

AMAZONIAN CARTOGRAPHIES: MAPPING NOVELS AND THE PRODUCTION OF
SPACE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY LATIN AMERICA

by
Amanda Mignonne Smith

A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland
June 2015

© 2015 Amanda Mignonne Smith
All Rights Reserved

Abstract

The decline of the first Amazonian Rubber Boom in 1912 was only the beginning of Amazonia's emergence as an important literary territory. This dissertation explores how Latin American intellectuals throughout the twentieth century grapple in their novels with the ways that extractive processes at different historical moments surveyed, transformed, and devastated Amazonia and how their resulting literary cartographies have intervened in Amazonian spaces. Scholars have recently begun to consider the representation of Amazonia across Latin American fiction, addressing the void in literary criticism on this region commonly relegated to anthropological, biological, and geographical studies. However, the role that literature has played in shaping Amazonia has not received sufficient attention.

My research focuses on authors from Amazonian countries whose work writes against processes such as state mapping, geographic curriculum, railroad construction, and extractivism that have codified Amazonia for integration into cultural and economic projects. I examine how their novels try to account for geographic experiences elided for the sake of those projects as well as how their efforts to design what they see as more faithful literary "maps" often produce other problematic omissions. I engage the problem of the translation of space from observation to representation—literary and otherwise—and I theorize how these representations work to create Amazonia in their image.

The first chapter unpacks *La vorágine* (1924) as a response to José Eustasio Rivera's participation in the Colombian-Venezuelan border commission from 1921-1922. Chapter 2 departs from Rómulo Gallegos's 1935 novel *Canaima* to illustrate the ways that literature, geographic curriculum, and shamanism have overlapped in mapping Guayana. The third chapter shows how the destruction of railroad records presents an opportunity for Brazilian author

Márcio Souza in *Mad Maria* (1980) to reinvent the spaces of American capitalism along the Madeira and Mamoré Rivers. Finally, my last chapter considers the transformation of Iquitos into a shamanic retreat center via César Calvo's *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía* (1981). Together, these chapters demonstrate the complex interplay between various modes of spatial representation and the crucial role played by literature in negotiating and producing Amazonian spaces.

Advisor: Sara Castro-Klarén

Second Reader: Eduardo González

Acknowledgements

This dissertation had to cross the Andes before reaching Amazonia, an intellectual and personal journey that would not have been possible without the guidance, support, flexibility, and tireless feedback of my advisor, Sara Castro-Klarén, whose expertise, insight, and academic rigor both demanded and inspired excellence in my work. I am also indebted to Eduardo González, Bill Egginton, Harry Sieber, Nadia Altschul, Lisa DeLeonardis, Debbie Poole, and Franklin Knight, in whose seminars I began tinkering with many of the ideas that appear here. A special thanks to Julie Reiser for her indispensable dissertation writing workshop and to *la Joda* members, Amy Sheeran, Christopher Kozey, Julia Baumgardt, and Mike Strayer, for being exemplary colleagues and peer editors and steadfastly encouraging friends.

My archival work in Colombia and Peru was supported by grants from JHU's Program in Latin American Studies and the Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures. I am eternally grateful to the personnel at the Archivo General de la Nación and the Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia (BNC) in Bogotá, especially Camilo Páez and Robinson López Arévalo of the BNC. In Iquitos, I am grateful to Julio Ramírez Arévalo for helping me navigate the Biblioteca Amazónica and to Martín Reátegui for the tips on Manuel Córdova that saved me days of searching. To my generous hosts and homes away from home, my most heartfelt gratitude: in Bogotá, Elsa, Gustavo, and Mauricio Patiño, and Tulia Peña; in Lima, Norma Vital Luna, Raúl Molina Caballero, Sebastián Flores Molina, and *turay* Carlos Molina Vital.

I wrote the entirety of this dissertation in my surrogate university community in Bloomington, Indiana. There, I am indebted to Micaela Richter, John Nieto-Phillips, Anke Birkenmaier, and Sylvia Martínez, who adopted me into the Latino Studies *familia* and sponsored me to use IU's research facilities. The first people to welcome me to IU were Spanish

graduate students, Eric Carbajal and Hannah Agauas, whose support and companionship are woven into the pages that follow. I thank them, especially, for the necessary levity that their senses of humor brought to long hours of dissertating.

The seeds of my future doctoral self were planted during my undergraduate years on another Big Ten campus in a course on Borges, García Márquez, Onetti, and Rulfo. María E. Mudrovcic's challenging and provocative class discussions first whetted my appetite for Latin American literature, and she has, since that time, been a constant and enthusiastic champion of my intellectual pursuits. For the inexhaustible fount of inspiration that her wisdom has provided me over the years, I offer my most profound appreciation.

I am overwhelmed with gratitude for *mi amor, mi cómplice y todo*, to borrow from Benedetti. Grant Whipple shared in every frustration and anxiety, triumph and joy along this adventure, both on paper and in the jungle. He patiently listened as I talked through ideas, asked stimulating questions that helped me clarify my thoughts, celebrated milestones big and small, believed in me during every step forward and back, and shared a soggy night of sleeplessness on the jungle floor of Pacaya-Samiria in the middle of a tropical storm. He would be the first to say that I could have done this without him, but the experience would have lacked luster.

Finally, this dissertation is dedicated to two people who accompanied me only in spirit throughout this process. To my grandfather, Bob Smith, who played poker to pay his way through medical school, studied less than his peers, and received the highest marks. Without his hard work, vision, and generosity, my education would not have been possible. To my dad, Paul Smith, who, more than anyone else, helped me to cultivate my imagination and curiosity. I thank him for spending many weekends of his all-too-brief life telling me that everything I wrote was genius as I sat on his lap crafting short stories on his word processor.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| 1. Mapping Lines, Writing Vortexes: Cartographic Illusion and Counter-Mapping in <i>La vorágine</i> | 25 |
| 2. <i>Canaima</i> and the Layers of Spatial Discourse in Guayana: Regionalism, Geography Manuals, and <i>Kanaimà</i> | 83 |
| 3. Laying Tracks to Nowhere: Márcio Souza’s Dark Ecology in <i>Mad Maria</i> | 148 |
| 4. Iquitos at the Crosscurrents of Extraction and Shamanism: Hidden Spaces in César Calvo’s <i>Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía</i> | 207 |
| 5. Conclusions..... | 285 |
| 6. Works Cited..... | 293 |

List of Figures

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Carlinatura from February 5, 2015 | 2 |
| 2. Colombian 20,000 peso note | 33 |
| 3. Detail of 1923 map corresponding to Rivera’s section of the commission..... | 43 |
| 4. One of Rivera’s maps of the river system near the Isana, Inírida, and Guaviare | 45 |
| 5. First page of the manuscript of <i>La vorágine</i> | 46 |
| 6. 1928 Editorial Andes front matter | 65 |
| 7. Photograph of Rivera as Arturo Cova for early editions of <i>La vorágine</i> | 77 |
| 8. Los pueblos que se tragó el carbón..... | 81 |
| 9. Front matter for Smith’s geography | 118 |
| 10. Logging rails overgrown with vegetation at site of Astoria mill..... | 263 |
| 11. Overgrown sawmill infrastructure at former Astoria site..... | 264 |
| 12. Rusted metal crane and overgrown sawmill infrastructure at former Astoria site | 264 |
| 13. Astoria Sawmill on the Amazon River, c. 1947-1948..... | 269 |

Introduction

Amazonia in Maps and Counter-Maps

More indigenous territory has been claimed by maps than by guns...more indigenous territory can be reclaimed and defended by maps than guns.
–Bernard Nietschmann

Because of the presence of the colonizing outsider, the land is recoverable at first only through imagination.
–Edward Said

In response to Pluspetrol's repeated failure to answer to demands from the Achuar and Kichwa peoples of the Peruvian Amazon for compensation for the company's misuse of the communities' lands and water, celebrated Lima caricaturist, Carlos Tovar Samanez (b. 1947), better known as "Carlín," published a cartoon in the Peruvian center-left newspaper *La República* (5 Feb 2015) showing an Amerindian woman and man standing in a contaminated river downstream of the private multinational (see fig. 1).¹ They are holding protest signs cut off by the picture frame, symbolizing the company's silencing of the Amerindians' protests. The only voice represented comes from a man in a hard hat who speaks to the figures in the foreground from the roof of a factory as if from a parapet upstream: "Ustedes están fuera del área de influencia. Si el río arrastró el petróleo, no es culpa nuestra" (Carlín). The sharp, uniform angles of Pluspetrol's colorless and barricaded factory stand in contrast to the loose, gestural lines that render the surrounding landscape of green and blue hues where vegetation, rivers,

1. The Achuar and Kichwa communities of the Loreto department of Peru have been protesting Pluspetrol's noncompliance and environmental destruction since the company first began operating there in 2000. The multinational company has been fighting to avoid payment on over 39.4 million Peruvian soles (approximately U.S. \$12,745,000) in fines for environmental infractions as well as repairs for ninety-two affected sites (Luna Amancio). As of March 2015, the Achuar people won a U.S. lawsuit against another offending company, Occidental Petroleum, marking the first time a U.S. company was sued in a U.S. court for pollution in another country. The Achuar community has stated that they will not refrain from filing a similar suit against Pluspetrol (Amazon Watch).

people, and pollution intermingle. Pluspetrol's homogenous factory space appears separate from the jungle scene, but its waste nevertheless seeps beyond its walls, connecting it to the heterogeneous ecology beyond. The result is a fictional representation of Pluspetrol's real and egregious intervention along the rivers where the company operates, based on Achuar and Kichwa accounts. As a sort of map of the permeability of Pluspetrol's "area of influence," Carlin's fictional illustration nevertheless highlights the fiction of the oil company's representations of its Amazonian operations.



Figure 1. Carlinatura from February 5, 2015
Reproduced with permission from the artist

Such uses of fictional representation to signal and censure the fictional qualities of official maps of Amazonia are the topic of this dissertation. Specifically, I examine novels as maps that undermine state and corporate representations of Amazonia throughout the twentieth

century. During the rubber boom (1879-1912),² the region experienced its first large-scale structural reorganization as a consequence of entering the global political economy.³ Since then, South American intellectuals who have spent time in the Amazonian regions of their countries have grappled with the dramatic and often violent transformations imposed by the division and codification of Amazonia throughout numerous extractive cycles. I read the novels resulting from these considerations as contact zones where conflicting spatialities come into focus.⁴ In the cases I examine, authors' firsthand experiences of a heterogeneous Amazonia call into question the authority of urban institutional powers that tried to homogenize the region for control and

2. Rubber has been tapped in Amazonia by Amerindian peoples since long before the Conquest and was reported in Columbus's letters, and notably, by La Condamine. During Brazil's colonial period, a variety of manufactured products such as raincoats and boots were made from rubber and sold abroad. However, prior to Charles Goodyear's 1839 discovery of the process of vulcanizing rubber to preserve its plasticity, international demand remained relatively low. A few decades later, the increased popularity of the bicycle as well as the automobile contributed to the boom in the rubber economy. Dates vary as to when the boom began. Commercialization of rubber had started to increase in the 1850s and peaked in 1879 with over 10,000 metric tons exported that year (Weinstein 53). 1912 marks the year that Southeast Asian rubber plantations, cultivated from seeds smuggled from South America, began to take over the market.

3. Missions were organized throughout Amazonia during the colonial period, which did involve spatial restructuring of Amerindian communities. However, the difficulty of Amazonian terrain for both the Spanish and the Portuguese as well as resistance by Amerindian groups, kept comprehensive colonization of Amazonia at bay until the nineteenth century.

4. I borrow the term "contact zone" to evoke Mary Louise Pratt's redeployment of this Bakhtinian concept meaning "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermath as they are lived out across the globe today" (Pratt 7). In this case, novels are contact zones where disparate and sometimes contradictory spatialities meet.

exploitation.⁵ I ask how authors understood and responded to these projects and consider the potential of literary maps to reveal spatialities otherwise obscured by those projects. My discussion includes both established canonical authors as well as less-commonly-studied authors in order to offer a broad sample of perspectives on Amazonia. This dissertation seeks to understand how a variety of cartographies—both literary and scientific—have worked together and against each other to represent and shape Amazonian spaces.

I argue that the novel is a genre particularly well suited to counter-map. In human geography, counter-maps refer to territorial representations resulting from the appropriation and application of techniques used in state and corporate maps, primarily by indigenous peoples, often in conjunction with activists and anthropologists, to legitimize land claims otherwise at risk (Rundstrom 314).⁶ Building on this emancipatory potential of the counter-map but avoiding its false dichotomy of indigenous and “non-indigenous” peoples, my use of the term more broadly refers to any representations of space that deliberately undermines both the techniques and resulting cartographic representations of hegemonic mapping projects. Whereas maps colonize

5. I take this notion that the spatial practices of capitalist exploitation produce homogenous space from Lefebvre’s theorization of abstract space. Abstract space, according to the French philosopher, results from the division of labor and is a form of space that “endeavours to mould the spaces it dominates (i.e. peripheral spaces), and it seeks, often by violent means, to reduce obstacles and resistance it encounters there. Differences, for their part, are forced into the symbolic forms of an art that is itself abstract” (49). I will discuss Lefebvre at greater length below.

6. “Counter-mapping” is a term first used by forest policy scholar Nancy Peluso to describe the “bottom-up” mapping strategies employed by villagers in Kalimantan, Indonesia to legitimize local claims to land in contrast to hegemonic state maps. Building indirectly on Foucault’s concept of counter-power, Peluso affirms the “transformative power” of such maps to “greatly increase the power of people living in a mapped area to control representations of themselves and their claims to natural resources” (384; 387).

space by dividing, quantifying, and simplifying territories in order to render them finite, uniform, knowable, and ready for use, the novel counter-maps I discuss question the methods of such maps by showing the omitted interconnections, confusions, and complexities of mapped space. Because novels, as Bakhtin suggests, constitute a dialogic and plastic genre in which temporal and spatial relationships have an “intrinsic connectedness,” they serve as a form distinctly predisposed to destabilize cartographic linearity (84). The counter-maps of Amazonia that I analyze subject Euclidean spaces to review and attempt to account for alternative spatialities effaced by the straight, uniform lines of maps.

The geographical designation “Amazonia” refers not only to the drainage basin of the world’s largest river but more broadly, to the vast region joined by its tributaries and comprised of rainforest, dry and flooded savanna, deforested farmland, and developed cities. Indeed, as Charles Mann notes, “Only about half of Amazonia is upland forest—vines overhead in a tangle like sailing ships rigged by drunks; tree branches in multiple layers; beetles the size of butterflies and butterflies the size of birds—the ecosystem that people outside the region usually mean when they say ‘Amazon’” (327). Loosely delimited by the Andes to the west, the Guiana Shield to the north, and the Brazilian shield to the south, Amazonia spans across nine countries: French Guiana, Suriname, Guyana, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Brazil.

In my discussion, I broaden these geographical limits to include the intersecting Orinoco river network and surrounding ecologies within the Guiana Shield, purported home of the gold-bathing chief El Dorado. My justification for considering Amazonia as Amazo-Orinoquia is primarily literary⁷: some of the narratives I explore move back and forth fluidly between

7. I thank Colombian anthropologist Carlos Páramo Bonilla for the suggestion to use the term “Amazo-Orinoquia.” In a personal conversation he argued that there is not much difference between Amazonia and

Amazonia and Orinoquia without distinguishing between the two regions. Additionally, there are geographical and cultural precedents for examining these two river networks together.

Geographically speaking, the Orinoco and Amazon Rivers are united by the Casiquiare River, a discovery first made known to the Western world by Humboldt and Bonpland's 1800 voyage along that river.⁸ Both Benjamin Belton and Hugh Raffles have suggested that in the Western imaginary, this link was also epistemological, wherein the foundational myths of the Amazons and El Dorado became intertwined.⁹ Furthermore, both the Orinoco and the Amazon have shared the symbolic designations of Edenic paradise and green hell. Raffles also provides a local perspective that unites the two river networks. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the region known as Guiana stretching across the Orinoco and Amazon, was comprised of "shifting indigenous polities that spanned the Pakaraima uplands dividing the watersheds of the Amazon and Orinoco (76). Taking into account this fluid interrelationship, this study considers together mappings of the Putumayo and the region beyond the triple border, Venezuelan Guayana, the Upper Peruvian Amazon, and an area at the border of Brazil and Bolivia along the Madeira River.

Orinoquia; rather they are categories chosen to invent a distinction. Their rivers, he explained, do not end, though, and there are no clear boundaries between them. In his article, "Cinco personajes de *La vorágine*: Tipos, mito e historia de la Amazo-Orinoquia," he highlights how *La vorágine* relates happenings that connect the histories of Amazonia and Orinoquia.

8. As Belton explains, "One of the goals of Humboldt's trip was to establish for once and for all the relationship between the Orinoco and Amazon, which had been the subject of much speculation" (80).

9. Belton, in studying Sir Walter Raleigh's association of the Amazon with El Dorado, argues that impressions of Amazonia were mediated by and incorporated into an already existing archive of Orinoco encounters and legends. Raffles concurs, "For the English...there was little reason to distinguish between the Amazon and the Orinoco" (75).

There are many reasons for a project that explores Amazonian mapping fictions and the counter-discursive potential of unofficial narrative “maps” to denounce and overwrite them. As a region that serves both as the quintessential playground for the developmentalist imagination and the archetypal impediment to modernization,¹⁰ Amazonia has become increasingly caught in conflicts over how to understand, represent, and use its spaces. Conservationist policies frequently prohibit long-standing land use practices. National parks overlap with communal lands. Ecuador’s constitution guarantees the protection of its Amazonian provinces as part of an idealized “ecosistema necesario para el equilibrio ambiental del planeta,” but faced with economic demands, President Correa opened oil drilling on the Yasuni region in 2013.¹¹ Numerous other examples abound of instances in which institutions in positions of power ultimately draw the lines that define Amazonian territories and their uses. Though participatory mapping and the use of social media have worked to reallocate both land and power in these struggles,¹² attention to how such conflicts have shaped Amazonia in the past provides a context for both successful strategies and potential pitfalls. Indeed, another reason for this study is that it responds to a call from geographers for increased attention to space and mapping from a humanities perspective in order to theorize how “cultural and aesthetic practices—

10. I am paraphrasing Ericka Beckman here. Following a discussion of Sarmiento, she explains the concept of nature in the Latin American export economy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: “‘nature’ functioned as a chief obstacle to modernization (marking the *absence* of human endeavor), its perceived virginity simultaneously enabled fantastic visions of the future” (18).

11. See Kraus’s *New York Times* article for more information on this decision.

12. Participatory mapping is a form of counter-mapping and involves collaborative efforts, generally using GIS technologies, to empower indigenous peoples to map their lands. For more on participatory cartography and ethnology, see Herhily and Knapp; Smith et al.; and Chapin and Threlkeld.

spatializations—intervene in the political-economic dynamic of social and political change” (Harvey, “Between” 429). Finally, my focus on Amazonia, a region often relegated to study in the sciences and social sciences contributes to an emerging body of scholarship that has begun to consider the vast riverine network from a literary and cultural studies perspective. At the same time, my interdisciplinary approach to this comparative work makes this study relevant not only to literature specialists but also to those working in the fields of anthropology and geography, not to mention that it could provide fruitful thought for political activists, policy makers, and corporate entities.

Amazonian Cartographies

Interest in Amazonia as a region of study in literary and cultural studies has gained momentum in the past two decades. Notably, Bolivian literary critic Nicomedes Suárez-Araúz established the *Amazonian Literary Review* in 1998 at Smith College to highlight Amazonian authors writing about Amazonian themes.¹³ Brazilian literary critic Pedro Maligo and Chilean critic Ana Pizarro have both published book-length projects analyzing the representation of Amazonia in Brazilian and Latin American literature, respectively. Both Maligo’s *Land of Metaphorical Desires* (1998) and Pizarro’s *Amazonia: El río tiene voces* (2011) chart the misrepresentation of Amazonia by outsiders writing about the region throughout history. Ileana Rodríguez’s *Transatlantic Topographies* (2004) also includes a section on Amazonia that excavates the colonial discourse in contemporary representations of Amazonia in Latin American literature. Candace Slater’s *Entangled Edens: Visions of the Amazon* (2002) similarly

13. The journal produced three editions before Suárez-Araúz’s retirement. In 2004, he published *Literary Amazonia* as a compilation of the journals.

examines the ways that Amazonia has been (mis)understood and (mis)represented, and she considers perspectives beyond literature including those of chroniclers, corporate executives, and subsistence farmers. In *Rain Forest Literatures: Amazonian Texts and Latin American Culture* (2004), Lúcia Sá opts for a subregional focus, examining how literature and indigenous cosmologies have intersected in representing different areas of Amazonia. While these studies make important contributions to understanding the discourses at work in describing Amazonia, they do not fully explore the way that the resulting representations in turn shape the regions that they refer to.

At the same time, the increased emphasis on thoroughly examining the discourses at work in Amazonian literary studies has allowed for a pivotal turn away from studies that have viewed the region primarily through an anthropological lens. Roberto González Echevarría notably argues for the prevalence of anthropological discourse in Latin American literature in his *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative* (1990). Though certainly relevant to the study of Latin American literature, this angle has spawned numerous studies that appropriate anthropological discourse in their analysis as well, including González Echevarría's own analysis of "jungle books" from Latin America, which departs from the notion that all jungles are more or less equal ("Canaima" 336). Long before González Echevarría, Lydia de León Hazera published *La novela de la selva hispanoamericana*, using similar terminology and theoretical premises (1971). Likewise Charlotte Rogers adopts this categorical grouping of jungle literature for her 2012 *Jungle Fever: Exploring Madness and Medicine in Twentieth-Century Tropical Narratives*. These studies focus on tropical forests as a broad category in which Amazonia is only one

example.¹⁴ León Hazera and González Echevarría refer to tropical forests throughout Latin America, whereas Rogers extends her scope to the jungles across the globe between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The problem, of course, with grouping Amazonia into these jungle designations is first that it tends to homogenize all jungles as the same kind of space and second that it reinforces anthropological stereotyping of Amazonia as a uniformly dense jungle rather than the diverse region that it actually is. My analysis diverges from these studies in its attentions to the unique textures of Amazonian cartographies.

Broadly understood, cartography necessarily uses reductive representations of space to create tools to make sense of and navigate physical space. As such, mapping is a process by which the chaos of observed space is rendered finite, usable, and, therefore, legible.¹⁵ A perhaps overused but pithy example to describe the relationship between a map's form and function is Jorge Luis Borges's short essay, "De rigor en la ciencia," in which an empire obsessed with cartographic perfection creates a map so precise that it is the exact size of the empire itself. Future generations see the impractical map as useless and allow it to deteriorate slowly. In only a few sentences, Borges captures the absurdity of belief in cartographic illusion, the perception that a map corresponds precisely to the land it codifies, for if the cartographic illusion were real the map would occupy the territory it described. And yet in a sense, this supplanting of the map for the territory is the effect of cartographic illusion, whereby the tool becomes the interface between the person and the world.

14. Other studies have perpetuated this overgeneralized categorical grouping of texts as "jungle novels" or "novelas de la selva." For examples, see Devries, Marcone ("Nuevos descubrimientos"), and Wylie.

15. The phrasing of rendering space legible belongs to James C. Scott, who describes the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam to defoliate the forest and thus render it legible and safe for government forces.

More than just traditional maps attempt to produce this cartographic illusion, and the spatial turn in critical theory allows for the consideration of a wide range of cultural products as maps.¹⁶ French literary critic Bertrand Westphal's elaboration of geocritical theory proposes that a variety of forms of literature serve as maps that appear to correspond to actual places and thus mediate people's experiences of the world. Another geocritical theorist, Robert T. Tally, further explains, "literature also functions as a form of mapping, offering its readers descriptions of places, situating them in a kind of imaginary space, and providing points of reference by which they orient themselves and understand the world in which they live" (*Spatiality* 2). One need only think of Colombia's recent tourist campaign, "Colombia is magical realism," for an example of how a geographically diverse place can be filtered through a singular literary lens, in this case the fictitious town of Macondo. The spatial turn, then, allows for an understanding of space as what Edward Soja has called "real-and-imagined" in that maps, which guide people to and through various spaces, necessarily contain figurative or fictitious elements, and those maps, in turn, create the experience of the spaces they describe (*Thirdspace* 81).

Cartographic processes, then, are not merely representational endeavors; rather, they intervene in and work to form the spaces they represent. Henri Lefebvre's "science of space" has been crucial in my theorizing of the ways that Amazonian cartographies have produced spaces throughout the vast region. Lefebvre's 1974 *The Production of Space*, which has been foundational for key spatial theorists such as David Harvey, Edward Soja, and Bertrand

16. The spatial turn acknowledges that in the nineteenth century, "space became steadily subordinated to time in modern consciousness," which manifest "through the lens of historicism, a despatialized consciousness in which geography figured weakly or not at all" (Warf and Arias 2). The spatial turn, then, is the reassertion of space into modern consciousness and critical theory. Foucault was one of the first theorists to articulate this transition in "Of Other Spaces" ("Des espaces autres" 1967).

Westphal, was, as Tally explains “both a reflection of and a motive force in the spatial turn” (*Spatiality* 116). More than any other theorist, Lefebvre overturns the notion of space as an empty container by developing his concept of the spatial triad in spatial relations. For Lefebvre, space is comprised of the physical world, mental abstractions of it—both philosophical and mathematical, and the social in the Marxist sense of an emotional and ideological bond between society and space (7). These three dimensions, which he calls perceived (spatial practice), conceived (representations of space), and lived (representational space), respectively—terms that I refer to throughout this dissertation—exist in a dialectical relationship.¹⁷ Lefebvre’s Marxist orientation proves befitting to discuss the spatiality of a region devastated locally by international economic practices. Using his spatial trialectics, I understand both scientific and literary maps of Amazonia as part of the same category of spatial production; both kinds of representations of space affect spatial practice and the lived experience of those spaces. In this

17. Karplus and Meir provide one of the clearest and most succinct definitions of these somewhat opaque terms in Lefebvre: “‘Perceived space’ is linked to the production and reproduction of the economy and of the workforce—that is, of society. It can be defined as the concrete physical arrangements and characteristics of each society’s land use patterns, a man-made second nature built upon the sediments of historical spatialities. ‘Conceived space’ is an abstract formation that imposes an order over concrete space through laws, assigned values, and jurisdiction derived from the ‘[social] relations of [economic] production and the ‘order’ which those relations impose’ (Lefebvre, 1991 [1974], page 33). The final layer of Lefebvre’s structure, ‘lived space’, is shaped by symbolism and meaning vested in space by society. It can be seen as the emotional bonding agent between society and its space, a produced ideology of space and a sense of place. It is ‘directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of “inhabitants” and “users”’ (page 39). As such, lived space can also be an arena for spatial appropriation by groups from within the society (or from outside) who hold alternative, even subversive, perceptions, conceptions, and ideologies of the established space” (26).

way, I am able to theorize how the Amazonian cartographies I analyze affect the spaces they represent.

The problem with the spatial turn for Amazonian studies, though, is that it departs from a Eurocentric timeline in which “modern consciousness” (Warf and Arias 2) turns spatial following the “cataclysmic restructuring of societies during, and in the immediate aftermath of, the Second World War,” which “led to the decline in the obsession with time, not to mention the abandonment of the image of history as a progressive movement towards ever greater freedom and enlightenment” (Tally, *Spatiality* 12). By filtering spatial theory through a postcolonial perspective, I understand that in the colonial world at large, this spatial consciousness emerges much earlier due to the “cataclysmic restructuring” of conquest and colonization. Throughout Amazonia, as mentioned, the most intense period of outside intervention and spatial destruction and reordering was not the colonial period but rather the decades corresponding to its first rubber boom. Taussig, focusing on the Putumayo region of Colombia, one of the most heavily tapped regions during the boom, concludes that the rubber economy inspired a “culture of terror,” turning Amazonia into a “space of death” (3). The rubber boom, therefore, marks the beginning of the spatial turn in Amazonia and serves as the point of departure for this analysis.

Another limitation of spatial theory for the study of a region often stereotyped as “natural” is that the urban focus of much spatial analysis can tend to reinforce notions of humans as separate from “nature,” thus perpetuating Western bias in spatial studies. Given the context of urban protest and class struggle in France that inspired much of Foucault’s and Lefebvre’s spatial work, for example, the focus of many studies that have followed their lead has been on industrialized cities and human alternatives to capitalist abstraction there. Actions that transform space unfold in cities where the active human production of space gives way to them, and

“nature,” on the other hand, remains a passive periphery for incorporation, raw materials for production. From this perspective, economic peripheries seem doomed to disappear in territorial struggles as either capitalist or revolutionary spaces increasingly encroach on them. As a result, much spatial theory continues to dichotomize the world according to the “dualist ontology” of Eurocentric binaries described by Arturo Escobar: spaces are either urban or natural, human or non-human, thereby implying that “nature” is both a separate and easily-distinguishable from humanized landscapes (“Alternative” 41). Lefebvre, for example, calls nature “absolute space,” Deleuze and Guattari, “smooth space”; both conceptions suggest a dualist stance toward a preferable untouched Eden out there somewhere (Lefebvre 48; Deleuze and Guattari 474).¹⁸ The notion of Amazonia as a quintessential Eden in environmental and literary discourse is paradoxical since Amazonia has been a trans-Atlantic and even a trans-Pacific human space at least since the rubber boom. Furthermore, though, spatial theory’s focus on the human transformation of urban space sometimes obscures unperceived anthropogenic aspects of “nature” as well as any potential for what Buell refers to as “the agency of nature,” that is, the work of non-human processes such as animals or weather in the transformation of landscapes (“Crosscurrents” 117). To examine all factors involved in the dynamic and shifting spatialities of Amazonia, then, spatial theory from its anthropocentric perspective does not suffice.

By combining spatial and ecocritical theories, I am able to examine Amazonian spatial production as a process that involves the actions of a dynamic and interconnected “mesh” of

18. At times, Lefebvre approaches recognition of a more relational ontology and even agency of non-human forms of life. His theoretical framework for a science of space is not incompatible with these ideas, although he is inconsistent regarding his approach to “nature.” Lefebvre makes the distinction between capitalist and non-capitalist spaces, calling them absolute and abstract spaces, respectively. In turn, he associates absolute spaces with spaces prior to human activity, what he calls “nature.”

living and non-living things, in which the distinction between living and non-living becomes difficult to define (Morton, *The Ecological* 28). I have been inspired by the work of Timothy Morton to examine literature for what it can reveal about human understandings of that ecological mesh. As Morton explains, “Even if a Shakespeare sonnet does not appear explicitly to be “about” gender, nowadays we still want to ask what it might have to do with gender. The time should come when we ask of any text, ‘What does this say about the environment?’” (*Ecology* 5). By asking what mappings can reveal about Amazonia as an ecology that interrelates capitalist infrastructure, sustainable and unsustainable human interventions, and plant and animal life, I argue that scientific mapping processes tend to approach space from a Euclidean perspective that separates people and instruments from the spaces they produce whereas novelistic space can interconnect these elements. Ecocritical approaches, with their foregrounding of this interconnectedness, allow me to move beyond the urban focus of spatial theory and examine Amazonia as a contact zone of a diversity of interrelated spatialities, avoiding drawing artificial lines between natural and developed spaces.

Reading Mapping Novels

In the chapters that follow, I show how maps, geographic discourse, capitalist labor organization, and Amerindian spatial ontologies intersect in Latin American novels about Amazonia. I pair a Foucauldian and new historicist approach to discourse analysis with the geocentric focus of a geocritical method in order to provide a thorough spatio-temporal contextualization of each analyzed work. Each of these approaches has greatly diversified the variety of texts open to analysis and provides a framework for my inclusion of narrative representation alongside a variety of texts and cultural objects that correspond to institutional

mappings in dialogue with the novels. These sources include a variety of archival materials such as maps and telegrams, as well as geography manuals, railroad plans, and spatial observation and photography taken *in situ*. One reason for placing these cultural objects of state and corporate mappings in contraposition to literary mappings stems from an effort to challenge a persistent vein of Latin American literary criticism that frames intellectual cultural production—especially prior to the Boom—as complicit with hegemonic ideologies.¹⁹ While studies through this lens have been foundational in uncovering the underground networks connecting cultural production to the political economy, this interrelationship certainly should not exclude readings that allow for dissent and artistic rebellion through literature. I use close text and visual analysis of my sources to elucidate the aesthetics, discourses, and ideologies at work in producing Amazonian spaces and to show how those grate against each other where they overlap. Each institutional mapping involves a fixing and homogenizing through some form of externally conceived standardized measurement, classification, or division, and my analysis argues that the novels work to unhinge that fixity through a variety of literary processes.

My premise, then, is that mapping novels can and sometimes do perform a subversive function in the larger political economy by counter-mapping its territorial fictions; however, I am

19. Two seminal texts have been especially influential in perpetuating this focus. Uruguayan literary critic Ángel Rama's now canonical text for Latin American literary studies, *La ciudad letrada* (1984), traces the problematic relationship between Latin American writers and power structures historically to emphasize how the writing of Latin American intellectuals has often been in service to centralized bureaucratic power. Likewise, Doris Sommer's important and oft-cited *Foundational Fictions* (1993)—used widely in Latin American literature courses—aims to “show the inextricability of politics from fiction in this history of nation-building” (5-6). Her study, in turn, builds on the previous work of Leslie Fiedler and Benedict Anderson. See also David Viñas and Mario Valdés.

also aware that all maps contain levels of misrepresentation, and I pay careful attention to the ways that the counter-maps contradict their emancipatory projects by producing further omissions. As Halperín Donghi, following Marx and Gramsci, has perceptively argued, intellectuals contradictorily occupy a position dependent on societal institutions while simultaneously self-fashioning a critical stance outside of them. My analysis brings this discussion out of the abstract realm of ideas and locates these contradictions in Amazonian spaces. Each chapter focuses on a different aspect of spatial production—the process of creating territorial representations through cartography, the processes of teaching them to youth through geography instruction, the physical transformation of the jungle into movable economic resources through railroad construction, and the translating of the ecosystem into extractable elements through plant taxonomy. The first chapter, for example, examines narrative mapping in conjunction with his work to set Colombia’s borders in Amazo-Orinoquia. Chapter 2 reads narrative geographic description of Guayana as a response to the region’s misrepresentation in Venezuelan geography manuals. The third chapter looks at the tension between novelistic spatial disorder and the structure of railroad infrastructure, and chapter 4 explores the space of a shamanic narrative as a criticism of the taxonomical mapping of Amazonian plants.

An alternative spatiality necessitates an alternative material form of representation, for as Lefebvre asserts, “‘Change life!’ and ‘Change society!’ These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space” (59). The institutional projects that the texts respond to not only represent the land they depict, but in taking an official form such as a map or a railway, these projects begin to intervene in spatial experience and understanding. While all representation necessarily involves abstracting and simplifying gestures, when the knowledge forged by that representation takes shape in the form of a map or catalogue of resources it

becomes a concrete abstraction that acquires meaning on its own. It is not enough, therefore, to propose an alternative spatial perspective theoretically without giving it a material manifestation. In literary representation, this materiality is expressed in form. Therefore, I ask if and how narrative representation can take a form that is open and heterogeneous, in contrast to the closed, homogenous forms of other institutional mappings. I pay careful attention to the narrative strategies employed to present this counter-form and with it enact a different kind of spatial knowledge.

As mentioned, the spaces mapped and counter-mapped in this dissertation are divided into four chapters, each focusing on a different region of Amazonia, although given the fluidity of river networks and the movement across them, there is geographic overlap in my analysis. Each chapter places a novel's representations of space in dialogue with other institutional mapping(s), and for these purposes I have chosen to highlight a different institution with its corresponding spatial production in each chapter so as to examine critically a variety of methods of spatial codification. In excavating the diversity of processes by which space is produced, though, I also draw comparisons across them in order to underscore that while the ideology of progress can take many forms in space, it often advances the same unilateral politics of exploitation for the advancement of political centers. In each chapter, I begin by examining in detail the historical contexts of the novels and their periods of publication and then develop my literary analysis of spatial representation in counterpoint to the spatial structures uncovered in the historical contextualization. I also include in each chapter a reflection on the legacy of the analyzed spatial practices into the twenty-first century. In this way, I allow literary spatiality to dialogue across regions of Amazonia with a variety of conceptual methods of producing space, and I address the ways that such spatialities continue to impact the region.

Nearly a century before the Pluspetrol “Carlincatura” described above, José Eustasio Rivera perhaps initiated the use of fiction to exhume the omissions inherent in official representations of Amazonia in his 1924 novel *La vorágine*. Chapter 1 reads the canonical novel as a response to Rivera’s participation in a controversial and frustrated border commission intended to chart definitively the boundaries between Colombia and Venezuela in Amazonia. As a poet of the *generación del centenario* and secretary of the mapping commission, Rivera’s participation was motivated in part by a sense of patriotic duty to carry out the procedures necessary to ensure the progress and stability of Colombia in its farthest-reaching frontiers. However, the knowledge he acquired during his nine-month sojourn in Amazonia made him acutely aware of the oversights if not arrogance and deliberate negligence of the Colombian state in mapping its frontiers. Rivera writes *La vorágine* from this conflicted locus of enunciation. In this chapter, I theorize the concept of cartographic illusion as promoted by Colombian statesmen, geographers, and engineers in order to imagine a sovereign Colombian nation whose scientific maps corresponded exactly to the lands they represented. I bring historiographical accounts, newspaper articles, maps, and archival documents from the mapping commission into my discussion to provide evidence of governmental awareness and subsequent denial of the inability of the mapping commission to complete its mission. I tell the story of Rivera’s public efforts to denounce the failures of the Colombian state at its riverine frontiers and situate *La vorágine* as part of this political activism. I argue that the novel’s rearranging of the same regions that Rivera attempted to map during the border commission not only challenges the ability of scientific tools to produce a space legible to the nation in Amazonia, but also exposes the destructive consequences of trying to force the jungle into the mold of the nation.

If Chapter 1 examines the role of geographic subdiscipline of cartography in spatial production, chapter 2 turns to the disciplinary body that sustains maps as credible representations of space: geography itself. *Canaima*, written by Rómulo Gallegos during his exile in Spain in 1935, tells the story of Marcos Vargas's firsthand geographic education transiting the lands and waters of the Guayana region of Venezuela. The knowledge Marcos acquires through hands-on experience contrasts directly with the geography presented to him by his teachers in school. Chapter 2 mines Venezuelan geography manuals from the first part of the twentieth century to elucidate the connection between standardized geography education and the production of space in the incipient oil industry. I then show how Marcos Vargas's geography shatters the unity of those geographical moulds, and constructs, rather, a knowledge of geography that can only be gained through shamanic insights acquired *in situ*. Nevertheless, my analysis of *Canaima* reveals how Gallegos's reliance on *kanaimà* shamanism to create an alternative spatiality produces further omissions and misrepresentations with lasting consequences in Guayana today.

Whereas my first two chapters focus more on representations of space, chapter 3 turns to the processes of physically transforming Amazonia in order to make it match a representation. The *Estrada de Ferro Madeira-Mamoré* (EFMM) was a multinational project conceived to link Bolivia to U.S. and European trade routes via the Atlantic Ocean for the purposes of exporting rubber. Construction began in 1907 and ended in 1912, just in time for the end of the rubber boom and, therefore, the redundancy of the railway. Thousands of human lives were lost on the "Devil's Railroad," as it was called. *Mad Maria* (1980), a novel that takes its title from the railroad's homonymous nickname, tells the story of this debacle with dark humor through a bitterly satirical lens. Writing at a time when Brazil's military dictatorship was promoting development projects in Amazonia in an effort to squelch national security concerns, Márcio

Souza exposes the violence that has ensued historically when men have tried to write the lines of progress into Brazil's Amazonian landscapes. In this chapter, I place my literary analysis in dialogue with historical accounts of the promise offered by the railroad to show how Souza's Amazonian ecology rewrites the spaces of the EFMM as nefarious and doomed from the beginning. Souza's counter-mapping suggests that attempts to transform Amazonia for the use of those outside of it correlate to the appropriation of Amazonia in Brazilian literature. I argue that *Mad Maria* offers an alternative "dark ecology" that condemns and discredits the reification of the region by other Brazilians, whether for "progressive" or literary projects.

In my final chapter, I reveal how shamanic and extractive spaces overlap and support each other through an analysis of *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía* (1981). Written by Peruvian poet César Calvo, the text tells the story of young César's encounter with the shaman Ino Moxo, the alter ego of *curandero* Manuel Córdova-Ríos, on a hallucinatory journey guided by *ayawaskha*. During part of his life, both the biographical and fictitious Córdova-Ríos worked for rubber companies and the Astoria Company of New York City identifying and plotting trees for timber and eventually collecting and annotating plants for the pharmaceutical industry in the United States, yet the spaces tangled together in Calvo's text preclude any such categorization. If taxonomy produces legible resources by teasing out and sorting the contents of space, *Las tres mitades* suggests that meaning is lost when individual elements are extracted from their interrelational positions in context. Calvo criticizes the violent processes that have supported such extraction in Amazonia throughout history. As in chapter 2, though, Calvo's use of shamanism becomes problematic, for he presents his shamanic *ayawaskha* journey as a commodified experience able to be consumed by readers and obscures the way extraction has facilitated the production of Iquitos as a shamanic space. My analysis

offers a much-needed critical reevaluation of this text often praised for its shamanic insights by arguing that Calvo's critique of Amazonian commodification folds back on itself, reproducing the discourses it denounces.

Beyond opening a debate in the fields of Latin American literature and cultural studies about the novel's potential to narrate a counter-hegemonic map, this dissertation, in its focus on the complexity of processes involved in Amazonian spatial production, also aims to make a broader contribution to spatial studies. At a time when the disputed relevance of the humanities frequently makes headlines, and when an increasingly digitally fragmented postmodern world places in question the endurance of the novel as a literary form, this project positions the humanist study of literature as central to understanding the way we create spaces that order and limit our knowledge and experiences of the world. By forging critical pathways to examine how literature can write outside the lines drawn by hegemonic spatial thought, I hope to offer new ways of thinking spatially, thereby advancing the thesis on the crucial and potentially emancipatory role that humanist study plays in human thought. This aim may seem overly optimistic, but the analysis that follows also shows that the pathways out of conventional thinking are rarely straightforward and often lead to painful and often depressing realizations about how much damage has been done and how much difficult work lies ahead. The exploration of these pathways that this dissertation advances seeks to open a dialogue about how to begin this work.

A Final Word on Time

Many twentieth-century narrative studies favor a period-specific analysis, limiting historical focus according to a specific established epoch in Latin American literature, economic

policy, or cultural history. Such literary-period-based projects serve the important function of establishing a timeline and cultural context for literary history; however, they also continue to give time precedent over space, privileging a linear development of literary history and obscuring the insights that literature can provide into space across time. Additionally, especially in a field with as much geographic breadth as Latin America, this temporal focus can lend to overgeneralization tendencies in pan-Latin American studies. My analysis resists such predetermined temporal end marking in favor of a focus on space. Rather than allowing time to dictate the story, I have chosen to explore the possibilities opened for literary analysis by allowing space to determine the critical trajectory.

For organizational purposes, I sequence my chapters chronologically according to the year of publication of the novels in question, but in doing so, I do not mean to follow a chronological timeline per se. Because multiple historical moments come into this discussion in a variety of ways, I have chosen the order of publication dates for the sake of consistency and ease of presentation. The resulting chronology may in fact appear problematic from a temporal perspective as the years of publication imply a focus on the second and third decades of the twentieth century as well as the 1980s, leaving a significant gap in between unaccounted for. These publication dates are misleading in that regard, for my analysis does not skip over time, but rather weaves time into space. My spatial focus warrants this movement between times in the lives of the authors and their works and pushes the apparent temporal linearity of my chapters into the background.

At the same time, with this foregrounding of space, I am careful to avoid “inflexibly exaggerating the critical privilege of contemporary spatiality in isolation from an increasingly silenced embrace of time” (Soja, *Postmodern* 11). By allowing for movement back and forth

across time through space, I theorize an Amazonian spatio-temporality that keeps time in focus without allowing it any deterministic advantage. My study moves between the years of the rubber boom and other moments of homogenizing spatial projects up to the beginnings of neoliberal dominance in the later decades of the twentieth century, which continued to apprehend pieces of Amazonia for profit, as they do today. The spatial analysis I develop argues that the Amazonia of Carlin's political cartoon is not a new one but rather a new instantiation of a contact zone of maps and counter-maps that was produced and reproduced throughout the twentieth century.

Chapter 1

Mapping Lines, Writing Vortexes: Cartographic Illusion and Counter-Mapping in *La vorágine*¹

“¡Cuánta diferencia entre una región y la carta que la reduce! ¡Quién le hubiera dicho que aquel papel, donde apenas cabían sus manos abiertas, encerraba espacios tan infinitos, selvas tan lóbregas, ciénagas tan letales!” –*La vorágine*

Introduction: Amazo-Orinoquia outside the Athens of South America²

At the turn of the nineteenth century, as Colombia prepared for its centennial celebrations of nationhood, classical models framed demonstrations of post-independence cultural “advancement.” In 1894, noting the vogue of Greco-Latin-inspired literary production, the Spanish literary critic Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo wrote that Bogotá was destined to become “la Atenas de la América del Sur” (ii). His prediction could just as easily have applied to the construction of the Colombian capital’s modern urban space. For the 1910 centennial festivities, President Rafael Reyes arranged for an “[e]xposición nacional de industrias y bellas artes” complete with neoclassical monuments, kiosks, and a display of light in the city of just over 100,000.³ Although these constructions did not survive the later rise of modernist architecture

1. A modified portion of this chapter has been published under the title, “The Vortex and the Map: Cartographic Illusion and Counter-Mapping in *La vorágine*.” *Ciberletras* 33: n. pag. Web.

2. I borrow the geographic designation “Amazo-Orinoquia” from Colombian anthropologist Carlos Páramo Bonilla who uses it in his work. In a personal conversation he argued that there are more geographic, cultural, and ethnic similarities than differences between Amazonia and Orinoquia; rather they are categories chosen to invent a distinction. Their rivers, he explained, do not end, though, and there are no clear boundaries between them. In his article, “Cinco personajes de *La vorágine*: Tipos, mito e historia de la Amazo-Orinoquia,” he highlights how *La vorágine* relates happenings that connect the histories of Amazonia and Orinoquia. See the introduction to this dissertation for a further discussion of the cultural and geographical links between Amazonia and Orinoquia.

3. See Escovar Wilson-White for a history of this architectural endeavor.

and aesthetics, at the time they were meant to memorialize Colombia's post-independence success and overwrite the failures of the Thousand Days' War (1899-1902), the subsequent loss of Panama (1903), and in general, the slow industrialization of a capital city situated in the middle of the country and high in the Andes mountains. At a time when the *suburbios* of Bogotá still had no access to electricity, zones peripheral to the Andean capital found themselves even further from these proclamations of modernity, yet as I argue in this chapter, Colombia's rural peripheries—and particularly its eastward-lying tropical forests—were anything but forgotten during this crucial time of modernization. Instead, efforts to fit them into the burgeoning space of the modern Colombian nation preoccupied both geographic and literary projects.

Focusing on a novel from this period that emerged from the uncharted periphery of Colombia's Amazo-Orinoquia, this chapter examines an instance in which literary and geographic mapping of this space intersect. Although now a canonical text, at the time of publication, *La vorágine* (1924) by the poet José Eustasio Rivera (1888-1928) controversially positioned itself outside of Athens by depicting the depraved circumstances of life within Colombia's borders. Set in the antagonistic spaces of the early twentieth-century rubber boom, the novel is often read in terms of its realistic depictions of the unpunished violence exercised to sustain rubber production at the margins of Colombia, Venezuela, and Brazil. As a result, often overlooked is the fact that the creation of Rivera's first and only novel is closely tied to his participation in a failed mapping commission to fix the border between Colombia and Venezuela (1922-1923). By excavating the complicit relationship between uncharted borders and unsanctioned human slavery, torture, and physical abuse, I argue that *La vorágine* condemns maps as one of the root causes of the crimes of rubber production. Rivera wrote many of the pages in which he describes the spaces of the Amazo-Orinoquia river basins while stationed in

the area, and his participation and frustration with the mapping commission made him acutely aware of the machinations and downright lies involved in representing Colombia's peripheral territories with cartographic science, as well as the consequences of cartographic negligence, by which I mean the failure to provide the tools and circumstances necessary for effective mapping. Nevertheless, no studies have yet examined in earnest the relationship of the novel to the national space that Colombia was attempting to produce cartographically at the time.⁴

Instead, in a post-Boom Latin American literary canon, the novel has often been referred to pejoratively as a "regional novel" or *novela de la tierra* a notion popularized by Carlos Fuentes in his 1969 *La nueva novela hispanoamericana*, which departs from the self-legitimizing claim that Latin American geography had swallowed literature before the new novel, excessive landscape descriptions stagnating literary growth. Nearly three decades later, Carlos Alonso shrewdly characterizes the legacy of Fuentes's claims:

Judging from current attitudes among most literary critics, the expression *novela de la tierra* would seem to be more than simply an attempt to reflect the thematics of the texts that are conventionally grouped under that rubric; for the term could be interpreted metaphorically as well to describe the position these works are deemed to occupy in the edifice of contemporary Latin American letters: they are considered the coarse, unfinished foundation of the structure, whose principal function is to give support to the building erected on them. (38)

Departing from Alonso's important reassessment of the regional novels, more recent studies such as those by Jennifer French (2005), Charlotte Rogers (2012), and Ericka Beckman (2013) have crafted compelling arguments contending that *La vorágine*'s regional focus—more than conveying local color through documentary landscape descriptions—in fact formulates a sophisticated critique of Colombian processes of modernity.

4. Jennifer French's study is the notable exception to this rule, and her brief discussion of *La vorágine*'s "topographic drive" serves as a necessary point of departure in this study (133).

In the immediate context of Rivera's writing, he experienced modernity as the imposition of the fixed lines of a map onto a space that resembled a vortex. My analysis, then, emphasizes how the novel dialogues with and contests "modern" Colombian geopolitics at its peripheries. I begin my investigation with a discussion of the political stakes of mapping Amazo-Orinoquia as well as the implications that Rivera's border commission had for the Colombian nation as a whole. My purpose in doing so is to interrogate the text as a response to a broader intellectual anxiety in the face of the problem of drawing national lines around and through a fluvial ecology like the Amazo-Orinoquia river basins at a time when Bogotá desperately hoped to forge and display a modern nation. Then, in my literary analysis I frame the text within the historic context of border mapping and argue that Rivera's narrative description of the Amazon articulates a criticism of official mapping projects by performing an archaeology on their basic precepts.⁵ At the same time, I read the space elaborated in *La vorágine* as a counter-map that brings forth spatial knowledge unincorporated into the official map.⁶ By considering *La vorágine* as a text about the problem of representing space, my analysis offers a revised interpretation of the novel's rich geographic detail as a critical framework for understanding and using representations of space to make sense of Colombia's complex geographic realities.

5. Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* proposes archaeology as a method for liberating history from the monolithic narrative of linear historiography; following this idea, I apply archaeology to the production of space. An archaeology of space here will understand maps as one representation of space and seek to reveal how this representation forges a knowledge of that space that excludes other spaces and knowledges.

6. I provide an overview of the term "counter-map" in the introduction to this dissertation. I borrow the term from human geography where it refers to bottom-up mapping strategies, usually by indigenous peoples to map and gain rights to their land. Here, I am expanding the term to bring it into a broader dialogue with Foucault's notion of counter-power to describe maps that undermine and subvert hegemonic maps.

Rivera and the Border Commission

It was a little after nine in the evening on November 9, 1923 in the Colombian Chamber of Representatives when conservative Jorge Vélez, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, called for a private session. All of the legislators stood up out of their seats, “Down with the traitors! Down with the cowards! Down with the sell-outs!”⁷ These battle cries erupted with the chaos of shrieks and whistles. As a symbolic act of protest, Representative José Eustasio Rivera, also from the conservative party, dramatically tore the notes from the speech he had been reading. The subject at hand was the negligence and deception of the Minister during the Border Commission on the limits between Colombia and Venezuela. Under the headline, “Se hacen graves cargos al Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores en la Cámara,” the newspaper *El Espectador* published Rivera’s accusations as follows:

El Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores *engañó* a la Comisión de límites enviándola sin equipo de ninguna clase; sin darle a los ingenieros teodolitos, niveles cuadrantes, brújulas, mapas; sin proveerla siquiera de toldas ni de lo más indispensable para aquellas regiones desiertas, so pretexto de que de todo ésto seríamos atendidos de manera abundante por la Comisión venezolana. Y a pesar de que en telegramas y correspondencia apremiante de toda clase le informamos de nuestra desairada situación, él no dio paso alguno para remediarla. (4, my emphasis)

Rivera’s choice of words and theatrical gestures certainly augmented the severity of his allegations, leaving the minister “visiblemente alterado” according to the same newspaper article (4).⁸

7. The citation is my translation of the incident as reported in *El Espectador*, “‘abajo los traidores,’ ‘abajo los cobardes,’ ‘abajo los vendidos!’ La mayoría prorrumpe en verdaderos alaridos” (4)

8. Curiously, the telegrams and urgent correspondence to which Rivera refers as evidence of neglect do not appear in the official records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Rivera left for the border commission in October of 1922 and returned to Bogotá July 1923. The commission itself was divided into two sections or teams—one

The polemic inaugurated Rivera's political career as representative in the Chamber of Commerce following his return from the border commission.⁹ For Rivera's biographer Neale-Silva, the decision to publicly decry the inaction of the Minister of Foreign Affairs becomes emblematic of Rivera's incorruptible patriotism, which—true to the poetic *generación del centenario* to which he belonged—sought not to play into party politics. Neale Silva writes, “Lo inaudito del escándalo era que las acusaciones las había hecho otro conservador. Rivera empezaba a dar pruebas de su incorruptible independencia de pensamiento y de su total incapacidad para ser diferente de lo que era” (265). This political eccentricity earned Rivera the reputation of a gadfly in Colombian politics.¹⁰ The public outrage, though, evidenced by the representatives' response and subsequent newspaper reporting suggests a passionate expression

surveyed the northern border between Colombia and Venezuela and Rivera's team in the southern Amazo-Orinoquia region. Colombia's Archivo General has detailed records of the documents from the northern team's work including maps, telegrams, official reports, and other correspondence; all of these can be found under the subject heading “Diplomática y consular” and the section title, “Comisiones de límites entre Colombia y Venezuela.” However, there are scant records from Rivera's team and a peculiar gap in the records from February 1922 to January 1923. Save an oblique reference to Rivera's resignation from the commission and correspondence regarding his public outcry upon his return to Bogotá, Rivera and his participation are nearly absent from the public record. In light of the public scandal caused by Rivera's unrelenting denunciations, one wonders if these were purposeful elisions.

9. According to the Annals of the Chamber of Representatives, Rivera had been elected to replace his uncle by the conservative political party in July of 1923, just before he returned from the border commission (See Neale-Silva 261).

10. Two years later, Rivera would be named to head the Comisión Investigadora of the Chamber of Representatives to investigate corruption in the Ministry and Administrative Department. Although elected for his recognized impartiality, he would shock his party again by going after conservatives with no regard for his political career.

of solidarity in the Chamber that night. Although perhaps a nuisance to his party affiliates, Rivera's indignation in response to the failure of the mapping commission was vehemently seconded by the Chamber at large to the point of implying that the Minister of Foreign Affairs was a traitor for not answering to it publicly. What this anecdote suggests, then, is that national maps and their deficiencies were very much on the mind of Colombian politicians and newspaper readers preceding the publication of *La vorágine*.

Negligence at a distant border almost certainly recalled trauma from Colombia's recent past. Amidst the conflict of Colombian civil war, U.S. forces had orchestrated Panamanian independence in 1903. A little more than ten years later, in a reconciliatory albeit belittling gesture, the United States expressed "sincere regret" for "anything that may have interrupted or altered relations of cordial friendship" in a treaty that included the stipulation of a twenty-five million dollar indemnity ("Our Sincere" 1). Teddy Roosevelt, however, publicly opposed the indemnity for its implied condemnation of his inter-American politics. For Roosevelt, an apology undermined the position of the United States in the Western hemisphere as well as the foreign policy under his presidency. At the brink of the first World War, Roosevelt's objections initially seemed to threaten the economic security promised by the settlement; however, the lasting effect of his response, as Neale-Silva indicates, constituted a blow for Colombia's "honor nacional" in regards to its territorial possessions (121). Peripheries could not be neglected, for their amputation proved not only embarrassing but also painful to the national psyche.

The Panama debacle essentially justified territorial usurpation on the basis of an implied defect in national sovereignty. According to Benedict Anderson's oft-cited definition, a nation state "is an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). Lefebvre's apology for a science of space reminds, however, that sovereignty

cannot simply be imagined; it must be enacted in space. Because Colombia had failed to secure its limits physically, the nation's ability to self-govern had publicly and humiliatingly been called into question. The late historian Bushnell suggests that at the turn of the 19th century, Colombia differed from other Latin American nations in its "relative weakness of national sentiment" (143).

He continues,

If anything made the loss of Panama easier to bear, it was the fact that—just as Panamanians had never felt much solidarity with the rest of Colombia—Colombians felt no deep cultural or other ties to the people of the isthmus. Indeed, the sense of national unity in Colombia as a whole continued weak, and scattered voices in other regions of the country even suggested that maybe the Panamanian example was not so much to be deplored as imitated. (154)

Yet whereas Bushnell tries to address the implications of the loss of Panama for Colombian nationalism, he fails to consider the potential anxiety produced by the international attention to Colombia's geopolitical fragmentation. A failure to secure sovereignty at the borders held the potential for more territorial loss.

When Rivera indicted the Minister of Foreign Affairs for deceiving the border commission, then, he was accusing him of putting Colombia's sovereignty at risk. Rivera's accusations ultimately implicated the Minister as one of the scattered, unpatriotic voices complacent with losing the nation's extremities and with them, the nation's territorial sovereignty. Perhaps the geopolitical pain of Panama's amputation and subsequent monetary compensation were on legislators' minds when they stood up and called for the demise of the nation's sell-outs. Colombians had learned a difficult lesson about the consequences of neglecting peripheries and could not risk losing more territory. This cry for border security corresponds to the politics of "internal colonization" in *La vorágine* to which French refers (135). The very idea of Colombia would begin to fray at the edges if physical lines could not be drawn around it and enforced.

The institution charged with this task was the Oficina de Longitudes y Fronteras, founded in 1902, a year before the loss of Panamá and based on a proposal by the astronomer, mathematician, and engineer, Julio Garavito Armero to “levantar y mantener la cartografía del país” (Montáñez Gómez).¹¹ This institution emerged to create a scientific record and control of national geography in a context in which Colombians urgently sought to establish cultural capital at the state level. Fittingly, Julio Garavito’s symbolic import to the nation remains present today but has been transferred to the realm of economic capital; his face appears on the 20,000 peso note (see fig. 2). On the backside of the note is an image of the moon showing the Garavito craters—so named in 1970 by the International Astronomical Union in honor of Garavito’s work on the measurements of the moon. The backdrop of the moon hovering over a rough terrain

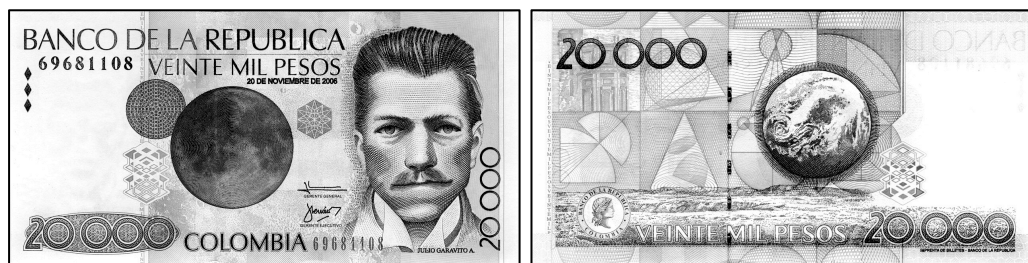


Figure 2. Colombian 20,000 peso note
Source: commons.wikipedia.org

contains a series of geometric figures reflecting carefully measured spatial representations, suggesting that a land as distant and foreign as the moon is quantifiable and therefore knowable through science—Colombian science. This monetary note supplants the geopolitical pain experienced by Colombia’s former territorial amputations with a symbol of Colombian scientific conquest over distant spaces. Garavito’s image in economic circulation heals the country’s phantom limb pain by extending Colombia’s territorial prowess into the farthest reaches of space. Although the border commission was put into action long before the current 20,000 peso note

11. This institution today operates under the name Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi in Bogotá.

and the naming of the Garavito craters, Garavito's intellectual life gave him a high profile in Colombia at the time.¹² In addition, in the early twentieth century, Amazo-Orinoquia was in some ways as unknown as the moon, giving a similar symbolic weight to the Oficina de Longitudes-sponsored border commission.

In *La vorágine* Rivera turns explicitly against the Oficina de Longitudes maps, aiming a pointed critique at the institution's purported science. When Cova and his companions put a plan in motion to officially denounce the crimes of the rubber economy to the consul in Manaus, he begins to despair:

¿En quién esperar? ¿En el anciano Silva? ¡Sábelo Dios si tal curiara habrá perecido! De juro que si bajan hasta Manaos, nuestro Cónsul, al leer mi carta, replicará que su valimiento y jurisdicción no alcanzan a estas latitudes o, lo que es lo mismo, que no es colombiano sino para contados sitios del país. Tal vez, al escuchar la relación de don Clemente, extienda sobre la mesa aquel mapa costoso, aparatoso, mentiroso y deficientísimo que trazó la Oficina de Longitudes de Bogotá, y le responda tras de prolija indagación: 'Aquí no figuran ríos de esos nombres! Quizás pertenezcan a Venezuela. Diríjase usted a Ciudad Bolívar.'

Y muy campante, seguirá atrincherado en su estupidez, porque a esta pobre patria no la conocen sus propios hijos ni siquiera sus geógrafos e ingenieros. (1st Ed. 360)

With this passage from the first edition in which Rivera includes the additional "e ingenieros" omitted from subsequent publications, he perhaps points his finger too overtly at Garavito. Not only was Julio an engineer but his brother, civil engineer Justino Garavito Armero, was also employed by the Oficina de Longitudes from 1902 to 1911 and later worked as chief of Rivera's section of the mapping commission.¹³ Although Cova is under great duress when he writes this impassioned reproach, he nevertheless shrewdly undermines the actions performed by the

12. For more information on Garavito's role in Colombia's intellectual history, see Sandro.

13. See Blanco Barros for a history of the Geographic Society of Colombia and biographies of its key players.

Oficina de Longitudes in its efforts to produce a faithful representation of Colombian space. Cova is infuriated not only by what he sees as the wastefulness (*costoso*), boastfulness (*aparatoso*), lies (*mentiroso*), and deficiency (*deficientísimo*) employed by Colombia's spatial architects but also by their effects, that is, the affirmation of *estupidez* in the form of false spatial knowledge and the resulting justification of political inaction in the face of denunciations of violence. This short passage undermines the cartographic science of the Oficina completely—its inaccuracies have direct lived consequences for those caught in the space it purports to map.

To understand why Rivera had such a serious vendetta against the Oficina de Longitudes, I now turn to the work of the border commission and Rivera's role in it. When Rivera was appointed secretary of the section of the border commission to examine Apostadero del Meta and the borderline between the Atabapo and Guainía rivers, the task at hand was to resolve a nearly one-hundred-year-old border dispute between Colombia and Venezuela that began with the dissolution of Gran Colombia in 1831 and resulted in continuous division of territory on maps that no longer corresponded to the land.¹⁴ To resolve these issues two teams—one working in the north and one in the south—would not only physically demarcate the disputed border with Venezuela but also produce definitive maps of the region. Engineers and geographers from Colombia and Venezuela collaborated with a team from Switzerland, chosen as arbiters. Previous attempts at resolution had been based on colonial maps, and an earlier border commission from 1900 had intervened to enforce an 1891 ruling made from Spain. As a result, there were great discrepancies between borders drawn or written in narrative from a distance and the lands to which they corresponded. As the Colombian foreign minister Marco Fidel Suárez explains to his Venezuelan counterpart in a February 2, 1916 correspondence,

14. For an extensive history of the dispute, see Álamo Ybarra.

no estando siempre de acuerdo los mapas con el terreno, y habiendo atendido el Laudo [de 1891] a los primeros, es posible que en algunos trayectos necesite interpretaciones la sentencia arbitral. De todo lo cual infiere V.E. que mientras la Comisión mixta no haya terminado esta obra en todas sus secciones, no es lícito ninguna de las partes interesadas ejercer dominio en territorios que haya estado en posesión por la otra, ora sean naturales, ora sean artificiales los límites adyacentes.

Suárez's reference to exercising dominion almost certainly refers to possibilities for economic exploitation of natural resources and liability for crimes at a time of intense rubber and petroleum activities, undoubtedly a motivator in reopening the border dispute; already the atrocious abuses at the hands of rubber barons in the Colombian Amazo-Orinoquia had made national and international headlines.¹⁵ However, underlying these issues was an epistemological problem that the border commission needed to resolve, namely, the country's inaccurate encoding of geographic knowledge on its maps.

The problem with the border maps' inaccuracies was not in fact that they existed but rather that they had been made conspicuous through repeated attention, therefore suspending belief in the maps' usefulness. After all, all maps are inaccurate to some extent, for abstraction and reduction are necessary maneuvers in a science that aims to scale the immensity of space to a user-friendly format. As Lefebvre rhetorically asks, "How many maps, in the descriptive or geographical sense, might be needed to deal exhaustively with a given space, to code and decode all its meanings and contents? It is doubtful whether a finite number can ever be given to this sort

15. Benjamín Saldaña Rocca, a Peruvian intellectual decried the crimes of Putumayo in 1907 in the Peruvian papers, *La Sanción* and *La Felpa*. His articles are presumably those that circulate among *caucheros* in *La vorágine*. Vicente Olarte Camacho published *Las crueldades en el Putumayo y en el Caquéta* in Bogotá in 1910. The Peruvian judge Rómulo Paredes had investigated these crimes and published *El libro rojo del Putumayo* in 1911. Roger Casement wrote his famous *Black Diaries* in 1912. Paternoster's *The Lord of the Devil's Paradise* came out in 1913 in London around the same time as Hardenburg's *Putumayo, the Devil's Paradise*. Peruvian Carlos Valcárcel wrote in 1915 *El Proceso del Putumayo y sus secretos inauditos*.

of question” (85). In practice, though, one map can suffice when it appears to account for salient features of space without calling attention to its omissions. Edney, in his groundbreaking work on the British Imperial mapping of India has keenly emphasized the importance of the element of belief in establishing the “epistemological ideal of cartographic perfection,” also referred to as the “cartographic illusion.”¹⁶ In other words, in order for a map to serve its purpose, maps do not need to mirror reality but users must believe that they do. In this way a map casts a sort of spell that obfuscates inaccuracies and blinds people to discrepancies. Edney, emphasizing flaws in cartographic technologies, insists that this belief is always undermined by imperfections in the mapmaking process. In Colombia, this undermining had happened slowly and repeatedly over nearly one hundred years, eroding the grounds for a cartographic illusion.

The colonial heritage of not only the border dispute but also of geographic knowledge—or ignorance—of the borders lies at the heart of why founding this belief proved so challenging. Faith in the accuracy of the systematic nature of science allows for the cartographic ideal, yet because Spanish colonial maps had not employed any standardized topographic surveys, there was no foundational science on which to build belief. Álamo Ybarra, a Venezuelan lawyer involved in the commission, wrote an extensive history on the border dispute in which he decries the risible verbal designations of the borderlands in the 1891 ruling, overseen by Spain: “Ordena, al describir el primer sector [de la comisión] una operación geométrica que tildaría de imprecisa y hasta de absurda un estudiante de geometría elemental: de un punto a una línea pueden tirarse infinidad de rectas” (65). According to the lawyer, even a child could identify the issues with the

16. I borrow these terms from Edney and Harley, respectively. Edney provides a historical explanation for their genesis: “First, the Enlightenment philosophes developed an epistemological ideal: correct and certain archives of knowledge could be constructed, they believed, by following rational processes epitomized by mapmaking” (17).

faulty, unscientific records. Furthermore, the impracticality both economically and logistically of surveying such a long stretch of land through dense and difficult terrain promised little hope of taking careful and systematic measurements, yet this undertaking was exactly the aim of the border commission.

The new mapping commission would employ the modern sciences of the time in hopes of reestablishing the cartographic ideal. For Colombia to claim national sovereignty, that is, to claim knowledge and control of its territories, it needed maps that appeared to correspond exactly to territorial claims. Such maps would allow distant regions such as the fluvial geography of Amazo-Orinoquia to fit unproblematically into the framework of the rest of the nation. A believable national map had implications not only for whom Colombians were but also the quantifiability and integration of its jungle regions. In this way, the border commission map—like all maps—was a necessary deceit. On the one hand, it would guard against additional amputations. On the other, it would fictitiously represent borderlands as part of a complete, whole, scientifically uniform, and regulated nation.

Although the use of science in this mapping process would establish and uphold belief, in practice the commission did not aim to gather geographic information, but on the contrary, to mark borders predetermined out of context; in other words, the commission sought to make the geography fit the map and not vice versa. Methodologically speaking, this aim was common practice. As Paula Rebert explains, boundary maps move through three stages—negotiation, delimitation on paper, locating and marking the boundary—only the last of which involves actually going to the disputed territory (159-60). In other words, the map, as a representation of space, makes the verbally negotiated boundaries material, in this way circulating space as a

concrete abstraction.¹⁷ The pre-negotiated limits as ideas about space become concrete with the support of scientific tools while remaining abstract on the ground. Bourguet, Licoppe, and Sibum have convincingly argued that in the creation of scientific knowledge tools are incorrectly understood as being objective and impervious to change regardless of their context. Scientific knowledge is developed locally with specific tools, but these tools then move to a new space and purportedly universalize that knowledge by applying the measurements elsewhere, out of context. Geographers and engineers with their instruments would move to the border and verify each country's border claims. The participation of Swiss arbiters added an extra guise of objectivity to the scientific maneuver, neutralizing territorial claims, and in this way serving as tools themselves to underwrite this maneuver. Rivera's claims, then, of being denied the tools necessary to complete the assignment amounted to accusing the Minister of Foreign Affairs of compromising the theoretical grounds for aligning cartographic representation and land.

Lack of precision instruments, however, was only one impediment to making the land fit the map. Historians of science now accept that—however hegemonic a governing force may be, “[l]ocal, situated and embodied knowledge practices on the one hand and global, universal knowledge on the other are always reshaped, removed and redefined with respect to one another” (Bourguet, Licoppe, and Sibum 14). Although Bourguet, Licoppe, and Sibum primarily refer here to the inevitable and necessary interaction of local peoples and scientists, the participation of local peoples is almost completely omitted from the border commission documents. Local

17. I take the idea that representations of space cause space to emerge as a concrete abstraction from Lefebvre, following Marx. Concrete abstractions are abstractions made real through practice such as money.

realities, however, certainly reshaped if not contested universal geographic schemas deployed prior to the border commission's departure.¹⁸

The commission members had not prepared for the geographic challenges that the riverine terrain presented to their mission. Stretches of thick foliage blocked the passage of commission members preventing them from marking boundaries on the ground. On July 23, 1923, P. Lardy, a Swiss representative of the commission sent a telegram to Garzón Nieto, chief of the northern section, expressing the “absolute material impossibility” of the task before them:

Hemos tenido frecuentemente la ocasión, desde el mes de noviembre último, de conversar reunidos sobre *la imposibilidad material absoluta* en que la Comisión Suiza de Expertos se encuentra de recorrer la mayor parte del territorio litigioso comprendido entre el Catatumbo y el Zuila, que la selva virgen [sic] hace impenetrable sin grandes gastos y con pérdidas infinitas de tiempo; Ud. se ha cerciorado conmigo de que los intentos que se hicieran para obtener una representación general de ese territorio tropezarían con dificultades insuperables y ha tenido la cortesía de recomendar a su Gobierno de los métodos aerofotográficos. (my emphasis)

In the commission records, absence of aerial photographs and repeated insistence on their expediency seems to indicate that the Colombian government did not heed this recommendation. Aerial photographs—although perhaps faster and more economical than supporting a crew's passage through the “virgin jungle” would not have allowed for the placing of necessary border landmarks. Even where human passage was possible, though, another impediment compromised the mission's goals. Rivers—that is, the physical feature that defines the area where Rivera's team worked—swelled with precipitation, altering the landscape. As moving and changing networks, river systems are antithetical to the idea of making a map or fixing a permanent border. All ecologies, of course, change and move, but rivers do so at a pace visible to one of the most

18. Here I am playing on Mignolo's book title, *Local Histories/Global Design: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*.

rudimentary instruments, the human eye. Commission members observed firsthand the ways in which rivers could contest border knowledge stored in the static lines of a map:

El caso aquí previsto está sucediendo: efectivamente, el río Arauca está encauzándose por el brazo Guárico, dejando al sur la ‘Isla del Vapor’, de gran tamaño que hoy está al norte de la vaguada, lo que significaría, si la vaguada continua [sic] siendo el lindero-como deber [sic] ser-que dicha isla hasta cambiara de jurisdicción, lo que se prevé en ese ordinal porque habla de la ‘ejecución de los trabajos adecuados para restablecer y mantener la situación actual. (Garzón Nieto)

Garzón Nieto reports the incoherence of using rivers as boundary markers when their shifting channels change their relationship to the land around them. Land switches sides as rivers morph with water levels from seasonal rains—something that the 1918 Bogotá Convention that had decided the borders did not account for. Government officials in Bogotá had not envisioned that the carefully negotiated limits would move.

Despite the difficulty of this geography, the commission members steadfastly—if not stubbornly—carried out their task, marking the borders on the map and on the land, therefore making the abstraction of national space concrete. Regardless of the fact that the commission yielded updated maps such as the one in figure 3, the material results on the ground were laughable and belied the mission’s accomplishments. Because the land itself presented impediments to landmark making, the commission members had to improvise, leaving landmarks as if for the sake of checking them off a list rather than erecting a functional signpost. Álamo Ybarra describes, for example, several landmarks with dubious reliability. One consisted in a tree around which a cone of rocks were piled. At another point, commission members placed “una botella herméticamente cerrada guardando un documento relativo a su erección” beneath a toppled trunk (116). Near the Yávita River, the men found the designated landmark position underwater due to seasonal flooding and decided to inscribe the necessary information on a rock

that stood above the water line.¹⁹ Given the terrain, these landmarks almost parody the absurd extremes of the logic of the map—as though once made concrete, the abstraction of the map would remain fixed despite the moving landscape all around. The naïveté of such thinking eerily resembles a later fictional parody, that of the protagonist of *Los pasos perdidos* (1953) when he tries for a second time to find the secret door to the jungle marked by three chevrons on a tree trunk. After hours of searching, he explains to his rower that the sign must be underwater: “Riendo me responde que ya se lo figuraba, pero ‘por respeto’ no me había dicho nada, creyendo, además, que al buscar la señal yo tenía en cuenta el hecho de la creciente” (238-239).²⁰ What in Carpentier is a caricature of urban spatial knowledge was common practice in the border commission. As *Los pasos perdidos* illustrates, though, signs posted in this riverscape do not suffice to guarantee navigation.

What results, then, is a situation in which the map is enforced on the ground whether information gathered by the body or other instruments contradicts it. There is very little evidence of local realities shaping universal science in the commission record. As a result, the border commission’s resulting maps were far from efficacious; they only appeared to use universal measurement to homogenize Colombia’s borderlands in the framework of the national space. To create this appearance, they overwrote local realities present in the textual record of the

19. Álamo Ybarra writes, “Respecto a los hitos 2 y 1 no pudieron ser colocados porque el terreno en que debían ser emplazados y además muchos kilómetros en contorno, estaban bajo el nivel de las aguas, habiendo crecido muchos los ríos Temi (o Yávita), Atacabi y Guasacavi e inundado todos sus contornos. Se hizo una buena referencia en un peñón que sobresalía de las aguas y que se encuentra a k. 4,2 de la boca del río Guasacavi, remontándolo y en su margen izquierda. Esta referencia consiste en: un punto de 3 cm. de diámetro y 4 cm. de profundidad, una letra A y el número 1923, dispuestos así... (116-117).

20. I thank Anke Birkenmaier for calling the resonance of this passage to my work to my attention.

mapping commission, and while the dispute was officially settled nearly twenty years after the border commission in 1941, the border remains porous to this day.

In Rivera's political life after the commission there is certainly a patriotic impulse that criticizes the government's handling of these challenges from a colonialist perspective—the Ministry of Foreign affairs prevented the nation from fulfilling its hegemonic duty of charting its territories, as French indicates. In the “Informe de la Comisión Colombiana de Límites con Venezuela,” which Rivera wrote with Melitón Escobar Larrazábal and sent to Colombia's Minister of Foreign Affairs from Manaus, they recount their activities near San Fernando de Atabapo, where both men waited for replacements after having quit the commission out of frustration. During this time, they interacted with Amerindian people, and Brazilian, Venezuelan and Colombian tenant farmers. Escobar Larrazábal and Rivera explain,

Nosotros aprovechamos las ocasiones que se presentaron para transmitirles algunas nociones sobre su nacionalidad y darles explicaciones gráficas acerca de los límites de Colombia en aquellos dominios. Muy complacidos recibían la noticia de que eran colombianos, lo que sabían por primera vez, y algunos nos dieron a conocer sus quejas y malos recuerdos acerca del tratamiento recibido de las autoridades venezolanas que han venido ejerciendo jurisdicción desde hace medio siglo. (44)

While the happenstance of this citizenship interpellation almost ridicules the cause, Rivera takes pride in fulfilling a patriotic duty by teaching the national map to his fellow citizens. He even reports encouraging those he encountered to share the information with others. With this example, Rivera's interest in extending the reaches of the state into its peripheries becomes clear.

Despite these perhaps condescending patriotic tendencies, though, there is something in Rivera's reports absent from accounts and documents from the official border commission: a

Este cuaderno viajó conmigo por todos los ríos Orinoco, Atabapo, Guaviare, Inírida, Guainía, Casiquiare, Ríonegro, Amazonas, Magdalena — durante el año 1923 cuando anduve de Abogado de la Comisión Colombiana de Límites con Venezuela y sus páginas fueron escritas en las playas, en las selvas, en los desiertos, en las popas de las canoas, en las piedras que me sirvieron de cabecera, sobre los cajones y los rollos de los cables, entre las plagas y los calores[. . .]

He marks his journey along the water, not along the land, as the local peoples he interacted with did as well. On the first page of the manuscript, it appears that Rivera added again the names of the rivers and the date of completion a year after beginning the book, emphasizing that the text came into existence in close relationship to the river networks (see fig. 5). These rivers, so problematic to maps and border marking became critical to Rivera’s acquisition of spatial information. He understood—unlike the mapping commission—that the rivers were not borders but routes of transit, jungle roads. Free exploration and local interactions then nuance Rivera’s perspective with a desire to understand the land and peoples within the state’s reach.

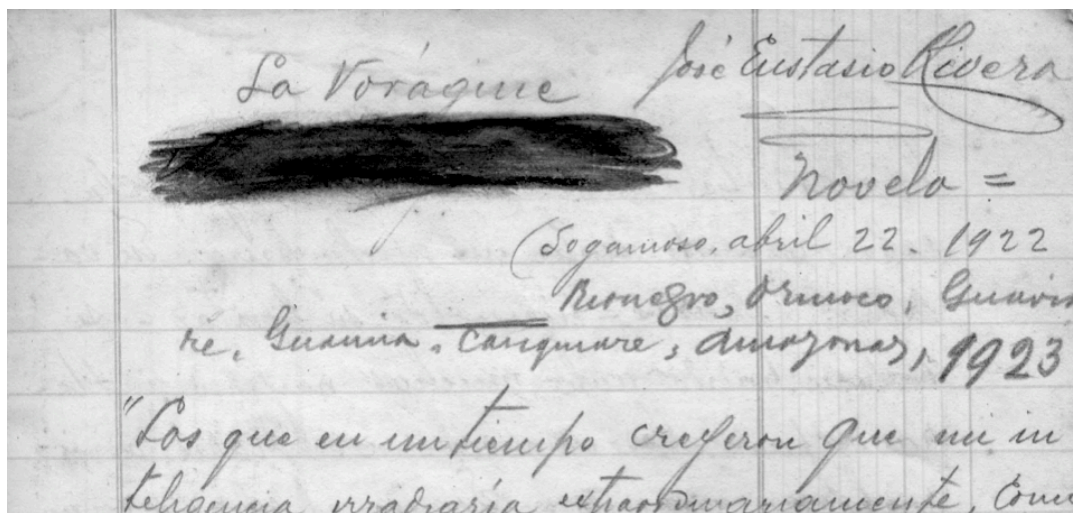


Figure 5. First page of the manuscript of *La vorágine*
Published with permission from the Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia

After Rivera’s time in the jungle, he became something of an expert in Colombia’s eastward-lying river geography, never missing an opportunity to correct others’ misinformation. He so expanded his firsthand knowledge *in situ* that when the Venezuelan diplomat Hermes

García claimed publicly that the border rivers were not navigable, Rivera—who had spoken with people who navigated these rivers—was armed with extensive knowledge to rebut him, which he did in a series of articles entitled “Falsos postulados nacionales” in the Bogotá newspaper *El Nuevo Tiempo*. Not only does he contest García’s claims, he also accuses him of not knowing or understanding the region he spoke about.²² Likewise, he exercises his superior knowledge of fluvial geography against the state’s official knowledge when he is accused of making too much an issue of Peruvian penetrations in Colombian territory. He writes in *El Tiempo* on April 13, 1924,

¿Imaginaría nuestro Canciller que es empresa posible andar por las selvas interminables y por ríos y desiertos en busca de los invasores para hacerle a cada cuadrilla nómada la notificación del señor Prefecto? ¿Quién pagará el viaje, el transporte y la compañía del agente oficial que venga a cumplir con dicha comisión? Y en caso de realizarla, ¿a quién obedecerán los caucheros? ¿Al que los paga o al que los notifica? (“Penetraciones” 64).

He is able to support his claims by explaining in detail how many days it takes to traverse land along one river and to the next, geographical knowledge not contained on maps. At work here is the acquisition of local knowledge versus the universalizing knowledge tendencies of the mapping commission. Rivera’s understanding of river networks undermined national claims and also questioned the state’s infrastructure for reaching and understanding the geography of its farthest peripheries.

As a consequence of Rivera’s extensive firsthand knowledge of river geography and his participation in the failed mapping commission, a conflict emerges. If in Rivera’s political life there is an interest in creating and disseminating the official map, one that encodes a cartographic ideal, there are also experiences that underminethat ideal as impossible. In Rivera’s intellectual biography emerges the problem of how to understand Colombia’s far eastern territories as part of

22. Neale-Silva recounts this debate. See p. 293.

the national unit when firsthand geographic experience cannot be codified into available national measures. Rivera is both a mapper and a counter-mapper. Whereas a mapper enforces the mimetic illusion of the map, the counter-mapper shows where the illusion breaks down and points to the weaknesses in the map's organizing principles. As a participant in the Colombian-Venezuelan mapping commission, Rivera became a tool in a larger national project to create a precedent for a homogenized national geography, measurable, knowable, and recordable on a map. However, by deviating from the commission's path and acquiring knowledge outside of its framework—outside of Athens—he made himself an adversary to the state project.

Out of context, then, *La vorágine* may seem to merely document regional geographic descriptions “en la tradición de los grandes exploradores del siglo XVI” (Fuentes 9). However, in historic context the novel's depictions of geography and space—instead of following a tradition—dramatically and boldly undermine one. Rather than approaching *La vorágine* as a provincial *novela de la tierra*, I consider this *novela de los ríos* to challenge and denounce not only the state's framework for establishing spatial knowledge of its riverine frontiers but also the knowledge itself. As a *vorágine*, meaning “whirlpool,” “vortex,” “maelstrom,” “unbridled passion,” and “build up of confusion,” the novel twists, confuses, and destroys the maps that tries to contain it. In this way, Rivera exceeds neocolonial rhetoric of internal colonization to imply that cartographic standards developed outside of Amazonia simply could not account for salient aspects of Colombia's eastern geography.

***La vorágine* as Counter-Map**

Rivera chooses an unlikely guide to take readers through the vortex. *La vorágine* is purportedly the publication of the manuscripts of Arturo Cova, a celebrated poet from the Tolima department of Colombia just west of Bogotá, who documents his misadventures beyond the

Colombian *llanos* in diary format; Rivera positions himself in the prologue as merely the compiler of the text. Cova's narration follows his exodus from Bogotá with Alicia, a young woman who is more an object of possession than affection, and who we later learn is pregnant. The impetus for the journey never becomes clear, but whatever Alicia and Cova have done to transgress high Bogotá society, they cannot return for some time. They initially retreat to Casanare in the Colombian llanos to wait out their exile at the ranch of Fidel Franco and his wife Griselda. Despite the fact that Cova is unfaithful to Alicia during this time—attempting to seduce both Griselda and a Venezuelan prostitute at another ranch—he becomes insanely jealous when the small-time rubber baron Barrera makes several advances on Alicia. When both Griselda and Alicia disappear with Barrera into the jungle, Cova—joined by Franco and his ranch hand—ventures after them.

As Cova relays his experiences traversing rivers and swamps, he also transcribes the narratives of those he encounters along the way. The stories of three men in particular—Helí Mesa, Clemente Silva, and Ramiro Estévanez—brought to the jungle by different circumstances illustrate the magnetic force of the rubber economy to capture men and destroy lives. Each man becomes a fugitive wandering the jungle to flee the cycle of debt peonage that binds *caucheros* to the abuses of the rubber plantations, and their stories bear witness to those injustices. Perhaps more practiced with poetry than prose, Cova relays these men's experiences through a (con)fusion of direct and indirect discourse with free indirect discourse, a style Silvia Molloy has aptly named “contagio narrativo”—even an attentive reader can easily lose track of who is telling the story (489). This strategy, though, could even more accurately be called temporal-spatial contagion, for the effect of bringing past stories into the present is a muddling of the space and time of the narrative as well. Cova's text incorporates vast areas of the jungle unknown to him

personally, projecting a space whose immensity is unprecedented in Latin American literature—perhaps only with the exception of the chronicles. In addition, as Crespi notes, “Rivera consigue incluir en su historia novelesca un período de quince años, a pesar de que la novela sólo abarca el período del embarazo de Alicia” (422). Through this broadened scope of space and time, Cova learns of and documents horrific accounts of torture, murder, and massacre suffered by cauchero workers, which he hopes to eventually denounce formally to the Colombian consul at Manaus, Brazil.

Cova’s interactions with these and other men along the way serve an important plot function, too. Other characters’ knowledge of jungle navigation makes up for Cova’s lack of experience and serves as a sort of *deus ex machina* that allows for Cova’s journey and, therefore, the narration to continue. For example, just before the men venture off into the jungle, the picaresque character el Pipa, who had earlier stolen one of Cova’s horses in the llanos, conveniently reappears to guide him. Having lived among various Amerindian communities as a military trainer for more than twenty years, el Pipa’s role as cultural intermediary is essential to the second part of the novel.²³ His negotiations with indigenous peoples provide the men with shelter and determine routes in the story. Cova relays these conversations from a distance, but he is never privy to their content. On the contrary, he is quick to disdain indigenous Colombians in the jungle calling their actions puerile and facilely concluding that miscommunications are due to simple-mindedness: “inútiles fueron mis cortesías, porque aquellas tribus rudimentarias y nómades no tienen dioses, ni héroes, ni patria, ni pretérito, ni futuro” (214). Cova’s disdain and denial of coevalness catches him in a dramatic irony, then, for although he flouts indigenous

23. Páramo Bonilla discusses at length the ways in which el Pipa acts as an “intermediario de la selva” (“Cinco personajes” 219).

ways of knowing, he nevertheless relies on them to navigate the jungle. Likewise, just before el Pipa flees with the Guahibo Indians accompanying him, Helí Mesa arrives on scene with two Maipurean Indians. Because Helí Mesa is less skeptical and more friendly with Cova's group than el Pipa, the travelers have more ready access to the Maipurean knowledge, so that after his two Maipurean companions are swallowed up by a river and el Pipa flees, Cova already knows where the next closest indigenous community is and how to reach them. Before they have a chance, though, Silva appears with his more than sixteen years of experience navigating the jungle and again their navigational problems are solved.

These convenient plot twists disappear, though, toward the end of the text after Cova murders Barrera, reunites with Alicia, and witnesses the birth of his unnamed son. At this time Silva ventures off to Manaus with a letter written by Cova to requisition help. As they wait for his return, Cova's diary entries become increasingly shorter and more desperate. Some of his final lines refer to a map he has sketched to mark his position for rescuers: "Aquí, desplegado en la barbacoa, le dejo este libro, para que en él se entere de nuestra ruta por medio del croquis, imaginado, que dibujé" (383). Finally the text ends with a telegram from the Colombian consul in Manaus explaining, "Hace cinco meses búscalos en vano Clemente Silva. Ni rastro de ellos. ¡Los devoró la selva!" (385). Cova's failed efforts to trace his route on paper, a sketch he characterizes as "imagined," point to the limits of urban intellectuals' imaginations in understanding the space of the jungle.

In contrast to the navigational aid provided by characters' personal experiences, none of the paper maps in the novel perform their navigational functions. Instead, as we have seen with Cova's final map and the Oficina de Longitudes map mentioned earlier, cartography fails to account for the land it charts; the novel's third map—a map posted on the walls of a corridor at

the Naranjal rubber plantation—takes this critique further by not only failing to guide but actively disorienting travelers. Clemente Silva—who originally came to the jungle in search of his runaway son—flees the abusive conditions at the Naranjal rubber plantation in a moment of opportunity with five fellow caucheros. By this time, he has already earned his nicknames, Brújulo and Rumbero, for his extensive spatial knowledge and innate navigational capacities; yet, when he loses his sense of direction, he reverts to official cartographic knowledge—having meticulously studied the Naranjal map:

Concentrando en la memoria todo su ser, mirando hacia su cerebro, recordaba el mapa que tantas veces había estudiado en la casa de Naranjal, y veía las líneas sinuosas, que parecían una red de venas, sobre la mancha de un verde pálido en que resaltaban nombres inolvidables: Teiya, Marié, Curí-curiarí. ¡Cuánta diferencia entre una región y la carta que la *reduce*! ¡Quién le hubiera dicho que aquel papel, donde apenas cabían sus manos abiertas, encerraba espacios tan infinitos, selvas tan lóbregas, ciénagas tan letales! Y él, rumbero curtido, que tan fácilmente solía pasar la uña del índice de una línea a otra línea, abarcando ríos, paralelos, meridianos, ¿cómo pudo creer que sus plantas eran capaces de moverse como su dedo? (306, my emphasis)

As Silva indicates, the Naranjal map fails because it reduces too drastically the vastness of vertiginous space that it attempts to represent, yet although the Rumbero realizes his mistake and the map's inefficacy, he is almost entranced by the sensual experience of standing apart from a map and sliding his fingers across infinite spaces. Stubbornly, then, he tries to replicate this gesture of separating himself from the surrounding geography by trying to get above the canopy to find the sun. He climbs a tree to orient himself: “Por un claro de la techumbre, semejante a una claraboya, columbró un retazo de éter azul, sobre el cual inscribía su varillaje una rama seca. Esta visión le recordó el mapa” (310). Excited by a perceived proximity to the experience of looking upon a map, Silva is nevertheless disappointed. He and his men are hopelessly lost, for Silva has naively tried to base his spatial orientation on the reductive principles of cartography.

The problem with Silva's reliance on reduction is not only that a map cannot represent the complex space around him, but also that this reliance blocks Silva's intuition. In fact, overriding intuition, which is acquired and applied locally, is another effect of the universalized representation of mapped space that the novel criticizes. Silva had earlier observed this consequence firsthand. While working at the Encanto rubber plantation, he is appointed to guide a *mosiú* who is rumored to have come to the area as an explorer and naturalist. The Frenchman, a clear allusion to Eugenio Robuchon who was hired by the Casa Arana to survey its land, depends on Silva and his porters to traverse the jungle despite his implied scientific learning. Silva recalls,

Al través de las espesuras iba mi machete abriendo la trocha, y detrás de mí desfilaba el sabio con sus cargueros, observando plantas, insectos, resinas. De noche, en playones solemnes, apuntaba a los cielos su teodolito y se ponía a coger estrellas, mientras que yo, cerca del aparato, le iluminaba el lente con un foco eléctrico. (265)

The metaphor here is clear: Silva illuminates the path for the Frenchman by serving as his eyes—the *mosiú* cannot see his way through the darkness without the Rumbero. Furthermore, the theodolite, tool of civil engineering for measuring angles and distances—the very tool mentioned by Rivera in his indictment of the Colombian foreign minister—in this scene is reduced to its most unscientific function, stargazing. The theodolite's triangulation capabilities are most likely limited in the thick jungle foliage, and Silva's services as Rumbero free the scientist up for observations tangential to his mission. The scientist refuses to let his tool become obsolete, though, and the text ridicules the hubris implied in his emphasis on the need for scientific observation. He looks up from the theodolite's telescope to tell Silva how to orient himself using star directionality. Silva, who has been leading the way through the jungle with no help from Robuchon up until that point replies, “Desde ayer hice el cálculo de ese rumbo, por puro instinto” (265). The *mosiú* is so busy fidgeting with his instruments, that he takes no time to interact with

the space around him, instead observing everything through a lens, from a distance. In contrast to the obsolescence of the Frenchmen's distanced universal measurements, Silva direct intervention in space places him one step ahead of the *mosiú* using instincts unfettered by science to gather spatial information.

The Frenchman is ridiculed for his perceptual shortcomings later, too, when he and Silva come across markings etched in a rubber tree, but in this instance, the critique is aimed at his inability to perceive dynamism in the jungle space. On the contrary, his scientific gaze projects a space that is static and timeless. The *mosiú* sees the markings first and tells Silva he believes them to be hieroglyphs. In other words, he assumes he is looking upon a primitive space, and this prejudice directs his perception, causing him to ascertain what he sees as logographic writing. Silva, on the other hand, immediately recognizes his own script—made years earlier in an effort to locate his missing son—now bent and disfigured with the growth of the tree. Whereas the Frenchman imagines much older writing permanently fixed in space, Silva understands that landmarks in the jungle cannot remain unchanged with the passage of time. Without this temporal awareness of space, the *mosiú* believes it passively and permanently records the actions of men in time. Such an understanding underlies the creation of scientific knowledge on maps in which space becomes a static background that movement passes in and through. In the heart of the jungle, this static gaze misconstrues the *mosiú*'s spatial interpretation.

These cartographic shortcomings may seem inconsequential, but it matters beyond questions of spatial epistemology that the scientist's gaze fixes whereas Silva's lets it move. The map's tendencies to reduce, inhibit intuition, and immobilize are closely tied to the erasure of violence from the official record in the novel. Although the *mosiú* has no way of knowing at the time, his mission in the lands near Arana's rubber plantation is actually *to not see* the abuses of

the rubber economy and to make their absence official through his findings. With Silva's guidance, though, the *mosiú* comes to perceive what his scientific gaze omits. The tree with Silva's message etched into its bark is doubly marked, also having been "castrado antiguamente por los gomeros, era un siringo enorme, cuya corteza quedó llena de cicatrices, gruesas, protuberantes, tumefactas como lobanillos apretujados" (266). The intimacy of this moment in which Silva discloses his search for his son gives the Rumbero enough confidence to show the *mosiú* his scarred back and ask, "Señor, diga si mi espalda ha sufrido menos que ese árbol" (266). The Frenchman captures the comparison in photograph and henceforth becomes obsessed with documenting these unaccounted-for abuses. Eventually, he learns too much. The *mosiú*, like Robuchon, disappears—most likely murdered by men working for the Casa Arana because of the threat posed by his findings.²⁴ In this case, then scientific survey conspires passively to allow violence to ensue outside of its representational purview, and those who try to present compromising information disappear.

However, in Silva's case, the map does not omit violence but causes it. The misdirection instigated by Clemente Silva's reliance on a paper map takes the novel into what arguably constitute its darkest moments: friends turn against each other, sudden and unapologetic fratricide ensues, a man dies grotesquely of hemoptysis bathing himself in a vomit of blood, and the remaining men are devoured, down to the bone, by carnivorous ants. Misdirection is a matter of life and death in the jungle. Silva's reliance on cartographic knowledge ironically leads the men off the map, unable to orient themselves, and they meet horrific ends.

24. *En el Putumayo y sus afluentes* published in Lima showcases several of the photographs alluded to in *La vorágine*.

The novel's maps perform a double epistemic violence on the peripheral jungle space. On the one hand, these maps attempt to universalize jungle space into one homogenous spatiality and clear the land, as it were, of unscientific ways of knowing. On the other hand, they censor the existence of uncharted spaces where abuses meet only impunity. I now turn to the ways in which the narrative counter-maps, beginning with how it exposes what the maps hide. If maps, in conspiracy with rubber barons, present the appearance of an unproblematically regulated space, the narrative contends with this surreptitious effect of mapping by unraveling the superimposed ideology of the official spatial organization to reveal a vertiginous palimpsest of spatialities marked by unacknowledged violence. At the same time, indigenous people and *cauchero* deserters move through the interstices in rubber baron control enacting heterogeneous networks of space, also unaccounted for on the maps. These spatial practices off the map do not overwrite each other but rather form a complex rhizomatic map in which space and knowledge about it are continually renegotiated through interaction and movement.²⁵ In this way the novel shows the movement silenced by its maps.

If maps erase stories of violence and suffering in Colombian territory, the narrative shows the absence of cartographic infrastructure in that same space, thus undermining the validity of maps. For example, at no point in the novel do the characters—who move from Colombia to Peru to Brazil to Venezuela—encounter any physical delimitation of national borders. Indeed, Páramo Bonilla notes that the word “frontera” does not appear once in the text (“Cinco

25. Deleuze and Guattari's concept is particularly useful in understanding how different bodies of knowledge work together in *La vorágine*. Very much unlike a grid-like map, a rhizome allows for multiple heterogeneous connections. Deleuze and Guattari use “mapping” to describe the openness of rhizomatic relationships and contrast this with “tracing.” It is this rhizomatic map that I contrast here with the official state maps.

personajes,” 210, note 3). Only Montserrat Ordóñez’s footnoted geographical annotations reveal when they cross borders. Indeed, borders are illegible in the dense jungle; as Helí Mesa explains, one crosses into another national territory unwittingly: “Ya les referí lo que aconteció después de una marcha de horas, apenas caímos al Vichada. El Palomo y el Matacano estaban acampados con quince hombres en un playón, y cuando arribábamos, nos intimaron requisa a todos, diciendo que habíamos invadido territorios venezolanos” (219). These accidental border crossings subtly expose the failure of the states to adequately mark their frontiers, revealing instead a spatial organization very different from the one represented in the novel’s maps.

Where the state is missing, the avaricious rubber barons step in to regulate space and in so doing their continued extraction of rubber. One way in which they take advantage of the lack of state control is to lay blame elsewhere for reported crimes. When Silva bares his back scars to a Visitador as evidence of the rubber crimes then being reported in places like Iquitos, the Peruvian overseer essentially calls Silva a liar explaining that such scars are caused by a tree whose perfumed shade tempts men and then covers them in festering wounds. He also places Silva’s character into question by comparing the seductive tree to “las mujeres de mal vivir” (269). Because the Visitador has no local knowledge of flora, he resigns to believe the overseer and allows the crimes to continue. Besides, as the overseer explains, rumored abuses are a product of international envy at the Peruvians’ success in the rubber economy:

Ya Su Señoría nos hizo el honor de averiguar en cada cuadrilla cuáles son las violencias, los azotes, los suplicios a que sometemos las peonadas, según el decir de nuestros vecinos, envidiosos y despechados, que buscan mil maneras de impedir que nuestra nación recupere sus territorios y que haya peruanos en estas lindes, para cuyo intento no faltan nunca ciertos escritrocillos asalariados. (270)

The close proximity of borders—and yet their very absence—in the exploitation of *caucho* allows rubber barons to exculpate themselves. Balbino Jácome instructs a then naive Silva in the

irremediable situation of crime at the jungle borders. Silva's knowledge and experience of border abuses leads him to want to denounce the crimes, but Jácome explains that he should do so only "si quiere que lo tengan por mendaz y calumniador" (277). The Colombian government reaps financial benefit from these unregulated lands at a distance, leasing them to rubber barons and turning a blind eye to abuses that can always be assigned to someone else's territory as another nation's problem. In this way, rubber barons take advantage of the state's border ignorance and lack of regulation to situate abuses in other parts of the jungle.

Another way that rubber barons exploit the benefits of an absent state is through the control of people's movement in order to guarantee the constant labor for rubber extraction. First, the *caucheros*' work keeps them close to the riverbanks, preventing them from learning spatial knowledge firsthand and, therefore, escaping. As Cova explains in describing Silva in relationship to other *caucheros*, "Acostumbrados a no alejarse de las orillas, carecían del instituto de orientación, y esta circunstancia ayudó al prestigio de don Clemente, cuando se aventuraba por la floresta y clavando el machete en cualquier lugar, les instaba días después a que lo acompañaran a recogerlo, partiendo del sitio que quisieran" (303). Second, rubber barons deny *caucheros* passports, prohibiting their safe transit beyond the rubber plantations. As Jácome explains, "Y Arana, que es el despojador, ¿no sigue siendo, prácticamente, Cónsul nuestro en Iquitos?" (277). In a situation in which rubber barons assume official authority, any man caught transiting the jungle outside of the rubber plantations without a passport would be labeled a deserter and made to labor on another rubber plantation. The only time a passport is issued in the novel, Arana does so so that Silva can serve as an extension of Arana's panoptic eye to gather information on rubber thieves. Although Silva initially takes advantage of this free movement to engage in reconnaissance on the location of his son, after wandering for more than six months,

he learns that his movements is still restricted. He is rumored to be involved in aiding deserters and must return to La Chorrera to clear his name and receive “una novena de veinte azotes y sobre las heridas y desgarrones me rociaban sal” (264). The rubber barons can facilitate movement and just as easily remove the privilege with a cast net that traps men within their territory subject to their working conditions. As Silva explains, “muchos pasaban meses enteros sin verle la cara al capataz”; nevertheless, these men felt that their movement was restricted (303). Even a jungle with a dense canopy could not assuage fears of vigilance and control; rubber barons control spatial practice at the borders.

Faced with this complete control of the Amazo-Orinoquian borderlands, escape can only be negotiated through treacherous terrains where rubber barons and their men cannot easily transit. The oral negotiation of these potential escape routes lays out networks of spatial knowledge gathered by caucho workers tossed from rubber plantation to rubber plantation. Conversation of hypothetical escapes is a practice that reinforces a potential space for free movement. The men speak together and compile their representations of space, projecting a spatial practice onto a space that could possibly be made transitable. These men mentally cut their own space between, through, and around carefully regulated spaces, waiting patiently for the opportunity to flee. Discussing these potential routes with Silva, the men say,

“Es claro que la fuga sería irrealizable por el Río Negro; las lanchas del amo parecen perros de cacerías.”

“Mas logrando remontar el Cababurí es fácil descender al Maturacá y salir al río Casiquiare.”

“Conforme. Pero el Río Negro tiene una anchura de cuatro kilómetros. Hay que descartar los afluentes de su banda izquierda. Más bien, aguas arriba por este caño Yurubaxí, a los sesenta y tantos días de curiara, dizque se encuentra un igarapé que desemboca en el Caquetá.”

“¿Y para qué el río Vaupés no hay rumbo directo?”

“¿A quién se le ocurre esa estupidez?” (302)

Through conversation, these men keep their mental maps fresh and alive should the opportunity for escape arise. The occasion does sometimes arise, but these alternative routes, much less than liberation resemble another form of control, for men's movement in these supposedly free spaces remains restricted. From indigenous informants, Franco learns that a cosmopolitan "tribe" of rubber plantation deserters has formed. Their renegotiations of space block and facilitate transit of Cova's group. They create their own *correderos* to dodge armed patrols and attack any travelers as though they were enemies, but they must treat hostilely anyone who crosses their terrain to invade it:

dijeron que en el istmo del Papunagua vivía una tribu cosmopolita, formada por prófugos de siringales desconocidos, hasta del Putumayo y del Ajajú, de Apaponis y del Cacava, del Vaupés y del Papurí, de Ti-Paraná (río de sangre), del Tui-Paraá (río de espuma), y tenían corredores entre la selva, para cuando fueran patrullas armadas a perseguirlos; que, desde años atrás, unos guayaneses de poca monta establecieron un fábrica cerca del Isana, para ir avasallando a los fugitivos, y lo administraba un corso llamado el Cayeno; que debíamos torcer rumbo, porque si dábamos con los prófugos nos tratarían como a enemigos; y si con las barracas, nos pondrían a trabajar por el resto de nuestra vida. (231)

Escape hardly seems hopeful, then. The only escape from one oppressive system is militant participation and defense of another. Even beyond the panoptic eye of the rubber barons, movement is highly regulated and restricted.

There is yet another violence performed by the rubber economy and absent from the map that emerges in *La vorágine*: the ecological havoc wrought on the spaces controlled by rubber extraction. Some of these may seem small, but they are nevertheless significant. Before they meet up with Silva, Cova and his companions come across litter in the jungle—fish spines, burnt out fires, fruit peels and “Algo más raro aún—agregó Franco. Latas de salmón, botellas vacías. No se trata de indios solamente. Éstos son gomeros recién entrados” (240). Implied in their conclusions of who the litterers are is the belief that indigenous inhabitants do not leave

inorganic trash behind. Instead, it is the men and the practices transplanted to the jungle by the rubber economy that leave their trace with foreign articles dotted across the jungle floor. Other ecological havoc is more pronounced and more devastating. Cova compares human intervention to a mudslide in its devastating and reorganizing force: “Y es de verse en algunos lugares cómo sus huellas son semejantes a *los aludes*: los caucheros que hay en Colombia destruyen anualmente millones de árboles. En los territorios de Venezuela el balatá desapareció. De esta suerte ejercen el fraude contra las generaciones del porvenir” (298, my emphasis). This kind of destruction, what Lefebvre calls “the receding of nature” is integral to rubber extraction, and permanent as it causes extinction in the future (50). Each of the aforementioned pathways of violence—impunity, movement control, and ecological devastation—represent spatial practices not indicated on the territorial maps of the Oficina de Longitudes. *La vorágine* brings them into high relief with horrific description dispelling their efficacy.

These narratives of uncharted paths are one element of the text’s archaeology of official maps, but the text’s treatment of maps also engages in a formalist critique of cartographic knowledge. In Cova’s critique of the Oficina de Longitudes map, for example, he makes a point to mention that it could be extended over a table, and Silva could not fathom how something that could fit in his hands was expected to represent vast areas. In other words, the text recognizes that the form the maps take is intimately bound to the faulty knowledge that they circulate and the damage that they cause. If *La vorágine* is a counter-map, that is, a different kind of map that offers alternative understandings of Amazo-Orinoquia beyond official cartography, then it must present that knowledge in a form that breaks with cartographic reduction and linearity.

By a different form, I mean something more than a different representational medium. Otherwise, the fact that *La vorágine* is a narrative and not a paper map would suffice to make it a

counter-map, but narratives, too, can produce spaces that are linear, reduced, scientific (not intuitive), and static. Instead, a form that counter-maps must engage differently with the space it describes—rather than imposing a set of rules onto categorizing and dividing space, it will emerge from the shape of that space. Rivera defended such a relationship between form and geographic content in his vindication of the novel. In his response to Trigueros’s scathing critique of his work, he writes,²⁶

¿No conviene, acaso, en que para recoger el ambiente de esa inmensa zona de dos mil leguas que va en mi libro desde las goteras de Bogotá hasta los estuarios amazónicos, y que tú calificas de ‘monstruosa, atormentada y bravía’ era indispensable que la concepción artística, la acción, los episodios y hasta el estilo reflejaran las peculiaridades del medio que copian? ¿Olvidas que la tumultuosa independencia de la región se opone a la medida, a la línea recta, a la ordenación, y solo admite lo intempestivo, lo inesperado, hasta lo absurdo? ¿Piensas que las gentes que viven en aquellos desiertos tienen almas semejantes a las que tú conoces, chiquitas, pacatas, catalogables? (“*La vorágine*” 67)

Although erring to the extreme of geographic determinism in this defense, Rivera argues that a peripheral literary space requires a different artistic conception. In other words, *La vorágine*, according to Rivera, does not merely describe the jungle terrain; rather, the story emerges from this uncatalogable place absent of measurement and straight lines producing a narrative whose form corresponds to—Rivera uses the word “reflects”—the land.

26. Trigueros was the pseudonym used by Ricardo Sánchez Ramírez to lambaste Rivera and his novel publicly in several Colombian newspapers at the time. Sánchez Ramírez directed several newspapers at the time and contributed to several others. He contributed to Colombian literary criticism while also maintaining an active political career. Perhaps one reason for his strong distaste for *La vorágine* was the fact that among his political postings, he had served as the Colombian consul at Manaus during the apogee of the rubber boom, a fact that Rivera reminds him of in one of his responses to suggest that his literary criticism conceals the human abuses Rivera announces and Trigueros must know to be true. To see the series of articles, see Ordóñez.

Through an innovation of form, spatial knowledge can take a new shape, and hence, a different kind of spatial knowledge is represented. Far from indicating authorial incompetence as Trigueros suggests, then, *La vorágine*'s circuitous narrative structure merits attention as what Aboul-Ela has called "the poetics of peripheralization," broadly defined as a relationship between novelistic structure and anti-Eurocentric histories of coloniality such as the routes of violence in *La vorágine* imposed by spatial control and inequality (34). As French has astutely indicated, *La vorágine* obscures any references to the global economy in favor of a focus on local devastation. The texts from the Global South that Aboul-Ela discusses correspond to a similar focus. By studying such texts in comparative perspective, he argues that the material experience of coloniality has a direct impact on the form of cultural production, most notably for my purposes, emphasizing space "as another means of subverting the unity of a monolithic temporal line of history, and the geohistorical inequalities that determine the true nature of relationships between spaces play a heightened role" (136). Whereas Aboul-Ela sees spatial representation as a means to an end—a focus on space to remove the narrative from the dominance of hegemonic linear history—I see spatial representation as a subversion of hegemonic space itself. *La vorágine* indicates that spatial control gives way to linear narratives of progress and not the other way around. As a result, the text's poetics of peripheralization work on space to introduce a materiality that communicates a non-colonialist way of knowing space.

Maps function metonymically as the transparent spatial knowledge propagated from the capital cities of Bogotá and Caracas, and *La vorágine*—as I have already mentioned—is anything but transparent, confusing readers with narrative and spatio-temporal contagion. The form that this confusion takes, as the title of the novel suggests, is circular. Everything in the novel swirls back around itself. Even the front matter in the 1928 edition published in New York

City—arguably the most important edition as Rivera spent the final years of his life perfecting it—introduces this concept. The first pages include a map showing the characters’ movement through space (see fig. 6). This map centers on Colombia and shows the surrounding border nations; however, in lieu of clearly defined borders, the rivers on the map take precedent and the names of the countries swirl around Colombia in a visual vortex. The structure of the narrative follows this same whirling pattern. For example, Cova’s disorientation leads the narrative in a circle, for he is lost at the end of the novel in precisely the same area where Silva’s men were lost and met their demise years earlier. The form of the narrative, then, opposes the linearity of the map.

Likewise, the space described in the narrative erases any traces of lines, demanding alternative means of conceiving space. As the men first venture below the jungle canopy, the way Cova understands his relationship to other entities in space becomes compromised by the light in the jungle. Moving from the wide, open llanos, where the urban spatial design of vanishing points and linear perspective is more easily superimposed, Cova and his companions venture off into the closed jungle, nightfall coinciding with their entry beneath canopy.²⁷ Cova describes the river’s trajectory as moving circularly “hacia el vórtice de la nada” because this

27. Lefebvre convincingly argues that linear perspective grew out of a pre-capitalist society and urbanization in Tuscany: “The artists ‘discovered’ perspective and developed the theory of it because a space in perspective lay before them, because such a space had already been produced” (79). Upon entry into the jungle, a new space emerges.

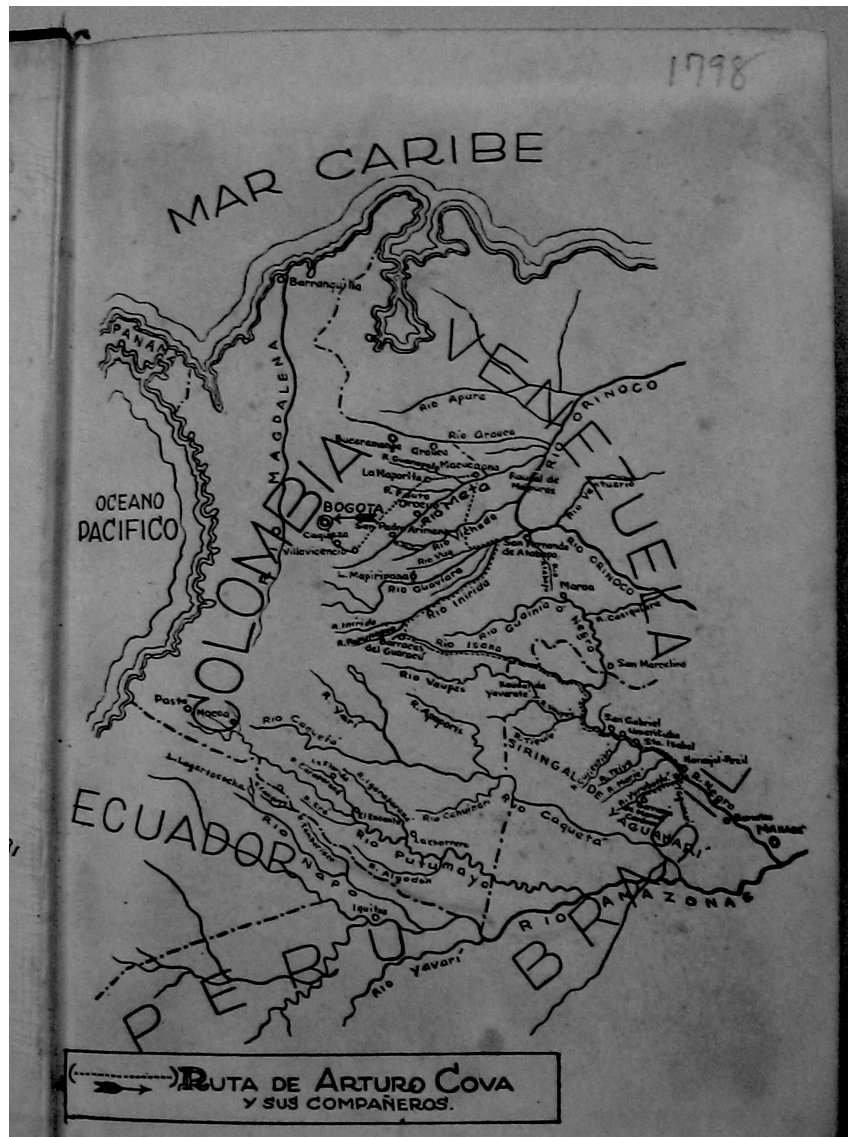


Figure 6. 1928 Editorial Andes front matter
 Photograph by the author courtesy of Colombia's Biblioteca Nacional

new space has all at once precluded linear ways of understanding positionality: “Sobre el panorama crepuscular fuese ampliando mi desconsuelo, como la noche, y lentamente una misma sombra borró los perfiles del bosque estático, la línea del agua inmóvil, las siluetas de los remeros...” (195). Significantly, in this passage the travelers lose sight of the fixed lines that separate and quantify things in space—profiles, riverbanks, silhouettes. Rather than being able to

distinguish between countable entities, Cova's sight only tracks an enmeshed darkness. His "deconsuelo" grows, then, because dividing lines are his only means of understanding his relationship in space, and they are no longer available to him. These effaced lines suggest the impossibility of linearity in general in this new space. A map's precise navigational lines could not account for this vortex of nothingness. Everything becomes entangled as they cross over from the llanos to the *selva*—even at the edges of the jungle, cartographic knowledge already loses its ability to account for space.

In lieu of linearity, what at first appears a horrifying vortex of space emerges. For example, early in the men's adventures two Maipurean Indians are knocked into the water and sucked into the current by a gyrating whirlpool when attempting to straighten the travelers' canoe. This scene is rife with words that reference the novel's title and form:

A lo largo de ambas orillas erguía sus fragmentos el basalto rojo por el río—*tormentoso torrente* en estrecha gorja—y a la derecha, como un brazo que el cerro les tendía a los *vórtices*, sobreaguaba la hilera de rocas máximas con su serie de cascadas fulgentes [. . .]. Acostumbrados a vencer en estas maniobras, la sirgábamos por la cornisa de un voladero, pero al dar con el triángulo de los arrecifes, resistióse a bandazos y cabezadas en el *torbellino* ensordecedor [. . .]. Los sombreros de los dos náufragos quedaron *girando* en el *remolino*. (233)

For Cova, the vortex is so horrific that, rather than help the men, he prefers to let them die in a "bello morir," which for him means a form of death that does not spill blood but rather hides death's abject horror beneath the surface of the water (233). Silva, too, when lost finds himself haunted by the circularity of the jungle space: "Por tres veces en una hora volvió a salir a un mismo pantano, sin que sus camaradas reconocieran el recorrido" (306). The other men, believing they are walking in a straight line, fail to understand the relationship of their bodies in space. Only Silva dismays at being trapped in the circle. Freud's essay on the uncanny describes an analogous experience of wandering an Italian city and inadvertently circling back around to

the same place. The shape of the vortex spins men into this uncanny nightmare in which space repeats itself, for they are lost without linear pathways.

Yet this circular and expansive space does not mimic the violent trappings of the rubber baron space. On the contrary, although Cova does not immediately see it, circularity is regenerative in the jungle. Because Cova is so focused on death as a frightening *telos* he misses the rejuvenating potential of the Maipureans' demise. Their hats swirl beneath "el iris que abría sus pétalos como la mariposa de la indiecita Mapiripana" (233). Told earlier in the text, the legend of Mapiripana personifies the jungle's cruel punishment of unwanted outsiders. However, the Mapiripana's murderous revenge against a lustful missionary was only one part of the story. She also symbolizes life, "exprimiendo nubecillas, encauzando las filtraciones, buscando perlas en la felpa de los barrancos, para formar nuevas vertientes que den su tesoro claro a los grandes ríos. Gracias a ella, tiene tributarios el Orinoco y el Amazonas" (225-26). In other words, the blossoming flower at the site of truncated life—far from serving as a symbol of destruction—is rather a reminder that the jungle's destructive forces give way to life. When later removed from the immediate threat of death, Cova, too, recognizes that the movement of the jungle "[e]s la muerte, que pasa dando la vida" (297). The vortex's circularity does not threaten to destroy gratuitously then, but rather creates through constant cycling.

With this argument, my analysis diverges significantly with studies that focus on the jungle's representation as part of the discourse of the green hell or the green prison—whether due to the caucho violence or the ecology itself.²⁸ I am suggesting, in contrast, that the jungle as "cárcel verde" in *La vorágine* is not inherent to the space but rather to a certain perspective on that space—namely, when linearity is imposed onto the jungle's circularity, it becomes an

28. See for example Beckman, Nielseon, Rogers, Rueda, and Wylie.

uncanny haunt (189). Only because Silva tries to rely on the map does the vortex catch him; Cova is horrified by being pulled into the vortex because he believes his death would mark the end of life, unable to see his participation as a small part of a complex circular ecology around him. In this space even creatures as tiny as ants actively reshape the land, destroying and creating new terrain, “barriendo el monte en lenguas y leguas” (304). Likewise, trees and termites destroy and regenerate:

Por doquiera el bejuco de matapalo—rastrero pulpo de las florestas—pega sus tentáculos a los troncos, agotándolos y retorciéndolos, para injertárselos y trasfundírselos en metempsicosis dolorosas. Vomitan los bachaqueros sus trillones de hormigas devastadoras, que recortan el manto de la montaña y por anchas veredas regresan al túnel, como abanderadas del exterminio con sus gallardetes de hojas y de flores. El comején enferma los árboles cual galopantes sífilis, que solapa su lepra supliciatoria mientras va carcomiéndoles los tejidos y pulverizándoles la corteza, hasta derrocarlos, súbitamente, con su pesadumbre de ramazones vivas.

Entre tanto la tierra cumple las sucesivas renovaciones: al pie coloso que se derrumba, el germen que brota; en medio de los miasmas, el polen que vuela; y por todas partes el hálito del fermento, los vapores calientes de la penumbra, el sopor de la muerte, el marasmo de la procreación. (295-96)

The jungle’s cycling, like the novel’s circularity, is a creative force. What Cova sees as sickness, devastation, vomit, grief, atrophy, waste, in fact is the work of other forms of life to regenerate the jungle space. Cova’s anthropocentric perspective is horrified by this movement because—unfortunately for the logical integrity of his mapping indictments—he, like a mapper, prioritizes his human experience and in so doing immobilizes the space he transits. The jungle is a constant moving nightmare to his static gaze.

Ways out of the Vortex. Cova’s position is particularly curious. He deplores the failure of maps and their gruesome consequences on the people living within their spaces, but he also replicates the map’s separation of people from space. Cova’s problem lies in the fact that when the jungle

space challenges his Cartesian subjectivity he responds by further reinforcing that subjectivity and thus separating himself from his surroundings. Cova's manuscripts are the material evidence of this exertion, for the act of writing continuously performs Cova's impervious subjectivity. As evidence of this claim, as Cova approaches his demise awaiting Silva with Alicia and his newborn son, his subject position comes into acute crisis, and his writing becomes increasingly frequent and self-conscious. Suddenly, after hundreds of pages of narrative and spatio-temporal contagion in which one easily forgets who is writing or that anyone is writing at all, Cova begins acknowledging the act of writing by starting his entries with statements such as "Esto lo escribo aquí, en el barracón de Manuel Cardoso" (381). These statements also illustrate a temporal shift from past-tense recollection to present simultaneity. Left to navigate the jungle on his own, Cova ceases to tell an entangled collective story and instead carefully marks his subject position, as if plotting fixed coordinates on a map through his writing.

Timothy Morton identifies these sorts of "as I write" statements as a form of ecomimesis, a characteristic of nature writing that implicitly says, "This environment is real; do not think that there is an aesthetic framework here." (*Ecology* 35). While ecomimesis serves functionally to draw the reader into the environment the act of "as I write" in fact prohibits this, turning the environment into an object of discourse, separate from the writer, and therefore the reader. In the case of Cova, however, calling attention to the surface of his writing serves not only to draw his rescuers into the immediacy of his desperation but also as a coping mechanism to keep himself separate from impending doom. Through writing, he asserts his geographic position and distances himself from the space around him, discursively protecting himself from any threats to his subjectivity.

Although Cova only explicitly writes himself into the aesthetic frame toward his end, this faulty coping mechanism of writing difference has accompanied him throughout the novel and prevented his growth. When he comes across his old, now ruined friend, Ramiro Estévez, toward the end of his journey, he belittles his wanderings and contrasts them with his own life saying, “En cambio, yo sí puedo enseñarle mis huellas en el camino, porque si son efímeras, al menos no se confunden con las demás” (346). Knowing the outcome of the novel in which Cova’s footprints are forever lost in the vortex, we must reevaluate this sentence and view his consideration of himself with an ironic distance. Despite everything he has experienced, he remains an intransigently stock character in a novel about constant change, and then he disappears. One may be tempted to believe he has changed when he takes up the abuses of the rubber plantations as his cause; however, these quixotic passions are in some ways no different than the amorous fancies toward Alicia that led him into the jungle in the first place. Cova stalwartly follows his whims whether logical or not. Should there be any doubt as to whether growth has occurred in Cova, his reunion with both Griselda and Alicia, the impetuses for the journey, reestablishes his immaturity. Initially Cova plays coy about his interest in the whereabouts of Alicia. Instead, the revenge he has lusted after throughout his journey takes precedent: “En tal momento me había olvidado de buscar a Alicia” (381). Cova still wants to kill Barrera, the man he has incorrectly and self-centeredly deemed responsible for his misfortunes. Seven months after initiating his journey, Cova has managed to remain untouched by all that he has experienced in the jungle.

Silva, on the other hand, goes through dramatic changes during his long stay in the jungle and learns to let go of his subjectivity—and to cease trying to rely on maps. After gruesomely losing his men in the jungle, he wanders two months “ausente de sus sentidos” (314). In other

words, he stops trying to use the paradigms available to him to make sense of the world around him. In this state, Silva must rely on others to survive. He becomes a “bestia herbívora,” imitating monkeys’ eating habits in order to survive (314). This key moment in which Silva leaves behind his humanness to become a beast himself is followed by a “repentina revelación” that saves his life (314). He suddenly remembers the legend of the cananguche palm that describes the path of the sun: “Nunca había pensado en aquel misterio. Ansiosos minutos estuvo en éxtasis, constatándolo, y creyó observar que el alto follaje iba moviéndose pausadamente, con el ritmo de una cabeza que gastara doce horas justas en inclinarse desde el hombro derecho hasta el contrario” (314). Then, crucially, he is able to communicate with a strange stranger:

La secreta voz de las cosas llenó su alma. ¿Será cierto que esa palmera, encumbrada en aquel destierro como un índice hacia el azul, estaba inclinándole la orientación? Verdad o mentira, él lo oyó decir. ¡Y creyó! Lo que necesitaba era una creencia definitiva. Y por el derrotero del vegetal comenzó a perseguir el propio. (315)

Following the anthropomorphized palm’s instructions, he arrives at a stream and instinctively throws leaves into it to determine its direction. From an ecocritical perspective, Silva has encountered “strange strangers” in the jungle (Morton, *The Ecological* 41).²⁹ According to Morton, such encounters involve a Freudian sense of the uncanny because they reveal likeness and interconnectedness across species, but this uncanny experience unlike the horror of repeatedly wandering back to the same place, saves Silva (*The Ecological* 81). Silva’s ability to relinquish a perspective of difference with his surrounding environment and instead strangely and uncannily recognize himself as like the monkeys and the palm saves him. He begins to

29. Morton develops the concept of strange stranger following Derrida’s *arrivant* to refer to all forms of life and non-life, which are necessarily made up of other forms, and therefore, appear strange to us. With this designation, he avoids having to divide interrelated parts of ecology into separate categories such as animals, plants, inorganic matter, etc. See *Ecological*.

navigate the jungle, and a group of Albuquerque finds him and nurses him back to health. Through these experiences of becoming lost and losing access to urban ways of knowing space, Silva is able to access geographical information directly from the world around him. His integration with his surrounding space depends on intuition and integration with Amazonia, possibilities denied by the distance implied in holding out a map to study geography. Silva has also been forcefully made part of his environment. The scars on his back mark the brutal transformation of space by the rubber economy, as we have seen. As part of that spatiality, he evidences its effects.

Through these changes and reorientations, Silva becomes Cova's opposite. Silva has already undergone these transformations when he meets Cova and his group, and when he first appears to them, he graphically embodies his acceptance of his place in the jungle's ecology. When the men examine his wounds, they discover worms living off of Silva's rotting flesh. Silva's reticence to show his wounds suggests that although he feigns surprise—"¿Será posible? ¿Qué humillación!"—he is probably already aware of the parasites living off of his body (246). He even knows when it occurred, "¿Y fue que un día me quedé dormido y me sorprendieron los moscones!" (246). For Silva, his condition is perfectly logical if not inevitable. He has already confronted the uncanny experience of recognizing himself over there in the forest and knows that the jungle is as much inside of him as outside. He seems almost amused by his liminal state between life and death—"¿Engusanado, engusanado y estando vivo!" (246). Cova makes every effort to avoid such blurring in his writing and he perishes. Silva, though, walks the line between life and death and survives.

The way out of the jungle is unexpectedly the way in—to become part of it and move with it. Silva saves himself by learning from other strange strangers how to be part of the space

around him. For this reason Jean Franco errs when she suggests that in *La vorágine*, “El hombre es castigado por sus ilusiones pero lo que contribuye a su derrota es su propia naturaleza, su instinto animal” (144). Certainly, men are punished in the novel for their illusions—or rather, delusions; however, animal instinct—grounded in space—would in fact protect them from these illusions. The distinction I am making may seem subtle, but it is integral to survival in the text. Cova uses rationality to try to control the jungle and himself, using words to impose a binary between himself and the space, but as Lefebvre asserts, “Man does not live by words alone; all subjects are situated in a space in which they must either recognize themselves or lose themselves, a space with they may both enjoy and modify” (35). Cova’s tactic leads to losing himself. By contrast, Silva abandons rationality and by the end of the novel, moves freely in and out of the jungle, finally avoiding detection, trapping, and getting lost, and he has done so by going so far into the jungle so as to slough off linear ways of trying to grasp space.

Despite the fact that Cova has carefully related Silva’s story in his diary, he fails to internalize its lessons. Instead, Cova employs much less effective strategies for navigating the jungle space. Despite the decades and multiple cultures of spatial information encoded in his text, Cova is writing instructions and drawing maps to situate himself, as if on a map, a point on an immobilized representation of space. Cova’s ecomimesis is the discursive equivalent of holding out a paper map and dissociating oneself from the land that it represents. As Tittler summarizes, “Cova’s attempts to save his life by escaping from the jungle are tantamount to his trying to escape from nature itself” (22). Whereas Tittler suggests that Cova’s dissolution within the jungle’s “viscera” results from the fact that Cova “lacks an identity apart from his surroundings,” I contend that Cova’s attempts to forge an identity separate from the jungle catches him offguard. Albeit out of necessity, he, too, substantiates the cartographic ideal of the faulty, deficient, lying

maps he has so scorned by claiming to pen his route precisely and objectively, over the land. Even as he penetrates deeper in the jungle, he remains stubbornly separate from it, and with this perception fallacy, his fate is sealed.

Cova's tragic end indicates that the counter-map should not simply replace the map. Given the fact that Cova's text proves useless in rescuing him from the vortex, for all of its carefully designed critiques, it proves equally as impractical for navigating the jungle space. Therefore, Jennifer French prematurely concludes,

The text more subtly corrects this governmental negligence by tracing in its fevered pages a new topography to replace the old one: *La vorágine* itself verbalizes the spatial configuration of the land, capturing in its intricate structure and baroque, wandering narrative the geographic complexities of an obscure corner of the Amazon jungle....The result is a new, verbal map to replace the antiquated government maps of which the characters repeatedly complain. (132)

Despite Rivera's criticism of the mapping commission in his political life and *La vorágine's* articulation of a critique, we certainly cannot conclude that Rivera intended for his text to somehow replace government maps.³⁰ On the contrary, far from trying to dispense with maps altogether—an equally deficient approach—*La vorágine* draws on the parallels between Cova's text and the maps to compel a more critical approach toward spatial representation in an ecology like Amazo-Orinoquia so as not to repeat the error of the consul of Manaus. In this way, *La vorágine* exceeds the neocolonial rhetoric of internal colonization to imply that cartographic standards developed outside of Amazonia simply cannot account for salient aspects of Colombia's eastern geography. The counter-map, then, is not another map but a different way of approaching maps.

30. Here I believe French falls into an intentional fallacy, confusing Rivera's political activism with the work of the text.

Certainly, Cova creates a verbal map in that he reduces the space he traverses to a readable description, but he is a careless mapper, unaware of his own abstracting gestures, just like the map. Cova gathers and compiles spatial information without internalizing it and without understanding his intervention in the creation of that spatial knowledge. He is a poet who has taken up prose and who believes that prose shortens the aesthetic distance. When he laments, “¿Cuál es aquí la poesía de los retiros, dónde están las mariposas que parecen flores traslúcidas, los pájaros mágicos, el arroyo cantor? ¡Pobre fantasía de los poetas que sólo conocen las soledades domésticas!” (296), he also obscures his representational framework, saying in essence that poetry distorts reality while his text tells the truth. Beckman has convincingly argued that counterfeiting tropes in *La vorágine* bring into high relief the “empty signifiers of a ‘civilization’ that does not recognize the exploitation on which it is built” (180). I am arguing that what Beckman calls counterfeiting is in fact a consequence of a representation in which the representer is unaware of and/or denies the abstraction inherent in his work and thus propagates a representational ideal. Like a map, Cova’s text pretends to represent space truly, as it actually is.

By framing Cova’s manuscript, Rivera’s text draws attention to the similitude between Cova’s narrative and Colombia’s maps at the extradiegetic level, too. *La vorágine*, after all, does not stop at the poet’s representation of space; rather, it is a representation of a poet’s representation of space. The text claims to present Cova’s manuscript without alterations, yet the compiler’s heavy hand appears throughout the text. Subtle cues suggest editing and reordering of the manuscript materials.³¹ In addition, whereas the map Cova mentions drawing at the end of

31. For example, curiously the text begins with a quotation labeled “Fragmento de la carta de Arturo Cova.” This quotation, rarely commented upon structurally, is quite revealing. In the prologue, Rivera writes to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia explaining that he has arranged (arreglado) Arturo Cova’s manuscripts for

the text is omitted, photographs from the adventure are included in the first editions' front matter. Furthermore, the photograph of Cova is actually a photograph of Rivera (see fig. 7).³² Like a map, *La vorágine* uses carefully selected documentary evidence to imply the realization of a representational ideal—Cova's manuscript as is. Both the prologuist and Cova affirm that they are presenting information objectively, yet they subtly undermine that claim with the texts themselves. This additional textual level reveals that poets are not alone in presenting their interpretations as unadulterated facts; even the prologuist has framed the text and tried to hide the frame.

By calling attention to this blurring of the distinctions between narrative and cartographic representation of space, I do not mean to suggest that *La vorágine* presents them as equivalent; it does, however, suggest that both engage in a common practice. Both the *Oficina de Longitudes* maps and Cova's mapping of space take very seriously the representational ideal, but in the case of the government maps, the result is not only misrepresented land, but also slavery, torture, murder, and ecological devastation. In other words, the stakes are not the same. *La vorágine*, after all—despite its documentary trappings of verisimilitude established in the prologue—is a work of fiction with an emotional and mercurial poet as a first-person narrator. In other words, it

publication without changing the style or errors of their author, only clarifying provincialisms, yet the following fragment is never repeated in the text, suggesting aesthetic rearrangement and elision by Rivera, the prologuist.

32. Unfortunately, these photographs, which also include images of Clemente Silva and Zoraida Ayram are usually absent from later editions.

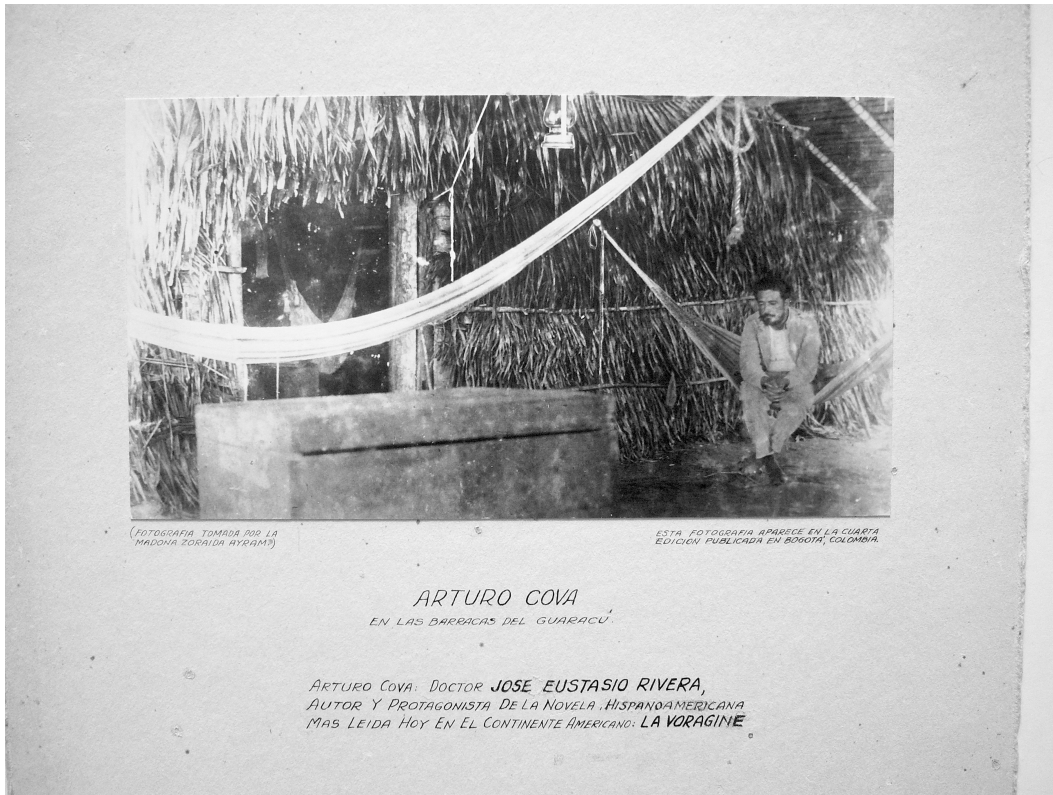


Figure 7. Photograph of Rivera as Arturo Cova for early editions of *La vorágine*
Photograph by Camilo Paez, courtesy of the Archivo Rivera, Universidad de Caldas

calls attention to its representational abstractions, allowing the text to do something that the maps cannot: reflect on and criticize their necessary abstractions. As Lefebvre explains,

Reduction is a scientific process designed to deal with the complexity and chaos of brute observations. This kind of simplification is necessary at first, but it must be quickly followed by the gradual restoration of what has thus been temporarily set aside for the sake of analysis. (105)

The maps do not allow for such a restoration, permitting reduction to become reductionism. The text, however, urges readers to see beyond the reductions. In this way, the text draws a subtle distinction between fiction and non-fiction, art and science; whereas both abstract, science must always obscure that abstraction whereas art can call attention to it in an effort to expand perception.

Conclusions: Seeing Beyond the Map

La vorágine, in creating a counter-map that in an innovative form maps a space ungraspable by science alone, does not supplant one method of reductionism for another, but rather compels the expansion of one's spatial perspective beyond the map—to step back from the representational frame and see it as such. In this way, *La vorágine* writes not a better map, but a different kind of map—a map whose abstractions we can see and take into account. The counter-map, unlike the scientific map, critically engages with the subject's involvement in making space. Tragically, then, after the publication of *La vorágine*, people would often dismiss sensationalist non-fiction accounts of abuses and devastation in the jungle as “cosas de *La vorágine*” (Rivera, “*La vorágine*” 69).³³ In this response, the delicate balance of belief needed to understand representation becomes painstakingly urgent, for if *La vorágine* exposes the dangers of taking the cartographic ideal too seriously, its reception reveals the dangers of not taking it seriously enough. Cartographic science should not serve as a replacement for perception, but rather a companion to it. *La vorágine* suggests that the crimes and territorial usurpations of the rubber economy would not have gone unchecked if people outside of Amazo-Orinoquia could see beyond the map.

Consequently, the counter-map does not render maps useless; on the contrary, it makes them more useful by taking their limitations into account. For this reason, the counter-map urges a subjectivity open to getting lost, to losing itself, like Silva's. By letting go of the need to look at

33. Rivera, in his retort to Trigueros, stated “Dios sabe que al componer mi libro no obedecí a otro móvil que al de buscar la redención de esos infelices que tienen la selva por cárcel. Sin embargo, lejos de conseguirlo, les agravé la situación, pues solo he logrado hacer mitológicos sus padecimientos y novelescas las torturas que los aniquilan. ‘Cosas de *La vorágine*’, dicen los magnates cuando se trata de la vida horrible de nuestros caucheros y colonos en la hoya amazónica” (“*La vorágine*” 69).

the land from a place separate from it and finding oneself *engusado*—survival becomes possible. We can only imagine that Cova and his family died the horrific, grotesque death that he so feared gazing upon, for to be devoured by the jungle is to finally lose one's subjectivity, to confront the horror that the ugliness over there is actually oneself and to surrender to that. This loss of subjectivity entails an admission that one cannot objectively map the land, for one is already part of it. For these reasons, I believe, Cova has to remain forever lost in the jungle. Despite his careful documentation, despite the fact that he believes his footprints have been left in the sand, his journey is not replicable, no more than the lines of a map are. The space moves, changes, and recycles, and as Heraclitus says, one cannot go to the same river twice.

Epilogue: “Se los tragó el carbon”

When I was in Colombia researching this chapter, an article appeared in *El Tiempo* whose title made a clear allusion to *La vorágine*: “Los pueblos que se tragó el carbon,” a reference that announces a trajectory toward a violent end in a space of impunity.³⁴ The article, published June 22, 2013, discusses the forced displacement of approximately 2000 people in three towns of Colombia's César department along the northern border of Venezuela due to unsafe contamination levels. Three multinational companies, CNR, Drummond, and Prodeco, who in the nineties promised to bring prosperity to this forgotten corner of the country, instead brought devastating pollution that has threatened people's health, access to food and water, and livelihoods. Although Colombia has the highest number of internally displaced persons in the world, the article explains that “Es la primera vez que se produce un reasentamiento (en las

34. Although the novel's final line is “¡Los devoró la selva!”, it was famously misquoted by Carlos Fuentes as “¡Se los tragó la selva!”—a line that continues to be popularly associated with the novel.

últimas, un desplazamiento forzoso) por las críticas condiciones ambientales que ha generado la minería. A Boquerón, Plan Bonito y El Hatillo se los tragó el carbón. Literalmente” (Escárraga).³⁵ A video on the electronic version of the article shows an interview with Alberto Mejía, a community leader in the town of El Hatillo, who explains the critical situation in his community and insists, “Estamos cercados por las minas” again recalling *La vorágine*’s depiction of the spatial organization of the rubber plantations (Escárraga).

What I find most striking about this article is the spatial language used by Drummond in response to the situation to deny culpability. In 2010 the Ministerio de Ambiente ordered the three multinational companies to relocate the populations. Drummond— in a statement eerily similar to Cova’s ventriloquism of the Colombian consul in Manaus—says that it will do so despite the fact that “ninguna de las poblaciones *queda dentro* de nuestros contratos de concesión ni de influencia directa” (Escárraga, my emphasis). In other words, these towns, despite their close proximity to the mining projects, despite the fact that they have “fenced in” the communities, despite the fact that they were promised prosperity by the companies when they first moved in, are situated outside of the space of the multinational’s direct influence. An interactive map available through *El Tiempo* supports this statement visually (see fig. 8). The map illustrating the areas exploited by each mining company shows that the three towns in question are situated outside of the purview of Drummond mining, although El Hatillo on the border of areas controlled by Drummond and Prodeco narrowly escapes Drummond’s spatial responsibility. Once again, the close proximity and yet material absence of borders sets the stage for exculpation.

35. The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimates the number of IPDs in Colombia in 2012 to be between 4,900,000 and 5,500,000.

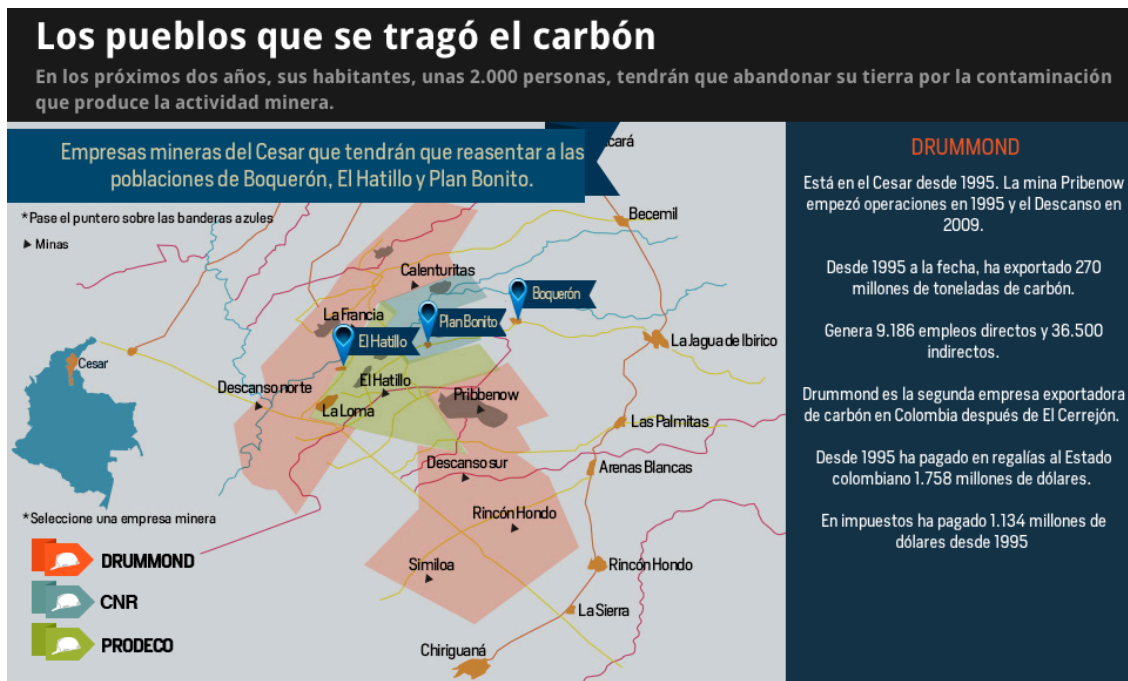


Figure 8. Los pueblos que se tragó el carbón
Source: <http://www.eltiempo.com/Multimedia/infografia/mineriaenelcesar/#>

This article exemplifies that the legacy of *La vorágine* has remained closely connected to the ways in which spatial representation produces violence—lines appear to shut out sickness and ecological devastation and in this way, allow destruction to continue and spread. Long after the rubber boom, then, this text beckons an urgent rereading as an indictment of representational abstraction taken too seriously. Continued problems in the spaces of *La vorágine* as described by Beckman are now spreading to other parts of the country:

For the most part, yesterday’s sites of colonial extraction remain the vortexes of today. These are places, to recall Patnaik’s words, in which capitalism has been both revolutionary and not revolutionary enough, or, alternately, that are both too connected to global capital, and not connected enough to warrant protection against ongoing waves of dispossession and violence. To go no further than Colombia, the plains and rivers traveled by Arturo Cova are the same as those traversed today by drug runners, paramilitaries, leftist guerrillas, Colombian soldiers and U.S. Marines fighting for control over cocaine production. (190)

Rather than seconding this argument that leaves us with rather pessimistic options for the future of Colombia's peripheries, especially Amazo-Orinoquia, I would like to suggest a more optimistic read. Indeed, in our current time of ecological crisis such as the one in the *El Tiempo* article, we must question readings that offer no way out of the vorágine. One easily fixates on Cova's devastating end and forgets that although the poet perishes in the jungle, Silva lives. The vorágine is forever lost and the "clemente selva"—the man who has managed to become the space around him—survives. Taussig in an act of prescriptive criticism, deems the text's lack of indigenous perspectives a shortcoming in the novel; however, Rivera could not have included this perspective as his knowledge of indigenous Amazonian cultures was second-hand.³⁶ Instead, he creates a character who has no autochthonous claims to the jungle and yet manages to shift his perspective, to find ways in and out of the vortex. Silva's success implies relinquishing the authority to cause harm and acknowledging himself as part of a larger spatial ecology. No one wishes to follow the footsteps of Cova, but following the footsteps of Silva implies suspending difference, and learning about the jungle first by being there. "¿Quién" like Clemente Silva, "se atreve a extraviarse en estos pantanos?" (304).

36. Neale-Silva suggests that most of Rivera's knowledge of indigenous Amazonia came from Custodio Morales, an informant in Ibagué. Furthermore, Carlos Páramo Bonilla indicates that Morales is mentioned in several international medical and anthropological publications as an authority on the psychotropic plant yagé, also known as ayawaska. See "Cinco personajes."

Chapter 2

Canaima and the Layers of Spatial Discourse in Guayana: Regionalism, Geography Manuals, and *Kanaimà*

...the discovery and desecration of native spirit places, as well as their occasional defacement, served [in 19th-century travel accounts] to enable the possession of that landscape through a mapping and surveying that exorcised the genius loci.

–Whitehead, *Dark Shamans*

In the previous chapter, I discussed how Bogotá's self-fashioning as the Athens of South America at the turn of the twentieth century belied a state with unsecured Amazonian borders where violence met impunity beyond the peripheral vision of the capital city. Faulty cartographic records conveyed sovereignty over Colombian national territory and allowed the state to turn a blind eye to crimes reported in areas that did not correspond to the country's maps. Therefore, as Bogotá celebrated its achievements in letters, arts, and urban architecture, it realized only the illusion of a lettered city, one which boasted “el triunfo de las ciudades sobre un inmenso y desconocido territorio, reiterando la concepción griega que oponía la *polis* civilizada a la barbarie de los no urbanizados” (Rama 14). My reading of José Eustasio Rivera's *La vorágine* (1924) underscores how fictional territorial representation can work to expose the fiction of Colombian geopolitics. In examining Rivera's novel as a counter-map, I show that *La vorágine* not only situates the oppositional barbarism of the riverine frontiers within the limits of Colombia, but also in a brilliant postcolonial turn, the novel accuses Bogotá of producing the very space defined as its barbarous Other. Through an analysis of the story of Clemente Silva, Chapter 1 also begins to hint at the fact that this partly fictional maneuver of defining the limits of national space involves drawing lines that write over Amazonian epistemologies and with them, ontological possibilities.

In this chapter, I unpack that process of geographic erasure by turning to a novel that deals directly with regional ways of knowing and being in space that do not fit into the molds of

outwardly imposed models. At a time when Venezuelan projects of social and economic integration were attempting to smooth over geographic textures throughout the country in order to fit the nation's diverse geography into a unified spatial practice, Rómulo Gallegos (1884-1969) wrote *Canaima* (1935), a novel that attempts to bring the geographic textures of the southern-lying region of Guayana into high relief. *Canaima* tells the tale of a protagonist from the shores of the Orinoco who is uninterested in economic gain and prefers to learn about Guayana firsthand rather than in classrooms. By reading Marcos Vargas's journey throughout Guayana as a counter-map, I argue that the novel engages critically with the homogenizing processes of spatial production that try to flatten space. However, I also show how, in attempting to counter hegemonic discourses with regional variations, the text also writes over other local geographic realities. *Canaima*'s (mis)appropriation of indigenous epistemology to create a sense of Guayana—for example, in the novel's title, which refers obliquely to a form of shamanism practiced by various indigenous communities in eastern Guayana—in turn produces another kind of geographic erasure.

Introduction

Guayana is a geographic region that stretches across the southern half of Venezuela, nearly all of Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, northern Brazil and a small slice of eastern Colombia. Situated between the Amazon and Orinoco Rivers, the geography straddles both river basins and includes mountains, jungles, dry and flooded plains, and swamps. As Whitehead illustratively explains, both indigenous and colonialist conceptions associate this diverse region's location with an insular geography because it is surrounded by water: rivers, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Caribbean Sea ("The Sign" 173). Part of this geographic island, though, overlaps more

than half of Venezuelan territory including its two largest states, Bolívar and Amazonas, which lie south of the Orinoco River. With the Orinoco separating Guayana from the rest of the country, conceiving of the region as part of Venezuela's national geography has proven problematic. Indeed, Venezuelan intellectual Horacio Cabrera Sifonte noted in 1980 that from Ciudad Bolívar—the largest city in Venezuelan Guayana, capital of its Bolívar state, and the place where *Canaima* begins—it was easier to follow waterways downstream to Trinidad and even Europe than to reach the Venezuelan capital of Caracas (qtd. in Minguet 212, note 132). As a result, Guayana has historically been disconnected from national infrastructure including educational institutions and roads.

To examine the role of literary representation in understanding and creating Guayana as part of a Venezuelan geography, I turn to a lesser-studied text by celebrated Venezuelan author, educator, and former president Rómulo Gallegos. His 1935 novel *Canaima* describes Guayana's landscapes in the dense descriptive detail for which Gallegos is known. Additionally, though, that geographic description engages critically with contemporary debates on the best practices for adapting school curricula to local realities throughout Venezuela—a crucial aspect of the text that has remained undiscussed in the critical literature. Although Gallegos's novels are often read as allegorical prescriptions for how to use education to achieve the “containment of barbarism,” in this chapter, I show how *Canaima* in fact wrestles with such prescriptive fixes (Skurski and Coronil 240). My analysis focuses on the ways in which three spatial discourses interact and clash in Gallego's mapping of Guayana; the discourses of regionalism and geography instruction—tinged with notions of civilization and barbarism, and a form of shamanism known

as *kanaimà*.¹ As layers of *Canaima*'s map of Guayana, these discourses articulate contradictory spatialities that Gallegos fails to reconcile. To bring these spatial discourses into comparative perspective, I engage with the work of political anthropologist Fernando Coronil, the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, and the ethnographic work of Neil Whitehead, among others. This discussion serves to bring the conflicting spatial discourses in *Canaima* to the surface and excavate the ways in which they overlap, grate against, and write over each other.

I have divided this discussion into three parts, corresponding roughly to each of the spatial discourses considered. In the first section, I offer a critical reassessment of regionalism as a discursive counter-map by situating Gallegos's work in the geopolitical context of early twentieth-century spatial organization in Venezuela. In that section, I underscore how *Canaima*'s engagement with regionalism as a locally-adapted curriculum dialogues with and critiques the homogenizing geographic representation of Guayana implied in economic and educational reforms underway at the time. The second section turns to the specific ways in which that regionalism manifests in the text in contrast to the projections of Guayana put forth in Venezuelan schools. Specifically, I show how regionalism emerges as a critique of classroom-based geography instruction by examining popular geography manuals used in Venezuelan schools around the time of writing. In that section, I underscore that the novel's critical counter-map relies on an over-simplified dichotomy that characterizes the protagonist's hands-on learning of Guayana's geography as practical and the geography of Venezuelan classrooms as useless and foreign to students. Finally, the last section further problematizes *Canaima* as a

1. According to Whitehead, *kanaimà* is a pan-Amerindian shamanism of ritual killing in the Guayana region practiced by several communities including: Karinya, Pemón, Makushi, Akawaio, and Patamuna. Additionally, it is also known by and part of the lives of groups near the locations of these people such as Waiwai, Wapishana, Ye'kuana, Wayana, Warao, and Lokono (*Dark Shamans* 52).

critical response to hegemonic mappings by addressing how the novel's redeployment of Guayana as "esos mundos de Canaima" appropriates and misrepresents kanaimà shamanism, resulting in omissions with dismaying reverberations in Guayana today (138).² As I argue in what follows, *Canaima*, read from a geocritical perspective, adverts to the dangers and horrors of counter-mapping a geographic region such as Guayana from the perspective of an urban intellectual like Gallegos.

Regionalism beyond Fiction

Like José Eustasio Rivera, in a post-Boom literary canon, Gallegos has sometimes been referred to pejoratively as a regionalist writer. A growing body of literature has reassessed this appraisal focusing on the ways that a regionalist aesthetic can articulate a counter-discourse to hegemonic projects of modernity.³ In these discussions, critics have primarily understood regionalism in the early twentieth-century as a pan-Latin American literary phenomenon, a nostalgic backward glance to a time before European literary and cultural models had threatened to preclude uniquely Latin American forms from arising. As this section argues, though, the idea of literary regionalism must be understood in conjunction with local contemporary geographic realities in order to account fully for the implications of this tendency to focus on regional landscapes in the cultural production in the early twentieth century. My discussion of *Canaima* bridges this gap in the literature. By situating the geographic realities represented in the novel in their geo-historical context, I offer a new perspective from which to understand both Gallegos's interest in representing the particularities of Venezuela's rural geography and the contribution of

2. All *Canaima* citations come from the Minguet critical edition.

3. I provide a brief overview of this polemic in Latin American literature in chapter 1.

those representations to Latin American thought. I consider how an early twentieth-century debate on the regional adaptation of Venezuelan curricula underscores a concern among some intellectuals that a nationally uniform educational model would not teach the knowledge necessary to prepare citizens for the unique problems and labor opportunities throughout Venezuela's diverse geography. Within this context, Gallegos's literary regionalism acquires a previously unconsidered critical dimension as part of the difficult conversations about the need for both deployable education models and preparation for varied local realities. I emphasize the ways in which this discourse in *Canaima* resonates with Freire's critical pedagogy to suggest its counter-discursive potential. Indeed, at issue in *Canaima* is the need for people to "develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves" (Freire, *Oppressed* 83, original emphasis). At the same time, though, I show how the text falls short of articulating those ideals. I begin this discussion with a brief plot summary that emphasizes the connection between *Canaima*'s geography and such educational debates.

The (mis)education of Marcos Vargas guides the plot of *Canaima*. The story begins in his hometown of Ciudad Bolívar in pre-petroleum Venezuela.⁴ As the novel opens, Marcos, an adolescent "cacique querido" among the neighborhood boys, has spent fifteen years at the edge of "Guayana de los aventureros" hearing the "palabras mágicas" of rubber tappers and gold miners that pass through his town at the end of each season to tell their stories of adventure in the jungle interior (10, 6, 43). Marcos's knowledge of Guayana in his youth is therefore informed by the narrative experiences of this older generation of experiential learners. Marcos longs to

4. Doudoroff's historical contextualization of events in the novel indicates that its actions must transpire between 1890 and 1920: "The telegraph had come to Upata, so most of the adventures occur after 1890; a motion picture is shown, but there are no automobiles, so the later events probably take place before 1920—which is to say, before petroleum" (xvii).

become an “Hombre Macho” like them but his parents, who have already lost two sons to the dangers, corruption, and impunity of Venezuela’s frontiers, have safer and more illustrious plans for him (7). They send him to a colonial English school in Port of Spain. There he boards for four years with no vacation in a disciplinary effort to tame his headstrong spirit.⁵ His parents’ attempts to forge a different path for Marcos away from Guayana prove futile, though, when his father’s death compels his return to Ciudad Bolívar. This return unleashes a chain of events—involving the corruption of regional *caudillos*—that finally leads the hero to embark upon exactly the journey into Guayana’s interior that his parents hoped to steer him away from.

With four years of formal schooling, as Marcos heads off into the jungle, he is hardly a Doña Bárbara, a Marisela, or Güiraldes’s *gaucho*, and yet eager to abandon his “civilized” life in order to know Guayana intimately, he is not exactly Santos Luzardo or Arturo Cova either. In *Doña Bárbara* (1929), education is usually read as a method for instilling urban “civilization,” but Marcos’s school learning is of no use to his life in Guayana. He calls his hands-on learning of Guayana “geografía viva” and refers to the geography of school manuals as dead (9). Through hands-on experience, he works as an overseer for a small rubber venture, expertly tracks down veins of alluvial gold, harvests *sarrapia* and eventually—after failing to return to the society he came from—joins a Maquiritare community, into which he marries and fathers a child.⁶ His school fails to prepare him for any of these experiences, and he must instead learn by doing.

5. An English colonial possession at the time, Trinidad’s school system suffered from a variety of problems; however, competition between government and denominational schools as well as a system of competition for government grants from England produced growth of the education sector and private schools affordable to the masses. For more on the history of schools in Trinidad, see Campbell.

6. Maquiritare people are part of the Carib linguistic group and refer to themselves as Ye’kwana. I use “Maquiritare” to stay consistent with the text. According to the 2011 Venezuelan census, this small ethnic group is

The narrative is told from a third-person omniscient point of view, which includes insights into the lives of numerous minor characters; however, the protagonist's movement and actions determine the direction and content of the narrative. Françoise Perus, using an abundance of fluvial metaphors states,

Por ser la figura protagónica de Marcos Vargas el principal afluyente de este mapa geográfico, histórico y cultural en donde aguas diversas y encontradas—'ríos de oro y sangre'—buscan su salida al mar abierto entre saltos y remansos, la trayectoria del protagonista es la que guiará nuestra exploración. (434)

Brushwood agrees that “[t]he deeds of Marcos are integrated into a complicated plot with several important facets and a variety of distinctive characters [. . .] but when all is said and done, *Canaima* is the story of Marcos rather than of any other character” (299). The geographic breadth of this one man's itinerary proves impressive, especially when compared to *La vorágine* in which the incorporation of several characters' stories from a broad range of dates accounts for the geographic expanse encompassed by the novel. In *Canaima* Marcos Vargas alone, in a matter of only five years, traverses thousands of kilometers of water and land from Ciudad Bolívar to the Cuyuní River at the eastern border with Guyana, to the western border with Colombia deep in what is now the Venezuelan state of Amazonas.⁷ Marcos's sweeping and often impulsive sojourns into Guayana are not accidental. On the contrary, he seeks out excuses to travel to areas unknown to him to expand his geographic knowledge. For example, one rubber tapper relates made up of nearly 8000 people living in Venezuela's two largest states, Bolívar and Amazonas, found in the Guayana region. Several hundred others live in Brazil's northeastern Roraima state. The population has increased from around only 3000 in the last few decades. See *Censo indígena* and “Censos de población y vivienda” (Instituto Nacional de Estadística). Censuses from earlier years are incomplete and do not give indication of how many Ye'kwana there may have been during the time of the novel.

7. Amazonas did not become a state until 1991 and at the time of Gallegos's writing was known as the Territorio Federal Amazonas.

that when Marcos hears of a region he is unfamiliar with, “apenas le oyó hablar de ella al *Alemán*, cuando, ya resuelto a irse con él, vino y me propuso, lo mismo que a ti en el Ventauri: ‘Dame bastimentos para unos días y es tuya otra vez la sarrapia que he recogido.’ Y se fue con el albino aquella misma noche” (173). Although Marcos’s formal schooling may not have found much purpose in these activities, his fascination with firsthand knowledge of the Venezuelan interior makes him an expert of Guayana geography. His life and movement in the novel define the text’s geographic space.

His extensive knowledge and numerous talents for navigating the jungle, though, do not amount to much in the eyes of his economically motivated friends. He works alongside his rubber tappers, sharing in the labor’s burden, and their yield is greater than that of the men of any other overseer, presumably due to these unprecedentedly just working conditions. Yet Marcos has little to show for his success nor does he care to, deliberately choosing the mobility of adventure over the sedentary life of capitalist accumulation. For him, Guayana is not a space for economic exploitation. As a romantic hero, he turns down profitable business partnerships, throws bits of gold into the river for others to find, and intentionally loses a game of cards in order to transfer all of his earnings to a friend. Others see these actions as squandered potential. Gabriel Ureña, a Caracas import to Guayana whom Marcos meets and befriends, recognizes Marcos’s promise as a leader, but fails to see the value of his activities in Guayana. Adopting a developmentalist perspective, Ureña tries to persuade Marcos to cultivate his talents with education and lead a movement toward “progress” in his country. Originally from Caracas, Ureña, too, was seduced by the stories that reached him from the jungle as a child, but when he instead chooses the desk-bound position of telegraph operator in Upata along the Orinoco, he justifies not following adventure into the jungle by retroactively recasting his childhood

fascination as youthful whims. By the time Ureña tries to redirect Marcos, even boldly suggesting that he could be a messiah for Venezuela's future if he would only further prepare himself intellectually, he is too late.⁸ Marcos has been stalked and drawn into the interior by Canaima, described in the text as “[e]l maligno, la sombría divinidad de los guaicás y maquiritares, el dios frenético, principio del mal y causa de todos los males” (121).⁹

This intangible force alluded to in the title of the text urges him to return and remain in the jungle and leads him back to a Maquiritare man, Ponchopire, whom he befriended earlier in his youth in Ciudad Bolívar. Marcos, exhausted and jaded by the violence he has witnessed throughout his quest for adventure, decides to join Ponchopire's community and serves as their protector and intermediary. From them, he learns how to subsist in Guayana and partakes in their communal life. Before long, though, a message arrives of deciphered signs that point to a time of indigenous rebellion and reclaiming of territory. Marcos—having learned of the long history of

8. Numerous critiques have noted the biographical similarities between Ureña and Gallegos and suggested that Ureña's perspective accounts for something like the moral of the novel. Subero outlines these parallels carefully in his essay on the matter, juxtaposing passages of Ureña's biography from the text with narratives of Gallegos's life. Additionally, Liscano notes in Gallegos's political life a “lirismo mesiánico” inspired by Russian pre-revolutionary messianism (*Rómulo* 54). My analysis departs from this biographical fallacy by addressing how the text itself dialogues with other discourses in historic context rather than trying to fish out correspondences between Gallegos's life and the characters' messages.

9. Minguet's footnote in the text explains vaguely that *kanaimà* in the Pemón language “no es un diablo, un dios, ni un espíritu del mal, para estos indígenas. . . . el indígena teme a *kanaima*, quien no existe como dios, pero sí como enemigo. . .” (254-55, note 518). The Pemón ethnic group, also of the Carib linguistic family, lives in areas of Guyana, Venezuela, and Brazil. In Venezuela, they live in the area of Canaima National Park. Minguet seems unaware of the meaning as a trans-Amazonian concept and form of shamanism belonging to the cosmology of numerous tribes, which I will discuss in detail below.

abuses and injustices enacted against indigenous peoples—desperately wants to lead such a rebellion, and remembers Ureña’s call to action. Marcos feels ill prepared to act as a leader, though, wondering “¿[. . .] qué ideas se había traído en la cabeza que sirviesen para algo . . . ?” (192). Although this question may at first seem to suggest that Marcos, too, has begun to accept Ureña’s developmentalist politics, wanting to act as a white savior but lacking the formal training to do so, in fact, the final ellipses leave this question open to interpretation. Perhaps Marcos, after living a life of learning from others in Guayana as opposed to imposing his learning onto them, realizes that he simply does not have the right locus of enunciation from which to lead this struggle.

This realization is difficult for Marcos, and a scene in which he settles into the melancholy of his obsolescence alongside his pregnant wife is the novel’s final glimpse of its hero. The story, though, does not end here. Disconcertingly, the text drastically jumps over a decade into the future when a young “mestizo” Marcos Vargas, the son of the protagonist, arrives at Ureña’s door with a message from his father requesting that Ureña educate him (194). The final scene shows “otra vez Marcos Vargas” leaning against the handrail of a boat as he travels down the Orinoco “hacia el porvenir” as his father did years before on his way to Trinidad (194). Young Marcos’s destination, though, is not Trinidad but the Venezuelan capital of Caracas. The Orinoco may seem to lead toward the future, but it also continues to separate Guayana physically, economically, and socially from the rest of Venezuela to the north. The plot’s circularity begs the question of whether Marcos Vargas’s story will repeat or whether the national educational system, in a city so distant from the Orinoco, can forge a different path for young Marcos and Guayana. The text provides no information regarding Marcos Vargas’s thought process in sending his son away for schooling. Perhaps he has given up on his ideals of

first-hand knowledge or perhaps he sees the necessity of pairing it with urban classroom-based learning if his adoptive community's struggle—taking place within Venezuela's borders—is to find its way into the national discourse.

Because the novel primarily deals with the very real and unresolved problem of the education of both Marcoses in relation to a space marginalized in both the economic and educational sectors at the time, Manichean approaches to Gallegos's previous work do not suffice for *Canaima*. Critical response to the international success of Gallegos's first novel, *Doña Bárbara* (1929), set the precedent for using a positivist framework of civilization and barbarism to read Gallegos. As a political discourse, ideas of Latin American society divided geographically into civilized cities and barbarous frontiers are prevalent in intellectual thought since the 1845 publication of *Facundo o civilización y barbarie en las pampas argentinas* by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888). Perhaps because of the fact that the Venezuelan *llano*, where *Doña Bárbara* is set, is a flat, open space much like the Argentine pampas, misguided readings have persisted in emphasizing conservative interpretations in which Gallegos proposes to use education to map civilization onto barbarous frontiers. With *Doña Bárbara*, Gallegos became known at home and abroad as “sobre todo el novelista del Llano” but also architect of a lettered Venezuela with a blueprint for the “traslación del orden social a una realidad física,” in this case, the linear order of civilization onto Venezuela's barbarous peripheries (Delprat, “El realismo” 342; Rama 6). As a result, the llano as a uniquely regional but civilizable space—one with cattle as an important source of revenue—has remained in Gallegos's legacy as the location of “la esencia nacional,” but not as a place of valuable knowledge (Castro 61).¹⁰ In contrast to

10. Castro discusses at length the 21st-century legacy of the llanos via Gallegos as “el espacio privilegiado por el positivismo para entender la nación” (67). This chapter is not the appropriate space to fully problematize this

the llanos, among Guayana's most salient features are flowing and shifting fluvial networks, thick vegetation, and high plateaus or *tepui*, in other words, an unstable heterogeneous landscape. In *Canaima*, then, "civilization" cannot map so easily onto the spaces of Guayana; rather, the failure to superimpose models onto the fluvial periphery suggests an undermining of the civilizing project. These geographic realities, though, have largely been overlooked in discussions of Gallegos's work.

Instead, critics have tended to eschew the specificity of *Canaima*'s geohistorical context altogether, using broad, universalizing approaches to argue against the perceived poverty of the text's regional appeal. Doudoroff, in his introduction to the 1996 English translation states that the text was part of a project that "would eventually tell the story of each region of Venezuela in both its proliferating natural uniqueness and its universal human drama" (xiv). Such readings promote what María E. Mudrovic calls "la ilusión a lo sublime en el arte," that is, a false separation of literature and politics with the intent of promoting the broad appeal of cultural production independent of the geopolitics from which it emerges (12). Gallegos scholar Juan Liscano, for example, uses Jung and Campbell to argue for an archetypal reading of Marcos's journey, which does not account at all for how the text emerges from and illuminates the geographic predicament of Guayana within Venezuelan geopolitics.¹¹ Similarly, González Echevarría privileges sweeping comparisons across texts set in tropical forests, tending toward nonspecific generalizations that ignore historical context. As this dissertation argues, even within Amazonia, what is considered to be "jungle" has innumerable permutations, and González

idea. However, although this concept of the llano constitutes one of the legacies of *Doña Bárbara*, I would argue that such an understanding is based on a misreading of the novel.

11. See "Las tres novelas mayores: *Doña Bárbara*, *Cantaclaro* y *Canaima*."

Echevarría has to ignore both differences across jungle regions as well as the political and economic realities governing them in order to develop his allegorical idea of mythical “quest narratives.” (347). In what closely resembles a move of Eurocentric taxonomy, he invents the umbrella term “jungle books” to describe a wide array of diverse texts written by “explorers, adventurers, anthropologists, and naturalists,” and presumably fiction writers as well (336). Although González Echevarría argues that *Canaima* departs from the “generic context” of “the quest romance,” the departures he notes are mainly plot deviations and “universal” themes; in other words, *Canaima*’s exceptionalism is framed within his prescription for what a jungle book is, with disregard to the text’s specific geopolitical context. He argues that the text questions “the very core of modernity at every level, from the economic and philosophical to the anthropological—that is to say it is an inquiry into modern culture itself—but above all into the literary” (“*Canaima*” 347). The vagueness of the terms “modern culture” and “modernity” emerge from González Echevarría’s “generic,” to use his words, approach to the novel and say little about the text as a form of cultural production emerging from a specific time and space (343). Even Rogers, who includes a historicized analysis of medical discourse in the text, considers *Canaima* a “tropical quest narrative” that subverts the modern story of the hero, ignoring regional struggles that make such texts about more than undermining modernity as an amorphous Other. I find it perplexing that these and other critics have been able in their analyses to erase from Gallegos’s Guayana all of its geopolitical particularities in order to repeat the colonial gaze that sees American wilderness as a timeless, spaceless, unspecific place of so-called “myth.”

Another troubling tendency in the literature on *Canaima* involves an adherence to the language of civilization and barbarism in critical analysis. The critics mentioned above attempt

to move discussions of *Canaima* away from erroneous and teleological interpretations that it is an “old-fashioned novel” by incorrectly arguing for its universal qualities; however, even in doing so, they fail to leave the civilization and barbarism paradigm behind in their analytical discourse (Brushwood 297). While Liscano, González Echevarría, and Rogers acknowledge a complex engagement with the notions of civilization and barbarism, they each conclude in different ways that this engagement amounts to inverting the paradigm and embracing barbarism. Liscano, for example, seems to accept the colonial notion that there are “uncivilized” places that exist in a different temporal plane. He states:

El tema de la civilización y de la barbarie adquiere en esta obra magistral, planteamiento renovado y, quizás, más profundo que en las otras. En lugar de presentarse solamente como una antinomia entre el valor ético y su contrario, entre una noción de progreso y su opuesto, traspasa esa proposición para matizar esos conceptos hasta el punto de que la aventura de Marcos Vargas consiste, precisamente, en des-civilizarse, en des-andar el progreso, en regresar a las fuerzas oscuras, al imperio de la emoción primera, al reino del silencio, cuando el mundo era sólo cruda existencia innominada, génesis recién serenado. (*Rómulo Gallegos* 137)

Although Liscano indicates that the text challenges the dichotomous thinking of civilization and barbarism, his conclusion does not. The idea of Guayana as an idealized prelapsarian space separate from modernity is only the other side of a Eurocentric coin that deems the space barbarous and horrifying. Likewise, González Echevarría, although reaching a different conclusion about the novel’s meaning, is unable to see Guayana as anything but a space of barbarism. He argues that the novel presents the problem of “how to incorporate the jungle, barbarism, the autochthonous into the national—as opposed to other works, like *Facundo*, where the savage appears as Other, inassimilable, someone who can only be brought into submission by the force of civilization” (“*Canaima*” 334). As in Liscano’s criticism, González Echevarría adopts the terminology of civilization and barbarism, accepting the idea of the jungle as both

autochthonous and barbarous without delving into the Amerindian sources of such autochthony. Rogers, opting for a more romantic interpretation, states that Marcos's decision to reject formal schooling "represents a complete reversal from Gallegos's former celebration of education as a means of overcoming barbarity. Marcos Vargas, the incarnation of a possible messiah for Venezuela, turns away from writing in favor of the unwritable forest" (140). With this statement, Rogers gives credence to notions of nature as a primordial space outside of writing and, therefore, history, notions that ecocritical theory has shown to be false.¹² Although each of these critics notes different ways in which *Canaima* does not quite fit into the Latin American paradigm of civilization and barbarism, they fail to leave this paradigm behind in their interpretive work, instead simply inverting the model. For these critics, Guayana, as a peripheral territory in the national geography, continues to represent barbarism, however nuanced as a desirable or celebrated other. In each of the above evaluations, I read a hint that Gallegos's representation of Guayana holds promise for a rich and innovative analysis of spatial politics but also a failure to explore this potential in earnest.

The Politics of Regional Education in Venezuela. Departing from these approaches, I tackle the novel's regionalism head on. I understand modernity within this "libro tan geográfico" as a primarily spatial phenomenon that relates specifically to what Marcos views as two different geographic pedagogies: the dead geography of school classrooms and the live geography of oral tradition and *in situ* learning (Minguet xviii). This tension emerges from a geopolitical context in which Venezuelan intellectuals were attempting to understand the relationship between the

12. For a discussion of how "nature" is always framed by writing and cultural production, see Morton (2007) and Schama.

national and the local, particularly in terms of citizenship education. The problem for these intellectuals was how to draft into law a national education in a country with a diverse geography and consequently, how to form national subjects located in disparate geographic realities. In *Canaima*, Gallegos presents classroom-based learning as a rigid, confining model that contrasts sharply with the flowing and experiential education Marcos Vargas acquires with indigenous guides along the Orinoco and its tributaries. The friction between the two modes of acquiring knowledge manifests as an experience of discord between an imposed national concept of Guayana and a negotiated and practical hands-on experience of local geography. In other words, *Canaima*'s critique of national education addresses an unresolved geographic problem for fitting Guayana into the concept of modern national Venezuelan space.

Part of Venezuela's geopolitical predicament was due to the fact that it had emerged into its early Republican years marginalized from some of the colonial infrastructure available in other parts of Spanish America. In part because available commodities in "little Venice"—pearl and cacao—were not as desirable to Spanish colonists as the silver and gold found in the mines of New Spain and Peru, Venezuela remained a peripheral colonial possession. Whereas elsewhere in Spanish America, educational and cultural institutions were established in the early years after conquest, hundreds of years would pass before Venezuela saw its first school, university, and printing press. Sánchez notes that unlike New Spain or Peru, "For more than 60 years after the discovery of Venezuela, the only education offered its inhabitants was in the rudimentary efforts of the missions" (13). Venezuela's first university, Universidad Real de Caracas, was established by the royal court of Madrid upon the request of friars from the Saint Rose of Lima Seminary in Caracas not until 1721, 183 years after the first university in Spanish

America.¹³ Likewise, the printing press came to Venezuela via Trinidad more than two and a half centuries after the 1539 establishment in Mexico of the first printing press in the Spanish colonies; the Britons Matthew Gallagher and James Lamb brought it in 1808 and established Venezuela's first newspaper (Hernández Bencid). Given this lack of educational infrastructure when compared to other parts of Spanish America, Venezuela was metaphorically situated quite far from "Athens" in nearby Colombia.

Additionally, more than one hundred years of *caudillismo* beginning with the Republican era would further complicate the establishment of a national education culture. Venezuelan cultural critic Mariano Picón Salas's oft-repeated assertion that the death of *caudillo* dictator Juan Vicente Gómez in December of 1935 "marked Venezuela's entrance into the twentieth century" attempts to account for the perceived difference between Venezuela and other former Spanish colonies, albeit using a linear, colonialist timeline toward "progress" (Coronil 68). Coronil has since reworked this Eurocentric conception of Gómez's regime (1908-1935) as stagnation by rightly addressing how the influx of petrodollars under Gómez laid the foundation for a modern Venezuela. Yet despite the burgeoning economic prosperity during that time, "popular education was officially considered an avoidable drain on the public purse" (Hanson 148). This inattention paired with the legacy of the nineteenth century accounts for the 80%

13. Compare these dates, for example, with the numerous 16th-century universities established in the Spanish colonial world: Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino (1538) in what is now the Dominican Republic; Universidad de Lima, now Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (1551); Real y Pontificia Universidad de México (1551); Universidad Santo Tomás in Colombia (1580); Universidad San Fulgencio in Quito (1586). Numerous other universities were also founded in the 17th and early 18th centuries before Venezuela's first. For more historical background on the colonial educational institutions in Venezuela as compared to other parts of Spanish America see Hanson, Mora, and Sánchez.

illiteracy rate in Venezuela in 1936, the year following Gómez's death. Additionally, only 35% of school-aged children (7-14) were enrolled and even fewer were in regular attendance (Hanson). Regardless of Venezuela's alternative path to modernity fueled by the exploitation of oil reserves, then, Caracas came nowhere near rivaling Bogotá's claim to the realm of the lettered city.

Areas remote to Caracas such as Guayana were even further removed from this ideal. As late as 1963, Sánchez writes of Venezuela that "rural education, as such, is virtually non-existent" (103). Within this fragmented national geography, the idea of regional specificity and variation was far from an essentializing discourse on the "cultural preoccupation with autochthony" (Alonso 45); rather, in a country of over two million with just over 100,000 living in the capital district of Caracas, regionalism represented a geographic reality that challenged the development of educational infrastructure.¹⁴ Numerous regions lay far from the capital city, not yet connected by roads and in only the very early stages of the implementation of the national telegraph system. At issue was how to inculcate the cultural values projected by elite urban citizens for a modern Venezuela in rural districts while simultaneously preparing students professionally for life in their diverse regions. Failure to do so would prompt infelicitous working conditions or mass population loss to other areas of Venezuela where available work would align more readily with received formal education. Boadas explains that such a situation continued to exist in 1983 in the state of Amazonas where:

el sistema educativo vigente se aleja de la realidad del medio regional y utiliza métodos que son efectivos en otros sitios del país, pero que no se corresponden con la realidad existente superior [...]. Esta situación, necesariamente, empuja a una gran parte de la fuerza de trabajo hacia otros lugares del país, lo que, por

14. Population statistics are according to the 1891 and 1920 censuses from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística.

supuesto, significa una gran pérdida de población joven con capacidad creadora. Cuando el educando termina el bachillerato y no sale de la región debe dedicarse a trabajar en actividades para las cuales no ha recibido formación. (121-22)

Resolving this problem, as evident in the date of Boadas's statement, would challenge Venezuelan politicians and educators for decades into the present day, explaining Gallegos's depiction of Marcos, a character who feels that his formal preparation has little of practical merit to offer when choosing to stay near home.

Making these concerns particularly pressing, the oil economy was beginning to alienate citizens from regional needs through the implementation of what Ramón Santaella has referred to as "estructura petrolera" (631). The oil economy may seem an unlikely point of reference for a novel about Guayana as Venezuela's oil reserves are primarily located along its northern coast. Furthermore, as mentioned, *Canaima* takes place prior to the development of the oil economy. Yet Doudoroff suggests that this absence represents an "element of something like nostalgia, an urgency to portray ways of life that were disappearing" (xvii). Indeed, Coronil rightly notes, "the work of several Venezuelan scholars has shown, despite the limited space occupied by its productive structures, the oil industry reconfigured space nationwide" (110). The resulting oil structure reversed the order of production of space throughout Venezuela. Prior to the oil structure, spatial practice related to economic activity was organized from the inside out in accordance with local agricultural practices and toward paths to international markets, but the oil industry produced a coherent national space by restructuring from the outside inward. Workers within this oil structure used the term "escuela" to refer to the industry's imposition of business standards, and what this school taught and imposed was new spatial practices to regulate the movement of people and products, therefore assigning space new meanings and values for a world market while attempting to write over local meanings and practices (Coronil 109). Before

Guayana could be integrated into an educational citizenship, then, international markets demanded a nationalized economic citizenship. My nuanced interpretation of what Doudoroff calls nostalgia, then, is rather that the pre-petroleum setting of *Canaima* allows the text to write against the spatial homogenization of the capitalist production of oil space by recording spatial practices obscured or expunged by the economic sector.

Whereas the oil structure was working to render a legible national space through uniformity, Venezuelan policy makers and educators, like Gallegos, were attempting to account for the practical needs of citizens through educational reform. What could perhaps be referred to as the “regionalization” of Venezuelan education became written into law, not without controversy, in the Proyecto de Ley Orgánica Nacional, introduced during Gallegos’s presidency in 1948. Proceedings from congressional discussions on this law catalogue months of debate over how to best address regional realities in Venezuelan classrooms. One representative, Congressman Perera from the state of Lara, echoing the discourse of earlier educational debates in Spanish America by Sarmiento and Andrés Bello, took a proposal to regionalize instruction to its logical extreme. Arguing against the language of Article 12, which required the adaptation of educational materials to local realities, he scoffs at the idea that one could study “la aritmética bajo un concepto andino o la gramática bajo un concepto yaracuyano” (qtd. in Gallegos, *Gobierno* 300). Perera’s argument is misguided, underpinned by elitist biases toward “proper” Spanish and prejudiced against regional variations in language and practice, but his opinions corresponded to the anxieties of many other legislators in the room who agreed with him. Nevertheless, within this debate, everyone seemed to agree that geography required a regional conception “para que los educandos vinculándose al medio comprendan los problemas de éste y contribuyan a su solución” (qtd. in Gallegos, *Gobierno* 312). What those problems were and

what their solutions may have been remained abstract ideals. Although legislators recognized that differences within Venezuela's borders required attention at the instructional level, they mistakenly thought that those differences could be compartmentalized into a geographic curriculum.

Not coincidentally, “los únicos conocimientos que le interesaban [a Marcos Vargas]” were “[l]a geografía de la vasta región que luego sería el escenario fugitivo de su vida de aventurero de todas las aventuras” (9). Although contemporary classroom instruction occupies the peripheries of this adventure, it serves an important structural function in framing the narrative; the story begins as Marcos is sent away to school along the Orinoco—presumably due to the lack of secondary educational infrastructure in Guayana at the time—and ends when his homonymous son follows in his wake. We never learn explicitly what sort of education unfolds in these distant schools nor in the primary school that Marcos attends in Ciudad Bolívar—both receive little more than a few sentences of mention—except that Marcos finds their lessons useless. After all, his mother hopes that school will make an “hombre formal” of him, and Marcos has no interest in any of the trappings of “civilization”—marriage, property, capital (15). Indeed, for a young adventurer who must pass “tests” in a region largely unaccounted for in school curricula, his intuitions about classroom instruction may be correct. When he first returns from Trinidad, his old friends challenge him to catch some fish in a school of passing *zapoara*: “¿Se es o no se es? [...] Vamos a ver si es verdad que en Trinidad se olvida lo que se aprendió en Ciudad Bolívar” (12). This playful provocation encapsulates an oppositional scheme that courses through the text: classrooms may be necessary and beneficial spaces for citizenship education, but they threaten—through their uniformity—to overwrite local knowledge, separating people from the life of their communities. At the same time, unchecked regional learning beyond the

classroom manifests as a hyper-masculinized discourse of proving oneself against nature. In this way, Gallegos anticipates the urban bias of the 1948 educational law; his treatment of Marcos implies that insufficient regional adaptation of learning provides tools that have no practical use, but too much regional adaptation can make people wild, barbarous. Although little narrative space is dedicated to the classrooms that Marcos leaves behind, then, they penetrate the text as a yardstick for Marcos's chosen "escuela verdadera, de lucha y de endurecimiento [...] el arabal y el campo circundante" (10). With this dichotomous division between classroom-based and experiential learning, Gallegos nonetheless attempts a counter-discourse to standardized education in which regionally-adapted learning has space to develop.

Within this dichotomy, standardized classroom instruction corresponds to a one-size-fits-all model, and in *Canaima* Gallegos is skeptical of such an approach. Lehtinen notes this skepticism in *Canaima* in relationship to development models: "throughout the novel Gallegos openly expresses his doubts over whether one single model of development can be applied with equal success to all social and geographical spectra of the Venezuelan nation" (35). Lehtinen fails to tie these doubts to the contemporary education debate, but Marcos, as a mouthpiece for Gallegos, evokes the discourse of that debate using a metaphor of custom-fit shoes. With colloquial language, he explains to his friend and creditor, Manuel Ladera,

eso de las disciplinas, inglesas o de donde sean, es relativo y pasa con ellas como en las zapaterías, que unos se calzan de percha y otros a la medida....Quiero decir que a unos pueden imponerle con reglamentos la disciplina que han inventado otros para el público grueso—siguiendo mi comparación—, porque están muertos por dentro y cualquiera les sirve; mientras que otros, vivos hasta el fondo, tienen que escoger la suya por sí mismo, viviendo su vida. (15)

This language, which also recalls Marcos's ideas about the dead geography of schools and the living geography of Guayana implies that Gallegos recognizes a loss, a death, involved in conforming to other's models. This rather facile opposition ignores the possibility for any

intermediary way of learning; Marcos is either alive, free to explore and acquire knowledge on his own or restricted and dead. As he spends more time in Guayana, he increasingly resists any form of model. After returning from his time as a rubber overseer and fittingly while in his friend's tailor shop, "dábase cuenta de que ahora menos que nunca le servirían las medidas de los demás, ni ya tampoco las antiguas propias" (160). Finally, when the same friend finds him along the shores of the Cuyuní River, Marcos exclaims, "[Q]uién sabe si a mí no me sirvan ya zapatos, ni de percha ni a la medida. ¡En fin! Ya veremos. . ." (180). Gallegos's choice of shoes as a metaphor for a standardized education model speaks to both a predetermined path walked by those shoes and a confinement—one could even imagine the way feet physically change as they conform to the structure of a shoe. Rather than serving to move through the dense and dynamic vegetation of Guayana, Marcos sees custom-fit shoes as impractical molds for feet on a different path.

By contrast, "geografía viva" constitutes a practical pedagogy that emerges from Guayana and serves to navigate the region effectively and gain employment. The narrator describes at length Marcos's idealized notion of what an alternative path would be:

El curso de los grandes ríos de Guayana y la manera de pasar de unos a otros por el laberinto de sus afluentes, caños y arrastraderos que los entrelazan, las escasas vías transitables a través de bosques intrincados y sabanas desiertas, el incierto derrotero, ya sólo conocido por los indios y apenas indicado por el arestín que crece sobre los antiguos caminos fraileros para ir hasta Rionegro evitando los grandes raudales del Orinoco y todos los rumbos que los aborígenes saben tirar desde un extremo a otro de aquella inmensa región salvaje y cuáles de estos indios eran buenos gomeros, cuáles mañoqueros y en las riberas de qué ríos o cabeceras de qué caños habitaban. La geografía viva, aprendida a través de los relatos de los caucheros, mientras que para la muerta que podían enseñarle en la escuela, así como para todo lo que allí quisieran meterle en la cabeza, no demostraba interés alguno. (9)

Although charged with the colonial discourse of alterity when speaking of Amerindian peoples, key to Marcos's motivation for understanding Guayana's geography is a sense of being on the

outside of indigenous knowledge needed to function in the region. He desperately wants access to the knowledge that makes transit and social interactions feasible across the Guyanese riverscape. This knowledge must be gained *in situ* and serves practical functions of movement and presumably subsistence, especially when compared to the inert knowledge shoved into his head in school, an expression he uses more than once to describe school instruction. The problem, Marcos's analogy implies, is that the contents placed into students' heads in schools come from outside of Guayana and do not account for the knowledge that Marcos thinks he needs for the life that he wants to live within the region.

Viewed as the allegorical father of education in modern Venezuela, Gallegos spent much of his public life wrestling with such educational issues.¹⁵ As a Caracas native who had to suspend his university education in order to help his family—not unlike Marco Vargas—Gallegos nevertheless placed great emphasis on the importance of education in his public life. He worked as a teacher, and as director of the Liceo Caracas (now Liceo Andrés Bello), supported notable students Miguel Otero Silva, Rafael Vegas, Isaac Pardo, and Rómulo Betancourt, among others, as they rose up in protest of Gómez's dictatorship during the *semana del estudiante* in February 1928.¹⁶ The generation of 1928 would go on to form Venezuela's first democratic party in 1941 and nominate Gallegos's candidacy to the presidency twice. In 1936, during a brief

15. Despite his internationally acclaimed literary achievements, and his political contributions as the first president elected through universal suffrage in Venezuelan history, Gallegos is best remembered as a teacher. Rodríguez Ortiz includes him as part of a mythic triad of Venezuelan modernity: “el *dictador* Gómez, el *demócrata* Betancourt, el *maestro de maestros*, Gallegos” (64, original italics). Likewise, Castro explains that Gallegos's legacy as reimagined by the current *chavista* government is “sobre todo el de civil y pedagogo” (69).

16. Liscano tells the story of the protests and Gallegos's quiet call to action. See *Rómulo Gallegos y su tiempo*.

tenure as Minister of Public Instruction, he designed a mass overhaul of the national system, which included changing the name of the ministry to Ministerio de Educación Nacional, beginning preparations for the Ley Orgánica de Educación, dividing education into primary and secondary, setting standards for teacher preparation, and contracting foreign specialists as advisors and consultants (Morales Benítez 71).¹⁷ During his nine months in office in 1948, educational reform would take precedent in Congress.¹⁸ Gallegos was very much involved with creating and implementing needed educational infrastructure. At the same time, though, his depiction of Marcos as critical of the end results of that infrastructure, that is, irrelevant classroom instruction, suggests an uncertainty and irresolution regarding educational reform.

Some of Gallegos's key political writings on Venezuelan education acknowledge the potential dangers of classroom-based learning, which for him, involved deauthorizing the student's role in the learning process. Writing in *La Alborada* in 1909, he compares schools to the stifling of life under military rule¹⁹:

Para ahogar nuestro espíritu de iniciativa, ya de suyo deficiente, cuenta la escuela con un aparato de represión y vigilancia tutelar que constituye su mérito mismo. En la práctica de sus labores escolares, nada hay de propio en el educando, todo

17. Gallegos had refused to hold any political office during Gómez's rule; Gómez, too, had plans to make him Minister of Public Instruction (See M. Rodríguez). Perhaps foreshadowing his later short-lived presidency, Gallegos held this office for only three months. As Morales Benítez explains, "Las razones por las cuales tuvo que dejar el Ministerio de Educación Nacional apenas tres meses después de su nombramiento son ampliamente conocidas: Gallegos era un Ministro de ideario progresista, desafecto a la escuela confesional y defensor resuelto de la separación de la Escuela y de la Iglesia" (71).

18. See *Gobierno y época del presidente Rómulo Gallegos*.

19. *La Alborada* was a magazine co-founded by Gallegos in 1909 to disseminate political, educational, and literary essays. It was in circulation only from January to March of 1909 before it was suppressed by the Gómez regime.

está sometido a reglas, salirse de ellas amerita un castigo; nada puede hacer por sí mismo y consultando sus propias aptitudes e inclinaciones; el régimen es inflexible, el maestro severo y hay que someterse en todo a ambos. (“Factor” 70)

Evoking the same language he later uses to describe Marcos’s opposition to the dead geography of school curriculum, Gallegos underscores what he views as the externality and, therefore, repressive quality of Venezuelan schools at the turn of the century. His desire to avoid this kind of punishing education seems to have motivated his renaming of the Ministerio de Educación Pública. For Gallegos both of these processes—the transfer of knowledge (“instrucción”) and the transformation of the student (“educación”)—are necessary, but he favors a pedagogy of education rather than instruction, in other words, one that allows for bidirectionality between student and teacher in the learning process (Gallegos, “El Factor” 62). During Gallegos’s first presidential campaign in 1940, he emphasizes the need for such a dialogic pedagogy:

Es necesario multiplicar nuestra escuela hasta llevarla a los más apartados y modestos núcleos de población, hasta plantarla sobre el tope de todos los cerros a cuyas faldas se esparzan o se acurruquen caseríos. [. . .] Y la misión educadora que recorra continuamente el país, de un extremo a otro, se detenga unos días en el minúsculo caserío perdido entre el monte y en la plaza del pueblecito, *converse, estimule, avive curiosidad inteligente, enseñe tres o cuatro cosas imprescindibles, de utilidad práctica adaptada al medio*, levante luego su tienda de campaña y vaya a detenerse allá otros días. (“Un ejemplo” 172-174, my emphasis)

In this passage, Gallegos anticipates the language of the Ley Orgánica with its emphasis on the need for regional adaptation, but whereas the law fails to expand on what that would look like, Gallegos does here. His emphasis on conversation, stimulation, and curiosity in order to ensure practical applicability of skills indicates that for him, education had to be more than a system that was implemented and enforced; rather, education required negotiation of knowledge at the most basic level of the student-teacher interaction.

Attention to the critical role of context in the learning process and the need for pedagogic dialogue between student and teacher would also be of primary concern in the later writings of

Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire (1921-1997). Although decades separate their work, both Gallegos and Freire served as Ministers of Education and wrote against the oppressive military dictatorships in their respective countries, seeking ways to radically reform the involvement of young people in their constitution as citizens. Like Gallegos in 1909, Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968), lambasts the stifling role of educational institutions in the mental and social lives of young people. Implicit in what he calls “narrative teaching”:²⁰

is the assumption of a dichotomy between human beings and the world: a person is merely *in* the world, not *with* the world or with others; the individual is spectator, not re-creator. In this view, the person is not a conscious being (*corpo consciente*); he or she is rather the possessor of *a* consciousness: an empty ‘mind’ passively open to the reception of deposits of reality from the world outside. (*Oppressed* 75)

Freire’s words are strikingly similar to the language that Gallegos uses in creating Marcos’s aversion to having teachers put information in his head. The problem with this model of the empty mind in narrative teaching is that it locates knowledge outside of the student, and what Marcos craves is an active role in knowledge construction. He certainly does not find that option in Trinidad, which would have only represented another model that did not fit. As Campbell explains, schools in Trinidad at the time were meant to inculcate English culture, and students had the opportunity to compete for university scholarships to study in Europe (10). Instead, despite the fact that Marcos’s adventures begin after his formal schooling, he does not seem to learn anything of practical value to him until he returns home to Guayana. In this emphasis on the local, as a starting point for the educational process, Gallegos’s approach to Marcos’s trajectory again resonates with Freire’s critical pedagogy. Freire writes:

Before I could become a citizen of the world I was and am first a citizen of Recife. The more rooted I am in my location, the more I extend myself to other places so

20. Freire also calls this the “banking conception” (*Oppressed* 75).

as to become a citizen of the world. No one becomes local from a universal location. The existential road is the reverse. (*Heart* 39)

In *Canaima* Gallegos creates a story that seems to experiment with this imperative to reposition the locus of knowledge within the reach of students in their surrounding space.

I draw these comparisons between Freire and Gallegos in order to reframe the discussion of *Canaima*'s central tensions beyond the positivist discourse of civilization and barbarism. Guayana, rather than a barbarous frontier to be tamed becomes a necessary starting point for Marcos's understanding of the world. In this way, Marcos's choice to stay in Guayana exceeds simplistic interpretations of a rejection of civilization in favor of barbarism. On the contrary, he is rejecting the irrelevance of foreign models and exteriority in his education. Freire's discussion of the need for students to feel rooted in their immediate location provides insight into why geography was treated specially in Venezuelan educational debates and by Gallegos himself. Narrative teaching that ignores the immediate setting empties the local geography—the context of students' daily lives—of meaning. On the other hand, direct engagement with the local allows for the connection “al medio” sought idealistically by Venezuelan legislators. Marcos's rebelliousness against classroom learning is an indictment of the way that knowledge is produced in Venezuelan schools, as geographically neutral models developed in the urban coastal capital and applied without regard to the varied spatialities throughout the country.²¹ Freire's framework for a critical pedagogy illuminates the complex relationships between knowledge and geography in Marcos's adventure and in the contemporary educational politics beyond the text.

21. In this sense, the development and deployment of supposedly universal frameworks to codify knowledge in a coherent epistemology resembles my discussion in chapter 1 of Robuchon's scientific measurement of Amazonia in *La vorágine*. In both *La vorágine* and *Canaima* a “regional” focus underscores the limits if not the absurdity of “objective,” overarching approaches to knowledge construction.

In drawing these comparisons, though, I do not mean to suggest that Gallegos is a critical pedagogue *avant la lettre*. Gallegos's concern for bringing a dialogic education to Venezuela's most geographically and by extension, economically marginalized sectors, certainly resonates with Freire's imperative to develop a "pedagogy of the oppressed" "forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples)" (*Oppressed* 49). However, whereas Freire is clear that what is needed is a radical liberation that begins with "men's recognition that they have been destroyed" by "arms of domination," Gallegos seems to ignore oppressive power structures in his discussion and is also markedly less sure on how to proceed (*Oppressed* 68). Both intellectuals wrestle with the question of how to reach marginalized sectors of society with relevant educational tools. Freire, following a Marxist philosophical tradition, though, is very explicit about the crucial role of oppressed peoples and the knowledge they possess in developing a pedagogy of the oppressed. Gallegos, on the other hand, is limited by the discourse of contemporary debates on national education, a discourse he was very much involved in creating, and sees the problem of Venezuelan education as primarily a geographic one, overlooking issues of power and class struggle encoded in the country's use of its space. In other words, Gallegos, like Freire, recognizes the need for a different kind of inclusion of students throughout Venezuela in their educational process; however, he does not think beyond classroom-based learning to conceive of what that inclusion would look like. In *Canaima*, through the character of Marcos Vargas, he experiments with two extremes. The rigid narrative model of teaching that Marcos hates clearly will not serve his purposes, so Gallegos allows Marcos to pursue the opposite extreme, a completely self-guided itinerary of learning throughout Guayana. Gallegos oversimplifies Venezuela's complex educational problem by setting up this dichotomous binary of live geography and dead geography; Marcos's thirst for free and adventurous knowledge of

his “geography” stands in direct contrast to the confining parameters of classroom-based learning. Although flawed, then, Gallegos dichotomy writes a sort of counter-map that attempts to present a critical geography of Guayana. Marcos’s schools determine the limits and scope of his knowledge, but Gallegos’s “geografía viva” in Guayana attempts to establish a counter-map in which the student has greater agency.

The limits of Gallegos’s counter-discourse are determined in part by the fact that he was an outsider to Guayana, an urban intellectual and politician from Caracas. The introduction of modern transportation to traverse Venezuela, such as the airplane in 1912, allowed for Gallegos to bring Guayana and other regions into focus in his novels. Unlike his characters who travel back and forth from the Venezuelan coast to Guayana by river, Gallegos reached Ciudad Bolívar by plane and traveled around from there in a Ford (M. Rodríguez 27). He spent only three weeks in Guayana from January 15 to February 9, 1931, prior to his self-imposed political exile in Spain, for the expressed purpose of gathering information for a novel about the region. He kept a small notebook, reprinted in facsimile version in M. Rodríguez’s *Y Gallegos creó Canaima* (1984), which includes notes on the names of regional flora and fauna, comments on variations of Spanish, notes on different people he meets, and anecdotes that happen to him and that he is told. So many of his notes find their way into *Canaima* that Gustavo Guerrero has deemed the novel “una reescritura del memorándum” (374). When read retrospectively through Fuentes’s lens of excessive realism, Guerrero’s observation amounts to a critique; however, in contemporary context Gallego’s details brought firsthand observations of Guayana to a wide audience.²² But there is a contradiction in this maneuver. Gallegos attempts to give an insider’s

22. Doudoroff has argued that Gallegos use of explanations to explain his characters thoughts or actions, what José Balza has referred to as a “pedagogical stigma” in his writing, in fact may have served “to guide a

view of Guayana but he does so as a well-known public intellectual from Caracas able to arrange and afford air travel. He sees the vast, fluvial ecology from above and learns about a great deal of Guayana from secondhand accounts. Although he does not reveal his sources for areas of Guayana that were outside of his personal travel itinerary, he did not traverse the immense amount of territory covered in the text personally. Gallegos was attempting to counter-map by bringing a marginalized region of Venezuela into popular literature of the time, but he was doing so from a limited and elite perspective. The rest of the chapter deals with the ways his counter-map engages critically with other representations of Guayana and examines in detail how his perspective limits this process.

When Charlotte Rogers states that Marcos's characterization of the dead geography in schools "represents a complete reversal" from Gallegos's positions on education in *Doña Bárbara*, she is only partially correct (140). Gallegos recognizes in *Canaima* that education is not a panacea, but he does not completely reverse his position on the importance of education nor does he present the novel's tension as one of overcoming barbarity. The problem is how to provide practical educational solutions for students in different geographic realities, and the solution remains unclear. In my historicized reconsideration of Gallegos's focus on Guayana, I have emphasized that neither a campaign against barbarism nor an embrace of it, nor a search for authenticity suffice to explain Gallegos's focus on this region geographically, economically, politically, and socially marginalized from Caracas where the parameters and methods of education are determined. More accurately, *Canaima* perhaps urges a critical rereading of *Doña Bárbara*, for the later novel indicates in Gallegos an uncertainty if not doubt in the ability of one common reader who may be a first-generation dweller in the city of letters" (293; xvi). In other words, Gallegos aimed to reach a broad audience of a variety of different reading levels.

educational model to prepare Venezuelan youth adequately for the numerous geopolitical realities contained within the country's limits. *Canaima* elaborates a critical commentary on the way that Venezuelan education attempts to do so. Using Gallegos's chosen matrix of geography, the next section turns to the specific ways that the novel attempts to undermine widely-circulating geographic renderings of Guayana in educational texts.

A Novel Geography Manual

Although the specifics of Marcos's classroom instruction remain unwritten in the text, a reconstruction of some key features of his geographic curriculum can be attempted by analyzing common geography manuals in circulation at the time. In this section, I focus on several manuals widely circulating in Venezuela at the turn of the century including Landaeta de Henríquez's *Compendio de geografía descriptiva elemental* (1886), Aristedes Rojas's *Libro de geografía de Venezuela según Codazzi* (1897), *Primer libro de geografía de Smith* (1901), Villegas Ruiz's *Compendio de geografía de Venezuela* (1908), and Miguel Granado's *Geografía de Venezuela y nociones de geografía universal para escuelas de segundo grado* (1928).²³ Curiously, with the

23. Given the state of political upheaval in Venezuela, which prevented on-site archival research at the time of writing, my access to turn-of-the-twentieth-century geography manuals from Venezuela was informed by Manuel Segundo Sánchez's *Bibliografía de obras didácticas publicadas en Venezuela o por autores venezolanos en el extranjero*" and limited to those texts available for loan in the U.S. As a result, some of the consulted editions have publications dates in the late 19th-century, but according to Segundo, these texts continued to be republished into the 20th-century. I have chosen to focus on Venezuelan representations of geography rather than the colonial English geography manuals Marcos must have encountered in Trinidad first because Marcos refers only to geography instruction in his Ciudad Bolívar primary school and second because the Venezuelan manuals will elucidate the relationship between the instruction of Venezuela geography and the mapping of Venezuelan space by the state.

exception of Smith's manual, none of the examined texts contain maps—perhaps due to the greater cost of printing images—rendering geography in schools a primarily discursive endeavor in Venezuela, which may hint at why Gallegos describes it as “dead” in *Canaima*. Introduced geographic concepts serve to measure the earth and identify distinguishing features so as to divide it into distinct regions and climate zones, and classify and identify characteristics of various regions. Using facts, numbers, and an ideologically charged lexicon, geography manuals present Guayana as finite, ascertainable, measurable, and—with a developmentalist undertone—useful only for the exploitation of natural resources such as plant products and mineral wealth. My analysis of the conceived representations of geography manuals brings into high relief the idea of a national education as a way of mapping a colonial space onto the Guayana periphery and shows how distant Venezuela was from achieving its regionalized education ideals. To excavate the ways in which Marcos's “geografía viva” serves to contrast with and undermine the conceived textual space of Eurocentric geography manuals, I examine trends in format and content among several texts that present geography as an object of study external to students' daily lives, and then highlight the ways that *Canaima*'s treatment of geography contrasts and writes against that geographic discourse.

One key obstacle to fostering a critical pedagogy that would link students to their surroundings was the late introduction of the printing press in Venezuela (1808). Without the means to print books locally, Venezuela established a reliance on foreign educational manuals imported from the United States and Europe, in Spanish translation. The practice of using foreign textbooks extended well after independence—even when national books became available—and Venezuelan positivist thinker Rafael Seijas laments in 1891 that “En cuanto a textos para escuelas y colegios, pocos son los nacionales y muchos son los extranjeros, por malos que éstos

sean. No acontece lo que en otros países, a saber: que se prefieren las obras de los nativos para la enseñanza primaria y superior” (100). For geography instruction, the effect of the use of these foreign texts is a privileging of geographic knowledge constructed elsewhere without reliance on firsthand observation. The Spanish translation of New York public school principal Asa Smith’s widely circulated geography manual—published twice in Venezuela—explicitly positions geographic knowledge produced away from local contexts as sufficient if not superior to local knowledge. One of the most popular geography manuals in the United States at the time according to its front matter, this text contains very basic facts on select geographic features of all five continents including population, climate, topography, and products, illustrated with images and maps. The Spanish translation includes an additional introductory note directed at the Spanish-speaking audience. Sparing no condescension, the text addresses its “amiguitos en los países españoles”: “Los niños aunque no hayan salido jamás de su país, pueden saber lo concerniente a [sic] las gentes, los animales, las montañas, y los ríos del mundo, sólo estudiando este libro y algunos otros sobre diferentes materias” (8). An image on the first page reinforces the idea of geography primarily as a spatial representation by showing a map, a globe, and several textbooks in a classroom (see fig. 9). Indeed, as a discipline concerned with describing the earth, geography is a necessarily representational subject. This foreign text implies, though, that the authority to write such descriptions seemed to be located in distant places. Aversion to this distancing is perhaps what causes Marcos Vargas to create the oppositional notion of “geografía viva” to resituate his knowledge acquisition in his surroundings.



Figure 9. Front matter for Smith's geography
Source: babel.hathitrust.org

To a certain extent, in the process of compiling geographic information from expansive and distant regions, the creation of geography textbooks—foreign or otherwise—necessarily deterritorializes firsthand knowledge. Obviously, this trend, rather than a preference, was a necessity as the demand for textbook authors almost certainly exceeded the number of geographers available to write them. Because writers had to rely on second-hand geographic information developed for other readers and other interests, a situation emerged in which geography was taught as a palimpsest of texts, often by foreign travelers and naturalists. Humboldt was most certainly a reference. Another celebrated geographer in Venezuela was Agostino Codazzi (1793-1859), an Italian military geographer and cartographer who worked for

Bolívar to map areas of Gran Colombia corresponding to modern-day Colombia and Venezuela. He published several books on his observations and measurements that became foundational sources for Venezuelan textbooks, which adapted his rich geographic description to a classroom-friendly format.²⁴ Such texts incorporated information from empirical sources. My point in addressing the distancing between geographic referent and representation in textbooks is not to suggest that such codification of geographic knowledge is necessarily harmful nor that it could have been avoided. However, such a reductive understanding of the relevance of geography instruction does seem to be the position of Marcos in *Canaima*. Marcos conflates the idea of geography as a representational subject matter and the firsthand experience of a region. As a result, he determines that geography is either classroom-based, and therefore, deterritorialized, irrelevant, and dead or empirical, exciting, dynamic, and alive. Unable to reconcile his all-or-nothing proclivities, he opts to abandon classroom instruction.

Given Marcos's preference for hands-on, dialogic learning, and his opposition to having things stuffed into his head, another of his objections to classroom-based learning was most certainly the narrative methods common at the time. The narrative teaching model marginalizes students as sources of knowledge. Students learn, therefore, to be passive recipients of facts. As Freire explains, "Almost never do they realize that they, too, 'know things' they have learned in their relations with the world and with other women and men" (*Oppressed* 63). One common lesson structure in vogue in nineteenth and early twentieth-century geography texts that reinforced these beliefs was the question-answer format. As Douglas explains, this format was

24. Manuel Segundo Sánchez lists two key titles by Codazzi *Catecismo de la Geografía de Venezuela* (1841) which had two subsequent reeditions, and *Resumen de la Geografía de Venezuela* (1841). Additionally, Arístedes Rojas published a question-answer format adaptation called *Primer libro de geografía de Venezuela, según Codazzi*, in 1883 and again in 1897.

popular before progressive education reform that began to consider “that the *process* was at least as important as substance (or subject matter)” (9). Although mimicking a form of inquiry, in fact, this format deters questioning by providing not only the answers but also the parameters for the questions. Authors Landaeta de Henríquez, Rojas, and Smith use this structure in their geography manuals. One notable question from Rojas that exemplifies how under the guise of a question, facts are established and questioning suppressed, even contrary to reality, comes from a section called “Estado de la Educación.” The first question reads, “¿En qué estado se halla la educación en Venezuela?”; the short and definitive answer, “En un estado floreciente” (38). Alternatively, manuals such as Villegas Ruiz’s *Compendio de geografía de Venezuela* remove the illusion of dialogic education by simply listing numbered facts. Other manuals, in addition to following these formats, include quizzes at the back of the texts, emphasizing again the finiteness of inquiry, much in contrast to Marcos’s unrelenting quest to explore new regions throughout Guayana.²⁵

Marcos’s methodological objections to such geography manuals apply to the teaching of Venezuelan students at large; however given that Marcos Vargas is a youth from Ciudad Bolívar, I now turn to how the geography manuals specifically alienate Guayana youth by failing to include them as recipients of knowledge, much less generators of it. Using the discourse of civilization and barbarism, the geography manuals overtly Other the people and land in areas outside of the capital district. For the sections of the texts corresponding to regions of Guayana, this Othering is especially pronounced. The first way this effect is achieved is through what anthropologist Johannes Fabian has referred to as “the denial of coevalness” in which regions

25. In addition to the mentioned texts, I examined Criollo, Granado, Landaeta de Henríquez, Rojas, Smith, and Villegas Ruiz.

conceived as “peripheries” are described as existing in a time prior to the time of urban areas on the coast. Additionally, the history of such places begins only with the arrival of Europeans. Rojas’s text, for example, contains a section that divides geographic information into states, but within this section only the Distrito Federal and its corresponding Miranda State include a history, which begins with the arrival of the Spanish, omitting historical background from other regions and excluding entirely any notion of a pre-Conquest Amerindian past. For a youth from Guayana, the implication is that the country’s history is located elsewhere.

Another way non-urban landscapes are de-historicized is through the pervasive use of the word “virgin” and other charged colonial terms to describe the jungle areas corresponding to the river basin. As Villegas Ruiz’s text explains in describing Bolívar state,

Con excepción de una pequeña parte de un inmenso territorio, en la que hay poblaciones importantes como Ciudad Bolívar, Upata, El Callao, San Félix, etc., con grandes campos cultivados, la Naturaleza aparece en la zona Virgen en un estado primitivo [sic] comarcas hay en ella en que aún no ha pisado el hombre civilizado! (10-11)

Here the implication is clear: only the step of “civilized” man can initiate the history, and therefore, geography of a region, an unfortunate prejudice handed down from Spanish colonialism. There is also an implied classificatory principle in that statement, which divides the land into important and unimportant areas. This classification also extends to people, making them only objects of study in the manuals, part of a process that Freire describes as “self-depreciation” (*Oppressed* 63). In Villegas Ruiz, for example, there is a brief taxonomy of indigenous groups as “pacíficos” such as the Mapoyes, Piaroas, Macos, and Guaraunos, or “feroces y terribles” such as the Guaicas, Guaharibos, and Maquiritares (11). Notably, Marcos’s peaceful experience in a Maquiritare community contradicts this characterization. Finally, a semantic map of words associated with Venezuela’s Bolívar state and Amazonas territory as well

as their inhabitants reveals an Othering gaze that relegates these geographic regions to the barbarous frontiers of civilization. I list here a few oft-repeated terms, taken from several of the manuals already cited: *salvaje*, *virgen*, *impenetrable*, *insalubre*, *monstruoso*, *peligro*, *fértil*. These terms, popularized in reference to the “New World” in the writings of early Spanish chroniclers, in the geography manuals continue to be projected onto Venezuela’s interior, defining Guayana from the outside as Other. Additionally, these descriptors, all of which deny Guayana as a place of knowledge production and designate it, rather, as an untamed backland rich in natural resources and in need of taming, relegate people from these areas, and particularly indigenous people, to a space outside modernity. In this way, the texts reinforce the idea that urban Venezuelans are students and Guayana and its people objects of inquiry in a center-periphery/civilization-barbarism paradigm.

Even as an object of study, though, Guayana hardly receives any attention in the geography manuals. As a geographic region of little economic importance to the country, the relevant information presented to students is primarily limited to topographic features including the principle rivers and tributaries, the meaning of salient geographic descriptors such as “delta,” the elevation, indigenous people living there, some raw materials, and the history of missions in the area. Compare these categories from Rojas, for example, with the information presented on the Distrito Federal, a section which also announces its importance by being situated first in the text after introductory pages on Venezuela. Whereas the Bolívar state chapter, which includes a section on Guayana, primarily concerns itself with defining the limits and features of the region, the capital district section places greater emphasis on population density and distribution as well as agricultural products. The lack of textual space dedicated to Guayana’s socioeconomic life communicates that this place without history bears little importance within the country’s

geopolitical landscape. As an area defined primarily by topographic features, though, even geographic description is lacking. One can hardly get a sense of Guayana from reading this snippet from a section on the Orinoco: “Es la región de los bosques cruzada por aguas blancas i negras; allí llueve todo el año; el salvaje habita en las orillas de los ríos ó en lo interior de las selvas, i el indio civilizado en las orillas del Orinoco, del Casiquiare i del Río Negro” (Rojas 140). This simplistic depiction of life, water, and land in Guayana, presented in question-answer format, does little more than reinforce colonial projections of frontier regions. Sometimes, scant stylized drawings, for example, of a man wrestling an alligator visualize the idea of barbarity implied in the text’s details (Rojas 134). Guayana, if it emerges at all from these manuals, appears a blurry image of imperialist projects of fantasy and desire.

Canaima does not fully escape this discourse, but in Marcos Vargas’s distrust of the geographic curriculum of schools, there seems to be an impulse to attempt at least a new understanding of Guayana. Marcos’s experience of the region, like Gallegos’s, is based on travel. The resulting image of Guayana that emerges from the text is a rich and dynamic space for which—in a Romantic sense—words fall short. It is worth quoting at length Marcos’s first impressions of the jungle, which appear in free indirect discourse in a chapter entitled, “Canaima”:

¡Árboles! ¡Árboles! ¡Árboles!... La exasperante monotonía de la variedad infinita, lo abrumador de lo múltiple y uno hasta el embrutecimiento.

Al principio fue la decepción. Aquello carecía de grandeza; no era, por lo menos como se lo había imaginado. No se veían los árboles corpulentos en torno a cuyos troncos no alcanzasen los brazos del hombre para abarcarlos; por lo contrario, todos eran delgados, raquíticos diríase, a causa de la enorme concurrencia vegetal que se disputaba el suelo.

“¿Y esto era la selva?” se preguntó. “¡Monte tupido y nada más!”

Pero luego empezó a sentir que la grandeza estaba en la infinitud, en la repetición obsesionante de un motivo único al parecer. ¡Árboles, árboles, árboles! Una sola bóveda verde sobre miríadas de columnas afelpadas de musgos, tiñosas de líquenes, cubiertas de parásitas y trepadoras, trenzadas y estranguladas por

bejucos tan gruesos como troncos de árboles. ¡Barreras de árboles, murallas de árboles, macizos de árboles! Siglos perennes desde la raíz hasta los copos, fuerzas descomunales en la absoluta inmovilidad aparente, torrente de savia corriendo en silencio. Verdes abismos callados... Bejucos, marañas... ¡Árboles! ¡Árboles! (119)

In this detailed description, Gallegos brings the features and impression of the Guayana jungle into focus. At the same time, in confronting Marcos's initial disappointment with these monotonous geographic textures, Gallegos also addresses the idealized inaccuracies of popular conceptions of Guayana. Furthermore, the overwhelming infinitude is almost too vast for one description; later, the text will explain that "lo que Marcos Vargas traía de la selva no era para narrarlo" (160). The inability to recount the experience of Guayana challenges the epistemological precept that Guayana's geography can be contained in a text limited to a finite question-answer format.

Within this rich geography, the text also reverses the idea of Guayana as a mere object of study to present it, rather, as a source of knowledge, which he accesses through contact with indigenous peoples and longterm resident outsiders. Through interaction with Maquiritare, Acarabisi, and Guaraúno people, facilitated by his involvement in extractive economic endeavors, Marcos learns of the long history of violence omitted from his classroom education. This violence becomes closely tied to the decadent state of Guayana described in the opening "Pórtico" chapter, for example. There, Guaraúno people are "degenerados, descendientes del bravo caribe legendario" (4), but they have become this way at the hands of the "*niborasida*—que significa hombre malo—o en español, a su manera, dice del venezolano: 'Somos maruco, robando mujé, tumbando conuco,' Porque si aquello solamente le reportó la colonia, menos aún y a veces peor le ha dado la república" (143). Knowledge of this raping and usurpation and destruction of cultivated land causes Marcos to turn on his creole friends, profiteers of extractive practices, when witnessing a Guaraúno festivity: "[q]ue ya es tiempo de que estos pobres indios sacuden la

opresión de ustedes. ¡Hatajo de bandidos que los explotan inicualemente!” (146). Learning about this history of violence, unavailable in geography textbooks, changes Marcos’s perspective on Guayana, making it less a land of adventure and showing rather, how men drawn to adventure meet horrific and forgotten fates.

He witnesses the instantiations of this violent colonial past in the present, too. Whereas Marcos’s “geografía viva” begins as a romantic quest that ignores any contemporary signs of violence caused by the capitalist economy in Guayana, his personal sense of adventure, too, is soon replaced by horror once he finds himself within the workings of the extractive economy. His witnessing of neocolonial violence exceeds his thrill-seeking and constitutes the primary unifying principle of his experience of Guayana. He sees and hears of horrific acts against indigenous communities, Venezuelan rubber workers, and African Trinidadians, and so he learns of the dark underbelly of Venezuelan modernity elided in the school geography manuals. This excavation is achieved through Marcos’s contact with sites of violence. He is deeply transformed by the death of Encarnación Damensano, a jovial young man whom he befriends while overseeing Vellorinis’s rubber venture. He dies horrifically bleeding out after hacking off his buttocks and thigh to try to save himself from a venomous snake bit while tapping rubber:

El triste fin del peón leal afectó mucho a Marcos Vargas. Hasta allí sus sentimientos humanitarios y sus simpatías hacia el humilde habían sido sensibilidad a flor de alma optimista, que hallaba plena satisfacción en el trato afable y la superficial camaradería; pero acababa de revelársele en todo su horror la tremenda injusticia que dividía a los hombres en Vellorinis y Damesanos—él entre ambos haciendo hipócrita la palabra efusiva al servicio del celo interesado—, y el alma generosa ya no podría conciliar el optimismo con la iniquidad. (135)

This iniquity graphically depicted in one man’s personal story also affects nameless masses of people, dehumanized by the violence they are subjected to. In a passage that describes what is basically the continuation of slavery in Guayana, the narration employs biting irony to describe

the fate of Africans from Trinidad: “en cierto modo eran algo menos que personas—con destino a las minas de El Callao” (47). They would follow packs of hounds into the mines but “[a] veces éstas [jaurías] se revolvían contra ellos y en las dentelladas al dorado talón les mordían la carne, les trituraban los huesos . . . ¡Pero qué podían valer unos negros habiendo tantos en Trinidad, Barbados, en Saint Thomas!” (90). This complete reversal of the northern-lying Caribbean island Trinidad as a site of cultural inculcation again points to the way that classroom education obscures the horrors of modernity in favor of a teleological path toward progress. Marcos, by experiencing Guayana firsthand, sees how horrifically violent deaths threaten the lives of all laborers at the economic base, and yet those crimes occur with impunity.

By way of contrast, Marcos’s experience living among the people described as savage in geography textbooks, shows no signs of such hierarchical violence or savagery. He describes his learning from others as an ability to see Guayana from other “ángulos” (121). First, he learns, albeit vaguely, of the pre-Conquest memory of a time when “el indio” was “dueño y señor de su tierra” (191). In the present, his experiences challenge the notion that the value of a place can be determined by the market value of its natural resources. In the novel, ecology is neither a resource for exploitation nor an impediment to travel but rather part of the daily practices of a “[v]ida simple y compartida,” devoid of economic interest (185). He comes to understand that the jungle, rather than a savage and virgin space of unused resources, constitutes a cultivated landscape of shared abundance: yuca farming, fishing and hunting with arrows and blowpipes made locally, hammocks and mosquito nets made from plant fibers, canoes carved out of nearby trees. In contrast to colonial projections of the jungle as dense and impenetrable, as expressed by the narrator—“Del océano de cientos de leguas de selva tupida bajo el ala del viento que pasa sin penetrar en ella”—Marcos moves about the jungle freely with his acquired navigational skills,

easily riding rapids (120). In the chapter entitled “Contaban los caucheros,” men recount their surprise in hearing of sightings of Marcos transiting notoriously dangerous torrents from Guyana in the east to southwestern Venezuela. In all of these ways, Marcos’s use of space in Guayana directly contrasts with the uselessness and insignificance of the region most likely deployed in his classrooms.

What Marcos’s counter-map reveals, then, is that what may initially appear yet another colonial projection of what Whitehead has called a “demon landscape,” in fact reverses the direction of barbarism as emanating from the “center” and shaping the “periphery.”²⁶ In the text, Canaima is a disembodied malevolent spirit that allows for this reversal. Canaima stalks Marcos throughout the text and draws him into the jungle to begin with, but as Marcos learns, this dark evil is not something inherent to the landscape. His journey associates this force with “los racionales, chupadores de la sangre del árbol de goma, violadores del sueño del oro con cuyo despertar se había desatado Canaima sobre la tierra del indio” and, therefore, locates savagery in the world of (191). Here the reference to rationality is clearly used ironically; the rationality of geography manuals and classroom-based geography instruction, for example, do not coincide with the realities that Marcos experiences.

He sees that evil originates in the “civilized” world of capitalism, which appropriates cultivated land and reorganizes spatial practices. To begin, sickness comes to the zone through economic exchanges. Marcos learns that “el catarro” was “la más temible para ellos de todas las formas que puede revestir Canaima” (184). Most likely a reference to the 1919-1920 worldwide

26. Whitehead’s analysis of the space of Guayana as a *kanaimà* landscape asserts that “This articulation of savagery through reference to *kanaimà* is culturally grounded, quite literally in ideas and metaphors of physical space” (“The Sign” 172).

flu pandemic, this disease “decimated” and uprooted populations more than any other (Whitehead, *Dark* 83). Additionally, Marcos witnesses ecological abuses caused by extractive processes: “Gime el árbol herido de muerte, vacila buscando un último apoyo, se desploma no hallándolo, en su caída desarraiga y arrastra malezas y aparece el afloramiento de una veta de oro” (90). Although he seeks adventure in the jungle, Canaima wants him to witness these truths hidden in the rhetoric of capitalist production of space, which civilizes empty land for economic growth. Toward the end of the narrative, we learn that Canaima keeps Marcos from leaving the jungle: “le había aprisionado las huellas cubriendo con casimbas disimuladas entre el monte y diariamente vigiladas las que su planta había estampado por allí” (190). His presence is required by Canaima to ensure defense against the rationals’ abuses: “Por el momento no estaba amenazada su tribu por los caucheros, pero siempre sería conveniente tener a su favor a un racional a quien los otros respetasen y viendo en Marcos un buen defensor de su gente le había dado por mujer a su hermana” (188-89). In other words, the awakening (despertar) of Canaima in Marcos’s life is catalyzed by violence emerging from the supposedly civilized spaces of Venezuela. In this sense, Gallegos innovates the concept of Canaima by dissociating it with the Amerindian world and using it rather to refer to evils originating outside of it.

Esos mundos de Canaima

As this chapter has emphasized, attention to Gallegos’s critical engagement with the political discourses related to the regional adaptation of geographic instruction as well as the positivist rhetoric of civilization and barbarism found in school materials reveals the counter-discursive impulses in *Canaima*, which attempt to challenge popular notions of Guayana within the Venezuelan imaginary. Additionally, as alluded to in the preceding paragraph and anticipated

in the novel's title, Canaima functions as a key trope that allows for the subversion of the dualistic idea of civilized and barbarous spaces. Yet the relationship between the novel and specific aspects of kanaimà shamanism has remained largely unexamined in the critical literature. Charlotte Rogers dedicates two brief sentences to acknowledging some similarity between kanaimà shamanism and the text but fails to develop this idea: "Neil Whitehead describes the Guyanese concept of *kanaimà* as a 'dark shamanism shamanistic complex' and an 'ancient form of sorcery.' Gallegos version is similar in that the spirit of Canaima can possess individuals, transform them, and infuse them with supernatural powers" (129). Lúcia Sá's important study addresses how the impact of native cultures and native texts is often written out of Latin American literary criticism, and in her analysis of *Canaima*, she offers a brief overview of the meanings of kanaimà according to several travel and anthropological sources; however, she does not delve into the specifics of how Gallegos's texts dialogues with those. I will elaborate further on the ways in which Gallegos's use of kanaimà both converges and departs from Amerindian conceptions. Described as "[l]o demoníaco, sin forma determinada y capaz de adoptar cualquier apariencia," Gallegos's usage of Canaima as a mutable force relates only obliquely to the practice of kanaimà shamanism, from which the term derives (121). Gallegos's problematic reliance on a superficial appropriation of this Amerindian spirituality in order to definitively transform Marcos's relationship to Guayana is the subject of this section.

On more than one occasion, Marcos Vargas calls Guayana "esos mundos de Canaima," a phrase that at first seems to summarize what he believes will be the thrilling adventure that awaits him and later becomes the horrific violence he comes to know. Gallegos was not the first or last intellectual to use the Pemón term kanaimà, in a variety of orthographic variations, to refer to an evil in Guayana that could take many forms. Neil Whitehead's thorough genealogy of

the term reviews numerous texts from missionary, ethnographic, and literary accounts beginning during the conquest and colonization of the continent that similarly misuse the term, stereotyping it as a frightening spirit associated with the Orinoco river basin and writing over the meaning of a shamanic practice of ritual killing.²⁷ As a result of this repeated misuse and diffusion in textual sources, Whitehead concludes that there are now two separate meanings—the Amerindian *kanaimà* and the “[Western] cultural resonance aside from that of its Amerindian creation” (*Dark* 87).²⁸ As this section will make clear, though, the stability of these two concepts as separate categories falls apart in *Canaima*. Gallegos was most likely unaware of *kanaimà* as a shamanic practice because it was not available explicitly in any textual accounts of Guayana at the time and indeed would not be documented in detail as a shamanic practice until Whitehead’s extensive study, which is the first to include indigenous informants to correct and contrast with the colonial concept (2002). However, because of the intertextual relationship between the two concepts, Western and Amerindian, elements of *kanaimà* shamanism, a horrifically violent

27. Whitehead contrasts what he refers to as the accounts of “observers”—visitors to regions where *kanaimà* shamanism is practiced—and “participants”—those who live aspects of *kanaimà* as part of their daily lives. Participants’ accounts are gathered from Whitehead’s ethnographic fieldwork among the Patamuna. The body of literature he reviews from observers is too large to list here, but spans 500 years although he mentions a significant gap in its appearance in literature from the late colonial period until the nineteenth century. His analysis includes the writings of such notable people as Sir Walter Raleigh; naturalist travelers such as English botanist William Hillhouse, Humboldt, the German botanist Richard Schomburgk, the German missionary John Henry Bernau, and the German ethnologist and explorer Theodor Koch-Grünberg; authors such as Gallegos and Victor Norwood; and twentieth-century ethnographers such as Walter Roth, to mention only a few.

28. To distinguish between these two meanings, I use “*kanaimà*” to refer to the Amerindian concept and “*Canaima*” to the misappropriated Western concept.

practice, do come to the surface of the text, unpredictably shaping the textures of Guayana and limiting *Canaima*'s potential as a counter-map.

Like other Westerners writing about Canaima, Gallegos's social distance from indigenous communities produces an essentializing of indigenous peoples and their struggles; however, read as an attempt to correct the errors of geography manuals and classroom-based geography instruction, as mentioned, Gallegos's use of Canaima tries to disassociate it from Guayana as an inherent aspect of an untamed "demon landscape" (Whitehead, "The Sign" 172). Canaima as a disembodied malignant force associated with the physical landscape of Guayana aligns to the pervasive misuse of colonial interpretations and corresponds to Gallegos's engagement with the word. However, whereas the idea of a mysterious and misunderstood evil emanating from the jungle serves in most texts to reinforce the geographic divide of outlying regions beyond civilization (Whitehead, *Dark* 82), as I am suggesting, Gallegos insists that the horrors of Guayana have been introduced by modern economic practices. In Amerindian thought throughout Guayana, though, *kanaimà* is not an incorporeal force that manifests in different forms of violence but a specific practice of "dark shamanism" in which practitioners, primarily men, stalk, kill, and consume their victims to acquire shamanic powers.²⁹ The text's use of

29. Whitehead provides the following definition of the shamanic practice based on years of field research: "*Kanaimá*, a term that refers both to a practice and to its practitioners, is a form of mystical assault that ritually requires the extensive physical maiming of its victims in order that they may be produced as a divine food. This carnal violence, primarily a mutilation of mouth and anus, renders the victim near dead but the process of slow death that occurs allows the formation of the magic substance *mama* within the body of the victim. The putrefaction of the cadaver in its grave then completes the cooking of the *maba*, which the *kanaimà* shamans suck from the belly of the victim. This substance cools the heat of the killers, augments the senses and physical abilities of the *kanaimàs*, and facilitates the location, tracking, and eventual assault of future victims" ("The Sign," 171) In his more extensive

Canaima seems at first to cover up this other meaning, preferring to imagine indigenous people as innocent victims of “modern” violence and possessors of esoteric wisdom in need of protection.

Within this essentialist tendency, Amerindian people serve as conduits for access to shamanic states of consciousness—not necessarily specific to kanaimà—that allow Marcos to initiate a process of unlearning his old ways of thinking. As Harner explains, “A shaman is a man or woman who enters an altered state of consciousness-at will-to contact and utilize an ordinarily hidden reality in order to acquire knowledge, power, and to help other persons” (20). Marcos’s new education into such states of consciousness begins with the guidance of two indigenous men from the shores of the Acarabisi who “lo aleccionaban” during his free time as an overseer for Vellorini’s rubber tapping company (122).³⁰ The words used to describe Marcos’s lessons with these men suggest a sort of shamanic initiation as viewed from an outsider’s perspective. Through silent contemplation, Marcos learns a “compenetración con la selva” in which he can distinguish “los mil rumores que componen el aparente silencio de la selva” and begins “iniciándose en las candorosas supersticiones” (122, 123). This convergence of

book on the matter, he explains the origin of the practice in Patamuna cosmovision: two brothers of the sun, Makunaima and Piai’ima created the world. Makunaima, meaning “great evil” has many disputes with his brothers but especially with Piai’ima, “the great or ultimate shaman.” This gives rise in Patamuna society to a dueling shamanism between kanaimà shaman associated with Makunaima and piya shaman associated with Piai’ima. For more information creations stories related to these shamanic practices, see Whitehead’s chapter, “Tales of Kanaimà: Participants” in *Dark Shamans*.

30. The Acarabisi is a tributary of the Cuyuní at the border with Guyana. The text calls Marcos’s two Amerindian teachers only Acarabisi Indians who speak acarabisi, but given their place of origin, they most likely belong to the Pemón people. See *Censo indígena*.

rubber tapping and shamanism and other indigenous knowledge is not unique historically; the phenomenon of what is now known as “mestizo shamanism” has its origins in the interaction between rubber tappers and indigenous healers brought together in regions of the jungle isolated from urban infrastructure (Beyer, *Singing* 301).³¹ Isolation in the jungle is essential, according to Harner, for shamanic initiation generally, and according to Whitehead’s Patamuna informants, to kanaimà shamanism specifically.³² At every free moment, Marcos spends time with these men in the jungle, learning their language but also learning to “sumergirse sin palabras ni pensamientos en aquel mundo abismal” (123). Letting go of a reliance on words and thoughts constitutes a crucial first step in Marcos’s ability to see beyond the textual understandings of Guayana that he learned before his time there.

The result of this dedicated study with the two indigenous men is something like what Sara Castro-Klarén, in her careful study of South American shamanism, has referred to as “interspecies convergence” (*convergencia interespecie*) in shamanic consciousness (“Recorridos” 170). Through Marcos’s process of integration with his surroundings, “fija la vista al azar sobre un tronco de un árbol [...] ya comenzaba a hacer la experiencia de que entonces no se era sino

31. In chapter 4, I provide an in-depth discussion of the exchanges of shamanic knowledge brought on by the rubber economy in the Upper Amazon of Peru. The term “mestizo shamanism” refers to shamanic practice learned from Amerindian sources but adapted, and practiced in Amazonia by people who do not self-identify as indigenous.

32. Harner describes the need for guardian spirits in shamanic practice and states, “The best-known way to acquire a guardian spirit is in a spirit quest in a remote place in the wilderness” (42). Whitehead states that in the training of initiates, “Isolation in the forest itself is intended to aid the process of concentration on shamanic development of key skills, like bodily transformations (*weytupok*) and detaching of the should (*iwemyakamatok*) by allowing the initiate to avoid the distractions of mundane village life” (107).

otro árbol” (123). Eventually, Marcos becomes legendarily known for such convergences, much to the shock and awe of the rubber tappers who claim to have witnessed them. One man reports having seen him “become” a stick and then come back into his human form (175). During a later stage in Marcos’s learning, he wanders in the forest on his own without the Acarabisi men and learns to eat raw meat:

la bárbara experiencia de alimentarse con el trozo de la presa cazado por el acarabisi, sin sal y apenas pasada por el fuego . . . y últimamente crudo y sangrante—, experimentaba ahora algo así como un vértigo espiritual con que lo atrajase al abismo interior de aquel hombrecito, personificación de la selva monstruosa, en quien la fiera condición, ya casi legendaria, estaba agazapada tras la apariencia inofensiva de su menguada humanidad y su aire apacible. (139)

Whithead mentions that this consumption of raw meat likens Marcos to a jaguar, the form that actively hunting *kanaimàs* take when stalking their prey (85). Marcos’s ability to converge with these other forms of life results from his careful study and observation with his indigenous teachers.

I do not mean to suggest that Marcos becomes a shaman—*kanaimà* or otherwise—nor that his Acarabisi companions are shamans attempting to initiate him, but there is something shaman-like about Marcos’s learning that allows him to begin to think differently. In a pivotal chapter called “Tormenta” in which Marcos is caught alone in a raging hurricane, he once again converges in order to survive.³³ “Becoming” a tree, he sinks his roots into the ground and later describes the experiences as being “uno más entre los que compusieron la maravillosa armonía de la tempestad” (160). Marcos explains that in that moment he feels “la más plena emoción de sí mismo que jamás había sentido” (160). In other words, Marcos’s fullest sense of himself is actually an experience of “becoming” something seemingly not himself, another species. Castro-

33. Almoína, González Echevarría, Potelet, and Shärer have all addressed the centrality of “Tormenta” to *Canaima* and its importance as a turning point.

Klarén, through a critique of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of becoming, insightfully explains that in South American shamanic practice, "En este converger [...] no hay un devenir del uno en el otro o de los dos términos en un tercer punto unificador: la multiplicidad aquí se manifiesta más bien en un abolir de la relación sujeto-objeto, como lo postulan los filósofos franceses ("Recorridos" 164). Although Castro-Klarén focuses on the traditions of shamanic healers in her analysis, her insight applies to Marcos's shamanic-like state of consciousness as well. Gallegos's depiction of Marcos's interspecies convergence allows the text to get outside of the Western epistemology that separates subject and object and that undergirds the production and location of knowledge in Marcos's school instruction.

The result in Marcos is a definitive change. Although his impetuous quest for "geografía viva" has until the storm related to his individualistic Western desire to experience adventure as an Hombre Macho against "nature," in Marcos's interspecies convergence, he finds an affective world, what Castro-Klarén refers to as "afecto-cognitivo chamánico," which changes his perspective and his path. At the climax of the storm, when "el huracán se le echó encima para asfixiarlo y desalojarlo del cobijo que lo protegía del chubasco," Marcos steps on something soft with his bare feet. He picks up a small, terrified monkey who curls up whimpering against his chest. "¡Hola pariente!" he exclaims, and the storm begins to subside (152). As in *La vorágine* when Silva's ability to dissolve the difference between himself and monkeys saves his life, Marcos's encounter with this "relative" saves him from a life conceived as ostentatious antagonism, allowing him to "arribar a un hogar, a un lugar de gozo libre de amenazas y miedos" (Castro-Klarén, "Recorridos" 170). Afterward, he is unable to return to his old life in Ciudad Bolívar. He decides to remain in the jungle that he has become a part of, to stop wearing shoes, and to move away from the teleological messianic path imposed on him by others. The

ontological possibilities opened by Marcos's shamanic-like learning have added textures to Guayana hidden to outsiders. After experiencing them, he no longer wishes to return to the smooth surfaces of Venezuela's educational and economic maps.

By relating Marcos's access to a shamanic consciousness to an ecocritical perspective, his learning can be understood as a counter-discourse on space. Ecocritical theory emphasizes the permeability of species categories in order to challenge Western notions of taxonomy and "nature." As Morton explains in his ecocritical analysis of Darwin:

The Origin of Species is based on paradoxes that involve *dialetheias*—contradictions, "double truths." You can't just specify when one species ends and another begins. . . . In fact, so dire is the paradox of evolution that Darwin should have used some kind of wink emoticon, had one been available: *The "Origin" of "Species" ;)*. The punchline of Darwin's book is that *there are no species and they have no origin.* (Realist 29)

Although such permeability is not the same as a shamanic interspecies convergence, both epistemologies—the shamanic and the ecocritical—similarly undermine the authority of dualistic conceptions of the world. The ecocritical perspective addresses how this categorical breakdown challenges capitalist notions of space production, in which space is conceived of as a reified and objective externality.³⁴ In this sense, Marcos's shamanic insights become a kind of unlearning of Western notions of space in which geography is a mere object of study. He learns that there is no outside of "nature," or "geografia viva," in his words. Much like Freire's humanizing pedagogy in which people are not *in* but *with* the world, through shamanic learning, Marcos understands that geography, in fact, is something he forms part of and has access to.

34. Lefebvre writes against these notions. He explains, "The dominant form of space, that of centers of wealth and power, endeavors to mould the spaces it dominates (i.e. peripheral spaces), and it seeks, often by violent means, to reduce the obstacles and resistance it encounters there. Differences, for their part, are forced into the symbolic forms of an art that is itself abstract" (49).

Presumably, such interconnectedness deters one from imagining and using Guayana as a space for neocolonial abuses, and yet the prevailing interpretations of Marcos's subsequent refusal to pursue economic opportunities in Upata and even Europe have largely been negative. Schärer misguidedly argues that Marcos's withdrawal from society represents a culmination of his process of dehumanization. Likewise, Marcone interprets the final chapters of the book as a shift away from Marcos's alienation from nature to his deliberate alienation from humanity ("Jungle Fever"). Both critics employ an extreme Eurocentricism that implies that "humanity" excludes Amerindian peoples, either that or they simply overlook the fact that Marcos settles in a Maquiritare community. Brushwood interprets Marcos after the storm as "either demented or seriously neurotic," and Castillo Zapato interprets the dénouement as evidence of Marcos's squandered potential as a metaphor for the country's untapped resources, a misguided allegorical reading of the nation (300). Each of these conclusions ignores the elements of shamanic initiation that have changed Marcos's thinking and mistakenly view the novel as a story of failed education.

My interpretation is rather that Marcos's frustrated messianism indicates his definitive departure from a linear path toward a teleological end, a linearity which also corresponds to linear notions of space in Guayana and linear divisions between species, incompatible with messianism. When Ureña later speaks to Marcos of his potential and urges him to educate himself further in formal classrooms, Marcos remembers feeling the same impulse to lead change "de manera intuitiva, confusa, verdaderamente tormentosa, la noche de la tempestad" (171). Although Marcos does not indicate at what point he experiences these feelings, his confusion and the use of the word "tormentosa" indicates a moment prior to converging with a tree and finding the monkey. After blurring species lines, all linearity in Marcos is abandoned. As

part of Guayana (“uno más”), Marcos becomes part of a circularity alluded to throughout his journey. In a rather obvious metaphor, when he first begins to see things from an indigenous perspective, as stated in the text, he witnesses the hatching of “millares de mariposas,” closing “el círculo de la vida [...] se unieron allí mismo los dos extremos del torbellino: la fecundación y la muerte. Cajuña y Canaima . . .” (123-24). Likewise, Juan Solito, a sort of *bruno* whom Marcos meets on his journey is always “velando las puntas del bejuco pa que el principio y el fin siempre se estén atocando,” like the novel itself which ends where it began along the Orinoco (84). As in *La vorágine*, what at first appears a vertiginous circle actually represents the restoration of a different order—in this case, a non-linear shamanic order, as conceived of by Gallegos, that seems to preclude actions of violence.

In this way, *Canaima*, re-presents a geography that challenges the spatial configuration of Guayana within the oil structure and in circulating geography manuals. The text brings into high relief textures smoothed by those homogenizing spatial practices and also challenges their ways of knowing and understanding Venezuelan space, but if this solution seems too easy, that is because it is. On the one hand, in counter-mapping, Gallegos draws attention to the violence perpetrated against Guayana’s spaces and peoples and implicates the Western mentality that allows for these horrors. On the other hand, though, violent aspects of kanaimà shamanism become covered up if not justified because they allow for access to states of consciousness not available in Venezuelan classrooms, allowing Gallegos to engage creatively with the problem of national education in a geographically diverse country. At the same time, though, Gallegos’s writing in *Canaima* continuously runs into kanaimà violence, causing him to map horrors that he does not fully see, believe, or disclose.

As a result of Gallegos's disengagement with the problematics of *kanaimà*, critical literature has also been blinded to this careless appropriation of Amerindian shamanism. For example, González Echevarría refers to Marcos's transformation in the "Tormenta" chapter as "one of the most extraordinary passages in all of Latin American literature—in which Marcos Vargas exposes himself to the fury of the elements to become one with them" ("*Canaima* 344). González Echevarría is certainly correct in noting the singularity of this passage in Latin American literature, but it is not exceptional because of its depiction of interspecies convergence nor because of one man's confrontation with difficult circumstances in the forest.³⁵ Rather, what is so unbelievable about this passage is that before reaching this point, Marcos becomes senselessly violent, and yet neither the narrator nor literary critics make much ado of it. Like a *kanaimà* stalking his victim, Marcos watches a man attempting to amputate a parasite-infested finger. He then grabs the man's machete and mercilessly swings at his back. This attack from behind is a hallmark of *kanaimà* according to Whitehead (*Dark* 14). The fact that a text otherwise critical of gratuitous acts of violence fails to rebuke this seemingly irrational assault is truly extraordinary. Marcos's otherwise illogical actions make sense as part of the symbolic order of *kanaimà* shamanism in which stalking and killing victims represents "access to a plane of shamanic encounter and exploration," which Marcos subsequently achieves in the storm, but neither Gallegos nor critics have been privy to this meaning (Whitehead, *Dark* 42). The selectivity of allowing for Marcos's violence while using him to condemn other violent acts indicates that Gallegos is blinded to his own engagement with this form of dark shamanism, excluded from his Western thinking as an outsider to Guayana.

35. For other instances of interspecies convergence in Latin American literature, for example, see Castro-Klarén, "Recorridos" and chapters 1 and 4 of this dissertation.

The text attempts to justify Marcos's violence and even distinguish it from the other forms of violence he has witnessed. The emphasis is on the inner serenity that Marcos finds in this violent storm, and here again, his actions have something in common with *kanaimà*. Whitehead explains that *kanaimà* killings are not "hot" in the Western sense of killings or murders of passion, but they do involve a build up like Marcos's. *Kanaimà* do not kill out of malice but rather to produce their food "like any other hunter, not murdering an individual; but the 'hunger' of the *kanaimà* builds inside and heats him as he does his work of mutilation" (*Dark* 92). In this sense *kanaimà* violence is unlike (neo)colonial violence related to power structures, but Marcos is not exactly a *kanaimà*. Rather, he is a character created by an author with only superficial understandings of regional shamanic practices. He has shaman-like qualities that slip into violent practices that remain unexplained in the text. For example, he does not act out of revenge or strong emotion when he attacks, and he is not exactly a hunter in the storm scene, but his work of mutilation does heat him. He is "totalmente fuera de sí, negras como carbones las pupilas que de ordinario las tenía claras y así se le transformaba la cólera" (149). This rage seemingly amplifies his ostentatious manliness manifest in his very Western desire to "encontrar la medida de sí mismo ante la Naturaleza plena" (150). In this way, Marcos's actions represent something of a mixture of shamanism and Western masculinity. As the rain, thunder, and lightning chase him, though, he becomes peaceful, or to use Whitehead's terms, he "cools":

¡El agua y el viento y el rayo y la selva! Alaridos, bramidos, ululatos, el ronco rugido, el estruendo revuelto. Las montañas del trueno retumbante desmoronándose en los abismos de la noche repentina, el relámpago magnífico, la racha enloquecida, el chubasco estrepitoso, el suelo estremecido por la caída del gigante de la selva, la inmensa selva lívida allí mismo sorbida por la tiniebla y el pequeño corazón del hombre, sereno ante las furias trenzadas. (151)

With this move, Marcos's actions become separate from the "hot" violence of the modern world. Through what could perhaps be described as intertextuality "light" with *kanaimà*, the storm

scene manages to separate Marcos's violent actions from those of the other characters and economies he condemns, and indirectly justifies certain forms of violence as long as they lead in some way to paradigm shifts in one's thinking.

From Canaima to Canaima National Park. Through this inattentive use of shamanism and kanaimà ritual, this “libro tan geográfico” counter-maps the conceived geography deployed by classroom instruction by pretending to teach a geography otherwise unavailable to readers who cannot experience it directly (Minguet xviii). Indeed, Marcos's new spatial practice, engaged through elements of kanaimà shamanism, was most certainly not available to Gallegos or the Venezuelan government at large; they were completely ignorant to it. A colonialist perspective blinded educational politicians and writers of geography manuals to these shamanic epistemologies. Nevertheless, an unintended intertextuality with kanaimà practices, even through colonialist accounts, allows them to do work in the novel. Gallegos thus constructs a narrative imbued with shamanic practice that becomes a lesson in considering if not seeking out alternative knowledge based on experience and convergence with geography. This intertextuality, though, is not without serious problems.

To use a reductive and imprecise representation of kanaimà shamanism—or shamanism in general—to construct a counter-discourse is another way of erasing complex landscapes. This weak engagement with shamanism projects onto it a function of cultural, and in this case, spatial resistance, which silences the ways that it functions as a practice in its own right within Guayana. Even Whitehead errs in this sense. He argues that in the shifting landscapes of mining and logging throughout the river basin, kanaimà becomes a “counter-performance” of development in which:

the practice of *kanaimà* constricts and chokes off the space for material and spiritual redemption through progress, for it is a counter-discourse on modernity in which the promise of development is violently rejected in favor of a new kind of tradition. The value of this tradition is precisely the way in which it eludes external attempts to classify and analyze native society—for it is beyond the visible and material as well as of them. (“The Sign” 186)

Whitehead correctly notes that Western epistemology falls short to understand *kanaimà*; however, this epistemological difference seems to cause Whitehead to forget briefly, the horror produced by this practice—not only against agents of modernity—but also against members of other Amerindian communities.³⁶ Many of the testimonies he includes in his book project on *kanaimà* recount the fear inspired in victims by the existence of *kanaimà* shaman in their region.

Whitehead even includes testimony from a “reluctant *kanaimà*” who discovered he had been born into a family of *kanaimà*, obliging him to learn the tradition and practice it, a painful and terrifying experience for him (*Dark* 113). Another second-hand report by Walter E. Roth states that “Kanaima tribes,” presumably communities that practice *kanaimà*, according to unidentified indigenous informants, “are tribes of cut-throats by profession, education from generation to generation in murder and theft, killing for the pleasure of killing, not even eating their victims” (218). Included in a volume called, *Witches of the Atlantic World*, Roth’s report seems tinged with colonial misunderstandings of *kanaimà* as revenge killings, but nevertheless, it captures the horror evoked locally by this practice. *Kanaimà* does not exist merely to challenge modernity—as Whitehead or Gallegos would have it—but rather is a practice required within a shamanic symbolic order to access shamanic states of consciousness present within but hidden from modernity. Furthermore, for the people who could potentially be the food of such shamans as

36. In *Dark Shamans*, Whitehead discusses how the continuously shifting practice of *kanaimà* has an instantiation today in which *kanaimà* choose victims based on their perceived ethnic and cultural positions of power within the mining and logging economies (185-87).

well as for some of the shamans themselves, the violent ritual is horrific obligation not a discursive weapon.

The legacy of *Canaima* in Venezuela today continues to be one of problematic misappropriations such as these, enacted in physical space. Now, Canaima is the name of Venezuela's largest national park, chosen in honor of Gallegos's novel according to Sharpe and Rodríguez, a site where tourism, illegal mining, and poaching come into conflict with the lives of approximately 27,000 Pemón people.³⁷ Purportedly established to preserve and protect the "incomparable belleza" and "recourses naturales renovables" found within the established limits of the park, much of the area overlaps Pemón territory, whose population continues to grow, raising complicated questions for the use and governance of the area in question (Venezuela, Instituto Nacional de Parques).³⁸ As one Pemón person protested in 2011, "Nosotros no estamos dentro del Parque Nacional, el Parque Nacional está dentro de nuestras comunidades, y es por eso que lo que se haga debe ser primero consultado con nosotros" (qtd. in García). In addition to this lack of prior consultation for numerous park activities, very little conservation work has ensued. More than thirty years after the establishment of the park, a "shoestring budget" of only \$1171 was available for the eastern sector while the Western sector remained unregulated

37. Canaima National Park is a popular tourist destination featuring the highest waterfall in the world, Angel Falls, and located in Pemón territory of Bolívar state near the border with Brazil and Guyana. Established in 1962, and expanded in 1975 to an area of 30,000 square kilometers, making it at the time the world's largest national park, Canaima National Park was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994, primarily in recognition of its salient tepui or tabletop mountains. The population statistic comes from a 2003 census.

38. For more on the growing Pemón demographic, see Bilbao, Leal, and Méndez.

(Sharpe and Rodríguez 20).³⁹ A 2014 article by Pablo Gutman, Senior Policy Adviser in the Macroeconomics for Sustainable Development Program Office of the World Wide Fund for Nature in Washington, D.C., concurs—albeit omitting Pemón protestors from the idea of Venezuelan citizenry—that Venezuela’s National Parks “rarely make it to the priority list of the Finance Ministry, nor, for that matter, are they contributed to by citizens” (44). With minimal personnel working in the park, illegal mining activities have ensued as well as the touristic commodification of sacred Pemón tepui.⁴⁰ The Pemón people continue to protest these and other threats to their territorial and cultural practices that have arisen with the establishment of the park.⁴¹ In other words, through these continuous attempts to reclaim the space according to Pemón conceptions, the indigenous rebellion and revolution that Marcos felt brewing toward the end of the novel, continues to broil in the land than now evokes the novel’s name.

The choice of this name to designate a pleasant tourist destination indicates the state’s continued ignorance to Amerindians meanings of the term. Pemón academic and former mayor of the municipality of Gran Sabana in Bolívar state, which includes part of Canaima National Park, has denounced on his personal blog, the government’s thoughtless use of the Pemón word. According to Delgado, “no es una palabra agradable, más bien una amenaza.” He also criticizes recastings of the word to denominate a national software system, Software Libre Canaima, as

39. The Western sector remains unregulated into the twenty-first century. See the 2006 proposal for zoning by Rivera-Lombardi et al. for more information regarding the current use and misuse of the space.

40. Sharpe and Rodríguez explain that the tepui are sacred mountains for the Pemón that guard the savannah and serve as residence for Mawari spirits in the form of men who sometimes steal the souls of the living (19).

41. See for example I. Rodríguez’s work on Pemón fire practices in Canaima and Sletto’s work on territorial border issues.

well as the Portuguese laptops also called Canaima. For Delgado, this problem is more than an issue of cultural appropriation; it is an issue of misuse of a powerful shamanic word:

Exhorto desde este espacio que el Gobierno nacional no siga usando el Nombre de Canaima para ningún otro proyecto, porque cada vez que se nombra, como todos saben de la manera más elemental, se invoca la acción y el carácter de Canaima, se [sic] éste indígena o no. Por eso digo, y creo firmemente, que ahora hay Canaimas por todas partes, en los barrios azotando a la ciudadanía, infiltrándose en las fuerzas armadas, corrompiendo los cuerpos policiales, llevando batuta de las cárceles.

Delgado's remarks speak to the fact that all that has remained of Canaima outside of Amerindian meanings is the positive spirit of adventure, an attractive name for a park, that Marcos Vargas so painfully unlearned during his time in Guayana. Gone is the idea of Guayana as a place rich in alternative epistemologies and completely absent from the state's consciousness is the meaning of a dark and dangerous shamanism.

And yet Delgado's comments are also significant because they indicate that Pemón epistemology travels with the word, even unbeknownst to users such as Gallegos, for example. To be clear, national and international appropriations of the word "Canaima" do indeed produce an erasure that writes over the Amerindian concept of *kanaimà* as in Trouillot's brilliant analysis of the three faces of San Souci. Whereas Trouillot's emphasis is on silencing the past through the redeployment of names, though, in the case of Canaima National Park, the redeployment of this indigenous term silences the present, appropriating space as one drawn, protected, and given meaning by the state. Yet at the same time, even unknowingly as in *Canaima*, Pemón epistemology also infiltrates other spaces as the word circulates. In this way, *Canaima* works as a multi-layered and unpredictable counter-map unaware of and indeed blinded to its own maneuvers. Gallegos reworks the Guayana geography to illuminate what geography manuals

hide and in so doing his engagement with but misunderstanding of *kanaimà* allows a darker, more surreptitious counter-map to bleed through the text.

What remains of Gallegos's novel in Venezuela's Guayana, then, is the tension between externally imposed maps and regional epistemologies, the inability of the latter to fit into the structure of the former, and the potential danger of those mis-mappings. Only in ignoring these problematic aspects, does *Canaima* appear to present a powerful new map of Guayana's geography. Careful examination reveals a much more unstable landscape. Even Gallegos himself, in the novel's ending, seems uncertain of how to proceed. As Marcos Vargas junior travels along the Orinoco, away from Guayana and "hacia el porvenir," the direction of progress is no longer clear. The image of the son of Marcos Vargas heading toward Caracas has elicited interpretations that Gallegos, like Vasconcelos before him, advocates for a new civilization founded by the progeny of white and indigenous peoples.⁴² However, this chapter has made clear that *Canaima* is too complex to allow for a simple allegorical reading. Gallegos was not so naive as to believe that a solution to Venezuela's complex geographic and educational landscape was simply to send all youth to the capital for education. Although young Marcos seems to take the same journey his father once took toward urban classrooms, he passes through a space that has been ravaged by the multifaceted abuses of cycles of extractive economy, the senseless violence that his father

42. Such interpretations have been both overly optimistic and overly pessimistic. For example, Brushwood believes the end indicates the triumph of civilization, Díaz Seijas reads it as a vision for a utopian future. Potelet considers the novel an affirmation and recognition of "el Indio de Guayana revelado con objetividad etnográfica y calurosa simpatía en sus peculiaridades étnicas y culturales más relevantes" (413). On the other hand, Almoína argues that the novel "conduce su visión de ese mundo a un callejón sin salida" (330). Likewise, Lehtinen perceives an unprecedented pessimism in Gallegos in this novel, and interprets the ending as igniting false expectations. Rogers interprets the novel as one about failure. Schärer concludes simply that "Nada logró fundraise pues" (501).

encounters throughout his Guayana education. The decadence perceived on this second trip down the prodigious river contrasts with the vibrant descriptions in the opening “Pórtico” chapter. Whereas “Pórtico” conveys abundant plant and animal life and a flourishing economy along the “¡Orinoco pleno, Orinoco grande!”, over a decade later, the final chapter “¡Esto fue!” evokes only memories of former abundance. Young Marcos’s Orinoco is not the same as his father’s, for the extractive economy has remapped the space. But whereas the novel fails to offer ways out of the horrors of hegemonic mappings, a critical reading of its sometimes hidden layers of spatial discourse begins this process by calling attention to the ways in which well-intentioned counter-mappings can reproduce the kinds of erasures that they criticize.

Chapter 3

Laying Tracks to Nowhere: Márcio Souza's Dark Ecology in *Mad Maria* (1980)

Por quê construir uma estrada de ferro entre o nada e o nada? Por quê?
—*Mad Maria*

On me lance à la tête des faits, des statistiques, des kilométrages de routes, de
canaux, de chemins de fer.
—Aimé Césaire

If a poisoned rainforest could speak, it would sound like Frankenstein's creature.
—T. Morton

In the previous two chapters, I have shown how Amazonia emerges in the novels of both Rivera and Gallegos as a space that does not match the representations drawn in records of official geography. Furthermore, both novels place into doubt the feasibility of “fitting” Amazonia into the spatial practices of their respective countries. Colombia and Venezuela's failures to account for the fluvial ecologies of their border zones—removed both in distance and infrastructure from centralized governments—result in faulty and deceptive “maps” of Amazonia nevertheless conceived of as one-to-one correspondences. Both authors correlate this willful ignorance of the region with a lack of state presence. Their novels highlight how, in the absence of a protector state, informal extractive economies—of rubber and other plant products, alluvial gold and other minerals—move in and govern spatial practice beyond the confines of official knowledge, placing national sovereignty in Amazonia at risk, and more critically, threatening human lives. This chapter examines another novel that decries a government's lack of knowledge of its Amazonian territories, this time focusing on the rift in geographic knowledge between Brazil's decision-making coast and its westward lying *hevea*-rich territories in the late years of the rubber boom.

Departing from the tradition of jungle stories in which an outsider protagonist ventures into the forest to learn firsthand knowledge unavailable on maps or in textbooks, Brazilian author Márcio Souza (b.1946) in *Mad Maria* (1980) narrates the fictional experiences of numerous

characters—both real and invented—involved in the construction of the state-sponsored railroad *Estrada de Ferro Madeira-Mamoré* (EFMM) in the present-day Brazilian state of Rondônia. Foreign workers named the locomotive “Mad Maria,” after the Madeira and Mamoré Rivers along which it would travel, a play on words that emphasizes the perceived insanity of laying steel tracks “que saía do nada e levava a parte alguma” through the swampy Amazon (Souza 254). Whereas my analysis of Rivera and Gallegos shows how each author attempts to construct a geography unaccounted for within the lines of official, non-fiction representations of Amazonia, Souza’s story zooms in on those lines to imagine how they were formed. Through a few key characters, *Mad Maria* invents the daily lives of the thousands of men who travelled to Amazonia from all over the world to alter the landscape physically in order to integrate it into the spatial practice of international market demands for rubber.¹ In this chapter, I show how Souza uses historical fiction to elaborate believable Amazonian spaces devastated by the labor required to sustain urban capitalist infrastructure. Those spaces of death, disease, cruelty, and corruption that serve as the scenes for *Mad Maria* are not part of any official accounts of the EFMM, and in this way, as if responding to the same statistical affirmations of “progress” that Aimé Césaire protests in his *Discours sur le colonialisme* (1950) cited above, the novel counter-maps the “progressive” promise of industrialization represented by the railroad.

1. Foot Hardman accounts for as many as fifty different nationalities of men working on the railway. Of these, the most numerous were Brazilians; Spaniards, Caribbean islanders, especially Barbadians; Portuguese, Germans, Italians, Colombians, Americans, Bolivians, English, and Peruvians. For a complete list of nationalities, see Foot Hardman (*Trem* 142).

Introduction

Born and raised in Manaus, capital city of the Brazilian state of Amazonas, Márcio Souza's prolific literary and artistic career has centered on drawing attention to Amazonian political and economic issues.² Brazilian literary critic Pedro Maligo contends that Souza is the first Brazilian author to write about Amazonia with an inward gaze toward its "political universe" as opposed to the outward gaze of the naturalists and *modernistas*, who used Amazonia as an archetypal reference for a broader Brazilian political and cultural sphere (143). Although a 2007 article in the *New York Times* entitled "Amazon Books, but Not What You Think" notes that Souza and fellow Manaus writer Milton Hatoum (b. 1952), lacking the broad appeal of "magical realism," have often "had problems making their voices heard beyond the jungle" (Rohter), Souza's work has been published outside of Brazil in Portugal, the United States, Spain, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Cuba, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, with a commercial success that has allowed him to live exclusively from his literary royalties (Medina 9). A 1983 review of Latin American fiction published in *Time* notes that Souza sold his first book *Galvez* "for only \$2,000. His forthcoming book, *Mad Maria*, went for \$5,000, and his third has just been signed for \$10,000" (Sheppard). Although *Mad Maria*'s 45,000 copies released the same year as *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, paled in comparison to García Márquez's 150,000 (Medina 9), Souza's novel was nevertheless a bestseller in Brazil and translated into English only five years later in 1985. In interviews, Souza admits to studying bestsellers in order to craft a successful novel (Foot Hardman, "Entrevista" 39), although these efforts are driven as much by a desire for economic gain as by a commitment from the self-proclaimed communist author to

2. Souza has written eleven novels, a book of short stories, and eleven plays in addition to other non-fiction works about Amazonia.

reach as large a readership as possible with his critiques of capitalist intervention in the region he calls home.³

Yet paradoxically, Souza's unique perspective on Amazonia may be more due to his awareness of his status as an outsider than any claims to being Amazonian by birthright. On multiple occasions, Souza has stated that not until his time at university in São Paulo did he begin to realize how little he knew about Amazonia. In class, his professors would elicit from him an "Amazonian perspective," and he realized that coming from a large industrial city like Manaus, he had very little knowledge of the jungle (Chapman University). Although he was originally interested in directing films to create a dialogue between what he saw as Amazonia and the rest of Brazil, in working on the film version of José Maria Ferreira de Castro's (1898-1974) novel *A selva* (1930) in the early 70s, he says, "descobri que não sabia nada, que não fazia diferença de eu ter nascido em Manaus. Do que eu sabia, poderia ter nascido em Porto Alegre, em São Paulo" (qtd. in Foot Hardman, "Entrevista" 28). Souza returned to Manaus in part to remedy this situation, studying the history of the vast region in archives, studying Amerindian cosmologies, and spending time in various jungle regions. Now, when discussing Amazonia, Souza insists, "Temos diversas Amazônias. O que vale para o sul da Amazônia não vale para a região dos grandes rios, a região montanhosa" (qtd. in Foot Hardman, "Entrevista" 47). From this reeducation emerge the scenes of his first two novels, *Galvez, o imperador do Acre* (1976) and *Mad Maria* (1980), which focus on the War of Acre (1899-1903) and the subsequent construction of the EFMM (1907-1912), respectively.

3. For these same reasons, Souza admits to being pleased with TV Globo's miniseries adaptation of his novel, also called *Mad Maria*, which was filmed on location in Porto Velho and Guajará-Mirim and broadcast in 2005 as the most expensive Brazilian miniseries ever produced (Foot Hardman, "Entrevista" 38).

Mad Maria (1980) is a novel that grotesquely dramatizes the depraved conditions of the construction of the EFMM, a 366-kilometer project along the Madeira between the towns of Porto Velho and Guajará-Mirim, both founded by the construction company. The events of *Mad Maria* correspond to the third phase of construction between the years of 1907 and 1912. Two failed nineteenth-century attempts as well as engineering reports deemed the project unviable,⁴ yet backed by European capital and the U.S. businessman Percival Farquhar (1864-1953),⁵ the project was reinitiated in the twentieth century in accordance with the Treaty of Petrópolis (1903) between Brazil and Bolivia.⁶ The railway was envisioned to circumvent the nineteen

4. In 1867, Dom Pedro II opened navigation of the Amazon River to all nations. At the time, the territory in question along the Madeira lay within Bolivian territory, and in 1869, the same year of the completion of the U.S. transcontinental rail, Bolivia recruited U.S. civil war veteran Coronel Earl Church to lead the project, granting him concessions through 1881. With British and U.S. capital, construction began in 1871, but by 1879, only 7.5 kilometers of track had been laid. In 1882, Brazil expropriated the project but made little headway. For more historical background on nineteenth-century attempts, see Craig, Foot Hardman (*Trem*), Neeleman and Neeleman, and Ferreira.

5. Although a Pennsylvania Quaker, Farquhar, in his business dealings was sometimes compared to Satan—indeed, in *Mad Maria* insight into his character is provided by a flashback in which he beats his wife into submission. Charles Gauld has described him as having “the greatest land hunger of any man in the history of Latin America since the Incas” (209). As a primary shareholder in the Brazilian Lumber Company, among other business endeavors, Farquhar hoped to benefit financially from the exportation of fine woods using the railway.

6. Conflict over the present-day Brazilian state of Acre, a coveted territory for its rubber trees during the rubber boom, began in 1899 when Spanish diplomat Luis Gálvez Rodríguez de Arias proclaimed Acre independent, precipitating a U.S.-Brazilian conspiracy to do the same that he was privy to as an employee of the Bolivian consulate in Belém. These events are the subject of Souza’s first novel, *Galvez, Imperador do Acre* (1976). Military intervention by both Brazil and Bolivia eventually resulted in Brazil appropriating the territory of Acre but not before promising to “construir em território brasileiro, por si ou por empresa particular, uma ferrovia desde o porto

dangerous rapids along this stretch of the river, thus creating a transit route to the Atlantic for rubber exportation. Inaugurated in 1912, though, the railway was all but obsolete upon completion. By that time, East Asian rubber plantations had put an end to the Amazonian rubber boom. Furthermore, Bolivia had completed a rail link to the Pacific via Chile, and three years later the opening of the Panama Canal would provide the coast-less country a more expedited route to the Atlantic (Neeleman and Neeleman 27-28).⁷

Mad Maria transpires primarily along the shores of the Abunã River, a tributary of the Madeira at the border with Bolivia, in 1911, the first year that rubber prices began to decline just as record numbers of workers were “imported”—the term used by EFMM to describe recruiting workers from other areas of Brazil and the world—to replace those lost to desertion, death, and tropical diseases.⁸ Hyperbolically ill-famed with the slogan, “Each tie a human life,” in one of

de Santo Antônio, no rio Madeira, até Guajará-Mirim, no Mamoré, com um ramal que, passando por Vila Murquinho ou outro ponto próximo (estado de Mato Grosso), chegue a Vila Bela (Bolivia), na confluência do Beni e do Mamoré. Dessa ferrovia, que o Brasil se esforçará por concluir no prazo de quatro anos, usarão ambos os países com direito às mesmas franquias e tarifas” (qtd. in Foot Hardman, *Trem* 136). By this time Bolivia had definitively lost its access to the Pacific in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883), and regardless, a fluvial export path for rubber downriver toward the Atlantic was logistically easier than other options that required traversing the Andes to reach the Pacific via Peru or Chile.

7. Neeleman and Neeleman emphasize that although the railroad never met initial expectations in terms of economic gain due to these factors, it did continue to operate until 1966. Used primarily for local transport until the late 30s, the increased demand for rubber during World War II gave the EFMM a brief life as a cargo transporter (135).

8. In 1911, the 30,000th patient entered the Candelária Hospital in Porto Velho, and company records indicate that 5,664 workers were brought to the region to work on the rail that year alone. 1910 had been the peak

Robert Ripley's "Believe it or Not" cartoons decades after the 1912 inauguration of the line,⁹ there is no way to know for certain how many human lives were lost in the construction as the company only kept records of those who died while in the 300-bed Candelária hospital in Porto Velho, but most estimates approximate 6,000 or more (Hecht and Cochburn 92; Millard 22).¹⁰ Workers who ended their contracts or deserted and died of complications either while in Amazonia or back at home were not included in the count; neither were deaths due to murder among workers or between workers and overseers. Furthermore, there are no records of losses of indigenous lives. In 1971 the Brazilian military destroyed what was left of the railroad and its files, and less than ten years later, Souza published *Mad Maria*, inventing the horrific scenes rumored to have led to so many deaths but beyond corroboration at the time of writing.

Referring to the destruction of records by the Brazilian military, Souza has said,

O que restou se deve a uns dez velhinhos que sobrevivem lá em Porto Velho. Foram eles que guardaram alguma coisa, que tiraram uns papéis, umas pastas dos caminhões que iam levar tudo pra queimar no mato. Então, ninguém pode provar nada. Nem eles, nem eu. Os fatos sumiram. O que restou foram as versões. (qtd. in Dimas 12)

Mad Maria recovers one such version, yet the notoriety of the EFMM had already been the subject of numerous other non-fiction accounts by the time of the publication of *Mad Maria*, raising the question of what Souza's novelistic version adds to the archive of the EFMM. A memoir of the first attempt to build the rail in the nineteenth century was published in 1907, year for imported workers, with 6,090 arriving to the area. After 1911, the numbers declined significantly. Ferreira publishes these company reports.

9. Kravigny reprints the cartoon and corresponding paragraph, published in *The Kansas City Star* in 1939 (4-5).

10. Ferreira provides a detailed analysis of deaths reported by the EFMM and estimates that deaths actually totaled four times the total number reported.

written by Neville Craig and entitled *Recollections of an Ill-fated Expedition to the Headwaters of the Madeira River in Brazil*. Henry Major Tomlinson also tells of his encounter with the site of the railroad in his 1912 *The Sea and the Jungle*. Despite Craig's choice of title, both his and Tomlinson's accounts are primarily celebratory of the endeavor to construct a railroad through the jungle. Frank W. Kravigny's later firsthand account of the twentieth-century construction, *The Jungle Route* (1940), tells a relatively pleasant experience from his privileged perspective as an American overseer staying in the best housing along the rail with vacation time. Manoel Rodrigues Ferreira's suggestively titled *A ferrovia do diabo* (1959) offers the first extensive critical study of the rail construction, including photographs, death and illness statistics, and economic investment information—Souza used this text as one of his most important references for writing *Mad Maria* (Dimas 12). None of these accounts, though, attempts what *Mad Maria* does: to show the spaces of construction of the EFMM beyond facts and statistics, from perspectives other than those of pampered American workers or European travelers, to imagine the horrors that led to thousands of unaccounted for deaths and a worker turnover rate of approximately three months.¹¹

Marxist geographer and theorist David Harvey, in his discussion of Raymond Williams's incomplete novel, *People of the Black Mountains* (1989), argues for the unique ability of novels to account for geohistorical contexts: "Concerned with the lived lives of people, the novel form allows him to represent the daily qualities of those lives in ways that could not be handled or grasped by other means" (*Justice* 28). Indeed, even Neeleman and Neeleman, whose book is subtitled "The Day-to-Day Life of the Workers on the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad" present only

11. According to Gauld, "Farquhar declared that the turnover of the work force, even among the 80 to 90 Americans always on the job, was over 95% every three months in 1908. It was later less" (131).

fragments of those lives: photographs, newspaper articles, poetry by workers—all taken at face value—and does little to narrate a sense of life on the rail. The imaginative reconstruction of those lives had been attempted in novel form by an Austrian author, Kurt Falkenburger, whose 1961 *Die Hölle warted nicht* (translated into Portuguese as *As botas do diabo* in 1971) takes place during the initial nineteenth-century construction of the EFMM¹²; however, Falkenburger's narrative validates the project and characterizes workers “como heróis que sofreram as piores agruras para trazer o progresso a esta região” (Gomes 41). In other words, Souza's highly critical fictionalized vision of the daily life of the EFMM offers a perspective, through the fictional elaboration of construction spaces, unavailable in the extant accounts at the time of writing.

The timing of *Mad Maria*'s publication is also crucial to understanding Souza's critique. Written during Brazil's military government (1964-1984), numerous critics have indicated that Souza's denunciation of the past is actually a critique of the present.¹³ Indeed, his choice in *Mad Maria* to focus on a period when another military officer, Marechal Hermes da Fonseca, held the presidency (1910-1914) serves as an analog to critique the military government in power at the time of writing. Souza makes this analogy explicit when he states that for him the EFMM “era

12. The Portuguese title refers to Santo Antônio, a town just upriver from Porto Velho, which was off limits to EFMM employees due to its reputation as a “pesthole and den of vice” (Gauld 131). According to Craig, it was called the place where the devil had left his boots (133).

13. Criticism of the present government in Souza's work through the lens of the past has been argued by Beebee, Bollinger, Cohen, Cooper, DiAntonio, Maligo, and Rocha.

uma coisa relacionada com a Transamazônica; queria uma resposta aos planos megalomaniacos da ditadura” (qtd. in Foot Hardman, “Entrevista” 37).¹⁴ Of the construction, Souza writes,

A justificativa principal dos militares era a integração nacional, mas o traçado da Transamazônica, ligando o Nordeste miserável à Amazônia pobre, não ajudava muito a reforçar os argumentos governamentais. A Transamazônica era algo tão absurdo que até mesmo o ex-ministro Roberto Campos, um dos mentores do modelo de integração da Amazônia, considerou uma futilidade a construção da estrada, criticando duramente a falta de viabilidade econômica do projeto. Em menos de dez anos a selva reivindicou da volta quase todo o trajeto da Transamazônica. (*Breve* 163)

He is equally critical of other initiatives in Amazonia during the military period including development and colonization projects spearheaded under the Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia (SUDAM), “which aimed to establish effective Brazilian occupation of the Amazon as a national-security priority” but in practice resulted in agricultural and livestock deforestation that did nothing to increase GDP while granting profitable subsidies to landholders (Brannstrom 270). What critics have missed, then, in recognizing Souza’s redeployment of the past to comment on the present is that his critique is primarily spatial in nature, condemning the use and transformation of Amazonia to meet national needs.¹⁵ Certainly, Souza lambasts what he depicts as the corruption, greed, and ignorance of the military regime in

14. The Trans-Amazonian Highway (BR-230), envisioned to traverse Brazil’s northern Amazonian region, was initiated in 1970 and faced many of the same construction and financial issues as the EFMM had decades earlier.

15. Beebee’s 2009 article on the geopolitics of Souza’s work is perhaps the one exception; however, Beebee focuses on how Souza’s novels draw attention to questions of national territorial control and relates the outlying regions of Souza’s fiction to what he sees as Souza’s concept of a more fluid concept of “brasileiridade” (9). Here, my efforts will be to avoid such allegorical readings in favor of an analysis of what Souza is saying about Amazonian space itself.

Mad Maria, but these deplorable qualities manifest in the spaces along the shores of the Abunã River in the text.

This chapter delves into Souza's representation of capitalist spatial practice along that river in *Mad Maria*. I emphasize how Souza's fictional spaces offer a "behind the scenes" glimpse of nefarious conditions presented as integral to the construction of a monumental infrastructural project like the EFMM. Against discourses of progress that hailed railroads as bastions of modernity for the civilizing of outlying territories at the turn of the last century, Souza shows the spaces of railroad construction intimately bound to neocolonial organizations of labor that result in blood, violence, death, and disease. Souza uses fiction to dredge the rivers for this postcolonial muck, bringing it from the underbelly into plain sight as the primary feature of this "modern" landscape. The stickiness of this muddy muck is quite literal in *Mad Maria*, clinging to the men's boots and skin, and I liken it to Timothy Morton's "sticky" aesthetics of dark ecology to argue that the novel rejects notions of Amazonia as a special region separate from modernity (*Ecology* 188).

As theorized by Morton, "dark ecology" is a response to the first wave ecocritical notion of "deep ecology," which, in its emphasis on the interconnectedness of living things, tends to reify "nature" and, therefore, offer no theoretical exit from notions of the natural world as separate from and superior to the human world. As a result, deep ecology does little to analyze the transformation of "nature" by modernity as "nature" remains always relegated to a category of "naturalness," separate from human landscapes. Dark ecology, by contrast, accepts that ecological interconnectedness implies an environment indelibly interwoven with the ugly aspects of modern life and thus signifies that there is a "monstrosity at the heart of the idea of nature" (*Ecology* 195). Morton likens this monstrosity to Frankenstein's creature in Mary Shelley's

classic Gothic novel: “Frankenstein’s creature is the distorted, ambient category of the environment pulled around to the ‘front’ of the reader’s view [...] the horrific ugliness of alienated social cruelty, and the painful eloquence of enlightened reflection” (*Ecology* 195). Much like such a distorted creature, the Mad Maria locomotive wheezes as it moves across its tracks in Souza’s novel as a reminder of the interrelationship between the forward motion of civilization and the weighty sickness that such “progress” entails: “Um corpo suado, metálico, mas de um metal escuro, misturando-se por entre formas esverdeadas, vegetais, avança resfolegando como um dinossauro, ou um estegossauro, ou um brontossauro” (16). I show how Souza’s mixing of bodies, sweat, metal, and vegetation in his Amazonian riverscapes dissolves notions of Amazonia both as a pristine Eden and an inherently hostile hell. *Mad Maria* shows that the ineradicable tracks left in the jungle by the work of “progress” have become part of its ecology.

I have divided this discussion into two parts. In the first section, I compare the spaces of the EFMM as seen from the perspectives of businessmen and legislators in the then capital of Rio de Janeiro with the perspectives of characters directly involved in construction along the Abunã to show how celebrations of “progress” in the novel rely on a staged distance from the atrocities of construction, which is unavailable to laborers working on site. I analyze how Souza’s representation of the workers’ spatial reality posits a dark ecology that draws a counter-map of Amazonia as a geographic region formed by multinational capital. In the second section, I read this dark vision of Amazonia in relation to the novel’s commentary on literature’s role in mapping Amazonia. Souza specifically implicates Brazilian literature as complicit in hiding the horrors of capital investment in Amazonia and suggests a correlation between Amazonia’s symbolic capital in the Brazilian literary imagination and its placelessness (“entre o nada e o

nada”) in the capitalist imaginary as an empty space for exploitation (255). I argue that *Mad Maria* compels a perspectival shift toward Amazonia that impedes such reified perceptions by showing the layers of blood, excrement, and rusted metal that have become as much a part of the fluvial landscape as the rivers.

Staging the Construction of the EFMM

Toward the end of *Mad Maria*, Percival Farquhar organizes a delegation of Brazilian diplomats to travel to Porto Velho in hopes that they will marvel at the wonders of American technology—Porto Velho boasted sewage systems, an ice plant, steam laundry, a Marconi wireless station where it produced weekly English-language newspapers, a modern hospital, and unbelievably, electric power and lighting in the depths of the jungle (Gauld 132).¹⁶ This fictional journey imagined by Souza was organized by Farquhar in the novel as a political response to an article published in the *Correio da Manhã* entitled “Obra do século ou coleção de escândalos e morticínios” (316).¹⁷ The idea of the American “vigarista” was to orchestrate positive eyewitness accounts that would contradict the second-hand reporting of the *carioca* journalist:

“Testemunhas oculares que somente verão o que for conveniente” (292). Fittingly, the three-day visit to Porto Velho—a two-month journey from Rio de Janeiro—begins on a stage in Porto Velho’s movie theater. Farquhar and the Brazilian delegates sit at a table before a sold-out audience of visitors, engineers, doctors, and other workers to give a lofty speech that describes the selfless efforts to build a rail so that the Brazilian people can collect their due “milhões de

16. Now the capital of Rondônia with a population of over 400,000, Porto Velho was founded by the Farquhar Syndicate in 1907.

17. In truth, Farquhar reportedly never visited Porto Velho (Neeleman and Neeleman 41).

libras esterlinas” for rubber collected “com heroísmo nesta região” (311). He further emphasizes the comforts and medical support provided to workers. This performance culminates in the recital of a poem by Brazilian Parnassian Olavo Bilac (1865-1918) describing the “divina majestade” and “glória” of Amazonia (313).

This scene in which the men on stage sit behind “uma mesa longa, coberta por uma toalha branca e flores [...] colocada logo à frente da tela escondida pelo pano de boca” serves as a metaphor for the spatial perspective of Amazonia deliberately crafted by foreign capital. Everything appears pristine and attractive, but behind the table is a drop cloth covering a hidden screen. The men travel all the way to Porto Velho to hear of the wonders of the construction of the EFMM, but they never visit any of the construction sites themselves nor meet any of the workers. Elsewhere, Souza has described this obscuring effect of capital during the rubber boom in Manaus:

A face oficial do látex era a paisagem urbana, a capital coruscante de luz elétrica, a fortuna de Manaus e Belém, onde imensas somas de dinheiro corriam livremente. O outro lado, o lado terrível, as estradas secretas, estavam bem protegidas, escondidas no infinito emaranhado de rios, longe das capitais. O lado festivo, urbano, civilizado, que procurou soterrar as grandes monstruosidades cometidas nos domínios perdidos, poucas vezes foi perturbado durante a sua vigência no poder. (*Breve* 140)

Likewise, Farquhar’s EFMM is a sinister *mise-en-scène* that hides the details of the “backstage” labor in order to perform progress. In this section, I contrast the “official” space of the EFMM represented by Farquhar’s on-stage performance with Souza’s counter-map of the dark ecology that emerges behind the scenes where the railway tracks are laid to show how Souza contends outsider views of Amazonia as a space to support and sustain Brazilian development. I begin with a brief plot summary that outlines the contrasting spaces of *Mad Maria*.

When writing *Mad Maria*, Souza shared drafts with his theater group from the Teatro Experimental do SESC (Serviço Social do Comércio) (TESC) in Manaus for feedback, and the resulting elaboration of space in the novel indicates a theatrical sensibility toward setting the scene. Souza explains that one of his colleagues “tem muita sensibilidade pra problemas de luz, uma percepção danada para ambientação. Ele discutiu muito o problema do sol em *Mad Maria*. De fato, ele me ajudou muito a compreender essa importância da luz, do sol, do calor na criação do ambiente” (qtd. in Dimas 10). The novel begins as the sun goes up and the fog begins to lift on the shores of the Abunã. This initial scene contrasts the cold, wet humidity of Amazonian nights that quickly gives way to the oppressive, disorienting light and heat of the day. As the lights go up, so to speak, they focus on the makeshift medical facilities of the recently graduated Johns Hopkins doctor Richard Finnegan, in one of the camps along the construction site. Neeleman and Neeleman suggest, “Conditions in the work camps rivaled in their misery those in Panama during the construction of the canal. Malaria, yellow fever, dysentery and beriberi were rampant” (xi). *Mad Maria* begins at the epicenter of this misery with the young, idealistic doctor squashing scorpions alongside a patient “inteiramente debilitado, respiração fraca, queimando de febre, que estava agonizando desde a tarde anterior” (13). In the novel’s initial pages, a downpour also ensues, halting work, dramatically altering the landscape, and leaving the men at camp with little protection. This opening glimpse of the EFMM evokes everything hidden behind Farquhar’s drop cloth.

The precarious camp brings together the stories of very different people: Finnegan, the privileged American doctor; Stephan Collier, the cynical English engineer and longtime

expatriate;¹⁸ German and Barbadian workers and Spanish overseers; a Karipuná man eventually named “Joe Caripuna” who is the last member of his community still living in the forest due to the work of “os civilizados,” a term used ironically much like Gallegos’s “rationales” in *Canaima*¹⁹; and the Bolivian high society pianist Consuelo Campero who is stranded in the jungle after her husband dies trying to move her European grand piano upriver to Bolivia. Márcia Leticia Gomes has referred to the stories of these characters as “micro-histórias” which offer “um contra-discurso à história dita oficial” (37). Indeed, these invented characters’ lives are punctuated by distrust, frustration, brawls, and death unwritten in official accounts of the construction. Additionally, every bit of progress made on the railway is quickly undone by weather, fallen trees, and other “natural” intrusions, and such delays make the project seem nearly impossible if not laughable. Working conditions are slave-like with the threat of death for any sort of rebellion. Collier runs the show, always carrying a weapon, and he is supported by armed guards as well. He unflinchingly opens fire on hostile workers to control them. A highly cynical man, he is at first at odds with Finnegan, the idealistic doctor who believes his work is important and will potentially make contributions to the field of epidemiology. Eventually, the

18. According to Cooper, Finnegan’s character is supposedly based on reports of the American doctors Walcott, Belt, and Lovelace. Collier’s character draws from the U.S. contractors May, Jekyll, and Randolph (112).

19. The Karipuná live in Rondônia state, on the banks of the Jaru, Jamery, Urupa, Cabecciras, Candeias, and Jaciparana Rivers. They speak a language of the Tupí-Guaraní linguistic group. Their population is on the decline and in 2001, there were apparently only twenty-one known living Karipuná people in Brazil. Also known as the Ah’e, Caripuna, Jau-Navo, Juanauo, Kagwahiva, and Karipuná de Rondônia, they are not to be confused with the Karipuná do Amapá, who live in Amapá state near the border of French Guiana and speak a Panoan language. Along with the Amundava, Kayabi, Júma, and Tenharim peoples, the Karipuná call themselves Kagwahiva. For more information, see “Brazil” in *Ethnologue*.

two men become friends, and Finnegan is eventually worn down by the impossible circumstances of trying to ensure health to workers who are overworked and underpaid—at one point, the German workers stop taking their anti-malarial quinine pills in order to sell them for profit; many become sick and die as a result. What in the historical record reads as numbers of deaths caused indirectly by the railroad construction, in *Mad Maria* becomes miserable circumstances directly created by the capitalist intervention in space.

The novel moves between the events at the camp and those at the other spaces connected by the Farquhar Syndicate. I have already mentioned nearby Porto Velho. Just two hours downriver from Porto Velho is Santo Antônio, the once center of production for the nineteenth-century construction attempts, which was later abandoned to ruin. As Foot Hardman explains, there was something of an opposition between the two towns:

a primeira [Porto Velho] signo do progresso, da higiene, do trabalho organizado; a segunda, da decadência, lixo, ócio degradante. Com efeito, Santo Antônio representava o passado, e um passado de malogros, as experiências fracassadas do século XIX; Porto Velho nascerá junto com o empreendimento bem sucedido do século XX [...]. Porto Velho aparecia, assim, como prenúncio de cidade; Santo Antônio, como vilarejo maldito. (*Trem* 169)

In *Mad Maria*, this dirty village off limits to workers of the EFMM, is nevertheless where men surreptitiously escape to drink and sleep with prostitutes.²⁰ All of these jungle spaces in turn contrast with the ordered streets and Frenchified decor of Rio de Janeiro where Farquhar puppeteers not only the lives of men involved in construction but also Brazilian politics in order to protect his economic interests. This spatial network connects the lives of the characters in Amazônia, whose names are unavailable in the historical record, with real people from Brazil's history involved in Farquhar's corrupt economics; in both the novel and in life, he surrounded himself with influential people such as the Canadian railway magnate Alexandre Mackenzie

20. Farquhar had instituted a ban on liquor for all employees of the EFMM (Gauld 132).

(1860-1943) and Bahian politician and unsuccessful presidential hopeful Rui Barbosa (1849-1923), who lost to Fonseca. These men conspire together against J. J. Seabra (1855-1942), one of President Fonseca's cabinet members, in order to sway politics in their favor. Souza underscores the behind-the-scenes criminality of these men's dealings by dramatizing closed-door meetings between these calculating men. Their political and economic aspirations are purely self-serving and completely ignore the material reality of the Madeira-Mamoré construction, a low priority as only one of their many investments. By alternating back and forth between the jungle and the coast in narrative vignettes, the novel suggests an inextricable link between the two seemingly disparate spaces.

The novel ends in a climatic contrast to the anticlimactic historical end of the railway construction. Before the horrific final scene, the narration briefly shifts away from the events of the story to provide headline-like details regarding the aftermath of the construction and the decline of natural rubber prices in the world market by 1912. Even though the railway was then obsolete, the narrator explains that Farquhar sued the Brazilian government for the money owed to him for a railway that would never be used as intended. Decades later in 1966, the Ministry of Transport sold the rail line as scrap metal to a São Paulo businessman. The construction was in vain, and as if to provide one final reminder of what that work entailed, the last section returns to camp and murder. Collier precipitously shoots and kills an unarmed Karipunà man thinking he is an armed Indian (from India) rail worker, and Finnegan loses his patience with Barbadian and Indian workers, indiscriminately opening fire on them: "O sangue escorre pela poeira, empapando a terra e sumindo para baixo dos dormentes" (344). Even though the historical record would suggest there is nothing left of the EFMM, the novel ends with this final image of the way

this bloody capitalist production has become soaked into the sediment along the river, at the foundation of what this jungle space is.

Souza has received a great deal of critical attention, with increased interest after the success of 2005 TV Globo miniseries, *Mad Maria*, based on Souza's novel. In the first episode of the series, a scene shows Collier standing over a large map of the railroad plans. As he moves his hand along the lines of the map, he lists the environmental obstacles unaccounted for on paper: "Alagadiços, pântanos, mosquitos, formigas, morte. Vamos ter que passar por cima de tudo isso que o mapa não mostra. Eu nunca pensei em trabalhar num inferno como este."

Although the television version of the novel graphically calls attention to the discrepancy between the crisp, empty land projected by the map and the cumbersome physical conditions on the ground, little attention has been paid to this theme in the critical literature on the novel. Instead, scholars have tended to focus on Souza's use of the genre of historical novel to represent the past—and with it, the present—without delving into the relationship between that genre mode and the text's geographic setting.

Mad Maria, listed in Seymour Menton's chronology of Latin America's new historical novel, exemplifies in many ways the new historical novel's questioning of both the production of History and the distinction between fiction and History (2).²¹ Analyses of the novel have mostly

21. Menton identifies Carpentier and Borges as key precursors of this literary mode in Latin America and distinguishes the new historical novel from the Romantic and modernista historical novels, which were more concerned with issues of national identity. He lists six traits that distinguish the "traditional" historical novel from the new. These include a Borgesian skepticism toward uncovering the truth of history or reality, a deliberate manipulation of history, the use of famous historical people as key characters, the use of metafiction, an often playful intertextuality, and a Bakhtinian dialogism that makes use of the carnivalesque, parody, and heteroglossia (22-24).

accepted this framework, highlighting Souza's use of Bakhtinian notions of transgression including satire, parody, and the carnivalesque to subvert linear narratives of historical progress. Valente argues, albeit controversially falling into an essentializing discourse, that Souza returns through his use of parody and carnivalization "a truly national cultural trait: the capability Brazilians have always had of laughing at themselves" during a dark time of dictatorial repression (792). Baumgarten emphasizes, rather, in his analysis of *Galvez*, Souza's use of parody to abolish hierarchies established by historical narratives, marking a "ruptura com o modelo de narrativa histórica herdado do século XIX e, conseqüentemente... a instauração de um novo paradigma para o gênero" (80). Both Cooper and Nenevé and Gomes likewise acknowledge the counter-discursive aims of Souza's retelling of historical events. For Nenevé and Gomes this counter-discourse questions notions of "progress" generally, while for Cooper the critique is a more specific attack against "informal imperialism" in Amazonia (66). One way Souza achieves this perspective, according to Beebe is by disparaging otherwise "heroic" historical personages such as Rui Barbosa and Percival Farquhar. (6). DiAntonio shows how this critical gaze toward historical actors and processes is achieved through what he calls an "aesthetics of the absurd" (96). He writes, "Souza's *Mad Maria* conjures up a strange world where men die of malaria and loneliness while imported German grand pianos are transported up the Amazon only to be capsized and washed away down river" (89). In the ways highlighted by these critics, Souza does retell history in ways that draw attention to what the author has elsewhere called "a integridade mentirosa de uma época rica de contradições" (*A expressão* 112).

The problem with the analyses of the above-mentioned critics, though, is that they do little more than identify what is otherwise an overtly-stated attempt to embed a scathing account of intervention in Amazonia within a playful narrative. As the first lines of the novel read:

Quase tudo neste livro bem podia ter acontecido como vai descrito. No que se refere à construção da ferrovia há muito de verdadeiro. Quanto à política das altas esferas, também. E aquilo que o leitor julgar familiar, não estará enganado, o capitalismo não tem vergonha de se repetir. Mas este livro não passa de um romance. (11)

These opening sentences of direct address from the otherwise unobtrusive narrator, succinctly anticipates the points made by literary critics. This novel will play with the idea of the fictional qualities of written history, thus undermining its authority. At the same time, in shortening the distance between past and present, the text will allegorize the shameful conditions of the present.

The next lines, however, are equally as important, “Preste atenção: Finnegan não sabia que os escorpiões começavam a aparecer no começo do verão. E o que era o verão naquela terra, afinal?” (11). What follows is an account of Finnegan’s attempts to make sense of this new space for which he finds himself gravely ill-prepared. In other words, the novel tells a tale of geographic ignorance and the inability to transfer geocentric concepts like summer from one region to another. Even though DiAntonio’s statement about the grand piano refers to a scene in which the spatialities of bourgeois tastes and jungle rivers converge horrifically, he and other critics err in their failure to acknowledge the spatio-temporal dimensions of Souza’s critique, instead falling into a nineteenth-century conception of (historical) time as separate from the space in which it occurs. Even Menton fails to recognize in his reference to the new historical novel’s criticism of nineteenth-century historical narratives that that century’s historiography was defined by a prioritization of dynamic, flowing time over what was seen as the passive spaces in which events occurred.²² Indeed, if Souza’s new historical novel undermines the idea

22. According to Warf and Arias, “In the nineteenth century, space became steadily subordinated to time in modern consciousness, a phenomenon that reflected the enormous time-space compression of the industrial revolution; intellectually, this phenomenon was manifested through the lens of historicism, a despatialized consciousness in which geography considered weakly or not at all” (2).

of one true version of history, it also subverts the idea of one concrete and passive version of space.

The monolithic version of space that *Mad Maria* fragments is, as mentioned, the staged space of Farquhar's capitalist projections onto Amazonia. Because Farquhar is a Pennsylvania businessman, his particular production of capitalist space along the Madeira corresponds to a decidedly American approach to spatial expansion and modification à la Frederick Jackson Turner, what Souza has referred to as "ideologia *Far-West*" (*Expressão* 98). Until the very end of the novel, when his spirits are finally vanquished, the idealistic Hopkins M.D. Finnegan vocalizes this brand of U.S. imperialism by defending the extension of "modernization" into frontiers perceived as empty: "Você e eu trabalhamos pelo progresso," he insists to Collier, his cynical interlocutor (257). The English engineer, though, has much more realistic notions of frontier expansionism: "Vocês, americanos, acabaram com os pioneiros. [...] Ser pioneiro agora é ser caçador de índios e pistoleiro metido a puritano" (257). This imported notion of U.S. pioneerism in which Amerindian peoples are viewed as exterminable obstacles is the subtext of Farquhar's closed-door business dealings in Rio as well. He reassures Seabra, who is concerned with the threat of peasant uprisings in areas of the São Paulo-Rio Grande Railway, that at the Madeira-Mamoré, "não há camponeses, só índios" (249). Even Farquhar, though, maintains a critical distance from the image he projects. During his stay in Porto Velho, news arrives that fugitive German workers showed up decapitated aboard canoes in Santo Antônio, and when he asks why they fled in the first place, Collier responds ironically, "porque são europeus e não se acostumaram com o clima tropical" (320). In response, "Farquhar sorriu porque a explicação era imbecil e convincente" (320). This official explanation, one that characterizes Amazonia as a hostile space and obscures the hostility of working conditions forged by capitalist spatial practice,

corresponds to the historical record, based on facts and numbers of deaths due to tropical disease along the EFMM. Farquhar's image of success relies on the depiction of an antagonistic space separate from the "modern" processes that transform it.

For Souza, this particular brand of American frontier expansionism implies an erasure of local sovereignty and culture. To begin, the *lingua franca* used in the novel throughout the construction sites and even in Rio business dealings is English.²³ Although written in Portuguese, most of the dialogue between characters in *Mad Maria* actually relays these conversations in translation between English-speaking characters: Englishmen, Americans, and Barbadians, among others. Additionally, American culture is imported with the American workers: Porto Velho "[e]ra uma cidade muito peculiar, onde não comemorava-se o carnaval mas festejava-se o Dia de Ação de Graças. O dia 7 de setembro não era lembrado mas a cidade engalanava-se no 4 de julho" (299).²⁴ In town, "quase toda a música que ali se ouvia vinha de discos norte-americanos tocados num gramofone" (307). The space itself is of American design as well:

A própria arquitetura era bastante diferente das outras pequenas cidades sul-americanas. Ali não existia nenhum vestígio dos tempos coloniais, nenhuma igreja barroca, nenhum casarão senhorial ou ruína de forte militar ibérico. Todas as construções, além de novas, pintadas discretamente com tinta a óleo, mais parecem casas de uma das muitas cidades de madeira de oeste norte-americano. Só que elas ganhavam em Porto Velho amplas varandas geladas e já contavam com iluminação elétrica, coisa que muitas cidades do continente nem sequer sonhavam. (300)

23. In reality, Spanish was the *lingua franca* established throughout construction sites (Gauld 133).

24. Historically, the observation of the U.S. holiday calendar seems to have been true. The local English-language paper *The Porto Velho Marconigram* announced the festivities for American holidays, and Farquhar's official EFMM photographer, the American Dana Merrill, captured several scenes of Fourth of July celebrations. See Neeleman and Neeleman.

This small town of “casas [...] racionalmente alinhadas” draws straight American lines through the swampy riverscape, reconstructing not only the present but also writing over the country’s past (300). Porto Velho’s medical facilities, too, are a U.S. Import, designed by Dr. Lovelace, a character based on the American parasitologist of the same name.²⁵ Collier calls the parasitologist a “parasita” while Finnegan defends that he “conseguiu melhorar as condições sanitárias aqui na construção da ferrovia. Trouxe a experiência adquirida no Panamá” (274). The real Dr. Lovelace also went from working on the Panama Railroad to Porto Velho as did many of the workers, both historically and in the novel (Gauld 128); Souza’s insistence on this point further underscores that the American transformation of Latin American spaces involves a commitment to the installation of “modern” spatial practices regardless of the cost of human lives.²⁶ Furthermore, the parallel drawn between the EFMM and the American annexation and appropriation of Panama presents this remote area of Amazonia as a place whose sovereignty can be sold to the highest bidder.

An illustrative scene of flag changing when Brazilian delegates arrive to Porto Velho leaves no doubt that this Amazonian space has been constructed within a framework of American neocolonialism. When the group deboards, Farquhar is mortified to see the United States flag flying at the port. He immediately orders that the flag be changed, and the men at Porto Velho scramble to find the Bolivian flag until Farquhar exasperatedly asks them what country they are in. John Kirkpatrick, general manager of the American May, Jekyll, and

25. He arrived in 1908 to replace another doctor (Ferreira 232).

26. Estimates place the loss of human lives at 10,000 for work carried out by the United States Panama Rail Road Company (Hecht and Colburn 92). The company notoriously profited doubly from the bodies of its workers by selling their cadavers to medical schools all over the world. Juan Gabriel Vásquez takes up the cold cruelty of this gesture in *Historia secreta de Costaguana* (2007).

Randolph contracting company in charge of the EFMM responds dubiously, “No Brasil, eu suponho” (304).²⁷ This discursive shoulder shrug indicates that the influx of American dollars, overseers, music, and architecture has left doubt over which country this border territory belongs to. Even the idea that Porto Velho falls within Brazilian territory has been constructed by the Americans. When the Brazilian flag is finally “içada de cabeça para baixo” it reads not “Ordem e Progresso” but rather “Order and Progress” (305). Beebee insightfully relates this confusion to the lack of national territorial control in the area: “The scene reminds us of the strong analogies between flag and the depiction of state territory on a map: both are boundaries, integral, filled frequently with solid colors. Above all, they are two visual ways of imagining the state through its symbols” (7). This particular “map” of Brazil has literally been drawn by Americans. The flag’s errors are due to the fact that it was sewn by an American seamstress in Porto Velho. There were no Brazilian flags readily available in Souza’s Porto Velho, and the fabric of the nation was stitched together by “[u]ma senhora americana” (305). The order and progress of Porto Velho and the railways ties that extend south from its port are of American design.

Within this ironically described “rationally even” plan for the EFMM, the locomotive itself serves as the symbol of forward moving “progress” that will efficiently traverse the straight lines of the railway, visualizing the flow of international capital moving through Amazonia. Because Souza’s depiction of American progress is inflected by a cynical tone, I disagree strongly with Martin Cooper’s assessment that the locomotive represents the “heart” of the novel. For Cooper, amidst the “downward journey [...] through the greed and ambition of the elite and pestilential life of the construction workers” is “the locomotive, who in her madness sits serenely

27. Farquhar contracted May, Jekyll, and Randolph in 1907. The firm had previously worked on the Guatemala Railroad (Silva 34).

watching a society destroy itself” (115). However, the men’s devotion to Mad Maria, which Cooper rightly notes, rather than indicating a personified spirit of goodness in an otherwise sordid atmosphere, more correctly parodies the irrational worship of fetishized commodities disconnected from the labor that produces them. Farquhar, when planning the diplomatic visit to Porto Velho, for example, is confident that “[a] ferrovia era uma façanha a que Hermes não podia resistir” (55). What Cooper’s comment more accurately responds to is the sense that the railway workers—despite the difficult and dispirited work of forging the right of way and laying the tracks—stubbornly, if not foolishly, imagine the locomotive as somehow separate from the murderous scenes that transform the jungle into a space of modern transit. The modernity, in other words, of this “progressive” infrastructure is entirely imagined in the novel.

This mentality that conceives of the train as an emblem of progress seems to correspond to the general Brazilian, if not international enthusiasm for railroads in the previous two centuries. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, spearheaded by Pedro II’s ambitious program for modernization following the 1850 end of the slave trade, 24,000 kilometers of railroads were laid in Brazil (Summerhill 4).²⁸ In Summerhill’s history of Brazilian railroads, he explains that it was “in large part to the resource savings generated by these railroads” that “Brazil emerged around 1900 as one of the fastest-growing economies in the Western world” (8).

28. Improvement of the country’s “precarious system of transportation” was one of the main priorities of Imperial Brazil’s plan for modernization. Fausto and Fausto emphasize that the main objective for railroad construction was to provide routes for export of Brazilian goods: “The major incentives for building railways came from the need to improve the transportation of the principal export merchandise to the country’s most important ports” (110). Although the rubber boom had not begun in earnest when these 1850 construction projects began, Charles Goodyear’s 1839 discovery of galvanization would soon catch on and provide a precedent for railway construction in Amazonia.

Furthermore, during the nineteenth-century construction phase of railroads in Brazil the successful inauguration of the U.S. transcontinental rail in 1869 had revived faith in the initial phase of construction of the EFMM under Colonel Church (Neeleman and Neeleman xv). Cooper's extensive study of railway culture in Brazil affirms that at the time, "The railway in Brazil was regarded as one of the technologies which brought modernity to the nation, or at any rate was closely involved in its arrival, and was used in the early twentieth century as a positive symbol of progress" (49). This image remained into the early twentieth century; Euclides da Cunha (1866-1909) argues in his posthumously published *À margem da história* (1909) for the necessity of a Trans-Acrean railway that would articulate with the Madeira-Mamoré, still in construction at the time of his writing: "o que se deve ver naquela via férrea é, sobretudo, uma grande estrada internacional de aliança civilizadora, e de paz" (84). Similarly high hopes surrounded the EFMM construction despite the fact that "[n]othing like it had ever been attempted. In an era when building railroads represented the height of commercial enterprise and engineering prowess, no one had ever penetrated such an expanse of unknown forest" (Neeleman and Neeleman xi). Such blind faith in the economic potential of railroads is at the foundation of the construction of the EFMM as presented by Souza.

Souza makes clear in *Mad Maria* that maintaining this idealistic optimism toward the infrastructural project required a deliberate distancing of the fantasy of the railroad from the actual site of construction. Farquhar, the personified capital behind the project, enacts this distancing the first time the narrator presents him. He is engaged in "o seu maior encanto," standing on Rua 7 de Setembro in Rio de Janeiro looking through the display window of a candy shop. Through the narrator's indirect discourse, Farquhar describes this habit as "uma volúpia inocente" acquired in childhood (21). Actually, though, "Ele não gostava particularmente de

doces, mas da sensação de cobiçá-los através do vidro da vitrine” (20). In other words, Farquhar’s favorite pastime involves coveting an imagined ideal that remains physically barricaded from him like those “confeitos defendidos pela vidraça” (21). In this scene, Farquhar reflects that his childlike greed is somewhat akin to “a dissimulação brasileira,” which he views as innate to Brazilian politics (21). Farquhar has adopted such concealment or disguise in his business and political maneuverings related to the EFMM. This first glimpse of Farquhar, then, shows him taking pleasure in acting out an aesthetic longing that is both calculatingly deceptive and unverifiable.

Farquhar’s capitalist display window aesthetics relates directly to his staging of the success of the EFMM in Porto Velho. For Souza, the theatricality required to display the profitability of the rubber boom manifests as a very specific genre of theatre: vaudeville, yet another American import. Between 1880 and 1910, vaudeville was the most popular form of entertainment in the United States (Lewis 315). With its origin in traveling shows, and other popular variety show performances, American vaudeville was an irreverent “low comedy” nevertheless popular across age groups, gender, and socioeconomic levels (Gilbert qtd. in Lewis 317). Conceived of as an urban theater of what American playwright Edwin Milton Royle describes as “infinite variety” catered to the public’s interests, vaudeville performances often dealt with adjustments to modern city life (qtd. in Lewis 325).²⁹ In Souza’s numerous references to the *ciclo da borracha* as a time of vaudeville in urban Amazonia, especially Manaus, he never

29. The format of vaudeville functioned on a twelve-hour cycle to accommodate the schedules of a wide range of audience members. Performers performed two to three times during this time block. Especially in low class neighborhoods, Lewis notes that themes consisted of negotiations with officials, doctors, landlords, employers, school teachers, shopkeepers, courtship and marriage, parents and children, success and failure (316).

expands in depth on exactly what he intends by this parallel³⁰; however, what is certain is that he intends nothing positive by comparing the ostentation of the *coroneis da borracha* with a theater of actors who sold themselves to the highest bidder in order to share the stage with

every imaginable thing, animate or inanimate....bears on roller skates; ponies who ring out a tune on hand-bells; and cats, dogs, rabbits, pigeons....monkeys who play billiards, ride bicycles, smoke and drink and behave generally in a manner...like an extremely ill-bred man.³¹ (Caffin qtd. in Lews 330-31)

Souza describes the epoch as a “*comédia de boulevard*” characterized by hyperbole, exaggeration, and consumerism (*Breve* 139). He recognizes the influx of capital during the rubber boom as a time of “vitalidades” that nevertheless manifest, like vaudeville, as a frenetic series of “mediocridades” (*Expressão* 109). For Souza, “A boa vida da *belle-epoque* amazonense é uma falácia” (*Expressão* 112). The author derides the Amazonian “vaudeville” of high society life during the rubber boom for creating the illusion of luxurious spaces completely disconnected from the surrounding jungle from where its wealth originates. The problem with this cheap entertainment in Amazonian urban centers, which converts Amazonia into a stage, is that it comes at high cost of human life.

Mad Maria’s behind-the-scenes vaudeville displays a gruesome show-must-go-on mentality to suggest a sadistic profit-seeking hidden by spectacle: “Farquhar era o único homem capaz de fazer de todos os horrores uma coleção de feitos grandiosos porque davam lucro” (74). Farquhar’s enterprise is enforced primarily by Collier but later by Finnegan once his idealism has been toppled by the work of the EFMM. Despite formidable setbacks caused by torrential rains,

30. Souza draws this comparison in both *Breve história da Amazônia* and *A expressão amazonense*.

31. According to Hartley Davis although vaudeville theaters in general cost just one half or even one third the price of admission of theaters with “first-class attractions,” actors were paid significantly more than at other venues, averaging between \$2,500 and \$4,000 a week, but in some cases up to \$5,000” (qtd. in Lews 335).

fallen trees, sickness, and death, the construction bullheadedly continues on. Collier frequently orders fire opened on worker squabbles that interrupt their workdays. In an early scene, mud-covered bodies are dragged off while the rest of the men return to work, “pois a morte era uma rotina tão certa quanto o almoço e o salário mingado no final da semana” (32). This work is almost comically undone by sporadic tropical storms in which the men watch “o trabalho de um mês ser destruído em poucas horas” (81). The cruelty of expediting this tenuous work becomes grotesque in a scene in which Collier acts quickly to silence anguishing German workers suffering from malarial fever in order to protect the needed hours of sleep of his healthy workers. With confirmation from Finnegan that the Germans’ cases are fatal and that there is nothing to be done, Collier’s guards tie the men up in hammocks and stuff rags “na boca uivante e completava o amordaçamento por uma espécie de tiara de pano enrolado como um bridão sufocante. Os urros abafavam-se em névoas de respiração que emanava sofrimento” (103). While the others sleep, the sick men’s muscles shake and contract in their hammocks, but they are dead by morning. Languishing in their enclosed sleeping quarters, these gagged victims of the EFMM remain both out of earshot and sight of the other workers, much like the real construction work does to the visiting Brazilian delegates.

None of this grotesque triage is visible at the site of one of *Mad Maria’s* vaudevillian stages, the hospital in Porto Velho where one visiting diplomat “abandonou o leito do Hospital de Candelária quase em lágrimas porque tinha ficado perdidamente apaixonado pela moderna técnica de tratamento dos americanos” (322). Though Souza’s depiction of hyperbolic devotion to the 300-bed hospital—a necessity to treat the sick and dying rail workers—may seem a brilliant satire of a profiteering that makes an attractive spectacle of the death it produces, in fact, historical literature documents similarly exaggerated appraisals of the hospital’s modern

technology. The discourse of progress used to invent the hospital as a space of modern success begins locally in the English-language *Porto Velho Times* published and distributed among EFMM workers. On August 15, 1909, it reports on the layout of the site with its fourteen buildings and concludes:

The treatment received by the patients is the very best, the food excellent and the doctors and nurses and all employees of the hospital unite in their efforts to make it as comfortable as possible. Candelaria is a most desirable place for the sick, and judging by the reluctance with which most discharged patients leave it, it is also a good place for the well. (qtd. in Kravigny 71)

Farquhar's words in *Mad Maria* echo this triumphant tone to speak of a place constructed to surmount unprecedented cases of sickness and injury:

Para os trabalhadores, oriundos dos quatro cantos da Terra, e que vieram com a esperança nos olhos e a vontade de contribuir para a grandeza do Brasil, oferecemos as melhores condições de trabalho possíveis numa área inóspita e bárbara. Uma assistência médica moderna, ministrada pelos profissionais mais respeitados e competentes, tendo como líder o mais eminente parasitologista dos Estados Unidos, meu amigo pessoal, o Dr. Lovelace, é oferecida gratuitamente a todos, reduzindo quase a níveis desprezíveis o índice de morbidez. (312)

This depiction of the hospital as a pleasant retreat center manages to spotlight the facility's amenities as "símbolos da ordem sanitária e produtiva" while diverting attention from the suffering there and at the work sites where the men are reluctant to return (Foot Hardman, *Trem* 169). The need for such a hospital had more to do with reducing the cost of importing new workers in an area where ninety-five percent became stricken with some illness than with philanthropy to employees.³² In Souza's fictionalized diplomatic tour, Farquhar highlights the hospital, though, in order to carefully curate its image.

32. Dr. Lovelace reports in 1908: "Dentro dos trinta dias seguintes [after his arrival], fui chamado para tratar de, pelo menos, noventa e cinco por cento da população de Porto Velho, atacada de malária" (qtd. in Rodrigues 232).

The deception of this curatorial work becomes abundantly clear with “o grande acontecimento” on the tour, Joe Caripuna’s recital on the piano, keyed with his toes (313). This spectacle of the happy double-hand amputee mesmerizing the Brazilian diplomats with his performance of “O guarani” and “Parabéns para você” “com sotaque de jazz” is the most overtly vaudevillian act of the men’s visit and also the most appalling (314). Joe barely survives when he is caught by EFMM workers with stolen trinkets from their barracks:

Os civilizados estavam excitados e batiam nele, batiam com força e ele gritava. Vomitava sangue e os beiços estavam partidos e inchados e mal podia abrir os olhos. Aconteceu então o pior. Os civilizados seguram ele esticado no chão e colocaram os dois braços dele sobre um dormente. Um civilizado pegou um machado e decepou na altura do antebraço as suas mãos. (85).

Joe no longer has a community due to territorial displacement of both the rubber economy and the EFMM construction. He stays near the EFMM and steals to survive, but the railway tie cum crucifix initiates the conversion of Joe into a sacrificial and redemptive figure for the EFMM. However, this Karipunà Christ (J.C.) does not forgive the sins of the railroad so much as he serves to deny their very existence, easing the minds of the men who invest their capital into the project. Farquhar tells the diplomats that Joe “foi vítima de seus próprios companheiros, de gente de sua tribo, que por algum costume aberrante, próprio dos selvagens, costuma decepar as mãos de certos jovens previamente escolhidos, numa espécie de sacrifício pagão aos seus deuses bárbaros” (314). In Farquhar’s official version of events, Joe was rescued by the workers of the EFMM and saved by its prestigious doctors: “Agora, saudável e feliz, Joe está conosco, trazendo a sua alegria. [...] Joe é [...] uma prova do quanto a civilização pode fazer na sua luta contra a barbárie” (314). This ironic inversion of events in order to uphold civilization as unequivocal progress maps a spurious geography, too, in which the surrounding jungle is cast as inherently antagonistic to the salubrity of modernity and, therefore, in need of transformation.

Farquhar's vaudevillian representation of the site of the EFMM is all that his eyewitnesses ever see; they make the several-month-long journey from Rio without ever witnessing anything real. In fact, construction is suspended at the time of their visit due to lack of able-bodied workers. The visiting Brazilian delegates are referred to as the "platéia" on multiple occasions, and Farquhar's performance is to delight the audience by fulfilling its expectations, what Jauss has referred to as "culinary" art (25). In Souza's version, Farquhar manages to create the enchantment of the candy store display window, capturing the men's admiration for his project while keeping them at a calculated distance from its inner workings. The men applaud a display that is completely artificial. They do not realize that the laudable space that their presence endorses is a stage set designed to truncate the visitors' peripheral vision to the network of spaces that extend beyond Porto Velho, bound by the spatial practice of the Farquhar Syndicate in what on multiple occasions throughout the novel is referred to as a snare (*armadilha*). Farquhar's Porto Velho hides this spatial entanglement in *Mad Maria* becoming, rather, a placeless place, a stage that exists outside of any national territory, nowhere. At least, according to Farquhar, the lands surrounding the Madeira-Mamoré were nowhere until his Syndicate moved in.

Dark Ecology beyond the Stage. The trick of Farquhar's theatrical rendering of the EFMM's Amazonia in *Mad Maria* is that it manages to construct what Lefebvre has referred to as an "area where ideology and knowledge are barely distinguishable" (45). What is actually the representation of the progress of U.S. capitalism functioning in Amazonia takes a material form before the representatives' eyes, becoming a spatial standard against which other parts of Amazonia are measured. Beyond Porto Velho, though, this illusion breaks down. If Farquhar's

modern Amazonia, parodied by Souza, relies on a dichotomous distinction between modernity and barbarity, the Amazonia that the author invents at the site of construction reveals the illusoriness of this separation. In contrast to the fast-paced vaudeville of the whirlwind visit to Porto Velho, the rest of the novel's activity moves at a sluggish pace, like the men buried to their wastes in mud, "mergulhados na água até a cintura," laying tracks (26). The perspective of the modern railway from the trenches makes Farquhar's candy store covetousness impossible. Rather than a finished product to be admired from afar, the men at the construction site are caught in the process of fixing the rails along and across the rivers, and that process closes the distance between the EFMM and the jungle, civilization and barbarism, modern Brazil and Amazonia. What emerges instead is a dark ecology in which everything and everyone is implicated in the violence and barbarity that the EFMM supposedly seeks to remedy.³³ Fittingly for the analysis of a novel about a train, Morton has described the sound of this dark ecology as "not the relaxing ambient sounds of ecomimesis, but the screeching of the emergency brake"—perhaps what the workers hear at the end *Mad Maria* when the engineer brings the train suddenly to a halt, barely seeing in time the "duas árvores gigantescas [...] tombadas, cortando a linha com seus troncos de mais de cinco metros de raio" (*Ecology* 196; Souza, *Mad Maria* 326). Beyond Farquhar's stage, iron and trees overlap, and men and "nature" become nearly indistinguishable in their destructiveness. In this counter-map the jungle cannot be divided into ordered areas of

33. Morton has described dark ecology as having a *noir* aspect in which "[w]e start by thinking we can 'save' something called 'the world' 'over there,' but end up realizing that we ourselves are implicated" (*Ecology* 187). I am extending this notion of dark ecology to the critique of capitalism in the novel in which the EFMM's promise of capital for Brazil conceives of the space of that capital as ultimately separate from Amazonia, which it must nevertheless traverse.

progress separate from disordered frontiers of sickness—Souza depicts both as spatial practices symbiotically created and intertwined in a dark ecology.

The darkness of the ecology that emerges in *Mad Maria* is not underpinned by a conservationist approach to the region. Indeed, in counter-mapping capitalist representations of Amazonia, Souza does not fall into the tendency to idealize this often othered region. Harvey has noted such a treatment of marginalized voices by the discourse of radical politics:

The idea is that there are those who are so radically ‘other,’ so radically outside of the dominant systems of determination, so marginal in relation to the iron cage of circular and cumulative causation, that they and only they have the capacity to see through the fetishism that fool the rest of us. They and only they have the capacity to generate radical change. (*Justice* 100)

With regard to Amazonia, the left-leaning politics of ecologists often parallels this special treatment of the margins but in regards to the region as a redemptive space, another form of reification. Maligo explains that in “conservationist thought,” Amazonia is often conceived of as a “land apart, as a territory that must remain untouched” (155). Furthermore, this space separate from modernity, often called the “lungs of the world” is imagined as having a single function as a reservoir of clean air to save the world beyond it.³⁴ Souza has been very vocal in his opposition to this ideological stance on the region. In an interview he states that such ecological discourse is entirely external to Amazonia. He characterizes the internal struggles within the region as political acts of citizenship that are only characterized as ecological by the “classe média alta que

34. Maligo succinctly explains the problematics of this description of Amazonia: “In this organic metaphor, it is clear that the representation of the region has been proposed from an external perspective and that it limits the Amazonia to a single, mechanical function [. . .] . In fact, current conservationist discourse about Amazonia, due to both its patronizing tone and to its shroud of (alleged) intellectual competence, clarifies even further the underlying assumption of the organic metaphor, i.e., that the decision-making center of the world is located elsewhere” (155).

mora na praia de Ipanema e defende a Amazônia à distancia” (qtd. in Ferreira and Arroyo 7).

Although highly critical of extractivism in the region—“Para Márcio, o genocídio e a exploração dos grupos indígenas pelas indústrias extratoras ou farmacêuticas com interesses econômicos é o ponto central do problema real da Amazônia”—he does not advocate for a conservationist solution but rather one of finding equilibrium between economic exploitation and preservation (Ferreira and Arroyo 2).³⁵ In this sense, Souza’s approach to Amazonia coincides with a dark ecology in that it “refuses to digest the object into an ideal form” (Morton, *Ecology* 195). Rather than present Amazonia as a redemptive natural space in opposition to the nefarious spatial practices of the manmade EFMM, Souza’s dark ecology in *Mad Maria* underscores Amazonia’s dark features as well.

The novel emphasizes the dramatic and often unpredictable rearrangements of the Abunã landscape as a continuous process of change that involves death and destruction. I have already mentioned how fallen trees undo the men’s work, and the text characterizes this setback as a loss of plant life as well. During the first storm that ensues in the novel, “A tempestade parecia querer arrancar cada árvore da selva e arrebatá-las num vôo alucinado” (77). Loss of human life is certainly emphasized, but it receives no special treatment alongside other forms of life. For example, when Consuelo’s husband is swept away in the river “nem mesmo o seu cadáver poderia mais ser localizado porque estaria preso no fundo do rio logo abaixo da cachoeira, águas

35. In another interview, he cites the cases of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden as having found just such an equilibrium. “No final do século XIX [...] três países se encontravam numa situação deplorável, porque tinham devastado toda a sua floresta [...]. O que é que essas três nações fizeram? Elas se debruçaram para conhecer a floresta de tundra, a floresta conífera. E hoje a economia da Suécia, por exemplo, continua forte no extrativismo, porém o que existe é um relacionamento não-destrutivo com o meio ambiente” (qtd. in Foot Hardman, “Entrevista” 47).

profundas cheias de pedaços de árvores tombadas e restos de outros naufrágios” (39-40). Human and plant life become indistinguishable in this sweeping of the landscape. A worker, lost in the storm, “estava bastante desfigurado e havia perdido as duas pernas....o cadáver era uma espécie de masa úmida feita de terra” (80). In life, though, then men are anything but part of their surroundings; during the day, they find the light disorienting, the heat oppressive, the mud a repulsive vomit, and the nights excessively cold and damp. Cases of malaria are constant, especially after the rains, and the only preventative treatment, quinine pills, causes nausea. Souza has said publicly that he is “scared to death with [sic] the jungle,” and his representation of the jungle in *Mad Maria* explains why (Chapman University). The men seeking fortunes as workers for the EFMM are risking their lives in the fluctuating environment along the rail.

Their lives, though, are also threatened by “a absurda e cruel organização de trabalho que oferecia condições desumanas de sobrevivência, onde um homem sadio somente podia aspirar, em tal situação, não mais do que noventa dias de vida” (287). These words, reported in the novel in the *Correio da Manhã* article denouncing Farquhar’s business ventures in Brazil serve to undermine the “inverdade que o índice de mortandade entre os trabalhadores na construção da ferrovia estava explicado pela agressividade do meio ambientes amazônico” (287). By conveying Amazonia as a place where workers must take quinine pills but would also benefit “[s]i tivéssemos pílulas contra a violência,” Souza manages to convey the dangers of the ecology at the worksite without demonizing Amazonia with a story of personified evil nature against righteous humans (23). The absurd cruelty of the people working along the EFMM is also highlighted, and not as a consequence of working in an environment conceived of as hostile but rather by the spatial practices of capitalism that try to transform that environment.

Souza highlights the history of outside intervention in Amazonia in many of his works; much of Souza's non-fiction writing, for example, has been dedicated to dispelling the myth that Amazonia constitutes a backward frontier in contrast to modern Brazil.³⁶ *Mad Maria* similarly underscores that a remote corner of Brazilian Amazonia was far from the "veritable Garden of Eden" Kravigny reported it to be (48). For example, alongside references to the modern hospital and laundry facilities and electricity at the town of Porto Velho, created by the EFMM, Souza ironically includes the men's reflections on the jungle landscape as a "paisagem pré-histórica" (16). Numerous other ironic references to the jungle as an unchanged snapshot from previous epochs—the Cenozoic era, the Cambrian period—recall Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's depiction of dinosaurs alive and well on a plateau in Amazonia in *The Lost World* (1912). The implication is absurd, for the workers' ability to imagine the landscape as outside of history requires a willful blindness to human intervention, whether Amerindian, or of the scale that the workers themselves are involved in.

Yet justification for the installation of the project relies on the region being conceived of as an empty frontier. In this nowhere that belongs to no one, workers coming from all over the

36. Not only has he emphasized Amerindian intervention in the landscape since the Pleistocene and even Holocene (*Breve* 9), but he also underscores that during the colonial period, the industriousness of the colonial region then known as Grão-Pará—sale of manufactured products and salaried labor for all workers—made it seem far more "modern" than the southern lying coastal colony of Brazil. This situation changed between 1823 and 1840 when the northern region "sofre a intervenção política e militar do Império do Brasil, perde suas lideranças históricas e deixa de ser uma administração colonial autônoma para se transformar numa fronteira econômica" ("Afinal" 92). "A derrota do Grão-Pará e sua destruição pelo Império do Brasil," Souza continues, "se me permitem a comparação um tanto audaciosa, foi, de certo modo, como se o Sul tivesse vencido a Guerra de Secessão, nos Estados Unidos" ("Afinal" 92-93).

world have no connection to the land or each other, and they see themselves as remaining outside of the space that they are building. They are compared to prostitutes and hustlers because of their willingness to have their bodies used for monetary gain. This analogy becomes poignantly clear when the German workers sell their quinine pills, trading their lives for a profit. Additionally, when Finnegan is repulsed by the prostitutes of Santo Antônio, Collier suggests, “Nós não somos diferentes delas, não. Nós também somos putas como elas” (268). Rather than an environment of solidarity, this selling of oneself for personal gain produces sectarianism that is reinforced by the division of labor, which groups men by nationality³⁷:

Os chineses trabalham no desmatamento, vão avançando pela floresta. Os alemães cuidam do serviço do desbocamento e da terraplenagem. Os barbadianos estão no serviço do colocação do leito ferroviário. Os espanhóis, egressos do sistema repressivo colonial em Cuba, fazem as vezes de capatazes e compõem a guarda de segurança....Mas o aspecto de cada homem é igual, independente de sua nacionalidade. Todos estão igualmente maltrapilhos, abatidos, esqueléticos, decrépitos como condenados de um capo de trabalhos forçados. (18)

In other words, Souza presents the spatial practice of the modern rail construction as one that divides workers despite the fact that they ultimately suffer the same miseries. This division of labor leads to tension between national groups, fights, and even murders, and these conflicts are necessary for the success of the project, giving workers an outlet for frustrations that is not the EFMM itself or its overseers. Germans are at odds with Barbadians; men strike each other with machetes and accuse each other of stealing. Overseers resort to force, often fatal, to control the situation. *Mad Maria* provides a glimpse of an Amazonia whose antagonism is created as much

37. This nationality divide seems to have been an invention of Souza's. Although, generally speaking, Americans held positions of power and privilege on the construction line, other nationalities worked equally on the tasks of construction. See Neeleman and Neeleman.

by tropical conditions as by the men's perception of those conditions and resulting efforts to overcome them.

What results is an ecology that is “sticky” or “tacky,” to use Morton's words, one where capitalist infrastructure becomes enmeshed in the ideas about nature it seeks to project (*Ecology* 158). The resulting monstrosity in *Mad Maria* might look something like Frankenstein's creature, a rainforest pieced together by trees and rivers, imported metal and wood, and foreign men's ideas, blood, and excrement.³⁸ Numerous images serve as metaphors for this dark ecology. I have already mentioned the man dead in the storm who becomes indistinguishable from the jungle floor as well as the way men's blood sinks below the tracks, mixing blood, iron, and mud at the foundation of both modernity and Amazonia. The scene which perhaps best visualizes this dark patchwork ecology shows the work stopped once again by environmental circumstances. When the locomotive ceases to function, one of the engine operators finds a pipe in the boiler completely blocked: “No interior da peça algum inseto tinha construído uma estrutura de bairro que endurecera com o calor...’o barro endureceu e acabou fechando o escapamento do vapor. Poderíamos ter explodido” (138).³⁹ The men risk their lives by imagining that their work is somehow able to cut through the surrounding ecology without becoming forged with it, but as Souza states in an interview, “[A] Amazonia é um atoleiro de tecnologia ocidental” (qtd. in

38. Farquhar reportedly imported wood from Australia and Taiwan because, despite building a railroad through a tree-filled forest, local woods were not believed to be termite-resistant enough (Neeleman and Neeleman 85; Gauld 97).

39. The idea for this scene apparently came from one of Souza's theater collaborators, who was an engineer with significant experience in tropical regions: “Ele contou de um bicho que tinha feito uma casinha num equipamento lá e aquilo tinha causado um problema sério. Eu, então, achei a idéia ótima e aproveitei no *Mad Maria*” (Souza, qtd. in Dimas 10).

Dimas 10). Rather than transplanting plans for straight rails onto the mutable jungle floor, the men are unwittingly merging spatialities together in such a way that they clash, stick together, and unite. Seeing this merging is unpleasant, perhaps even frightful like Clemente Silva's maggot-infested wounds in *La vorágine*, and such images of dark ecology in *Mad Maria* seek to challenge simplistic projections of Amazonia by outsiders by binding them to the unsightly work that holds them together.⁴⁰

Nowhere does the interrelationship between candy store spectacle and grotesque sludge become more apparent than in the novel's juxtaposition of the two Madeira River towns of Santo Antônio and Porto Velho. Santo Antônio, off limits to the EFMM workers during the time period that Souza writes about, was the Porto Velho of the first phase of construction and a necessary first stop for workers coming into the area.⁴¹ There, the English contracting company Public Works set up shop for little more than a year before breaking their contract in 1874 due to the perceived unfeasibility of the project.⁴² After the nineteenth-century construction attempts definitively failed, Santo Antônio was abandoned, and by the time Farquhar took over the project in the twentieth century the town was considered morally inferior to the American-made Porto Velho. In *Mad Maria*, men go there to drink and sleep with prostitutes who are Karipunà women

40. See chapter 1 for my discussion of the ecological significance of Clemente Silva showing up "engusanado y estando vivo" (Rivera, *La vorágine* 246).

41. The Madeira River was navigable by ocean freighter only to Santo Antônio, where the port was established (Gauld 126).

42. According to Craig, Public Works's formal petition to end the contract stated "that the country was a charnel house, their men dying off like flies, that the road ran through an inhospitable wilderness of swamp and porphyry ridges alternating, and that, with the command of all the capital in the world and half its population, it would be impossible to build the road" (57).

displaced by rubber tapping and railway construction. The narrator describes the town's "fedor de dejetos e carne em decomposição," and Finnegan calls it a "viveiro de todas as moléstias da região" (239; 285). Here decay and progress become intimately intertwined in a way that threatens the image of Port Velho that Farquhar projects—Souza's novel suggest that Santo Antônio was not off limits to protect workers' best interests, but rather to preserve the integrity of the EFMM. Despite the fact that the EFMM made Santo Antônio as much as Porto Velho, the towns needed to be envisioned as part of separate spatial practices. Symbolically, the old locomotive from the failed nineteenth-century project lies out of sight, abandoned and taken over by vegetation, serving as an open-air latrine, "a chaminé em forma de cone, deteriorada pelas intempéries, por onde um viçoso açazeiro despontava para o céu. Um homem estava saindo da moita, afivelando as calças" (282). The town represents the fetid excrement of Porto Velho, relegated to a space apart where it can remain both separate and unseen from the technological marvel that produces it. Although beyond the boundaries of the company, men working on the line sustain Santo Antônio with surreptitious visits to spend the money earned for their labor and leave their waste. What the company conveys as separate, unrelated spaces—both in the novel and in historical accounts—in *Mad Maria* become part of the same dark ecology.

Santo Antônio, as the waste of Porto Velho, presents a postcolonial problem about how the underside of coloniality and neocoloniality is disposed of in order to invent spaces of progress and distinguish them from spaces of decay. For Morton, dark ecology deals with bringing to the forefront "the qualities of the world we slough off in order to maintain subjects and objects" (*Ecology* 159).⁴³ Souza's dark ecology in *Mad Maria* deals not with subjectivity on

43. Morton reaches this position on "what to do with one's slime" via Sartre, Lacan, and Kristeva (*Ecology* 159).

an individual level, that is, the construction and maintenance of an identity, but rather with the production of spaces that reinforce the ideology that produces them, for as Lefebvre reminds, there can be no ideology unless it takes form in space.⁴⁴ Souza widens the focus on the EFMM's railroad map to show where the ideology of capitalist development in Amazonia contradicts itself. *Mad Maria* brings the EFMM's waste to the forefront to show not only where the illusion of Farquhar's vaudeville breaks down but also, in doing so, the novel conveys an image of Amazonia as a region comprised of such poisoned spaces.

The result of Souza's portrayal of the project is that everyone—with the exception of the displaced and prostituted Karipunã people in the novel—becomes implicated in the transformation of Amazonia into a smelly garbage heap. All of the men (and women) brought to the region for the EFMM are as much involved in the creation of a place like the Candelária Hospital as they are in the creation of Santo Antônio. Despite horrific working conditions, men employed there are not victims but willing workers. When Finnegan and Collier escape away to Santo Antônio one night, Finnegan realizes with horror that their boots are covered in blood. Unaware of where they stepped in blood, the two men hypothesize a number of scenarios: indigenous blood from “[a]lguma confusão,” menstruation from the prostitutes, or a battle (266). Collier, though, urges Finnegan to calm down, “É só sangue, e não é nosso” (266). Indeed, it is not; the next morning they witness cattle being slaughtered in the middle of the muddy street: “Que imundice,” says Finnegan, “Estão esquartejando o gado em coma da lama” (283). The scene describes the street as a “palco de batalhas sangrentas” in which “os homes que esquartejavam as reses sem a mínima noção de como separar as partes de um boi. Os

44. Lefebvre writes, “[W]hat we call ideology only achieves consistency by intervening in social space and in its production, and by thus taking on body therein” (44).

compradores seguravam os pedaços sanguinolentos com as próprias mãos” (283). Finnegan and Collier comment on the incongruous cost of that beef slaughtered in such an unsanitary manner. The metaphorical weight of this scene in relation to the other events of the novel is paramount. The blood is so profuse that it is on everyone’s hands and boots. There are so many possible scenarios for how it got there, that one can hardly be sure of its source, but that source undoubtedly involves a brutal slaughter performed on a stage (palco) for profit. Collier’s statement that the blood is not theirs becomes ironic. Anyone wearing rubber boots during the time of the rubber boom has blood on them and is responsible for that blood. The town’s nickname as the place where “the devil left his boots” takes on new meaning when the devil is anyone with dirty boots (Craig 133). This bloody Santo Antônio, the underside of Farquhar’s vaudeville of progress, compels a reexamination of those actors responsible for creating places like Santo Antônio.

Souza’s dark ecology leaves little to be admired of interventions in Amazonia designed to incorporate its riverine ecology into capitalist spatial practice. By presenting the map for this space as the orchestration of a deceptive but entertaining and delightful vaudeville in conjunction with a counter-map that shows how the illusion was produced, *Mad Maria* criticizes such uses of Amazonia while also presenting a landscape forever altered by those practices. In other words, while the consequences of the EFMM and projects like it are conveyed as corrupting, equally corrupting becomes the naiveté of imagining Amazonia as a special place apart from modernity. Souza writes a counter-map that forces readers to confront the unsightly aspects of Amazonia as it has been cannibalized by the production of space, much like the cattle torn apart for meat in the mud. As will become clear in the next section, I deliberately use “cannibalized,” a term charged in Brazilian cultural history to refer to these processes.

Amazonia in the Candy Store of Brazilian Literature

In the final pages of *Mad Maria*, the narrator intervenes to offer a sort of epilogue to the events described in the novel, giving the dates of completion of the railroad (September 7, 1912), the final sums of money spent and owed, and the fate of the historical personages described in the text. But then he describes something curious: a photograph taken in Porto Velho on July 11, 1927 of “um poeta” smiling and seated on a rail of the Madeira-Mamoré surrounded by butterflies that register as blurs on the film (340). The photograph is real, and the poet is Mário de Andrade (1893-1945). Published in his posthumous diary, *O turista aprendiz* (1977), the photograph as described by Souza’s narrator includes even its time mark, 12:30 pm.⁴⁵ He goes on to describe details of Mário’s trip along the sites of the railroad and then highlights a reworked passage from Mário’s diary:

O que eu vim fazer aqui!... Qual a razão de todos esses mortos internacionais que renascem na bulha da locomotiva e vêm com seus olhinhos de chins, de portugueses, bolivianos, barbadianos, italianos, árabes, gregos, vindos a troco de libra. Tudo quanto era nariz e pele diferente andou por aqui deitando com uma febrinha na boca-da-noite pra amanhecer no nunca mais (qtd. in Souza 341).⁴⁶

45. The photograph appears on page 331 of *O turista*. Mário wrote his diary with the intention of publishing it as a “livro de viagens” to introduce Brazilians to indigenous Brazil through documentation of folklore from throughout the country (Lopez 18). Excerpts of the journal were featured in various publications throughout Mário’s life, but the text was never published in its entirety during his lifetime. The three-month trip (May 13 - August 15, 1927) throughout Amazonia took him as far as into Peru and Bolivia. He had already begun writing *Macunaíma* (1928) when he made plans for this ethnographic “viagem da descoberta do Brasil,” motivated in part by *modernismo*’s fascination with exploring *primitivismo* as a source of *brasileiridade* (Lopez 16)

46. In *O turista aprendiz*, this passage appears as follows: “Milhares de chins, de portugueses, bolivianos, barbadianos, italianos, árabes, gregos, vindos a troco de libra. Tudo quanto era nariz e pele diferente andou por aqui deitando com uma febrinha na boca-da-noite pra amanhecer no nunca mais. O que eu vim fazer aqui!... [...] O que

The narrator then reflects, “Amanhecer no nunca mais é um diabo de expressão, poeta! Quanta sandice. Coisas da vida” (341). The nonsense of the poet’s statement—a reflection of lives lost tragically to tropical disease—becomes clear when the narration abruptly shifts to the final scene of Finnegan’s total corruption, opening fire on workers. This section asks what the presence of the author of one of the founding texts of Brazilian modernismo, the Amazonian novel *Macunaima* (1928), does in a novel about the brutal transformation of Brazil’s most westward-lying riverine ecology. In what follows, I explore the relationship between Souza’s dark ecology of the Abunã, Mário’s engagement with the *antropofagia* movement in his *modernista* literary work, and his reflections on the railroad’s past while traveling on the tracks inserted at the end of Souza’s novel. Farquhar may have been responsible for mapping the Madeira and Mamoré river basins for the Brazilian export economy, but Mário became a key figure in integrating Amazonia into Brazil’s literary map. I suggest a direct relationship between *Mad Maria*’s criticism of Farquhar’s candy store spatial practices and *antropofagia*’s appropriation of Amazonia as a space to reinvent Brazilian culture.

Before the Brazilian modernista appears at the end of the novel, Souza takes several jabs at other literary traditions prevalent in Amazonian countries that are disconnected from the region’s geopolitical reality. First, he sharply criticizes the figure of the Spanish American intellectual who immerses himself in medieval and Spanish Golden Age texts to the detriment of his involvement in contemporary geopolitical realities. This tendency drives the actions of the quixotic character Galvez in Souza’s first novel in which the main character, true to history, declares Acre’s independence and invents himself as emperor of Acre. In *Mad Maria*,

eu vim fazer aqui!...Qual a razão de todos esses mortos internacionais que renascem na bulha da locomotiva e vêm com seus olhinhos de luz fraca me espiar pelas janelinhas do vagão?... (151-52).

Consuelo's father, a Bolivian university professor of "letras espanholas clássicas" in Sucre who "só conseguia se sentir realmente existindo quando perdia-se nas páginas de *El Cid* ou na trama de alguma comédia de Tirso de Molina" (201; 204). He escapes from the tumultuous decades of the end of the *fin-de-siècle* military dictatorships "refugiado nas páginas de Góngora e do *Lazarillo de Tormes*" (201). When called upon by President Melgarejo (1864-1871) to commemorate Bolivian independence at the Faculdade de Letras, he chooses to honor Cervantes, "mostrando que no campo literário o país ainda se encontrava atado por laços bastante profundos com a antiga metrópole colonial" (201). The "reconhecidamente analfabeto" president believes he is praising a General López de Cervantes, his personal enemy, and orders Consuelo's father imprisoned. Both the father's nostalgia for an illustrious literary past and the president's ignorance depict a country disconnected from its past and present. This image of Sucre's cultural reality, as remembered by Consuelo when she is being carried away in a tub of reeking fat by fleeing German workers who have kidnapped her, is depicted as particularly divorced from the dark ecology of Amazonian development in which Consuelo is uncomfortably immersed at the time.

Souza also takes aim at this disconnect in Brazil, with the Brazilian Parnassian poets receiving particular scrutiny for their appropriation and misrepresentation of Amazonia. The fact that Souza, an advocate for Amazonian perspectives on the region, criticizes a poetic tradition developed in France and often concerned with exoticizing its subjects should come as no surprise.⁴⁷ On the one hand, the Amazon state senator could not have chosen a more fitting poem

47. In *Breve história*, Souza writes, "[A] História da Amazônia precisa ser escrita o mais urgentemente possível, e por autor ou autores da região. Não devemos esquecer que, nos últimos tempos, quase todas as opiniões e propostas—algumas absurdas—para o futuro e o desenvolvimento da Amazônia foram sendo afoitamente apresentadas por gente sem nenhuma ou quase nenhuma experiência amazônica" (9).

than Rio de Janeiro poet Olavo Bilac's laudatory lyrics about Amazonia to endmark Farquhar's proclamation of Amazonian success in the theater at Porto Velho, but on the other hand, his words could not be more incongruous with the counter-map of dark ecology that emerges in *Mad Maria*. Bilac's words combine fervent nationalism "O Pátria!" with elevated descriptions of the heroic Amazonian landscape: "Outro sol, outra crença em outros dias! / As nobres ambições, força e bondade, / Justiça e paz virão sobre estas zonas / Na confusa fusão da ardente escória" (qtd. in Souza, *Mad Maria*, 313). A dialogue between Collier and Finnegan serves as a pragmatic exegesis of the text. "[É] uma poesia ridícula," says Finnegan when he learns from Collier that the recital was of a published poem, not one invented on the spot in a fit of passion, as he assumed. Finnegan can hardly believe that a poet actually wrote the poem. The men joke about paying tribute to Bilac by naming a tropical disease, "síndrome de Bilac" or "peste de Olavo," because according to Collier, "Enquanto treme o doente, treme a imaginação poética. E ambas são mortais" (336). Incidentally, this relationship between creative fecundity and sickness is one of the arguments of Charlotte Rogers's book on madness in tropical literature, *Jungle Fever* (2012). She states that the coincidence of medical discourse and literary creation serves to break down the civilization and barbarism paradigm. In *Mad Maria*, though, Souza pokes fun at such a perspective suggesting that in fact, outsiders' euphoric Frenchified writing on a region that they know very little or nothing about as indicative of a national pride resembles the convulsions of malaria, of being out of one's mind.

This theme of literary delirium becomes closely associated with consumerist madness in Souza's nonfictional writings on Amazonia. Around the time of writing, Souza was shocked by the transformation of Manaus under the military dictatorship, which declared the Amazonian port a free zone in 1967:

[E]u vim e não reconheci mais a cidade. Tinha mudado inteiramente. Era o delírio da classe dominante, da oligarquia, das figuras das colunas sociais, que não entendiam absolutamente o que era a Zona Franca. Inclusive, uma gente que não entendia que aquilo era a sua própria sentença de morte. (qtd. in Dimas 4)

Bollinger describes this upheaval as a city “cambiada, deformada como en pesadillas. La gente, enloquecida de oportunidades de consumo y de enriquecimiento” (94). For Souza, this time was in some ways a repetition of the vaudeville of the rubber boom, which manifest as a consumerist aesthetics in the symbolist literature of the time. Maligo correctly notes that in *A expressão amazonense*, Souza argues that the history of literature in Amazonia has been influenced by extraction in the region: “When applied to literature, he uses this motif of extraction to signify the imposition of outside cultural values combined with the Amazonians’ perception that, in order to participate in cultural production, they must cater to imported, established tastes” (143). Souza does not shy from expressing his disgust for this culinary literature: “Esta literatura apartada da vida, carregada apenas pela força da ideologia arrivista, queria ser perfume e não passou de dejetos” (*Expressão* 109). Defecation was nevertheless presented as perfume during this time, making the writers of Manaus “como moedeiros falsos. Falsos cunhadores de uma moeda que enganava um mercado de ignorantes” with grandiose literature that bared little resemblance to the surrounding jungle⁴⁸: “Contra a moda peculiar dessas letras estagnadas, o brilho de uma paisagem. Contra o desejo de agradar lela jóias de fantasia, a malária que despedaçava os seringueiros (Souza, *Expressão* 110). Much like Farquhar’s candy shop

48. Perhaps not coincidentally, this assessment of poetic counterfeiting sounds strikingly similar to José Eustasio Rivera’s suggestion in *La vorágine* (1924) that the poet Arturo Cova was one of the “acuñadores de...moneda (84). Ericka Beckman focuses on this counterfeiting trope in the novel and concludes that the “poetic discourse circulating in *La vorágine* bears a parallel with the ostentatious opera house in Manaus; both are empty signifiers of a ‘civilization’ that does not recognize the exploitation on which it is built” (180).

aesthetics, the distance of rubber boom literature from the exploitation that allowed the period to flourish “não conseguiu reconhecer a necessidade de uma consciência crítica, autônoma, originária, e se submeteram à ideologia da ostentação” (Souza, *Expressão* 110). Rather, this period in Amazonian literature, according to Souza, produced little more than neatly wrapped candies to satiate imported tastes, commodities that obscured any relationship to the dark labor practices that sustained the consumerism of Manaus’s high society at the time.

As López has noted, the aim of modernismo was to remedy Brazil’s perceived cultural alienation resulting from adherence to European currents by “tentando filtrar dialeticamente as vanguardas européias e, na exploração do primitivismo, partir para a descoberta vivida do Brasil” (15). Amazonia became a key site of cultural “raw materials,” so to speak, in this process, with the appropriation of Tupí anthropophagy as an autochthonous cultural practice to devour European culture, ingesting it into Brazilian forms. Maligo has been highly critical of this modernista construction of Amazonia as a site from which to extract cultural concepts to invent *brasileiridade*. He states, “[T]he territory of economic desires during the Rubber Boom” becomes “the modernists’ ideal ground for the projection of an aesthetic program that interpreted Amazonia from the point of view of Southern, urban intellectuals,” including Raul Bopp and Mário de Andrade. Castro-Klarén’s indispensable genealogy of Oswald de Andrade’s foundational *Manifesto Antropófago* (1928) illustrates the limits of this bias. She dismantles the construction of modernista anthropophagy as a tradition inspired in Tupí thought by showing how its precept of cultural synthesis stems from concepts rooted in Western philosophy, ignoring entirely Tupí understandings of cannibalism. She grounds her analysis of Tupí cannibalism in the work of Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro to conclude that “el ‘canibalismo’ es lo opuesto a una incorporación narcisista. Se trata más bien de una operación de alteración, es

decir de tornarse, de devenir, de pasar a ser otro. El canibalismo tupí implicaría así la imposibilidad de toda síntesis” (“El Manifiesto” 252). In other words, modernista antropofagia, like Souza’s dark ecology, involves another kind of excrement,⁴⁹ the expelled product of digesting European cultures into Brazilian forms, but modernista “excrement,” unlike the ecology of *Mad Maria* is a reified cultural product invented as Amazonian and uniquely Brazilian, but discursively removed from those landscapes.

This invention of Amazonian concepts for a wider Brazilian cultural project coincides with the movement’s misrepresentation of the region in literature.⁵⁰ Although João Carlos de Carvalho, in his analysis of the discursive history of Amazonia in Brazilian literature, names Mário de Andrade’s trip as “um passo importante para se refletir sobre o confronto entre as visões de mundo herdadas,” Mário’s view of Brazil through Amazonia is necessarily mediated by his cultural and literary biases. He himself admits in the preface to *O turista aprendiz*,

[d]urante esta viagem pela Amazônia, muito resolvido a... escrever um livro modernista, provavelmente mais resolvido a escrever que a viajar, tomei muitas notas como vai se ver... Se gostei e gozei muito pelo Amazonas, a verdade é que vivi metido comigo por todo esse caminho largo de água. (49)

This “advertência” seems to suggest inadvertently that Mário’s contact with Amazonia was filtered through his preconceived modernista ideas. In this project, Amazonia once again serves

49. Oswald uses the verb “expulsar” in the Manifesto with the double meaning of expelling European influences as well as discharging them after the digestive processes of cannibalization (7).

50. The space of this chapter does not allow for an exhaustive analysis of the representation of Amazonia in Brazilian modernismo. I am most interested in highlighting the fact that Amazonia was used as a source of raw material for Brazilian indigeneity by modernistas, especially Mario de Andrade, who appears in *Mad Maria*. For a more thorough consideration of the representation Amazonia in modernismo as well as in other periods of Brazilian literature, see Carvalho and Maligo.

as a “nowhere” where Mário can build his literary project.⁵¹ Kimberle López notes, for example, how *Macunaíma* tries to deal with issues of forging a national identity rooted in Amazonia but fails to move beyond European projections of primitivism—an absence of “civilization”—onto the region. Likewise, in an early book review of Souza’s *Galvez*, the reviewer recognizes the primitivist vision in the Amazonian-themed modernista text *Cobra Norato* (1931) by Raul Bopp (1898-1984) and contrasts it with Souza’s Amazonia:

A Amazônia [de Bopp] perde-se no passado pré-cabraliano, reativado pelo sonho, cerne de uma nacionalidade vigorosa, capaz de enfrentar com categoria a niveladora civilização européia. O autor de *Cobra Norato* fecha os olhos para a Amazônia invadida por exploradores estrangeiros e o capital que investem. A Amazônia de Bopp se oferece como mítica utopia. Que Márcio de Souza queira esquecida esta contribuição do Modernismo não causa estranheza. (Schüller 6)

And yet, despite these justified objections to modernismo’s Amazonia, Souza writes in favor of Bopp’s and Mário de Andrade’s Amazonia, “Foi por meio desses dois momentos de descoberta [*Macunaíma* and *Cobra Norato*], creditados ao movimento modernista, que a Amazônia pôde se insinuar e transformar criadoramente a literatura e a cultura nacionais” (*Expressão* 32). Perhaps eager to praise modernismo’s departure from earlier periods’ depictions of Amazonia in its efforts to know the region more deeply,⁵² Souza fails to apply the same critical lens to the resulting representation of the region as he does to that of the symbolists, and, therefore,

51. Indeed, widely accepted is the fact that, despite Mário’s three-month journey, the primary source used for *Macunaíma* was the German ethnologist Theodor Koch-Grünberg’s *Von Roraima sum Orinoco* (1917), which according to Maligo constituted a “pre-existing semantic universe that could immediately be associated with Amazonia,” deriving from “scientific discourse and literary *inferno verde* found in Euclides and Rangel” (98).

52. Souza has stated that he is an admirer of Oswald and follows the anthropophagic tradition initiated by him “to eat all the European culture...and to give back as a Brazilian and to go deep back to the roots of Brazil” (Chapman University).

overlooks the continuity in the Amazonia of the chroniclers, symbolists, naturalists, and modernistas.

Mário de Andrade's appearance as a tourist in *Mad Maria*, then, may have been intended by Souza as an homage to the modernista who took it upon himself to explore and observe Amazonia firsthand. However, his actions from *O turista aprendiz*, inserted in a text that mocks withdrawn admiration for the staged marvels of Amazonia produces perhaps an accidental criticism that is more parodic than extolling. Carvalho agrees that Mário's presence in *Mad Maria* offers a "leitura dessacralizadora" of modernismo, although he fails to develop fully this idea (287). Souza is careful not to refer to Mário as a tourist in the brief passage summarizing his visit to the EFMM, but the passage inevitably leads to Mário's text where he characterizes himself as a tourist. In Souza's work, tourism has a decidedly negative connotation. In the opening pages of *Galvez*, the narrator concludes that the picaresque hero Galvez marks the end of "histórias de aventuras [...]. Depois dele: o turismo multinacional" (13). Beebee clarifies that "the 'tourists' who follow Galvez into Acre are multinational capitalists like Percival Farquhar of *Mad Maria*, and also the Brazilian writers who, like Mário, 'extract' from the Amazon its myths and supposed Indian-ness for their work" (3). Though Souza never makes this connection explicit in his appraisal of modernismo beyond *Mad Maria*, his description of Mário's sightseeing at the end of the novel does seem to imply a collection of souvenirs gathered for later display:

Conheceu coisas interessantes. Um índio pacaá-novo que sonhava em ser telegrafista para casar com uma mulher branca e virar civilizado. Em Guajará Mirim entrou numa latrina onde anotou um curioso texto ensinando aos seringueiros o uso civilizado daquele recinto. Ali se levava muito a sério a palavra CIVILIZADO. [...] Ele viu mulheres barbadianas com seus chapéus coloridos e cheios de flores desfilarem pelas ruas do vilarejo.⁵³ (341)

53. These snapshots of Mário's visit are a paraphrasing of several excerpts from *O turista aprendiz*.

Although Mário's focus is different than Farquhar's—after all, he highlights a latrine and at least touches upon the latent effects of coloniality—this visit is not unlike the tourist trip arranged by Farquhar to delight the Brazilian diplomats. Like Farquhar, Mário is gathering and perhaps even inventing evidence to support his project. He is an outsider, a tourist, presenting Amazonia through his impressions in a way that Souza has written against, as an “espaço do rústico para deleite dos turistas pós-industriais” (“Afinal” 95).

The photograph of Mário on the tracks of the EFMM symbolizes this selective use of Amazonian features to present a certain kind of space—whether in symbolist poetry or through anthropophagic modernismo. Although the railroad was fully operational at the time of his visit, the tracks where he sits appear to be ruins. Below them, small pieces of debris are visible, and in the background of the image, a blurry heap on the horizon appears to be rubble or fallen trees, or perhaps a mixture of both. In contrast to this scene of apparent decadence, Mário sits in fine clothing, with a hat and tie. In the caption he writes for the photograph, he explains that his intention was to capture the fluttering butterflies: “Na verdade eu estou sentado nestes trilhos de Porto Velho por causa das borboletas que estão me arrodando, amarelinhas e a objetiva se esqueceu de registrar. Era para fotar as borboletas” (M. Andrade, *O turista* 331). As the narrator of *Mad Maria* notes, “[A] velocidade do filme era baixa e transformou as borboletas em simples borrões claros, um no ombro do poeta, outro cobrindo a mão direita que ele colocou firme sobre o trilho” (340). The image that Mário tries to present of Porto Velho is deliberately selective—he tells viewers to look at the butterflies not the tracks—and yet the result is only a blurry suggestion of what he actually saw. His Porto Velho is just as staged as Farquhar's, trying to delight in order to detract attention from more unsightly areas. Further aligning his framed image of Amazonia with Farquhar's vaudeville spectacle, the subject of the photograph is—despite

Mário's stated intentions—the poet himself, seated in the center of the frame. Just as Farquhar's staging of Porto Velho ultimately serves to justify his efforts to transform Brazilian space with modern infrastructure throughout the country, Mário's presentation of his visit to Amazonia seeks to authorize his use of the region as a scene for the larger product of creating a modernista national literature.

This project becomes satirized by Mário's presence in *Mad Maria*. In contrast to modernismo's ideal of “*devoração em face dos valores europeus...de que Macunaíma seria a mais alta expressão,*” Souza's novel presents a region of Brazilian Amazonia, geographically far from Europe and North America, that has nevertheless been transformed by imported workers, with foreign capital, and urban spatial ideals into the twentieth century (Cândido 130). Souza exposes a landscape of excrement that cannot be digested into an ideal form because lives were lost and spaces were transformed. Unlike Mário's Macunaíma, who “[n]o fundo do mato-*virgem nasceu [...], héroi de nossa gente*” has a series of misadventures and ascends to the sky as Ursa Major, the only indigenous character in *Mad Maria*, Joe Capiro—a speaker of the Tupí-Guaraní linguistic group like Macunaíma—has his hands brutally amputated by foreign workers, becomes a profit-making freak show when he learns to play the piano with his feet, and dies of syphilis in New York (M. Andrade, *Macunaíma* 7). Souza shows that this Amazonia cannot be conceived of as the location of a resilient cannibalistic Brazilian modernismo because it is a space devastated—like Joe's body—by colonial and neocolonial processes. Mário, in the passage that appears in *Mad Maria*, reflects on the international lives lost along the rail without fully recognizing the darkness of the neocolonial practices that built the rail; he sees the landscape through the accounts of so many official stories that have attributed loss of life to tropical disease. He imagines a moment of feverish delirium and uses it to create poetry, like the Parnassians and

the rubber boom symbolists: “Amanhecer no nunca mais é um diabo de expressão, poeta! Quanta sandice” (341). In this sense, he appears like the inspired Amazonas senator fervently reciting Bilac: a caricature of literary Amazonia.

The narrator presents quite the opposite of a modernista synthesis of cultural integration. He follows his remarks on Mário’s passage with a brief passage of metadiscourse on the novel itself: “Ah, que belo país é o nosso Brasil, onde um escritor de língua neo-latina pode fazer um romance inteirinho cheio de personagens com nomes anglo-saxões. E havia também uma locomotiva chamada Mad Mary, Marie Folle, María Loca, Maria Louca, Mad Maria” (341). The staccato repetition of variants of “mad” in this line at once invokes the insanity at the center of this spatial practice and the inability to digest these horrors of Amazonia into a grand form. The narrator’s ironic tone in this denouement of foreign names is urgent: Amazonia has been cannibalized by the production of capitalist space. What is most uniquely Amazonian is, in fact, the way its geography has been pieced together by foreign interests since colonial times—in another section of the novel, Collier tells Finnegan the history of Jesuit intervention in Santo Antônio (285). Beebee concludes that Souza’s Amazonian geopolitics is meant to draw attention to geographic “remainders” that lie outside of national territorial control, but *Mad Maria* suggests, rather, that these seemingly unintegrated regions of Amazonia, which seem “un-Brazilian” and “un-Amazonian” in their transnationalism are paradoxically the kinds of spaces that constitute Brazil, and Amazonia in particular (10).

In drawing this counter-map of Amazonia, with its corresponding dark ecology, Souza also indicates, then, that, given the region’s geopolitical reality, Amazonian literature needs to emerge from and acknowledge this context in contrast to extractives literary uses of the region as a site of raw materials for commodification elsewhere. In effect, Souza’s Amazonia aligns with

Morton's imperative to find "ways to stick around with the sticky mess we're in and that we are, making thinking dirtier, identifying with ugliness" (*Ecology* 188). There is nothing emancipatory to celebrate about this process in *Mad Maria*: it requires standing in the mud, blood, and excrement along the shores of the Abunã without trying to digest it into some kind of coherent statement or cultural product. It requires being open to going nowhere, not in the way *Mad Maria*'s characters see going nowhere as indicative of the futility of the EFMM, but rather, in the sense of ceasing projections of Amazonia as a place to take Brazil somewhere else. Modernity in Amazonia is the spatial nightmare of Souza's Abunã, and Souza shows it to readers, perhaps hyperbolically at times, to wake readers from the dream of cultural or economic progress. The Abunã is a landscape soaked in death and devastation.

Conclusions

As a counter-map, *Mad Maria* zooms in on the straight lines of the railroad to imagine, as Collier says in the television version of the novel, "tudo isso que o mapa não mostra." What the map of Amazonia does show—whether the map of development or the literary map—is a curated image that seeks to justify the integration of the jungle into other territories. The U.S. entrepreneur Percival Farquhar must make his critics believe that the EFMM will successfully incorporate the insurmountable rapids of the Madeira into an efficient route for export capitalism. Poets—whether Olavo Bilac or Mário de Andrade—claim Amazonia for Brazil's national literature. As in *La vorágine*, the resulting maps are deficient and dishonest; they are also artificial and far removed from the geography that they represent, but they nevertheless begin to alter and shape it. Additionally, what both of these Amazonian cartographies have in common in *Mad Maria* is an underlying presupposition that Amazonia constitutes a nowhere, an empty

space where plans can be etched, an unclaimed geography where bits can be removed for consumption. But Souza fills that empty space with the abject⁵⁴: images of sweat, blood, and mud, with displaced people working as prostitutes or punished for trying to survive, and with international workers killing each other. This dark ecology has resulted from the ill-conceived notion that one can lay tracks to nowhere through Amazonia, that is, simply transform an inconsequential space. Souza's images of that dark ecology serve to criticize such consumerist ideology. To stop this process and shift this perspective, *Mad Maria* shows in frightening detail the way capitalism left its tracks along the Abunã.

Though Souza's novel indirectly undermines modern infrastructure projects taking place in Amazonia at the time of his writing, his imperative to acknowledge the interrelated web of modernity and blood in Amazonia remains urgent in the twenty-first century. Currently, a China-Brazil-Peru working group is discussing plans to build a transcontinental railroad linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans through Amazonia. According to *ChinaDaily*, "The rail would begin from coastal cities of Peru and end on Brazil's coast, extending about 5,000 kilometers, including 2,000 kilometers of already existing railway. The initial investment of the historical undertaking is estimated at \$60 million." Although practices of railway construction have certainly changed since the early twentieth century, as *Mad Maria*'s narrator warns, "[O]

54. Kristeva's concept of the abject has an affinity with dark ecology, and indeed, is one of Morton's points of departure for developing this concept. This passage from *Powers of Horror* is particularly à propos to my discussion: "A wound with blood or pus, or the sickly, acrid smell of sweat, of decay, does not *signify* death. In the presence of signified death—a flat encephalograph, for instance—I would understand, react, accept. No, as in true theater, without makeup or masks, refuse and corpses *show me* what I permanently thrust aside in order to live. These body fluids, this defilement, this shit are what life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death. There, I am at the border of my condition as a living being" (3).

capitalismo não tem vergonha de se repetir,” and this time the international economic networks of BRICS have catalyzed what is perhaps another mad project to lay tracks across Amazonia.⁵⁵ The scenes that Souza invents to reconstruct the past of the EFMM may be fictional, but they serve to contextualize both past and present undertakings in Amazonia, drawing attention to the fanciful idea that Amazonia can be traversed without getting blood on one’s boots.

55. The project was initially announced when Chinese president Xi Jinping made a 2014 trip to South America for the 6th BRICS summit.

Chapter 4

Iquitos at the Crosscurrents of Extraction and Shamanism: Hidden Spaces in César Calvo's *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía*

...wherever you go, the great *brujos* are elsewhere. In our town of Puerto Tejada it is said that the *brujos* of Chocó are astounding. If you go to the Chocó they say the great ones are in Puerto Tejada. And so it goes, the far away rubbed against the familiar, the primitive against the modern, the forest against the city, race rubbed against race in a magic-creating friction. —from Taussig

The preceding chapters have explored novels as contact zones where the discourse of hegemonic mappings of space in Amazonia wrestles with counter-discourses that seek to include spatialities unaccounted for by modern colonialist production of space. I have shown how representations of space such as border maps, geography manuals, and railroad infrastructure plans do more than merely represent; as Lefebvre says, they “intervene in and modify spatial textures which are informed by effective knowledge and ideology” (42). In different ways, each of the analyzed institutional representations of Amazonia attempts to fix, classify, divide, and render homogenous otherwise complex and heterogeneous geographic regions. Each of these processes underlies and precedes the production of a space ready for exploitation and commodification of raw materials such as rubber, gold, and *sarrapia*. This final chapter examines the processes of twentieth-century extractive cycles in and around the area of Iquitos, Peru to explore commodity identification and creation as a form of mapping in and of itself that precedes the exploitation discussed in previous chapters.

Whereas the previous analyses have argued that novelistic counter-mapping of Amazonia can offer ways out of the hegemonic erasure of spatialities, this final consideration addresses what may ensue when a spatiality that contests the commodification of jungle space becomes a commodified experience itself, that is, when the counter-map reinscribes itself in the discourse it criticizes. I have already alluded to this possibility in my discussion of Canaima National Park,

in which the legacy of Gallegos's novel becomes a space for touristic consumption that reproduces the indigenous struggles for territory dramatized in the text.¹ Here, I bring this complex relationship of map and counter-map to the forefront in my discussion of the Peruvian Upper Amazon in *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía* (1981) by Peruvian poet César Calvo (1940-2000).² If the preceding chapter emphasizes the dark ecology that emerges from direct contact with the raw materials of the map,³ my analysis of Calvo's only novel argues that there is an opposite end of the spatial spectrum in which the reification of escapist alternatives to that dark ecology presents a fetishized Amazonia.

Introduction

Iquitos in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has become practically synonymous with *ayawaskha* tourism, that is, in the geography of global tourism, it has emerged as an "internationally known ayahuasca Mecca" that caters primarily to "white, urban, relatively wealthy, well educated, and spiritually eclectic outsiders" desiring to experience the purportedly transformative powers of an ayawaskha ceremony (Labate, Cavnar, and Freedman 11; Beyer,

1. See this discussion in chapter 2.

2. Upper Amazon is a geographical designation that generally refers to the river systems originating in the Andes that flow into the Marañón and Amazon Rivers.

3. "Dark ecology" is an ecocritical term developed by Timothy Morton, following both Robert Frost and Gothic culture, and implies an ecological awareness that acknowledges interconnectedness with a poisoned and damaged ecological mesh as a means of criticizing and finding ways out of Romantic reification of "nature" as well as environmentalisms that safely separate subjects from affected environments. For more on this concept see *Ecology without Nature*, "John Clare's Dark Ecology," and chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Singing 353).⁴ Ayawaskha refers both to the name of a vine and the drinkable mixture prepared by Amazonian healers with that vine for curative purposes. In this chapter, when I refer to ayawaskha, I mean the psychoactive drink made by combining the ayawaskha vine *Banisteriopsis caapi*, which contains a monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitor, with another plant that contains the active substance *N-Dimethyltryptamine* (DMT), usually *chacrana* (*Psychotria viridis*) in the Iquitos area. The eponymous vine, then, does not actually contain the active substance but allows that substance to be absorbed by the body. Initially a diagnostic tool used by Amazonian healers, tour operators said in 2010 that twenty percent of visitors who go to the Iquitos area do so to try ayawaskha (Forero, “In the Amazon”). Dobkin de Rios, an American anthropologist who spent many years studying and publishing about the benefits of ayawaskha, was one of the first to popularize the notion that the ayawaskha industry constituted nefarious “drug tourism” that threatens indigenous peoples, promotes charlatanism, and places naive tourists in danger (“Drug Tourism” 6).⁵ However, later inquiries such as the one conducted by American anthropologist Michael Winkelmann question whether travelers who participate in lengthy and often expensive retreats, sometimes in search of spiritual and emotional healing and

4. Ayawaskha is a Quechua word translated as either “liana of the soul” or “liana of the dead” given the polyvalence of the word “aya” in Quechua, meaning both “soul” and “dead ones.” Its more common, Hispanicized spelling is “ayahuasca.” However, I choose the Quechua orthography both because it is consistent with Calvo’s text and because it recognizes the Quechua etymology of the word, most likely due to the spread of ayawaskha shamanism use during the Jesuit missions. Other Amazonian languages have their own designations for both the vine and the drinkable mixture.

5. Dobkin de Rios, who coined the term, explains, “Drug tourism is like international mass tourism, where millions of temporary travelers from industrialized nations seek in the margins of the Third World a figment of their imagination, a fantasy of Western consciousness—the erotic, erotic primitive or happy savage” (“Drug Tourism” 6).

insight, should be considered in conjunction with drug dilettantes seeking quick and inexpensive fixes abroad (215).⁶ In the meantime numerous “spiritual centers” have sprung up in and around Iquitos with English-language websites to entice tourists to find alleviation from the “drama, chaos, and confusion of modern life” through several-thousand-dollar ayawaskha retreats (“Blue Morpho”). This reconstruction of Iquitos as a spiritual retreat center, while highly problematic, seems remarkably far removed from the image of the city as the muggy, corrupt, and infected Amazonian town of Mario Vargas Llosa’s *Pantaleón y las visitadoras* (1973), the 1999 Peruvian cinematic adaptation of the same name by Francisco Lombardi, and Werner Herzog’s 1982 film *Fitzcarraldo*. One of the questions this chapter addresses is how a place notorious for depravity and the harshest aspects of nineteenth and early-twentieth-century colonialization has been produced as a space for spiritual enlightenment and what role literature plays in those processes.

One of the first widely-circulating cultural products that promotes the latter image of Iquitos is Peruvian poet César Calvo Soriano’s genre-bending narrative of an ayawaskha session entitled *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía* (1981), which is often cited as an authoritative source on ayawaskha shamanism. Incredibly, ayawaskha experts and anthropologists Luis Eduardo Luna and Stephan Beyer refer to Calvo’s text as a source of accurate medicinal plant knowledge without problematizing its literary aspects or offering corroborating scientific evidence. Translated into Italian (1982) and English (1995), and recently reissued in Peru in 2009 by Peisa, this text, which in a Borgesian conceit, claims to be a “memoria” and includes photographic documentation, tells the hallucinations of the narrator,

6. U.S.-Colombian journalist Juan Forero and U.S. journalist John Otis as well as French anthropologist Christian Ghasarian all contend that these ayahuasca tourists committed to long stays in controlled settings constitute a different phenomenon that travelers seeking a quick and easy fix.

César Soriano, César Calvo's real-life cousin and alter ego in the text,⁷ during a curative ayawaskha ceremony conducted by celebrated Iquitos shaman Manuel Córdova Ríos (Ino Moxo) in Iquitos in 1977.⁸ Writing in the wake of Burroughs and Ginsberg's accounts of South American drug experiences in *The Yage Letters* (1963), Carlos Castaneda's widely-read and polemicized shamanic narratives, *The Teachings of Don Juan* (1968) and American forester Bruce Lamb's co-authored biography of Manuel Córdova's purported capture and training with the Huni Kuin, *Las tres mitades* participates in a wider trend of global interest in practices of indigenous medicine and healing, which have become conflated in anthropological and tourist discourses under the umbrella term "shamanism." It is beyond the scope of this geocritical literary analysis to examine the genealogy of the use of the term "shamanism," believed to be of Siberian origin, to describe numerous dissimilar healing and warfare practices from across the globe, including in Latin America. Such a study is needed, however, to deconstruct both the Western and indigenous uses of this term; anthropological studies that group together research on various forms shamanism, for example, sometimes address the problematic use of the term only to justify its continued deployment. Such is the case of several texts used for this study such as Thomas and Humphrey and Lavate and Cavnar. Although Calvo never uses the term "shaman" (chamán) in *Las tres mitades*, his text is part of a cultural and spatial transition in Iquitos that associates the city and its surroundings with shamanism. At one point, *Las tres mitades* inspired

7. In a personal interview with Calvo's friend and colleague, Peruvian poet Hildebrando Pérez Grande, he affirms, that Calvo indeed had a cousin called César Soriano.

8. According to the text, "Ino Moxo" means "black panther" in the language used by the group where Córdova acquires his medicinal knowledge.

a four-day tour and shamanic retreat in the jungle area surrounding Iquitos called “Ino Moxo nos revela los misterios de la ayahuasca.”⁹

I am highly skeptical of the Western notion that a variety of indigenous healing practices from around the world constitute a single phenomenon that we can call “shamanism.” Definitions that try to encompass this geographic expanse are undeniably broad. Michael Harner, for example, who claims to have gathered his knowledge of shamanism from experiences with “South and North American Indians, supplemented by information from the ethnographic literature, including from other continents” says,

A shaman is a man or woman who enters an altered state of consciousness—at will—to contact and utilize an ordinarily hidden reality in order to acquire knowledge, power, and to help other persons. The shaman has at least one, and usually more, ‘spirits’ in his personal service. (20)

This idea of a shared approach to consciousness by indigenous shamans globally is highly suspect. Nevertheless, in a globalized world where traveling Westerners have promoted such an idea and “shamans” have capitalized on it, we can now speak of a cultural phenomenon called “shamanism” happening worldwide in which the meaning, significance, and cost of a shamanic experience is negotiated bidirectionally between patient/tourist (perceived outsider) and healer (perceived insider). Taussig’s *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man* (1987) is one of the first works to address the political, social, and economic dimensions of this negotiation in the Upper Amazon (Putumayo). In Iquitos and elsewhere, such negotiations have given way to new practitioners such as Manuel Córdova Ríos, considered “mestizo shamans,” that is, healers who do not identify as indigenous and work outside of indigenous communities, a phenomenon I discuss at length below. When I use the term “shamanism,” then, I am implying such a negotiation and referring to healing practices, available to people beyond Amerindian

9. I found this tour in a 2012 Google search. It is no longer offered at the present date.

communities, that are both presented and interpreted as shamanic and linked to indigenous knowledge via the ayawaskha session. In the case of *Las tres mitades*, I am interested in what must be omitted and hidden in Calvo's representation of the ayawaskha shamanism of one of the first "mestizo shamans" in Iquitos in order to authenticate the city as an uncorrupted shamanic space.¹⁰ I argue that the text tries but fails to use a fictionalized version of ayawaskha shamanism as a tool to counter-map the violent colonial and neocolonial mappings of Amazonia. Although Calvo is critical of Western intervention in Amazonia, his depiction of shamanism as a consumable product reproduces the Upper Amazon as a place with commodities valuable to outsiders. This chapter examines the complex relationship of *Las tres mitades* to the commodification of Peruvian Amazonia, and particularly Iquitos, as a shamanic space.

First, I analyze how *Las tres mitades* uses the ayawaskha session to attempt a counter-map of the capitalist space violently imposed on Amazonia throughout centuries by taking aim at the categories of its economic order. At the same time, though, I question the narrative's reliance on colonialist dichotomies in this critique. To destabilize these dichotomies, I then discuss Manuel Córdova Ríos's employment with companies participating in extractive economic cycles in the area such as the Casa Arana (dates unknown) and the Astoria Importing and Manufacturing Company (1947-1968).¹¹ Finally, I argue that the relationship between Córdova's employment and mobility within the spatial practice of extraction and his shamanic practice not only undermine Calvo's critique but also tell a more complex and problematic story about the emergence of shamanism in Iquitos. Because Calvo's critique ignores the complicated spatial

10. Although such shamanism is now popular in Iquitos, Dobkin de Rios and Peruvian Amazonist scholar Roger Rumrill contend that when Córdova practiced, he "was one of the few mestizo shamans in the city" (35).

11. These dates are taken from *Las tres mitades*; however, dates of Córdova's employment are extremely difficult to track as Bruce Lamb's biographies lack dates for long sections. See below for more biographical details.

restructuring that facilitates Córdova's acquisition of medicinal plant knowledge and instead exoticizes and fetishizes the experience of the ayawaskha session as access to an Other space, I argue that *Las tres mitades* remains caught in the commodification discourse that it criticizes. My geocritical analysis of Calvo, as I will show, reveals the naiveté and error of previous studies—both literary and anthropological—of the text.

Ayawaskha, a Decolonial Gateway?

In *Las tres mitades*, Ino Moxo tells young César that “ayawaskha es puerta, sí, pero no para huir sino para eternar, para entrar a esos mundos, para vivir al mismo tiempo en esta y en las otras naturalezas, para recorrer las provincias de la noche que no tiene distancia, inabarcables” (Calvo 235). As this section makes clear, Calvo's characterization of the ayawaskha session as a gateway to other worlds seeks to exculpate César and Manuel Córdova as exceptional “virakocha,”¹² whose access to shamanic states of consciousness provides them with perspectives that distinguish them from other actors of colonial violence. French anthropologist Christian Ghasarian has emphasized that for Westerners, “the main objective of the shamanic experience is to enter into an altered state of consciousness and therefore to establish contact with non-ordinary reality in which perceptions of time, space and objects are changed,” and in *Las tres mitades*, this altered state of consciousness becomes a means to an end (182).¹³ Calvo

12. “Virakocha” is a name of Quechua origin (wirakocha) that refers to a creator deity in Andean cosmovision. Chroniclers such as Pedro Cieza de León and Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa reported that this god was considered to have had white skin, causing subjects of Tawantinsuyu to refer to the Spanish as “virakocha” when they arrived. To this day, “virakocha” connotes high status and light skin.

13. Non-ordinary reality, a term developed by Castaneda, refers to the idea of a shamanic state of consciousness in which altered perception, in this case by a psychoactive plant, allows for the empirical observation

tries to position César and Córdova on the good side of history by contrasting shamanic states of consciousness with what Ino Moxo labels “prejuicio virakocha” in the text, an inability to perceive fully due to thinking that refers to one-to-one correspondences of meaning between epistemological categories, in other words, the maneuver of mapping (235). Mignolo has referred to such classificatory thinking as “a fundamental pillar of Western civilization and, therefore, epistemology: the geo-historical and bio-graphic foundation of modern epistemology (that is, of the idea of modernity and its darker side, coloniality)” (*Western Modernity* 45). Calvo’s text suggests his awareness of this link between Western epistemology and colonial violence; through his narrative of an ayawaskha ritual, he directly challenges the temporal, spatial, and perspectival categories of that Western epistemology, questioning the imposed universality of Western taxonomy at the root of coloniality. In so doing, Calvo presents ayawaskha as a gateway to move outside of the world of colonial epistemology, one of the text’s key themes. And yet this decolonial option, to again recall Mignolo’s terms, accounts for a mere reversal of categories that only serves the protagonist and other virakocha like him, uncomfortable with their virakocha subject positions as outsiders of high status and light skin. Despite what Ino Moxo says, then, ayawaskha does seem to be a “puerta” for César to “huir” (flee) from his discomfort. The consideration below problematizes the decoloniality overtly expressed in the narrative, for once again knowledge is made available for use by white men, in this case, to liberate them from their history of colonial violence in a decolonial fantasy.

of sights, sounds, smells, and tastes unavailable in ordinary reality. It is understood as not different than ordinary reality, per se, but unavailable for observation outside of the shamanic session. For a discussion of the differences between ordinary and non-ordinary reality as well as the connection between the two, see Harner (xix-xx).

When I presented a preliminary version of this chapter at the I Coloquio de Literaturas Amazónicas in August of 2012 in Lima, Peru, a member of the public asked me during the question and answer portion of my panel whether I had taken ayawaskha.¹⁴ After I responded in the negative, he disputed my ability to understand and analyze what he called *literatura ayahuasquera*, a category proposed in public discussion to describe literature such as that of Calvo, Walter Pérez Meza, and even Ginsberg and Burroughs, which includes ayawaskha narratives. During the subsequent break, this man handed me his card, which stated he was a shaman, and invited me to Pucallpa to drink ayawaskha with him, an offer that I politely declined. This unsettling interaction nevertheless left me with doubts and stayed with me for my ensuing rereadings of *Las tres mitades*. The link between shamanic knowledge and a business transaction represented by the man's card seemed more than a kind offer to enrich my reading of Calvo; it suggested something bigger to me about the way the novel has become associated with the marketing of the shamanic experience. The man's accusation of my ignorance appeared less related to my authority for literary analysis—one does not have to experience 17th-century Iberia to write about it, for example—and more related to establishing the esoteric allure of an experience that I could purchase. In *Las tres mitades* Calvo sets out to establish a similar precedent for ayawaskha use by describing in ordinary reality the benefits of an ayawaskha journey to a broad readership in such a way that would not require prior firsthand experience or knowledge of non-ordinary reality. To argue this point, I begin with a brief overview of Calvo's text.

14. The conference paper, which has been modified and extended for this chapter is published as "Patologías hegemónicas y espacios curativos en *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonia*." *Voces de la selva: Ponencias del I Coloquio Internacional de Literaturas Amazónicas*. Ed. Ricardo Virhuez Villafane. Lima: Biblioteca del Bolsillo, 2013. 5-26. Print.

Las tres mitades is a fictionalized account of the visions and teachings experienced by César during a shamanic journey guided by Manuel Córdova in Iquitos in 1977 in order to encourage others to seek out the same treatment. The protagonist and narrator, César, is César Soriano, whom Ino Moxo, in the text, calls Calvo's "desdoblamiento...uno de los cuerpos de tu sombra" (Calvo 282).¹⁵ In the narration, the two Césars appear as separate characters; not until after the effects of the plants have worn off does César comment, "Solamente en este instante descubro que nunca hubo nadie en el lugar de mi primo César Calvo" (Calvo 278). The text recounts that both Césars—before realizing that they are one and the same—receive medical treatments from Córdova that resolve physiological ailments—sinusitis and a stomach ulcer—deemed untreatable by Western medicine (Calvo 270). After this curative experience in the ayawaskha session with Córdova, he takes out a typewriter and begins writing *Las tres mitades*, the text we have just read, because he wants others to learn of Córdova's medicinal knowledge and find their way to health. Córdova explains in the text:

No es justo que las gentes padezcan daños como la diabetes, varios tipos de cáncer, males que aquí sabemos ahuyentar [...]. Todo lo que te he dicho de mí, de tantas [sic] cosas, me diría, te lo he dicho pensando en esas gentes. Acaso alguien está por ahí sin remedio, víctima de una enfermedad que los médicos diplomados creen incurable, alcance a leer lo que tú escribas y venga donde nosotros y recupere acaso los contentos de su existencia. Para eso te he contado lo que te he contado . . . (Calvo 22)

The distinction between the "por ahí" and the "aquí" is geographical. To be "por ahí sin remedio" means outside of the curative space "donde nosotros," the shaman and the plants can cure. In this case, Lima is opposed to Amazonia. Furthermore, the use of the verb "recuperar" connotes the recovery of something lost, implying that Lima's modernity removes people from a joy

15. To avoid confusion between the author and his fictional "double," I refer to the author as "Calvo" and the character as "César."

characterized as inherent to existence. The final elipses beckon the reader to “return” to what is lost in Lima and other chaotic cities like it. Although framed as a final wish of a wise nonagenarian who laments not having anyone to pass his knowledge on to, this emphasis on luring people to Iquitos in order to seek treatment from Córdova already begins to resemble an advertisement for ayawaskha shamanism.

The nonlinear sequences of Calvo’s narration prove difficult to summarize and this nonlinearity is crucial to the transformative potential of the ayawaskha experience that Calvo constructs. The fact that César and his friends are in an ayawaskha session in Iquitos is not revealed until the end of the text. Rather, the narration moves through space and time to follow César and the other three young men as they travel from Lima to Pucallpa and from there by river in search of Ino Moxo in Amawaka territory. The episodes that lead the youth to Ino Moxo are interspersed with César’s memories from a 1953 ayawaskha session with another shaman named Don Juan Tuesta in Pucallpa. Consequently, Córdova’s voice guiding the session in Iquitos becomes entangled with the voice of Don Juan Tuesta along with “otros brujos de la Amazonía,” Don Hildebrando and Juan González also of Pucallpa, and Don Javier near Iquitos. Sometimes, the text begins by attributing direct discourse to Don Juan Tuesta in Pucallpa, for example, and switches voices mid-discourse ending on the words of a different shaman in another location, an effect that gives new meaning to Silvia Molloy’s concept of narrative contagion (489).¹⁶ Like Córdova, each of these men seems to correspond to a known shaman. Don Hildebrando, for example, was Marlene Dobkin de Rios’s father-in-law and the subject of her 1992 book, *Amazon Healer: The Life and Times of an Urban Shaman*. Don Javier is Javier

16. Molloy uses this term to describe the dialogic confusion of Rivera’s mixing of direct and indirect discourse in *La vorágine*. For more, see chapter 1.

Dávila, a shaman still living in the Iquitos area (Izcue). Additionally, these men are made to appear real in the captioned photographic “evidence” at the back of the text, in which their names are paired with photographic images. As these shamans’ voices guide César through the space of his visions, he also moves through time, going back sixty years, for example, to a period when Córdova says he lived in an Amawaka community as a leader. Calvo uses all of these temporal and discursive confusions in the narration to present the appearance of a non-ordinary reality that undermines the logic of ordinary reality, a feat he attributes to César’s access to important insights delivered through the mouths of the shamans.

As the men, called “brujos” in the text,¹⁷ share their wisdom, a recurring theme that frames the history of Amazonia as revealed through César’s ayawaskha visions is the brutality, violence, and injustice that extractive cycles have brought to the region and the rest of Peru beyond Amazonia since the conquest (1532). Repeated references designate four hundred years ago as a time when this devastation began. Understanding the implications of these interventions from a new perspective is one of the outcomes promised to César by Ino Moxo. He explains,

Te será concedido conocer la razón verdadera, y no el pretexto, que trae a nuestra selva a la llamada civilización. Porque lo que es progreso para el blanco, para el indio es regreso. Para el blanco de ayer el caucho fue oro, para el indio fue exterminio. Para el blanco de hoy el petróleo es la vida, para el indio es la ruina, la peste, el desarraigo. ¡Verás quiénes han sido y quiénes son, en realidad, los bárbaros, quiénes los caníbales y quiénes los cristianos! (Calvo 159)

This Manichaean inversion of colonialist discourse functions within the ayawaskha session to position both César and the shaman in solidarity on what they perceive as the “good” side of history. Moving through time, space, and even people, César’s body shifts and he becomes

17. Although negatively connoted today, Don Agustín Rivas Vásquez, an ayawaskha practitioner from the Iquitos area, indicates the the word “brujo” was not always associated with negative or evil (Bear 18). Further discussion follows below.

indigenous Amazonians and Andeans at different historical times. On his ayawaskha journey he believes that he both experiences an indigenous perspective and endures historical injustice firsthand, in this way imagining his past as one free of the greed and prejudice at the root of historical violence in Amazonia. In other words, the ayawaskha session, as César describes it, offers relief not only from physical ailments but also alleviates the psychological discomfort of his colonial guilt.

Not only is the ayawaskha session presented as an attractive and beneficial experience for the sick and the spiritually distraught, but it also seems enjoyable. Ino Moxo tells César, “Tú no has venido desde Lima para que te sane tu cuerpo material. Y anoche no has venido solamente para tomar oni xuma [ayawaskha] casado con tohé. Yo lo sé. Por eso he dictado lo que ha visto tu sueño” (Calvo 281).¹⁸ However, César’s initial motivation to take ayawaskha is pleasure-seeking, much like a modern-day drug tourist:

Pero no hemos venido, Iván Calvo, Félix Insapillo y yo a platicar de enfermos ni de magia sino a que Don Manuel Córdova, por favor, tenga la bondad de invitarnos ayawaskha, si es posible con tohé, y nos cuide durante las visiones ya que ambas drogas juntas precisan de un maestro que sepa manejarlas y conducir por un bueno rumbo la mareación de los participantes. (Calvo 271)

César has come to experiment, and the insights and health he gains along the way become unexpected gifts along his pleasant journey—his motive was not physiological healing, but he receives it anyway. Although on a few occasions during the visions, the brujos suggest that “[a]caso le ha hecho daño a César la mezcla con tohé...,” overall César’s experience with ayawaskha and tohé seems agreeable, quite a rarity when considering that according to Beyer the purging action of vomiting and diarrhea are more important than visions in such healing sessions

18. Ino Moxo explains that oni xuma is the Amawaka word for ayawaskha. Brabec de Mori affirms that “oni,” meaning “person” is associated with ayawaskha in the Panoan linguistic group (33).

(Calvo 243; Beyer, *Singing* 22). Additionally, tohé, a powerful additive to ayawaskha is associated with “dark and frightening” visions and Guillermo Arrévalo, a Shipibo shaman considers it “toxic and dangerous” (qtd. in Dobkin de Rios, “Interview” 205). Recent headlines about ayawaskha tourism echo these warnings.¹⁹ Yet César’s tale emphasizes instead the ease and comfort of accessibility to health and broader perspective.

Surprisingly, criticism of the text has tended not only to accept but also to praise Calvo’s descriptions of César supposedly achieving an Other perspective. Cornejo Polar’s seminal work on the heterogeneity of Latin American, and particularly Peruvian literature, has shown why such a perspective is nearly impossible to write. He explains that heterogeneous literature is characterized by “la duplicidad o pluralidad de los signos socio-culturales de su proceso productivo: se trata, en síntesis, de un proceso que tiene por lo menos un elemento que coincide con la filiación de los otros y crea, necesariamente, una zona de ambigüedad y conflicto” (12). And yet overlooking the problematics of writing across socio-cultural contact zones, for example, in a novel about a non-ordinary reality written for an audience in an ordinary one, Peruvian journalist Roger Rumrill enthusiastically and naively endorses *Las tres mitades* as “la novela o la realidad amazónica vista desde adentro” (“César Calvo la Leyenda”). He is not alone in his gullibility. Luis Chávez Rodríguez, whose doctoral thesis studies the novel, forgets the questions raised by Spivak regarding the “subaltern” and takes Rumrill’s assertion to a logical extreme, affirming the text’s ability to “amplificar la voz del otro subordinado” (57). Similarly, Santiago

19. Anderson’s 2014 article “Toé, the ‘Witchcraft Plant’ That’s Spoiling Ayahuasca Tourism” discusses the negative impact of toé on touristic shamanism. Likewise, Thelwell, also writing in 2014 describes the use of toé to “leave people in a more vulnerable and confused state and is done often for nefarious reasons - to rob or sexually abuse people, warns McKenna.”

considers that the text “opta por una comprensión de lo ancestral autóctono para construir una cultura nacional diferente” (114). These assessments overlook the fact that the only indigenous voices in the text are dictated to César by Córdova during the *ayawaskha* session. Furthermore, these critics rely on an erroneous assumption of the homogeneity of cultural categories corresponding to inside and outside the jungle, ignoring the heterogeneity that necessarily comes to play in a text such as Calvo’s.

Perhaps part of what persuades critics to accept the text’s presentation of cultural categories is Calvo’s self-fashioning as a cultural chameleon in both his public and personal life.²⁰ Although Calvo’s father, celebrated figurative realism painter César Calvo de Araújo (1910-1970), was from Iquitos, and Calvo spent some of his childhood summers there, most of his life was spent outside of the Peruvian Amazon, including sojourns outside of Peru. Even with this cosmopolitan background, Calvo strongly “identified” with Iquitos and the Amazonian region and longed to be able to speak from an Amazonian perspective. He often uses his words to suggest an ability to assume other perspectives, but the basis for such claims prove faulty and fictitious. As his friend, the Peruvian poet Arturo Corcuera writes:

No sabemos realmente dónde ha nacido César Calvo. Siempre nos dijo a sus amigos que fue en Iquitos. Algunas veces le oí decir que en Sofía, La Habana, París, Lima, Cusco, Florencia, ciudades que habían entrado en su vida. Nos amenazaba con volver a nacer. Nadie ha visto su partida de nacimiento.

But we do know that César was born in Lima, not that birth is a determining factor, as Calvo seems to have implied. His mother explains that not only did he claim to have been born in Iquitos, he also tried to convince her that she had simply forgotten that she had taken a plane to

20. Celebrated poet of the “generación del 60” in Peru, Calvo is the author of numerous poetry volumes including *Poemas bajo tierra* (1960), *Ausencias y retardos* (1963), *Cancionario* (1967), *El cetro de los jóvenes* (1967), *Pedestal para nadie* (1975), *Puerta de viaje* (1989), and *Los lobos aúllan contra Bulgaria* (1990).

Iquitos on the day of his birth so that he could be born there, “porque quería ser loreetano como su padre, quería ser loreetano” (qtd. in Izcue). In other words, in Calvo’s personal and public life, he desired to belong to Loreto, to Amazonia. Origin seems more a choice and a feeling than a birthright both in the text and in Calvo’s life, and this suggestion, coupled with Calvo’s deliberate deception, may have impacted critical acceptance of Calvo’s ability not only to see but also to write from other perspectives.

What I believe makes the text so attractive to unwitting critics, though, is that it suggests that these perspectival shifts to an Amazonian locus of enunciation, for example, are possible to anyone through *ayawaskha*. Here again, the critical literature unquestionably accepts this very problematic premise. The Italian anthropologist Riccardo Badini, for example, poorly reasons that in Calvo,

la *ayawaskha* se configura como una profunda experiencia cognoscitiva que lleva al autor a asumir la cultura indígena desde dentro, acercándolo a una variante más profunda del indigenismo, en la cual el mundo autóctono deja de ser un mero referente literario para afectar con sus modalidades el propio medio expresivo o la estructura de la trama. (162)

I will later excavate the relationship of *ayawaskha* to Amerindian cultures. For now, this comment serves as an example of how prematurely Badini, an Italian anthropologist, accepts the ability of not only the character César but also of the author César Calvo to write from an indigenous Amazonian perspective. Although no longer referring to indigenous culture directly, White similarly implies that Calvo’s text allows for the substitution of an outside perspective for an inside one. He states that shamanic narratives like Calvo’s “provide a space for the staging of the potential otherness, for moving beyond not only the borders of the self, but the frontiers of the human as well. One of the instruments that can facilitate the individual’s access to these realms is *ayahuasca*” (111). Harner has used the term “cognicentrism” to describe the “prejudice”

against an experience of non-ordinary reality held by someone who has not experienced it directly, but these comments seem to work at the opposite end of the spectrum in which someone else's description of a non-ordinary reality become heralded as universal truths and replicable experiences (xx). Both interpretations of Calvo's text demonstrate how much of the critical work on the text has tended to be framed within the cultural categories suggested by the narrative, rather than from the perspective of critical distance offered here. The text does indeed suggest that ayawaskha allows César to assume what appears an indigenous perspective "desde dentro" (Badini 162). However, these comments, rather than incontrovertibly affirming that ayawaskha is a panacea for ethnocentrism, in fact suggest only that the novel has managed to convince even critics that such an easy transformation is possible.

Because the text is perceived as unique, genre has been a point of contention in scholarship. White refers to the text as a neo-*indigenista* novel that appropriates "shamanic narrative techniques and thematic content" (112). For Santiago, it is what he calls "una novela que se pretende crónica" in the tradition of colonial chroniclers—presumably, he implies that it is an account unaware of its own fictionalizing. He also calls it "una antropología poética," again presumably to suggest the idea that the text stylizes what he considers a non-fiction account (112, 114). Chávez Rodríguez reads the text as a "testimonio literaturizado," that is, a testimony that places importance on aesthetics in the presentation of events (46). All of the qualifiers necessary in these definitions begin to resemble something of a parody of literary taxonomy. Written—according to the English translator who met with Calvo—as the first text in what was intended to be a trilogy (Symington x), *Las tres mitades* does contain elements of neo-indigenism, anthropology, poetry, and testimony, but trying to invent a singular category that can account for the novel's unique combination of these genres becomes an exercise in classification in which

the category becomes so precise as to name only one text, or at least a small number of texts. The same critics who affirm that *Las tres mitades* gives insight into a uniquely indigenous perspective are the ones who try to coin the most appropriate Western taxonomical category that can account for the text in its totality.

The novel's self-aware defiance of categories begs a consideration not of what nomenclature best corresponds to the text but rather of what this subversion of categories does and how it relates to the content of the narration, specifically the promise of the *ayawaskha* session to see outside of Western rationality. César explains in the *envío*: “este libro no es un libro. Ni una novela ni una crónica. Apenas un retrato: la memoria del viaje que yo cumplí sonámbulo imantado por indomables presagios y por el *ayawaskha*, droga sagrada de los hechiceros amazónicos” (Calvo 22). A few pages later, Calvo explains the complicated temporal dimensions implied in the assigned category, “memoria,” which serve to further evade the text's classification: “La memoria es más, es mucho más [...]. La memoria verídica conserva también lo que está por venir. Y hasta lo que nunca llegará, eso también conserva” (Calvo 29). As already mentioned, this supposedly “true” (verídica) memoria is told from the perspective of other people, usually perspectives exogenous to César's biographic experiences including an Amawaka man called Hohuaté or Andrés Avelino de Cáceres who helped rubber barons, or from the perspective of Narowé, the first man in the Ashéninka creation story as presented by Don Hildebrando.²¹ Additionally, this memoria becomes interlaced in its telling with poems by the

21. Ashéninka people are considered part of a larger ethnic group previously referred to as Campa, which includes Asháninka, Ashéninka, Nomatsiguenga and Kakinte peoples. Calvo refers to the community living in the Gran Pajonal, called Ashéninka, although he erroneously uses the term “ashanínka,” a misspelling of Asháninka, rejected by this group as an auto-denomination (Santos and Barclay xxi). He uses “ashanínka” interchangeably with “campa,” which he considers the *virakocha* term to describe Ashéninka people. Indeed, this term has fallen into

Quechua poet Isidro Kondori, lyrics of *landó*, a form of Afro-Peruvian music usually accompanied by a cajón, and long passages taken verbatim from *El verdadero Fitzcarrald ante la historia* (1944) by Zacarías Váldez, rubber baron who worked with Fitzcarrald. Furthermore, according to César, the text itself exceeds its pages to include “diecisiete cintas de grabación, el vocabulario y las fotografías al final del texto, el texto de Váldez, y la paciencia de los Magos Verdes” (Calvo 22). César the narrator is telling his reader that this is a multimedia text that incorporates multiple genres and discourses, and that it cannot be categorized according to conventional understandings. This deliberate move to problematize and therefore critique literary taxonomy is only one category of Western thought at which the novel takes aim.

Despite this attempted subversion of categories, I refer to *Las tres mitades* as a novel for two reasons. First, as will become clear in what follows, although there seems to be a deliberate impulse to undermine Western epistemology, I do not think the text achieves it sufficiently to surpass established literary categories. Second, the novel genre accounts for the work of the text both at the level of discourse and in the content of critical dialogue with Western modernity. Bakhtin’s conception of the heteroglossic novel can account for a text that incorporates reported dialogue with invented dialogue, fictional narrative, memories of ayawaskha visions, photographic images, real-life characters, and a glossary, even if it tries to pass as non-fiction. Furthermore, Aboul-Ela’s theorization of postcolonial novels of the Global South accounts for the kind of critical work that *Las tres mitades* attempts. He explains that such novels “use complications of time, space, and perspective to explicitly oppose a unified, linear, monolithic historiography” (17). This configuration allows for the analysis of a narrative like Calvo’s whose disuse since being publicly rejected by the people it describes (Santos and Barclay xx). The Ashéninka of the Gran Pajonal speak Ashéninka, an Arawakan language. See Hvalkof and Veber.

axis is a refusal to conform to Western categories. Furthermore, following Rama, Aboul-Ela notes a connection between the geographic space of the text and literary production that manifests in its form (107). In other words, the fact that *Las tres mitades*'s genre evades and problematizes categorization relates to the ideological assumptions about Amazonia as a space present in the novel, one of which casts Amazonia as an Other space whose epistemology, presented as separate from modernity, is accessible through *ayawaskha*.

The circular structure of the *ayawaskha* journey interspersed with the violence of Western history is a postcolonial novelistic structure that “features an invocation of history combined with a jumbling of chronology and a rejection of teleology” (Aboul-Ela 108). The first and final sentences of the main sections of the text refer to the Ashéninka creation story that César learns during his sessions: “El primer hombre no fue hombre [...]. El primer hombre fue mujer” (33). This idea of Ashéninka creation as an inversion of gender roles in the Judeo-Christian creation story seems largely to be an invention of Calvo's as a way of paralleling directly the Christian story to subvert it.²² Additionally, the final section of the novel called “El despertar” consists of four chapters numbered in reverse chronological order. The text returns to the beginning of the narration with both of these maneuvers: an invocation of the creation story that begins the text and the numeric countdown. This beginning suggests an inversion of the Judeo-Christian creation story, and therefore, the possibility of a new beginning in this “awakening.” The text places much emphasis on the hope of the return of those presented as history's heroes: 1742 rebellion leader Juan Santos Atahualpa, Peruvian author and anthropologist José María Arguedas,

22. Calvo's Ashéninka creation story is inconsistent with ethnographic accounts although Narowé may come from Náviri another name for the creation god Pachacamaite, also mentioned in the text by Calvo but as a different entity. Rather than an Eve-like and Adam-like first couple, the story involves the transformations of a small family of deities. For a more detailed account of Ashéninka creation see Hvalkof and Veber.

and Ino Moxo. This circularity that suggests the possibility of a new kind of beginning contrasts with another destructive circularity—that of the violent interventions in Amazonia by outsiders throughout history. In horrific tales, Spaniards, rubber barons, and oil workers use the same oppressive mechanisms to control populations and extract natural resources at all costs throughout history, and this emphasis on repetition undermines the teleological narrative of progress used to justify these interventions. *Las tres mitades* emphasizes cyclical destruction in opposition to what is portrayed as the linear history of development in Peru as conceived by virakochas: “Y los caucheros virakocha necesitaban de ese caucho, dicen para el progreso de la Patria. Así andan diciendo hasta ahorita” (Calvo 207). Even though the violences of “progress” return, the circular structure of the text offers a different point of departure separate from hegemonic Western order.

César experiences a time outside of this order, a time associated with the beginning of creation, accessed through the ayawaskha session. Don Javier explains vaguely that before, “Pasaba el tiempo sí, pero era diferente del que hoy conocemos. También el tiempo era ceniza y carecía de límites como un río de tres orillas” (Calvo 141). This spatial description of time emphasizes that this “tiempo sin tiempo,” as the brujos call it, is not separated from space as in much contemporary Western thinking (Calvo 34). Warf and Arias summarize spatial theorists’ contention that historicism, “a despatialized consciousness in which geography figured weakly or not at all,” “subordinated time in modern consciousness” (2). In the shamanic time that Calvo describes, such subordination does not exist and allows for surprising possibilities. For example, Juan González describes an episode of being imprisoned after a jealous Western doctor accused him of practicing medicine without a license. When a guard challenged him to use his powers to escape, he sang ícaros and consumed tobacco in his cell in Pucallpa to access this other time. In

that time, “salí de la cárcel y caminé hasta el río, levanté la tapa del Ucayali, entré, me fui caminando sin peligro alguno, bien reguardado por la tela del agua y aparecí en el puerto de Belén en Iquitos” (Calvo 264). From there, he managed to send a telegram that the prison guard received the morning after his challenge advising him that Juan González would arrive by boat to Pucallpa that afternoon, another impossibly fast journey in linear time. This episode has a great deal of intertextuality with shamanic narratives as told by Harner. He explains the connection between water and underground travel:

The basic form of this [shamanic] journey, and the one usually easiest to learn, is the journey to the Lowerworld. To undertake this, a shaman typically has a special hole or entrance into the Lowerworld. This entrance exists in ordinary reality as well as in nonordinary reality. The entrance among California Indian shamans, for example, frequently was a spring, especially a hot spring. Shamans were reputed to travel hundreds of miles underground, entering hot springs and coming out at another. (24-25)

The possibilities of this other time free of the restrictions of Western time, as in Juan González’s example, are quite literally liberating.

This liberation, in turn, contrasts with the way César begins to conceive of linear time as destructive. Though much of spatial theory focuses on the nineteenth-century industrial revolution as the impetus for the divorce between space and time, *Las tres mitades* seems to indicate that this separation occurred much earlier in Amazonia and the Americas in general. Linear time, which marches through space rather than with it, comes to the story only through the intervention of the Spanish and later workers at the base of various cycles of extractive economy, beginning “[h]ace más de cuatrocientos años” (Calvo 81). The brujos teach César that their apparent march toward “progress” looks like death from the perspective of the other time accessed through *ayawaskha*. Don Javier explains that “este tiempo que se fatiga y se echa a descansar igual que gente,” this cut-up (*troceado*) time, did not always exist (Calvo 141). To

contrast that time with the “tiempo sin tiempo,” Juan González explains that unlike present time, the other time of before “no sirve para llevar a la muerte” (Calvo 264). This idea becomes poignantly clear when, as César travels through this other time with the aid of Córdova and ayawaskha, he sees José María Arguedas walking over the Amazon River, trying to evoke the other time in order to prevent the injustices caused by the Spanish empire in the Americas. He deploras, ““Regresa al Urubamba! [...] ¡regrésame contigo aguas arriba! ¡Avanza cuatro siglos! ¡Retrocede, Amazonas, cuatro siglos por el Río Sagrado! ¡Impide el desembarco de los bárbaros, los virakocha, los conquistadores!”” (Calvo 247). This wish is not an impossible dream in the space-time of the ayawaskha session as in Juan González’s example, but in Arguedas’s life in ordinary reality, it is. César watches as Arguedas puts his mouth around a blowgun “[y] desapareció su cuerpo echando humo” (Calvo 247). This despair of linear time visualized through this poetic retelling of Arguedas’s suicide becomes clear when perceiving history in shamanic time.

César’s experiences of time on his shamanic journey challenge chronology as an organizing principle, and likewise, his experience of space challenges the way his senses usually perceive and understand his surroundings. Colombian anthropologist and ayawaskha researcher Luis Eduardo Luna has found that in ayawaskha shamanism, “the healing process comprises of, an integration with, the ecological setting through imagery” guided by the shaman and perceived by the patient (“Ícaros” 239). These images, though, become available with closed eyes: “Sin que nadie lo solicitara permanecíamos durante toda la sesión con los ojos cerrados...y era posible *ver* al brujo enfrente de nosotros y para ello no precisábamos ni entreabrir los párpados” (Calvo 105, original emphasis). Córdova’s begins the session instead with auditory imagery. White has noted that the several-page-long “enumeration of unimaginable abundance and

diversity produces an effect that might be characterized as the other-wordliness of *this* world,” but he fails to articulate that part of this effect involves a dissociation from the visual senses specifically (119). In this section of the text, the glossary becomes key for readers unfamiliar with local names for flora and fauna, many of which are in Quechua. Ino Moxo concludes by saying, “¿Quién va a poder oírlo todo, dime tú? ¿Quién va a poder oírlo todo, de una vez, y creerlo....” (Calvo 29). The effect of listing the unfamiliar sounds of animals, fish, plants and even “los pasos de los animales que uno ha sido antes de humano, los pasos de las piedras y los vegetales y las cosas que cada humano ha sido” is not a clarification but rather a complication of sensorial perception (Calvo 29). César enters a seemingly unquantifiable space that no one would be able to hear in its entirety according to the shaman. Furthermore, he must unlearn his reliance on visual perception, a sense that Mary Louise Pratt has related to imperialist discourse. In studying the passive descriptions of space in travel writing, she notes, “The eye ‘commands’ what falls within its gaze. [...] The European presence is absolutely uncontested” (59). In contrast, César’s integration into his ecological surroundings emphasizes an active, moving environment that his eyes cannot arrest.

Within the epistemology that César attributes to his *ayawaskha* visions, reliance on visual senses can produce potentially fatal results. As the boys are journeying along the rivers toward Amawaka territory, Iván Calvo saves everyone’s life when he shoots at a jaguar after smelling its location. In the darkness and thick foliage of the jungle, this danger cannot be perceived with the eyes. Instead, Iván’s nose identifies the animal lurking in the shadows. The obviousness of this olfactory intuition within the *ayawaskha* visions becomes clear when Iván, responding to César’s question of what would have happened had he not smelled the jaguar, rhetorically questions, “¿Cómo pues no voy a oler a un tigre?” (Calvo 98). Likewise, in Félix Insapillo’s story of

becoming lost in the forest, he tells how his sense of touch allows him to understand and perceive space at night. With his eyes he believes he sees the eyes of a jaguar, but he uses his hands to confirm that in fact the lights are the reflection of the moon on wet moss. Then, in a moment of extra-sensory perception, he accepts that the moon's reflection actually indicates the lantern of his godfather, Don Javier, guiding him out of the jungle. The activation of the perceptive power of these other senses subtly critiques the limitation of sight so predominant in César's perception. Not only does overreliance on sight lead to potential danger because it does not grasp the jungle in its entirety, it also renders the world passive and limits César's experience.

The restricted quality of César's Western thinking also becomes apparent at the level of the linguistic sign. Whereas César seeks simplistic linguistic correspondences through translation, Ino Moxo affirms that the way he speaks is polysemic. César asks him to translate the word "ayawaska" to Amawaka, for example, but Ino Moxo, in his reply, problematizes the very idea of translation, again in spatial terms:

Será por el carácter de estas selvas, todo este mundo nuestro todavía formándose, ríos que de improviso trastornan su sentido o descienden sus aguas o las alzan en unas pocas horas. [...] Para ver y entender y nombrar un mundo así, requerimos hablar también así. Un idioma que decrezca o asciende sin anunciar, boscajes de palabras que hoy día están aquí y mañana despiertan lejos, y en ese instante, dentro de la misma boca, se pueblan de otros signos, de nuevas resonancias. En castellano te será difícil entenderlo. El castellano es como un río quieto: cuando dice algo, únicamente dice lo que ese algo dice. El amawaka no. En idioma amawaka las palabras contienen siempre. Contienen siempre otras palabras . . . (Calvo 233-34)

Ino Moxo, in this initial response, indicates that the relationship between the plurality of the jungle space requires a plurality in the discourse about it. Here again the ellipses emphasize on the page that there is something more to language that cannot be captured in words. In contrast, the translation process that César has requested requires a bijective function in which categories of meaning between two languages correspond exactly to each other, therefore limiting outlying

meanings. Furthermore, in this process, one language must inevitably impose its epistemology onto another. Melis notes that for Calvo, this imposition of meaning was strongly associated with the violence of conquest: “Toda tentativa de encasillar este patrimonio irreductible en los moldes de la cultura hegemónica se transforma en un acto de violencia, que vuelve a proponer, en otro terreno, la ‘escena originaria’ de la conquista” (13). To avoid this, Ino Moxo tries to explain the multiple meanings that “oni xuma” can have in Amawaka:

Según cómo y para qué se diga, según la hora y el sitio en que se diga, oni xuma puede decir lo mismo, o decir otra cosa, o decir su contrario. Si yo pronuncio así, oni xuma, con la voz delgada, brillando como delectando hogueras y no letras, en lo oscuro, oni xuma significa *filo-de-piedra-plana*. Y dicha de otro modo significa *tristeza-que-no-sale*. Y significa *punta-de-la-primera-flecha*. Y significa *herida*, que a la vez significa *labio-del-alma*. Y siempre, al mismo tiempo, es ayawaskha. (Calvo 234-35)

Ino Moxo’s glossing resists submission to simplistic translation principles and criticizes the idea of a transcendental signifier with its illusory stability, very much related to the illusory stability of space as perceived through the eyes alone. Ino Moxo’s response points to the reciprocal process of thought and spatial perception while also incorrectly deeming Spanish a language of fixed meanings, which he associated with the tenets of thought that have guided violent interventions in Amazonian space throughout centuries.

Within this shamanic space that unfolds through sensory expansion and polysemia, César’s divided self also serves to question categories of Western thought. In the text, Córdova refers to the other César, César Soriano, the narrator, as César Calvo’s “desdoblamiento.” This word has negative connotations within the context of Western psychopathology as a “splitting” in which one dissociates perceived negative aspects of the personality as a defense mechanism. Additionally, though, the word denotes an unfolding. In other words, the word evokes the Western concept of a unified subject as a healthy subject while also suggesting that such a

concept depends on a process of confinement or folding of the self. Aboul-Ela, in his analysis of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, argues that the doubling motif represented in the text's twins undercuts "the suggestion—so prominent in the bildungsroman—of a complete and autonomous individual subject" (120). Here, though, we are not dealing with twins or a doubling, but rather the unfolding of a single subject, an even clearer weakening of this concept. César Soriano experiences the entire shamanic session not even realizing that he is also César Calvo. He perceives his unfolded self as another person because his thinking is so bound to the idea of an individual subject. Córdova cannot explain in dictating the visions, "por qué no fui capaz contigo, por qué te hice viajar dentro de tu pariente, a su lado, como un extraño, por qué te hice viajar desde tu otra persona en las visiones..." (Calvo 282). In the text, though, these two Césars represent the perspectives of ordinary and non-ordinary reality opened by the ayawaskha session, which Córdova refers to as the reality and the dream. Although César sees that he occupies only one body at the end of the text, both Césars must remain present as Córdova's advice indicates: "Ve a descansar ahora. [...] Pero no vayas a alterar la realidad del sueño, no divorcies la magia de la historia ni la vigilia del mito. No te olvides que los ríos pueden existir sin agua pero no sin orillas. Créeme: la realidad no es nada si no se llega a verificar en los sueños" (Calvo 282). César's ability to remain unfolded after the ayawaskha session allows him to write the story from a locus of enunciation outside of the Western unified subject: "Don Manuel Córdova ordenó que yo, no César Calvo sino mi otro César, contara en beneficio de la gente los meandros del viaje que creí haber soñado" (Calvo 282). This effect is visualized on the cover of the first edition of the book as well. The front cover shows the title and author, César Calvo, and is the mirror image of the back cover, where César Soriano is listed as author. In this way *Las tres mitades*

tries to complicate even authorship through this *desdoblamiento*, extending the questioning of a unified subject position beyond the pages of the text.

The text's seeming success in getting outside of these Western categories is surely what Rumrill and other approving critics have in mind when affirming what they incorrectly deem the unique Amazonian perspective written into the ayawaska sessions. In Calvo's efforts to question and undermine Western concepts of space, time, perception, meaning, and subject position, *Las tres mitades* aims, but misses, at the misconceptions that have led to extractive interventions in Amazonia. The means to overcoming these misconceptions becomes an unfolding through ayawaska. However, though the text is quick to criticize some Western categories of thought, it selectively clings to others in order to position César in opposition to the violence that has become part of Amazonia's space and history. He relies on dichotomies such as virakocha/indigenous and city/jungle, then, to place himself in the categories he deems nobler. The narrative's vilification of Western epistemology, then, cannot be separated from César's desire to dissociate from the injustices it has caused.

The text attempts to allow for this dissociation by assigning the violence of that epistemology to a category that César can oppose, criticize, and find his way out of. Rather than questioning the complex geopolitical and economic dynamics of colonialism, in the text, the white man is scapegoated as a vilified other. At almost every instance of the text in which virakochas are mentioned, they are followed by the appositive, "los blancos," and brought into the discussion as a point of contrast to the existence of various indigenous communities, shown as simplistically pacifist. Not only are virakocha not pacifist, though, they kill and destroy wherever they go. Don Juan Tuesta tells a story of virakocha who emerged from a lake to "seguir a los campá y matarlos. A todos los campá los mataron" (Calvo 41). This "origin story" of the

virakocha continues to the present day, according to the text. At some point, Félix Insapillo asks, invoking the Holocaust, “¿no es cierto que los virakocha de hace poco tiempo construyeron hornos para quemar humanos, asesinaron millones, niños, mujeres, varones, ancianos, sin misericordia, millones, de los modos más atroces, en duchas que echaban veneno en vez de agua, hace poquitos años, ayercito nomás?” (Calvo 180). From the perspective of the characters in the book all of these atrocities occur in the name of progress: “En nombre del progreso fue que nos despojaban y nos baleaban....” (Calvo 207). The text, of course, is not incorrect in aiming this postcolonial critique at white actors who, throughout history, have imposed ideas of progress through violent means of biopolitical and geopolitical control. However, it is one thing for victims of violence and oppression to demonize their oppressors and quite another for César to assume that colonial suffering as his own. Furthermore, for the Ashéninka, a group that in the text represents the community most fiercely resistant to interventions throughout history, such dichotomous thinking is not part of their cosmovision. Anthropologists Hvalkof and Veber write,

Parece imposible comprender el universo de los pajonalinos como una serie de contradicciones binarias antagónicas a partir del dualismo naturaleza/cultura en torno al cual un europeo occidental está tan acostumbrado a organizar su pensamiento. Por el contrario, los Ashéninka tienen la maestría de hacer que todo esté contenido en relaciones dinámicas y permanentemente cambiantes. (247)

With this sense of dynamic interrelationships, the stability of the category “virakocha” across time, in a text that aims to show an indigenous perspective, raises suspicions. To be virakocha, one must not be indigenous, but the qualifiers for indigeneity in the text are not only cultural or ethnic. Rather they include an ability to understand an indigenous person’s point of view as César believes he does and as many critics claim the text shows. Virakocha in the text effectively signifies an abstract other onto which César can project his colonial guilt in order to distinguish himself from it.

At one point, Ino Moxo tells César that his thinking shows signs of “prejuicio virakocha,” and he wrestles with this virakocha subject position throughout the text (Calvo 234). He sympathizes with the plight of indigenous people he observes, interacts with, and becomes during the ayawaskha session, and César clearly sees himself as someone able to overcome his virakocha biases. This self-assuredness leads him to intervene impetuously in one of Don Hildebrando’s healing sessions, undoing the order of “la arquitectura del aire” (Calvo 137). The brujo later explains to him,

No sólo los espíritus benignos se hospedan en el aire. También hay grandes ánimas que segregan daño. Y cuando alguien interrumpe ese orden, los malos espíritus, que son poderosos, aprovechan para colarse por entre la arquitectura que ya se ha resquebrajado, se anticipan a las ánimas puras y caen como ejércitos de fuego sobre los humanos indefensos. (Calvo 137)

Reprimanded by the shaman, César admits in this retelling how he longs to be a larger part of the shamanic ritual but cannot do so due to his ignorance. His help becomes harm that creates more work for the shaman. César has a great deal to learn in order to un-learn his virakocha ways, but such a transition seems possible according to his story. When he begins the shamanic journey with the other boys, one being his brother, he finds himself on the outside: “César tropezó con la infranqueable hostilidad de ambos,” but days later when César’s skin has darkened in the sun, “Iván [...] puso su brazo oscuro junto al cuerpo ya oscuro de César, comparó los colores y sonrió: ‘¡Ahora sí eres mi hermano!’” (Calvo 97). César may not have acquired all the necessary cultural knowledge, but he claims that by merely stepping into another space, the jungle—albeit in his ayawaskha visions—he begins to move away from the external virakocha category that he so detests. In this way, the confounding of Western categories that César relates as part of his ayawaskha journey serve to move him away from the virakocha category that so troubles him.

César's ability to fashion himself through the writing of his experiences as not-quite-virakocha proves problematic to the text's challenge to modernity for two reasons. First, César's ability to move between categories relates directly to the power dynamics entailed in his position of privilege as a cosmopolitan Lima-dwelling Peruvian visiting Iquitos. Second, given the unequal power associated with César's visit, his attempted disassembling of Western categories serves to undo history or rather exculpate the descendants of actors who created these power dynamics in the first place. When Arguedas appears, he beckons to reverse time in order to prevent the Spanish from coming, but César wants to rewrite his own involvement with that history just as Córdova has done. Córdova seems to embody César's desire to become other. When Córdova speaks of indigenous groups, he uses the first person plural "nosotros" to tell their stories. His background, too, has been creatively invented. He is "hijo de madre uru y padre virakocha, más mestizo que virakocha" (Calvo 217). Córdova's whiteness is written out by his shamanic practice and his incredible story of apprenticeship among the Amawaka. Indeed, in the visions that he dictates to the boys, they journey to find him as an Amawaka leader. César and Córdova are not indigenous men challenging the oppressive structures that have shaped them, but rather, they have benefited, however indirectly, from that oppression, giving them the flexibility to reinvent themselves.

Given the rather self-serving impetus behind the text's challenge to Western epistemology, then, critics' claims that this novel represents an autochthonous perspective become even more unwarranted. On the contrary, *Las tres mitades* is a story told by an outsider struggling to grapple with the meaning of his position as an outsider. César seems very much like ayawaskha tourists who seek consciousness expansion for personal transformation. Manuel Córdova has gone before César on this journey, and through his shamanic learning has found a

discourse that allows him to appear integrated into indigenous Amazonia. Ayawaskha becomes not a decolonial gateway to new ways of conceiving the world but rather a colonialist exit strategy that allows César to relinquish the colonial guilt he feels without changing anything about the power structures that led to actions that caused that guilt in the first place. Ayawaskha may reveal elements of non-ordinary reality that resonate with other accounts and that provide fleeting insights into problems of Western epistemology, but *Las tres mitades* mistakenly associates non-ordinary with indigenous and ordinary with something outside of indigeneity. Furthermore, ayawaskha, portrayed as bridging the urban virakocha and rural indigenous Amazonian worlds, necessarily reinforces those two categories that it attempts to bring together. In fact, César's attempts to become Other relies on this perceived categorical distinction. A closer look at the spaces of both ayawaskha's history and Córdova's access to ayawaskha shamanism begins to unravel the idea that such worlds are separate. Rather, they emerge ineradicably bound by the spatial practices of centuries of extraction.

From the Spaces of Extraction: Rubber, Mahogany, Shamans, and Pharmaceuticals

César's guide on his ayawaskha journey is Manuel Córdova. Córdova accounts for his extensive knowledge of plant medicine, both in *Las tres mitades* and in a co-edited autobiography, *Wizard of the Upper Amazon* (1971), with a narrative of kidnapping and apprenticeship among an indigenous community, either Amawaka or Huni Kuin.²³ Ino Moxo

23. "Huni Kuin" and "Amawaka" are used interchangeably in Córdova's account, a fact which causes considerable controversy, as I will elaborate below. Both Huni Kuin and Amawaka speak a variant of the Panoan linguistic family and live in roughly the same areas of eastern Peru and western Brazil along the Purús River. However, Huni Kuin people also live in areas along the Yurúa River whereas Amawaka communities are also along the Ucayali, Yavarí, and Madeira Rivers (Kensinger 5; Dole 127). "Huni Kuin" is the self-denomination for the

states in Calvo that when he met Ximu, the leader of the community, “Ese día dejé de ser quien era, el hijo de mi padre y de mi señora madre, y empecé a ser amawaka, yora, hijo de Ximu, discípulo de Ximu, heredero de Ximu...” (219). Of the many problems with his transformation narrative that I will discuss below, perhaps the most troublesome for Calvo’s portrayal of the ayawaskha session, is the fact that Córdova’s story locates his indigenous learning in a time and space disconnected from and inaccessible to—except through ayawaskha—César’s daily reality as a “modern” Peruvian. In other words, *Las tres mitades*’s rejection of what Quijano calls Western modernity-rationality nevertheless relies on dichotomous thinking that locates ayawaskha healing rituals and modern ailments in two separate spaces. In so doing, the text engages with misconceptions of Western modernity-rationality, in which a perceived “other” becomes external to César’s reality. This idea of externality, I also take from Quijano, who intended it as an ontological category in the subject-object distinction of modernity-rationality (441). However, establishing this externality often relies on an object occupying a position in space literally perceived as external to a subject, as in the case of César and Ino Moxo. An excavation of Córdova’s story of ayawaskha apprenticeship blurs this distinction by revealing how the historical violence that Calvo denounces produces a certain kind of shamanism.

Córdova’s story of apprenticeship as narrated in *Wizard* and reproduced in snippets throughout *Las tres mitades* tells that he was taken away as a boy and traveled on foot for several days with his captors before reaching a place called Xanadá, corresponding roughly to an area where both Amawaka and Huni Kuin have territory.²⁴ *Wizard* states that Xanadá was located people alternatively known as Kaxinawá, but they do not reject the latter term. “Huni” means “man” (hombre) and “kuin” means “true” (verdadero) (Kensinger 6).

24. *Wizard* reports his age as fifteen at the time of kidnapping, but a 1994 biography published posthumously and also co-edited by Lamb claims that he was twelve (See Lamb, *Kidnapped in the Amazon Jungle*.)

between “the headwaters of the Jurua [Yurúa], Purus, Madre de Dios, Michagua, and Inuya Rivers” (Córdova-Ríos 170). There, he lived for seven years, was initiated into ayawaskha shamanism by “chief” Xumu (Ximu in *Las tres mitades*) of the “tribe,” married, and eventually took over leadership of the community when Xumu died (Córdova-Ríos 14, 18). He taught the community how to prepare rubber for sale and trade it downriver in Brazil for weapons and other goods. In fact, according to both *Wizard* and *Las tres mitades*, Córdova’s kidnapping was motivated by the Huni Kuin’s desire to obtain arms—during the rubber boom, Amerindian people often had restricted access to weapons. Córdova’s role was not only to acquire weapons but also to teach Huni Kuin people to use them against rubber cutters encroaching on their territory. Eventually, when mounting tensions in the community begin to make his life unpleasant, Córdova escapes at age twenty-one.

At issue in the consideration of what this story obscures is not the intentionality of Calvo’s omissions but rather the effect that these omissions pose for the critique of the historical processes of modernity presented in *Las tres mitades*. Indeed, there is ample evidence to suggest that Calvo was simply repeating edited versions of Córdova’s story already presented elsewhere. Both Calvo and the American forester, F. Bruce Lamb (1913-1992), listed as “contributor” on the first of Córdova’s three English-language autobiographies, claim to have written the texts based on interviews with Córdova. Disentangling the potentially sourced material from what is most certainly poetic embellishment in their texts proves near impossible; however, several commonalities between the texts are noteworthy. First, the coincidence in the choice of the word “brujo” translated into English as “wizard” to describe Córdova is mentionable given that options such as “chamán,” “vegetalista,” and “curandero” were also in circulation at the time. This choice seems especially strange given that “brujo” can have a negative connotation of

“doing evil” although testimony from Don Agustín Rivas Vásquez, an *ayahuasquero* from the Iquitos area, indicates without specifying that there was a time when this was not the case (Bear 18). Furthermore, both texts suggest Córdova lived among the Amawaka people, a fact that later becomes a point of dispute as I will show below. Finally, the language of the dialogue and descriptions associated with the *ayawaskha* sessions is strikingly similar in both texts. Whether these commonalities are attributable to a common source—Córdova—or Calvo’s potential reading and recasting of *Wizard* is difficult to determine. The point, though, is that both writers seem to have sourced the same material on Córdova and believed it unhesitatingly, without digging very far beneath its surface. Bringing the complexity of Córdova’s life to the forefront problematizes some of the underlying biases of *Las tres mitades* in particular.

Before examining the entanglements of Córdova’s shamanic knowledge and the modern practices of extractive capitalism, it is important to clarify that although Córdova’s story contains dubious details—and indeed received a great deal of scrutiny—evidence suggests that Córdova’s professed skill as a practitioner of plant medicine has merit. Indeed the more controversial aspects of his story may have been initially overlooked because his medicinal knowledge both produced results and was consistent with ethnographic accounts. Dobkin de Rios, in her 1972 book review writes that *Wizard* is “totally original and empirical,” including its ethnographic accounts of indigenous peoples as well as “mestizo drug healing” (“*Wizard*” 1423). Likewise, the same year, the New York Botanical Garden published a review stating that any doubts raised regarding the veracity of the text “are not meaningful” (S. 197). *Wizard* was written based on notes apparently made by both Córdova and Lamb during their time together. Lamb then wrote the book in English from Córdova’s perspective, took it to Iquitos to translate it for him “page by page,” and published it, listing Córdova as author (Lamb, “*Wizard*” 579). Yet both reviews,

predating the 1985 publication of *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*, do nothing to wrestle with the complex questions of authorship and memory that Menchú's and Elizabeth Burgos's text would later bring to the forefront.²⁵ Instead, both reviewers—delighted by a testimonial account of what seems to be indigenous plant medicine—precipitately affirm the text as a whole. Today, in the still-emerging field of ayawaskha studies, references endorsing Córdova's story in *Las tres mitades* and/or *Wizard* as a reliable source of Upper Amazonian plant medicine abound. In the introduction, I mentioned the inclusion of *Las tres mitades* in the anthropological work of Luis Eduardo Luna and Stephan Beyer; both reference Lamb's text as well. Additionally, Córdova's story has found its way into some of the most important texts on ayawaskha shamanism as a respected source.²⁶

Apart from the academic accreditation of Córdova's knowledge, local accounts and certain biographic details also suggest that Córdova's practice relied on knowledge that produced results. According to Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill, “[he] gained fame as one of the most accomplished shamans in Iquitos in the 1960s up to the 1970s” (35). Lamb came to know Córdova due to Córdova's extensive knowledge of Upper Amazonian flora. The Astoria Importing and Manufacturing Company (AIMCO) of Iquitos, where Córdova's expertise in the function and application of plant medicine earned him employment as a taxonomist, appointed Córdova as support personnel to guide Lamb through the forests and rivers of the Upper Amazon while completing a timber survey in the 1960s for the U.S. Plywood Corporation.²⁷ Lamb was

25. For more on this polemic, see Beverley.

26. See for example Langdon and Baer, Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill, and Thomas and Humphrey.

27. Dates for Lamb's time with Córdova in the Amazon are not reported in any of their co-authored books. However, his obituary, originally published in the Canon City *Daily Record* (Colorado) indicates that he began his employment for the U. S. Plywood Corporation in 1960. See “Frank Bruce Lamb.” Additionally, Robert Carneiro, in

impressed by Córdova's ability to navigate the jungle on land and water and specify the location of specific trees, but the skill that most caught his attention and the one that ultimately inspired him to write *Wizard* was Córdova's recognized healing abilities. He says,

Before leaving Iquitos I found out that Córdova was a healer of considerable fame—the man that people went to for help when the medical profession found a case incurable. On our trip this became evident. Whenever we made a stop at some riverside village, there would soon be someone on board the launch looking for Don Manuel. (Foreword vi)

Likewise Roger Rumrill interviewed Córdova on several occasions and reports that these visits were frequently interrupted by ailing people seeking help (Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill 35). In *Wizard*, Córdova indicates that his patients even included a Peruvian president and the Belgian ambassador to Peru who came to him after hearing of his reputation as a healer (234). The local magazine, *Proceso: Revista de la Amazonía peruana*, interviewed Córdova when he was eighty-seven for their December 1972-1973 issue. The article mentions the controversial facts of Córdova's story only to affirm his expertise: “Lo cierto es que posee valiosísimos conocimientos sobre la medicina tradicional de nuestra región, que desgraciadamente, hasta hoy, no han sido aprovechados por la ciencia en nuestro país” (“El hombre” 20). Iquitos writer, teacher, and political activist Martín Reátegui Barta claims to have met Córdova as a child and affirms that he was a very good practitioner of plant medicine despite what he considers the invented story of his training. In other words, although many details of Córdova's life are difficult to ascertain, ample evidence suggests that he possessed and practiced medicinal plant knowledge effectively and according to a recognized Upper Amazonian tradition in the academic literature.

his critique of *Wizard of the Upper Amazon* indicates that he met with Lamb in 1963 after he had gathered information to compile Córdova's story.

This distinction between the validity of Córdova's practice and the potentially invented aspects of his acquisition of plant medicinal knowledge serve to establish that although Córdova may have crafted a provocative story, he was not a charlatan. Peruvian psychiatrist Carlos Alberto Seguí (1907-1995) considers that not only do charlatans not "believe in what they say or do," they also scam their clients and have an "uncertain base [of knowledge]" (qtd. in Dobkin de Rios, *Amazon Healer* 49, 50). Córdova, on the other hand, was at the forefront of an incipient form of shamanism that in the 1960s began to be practiced in Peruvian Amazonian cities (Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill 35). This trend involved the migration of shamanic healing associated with communities of Amerindian people living in rural areas to urban areas where practitioners considered racially and culturally "mestizo" administered plant medicine. Labate, Cavnar, and Freedman, in their definition, underscore that the practice is "*based on* indigenous ayahuasca shamanism," suggesting indirectly that with its movement through Amazonian spaces and interaction with new patients, the practice changed (6, my emphasis). As one of the few shamans in the city of Iquitos in the 1960s and 70s (Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill 35), and as a shaman who gained considerable international attention, the uniqueness of Córdova's practice and story may have raised suspicions, but Córdova was actually part of a larger phenomenon of healing ritual taking hold in Peruvian Amazonia.

Much literature on Amazonian shamanism in Peru interchangeably employs the terms mestizo shamanism, urban shamanism, neoshamanism, or *vegetalismo* to describe these modified practices of shamanic healing in urban Amazonian areas; however, due to their connotative differences, these terms are not all equally suited to describe the practice that Calvo narrates. "Mestizo shamanism" draws attention to the fact that the practice involves a perceived shift in the racial category of practitioners, a distinction that perpetuates the colonialist binary of

indigenous/non-indigenous, with the “mestizo shamans” corresponding to the latter category. “Urban shamanism” refers to the perceived shift in the geographic location of the practice from rural to urban areas, another false dichotomy; furthermore, “urban shaman” is a term applied to shamanic practices beyond Amazonia and even South America, losing the specificity of Upper Amazonian practices. “Neoshamanism” emphasizes the impact of the New Age movement on this form of shamanism in its present instantiation as a service geared toward international tourists seeking shamanism with “a pan-cultural dimension, valid for all humanity” (Ghasarian 178). I prefer the term “vegetalista” to describe Córdova—although neither Lamb, Calvo, nor contemporary local press mention his use of this term—because it emphasizes the plant base that was so central to Córdova’s practice while avoiding some of the problems above. According to Luna, who has written the most extensive study on vegetalismo to date, the word refers not only to the use of plants—ayawaskha or others—by shamans in the Upper Amazon but also “to the origin of their knowledge: it comes from the spirit of certain plants (vegetales), which are the shaman’s real teachers” (*Vegetalismo* 14-15). This term also avoids the problematic binaries of indigenous/non-indigenous and instead focuses on the practice itself. Additionally, based on Luna’s extensive fieldwork in the Upper Amazon, it is “one of the most frequent autonominations of the shamans I have been working with” (*Vegetalismo* 14). Vegetalismo, then, maintains both the geographic and material specificity of Córdova’s practice, as represented by Calvo.

The space here does not allow for a complete overview of ayawaskha vegetalismo, but I will emphasize a few key aspects of this form of shamanism that coincide with Córdova’s in *Las tres mitades* in order to elucidate specific ways that Calvo’s representation of Córdova’s

practice corresponds to this broader practice.²⁸ To begin, in ayawaskha vegetalismo, shamans consume ayawaskha at night, as in César's sessions with Ino Moxo, because it is easier to see with ayawaskha at night (Lenaerts 49). Sometimes, a patient also takes ayawaskha, but this step is unnecessary to the healing process as the ayawaskha itself does not heal but rather teaches the shaman how to heal. Through a process that Sara Castro-Klarén has insightfully designated “un convertirse, no en otro, sino en una extensión conjunta y alterna al mismo tiempo...es decir, en una dimensión de ser-siendo (*being*), que excede pero no contradice la unidad de la experiencia cotidiana,” plants, called “doctores,” merge with the shaman in his practice so that a proper treatment for a given client becomes clear (“Recorridos” 168). As Beyer explains:

Whether ingested alone or with ayawaskha, the goal of the diet [of social isolation, abstinence, and diet that the shaman follows] is to maintain an ongoing connection and dialogue with the plant; to allow the plant to interact with the body, often in subtle ways; and to wait for its spirit to appear, as the spirit wishes, to teach and give counsel. The effect of the most powerful plants may be instantaneous, but the effect of others may be gradual: the plants become your body and give you the power to heal; they become—through this lengthy, dreamlike, silent, sacred process—your allies. (*Singing* 60)

Ino Moxo expresses this connection with the plants to César:

No hay milagro en la cura, no en la invocación, ni antes ni después del oni xuma. Hay raíces y jugo de raíces, hay cortezas precisas para esto y lo otro, varios tipos de lluvia que se bebe, y también ciertas piedras. De qué manera, en qué caso utilizarlos, cuándo y cómo segarlos y prepararlos, eso es lo que sabe el ayawaskha, eso no lo transfiere si así lo considera, si el ánimo o el cuerpo lo merecen. (Calvo 236)

For these reasons, this ayawaskha vegetalismo differs from the experimental use that Ino Moxo so disdainfully dismisses: “Para ellos [virakocha] es tóxico, ayawaskha es droga, dicen alucinógeno, y experimentan, juegan” (Calvo 251). Because early literature on ayawaskha shamanism so

28. Beyer's detailed text, *Singing to the Plants*, provides a good point of departure for those interested in further reading.

frequently sources accounts of key aspects of Córdova's practice, it may be near impossible to determine to what extent literary accounts of Córdova may have shaped vegetalismo rather than merely representing it—most likely the truth involves a combination of these two processes. More clear is the fact that Córdova's practice relied on plant knowledge that became part of a widely practiced healing ritual in the Upper Amazon.

Yet despite the apparent legitimacy of Córdova's practice, the soundness of the story that justifies his access to plant knowledge and practice caused controversy, largely due to its early unquestioning approval in anthropological texts. When the academic community began to hail *Wizard* as a valuable ethnography, as opposed to a tale of true adventure, the text was read with greater scrutiny, a shift that brought specific inaccuracies in Córdova's story to light. American anthropologist R. L. Carneiro was one of the first academics to publicly question the use of *Wizard* as an ethnography in an article entitled "Chimera of the Upper Amazon." Carneiro points to fraud and imposture in the drafting of *Wizard* and dismisses the text's tendency to "heavily embroider the fabric of reality" (9). As an anthropologist with experience working with Amawaka communities, Carneiro picks apart the ethnographic details of Córdova's story, including his description of community hierarchy, dress, ritualistic practices, hunting practices, and mythology. Ultimately Carneiro upholds that the culture that Córdova describes is more akin to the indigenous cultures in northwestern Amazonia, where Córdova was known to have close associations. Carneiro's accusations of falsehood received a considerable readership as part of Richard de Mille's collection of essays, *The Don Juan Papers* (1980), aimed toward discrediting Carlos Castañeda as a charlatan. In the atmosphere of rising international interest in South American shamanism, skeptics also abounded, and attention such as that received by *Wizard* brought scrutiny. Carneiro even goes so far, using Córdova's words as reported by Seguí, to

suggest that “[p]uede ser todo mentira” (98). This public scrutiny points to the instability of Córdova’s text across genre categories—as a tale of true adventure, the story is captivating, but as an ethnography, it begins to unravel.

And yet Lamb, who upholds that *Wizard* “was not intended to be a scientific study,” dedicates two articles in 1981 to defending Córdova, one in *Current Anthropology* and another in *American Anthropologist* (“*Wizard*” 577). Further emphasizing the shift in his position on the text, he titles the *Current Anthropology* article, “*Wizard of the Upper Amazon as Ethnography*.” Both articles, similar in content, argue for the accuracy of the information reported by Córdova by corroborating it with reports from numerous ethnographic studies. Furthermore, though, he strategically undermines Carneiro’s expertise claiming that he confused Amawaka with Kaxinawá—a confusion no doubt facilitated by the fact that in *Wizard* Amawaka and Huni Kuin are used interchangeably. Lamb corrects this error in subsequent posthumous publications on Córdova such as *Rio Tigre and Beyond: The Amazon Jungle Medicine of Manuel Córdova* (1985) and *Kidnapped in the Amazon Jungle* (1994), clarifying that the Huni Kuin are sometimes called Kaxinawá or Amawaka, a trend that nevertheless is mistaken as Kashinawá is a name that refers to the people who call themselves Huni Kuin, distinct from Amawaka people (*Rio* 139).²⁹ Curiously, then, Lamb becomes drawn to the idea of *Wizard* as ethnography, and defends the text using ethnographic terms and anthropological studies despite his complete lack of training as an anthropologist; Lamb received a bachelor’s degree in forestry, a master’s in plant pathology, and a doctorate in tropical forestry (“Frank Bruce Lamb”). What began for Lamb as an “enthraling

29. Kenneth Kensinger explains, “Aunque los miembros de este pueblo [Cashinawa] aceptan la denominación de Cashinawau (de *kashi* = ‘murciélago’, y *nasa* = ‘gente’, ‘foráneo’), se autodenominan *Huni kuin* (*huni* = ‘hombre’; *kuin* = ‘verdadero’) por oposición a *huni kuinman*, ‘hombre no verdadero’, todo aquél que no es cashinawa, también llamado *nawa*” (6).

tale of high drama that reads like an adventure-fantasy scenario” becomes a bailiwick defended with personal attacks and public defamation (qtd. in Lamb, *Wizard* 168).

Tracing the facts of Córdova’s life (18??-1978) proves difficult due to multiple contradictory accounts, but Carneiro was justified in raising an eyebrow to Córdova’s story.³⁰ In fact, according to the 1938 book *Hombres del Amazonas*, published when Córdova was in his fifties and decades after his supposed escape from the Huni Kuin community where he lived according to Calvo and Lamb, he was yet unknown as a healer in Iquitos. He does earn a page in local history, though, as a notable “agricultor” in *Hombres del Amazonas*. According to this text, Córdova’s mother was from Moyobamba and his father from Arequipa. He did not finish primary school, preferring instead to “‘correr por el mundo’ por nuestra Amazonía, por cuenta y riesgo suyo” (“Manuel Córdova Ríos” 194). His first documented employment was as a store attendant aboard Julio C. Arana’s steamboat, *Cosmopolita*—a fact omitted from both Calvo’s and Lamb’s accounts—or perhaps Córdova’s himself. Aboard *Cosmopolita*, he traveled upriver as far as Puerto Pizarro, Colombia on the Caquetá. He also worked along the Ucayali, Tapiche, Yaquerana, and Blanco Rivers in Peru as a rubber day laborer. In 1915 he was hired by Jorge Borda y Compañía as an overseer for forty *caucheros* in the Alto Tapiche district of Requena, Loreto, Peru. *Hombres* reports that after the collapse of the rubber economy, Córdova worked as a farmer, married, had ten children, and moved to Iquitos to educate them. There, he worked selling pork and by operating a cockfighting establishment. Curiously, in what appears an

30. Even Córdova's birth year is difficult to determine. Dobkin de Rios and Rumrill report that he was born in 1887 (*A Hallucinogenic* 34). However, the dates and ages reported in his first (auto)biography, *Wizard of the Upper Amazon* (1971) places his birthyear in 1892, the same year reported in the text *Hombres del Amazonas*. However, the Iquitos magazine, *Proceso: Revista de la Amazonía peruana* reports in its 1972/1973 edition that Córdova is eighty-seven years old, meaning his birth year would have to be 1885 or 1886.

afterthought, *Hombres* mentions that “[c]abe notar” the fact that Córdova lived for seven years among the Capanahuas, Mayos, Remos, and Marubos—indigenous groups unaffiliated with either the Amawaka or Huni Kuin who live along the rivers mentioned in the text—from whom he learned a great deal of plant medicinal knowledge (“Córdova Ríos” 195). This final fact not only belies the details of Córdova’s account, it suggests that although his plant knowledge is mentionable, it is superfluous to his life story.

Several decades later, Córdova’s cohabitation with indigenous teachers becomes central to his biography. Lamb and Córdova’s co-authored version of the vegetalista’s life emphasizes more continuity of plant medicinal practice from his youth to his final years, as does the representation of Córdova’s life in *Las tres mitades*. In *Rio Tigre and Beyond* (1985), a second co-authored biography published by Lamb after Córdova’s death, the narrative elaborates Córdova’s story after his escape from living among the Huni Kuin. In other words, this book picks up where *Wizard* leaves off, and after Córdova had supposedly already acquired his healing capabilities.

According to the narrative, Córdova returns to Iquitos during World War I, which caused a temporary increase in rubber demand worldwide. Had it not been for the war, the rubber economy in Iquitos would have collapsed much earlier. The same year that marked the start of the war corresponds to a drop in rubber prices worldwide as southeast Asian rubber plantations had begun to take over the market.³¹ Córdova reports in the text that his recently-acquired ability to navigate the jungle and identify plant species earned him employment as a *matero* or rubber tree locator with Jorge Borda y Compañía, thus carefully eliding his work as an overseer of

31. The British made numerous attempts beginning in 1873 to smuggle and germinate the seeds of *hevea brasiliensis* outside of Brasil before finally achieving success in its southeast Asian possessions.

rubber tappers, a position notoriously associated with abusive practices. Instead, the text recounts how the position of *matero* required extensive travel throughout two of Peru's Amazonian departments, Loreto and San Martín. A map at the beginning of *Rio Tigre* indicates places reached in the text on Córdova's river excursions from Peru's northeastern border with Colombia to the high jungle towns of Tarapoto and San José de Sisa in Peru to Cruzeiro do Sul in Brazil at the eastern border with Peru. The narrative emphasizes that during this time, he begins practicing plant medicine, which causes him legal troubles when he is accused of practicing medicine without a license. To escape the legal repercussions, Córdova supposedly flees to Brazil where he continues to practice. There he attracts the attention of Douglas Allen, president of the Astoria Importing and Manufacturing Company (AIMCO), who hires him to locate and catalogue medicinal plants for sale to pharmaceutical companies in the United States.³² With the protection of AIMCO, Córdova returns to Iquitos where he meets Lamb and once again practices medicine in Peru. This story of seamless transition from Córdova's capture to his medicinal practice almost as an inevitability is present in Calvo's truncated version of events as well: "Sé que Don Manuel Córdova llegó a Iquitos en 1917 y desde entonces empezó a aplicar sus conocimientos sobre las propiedades medicinales de las plantas" (Calvo 271). In *Las tres mitades* Ino Moxo's apprenticeship and his later practice become spliced together as a continuity to tell the tale of an indigenous becoming.

When Lamb ventured so far outside his area of expertise to defend this story based on questionable details, certainly issues of reputation were at stake, but perhaps, too, Lamb saw in the Upper Amazon something that Carneiro did not: a space where the story, however counter-

32. With headquarters in New York City, Astoria operated several logging plants throughout the Americas, including an important center in Iquitos. See below.

factual, was imaginable. Prior to the rubber boom, the idea that a person such as Córdova from outside an indigenous community could possess extensive plant medicinal knowledge made little sense, but the practices of rubber extraction so drastically altered spatial practices in Amazonia that cases such as Córdova's became a reality. The idea that an indigenous group would kidnap a young, fair-skinned boy and train him in their ways of life in order ultimately to use him to acquire firearms for protection becomes logical in a space where indigenous peoples were captured and enslaved to tap rubber in *correrías* sometimes organized and carried out by other indigenous communities trying to maintain good relationships with rubber overseers. Córdova's story may contain holes and inaccuracies, then, as Carneiro insisted, and indeed, he may have fabricated the whole story as he purportedly stated. At the same time, though, Córdova's story and the controversy that followed it point to circumstances in the Iquitos area that allowed for such a fantastic story to move into the realm of plausibility. The story emerges from the very real and yet unbelievable context of the dramatic restructuring of space put into motion by rubber barons eager to meet international market demands.

Although the Peruvian government established Iquitos as a militarized port after an 1859 war with Ecuador, less than one thousand people lived in “[c]ane and mud-walled houses covered with thatched roofs” on “grassy streets” (Stanfield 30).³³ Over the course of a few decades, this space would barely be recognizable. By 1900, over 10,000 people were living in Iquitos. Even though, as Weinstein notes, the system of extracting rubber changed very little from La Condamine's eighteenth-century observations through the rubber boom (1880-1910),

33. Before the construction of the shipyard and the militarization of Iquitos, the village had 300 residents. By 1862, there were 862 (Stanfield 31).

the scale of extractions drastically altered the space (9).³⁴ With numerous commercial houses located in Iquitos, while the city's population steadily rose, the number of adult men decreased in surrounding towns (Santos-Granero and Barclay 37). Iquitos, not yet the capital of Loreto at the time, became the center of the Peruvian Amazon. Engaged mostly in local trade, exchange and commerce prior to the boom, steamboats and other steam-powered machines created international export routes while also attracting industry and entrepreneurs to the city (Stanfield 31). In addition to giving the rivers new meaning, rubber collection cut paths through the forest as well. The collection of caucho from *castilloa* trees caused movement of populations in search of more specimens—these trees had to be destroyed to extract rubber and “it is rare to find [...] more than one rubber tree per acre” (Weinstein 14). Downriver movements of workers brought large populations to rural areas in a small period of time. For example, in 1884, 1500 men arrived to the small Pachitea River, a tributary of the Ucayali (Santos-Granero and Barclay 31). The movement of men through unmarked national territories also caused territorial conflicts with all bordering Amazonian nations: Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, and Bolivia. The most upheaval, though, occurred within the borders themselves in the lives of numerous Amerindian people who suddenly found themselves living in the space of an export economy. Many Amerindians were coerced into tapping rubber through violent *correrías* in which women and children were gathered for sale and men for work (Santos-Granero and Barclay 41). Santos-Granero and Barclay insist that *correrías* were not the main “recruitment” strategy and misguidedly use this fact to dismiss notions that the rubber economy operated under a system of terror. They say that most indigenous workers were “recruited” through what was called *habilitación* or *enganche*,

34. Historians and economists present a variety of dates to mark the years of the rubber boom across Amazonia. I am following Flores Marín's economic analysis of the rubber boom in Peru.

which consisted of supplying people with manufactured goods or tools in order to initiate a system of debt peonage. Certainly, engaging in debt peonage may have seemed advisable under the threat of a terror-ridden *correría*. Sometimes indigenous groups carried out *correrías* against other groups in order to remain on good terms with rubber tappers and overseers and avoid horrific ends. Santos-Granero and Barclay, using economically biased language, explain:

To avoid being subjected to *correrías* carried out by enterprising indigenous leaders, some headmen opted to establish similar exchange relations with other local rubber *patrones*, so as to be able to acquire firearms and confront their rivals on equal terms. This increased inter- and intratribal violence to previously unknown levels. (44)

Another way that people were moved by rubber was through *traspaso de cuentas*, which a sub-prefect of the province of Bajo Amazonas equated to “tráfico de carne humana” (qtd. in Flores Marín 61-62). In this system, an indebted worker could be transferred as goods to another rubber baron’s operations. Given the horror of this situation, people also moved to escape these outcomes, fleeing. In a short period of time, rubber changed what the jungle meant in people’s everyday lives and redirected their movements in space, often forcibly.

This dramatically shifting landscape remapped social contact zones, uniting diverse groups that had previously had little contact in the spatial practice of rubber extraction; *vegetalismo*, rather than developing parallel to these processes, emerges from them. Incredibly, so entrenched is the association of *vegetalismo* and rubber in the Upper Amazon that one of Luna’s informants, when asked about the origins of *ayawaskha* use for healing ritual, claimed that *caucheros* had discovered it (*Vegetalismo* 31). In fact, many academics contend that the Tukanoan (Tupi) people actually first used the plant concoction in this way—most affirm that the use of *ayawaskha* in healing ritual began in the Upper Amazon and spread downriver from there (Brabec de Mori 42). As Labate, Cavnar, and Freedman explain:

Though little is yet known about the origins and spread of ayawaskha in pre-Hispanic contexts, its use in colonial missions and frontier posts of the Upper Amazon was reported in historical sources before accounts of its wider dissemination in the Amazonian lowlands at the turn of the twentieth century as a result of the social, ethnic, and economic upheavals associated with the Rubber Boom. (3)

Because initially the predominant practice of rubber extraction in Peruvian Amazonia required felling the *castilloa ulei* or *castilloa elastic* tree, men had to continuously venture into new areas of the woods in order to find rubber sources.³⁵ In distant, isolated areas, these men, many of whom had come to the Iquitos area voluntarily hoping to make their fortunes, had to rely on Amerindian healers in times of medical necessity and according to Luna, “curious mestizos actually learned directly from Indian sources” (*Vegetalismo* 31). These circumstances led not only to the spread of ayawaskha vegetalismo but also to its modification with the incorporation of traditions and religious practices (Labate, Cavnar, and Freedman 6). Gow affirms that at the time of his study (1994), not only were the practices of ayawaskha shamanism relatively uniform

35. Although “caucho,” “siringa,” and “jebe” are often used synonymously, they actually correspond to different genuses. Caucho was a product of the *castilloa* trees whereas siringa or jebe was used to refer to the product of the *hevea*. The *hevea brasilienses* found mainly south and southwest of the Amazon River in Brazil produced a high quality rubber (siringa, jebe) and could be repeatedly tapped. However, because this tree is found primarily in low-lying regions of the Amazon, rubber tappers could only work it half of the year, during the low season. *Castilloa* trees, on the other hand, found concentrated in the northwestern basin produced a lower-quality rubber (caucho) but could be tapped year-round and gathered more quickly than siringa. Santos-Granero and Barclay insist that the distribution of trees was more heterogeneous than originally assumed and that both were associated with cultures of violence; however, they also affirm that in the Upper Amazon the rubber boom began with the tapping of the *castilloa* (31). Whereas the conditions of the *hevea brasilienses* gave rise to more or less stable sources of rubber from tappers who lived in huts near rubber sources, *castilloa* required men to continuously seek out new sources of rubber in isolated areas, in a semi-nomadic lifestyle. Beyer (*Singing*) and Blaustein discuss the different rubber economies caused in part by the characteristics of these trees.

throughout the Upper Amazon, they did not exist in areas where people have remained isolated from extractive missionary work and extractive practices. Rather than an endogenous practice of an isolated indigenous community, then, as Córdova's story would suggest, *ayawaskha* *vegetalismo* in fact becomes a palimpsest written and revised in numerous cultural contact zones. *Ayawaskha* shamanism has no single source and cannot be separated from its numerous transcultural elements. This excavation of Córdova's story shows that at its heart is "not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they [things] have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fashion from alien forms" (Foucault, "Nietzsche" 142). The spaces of the rubber boom were in fact central to the spread and adaptation of *ayawaskha* *vegetalismo*, but they were not the first contact zones where *ayawaskha* was brought into and changed by the spaces of social control.

I use the term "contact zone" to evoke Pratt's redeployment of this Bakhtinian concept meaning "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermath as they are lived out across the globe today" (7). However, Pratt's contact zones as well as related concepts in Latin American cultural studies—transculturation, heterogeneity, hybridity—have sometimes, in their emphasis on discourse analysis, overlooked the concrete physical and representational details where these processes unfold, tending instead toward a metaphorical consideration of the space of cultural contact. In contrast, the genealogy of *ayawaskha* *vegetalismo* analyzed here stays very close the physical spaces with their corresponding representations and representational meanings that made such contacts possible in the first place. Indeed, Pratt's use of the word "social space" in her definition alludes to the Marxian concept of social labor which Lefebvre later applies to space to emphasize that space is

not a “mental thing” or the “mental place” of philosophers but rather a combination of physical, mental and social factors (Lefebvre 11). Therefore, I build on the cultural studies concepts’ important work in breaking down the false binaries between “modernity” and “tradition” established by the Conquest and colonization of the Americas while also heeding Lefebvre’s call to examine critically the dimensions of space. In examining the uneven relationships of domination at work in the story of Manuel Córdova and his vegetalista practice, then, I emphasize the crucial role played by Córdova’s mobilization through capitalist spatial practice along the Upper Amazonian rivers as contact zones.

With the rubber infrastructure came steamboats that decreased the distance between riverine towns and communities, and Manuel Córdova, as a rubber overseer and *matero*, found himself in an advantageous position to transit these routes and thus acquire and spread healing knowledge among a diverse group of people. In the rubber economy as well as in the extractive cycles that followed in its wake—cotton (1920-1930s), *barbasco* (1930s-1940s), rosewood (1950-1955), fine wood (1910s to present)—national and international companies alike relied on the expertise of people familiar with Amazonian space, able to navigate the forest and locate and identify a variety of plants for raw materials (Santos-Granero and Barclay 150-61). Additionally, as Weinstein notes, due to Amazonia’s diversified pattern of plant and tree growth, “the Amazon also produced a labor force unlike those generally associated with enclave economies [of extraction]. Gathering necessitated a highly dispersed and mobile population of producers whose work routines could not be subjected to the usual forms of regimentation” (14). Córdova’s search for plants and trees allowed him to interact independently with numerous Amerindian communities. *Rio Tigre* does not mention by name all of the people that Córdova interacts with during his time as a *matero* and later a pharmaceutical taxonomist and Lamb’s guide, but it does

include interactions with people of the Jivaroan, Arawakan, Tukanoan, and Panoan linguistic groups—all of whom he claims to be able to communicate with using knowledge of Quechua—established as lingua franca in the Upper Amazon during the Jesuit missions—and Amawaka.³⁶ Córdova’s movement through space links these communities as he shares and exchanges plant medicinal knowledge with each, and this previously unimagined mobility was required and facilitated by Córdova’s employment and participation in the spatial structure of extraction, a structure which allowed for the mobility of only certain people.

In *Rio Tigre*, the narrative seizes on the asymmetry of this spatial practice in order to craft an image of Córdova as a masterful polyglot wizard. Freedman, in her study of contemporary “road shamans” along the paved route from Nauta to Iquitos, indicates that

[o]ne aspect of Amazonian shamanism that has been little researched, due to the academic tradition of situated ethnographies and the analytic divide between indigenous and non-indigenous people in contact zones, is the extent to which shamans have traveled and continue to travel over long distances to gain personal power. (Freedman 130)

Córdova’s biographic details, though, provide a concrete example of the connection between geographic travels and the development of personal shamanic power. The text’s mention of indigenous communities, rivers, and exchange of information emphasizes the geographic and cultural expanse of Córdova’s knowledge, but it also underscores Córdova’s ease of gaining access to these geographically and culturally diverse areas and their accompanying healing rituals. For example, when Córdova explains his decision to take a position with AIMCO, the emphasis is on the mobility required, but also facilitated by the position: “I knew this would

36. Córdova’s knowledge of Quechua apparently came from his mother, who was from Moyobamba, San Martín in north-central Peru in the high Amazon. He claims his ability to speak Amawaka comes from his time spent with the Huni Kuin, although as stated Lamb later defends that the Huni Kuin are Kashinawa, not Amakwaka people, both are from Panoan linguistic group.

require long field trips into the forest” (qtd. in Lamb, *Rio* 94). In this way, *Rio Tigre* exploits Córdova’s position of power within the spatial structure of the extractive economy while also quietly eliding any direct connection between Córdova and oppressive practices. In other words, the text uses Córdova’s control of his movement within space to control the image projected of him. Erik Camayd-Freixas refers to this discursive process of enunciated space as an ideological discourse in which a thinking subject articulates a space in order to move within it as a speaker. He writes, “It is, of course, a reciprocal process given that, conversely, in adopting a locus of enunciation, enunciated space is constructed” (108). During Córdova’s travels, *Rio Tigre* becomes a story about the superiority of Córdova’s medicinal knowledge when compared to other groups—a fact he attributes to the superior knowledge of the Huni Kuin who trained him. Indeed, he narrates that not only is he a sought-after practitioner of vegetalista healing, but also a teacher of plant medicine to all the indigenous people he meets along the rivers, therefore insinuating the superiority of his training. At one point, referring to the leader of a Secoya community where Córdova researched the medicinal plant *yoco*, Córdova laments, “Neither Santos nor any of the other Indians with whom I have worked since leaving Huni Kui [sic] possess the complete knowledge of the forest plants displayed by my former captors” (qtd. in Lamb, *Rio* 115). Córdova’s story suggests, therefore, that travel makes a shaman more powerful not only by expanding his medicinal knowledge through exchange, but also by giving him the ability to construct and tell a story about those travels that further enforces his position of authority.

The story, though, indirectly shows how the spatial practice of extraction facilitated movement for this man unaffiliated with any indigenous community, underscoring how uneven relations of power in space relate to knowledge acquisition. Had it not been for the spaces

opened up by the rubber economy, Córdova would have gone down in history as a farmer, as he did in *Hombres del Amazonas*, a farmer whose first paid position was aboard a steamship owned by Julio C. Arana. Instead, Córdova's ability to earn employment outside of the binds of debt peonage afforded him the opportunity to reinvent himself as a *vegetalista* but also made him complicit with companies and practices responsible for drastically restructuring Peruvian Amazonia along former colonial divides as part of a neocolonial order. In fact, Córdova may have been a creditor in the *habilitación* system. At the opening of Calvo's novel, Córdova's innocent story of offering to teach the Huni Kuin how to collect rubber while living among them so that they could obtain manufactured goods has all the trappings of the system of *habilitación* used to recruit Amerindian rubber tappers, albeit told from a very cleverly crafted perspective. I can only speculate, but I do think that a long-term relationship of *habilitación* seems a more likely scenario for a person like Córdova to have established a lasting interaction with an indigenous community and acquire medicinal plant knowledge. But the story of an accomplished *vegetalista* who began his career aboard a steamship transporting rubber for one of the most infamously ruthless rubber barons—Arana was responsible for an estimated 30,000 Huitoto and Bora deaths (Lagos 11)—and who then exploited Amerindian workers through the notoriously unjust system of *habilitación* to produce rubber establishes a problematic point of departure for the romanticized narrative of innocent adolescent-cum-*vegetalista* who defended indigenous medicinal practices and ways of life. Instead, in *Las tres mitades*, Córdova displaces the colonial guilt of the rubber economy to his father, fashioning himself as an innocent child drawn into the forest by Ximu's *ícaros*: “Mi padre vino buscando ser cauchero....¿Yo? Yo quise y no quise, era muy niño....Con un *ícaro* eso fue que Ximu me hizo venir, de llamado. Como si yo fuera espíritu de protección, así me hizo venir” (Calvo 207-8). In reality, the spatial practices of extraction

facilitate Córdova's free movement. In other words he, and most likely other *vegetalistas* as well, was part of the destructive spatial practices that Calvo fashions as antithetical to his shamanic persona in *Las tres mitades*.

Córdova's story of apprenticeship among the Huni Kuin, I argue, serves as something like a magician's sleight of hand to distract from the dirty trick that creates the illusion. Among *vegetalistas*, as it turns out, stories such as Córdova's are not uncommon, although Luna notes that of the stories he has heard, Córdova's is particularly "dramatic" (*Vegetalismo* 21). Freedman, building on Taussig's notion of constructed exoticism in postcolonial shamanism, states, "Their initiation journeys, typically confabulations of real and imagined trips, all include some contact with remote tribal forest people constituting their 'wild' pole of power" (Freedman 141). Anthropologists such as Luna and Gow, who have done fieldwork in the Upper Amazon, agree that underlying these stories is an "ideological assumption that forest Indians are the ultimate source of shamanic knowledge, and that any powers acquired directly from them are of particular value" (Gow 96). In other words, these stories aim to authorize a *vegetalista's* practice as valid. Certainly, one factor at play in these ideological assumptions is the expectation fulfillment of those who seek out *vegetalistas* for medical intervention. This bidirectional process in which "[s]hamans of mixed blood have to position themselves with constructed images that are of interest to their audience" is a topic of Taussig's famous study (Labate, Cavnar, and Freedman 7).³⁷ Part of the effectiveness of these constructed images involves their ability to appear distant from the world of the urban patient perceived as modern, urban, scientific and familiar.³⁸ At the

37. See *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man*.

38. Although this image construction may seem to falsify in some ways the shamanic practice, research from medical anthropology suggests that "all forms of healing—whether medical or nonmedical, orthodox or complementary, modern or traditional—make use of this phenomenon to some extent (Helman 6). Indeed, it may

same time, though, vegetalismo's relegation to an "other" space allows the shaman to locate his learning in a perceived "untouched" indigenous space rather than in the modern spaces of extraction. Indeed, the dramatic specifics of Córdova's story are a sort of magic that points away from any involvement with the questionable workings of extractive cycles. Those details may in fact be a part of the non-ordinary reality in which he acquired his knowledge, but by eliding the ordinary reality altogether, he effectively writes over this past with an alternative version of his story.



Figure 10. Logging rails overgrown with vegetation at site of Astoria mill
Photograph by the author

actually aid the healing process. Fulfilling a patient's expectations establishes a context in which the patient believes she can be healed, even if those beliefs are based on colonialist dichotomies, and belief in turn can enact the placebo effect defined as "any 'pill, potion or procedure' (Wolf 1959) where belief plays an important role" in producing a measurable physiological or psychological response (Helman 6).

The Astoria Importing and Manufacturing Company. Coming to port at the small community of Caserío Astoria, a twenty-minute motorboat ride downriver from Iquitos on the Amazon, the motorist tells me, “Es feo el puerto.” Indeed, in low season, to climb up to the community, one



Figure 11. Overgrown sawmill infrastructure at former Astoria site
Photograph by the author



Figure 12. Rusted metal crane and overgrown sawmill infrastructure at former Astoria site
Photograph by the author

must walk through soft, muddy earth, make an awkward climb amidst vegetation and rock to a broken concrete staircase reinforced with wooden boards. Today, banana crops dominate the landscape, and an inattentive pedestrian may not notice the rails snaking beneath her feet and through these agricultural fields (see fig. 10). Following the tracks, one reaches a series of abandoned sawmill structures, rusted and standing on foundations now compromised by intruding vegetation (see figs. 11 and 12). These industrial ruins mark the site of what was once one of the largest hardwood mills in the world, with a capacity of 20,000 board feet per day (E. Tomlinson 316).

Specializing in cedar and mahogany to satisfy bourgeois tastes for luxury lifestyles far away from centers of extraction, AIMCO's control of the local waterways established a near-monopoly on the exploitation of fine wood in the Iquitos area. In 1937 approximately 2,500,000 square feet of cedar were shipped by steamer from Iquitos to New York (E. Tomlinson 316). To say that local memory of this company's operations are negative would be an understatement. A 2008 development plan written by the Municipalidad Distrital de Punchana (Maynas, Loreto) recalls that this

empresa de capitales norteamericanos que habría de convertirse en la única compañía exportadora de especies maderables, gracias al respaldo que tenía del gobierno de Augusto B. Leguía. Era monopólica y abusiva, gran aliada de la empresa naviera Booth Line de Londres que desde el 22 de febrero de 1905 tenía la concesión exclusiva del muelle que se ubicaba en la calle Loreto por esos años y la navegación fluvial a puertos del extranjero. (República del Perú 10-11)

While little remains of this calculating goliath in Caserío Astoria, the impact of the company's spatial interventions survives in Córdova's legacy. I focus on the intersection of AIMCO's spatial practices and Córdova's shamanic practices—rather than his work for Arana, for example—for two important reasons. First, perhaps due to deliberate concealment, less information is known about Córdova's work for Arana or the rubber industry in general. Second,

Córdova's employment with AIMCO is given an unequivocally positive spin in *Las tres mitades* as a company interested in collecting and preserving Córdova's knowledge, whereas the workings of AIMCO reveal an ethos very much in contradiction to Ino Moxo's Amazonia as represented by Calvo.

A bit of background on AIMCO's use of space beyond Amazonia illustrates how distant—both geographically and symbolically—the commodities produced by AIMCO were from the sites of raw material extraction. AIMCO was one of many iterations of the sawmill companies owned by the “dynastic” Williams family of New York (Callahan 120).³⁹ Initially a small cabinet-making business, the company grew and changed over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to become “the oldest and largest firm in the world dealing in mahogany and other imported cabinet woods,” bringing in “literally the forest riches of the entire world” from countries such as India, Australia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), the Philippines, Russia, France, and of course several countries of Latin America including Peru (Callahan 120, 123). Callahan explains, “[W]herever there was a wood species demanded by designers or craftsmen, there was a Williams agent ready to send it to New York” (121). They specialized in mahogany veneer for cabinets on luxury sailboats, Steinway pianos, and Gibson guitars in addition to flooring plywood. A 1930 advertisement in the magazine *Motor Boating* touts, “When you buy

39. These numerous iterations of the over six generations of Williams—whose family tree resembles that of the Buendía—include Williams and Dawson Cabinet Makers (1824), Williams and Smith (1838), Smith and Williams (1851), Ichabod T. Williams (1870), Ichabod T. Williams & Sons (1882), George D. Emory Company (c. 1900), Otis Astoria Mahogany Company (c. 1900), Astoria Importing & Manufacturing Co., inc. (c. 1900), Compañía Astoria Peruana, S.A. (1929), Astoria Pan-Americana, Inc., Ichabod T. Williams & Sons, Inc (1957), Thomas R. Williams doing business as Ichabod T. Williams & Sons (1964). For more on the history of the company, see Callahan.

your boat do not be satisfied with the bare statement that cabinet work is Mahogany. Be sure it is Genuine Mahogany. The finest Genuine Mahogany comes from the jungles of Mexico, Central and South America and the West Indies...” (348). Clearly, AIMCO understood how access to raw materials from distant foreign lands could increase commodity value. The company achieved this access through a fluvial spatial practice along international waterways. 1838, the year that the Williams family began construction of their first New York sawmill site, also marked the beginning of transoceanic steam navigation on the side-wheeler *Sirius* (Callahan 121). Nearly a century later, in 1922, the company was able to begin construction of what would be at the time the largest mahogany saw and veneer mill in the world along the Hudson River in New York. This new site—consisting of two miles of railroad siding for direct access to purchasers—followed three other mammoth operations that were subsequently abandoned by the company along the river as it expanded. Rising to success during the Industrial Revolution and strategically situated along the waterways of one of the world’s most important entrepôts, the Williams family was involved in establishing a importing/exporting and distribution routes across water and land, carving the path for a spatial practice to create and satisfy bourgeois tastes.

As in these New York operations, in Iquitos AIMCO took the necessary steps to produce a space to meet these demands. After the decline of the rubber trade in Iquitos in 1921, AIMCO survived as the only Iquitos company whose headquarters was not located in Peru (Santos-Granero and Barclay 144). In other words, when the importing/exporting industry experienced a recovery period in the 1940s, AIMCO was the only company whose revenues primarily went abroad. Known locally as the *Compañía Astoria Peruana* or simply “la Astoria,” the company began its Iquitos operations to extract mahogany from the surrounding forests. Positioning its sawmill just downriver from the Amazonian metropolis on the Amazon at the mouth of the

Nanay—the river topography has since changed and the site now sits beyond the Nanay—the company was able to build a large and imposing operation outside the city while drawing easily from local resources in Iquitos (see fig. 13). Furthermore, “Since there are no land routes of transportation in the ‘montaña,’ everything connected with the mahogany business moves by water. In an emergency a band sawblade or a repair part may come by air, but the raw materials as well as the processed lumber constitute a one-way traffic down the river” (Hoy 7). This downriver location, then, also facilitated exportation of timber once processed locally. At the same time, as an established multinational company, Astoria’s U.S. capital was carefully invested to discourage competition from smaller operations upriver. According to Hoy, most loggers were independent and could sell to the company of their choice, but Astoria’s *modus operandi* consisted of a post-rubber boom instantiation of *habilitación* that guaranteed a steady flow of timber. The company, though, set up relationships of *habilitación* with large (but smaller than Astoria) commercial operations on which they depended for raw materials (Santos-Granero and Barclay 158). As soon as the chance arose, though, Astoria put a stop to this codependency:

When in 1937 Congress approved the regulation for timber-extraction permits (Ballón 1991: II, 258), Astoria was quick to request six concessions along the Ucayali River. These were granted the same year, with a total area of 105,254 hectares (Padrón 1939). This move was aimed at eliminating the brokerage of the traditional merchant houses. (Santos-Granero and Barclay 158)

In establishing their operations in Iquitos, Astoria seemed to consider both logistical questions of spatial practice as well as the site’s ability to represent prestige with large properties, riverfront presence, and capital to attract suppliers and acquire local partners.

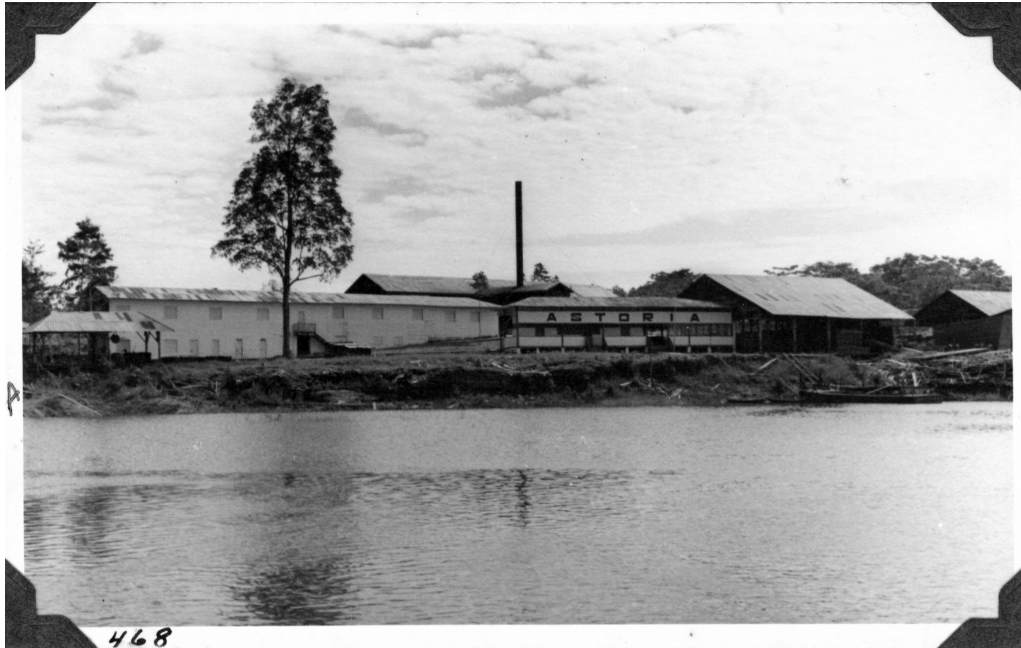


Figure 13. Astoria Sawmill on the Amazon River, c. 1947-1948
Photo by Rómulo Sessarego
Reproduced with permission from the Biblioteca Amazónica of Iquitos, Peru

With this spatial and economic precedence, though, came a heavy hand in the flattening of Amazonian space throughout Peru's Loreto department. Although Astoria also took advantage of international demands for barbasco and rosewood oil, its primary use of space in the Iquitos area, as mentioned, focused on the extraction of mahogany.⁴⁰ Mahogany can be cut year-round, but the less rainy season in August and September provides more favorable conditions for increased productivity. Prior to meeting Córdova, Lamb wrote a book called *Mahogany of Tropical America* (1966), and in the introduction laments the "depletion of mahogany growing stock," although from a supply and demand perspective, not an ecological one (ix). The felling of mahogany trees requires not only cutting the trees themselves—"frequently 100 feet in height; commonly 4 to 5 in diameter, sometimes more"—but also clearing a path to roll the logs down to

40. Barbasco was used to manufacture vermifuge, repellent, insecticide, and even a salt-resistant paint used on naval helmets during the World War II. Rosewood oil is a key ingredient of the popular perfume Chanel No. 5.

the nearest stream (Lamb, *Mahogany* 5). Because mahogany is a canopy tree, seeking its light by shooting above competitors for sunlight, these trees do not require access to the waterways, where light is more readily available for survival. As a result, they sometimes grow far from rivers. According to Hoy, logs were generally cut into segments from eight to twenty feet long, meaning that a path that wide had to be cleared in the forest all the way to the water (6). Each cycle of extraction, of course, would require loggers to move further inland, therefore implying more tree casualties in cutting the paths down to the rivers in a process that Homma has referred to as scarcity-producing “predatory or annihilation extraction” (64). Lamb reports that trees further inland sometimes required “ox teams [...] for hauling” (*Mahogany* 35). Additionally, due to the complicated pre-production process, “of all mahogany logs cut only 50 percent are finally loaded on ship” (Lamb, *Mahogany* 40). Meeting international market demands involved a blatant disregard for adverse local effects at the site of extraction, and these processes literally transformed the land around Iquitos through deforestation. Even when the Peruvian government implemented a reforestation program in the 1940s, which mandated loggers replant two trees for every one cut the Forestry Service found enforcing that law very difficult (Hoy 6). As the largest operator of mahogany in the Iquitos area, Astoria played a crucial role in devastating the local ecosystem through deforestation, therefore depleting the jungle that Calvo works to defend in his creative work.

Despite the complexities of Astoria’s involvement in the Iquitos culture of extraction, *Las tres mitades* and *Rio Tigre* present a rather simplified representation of Astoria as a patron of Córdova’s shamanic practice. As a preface to César’s conversation with Córdova about his time working for Astoria in *Las tres mitades*, César explains, “Su sueldo en esa época, duplicaba al que percibía un médico por labores hospitalarias” (Calvo 271). The U.S. capital also paid him a

pension, which Calvo claims allowed for a comfortable retirement, giving Córdova the freedom to continue practicing plant medicine “sin necesidad de cobrar honorarios a los pacientes” (Calvo 271). Given these circumstances, which may indeed have been true, Astoria seems a generous benefactor to a man who wishes to practice vegetalismo and help patients at little or no cost to them. Additionally, Astoria’s diverse practices allowed the company’s president, Douglas Allen, to recognize and see the potential value in Córdova’s skills. In *Rio Tigre*, Córdova goes so far as to suggest that his work for Astoria “would lead to understanding and perpetuation of the knowledge I had accumulated at such risk from a source which probably no longer exists” (Lamb 94). As I have already demonstrated, this prediction was most likely true, but not because Córdova’s catalogues of knowledge for Astoria would document a disappearing practice, but rather because Córdova’s movement through space to collect plants and his interactions with people who use them would create networks of shamanic knowledge. Instead Calvo uses Córdova’s story of his employment with Astoria to draw and highlight a sharp line between what he construes as the indigenous world and the modern world, a practice in danger of extinction and modern ways of cataloguing knowledge. Within this framework, Astoria’s efforts seem a noble move to document knowledge that appears locally in disuse and low esteem.

Yet when considering the broader context of this company’s operations, Córdova’s employment as a medicinal plant taxonomist signifies the beginning—or at least potential beginning—of a new extractive cycle of plants for pharmaceutical fabrication abroad, a spatial practice that seems to grate against the rather idealized representation of Astoria in *Las tres mitades*. Taxonomical cataloguing of medicinal plants works within the framework of pharmacological determinism, which reduces the complex workings of vegetalista medicine, for example, to chemical properties. As Beyer explains,

The terms *pharmacologicalism* and *pharmacological determinism*...capture the unstated premise that the effects of a substance are entirely determined by chemical structure, thus ignoring the effects, among other things, of traditional settings, the authoritative presence of a healer, social pressures both within and outside the ceremony, and expectations of particular outcomes. It ignores as well the presumably complex interactions *among* plants deliberately used for modulatory effects during the ceremony, including not only nicotine and other tobacco alkaloids but also any of the scores of additional plants that have been added to the ayawaskha drink. (*Singing* 225)

In a moment, I will discuss the implications of pharmacologicalism for the holistic practice Calvo describes in *Las tres mitades*, but first, I want to underscore how pharmacologicalism is also a form of mapping that within the extractive economy organizes “nature” using scientific discourse to divide it into singular parts readily translatable to specific treatments needed abroad. Furthermore, this process is very similar to the process of translation criticized in *Las tres mitades*. Both processes invent a one-to-one correspondence that directly contrasts the irreducible polysemy entailed in Córdova’s definition of ayawaskha. Pharmacologicalism must impose this one-to-one correspondence to render the forest legible, a first step in resource extraction. In *Rio Tigre*, Córdova explains that not only did he identify plants, he separated and identified their individual parts (95). This pharmacologist simplification is the equivalent to the scientific forestry described by Scott in which trees are planted in militaristic-looking rows. He writes that in the “new legible forest,” “[c]ommercial logic and bureaucratic logic were, in this instance, synonymous; it was a system that promised to maximize the return of a single commodity over the long haul and at the same time lent itself to a centralized scheme of management” (18). In the same way that the *castilloa ulei* and *elastica* as well as *hevea brasilienses* come to signify tires, and mahogany trees indicate pianos and furniture in the rough, plants are marked as pills for foreign medicine cabinets, “modern” cures for “modern” living. Indeed this pharmacological discourse seeps into *Las tres mitades*’s first pages, when Ino Moxo

enumerates all of the sounds of the jungle. Toward the end of the several-page-long passage, he describes the plants, but whereas the previous sounds listed are merely descriptive, each of the plants becomes equated with cures: “y la *wankawisacha* cura para siempre a los alcohólicos...la *zarzaparrilla* sana de la sífilis, y la *papaya* verde elimina la sarna y la parasitosis” (Calvo 28). He is no longer tuning the patient’s ear to the jungle but rather itemizing plants for commodification. Ironically, the novel that supposedly resists taxonomy in all categories is actually made possible by taxonomy. In documenting knowledge of Upper Amazonian medicinal plants within this extractive discourse, Córdova does in a sense preserve knowledge but only from within a scientific epistemology with teleological aims.

Furthermore the underlying assumption entailed in this pharmacologicalism, that plant medicine may be extracted as a specimen from its Amazonian context and used by scientists and medical doctors to heal elsewhere, directly contradicts the holistic practice Córdova describes in *Las tres mitades*. Córdova’s work to identify “[e]n total [...] acaso, dos mil” species is not easily reconciled with his disdainful statements in *Las tres mitades* about virakocha epistemology and application of plant knowledge (Calvo 272):

Algunos virakocha, los menos virakocha, toleran determinados conocimientos nuestros, sólo los relativos a los vegetales, los que ellos consideran conocimientos. Pero no ven que los vegetales son apenas el extremo visible de la cura. Los virakocha aplican nuestros vegetales y fallan, no hay buen resultado. Los vegetales no son nada si no se hallan insertos dentro de su total, en la totalidad de conoceres que nos han sido legados, en esa infinita arquitectura de realidades sagradas, cada una con sus puertas precisas. Ignoran que esas puertas son una sola, única, y que su llave es múltiple. Y que esa llave nunca se repite y es siempre onixuma. (Calvo 250)

Córdova seems to suggest with this statement that a specific kind of space is required for healing to take place, not only an active substance. That space involves the representational meaning ascribed to it by the vegetalista and his healing ritual, and crucially, the spaces of the doors

opened by ayawaskha into non-ordinary reality. Here, Córdova is referring to the practice in ayawaskha vegetalismo of consuming the mixture not as a treatment but rather as a way to gather information. Beyer explains,

before the influence of medical models and expectations, ayahuasca was not itself a healing medicine but rather a *diagnostic tool*. Shamans—and their patients—did not drink ayahuasca for healing; they drank ayahuasca to *get information*—identify the seducer of an unfaithful spouse, the secret dealings of a business rival, the location and nature of the malignant darts within the patient’s body. (Beyer, “Special Ayahuasca” 3)

Ayawaskha grants access to the shamanic state of consciousness not separate from but “hidden” from the ordinary reality, and this access allows the vegetalista to learn the cure (Harner 20). In this way, Córdova’s practice is empirical, but it is an empiricism that relies on a context not wholly visible in the ordinary reality of traditional scientific empiricism. This context is created with the shaman and the plant and cannot be packaged for export.

Ayawaskha wisdom dictates that shamanism take place not in another place but rather in another relationship to a place through a non-ordinary state of consciousness, but Calvo locates Ino Moxo, and perhaps more importantly, the source of his shamanic knowledge, in another time and space that he uses to oppose the modern spaces that literally plague his body and make him sick. The categories that imply mutual exclusivity undergirding *Las tres mitades*—forest/city, indigenous/modern, wholesome/malevolent—are made stable only by the selective inclusion of details from Córdova’s life. When one is able to see how the space for vegetalista exchange was produced along with the capitalist spaces of extraction, the text’s critique begins to fall apart. Manuel Córdova is not separate from and in opposition to modernity; rather, the archaeology of his story presented here shows how a practice built on the inseparability of these categories nevertheless clings to them to draw attention away from unsettling truths. Astoria may have supported Córdova’s vegetalista practice and allowed him to treat patients for free, but it also

mapped the Upper Amazon for commodification regardless of the local consequences. The vegetalista's knowledge most certainly has indigenous sources, but separating those from the influence of Catholic missions and the practices of the rubber boom remains difficult over hundreds of years of history. The spaces of capitalist extraction destroy ecology but also create new routes for local and international exchanges of information. These circumstances call into question Calvo's consideration of extractive economies as indisputably nefarious, for extraction allows Córdova to reinvent himself. At the same time, though, the story Calvo tells about Córdova obscures the way that the uneven power dynamics at work in capitalist space provided Córdova with advantages that not all practitioners of plant medicinal knowledge have, allowing him to become a respected international sensation.

Commodifying the Shaman

The smoothing of the complex vegetalista topography just described in *Las tres mitades* hides the underlying power structures that create the phenomenon of Manuel Córdova, therefore allowing him and his practice to appear magical. Magic, though, is just one piece of a colonialist dichotomy that places Otherness elsewhere, in another space, as in this chapter's epigraph from Taussig. These dichotomies intermingle and blur in the spaces of extractive capitalism in and around Iquitos, and the fact that Calvo's text does not show this interrelationship effectively fetishizes the shaman as a commodity. Marx's discussion of commodity fetishism emphasizes the disconnect between objects as the products of labor and their ascribed value in the market so that the social relation between capitalists and exploited laborers appears "the fantastic form of a relation between things" (45). Marx also underlines the "magic and necromancy" that attaches to products as a result (47). In the economy of ayawaskha shamanism, and particularly ayawaskha

tourism, though, the thing produced for consumption is the ayawaskha journey. Just as Marx describes that in commodity fetishism, a commodity's labor time is "secret" and "hidden" by exchange value, *Las tres mitades* conceals the oppressive systems of labor whose spatial practices produce a phenomenon such as Ino Moxo, capable of guiding an ayawaskha session (46). In obscuring any relationship between Córdova's services and the modern world of potential patients, the text commodifies and fetishizes a consumable shamanic experience as a capitalist fantasy disconnected from the nefarious forms of production affecting the spaces where it emerges.

In commodifying the shaman, though, the text also re-presents Iquitos as a space where access to shamanism unadulterated by the processes of modernity is possible. Explained another way, Calvo creates what Lefebvre calls an "illusion of transparency" wherein mental projections of Iquitos and Amazonia as separate from modernity in the ayawaskha session appear to coincide thereby making these spaces seem "innocent, as free of traps or secret space" (28). Just as the text conceals the relationship between social labor and the production of vegetalista shaman, it also hides the relationship between the spatial practices of capitalist extraction and the production of Iquitos as a shamanic space. As a result, Iquitos, like Córdova, takes on a "magical" quality as a place where César escapes what he describes as the deleterious processes of modernity to find refuge and healing.

Las tres mitades further lures readers like César to Iquitos by emphasizing that this shamanic commodity will not always be available. In César's interactions with Ino Moxo, the shaman explains that his time to go has nearly come. At one point during the session, César hears a voice say, "Tengo que marcharme, dice Ximu apenándose apenándose, [sic] saliendo del campo de mis visiones. Y no es el jefe Ximu. Es el jefe Ino Moxo" (Calvo 241). Ino Moxo

repeats throughout the text the urgency of his departure, an obvious euphemism for his impending death. As he begins to shift his energies toward the end of his life, thoughts of leaving become interspersed with thoughts of his legacy. Córdova laments not having anyone to pass his knowledge on to:

Lo único que ahora es pena para mí, bastante pena, es no haber podido hallar a alguien para dejarle todo lo que aprendí en los bosques. Mis hijos, cada cual por su propia inclinación, son profesionales de otras ramas. Mis nietos, peor: ninguno es curioso para los vegetales, como yo. Seguramente no podré dejar discípulo. Aunque todavía pienso vivir mucho más . . . (Calvo 275)

Córdova makes this statement about living much longer when, according to the text, he is ninety-five years old, a young age for a shaman when compared to Don Javier's claim to have lived "sesenta millones de años" (Calvo 111). However, Córdova would pass away one year after the events described in the text, and his late life regrets about a lack of disciples, spoken to a white interlocutor from Lima, implies a need for more people like César to come experience and potentially learn plant medicinal knowledge presented as not appreciated locally. Even though Córdova was no longer alive when Calvo published *Las tres mitades*, the text's title reminds that there are "otros brujos de la Amazonía." As long as people continue to travel to them and seek them out, Iquitos will remain a commodified space where outsiders and foreigners can come to consume ayawaskha and therefore consume this fetishized ayawaskha experience. Just as ayawaskha vegetalismo changed and spread through the spatial practices of the Jesuit missions and the rubber boom, ayawaskha vegetalismo lives on within the spaces produced by the global markets of the exotic in late capitalism. Paradoxically, then, by representing Córdova's work with César as a dying practice, the text keeps it alive.

As should be clear, *Las tres mitades* does not transparently represent Amazonia from within as critics have enthusiastically reported; rather, the text's presentation of Iquitos as a place

where anyone can experience the jungle from within becomes part of the processes that convert the bustling Amazonian metropolis into a spiritual center for visitors and tourists. I do not mean to suggest with this statement that there exists a one-way relationship of cause and effect from Calvo's text to Iquitos as a mecca for ayawaskha tourism. Rather, through a reciprocal process of spatial production, the representational space of Iquitos, imbued with the meanings projected by Calvo's imagination, adheres to the space physically in the construction of jungle lodges, touristic restaurants with ayawaskha menus, and international routes connecting the world to the Peruvian Upper Amazon. In other words, the city becomes its representation through a process of intertextuality. Westphal explains this process succinctly, "[T]he representation fictionalizes the source from which it emanates. Representation, which is re-presentation, amounts to a staggered updating of this source in a new context" (76). Calvo's text appears to come from within the jungle because it has intervened in and affected the space that it describes. This chapter has mentioned many details effaced in order for Iquitos to be reshaped in this way. One final omission worthy of mention is the fact that Iquitos itself is almost entirely absent from *Las tres mitades*. Although all of the visions in the text take form before César's closed eyes in Iquitos, the text almost never shows the city, save for a brief mention of walking the streets to César's father's house and sleeping there toward the end. As a sleepy dream space of empty streets, the Iquitos of *Las tres mitades* remains far removed from the loud, polluted, and fast-paced Iquitos of present-day. Writing space alone, then, does not reshape it. Change must happen in the space itself to conform it to the representation. *Las tres mitades* is an important text that emerges early in the development of ayawaskha tourism to draw people to Iquitos for a specific purpose, creating pathways to the city and encouraging a spatial practice that today is the work of websites, ayawaskha testimonies, and travel guides. Calvo's fictional Amazonia provides an

example of how a text intervenes to match a spiritual void elsewhere with an economic opportunity within Amazonia.

Evidence for this interrelationship between text and spatial practice abounds in other literature on shamanic experiences and ayawaskha shamanism specifically. Two examples illustrate this clearly. First, Michael Harner inadvertently refers to the power of texts to create space in his discussion of what he calls “[t]he return of shamanism” (xi). He lists many reasons for an increased interest in shamanism “even to urban strongholds of Western ‘civilization’”; these include reactions to the “Age of Science” and its inability to account for all of human experience, a simultaneous development of holistic approaches that use the mind to impact healing, and the need for a spiritual ecology in a time of environmental crisis (xi). He does not mention directly the importance of textual representation in this resurgence, but the language he uses certainly suggests this dynamic: “They [people who turn to shamanism] searched in the books of Castaneda and others for road maps of their experiences, and sensed the secret cartography lay in shamanism” (xii). Harner may not directly recognize how texts precede space and allow for the causes he describes to take shape, but this almost parenthetical mention of the link between books and cartography makes this connection quite clear. Dobkin de Rios also failed to understand this relationship when she began her anthropological work on ayawaskha shamanism in the Upper Amazon. In a section of a text co-authored with Roger Rumrill called “The Anthropologist and Drug Tourism: Mea Culpa,” they write,

Over the last 39 years she presented more than 70 papers and talks on her research, in 15 different countries, as well as publishing widely in this area. It never occurred to de Rios that her work had diffused to a general drug-seeking public, until she began to be invited to a few conferences that were less academic, with committed, drug-seeking men and women eager to learn more about ayahuasca—in effect, the drug tourist described in this book. (78)

Dobkin de Rios regretfully recognizes that while she thought she was merely describing a phenomenon, she was actually creating it, too. Calvo most likely failed to see this connection as well, and indeed, he could not have predicted that *Las tres mitades* would become part of what at the time of writing was barely an incipient transformation of Iquitos.

Economic exchange is the practice that binds the text to the place in this case. César never mentions a monetary transaction in the text, which may perhaps point to another omission, but whether he paid for the experience with Córdova or not, he presents it as a commodity that outsiders can consume. In fact, *Las tres mitades* has all of the elements of the touristic consumption of Otherness except the monetary exchange. Picard and Di Giovine, in their edited volume on “exotic” tourism, write,

[T]hey [consumable forms of Otherness] constitute ceremonial grounds in which tourists ‘play, pray and pay’ (Graburn, 1983b)—in other words, situations in which they liberate and activate their body, consume accumulated economic and emotional surplus, and re-enchant and sometimes also fundamentally change the moral and cosmological order of the world. (2)

Las tres mitades does this by representing Iquitos as a space where one can dissociate from modernity and all of the cultural and historical guilt that may come with living a modern life in order to experience the world from a perspective unclouded by modern living and modern ailments. Remembering that *Las tres mitades* touts its verisimilitude with material evidence, this possibility extends beyond the world of fiction and becomes more than the story of one person’s encounter with other ways of thinking and understanding the world. Cities like Lima outside of Amazonia become the spaces of physical and spiritual illness, and Iquitos within Amazonia becomes an “antídoto contra el pensamiento hegemónico occidental” (Badini 163). Badini recognizes the dangers of ayawaskha commodification while excluding Calvo’s text as an actor in this process. In an article in which he praises the novel as a faithful representation of the

mental rearrangings acquired during the ayahuasca session, he also points to the fact that “[u]na vez obtenida una medicina sintética derivada de la *ayahuasca*, no sería tan difícil su paso a droga de consumo generalizado: en este sentido la historia es harto conocida” (165).⁴¹ Like other critics, Badini fails to see how Calvo is like an ayahuasca tourist in his commodification of the ayawaskha journey as a service available for modern living through economic exchange.

Anthropologists who study ayawaskha tourism, or shamanic tourism in general, are divided as to the implications of the commodification of the practice. On what I will call the less-critical side of the discussion are arguments that emphasize positive outcomes of an otherwise problematic process of cultural exchange. Beyer and Otis suggest that such tourism helps keep a waning practice alive. Ghasarian and Winkelman focus on the positive outcomes for Western tourists who report experiencing therapeutic change in their lives. Fotiou and Labate take a somewhat defeatist position arguing that the present changes are simply a continuation of the changes to vegetalismo enacted since colonial Jesuit missions. Tupper, approaching a neo-materialist perspective, goes so far as to argue, “Assessing the future of ayahuasca also requires entertaining seriously the provocative suggestion that ayahuasca itself may have some agency in its recent global ascendance” (131). Each of these positions correctly acknowledges the changes affecting ayawaskha vegetalismo as part of larger processes of transcultural exchanges in a

41. Such a process was attempted. In 1981, the same year that *Las tres mitades* was published, Loren Miller, director of the International Plant Medicine Corporation, patented the ayahuasca vine with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, “claiming a new plant variety he called *Da Vine*, and in 1986 obtained exclusive rights to sell and breed the plant. It was not until ten years later that Amazonian indigenous people became aware that one of their sacred plants was now under U.S. patent law” (Beyer, *Singing* 381). After years of fighting the Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA) finally won the patent suit.

globalized economy; however, they fail to examine constructively what the potential consequences of these changes are for those in positions of lesser power.

On the other hand, some critics, while recognizing the truth in the above statements, rightly insist on examining the negative impacts that the internationalization of ayawaskha has on local communities. Dobkin de Rios, one of the first and most vehement opponents of these transformations, disputes them primarily from a standpoint of trying to preserve what she deems a culturally authentic practice by guarding it against outside changes. Although her concern is for how the internationalization of the practice could harm indigenous communities, she fails to follow through with specific examples, and her argument therefore wrongly overlooks the agency of ayawaskha shamans in this transformation and accuses those that choose to alter their practice for international consumers as charlatans. Labate clarifies some of the concrete negative effects that Dobkin de Rios alludes to by focusing on the “asymmetric north-south” relations” at work in this exchange that promote the economic exploitation of vegetalistas (194). Brabec de Mori describes the implications for medical care in areas where healers have transitioned to focus on international clients, therefore limiting the access of local peoples who cannot afford, do not trust, or do not have access to “hospital medicine”: “Therefore, many indigenous and mestizo families are nowadays trapped in a vacuum of medical care” (44). Beyer focuses on the negative effects of decontextualizing the practice and even recognizes the impact of the figure of Córdova Ríos in this process. He describes “the chance for the tourist, in imitation of the archetypal Córdova Ríos, to bring back the redemptive secrets of the Edenic rain forest, as decontextualized as an indigenous basket on a suburban wall” (*Singing* 352). Fotiou recognizes in this superficial engagement with Amazonian shamanism a “further marginalization of indigenous knowledge” (177). Each of these perspectives indirectly points to the idea that

although the internationalization of ayawaskha in the global market creates new spaces for exchange, it fails to overturn the power structures that marginalize, oppress, and enact violence on individuals and communities in Amazonia.

These more skeptical approaches to vegetalismo in the Upper Amazon align more closely with what my discussion of *Las tres mitades* ultimately argues. Calvo crafts a text that attempts to present a postcolonial perspective not only of history but also of reality itself comprised of space, time, and perception. However, in commodifying that perspective as a consumable experience available to those who can travel to Iquitos, the text reinscribes itself in the very power structures it criticizes. Though there is a clear drive to expose and condemn the crimes of coloniality in Amazonia, the text itself fails to decolonize because it continues to reinforce the capitalist spatial practices that support uneven power structures. On the one hand, promoting and engaging in ayawaskha tourism—even incipient tourism such as César’s—appears to differ from the spatial practices of extraction, whether rubber, petroleum, timber, or medicinal plants. Rather than the exportation and depletion of raw materials, ayawaskha tourism involves going to Amazonia in search of a transformative experience. On the other hand, as in the extractive cycles that have ravaged Amazonia throughout history, ayawaskha tourism maintains and supports bourgeois lifestyles elsewhere. Just as mahogany trees become luxury kitchen cabinets and local plants cure faraway ailments, an ayawaskha session becomes a kind of medicine that makes “modern” life more bearable.

Las tres mitades, through its duplicitous blending of fiction, biography (of Córdova), and autobiography (of Calvo)—it is worth noting that Calvo does not publish it until after Córdova’s death—performs a similar function on Iquitos, presenting it to potential consumers as a pleasant space of cultural exchange where social and economic differences and transactions are hidden

from view. Although César claims to assume an indigenous perspective through ayawaskha, the only indigenous people he encounters are those of the visions dictated by Córdova. They are images of past injustices, but the contemporary state of indigenous communities in Amazonia remains hidden from César as it potentially does from those who currently travel to Iquitos to take ayawaskha. César believes he is offering others a way out of the hierarchies of modernity, but in fact, he hides the work of those hierarchies and re-presents Amazonia as a place useful primarily for the ways it can help those far away from it. The effect of this hiding absolves those who follow in César's footsteps from considering the local impact of their actions. Calvo manages to write a novel that outwardly condemns the production of capitalist space in Amazonia while surreptitiously reproducing that space through César's proto-ayawaskha tourism. *Las tres mitades* is an important text in Latin American literature not because it manages to show Amazonia from within, but rather because it dramatizes the limits of attempting to decolonize from a subject position of relative power.

Conclusions

Counter-mapping Comparative Studies

The novels that I have considered deal with historical moments and Amazonian regions distant from each other, and yet they share a tension between maps and counter-maps because they are nourished by the same overwhelming reality of capitalist spatial production in a fluvial geography positioned at the frontiers of national and economic modernity. Each of my authors encountered firsthand conflicting spatialities working to shape and define different areas of Amazonia; in riverscapes remote from economic and industrial centers, the linear infrastructures of urban progress were entangled with riverine ecologies, displacing local practices and thus, placing them at risk. Rivera's knowledge of water and land routes acquired locally from people living along Colombia and Venezuela's border rivers defied projections by legislators and engineers. Likewise, *La vorágine*'s account of the movement of people beyond the rubber camps suggests that deserters, Amerindians, and fugitives established furtive spatial practices that evaded the reach of rubber barons' panoptic eyes. Gallegos experienced Guayana on his brief trip as a space where modern economic practices were erasing what he viewed as more traditional practices and beliefs, and he retold this conflict in *Canaima*. Souza visited the ruinous site of the EFMM at Brazil's swampy border with Bolivia and used historical archives and invention to recreate what he saw as the violent destruction of men and ecology in Amazonia as part of the railroad industry's "mad" efforts to reach international markets. Calvo, a longtime visitor and summer resident of Iquitos, experienced the transformation of the Amazonian city throughout several cycles of twentieth-century extraction and conveyed a sense that industry and practices grounded in Amerindian knowledge of Amazonia grate against each other in *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo*. Although the personal and historical circumstances behind each novel

differ, the texts emerge as part of the same phenomenon of the ineluctable clash between maps and counter-maps in a vast region deemed virgin by an extrativist gaze but in fact shaped by a long history of human intervention.

Authors' approaches to translating the dense layers of spatial conflict between official maps and local maps take different forms. Each author's text tries to account in some way for local spatialities missing from the official record, and in each case this correcting and expansion of the map's perspective through fiction is somewhat overt in the texts. However, authors convey varying degrees of awareness of their limitations in intervening in Amazonia's spatial misrepresentation. To place them on a spectrum of authorial assuredness in their geographic understanding, at one extreme, Calvo crafts himself as an insider to Amazonia and universalizes his experience as a privileged interior map of all experiences in the Amerindian Upper Amazon. In *Las tres mitades*, Calvo's interpretation becomes the spatial practice of two Césars who are one. In this way, his efforts to diversify the spiritual and symbolic landscape he describes in fact radically singularizes the shape of the Upper Amazon, creating a fabricated testimony of Amazonia from within. Souza, the only Amazonian-born author considered here, writes from the opposite end of the spectrum, painfully aware of his position as an outsider despite living most of his life in Manaus. He does not project a singular authoritative perspective onto a spokesperson character, but rather presents a pluralistic view of the Abunã River from the points of view of multiple characters whose experiences contradict one another. Both authors narrate stylized versions of local spatial practices that attempt to wrinkle the smooth surfaces of hegemonic maps but with opposing approaches to codifying space for representation.

Between these two extremes, Rivera and Gallegos teeter between an awareness of the gaps in their knowledge of Amazonia and confidence in their ability to understand and represent

alternative spatialities. Rivera does not falsify his version of the Putumayo and beyond as in Calvo, but he does imagine himself as more of an authority than he is. His interaction with local peoples throughout Colombia's eastern frontier certainly gave him insight into the region that Colombia's legislators and engineers were lacking, and he uses this knowledge to denounce egregious crimes of cartography and compel a more open approach to using maps. However, his awareness of his more comprehensive spatial knowledge sometimes blinds him to the remaining deficiencies in his understanding due to his status as an outsider. On the one hand, in *La vorágine*, he mocks the authorial confidence of the urban poet Arturo Cova in drawing maps of his location throughout Amazonia, but on the other hand, he leaves unexamined his own ability to interpret and communicate alternative spatial knowledge when he vehemently defends the text in the controversial aftermath of its publication. Finally, Gallegos's *Canaima* constitutes the most complicated case of an Amazonian mapping novel considered here. He goes to Guayana acknowledging his lack of knowledge to gather information for the novel and projects his spirit of adventure onto his character, Marcos Vargas. Through Marcos, he tries to show insight into a Guayana unavailable in the official geographic discourse, but Gallegos neither acknowledges nor escapes his elite locus of enunciation. As a result, he unknowingly moves Marcos through symbolic territories that Gallegos cannot fully account for. As an author, he is divided between wanting to see Guayana from within, as he attempts to allow Marcos to do, and Othering and, therefore, misunderstanding what he encounters therein. *Canaima's* mapping writes over other counter-maps, and the text remains unable to account for them. Rivera's and Gallego's texts depart from a recognition of the inadequacies of official maps of Amazonia and use local knowledges to oscillating degrees of awareness and deference in order to remedy them.

Because the novels that I have discussed are situated along the tenuous line between fiction and reality, they must be read in conjunction with contemporary maps, not as a means of fact checking, but rather to examine fully the layers of cartographic discourse that have overlapped and clashed in producing spaces for economic and literary consumption. Indeed, because of the unique incorporative capacity of novels à la Bakhtin, the textures of many other cartographic discourses emerge in mapping novels—whether in latent or explicit form—and demand examination in order to understand the positioning of such novels’ interventions in space in relation to their contemporary contexts. My emphasis on the ways that indigenous sources, local practices, as well as historiography and capitalist mappings, are embedded in the examined novels’ narrative discourse has underscored the relative incompleteness of a wide variety of forms of Amazonian maps: no map can account for all that it pretends to chart. Although the novel has sometimes been considered a hegemonic genre mode complicit with grand ideological narratives, I argue from a New Historicist perspective that the fissures in its literary cartographies offer yet another avenue through which counter-narratives can emerge. Cartographic tensions both provide insight into Other cartographies and reveal the ways in which all cartographies are ultimately reductive. My methodological movement back and forth between fictional representation, non-fictional representation, the fictional qualities of non-fictional representation, and the non-fictional qualities of fiction, complicates the relationship between representations of Amazonia and compels an interdisciplinary approach to engaging with maps—literary or otherwise—in order to broaden spatial perspectives.

Together, the four chapters of this dissertation work to unravel the tangles of representation and misrepresentation that have made Amazonia a legible space for outsiders, and they also offer a fresh comparative model for Latin American literary studies. In emphasizing the

ways in which literature functions in conjunction with mapping, charting, construction, and extraction in Amazonia, I demonstrate the fruitful paths of analysis opened by situating comparative studies in their appropriate cartographic contexts. Although the Abunã of the EFMM may seem distant from Marcos Vargas's adventures in eastern Guayana, they constitute the same kind of space: riverine ecologies situated beyond major urban infrastructures where practices that attempt to immobilize the moving landscape are interwoven with counter-maps that communicate fluidity and call attention to the violence needed to erect straight lines and solid foundations in Amazonia. My focus on this spatial tension unites disparate regions in this pan-Amazonian study and also questions the conventional clustering of comparative Latin American studies, which often follow national or continental divisions and sometimes justify studies across continents according to historical periods. While such studies have certainly provided important insights, my work leads me to conclude that the time has come to examine rigorously the spatio-temporal knots from which Latin American literature has emerged. Rather than accept and reproduce established parameters for literary comparison, literary critics, too, must begin to counter-map and ask themselves which texts merit if not require consideration together.

By mapping novels in this way, the canon will inevitably open itself to more diversity of voices and texts. Somewhat obscure and controversial texts like César Calvo's *Las tres mitades*, for example, will have to be considered seriously for the ways that they have intervened in the production of Latin America spaces. Likewise, more canonically marginal authors such as Márcio Souza can offer alternative perspectives from which to enter Latin America's literary topography via uncommon pathways. Perhaps the most important contribution that can be made by this and future place-based literary studies is the uncovering of the critical role that

Amerindian maps, texts, and cosmologies have played in the construction of Latin American spaces. Thorough comparative place-based studies cannot overlook the ways that canonical national texts such as *La vorágine* are written over Amerindian territories and nourished by their representational spaces. Furthermore, as neo-materialist studies such as Héctor Hoyos's consideration of rubber in Colombian literature take interest in the role of non-human agents in historical processes, the kind of comparative work that I am arguing for offers an ecocritical pathway into how plants such as ayawaskha, for example, animals, and their by-products have shaped Latin American spaces and intervened in their mapping, literary and otherwise.¹ In this way, mapping novels and other forms of literature provide a more complete understanding of the literary textures of Latin American spaces.

My findings reveal the irreducible intertextuality of maps and the spaces they produce and sustain that mapping novels—whether understood as novels that map or the critical work of charting literary cartographies—allow(s) for unique insights into the ways that Amazonia has been perceived, conceived, and lived, to again evoke Lefebvre. In particular I have considered how every form of mapping contains forms of counter-mapping, and every counter-map also contains other maps.² Stated otherwise, every effort to account fully for a geographic space must rely on already existing geographic knowledge often suppressed or deliberately silenced to protect the map's apparent coherence, and every effort to correct the omissions of a map through counter-mapping will unavoidably write over other forms of spatial knowledge and practice.

1. In a talk given at the Conferencia anual de la revista Cuadernos de Literatura in Bogotá in 2014, Hoyos combines the theoretical perspectives of Michael Pollan and Fernando Ortiz to suggest the agency of caucho in Colombian history and literary studies.

2. Here I am borrowing the syntax of Arturo Escobar's argument, via Arce and Long, that "every act of development is at least potentially an act of counterdevelopment" (*Territories* 176).

Maps are constantly at odds with each other, and the analysis that I have advanced allows this process to remain open, continuously bringing counter-maps to the surface to diversify the cartographic landscape.

This dissertation has interrogated the relationship between representations and geographic referents that forms that cartographic landscape. The Amazonian cartographies that I have examined in the preceding pages emerge from contexts of Amazonian transformation and devastation, but they also alter the shape and meaning of those contexts. In other words, I have shown referential representation to be also necessarily cartographic, and therefore, formative. By focusing on literary cartographies that intersect and collide with other forms of geographic rendering, I have also emphasized that diverse forms of mapping—whether comprised of literary discourse, scientific measurement, geographic description, railroad linearity, or extractivist codification—all rely on fiction to establish the illusion of cartographic perfection that allows for representation to resemble referent and referent to resemble representation. In this cartographic conquest of Amazonia, literature, too, sometimes obfuscates its literariness by purporting to represent a “truer” Amazonia closer to reality than the “false” representations of other interested parties: Rivera presents *La vorágine* as a manuscript; Gallegos positions his geographic description as more “alive” than that of contemporary geography manuals; Souza retells an elided piece of history that cannot be corroborated; Calvo insists on the biographic reality of his text. At the same time, each text acknowledges its fictionality in different ways, but even this apparent self-disclosure serves to strengthen the authority of literary versions of space by diverting attention from the ways that invented prose can then bleed back into reality, imbuing space with representational meaning, fusing with the material textures of the world, and altering spatial practice.

My focus has been on Amazonia because its flowing waters that in dry season swallow masses of full-grown trees at the rivers' edges provide an easily observable indication of the ways a static map cannot sufficiently account for a shifting landscape. In other words, Amazonia constitutes a vast region that uniquely highlights the limits of scientific mapping and the need for other perspectives in understanding space; however, the insights provided by these conspicuous contrasts apply to other spaces as well. Elsewhere in Latin America and in other areas affected by colonialism, neocolonialism, and neoliberalism, spaces are seized and appropriated for use with incomplete and often specious maps that selectively correspond to the areas they represent. I have argued that literary texts can loosen the grip that other maps have on such territories. The work to show how this may be so in other Latin American regions needs to be done as well. My suspicion is that if we examine the spatial vortexes created by maps and counter-maps elsewhere, we will find that people have been devoured by open plains, mountains, and cities as much as by jungles throughout Latin American literary history.

Works Cited

- Aboul-Ela. *Other South: Faulkner, Coloniality, and the Mariátegui Tradition*. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 2007. Print.
- Álamo Ybarra, Carlos. *Nuestras fronteras occidentales: Debate histórico jurídico sostenido entre Venezuela y Colombia desde 1833 hasta nuestros días*. Caracas: Editorial "Patria," 1927. Print.
- Albuquerque, Severino João. "Construction and Destruction in *Macunaíma*." *Hispania* 70.1 (1987): 67–72. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 Mar. 2015.
- Almoína de Carrera, Pilar. "Canaima: Arquetipos ideológicos y culturales." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 325-339. Print.
- Alonso, Carlos J. *The Spanish American Regional Novel: Modernity and Autochthony*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.
- Amazon Watch. "Indigenous Peruvians Win Amazon Pollution Payout from US Oil Giant." *Amazon Watch*. n.d. Web. 18 Mar. 2015.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Revised ed. London: Verso, 2006. Print.
- Anderson, Brian. "Toé, the 'Witchcraft Plant' That's Spoiling Ayahuasca Tourism." *Motherboard*. 19 Feb. 2013. Web. 27 Sept. 2014.
- Andrade, Mário. *Macunaíma*. Rio de Janeiro: Livros Técnicos e Científicos, 1978. Print.
- . *O turista aprendiz*. São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1976. Print.
- Andrade, Oswald de. "Manifesto antropófago." *Revista de antropofagia* 1.1 (1928): 3, 7. Web.
- Badini, Riccardo. "Ayahuasca y resistencia indígena en la Amazonía peruana." *Discursos sobre (l)a pobreza: América Latina y/e países luso-africanos*. Ed. Martin Lienhard. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2006. 159–67. Print.

- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin, TX: U of Texas P, 2004. Print.
- Balza, José. “Are You or Aren’t You?” *Canaima*. Ed. Michael J. Doudoroff. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996. 293–295. Print.
- Baumgarten, Carlos Alexandre. “O novo romance histórico brasileiro: O caso gaúcho.” *Letras de hoje: Estudos e debates de lingüística, literatura, e língua portuguesa* 37.2 (2001): 75–82. Print.
- Bear, Jaya. *Amazon Magic: The Life Story of Ayahuasquero & Shaman Don Agustin Rivas Vasquez*. 1st ed. Taos, NM: Colibri Pub, 2000. Print.
- Beckman, Ericka. *Capital Fictions: The Literature of Latin America’s Export Age*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2013. Print.
- Beebee, Thomas O. “The Geopolitics of Amazônia in Souza’s Fiction.” *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature & Culture: A Web Journal* 11.3 (2009): 1–11. Web. 10 Mar 2015.
- Belton, Benjamin Keith. *Orinoco Flow: Culture, Narrative, and the Political Economy of Information*. Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow P, 2003. Print.
- Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2010. Print.
- Beverley, John. *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004. Print.
- Beyer, Stephan V. *Singing to the Plants: A Guide to Mestizo Shamanism in the Upper Amazon*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 2009. Print.
- . “Special Ayahuasca Issue Introduction: Toward a Multidisciplinary Approach to Ayahuasca

- Studies.” *Anthropology of Consciousness* 23.1 (2012): 1-5. Print.
- Bilbao, Bibiana A., Alejandra V. Leal, and Carlos L. Méndez. “Indigenous Use of Fire and Forest Loss in Canaima National Park, Venezuela. Assessment of and Tools for Alternative Strategies of Fire Management in Pemón Indigenous Lands. *Human Ecology* 38 (2010): 663-673. Print.
- Blanco Barros, José Agustín. “Historia de la sociedad geográfica de Colombia: Antecedentes geográficos.” *Sociedad Geográfica de Colombia. Academia de Ciencias Geográficas*. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.
- Blaustein, Rich. “Bouncing Back.” *Native Peoples Magazine* 26.2 (2013): 52. Print.
- “Blue Morpho Shamanic Ayahuasca Center & Retreat in Peru.” n.d. Web. 20 June 2014.
- Boadas, Antonio R. *Geografía del Amazonas venezolano*. 1a ed. Caracas: Editorial Ariel-Seix Barral Venezolana, 1983. Print.
- Bollinger, Rosemarie. “Tres escritores brasileños.” *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos: Revista mensual de cultura hispánica* 439 (1987): 85–98. Print.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. “Poema en audio: ‘Del rigor en la ciencia’ de Jorge Luis Borges en la voz de Jorge Luis Borges.” *Voz y poesía en la poesía iberoamericana*. n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2015.
- Bourguet, Marie-Noëlle, Christian Licoppe, and H. Otto Sibum. “Introduction.” *Instruments, Travel, and Science: Itineraries of Precision from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*. Eds. Marie-Noëlle Bourguet, Christian Licoppe, and H. Otto Sibum. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Brabec de Mori, Bernd. “Tracing Hallucinations: Contributing to a Critical Ethnohistory of Ayahuasca Usage in the Peruvian Amazon.” *The Internationalization of Ayahuasca*. Eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Henrik Jungaberle. Münster, Germany: Lit Verlag, 2011. 23–

47. Print.

Brannstrom, Christian. "Renewed El Dorado." *Mapping Latin America: A Cartographic Reader*.

Ed. Jordana Dym and Karl Offen. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 2011. 269–272. Print.

"Brazil." *Ethnologue*. n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2015.

Brushwood, John S. "Inside and Outside *Canaima*." *Canaima*. Ed. Michael J. Doudoroff.

Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996. 297–303. Print.

Buell, Lawrence. "Crosscurrents of Urban Theory." *Configurations* 7.1 (1999): 109–118. Print.

Burroughs, William S. *The Yage Letters [by] William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg*. San

Francisco: City Lights Books, 1963. Print.

Bushnell, David. *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in Spite of Itself*. Berkeley:

U of California P, 1993. Print.

Callahan, John C. "The Mahogany Empire of Ichabod T. Williams & Sons, 1838–1973." *Journal*

of Forest History 29.3 120–30. Print.

Calvo, César. *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros brujos de la Amazonía*. Iquitos, Perú:

Proceso Editores, 1981. Print.

Camacho Guizado, Eduardo. "La novela del posmodernismo." La vorágine: *Textos críticos*. Ed.

Montserrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 229–231. Print.

Camayd-Freixas, Erik. "Enunciating Space, Locating Identity: Garcilaso de La Vega's

Comentarios reales de los Incas." *Mapping Colonial Spanish America*. Eds. Santa Arias

and Mariselle Meléndez. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2002. 102–20. Print.

Campbell, Carl C. *Colony & Nation: A Short History of Education in Trinidad & Tobago, 1834–*

1986. Kingston, Jamaica: IRP, 1992. Print.

Cândido, Antônio. *Literatura e sociedade: Estudos de teoria e história literária*. 11a ed. Rio de

- Janeiro: Academia Brasileira de Letras, 2010. Print.
- Carlín. "Carlincatura 05-02-2015." *La República*. n.d. Web. 18 Mar. 2015.
- Carneiro, Robert L. "Chimera of the Upper Amazon." *The Don Juan Papers: Further Castaneda Controversies*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1990. 94–98. Print.
- Carpentier, Alejo. *Los pasos perdidos*. Mexico City: Editorial Lectorum, 2002. Print.
- Carvalho, João. *Amazônia revisitada: De Carvajal a Márcio Souza*. Rio Branco: EDUFAC, 2005. Print.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*. 1968. New York: Washington Square P, 1990. Print.
- Castillo Zapata, Rafael. "Catalysis and Catharsis in the Narrative Dynamic of *Canaima*: An Essay in Textual Chemistry." *Canaima*. Ed. Michael J. Doudoroff. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996. 305–312. Print.
- Castro, Juan Cristóbal. "Herencias nocivas: Políticas espectrales de la figura de Rómulo Gallegos en la Venezuela revolucionaria." *Cuadernos de literatura* 17.33 (2013): 52-75. Print.
- Castro-Klarén, Sara. "El 'Manifiesto Antropófago' o la contienda Sócrates-Caraíbe." *Heterotropías: Narrativas de identidad y alteridad latinoamericana*. Ed. Carlos A. Jáuregui and Juan Pablo Dabove. Pittsburgh, PA: Instituto Internacional de Literatura Iberoamericana, 2003. 237–261. Print.
- . "Recorridos chamánicos: Sobre el afecto cognitivo en Arguedas, W.H. Hudson y Deleuze y Guattari." *Cuadernos de literatura* 18.35 (2014): 151-172. Print.
- Censo indígena de Venezuela: Nomenclador de comunidades y colectividades*. Caracas: República de Venezuela, Presidencia de la República, Oficina Central de Estadística e Informática, 1985. Print.

- Césaire, Aimé. *Discours sur le colonialisme*. 2e ed. Paris: Presence Africaine, 1955. Print.
- “César Calvo la Leyenda.” *YouTube*. 23 Aug. 2010. Web. 15 May 2012.
- Chapin, Mac, and Bill Threlkeld. *Indigenous Landscapes: A Study in Ethnocartography*.
Arlington, VA: Center for the Support of Native Lands, 2001. Print.
- Chapman University. “Marcio Souza at Chapman University.” Online video clip. *YouTube*.
YouTube, 17 May 2012. Web. 10 Mar 2015.
- Chavez Rodriguez, Luis Ivan. “Testimony and nature in *Las tres mitades de Ino Moxo y otros
brujos de la Amazonia* by Cesar Calvo.” Diss. Boston U, 2011. Ann Arbor: UMI, 2011.
Print.
- Cohen, Marleine, ed. *Uma saga amazônica, através da minissérie Mad Maria*. São Paulo: Globo,
2005. Print.
- Constitución Política del Ecuador de 2008. Web. 19 Nov. 2013.
- Cooper, Martin. *Brazilian Railway Culture*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars,
2011. Print.
- Corcuera, Arturo. “Uso de la palabra: César Calvo y su corazón ardiendo bajo tierra.” *Perú 21*.
17 Aug. 2005. Web. 26 Mar 2015.
- Córdova-Ríos, Manuel. *Wizard of the Upper Amazon: The Story of Manuel Córdova-Rios*. 1971.
2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975. Print.
- Cornejo Polar, Antonio. “El indigenismo y las literaturas heterogéneas: Su doble estatuto socio-
cultural.” *Revista de crítica literaria latinoamericana* 4.7/8 (1978): 7–21. *JSTOR*. Web.
30 Sept. 2014.
- Coronil, Fernando. *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela*. Chicago: U
of Chicago P, 1997. Print.

- Craig, Neville B. *Recollections of an Ill-Fated Expedition to the Headwaters of the Madeira River in Brazil*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1907. Print.
- Crespi, Roberto Simón. “La vorágine: Cincuenta años después.” *La vorágine: Textos críticos*. Ed. Montserrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 417-430. Print.
- Criollo, Fernando. *Elementos de geografía de Venezuela: Escritos para uso de las escuelas*. 9a ed. Maracaibo, Venezuela: Hermanos Bellosso Rossell, 1906. Print.
- Cunha, Euclides da. *À margem da história*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1999. Print.
- Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. Minneapolis: U of Minneapolis P, 2011. Print.
- Delgado, Ricardo. “Canaima y el Parque Nacional Canaima.” *Ricardo Delgado – Thin Karawak*. *Wordpress*. 12 June 2013. Web. 23 June 2014.
- Delprat, François. “El realismo poético de Rómulo Gallegos: Recepción crítica de *Canaima*.” *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 341–356. Print.
- DeVries, Scott. “Swallowed: Political Ecology and Environmentalism in the Spanish American *Novela de la Selva*.” *Hispania* 93 (2010): 535-546. Print.
- DiAntonio, Robert E. *Brazilian Fiction: Aspects and Evolution of the Contemporary Narrative*. Fayetteville: U of Arkansas P, 1989. Print.
- Dimas, Antonio. *Márcio Souza*. São Paulo: Abril Educação, 1982. Print.
- Dobkin de Rios, Marlene. *Amazon Healer: The Life and Times of an Urban Healer*. Dorset, UK: Prism P, 1992. Print.
- . “Drug Tourism in the Amazon: Why Westerners Are Desperate to Find the Vanishing Primitive.” *Omni* 16.4 (1994): 6. Print.
- . “Interview with Guillermo Arrévalo, a Shipibo Urban Shaman, by Roger Rumrill.” Trans.

- Marlene Dobkin de Rios. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* 37.2 (2005): 203–07. Print.
- . “*Wizard of the Upper Amazon* (Book Review).” *American Anthropologist* 74.6 (1972): 1423–24. *ProQuest*. Web. 4 Sept. 2014.
- Dobkin de Rios, Marlene, and Róger Rumrill. *A Hallucinogenic Tea, Laced with Controversy: Ayahuasca in the Amazon and the United States*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008. Print.
- Dole, Gertrude E. “Los Amahuaca.” *Guía etnográfica de la Alta Amazonía*. Vol. 3. Balboa, Panamá: Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 1998. 125–273. Print.
- Doudoroff, Michael J. “Introduction.” *Canaima*. Ed. Michael J. Doudoroff. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996. xv–xviii. Print.
- Douglass, Malcolm P. *The History, Psychology, and Pedagogy of Geographic Literacy*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998. Print.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Lost World*. New York: Berkley Publishing Corporation, 1965. Print.
- Edney, Matthew H. *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1997. Print.
- Editorial PUJ. “Conferencia annual de la revista Cuadernos de Literatura.” Online video clip. *YouTube*. YouTube, 9 Sept. 2014. Web. 28 May 2015.
- “El hombre que aprendió de los amahuacas el secreto de las plantas.” *Proceso: Revista de la Amazonía peruana* 18 (1972): 20–21. Print.
- “Episode 1.” *Mad Maria*. TV Globo, 2005. Television.
- Escárraga, Tatiana. “Los pueblos que se tragó el carbon.” *El Tiempo.com*. N.pag., 22 June 2013. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.
- Escobar, Arturo. “Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?” *Latin America at a Crossroads, Cultural Studies* 24:1 (2010): 1-65. Print.

- . *Territories of Difference: Place, Movement, Life*, Redes. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2008. Print.
- Escovar Wilson-White, Alberto. "Bogotá en tiempos de la celebración del primer centenario de la independencia." *Historia Mexicana* 60.1 (2010): 525-559. Print.
- Fabian, Johannes. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002. Print.
- Falkenburger, Kurt. *As botas do diabo*. São Paulo: Clube do Livro, 1979. Print.
- Fausto, Boris. *A Concise History of Brazil*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Cambridge UP, 2014. Print.
- Ferreira, Manoel Rodrigues. *A Ferrovia do diabo*. São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 2005. Print.
- Ferreira, Rocio, and Jossianna Arroyo. "Entrevista com Márcio Souza." *Lucero: A Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 5 (1994): 2–8. Print.
- Fidel Suárez, Marco. Letter to the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs. 2 Feb. 1916. TS. Fondo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Diplomática y Consular: Comisión de Límites entre Colombia con Venezuela. Archivo General de la Nación, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Flores Marín, José. *La explotación del caucho en el Perú*. Lima: U Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 1977. Print.
- Foot Hardman, Francisco, ed. "Entrevista: Oficio de escritor." *Márcio Souza*. São Paulo: Instituto Moreira Salles, 2005. 23–49. Print.
- . *Trem fantasma: A modernidade na selva*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1988. Print.
- Forero, Juan. "In the Amazon, Potion Offers 'Window into the Soul.'" *NPR.org*. 18 Aug. 2010. Web. 13 June 2014.
- Fotiou, Evgenia. "On the Uneasiness of Tourism: Considerations on Shamanic Tourism in Western Amazonia." *Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond*. Eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Clancy Cavnar. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2014. 159–81. Print.

- Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Routledge, 1972. Print.
- . "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History." *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice. Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*. Ed. Donald F. Bouchard. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1977. Print.
- . "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias." Trans. Jay Miskowiec. *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22-27. Print.
- Franco, Jean. "Imagen y experiencia en *La vorágine*." *La vorágine: Textos críticos*. Ed. Montserrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 135-148. Print.
- "Frank Bruce Lamb (1913 - 1992) - Find A Grave Memorial." n.d. Web. 4 Sept. 2014.
- Freedman, Françoise Barbira. "Shamans' Networks in Western Amazonia: The Iquitos-Nauta Road." *Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond*. Eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Clancy Cavnar. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2014. 130-58. Print.
- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Heart*. Trans. Donald Macedo and Alexandre Oliveira. New York: Continuum, 1998. Print.
- . *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum, 2011. Print.
- French, Jennifer. *Nature, Neo-colonialism, and the Spanish American Regional Writers*. Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College P, 2005. Print.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The 'Uncanny.'" *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud. Vol. 17 (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works*. Trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth P, 1955. 217-256. Print.
- Fuentes, Carlos. *La nueva novela hispanoamericana*. México: J. Mortiz, 1969. Print.
- Gallegos, Rómulo. *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de

- Relaciones Exteriores, 1996. Print.
- . “Un ejemplo de todos los días para todos los días.” *Una posición en la vida*. Mexico City: Ediciones Humanismo, 1954. 162-181. Print.
- . “El factor educación.” *Una posición en la vida*. Mexico City: Ediciones Humanismo, 1954. 58–81. Print.
- . *Gobierno y época del Presidente Rómulo Gallegos*. LXI. Caracas, Venezuela: Congreso de la República, 1991. Print.
- . “Revista de instrucción pública.” *Una posición en la vida*. Mexico City: Ediciones Humanismo, 1954. 23–30. Print.
- García, Natalie. “Indígenas restringirán acceso al tepuy Roraima, no los tomaron en cuenta para establecer normativas.” *Informe 21*. 6 Apr. 2011. Web. 23 June 2014.
- Garzón Nieto, Julio. Telegram to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Oct. 14, 1927. TS. Fondo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Diplomática y Consular: Comisión de Límites entre Colombia con Venezuela. Archivo General de la Nación, Bogotá, Colombia.
- Gauld, Charles Anderson. *The Last Titan: Percival Farquhar, American Entrepreneur in Latin America*. Stanford: Institute of Hispanic American and Luso-Brazilian Studies, 1964. Print.
- Ghasarian, Christian. “Journeys to the Inner Self: Neo-Shamanism and the Search for Authenticity in Contemporary New Age Travel Practice.” *Tourism and the Power of Otherness: Seductions of Difference*. Eds. David Picard and Michael A. Di Giovine. Buffalo, NY: Channel View Publications, 2014. 176–91. Print.
- “Global Statistics.” *The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)*. n.d. Web. 22 Oct 2013.

- Gomes, Márcia Letícia. "Estrada de Ferro Madeira-Mamoré na literatura." *Labirinto* 17.0 (2014): 39–49. Print.
- González Echevarría, Roberto. "Canaima and the Jungle Books." *Canaima*. Ed. Michael J. Doudoroff. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P, 1996. 331–348. Print.
- . *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.
- Gow, Peter. "River People: Shamanism and History in Western Amazonia." *Shamanism, History, and the State*. Eds. Nicholas Thomas and Caroline Humphrey. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994. 90-113. Print.
- Granado, Miguel Ángel. *Geografía de Venezuela y nociones de geografía universal para escuelas de segundo grado*. Caracas: Librería Española de I. Puig Ros, 1928. Print.
- Guerrero, Gustavo. "De las notas a la novela: El memorándum de Gallegos y la génesis de *Canaima*." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 359–375. Print.
- Gutman, Pablo. "Putting a Price Tag on Conservation: Cost Benefit Analysis of Venezuela's National Parks." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34 (2002): 43-70. Print.
- Halperín Donghi, Tulio. *Intelectuales, sociedad y vida pública en Hispanoamérica a través de la literatura autobiográfica*. Mexico: U Nacional Autónoma de México, 1981. Print.
- Hanson, E. Mark. *Educational Reform and Administrative Development: The Cases of Colombia and Venezuela*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1986. Print.
- Harley, J. B. "Historical Geography and the Cartographic Illusion," *Journal of Historical Geography* 15 (1989): 80-91. Print.
- Harner, Michael J. *The Way of the Shaman*. 10th anniversary ed. San Francisco: Harper & Row,

1990. Print.
- Harvey, David. "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80.3 (1990): 418–34. Print.
- . *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Hecht, Susanna B., and Alexander Colburn. *The Fate of the Forest: Developers, Destroyers, and Defenders of the Amazon*. Chicago, IL: U of Chicago P, 2011. Print.
- Helman, Cecil G. "Placebos and Nocebos: The Cultural Construction of Belief." *Understanding the Placebo Effect in Contemporary Medicine*. Ed. David Peters. London: Churchill Livingstone, 2001. 3–16. Print.
- Herhily, Peter H., and Gregory Knapp. "Maps of, by, and for the Peoples of Latin America." *Human Organization* 62.4 (2003): 303-14. Print.
- Hernández Bencid, María Soledad. "Periodismo criollo en 1808: Monseñor Mariano de Talavera y la Gaceta de Caracas." *Tierra firme* 24.96 (2006): n. pag. Web. 23 June 2014.
- Herzog, Werner, dir. *Fitzcarraldo*. Werner Herzog Film Produktion, 1982. Film.
- Homma, Alfredo K.O. "Modernisation and Technological Dualism in the Extractive Economy in Amazonia." *Current Issues in Non-Timber Forest Products Research*. Ed. M. Ruiz Pérez and J.E.M. Arnold. Indonesia: Center for International Forestry Research, 1996. 59–81. Print.
- Hoy, Harry E. "Mahogany Industry of Peru." *Economic Geography* 22.1 (1946): 1–13. *JSTOR*. Web. 10 June 2014.
- Hvalkof, Soren, and Hanne Veber. "Los ashéninka del Gran Pajonal." *Guía etnográfica de la Alta Amazonía*. Eds. Fernando Santos and Frederica Barclay. Vol. 5 Balboa, Panamá:

- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 2005. 75–279. Print.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística (Venezuela). “XIV Censo de Población y Vivienda 2011.” nd. Web. 23 Apr. 2014.
- Izcue, Nora de, dir. *Responso para un abrazo: Tras las huellas de un poeta*. Naella Producciones S.A.C., 2013. Film.
- Jauss, Hans Robert. *Toward an Aesthetics of Reception*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1982. Print.
- Kane, Adrian Taylor, ed. *The Natural World in Latin American Literatures: Ecocritical Essays on Twentieth Century Writings*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010. Print.
- Karplus, Yuval, and Avinoam Meir. “The Production of Space: A Neglected Perspective in Pastoral Research.” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 13 (2013): 23–42. Print.
- Kensinger, Kenneth M. “Los Cashinahua.” *Guía etnográfica de la Alta Amazonía*. Vol. 3. Balboa, Panamá: Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 1998. 1–124. Print.
- Krauss, Clifford. “Plan to Ban Oil Drilling in Amazon is Dropped.” *The New York Times* 17 Aug. 2013. Web. 19 Nov. 2013.
- Kravigny, Frank W. *The Jungle Route*. New York: O. Tremain, 1940. Print.
- Kristeva, Julia. *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia UP, 1982. Print.
- Labate, Beatriz Caiuby. “The Internationalization of Peruvian Vegetalismo.” *Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond*. Eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Clancy Cavnar. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2014. 182–205. Print.
- Labate, Beatriz Caiuby, Clancy Cavnar, and Francoise Barbira Freedman. “Notes on the

- Expansion and Reinvention of Ayahuasca Shamanism.” *Ayahuasca Shamanism in the Amazon and Beyond*. Eds. Beatriz Caiuby Labate and Clancy Cavnar. Oxford, UK: Oxford UP, 2014. 3–15. Print.
- Lagos, Ovidio. *Arana, rey del caucho: Terror y atrocidades en el Alto Amazonas*. 1a ed. Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2005. Print.
- Lamb, F. Bruce. “Comment on Bock’s Review of *The Don Juan Papers*.” *American Anthropologist* 83.3 (1981): 641. Print.
- . Foreword. *Wizard of the Upper Amazon: The Story of Manuel Córdova-Rios*. 1971. 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1975. v-ix. Print.
- . *Kidnapped in the Amazon Jungle*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1994. Print.
- . *Mahogany of Tropical America; Its Ecology and Management*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1966. Print.
- . *Rio Tigre and Beyond: The Amazon Jungle Medicine of Manuel Córdova*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1985. Print.
- . “*Wizard of the Upper Amazon* as Ethnography.” *Current Anthropology* 22.5 (1981): 577–80. Print.
- Landaeta de Henríquez, Mercedes. *Compendio de geografía descriptiva elemental*. 4a ed. Curazao, Venezuela: A. Bethencourt e hijos, 1886. Print.
- Langdon, E. Jean Matteson and Gerhard Baer, eds. *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America*. 1st ed. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1992. Print.
- Lardy, P. Letter to Garzón Nieto. July 23, 1923. TS. Fondo Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Diplomática y Consular: Comisión de Límites entre Colombia con Venezuela. Archivo General de la Nación, Bogotá, Colombia.

- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2012. Print.
- Lehtinen, Jenni M. *Narrative and National Allegory in Rómulo Gallegos's Venezuela*. London, England: Modern Humanities Research Association (MHRA), 2013. Print.
- Lenaerts, Marc. "Substances, Relationships and the Omnipresence of the Body: An Overview of Ashéninka Ethnomedicine (Western Amazonia)." *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* (2006): 1-19. Print.
- León Hazera, Lydia de. *La novela de la selva hispanoamericana: Nacimiento, desarrollo y transformación*. Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 1971. Print.
- Lewis, Robert M., ed. *From Traveling Show to Vaudeville: Theatrical Spectacle in America, 1830-1910*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2003. Print.
- Liscano, Juan. "Las tres novelas mayores: Doña Bárbara, Cantaclaro y Canaima." *Rómulo Gallegos: Multivisión*. Caracas: Ediciones de la Presidencia de la República, 1986. 195–225. Print.
- . *Rómulo Gallegos y su tiempo: Ensayo*. Caracas: Monte Avila, 1969. Print.
- Lombardi, Francisco, dir. *Pantaleón y las visitadoras*. América Producciones and Inca Films, 1999. Film.
- López, Kimberle S. "Modernismo and the Ambivalence of the Postcolonial Experience: Cannibalism, Primitivism, and Exoticism in Mário de Andrade's *Macunaíma*." *Luso-Brazilian Review* 35.1 (1998): 25–38. Print.
- Lopez, Telê Porto Ancona. "'Viagens Etnográficas' de Mário de Andrade." *O turista aprendiz*. São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1976. 15–23. Print.
- Luna, Luis Eduardo. "Icaros: Magic Melodies among the Mestizo Shamans of the Peruvian

- Amazon.” *Portals of Power: Shamanism in South America*. Eds. E. Jean Matteson Langdon and Gerhard Baer. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1992. 231-53. Print.
- . *Vegetalismo: Shamanism among the Mestizo Population of the Peruvian Amazon*. Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1986. Print.
- Luna Amancio, Nelly. “Las heridas de Pluspetrol en la Amazonía peruana.” *La República*. 15 Feb. 2015. Web. 18 Mar. 2015.
- Maligo, Pedro. *Land of Metaphorical Desires: The Representation of Amazonia in Brazilian Literature*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1998. Print.
- “Manuel Córdova Ríos.” *Hombres del Amazonas*. Iquitos, Peru: Empresa de Publicidades Loreto, 1938. 194–95. Print.
- Mann, Charles C. *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus*. New York: Vintage Books, 2006. Print.
- Marcone, Jorge. “Jungle Fever: Primitivism in Environmentalism: Rómulo Gallegos’s *Canaima* and the Romance of the Jungle.” *Primitivism and Identity in Latin America: Essays on Art, Literature, and Culture*. Ed. Erik Camayd-Freixas and José Eduardo González. Tucson: U of Arizona P, 2000. 157–172. Print.
- . “Nuevos descubrimientos del gran río de las Amazonas: ‘La novela de la selva’ y la crítica al imaginario de la Amazonía.” *Estudios: Revista de investigaciones literarias y culturales* 16 (2000): 129-40. Print.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. Vol. 1. Digireads.com Publishing, 2004. Print.
- Medina, Cremilda. “Márcio de Souza, contemporâneo, busca a cumplicidade do leitor.” *Minas Gerais, Suplemento Literário* 20.954 (1985): 9–9. Print.

- Melis, Antonio. "Penetrar placeres para brindar amores." *Edipo entre los inkas*. De César Calvo Soriano. Vol. 1. Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 2001. 13-20. Print.
- Menchú, Rigoberta. *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia*. México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1985. Print.
- Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino. *Antología de poetas hispano-americanos*. Vol. 3. Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1894. Print.
- Menton, Seymour. *Latin America's New Historical Novel*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1993. Print.
- Millard, Candice. *The River of Doubt: Theodore Roosevelt's Darkest Journey*. New York: Doubleday, 2005. Print.
- Mignolo, Walter. *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham: Duke UP, 2011. Print.
- . *Local Histories/Global Design: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000. Print.
- Minguet, Charles. "Introducción del coordinador." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Buenos Aires: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 1996. xvii-xxii. Print.
- Molloy, Silvia. "Contagio narrativo y gesticulación retórica en *La vorágine*." *La vorágine: textos críticos*. Ed. Montserrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 489-513. Print.
- Montáñez Gómez, Gustavo. "Elementos de historiografía de la geografía colombiana." *Revista de estudios sociales* 3 (1999): 9-28. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.
- Mora García, José Pascual. *Historia de la educación en Venezuela: Historia de la educación centralista a la historia de la educación regional*. 1a ed. Caracas: Centro Nacional de Historia, 2009. Print.

- Morales Benítez, Otto. *Rómulo Gallegos: Identidad del escritor y del político*. Caracas: Ediciones del Congreso de la República, 1993. Print.
- Morton, Timothy. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2010. Print.
- . *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2007. Print.
- . "John Clare's Dark Ecology." *Studies in Romanticism* 47.2 (2008): 179-93. Print.
- . *Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities P, 2013. Print.
- Motor Boating: The Yachtmen's Magazine*. (Feb. 1930). *Google Book Search*. Web. 1 Oct 2014.
- Mudrovcic, María Eugenia. *Nombres en litigio: Las guerras culturales en América Latina: Del happening desarrollista a la posguerra fría*. Rosario, Argentina: Beatriz Viterbo Editora, 2010. Print.
- Neale-Silva, Eduardo. *Horizonte humano: Vida de José Eustasio Rivera*. 2a ed. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1986. Print.
- Neeleman, Gary. *Tracks in the Amazon: The Day-to-Day Life of the Workers on the Madeira-Mamoré Railroad*. Salt Lake City: The U of Utah P, 2014. Print.
- Nenevé, Miguel Proença, and Márcia Letícia Gomes. "A descolonização em *Mad Maria* de Márcio Souza: O Contra-discurso ao 'progresso' na Amazônia." *REALIS* 1.2 (2011): 2–31. Print.
- Nielson, Rex P. "Amazonian El Dorados and the Nation: Euclides da Cunha's *À Margem da História* and Jose Eustasio Rivera's *La Vorágine*." *Ometeca* 16 (2011): 16-31. Print.
- Nietschmann, Bernard. "Defending the Miskito Reefs with Maps and GIS: Mapping with Sail, Scuba, and Satellite." *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 18.4 (1995): 34-37. Print.
- Ordóñez, Montserrat. *La vorágine: textos críticos*. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987.

Print.

Otis, John. "Down the Amazon in Search of Ayahuasca." *Time*. 8 Apr. 2009. Web. 20 June 2014.

"Our 'Sincere Regret' Expressed to Colombia in New Treaty; For 'Anything That May Have Interrupted or Altered Relations of Cordial Friendship'—Text, Kept Secret in Washington, Made Public in Paris." *The New York Times* 18 Apr 1914: 1. Print.

Páramo Bonilla, Carlos. "Cinco personajes en *La vorágine*: Tipos, mito e historia de la Amazonia Orinoquia." *El aliento de la memoria: Antropología e historia en la Amazonía andina*. Eds. François Correa Rubio, Jean-Pierre Chaumeil, and Roberto Pinedo Camacho. Bogotá: Institut français d'études andines, 2012. 208-258. Print.

---. Personal Interview. 18 July 2013.

Peluso, Nancy Lee. "Whose Woods Are These? Counter-Mapping Forest Territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia." *Antipode* 27.4 (1995): 383–406. Print.

Perez Grande, Hildebrando. Personal Interview. 14 May 2012.

Perus, Françoise. "Universalidad del regionalismo: *Canaima* de Rómulo Gallegos." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 417–472. Print.

Picard, David, and Michael A. Di Giovine. "Introduction: Through Other Worlds." *Tourism and the Power of Otherness: Seductions of Difference*. Eds. David Picard and Michael A. Di Giovine. Buffalo, NY: Channel View Publications, 2014. 1–28. Print.

Pizarro, Ana. *Amazonía: El río tiene voces: Imaginario y modernización*. La Habana, Cuba: Fondo Editorial Casa de las Américas, 2011. Print.

Potelet, Janine. "*Canaima*, novela del indio caribe." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 377-416. Print.

Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. 2nd ed. London:

- Routledge, 2008. Print.
- Quijano, Anibal. "Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad (1989)." *Los conquistados: 1492 y la población indígena de las Américas*. Ed. Heraclio Bonilla. Ecuador: Libri Mundi, 1992. 437–48. Print.
- Raffles, Hugh. *In Amazonia: A Natural History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2002. Print.
- Rama, Angel. *La ciudad letrada*. Hanover, NH: Ediciones del Norte, 1984. Print.
- Reátegui, Martín. Personal Interview. 30 July 2014.
- Rebert, Paula. "Drawing the Line." *Mapping Latin America: A Cartographic Reader*. Eds. Jordana Dym and Karl Offen. Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 2011. 159-162. Print.
- República del Perú. Provincia de Maynas - Región Loreto. Municipalidad Distrital de Punchana. "Plan de desarrollo concertado del Distrito de Punchana," 2008. Print.
- Rivera, José Eustasio. "Las penetraciones peruanas en el Caquetá." *José Eustasio Rivera intellectual: Textos y documentos 1912-1928*. Ed. Hilda Soledad Pachón Farías. Bogotá: U Nacional de Colombia, 1991. 62-65. Print.
- . "Se hacen graves cargos al Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores en la Cámara." *El Espectador* 10 Nov. 1923: 4. Print.
- . *La vorágine*. 1923. MS. Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá.
- . *La vorágine*. New York: Editorial Andes, 1928. Print.
- . *La vorágine*. Ed. Montserrat Ordóñez. Madrid: Cátedra, 2006. Print.
- . "La vorágine y sus críticos." *La vorágine: Textos críticos*. Ed. Monsterrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 63-76. Print.
- Rivera, José Eustasio and Melitón Escobar Larrazábal. "Informe de la comisión colombiana de

- límites con Venezuela.” *José Eustasio Rivera intelectual. Textos y documentos 1912-1928*. Ed. Hilda Soledad Pachón Farías. Bogotá: U Nacional de Colombia, 1991. 41-55. Print.
- Rivera-Lombardi, Roberto J., Jorge L. Padrón, Otto Huber, and Iván Linares. “Propuesta de zonificación de uso del sector occidental del Parque Nacional Canaima. Estado Bolívar.” *Terra* 22.32 (2006): 77-122. Print.
- Robuchon, Eugenio. *En el Putumayo y sus afluentes*. Lima, Peru: Imprenta La Industria, 1907. Print.
- Rocha, Rejane Cristina, and Tânia Maria Pantoja. “As mobilidades da sátira na metaficção historiográfica: Uma leitura de *Galvez, Imperador do Acre*.” *Estudos de literatura brasileira contemporânea* 25 (2005): 121–146. Print.
- Rodríguez, Ileana. *Transatlantic Topographies: Islands, Highlands, and Jungles*. Minneapolis, U of Minneapolis P, 2004. Print.
- Rodríguez, Iokiñe. “Pemon Perspectives of Fire Management in Canaima National Park, Southeastern Venezuela.” *Human Ecology* 35 (2007): 331-343. Print.
- Rodríguez, Manuel Alfredo Segall. *Y Gallegos creó Canaima....* Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela: CVG/Ferrominera Orinoco, 1984. Print.
- Rodríguez Ortiz, Óscar. “Coordenadas de una cultura.” *Rómulo Gallegos: Multivisión*. Eds. Isaac J. Pardo and Óscar Sambrano Urdaneta. Caracas: Ediciones de la Presidencia de la República, 1986. 63–75. Print.
- Rogers, Charlotte. *Jungle Fever: Exploring Madness and Medicine in Twentieth-Century Tropical Narratives*. Nashville: Vanderbilt UP, 2012. Print.
- Rohter, Larry. “Amazon Books, but Not What You Think.” *The New York Times* 24 Sept. 2007.

- NYTimes.com*. Web. 16 Jan. 2015.
- Rojas, Aristides. *Primer libro de geografía de Venezuela según Codazzi*. 5a ed. Caracas: Santa y Cia Editores, 1897. Print.
- Roth, Walter E. "The Medicine Man and the Kanaima." *Witches of the Atlantic World: A Historical Reader and Primary Sourcebook*. Ed. Elaine G. Breslaw. New York: New York UP, 2000. 213-220. Print.
- Rueda, María Helena. "La selva en las novelas de la selva." *Revista crítica literaria latinoamericana* 57 (2003): 31-43. Print.
- Rundstrom, Robert A. "Counter-Mapping." *International Encyclopedia of Human Geography*. Eds. R. Kitchin and N. Thrift. Vol. 1. Oxford: Elsevier, 2009. Print.
- Sá, Lúcia. *Rain Forest Literatures: Amazonian Texts and Latin American Culture*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2004. Print.
- Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. Print.
- Sánchez, George Isidore. *The Development of Education in Venezuela*. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1963. Print.
- Sandro, Romero. "Julio Garavito Armero: en el lado oscuro de la luna." *Biblioteca Luis Ángel Arango. Biblioteca Virtual*. Banco de la República, 1998. Web. 18 Oct. 2013.
- Santaella, Ramón. "La dinámica del espacio venezolano durante el gobierno de Gómez." *Tierra firme* 3.12 (1985): 629-636. Print.
- Santiago, José A. "Crónica de una alucinación." *Cuadernos hispanoamericanos* 487 (1991): 111-14. Print.
- Santos, Fernando, and Frederica Barclay. "Introducción." *Guía etnográfica de la Alta Amazonía*.

- Eds. Fernando Santos and Frederica Barclay. Vol. 5. Balboa, Panamá: Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 2005. xv-xli. Print.
- Santos-Granero, Fernando and Frederica Barclay. *Tamed Frontiers: Economy, Society, and Civil Rights in Upper Amazonia*. Boulder, CO: Westview P, 2000. Print.
- Schama, Simon. *Landscape and Memory*. New York: Random House, 1995. Print.
- Schärer, Maya. “Canaima o la fundación imposible.” *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 487–501. Print.
- Schüller, Donaldo. “O imperador do Acre: Verdade histórica e ficção.” *Minas Gerais, Suplemento Literário* 15.856 (1983): 6–6. Print.
- Schultes, Richard Evans. “Review of Wizard of the Upper Amazon by Manuel Córdova-Rios; F. Bruce Lamb.” *Economic Botany* 26.2 (1972): 197–98. Print.
- Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Conditions Have Failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale UP, 1998. Print.
- “Se hacen graves cargos al Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores en la Cámara.” *El Espectador* 10 Nov. 1923: 4. Print.
- Segundo Sánchez, Manuel. *Bibliografía de obras didácticas publicadas en Venezuela o por autores venezolanos en el extranjero*. Caracas: Tipografía Americana, 1946. Print.
- Seijas, Rafael F. “De la instrucción pública.” *La educación en la historia de Venezuela*. Ed. Felicitas López Portillo. Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1985. 99–101. Print.
- Sharpe, Christopher J. and Iokiñe Rodríguez. “Discovering the Lost World: Canaima National Park and World Heritage Site, Venezuela.” *The George Wright FORUM* 14.3 (1997): 15-23. Print.

- Sheppard, R.Z. "Where the Fiction Is Fantastica." *Time* 121.10 (1983): 92. Print.
- Silva, Renato Ignácio da. *Madeira-Mamoré-Martírios: Caminhos da ilusão*. São Paulo: RENIG-Editora e Assessoria Publicitária, 1991. Print.
- Skurski, Julie, and Fernando Coronil. "Country and City in a Postcolonial Landscape: Double Discourse and the Geo-Politics of Truth in Latin America." *Views beyond the Border Country: Raymond Williams and Cultural Politics*. Eds. Dennis L. Dworkin and Leslie G. Roman. New York: Routledge, 1993. 231–259. Print.
- Slater, Candace. *Entangled Edens: Visions of the Amazon*. Berkeley: U of California P, 2002. Print.
- Sletto, Bjorn. "'Indigenous People Don't Have Boundaries': Reborderings, Fire Management, and Productions of Authenticities in Indigenous Landscapes." *Cultural Geographies* 16.2 (2009): 253-277. Print.
- Smith, Asa. *Primer libro de geografía de Smith, dispuesto para los niños y adornado con más de 100 grabados, 18 mapas y un cuadro de banderas*. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1901. Print.
- Smith, Richard Chase, Margarita Benavides, Mario Patriona, and Ermeto Tuesta. "Mapping the Past and the Future: Geomatics and Indigenous Territories in the Peruvian Amazon." *Human Organization* 62.4 (2003): 357-68. Print.
- Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. New York: Verso, 1989. Print.
- . *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Sommer, Doris. *Foundational Fictions: The National Romances of Latin America*. Berkeley: U

- of California P, 1991. Print.
- Souza, Márcio. *A expressão amazonense: Do colonialismo ao neocolonialismo*. São Paulo: Editora Alfa-Omega, 1978. Print.
- . "Afimial, quem é mais moderno neste país?" *Estudos avançados* 19.53 (2005): 87–96. Print.
- . *Breve história da Amazônia*. São Paulo: Marco Zero, 1994. Print.
- . *Galvez, imperador do Acre: Folhetim*. 16a ed. Rio de Janeiro: Marco Zero, 1992. Print.
- . *Mad Maria: Romance*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização brasileira, 1980. Print.
- Stanfield, Michael Edward. *Red Rubber, Bleeding Trees: Violence, Slavery, and Empire in Northwest Amazonia, 1850-1933*. 1st ed. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1998. Print.
- Suárez, Marco Fidel. Letter to the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs. Feb. 2, 1916. TS. Archivo General de Colombia, Bogotá.
- Suárez-Araúz, Nicomedes. *Amazonian Literary Review*. Vol. 1. Northampton, MA: Center for Amazonian Literature and Culture, 1998. Print.
- . *Amazonian Literary Review*. Vol. 2. Northampton, MA: Center for Amazonian Literature and Culture, 1999. Print.
- . *Amazonian Literary Review*. Vol. 3. Northampton, MA: Center for Amazonian Literature and Culture, 2001. Print.
- . *Literary Amazonia: Modern Writing by Amazonian Authors*. Gainesville: UP of Florida, 2004. Print.
- Subero, Efraín. "Génesis de *Canaima*." *Canaima*. Ed. Charles Minguet. 2a ed. Paris: ALLCA XX, 1996. 309-316. Print.
- Summerhill, William Roderick. *Order against Progress: Government, Foreign Investment, and Railroads in Brazil, 1854-1913*. Stanford: Stanford UP, 2003. Print.

- Symington, Kenneth A. "Translator's Note." *The Three Halves of Ino Moxo: Teachings of the Wizard of the Upper Amazon*. Trans. Kenneth A. Symington. Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1995. ix-x. Print.
- Tally, Robert T., Jr. *Spatiality*. New York: Routledge, 2013. Print.
- Taussig, Michael. *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man: A Study in Terror and Healing*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1989. Print.
- Thelwell, Emma. "Why Do People Take Ayahuasca?" *BBC News*. 29 Apr. 2014. Web. 27 Sept. 2014.
- Thomas, Nicholas, and Caroline Humphrey. *Shamanism, History, and the State*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1994. Print.
- Tittler, Jonathan. "Ecological Criticism and Spanish American Fiction: An Overview." *The Natural World in Latin American Literatures: Ecocritical Essays on Twentieth Century Writings*. Ed. Adrian Taylor Kane. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2010. 11-36. Print.
- Tomlinson, Edward. *New Roads to Riches in the Other Americas*. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1939. Print.
- Tomlinson, Henry Major. *The Sea and the Jungle*. New York: Time, 1964. Print.
- Trigueros, Luis. "José Eustasio Rivera, novelista y poeta." *La vorágine: Textos críticos*. Ed. Monsterrat Ordóñez. Bogotá: Alianza Editorial Colombiana, 1987. 49-61. Print.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon P, 1995. Print.
- Tupper, Kenneth W. "Ayahuasca Healing beyond the Amazon: The Globalization of a Traditional Indigenous Entheogenic Practice." *Global Networks* 9.1 (2009): 117-36. Print.

- UNESCO. *Canaima National Park*. Web. 30 May 2014.
- Valdés, Mario J. "Social History of the Latin American Writer." *Literary Cultures of Latin America: A Comparative History*. Ed. Mario J. Valdés and Djelal Kadir. Vol. 1. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004. 155–177. Print.
- Valdez Lozano, Zacarías. *El verdadero Fitzcarrald ante la historia*. Iquitos, Peru: El Oriente, 1944. Print.
- Valente, Luiz Fernando. "Parody and Carnivalization in the Novels of Márcio Souza." *Hispania* 70.4 (1987): 787–793. Print.
- Vásquez, Juan Gabriel. *Historia secreta de Costaguana*. Madrid: Alfaguara/Santillana, 2007. Print.
- Venezuela. Instituto Nacional de Parques. *Decreto de Creación: Parque Nacional "Canaima."* 12 June 1962. Caracas: Inparques, 1962. Print.
- Villegas Ruiz, Juan de Dios. *Compendio de geografía de Venezuela*. 3a ed. Caracas: Tipografía americana, 1908. Print.
- Viñas, David. *De Sarmiento a Cortázar*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Siglo Veinte, 1971. Print.
- Warf, Barney and Santa Arias, eds. *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. London: Routledge, 2009. Print.
- Weinstein, Barbara. *The Amazon Rubber Boom, 1850-1920*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1983. Print.
- Westphal, Bertrand. *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces*. Trans. Robert T. Tally, Jr. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. Print.
- White, Steven F. "Shamanic *Ayahuasca* Narratives and the Production of Neo-Indigenista Literature." *Latin American Indian Literatures Journal* 17.2 (2001): 111-23. Print.

Whitehead, Neil. *Dark Shamans: Kanaimà and the Poetics of Violent Death*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2002. Print.

---. "The Sign of *Kanaimà*, the Space of Guayana, and the Demonology of Development."

Terror and Violence: Imagination and the Unimaginable. Eds. Andrew Strathern, Pamela J. Steward, and Neil L. Whitehead. London: Pluto P, 2006. 171-191. Print.

Winkelman, Michael. "Drug Tourism or Spiritual Healing? Ayahuasca Seekers in Amazonia."

Journal of Psychoactive Drugs 37.2 (2005): 209–18. Print.

Wylie, Lesley. "Hearts of Darkness: The Celebration of Otherness in the Latin American

Novela de la Selva." *Romance Studies* 23.2 (2005): 105-116. Print.

Yuchen, Zhang. "Brazil, Peru and China to Specify Railway Details" *ChinaDaily USA*. 16 Feb.

2015. Web. 12 Mar. 2015.

Vita

Amanda Mignonne Smith was born December 6, 1981 in Muskegon, Michigan. She received a B.A. in Spanish from Michigan State University (MSU) in 2003. Following graduation, she taught English as a Second Language in both Cusco and Arequipa, Peru. She later taught high school Spanish and French in Oscoda, Michigan before returning to MSU for graduate studies in Hispanic Literatures, obtaining an M.A. in 2009. In 2010 she began her doctoral studies under the guidance of Sara Castro-Klarén in the Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures (GRL) at the Johns Hopkins University (JHU). At JHU she received several awards including the Gilman Fellowship, the F. Millard Foard Fellowship, a Program in Latin American Studies (PLAS) travel grant for Peru, and grants from GRL to conduct archival research in Peru and Colombia. As part of her early dissertation research, she studied Quechua with Regina Tupacyupanqui in Cusco, and she also taught an introductory Quechua course during one of JHU's intersessions. Throughout her graduate studies at both MSU and JHU, she has designed and taught courses in all levels of Spanish language, Spanish linguistics, and a topics course on Latin American culture. She served as graduate student representative for the Spanish section of GRL's Graduate Student Forum, student-faculty liaison for PLAS, and organizer of PLAS's annual conference. Additionally, she co-founded and co-organized a latin@ author speaker series called American Voces, which brought authors Giannina Braschi, Junot Díaz, Cristina García, and Quiara Alegría Hudes to JHU. Her research focuses on interdisciplinary readings of twentieth and twenty-first century texts and other cultural production, with special interest in space and mapping, ecocritical theory, and postcolonial studies. She has presented her work at numerous conferences and has published several scholarly articles. Beginning in the fall of 2015, she will teach Latin American culture and history at Butler University in Indianapolis.