⁴³” (p. 12). For Deleuze and Guattari, the real threads together once discrete and isolated objects in stasis and turns them into processing activities that are defined by their motion alongside, toward, against and through other moving appendages. The map of a rhizomatic space, however is not a simple visual map of a region in the traditional sense. Because what is traditionally considered object, in the authors’ thesis, is rendered chaotic and incomprehensible without the emerging activities that qualify them as being in the world. A relational understanding of a rhizomatic space reiterates the dynamism for the basis of reality as multiplicity.

With regards to the Humboldtian perspective, one can interpret his work linearly or with a degree of rhizomatic significance. Humboldt’s systematic organization of what he named the “torrid zone” of South America into a mapped territory of landmarks, water paths and scaled borders is reflected in the single image of Edouard Enders' famous painting of Humboldt as a celebrated hero in his grand odyssey through the Spanish American colonies from 1799 to 1804. The work centralizes Humboldt as a pathfinder and makes secondary the fact that the region was already occupied with native societies, marked with trade routes and outposts, and missions funded by the Spanish magistrates. The work demonstrates an ordered nature through the erasure of not only indigenous humanity but the prior human touch of rival colonial projects that no doubt provided some assistance to what historian Michael Dettelbach⁴⁴ calls Humboldt's "organization of the view", or his physical space of science (1996). Humboldt’s *Personal Narrative*, on the contrary, reads like splattered thoughts and in-the-moment improvisations stitched together through an editing process with memories of events still partially intact. The

⁴³ For the authors, the real is not a resemblance of the objective reality, but approximated through artistic renditions, scientific theory and socio-political concepts.

⁴⁴ Dettelbach illustrates Humboldt’s physical portraits of the tropics as material science through the visions and sounds of his senses. He argues that a science of the tropics is a science of the senses.

physical presentation of his journal reflects fragmented, episodic chunks of ideas and information, like he was processing them at the moment or even after his thoughts scrambled into words. His travel writing does not reflect the linear progress of a novelist's story, but is instead interposed with "fugitive ideas... and [a] temporary collection of facts and first impressions" (Dettelbach, 1996, p. 261) subject to misremembrance. Unlike Doyle's fictional narrator, Humboldt carries in his work a sense of the developing present, unfolding toward a conceptual framework perhaps unexpected despite his scientifically trained mind. On the Amazon, Humboldt writes:

The site has something wild and tranquil, melancholic and attractive about it. In the midst of such a powerful nature we felt nothing inside but peace and repose. In the solitude of these mountains, I was less struck by the new impressions recorded at each step than by the fact that such diverse climate has so much in common... The grass carpeting the ground, the old moss and ferns covering tree roots, the torrent that falls over steep calcareous rocks, the harmonious colours reflecting the water, the green and the sky, all evoke familiar sensations in the traveler" (Humboldt, 1995, p. 109).

Here, his descriptions lean toward tranquility of the mind, a stillness that reflects a peaceful world containing colors and shapes that are not so unlike the human world of his home. The familiar feeling prescribes a sense of recognition between the foreign space out there and a contrasting movement in his own attitudes toward the meaning of things.

In Humboldt's work, differences seem vaguely recognizable, and similarities are noted with a careful abstraction. In other passages, the concept of the natural order is conjured up more frequently to illustrate a wilderness that is so alien to the traveling explorer that they are astounded by its contrasting space to anything seen before. Here, Humboldt writes from the narration of a Western voice:

In South America, [the European] sees nature in a completely unexpected guise. The objects that surround him only faintly bring to mind those descriptions by famous writers of the banks of the Mississippi, of Florida, and of other temperate regions of the New World. With each step, he feels not at the frontiers of the torrid zone but in its midst... If

he is able to feel the beauty of landscape, he will find it hard to analyze his many impressions. He does not know what shocks him more: whether the calm silence of the solitude, or the beauty of the diverse, contrasting objects, or that fullness and freshness of plant life in the Tropics. (Humboldt, 1995, p. 83).

The contradictory nature between the two passages and within the passages reveals an underlying excitement built into the navigation of the visuals that Humboldt witnesses. In the first passage he is awed by the colored details of the natural order, concluding in a reflective anecdote about stillness and harmony. The latter statement starts with a startling contrast between the natural visage of other American landscapes and the unique qualities of the Amazon tropics, against which the traveler simply cannot prepare and prepare well. The explorer becomes flustered, and any reasonably analytical thought is overwhelmed by the sheer exoticism of this place. Both passages speak of a celebration of the singularity of the Amazon jungle in motion along with a sense of abstract familiarity. The latter passage ends with the notion of a chaotically disruptive place, allowing for both order and disorder to interact simultaneously. Humboldt's writing jumps from one feeling to another in an actively interweaving way- with one passage trying to contain the previous as if he is reaching some new conclusion that nonetheless makes its circuit back to an earlier thought he might have jotted down, on a prior day, sitting at a different campsite, along another riverbank. His travel writing at times feels less coordinated, and his literary technique is as much about overwriting as about descriptive writing. This kind of spotted signification paints the Amazon landscape as contradictory, and somewhat unlike the orderly categorical hierarchy of traditional colonial projections.

Much of the scientific articulation of Humboldt's work refers to the culmination of his descriptions into future European projects of documentation. Humboldt's writings were not as orderly as the smooth space of an overseer or as binding as the striated passages of a science text. In Humboldt's work, the spatial geometry of the Amazon, in turn, can be interpreted as an

openly tangled space of overlapping pockets of scenic orientations. One view of nature in the jungle can run from a tree trunk to a jumble of rock moss, and continue in every direction of longitude and latitude with no significant middle position. The jungle in this way does not feature singular objects living in a static moment toward a unidirectional timeline. The human travelers enter where they can⁴⁵ and exit when resources are depleted, connecting with the jungle point to point in a provisional manner. The jungle becomes an oscillating geometry, rooted in many places that can be organized into a scene of interest if the explorer happens to be passing through. Unlike a decolonial interpretation of Eurocentric intentions of travel, where nature becomes accessible, collectible and categorizable, the Amazon jungle as rhizomatic architecture is defined by an extraordinary process, a spectacle, "not a nature that sits waiting to be known and possessed, but a nature in motion, powered by life forces many of which are invisible to the human eye" (Pratt, 2007, p. 118). The visualization of the jungle in Humboldt's writing can be used to enhance the process of what Matthew Sparke calls "geo-graphing" (Sparke, 2005, p. xxxiii), or the account of geography as both process and result. Sparke speaks to a scientific obsession to graph the "geo" of reality, to the extent that such labor of measurement would require tedious specificity that equalizes all geographic value as significant to its own value in cubic meters, centimeters, millimeters.

The geometry of the rhizome space produces an Amazon that becomes unmappable due to the scientific value of each of its spatial parts no matter how one divides up the jungle space. Each part or territory of the rhizome space becomes comprised of not only units of measurement, but layers of vertical dimensions, overflows and countermotions. Unlike a structure mapped and marked toward an exploration of hierarchically scientific significances, the rhizomatic Amazon

⁴⁵ In the case of Humboldt, his location of entry depended on the goodwill of the Spanish Magistrate and a passage permit from the King of Spain.

can be read as the encountering of stratification where detachable parts compress and participate in forming new kinds of signification. The Amazon as rhizome is not only physically center-less but also spiritually dissipating as multiple points of disruption confound its unity. A workable map in light of Sparke's scientific graphing of the geo would invoke a kind of overmapping⁴⁶ where there is never enough detail on a map of the Amazon to reflect the conditions of the tropical landscape. The rhizome landscape is without focus, its scientific knowledge is never complete because Western travelers cannot access every mountain, river and canopy. Neither the clinical protocols of science nor the memories of its visual and bodily encounters can center the Amazon around a unified field of meaning. The rhizomatic growth of life would quickly outpace any attempt to catalog and organize the place we name Amazon.

Conclusion

Writing and reading the Amazon as different geometric forms of spatial interpretation provides insight into how space can be reimagined from merely a plain that resides in the background of human action. This chapter characterizes the Amazon space, as represented in the genre of fiction, film and travel writing, each illustrating a provocative interpretation of the labyrinthine, striated and rhizome space. The Amazon landscape is more than the idle background from which human action emerges. It instead takes shape to model different features of its spatial integrity depending on the form and genre of writing. The Amazon is flexible in its geometry because it is itself a demarcation of distributed elements that transcend its fixed position on a two-dimensional map. In text, the Amazon basin has the potential to be redefined along new cartographic paths based on its narrative geography. The above geometries of the

⁴⁶ This is similar to Jorge Luis Borges' story "The Map of the Empire," where imperial cartographers aspire to map everything in such detail that their illustration of the world actually expanded to the size of the Empire and covered up the land it sought to represent (see Borges, 1998).

jungle illustrated in literature and cinema already hint at the notion that the significance of the terrain cannot be cataloged within precise limits in its thematic characterization. To observe the Amazon as geometric cartography also takes literary theory toward new productions of knowledge, breaking from content reading and plot analysis in its temporal traditions. These shapes of textual mapping are however by no means stable and consistent as it alters in geometry even as the reader struggles with new understandings of space. This sense of spatial fragmentation and movement toward a more imaginative composition of the jungle is the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter IV

Fragmented Territoriality and the Amazon as Object of Fulfillment

Introduction

Theorist Rob Shields notes that throughout the history of thought, space is just there — "a context that will be ignored by most analysts in favor of the objects it contains and their interaction and development" (2013, p. 15). In classical philosophy, space is often presented as a structure for classifying human sensations and phenomena, or in other cases, a Cartesian *res extensa* representing an objective Absolute only to be replaced by Newtonian physics. Shields refers to space as "an operation rather than a fact" (p. 137), as it can be conceived as an operative, dynamic and multilayered, an instrument for conjuring productive power through its social relations with human contact. By giving space a sense of social agency, Shields refers to Lefebvre's concept of this interactive space as "spatialization" (1999, p. 161) to stress both its fluidity as a network of relations but also to highlight the significance of those relations that space tends to create. In other words, it is not enough to give space a literary character (Chapter I and II), or that there is some creative engagement happening within a bounded spatial configuration (Chapter III), but that the spatial appointment is somehow responsive to its human travelers and dwellers. This chapter discusses the intersection of two key thinkers — Martin Heidegger and Giles Deleuze (and his writing partner Felix Guattari). While Heidegger's work relies on the phenomenological⁴⁷ understanding of a place as dwelling, Deleuze and Guattari's

⁴⁷ Phenomenology, in Husserl's conception, is primarily concerned with the systematic reflection on and study of the structures of consciousness and the phenomena that appear in acts of consciousness.

concept of territoriality is conceptually constructivist and posits the lived body of spatiality as a being external to human being. At the spatial intersection of Deleuze's notion of territory and Heidegger's notion of dwelling, human subjects experience disorientation in the Amazon basin whether through fear and horror or desire and fulfillment. This effect is not hallucinogenic, but physical due to the jungle's changing milieu as Deleuzian territory in possession of Heideggerian Dasein. This approach relinquishes spatial construction from presumably a human design and unchains its orientation from human subjectivity, and as such, provides spatiality the primacy it would otherwise surrender in tradition spatial discourses.

While the geometric spaces conceived in the last chapter represent a working example of Lefebvre's concept of spatialization in literature, this chapter illustrates spatialization through the fulfilled spatial-object of the Amazon basin in the real world, whose agency may spill over into literary moments. While a narrative geometric formation of space is conceptually significant in relations to the act of narrative deployment, space as spatial-object becomes more than merely an extended position marked by a bordered perimeter. The medium through which adventurers travel takes shape when spatial theory provide a measure of qualitative significance through a narrative of fulfillment. In this chapter, I conceive of the Amazon space as a heightened spatial-object. Whereas the last chapter conceived the Amazon as geometric spatialization, this chapter merges the concept of Deleuzian "territory" and Heideggerian "dwelling" into a unified understanding of the basin's ontology. This chapter is divided into three sections, each of which discusses the significance of space through the introduction of a related theoretical concept. I begin with a discussion of the comparative concepts "territory", Deleuzian "territory" and

Phenomenology can be clearly differentiated from the Cartesian method of analysis, which sees the world as objects, sets of objects, and objects acting and reacting upon one another.

territorialization found in Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's work. I then use the Amazon as a case study for Deleuze's territory and how it operates in the production of filmic images. In the second section, I introduce Henry Lefebvre's work on spatial formation alongside Heidegger's classic notion of dwelling as permitted by the presence of *dasein*.⁴⁸ Finally, I synthesize the two contradictory strands of thinking regarding space- i.e. Heideggerian space reflecting the intimacy of dwelling, and Deleuzian space representing the objectivity of territory, into a meditation on the ontology of limits, thresholds and Amazon as a spatial-object-being of fulfillment.

The Deleuzian Notion of Space, Part 1: Territory(s) and Territorialization

The Deleuzian notion of space is a "world of movements without subjects, roles without actors (Deleuze, 1994, p. 219). French philosopher Giles Deleuze's project of spatial construction is a politics without human faces, actors and heroes, but instead a dramatization of a *mise-en-scene* from where action unfolds not within an atmosphere but as the body of an atmosphere. Deleuze's focus transcends a linear perspective of space into a powerful abstraction of the cartographic landscape. His vantage point renders the object of study into a disorder, dissolved into "a corpuscular space" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 273). Deleuze and Guattari argues that a place becomes conceptually possible in its detachment from human agency, setting up functions and activities as a consequence of "geomorphism" (1987, p. 319) — or the movement of the earth, as primary text of inquiry. In order to better grasp this function of a rotating space as primary action, the task at hand is to un-synchronize what scholar Andy Merrifield calls "differential space" (2013, p. xvii) by first detaching it from the logic of visualization so that space becomes a "fractal and unframed geography" (2013, p. 9) and not

⁴⁸ A German term that means "being there". Heidegger uses the expression *dasein* to refer to the experience of being that is peculiar to human beings. I borrow *dasein* to mean the experience of being that is peculiar to a spatial body.

merely a map or any other object of the human study. This framing of this detached space removes the linear axis of coordinates from a traditional map, which the narrative geometry from the previous chapter already attempts to accomplish to some degree. Unlike the narrative geometries of space, Deleuzian space is a transcendent ground beyond the organizational capacities of the human gaze beyond the extension of lived experiences. It is an un-representational means of expression that can be characterized as primary space.

In order to understand Deleuze's ontology of space, I must distinguish territory, from Deleuze and Guattari's territory, and finally, from territoriality. Firstly, the Deleuzian notion of territory⁴⁹ is contrasted with a prior definition of territory⁵⁰ set aside to mark the political transition of power from the possession of land as a site of economic struggle. According to political theorist, Stewart Elden, territory touches not only on the concept of a politicized space of the State but a "political technology" (2013, p. 322) in the Foucaultian sense of the word. Here, territory can be read as a unifying body, a target for political subjugation as well as an anatomical means of production. Foucault writes:

“The body is also directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs.... The body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body. This subjection is not only obtained by the instruments of violence or ideology; it can also be direct, physical, pitting force against force, bearing on material elements, and yet without involving violence; it may be calculated, organized, technically thought out; it may be subtle, make use neither of weapons nor of terror and yet remain of a physical order.

Territory in the political sense becomes a controlling apparatus that organizes a population through the manipulation of fear and obedience, ridicule and shame, ethics and law. Elden,

⁴⁹ From this point forth, I will call this “Deleuzian territory”.

⁵⁰ The use of “territory” as a political site of struggle comes from “territorium” in the 8th century where land is understood as a measurement of conquest and possession. This usage is carried forth by feudalism as a form of economic production.

through Foucault, evokes the politicization of space as a physical order manufactured by social and cultural technologies. In this instance, territory is understood as the spatial extension of sovereignty in so far as it is imbued with state power. In tracing the etymology of the term territory, scholar Jean Gottman writes that the term “comes from terrain, which is related to the root word *terrere*, or ‘to frighten’ - suggesting that territory and power are inextricably linked” (1975 p. 110).

Deleuze and Guattari reject Elden’s core definition of territory. Instead of drawing from political history and technologies of the state, Deleuze and Guattari is influenced by multiple critical lenses including ethological (Konrad Lorenz, 1949) and developmental biology (Raymond Ruyer, 1974) to develop and define a concept of space they call territory. Deleuzian territory is not a political concept, nor is it a mode of social organizing whereby the most powerful defend their area of interest.⁵¹ Deleuzian territory is a primary location that establishes its ontology prior to the actions of human survival impulses. Deleuze especially rejects a model of territory where the condition of its existence is based on some animal stimulus-response model, where land is perceived as an outgrowth of resources that possess quantities of survival value leveraged for political and economic power. While a more practical understanding of territory requires a focused analysis of power to articulate the practice of human labor, agency and governing structures, Deleuze and Guattari suggest that territories are not based on utility because functions cannot grasp the main significance of spatial formations. The service and efficacy of land are already developed to its rational end due to their condition of earthly existence. This does not mean that such spaces are without material manifestations recognizable and consumable by human behavior. For Deleuze and Guattari, territory is in fact already

⁵¹ For an expanded understanding of territory as political landscape, see Sack’s 1986 work, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*.

comprised of “milieus and rhythms...” that are at once “directional and dimensional (1987, p. 314-5). Milieu, within the discourse of Deleuzian territory, is not simply “a person’s social environment” (see Google dictionary) but is defined as compositions of things and actions that “is constituted by the periodic repetition of its components,” (p. 313) environments, orders and measures of its own body.

The territorialization of space, in contrast to territory and Deleuzian territory, can be perceived as an environmental-cultural formation outlined by various forms of material, scientific and aesthetic contact between human agents, nonhuman agents and various milieus and appendages of a Deleuzian territory. In some sense, territorialization is “a construct through which life occurs, give meaning and become vulnerable to social destruction” (Paasi, 2003, p. 110).⁵² It is the organizations and techniques defined as social action, desire and agency that enable humans to have a relationship with space, become a part of space and produce function and action as spatial entities. French geographer Claude Raffestin writes, “territorialization is in some sense, the skeleton of everyday life,” (2012, p. 129) which tries to give space meaning on a concrete and practical scale through human interpretation. Literarily speaking, territorialization gives narrative importance to locations and horizons vital to the storyline. But as theorist Jacques Levy posits, there are four basic conditions to space that territorialization must navigate: 1) it corresponds to local spaces that nevertheless have physical linkages beyond its small place of interest; 2) each place is a limited and controlled space with recognizable boundaries that pertain to its form and function; 3) the areas marked by boundaries are spaces beholden to an identifiable owner or caregiver; and 4) these spaces are inevitably occupied, through which Deleuzian territory becomes recognizable.

⁵² Anssi Paasi

Since Deleuze and Guattari's territory is not utilitarian, or existing for another's sake, it only becomes relatable through the act of territoriality. Unlike territory, which relates directly to human social and political functionality, Deleuze's territory is only interpretable toward human convergence by the narrative and aesthetic encounter of territoriality. Human interpretation of space is a part of territoriality, but is not exclusive to it. Deleuze argues that one must resist the habit of analyzing the lived environment as representational forms of human habit, such as action and reaction based on a linear set of causes and effects. Rather, territoriality is a set of "spatiotemporal dynamisms" (2012, p. 218) defined by its own rhythm and style. It is a living narrative and aesthetic constitution that can enter into mutual composition with other bodies living and nonliving, human and nonhuman alike. Its consolidation of rhythms, production of provisory subjects and orientation to the rest of the earth generates a different kind of significance when transformed into a narrative topography. The relationship between the milieus of the Amazon spatial-being helps to illustrate a territorial motif- a repeating pattern of spatial accumulation. This compositional relationship in territoriality is most reflective in Deleuze and Guattari's example of the wasp and the orchid. In evolutionary biology, the orchid seeks pollination from the wasp thus the orchid imitates the wasp's shape to lure them in. Deleuze retells the relationship, instigating a dynamic of "becoming-wasp of the orchid and becoming-orchid of the wasp (1987, p.10). The wasp takes upon itself certain motifs of the orchid melody- its stillness and plant form, and in return, the orchid shapes its stems and bud into wasp shape. The two synchronized but different objects acquire one another's constitution as the primal image, as the orchid "does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp, but forms a map with the wasp... [orienting] toward an experimentation in contact with it" (p. 12). The form of these objects in their encounter does not prescribe to the act of imitation, but to that of becoming a new reality.

The wasp and the orchid are each individual appendages of the jungle, and are linked in their commonality to compound the rhythm of reality, thus forming new physical and cultural milieus that permeate the body of spatiality. In territoriality, the wasp and the orchid do not live in the jungle, but are units of the jungle body themselves.

The Deleuzian concept of territory is helpful to reorganize the narrative topography of space in generating that quality of attraction beyond economic and empirical concerns. The act of territorialization can affirm the quality of their consistency due to the relationship of materials produced from within their bodies. Deleuze calls this notion a contrapuntal relationship within the model of space making, as "there is no form or correct structure imposed from without or above, but rather an articulation from within" (1987, p. 328). The compactness of a bounded space is articulated as a "transversal" (Guattari, see *Transversality*) or a milieu component that organizes the territory in a widespread and outreaching way. The pragmatic side to this formation of Deleuzian territory generates from the "assemblage of milieu consolidation" (1987, p. 320), which garners the act of territorialization effectively. The consolidation of a history of narratives concerning a given space means the reading of fictions and films constitute the extraction of narrative and aesthetic content not only from the authorship of the works of art, but from the geography of the Deleuzian territory itself. Territorialization is thus possible not from the onset of fiction publication or film production, but when audiences consolidate the milieu of these aesthetic points of reference in their spatial formation. Deleuze implies that abstract ideas and technologies of narration and aesthetics are only possible as topological diagrams, forms and geometries that already exist within the milieu of a given space. That is, the milieus of a Deleuzian territory may provide different points of aesthetic contact through its heterogeneous blocks of cultural concepts- e.g. genre, form, etc. In the next section, I provide concrete

examples of how the Amazon landscape in narration represent itself as both tradition territory and as Deleuzian territory.

The Deleuzian Notion of Space, Part 2: Amazon Territory and Amazon Territorialization

The Amazon as territory in the traditional sense can be understood as a tropical forest regulated by the environmental agencies of state and sovereign governments. Humboldt's 1799 Amazon expedition, for example, required a travel permit from the Bourbon monarchy and the blessing of Spanish Foreign Minister Don Urquijo (Brading, p. 1991). Only after all travel papers were in order, did Humboldt journey to Cumana, Venezuela, where he continued to navigate bureaucracy before setting sail to the Orinoco River. The Amazon body itself is divided into nationalized territories, outlined by physical borders and mutually recognized sovereign rights within each bordered nation.⁵³ The Amazon, under the protection of nation-states, performs a passive function of the state, while representing "a portion of geographical space that coincides with the spatial extent of a government's jurisdiction" (Gottmann, 1975, p. 29)⁵⁴. The jungle takes on the characteristic of a physical container that exacts a certain amount of political leverage proportionate to both its size and strategic location to the West. Whether or not the Amazon has autonomy becomes a question of political freedom and its role in the development of colonial history in the region⁵⁵.

⁵³ The South American jungle is located in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela.

⁵⁴ Professor Jean Gottmann developed his theoretical model in order to explain the political partitioning of geographical space. Gottmann's work makes explicit reference to human psychology, and is based on a few fundamental concepts: cloisonnement (partitioning), circulation (movement), carrefour (crossroad) and iconographie (iconography).

⁵⁵ See Chapter V- Geoappropriation and the Centrality of the Periphery.

The Academy Award-winning 1986 British drama, *The Mission*, tells the story of a Jesuit mission in 18th century Amazon. The film is set in the 1790s and introduces Spanish priest Father Gabriel who enters the western Paraguayan jungle to construct a mission station to convert a Guarani Indian community to Christianity. Father Gabriel's mission, protected under Spanish law, is depicted as a village of sanctuary and enlightenment for the Guarani. But the 1750 Treaty of Madrid reapportioned this part of the Amazon jungle in a colonial transfer deal to Portugal, whose merchants are keen to use natives for slave labor. Father Gabriel, under threat of excommunication from the Church, states his intention to defend the mission against the Portuguese plantation owners, and in the end scenes of the film, the Portuguese militia kills him and slaughters his indigenous followers of mostly women and children. In *The Mission*, the Amazon terrain becomes the conjunction where political struggles of European nationality and Christian dogmas play out. The jungle is flung far into the background behind the absolution of a treaty conducted thousands of miles away at the colonial center of Spain. On the local scale, Catholic priests are portrayed as politically righteous and humanitarily empathetic. *The Mission* is a film that illustrates European protagonism, where priests represent their orders of governance. The mapping of the story occupies a particular set of spatial-temporal problems unique to the Spanish missionary at this moment in time. In these circumstances, the Amazon territory is merely an object of politics to be acted on.

The Mission also portrays a socio-cultural and existential tradition in its development of territoriality prior to the incorporation of European ethics and politics. The character Rodrigo Mendoza captures the flow of social action in the Amazon through his ethical maturing across the timeline of the film. He begins as a slave trader himself, and through the guidance of Father Gabriel, becomes a Jesuit priest and finally a defender of natives against the Portuguese invaders.

Though in the end, he perishes under a hail of gunfire, his journey represents the lived expressions of the spatial resiliency of the Amazon as Deleuzian territory. In the lived experiences of daily life, audiences witness Mendoza farm for food and well for water. In one scene, he builds a hut using locally sourced timber, and helps to fence off the Amazon village from the outer forest. Mendoza, alongside his native neighbors, lives in the forest in peace, and not as a part of a unified state territory sanctioned by the Spanish crown. *The Mission's* Amazon is a local space, a lived habitat with linkages to the greater jungle. The village serves as the controlled space of territoriality not by its recognizable boundaries of human architecture, but by its function as a lived space where human civilization is but an appendage of the jungle in motion alongside other interacting appendages. The state function of the Amazon territory emerges after the material occurrence of territoriality in space. In contrast to the state territory of the Amazon as a property of the Spanish crown, the localized territoriality of the jungle is an unfolding of a set of scenes emanating from primarily non-human actors.

In light of Deleuze and Guattari's work, the fictionalization of the Amazon space becomes a narrative vessel that expresses the spatial milieu of its given space. In turn, territoriality is the foundation from which the jungle becomes a realized geometry,⁵⁶ a shape of abstraction that merges the narrative with the spatial contours of the land. Fictionalizing Deleuzian territory requires aesthetic markings other than geometric form. In Doyle's *The Lost World* for example, Professor Challenger describes the colors by a river he crosses. Doyle writes:

"Vivid orchids and wonderful colored lichens, smoldered upon the swarthy tree-trunks and where a wandering shaft of light fell full upon the golden allamanda, the scarlet star-clusters of the tacsonia, or the rich, deep blue of ipomaea, the effect was as a dream of fairyland".

⁵⁶ Recall Chapter III's labyrinthine, striated, and rhizome spaces.

These colorful descriptions in Doyle's Amazon are moments of territorialization of the actual Amazon, where the appendages of the tropics reach dimensionally into the languages of text. Whereupon fictions construe objects in reality, the milieu of the real can also extend into the organization of fiction. In this example, the extension of milieu is accomplished by activating the organizing principles of human vision. Deleuze writes, "color is a membrane state associated with interior hormonal states, but it remains functional and transitory as long as it is tied to a type of action" (1987, p. 315). The action required of the colorful details of the riverbank reveals a glimpse of spatiality, including the spatial contours that the descriptive appendages occupy. These textual descriptions "acquire a temporal constancy and a spatial range that make it a territorial, or territorializing mark: a signature of the world" (1987, p. 315). Territoriality of the Amazon is only revealed to human actors when infused with descriptive utterances, imaginative expressions and providing the signature quality that is reflective of the Amazon basin. Such unique markings permeate across a specific time and space, thus fulfilling the act of human narration.

Although Deleuze's territory highlights the expression of shapes and forms, and milieus of color, it's spatial-object-being is not intrinsically tied to the protagonist human subject, e.g., Humboldt, Challenger, Aguirre. Deleuze writes that the expressiveness of the Amazon does not convey "qualities that belong to a subject" (1987, p. 316); however the jungle can delineate a textual and visual montage of itself as a representation of the subject that comes into contact with its mass. In *Aguirre* for example, Herzog's camera, at times, pulls the figure of Aguirre from the milieu of his surroundings, parting away the vegetation with a close-up shot as if his insanity is completely independent from the environment of his present geography. In the film, Aguirre's subjectivity competes with the Amazon for a foothold on the center platform of spatial

significance. Herzog's craft as a filmmaker is often highlighted by character-driven techniques, but where the jungle appears on screen, it resists being the object of inquiry. The Amazon attempts to fold these images into its bodily milieu to form new territorial appendages beyond its physical manifestation. As *Aguirre* progresses, the constitution of the jungle landscape takes precedence as the field of pragmatic experience, a territory oriented by the values inherent to the jungle's tendencies. The Amazon as Deleuzian territory in film, consists of its own mechanics of action, signatures and milieus, and thus constitutes a new appendage of spatiality with which *Aguirre's* director and actors negotiate. This act of consultation and collaboration is unavoidable especially when film production is moved onsite as is the case of the Amazon films so far discussed.

The relationship between the Amazon as Deleuzian territory and the Amazon as Herzog's film set is not one based on collision and contact, but rather on consumption and growth. Whereas an artificial setting of the jungle can represent how a human subject consumes their environment, a Deleuzian territory can in turn subsume a film set of itself and turn it into a new territorial appendage. In the production of *Fitzcarraldo*, for example, Herzog and his crew become subsumed as part of the Amazon system of relations even as they engage with the production of a fictional tale. In crafting a film set, Herzog has limited choices in making his location decisions. The film crew must establish a space with proper logistics to the best of their ability given environmental conditions of temperature, light and accessibility. While Herzog's set must evidently differentiate the filmed temporal terrain of fiction from the territory location of his present time, the staged scene is not outside of the Deleuzian territory of the Amazon, but a part of it. Herzog's set spurs from the growth of the jungle and its milieu, giving them a particularly filmic significance. In making the fictional Amazon, a new milieu of the jungle

grows forth as both a property of filmic discourse and an appendage of the tropical jungle. In Herzog's production, the Amazon as Deleuzian territory takes creative measures to add to itself delimited components of cinema. Herzog, in turn, with his recording technology and a crew of human operators and actors, maneuver as temporary assemblages in the jungle. Their role is to convert existing Amazon milieu into meaningful narrative and aesthetic image for audience consumption.

Reader and audience engagement with the Amazon narrative involves the repeated confrontation between the aesthetic forms and colors of the filmic jungle and the milieus of its Deleuzian territory. Like a long sustaining musical note, our memories of the history of the Amazon representations overlap and entangle. Repetition is maintained through the consumption of these coordinated textual mappings from travel writing to fiction and cinema. The revelation of the Amazon territory does not require actual physical presence of the audience inside the basin, but only the repetition of narrative and aesthetic framing of its images. Thus consistency of engagement is based not on direct confrontation with the phenomenon of the jungle, but a constant refrain and consumption of the narrative signifiers of the jungle. The refrain of experience enables the very act of deterritorialization⁵⁷ where "one launches forth, hazards an improvisation" (1987, p. 311) and makes sense of the world. Thus in viewing the Amazon body as a delimited, organized and repeating structure of territorial act, there lies an opening for the diversification of milieu from within the arrangement of the Deleuzian territory itself. In charting the narrative forms and functions of the Amazon, the act of repetition becomes nonlinear while

⁵⁷ In this instance, deterritorialization refers to a detachment of previous socio-political meaning attributed to a place through territorialization. For example, territorialization allows a rubber barons to organize the Amazon into units of profit based on extraction. Deterritorialization can purge the space of the Amazon from traditional human significance and redistribute meaning through future reterritorialization in more creative ways.

the experience of space renders coordinates on a map irrelevant. Whereas one's physical presence in the Amazon can testify to the sensation of that specifically localized Amazonian geography, the fictionalization of the Amazon terrain generalizes location so that exact coordinates become less critical to the cultural spacing of territory. In this sense, a Deleuzian territory can “speak back” to the technologies of human mapping, and at the same moment, be susceptible to narrative and aesthetic interpretation. In the act of territorialization, Deleuze and Guattari are careful not to call a territory a physical reality, but they understand its dynamic being-in-the-world as not simply a quality of human subjectivity.

Lefebvre and Heidegger- The Heideggerian Notion of Space: Place and Dwelling

Recall in the introduction of this dissertation that in Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, urban spatiality is a concept qualified by dynamic characters on its own terms. Where the texture of urban space gains focus, “it is helpful to think of surroundings and context, in a populated area and associated networks in which it is set down, as part of a particular production of an area” (1991, p. 118) made of layers, ripples and gaps. Where space is constructed both materially and creatively, Lefebvre posits two modes of producing space. In the first instance, production is realized in the industrial sense, exemplified by how the rubber barons have navigated the rubber plantations in South America by identifying healthy tree trunks from useless ones, and the development of export routes out of the Amazon rivers. This kind of economic production involves a series of repetitive gestures organized as labor and moves in accordance with efficiency and the extraction of commodities. In contrast, the second mode of production highlights space as the result of artistic activity. Lefebvre's work introduces space as a social and cultural concept, as having a critical role in functionalism and aesthetics, which becomes

dominant over time as more people utilize the place of habitat, creating and recreating them according to their own need and enjoyment.

The Amazon terrain is incongruent with the characteristics describing urban spatiality; therefore, the history of spatial analytics in critical theory has largely abandoned the forest as an unlivable space, one perhaps unworthy of spatial analysis. In its textual form, constructions of the Amazon and its coordinates are distinctly different from that of the socio-urban space. Its place in time is not often associated to the everyday practice of urban populations of the West, and its knowable features are, as reflected in previous chapters, limited to fictional tropes and mythologizing stories based on limited travel explorations. In regards to the Amazon, much of spatial studies in Western critical theory dismiss the region due to its lack of dynamic urban social conditions of living. The Amazon disrupts what Robert Sack⁵⁸ refers to as an endeavor toward a "spatial strategy to affect, influence or control resources of people in geographical terms" (1986, p. 1-2). While territoriality of the Amazon can be articulated as a "social construct, forged through interaction and struggle" (Elden, 2013, p. 3-4), its barren location on the colonial periphery resists the critical theories of space that seek to understand and nuance spatial conception in the 20th century. Spatial studies of the Amazon may, however, draw meaning from writings on urban spatial discourses. Lefebvre's point is that space cannot simply be a mere "collection of things or an aggregate of sensory data" that exist outside of the human mind like an imposed phenomena" (1991, p. 27). Instead, space resembles a dialectic operation that is filtered through the lens of three prisms or dimensions- spatial practice, representation of space and spaces of representation (1991, p. 38-39). To paraphrase Lefebvre's spatial dialectic- 1)

⁵⁸ Robert Sack argues that making meaning out of space for humans is not necessarily an instinct, but a powerful and often indispensable geographical strategy used to control social processes while living in a community. For Sack, territoriality is the human action upon space that both is motivated by and results in social power.

spatial practice is related to the everyday practices and routines that make up the perception of space; 2) representations of space consist of the abstract knowledge about space that organizes it into knowable units; 3) the spaces of representation reflect the lived space of all peoples in motion (1991, p. 38). In effect, the Lefebvrian spatial lens prioritizes human experience in social atmospheres and the categorization of space into knowable and interacting parts.

Heidegger takes a different approach to the concept of spatiality by naming the *umwelt* or surrounding world in his magnum opus *Being and Time* (1996). For human subjectivity to function, and for human subjects to orient their position in space and time, Heidegger grants precedence to the question of temporality, finitude and mortality. The existence of human understanding is possible only through the presence of limitations and how a being (*dasein*) circumnavigates the world. Theorist Jeff Malpas⁵⁹ argues that Heidegger understands our space of inhabitation as the “transcendental source or origin of being... understood as an effect of place” (2006, p. 7). A space, or location in time, is not only where a being emerges physically, ethically and consciously, but also where beings congregate with other subjects and objects in a matrix of meaning production. For Heidegger, place is infused with the production of meaning, is “indeed the idea and image of a concrete gathering of otherwise multiple elements of a single unity” (2006: 16). In writing *Being and Time*, Heidegger departs from the traditional metaphysical notion of Newtonian physics where the marking of a position happens in an empty container. The physical presence of space emerges from the world or the wherein of *dasein*, as “the world is not objectively present in space... for only within a world can space be discovered (2010, p. 351). In other words, spatiality does not precede *dasein*’s limited encounters in the world but emerges with the presence of its encounters. Heidegger’s *dasein* is absorbed in the world as subject, thus

⁵⁹ Malpas is a contemporary philosopher who has addressed the significance of the concept of place. He is a leading figure in “philosophical topography” in which he argues for an “externalist” conception of self and mind. His work is indebted to both Hans-Georg Gadamer and Martin Heidegger.

takes custody of the image the world produces from its habitat of dwelling. Here, the lived subject is situated in an existential but necessary dwelling as only *dasein* can be situated. The subject is activated and pragmatically located in the world's space so it can encounter things-in-the-world [*zuhandene*] according to the format of its order and utility. Whereas the encountered things are useful to *dasein*, the context within which things become useful is also a portion of that encounter. Following Heidegger's logic, I argue that the outlining perimeter and the material context of *zuhandene* from within those perimeters form the very fabric of the Amazonian narrative topography.

Dasein's being-in-the-world, in its most basic form, is a dwelling in space, its only role in existence is to inhabit those who dwell. As Malpas writes, the lived space "becomes a way to grasp dwelling as a poetic practice" (2006, p. 24) implying that Heidegger's notion of dwelling means something beyond the mere physical coordinates of a place of human residence. For Heidegger, *dasein* itself can be construed as a spatial being-there that folds onto itself from the location of dwelling. As he points out, "in directing itself toward... and in grasping something, *dasein* does not first go outside of the inner sphere in which it is initially encapsulated, but rather... it is always already outside together with some being encountered in the world already discovered" (2010, p. 62). Heidegger speaks to a simultaneous inside dwelling of the familiar, and outside sphere of the encounter, the former of which is the being-in-the-world, and the latter of which is the being-there texture of space. It's important to note that *dasein* is not a subject that comes into being prior to an objective space, but a being-in-the-world that take up space where there was no space before. It accomplishes its dwelling by being spatial, physical and present from the beginning of its being. In understanding "its here in terms of the over there of the surrounding world" (2010, p. 105), *Dasein* creates and organizes its place by bringing things near

instead of traveling through space. Therefore in constructing *dasein*, Heidegger's key distinction between *place* and *space* is made clear. Space is an open area where beings may travel to and from, through routes taken or the trailblazing of new paths. Place is a subsumed space that is already here, engulfed by *dasein*. And where there are distant spaces, *dasein* makes it a place by luring it near and into its dwelling for self-reorientation. Heidegger gives the example of a person entering a familiar room that has been disorganized into darkness with a flick of the off switch. He first rejects the common notion that in the dark, we orient ourselves according to the asymmetry of the body- up, down, front, left, right and behind. Heidegger claims that we "necessarily orient [ourselves] in and from already being in the world" (2010, p. 106). Directional markers of up from down, left from right, are for Heidegger direct external limbs for charting physical space, much like latitude and longitude on a map. One might think it's counterintuitive to presume basic directions as not essential for world mapping, but Heidegger argues that orientation is grounded in the presence of *Dasein* in general, which is determined by its being-in-the-world. This results in the orientation of space as designed via a subject's *a priori* being-in-the-world.

In Lefebvre's *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, the concept of dwelling marks an intimate orientation of space. Lefebvre uses Heidegger's dwelling [*wohnen*] by suggesting that the human occupation of dwelling creates new space for creative and political engagement. Heidegger develops his concept of dwelling through a reference to Friedrich Holderlin's theory on poetry, which introduces the poet-dweller in space, a poet whose "subject is not in the world like an object present-at-hand and indifferent, but a being-in-the-world, entangled in its web" (2019, p. 31). Whereas Heidegger's *dasein* dwells as a caring subject in their surrounding, he nonetheless leaves the possibility of a profaned space to emerge from one's

primordial dwelling. Heidegger writes, "spaces open up the fact that they are let into the dwelling of man" (p. 154), and as the subject lives, new spaces emerge as habitat in lived experience. In other words, dwelling does not occupy empty space, but space exists as an entity that occupies human dwelling, giving it character, assembly and meaning. Lefebvre reinforces the idea that dwelling, filled with space, allows subjects to comprehend their lived experience, for the "relation of the human to nature, to its own nature, to being and to its own being, is situated in habiting" (2003c, p. 82). Lefebvre, more than Heidegger, organizes the concept of space as referential to urban space, or a lived space in the suburban and rural outskirts of European municipalities. However, his worldview on the notion of lived space breaks apart as European travelers, and later, fiction writers stumble across the colonial borders of South America, where the space of an enormous tropical jungle antagonizes the Western subject and their meditation on the common notion of dwelling as home.

A Synthesis of Deleuzian Territory and Heideggerian Dwelling

For Heidegger, the outside is necessarily transformed into an inside as the subject makes external space familiar. The idea of dwelling becomes a gathering place, a vortex that pulls space and its objects close to form a "Truth" of the world. From Heidegger's work, I interpret the inside composition of place as radically different from Deleuze and Guattari's territory. While the components of territory materialize from within the elongated milieu of multiple layers of spatial engagements, place is a familiar region within the worldview of a human subject capable of experience and knowledge formation. In comparing the two terms- territory and place, a fundamental contradiction between Deleuze and Heidegger's spatial ontology arises. Heidegger seeks recognition for Dasein's absorption of space and the creation of its authenticity as the primary function of existence. At Dasein's core occupation, is a being that acts in practical

engagement with a personal and limited environment. Deleuze and Guattari organize territory as a refrain and a repetitive layering of disguises, masks and simulacra not in search of authenticity but an ongoing reflection and eventual evolution (see *Difference and Repetition*) of spatial formations. For Deleuze and Guattari, territory's out there-in-the-world before Dasein's encounter is already a fulfilled representation of space, and the closer that space is drawn toward the dwelling of the subject, the more that spatial body resembles what Dasein has already experienced. For their ontology of territory, the act of repetition over specific instances of experience turns the subject into a synthesizer, which "unites disparate elements" (1987, p. 434) to generate difference and variation. For these authors, Heidegger's Dasein becomes a merging of subject and object that favors the situated human agent in all their limitations and intentions. Deleuze and Guattari's issue with Heidegger is his focus on the distinctiveness of Being as that primary entity which "Being is an issue for itself" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 32).

Territory, in contrast, does not rely on an authentic subject to perform its functions as its milieus and appendages act only in reliance upon each other. Territory is not the phenomenological place residing in the primordial dwelling of Dasein. Recall that territory exist prior to the distinction between subject and object and that territory offers its own rational and distinct character that resists and escapes the gravitational pull of human subjectivity. Whereas Heidegger relates to a phenomenological notion of place, Deleuze's territory can be better described as ethological- i.e. "the practical science of the matters of being" (See Deleuze: *Spinoza Lecture*, 1980) in its affects. Here, I interpret territory as referring to a localized space of influence, not something far in the distance of space. This ethology also departs from prior, more traditional ethological values, as it does not give primacy or protagonism to plant and animal life as presumed in Darwin's theory of evolution. For example, Deleuze and Guattari exemplify the

tick, wherein its limited habitat, its body functions on the effects of light, smell and heat. The tick crawls toward sunlight to perch on a branch where it waits up to eighteen years until it smells a passing animal below, and as it lands the tick searches a hot area of the body to feed (1988b, p. 124). The ethology of the tick requires a territorialization out of the given diversity of the forest using its bodily affects of which it is capable based on the particularity of its assemblage. This act of the tick becomes part of the ontology of the forest. Territory, therefore “marks out the relations of propriety or of appropriation of distance” (Zourabichvili, 2012, p. 167) as the very conditions by which human bodies are also enabled to act. Territory precedes Heidegger’s Dasein, and even as it becomes a place in dwelling for human subjectivity, consumption and meaning production, territory nonetheless folds the dynamism of these new rhythms into its ontology.

The role of Dasein, its dwelling and its acquired place from the horizon of human experience is however useful once the attributes of Dasein is placed onto the bodies and appendages of territory. Territory as Dasein reorganizes the composition of a new Copernican⁶⁰ center, redrawing space as a place of human dwelling and consumption. I propose that the role of Dasein be construed as the ethological substance of a territory such as the Amazon basin, and whereas human subjectivity gets relegated to the outer layer of milieu as an additional point of the jungle’s bodily interaction. From the perspective of the subject, any field of meaning that enables one to act and think is already formed by territorialization prior to any conditions for knowledge. Thus behavior is radically determined according to the relations of assembly that constitute from within the self-dwelling of a Deleuzian territory. When Humboldt traverses the Amazon, he is but a passing milieu that the territory of the jungle envelops into its place of

⁶⁰ Copernicus challenged the church to argue that the Sun, not the Earth, is in the center of the solar system, thus displacing humanity as the center of God's creation. This reference to the Copernican Revolution is further detailed in Chapter VI and VII of this dissertation.

dwelling. Whereas in the human subject the “I is a habitat” (1994, p. 105) of the spatialized body in the Cartesian sense, the Amazon becomes the authentic subject of its own habitat, which holds in its space the capacity to envelop the presence and determine the experience of the human explorer. The transference of Heideggerian subjectivity to characterize territory also means that territory is not just Being, i.e., an interacting self that cares primarily about being-in-the-world as self-fulfilling. Amazon as territory, instead, fulfills its Being by its material manifestations of difference if and when foreign entities, e.g. ocean water, a new species of plant, human explorers, enter its system of engagement. It can express a particular set of spatiotemporal behaviors, dynamism and rhythms within its bodily borders that differ from other territories a distance away.

By fusing the empowering qualities of the Heideggerian Dasein into a “Deleuzian cogito” (2012, p. 95) that claims an inhabitation of spatiality, human subjectivity and its attempts at representations of space becomes limited to what one can achieve based on the centering territory from which one revolves around. On the question of human subjectivity, Spinoza offered a non-phenomenological understanding of the human body in asking “not ‘Who am I?’ but ‘What can my body do?’” (1988b, p. 17). Deleuze reads Spinoza's initial question as a disposition of human function, in that the body is determined by the effects that constitute it and give it motion. I expand this notion of the body to incorporate a territorial body such as the Amazon, where the borders of each individual plant, animal and human body are eradicated and function is expanded beyond a living thing's skin organ.

Whereas the Amazon territory includes the bodily physique of those explorers and actors who traverse its land, the totality of the functioning Amazonian body requires a mapping of the "longitude of body... the set of relations of speed and slowness, motion and rest, between particles that compose it" (1988, p. 127-8). Through travel writing, fiction and film, the

coordinated aesthetic milieu of the Amazon territory as a bodily function is often described in detail. The function of the Amazon flows from early eye-witness accounts of explorers like Humboldt, through science fiction authors like Doyle, to the physical reentering of the Amazon by film directors, actors and crew over the last decades of filmed-on-location adventure cinema. Territory is hardly self-contained in these representations, as it constantly expands from its relations and compositions with foreign human bodies, advancing technologies and newly recycled works of art. Thus the representation of the Amazon becomes an empowering experience for the reorganization of its dwelling. Deleuze distinguishes these encounters as joyful and sad moments of contact as "we experience joy when a body encounters ours and enters into composition with it, and sadness when, on the contrary, a body or an idea threaten our coherence" (1988b, p. 19). In the Amazon, Western human subjectivity is threatened because these human bodies move differently from their traditional lived environments. When human actors enter the Amazon dwelling, their milieus become subsumed under the total function of the jungle. The Amazon dwelling, upon its encounter with human actors, acts in a way that resembles the legal action of eminent domain, where the power of a municipality may confiscate private lands for public use. In this case, territory enacts a seizing authority over the domain of Spinoza's subject body, drawing from it a set of proper functions. Note that this possession does not necessarily dissolve the human body but only changes its habits and functions as long as they remain in the jungle. What the Amazon does reduce is the capacity for isolated and freely composed human subjectivity. A more radical engulfing of human subjectivity is exemplified in the recent forest-horror film, *Annihilation*. The plot follows a cellular biologist's debriefing about a four-month expedition into an anomalous iridescent electromagnetic field called "the Shimmer" from which she alone survives. In "the Shimmer" humans minds can't remember their

past, lose their sense of direction and identity, while their bodily cells slowly mutate to resemble the forest plants and animals they come into contact with. It is revealed that the affected terrain is rearranging living organisms in the manner of a prism, distorting and refracting DNA in the same way that a prism refracts light, thus changing the fundamental construction of all cellular bodies.

Limits, Thresholds and the Amazon as Spatial-Object of Fulfillment

Just as Amazon's topographic content contain physical borders, so too does a narrative of a hybrid Deleuzian and Heideggerian ethology contain specific limits and thresholds. The capacity of language does not only define such constraints, but the very actions determined by what a physical body is capable of in certain spaces. The limitation of the Amazon territory resides in its diversified and limited bodies and their capacity to interact with one another across the landscape. For Deleuze and Guattari, this "*limit* designates the penultimate marking a necessary rebeginning, and the *threshold* the ultimate marking an inevitable change" (1987, p. 438). The limit and the threshold are two sides of the same border, the former facing inward toward a confined body, and the latter facing outward toward the world out there. The limit for a localized body necessitates a relative deterritorialization where one attempts some different action that is predictable within its habit. Imagine Humboldt coming across a fork in the Amazon, and he takes the path away from the safe reference of the riverbanks and into the deep jungle. The threshold marks the point "when the assemblage must change its nature" by engaging in an absolute deterritorialization (1987, p. 438). On the level of territory, the border of the Amazon becomes both a confined space as well as an internal composition of horizons where one can leap into a new bodily composition to traverse territorial limits. Unfortunately for human subjects, crossing this threshold fully is a matter of life and death as the decomposition of our bodily assemblages alter the nutritional composition of the Amazonian earth but would in effect end our

subjectivity as we know it. Aguirre's madness and eventual drifting onto his death via starvation qualifies as the traversing of his bodily terrain onto new functions. Similar to one character's cellular mutation into a living plant in *Annihilation's* "the Shimmer" where the speed of her transformation into a plant is quickened by her willingness to do so, Aguirre similarly gives up his assumed bodily function to survive- thus speeding up the deterioration of his cells toward death. In effect, the fear of the Amazon in the forest horror genre can be interpreted as a fear of being overtaken by the functions of its territory, the fear of never escaping from its dwelling out of choices of our own. And while one can read Amazon's territorial assemblage as "milieu consolidation... as co-existence and succession" (1987, p. 320), the Amazon's eventual overtaking of our body and subjectivity means the mass of the jungle and its assemblages prior to the presence of Western humankind poses a threat to our bodily territory. The pragmatic aspect of the Amazon as territory is then based on an act of consumption and selection.

Deleuze, in *Difference and Repetition*, draws on Matila Ghyka's "dynamic symmetry" to describe the immanently nomadic ways that territories inevitably make contact with one another. When two dwellings collide, such as between the Amazon territory and the Western explorer, an asymmetrical altercation occurs where one dwelling engulfs the other at the point of contact. Whereas symmetrical processes remain at the state of equilibrium for a duration of time, asymmetry refers to the dissipation of one horizon as new orders emerge from the structure of space. The correspondence between two heterogeneous fields, or when two territories touch, acts within a law of attraction where once dwelling make contact there cannot ever be a complete breakage toward expulsion. One territory's milieu is stuck onto the other even before a point of total consumption. Thus if human bodies can extract themselves from the Amazon, some aspect of Amazon milieu remains on the body and enacts its rhythm and function. Recall also that

Heidegger's ontology grants precedence to questions of human temporality and finitude, our presence in the Amazon territory can accelerate one's changing constitution toward certain death. As a result of the fear of the Amazon territorializing our human bodies, first without our consent, then perhaps with the blessing of our approval, narrative topographies of the Amazon develops a second theme beyond that of the forest horror where the eventuality of human death is imminent and predictable. The theme of fulfillment, from the perspective of human subjectivity, illustrates the jungle as holding the qualities of redemption once the threshold of horror has been breached by the milieu components of the jungle environment. Amazon as a spatial-object of fulfillment is then a transcendental leap from the territorial effect of spatiality toward a more pragmatic circumnavigation of the human subject in the aesthetic experience of the jungle. I return to the thematic reflection of the Amazon from Chapters One and Two but this time, both the narrative geometry and the territoriality of its dwelling insinuates human subjectivity to speculate the Amazon as a spatial-object of fulfillment.

For Humboldt, Herzog and others who have traversed the jungle in real space-time to complete an aesthetic project of discovery, their end journey whether in the labyrinth, striated or rhizome geometry of the Amazon, concludes with their human subjectivity relatively intact. Their fear of total consumption in effect sets the tone of their fear of partial consumption even if they survive Amazon's territorial pull. Recall that this spatial rhythm of the human actor does not derive from within the Cartesian centrality of the soul, but from the spatiotemporal dynamisms of the Amazonian territory. The human actor commits to exploratory action upon witnessing the dwelling of the jungle. For instance, in *Fitzcarraldo*, Werner Herzog constructs in his visual montage a scene of the absurd- the towing of a steamship across dry jungle earth to fulfill his specific cinematic dream to do just that. Herzog enacts a drama, a *mise-en-scene* in his very act

of setting up the prop of an actual steamship in the territory of the Amazon. Deleuze would argue that this labor-intensive act is not a human will to construct with intention, but that Herzog assembled this scene unconsciously, like a stage-making bird of the jungle who constructs its landmark home with leaves and sticks (1987, p. 315). Deleuze elaborates, "there is necessarily something cruel in this birth of a world of movements without subjects, roles without actors" (1995, p. 219), where the cruelty is reflected in the subject's actions unknowingly produced by their assemblages, and unknowingly expressed in their territories. Like a bird building a nest, Herzog directs, Kinski acts and Humboldt travels to express their diagram as bodily territories with certain gatherings of milieu. The act of fulfillment that is begged of the Amazon narrative becomes a reaction to this human exposition of territory upon their encounter with the Amazon, and not some mechanism of some plot genre. Seeing the Amazon as spatial-object of fulfillment becomes a reaction of experiencing the threatening composition of milieu that the Amazon territory expresses that could very well end human subjectivity. For Deleuze, territories are the auto-poetic acts that make milieu expression possible in "consolidated aggregates of succession as well as coexistence" (1987, p. 329). The Amazon becomes a synthesis of these heterogeneous actions that do not actually require a human subject to organize but instead consumes the human after which humans make contact within its dwelling.

Werner Herzog's success as a radical filmmaker is an expression of his assemblages within the dwelling of the Amazon. His material acts of exploration and documentation manifest as the rhythm of his human abilities, where his material being produces additional assemblages alongside the plants and animals of his surroundings. This action and re-action, in their cyclical motion, can be understood as operating beyond Herzog's agency. Thus, the reading of the Amazon narratives at hand can be an exercise in the documentation of subjectivity's survival in

the wake of Amazon territory's consumption of human milieus and appendages over time. While these narratives appear to show how humans engage the Amazon jungle, seeking a fulfilling life of extraordinary adventure (Humboldt), medicine (Spruce, Wallace and Bates), God (Father Gabriel), wealth (Reyes) and aesthetic inspiration (Herzog), their struggles become a fight to preserve their diminutive and diminishing subjectivity in the face of a very active territory that dwells. In recognizing this unfettered task as self-preservation, Herzog once claimed: "I am the conquistador of the useless."

Conclusion

For Deleuze and Guattari, territory is "an act of rhythm that has become expressive" (1987, p. 315) alongside the entanglement of new horizons where a multitude of milieu arises from different shifting appendages. The Amazon territory, though confined in relative borders to other landscapes, function in rhythmic difference evidenced by the actualization of rocks and rivers, sunshine and rainfall, plants and animals, indigenous tribes and Western travelers. In its spatial plain, territory remains a subject in motion, drawing new horizons onto its dwelling so that new milieu components once foreign and exterior to its body, become a part of its rhythm. This act of attraction stabilizes its interior along with units of material action timed and measured in oscillation so that the Amazon can maintain a sense of spatiotemporal order. The rhythm of its territory is a repetition that occurs between milieu and its larger heterogeneous units of assemblages, ever productive of new directionality and new ontologies. The Amazon territory is a non-phenomenological concept, unlike Heidegger's Dasein, which is itself based in the operations of human subjectivity. The Amazon is a spatial-object, sometimes defined by its manifest actions alongside human presence and human narratives. Wherein Heidegger's Dasein anchors the "here and now" of the human subject, the Amazon orders its own being-in-the-world

through the process of territorialization, raising a dwelling composed of directional variant and markings enacted by all the living and nonliving things within the space of the jungle.

When the composition of a Western human subject enters its territory, the Amazon alters its spatiotemporal dynamisms to account for the acting milieu of this new territory. The performance that ensues becomes a synthesis of struggles, which takes place within a set of possibilities concerning a field of impersonal forces, some human, some animalistic, and others characterized by a dominant jungle narrative. The human subjects- Humboldt the explorer, Herzog the Director and Kinski the actor, become disoriented through a reactionary force, first expressed as fear and horror, then expressed as desire and fulfillment. They are no longer transcendental subjects, but a geography of effects, becoming forces of ethology as opposed to subjectivity. Their humanity is altered to emanate Amazon's own body of assemblages, rhythms no different from the birds that fly, the spider that weaves, the cricket that chirps at night. The Amazon as narrative ontology does not escape this territorial effect as the narration of landscape also demonstrates a space that precedes the human as an impersonal non-phenomenological world. The Amazon jungle in its bodily functions as territory may very well alter our inhabitable body by disseminating human subjectivity, blocking old patterns of existence and opening up new ways of being. The Amazon basin, in this way, renders visible imperceptible human forces and the rhythms that constitute us, as Humboldt's claim to fame cannot be possible without the orientation of the Amazon rivers, and Herzog's acclaims cannot be rendered without the masses of the jungle tree lines. This recognition of the Amazon as active Deleuzian territory in possession of Heideggerian Dasein becomes layered with contradictions with the introduction of coloniality, geo-appropriation and aesthetics in the coming chapters.

Chapter V

Amazon Basin and the Iterations of Domestic Geocriticism

Introduction

Readers of literature and viewers of film can cognitively identify the difference between the fictional world of an entertaining narrative and the real world from which that fiction is extracted. In the West, where the significance of Dickens' London, Baudelaire's Paris and Joyce's Dublin seem to take on a documentary feel, readers understand the difference between those fictions and the lived cities that have evolved over the decades. Compared to the recognizable and relatable cityscape of the Western metropolitan, the colonial periphery of the South American jungle represents a more otherworldly space in literature subjugated to a reality of domination and fantasy making. Edward Said represents a vital figure in the organization of spatial orientation, and although he would not call himself a geocritic, he instigates a unique discourse against and alongside the major Eurocentric voices of literary theory. Borrowing from Said and others in postcolonial studies, I engage in this chapter with the theoretical approaches of geocriticism, and how different variations of spatial theories succeed or fail to address a colonial space like the Amazon jungle.

This chapter is divided into two segments. The first part introduces the term geocriticism as a general theory and then discusses the concept of spatial protagonism in the form of Bachelard's homebody, Benjamin's flaneur and de Certeau's pedestrian in the urban environment. I challenge the ways these geocritics qualify spatial analysis in the West and how collectively, they practice what I call "domestic" geocriticism. In the next section, I apply the

domestic form of geocriticism onto the spatial body of the Amazon landscape and show how a spatial framework focused on the discourse of social setting stifles the capacity of the Amazon terrain due to its position in the colonial periphery. I group the spatial scholarship of Lefebvre, Wegner, Bachelard, de Certeau and Benjamin together to demonstrate the effect of urban spatial analysis in contrast to a need for a new spatial approach beyond geoappropriation where the author-subject, the pedestrian, and the flaneur wont be so predictably absorbed by the conditional stereotypes of the Amazon jungle. This chapter illustrates the shortcomings of these western spatial scholars by assessing domestic geocriticism's incompatibility with the Amazon landscape in the hopes of developing new methods of articulating spatiality in the colonial periphery.

Spatial Bodies in Everyday Life

Critical theory has been a crucial tool to expand the domain of spatiality studies. As David Harvey argues, "how we represent space and time in theory matters because it affects how we and others interpret and then act with respect to the world" (Harvey 1990, p. 205). With the pertinence of spatial theories and practices that emerged with more regularity in the latter part of the century, the term geocriticism started to encompass the whole of the spatial turn in both literary and cultural studies. Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* was one of the first iterations of spatiality to engage with the investigation of the spaces of everyday life and the ways that aesthetics and politics intertwine in the domestic sphere of the home as a form of poetic image. He asserts that language in text can only provide a basis from which images are born, but cannot properly illustrate the vibrancy of the poetic image. Literary space, Bachelard concludes, takes place in the reader's imagination, a home-like psychic location separate from the facets of reality, "is seized as its own specific reality" (1969, p. xv). Bachelard begins his writing with the concept of the home space which when broadly conceived, is a fundamentally

safe space for human imagination to flourish. The home is an "inhabited space that bears the essence of the notion of safety" (p. 5), where one can sit at a desk, lounge on a couch or splay on a bed to indulge in the spaces of literary imagination as a writer of novels. Bachelard argues that the physical home space is a shelter for daydreamers, or architects of narratives, as "the house protects the dreamer... allowing one to dream in peace" (p. 6). In such a place, where the confines of four walls and a roof defend the human body from the outside, it also protects the imagined spaces of the mind. Topological emphasis on the domestic space of the home is significant due to its function in the simultaneity of its dual locations- 1) in the psychic home of a dreamer's mind, and 2) in the literal home of a writer's place of familiar comfort. The imaginative space of a fictional adventure necessarily derives from both origins simultaneously, where one nourishes the other to help facilitate a safe space of thinking and writing.

Starting from the spatial position of the home, and navigating outward to the social space which surrounds the home, two well-known examples of protagonism come to mind in the form of Walter Benjamin's Parisian walker and Michel de Certeau's urban pedestrian. Benjamin establishes the flaneur as the archetypically modern figure in his *Arcades Project* (1969), where a human subject navigates the city of Paris by idly strolling, window-shopping and observing without an intended endgame. Benjamin's work on the flaneur arises from his reflection of Baudelaire's urban poetry, taking the human subject as a painter of modern life. Benjamin's flaneur becomes more than a looker, one who stares from the crowd. The flaneur resists on being a set piece in a crowd, and as "the flaneur demands elbow room" (1969, p. 172), they have already become a standout amongst the other moving bodies of their environment. The human individual of urban Paris is less a wayfinding cartographer set on defining physical space for discovery, but a painter or artist who conjures an abstract and shifting imagery of the density of

the social and cultural sphere of life. As flaneurs move through the shopping arcade, the park, the central station, they orient space through their own creative means. As the urban subject gathers demographic knowledge as well as geographic knowledge, the mobility and psychology of metropolitan populations become key aspects to spatial knowledge of the city.

Similarly, Michel de Certeau describes Manhattan in *The Practice of Everyday Life* as an urban island that's also "a sea within the middle of the sea" (1984, p. 91). De Certeau distinguishes between the street-level view of the pedestrian and the panoptic overview of the observing State found in Foucault's work⁶¹. Whereas the latter generates a god's eye view of a presumably controllable and knowable city, de Certeau's pedestrian maps the city in "a long poem of walking" (1984, p. 101) that results from the everyday encounters with city life stimuli. To comprehend the cityscape, one cannot simply climb to the observation deck of the World Trade Center at the height of Manhattan and look down. Though one may gather a breathtaking view, de Certeau notes that "to be lifted to the summit of the WTC is to be lifted out of the city's grasp" (1984, p. 92). The urban text cannot be written from the vantage point of an overview from above but can only be asserted from "the ordinary practitioners of the city" (p. 93) from below where vendors, walkers, regulators, consumers and observers are leveled on a horizontal plane of emerging activity. De Certeau argues that pedestrians make the reality of the city and locate the "practice that is foreign to the geometrical or geographical space of the panoptic" (p. 93). De Certeau's rejoinder to Foucault contends that the street-level pedestrian⁶² can escape the totalizing gaze of social control and disrupt the spatial relations of power placed by the state.

⁶¹ Foucault's discourse on spatiality appears in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) with a 'carceral archipelago' that gave birth to the asylum, the clinic and the modern prison. In this spatial formation, the central figure of control uses various panoptic technologies of control to subdue a given population and generate a mobile circuitry of power that Deleuze would later refer to as Foucault's cartography of power.

⁶² Here, de Certeau makes an inimitable distinction between the actively engaging pedestrian and the voyeur who looks for the sake of looking with a lesser degree of participation. The voyeur characterizes an anti-pedestrian whose scopic act of looking is made more isolating when stationary or walking a straight path from start to end.

Here, De Certeau makes an additional analytic point in his argument that “to walk is to lack a place” (p. 103), which can be read as a diagnostic of the mobile pedestrian.

The spatial thinkers I have laid out in this section, namely Bachelard, Benjamin and de Certeau, represent a concise sample of how spatial bodies are constructed with agency through its interaction with the social atmosphere of a western metropol. Their works help to detect nuanced relationships between human individuals navigating a cityscape and how their subjectivity help to constitute the organizing principles of those urban grids. Although de Certeau makes the vital distinction between the knowledge production of a *seeing* voyeur and that of the *going* pedestrian, he nonetheless understands the transitory subject as a totalizing agent of mapping with both the power of observation and physical travel. Benjamin’s flaneur, similarly, is equally capable of navigating the city while activating their sense of individuality and charisma. Bachelard’s author-subject, although safe at home and stationary in their situated shelter of comfort, activates their agency by producing imaginary space in the novel. Together, the imaginative author, Benjamin’s poetic flaneur and de Certeau’s shortcut-finding pedestrian, combines to produce the archetypical western protagonism. Each personality is a part of the deduction of spatial matters as they combine to achieve an overarching discourse based on the dialectical movement of those who compose imaginary space from above, e.g. the author, and those who compose geographic space from below, e.g. the pedestrian and the flaneur.

By placing full relevancy to already recognizable Western spaces of influence, geocritic theorists distribute knowledge to traveling-subjects and traveling-fictional protagonists with the power to map new territory, the power to walk and mark new short-cuts, and the power to physically insert the social into perceived nonsocial spaces. I call this form of spatial analysis domestic geocriticism because the very dialectical approach to structuring the discourse of

knowledge is essentially repeated from one critic to the next, using the geography of the domestic life- the city, the town, the human interactive world, as a literary and spatial backdrop from which spatial subjectivity emerges. In the Amazon, for example, the pedestrian's occupation of a place and the flaneur's unwavering subjectivity become vastly more portable, fleeting from moment to moment, and in constant motion because to stop would mean certain death in the jungle. Domestication here implies a second meaning that relates to the domestication of readership. De Certeau and Benjamin is part of a movement of critical theorists that give the power of authorship to the keen readers of everyday life- the pedestrian, the flaneur, the reader, the working class proletariat, et cetera. The command of authorship, in this way, is collapsed with the authority of readership in joint creative production of space as a byproduct of simply being a socially engaging human subject. The output of spatial meaning is less of an extraordinary act and more of a micro-cataclysmic manufacture of the ordinary. Compared to the ontology of space in Deleuze and Heidegger illustrated in the previous chapter, these authors leave little room for the rewriting of spatial meaning from outside the occurrence of social interaction, while at the same time, obscures the boundary between authorship and readership, spatial construction and spatial experience.

Domestic Geocriticism in Social Space Interacts with the Amazon

In this section, I argue that domestic geocriticism is best confined to the Lefebvrian social space introduced in Chapter IV. In other words, the human subject experience in domestic space, as illustrated by Bachelard, Benjamin and de Certeau, form the foundational praxis for Lefebvre's understanding of the social workings of effort produced by a concentration of human bodies and relationships in a governed environment. Lefebvre's mantra- "social space is social product" (1991, p. 30) means that space is to be used and consumed as a means of production for

future spaces to emerge. The networks of exchange and flows of human spaces also imply that space is deeply historical, and grounded in the development of human conflicts. Lefebvre's work engages with the hermeneutics of space, or the interpretation of space as a social circumstance derived from interaction with previous spatial settings. As theorist Phillip Wegner⁶³ summarizes, Lefebvre's space is "dialectically interwoven" (2002, p. 182) in that he starts with a spatial practice, then points toward a representation of space, and finally synthesizes both into a representational space out there in the world. Wegner's interpretation of Lefebvre results in these three points, which I argue, correspond to the three modes of apprehending space- the domain of the conceived, the perceived and the lived (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33-40). Each mode in effect, corresponds to Bachelard's home-subject (the conceived), Benjamin's flaneur (the perceived), and de Certeau's pedestrian (the lived). In the following section, I deduce the three spatial positions in the narrative formation of spatial content.

a) The Conceived

The first spatial position, i.e. the conceived spatial practice of imagining, requires the subject to determine their own location in time. A spatial practice can be regarded as the act of writing a novel in one's own home or filming a scene in the Amazon in which the author and filmmaker both must first decipher the quality of their narrative environment and whether such units of space are safe or dangerous, recognizable or foreign. The narrative protagonists of their respective literatures and film must also weigh the spatial measurements of their environment. In the case of Professor Challenger, he willingly leaves the estate of his English home, thus rejecting his Bachelardian home-subject to become an adventurer in the jungle. While Challenger's arrival in the Amazon becomes the most significant spatial practice defined by his

⁶³ Wegner is a spatial theorist working in the field of literary history and social theory. His main concern is regarding the usage of utopian narrative as a medium for understanding social space.

very presence in the forest, his abandonment of the home-subject is itself an act of anti-social conception. He conceives of his adventure to replace the subject of his previous existence, and by extension, the home-subject of the fictional author in Doyle.

b) The Perceived

Spatial representation, or what Lefebvre calls “the perceived”, is the second spatial position of the western subject. In authorship, it is organized around the effort to conjure an imaginative place in the novel or film that represent a real-world space. In the case of the filmmaker in the Amazon, spatial practice and spatial representation are collapsed into a parallel dimension where the space of the real corroborates fully with the space of the narrative on screen. This “perceived” spatial position, from which Herzog directs his Amazonian films, doubles as both a perception of the Amazon in reality as well as in the fictional world of cinema. Whereas in social space, Benjamin’s flaneur perceives their heroism, charisma and individuality as a beacon in the elaborate folds of the city, the flaneur’s position is soon drowned out by their perception of the jungle foliage. The more the flaneur-hero perceives their anti-social environment, the more their spatial representation overwhelms their humanity.

c) The Lived

In social space, “the lived” is a qualitative and subversive subject fitting of de Certeau’s pedestrian identity. “The lived” synthesizes the previous two positions of spatial practice and spatial representation through the act of walking.⁶⁴ A representational space, thus refers to “space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of inhabitants and users” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 39). In the Amazon basin, de Certeau’s space making pedestrian is useless, unable to subvert a state order due to its very absence. In the jungle, the western

⁶⁴ Pedestrian comes from the Latin word *pedester*, meaning “going on foot”, or someone who walks.

pedestrian walks, but is lost and sick, weak and tattered. While the pedestrian generates a “lived” experience in the Amazon, therefore producing a temporary representational space in the world they perceive and walk, that moment is short lived as food and water supplies cannot sustain their usual living standards. He pedestrian, if lucky, exits the Amazon to return as a subversive subject in the western city. In the end, Herzog’s *Aguirre* and Doyle’s *Challenger* simply cannot bring enough civilizational content to alter the spatial ontology of the forest.

One alternative way of overlaying Lefebvre’s notion of social space onto the Amazon terrain is to point to the historical accounts of the Amazon as organized by western travelers, geographers and mapmakers and a summation of all the countable records, journal entries and documentations of the forest from the past five hundred years. These encounters on record are spaced across a timeline ranging from the present back to Pizaro's first documentation of the Amazon River's outflow to the Atlantic Ocean. The West's experience in the Amazon is at most fragmented and vastly incomplete thus unable to dialectically engage with a nonexistent social circumstance of the lived Amazon by a Western population. Imagine one were to illustrate a novel on the human history of Mars, where like the Amazon, its landscape has remained physically similar as far as we know for many millennia. As far as Lefebvre's theory of space is concerned, it would be hardly useful due to the bare existence of human interaction in both social circumstances and historical narratives of the reality of Mars. Thus any narrative of Mars that fancy a Lefebvrian dialectic of space would be forced into the category of science fiction. In terms of a Lefebvrian articulation of space as experienced by a western subject, the Amazon space is more similar to Mars than London or Paris.

Other Forms of Social Spaces in the Discourse of Geocriticism

Consider another element of classic urban geocriticism- Walter Benjamin's use of the spatial threshold from localized areas in a limited spatial pattern. In his writing, Benjamin frequently alludes to the threshold as a frontier or border that emphasizes the ambiguities of those liminal dimensions within geography. In "A Berlin Chronicle," Benjamin is fascinated by the crossing of a threshold from one neighborhood or social class to another topographical frontier where new paths of travel open up to one who chooses not to hover at the brink but wanders across to new spatial unknowns. The threshold of the Amazon alludes to the production of space as a significant designation for the visual register of space as units of volume in real time. In the case of the cinematic lens, the threshold outlines both the limits of the camera circumference, as well as a depth of view through the jungle vegetation, penetrating as far as the leaves, trunks and vines of the jungle would allow. In a novel, the threshold of the Amazon is confined by the physical descriptions of language and what each character experiences through prose. The emergence of what is perceived as outside these narrative technologies of utterance-visual, linguistic, and other, appear as imaginary replications of what is already produced in the mode of narration. This spatial threshold produces a homogenous landscape that is unlike the cityscape of Paris, London and New York. For example, as de Certeau describes the height of the World Trade Center, the reader does not imagine multiple World Trade Centers towering above the skylines of NYC across Manhattan because there is only one WTC. When von Humboldt illustrates a towering kapok tree that reaches up to seventy meters in height, the reader imagines an endless sea of kapok trees grazing the roof of the forest canopy. Likewise, any vegetation captured on a camera lens implies the multiplicity of its form and function repeating itself over and over again beyond the threshold of the lens diameter and its field of depth. This threshold of a measurable and limited Amazon unit of space ensures for the audience and reader of its text a

homogenous and infinite jungle green beyond the functioning technologies at play. Note that Lefebvre's notion of abstract space can be applied to the expression of the Amazon beyond its narrative descriptions where homogeneity is "its goal, its orientation, its lens" (1991, p. 287). Where Lefebvre's abstract space belongs to the orientation of a predominantly visual register- what one sees on camera- the abstract space of the Amazon is precisely what one does not see but fully imagines based on the immediately visible registers of onscreen space. The two sides of the threshold, the visual inner and the imaginary outer space, become a permanent marker of the represented Amazon as both are required to maintain the homogeneity of the jungle's spatiality.

Foucault's "Of Other Spaces" also distinguishes an interior spatiality from the exterior space in which we live our lives in coordination with social history. But Foucault's analysis of this heterogeneous space, which represents the fluid milieus of social forces emerge from his engagement with specific human institutions that eventually broaden to a social sphere of surveillance and other hegemonic discourses. Using Benjamin's symbol of the spatial threshold, Foucault's geocriticism illustrates the bodies of a designated inner space- the prison, the asylum, etc. and how they are situated, distributed and regulated. The Amazon as a geometry of narrative space does not necessarily reveal this stratification of bodily forces because there are not enough visible Western bodies to arrange and codify. This is one reason why the spatial orientation of the Amazon are marked by primarily plants and animals, to the extent that even indigenous human bodies are interpreted as animalistic and nonhuman. The abstraction of the Amazon, therefore, resists Foucault's archaeology and genealogy of the modern world.

Lastly, Frederick Jameson reads Lefebvre's abstract space as a culmination of both the lived experience and perceived reality of the postmodern, arguing that the way we organize space is based on a specific mode of production under the terms of late-capitalism. Jameson,

unlike Foucault, understands spatial formation as rooted in the material processes of capital itself rather than what Jameson dismissively refers to as "that shadowy and mythical entity Foucault called 'power'" (1991, p. 410). But Jameson's critique of the postmodern space is also ill-fitting of the Amazon as a pre-modern condition of the novel outside of the basic notion that greedy Westerners extract rubber, gold and rare medicines from the field of a commoditized jungle. As explained in Chapter II, the spatial fragmentation of the jungle permeates in the assumed dangers of the land, thereby transcending the existential crisis of capitalist logic. The Amazon, for example in its labyrinth form as discussed in Chapter Three, is organized as a geometrical rite of passage, and defined as ontological disorientation that's produced by its aesthetic conditions of seemingly endless growth. To apply Jameson's spatial logic to identify the Amazon as purely the financialization of exploration, labor extraction of the natives and deforestation is to use a geocritic logic on a landscape that far exceeds these Western criticisms.

In *The Geopolitical Aesthetics*, Jameson calls for an aesthetic of cognitive mapping, which I find more useful to organize the Amazon space as opposed to reading all fragmented renditions of the Amazon image as motivated by the logic of capitalism⁶⁵. Cognitive mapping refers to an individual subject's attempt to locate their position within a complex social organization or spatial milieu. Jameson defines cognitive mapping in urban studies as that "which involves the practical reconquest sense of place and the construction or reconstruction of an articulated ensemble which can be retained in memory and which the individual subject can map and remap along moments of mobility" (1991, p. 51). Jameson's work includes a repeated emphasis on the ways certain cultural representations contain within them cognitively mapped apprehension of a sense of totality. For example, Jameson thinks the assassination of John F.

⁶⁵ Other Marxist geographers include David Harvey, Edward Soja and Derek Gregory, all of whom build from the work of Lefebvre, Jameson and Foucault.

Kennedy in 1963 remains “the paradigmatic assassination in modern times” not because Kennedy himself was so important and loved, but because of the sense experience that this assassination brought the whole of U.S. citizenry together, generating a fleeting understanding of totality (1992, p. 47). The representation of the seemingly unified experience of the Amazon through narration can also signify the totality of a Western cognitive experience, which manifests itself not through the crisis of a singular event like Kennedy’s assassination, but through the multitude and repeated act of naturalized violence enacted by the Amazon against unsuspecting explorers. The heterogeneous ways by which the Amazon assassinates human characters throughout narrative history is significant, but its acts of violence against adventurers have been normalized in a way the assassination of a president has not. As a result, the cultural motif of Amazonian deaths and how this event generates a collective consciousness in the West illustrates the different ways Jameson’s conscious totality can be generated. From the perspective of territorialization, the cognitive mapping of the Amazon would necessarily have to take into account the imaginative jungle from outside the threshold of the visual map already conceived in narrative form. A cognitive map is thus a diagnostic of spatiality, which attempts to isolate spatial formation first as a conduit of power and then possibly insert human agency into an already constructive field where they act accordingly and predictably.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I emphasize the ways that Western spatial critics fail to capture the epistemology of the Amazon and Western Amazonian narratives with existing geocritic notions of space. The gaze and counter-gaze of European authorship on the subject of the Amazon territory appear problematic when observed from the position of a Bachelardian story teller, a charismatic flaneur, or a walking pedestrian. Through reading Lefebvre, Wegner's three-prong

designation of spatial development, i.e., spatial practice, spatial representation, and representational space collapses into a singular act characterized by colonial regression. For the Western artist in the Amazon, the spatial practice of jungle travel is informed by their preconceived notion of the representation of the Amazon, and thus their representational space of the Amazon is a mirroring origin of reference for travel practice. Similarly, the power of de Certeau's pedestrian and Benjamin's flaneur, when placed in the jungle landscape, are absorbed by the conditional stereotypes of previous forest horror fictions. The power gifted to the agentic walker of cities is muted by the lack of walkable paths and crossable rivers, by the fear of night and the trepidation of the unknown. Just as Bachelard's author-subject is secure and protected in their home to freely imagine and construct, the city pedestrian is mostly safe to traverse unplanned paths of travel in their urban environment. In the jungle, this taken-for-granted geocritical approach becomes taxing both physically and psychologically. Even a seasoned explorer like Professor Challenger must weigh his probability of success, for failure to pave a shortcut from his dinosaur plateau would mean certain death. Participants of Amazon expeditions cannot be called "social delinquents" (see de Certeau, 1984), for they do not resist the totalizing gaze from above like their roaming counterparts walking the cityscape. Far from being politically radical or culturally innovative, the Western Amazon pedestrian and the panoptic gaze from above are narrated as one and the same, participating in a final collapse between Bentham's organizing structure from overhead and de Certeau's transgressive power from below. Thus the Amazon, if produced from the perspective of domestic geocriticism, falls very short of the optimistic spatial heroism marketed by European thinkers of the geocritical spatial turn.

Chapter VI

A Geocritical Legacy of Postcolonial Studies:

Amazon Basin as Geoappropriation Without Cardinality

Introduction

Before Edward Said, literary criticism as a discourse mostly dismissed the function of spatiality in the colonial narrative. Said famously demonstrates these colonial overlapping territories of literature and empire in his seminal works *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), by pointing out that the peripheral positions of the colonies, along with the fantasies of the orient, are catalysts to the formation of literature and culture in the European center. In this chapter, I continue Said's tradition of engaging in critical readings, with the intention of using concepts that integrate the study of postcolonial geography to highlight the strong iteration between literature, space and colonialism. The theme of this chapter is organized around the specificity of the geocritical legacy of postcolonial studies, starting with colonialism as a spatial concept, then the notion of tropicality as a spatial orientation, and finally, a subcategory of cultural appropriation I call geoappropriation, as a spatial act of the legacy of colonial story telling. I highlight geoappropriation as a form of colonial aesthetic undertaking because such practices have been historically naturalized and largely invisible to discourses in spatiality. By understanding the geography of the Amazon as a unified aesthetic object of appropriation, irregardless of its internal sense of borders, direction, approximation and

cardinality as narrative function, I seek to reveal how the Amazon remains situated as a timeless background space, unchanging in its narrative utility and characteristics.

Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World Systems* (1974) provides the backdrop to this chapter. Wallerstein makes clear the cultural interrelations between the core Euro-American center of power and the periphery colonial locations in the New World and the Global South. Applying his work to the field of literary geography means that there are parallel dynamics in the overlapping territories of literature and empire, as demonstrated in both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. In the latter case, Said shows how the literal peripheral, located away from the metropolitan center of London and Paris, are actually central to the formation of literature and culture in Great Britain, France and the U.S. As Raymond Williams points out, the hasty development of the Western political economy in the 19th century required continuous extension of markets well beyond the domestic space of the European nations and thus the "traditional relationship between city and country was then thoroughly rebuilt on an international scale" (1973, p. 280). The urban, suburban and rural dichotomy in some ways parallels the tripartite division of the international core, semi-periphery and periphery model as found in Wallerstein's work. But such direct comparison misses the ontological question of how humans living in peripheral and semi-peripheral territories are categorized in relations to essentially anti-human geographies like the tropics.

While Wallerstein's distinction relates to how colonial economies function, Said would eventually link Wallerstein's spatial-political zones to literary and cultural ones. For example in *Orientalism*, the "imaginative geography" stands for different types of spaces according to the arbitrary distinctions made by Western explorers as new borders are drawn and new lands are divided up based on resource extraction and consumption. Said writes, the "practice of

designating one's mind a familiar space which is 'ours' and an unfamiliar space which is 'theirs' is a way of making geographical distinctions" (Said, 1978, p. 54) quite capricious and as such, these distinctions are irrationally maintained. Just as William's "country" and "city" paradigm emerge as a model for organizing the lived space of human societies, the unfamiliar populations of the periphery are organized arbitrarily and generally according to a capitalist racial hierarchy based on domination and exploitation. Here, the questions of spatial distance and proximity are likewise magnified to reveal that human perspectives change as the distance between people increases. In such encounter, the colonial center and periphery question is not simply one scaled to economic and racial exploitation, but to the physical distance and length of travel between the explorer and the explored.

This chapter contains three subsections, each contributing to a progression of a new spatial orientation in light of both Immanuel Wallerstein's core and periphery paradigm and Edward Said's articulation of East and West. I first argue that Wallerstein's work is important to the cultural and literary realm of spatial analysis, especially where geographies of the world collide in the act of colonial exploration and exploitation. I situate the Amazon territory in the outer limits of the colonial periphery to clarify its dynamic position relating to Said's work on how imaginative geography represents different types of spaces as objects of the colonial gaze based on a civilizational distance from the European center. In this first section, I first highlight important works around postcolonial literary criticism, e.g. Said's critique of *Mansfield Park* and Conrad's analysis of *Heart of Darkness*, followed by how Amazon as an outer-periphery space of literature and aesthetics functions differently in its relations to the European core and the traditional concept of the colonial periphery. In the next section, I introduce the notion of tropicity as a spatial configuration that is situated on the outer periphery of the civilized world

and how the literary motifs of heaven and hell organizes tropicality differently than does Said's orient for the Oriental spaces of the East.

The final section of this chapter highlights an alternative form of postcolonial critique involving the cultural appropriation of geographies- or geoappropriation, and what this framework accomplishes within the postcolonial paradigm between barbarism and civilization. Discourse around cultural appropriation derives from the works of postcolonial studies and notions of colonial rights and ownership. Likewise, geoappropriation is a subcategory of cultural appropriation that points to discussions around geographical landscapes as appropriated spatial-object. To illustrate geoappropriation, I examine the geography of the Amazon through a series of Western narrative representations as I work alongside other postcolonial discourses to determine the meaning of the literary Amazon as borrowed landscape. I argue that these narrative renderings of the Amazon from artists of the colonial center reveal a unique act of appropriation process that fulfills the fantasy of conquering a land that has up until now, resisted physical conquest with relative success compared to the rest of the Americas. Finally, I discuss what this distance between physical occupation and cultural conquest might mean for future literary practices.

A Geocritical Critique of Colonial Literature and the Mapping of the Periphery

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said engages in geographical inquiry into historical experiences in literature, as he implies that no work of fiction is entirely free from the struggle over our real world location in space. He writes, "the main battle in imperialism is over land... but when it came to [our] land, who had the right to settle and work on it, who kept it going, who won it back, and who now plans its future- these issues were reflected, contested, and even for a time decided in narrative" (1993, p. xiii). In the novels Said references, including Jane Austin's

Mansfield Park, he finds that the stories told all pay absolute tribute to the ideology of territorial empire, or land ownership as the main marker of Empire building. Said finds that the novelistic references to the celebration of empire in the works of Conrad and Kipling are logical extensions of earlier, non-explicit narratives written by Austen, Thackeray and Dickens. In these earlier works of Common Wealth literature, empire building is crafted as a subdued subject of ideological sub-structure of the novel itself in that "both the formal characteristics and the contents of all these novelists' works belong to the same cultural formation" (p. 75). To be clear, Said describes not just a mere interrelationship between empire and cultural texts, but that there is no European novel as we know it without European empires. Derek Gregory emphasizes this poignant revelation in Said's work in *Geographical Imaginations*, where he writes that the "civilizing mission of the European self rationalized the dispossession of the other's humanity partially through the rational emergence of the novel as a form of narrative art" (1994, p. 179). In diagnosing empire, Said insists that literary scholars and historians must at some point in their work remark on the geographical notation as a cultural and colonial event.

In Said's reading of *Mansfield Park*, he does not simply reject the classic text outright, but engages with it productively, seeking meaning, reference and knowledge from its position in history. Said makes the argument that Western culture cannot be understood without recognizing its underlying investment in imperialism. He sets out to rationalize the relationship between the middle-class lifestyle of *Mansfield Park*, and the Antiguan plantation resources from which it draws. In revealing the presumptive characters of *Mansfield Park* and all its residents, Said demonstrates both a contrapuntal reading of the novel and the fact that any conjuring of 19th century Europe ultimately depends on the parallel interrelations it has with its own acts of colonial plundering. Said writes that the continuing value of a text like *Mansfield Park*, even

with its “affiliations with a sordid history” of slavery (p. 114), can be called brilliant due to Austen’s way of making complex and subtle gestures regarding the relationship between Mansfield Park and Antigua. A lesser work “wears its historical affiliation more plainly; its worldliness is simple and direct, the way a jingoistic ditty . . . connects directly to the situation and constituency that coined it” (p. 116). Said reminds us that both cartography and fictional narrative plays a significant role in the civilizing missions of the natives and that the age of empire building coincides directly with "the period in which the novel form and the new historical narrative become preeminent" (1979, p. 58). He also warns that cultural historians and literary scholars "have failed to remark the geographical notion and charting of territories that underlie Western fiction" (p. 58).

One difference drawn between the geography of Mansfield Park and Antigua is the presumption of the familiar versus the foreignness of the unfamiliar. A geographical distinction is not an arbitrary one, as familiarity is based on a repetition of basic daily activities that take place in a given location over a duration of time. In this way, "space acquires emotional and even rational senses by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant and anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning " (Said 1978, p. 55). Just as Williams’ “country" and the "city" organizes the domestic spaces of Great Britain, the us-them dichotomy organizes the spaces of one's imaginative geography where the *here* becomes the presently lived and knowable, while the *there* becomes a model for ambiguous imagining and fantasizing. This interplay of distance between *here* and *there* steams from a weighted and centralized cultural location of core and periphery, which functions like a reverse Copernicus revolution⁶⁶. In the Christian doctrine, the earth is placed at the core of the universe, and the other planets revolve around it from a

⁶⁶ The Copernican Revolution was the paradigm shift from the Ptolemaic model of the heavens, which described the cosmos as elevating Earth to the center of the universe, to the heliocentric model as centering the Sun at the core of the Solar System.

rotating peripheral position in the darkness of space; the farther from the Earth and its occupying human perspective, the more insignificant, strange and uncivilized. The sun provides light, but it too revolves around the human habitat. In the colonial paradigm, the Copernican sun is once again de-centered by the European subject. An illustrative literary example of the interplay between center and periphery is illustrated in J.M. Coetzee's fiction *Waiting for the Barbarians*, which the author examines the question of distance and proximity and the ways character perspectives change as the distance between supporting characters vary in relations to the main character. The project of postcolonial studies itself is illustrated as a study of spatiality and the positions of periphery cultural moments measured against centered events, where imperialism as the “determining, political horizon of modern Western culture” (1993, p. 60) endures.

Taking up Said’s challenge, Chinua Achebe articulates a spatial analysis of Africa from Joseph Conrad’s novel, *Heart of Darkness*. In Conrad's story, the character Marlowe describes the thrill he felt when looking at the "blank spaces" on his map that represents unexplored central Africa. Later in the novel, Marlowe notices how the blankness of his colonial map of the Belgian Congo has been filled with "all the colors of a rainbow" representing the "pioneers of progress" who give once barren lands texture and life (Tally, 2013, p. 26). Conrad likewise scorned the geographies of the medieval maps, which decorates unexplored spaces with sea creatures and other fantastical illustrations. He writes, "from the middle of the 18th century on, the business of mapmaking had been growing into an honest occupation registering the hard-won knowledge but also in a scientific spirit recording the geographical ignorance of its time" (1921, p. 19). Conrad champions the civilizing process, cheering the work of map coloring and line drawing, which symbolizes terrain, elevation and temperature of a given location of longitude and latitude. Achebe denounces Conrad’s view, finding his intentions in *Heart of Darkness* a derogatory and

dehumanizing version of the landscape of Africa.⁶⁷ If Conrad's notion of colonial spatiality is the articulation of distance and relational power over physical and metaphorical distances, then the European metropolitan core and periphery colonies would be organized as conceptual spatial-objects that live in the cartography of space. The discipline of postcolonial studies, in this view, is structured by the triangulated mapping in its spatial narrative points to a geometrical reference of the one directional line drawn from London to Mumbai, Paris to Port-au-Prince, Madrid to Santiago. The spatial reference of an arrow, line or slave ship navigational route is adequate to pinpoint the allocation of colonial power to the topological referencing of the civilized against the barbaric. This spatial orientation, Said argues, references the very coordinates of empire building in colonialism and in its historical form, coincides with "the period in which the novel form and the new historical narrative become preeminent" (1993, p. 58). In other words, the unidirectional spacing of colonialism already presupposes a asymmetrical delineation of power prior to the fictional rendering of the novel space. Against the spatial backdrop of colonization, there is hardly another way to rationalize land and territory without firstly, an adequate subversion of colonial thinking and being.

Following Achebe's critique of Conrad's literary usage of maps as a tool of colonial construction, other spatial critics on the forefront of postcolonial mapping have likewise demonstrated how cartographic practices of the colonial era have frequently served imperial programs to dissect the New World into logically consumable pieces of real estate and territory.

Mark Monmonier's *How to Lie with Maps*, calculates how metric projections used in mapmaking

⁶⁷ Some argue that Achebe overlooks the overall authorship and aesthetics of Conrad's novel. Defenses of Conrad have been mounted based on the mastery of his craft, or how unfair it is that "a beautiful piece of writing may be shot through with delusions and brutality" in its organized content (Harrison, 2003). But Achebe's relationship with English canonical texts is complicated. For example, he writes about his inspirational relationship with Shakespearean plays, and how as a child he remembers reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and being deeply touched (Achebe, 1988).

came to serve colonial domination through the Mercator mapping technique. Monmonier writes, "the English especially liked the way the Mercator flattened the British Empire with a central meridian through Greenwich and across prominent fun-flung colonies like Australia, Canada and South America" (1991, p. 96). In the early modern era, the ascension of cartography as a field made the object of the field map the primary way of visualizing and thinking about the physical world, especially the vast distance of space between where the charted oceans drive apart the colonial center from the colonial periphery. This visual representation of the colonial world can be contrasted to spatial orientation in the European city or countryside where a critical mass of townsfolk, merchants, magistrates and the daily pedestrian visualize their spatiality through lived experiences, and perhaps only secondarily rely on a map of their lived environment for a more citywide reference like the plotting of a new travel route, or the defense of a besieged city.

In the wake of postcolonial theory that merged with geocritical aspects of literary studies, the map as a scientific device or literary discourse becomes intrinsically tied to ideological matters as the symbolism and scales of maps are embedded with structures of domination. As theorist J.B. Harley⁶⁸ notes, cartography "is thoroughly enmeshed with the larger battles which constitute our world... In North America, for example, it was easy for Europeans to draw lines across the territories of Indian nations without sensing the reality of their political identity" (2001, p. 167). As unlike the mapping of a European city, the cartography of the New World enables viewers to detach themselves from the phenomenon studied, sensing only the scaling of abstraction that alter an underlying reality where people occupy. As Said writes, "the practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is 'ours' and an unfamiliar space which is 'theirs'" (1978, p. 54) is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be quite arbitrary.

⁶⁸ Harley's work in the study of visual culture subverts the traditional, positivist model of cartography, replacing it with one that is grounded in an iconological and semiotic theory of the nature of maps. He sees mapping as a way for state power to be inscribed through cartography.

These constructed boundaries allow an abstract “they” to become a concrete “they” accordingly, as “both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from ‘ours’” (1978, p. 54). In studying Harley and Said, I reiterate the point that mapping of the strange colonial other is starkly different from the cartography of known European spaces as the prior stands on the ground of absolute novelty, whereas the latter is a supplemented reiteration.

The tension underlying this colonial dualism resides in what Fredric Jameson calls the schism between truth and experience, where the material conditions for the possibility of an individual’s lived experience in the metropolitan center are only actualized in the peripheral elsewhere through the device of aesthetics. Jameson writes, “the truth of that limited daily experience of London lies, rather, in India or Jamaica or Hong Kong; it is bound up with the whole colonial system of the British Empire that determines the very quality of the individual’s subjective life” (1991, p. 411). The stylistic innovations of literary modernism, Jameson argues, were attempts to deal with this existential condition. Both language and style were revolutionized in the text in order to “invent new and elaborate strategies for overcoming this dilemma” (p. 411).

In this dissertation, I argue that the Amazon becomes the spiritual-spatial site for storytelling that reproduces previously invented racial tropes in historic colonization and further purifies the lived experience of the colonial center in contrast to the outer periphery of the 3rd space. The Amazon is necessarily a contemporary target for Western art because of its perceived precolonial status in the world. These textual innovations in the novel actively operate as a tactic of containment that represses the colonial content of the novel due to the indistinguishable parallel between the real dangers of the Amazon and the aesthetic experience of the Amazon through the gaze of the Western artist. The aesthetic experiences of the horror films *Anaconda* and *The Green Inferno*, for example, leaves a vast majority of audiences with the idea that the

Amazon is not only the antithesis of the human condition, but impossible to colonize and civilize. The animated graphical horror of the man-eating snake or the fantastical war paint of the tribal cannibals become tactical deployments to distance the civilized, and the semi-civilized from the hopelessly anti-human quality of the Amazon. As a result, the aesthetics in these films can both discourage tourism and encourage apathy toward deforestation of the Amazon in the real world. In the meanwhile, the experience of life for those residing in the civilized world becomes more vivid, utopian, and intentional in contrast to the horrors of the tropical jungle.

The Geocritical Legacy of *Orientalism*, Toward The Notion of Tropicity

A combination of loathing and fear that Western audiences garner toward the Amazon matured over time through a series of conventions and myths about the tropics, which by the 19th century had solidified into an influential discourse historian David Arnold calls tropicity⁶⁹ (1996). Arnold conceived of the specific notion of tropicity based on his reading of Said's *Orientalism*. Whereas European discursive practices of representing the Orient codified the narration of colonial center and periphery, tropicity more accurately describes a geographical landscape lacking in culture, creativity and recorded human practice and knowledge accumulation. Whereas orientalism is based on the notion of human barbarity reflected in cultural mysticism, tropicity became the very negation of human subjectivity and society. As I point out in Chapter II, the Amazon as forest horror highlights not simply colonial othering, but the characteristic of an anti-human mode of being. Arnold diligently reworks the concept of orientalism to describe the tropical jungle as another form of the other because "Europe possessed more than one sense of otherness" (2000, p. 142) beside its description of the East. Arnold also inspects the notion of discourse from an ecological perspective suggesting that the

⁶⁹ While the tropics refer to the region of the Earth surrounding the Equator. Tropicity and usage of tropics in this paper relates explicitly to the Amazon jungle region of the tropics.

way the jungle space is portrayed directly influences the people that live there, as landscapes and their observed climate and temperature, life and death, have always connoted not only characteristics of morality but ideas about the civilizing process as a whole. One key difference between Arnold's tropicality and Said's orientalism is the affect of material reality on the ground and how much such variants shape the creation of a discourse of the other. Tropicality negotiates the imagined and the created with the physical manifestation of the jungle it attempts to depict, and while both aspects of the Amazon can be understood as colonial narrative, they represent a different kind of text-to-text relationship that remains vague in *Orientalism*. Tropicality conceives of the primary linkage between physical reality and text of the colonial other, produced by what is written about the tropics and what an author, painter and filmmaker experiences in the tropic landscape. As Europe's interaction with the Amazon became more frequent, and its texts became more vivid in travel writing, literature and film, tropicality became at once more dynamic and rooted.

As Europe's tropical colonies increased their production of resource export, tropicality became a tool for legitimizing European interference in an exploration of the South American basin. While the Amazon basin, under the lyrical description of Humboldt, became an exotic paradise at the beginning of the 19th century, what was once thought of as a pristine paradise became perceived as sinister, diseased and barbaric overtime. Rubber, an increasingly lucrative imperial resource at the end of the century, began to overtake the exoticism of jungle travels due to the prolonged stay of rubber barons and their hired managers. The jungle became a violent environment of material hardships, a field of labor for the indigenous and their white supervisors alike. The rules and regulations of tropicality also altered to impose order and authority so that the jungle environment itself became a place of subjugation. However, the exoticism of

Humboldt's writing didn't end just because rubber was discovered in parts of the jungle. When Charles Darwin first traveled the tropical zone, he saw it through Humboldt's eyes; he writes, "as the force of impressions generally depends on preconceived ideas, I may add that all mine were taken from the vivid descriptions in the *Personal Narrative of Humboldt*" (1902, p. 496).

Although Darwin did not explore the same region as Humboldt, he nevertheless mediated what he saw through Humboldt's tropical descriptions. These repeated representations of the Amazon basin solidified select perceptions of tropicality as innately more "natural" or closer to a state of nature than Europe. Darwin and subsequent colonial writers engaged with Humboldt at the same moment that European entrepreneurs forced the Amazon into the European economy. Tropicality then became a multi-dimensional development of culture and economy from the onset of the colonial order.

The paradoxical dual identity of the Amazon as both exotic Eden⁷⁰ and malevolent hell is a symptomatic characterization of tropicality within colonialism. According to Mary Louise Pratt, many South American regions gained independence from Spain in the early 19th century, Northern and Western European nations had to renegotiate their access to the continent, which took the form of new travelers, investors and scientists (1992, p. 112). Narratives of the tropics became more negative as imperial enterprises and colonial ambitions took on more neo-liberal forms. The Uruguayan journalist Eduardo Galeano, in his 1971 book, *Open Veins of Latin America*, argues that a general insecurity about Latin America and its tropics prevailed around that time, and led to the further exaggeration of differences between the barbaric tropics and a temperate European center which in turn legitimized European superiority in theories of racial

⁷⁰ Maria Ortiz, in "Textual Forests", traces how a rainforest is a socially constructed place that both synchronizes with and reacts to the cultural orientation of the colonial center. She writes how the Amazon is described as a Garden of Eden only when the rubber boom was profitable, but as soon as climate and disease began to devastate the labor force, the Amazon became a curse of God that overwhelmingly holds back any resemblance of peripheral modernity.

hierarchies, acclimation, nature and notions of civilization. Combine this distinct boundary between the barbaric and the civilized, and the mythical distinction between the early tropical fantasy of Eden and later manifestation of Purgatory, much of the interpretive aspect of tropicity can then be traced to what Pratt calls the “anti-conquest”- which refers to the way Europeans are ideologically unattached to conquest but still engage in “rhetoric of conquest associated with the absolutist era however innocent they portray themselves” (1992, p. 7). Doyle can be regarded as a novelist engaging in anti-conquest, as he has never traveled to the Amazon to research his novel. Humboldt, who often flies the banner of scientific neutrality is, on the other hand, a "seeing-man"- or one who does not directly engage in colonial conquest but visualize, interpret and create the tropics for cultural consumption. In Pratt's words, the "seeing-man" is the protagonist of the anti-conquest (p. 7), or one who is perceived to side with nature.

While the similarities between tropicity and orientalism run alongside a distinctive but predictable politics of power, the spatial and imaginative differences between the two operations of colonial othering differ in many concrete ways. While orientalism emphasizes an Eastern part of the Known World and illustrates the depraved and exotic performances of a leisurely Eastern civilization on the brink of moral collapse, the New World tropics of the Amazon represent an "unknown world," untouched by the advancement of civilization. Whereas an invasion by European powers into the Orient would be considered by many as an act of cultural and religious liberation⁷¹, the question for the emergent tropics of South America became a colonial project for a civilizing process, not a liberating one. The difference is that the kind of barbarism in need of civilizing is much more barbaric, even inhuman, than the barbarism in need of liberating. Whereas the Orient's barbarism is considered a partially other, less civilized but recognizable;

⁷¹ For example, the eight major Christian Crusade expeditions occurring between 1096 and 1291 into Muslim held territory.

the tropic's barbarism is an uncivilized wholly other. Europe's orientalism of the Arab world derived from centuries of trade, intellectual collaborations, religious wars and other social and political interactions. The East was a neighbor to Europe, connected by the silk roads and sharing the shorelines of the Mediterranean Sea. To some extent, even the tropical regions of Asia and Africa were in some ways connected with Europe before 1492 as merchants exchanged goods and contributed to the European marketplace over time. The Amazon, on the other hand, is a fantastical geography in the Age of Exploration, a much less accessible place than the Orient. It was upon this fertile colonial experimentation that a perceived emptiness of virtue, vice and moral directionality would rest, and new dreams of social order would be projected upon.

Tropicality as Borrowed Cultural Space: The Aesthetics of Geoappropriation Without Cardinality

The introduction of the term tropicality in the previous section is projected as an ulterior orientalism residing on the far side of the colonial periphery. This section discusses tropicality as a form of South American essentialism, implying a spatiality of bio-geographic and aesthetic spaces found in the works of European art and literature. In past chapters, I have used various novels and films to exemplify variations of tropicality, but overall the term does not get much use in art theory discourses unlike its related counterpart, orientalism. The term is seemingly complex in part due to the diversity of empires, imperial ambitions and divergent ways of claiming, which eventually results in different parts of the Amazon being defined by different European powers. But whether the representational aspects of tropicality in art expresses the Amazon in Eden-like innocence and harmony or in more sinister manifestations of ecological intractability, disease and biblical evil, the spatiality of the Amazon becomes essentialized for hermeneutic purposes. Placed alongside the three pillars of scientific racism- environmentalism, scientific anthropology and social Darwinism (Hecht, p. 427), tropicality has in modern times

transcended spatial design. That is, the Amazon as an interpretable space, is repeatedly “borrowed” from its spatial place over time to become a backdrop of Western cultural discourses.

a) Aesthetics and Cardinality

Imagine for a moment the contrast between the borrowed space of tropicality in creating an aesthetic Amazon and the physical space of the Amazon in practical reality. The former might represent a romantic gesture for entertainment and consumption, but the borrowed aesthetic space of the Amazon also lacks a critical component abundant in the physical Amazon- that of the device of cardinality. I refer the term to a significant colonial mapping operation, one potent to the orientation of the tropics. The concept of cardinality relates to the four-way directional orientation of up and down, left and right on the legend of a map. From Europe, the South American jungle is far left and down- i.e., a southwest enterprise from the centrality of continental Europe. The spatial coordinates of literary imagination suggest that orientation by a standard compass technology is historically coded with colonial presuppositions. Said indicates in *Orientalism* that the East is coded as the exotic Orient ideologically laden experience of a directional other that one can point to always as "that place over there." The term global south also emerges from postcolonial studies to refer to the developing world, and from these discourses, the term West is often used to designate first world civilizations. Cardinal orientation in the Amazon would even later help map the expansion of infrastructure in the tropics especially in the form of emergent road networks that allow the shipment of rubber, timber and other natural resources uni-directionally from South America to Europe and North America. In the 21st century, studies in anthropogenic impacts on the Amazon environment base their tropic orientation on the same set of functional cardinality to effectively discuss global carbon cycles (Steffen and Tyson, 2001; Jenkins, 2003), deforestation (Geist and Lambin, 2002), and the

greater ecological effects of colonized the Amazon basin (Nagendra et al., 2004). Regarding the physical Amazon, cardinality and its associated map-making discourse organize the inner Amazon into resource zones, and as a tool of critique, cardinality likewise aids in establishing the anthropogenic counter-response to land development in South America.

The aesthetic Amazon, by contrast, is an outline of an amorphous cultural space that acknowledges the tropics as a general patch of area bordered by landscapes that do not share in the Amazon's unique qualities. The aesthetic Amazon is not only a representational whole that encompasses the spatial ontology of the forest but a preferential site for the spirit of the place as a cultural center. The novels and films of the Amazon are bound together by the aesthetics of the river flow, tree lines and animal callings, and for the quality of its narrative, the Amazon becomes a centered subject at the vortex of itself. What all of the novels and films about the Amazon have in common is that almost the entirety of the narrative arcs resides in or along the borders of the tropics. Unlike the invisible peripheral role of Antigua in *Mansfield Park*, the Amazon jungle is the main entity both occupying the thoughts of the characters and audiences alike, as well as enveloping the physical conditions of the characters. Likewise, the aesthetic of the Amazon forgoes the orientation markers of the compass by forgoing cardinality and an ordered sense of direction all together. The interesting effect of this aesthetic rendering is that Amazonian qualities of narration are little affected by the disappearance of cardinality. Even in the case of the Amazon as a labyrinth-geometry explored in Chapter III, directionality for the traveling European party only matters in the case of their survival as they escape the center of the Amazonian maze, from the Lost World back to the Known World, toward the edge of the jungle. For Professor Challenger, cardinality as a tool is not as important as a general movement *away from* the chasing ape-men, zigzagging across the labyrinth by carving new paths outward from

the Amazon center. After all, one cannot merely walk in a straight line due northeast back to London.

The aesthetics of the Amazon, unlike its shape and texture on a map, is not deliberated by directional measurements, but by the production of developmental and self-referential narratives of its own spatial ontology. Whereas in the environmental sciences of Amazon exploration, explorers count and document Amazonian specimen in extraordinary detail using cardinality and other scientific tools, the aesthetic representation of the Amazon is a direct colonial product that precedes the function of cardinality as a geographic given. This production of the tropics promotes the licensing of the West's being in the world prior to the notion of any physical mark of position, direction and location. Even the physical exploration of the tropics in travel writing is preceded by the demarcated beacon of a sign of space that garnered the aesthetic pondering of a Western explorer. In this aesthetic ontology, there lacks any distinction between north from south, east from west, plant from animal, river from earth; there is only the totality of Amazon that would later be dressed in colorful depictions and portrayals such as Eden-like, hellishly terrifying, or primordially spiritual. Tropicality in this way becomes a cultural production of space by a general framing of the total quality of the Amazon jungle in each reproduction of novel and film of the Amazon, in all cases self-referential and inward-looking. Henri Lefebvre remarks in *The Production of Space* that “there is no stage at which man does not sign his space, leaving traces that are both symbolic and practical” (p. 192), however in this instance, the Amazon is marked not by a primitive and anthropological practice of territoriality involving routing, herding, migrating and direction making, but by an aesthetic motif generalized across a unified spatiality regardless of its temporal moment.

b) The Aesthetics of Geoappropriation

The mechanism of spatial unification in aesthetic rendering allows the writer and film director to extract the Amazon as an earthly environment of the other, and introduce its aesthetics into the language of art and entertainment. Doyle's *The Lost World* is the first example of such a rendering where the Amazon territory is borrowed and transmuted into language in a science fiction text. This act of cultural borrowing is what I refer to as geoappropriation, or a category of cultural appropriation that represents a unified set of artistic practices that reach into the underside of the colonial difference to extract territory and render it aesthetically valuable. I argue that these aesthetic renderings of the Amazon from artists of the colonial center reveal a unique act of appropriation process that fulfills the fantasy of conquering a land that has up until now, resisted physical and cultural conquest with relative success compared to the rest of the colonial Americas. The artworks I explore are crafted in regards to the representation of the Amazon as defined by geoappropriation first and foremost as a landscape that is acted upon by authors and film directors that have access to previous representational works of the Amazon. In light of postcolonial tropicity, geoappropriation articulates a set of Western artworks that engage in the process of cultural appropriation, but through the mapping of an imaginary spatial terrain without the use of traditional mapping principles such as cardinality.

The broader category of cultural appropriation is defined by the adoption of elements of a periphery culture by members of a dominant culture without invitation or permission of use (Huck, 2012). Cultural appropriation suggests stolen culture repurposed under the colonality of power in a broader context, as much of the discussion surrounding cultural appropriation can be reduced to three subcategories: subject appropriation, content appropriation, and object appropriation. Subject appropriation occurs when “an outsider represents members or aspects of another culture” (Young, 2005, p. 136) by making the lives of insiders the subject of art and

narrative. Content appropriation is when an outsider artist “uses the cultural products of another culture in the production of art” (p. 136) such as lyrical content, cultural style and motif, and narrative mythologies. Object appropriation “occurs when the possession of a tangible object, e.g. a sculpture, is transferred from members of the culture that produced it to the possession of outsiders” (p. 136). I theorize geoappropriation as a fourth category where a geographical space or landscape from the colonial periphery is used in Western art to reiterate colonial structures of power. By reading the geoappropriation of the Amazon, one can draw out the strands of epistemological meaning embedded in the artwork in each set of aesthetic iterations. The prefix geo is used here to imply a subcategory of culture regarding a unity of creative production in that the geography that is the landscape of the Amazon is already a representational and consumable commodity under colonial domination.

The Amazon is organized as a tangible property, endorsed by those who gave it its name and measured in standard sizing via cubic metrics of length, width and height. The figurative Amazon becomes an appropriated virtual space where its boundaries, measurements and orientations are downplayed to highlight its unity as an object out there, unchanging and unaltered across space and time. Western cultural appropriation in the arts might not be possible without the occupation of imperial expansion, just as geoappropriation of the tropics would be unlikely to take place without Spanish and Portuguese governance over its South American domain. The appropriated landscape in art, in this case, is tied to the enforcement of property laws developed in the West from the protection of physical imperial property to the protection of intellectual property. Geoappropriation traverses between physical and intellectual property; as its body resides in the physical whereas its transformation into a narrative and aesthetic object signifies an ontological shift toward a public intellectual property where any author or director

may render it for intellectual use. The Amazon is not a copyrighted property protected by any national laws from intellectual and aesthetic usage. For the indigenous that reside in the Amazon, their ecology and livelihood are likewise not protected from foreign artistic rendering. The banning of *Cannibal Holocaust* in 1980 for example, is not due to the film's cultural insensitivity and false portrayal of Amazonians, but excessive violence and gore. Geoappropriation implies misappropriation, wherein the procedure of transference from one spatial location to the cultural realm embodies an inherent falsification, mutation and often exaggeration. Appropriation in the actual sense of the word had already occurred with the signing of legal treaties between the Spanish and the Portuguese, dividing up the colonial world of terra nullius, or "unoccupied lands," in the 15th century. And in some ways, to articulate geoappropriation in the arts now seems like a late response to political domination over the centuries. However, the changing patterns cultural technology can imbue the Amazon space with new renditions of power and knowledge.

Discourse in cultural appropriation takes on various themes such as the preservation of cultural goods (Brand, 1993), the deprivation of material advantage (Merryman 1989), and the failure to recognize sovereign claims (Simon, 1993). In postcolonial studies, cultural appropriation has become synonymous with cultural degradation, which Said considers a result of Orientalist discourses produced by the West. While Said searched for ways to counteract the invention of the Orient as a unified stereotype by the West, he also rejected the notion that "only blacks can write about blacks, a Muslim about Muslims and so forth" (Said, 1993, p. 322). Geoappropriation is not a discourse that argues who can make art concerning the Amazon or whether Amazon as Deleuzian territory can represent itself as an art object. Geoappropriation is instead a device that at first mimics the process of cultural appropriation, but upon assimilation

of a territory into art practices, it is the landscape that appropriates authorial intent through the characterization of itself as fulfilled subject of autonomous creation. Thus the discourse of geoappropriation is twofold: 1) It is a contemporary cross-genre methodology to explore how Western authors and artists deploy the Amazon as appropriated geography to both make familiar that which was once foreign and sustain its bewilderingly alien quality in order to prolong the fetishizing and fantasizing conditions of aesthetic rendering; and 2) how the geography of territory reclaims itself within the phenomenon of artistic expression. Through popular film and literature, geoappropriation manifests as an epistemological force by rearticulating old stereotypes about the Amazon in different literary formats, which in turn stabilizes the appropriated region, and accelerates the repetitive nature of appropriation practice. But the Amazon also tends to envelop the subject of authorship into a self-creation that responds to human intervention.

The Amazon as a primary cultural object from the colonial difference is reconstructed as geoappropriation in filmic and literary texts, manifested as a territory both unified in presentation and without cardinality in its being-in-the-world. Geoappropriation is the unified artistic quality of the Amazon as a landscape generated from its own origin, created using aesthetic techniques and Western technologies like the filmic camera to access a geography knowable and consumable for a Western audience. Like the cartographer, the narrator and film director must survey territory and determine the inclusion of specific landscape themes, and from them, its characters interact and develop the narrative arc alongside the enveloped art territory of the tropical landscape. The Amazon that exists as content in geoappropriation is an obvious point of reference for a spatial coordinate with clearly designated borders that enclose the protagonists, forcing their actions and limiting their choices that would otherwise differ if they were situated

in another Earth location. The referential space in these narratives illustrates a unified sense of bewilderment that is connected to the physical placement of character bodies inside the geoappropriated Amazon, as the strangeness of character reasoning and behavior such as madness and barbarism derives directly from the act of authorial appropriation. Recall that in Chapter Two, I argued that the dramatic tension in works such as *The Lost World* and *Aguirre Wrath of God* resides in the formal conflict between human actors and the Amazon itself as the main villain. Likewise in Ann Patchett's 2011 novel *State of Wonder*, where the main drama centers on medicinal discovery as opposed to horror and madness, a geoappropriated Amazon, along with its unpredictable weather patterns and tribal politics, becomes the main barrier to the extraction of a malaria antidote. Both the dangers of the Amazon and the lifesaving drug are both dramatic elements comprised of the unifying Amazonian body rendered as a fictional antagonist. Here, a geoappropriated Amazon is not just a villain, but also an aesthetic utterance that dictates the spatial order of thinking and set the foundation for the permeating characteristics of the narrative geography. Writers like Patchett sets proprietary boundaries for the imaginative geography of the jungle by fixing stable domains for the landscape to be continuously recognizable. Along with distributions of spatial geometries and visual markers, the narrative charting of the Amazon relies on aesthetic concepts found in the process of geoappropriation. The Amazon, upon consumption by a readership or audience, becomes a matrix upon which visual navigations between Cartesian x and y -axes points are charted along imaginative cardinal lines. The narrative charting of the Amazon expands on the possibility of the aesthetics of exploration, and thus the myth of the Amazon basin as a predictable antagonist. When audiences absorb such works, the perception is that the aesthetic quality of the jungle iterates the relations

of the characters at play, the result of which reveals the illusion that human characters are centered when in actuality it is the Amazon that is the spatial-object of protagonism.

Regarding content, the mapping of the Amazon within geoappropriation is vital to both the physical and psychic development of the characters. The authors and directors, too, are mapmakers in the metaphorical sense (Turchi, 2004). The narrator “is a surveyor . . . if only by reason of the use of the space of language” (Hartog 1988, p. 354). As the narrator surveys the location of their work, they weave together disparate elements to produce content, taking scraps of other stories, images derived from observation and subsequent reports, legends and myths, and creations of the imagination. The literary cartography present in one narrative can become a part of future surveys and narratives, like plotted points on a roadmap. For consumers of the Amazon narrative, these geoappropriation processes become reference points that get bundled together, and each fictional Amazonian mapping is layered atop one another to illustrate the total perception of the Amazon territory. The idea of mapping itself follows the colonial logic of turning barbaric space into an organized system of regulations consumable as civilized territoriality. Even within the geography of the Amazon, large swaths of the basin is still to this day unreachable and undiscovered by the West. Large parts of the Amazon tropics resembles that of a Martian landscape where two NASA Mars Exploration Rovers named Spirit and Opportunity (see nasa.gov) is on a quest for planetary discovery with nothing but mounted cameras supplying images back to earth. The transition between the unmapped and the mapped becomes, in the colonial era, a crossover from barbaric to civilized and the measure of that difference is marked by whether a given continent is known or unknown to the colonizing power. In this framework, both the colonial center and the colonial periphery, both within the parameters of the European empirical gaze, belongs within the boundary of the civilized. The Amazon as

barbaric spatiality shifts the boundary between barbarism and civilization outward, from its historic position between Europe and the Americas, to a muddled position between the established colonies and the tropics.

In tropicity, the difference between barbarism and civilization is marked not only by the cardinal distance between the colonial center and the colonial periphery, but also by the divergence between unmapped jungle land and colonized property. This detachment is made more explicit by the literary aesthetics of geoappropriation, where Western authors romanticize barbarism unique to the jungle terrain of South America. But given that geoappropriation is a cultural transference of nonfictional spaces into mythical ones, it, in essence, supplies the civilized West with an unimaginable provision of un-civilizable barbarism especially when activated in the genre of science fiction and horror. Geoappropriation, analyzed through the postcolonial lens, becomes an aesthetic interpretation for the transmutation of forms once separated by entirely categorical differences. The critique of geoappropriation is not to confer confidence to proper borrowing of the tropics and condemn improper borrowing, but to illustrate the fact that such metaphysical rendering of the tropics into tropicity allows authors and filmmakers as well as readers and audiences of such artworks to fold the Amazon basin into the framework of the cultured and the civilized for the sake of preserving civilization itself.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the legacy of Wallerstein's world systems theory, as applied through Said's literary criticism to articulate the spatial positionality of the world map as colonial center and colonial periphery, to highlight the visual spaces that are in perpetual conflict. Although Said and Achebe are not considered primarily spatially oriented critics, their work, especially Said, has been influential for geocritics tasked with engaging in postcolonial

scholarship. Even in his first published work, *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography*⁷², Said subtly assesses the spatial form and geographical context of Conrad's letters and short fiction. For Said, Conrad's "writing and life were like journeys without maps, struggles to win over and then claim unknown grounds..." (1966, p. 63). This abstraction is carried over to his writings as an author of geoappropriation, and to the imagination of his readers as they interact with forms of aesthetics in the colonial periphery. I argue that the need to describe a community of insiders and outsiders, colonists and colonized, is implicit in the practice of geoappropriation. While the term generally refers to configurations of a wide range of artistic and representational practices, geoappropriation connotes a form of colonial taking without permission, inferring a unidirectional access of space as cultural text, from the outer colonial periphery to the colonial center.

The process of geoappropriation confers spatiality of the Amazon itself as the aesthetic object of appropriation, which redirects an analysis of subjectivity from the historical writings of Amazon travelers to the fictional authors of scientific romance. As a result, geoappropriation of the Amazon basin lacks a sense of cardinality- a directional nuance from within, whereby the transference of spatiality is taken as a unified whole without its expanded coordinates of difference marked in physical space by its mass, direction and approximation to other places on a map of the world. Whereas a working compass gives a mass of land dimension and topographic importance, geoappropriation casts the concept of space to the background of acting subjects and characters. Just as colonial empires once expanded on unknown lands in an outward direction from the centers of their civilization, the spaces under the fold of geoappropriation become confined within the municipality and governance of a civilizing process. This aesthetic rendering

⁷² Originally written as Said's Ph.D. dissertation at Harvard University, later published by Harvard University Press in 1966.

does not require the actual act of spatial modernization, such as the occupying of land and a prolonged transition from forestry to urban center. The Amazon basin can mostly be situated in its physical characteristic, unchanging across a duration of time in which other large units of land in the Americas have been converted to farmland, suburban housing and city centers.

Geoappropriation of the Amazon basin is thus a semi-civilizing process, transforming a barbaric forest into literary mythology within a Western cultural mode of production. At the end of *State of Wonder*, the protagonist Marina retrieves her lover Anders from the grips of a cannibal tribe as they both return to the United States unharmed. They cross the border from barbarism back to the civilized, and just as their journey ends, the author Anne Patchett returns the geoappropriated Amazon she developed for the majority of the novel back to its corner of the globe, a physical location on earth not unlike a reference shelf in a warehouse of colonial ideas, waiting for future use by another mythmaker.

Chapter VII

Expanding the Discourse on Tropicality: Reorienting the Amazon as 3rd Space Coloniality

Introduction

Narrative representations of the Amazon overwhelmingly portray the tropics as homogenous through a collection of distinct stereotypes built on the history of colonialism, its fantasy of discovery and the peripheral encounter of early Western expeditions. The Amazon began as a solidified region of mystery, enchantment and danger to the Western human body and psyche, and has over time maintained this visage of cultural narrative. Like representations of the West's Orient, the narratives I engage with have transfixed the status of the Amazon by summing up the destructive characteristics of its parts, directing both fictional characters and audiences toward an imaginary emancipatory horizon in order to symbolically colonize the Amazon through the aesthetic experiences of landscape as spatiality. Stylistically, the Amazon is detailed in its turbulent flow of plants, animals, rivers, and mounds of earth and the landscape's unity as a colonial region unites a tropical stratification that contributes to a primal engagement with Western human explorers. In the modern practice of coloniality in art and literature, the Amazon remains largely a secular wilderness, both an Eden and a Hell, and upon every new aesthetic and narrative engagement, the stereotypes of the region are renewed once more. I build this chapter around the examination of coloniality,⁷³ or the living practices and legacies of the 500 years of

⁷³ To review, the term was first articulated by Walter D. Mignolo (1995, 2000) in October 1998, at a Duke University conference organized by the South Asian Subaltern Studies Group and the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group (Grosfoguel, 2012). Seminal texts were gathered to help shape the terminology

European colonization, and how it has produced racial, political, and cultural hierarchies around the colonial difference dividing East from West, center from periphery, civilization from the Global South. I set out to contextualize how coloniality intersects with the subjects of geoappropriation in aesthetic form, continuing from the previous chapter to explore contemporary decolonial movements around periphery spaces.

This chapter centers the notion of the Amazon as peripheral 3rd space, which becomes a significant ideological habitat that cultivates the West's existential crisis at the end of the Age of Exploration. This imaginative geography, represented in literature and film, preserves the traditional civilized core and barbaric periphery paradigm due to its location on the perimeter of the World Systems orbit. In other words, Amazon as 3rd space dictates the relational existence of colonial human spaces. Unlike Said's barbaric Orient, which preserves the integrity of the civilized West, Amazon as 3rd space preserves the relational affinity between civilized humanity and barbaric humanity. To begin, I first introduce the contemporary discourse on the coloniality of being and argue that the foundation for decolonial aesthetics starts with an understanding of decoloniality as a practice of spatial formation. Following from Chapter VI, I then argue that the Amazon as geoappropriation is a product of *3rd space coloniality*⁷⁴ — a geography of aesthetics that is placed beyond the binary coordinates of colonial center (civilized) and colonial periphery (barbaric). Through this model, I point to the repeated narrative tendencies that articulate the Amazon as simultaneously a modern physical fantasy perpetually on the verge of colonial conquest and a mythological agent of death that resists colonial conquest by its continued

around decoloniality and the myth of modernity (Quijano, 2000; Dussel, 1992). The dialogue resulted in the publication of the journal *Nepantla*, and later, substantiated the concept of the coloniality of Being in Mignolo's talk at Boston College, where a young Nelson Maldonado-Torres first linked coloniality/decoloniality to his interests in Emanuel Levinas's heretical interventions (Levinas, 1969) in modern European philosophy.

⁷⁴ Other terms in this dissertation interchangeable with 3rd space coloniality are "3rd space", "3rd space tropics" and "outer-periphery".

deferral of the distinction between the antagonism of barbarism and of civilization. To understand the Amazon as an aestheticism elucidates the West's failure to wholly conquer the tropics in the literal sense of land ownership, and suggests that such shortcomings are crafted intentionally to preserve the aesthetics of conquest itself. I illustrate these points by examining how the Amazon performs as 3rd space coloniality in David Grann's book *The Lost City of Z*, the film *Medicine Man*, and Ann Patchett's novel *State of Wonder*. I then review from the last chapter the concept of cardinality in the discourse of 3rd space coloniality and argue for a new de-orienting aesthetic outlook on the tropicality of the Amazon basin. Amazon as colonial 3rd space is helpful to enhance the visual topography of the colonial relations between the West, its traditional peripheral position and the Amazon as outer periphery. The significance of the Amazon territory as a topographic frontier beyond the paradigm of civilization and barbarity introduces an ulterior dimension to Said's bilateral orientation between the West and the Orient, thus merging and enhancing the discourse of spatiality and postcolonial studies.

Introduction to the Coloniality of Being

The coloniality of being represents the globalized historical legacy of “the five hundred years of night” (Editorial Collective, 1994) in the form of modernist inscriptions of subjugated colonial bodies in their lived experiences, absent of humanness, namely thinking and being, as exemplified by the logic of Western philosophy. The evidence for the coloniality of being as a historically situated concept is well represented in the examples of how colonies were divided, organized, governed, and how its people were managed, disciplined and punished. The coloniality of being as a theoretical concept is derivative of this history of oppression, but it's also based on how power operated in different colonial and social contexts that directly led to the apprehension of the concept of being in Western philosophy (Quijano, 2000). The coloniality of

being is related to the modern condition of power derivative of the coloniality of power- a concept advanced by Anibal Quijano from the arena of Latin American subaltern studies. The living legacy of colonialism in succeeding social orders, according to Quijano, becomes embodied in a racial hierarchy of the living. This hierarchy, in turn, is reproduced by a power system in which identities of superiority and inferiority continues to be based on phenotypes and claimed biological traits (Quijano, 2007). The structure of the coloniality of power, however, is not confined to Latin America, but a festering growth of white supremacy that extends to the global neoliberal system of capital and labor, which at their foundation, reflect the racial power relations between Euro-American cultures and that of the Global South. (Jaramillo and McLaren 2008, p. 196). To address racism, sexual oppression and gender violence in the present day, many decolonial critics first recognize the placement of colonial power dynamics both in history and in its contemporary legacy. While colonialism represents a historical, “political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation,” (Maldonado-Torres 2007, p. 243), coloniality implies an existing power relation based in colonialism but is well received in the modern world, in its societies, cultures and institutions, fields of knowledge production and inter-subjective relations. Anibal Quijano saw the project of colonization as a molding of a lasting power model for contemporary structures of domination. Thus the idea of race derives not from the categorization of a natural order, but the "codification of the differences between conquerors and conquered... that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the other" (Quijano, 2001).

The concept of coloniality pivots on the key notion of whether the natives of the Americas possessed souls, or in other words, whether they were human. The question of the soul occupied the curiosity of the conquerors as the question- “Who is human and who is subhuman?”

settled into a categorization based on skin color (Wynter, 1995). This new racial logic emerged not from the Orient, but out of the Americas and reproduced itself across global coloniality in the centuries to come (Georas, 1997). The coloniality of being, therefore, is a theoretical revelation of the colonial present, one based on a specific origin in trans-Atlantic history. One key idea that derives from the continued practice of coloniality is what Enrique Dussel calls the myth of modernity. Dussel criticizes the myth of modernity implicit in the civilizing process of Eurocentrism using Wallerstein's world systems theory as a marker of historical orientation that conceives the Americas as the periphery to Europe's metropolitan center.⁷⁵ For Dussel, 1) "Modernity signifies rational emancipation, [as it] involves leaving behind immaturity under the force of reason as a critical process that opens up new possibilities for human development" (1995, p. 136), and 2) "modernity justifies an irrational praxis of violence" enacted upon the non-modern in order to bring modernity to barbarism (1995, p. 136). By this logic, "modernity, thinking itself as the civilizing power, regards the sufferings and sacrifices of backward and immature peoples, enslavable races, and the weaker sex as the inevitable costs of modernization" (Dussel 1995, p. 137).

For Dussel, the coloniality of being is an ontological state born from the construction of the "alterity of the other" (1995, p. 139). In this formation of the other's identity, the indigenous communities of the Americas lose their humanity, either denied completely by the conquerors or conceived as limited, beast-like, or childlike in need of maturing. Alterity is then "covered up" (*en-cubierto*) when the encounter with the other leads to the invention of the indigenous as

⁷⁵ In December 1998, Agustín Ramón organized the international conference "Transmodernity, Historical Capitalism, and Coloniality: a Post-Disciplinary Dialogue" in Binghamton. Besides Quijano and Wallerstein, Argentine philosopher Enrique Dussel and Argentina-born semiotician Walter D. Mignolo were also invited. Dussel was known in Latin America as one of the founders of the "philosophy of liberation" in the seventies, while Mignolo was beginning to be recognized in the growing circle of postcolonial studies as a result of his book, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*. It was at this conference where Dussel, Quijano and Mignolo first came together to discuss their approach to the colonial legacy in Latin America in dialogue with the analysis of Wallerstein's world system.

“Indian”, Asian, so as to avoid any real confrontation with any new alterity by regenerating a superficial categorization of the other that has already been conceived of in the discourse of *Orientalism* (1995, p. 36). America as Asia, according to Dussel, was purely an intentional fantasy and an aesthetic invention, not simply an honest mistake. And in this fantasy, the indigenous disappeared and the "Indian" appeared to take their place in an act of strategic mimicry. Dussel marks a clear line where a systemic colonial framework of reference first took shape to iterate a new European white supremacist epistemology. The civilizing process of Europe mirrors directly with the act of conquest in the New World, forming the logic of dialectical rationality that states firstly- the colonial other is not as civilized, and secondly- they must be emancipated from their barbarity. Dussel identifies three corollaries in this argument, 1) colonization is required to produce civilization, 2) conquerors are ethical saviors, and 3) violence against the colonized could be avoided but for their own savage resistance to Europe’s goodwill. Dussel marks a new historical orientation as well as the origin of European modernity that became the catalyst for Europe's culture and knowledge production in a world system. Dussel identifies the metaphor of center vs. periphery to represent not only unequal power and resource distribution, but also cultural ideologies that frame superiority and inferiority as identified in the works of Cesaire and Fanon. Dussel’s Latin American strand of decolonization work is to expose the myth of modernity, and its predecessor, the myth of enlightenment that claims to have been risen singlehandedly out of the intellectual atmosphere of Europe’s universities, science labs and high courts. Modernity, likewise assumes that it came to fruition in spite of colonial operations in the Americas that included the reaping of resources and labor power. This European epistemology carried with it the suppression of alterity for the colonized other, which helped to naturalize what Latin American decolonial scholars call the “coloniality of being.”

Nelson Maldonado-Torres looks for the ontology of coloniality in European philosophy itself. Heavily influenced by Dussel, he suggests that the first wave of Europe's colonizing enterprise left behind the legacy of a deeply disturbing but subtle meta-ideology that even influenced Descartes' expression of *ego cogito*, and that is conquistador Hernan Cortes' articulation of *ego conquiro* (Dussel, 1996, p. 133) What this suggests is that Descartes was creating not only the pillars for the building block of certainty capable of self-thinking and self-realization but an intertwining and parallel certainty for the realization of a conquering self. Maldonado-Torres relates the concept of racial categorization to a subtler attitude regarding human ontology, which is characterized by a permanent suspension of the ethics of recognition (2007, p. 244). For both the *ego cogito* (thinking) and the *ego conquiro* (conquering) to take hold, the underlying logic requires both Descartes and Cortes to illustrate the negation of questionable entities that don't quite fit into their own self-affirmation as existing thinking beings- in this case, the natives of the Americas upon first contact. Descartes first placed skepticism on the external world outside of his mind thereby reaffirming in his concluding meditation that he is, without doubt, a real thinking being. Maldonado-Torres, working with Enrique Dussel's writings, traces the same deductive logic of Descartes to the conquistadors in which their mode of colonial thinking placed a similar skepticism to the humanity of the colonized and thereby reaffirming their own humanity (2007, p. 245). The doubting of the exterior being, a native people communicating in foreign tongues on an unexplored continent, suspends, and over time eradicates any possibility of the recognition of a unified species-being but instead, works to negate the very condition of humanized existence for the wholly other.

Maldonado-Torres gazes back at Descartes' epistemology, i.e. "I think" (Descartes, 1990), and later, Heidegger's ontology, i.e. "I am" (Heidegger, 1997), as he argues that both miss the

crucial point that the lack of one negates the other and vice versa. Hernan Cortes' rejection of the natives' ability to be, and their ability to think, occurs simultaneously and without prejudice. This duel-intertwining helix of dependability between being and thinking underlies the prejudices in which the colonies were governed. Recall Said's argument that "orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient... which elided the Orient's difference with its weakness" (Said 1978, p. 204). Contrast this with the idea that both the European being as "conquerors" and "thinkers" predisposes their notion that the natives, Africans and others of the Global South are sub-human, unthinking, unbeing, positioned naturally by the West to be objects of conquest. In the present context, the coloniality of being defined by a working and evolving definition of epistemological and ontological presence, or for the colonized- a lack of presence, continues its ugly legacy in our modern political and socio-cultural current. Not that societal oppression and violent invasions did not exist prior to "the five hundred days of night" but the very mechanism of that oppression has taken on specific forms of discourse, and norms and strategies of power since colonization, ones based in the idea of the placement of both the European thinking self, as well as the conquering European self.

Maldonado-Torres more clearly defines the coloniality of being "as the normalization of the extraordinary events that take place in war" (2007, p. 225). In this definition, he invokes Aime Cesaire's revelation of Nazism and how Europe "legitimized it..., tolerated that Nazism before it was inflicted on them... because it had been applied only to non-European peoples" (2000, p. 36). Maldonado-Torres refers to this war-like cruelty of killing, maiming, gassing, bombing, and other acts of brutality in the heat of combat and places them within the context of colonialism where violence has been normalized in the everyday affair of colonial life. Although the coloniality of being embraces the combative nature of warfare with the Europeans exercising

a permanent and naturalizing bloodlust, it is also more subtle and its operations, at once blatant and concealed, and far more devious (Maldonado-Torres, 2008). It can disguise itself as justice, truth and inalienable rights, and can drive people into confronting multiple enemies within their own family and community through competition and self-doubt. Ultimately, the coloniality of being works in networks of power to preserve the core logic of itself, which has historically been revealed as the egotistical Cartesian self.⁷⁶ In war, the self-preservation of life triggers an instinct toward violence situated at the moment of hectic maneuvering. In the coloniality of being, this momentary instinct is replaced by a temporal permanence, as the opponent is perceived as animalistic and non-human. While international laws of warfare protect the prisoner of war, no laws protect the colonial subject except as the colonizers' property and possession. The coloniality of being has no equal in human history, no analogy of war, genocide or conquest by itself is sufficient to describe it. In summary, a definition of the coloniality of being can be regarded as the combined thesis of Quijano, Dussel and Maldonado-Torres in the following way: It is the existing social and cultural relations of power through which colonial oppressions manifest, derived from the European alterity of the other and the denial of both thinking and being that results in the normalization of the permanent suspension of ethics. In the next section, I argue how the spatiality of the Amazon landscape functions and maintains the coloniality of being.

The Outer Periphery, or 3rd Space Tropics, of the Colonial Paradigm

⁷⁶ The most influential figure to Maldonado-Torres' conception of coloniality is Frantz Fanon (1968), whose critique of colonialism, juxtaposing language and lived experience provides a rethinking of the conditions of possibility of a new resistance and subversion to Cartesian meditations. Currently, Maldonado-Torres is working on a new book that directly addresses what he terms a "Fanonian Meditation."

Coloniality can be reinterpreted as a practice of spatial formation through the imaginative geography of aesthetic and narrative rendering consolidated around the mass of the Amazon basin. “Imaginative geography” is, for Said, often an exercise of arbitrary designation. He draws on Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space* by arguing that “space acquires emotional and even rational sense by a kind of poetic process, whereby the vacant and anonymous reaches of distance are converted into meaning for us” (p. 55). Coloniality, as a direct result of geoappropriation of the Amazon landscape through aesthetics and narration, is converted into meaning by our collective imagination. The reimagining of the Amazon as a wholly other fulfills the central function of maintaining a visual frontier even when other earth frontiers have all but disappeared. A vast region of the Amazon basin has yet to be charted. Vale do Javari for example, is one of the largest indigenous territories in Brazil and home to at least fourteen uncontacted tribes. It is part of the vast Brazilian state of Amazonas, a region so inaccessible that its biggest mountain- indeed the tallest in the whole country- Pico da Neblina, wasn’t discovered until the 1950s. The imaginary geography of the narrative Amazon fills the physical gap of the unexplored region, condensing the tropics into a colonial 3rd space outside of the border of the colonial core and periphery paradigm. The Amazon is presented as an outlier to the world system, almost taking on mythical characteristics like that of Atlantis and Mu,⁷⁷ or as I suggested early on, like that of the Martian planet. However unlike the conquest of Mars, as exemplified by popular narratives of Martian colonization⁷⁸ and Elon Musk’s⁷⁹ outlandish ambitions to colonize

⁷⁷ Atlantis and Mu are suggested lost continents in ancient history whose landmasses have since sunk beneath the oceans.

⁷⁸ Well known science fiction novels and films set around conquest and exploration of Mars include Edwin Arnold's *Gulliver of Mars* (1905), Alexander Bogdanov's *Red Star* (1908), A.N. Tolstoy's *Aelita* (1922), Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), Bryon Haskin's *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964), Ian McDonald's *Desolation Road* (1988), Paul Verhoeven's *Total Recall* (1990), Andy Weir's *The Martian* (2011).

⁷⁹ A business magnate and inventor, CEO and CTO of SpaceX, whose life ambition includes the human colonization of the planet Mars.

Mars this century, the Amazon resides on earth. I, therefore, refer to colonial tropicality as a 3rd space⁸⁰ from two previous paradigms of interest. Firstly, Amazon as 3rd space refers to its situated location outside of the two human spaces of civilized center and barbaric periphery. Secondly, it is a space residing between the colonial geographies of conquered Earth and unconquered space, the prior teeming with human connectivity and already reconfigured with human infrastructure, and the latter minimally reachable but have for as long as human records have existed, captured the imaginations of story tellers, science fiction novelists and futurists alike.

Amazon as 3rd space is a feature of coloniality, as its function is to stabilize the distance between the colonial center and periphery. By constructing the Amazon as a permanent outer-periphery landmark- perceived, recognized, and patented, the West can acquire a metaphysical template that synchronizes with its noted ability to drive the rest of humanity into various degrees of civility, technology and welfare. It's no surprise then that films about the Amazon display a colonial tropicality that is ancient and mythical, a land before time where human protagonists are but fearful pray to the brutality of the jungle. 3rd space Amazon becomes synonymous with forest terror, a stable imaginary that feeds off the fears of each subsequent human generation. While the weapons, technologies and clothes of the explorers are updated, e.g. *Aguirre's* pike and steel armor, *Cannibal Holocaust's* handheld 16mm camera, Tran Wu's M1917 Enfield rifle from 2004's *Anacondas: The Hunt for the Blood Orchid*, etc., the general exaggeration of madness and incivility that captures an otherwise rational human character is attributed to 3rd space Amazon itself. In this, the West creates a narrative that suggests the whole

⁸⁰ I use the term 3rd space specifically to refer to the outer periphery of the colonial paradigm, which revolves around the 2nd space of the colonial periphery and the 1st space of the colonial core. 3rd space in this chapter is not related to Homi Bhabha's "Third Space". The latter refers to a cultural hybridity grounded on the identity alienation, displacement and exile of individuals. 3rd space is used here as a physical and imaginary literary place exemplified by the Amazon basin.

of the region is ill-adapted to any civilizing process, unlike other peripheries of the Americas that have caught up with the civilized west. These narratives dictate the bifurcation between the colonial periphery, i.e. barbarism that can be cured via the civilizing mission, and colonial 3rd space, i.e. barbarism that will hopelessly remain in permanent incivility. Hence the colonial 3rd space is an anchoring position represented by a mythical jungle whose tropical quarantine will always remind humanity of how far the species has come from a state of vulgarity.

Narrative Examples of 3rd Space Tropics: Amazon as Spatial-Object of Desire

I read the Amazon as representing a 3rd space beyond the colonial core/periphery model by which mobility, transgression, and heterogeneity seep through the many authorial attempts to homogenize the space as inherently knowable but knowingly unconquered. In addition to narratives that characterize the tropics as an evolutionarily weaponized deathtrap, a second stereotype paints the region as a land of buried treasures awaiting discovery. The fantasy of El Dorado, a term used by the Spanish Empire to describe a mythical land in the tropics where an entire city is constructed out of gold (Wikipedia.com, 2018), permeates across Western mythology of the Amazon. The term initially referred to the story of El Dorado- or "the golden man," told by Amazonian natives to the Spanish historian Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo. The legend claims that El Dorado slathered himself in gold and floated on a lake "gleaming like a ray of the sun" (Grann, p. 149). In 1537, Spaniards traversed a sacred lake in the Eastern Ranges of the Andes where they witnessed native rituals involving gold jewelry (Baynton-Williams, 2004). Some claimed the lake El Dorado while others were determined to continue their search. The location for El Dorado inspired several more unsuccessful expeditions in the late 1500s, where Western men searched the jungles of Columbia, Venezuela, Guyana and northern Brazil for the treasures of a lost city. Recall in the introduction of this work I briefly illustrated that Gonzalo

Pizarro once banded together more than three hundred soldiers and four thousand natives in 1541 to find a city of gold, only to discover the length of the Amazon River. And again in 1560, Lope de Aguirre followed a similar path but found not a trace of treasure in the thick of the jungle. David Grann's research on the adventurous life of Percy Fawcett concerns his obsession with the Lost City of Z, which transforms El Dorado the golden city into a full-fledged urban network of ancient bridges, roads and temples, all hidden beneath the jungle canopy.

The search for El Dorado and the City of Z pinned major narrative tropes in travel writing as characterized by a symbolic resistance between human greed and the Darwinian order of things. Whereas the latter gave final triumph to the raw force of nature, it also insists on the idea that the consequence of death is exacted in a landscape most fitting for the carrier of that inhuman force. The Amazon as 3rd space coloniality is exacerbated by the myth of gold; a symbolic currency elevated in Western capitalism to new heights upon the discovery of the Western Hemisphere. The golden city motif becomes even more aggrandized as a symbol of power when cloaked within the primeval wilderness of the tropics, where Thomas Hobbes describes as a place with "no Arts; no Letters; no Society" (see Blits, 1989, p.148). The tropic's ruthless conditions seem to give credence to the theory of environmental determinism, which states, "even if some early humans eked out an existence in the harshest conditions on the planet, they rarely advanced beyond a few primitive tribes" (Grann, p. 4). Percy Fawcett and adventurers like him defied Western scientific convention by the sheer will of their beliefs. Grann writes on his research of Fawcett:

Originally, Fawcett had described Z in strictly scientific terms and with caution: "I do not assume that The City is either large or rich." But by 1924 Fawcett had filled his papers with reams of delirious writings about the end of the world and about a mystical Atlantean kingdom, which resembled the Garden of Eden. Z was transformed into "the cradle of all civilization" and the center of one of Blavatsky's "White Lodges," where a class of advanced spiritual beings helped to direct the fate of all the universe. (260)

The key to grasping the Amazon-as-treasure trope lies in the spectrum of believability. Without proof, either of the existence of El Dorado or the City of Z, explorer narratives can continue to illustrate the productivity of Amazonian adventures through the fantasy lens, and renew the mythology of the tropics over the decades of Western cultural development.

In connection to the trope of treasure discovery, Amazon as 3rd space coloniality also exerts the narrative of the power to enhance life and healing, which sharply contrasts its ability to exert madness and death. Ironically, the narration of Amazonian miracle plant further fuels the mythology of the jungle's permanent barbarism. Whereas the golden city fable requires the indigenous to administrate complex urban planning, construction of buildings, allocation of resources and population control, the Amazon as a realm of magical healing requires the jungle to maintain its ancient state of permanent barbarism for only under such Eden-like conditions can these natural agents of healing prosper. In John McTiernan's 1992 film *Medicine Man*, a pharmaceutical company sends biochemist Dr. Crane to the Amazonian rainforest to locate a researcher named Campbell (Sean Connery) who has been cut off from outside contact. It is revealed that Campbell discovered the cure to cancer but has difficulty synthesizing the compound for an application. In this story, Campbell seeks not only to create a healing serum from the most elusive species of the Amazon but also tries to prevent a logging company from bulldozing a tribal village. The protagonist in the story is presented as an eccentric and empathetic scientist with both a desire to save humanity from cancer and an Amazonian village from deforestation. At the apex of the narrative, Campbell is forced into an ethical dilemma- he can either use the last of the sample serum to cure a dying native boy showing symptoms of malignant neoplasm, or keep the sample as a base ingredient to synthesize more serum. The film pins Campbell's Western humanity- exemplified by his will to save a child, against the Amazon's

cruelty- demonstrated by its act of hiding the cure to cancer from humanity. The unraveling of the latter in this case is dependent on the induction of the former, that is, if the child is fed the serum, Campbell risks his entire research. Lucky for Campbell, it is revealed that the village medicine man knew all along where to acquire more ingredients for Campbell's serum.

The narrative of *Medicine Man* illustrates three dialectical points of contact within the paradigm of coloniality. The first point is represented by Campbell, who belongs in the colonial center but sacrifices his comfortable lifestyle to work in the harsh conditions of the tropics. His ethics is tested with the life of an indigenous boy, but in the end, he prevails by saving his life as well as procuring the resources to synthesize a cancer-treating miracle drug. The indigenous boy and the village healing man represent the second point of reference. They lie on the outskirts of the colonial periphery, at first unaware of their marginalized position but know only to preserve their lives against the hardships of the jungle. When Campbell rescues the boy, that single act of humanity not only saves the boy, but also convinces the medicine man to reveal the secret location of the ingredients to the serum. Both the boy and the village healer open themselves up to Campbell's civility and welcome him into their community. The third point refers to Amazon as 3rd space coloniality- an uncanny entity that manifests a villainous intent against Campbell and the villagers. In a later scene, the jungle spreads a controlled fire across the village burning down its perimeters, huts and farm pins. The Amazon frustrates Campbell at every turn, keeping from him the ingredients of his serum. The jungle acts in reckless cruelty, taking human lives and impeding human actions toward civility and scientific progress. The village medicine man, caught between human civilization and permanent barbarism, relinquishes his loyalty to his lived environment and provides to Campbell, the secrets of his 3rd space terrain. For the West, the narrative of *The Medicine Man* is maintained and sustained as a permanent cultural property that

codifies its meaning around the fantasy for a spatial-object of desire. In this reading, the medicine man is not Campbell, but the village healer who only becomes an authentic medicine man upon his collaboration with Campbell toward a cancer cure for his civilizing mission.

In 2011, Ann Patchett wrote a strikingly parallel narrative to the film *The Medicine Man*, titled *State of Wonder*. The novel follows pharmacologist Marina Singh as she is sent to Brazil to check on the research progress of a fertility drug headed by stern Dr. Annick Swenson, her former teacher. Singh follows in the footsteps of his colleague Dr. Anders Eckman, who disappeared into the jungle under mysterious circumstances while checking on Swenson's research. Deep in the wilderness, Swenson is funneling company money to produce a cure for malaria but hides her research in fear that malaria cures are not profitable enough for her funders to take any interest. In this story, the Amazon, as an object of desire, is parsed down to the bark of an endemic tree. Upon consumption, the bark can prevent menopause in older women, as well as vaccinate against malaria. The pace of the novel builds up to the malaria vaccine, as the novel introduces the wild of the jungle even before revealing the presence of Swenson's science lab in the forest. Singh becomes aware of her tropical environment almost immediately. She describes insect bites at the airport (p. 69), a lizard the size of a cat in her bathtub (p. 82) and even an opera house reference to *Fitzcarraldo* (p. 110). In another scene where Singh travels downriver, the crew of the boat catches a deadly Golden Lancehead Viper onboard (p. 177). In a later section, Patchett's heroin fights an anaconda (p. 331) and saves her colleague Eckman from a tribe of cannibals. Like previous authors before her, Patchett organizes the Amazon into units of danger, turning the jungle into an at-large antagonist, engaging in transgressive acts that far outpace the human barbarism of the colonial periphery. The cannibal tribe becomes a stereotype much like its references in the horror film, *The Green Inferno*. These savage natives, unlike the "good"

Indians who welcome scientific research in their village, are the wholly other — without humanity, or even animality, just purely spatial sectors of cruelty embodying a naturally primordial function of the jungle itself. Thus the Amazon as a 3rd space of desire refers only to a minute part of its total bodily function — a bark, a flower, the glands of an ant. These elements of a medical cure reside within layers of permanent barbarism, outer objects of inference that can kill a human without cause. These narratives contrast the personification of Amazon as 3rd space with the hope for human salvation of the colonial periphery, a salvation only achievable with the presence of a protagonist member from the colonial center.

Re-orienting the Cardinality of 3rd Space Tropics

The cardinal mapping of the three colonial spaces- center, periphery and the outer dark of the Amazon, can be visually construed to relay a Copernican sphere of influence where relational spatial points always refer back to a Western center. From the position of Europe, Amazon as 3rd space coloniality lies in the southwest region, away from the global center. Even from the colonial center of a contemporary and modernized North America, the tropics are but a distant entity residing in the cardinal south. To decolonize the spatial and cardinal rhetoric of the Amazon, scholars might find some use to reorient the aesthetics of the Amazon to revise its cardinal temporality as 3rd space altogether. In the last chapter, I referenced the lack of inner cardinality within the Amazon, where traditional aesthetics and narratives of the tropics tend to unify spatial units by universalizing the Amazonian travel experience. Visually on camera as well in both travel and fictional narratives, the features of tropicality are relatively the same, projecting a copied aesthetics of jungle greens, river bends and animal sounds. In these moments, cardinal orientation is unnecessary, as the dangers of the jungle can strike from behind any foliage and from any direction. Likewise, the sought after healing flowers, barks and plants can

reside in any corner of the forest, making the task of searching seemingly impossible. Thus, to reorganize the spatial cardinality of the 3rd space tropics requires both the reorienting of the inner cardinality and the redesign of the outer colonial relations to take effect in the space of literary imagination.

The directional features of the tropics on a map are inherently disorienting, especially in the bulk of the Amazon where lack of roads, changing river flows and the complete immersion of vegetation impedes human navigation. The placement of mapping operates as a closed system without many landmarks and directional signs for Western orientation. The quadrants are dissected as territories between at least nine South American nations, the largest belonging to Brazil and the smallest to French Guiana. While the aesthetics of the Amazon unify the tropics as a single entity, one might interrogate its cardinality, or standard orientation, as a presupposition to knowing a geographical space. The cardinal points of the compass as a navigational tool have achieved an unwarranted aptitude to identify colonial spaces and become an unquestioned source of knowledge production. It has become ideologically attuned to our experience of place, where the usage of an old techno-science, or what scholar Bernard Stiegler calls “technics”, “precedes the scaffolding for a geographic given” still in use in the present (Stiegler, p. 2-3).⁸¹ The concept of orientation relies heavily on a straightforward sense of spatial positioning where a single human subject can interrogate their environment and locate themselves in a single moment in time even as multiple narrative geographies provide conflicting instructions. The narrative Amazon, suspended in orientation, becomes a narrative backdrop without cardinality in so far as its physical space mimics its imaginative counterpart in the collective readership and viewership

⁸¹ French theorist Bernard Stiegler argues that “technics” forms the horizon of human existence. The history of technics that produce the vessel of narration- e.g. books and films, display similar ideological tendencies as the technics of navigation- e.g. the compass of cardinality. These technics correspond not only to the genesis of what is called human, but to temporality as such.

of its cultural representations in geoappropriation. The contrast between the physical territory of the Amazon and the imagination of the narrative Amazon is often categorically distinct due to an absence of cardinal references so readily available in non-fiction travel writing. As a result of the exemplary narratives of the Amazon stated above, the fantasies of the jungle have come to embody the whole physical Amazon in its material dimension.

In so far as the narrative compositions of the Amazon is a derivative of the Amazon subject without cardinality, Amazon as 3rd space appears in literature and film as descriptive scenes, symbolic fixture and fixations in prose. While the traditional sense of orientation is suspended in the Amazon narrative, perhaps achieving what Gaston Bachelard might call a “productive imagination”⁸² (1969, p. xxix), the inner image of the forest landscape is often represented by a mass shade of green leaves, brown trunks, gushing rivers and blackening shadows in their unified aesthetic renditions. The logic of a metaphysical cardinality in its conceived paradigm between good and evil, safe and dangerous, friendly and savage remains ever present. To actively practice a productive imagination toward a new aesthetic rendition of the narrative Amazon, the abandonment of cardinality cannot simply elicit the superficial disorientation of those protagonists traversing the inner Amazon. For example, when Professor Challenger concludes his adventure in the inner labyrinth of the Lost World, he returns to London and is quickly reoriented with the urban cardinality of his city life once again. To activate a new productive spatial imagination, decolonial narratives of the Amazon should reorganize the paradigm of Amazon’s outer orientation toward the colonial center itself. The

⁸² Bachelard’s works on imagination have been used primarily by literary critics interested in the archetypal imagery of writers. His treatment of the imagination of matter has led to a method of classifying poets according to their favorite substances, based on a view of Bachelard as a “psychoanalyst” of the elements. But the phenomena of imagination, the images themselves, are not his fundamental concern. Bachelard’s physics and chemistry of imagination also imply a metaphysics.

culprit of imaginative stagnation toward the narrative Amazon is colonial in origin, and the antics of geoappropriation only exacerbate colonial protocols in new Amazon narratives. Thus the decolonial move involves whether the Amazon can have a place in narration and aesthetics without the presence of a trans-Atlantic directionality toward the colonial center.

The implication of a dual cardinality of the placement of the Amazon ontology implies that there are in essence, two cardinal tools for Amazonian geographic configuration. The first being the magnetic north compass, which adventurers use to orient themselves while residing in the inner jungle of the tropics, and the second being the compass of coloniality, which marks a metaphysical West- pointing toward the civilized nations and capitals of nations in the West. This second compass is activated once the adventurer, real or fictional, exits the Amazon and returns home. Salman Rushdie recalls the importance of the East to medieval European maps and the colonial Christian narrative, where if lost, the navigator would “lose their bearings... certainties, knowledge of what is and what may be, perhaps even [their] life” (1999, p. 176). To challenge this orientation of the East, Rushdie immediately dares his readers to give it up. He writes, "what if the whole deal- orientation, knowing where you are and so on- what if it's all a scam?... What if home, kinship... is only brainwashing; what if daring releases you to live your own life; what if you have to get lost, venture into chaos and beyond... the wild panic of losing your moorings" (p. 176-177). He argues that to lose the East is to be not only disoriented but to be de-oriented. The coloniality of 3rd space tropics challenges Rushdie’s strategy to de-orient the East by presenting itself as the result of such de-orienting strategy already imposed by Western aesthetic. Since within the Amazon, the de-orienting effect already takes place through the placement of protagonists within the image of the jungle, such effects only work to emphasize the stable orientation of West to South delineation from the compass of coloniality. In effect,

Rushdie's iteration of the de-orienting strategy does not result in a permanent loss of the East, but only a temporary suspension of the East and a supplementing of the East with a 3rd space South. Upon one's exit from such tropical spatiality, the East only returns as a vibrant periphery, marking a path to the direction back West.

One might remark that the West is not absolute and unified, much to the effect of the general criticism pointed against Said's *Orientalism*. But I argue that when the traveler is physically located in the Amazon, the West becomes cohesive as an absolute unity to counterbalance the unified fantasy of tropicality. Drafted against the imposition that the aesthetic image painted against the Amazon basin follows a similar logic, I again emphasize the insurmountable evidence of travel writings, fictions and films that demonstrate the overbearing homogeneity in its overall directional gaze toward the Amazon. On this last point, 3rd space tropics is codified as diverging directions in so far as whether a particular area of the Amazon is "safe" versus other areas that are "dangerous." Take the example of the locatedness of Patchett's cannibal tribe versus the more friendly tribe in *State of Wonder*. In exposing the tribe north of the river in contrast to the friendly tribe Dr. Swenson lives with while conducting her research, Patchett writes on how "the natives live together like national entities, treating neighboring tribes like a unity in need of negotiation, compromise and sometimes pacification" (2011, p. 234). The directional inference of the two tribes separate how the jungle is perceived in each arena, but the point of such demarcation is to unify the Amazon under the long-held stereotype of territorial horror reiterated by the many writers before Patchett. The assumptions of cardinality undergirding the Amazon geography in this sense do not completely dispense with the concept of orientation but instead bonds the presence of oriented space with certain insurmountable emotions allocated to the Amazon itself as a whole. This iteration of orientation is perhaps

another version of Said's imaginative geographical knowledge as "something more than what appears to be merely positive knowledge" (1979, p. 55). In the cardinality of the Amazon as 3rd space, narratives perhaps train the imagination toward an alternative empirical reality off the cartographic grid but reinforce the traditional colonial West and East paradigms as a result.

Conclusion

The Amazon as a colonial 3rd space enhances the discourse of coloniality by framing it as a metaphysical topography already implicit in its colonial relations with both the West and its peripheral territories. The Amazon's production of primeval attributes and anti-human sentiments highlighted in the chapters above mark its entire topography as a permanent frontier, beyond the paradigm of barbarity and civilization. 3rd space coloniality points to a 3rd spatial-object of distant orientation in the etymology of the colonial paradigm. Recall that Said's bilateral orientation between the West and the periphery Orient demarcates the East as a constituted foil to the Occident via his scholarship on culture, literature and art. Although charting the East orients explorers and navigators in both real and metaphorical spaces, charting the cardinality of the Amazon 3rd space becomes a wholly disorienting process when situated inside the territory of the jungle. Paradoxically, the directedness of the spatial cardinality of the inner Amazon, when activated to contrast one tribe with another, only reinforces the distance between the kind of barbarism that is civilizable and the kind that is of a primeval order. One might think of the ape-men in *The Lost World* or the cannibals from *State of Wonder* as an experimentation of a literary consciousness that deals with a series of material losses of positionality in colonial conquest, but the literary consciousness that locates a directional substitute in the narratives of the Amazon only reinforces traditional cardinality once we observe the Amazon from the outside looking in. 3rd space coloniality, in this case, provides a fascinating way of critical analysis for

both Amazonian spatiality as well as how cardinality plays a metaphysical role in colonial directionality between the West, the East and the 3rd space tropics.

Chapter VIII

Beyond the Colonial Paradigm: the Aesthetics of Geography In 4 Dimensions

The sequencing of previous chapters culminates toward the consideration of the narrative ontology of the Amazon tropics as an aesthetic property of Western storytelling from travel writing to fiction and cinema. The geoappropriation of the Amazon as colonial 3rd space tropicity emphasizes an alternative viewpoint from which a spatial cardinality in cognitive mapping can appear in literary geography from both the internal body of the Amazon as well as its directional position on the colonial horizon. This chapter combines the three spatial elements of the colonial Amazon from the previous chapter with what I determine to be the four spatial elements of aesthetics. In light of the repetitive and paradoxical nature of narrative geoappropriation already explored in previous chapters, the Amazon also fabricates a unified narrative weave, which runs alongside the production of the tropics through aesthetic devices. In unpredictable ways, the Amazon can refashion itself beyond its colonial tropes and break the aesthetic barrier of art and literature to speak against both the West's past failures of conquest and present fantasies of conquest. This approach is significant because it filters the Amazon geography through both a colonial lens as well as an aesthetic lens. Whereas Said argued that Western aesthetics is a product of colonial discourse, my method of analysis reveals that aesthetics and coloniality function as a wholly binary system that works to generate space while living in the fabric of space.

In this final chapter I discuss the origin of aesthetics and how I use the term in application to the Amazon as an inwardly folded 4th spatial dimension that accommodates its own narrative structure across time. I organize the first section of this chapter around the coloniality of aesthetics and provide an overview of the term. I then reincorporate geoappropriation introduced in Chapter VI to confer how the Amazon is folded into the coloniality of aesthetics in spatial terms. In the second section, I arrange the narrative geoappropriation of the Amazon into four aesthetic spatial dimensions highlighting its reference to both theoretical physics and Gilles Deleuze's work. Finally, in the conclusion of this chapter, I intersect the iteration of Amazon aesthetics in four spaces with Chapter VII's iteration of the colonial Amazon in three orbiting spaces⁸³ to redefine the landscape in an exercise of imaginative geography. I call this new reconfiguration *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*- a collective reimagining of the Amazon basin not as tropicity alone, but as a part of a process toward decolonial *aesthesia*,⁸⁴ or a struggle for epistemological spatial subversion and transformation.

The Coloniality of Aesthetics

Part 1: An Overview of Aesthetics

In the term *coloniality of aesthetics*, I use the word *aesthetics*, or the philosophy of art, as the organizing principle around the study of beauty and taste (Santayana, 1904). The term, in its inheritance of the Greek word *aisthetikos*, and in its most narrow application, assumes a quality about art movements and art objects made possible by human judgment. The discourse of aesthetics in the West shifted toward a focus on the aesthetic appreciation of beauty as a sensual

⁸³ Recall the three colonial spaces of colonial center, periphery and outer periphery from Chapter VII.

⁸⁴ An unelaborated elementary awareness of stimulation; "a sensation of touch", sense datum, sense experience, sense impression or perception - the process of perceiving (Google Dictionary, 2018).

aspect of human nature, a modernist move that solidified art as possessing universal value beyond ethics, culture, and global economic relationships. Aesthetic appreciation of beauty recognizes a sensual aspect of human nature (Witte, Schiller, Wilkinson & Willoughby, 1969), as it leads to the first stage toward the manifestation of what Hegel called absolute spirit in the objective revelation of beauty (Schaper, 1976). In the discourse of continental philosophy following, contemplation of beauty became a form of intellectual exercise fueled by the power of human will (Beck, Schopenhauer & Payne, 1959). European scholars attempted to then categorically proclaim an objective sense of beauty and taste (Burke, 1798; Hume, 1985), and provide a scientific approach to aesthetics, marking a relationship between human interests and the complexity of brain stimulus (Mill, 1829).

The concern for a theory of aesthetics requires a logical explanation for an understanding of our sentiments and emotions toward the visual sensations we experience when confronting an art object. In the 18th century, aesthetics became central to philosophy both as a positive epistemological notion (Baumgarten, as cited in McQuillan, 2004) and as a unifying concept that refers to an origin of experience (Kant, 1988). Even when the aesthetic experience becomes the antithesis of thought, a process that takes shape as an independent object opposite consciousness (Hegel, 1976), a more synchronized relationship between the subject and the world started to structure art's role in Western civilization. The final piece of deduction for the ontology of aesthetics in modern Europe removed the distinction between appearance and reality by reconfiguring the world as constructed solely by representation (Nietzsche, see Markotic, 2009). The question of aesthetics became a project of laborious writing and discussion, but never fully integrated to reflect the global shift in power that took place in the centuries of colonization until Edward Said's *Orientalism*. In my work, the term aesthetics complies with Said's view that

Western representations of the world demonstrates an epistemological force that tends to render the colonial periphery as the ontological other. *Orientalism* introduced the notion that the orient was invented as a discourse of cultural and political vision whose structure prompted stereotypes about the East and its people. In the aftermath of *Orientalism*, art criticism in postcolonial studies revolved around this definitive duality of center and periphery, East and West, colonizer and colonized, both equating the overwhelming presence of art themes as “metropolitan paternalism” (Kalliney, n.p.) and establishing “aesthetic autonomy”⁸⁵ as a major feature and flaw of modernist artworks (Bohls, 1994).

The narrative stand-off between the mapping of natural beauty as an interpretive exercise in rational judgment and as an expression of personal sentiment- a problem tackled by Kant in *The Critique of Judgment*- becomes codified in the formatting of language and the production of an "imaginative geography" (see Said) in the mind of the reader. The pleasure derived from reading, though appreciated from the perspective of a subject experience, also functions as the expression of an association of the universal faculties of language. The beauty of the Amazon as appears in text and scripted prose, is ordered by design, word by word, sentence by sentence, and when applied to the visual format of a film lens, qualifies as a form of aesthetic representation abstracted from the actual geography of the Amazon terrain. In a novel, the Amazon spatial terrain is dissected in prose, stringing together scene after scene with verifiable accounts of its reality witnessed by the protagonists at play. In film especially, the Amazon territory as a tropical background is indicative of its visual and performative action on screen, actualized by

⁸⁵ The history of this shifting boundary separating the aesthetic notion from other areas of discursive practice was scrutinized intensely in cultural studies in the 1980s and early 1990s (Mattick, 1993; Eagleton, 1990; DeBolla, 1989; Barrell, 1986; Bourdieu, 1984), especially the discourse on the aesthetics of art and literature in 18th century Britain. Following Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, the growing prominence of aesthetics in art as a philosophical theory paralleled the notion of disinterested aesthetic contemplation, i.e., a state of mind excluding all the vested interests such as practical needs for food, shelter, and life, and material circumstances relating to political and colonial relations (Stolnitz, 1961).

the live-action sequences filmed on location in the Amazon, using the technology of cinema to render the mimetic⁸⁶ code of Western poetics found in Aristotle's legacy. Kant's later regulation of aesthetics does not preclude aesthetics as the judgment of beauty from a literary and linguistic stance, however I emphasize Walter Mignolo's assertion that both aesthetic knowledge and hermeneutic methods of aesthetic interpretation are two pillars of civilized humanity historically policed by the West and the West alone.

As a technology of the West, film perhaps emphasizes the aesthetics of nature as a categorical phenomenon once recognized by Plato and Aristotle as both revealed in form and in its particularity. The dynamic emphasis of film on the visual aspect of the human senses renders linguistic aesthetics almost invisible by design of its image technology. But remember that films have scripts and scripts often guide the cinematography of filmmaking therefore its aesthetic properties as well. The French film critic Andre Bazin argues, "cinema makes a molding of the object as it exists in time and, furthermore, makes an imprint of the duration of the object" (Bazin, 1967, p. 97). As a causal process of mechanical art, cinematic aesthetics of the Amazon rendered in the technology of moving pictures and projection, for the sake of my dissertation, is considered an art form most influential to public opinion on the Amazon basin. Its important for my purposes that the filming of the Amazon, as personified in expressive language, is a lens for the depth building of a scenic environment, one that already embeds a standard of beauty for the imagined lushness of a forest, or the characteristic imprints of a tropical landscape. The visual aesthetics of the Amazon becomes a blueprint of the storytelling in a particularly persistent form whereupon the removal of the scene endangers the plot points of the narration. In the case of the

⁸⁶ Aristotle also defined mimesis as the perfection, and imitation of nature. Art is not only imitation but also the use of mathematical ideas and symmetry in the search for the perfect, the timeless, and contrasting being with becoming. Nature is full of change, decay, and cycles, but art can also search for what is everlasting and the first causes of natural phenomena (See Auerbach, 1968).

Amazon, the aesthetics of the tropics become a universal point of reference from the history of the Amazon to the fictional rendition of the tropics on film. And upon viewing of the many cinematic narratives that take place in the Amazon basin, public opinion of the region rests on the slow accumulation of multiple and repeated visual constructions of the forest.

In the 20th century, the aesthetics of nature as a mode of Western inquiry became a subject of contemplation in R. W. Hepburn's influential paper, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty". Hepburn revived interest in the subject of beauty and nature as the direct application of the former adjective to the latter subject without the medium of literature and film (Hepburn, 1966). As nature became a subject of "disinterested delight"- i.e. disinterested from moral and political authority, it became the exclusive province of the spectator in their colors, shapes and perspective. In so far as a landscape can be aesthetically appreciated, so then can its rendition in linguistic description in text, as demonstrated by early travel writers. The American naturalist John Muir sought to organize an alternative concept for natural aesthetics, one that is defined as a proper object of artistic rendering- painting and photography, a scene of nature untouched by human intervention and interest (Carlson, 2000). Muir's work sought not only to represent nature, but to disclose the new horizon of newly explored nature. The substance of aesthetic judgment thus implies a first judgment, contrasting the epistemological position of a nature previously un-judged, or undiscovered. The aesthetics of the Amazon, for this reason, hides in its position of inference, a chance to be re-judged, re-ordered and re-represented by subsequent spectators. My sense is that the aesthetics of nature, and its subsequent aesthetics of language in description of the Amazon and the filmic scenes of the Amazon are endeavors to place human judgment. The narrative dimension of the Amazon belongs within the aesthetic rendition of the Amazon precisely because of the order of judgment,

and without the qualities of a beautiful, pristine, dark and brutal Amazon, narratives of the tropics cannot possibly materialize and take shape. Aesthetics in this sense become primary, it provides the ordered transcendent values of human relationship that take place in Amazon narratives. In other words, the construction of an aesthetics of nature, applied specifically to the tropics, precedes the narrative making of contemporary novels and films that seek to re-interpret the Amazon basin.

Part 2: Geoappropriation in the Coloniality of Aesthetics

The coloniality of aesthetics as a method of analysis necessarily starts with an act of geoappropriation. This theory of aesthetics emerges as a theory that bridges the principles of the coloniality of being (see Chapter VII) from South American subaltern studies and the understanding of aesthetics in Western fiction and literature. The cumulative effect is based on the allegation that the Amazon is organized by a contemporary colonial paradigm, one that deploys the landscape in the form of a predictable geoappropriation. This practice of coloniality first names the primary site of origin in a geoappropriated Amazon as a colonial 3rd space of aesthetic judgment, rendering a visual and imaginative oversight that persists across a body of literatures and films from the 20th century onward. The coloniality of aesthetics generates a topographic state of being fit for the narrative form of fiction and film, in effect, creating a cultural object that interweaves the production of colonial knowledge and granting a mystic quality of fantastical fiction populated by monsters, treasures and healing totems. The judgment of beauty implicates the aesthetics of the Amazon, and solidifies the mythology of a territory permanently suspended between documented exploration and the deferral of permanent conquest. From this, several unique characteristics emerge from observing narratives through the lens of the coloniality of aesthetics, the most relevant of which is how the spatial relevance of the

Amazonian identity is unified within the coloniality of aesthetics. A persistent and dominant form captures the judgment of beauty in terms of reader and audience perception, related to but independent from the narrative variants of the Amazon stories available in popular culture and art.

In the previous chapters, the fictions I explore are crafted in regards to the representation of the Amazon as defined by geoappropriation first and foremost as a landscape that is acted upon by authors and film directors that had access to previous representational works of the Amazon. Unlike Barbara Piatti's⁸⁷ "geospace" (2008, p. 22–23), which speaks of an environmental space in geography, the aesthetics of the tropics is interested in the imaginary physical space of a permanent jungle, without markers and cardinality. Since geoappropriation builds around the discourse of Western fictions as a process of cultural appropriation, scholars of spatiality may view the Amazon ontology as a periphery culture repurposed under the coloniality of power in a larger context guided by the works of Mignolo, Maldonado-Torres and others, thus merging the contents of chapter six and chapter seven. This means that the process of geoappropriation may result in some form of the coloniality of aesthetics, and reversely, Western aesthetic judgment of the Amazon may dictate the method of geoappropriation. The confluence of the two systems of aesthetic practice merges into a unified structural form of Western domination that oversees the ontological development of the Amazon landscape. The coloniality of aesthetics is best understood as a methodology that explores how Western authors and artists deploy the Amazon as geoappropriation to make familiar that which was once foreign, and to conjure up new truths and fictions based on the utterance of Amazon tropes across literary formats.

⁸⁷ Scholar Barbara Piatti is interested in the formation of uncommon spaces in literary Europe. Her idea of geospace provides a rich texture that gets converted to descriptive language. For Piatti, the border of fictional space and real space is the contact point between language and environmental texture.

The Amazon Aesthetics in Spatiality: 4th Space *Aiesthesia*

I use the term aesthetics as a second analytical discourse after the primary discourse of coloniality following Chapter VII. Aesthetics is a spatial maneuver that the Amazon undertakes in its narrative form in four epistemological stages of being. Amazon 1st space aesthetics⁸⁸ is represented by the spatial-object of physical human encounter with the basin and its rivers, stones, plants and animals that is out there on the terrain of the earth. Amazon 2nd space aesthetics is the authorial space of the literary sphere of descriptions, visuals and annotations by travelers, writers and filmmakers across the centuries. This 2nd space is organized by the act of geoappropriation discussed in Chapter VI. Amazon 3rd space aesthetics is the imaginative Amazon that deviates from the readership and audience of its narrative tropes. This 3rd space is the craftwork of the audience upon the perception of the Amazon as a work of art and literature. Amazon 4th space *aiesthesia*, much like the 4th dimension of a three-dimensional physical space, is an inwardly folded space that permeates across the previous three spaces of narrative contact. I use the term *aiesthesia* as a designation to this 4th spatial dimension that renders the Amazon both imaginable and knowable only through the lens of discourse conducted on a lower dimension of perception. From the 1st space that begins as a referential Amazon, to the 2nd space of constructed authorial landscape, to the 3rd space of audience imagination, the Amazon territory synthesizes within the confines of its possible make up and texture in a final 4th space of metaphysical significance.

⁸⁸ Note that the four spaces of aesthetics (Chapter VIII) is categorically different from the three spaces of coloniality (Chapter VII). The three spaces of coloniality is named as such- colonial 1st space (core), colonial 2nd space (periphery), and colonial 3rd space (outer periphery). In contrast, the four spaces of aesthetics are named as such- 1st space aesthetics, 2nd space aesthetics, 3rd space aesthetics, and 4th space *aiesthesia*. When combined, these two categories are called *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*.

The Amazon tropics as 4th space *aesthesia* represents one version of the conglomerate effect of the designated jungle in its aesthetic iterations, made possible through the previous three narrative spaces. The 4th space is one realm of aesthetic possibility, although it is not an induction of the Kantian sublime experienced upon first discovery of the Amazon basin with each new European expedition. It is not a poetic representation of art belonging to the effects of the aesthetics of geoappropriation, for its organizing principles of beauty is not based in the human-produced visuals of cinema or the profoundness of iterated language. Whereas poetic language attempts to clarify the humanly transformative aspect of emotion and judgment through the aesthetics of 2nd space- or the space of geoappropriation, the 4th space reorganizes aesthetic renderings to some aspect of spatiality within the folds of authorial intent. The 4th space is also not aligned with the imaginative 3rd space of audience perception due to its distinction from qualities in aesthetic formation. In the perceived 3rd space of audience imagination, the discourse of geocriticism can effectively engage with the 2nd space of authorial intent. And when the two spaces confront one another in literary discourses, they often generate a new perspective on the spatial-subject of the Amazon basin in interesting ways. This transcendental discourse of geocriticism obtains a living quality, one that forms around the limits of human perception and judgment. 4th space *aesthesia*, taking on a Deleuzian quality of territory, is unlivable spatiality because it is impossibly inhuman, traversing through the boundaries of the previous three spaces where living and rational humans interact with the spatial-object of the jungle basin. Amazon as 4th space renders the tropics invisible to human cognitive effects that dominate the historical judgment of beauty.

Another helpful revelation concerning the whereabouts and locatedness of 4th space *aesthesia* ties in the concept of a 4th dimensional space found in theoretical physics. The 4th

dimension of space is a mathematical extension of a three-dimensional space bounded by length, width and height as in the model of a cube. I paraphrase Neil deGrasse Tyson's explanation⁸⁹ of this concept based on a step-by-step generalization of the properties of points, lines, squares and cubes: A point has no dimensions. A line has one dimension- length. A square has two dimensions- height and width. A cube has three dimensions- length, height and width. It follows that a line is a one-dimensional object bounded by two zero-dimensional points. A square is a two-dimensional object bounded by four one-dimensional lines. A cube is a three-dimensional object bounded by six two-dimensional squares. Each advancing iteration is contained by lines that progress two integers at a time, i.e. two dots on the sides of a line, four lines on the sides of a square and six squares on the sides of a cube. Imagine now a four-dimensional object called a hypercube, whose volume is bound by eight "sides". And each of its eight "sides" is comprised of a three-dimensional cube. A hypercube's volume is thus measured and contained by eight cubes. The more significant question to the concept of a four-dimensional space is how a human, comprised of and living in the surface of one of its sides (a three-dimensional space) can ever experience the reality of a hypercube? The theoretical physics answer is that a lower dimensional being would only experience an upper dimensional object indirectly. Imagine a 3 dimensional sphere passing through a two dimensional universe. A being living on a two dimensional universe would only observe a sphere's passing as the appearance of first a dot, then a small circle that expands to a larger circle, and when the sphere passes half way the circle would shrink smaller, and eventually back to a dot and finally disappear. For the entirety of the sphere's passing, a two-dimensional being would only observe its movement through a two-dimensional lens. In other words, the sphere is a three-dimensional phenomena manifesting a two-

⁸⁹ A precise formalization of the concept is found in Charles Howard Hinton's 1880 essay titled "What is the Fourth Dimension?".

dimensional experience. To extend the above concept to that of the hypercube, a human can only experience a four-dimensional phenomena from our bounded three-dimensional reality in space.

The Amazon territory as 4th space *aisthesis* in the field of critical spatiality garners parallel comparison to the physics experimentation of the hypercube. Any cardinal point of a mapped Amazon represents a location in time at the moment of human encounter. 1st space is manifested in the act of a subject-object encounter just as a first physics dimension is born from the drawing of a connected line between two zero-dimensional points. The 2nd and 3rd dimensions of physics iterate the discourse between the 2nd space of geoappropriated authorial intent and the 3rd space of audience perception and imagination. Just as a three-dimensional space is comprised of multiple two-dimensional sides, 3rd space audience discourse is generated by multiple 2nd space boundaries in the form of travel writings, literatures and films. Finally, the aesthetic properties of spatiality signify a higher 4th dimensional phenomenon manifesting lower dimensional experiences. Aesthetics, redefined in this dissertation, is the tangible residue of the *aisthesis* of 4th spatial-object manifested in 1st, 2nd and 3rd space encounters, which gives it material significance for human interaction. Aesthetics, in its multiple manifestations of first-contact travel experience, second-contact authorial works of fiction and film, as well as third-contact audience perception of the geoappropriated Amazon, contribute to a rich and diverse interpretation of the jungle territory. And just as a three-dimensional sphere gliding through a two-dimensional plain appear to enlarge and shrink as it passes, the *aisthesis* rendering of the spatial formation of the Amazon also alters depending on the lens of viewership.

Amazon as 4th space *aisthesis* is configured through the very fabric of the jungle terrain by its oscillating frequencies between its differentiated bodily parts and between its 1st, 2nd and 3rd aesthetic space iterations. Whereas Foucault's codification of self-regulated individuals in

social space forms the basis for a marked human identity, Amazon's identity is structured in the folded spaces of indeterminable coordinates beyond the limits of human discourse. Amazon as folded 4th space is interwoven with its own unique signifiers that order and distribute its presence onto human cognition. This rendering of the Amazon as inhuman differs from the forest-horror narratives that configure the Amazon as inhumanly cruel and biblically immoral. The Amazon 4th space as an inhuman space recalls Deleuzian territory as a "spatiotemporal dynamism" (2012, p. 218) organized by its own milieu (See Chapter IV). It is a living ontology and *aisthesis* constitution that can either enter into mutual composition with human bodies, but also consume human bodies. Both Foucault and Deleuze are concerned with human techniques for the development of cartographic structures upon 1st, 2nd and 3rd spaces along the lines of charting and documenting grids in human occupied discourse. The result of a 4th space discourse renders some human measurements liberating and other ones repressive. Amazon as 4th space deviates from the act of spatial analytics as a subversion of the hierarchy of power. 4th space, instead, renders the assemblages of the Amazon as a differentiated mode of conceiving space beyond the literary narration of the tropics. There is a principally pragmatic effort to alter the course of aesthetics to reorient the fundamental task of thinking so that aesthetics as 4th space is perceived differently in every iteration of spatiality.

While Foucault does not provide the possibility of situating the human subject outside of the figuratively carceral archipelago of the state, Amazon as 4th space transforms the human subject toward the periphery as one of many appendages to the centered spatial entity that is the Amazon. From this position of a reversed subject-object relation of power, Deleuze's smooth and striated spaces as well as Foucault's panoptic social order fictionalized as Amazon narratives becomes a part of a larger descriptive Amazon landscape. This limited parcel of refracted

substance, rendered humanly knowable, becomes recognizable as epistemological discourse. The rendition of the Amazon as 4th space recognizes the significance of an underlying ontological presence to the jungle territory, one that delivers a shifting web of spatial relations. In effect, the Amazon 4th space retracts the coordinated effect of human subject to environmental object and the tension expressed between the two entities in film and literature. As Deleuze and Guattari writes- "Subject and object give a poor approximation of thought. Thinking is neither a line drawn between subject and object nor a revolving of one around another. Rather, thinking takes place in the relationship of territory and the earth" (1994, p. 85). The interplay between subject and object is analytically replaced with an interconnected and confrontational spatiality within itself, as introduced in Chapter 4's iteration of territory and its milieu. Whereas the arrangement of forces and spectacles interact, the Amazon is affirmed beyond living and dead, rational and irrational, intelligent and chaotic.

Finally, the aesthetics of the Amazon as 4th space conjures yet another example of a 4th dimension of epistemological inquiry regarding its aesthetic verification of itself through the perception of the West. Regarding this, I turn to Slavoj Žižek's poignant piece regarding the nature of ideology. He writes,

"In March 2003, Rumsfeld engaged in a little bit of amateur philosophizing about the relationship between the known and the unknown: There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know." What he forgot to add was the crucial fourth term: the "unknown knowns," the things we don't know that we know-which is precisely, the Freudian unconscious, the "knowledge which doesn't know itself," as Lacan used to say." (Žižek, 2004).

In so far as the 4th space *aisthesis* of the Amazon is ideological, I refer to Žižek's efforts to thematize the Kantian notion of the sublime in order to analogize ideology to a vastly powerful force beyond perception and predictability (Žižek, 1989). This offer to reinterpret ideology as the

“unknown known”, and not simply “false consciousness” — that is, the interest of the ruling class embodied willfully by the political will of a subordinate class (Engels, 1893), is at the heart of the difference between *aisthesis* and the traditional rendering of a Kantian aesthetics. Žižek’s ideology is not “false” but simply an “unknown” reality that already forms the foundation for what we know. The ideological is hidden from the fabric of social reality, where its very reproduction “implies that the individuals do not know what they are doing” (p. 16). To draw direct relevance to the above passage, I compare the following: Amazon as 1st space- the space of exploratory contact, is represented by the “known knowns”, or the tropic environment of conscious knowledge production by exploration; The “known unknowns” is manifested by an epistemological fantasy, or the order of things that the fiction author in 2nd space knows that they do not know, thus setting up the narrative under the fiction category and surpassing the limitation of the unknown through fantasy production; The “unknown unknown”, or the category of knowledge that we do not know that we don’t know is represented by an equally powerful audience perception in 3rd space. This order of “unknown unknown” leaves the audiences’ imagination to ponder a fiction’s reality, or rather, the limitless fantasies of the Amazon that might exist to which we have yet to conceive of. The “unknown unknown” is the future-oriented boundless fantasy derivative of the “known unknown” of 2nd space authorial intent. Žižek’s fourth category, the “unknown known”, or the things we don’t know that we know, belongs in the interpretive framework of the aesthetic conjuring of the Amazon, which settles in the foundation of the previous three spatial dimensions of the narrative Amazon. In other words, the “unknown known” of 4th space *aisthesis* is unknown precisely because its whereabouts are folded into the first three aesthetic spaces.

Meditation on *Aisthesis* and Its Use

This dissertation defines *aisthesis* differently from Walter Mignolo's use of the term. Mignolo's *aisthesis* is defined as "an unelaborated elementary awareness of stimulation, a 'sensation of touch'" related to both aesthetic and political awareness, sense experience and expression (Burgess & Elias, 261). For Mignolo, the object of taste becomes an identifiable aesthetic production and objectification that illuminates new forms of spatial protagonism, obliging agendas and political foundations from the position of decoloniality. For Mignolo, decolonial practice involves the activation of aesthetic judgment as spiritual practice, shifting away from established sensual acquisition activated by vision, the ordering of gender binaries and traditional conceptions of the body. For Mignolo, *aisthesis* involves aesthetics as spiritual practice, one that confronts the powers of "modern aesthetics, and its aftermath to decolonize the regulation of all the sensations to which our bodies respond" (Mignolo and Vázquez, 2013). Following the course of spiritual meditations on race and colonialism that attempt to open new dimensions of consciousness through the contemplation of aesthetics, Mignolo's discourse on *aisthesis* reorders subjective and intersubjective being to subvert definitions found in Western biology. The significance of this practice inspires me to observe the connectedness of the tropics as more than the sum of its plant, animal and sediment parts visualized and documented in human narratives. *Aisthesis* is derivative of the processes of different perceptions, not simply a mythical conjuring based on the visions of Amazonian aesthetics. Mignolo's main point in his work is to call upon the urgent need to decolonize Western aesthetics in order to liberate *aisthesis*. A decoloniality of aesthetics hold this precise strategy of shifting the focus of aesthetic recognition in art and literature toward the practice of engagement with manifestations of *aisthesis* in works of cultural production.

Whereas Mignolo's body of work exemplifies migrant and people of color artists and writers such as those invited to attend the Bandung Conference and the Non-Aligned Movement of which he helped to organize, my own reference point for illustrating *aisthesis* resides in the calibrated 3:4 spatial coordinate of the Amazon landscape. An *aisthesis* of the Amazon does not seek to theorize artistic practices in the context of the tropics but instead address spatial protagonism as a unique experience within the wider scope of geocriticism discussed in Chapter IV. This field of work shifts away from the perspective of traditional adventure narratives that focus on the human subject traversing the jungle and activating colonial themes such as primitiveness, tribalism and animism. It discards the exploration enterprise of colonial expansion onto 3rd space contact zones, turning the place into an endless forest of horror or a virgin Garden of Eden. Instead, an *aisthesis* reading of the tropics seeks to reterritorialize the Amazon landscape with newly diffused meaning that resist the authorial intent of already existing Western Amazonian narratives. While the aesthetics of exploration is derivative of the passage toward a horizon of wonder, one experienced by the Western explorer as well as the audience of exploration narratives, the *aisthesis* experience turns the gaze back onto the human object from the perspective of a central place of judgment. Recall that Deleuze's dual interventions of the smooth space and the striated space are juxtaposed alongside the function of aesthetic reterritorialization not as either or, but both and in between. The in-between dimension of aesthetics functions to morph the Amazon into both smooth space and striated space according to the protagonist actions of the Amazon territory itself. This view of the tropics attempts to retrieve the Amazon from the human longing for colonial conquest that was inadvertently consumed by the past physical failures of conquest and the present success of prolonging that conquest so to maintain the traditional colonial paradigm between center and periphery spaces.

*Aiēsthesi*s also responds to the fantasies of conquest defined by both epistemological fantasy, i.e. a wanting underlined by a knowing of wanting as expressed earlier in my work as a “known unknown”; and a fantastical fantasy, i.e. an irrational wanting of fantastical knowledge regardless of the boundaries of possibilities as suggested by the limitless inquiry into the “unknown unknown”. Amazon as *aiēsthesi*s punctures both the fantasies of the “known unknown” and the fantasies of the “unknown unknown” in the imagination of narrative geography. An epistemological fantasy of conquest has taken many forms, each historically inspired by previous Amazonian adventures that have resulted in some written description and reflection of the tropics. Doyle’s dinosaur population in the mysterious Lost World represents such a fantasy where the expression of a Jurassic utopia was foreshadowed in Challenger’s mission. The *aiēsthesi*s perspective recognizes that in order to do any work toward decoloniality, the critic must recognize that the fantasies of the “known unknown” is personified and magnified by the striated space of Western narration. The Amazon is measured in this way by each subsequent fictional claim, mythology and filmic image. And to the degree that a biblical Garden of Eden is personified vividly in the mind of the believer without any striated measurements of its quality, the Amazon is equally actualized via the fantasy for its articulated mythology in fiction and film. The “unknown unknown”, or the fantastical fantasy, on the other hand, is tasked to emulate a tactic for challenging the current colonial paradigm toward a unified “smooth space”. This line of aesthetic judgment is often taken up by authors and filmmakers in Amazon narratives in a generalized description of the jungle, or a panoramic shot of the tree lines. As a result, the fantastical fantasy casts all possibilities probable and all improbabilities possible.

A recognition of *aiēsthesi*s in the aesthetic 4th space can help synthesize the epistemological fantasy and the fantastical fantasy by revealing a political awareness beyond the

appreciation of aesthetic judgment. On the dialectical movement between “known unknown” and “unknown unknown”, the political awareness of taste belong to the domain of critics, even as it is practiced through the discourse of 1st, 2nd and 3rd space positions. *Aiethesis* is the infusion of a political awareness keen to dismantle coloniality through the folded 4th space. This inclusion of the 4th space positioned alongside the 3rd colonial space calibrates the ripples generated by the confrontation between the epistemological fantasy of discovery and the fantastical fantasy of fiction. A decoloniality of *aiethesis* is a recognition of the paradoxal nature of humanity’s confrontation with the Amazon territory, in that a shift from knowing the narrative tropes of the jungle to being one of its bodily appendages calls into question the ontology of the human. Although numerous attempts at charting the Amazon body beyond its cardinal points of longitude and latitude have failed in the past, perhaps an *aiethesis* reading of the forest locates the object of inquiry onto the human, where the forest ponders whether to consume, release or correspond with the foreign entity.

Spatiality Calibrated in 3:4, or the Merging of Coloniality and Aesthetics

The coloniality of aesthetics, following the above iteration from Chapters VII and VIII, is thus constructed from two metaphysical properties in 1) coloniality, and 2) aesthetics. In coloniality, I designate the outer colonial 3rd space of geoappropriation, which contrasts and maintains the hierarchy of 1st colonial center and 2nd colonial periphery positions on an epistemological account of power relations. In aesthetics, I designate the extra dimensional 4th space, or the space of *aiethesis*, as an imaginary geography rendered visible on account of 1st space contact, 2nd space authorial text and 3rd space readership perception. Together, these two metaphysical properties join to construct the coloniality of aesthetics with the designated numerical signature of 3:4, conceived as *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*. I use the verb “calibrate” to

describe the focal point of where 3rd space coloniality and 4th space *aesthesis* intersect in modern literary analysis. To calibrate is to determine or rectify the graduation of the instrument of cultural critique in qualitative measurements. The act of calibration also implies that spatiality can be recalibrated for alternative discourses. For example, a spatiality calibrated in 1:2 refers to a literary description of Ulysses' Dublin, i.e. a 1st colonial space of the European center intersecting with the 2nd literary space of authorial intent. This area is where most geocritical analysis takes place in traditional literary theory. I use the preposition "in" to mark the inference that calibration occurs at the junction overlapping two different discourses with two varying lineages of knowledge. The "in" designates a bounded space where these discourses overlap in restricted and localized ways. Here, the discourse of coloniality activates the first numeric marking, while the discourse of literary perspectives and relational readings of fiction and film activates the second numeric marking. The Amazon basin's 3:4 marking resembles a specific cultural theory of aesthetics as a relational integer alongside Western geoappropriation of the outer colonial periphery, where its inference produces the traditional relationship between colonial core and the inner colonial periphery.

The two designated integers of 3:4 differ also in their spatial formation from a visual perspective. The colonial designations of 1st, 2nd and 3rd spaces map out in the geometry of three concentric circles in the spirit of a reverse Copernican revolution. Here, the sun is replaced with the colonial center, the second orbiting ring represents the colonial periphery, and the third outer satellite object represents the 3rd space of Amazon tropics. The 1st space of contact occurs first in time as first-person accounts, followed by 2nd and 3rd space positions in the narrative imaginary, while 4th space *aesthesis* is folded within the underlying function of the first three positions. The aesthetic spatial formation designates an order of hierarchy stemming from the charted space of

cardinal reference in reality, to the filtered lens of the narrative form, to the interpretation of art and literature that come after the creation of narration and text. In this iteration of spatial charting, *spatiality calibrated in 3:4* represents the Amazon basin as a geography of colonial narrative. Amazon in 3:4 signifies specifically a visible and stable position through the focused lens of coloniality and aesthetics, by the architecture of the Amazon's unchanging geographic characteristics in tropical fictions. The lens of coloniality interplays with the aesthetic 4th space, generating an Amazonian identity through conflict and antagonism between the two analytical dimensions. The jungle iterates a disciplined conflict between the expected conformity of colonial spatiality and the possibly subversive image of aesthetic representation.

Conclusion

This dissertation is inspired by the concept of decolonial aesthetics,⁹⁰ which follows the work of Latin American artists, activists and allies that celebrate an alter-modern standard for and by the global south. Various working groups⁹¹ from a variety of genealogies engage in artistic practices from the standpoint of a transnational identity-*in-politics*. Rather than a state-promoted practice of multiculturalism, decolonial aesthetics links anti-colonial liberatory practices with a sense of interculturality by re-creating “identities that were either denied or acknowledged first but in the end were silenced by the discourse of modernity, postmodernity, and... altermodernity”⁹² (Escobar, 1992, p.12). Decolonial aesthetics, in its wider framework of

⁹⁰ The term was introduced by the Colombian artist, activist, and scholar Adolfo Albán in 2003 (Mignolo and Vázquez 2013; Rojas-Sotelo 2014). Multiple other artists, activists, and scholars have contributed to the elaboration of the concept. This is evinced in the “Manifiesto for a Decolonial Aesthetics” (Lockward, Vázquez, Díaz Nerio, et. al. 2011) along with the wide range exhibits, workshops, and publications (Rojas-Sotelo 2014).

⁹¹ In November of 2010, an exhibit on “Decolonial Aesthetics” opened at Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, in Bogotá, Colombia. On May 4-7, 2011, a follow up exhibit and workshop on “Decolonial Aesthetics” was organized at Duke University. These

⁹² In 1998, at the World Congress of Sociology in Montreal, Edgardo Lander organized the symposium “Alternatives to Eurocentrism and Colonialism in Latin-American Social Thought”, with the participation of Aníbal Quijano, Arturo Escobar, Fernando Coronil, Walter D. Mignolo. From this foundational meeting

strategies and goals, includes the critical revamping of colonial canons of art and literature, and static identities in modern systems of classification including linguistic and visual hierarchies. In seeking a transmodern and pluriversal state of being, creative practitioners of decolonial aesthetics have endorsed a foundational movement rooted in the conceptual legacies of the Bandung Conference⁹³ in 1955, and the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement⁹⁴ in 1961, building a coalition of artists and activist neither capitalist nor communist, but decolonial. Decolonial practice, in this way, preaches the creative forms of autonomy between the borders of the modern and colonial world. To draw out the importance of a practice of *aiesthesis* in spatial imagination. This dissertation considers the discourse of a coloniality of aesthetics, or *spatiality calibrated in 3:4*, culminating from the previous eight chapters, and contrasts the practice of aesthetics and *aiesthesis* through a diagnostic of the literary visions and filmic lenses of the Western imagination. The application of my analysis through these forms of representation on spatiality materialize in the collective cognitive mapping of the Amazon basin, and demonstrate alternative paths of travel through the dense jungle of a Deleuzian territory.

In recognizing the application of *aiesthesis*, one can start to reject the intended position of the Amazon in its various narrative forms as either the antagonist to a moral allegory, or simply a background in which meaningful and fatalistic human gestures occur and dissipate. In this approach, the jungle is no longer a *where* within which characters interact, but a living protagonist acting alongside existing human characters. In this work I hope to generate a decolonial act that returns spatial belonging to a Deleuze's territory, which provides a form of

emerged the most known book of the group: *La colonialidad del saber: euro-centrismo y ciencias sociales*, Buenos Aires, CLACSO, 2000. This meeting planted the seed of what will become the project *Modernity/Coloniality/Decoloniality*, magisterially summarized by Arturo Escobar in his classic article "World and Knowledges Otherwise".

⁹³ The Bandung Conference.

⁹⁴ The Non-Aligned Movement.

narrative agency both in the visual content of the novels and films in discussion, as well as an alternative spatial mapping between the intended artwork and its reception. I draw attention to the material aspect of the Amazon in order to read the landscape itself as an agent capable of developing a structure of resistance to the artwork that seek to represent it. This alternative reading of the Amazon is a step toward a liberating exercise for the Amazon to break free of its encoded narrative tropes calibrated in 3:4. I am intrigued by the future development of this rereading which seeks to illustrate how certain elements of the novel such as the protagonist can operate within material processes that include other nonhuman and nonconscious actors. Such a recognition forces us to acknowledge the ways that nonhuman actors can exercise agency in the development of plot, helping to shape the ways territory can crystallize out of the flows and relations between human and nonhuman forces. My work seeks to forward a process by which spatial terrain can participate in a broad spectrum of ways, take on unexpected characteristic traits and bring to life new milieus and appendages despite its designated genres, tropes and stereotypes.

Confronting a narrative craft designed to systematize and naturalize a colonial 3rd space beyond the colonial core and periphery designations alongside its aesthetic 4th space is a challenging task. But I believe a decoloniality of aesthetics is possible and such practices can open up new interpretive passageways beyond both the past failures of Amazon's epistemic conquest and the present contentment for its symbolic order and place in the Copernican cardinality from center to margin. The critical rereading of the 4th space aesthetics of the Amazon territory helps to identify a new protagonist, the Amazon itself, which can act to defy its encoded meaning across centuries of colonial narratives in travel writing, fiction and cinema. This method of reading is initiated by a recognition that the Amazon is already cast toward the

far end of the colonial paradigm, and alongside its inwardly folded aesthetic 4th space dimension, its *spatiality calibrated in 3:4* is a designation that reveals a dual presence, which attunes the spatial-temporal persona of the Amazon territory as a protagonist of spatiality, and which subverts previous colonial tropes, narrative devices and visual renditions in Western storytelling.

This dissertation encourages an open-ended investigation into the operation of spatiality in Western artworks, by reversing the protagonist vs. antagonist paradigm in a multitude of bodily renderings and to generate meaning away from human ideologies of colonial spatial hierarchies. I introduce *aiesthesis* interpretation to not only prioritize spatiality in a given geoappropriated narrative, but how that space is articulated in both the encoding and decoding of 1st space exploration, 2nd space authorial intent and 3rd space reader interpretation along with its construction of historical tropicality. I read the Amazon not in terms of terror, redemption and commodity extraction, or as a dreamscape of conscious imaginaries used to define the jungle in relation to the human. Nor do I wish to exemplify the estranged conditions of the Amazon via its object-centric extraordinaire- the pink dolphin, the botfly plant, the anaconda, et cetera. An alternative aesthetics should include the larger ecosystem of its territorial body including all its milieus and appendages, and not just a single species and its horrific effect on human life. More creative writing is needed to weave the aesthetics of the Amazon as a geometric shape in relation to the earth's position in the solar system, not just a jungle as a resource for human consumption, an oxygen source for human breathability. The two active positions in the coloniality of aesthetics, marked by *3:4*, privileges a spatial narrative play over the traditional geometries of the jungle fantasy, in the hopes that more creative ways to organize new geographies, cardinalities and spatial formations can be made possible.

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