Clearcut: Reading the Forest in Canadian and Brazilian Literatures and Cultural Imaginaries

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Abstract

This dissertation examines representations of the forest in Canadian and Brazilian literatures and cultural imaginaries in order to question utilitarian models of environmental use and discuss issues of deforestation in both countries. I argue that these models draw on aesthetic and narrative strategies that were consolidated through cultural myths about the Canadian woods and the Brazilian Amazon during the period of colonization and settlement which reified the wilderness and the jungle as uncultivated environments in need of being tamed, optimized, and civilized through consistent projects of land transformation and economic development. Furthermore, I argue that myths about the wilderness and the jungle founded a particular mode of knowing, interacting and existing *in* and *against* the environment based on the antagonism between humans and non-human nature which was imposed as universal and continues to shape current material practices in both countries.

Despite the differences between the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian jungle, similar patterns and problems are visible in the literatures of both countries because of their colonial histories and economic models based on the capitalist development of primary resources. Thus, by analyzing a variety of Canadian and Brazilian texts, my dissertation draws attention to the relations of power within which “the forest” was constructed in the Canadian and Brazilian national imaginaries, and which, in turn, were naturalized by particular representations of the wilderness and the jungle. In so doing, my project shows the centrality of Western-centric ideals of progress, culture, nature, and modernity in both countries, and how these concepts continue to inform current institutional policies and environmental debates about forestry management, deforestation, and conservation. I argue that by questioning utilitarian models of land management, writers like Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt and Jeannette Armstrong in Canada as

well as Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-writers Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa in Brazil call for a critical reinterpretation of master narratives while also inviting alternative frameworks of knowledge that run against dominant economic, environmental, and ontological models.

The Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon occupy a central role in the national literatures and cultural myths of these countries. Nevertheless, the idea of the wilderness and the jungle they reify is mostly symbolic and, as such, tends to obscure the material realities of these landscapes. In turn, the texts I analyze in this dissertation unveil a connection between the imaginary and actual forestry practices enacted by companies and governments to call for epistemic, ontological, and material changes on the ground. Put another way, these narratives mediate between real world issues and aesthetic form, and try to offer a discursive structure for acting upon current environmental, cultural, and economic crises. In their critique of the sustained exploitation of humans and non-humans in postcolonial nations like Canada and Brazil, the writers I examine in my project offer the seeds a theoretical (un)thinking that brings epistemology, ontology, nature, and politics to the forefront of discussions about the environment.

Resumo

Esta tese examina representações da floresta nas literaturas e culturas canadense e brasileira a fim de questionar modelos utilitários de uso ambiental e discutir questões de desmatamento em ambos os países. Eu defendo que esses modelos se baseiam em estratégias estéticas e narrativas que foram consolidadas através de mitos culturais sobre a floresta canadense e a Amazônia brasileira durante o período de colonização e povoamento que reificaram a natureza selvagem (“wilderness”) e a selva (“jungle”) como ambientes não cultivados que precisam ser domesticados, otimizados e civilizados através de projetos consistentes de transformação da terra e desenvolvimento econômico. Além disso, defendo que os mitos sobre a natureza selvagem e a selva fundaram um modo particular de conhecer, existir e interagir *com* e *contra* o meio ambiente com base no antagonismo entre o ser humano e a natureza não-humana que foi imposto como universal e continua a moldar as práticas materiais atuais em ambos os países.

Apesar das diferenças entre o território selvagem canadense e a selva brasileira, padrões e problemas semelhantes são visíveis nas literaturas de ambos os países devido a suas histórias coloniais e modelos econômicos baseados no desenvolvimento capitalista dos recursos primários. Assim, ao analisar uma variedade de textos canadenses e brasileiros, minha tese chama a atenção para as relações de poder dentro das quais “a floresta” foi construída no imaginário nacional canadense e brasileiro, e que, por sua vez, foram naturalizadas por representações particulares da natureza selvagem e da selva. Neste sentido, meu projeto mostra a centralidade dos ideais ocidentais de progresso, cultura, natureza e modernidade em ambos os países, e como esses conceitos continuam a influenciar as políticas institucionais atuais e os debates ambientais sobre manejo florestal, desmatamento e conservação. Eu mostro que ao

questionar modelos utilitários de gestão de terras, escritores como Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt e Jeannette Armstrong no Canadá, bem como Márcio Souza, Regina Melo e os co-autores Bruce Albert e Davi Kopenawa no Brasil pedem uma reinterpretação crítica das narrativas hegemônicas ao mesmo tempo em que convidam estruturas alternativas de conhecimento que vão contra modelos econômicos, ambientais e ontológicos dominantes.

O espaço selvagem canadense e a Amazônia brasileira ocupam um papel central nas literaturas nacionais e nos mitos culturais desses países. No entanto, a idéia do mundo selvagem e da selva que eles reificam é em sua maioria simbólica e, portanto, tende a ocultar as realidades materiais destas áreas. Por sua vez, os textos que analiso nesta tese revelam uma conexão entre as práticas florestais imaginárias e reais promovidas por empresas e governos para exigir mudanças epistêmicas, ontológicas e materiais. Dito de outra maneira, estas narrativas intermediam questões do mundo real e da forma estética, e tentam oferecer uma estrutura discursiva para atuar sobre as atuais crises ambientais, culturais e econômicas. Em sua crítica à exploração contínua de humanos e não-humanos em nações pós-coloniais como Canadá e Brasil, as escritoras e escritores que examino em meu projeto oferecem as sementes de um (des)pensamento teórico que traz epistemologia, ontologia, natureza e política para a frente das discussões sobre o meio ambiente.

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Preface

One of the arguments I make in this dissertation is that environmental violence is also violence perpetrated against human bodies, systems of knowledge, and modes of existence. In September 2021, *Global Witness*, an international NGO established in 1993 with the goal of investigating issues of resource exploitation and human rights abuse worldwide, published a report entitled *The Last Line of Defence.* According to this report, 227 land and environmental defenders were killed in 2020. The three deadliest countries were Colombia, Mexico, and the Philippines, followed by Brazil in fourth place. Since 2012, in fact, *Global Witness* has been gathering data on the killings of land and environmental defenders across the world. Their dataset, which is open source and accessible on their website, includes the names of the victims as well as other relevant information like their country of origin, their self-identification, the date of their deaths, and the industry sector associated with their assassinations up to 2021.

To honor the memory of the land and environmental defenders assassinated in the Brazilian Amazon between 2016 (the year I started my PhD) and 2021, in Appendix A of this dissertation I include a table with their names and other relevant information. In Appendix B, I include a map of Brazil with the number of deaths by state during the 2016-2021 period. Although the *Global Witness* report has not yet released information beyond 2021, in this Preface I also want to honor the memory of the land and environmental defenders killed in 2022, particularly the British journalist Dom Phillips and the environmentalist Bruno Pereira, both of which were killed in the Amazon in June, 2022 and whose deaths took over national and international media. Lastly, I want to honor the memory of the hundreds of Yanomami people who have died over the past years, victims of the humanitarian and health crisis caused by illegal mining in their territory.

Introduction

"Not Out of the Woods Yet": The Forest and the Social Imaginary in Canadian and Brazilian Literature

> The mystique of Canadianism was specifically the cultural accompaniment of Confederation and the imperialistic mood that followed it. But it came so suddenly after the pioneer period that it was still full of wilderness. To feel "Canadian" was to feel part of a no-man's-land with huge rivers, lakes, and islands that very few Canadians had ever seen. "From sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" – if Canada is not an island, the phrasing is still in the etymological sense isolating. One wonders if any other national consciousness has had so large an amount of the unknown, the unrealized, the humanly undigested, so built into it.
>
> -- Northrop Frye, Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*

> The idea of *patria*, of "fatherland," was closely linked to that of nature and in part took its justification from this. Both led to a literature which compensated from material backwardness and the weakness of institutions by the supervaluing of "regional" aspects, making exoticism a cause for social optimism.
>
> -- Antonio Cândido, "Literature and Underdevelopment"

On August 19, 2019, black smoke covered the sky of São Paulo, Brazil's largest and most populated city, bringing nightfall at 2 p.m. Approximately 2,500 kilometers north of the city, the Amazon rainforest[1] was on fire. Though this was not the first time that smoke from wildfires in the north reached Brazil's southern states, this particular occurrence showed that forest fires were achieving unprecedented levels. Between January 1 and August 29, 2019, for example, the

[1] In my dissertation, I adopt a geopolitical definition of the Amazon that is restricted to the Brazilian territory and comprises nine different northern states: Pará, Amapá, Amazonas, Acre, Roraima, Rondônia, Tocantins, Mato-Grosso, and part of Maranhão. This definition is known in Portuguese as *Amazônia Legal*. However, it is important to note that there is also a pan-national conception of the rainforest which includes other Latin American countries such as Suriname, Guiana, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and French Guiana. It is also important to acknowledge that both definitions refer to nation-state borders imposed by colonial administration in Latin American countries and thus ignore the fact that most of the Amazon rainforest is located on Indigenous territories and is defined differently according to Indigenous conceptions.

Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais (INPE) [*National Institute for Space Research*] detected 45,256 fire outbreaks in the Amazon, the highest number recorded since 2010 (Alencar et al. 1). As expected, news of São Paulo's smoke-filed sky quickly spread into international media outlets, directing worldwide attention to the Brazilian rainforest, and "igniting" major discussions in social media platforms such as Twitter with hashtags like #PrayForAmazon and #ActForTheAmazon. Among the most popular tweets was French President Emmanuel Macron's lament that the "Amazon rain forest – the lungs which produces 20% of our planet's oxygen – [was] on fire" and his call on members of the G7 to address this "international crisis." Domestically, however, this record-setting wave of fires in part of the world's largest rainforest was not treated with the same urgency. Two days after São Paulo's sky filled with smoke, Brazil's president at that time, Jair Bolsonaro, accused non-government organizations of intentionally starting the fires in the Amazon to protest his decision to decrease federal funding to environmental groups. Responding to Macron's cry for help, the G7 bloc agreed to create a US$20-million emergency fund in order to implement fire-fighting strategies in the Amazon. Nevertheless, Bolsonaro refused the donation unless the French President apologized for what the Brazilian leader saw as personal insults on Twitter. In a public note, Bolsonaro also accused G7 nations of trying to enforce a neo-colonial agenda that would undermine national sovereignty. In a tweet from August 26, 2019, Bolsonaro wrote that Brazil would not accept that Macron "dispare ataques descabidos e gratuitos à Amazônia, nem que disfarce suas intenções atrás da ideia de uma 'aliança' dos países do G-7 para 'salvar' a Amazônia, como se fôssemos uma colônia ou uma terra de ninguém" ["fires off unreasonable and gratuitous attacks on the Amazon, nor that he disguises his intentions behind the idea of an 'alliance' of the G-7 countries

to 'save' the Amazon as if we were a colony or a no man's land"].[2] Bolsonaro's careless responses ultimately threatened the future of a trade agreement between the European Union and the Mercosur bloc, with France's and Ireland's governments claiming that they would "vote against the deal unless Brazil [honoured] its environmental commitments" ("Amazon Fires: What's Happening, the Climate Context and How you Can Help"). A few days after this warning, Bolsonaro yielded to international criticism and requested internal military assistance to help control the wildfires.

Forest fires are a common occurrence during long and intense periods of drought in the region, which usually last from June to November. Farmers, ranchers, and landowners use these months to prepare their land for agriculture, oftentimes through irresponsible practices of land clearing and management like slash-and-burn, which involves clearcutting an area and burning its remaining vegetation to produce a temporary nutrient-rich layer amenable to farming. However, according to a study conducted by the *Instituto de Pesquisa Ambiental da Amazônia* (IPAM) [*Amazon Environmental Research Institute*], the intensification of forest fires in 2019, a year of "milder drought," is a direct result of deforestation (Silvério et al. 2). In fact, IPAM's data reveals that the ten municipalities with the highest number of fire occurrences that year (accounting for 37% of the total occurrences) were the ones with the highest number of deforested areas (43% of rates recorded up to the month of July). The study then concludes that "a concentração de incêndios florestais em áreas recém-desmatadas e com estiagem branda representa um forte indicativo do caráter intencional dos incêndios: limpeza de áreas recém-desmatadas" (Silvério et al. 2) ["the concentration of forest fires in newly deforested areas and with mild drought represents a strong indicative of the intentional character of the fires: the

[2] Bolsonaro's tweet was published in Portuguese. The English version is my own translation of Bolsonaro's original text.

cleaning of newly cleared areas"].[3] Significantly, one month before São Paulo's smoke-filed sky directed worldwide attention to the Brazilian rainforest, *Detecção do Desmatamento em Tempo Real* (DETER) [*Real-Time Deforestation Detection*], an alert system developed by INPE to help detect and control deforestation and forest degradation in the Amazon, revealed an increase of 90% in the rate of deforestation in June, 2019, and 278% in July, 2019, when compared to those same months in 2018 (Watanabe n.d.). In a public statement, Bolsonaro attempted to cast doubt on these numbers and, once again, attacked NGOs by insinuating that Ricardo Galvão, director of INPE, was working in partnership with non-governmental organizations to disseminate false information about environmental practices in the Amazon. Unsurprisingly, Bolsonaro's skepticism toward climate change and commitment to promote large-scale agriculture in the Amazon only increased the intensity and frequency of deforestation and human-made disasters like forest fires. In an interview to *BBC News Brazil,* Marina Silva, environmentalist and founder of REDE, the Sustainability Party in Brazil, stated that "incêndios sempre ocorreram, mas nunca incentivados pelo discurso de um president" ["fires have always occurred, but never encouraged by a president's speech"].[4]

Implying that Brazil's political context and irresponsible leadership enabled environmental disasters such as the 2019 forest fires in the Amazon is not too far-fetched. During his 2018 electoral campaign, Bolsonaro openly spoke about his intentions to promote agricultural and other economic activities in the Brazilian Amazon, and to open Indigenous lands and other protected areas to mining, farming, and large-scale food production. During the four years of Bolsonaro's mandate beginning on January 1, 2019, his right-wing extremist government relaxed environmental legislation and approved policies that encouraged illegal deforestation for cattle

[3] The translations of IPAM's report are my own.
[4] The translation of Marina Silva's words is my own.

ranching, agriculture, and other economic activities. For instance, while Senator Flávio Bolsonaro (Bolsonaro's son) proposed a bill to revoke legislation that required landowners in the Amazon to maintain 80% of their land undeveloped (that is, protected), Infrastructure Minister Tarcísio Freitas discussed creating incentives for development projects that would inevitably intensify land disputes involving Indigenous peoples and other local communities (*Countdown to Extinction* 53). In an open letter, eight of Brazil's former Ministers of Environment condemned Bolsonaro's actions to eliminate the Department of Climate Change, subsume the Brazilian Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture and limit the Ministry of Environment's capacity to formulate public policies. Reminding us of the mining disaster that happened in Córrego do Feijão in the beginning of 2019, these Ministers warned that the "prospect of loosening environmental licensing, disguised as 'management efficiency' is dangerous in a country that has just gone through the trauma of the Brumadinho dam collapse"[5] ("Statement from Brazil's Former Ministers of the Environment"). More than a symptom of malfunctioning national politics, the context in which the 2019 forest fires took place illuminates how environmental discussions in Brazil continue to reduce the Amazon to debates about economic development and political sovereignty, as if the natural resources of Brazil's north were the key to the "material backwardness and the weakness of institutions" that Antonio Cândido mentions in the second epigraph of this Introduction.

In mid-July 2021, almost two years after woodsmoke brought nightfall to São Paulo at 2 p.m., a smoky, grey haze covered Ottawa's blue summer sky, resulting in reduced visibility and poor air quality ("Why the air in Ottawa is smoky, and how long it will last"). This unexpected

[5] On January 25, 2019, a dam collapsed at the Córrego do Feijão iron ore mine, on the east of Brumadinho, state of Minas Gerais, releasing 11.7 million cubic metres of toxic mud (Senra n.d.). This mining disaster was the second in the region since 2015, when a nearby dam co-owned by Vale collapsed in Mariana, also in the state of Minas Gerais.

phenomenon was caused by more than 200 forest fires burning in northwestern Ontario and Manitoba. When compared to the total amount of fires in the Amazon in 2019, this number is much less drastic, which might, to some extent, explain why these wildfires in Canada sparked little international attention and only modest coverage domestically. Yet, in an article published in *The Globe and Mail*, Arno Kopecky reminds that a few years earlier, in 2018, "it wasn't the Amazon in the news but our own forest fires, which blanketed swaths of Western Canada in smoke" (n.d.). The fire occurrences to which Kopecky refers "vaporized 1.2 million hectares of B.C.'s forest and dumped almost 200 million tons of CO_2 into the atmosphere" (n.d.). Although Kopecky attributes increasing rates of wildfires mostly to climate change, he still comments on the impacts of the logging industry on British Columbia's boreal forest. As he writes, industrial logging clearcuts "more than 400,000 hectares of [the forest] each year, mostly to supply the United States with Kleenex and toilet paper" and "release 12 per cent of the annual emissions Canada has agreed to cut by 2030 under the Paris Agreement. They also put us in third place for intact forest loss, accounting for 15 per cent of the global total, behind only Russia and Brazil" (n.d.). Calling on the provincial and federal government to address environmental issues related to forest fires and industrial logging, Kopecky concludes that unlike the Amazon, "these forests lie within our jurisdiction. We don't need foreign aid or armies to protect them and all they protect. We just have to see them" (n.d.). The oversight Kopecky attributes to administrative inaction can also be explained by the fact that wildfires are usually taken as a natural and unpredictable phenomenon and, therefore, hardly associated with increasing deforestation rates or human action. This is clear, for instance, in the *Preliminary Strategic Climate Risk Assessment*, a report released by British Columbia's government in July 2019 which evaluates the likelihood of fifteen climate hazards that could occur in the province by 2050s. According to

this report, some of the greatest risks include "discrete events" such as wildfires, water shortage, and heat waves, and "slower-onset, gradual climate changes" like ocean acidification and glacier mass loss (24). In his analysis of the report, Peter Wood explains that despite "a large body of scientific literature that documents the impact that industrial logging has on the severity and frequency of many of these events," the *Assessment* "did not consider this information" (2). Wood then concludes that this "major blind spot" could "undermine the assessment's findings and the effectiveness of the province's response in defending communities from worsening climate impacts" (2).

Both Kopecky's concluding sentence ("We just have to see them") and the "blind spot" Wood identifies in British Columbia's strategic assessment plan speak to the disconnect between how the forest is conceived in the national consciousness as vast, pristine, and well managed, and actual forestry practices on the ground. While the forest occupies a central space in the Canadian social imaginary, particularly through the myth of the lumberjack and the overall sentiment of pride regarding Canadian forests and their state of preservation, national myths end up obscuring forestry practices and the environmental problems they cause, for instance, wildfires and deforestation. Furthermore, even though, according to an annual report on the state of Canada's forests released by *Natural Resources Canada* in 2021, the "almost 362 million hectares of forest" within Canadian soil make up "40% of Canada's land base" and "9% of the world's forests" (19), environmental discussions and research in Canada tend to center around issues of pipelines and extractivism, neglecting the fact that wood and pulp remain key resources in the national industry. It is not by accident, then, that deforestation is not the main topic of the report produced by *Natural Resources Canada*. Acknowledging that industries like agriculture, mining, oil, and gas contribute to deforestation rates in the country, the report nonetheless concludes that

only "0.37% of the total global deforestation" since 1990 occurred in Canada. It, therefore, predicts that "Canada's overall deforestation rate is expected to remain consistent with current levels" (23). From the outset, the report states that its goal, instead, is to highlight "how the integrated social, environmental and economic fabric of Canadian forests and forest resources provide a deep source of *resilience* for Canadians" (2, emphasis added). In this sense, more than half of this document focuses on the economic potentials offered by the forest industry. For example, the report highlights job creation and monetary revenue from the forest sector by stating that this industry employed "about 184,510 people" in 2020; generated more than "$1.9 billion in revenue for provincial and territorial governments" in 2018; and reached export rates of "$33.1 billion in forest products (2020)" (49). These numbers, of course, reinforce the extent to which Canadian economy depends on the forestry industry. Even so, the overall tone of the report, particularly its insistence on how "vast" and sustainably managed Canada's forests are as well as its emphasis on the "resilience" of both citizens and natural landscapes, point to an idealization of the state of Canada's forests that might impact how we understand issues of forest degradation and deforestation in the country. Interestingly, the report also incorporates several watercolor illustrations of forest spaces which echo some of the Group of Seven paintings, thereby contributing to this sense of idealization and romanticization of Canada's forests.

In both Canada and Brazil, increasing occurrences of wildfires and other land-clearing practices as well as the insufficient measures taken by government representatives to prevent and address these issues unveil the longstanding logic of economic development that continues to subsume forest landscapes to the interests of major industries like logging, mining, and agrobusiness. In this dissertation, I argue that this model of domination of the natural world draws on aesthetic and narrative strategies that were consolidated through cultural myths about

the Canadian woods and the Brazilian Amazon during the period of colonization and settlement which reified the wilderness and the jungle as uncultivated environments in need of being tamed, optimized, and civilized. As I will demonstrate later in my dissertation, the paradoxical collaboration between the current resource language (and its focus on economic value) and the colonial mythology of the woods and the jungle as uncultivated was founded on the discursive erasure of Indigenous nations and appropriation of Indigenous territories. In this sense, an important aspect of Indigenous resistance to existing forestry management ideologies entails a reject of such resource logic through the reclamation of Indigenous conceptions of land. For example, Dene scholar Glenn Coulthard states that "the theory and practice of Indigenous anticolonialism, including Indigenous anticapitalism, is best understood as a struggle primarily inspired by and oriented around *the question of land*" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 62, original emphasis). According to Coulthard, this struggle is not only "for land in the material sense", but also for a concept of land that is "deeply informed by what land as a complex system of reciprocal relations and obligations can teach us about living our lives in relation to one another and the natural world in non-dominating and nonexploitative terms" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 62). In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I provide a more detailed discussion of Indigenous land-based struggles and the idea of sustainability and stewardship they put forth.

It is important to note that while both "wilderness" and "jungle" refer to natural spaces, they carry different connotations. According to Candace Slater, for example, the wilderness evokes a landscape that is "uncultivated and uninhabited by human beings, thus located at the fringes of civilization" (117). Although she refers mostly to a U.S. idea of the wilderness, her definition is echoed in early Canadian texts about settlement which narrate the process of

populating and civilizing a presumedly empty land by means of transforming the landscape through labour. To adapt Frye's epigraph, then, early settler literature describes the process through which the wilderness becomes "realized" and "digested" through the colonial imposition of order, culture, and civilization for the survival of the settler (nuclear) family. The jungle, on the other hand, evokes a "still-savage" present, a "tumultuous complexity" which carries negative connotations (Slater 117). Slater defines the jungle as a "nonparadisal space" that, home to beasts, disease, and decay, becomes the stage of a "ruthless struggle for survival" (118). This logic is ingrained in early Brazilian texts about the occupation of the Amazon which depict the struggles between men and nature and, oftentimes, the defeat of the first. By emphasizing the threatening and challenging qualities of the Amazonian landscape, these narratives imply that only massive projects of development and land optimization would successfully control the rainforest and, therefore, help bring material progress to the country through the integration and modernization of Brazil's underdeveloped north.

I argue that despite their different discursive conventions and connotations about these natural spaces, myths about the wilderness and the jungle founded a particular mode of knowing, interacting and existing *in* and *against* the environment based on the antagonism between humans and non-human nature. This model was imposed as universal and continues to shape current material practices. In turn, in this dissertation I examine literary responses to forestry use and deforestation in Canada and Brazil that draw attention to the relations of power that are constitutive of and naturalized within cultural myths of forest landscapes. In so doing, they conceive the forest as a contentious entity embedded in broader environmental, cultural, and economic conflicts. I argue that by questioning utilitarian models of land management, writers like Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt and Jeannette Armstrong in Canada as well as Márcio Souza,

Regina Melo, and co-writers Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa in Brazil call for a critical reinterpretation of master narratives while also inviting alternative frameworks of knowledge that run against dominant economic, environmental, and ontological models. Put another way, these authors intervene in a social imaginary established early in the culture of Canadian and Brazilian societies and which now persists in such a way as to assist the "empire" by reinforcing colonial, Eurocentric global capitalism. In this sense, they unveil a connection between the imaginary (the symbolic and discursive realm of art) and actual forestry practices enacted by companies and governments to call for epistemic, ontological, and material changes.

Interestingly, scenes of forest landscapes being slashed and burned are central to canonical settlement texts like Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village* and Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story*. Originally published in 1825, *The Rising Village* offers a direct response to *The Deserted Village*, a pastoral elegy written by his uncle, the Irish Oliver Goldsmith, to narrate the fall of the farming village of Auburn due to the increasing practice of land enclosure which consisted of allocating land to wealthy landowners. Unlike his uncle's story of displacement and loss, Goldsmith's long poem chronicles the settlement and development of Nova Scotia and, thus, provides an allegory for the rise of a "nation." Depicting colonization as a linear teleological project through which settlers endure "great pain, the danger, and the toil" (16) in order to reproduce the idyllic sceneries and forms of governance of the metropole, *The Rising Village* also celebrates the transformation of Nova Scotia from untamed wilderness into successful colony. In this sense, *The Rising Village* reinforces the myth of the heroic and resilient settler to assert that industry and hard work in clearing and cultivating the land would allow colonists to carve up space for cultured and civilized life in the Canadian wilderness.

In the beginning of the poem, for instance, Goldsmith contrasts idyllic scenes of the British Empire, particularly its "Majestic palaces in pomp display / The wealth and splendour of the regal sway," with descriptions of the presumed *terra nullius* of Nova Scotia: how "lone and drear / Did once Acadia's woods and wilds appear" (15). The poem then provides a lengthy description of the struggles to control and transform Acadia's lonely and dreadful wilderness:

> How great the pain, the danger, and the toil.
> Which mark the first rude culture of the soil.
> When, looking round, the lonely settler sees
> His home amid a wilderness of trees
> How sinks his heart in those deep solitudes,
> Where not a voice upon his ear intrudes;
> Where solemn silence all the waste pervades,
> Heightening the horror of its gloomy shades;
> Save where the sturdy woodman's strokes resound,
> That strew the fallen forest on the ground.
> See! from their heights the lofty pines descend.
> And crackling, down their pond'rous lengths extend.
> Soon from their boughs the curling flames arise,
> Mount into air, and redden all the skies;
> And where the forest once its foliage spread,
> The golden corn triumphant waves its head. (16)

As this passage demonstrates, the settler's manual labour *in* and *against* nature is the motor for the transplantation of the empire's economic order to the colony. This is clear in the way the

poem describes the sound of the "woodman's strokes" and the "crackling" of the "fallen forest on the ground" giving way to the "triumphant" corn field that would guarantee the settler's survival. Such transformation is accomplished through fire and the burning of fallen boughs, here represented in the "curling flames" that arise in the air and "redden all the skies." Labour, this passage suggests, interrupts the "solemn silence" that frightens the lonely settler and provides the remedy for his "deep solitudes" by offering the prospect of his belonging in the colony.

Yet, economic prosperity brought by the clearing of the land and establishment of agricultural practices is not enough for the settler colonial belonging. The linear teleological process the poem describes also involves the conquest of nature by culture. In "Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village*: Controlling Nature," Gerald Lynch expands on Kenneth J. Hughes' claims to argue that Goldsmith's long poem is, in essence, a text about "the control of nature, both physical and human" (44). The control of physical nature, as Lynch puts it, is consolidated through the "triumph of the axe and agriculture" whereas the "cultivation" of human nature is "effected by means of the 'arts of culture'" (45). *The Rising Village* confirms Lynch's statement when, after narrating the settler's work in clearing the land, the poem describes how the forms of cultural, social, and civilized life of the metropole are introduced into the colony:

> The arts of culture now extend their sway,
>
> And many a charm of rural life display.
>
> Where once the pine upreared its lofty head.
>
> The settlers' humble cottages are spread;
>
> Where the broad firs once sheltered from the storm,

> By slow degrees a neighbourhood they form;
>
> And, as it bounds, each circling year, increase
>
> In social life, prosperity, and peace. (19)

In this passage, culture slowly replaces nature and gives rise to the symbols of social, spiritual, and material life, for example, the tavern, the church, and the country store which would help control human nature and create a sense of belonging and identity for the lonely settler in the colony. Cultivation ("rude culture of the soil") and culture ("arts of culture") come together to make civilization. Here, the poem's stance is clear: civilization, both in its economic and cultural forms, comes with the mastery and clearing of the landscape.

For Goldsmith's rising nation to prosper, settlement must subjugate not only the "lofty pines" of the wilderness through clearcutting and fire, but also the signs of pre-existing presence that could obstruct the colony's teleological progress. As *The Rising Village* implies, the establishment of a public society ruled by imperial systems of governance, religion, morality, and education is inseparable from the erasure of previous civilizations from the landscape and the transformation of wilderness into a *terra nullius* ready to be (re)formed. From a discursive perspective, therefore, *The Rising Village* performs what Margery Fee defines as a "literary land claim" whereby writing "becomes analogous to the discovery, exploration, claiming, and mapping of actual territory" (6). For Fee, this process of land claim through literary discourse happens when the "heroic author takes over from the vanishing Indians to form a new indigenous mythology for the newcomers, who thus become indigenous themselves" (6). In *The Rising Village*, the "discovery" of Nova Scotia begins with an initial acknowledgement of Mi'kmaq presence. For instance, the opening pages of Goldsmith's long poem describe "the savage tribes in wildest strain" approaching "with death and terror in their train" while the settler "hears them

oft in sternest mood maintain, / Their right to rule the mountain and the plain" (17). The narrator considers their approach as an announcement of "the *white man's* instant death" (17, original emphasis). This first encounter suggests that for the settler to occupy the "new" territory of the colony, he would need to deny the legitimacy of the already existing social, economic, and environmental systems of the Mi'kmaq which validated their claims to "rule the mountain and the plain." As the poem develops, then, Goldsmith eliminates this first obstacle and, like his treatment of the wilderness, clears the land of the presence of these "savage tribes." For example, when morning comes and brings no "shouts of man, or beast's appalling roar," the setter of *The Rising Village* realizes that the "wandering Indian" has turned "another way" (18), hence grating him the right to own the land. The passage then concludes that by "patient firmness and industrious toil, / He still retains possession of the soil" (18). The making of a nation through colonization, the poem shows, depends on the settler colonial *possession* of the soil and, in turn, on the *dispossession* of the Indigenous nations whose ownership of the territory and forms of existence *in* nature were never recognized. To borrow Coulthard's words, *The Rising Village* shows the extent to which "the history and experience of dispossession" became "the dominant background structure shaping the character of the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 62). The industrious settler is now ready to cultivate and improve this pre-emptied land, becoming himself "indigenous" to the "new world." Once the (discursive) removal of Indigenous presence is complete, the poem ends with a nostalgic reminiscence of the now distant "savage tribes": "Not fifty Summers yet have blessed thy clime, / How short a period in the page of time! / Since savage tribes, with terror in their train, / Rushed o'er thy fields, and ravaged all thy plain" (38). The rising nation owes its existence to the settler's physical labour clearing the wilderness and

shaping it into productive land as well as to the state's work of colonization and its forceful appropriation of Indigenous land. Together, both undermine the existing land practices of those perceived as "wandering savages" (15), the Mi'kmaq.

Another canonical Canadian long poem that foregrounds the subjugation of the forest landscape trough labour is Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story*. In her long poem, Crawford also depicts settlement as a linear teleological project and her text, like Goldsmith's, reflects the use of slash-and-burn as an effective practice of land clearing. Unlike Goldsmith's text, which offers a brief description of a doomed love story between Albert and Flora that ends with the bride being abandoned at the altar,[6] Crawford's long poem centers around the love story between Max, a woodsman employed in clearcutting the Canadian woods, and Katie, the daughter of a wealthy Scottish farmer. In this sense, the myth of the heroic settler Crawford's poem materializes is a classed one. Whereas Malcolm, Katie's father, struggles to keep the homestead he inherited from his ancestors profitable and safe from the surrounding wilderness, Max must work "his axe" against "the primal woods" (51), work to the "throbbing music of the bold, bright Axe" (53) in an attempt to build his own estate not as a slave "but – a King!" (50). Max, therefore, must own the land through labour. In a long, but crucial passage, the poem describes this process:

> And Max, the labourer and the lover, stood
>
> Within the forest's edge, beside a tree;
>
> The mossy king of all the woody tribes.

[6] In Goldsmith's poem, the love story between Albert and Flora takes place after settlers found their village. In it, Albert promises Flora that they will get married, but, on their wedding day, he sends a note informing that he has left the village and, thus, she would never see him again. Desolate, Flora rushes into a snowstorm and almost freezes to death. Although she is found and saved by a peasant couple, she never recovers from Albert's betrayal. In "Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village*: Controlling Nature," Gerald Lynch argues that the love story between Albert and Flora provides a cautionary tale warning about the dangers of losing control over oneself and over nature.

Whose clatt'ring branches rattl'd, shuddering,

As the bright axe cleav'd moon-like thro' the air.

Waking strange thunders, rousing echoes link'd

From the full, lion-throated roar, to sighs

Stealing on dove-wings thro' the distant aisles.

Swift fell the axe, swift follow'd roar on roar,

Till the bare woodland bellow'd in its rage.

…

Soon the great heaps of brush were builded high,

And like a victor, Max made pause to clear

His battle-field, high strewn with tangl'd dead.

Then roar'd the crackling mountains, and their fires

Met in high heaven, clasping flame with flame.

The thin winds swept *a cosmos of red sparks*

Across the bleak, midnight sky; and the sun

Walk'd pale behind the resinous, *black smoke*.

And Max car'd little for the blotted sun.

And nothing for the startl'd, outshone stars;

For Love, once set within a lover's breast,

Has its own Sun—its own peculiar sky,

All one great daffodil—on which do lie

The sun, the moon, the stars—all seen at once. (50-1, emphasis added)

To recreate Malcolm's colonial accomplishments, Max needs to conquer the forest ("woody tribes") and fell the trees of the wilderness with his axe until "bare woodland" roars "in its rage" and opens space for Max to build a functioning farm. As he prepares to set the fallen forest on fire, Max feels like a "victor" proudly standing by his battlefield and staring at the "dead" he has slain. Max's physical labour is followed by the transformation of the fallen branches into a crackling fire which gradually gives rise to flames that gather in a "cosmos of red sparks," and, finally, "black smoke". Interestingly, the passage shows that proving himself capable of establishing a successful farm through the clearing of the land is also what would allow for the marriage between Max and Malcolm's daughter. As *Malcolm's Katie* demonstrates, the production of wealth through clearcutting and burning is inseparable from reproduction through marriage and the making of the heteropatriarchal settler colonial family. This passage, therefore, points to a connection between "husbandry" (subjugation of nature through male labour) and "husband" (subjugation of women and the female body through marriage) that Daphne Marlatt critiques in *Ana Historic*, a point to which I return in the third chapter of this dissertation.

In "The Ecological Vision of Isabella Valancy Crawford," Diana M. A. Relke claims that each character in *Malcolm's Katie* embodies a different relationship between humans and the natural world. For Relke, for example, Malcolm represents a "*commercial* model" according to which "nature is ruthlessly and thoroughly subdued by man and turned into a profit-making enterprise" (162, original emphasis). Max, on the other hand, points to a "*military* model" that, through the throbbing of his axe, engages in a "guerilla warfare with the landscape" (162, original emphasis). Both, according to Relke, play a complementary role in supporting the imperial project in the colony in the sense that Malcolm's agrarian capitalist model depends on the "military" commitment of Max and his physical labour in clearing the land. Alfred, Katie's

suitor, reflects a "*Darwinian, or scientific,* model that conceives nature as "hostile and triumphantly destructive to man and the culture he creates" (162, original emphasis). Since the colonization of the "new world" relies on taming the wilderness to enable settler colonial presence and appropriating nature for the survival of the settler family, Alfred does not fit in this project, which makes his death at the end of the poem not accidental. Katie, the connecting character of Crawford's long poem, represents "the *New Edenic* model" in which "nature and culture are reconciled and exist in harmony" (162, original emphasis). Here, Relke reads the poem both as a celebration of rural idyllic life and a "utopian vision" that desires to "temper Victorian 'progress,' with its program of industrial and commercial expansion, through a uniquely female ethic of care and responsibility for nature" (164). Yet, Relke clarifies that the "New Edenic vision" represented by Katie still conforms to "the conventional Romantic notion of the reconciliation between man and nature, for Mother Nature – and hence the feminine – must be subdued and possessed in order for it to be realized" (165). To slightly modify Relke's statement, then, I would state that through marriage and childbirth, Katie helps expand the order of the empire, and, thus, becomes the vehicle through which (subdued) nature and imperial culture are reconciled. The imperial order, here, depends not only on the subjugation of nature, but also on the optimization of women's bodies and exploitation of female sexual reproduction. The "literary land claim" *Malcolm's Katie* performs, therefore, is one that combines the settler's industry in clearing the land with the settler woman's contribution to nation-building through childbearing. At the end of the poem, Max successfully builds his homestead and marries Katie; Crawford's text then closes with a description of Malcolm, Max, Katie, and the newborn Alfred sitting inside the "home of Max" with its "wealth of drooping vines" and "rich, fresh fields" (85).

Significantly, Relke identifies a fifth model, "*the most complex model of all, the one delivered to us by the narrator*, in which the boundary between humankind and nature seems to disappear" (162, original emphasis). Labelled as "ecological", this model "critiques hierarchical and dualistic ways of perceiving reality [and nature] and suggests an alternative epistemology of knowledge based on equality and multiplicity" (162). The passages which Relke classifies as "ecological" refer to Crawford's depictions of mythologized and personified natural elements, for instance, the seasons. Here, more specifically, Indigenous imagery is used to describe the elements of the natural world and dramatize the change from autumn to winter. For example, after describing the "South Wind" laying "his moccasins aside" and casting his "useless wampum, beaded with cool dews / Far from him, northward," the poem narrates the arrival of the winter:

> "Esa! Esa! shame upon you, Pale Face!
> "Shame upon you, Moon of Evil Witches!
> "Have you kill'd the happy, laughing Summer?
> "Have you slain the mother of the Flowers
> "With your icy spells of might and magic?
> …
> "She is gone a little way before me;
> "Gone an arrow's flight beyond my vision;
> "She will turn again and come to meet me,
> "With the ghosts of all the slain flowers,
> "In a blue mist round her shining tresses;
> "In a blue smoke in her naked forests

“She will linger, kissing all the branches,

“She will linger, touching all the places,

“Bare and naked, with her golden fingers,

“Saying, ‘Sleep, and dream of me, my children;

“‘Dream of me, the mystic Indian Summer;

Personified as a female force, the summer points to a female ethics of care that resists the “icy spells” of the winter and returns to provide relief with her “golden fingers.” As in Goldsmith’s *The Rising Village*, however, *Malcolm’s Katie* shows that Indigenous people are still part of what Frye called the “unknown, the unrealized, the humanly undigested” wilderness to be tamed. In fact, by incorporating Indigenous imagery to describe natural phenomenon such as the South Wind, Crawford conflates Indigenous peoples and natural landscape while she simultaneously laments not their imminent erasure, like in Goldsmith’s poem, but, rather, their assimilation into the imperial order. As a lingering presence (after all, the “mother of Flowers” will always “come again” and “linger”), Indigenous peoples here can only serve as a backdrop to Crawford’s narrative, the mystic voice whispering a lullaby to the children of the new colony.

Providing a comprehensive analysis of literary representations of slash-and-burn practices that facilitate the clearing of the Canadian wilderness and its transformation into a cultured settler space is outside the scope of this dissertation. Rather, my discussion of canonical texts like Goldsmith’s *The Rising Village* and Crawford’s *Malcolm’s Katie: A Love Story* illustrates how portrayals of forest landscapes in early Canadian literature help establish the wilderness as a foundational category in articulating Canadian (settler colonial) national identity. Goldsmith’s and Crawford’s long poems turn the Canadian wilderness into a discursive entity defined in terms of an empty and remote land that needs to be appropriated, controlled,

populated, and adapted for settlement and the survival of the normative settler family. Through an ambivalent discourse, these narratives, to some extent, celebrate the distinctiveness and value of untouched nature (particularly in Crawford's case) while also portraying the forest as an obstacle to the settler colonial project of civilization and development of the "New World." It is not by coincidence, then, that the heroic, resilient and hard-working settler who clears the woods to build a new life in the colony – himself a prototype of the lumberjack who would become the backbone of the Canadian forestry industry – holds a central place in the narrative universe of these texts. Mostly written for a British audience to offer homesteading advice and promote emigration to the "New World," early Canadian narratives portray the complexities of the work of settlement and illuminate the ways through which land-clearing and farming practices are embedded in broader political projects aimed at expanding and reproducing the social and economic order of the empire. Constructed vis-à-vis colonialist and virile discourses of nation-building that emphasize the vastness of the Canadian wilderness, these early texts consolidate an idea of land ownership based on the Lockean transformation of nature through labour and the need for control and mastery over the environment which is critiqued in the narratives I examine in the chapters that follow, for instance, Brian Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut: Or the Way Things Are in my Hometown*, Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* and Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows*.

In Brazil, the forest also occupies a central space in the national imaginary and is constitutive of Brazilian identity.[7] As a material and discursive entity, the Amazon is first

[7] Alongside the rainforest, the *sertão*, an arid region in the northeast of Brazil, also occupies a central place in the national imaginary. Focusing on the struggles of the *nordestino* worker to survive the aridity of the *sertão*, for example, authors such as Euclides da Cunha, Graciliano Ramos and Jorge Amado call attention to the marginalization of Brazil's backlands, as opposed to the prosperity of urban centers like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Unlike the Amazon, however, the *sertão* diagnoses, but offers no solution to Brazil's "material backwardness," in part because of the unproductivity of the land.

conceived as an empty terrain, an archaic and distant territory that lacks the marks of civilization but abounds with exoticism, much influenced by the exploration and adventure narratives of foreign authors like Gaspar de Carvajal's *Descobrimentos do Rio de Orellana* (1542), Jules Verne's *La Jangada: 800 Lieues sur l'Amazone* (1881), and Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World* (1912). With the discovery of natural latex in the Amazon Basin at the end of the nineteenth century, however, Brazil's northern frontier gradually crystalized in the national imaginary as a space that, because of its abundant natural resources, carried the promise of material and social achievements that could free the country from the ingrained assumption of cultural, economic, and technological backwardness. The rubber boom (1879-1912), as this economic cycle became known, put the Amazon, historically located at the geographical, cultural, and economic periphery of the already developed southern states, at the centre of Brazil's political discussions. With the establishment of the *Primeira República* (First Brazilian Republic) in 1889, the Brazilian government started designing systematic plans to promote the occupation of the northern lands so as to expand the state's presence beyond the major cities in the south. This new era brought migration from the northeast coast to the Amazon, and the establishment of rubber-worker communities such as the *seringueiros* who, subjugated to social, economic, and political marginalization, experienced intense conflicts with wealthy landowners. The building of Brasília, Brazil's new capital city, in the late 1950s encouraged even larger projects of occupation and development of Brazil's interior lands that the military government would implement in the 1960s. As Brazil's north was disconnected from core industrial zones in the south, and shared unguarded borders with other foreign nations, the military built on a rhetoric of border security and national sovereignty that would legitimize predatory projects of infrastructure such as the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railway which Márcio Souza

critiques in *Mad Maria*. The creation of the *Superintendência de Desenvolvimento da Amazônia* (SUDAM) [*Superintendence of Development for the Amazon*] in 1966 consolidated a series of public policies to modernize the Brazilian Amazon, including fiscal incentives to draw private capital from the country's industrial south as well as loans from the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Particularly relevant in this context is the military slogan "integrar para não entregar" ("integrate to not deliver"), where "to integrate" meant not only to demarcate the borders of the Amazonian states, but also to promote the exploitation of natural resources in large scale, hence cementing and giving universal purpose to the technocratic mindset that the rubber boom had initiated. Significantly, thirty-three years after the end of the Brazilian dictatorship, the election of President Jair Bolsonaro in 2018, himself a retired military officer and supporter of the 1964 *coup d'état*, showed the extent to which these ideals of national sovereignty, border security, and capitalist development in the Amazon were still alive.

Literary discourses at the dawn of the twentieth century perpetuate an idea of the Amazon as an uncontrollable, dangerous, and ruthless "jungle" whose potential for social and material greatness depends on its subjugation to monumental projects of economic and technological development. Particularly relevant in this context are narratives like Euclides da Cunha's *À Margem da História* (*The Amazon: Land without History*) and Alberto Rangel's *Inferno Verde: Cenas e Cenários do Amazonas* (*Green Hell: Scenes and Sceneries of the Amazon*). Published in 1909, *À Margem da História* is an essay anthology which recounts Da Cunha's experiences in the Amazon region while working as a government employee at the *Comissão de Reconhecimento do Alto-Purus*, a federal commission formed to help demarcate Acre, Brazil's newly acquired state. Influenced by the scientific discussions of the time, Da Cunha adopts a

positivist approach to nature according to which the Amazon is portrayed as an erratic and incommensurable territory, an "opulent" chaos where a man is merely a "caminhante perdido" (9) ["lost wanderer" (10)].[8] In "Impressões Gerais" ("General Impressions"), the opening piece of *À Margem da História,* Da Cunha writes:

> A impressão dominante que tive, e talvez correspondente a uma verdade positiva, é esta: o homem, ali, é ainda um intruso impertinente. Chegou sem ser esperado nem querido – quando a natureza ainda estava arrumando o seu mais vasto e luxuoso salão. E encontrou uma opulenta desordem ... Os mesmos rios ainda não se firmaram nos leitos; parecem tatear uma situação de equilíbrio derivando, divagantes, em meandros instáveis, contorcidos sem "sacados", cujos istmos a reveses se rompem e se soldam numa desesperadora formação de ilhas e de lagos de seis meses, e até criando formas topográficas novas em que estes dois aspectos se confundem; ou expandindo-se em "furos" que se anastomosam, reticulados e de todo incaracterísticos, sem que se saiba se tudo aquilo é bem uma bacia fluvial ou um mar profusamente retalhado de estreitos. (4)

> The overwhelming impression I conceived – perhaps corresponding to a positive truth – is this: humankind is still an impertinent interloper here. We have arrived uninvited and unprepared for, while nature was still in the process of setting up this vast, magnificent salon. Here we encounter disorder on a lavish scale … the rivers are still not fixed in their courses. They seem to search vainly for equilibrium by wandering off aimlessly in unstable meanders that curve into the form of lakes called *sacados* with isthmuses that repeatedly break down and recombine in the futile creation of islands and lakes of only

[8] All the translations of *À Margem da História* come from the English version of Da Cunha's anthology, translated by Ronald Souza and published by the Oxford University Press in 2006.

> six months' duration. They even produce new topographic forms of jumbled island and lake. Or they extend in cross channels called *furos* that anastomose between the courses of river and tributary in an atypical network fashion, until it is impossible to decide if the area is a river basin or a sea profusely segmented by straits. (4)

The Amazon, according to Da Cunha's general impressions, is incomplete, erratic, and unpolished. To borrow Slater's definition of the jungle, the rainforest is a "tumultuous complexity," a "still-savage" space which men are unable (and unwelcome) to settle. By emphasizing the several rivers that refuse to be "fixed" in their courses, the new topographic formations that follow the change of the seasons, and the overall labyrinthic sense of the landscape, Da Cunha contrasts the chaos that besieges the Amazon with the order that characterizes civilization in the south of the country. He does so to show that only "as verdades da arte e da ciência" (5) ["the well-defined truths of art and sciences" (5)] could correct "a grande lógica inconsciente das coisas" (5) ["the grand unconscious logic of things" (5)]. In this sense, Da Cunha uses what he perceives as the unpredictable and uncontrollable topography of the Amazon to set the scene for the arguments he makes throughout his anthology, that is, that only centralized and consistent investments in modernizing the region and capitalizing its endless resources could help integrate Brazil's backlands into the central state and help solve the country's unresolved problems of underdevelopment.

In her introduction to the English version of *À Margem da História*, Lúcia de Sá comments on Da Cunha's portrayal of the Amazon and the concept of territory it creates. Drawing a parallel between Da Cunha's historical novel *Os Sertões,* which recounts the Canudos war that happened in Bahia's *sertão* (Brazil's arid region) from 1896 to 1897, and *À Margem da História,* Sá states that, in both, "nature is inconstant and eliminates, through self-destruction, all

traces of its own history" (vx). Here, Sá builds on Da Cunha's conception of both the *sertão* and the Amazon as erratic and the fact that, for him, the subjection of these landscapes to unstable natural laws like the change of the seasons and its corresponding natural phenomena would destroy any possibility of history. In the specific context of the Amazon, Sá contends that, by "presenting Amazonian nature this way, Euclides makes land practically nonexistent as a physical concept, replacing it with territorial definitions based on human action" (xv). Her starting point is the way Da Cunha describes the *sertanejo*, the migrant from Brazil's arid region, as the rightful settler. In *À Margem da História,* Da Cunha explains that long periods of drought in the *sertão* forced the *sertanejos* to move to the "Amazônia – vastíssima, despovoada, quase ignota – o que eqüivalia a expatriá-los dentro da própria pátria" (25) ["Amazon – vast, unpopulated, almost unknown – which amounted to expatriating them within their own country" (36)]. Fleeing poverty and social marginalization in the northeast of Brazil, this "martyred multitude" (36) embarks on a journey to the "unknown" which ultimately leads them to settle in the Amazon jungle. After thirty years of different waves of migration, Da Cunha concludes that the Amazonian state, which "era uma vaga expressão geográfica, um deserto empantanado, a estirar-se, sem lindes, para sudoeste, definiu-se de chofre, avantajando-se aos primeiros pontos do nosso desenvolvimento econômico" (25) ["was a vague geographical term, a swampy wilderness stretching out limitlessly to the southwest, has suddenly defined itself, contributing substantially to our economic development" 36)]. The physical work of the *sertanejo* men, although not described in detail by Da Cunha, transforms the unpopulated and swampy jungle into a well-defined, bounded state that is ready to be appropriated and contribute to national economic development. Da Cunha's logic, according to Sá, implies "that borders can stabilize only after the Brazilian workers arrive and found towns and villages. The spatial logic of the

Amazon, here, for Euclides, is the logic of *uti possidetis*" (xvi). Like Goldsmith's industrious settler and Crawford's resilient Max, these migrants from the northeast gain ownership and control ("*utis possidetis*") over the land through a Lockean idea of transformation of the landscape through labour and, thus, set the stage for upcoming projects of modernization in the rainforest. Here, Da Cunha's discursive universe helps found a concept of land ownership that writers like Jeannette Armstrong, and co-authors Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa question in their narratives, a topic that I explore in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

Da Cunha's "*uti possidetis*" logic shows that the absence of history that Sá attributes to his representation of the Amazon as unstable is less the result of unpredictable natural laws than a discursive and symbolic construction that erases the histories and knowledge systems of those who already lived in the Amazon. It is not by coincidence, then, that Indigenous peoples appear very rarely in *À Margem da História* and, for that matter, are practically absent in the first essays of Da Cunha's anthology in which he locates and defines Brazil's northern region geographically and historically. Presuming that the Amazon "é talvez a terra mais nova do mundo" (5) ["may well be the world's newest land" (5)], Da Cunha, like Goldsmith and Crawford, neglects the social, cultural, and epistemological systems of the Indigenous nations who have owned the land (not in the "*uti possidetis*" sense) long before the Portuguese invasion of Brazil. In both cases, these writers repeat a longstanding cliché of Canada and Brazil as new countries. The first mention of Indigenous communities in *À Margem da História*, for example, appears in its fourth essay, "The Caucheiros." Here, Da Cunha warns the people going upward in the direction of the Purus river that they will encounter, in the area near Cachoeira, Indigenous communities like "os paumaris rarescentes, mal recordando os antigos donos daquelas várzeas; e dali para montante os ipurinás inofensivos; ou a partir do Iaco, os tucunas que já nascem velhos, tanto se lhes reflete na

compleição tolhiça a decrepitude da raça" (29) ["the Paumaris, ever decreasing in number and hardly recalling the old masters of those lands, or further upstream, the peaceful Ipurinás, or even past the Yaco, the Tacunas, born looking old, so much is the decrepitude of their race reflected in their stunted aspect" (45)]. According to Da Cunha's description, the Brazilian Indigenous nations that make up the Paumaris, Ipurinás, Yaco, and Tacunas pose no threat to the economic exploitation of the rainforest, since they are either peaceful admirers of civilization or groups doomed to disappear. Da Cunha then concludes that "civilização, barbaramente armada de rifles fulminantes, assedia completamente ali a barbaria encantoada: os peruanos pelo ocidente e pelo sul; os brasileiros em todo o quadrante de NE; no de SE, trancando o vale do Madre de Diós, os bolivianos" (30) ["civilization, barbarously armed with its lethal rifles, completely besieges here the cornered savage. The Peruvians from the west and from the south; the Brazilians in the entire northeastern sector; and on the southeast the Bolivians, shutting off access to the Madre de Dios Valley" (46)]. From a discursive perspective, in these passages Da Cunha inaugurates a Brazilian version of the vanishing race myth that, in Sá's words, is marked by a "sentimental imperialist nostalgia" according to which readers "feel pity for the poor Indian who is being killed by our own 'civilization'" (xix). While I agree with Sá's statement, Da Cunha's portrayal of the extermination of Indigenous nations remains uncritical. Although Da Cunha broadly defines the decimation of Indigenous nations as a barbarous act committed by "civilization," their presumed disappearance is depicted as a necessary step to accomplish Brazil's progressive dream. In the end, the demarcation of the Acre state – Da Cunha's own mission as a government employee – successfully sets the geographical borders that, according to him, would facilitate the government's systematic plans to civilize and order the jungle, and, thus, contain its erratic nature. More importantly, Da Cunha's demarcation project sets the cultural and epistemic

borders that would erase Indigenous presence and undermine their forms of land stewardship. Transformed into a "land without history," as the title of his anthology makes it clear, the Amazon is ready to be optimized and contribute to improving Brazil's geopolitical and economic potential.

Influenced by Da Cunha's writing, Alberto Rangel portrays the rainforest as a place of complexity whose internal incoherences and threatening qualities continue to astonish and challenge men. Like Da Cunha, Rangel also held an official role as government secretary for the Amazonas state between 1901 to 1907, a position which not only allowed him to travel through the jungle, but also reinforced his view of the central state as a trusted carrier of modernity and economic development to the outskirts of Brazil. In his short story collection *Inferno Verde: Cenas e Cenários do Amazonas* (*Green Hell: Scenes and Sceneries of the Amazon*), published in 1908 with a preface of Da Cunha, Rangel uses a "green hell" metaphor to depict the rainforest and, by doing so, founds a new aesthetic approach known as *infernismo.* This new aesthetic counters previous descriptions of the rainforest as an exotic land of boundless natural resources and mysterious places like the *El Dorado*, which Gaspar de Carvajal portrays in his recounting of the expedition led by Spanish explorers Francisco de Orellana and Gonzalo Pizarro along the Amazon River between 1541-1542. Rangel's *Infernismo* also challenges the idea of the Amazon as a promised land where José de Alencar narrates the birth of the true Brazilian identity in his indigenist trilogy.[9] In *Inferno Verde*, instead, Rangel characterizes the Amazon as a sinister and

[9] Embedded in nineteenth-century romantic discourses about the new world and search for national identity, Alencar's indigenist novels *O Guarani* (1857)*, Iracema* (1865) and *Ubirajara* (1874) attribute national distinctiveness to the country's forest landscapes, especially the picturesque scenery and submissive Indigenous inhabitants he enthusiastically represents in these novels (all of which are named after an Indigenous character). Alencar's idea is that the true Brazilian subject would be born from the miscegenation of the European colonizer and the Indigenous person with the "selva" (jungle) serving as idyllic brackground for this fusion. Even so, the idea of the "selva" that he depicts in his novels is, to some extent, de-territorialized, abstract, and, more importantly, idealized.

threatening entity whose unbearable heat, unmappable topography and predatory fauna lead to the characters' numerous trials and death. In fact, nearly all the eleven stories of *Inferno Verde* narrate the conflict between men and nature, and, oftentimes, the subjugation of the first by the second. Evoking the unpredictability of the Amazonian landscape which Da Cunha explores in his essays, Rangel depicts the Amazon as a "terra caída" ("fallen earth") where the struggles of men like Souto, the main character of the short story "Inferno Verde," resemble a "jogo de erosões e de aterros [onde] o esforço do homem é o de Atlas sustentando o mundo e a sua luta é a de um Sísifo invertido" (n.d.) ["game of erosions and landfills [where] a man's struggle is that of an Atlas holding up the world, and his fight is that of an inverted Sisyphus"].[10]

Unlike Da Cunha, Rangel focuses on the racial, cultural, and political marginalization of local migrants and mestizo communities in the rubber camps of the Amazon so as to problematize the reality of human and natural exploitation brought by the predatory capitalist logic of this new industrial cycle. "Maibi", for example, narrates the story of Sabino, a migrant rubber worker from Ceará, a state in the northeast coast of Brazil, who sells his Indigenous wife, Maibi, to another trapper in an attempt to settle a debt he kept with his boss. Marciano, Sabino's boss, encourages the trade and facilitates the money transfer. Unable to bear the absence of his wife, however, Sabino ultimately steals her back from her new "proprietor" and kills her. Significantly, he does so by tying Maibi's body to a tree and letting her blood drop inside the bowl he uses to collect latex. Here, the narrator portrays Maibi's wounded body as an extension of the abused tree, hence making a parallel between the exploitation of nature for the profit of the rubber industry, and the violence against Maibi's female body in a space that is overwhelmingly masculine, the rubber settlement. In this sense, "Maibi" unveils the connection between

[10] All the translations of Rangel's short story collection *Inferno Verde* are my own.

exploitative capitalism and gender violence that I will discuss in the third chapter of this dissertation in my analysis of Daphne Marlatt's and Regina Melo's novels. Even so, the narrator of Rangel's story concludes that Maibi's martyrdom, "com a sua vida a escoar-se nas tigelinhas do seringueiro, seria ainda assim bem menor que o do Amazonas, oferecendo-se em pasto de uma indústria que o esgota" ["with her life draining away in the rubber tapper's bowls, would still be much less than that of the Amazon, offering itself as fodder for an industry that exhausts it"]. Maibi's fate, the narrator implies, results from "um crime maior, não cometido pelo Amor, em coração desvairado, mas pela Ambição coletiva de milhares d'almas endoidecidas na cobiça universal" (n.d.) ["a greater crime committed not by Love, in a frenzied heart, but by the collective Ambition of thousands of souls maddened by universal greed"]. In other terms, Maibi's death is the outcome of an exploitative economic system whereby abusive relationships between wealthy rubber lords and indebted workers suspend any notion of civility and morality. The "green hell," the story suggests, is less an imposition of an unruly nature than a human creation of an unfair economic system. Nevertheless, instead of targeting the very institutions that allow for inhumane crimes like Maibi's death, in his critique Rangel focuses on individual actors like Marciano, Sabino's boss, who, "desprezando escrúpulos e cuidados na conservação da riqueza florestal, com que a boa Natureza lhe presenteara, resumia brutalmente, na homilia, o programa absurdo da sua exploração" (n.d) ["contemptuously disregarding any scruple or care in the conservation of the forest resources with which Nature had gifted him, brutally summarized in his preaching the absurd program of his exploitation"]. Through Marciano, Rangel offers a glimpse of Brazil's iconic figure of the wealthy and despotic landowner who carelessly exploits the environment in order to increase his profits and facilitate the economic and political development of the country. Conceiving the Amazon as part of a broader profitable enterprise,

this unscrupulous landholder becomes the figure through which modern ideals of civilization and progress are enforced in the country's northern frontier.

"Inferno Verde," the story that gives name to the anthology, is emblematic of Rangel's views about the Amazon and, more importantly, of the limited scope of his environmental and social critique. The narrative recounts the struggles of Souto, an engineer and retired military who moves from Brazil's industrialized south to the Amazon region to lead the topographic mapping of Tamboriaco, a stream in the Acre state. From the beginning of the story, Souto's relationship with the forest is informed by fear, uneasiness, and isolation (from family members and from the marks of civilization) – so much so that land, in "Inferno Verde", becomes an animated entity that constantly bewilders and threatens Souto. This is clear, for example, when Souto compares the laughter and murmurs of pain he supposedly hears coming from the rainforest to the convulsed fingers of a "gênio em delírio" playing "as cordas infinitas dessa grande harpa de esmeralda, arrancando-lhe acordes e síncopes harmoniosos ou incoerentes, na execução da mais aterrorizante das sinfonias" (n.d.) ["delusional genius" playing "the infinite strings of this great emerald harp, plucking harmonious or incoherent chords and syncopations, in the execution of the most terrifying of symphonies"]. The portrayal of the jungle as a threatening entity, here, anticipates Souto's doomed fate. In the story, Souto falls ill with tropical fevers while travelling through the region, and, despite the efforts of his colleague to search for help in the closest city, he ultimately dies at the end of the narrative. In the last scene of "Inferno Verde," a lonely, convulsed, and helpless Souto walks around the garden outside his hut and, in a last outburst of resistance, curses the land "– Inferno! … Inferno … verde" (n.d.) ["–Hell! … green … Hell"]. The story then closes with the forest presumedly explaining its mercilessness and forgiving Souto: "Mas essa terra que, matando o aventureiro, o estemava de rosas, poderia

no entretanto responder: 'Perdôo-te e compreendo o estigma que me lanças. Fui um paraíso. Para a raça íncola nenhuma pátria melhor, mais farta e benfazeja. Por mim as tribos erravam, no sublime desabafo dos instintos de conservação, livres nas marnotas pelas bacias fluviais afora'" (n.d.) ["But this land, which, by killing the adventurer, streaked him with roses, could in the meantime respond: 'I forgive you and I understand the stigma you cast on me. I was a paradise in the past. For the original race, I could not have been a better and more nourishing land. Upon me, whole tribes wandered free through the river basins, following their conservation instincts'"]. Here, a delusional Souto regrets the devastation of the Amazon imposed by the arrival of modernity. This passage is marked by a sense of nostalgia that mourns the fall of the green paradise, the loss of the forest in its primeval condition, and the disappearance of its wandering Indigenous inhabitants.

By giving voice and consciousness to the forest, Rangel arguably tries to problematize the environmental exploitation caused by ongoing projects of occupation and development of the Amazon frontier. Yet, the last paragraphs of "Inferno Verde" suggest that the environmental subjugation of the Amazon was a necessary process, which ultimately undermines Rangel's critique. From the perspective of the rainforest, the narrator writes:

> Eu resisto à violência dos estupradores... Mas, enfim, o inferno verde, se é a geena de torturas, é a mansão de uma esperança: sou a terra prometida às raças superiores, tonificadoras, vigorosas, dotadas de firmeza, inteligência e providas de dinheiro; e que, um dia, virão assentar no meu seio a definitiva obra de civilização, que os primeiros imigrados, humildes e pobres pionnière do presente, esboçam confusamente entre blasfêmias e ranger de dentes" (n.d.)

> I resist the violence of the rapists. But, finally, the green hell, if it is the Gehenna of tortures, is the mansion of a hope: I am the land promised to the superior, invigorating races who are endowed with firmness, intelligence, and provided with money; and who, one day, will come to settle in my bosom the definitive work of civilization which the first immigrants, humble and poor pioneers of the present, sketch confusedly among blasphemies and gnashing of teeth.

Souto's death, here, symbolizes his punishment not because he was complicit in the system of economic exploitation of the Amazon, but rather because he was unfit for the modernizing project he blindly endorsed. Lacking the strength to endure the many trials to which he is put, he is disqualified as a member of the "superior race" who, endowed with intelligence and money, would bring civilization to the jungle. Although attentive to the ecological, social, and political impacts of the rubber economy, Rangel still conceptualizes the Amazon as a national frontier that could feed Brazil's modernizing dreams. In this sense, he overlooks the complicity of the Brazilian elites in authorizing human suffering and ecological degradation in the name of capitalist progress, and fails to acknowledge the shortcomings of exalting discourses of modernity. Through the same positivist mindset as Euclides da Cunha, Rangel explains the territory in terms of its promising resources and potential to contribute to Brazil's "civilizing" projects, and frames human existence as antagonistic to non-human nature. For both Da Cunha and Rangel, the Amazon is a complex, unpredictable and hostile jungle that only overly rational and technocratic systems would be able to control.

In *Amazônia Babel: Línguas, Ficção, Margens, Nomadismos e Resíduos Utópicos* (*Amazon Babel: Languages, Fiction, Margins, Migrations and Utopian Residues*), Simone de Souza Lima argues that, more than a material entity, the Amazon is a cultural sign that, like a

palimpsest, is produced through the imposition and interaction of different inscriptions. As a discursive construction, in other words, the rainforest is a fluid concept that can be appropriated and manipulated to serve various aesthetic, ideological and epistemological purposes. Because intellectual elites at the threshold of the twentieth century portrayed the Amazon as essential to achieve economic development, political autonomy, and the consolidation of Brazilian identity, many of the "different inscriptions" about the Amazon are informed by this common denominator. The problem, according to Lima, is that these images are usually disconnected from the immediate realities from which they arise, thus creating a "estética da monumentalidade destituída da tomada de consciência e das lutas políticas de seu povo [da Amazônia] (77)" ["an aesthetic of monumentality that is unconscious about the political struggles of [the Amazonian] peoples"].[11] Through this perspective, the Amazon becomes a deterritorialized sign that is uprooted from its own social, political, and cultural historical processes. It is not by coincidence, then, that canonical texts about the Amazon like *À Margem da História* and *Inferno Verde* were written by authors who moved from the south to the north of Brazil to work as government employees and, like foreigners in their own country, were unfamiliar with the material realities of the region. Their "aesthetic of monumentality," marked by the emphasis on the "erratic," threatening and unrewarding topography of the rainforest, called for "monumental" and systematic projects engendered by the central state to successfully demarcate the borders of the north and control its unruly nature, hence legitimizing the careless exploitation of the Amazon. Furthermore, cultural representations that came to characterize the rainforest as a region of promising economic development and social prosperity point to Brazil's entrance into a modernity that is mainly Eurocentric. As Lima puts it, to the Indigenous peoples, the Africans

[11] All the translations of Lima's text are my own.

forcefully dislocated to the Americas, and the *nordestino* migrants, modernity, which is the fuel of political and cultural discussions about economic development, meant "a (des)territorialidade de seu *modus vivandi* individual e coletivo, a perda de suas línguas e dos referenciais culturais que elas carregavam. Essas populações viram-se repentinamente seus *corpos* ocupados por outros emblemas e códigos simbólicos" (178-9, original emphasis) ["the (de)territoriality of their individual and collective *modus vivandi*, the loss of their languages and the cultural references they carried. These populations suddenly saw their *bodies* occupied by other emblems and symbolic codes"]. As this quotation implies, the Amazon manifests in the national imaginary based on a Western intellectual tradition that establishes its own narratives, epistemologies, and ontologies as universal, and imposes them on the "bodies" of minority groups and natural landscapes. In this sense, both Da Cunha's idea of the Amazon as a land without history and Rangel's use of a green hell metaphor emphasize the complexity and challenging nature of Brazil's north to naturalize power relations and legitimize hegemonic understandings of progress based on the antagonism between humans and environment.

Lima's points are important because the search for a localized image of the Amazon in texts like Márcio Souza's *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* (*Lost World II: The End of the Third World*), Regina Melo's *Ykamiabas: Filhas da Lua, Mulheres da Terra* (*Ykamiabas: Daughters of the Moon, Women of the Earth*), and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* (*The Falling Sky: Words of a Yanomami Shaman*) is inseparable from deconstructing and exhausting previous cultural inscriptions about the rainforest as well as the modes of knowledge and existence that they reify. In fact, in this dissertation I argue that in their critical re-examination of the meaning and importance of Canada's and Brazil's forests, authors like Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-writers Bruce Albert

and Davi Kopenawa bring epistemology and ontology (as in a matter of existence) to the center of environmental debates. By doing so, they show that, as contested categories, the Canadian wilderness and the Amazonian jungle are unthinkable outside issues of culture, knowledge, collective existence, and the survival of human and non-human nature. To borrow the words of Colombian scholar Arturo Escobar, the authors I analyze adopt a "decolonial view of nature" which entails "seeing the interrelatedness of ecological, economic, and cultural processes that come to produce what humans call nature" so as to open space for "an epistemic questioning of modernity and development that points at basic definitions of life" (*Theories of Difference* 155). Their decolonial critique is inseparable from their questioning of the universality and rationality of Western-centric narratives and cultural inscriptions. For instance, Brian Fawcett's *A Virtual Clearcut,* Márcio Souza's *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo,* and Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* reveal the cracks and failures of hegemonic (colonial) ideals of capitalist development to show that productive labour *in* and *against* the forest can only catalyze human and environmental exploitation. For Marlatt, these ideals are embedded in a masculinist narrative about the settlement of British Columbia which create the conditions for the subjugation of both women and non-human nature. Fawcett, Souza and Marlatt urge readers to re-evaluate our relationship with non-human nature beyond anthropocentric models in order to open space for non-capitalist actions and forms of existence. At the same time, narratives like Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu*, Regina Melo's *Ykamiabas* and Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows* foreground how Indigenous and other traditional groups respond to the cultural and environmental changes caused by forest exploitation to emphasize the power of local groups to create locally-centered and environmentally conscious frameworks for relating with the environment. I argue that through their representation of Canada's and Brazil's forests,

Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Sousa, Regina Melo, and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa comment on the need to acknowledge practices of land use and resource management that are less anthropocentric and more geared toward reciprocal relationships between humans, non-humans, and nature, thus calling for alternative understandings of the environment, what it means to protect it, and what it means to exist *in* and *with* nature.

In analyzing how literary representations of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil speak to a broader crisis of modern systems of thought, my dissertation draws upon the claims that critics like Aníbal Quijano and Walter Mignolo make in Latin-American postcolonial theory. Their ideas are part of a broader project known as the "modernity/coloniality research program," which was established in the beginning of the 1990s through the combined efforts of Enrique Dussel, Arturo Escobar, Aníbal Quijano and Walter Mignolo, to name only a few. To explore the connections between Eurocentrism, colonialism, and capitalism in Latin America, the "modernity/coloniality" project locates the origins of modernity in the sixteenth, instead of the eighteenth century. The rationale of "modern/colonial" scholars is that, by considering the rise of the French and British empires as the starting point of modernity, post-Enlightenment European history and theory ignores the colonial legacies of the Spanish and Portuguese invasion of the Americas, which go as far back as the sixteenth century. Through their focus on the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of Latin America, therefore, theorists like Quijano, Mignolo and Escobar conceive modernity and coloniality as concomitant events, and the Americas as the place where the modern world was born. According to Quijano, for example, the consolidation of colonial power in the "New World" imposed "new geo-cultural identities" that suppressed local experiences, histories, knowledges, and cultures to reinforce Western hegemony (540). Since

global capitalism still presupposes an element of coloniality, Quijano argues that an effective redistribution of power should combine social and economic changes with an epistemic emancipation from Western-centric paradigms of thought. Focusing on the geopolitics of knowledge, Mignolo states that an awareness of the locus of enunciation, or the place from where one thinks, not only delegitimizes the pretense of Eurocentric modes of thought to be universal and monologic, but also sets the grounds for "epistemic affirmations that have been disavowed" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 80-1). My thesis adapts these arguments to the context of cultural discourses about the forest in Canada and Brazil to demonstrate that, while participating in current debates about ecological crisis, artistic responses to forest management and deforestation in both countries move beyond an (exclusively) environmental agenda to question the hegemony of Western-centric thought and the ongoing suppression of cultures, epistemologies, and ontologies in both countries.

The ways that the eco-politics foregrounded in contemporary literatures in Canada and Brazil calls for non-hegemonic concepts of ecology, politics, and culture, most of which originate from localized and community-managed practices, echo the arguments of postcolonial ecocritics like Arturo Escobar and Lorraine Code, and of decolonial scholar and activist Boaventura de Sousa Santos. For Escobar, for instance, the sense of ecological crisis that informs current discussions about the environment reflects a failure of universalist (Eurocentric) systems of thought to provide solutions to environmental, political, and economic problems. In this sense, his analysis of place-based models of environmental consciousness among Black and Indigenous communities in Colombia relates to a broader call for the legitimization of alternative conceptions of nature, culture, and economy at local and global levels (10). Similarly, Code relocates ecocritical enquiry "down on the ground" to examine localized forms of knowledge

that challenge the master epistemologies of Western capitalist system and help restructure the dominant social and cultural imaginary. For Code, therefore, "a revisioned mode of engagement with knowledge, subjectivity, politics, ethics, [and] science" (5), demands that we think ecologically as well. Focusing on the emancipatory movements of subaltern groups in the "global South," Santos suggests that social justice – and I would add environmental justice – can only be achieved with cognitive justice and the recognition of alternative epistemic frameworks.[12] Rather than a geographical space, the "South" here refers to movements of resistance to capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy by victims of systemic oppression and violence whether they are in the North or South (x). From the lived experiences of marginalized communities, Santos proposes a "rearguard theory" that both reinterprets Western concepts and invites non-Eurocentric ideals of emancipation. These claims about the limitations of modern systems of thought and awareness of localized practices of land management shape my analysis of how Indigenous nations like the Yanomami in Brazil and the Okanagan in Canada promote alternative understandings of nature, culture, politics, and development. Instead of proposing a romantic return to a primitive and non-exploitative past, the texts I examine in my research project draw on the experiences and perspectives of modern Indigenous and rural communities to problematize the use of natural resources that exclusively supports a market-driven and profit-based economic model.

[12] In the context of ecocriticism, Santos's focus on territorial disputes and awareness of existing inequalities regarding access to natural resources and exposure to ecological risk echo the claims put forth by movements such as "environmentalism of the poor" and "environmental justice." While the first analyzes the relationship between environmental disasters and unevenly distributed levels of economic development, especially concerning the increasing social inequality between North and South, the second, developed mainly in the United States, grew out of civil rights movements, and is concerned primarily with the effects of environmental issues on racialized minorities. In my thesis, I will draw mostly upon the concept of "environmentalism of the poor," especially Joan Martínez-Alier's book *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study of Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (2002).

The writers I examine in the chapters that follow represent forestry landscapes and environmental issues like deforestation in order to revisit a social imaginary about the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon which is embedded in the main pillars of Eurocentric modernity, that is: capitalism, patriarchy, and colonialism. My first chapter argues that by critiquing the sustained exploitation of humans and non-humans in postcolonial nations like Canada and Brazil, Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-writers Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa offer the seeds a theoretical (un)thinking that considers environmental problems alongside issues of epistemological and ontological affirmation (as in the recognition of different knowledge systems and of alternative, non-exploitative forms of existence). Consequently, understanding the kinds of intervention they are making in the cultural and material imaginary of these countries requires a dialogue between postcolonialism and ecocriticism within and beyond Western-centric frameworks. Thus, in my first chapter I outline the contributions of Latin-American postcolonial theorists like Quijano, Mignolo and Escobar to argue that their treatment of epistemic and ontological issues in the context of (neo)colonialism in Latin America helps de-center hegemonic imaginaries, thereby opening space for the emergence of alternative practices of environmental use, modes of knowledge, and forms of existences. At the same time, in this chapter I contend that narratives like *Virtual Clearcut*, *Mad Maria*, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, *Ana Historic*, *Ykamiabas*, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* mediate between real world issues and aesthetic form and, by doing so, try to offer a discursive structure for acting upon current environmental, cultural, and economic crises. Their (un)thinking, therefore, is not only theoretical, but also geared toward action on the ground. In this sense, my first chapter reads the works of Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-authors

Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa in light of Rob Nixon's definition of the "environmental writers-activist" to show how they bring ethics and aesthetics together in order to urge readers to think, act, and live differently. While Fawcett, Marlatt, Armstrong, Souza, Melo, and Albert and Kopenawa contribute to theoretical discussions about the need for alternative epistemologies and ontologies, they also redefine literature as an important tool to promote social, economic, and environmental change.

Cultural myths of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil reify the idea of land transformation and economic development as teleological and necessary processes that would help these countries achieve civilization and prosperity. As Goldsmith's and Crawford's long poems illustrate, settlement in Canada depended on the subjugation of the Canadian wilderness through labour and its transformation from empty and untamed land into a "copy" of the empire in the new world. Da Cunha and Rangel, on the other hand, appropriate the Amazon rainforest to advocate systematic projects of modernization and land optimization in Brazil's north. In both cases, these Canadian and Brazilian texts point toward a connection between the national imaginary and the beginning of colonial, Eurocentric capitalism. Thus, in my second chapter I analyze narratives such as Brian Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut,* and Márcio Souza's *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* which deconstruct positive representations of capitalist tropes to, instead, unbury the economic and environmental outcomes that are hidden underneath promises of material achievement and capitalist redemption. I argue that by conceiving development as a set of material practices, instead of simply a mental or discursive structure, and focusing on the grounded actions that enable the narrative of economic progress, Fawcett and Souza suggest that deconstructing the ideology of economic development does little to prevent the destruction of forest landscapes in Prince George and in the Amazon. Unable to identify a correlation between

dismantling mindsets, concepts, and ideologies, and achieving positive change, *Virtual Clearcut, Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* point to the need of moving beyond the realm of ideas and discourses toward enabling non-capitalist actions.

Women and the female body, like the forest, also played a role in the colonial process of settlement. This is clear, for instance, in Crawford's portrayal of Katie's procreating body as crucial to the rise of the settler colonial nation. In his description of Maibi's mutilated body as an extension of the Amazonian trees from which latex was extracted in the Amazon, Rangel unveils a connection between economic progress, environmental degradation, and the oppression of women which I examine in my third chapter. Focusing on the intersections of environmental exploitation and gender exclusion in Canada and Brazil, I analyze historical novels like Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* and Regina Melo's *Ykamiabas* which critique the historiographic portrayal of forest landscapes as masculine spaces and its narrative praise of male achievements through the bringing down of nature under men's control. I argue that by deconstructing a particular concept of historical process understood as the making of a civilized human (male) space over and against the natural world, Marlatt and Melo reveal how a concept of history based on taking and using land, and turning nature into culture creates the conditions for the double subjugation of women and nature. Counter to the ideals of productive (male) labour in nature that historical discourses about the settlement of British Columbia and the colonization of the Amazon reinforce, *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* bring forth an idea of natality and childbirth that questions destructive environmental practices and, therefore, point toward a women-centered ethics of care which echoes ongoing discussions in the field of ecofeminism. In this sense, I argue that both Marlatt's and Melo's narratives use natality as a strategy to redefine

historiography and call for a renewed relationship between humans and non-human nature that is anti-patriarchal and anti-phallocentric.

Myths of the Canadian wilderness and the Amazonian jungle perform what Margery Fee defines as "literary land claims," which consists of the discursive erasure of Indigenous presence and undermining of their claims to territory by endorsing the vanishing race narrative of the time. Thus, my fourth chapter examines how issues of forestry management and deforestation intersect with conflicts involving Indigenous territories in Canada and Brazil. While the process of clearing and civilizing the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon depicted texts like *The Rising Village, Malcolm's Katie*, and *À Margem da História* results in the deforestation of natural landscapes and expurgation of Indigenous cultures, narratives like Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows* and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* portray land disputes as an embodiment of broader conflicts between Western and Indigenous epistemologies regarding land ownership. I argue that by reclaiming Indigenous modes of thought and alternative understandings of land stewardship, Armstrong and Kopenawa replace a colonial idea of "owned" land tied to the Lockean transformation of nature through labor with that of land as a dynamic place made of mutually constitutive agencies and dynamic interactions. At the same time, as performative and pedagogical texts, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* guide readers through a process of epistemic decolonization which involves de-centering Western models to invite us to envision the forest otherwise. Nonetheless, in their efforts to promote a renewed engagement with the non-human world, Armstrong and Kopenawa point to an unresolved conflict between epistemic affirmation and systemic change which shows that any attempt to engage in a pedagogy of decolonization must account for the difficulty of replacing the material structures which the dominant epistemological traditions have enabled.

In my reading of earlier literary representations of forest environments in Canada and Brazil alongside ecological disasters like wildfires, my intention was to show the centrality of Western-centric ideals of progress, culture, nature, and modernity in these countries' national imaginaries, and how these concepts continue to inform current institutional policies and environmental debates about forestry management, deforestation, and conservation in both nations. Making this connection allows us to understand statements about national sovereignty and economic development like Jair Bolsonaro's within a longstanding tradition that conceives the Amazon as a challenging and unknown territory that still carries unrealized promises of material prosperity. At the same time, a revisiting of the social imaginary in the context of increasing rates of deforestation in Canada shows the extent to which the idea of Canada's forests as vast, pristine, and well managed is ingrained in cultural myths which create an image of the wilderness as a landscape that is transformed, in a small scale, for the survival of the settler family and the *resilience* of the Canadian (settler) citizen. Through the collaboration of postcolonial and ecocritical theory, this dissertation, therefore, calls into question settler colonial ideals that still inform current environmental practices. Rather than offering an exhaustive picture of eco-centric narratives that promise to find solutions to current crises, the narratives I analyze in the chapters that follow offer a few glimpses of what alternative modes of knowing and existing *in* and *within* nature could look like if only we were able "to see them."

Chapter One

The Seeds of a Theoretical (Un)Thinking: Environment, Epistemology and Ontology

What is the environment? What does it mean to say we must save it? Davi Kopenawa, a shaman and environmental activist from the Yanomami nation in the Amazon rainforest, defines the environment as "natureza por inteiro," including "suas árvores, seus morros, suas montanhas e seus rios; seus peixes, animais, espíritos *xapiri* e habitantes humanos" (484-5) ["'nature' as a whole thing," including "the forest's trees, hills, mountains, and rivers; its fish, game, spirits, and human inhabitants" (398)].[13] According to Kopenawa, then, protecting the environment means accounting for the wellbeing of humans and non-humas alike. As Kopenawa explains, his idea of what it means to preserve "nature as a whole thing" depends on fostering and maintaining non-hierarchical relationships between humans, non-humans, and spiritual entities that, in the language of his nation, are called *xapiri*.[14] Referring to environmental protection as ecology, Kopenawa writes:

> Na floresta, a ecologia somos nós, os humanos. Mas são também, tanto quanto nós, os *xapiri*, os animais, as árvores, os rios, os peixes, o céu, a chuva, o vento e o sol! É tudo o que veio à existência na floresta, longe dos brancos; tudo o que ainda não tem cerca. As palavras da ecologia são nossas antigas palavras, as que *Omama* deu a nossos

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[13] All the translations of *A Queda do Céu* come from the English version of the text, which was translated by Nicholas Elliott and Alison Dundy, and published in 2013.

[14] The *xapiri* are spiritual beings that inhabit and protect the Amazon. Bruce Albert, French anthropologist and co-author of *A Queda do Céu,* offers a definition of these spiritual entities that helps us understand the complex role they play within Kopenawa's narrative. He explains: "Any existing being has an 'image' (*utupë a*, pl. *utupa pë*) from the original times, an image which shamans can 'call,' 'bring down,' and 'make dance' as an 'auxiliary spirit' (*xapiri a*). These primordial image-beings ('spirits') are described as miniscule humanoids wearing extremely bright, colorful feather ornaments and body paint… Practicing shamanism is referred to as *xapirimuu*, 'to act as a spirit'; to become a shaman is said 'to become spirit' (*xapiripruu*). These expressions refer to the fact that, during the shamanic trance, the shaman identifies with the 'auxiliary spirits' he is calling" (*The Falling Sky* 490).

> ancestrais. Os *xapiri* defendem a floresta desde que ela existe. Sempre estiveram do lado de nossos antepassados, que por isso nunca a devastaram... As palavras da ecologia, para eles [Yanomami antepassados], eram achar que *Omama* tinha criado a floresta para os humanos viverem nela sem maltratá-la. E só. Somos habitantes da floresta. Nascemos no centro da ecologia e lá crescemos. Ouvimos sua voz desde sempre, pois é a dos *xapiri*, que descem de suas serras e morros. (*A Queda do Céu* 480, original emphasis)

> In the forest, we human beings are the "ecology." But it is equally the *xapiri*, the game, the trees, the rivers, the fish, the sky, the rain, the wind, and the sun! It is everything that came into being in the forest, far from the white people: everything that isn't surrounded by fences yet. The words of "ecology" are our ancient words, those *Omama* gave our ancestors at the beginning of time. The *xapiri* have defended the forest since it first came into being. Our ancestors have never devastated it because they kept the spirits by their side … For them [the ancestors], the words of "ecology" were to think that *Omama* had created the forest for human beings to live in it without destroying it. That is all. We are inhabitants of the forest. We were born in the middle of the "ecology" and we grew up in it. We have always heard its voice because it is the voice of the *xapiri* who come down from the mountains and hills of the forest. (*The Falling Sky* 393, original emphasis)

Inhabited by the *xapiri* and other spirits created by *Omama* (the Creator) to protect it as well as by animals, plants and natural phenomena, the forest in Kopenawa's view becomes an environmental and cosmological entity that shapes the intellectual and spiritual existence of the Yanomami. Beyond simply securing the physical space where the Yanomami live, protecting the

Amazon here means caring for and respecting the different existences of those who live in the rainforest, including non-human beings. Notably, Kopenawa encourages us to understand natural environments such as the Amazon in a way that runs counter to instrumentalist ideas of the forest as a physical space, or, as he puts it, a space "surrounded by fences" and managed by humans with the goal of economic profit. Instead, he emphasises how natural environments sustain the political, social, and cultural life of local communities like the Yanomami, and how mutual relationships between humans, non-humans and spiritual beings are necessary for the survival of all.

Most of Kopenawa's discussions about the environment appear in *A Queda do Céu: Palavras de um Xamã Yanomami* (*The Falling Sky: Words of a Yanomami Shaman*), a book born out the political and literary partnership between Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, a French anthropologist who worked with the Yanomami in the 1970s. *A Queda do Céu* originates from interviews Kopenawa recorded in Yanomami and had Albert translate into a text that both recounts the history of the Yanomami as a nation and critiques Western political economy. In his narrative, Kopenawa comments on the general role of shamans in protecting the forest, reflects on the challenges the Yanomami face because of the encroachment on their territory by gold prospectors (*garimpeiros*), and describes his journeys through Europe and the U.S. as an environmental activist fighting for the protection of the rainforest. The book then concludes with a cosmo-ecological prophecy about the death of shamans and a potential end of the world caused by increasing rates of pollution and environmental degradation. Significantly, Kopenawa and Albert's project offers a hybrid and multi-voiced discourse that contrasts traditional Yanomami epistemologies and Western systems of knowledge and, by doing so, re-enacts the collaborations, tensions, and inequalities characteristic of asymmetrical forms of cultural contact

like colonialism. At the same time, the in-between position Kopenawa occupies allows him to navigate and move beyond the territorial and imaginative boundaries of colonialism to insist on the epistemic, ontological, and political affirmation of the Yanomami. In this sense, Albert and Kopenawa's collaboration challenges readers to reflect on the epistemic, ontological, and spiritual clashes between Eurocentric and Yanomami systems of knowledge that have rendered the latter inexistent or illegitimate. Given Kopenawa's environmental critique, *A Queda do Céu* also forces us to think about the effects of Western materialistic culture not only on the Yanomami and their territories, but on the environment more broadly.

Defining the genre of *A Queda do Céu* is a challenge. As Viveiros de Castro writes in his introduction to the Portuguese edition, the book can be read as an autobiography of Kopenawa's life and development as a shaman and activist, as a counter-anthropology of colonial culture and its destructive relation to the environment, and as a metaphysical explanation of Yanomami epistemologies (27). As an environmental discourse, *A Queda do Céu* shows that Western notions of sustainability and environmental politics continue to subsume natural resources to colonial ideals of economic development, culture, and modernity and, thus, to undermine the political, territorial, and epistemic sovereignty of Indigenous nations such as the Yanomami. At the same time, Kopenawa foregrounds Yanomami practices of land use and social organization that are non-hierarchical, de-centralized and committed to the wellbeing of humans, non-humans, and spiritual entities. By doing so, he crafts a new space of enunciation that speaks of alternative understandings of nature, ecology, and environment. In this sense, Kopenawa's emphasis on the revisionist power of Yanomami epistemologies echoes what Argentinian scholar Enrique Dussel regards as the potential of "transmodernity" to reinterpret and de-center the dominant and universalist concepts of Eurocentric modernity. Moving beyond postmodernity, that is, a critique

of modernity that is mainly developed within Western thought, "transmodernity" focuses on discussions about cultural and epistemic liberation based on the experiences of colonized groups. In a nutshell, "transmodernity" rejects the three foundational principles of dominant modernity – capitalism, Eurocentrism, and colonialism – to open space for alternative concepts and, thus, facilitate an intercultural dialogue that is liberating, "pluriversal"[15] and predicated on a "new ontological attitude toward nature" and "other cultures" (220).[16] For Arturo Escobar, Dussel's concept opens a discursive space "in which the examination of concrete modernities, symmetrical projects, and decolonial processes can be started in earnest from a deessentialized perspective" (*Territories of Difference* 305). *A Queda do Céu* embodies this idea of "transmodernity" especially in the ways Kopenawa tries to create a new discursive and ontological space which deconstructs exploitative views of the forest in order to conceive it as a complex entity that encompasses difference existences and whose very survival depends on this recognition.

Instead of proposing a romantic return to a pre-colonial past, Kopenawa's emphasis on Yanomami modes of thought and eco-centric epistemologies problematizes the appropriation of nature to support a profit-based economic model. Such model, Kopenawa suggests, is unthinkable outside the purview of colonial power. Even though Kopenawa's insistence on restoring Yanomami social, political, and economic forms of organization seems nostalgic, we could read this assumed nostalgia in light of what Boaventura de Sousa Santos defines as a "guidance toward a future that escapes the collapse of the Eurocentric alternatives precisely because it has been outside such alternatives" (*The End of Cognitive Empire* 30). In other words,

[15] The concept of the "pluriverse" that I use in this chapter emerges from Latin American decolonial theories (Enrique Dussel, Water Mignolo and Arturo Escobar) and provides a counternarrative to Western assumptions of the universal by insisting on the coexistence of different realities and modes of thought.
[16] All the translations of Dussel's text are my own.

Kopenawa's presumedly "pre-modern" recuperation of Yanomami cosmologies represents, in fact, a "modern" effort to conceive "modernity otherwise," a modernity (or "transmodernity," to use Dussel's concept) that allows for the emergence of knowledges, experiences and alternatives that come from the margins of dominant Western modernity (*The End of Cognitive Empire* 30). As an intercultural mediator trying to prevent the destruction of the Amazon, Kopenawa is aware that to be able to talk about ecology "otherwise," that is, ecology in Yanomami terms, he needs to make his way into white environmental discourses and the material structures of colonialism. Yet, he also needs to keep a cultural distance that would allow him to disentangle these discourses from the economic motivations that continue to objectify and quantify nature in order to legitimize Yanomami ways of conceiving and relating with the environment. In this sense, it is through and against materialist and anthropocentric notions of "meio-ambiente" (environment), "ecologia" (ecology) and "preservação" (preservation) that Kopenawa's environmental consciousness takes place.

Like Kopenawa, the writers I analyze in this dissertation draw attention to the material realities of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil to denounce the impacts of deforestation to both the environment and the local groups who work and/or live in those spaces. Through their representation of Canada's and Brazil's forests, authors like Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Sousa, and Regina Melo also comment on the need to acknowledge practices of land use and resource management that are less anthropocentric and more geared toward reciprocal relationships between humans, non-humans, and nature, thus calling for alternative understandings of the environment and what it means to protect it. In this sense, narratives like Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut,* Marlatt's *Ana Historic,* Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows,* Souza's *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo,* Melo's *Ykamiabas* and

Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* encourage us to rethink forest landscapes as environmental, cultural, and political entities which shape the intellectual and social existence of local communities. By insisting on the urgent need for a renewed engagement with the natural world and by representing alternative models of environmental use which reclaim suppressed cultural and epistemic modes of thought, these authors help decenter hegemonic frameworks of thought and open space for new ways of thinking about and existing in nature. Their re-examination of the meaning and importance of Canada's and Brazil's forests brings epistemology and ontology (as in a matter of existence) to the center of environmental debates, showing that, as a contested category, nature is unthinkable outside issues of culture, knowledge, collective existence, and survival. To some extent, then, the narratives I have chosen to examine in my project confirm ecocriticism's central claim that current environmental crises demand a rethinking of dominant anthropocentric values and models, and that art and literature can help create, imagine, or reclaim alternative ways of interacting with the environment.

In fact, the basic premise of ecocritical thought, according to Lawrence Buell, is that "the spreading sense of a global 'risk society' whose hazards cannot be anticipated, calculated or controlled" (5) requires a thorough critique of the cultural and epistemological imaginaries that dominate hegemonic scholarship and theoretical frameworks. As Buell puts it, ecocritical theory emerges out of a "growing malaise about modern industrial society's inability to manage its unintended environmental consequences" (5), and, thus, moves from an initial focus on nature-oriented literature and its celebration of natural landscapes to a more careful attention to issues of environmental justice, nature preservation and the complicity between environmental exploitation and dominant forms of knowledge. As I demonstrate in this chapter, ecocritics play an important role in dismantling the culture and nature divide, re-envisioning the connection

between nature and politics, and asking fundamental questions about the very meanings of human subjectivity and agency. Their call for a rethinking of cultural imaginaries through literary representations of natural landscapes, of course, sets the grounds for my analysis of Canada's and Brazil's forests as contested entities that point to alternative frameworks for relating to the environment. Even so, despite its efforts to move beyond the environment to reflect on how nature, knowledge and politics are intertwined, ecocritical theory is developed mostly through Eurocentric approaches which tend to overlook how local and plural knowledges outside of Europe (and North America) contribute to these conversations. In this sense, the narrow scope of ecocriticism may limit my analysis of how Indigeneity informs environmentalism in works like Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering Shadows*, and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu.*

In this chapter, I argue that a reading of Canada's and Brazil's forest landscapes as environmental, cultural, and political spaces relies upon a fruitful dialogue between postcolonialism and ecocriticism that a mainly Eurocentric scholarship has not yet developed. On the one hand, mainstream postcolonial theory concentrates on issues of (post)national, racial and identity politics, overlooking how environmental concerns and policies inform those debates. Pablo Mukherjee, for example, states that while canonical postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak unveil the ideological foundations of Western colonial narratives, their emphasis on transnationality and hybridity fail to account for the material realities of environmental landscapes and how environmental politics contributes to anti-colonial resistance. Furthermore, Mukherjee reminds us that even though more contemporary postcolonial texts like Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin and Gareth Griffith's *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* present a section on the

environment which explores the connections between humans, non-human life forms and land, most of the essays in this anthology tend to associate environment and empire, and reinforce a simplistic division of the world into Europe and the rest (55). On the other hand, mainstream ecocritical thought develops outside discussions of group identity or, when trying to address racial and ethnic marginalization, often romanticizes a mystical connection which minority groups ostensibly keep with nature and, therefore, risks reinforcing (neo)colonial discourses and stereotypical portrayals of those groups. As Mukherjee contends, moreover, ecocritical theory often reinforces ideals of "purity, conservation and parochialism" by conceiving nature as an entity that exists as separate from humans and is constantly threatened by us (40). Hence, Mukherjee calls for more sustained exchanges between environmental and postcolonial approaches that are attentive to how material conditions inform different constructions and representations of nature.

Investigating the relationship between environment, colonialism, and economic inequality in underdeveloped nations, postcolonial ecocriticism tries to bridge the gap in postcolonial and ecocritical theories by promoting a historical analysis of the social and political origins of ecological issues. In their introduction to *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin write that postcolonial ecocritical approaches are crucial to interrogate humans' constructed place as against or outside nature and how "the hierarchisation of life forms that construction implies" remains "complicit in colonialist and racist exploitation from the time of imperial conquest to the present day" (6). For Huggan and Tiffin, these kinds of analyses are important because "human liberation will never be fully achieved without challenging the historical conditions under which human societies have constructed themselves in hierarchical relation to other societies, *both* human *and* nonhuman,

and without imagining alternative ways through which these human and nonhuman societies can be creatively transformed" (22, original emphasis). Historic revisionism, through their perspective, is inseparable from imaginative and epistemic renewal. Significantly, Huggan and Tiffin remind us that a historical and materialist investigation of the relationship between humans and non-human nature cannot happen without an examination of the "cultural politics of representation," particularly the role of literature as a "catalyst for social action" and for a "full-fledged form of engaged cultural critique" (12). In this sense, postcolonial ecocritics like Huggan and Tiffin rethink the role of literature and art as well as negotiate politics and aesthetics so as to reinforce the social responsibility of literary texts and their "capacity to set out symbolic guidelines for the material transformation of the world" (14). The historical and material focus of postcolonial ecocriticism, therefore, helps deconstruct universal and hegemonic concepts of the environment and question ongoing forms of economic, political, and environmental subjugation in post/neo-colonial countries like Canada and Brazil.

Because Eurocentric theories usually render invisible questions of Indigeneity and local ways of knowing, a reading of how forest landscapes intersect with environmental, political, and epistemological issues also implies the need to move beyond Eurocentric frameworks. Produced in the context of colonialism and (neo)imperialism in the Americas, Latin American decolonial theory promotes a rethinking of dominant cultural imaginaries from a place of what Walter Mignolo calls "colonial difference" and, thus, provides a framework for examining how Armstrong, Kopenawa and local groups in the Amazon displace the hegemonic categories of Western thought. At their core, new epistemic formations that come from this place of "colonial difference" invite a collaboration between epistemological, ontological, political, and economic discourses that is essential for an analysis of postcolonial environments such as the Amazon in

Brazil, and an examination of the continuing exploitation of Indigenous territories in Canada. In *Territories of Difference: Place, Movements, Life, Redes,* Arturo Escobar comments on the limitations of applying Eurocentric thought to a Latin American context, writing that "the democratic, social, and ecological crisis of the world at present is not so much a problem of science, but of existence" or, more precisely, of recognizing "different forms of existence" (311). This recognition, for Escobar, depends less on validating existing theories than on creating spaces for social, epistemological, and ontological transformations outside the limits of Eurocentric thought. Like Dussel's concept of "transmodernity," Escobar calls for the emergence of a new "discursive space in which the idea of a single modernity has been suspended at an ontological level; in which Europe has been provincialized, that is, displaced from the center of the historical and epistemic imagination" (*Territories of Difference* 305). As Escobar clarifies, his goal is not to deny Western knowledge, but, rather, to multiply "landscapes of knowledge" in order to allow for the recognition of "border thinking, other knowledges and knowledge otherwise, [and] *academias otras*" (*Territories of Difference* 306). For Escobar, the frameworks of research that would originate from these new spaces are crucial to de-center political and economic systems that continue to legitimize environmental degradation and cultural oppression in Latin America. More importantly, the ways that these frameworks privilege "subaltern knowledges of the natural," according to Escobar, help us envision "political ecologies" which "articulate uniquely questions of diversity, difference, and interculturality – with nature as central agent" (*Territories of Difference* 155).

Escobar's ideas reinforce a central aspect of Latin American postcolonial and decolonial perspectives, that is, the awareness that issues of knowledge, ontology, nature, and politics are interconnected. The ways that theorists like Escobar discuss epistemic and ontological issues in

the context of (neo)colonialism and imperialism draw attention to the sustained exploitation of humans and non-humans in postcolonial nations like Canada and Brazil, and enables us to rethink the role of nature within social, cultural, and political structures. Because natural landscapes such as the rainforest inform the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural life of groups such as the Yanomami, attending to the intersections of epistemology, ontology, nature, and politics is crucial if we are to create spaces for the emergence and recognition of different forms of environmental practices, knowledges, and existences. I argue that through their critical reinterpretation of Canada's and Brazil's forests as contested entities, the authors I examine in my dissertation bring epistemological and ontological concepts to the centre of discussions about the environment. By doing so, they show that forest landscapes are fraught territories that contain the germs of the theoretical (un)thinking that scholars like Escobar call for – a kind of (un)thinking that is, in its core, inseparable from matters related to knowledge, existence and altered action on the ground.

Given my position as a Brazilian student enrolled in a PhD program in the "global North," my intention is not to ignore useful Eurocentric approaches, but, rather, to explore how de-centering these approaches might create plural spaces of knowledge production and interaction. In other words, my goal is to create a space of enunciation that facilitates dialogue and accounts for the similarities and tensions between different frameworks while also recognizing the impossibility of absolute reconciliation. At the same time, as a Brazilian citizen with mixed European ancestry (Italian and Portuguese), I believe it is crucial to acknowledge my position as an outsider when addressing the histories, epistemologies, and activist practices of Indigenous and other marginalized groups. Located as I am on what Boaventura de Sousa Santos defines as "this side of the line" (*Epistemologies of the South* 118), I recognize my limited

capacity to understand Indigenous experiences of oppression and resistance. Because I am aware that reading practices of Indigenous texts by non-Indigenous scholars risk (re)enacting colonial relationships, my analysis of writers from different Indigenous nations in Canada and Brazil aims at investigating the singular role they play in the literary histories of those countries and how their artistic practices call for a critical reinterpretation of master narratives.

As discussed in my readings of foundational texts like Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village,* Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story*, and Euclides da Cunha's *À Margem da História*, Canada's and Brazil's forests occupy a central role in the national literatures and cultural myths of these countries. On a symbolic level, many of the narratives about the Canadian wilderness and the Amazon jungle valorize these landscapes, but also comment on the need to "cultivate" them to open space for civilization and development and, hence, make way for the establishment of these nations as geo-political entities. In other words, operating alongside romantic treatments that valorize the naturalness of the forest and its communities is a woods-as-resource trope. Both these motifs reinforce a dichotomy between culture and nature that authors like Fawcett, Souza and Kopenawa try to challenge. The culture-versus-nature dualism that texts like *The Rising Village* underpin is not limited to nineteenth-century narratives and their quest for settler colonial belonging in the Canadian wilderness. In *Intemperate Rainforest: Nature, Culture, and Power on Canada's West Coast*, Bruce Braun shows that contemporary discussions about deforestation in British Columbia continue to re-enact this conflict. The starting point of Braun's analysis is the satellite images that two environmental organizations, the Wilderness Society and Sierra Club of Western Canada, produced and circulated in the 1990s to draw attention to increasing deforestation rates in the province. These images contrast two pictures: one from 1954 which emphasizes the extent of

Vancouver Island's ancient temperate rainforest, and a second one from 1990 which shows what remains of those forests – a "fragmented, discontinuous patchwork, surrounded and dissected by 'modified landscapes'" (Braun 214). As Braun argues, in their attempt to represent forest destruction, panoramic images like the ones he examines try to transform complex forest landscapes into a narrative of ecological destruction that can be easily "read, compiled, compared and translated" (221). The "social power" of such pictures is that they remain "mobile" and "immutable:" the more they travel across time and space, the more "it becomes possible to 'see' the forest's liquidation, and the more times and the more places this occurs, the more its narrative [of forest destruction] stabilizes as a fact" (Braun 222-3). For Braun, however, these satellite images are problematic signs because they reduce the forest to abstract symbols that are uprooted from local and cultural contexts. At the same time, their subtext that "the forest is disappearing" reinforces a "romantic ecology" that naturalizes British Columbia's temperate forests as "fragile" networks that should be kept away from human intervention and destruction (Braun 232). While this representation of the forest as a pristine and endangered wilderness reinforces a culture-versus-nature dichotomy, Braun urges us to understand the "natures" to which we refer when discussing environmental exploitation and preservation as culturally constructed and socially mediated entities. As he puts it, "the natures we may seek to save, exploit, witness, or experience do not lie external to culture and history, but are themselves *artifactual*: objects made, materially and semiotically, by multiple actors (not all of them human), and through many different historical and spatial practices (ranging from landscape painting to the science of ecology" (3, original emphasis). Attending to the cultural and social constructedness of nature, Braun implies, is needed if we are to "attend to the subjugated histories and buried epistemologies" that inform forest politics in British Columbia (3). To

Braun's point, I would add that this awareness is also needed when examining fictional or artistic representations of our "real" forests.

For environmental historian William Cronon, breaking the culture-versus-nature binary not only encourages us to redefine nature as contested and culturally informed, but also helps rethink the very meaning of environmental protection. In Cronon's view, the environment should no longer be taken as a holistic and balanced unit that must be kept away from human disturbance, but, rather, as a dynamic and changeable entity that is imbedded in specific geographies, histories, and cultures and, thus, reflects specific human values and assumptions. Instead of reifying nature as a universal category that merely serves to reinforce or embody human needs, values, and cultures, however, Cronon regards the natural world also as an autonomous material entity that "sets limits (never completely clear but no less definite for being uncertain) on the possibilities of human ingenuity and storytelling" (458). Like Braun, Cronon is critical of representations of the wilderness, and of nature more broadly, as holistic and endangered. As he puts it, ecological discussions (especially in the U.S., which is the focus of his theory) tend to focus on protecting untouched ecosystems and threatened species, thus continuing to reproduce a dualism that "tends to cast any use as abuse, and thereby denies us a middle ground in which responsible use and non-use might attain some kind of balanced, sustainable relationship" (85). Instead, Cronon calls for an environmental ethics that dismantles the culture and nature duality to look at humans as part of the natural world while also recognizing the autonomy of the non-human world. For Cronon, it is only through this recognition that we will achieve a more nuanced understanding of "the ways through which we interact with and manipulate nature," and will realize "the [im]possibility of non-use" (89).

It is important to keep these critiques of a binaristic approach to nature in mind because longstanding assumptions that nature is opposed and inferior to culture run counter to my reading of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil as dynamic environmental, cultural, and political entities. Even so, providing a genealogy of the culture-versus-nature dichotomy in Canadian and Brazilian literature and scholarship lies outside the purview of this study. Instead, my intention is to examine how binaries like culture-versus-nature continue to allow for the subjugation of alternative knowledges and practices in Canada and Brazil. For instance, Arturo Escobar explains that the problem is not that dualisms such as "culture versus nature", "us versus them" and "subject versus object" exist, but, rather, that because they "are treated culturally," they help naturalize "the hierarchies established between the two parts of each binary, and the social, ecological, and political consequences of such hierarchies" (*Designs for the Pluriverse,* 94). For Escobar, moreover, the categorization of difference "implies a pervasive Eurocentrism – a hegemonic representation and mode of knowing that claims universality for itself" (*Designs for the Pluriverse* 94). The prioritization of one of the terms in those binaries, in other words, leads to the suppression of the systems of knowledge and modes of existence that are related to the other. Through Escobar's perspective, deconstructing dichotomies would lead to the recovery of alternative epistemologies and ontologies long suppressed by Eurocentric frameworks. It is within this context of the intersections between colonialism and Eurocentrism that I read alternative representations of natural landscapes such as Kopenawa's as opportunities for a theoretical (un)thinking that, to use Escobar's words, reveals the "arbitrariness (and often brutality) of many aspects of the modern project" (*Designs for the Pluriverse* 94). In the context of environmental thought, these representations show that there is no nature outside of culture,

and this recognition opens space for "multiple assertions of pluriversality, what in the decolonial perspective is called 'worlds and knowledges other wise'" (*Designs for the Pluriverse* 94).

Mainstream ecocritical theory also calls for the breaking of the culture-versus-nature duality. In fact, ecocritics like Bruno Latour reframe the culture-versus-nature duality as a discussion about the disciplinary boundaries between social and natural sciences, and between subject and object to re-envision the relationship between humans and the non-human world. In *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, for instance, Latour calls for a relationship between humans and non-humans that moves away from "the one required by the cold war between objects and subjects" (76). Latour writes:

> Humans and nonhumans for their part can join forces without requiring their counterparts on the other side to disappear. To put it yet another way: objects and subjects can never associate with one another; humans and nonhumans can. As soon as we stop taking nonhumans as objects, as soon as we allow them to enter the collective in the form of new entities with uncertain boundaries, entities that hesitate, quake, and induce perplexity, it is not hard to see that we can grant them the designation of actors. And if we take the term "association" literally, there is no reason, either, not to grant them the designation of social actors. (76)

Echoing Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the rhizome as an assemblage of interconnected and heterogenous elements that interact without predetermination, Latour refuses the idea of an external reality that is a-historical, non-human, objective, and conclusive to focus on the multiple and ever-growing "associations" of humans and non-humans. Arising out of what Latour calls "a state of uncertainty" (75), these associations allow for the creation of assemblages that are open and provisional, and for the coming together of heterogeneous entities, voices, and actors that

Latour calls the "pluriverse." More than mere objects, non-humans, in Latour's conception of the pluriverse, become entities that participate in the collective as actors capable of provoking "perplexity" and thought in those around them. The collaboration between humans and non-humans that Latour calls for would allow both to enter the collective as actors, "actants," "acting agents" (76). Acknowledging the possibility of multiple associations between human and non-human actors, Latour's idea of the collective brings together diverse subjects who inhabit a single world without subsuming each other. A narrative like *A Queda do Céu* embodies Latour's definition of the "pluriverse" precisely by implying that the external world (the forest, in this case) is not given but, rather, an entity that must be created collectively and account for the contributions of non-human agents. Through Kopenawa's perspective, in other words, the rainforest becomes a dynamic entity formed through the multiple associations and mutual exchanges between humans and non-humans.

Like Latour, Jane Bennett also questions the idea of matter as passive and inert to focus on the "powers of material formations" and the potential of material agency (vii). Drawing upon the 2003 blackout that impacted more than 50 million people in North America, Bennett defines matter as an entity that is relational and capable of acting on and influencing the human world. Agency, in this sense, is distributive so much so that interactions between humans and non-humans are always unpredictable and capable of producing unexpected effects. This idea of matter as an active entity that can impact human designs and act as forces with trajectories of their own question our tendency to attribute blame and responsibility when examining complex issues such as deforestation and climate change. As Bennett writes, the idea of distributive agency forces us to focus on "consequences more than intentions" and "makes 'responsibility' more a matter of responding to harms than of identifying objects of blame" (101-2). Here,

Bennett expands on John Dewey's idea of the "public" as "a confederation of bodies pulled together not so much by choice," but, instead, "by a shared experience of harm" to suggest that non-human bodies indeed participate in what he defines as the "public" (Bennett 100). Bennett's project, like Latour's, is also political. As she states, while common images of matter as inert and instrumentalized feed "human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption" (ix), her insistence on the vitality and agency of matter encourages sustainable engagements with the material world and a genuine recognition of the role non-human actants play in collective formations.

Latour's and Bennett's re-conceptualizations are important if we are to read natural environments like the forest in non-appropriative terms. Yet, although material ecocriticism approaches like theirs move beyond human-centric perspectives of history, politics, and democracy, they have some liabilities. For Timothy Clark, for instance, material ecocritics over-intellectualize discussions about humans' exploitation of nature, risking "caricaturing as an academic problem what is more truly and intractably a political, social, psychological and ecological one" (132). As a theoretical field, material ecocriticism remains primarily limited to academic settings and, thus, disconnected from embodied experiences and realities. For Clark, moreover, material ecocritics also undermine human responsibility for environmental issues. As he puts it, by insisting on a post-humanism that places humans as one organism among a multitude of other human and non-human agencies, scholars such as Latour and Bennett "disperse seemingly independent 'human' actions into a network of contingencies and non-human factors," hence undercutting any attempts to articulate what the idea of a network of "actants" or agencies means to notions of human accountability and equity (135). The abstract nature of material ecocriticism, in this sense, runs counter to the localized aspects of the

narratives and documentaries I analyze and my attempt to examine the material realities of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil. After all, a narrative like Brian Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut* is very much ingrained in the functioning of the forest industry and working conditions of loggers in Prince George, British Columbia while a text like Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* specifically focuses on land conflicts and economic expansionism in the territory of the Yanomami.

Even so, discussions about material agency are crucial for redefining the boundaries between humanities and natural sciences and for challenging claims of human exceptionality and sovereignty. As material ecocritics, Latour and Bennett reaffirm non-human agency by insisting on the idea of interconnected and performative networks in which humans and non-humans interact through mutually constitutive ways. By breaking with the culture-versus-nature dichotomy, and challenging the separation of politics and ecology, material ecocriticism offers a theoretical framework that adds to ecocriticism's broader project of changing the dominant cultural imaginary. At the same time, the critique of an anthropocentrism that fails to acknowledge non-human entities except in appropriative terms questions utilitarian models of resource exploitation and economic profit that, in countries like Brazil, are inseparable from (neo)colonial and imperialist agendas. Acknowledging the possibility of multiple associations between human and non-human entities beyond utilitarian views of nature is crucial to my reading of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil as complex entities whose existence depends on mutual relations and collaborations between the different "actants" that inhabit these landscapes, including non-humans. Through its emphasis on non-human agency, material ecocriticism implies that a theoretical (un)thinking that is epistemological and ontological needs

to also consider the contributions of non-human nature, thus offering a framework of analysis that is sometimes missing in Latin American postcolonial and decolonial theories.

To avoid the abstract and overtly academic claims that they saw as dominant in material ecocriticism, scholars of what became known as "environmentalism of the poor" try to connect ecological thinking to grounded experiences of social and economic inequality, mostly in the Global South. For instance, examining the relations between environmental politics and economy, Spanish scholar Joan Martínez-Alier argues that ecological disasters, territorial conflicts, and inequalities regarding access to natural resources can all be traced to uneven levels of economic development, especially concerning the disparities between the North and South. Thus, Martínez-Alier claims that we need to look carefully at the struggles of marginalized communities fighting against environmental degradation if we want to examine how alternative models of resource management can contribute to de-centering hegemonic forms of economic development like capitalism. Despite his focus on grounded experiences of poverty and economic oppression, however, Martínez-Alier risks oversimplifying the North and South as homogeneously rich or poor. For Pablo Mukherjee, such an approach ignores endemic poverty and inequality in North America and Europe, and forgets about global capitalism's "tendency to develop pockets of extreme wealth and vast swathes of poverty *simultaneously* on local, national and global levels" (32, original emphasis). Yet, the discussions developed through the environmentalism of the poor contributes to my analysis of the grounded experiences of marginalized groups like the Yanomami in the Amazon, especially with respect to the unique ways they experience issues of deforestation as well as of how ongoing legacies of colonialism, imperialism and global capitalism inform their experiences.

Bringing Martínez-Alier's ideas to an aesthetic context, Rob Nixon reflects on the role of the "environmental writer-activist" in bridging the gap between creative writing and social awareness. Nixon defines the "writer-activist" as a "combative" writer who deploys an "imaginative agility and worldly ardor to help amplify the media-marginalized causes of the environmentally dispossessed" (5). Nixon's argument, more specifically, is that the environmental "writer-activist" combines creative writing and political awareness to draw attention to the effects of environmental exploitation on poor communities, which, according to his perspective, remain invisible from media attention and scientific enquiry. As Nixon states, however, the "environmental writer-activist" must overcome specific aesthetic difficulties. Since ecological issues develop through what he calls "slow violence," a kind of violence that happens gradually and whose effects are dispersed across time and space (9), they challenge the environmental artist to give shape to "formless threats" and apprehend "imaginatively" what "remains imperceptible to the senses" (10). Nixon then concludes that this environmental aesthetics, when combined with an awareness of broader social, economic, and political injustices, allows the "writer-activist" to explore the relation between literature, social change, and environmental activism (31). Similarly, in *EnvironMentality: Ecocriticism and the Event of Postcolonial Fiction*, Roman Bartosch negotiates environmental ethics, ecological conflicts and the role of culture and textuality to reassess our engagement with the literary world and reflect on the ethical role of literature. Expanding on ecocriticism's basic premise that the current environmental crisis is also a crisis of imagination, Bartosch states that an attention to aesthetic form reinforces the potential of literature to imagine possible worlds, and to negotiate and re-examine "human ethical duties" toward the natural environment (11). Rather than simply enhancing readers' environmentalist consciousness, works of fiction that are "ecocentric,"

according to Bartosch, promote a new engagement with the natural world that recognizes the alterity and "elusiveness of nature and complexities of different realities" (84). According to his perspective, then, "EnvironMentality" becomes a question of "reading praxis" that tries to conceive and understand "otherness," particularly the otherness of non-human beings, "through the experience of reading" (Bartosch 84).

Nixon's concept of the "environmental writer-activist" and Bartosch's idea of "EnvironMentality" imply a relationship between literature, environmental activism and social change that is central to the texts I analyze in this dissertation, and, in fact, to this research project as a whole. In *Virtual Clearcut,* for example, Brian Fawcett offers a grounded depiction of a massive clearcut in the logging town of Prince George to make deforestation "visible" so that it can be understood and prevented (213). Penny, the protagonist of Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering Shadows,* realizes that, as a visual artist, she has a responsibility to represent environmental and economic exploitation because she believes that "putting images out there changes the world" (292). Appealing to a non-Indigenous audience to help stop human and environmental exploitation in the territory of the Yanomami, Davi Kopenawa in *A Queda do Céu* records his words into "peles de papel" ("paper skins"), as he defines Western literacy, so that they "se dividam e se espalhem bem longe, para serem realmente ouvidas" (64) ["divide themselves and propagate over long distances so they can truly be heard" (12)]. Underlying the content of narratives like Fawcett's, Armstrong's, and Kopenawa's is the idea that literature can promote social, economic, and environmental change, thus playing both an aesthetic and ethical role. In this sense, concepts like the "environmental writer-activist" and "EnvironMentality" support my analysis of how the authors I examine in my dissertation mediate between real world

issues and aesthetic form and, by doing so, try to offer a structure, at a discursive level, for acting upon current environmental, cultural, and economic crises.

Scholars such as Nixon and Bartosch turn to the social, economic, and historical trajectories that influence how nature is produced and represented in artistic discourses to show that the cultural imaginary is indeed embedded in broader material structures. This awareness, of course, is needed if we are to understand how natural landscapes in Canada and Brazil inform and are shaped by issues of politics, economy, identity, and epistemology in these countries. Nevertheless, environmental humanities scholar Timothy Clark warns against the "structural traps" of postcolonial ecocritical approaches (140). As he states, postcolonial ecocritical thinkers oftentimes romanticize experiences of marginalization and environmental degradation, particularly in the Global South. By doing so, they bring forth "false versions of pastoral" which try to recreate "some lost idyllic precolonial society living in a state of implausibly assured 'harmony' with their natural environments" (140). According to Clark's perspective, therefore, postcolonial ecocritics ultimately risk reinforcing what Donna Haraway identifies as "the cannibalistic western logic" of constructing "other cultural possibilities as resources for western needs and actions" (qtd. in Clark 140). Against what he perceives as the limited scope of postcolonial ecocriticism, Clark calls for an awareness of "planetary scale" that moves away from a North and South divide to, instead, navigate complex and multifaceted social, political, economic, and ethical issues (156). This awareness, as Clark clarifies, opens space for new "modes of reading" that examine local environmental conflicts within a broader understanding of "the global impact of past imperialisms and contemporary neo-colonialism" (155).

Although authors like Armstrong and Kopenawa focus on the realities of marginalized communities and reclaim non-hegemonic forms of knowledge, they rethink the connections

between humans and non-human entities in a local context that is, in fact, inseparable from the global. By doing so, they echo what Ursula K. Heise calls "eco-cosmopolitanism," a concept that she defines as "an attempt to envision individuals and groups as part of planetary 'imagined communities' of both human and nonhuman kinds" (61). "Eco-cosmopolitanism," Heise contends, combines both "the sense that places are inexorably connected to the planet as a whole" and "the perception that this wholeness encompasses vast heterogeneities by imagining the global environment as a kind of collage in which all the parts are connected but also lead lives of their own" (64). For creative writers and scholars, an "eco-cosmopolitan" consciousness entails framing ecological discussions that are no longer premised on ties to specific places, but, rather, on "ties to territories and systems that are understood to encompass the planet as a whole" (10). By focusing on the interconnectedness of human and non-human communities beyond specific geographies, Heise's concept invites local groups to envision themselves as a part of a global biosphere and community, and allows for the development of new forms of activism and solidarity that recognize broader structures of power. The local, nevertheless, is not completely excluded from Heise's discussions. Instead, her call for "a sense of planet" requires us to also recognize how these broader "political, economic, technological, social, cultural, and ecological networks shape daily routines" (55). Heise's idea of eco-cosmopolitanism, thus, informs my analysis of the forest as a local and complex entity that shapes the experiences of local groups while it also lays open the impacts of global networks of power such as capitalism and settler colonialism in Canada and Brazil. As I demonstrate in this dissertation, however, this global view is good and necessary provided it does not obscure the asymmetrical power relations produced by globalization as an extension of colonialism.

More than simply asking us to act upon real world issues like environmental degradation, writers like Fawcett, Armstrong, Melo and Kopenawa urge readers to think differently and, thus, act differently. As this dissertation argues, at the same time that these writers represent issues of deforestation and alternative practices of forestry use in Canada and Brazil, they prompt us to learn about and/or reflect on the possibility of creating epistemic alternatives to hegemonic frameworks of thought and models of economic and social organization so that grounded action can take place. In this sense, embedded in the content of narratives like Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut*, Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows* and Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* is the idea that literature may serve as a tool to encourage transformative learning and action, and, thus, play an aesthetic, ethical and pedagogical role. The fact that they write back or against earlier literary treatments, therefore, is important given their pedagogical stance. In *Ecological Thinking: The Politics of Epistemic Location*, Lorraine Code examines ecological cautionary tales that critique dominant social and philosophical imaginaries to show that eco-centric thought is essential to unsettle "the self-certainties of western capitalism and the epistemologies of mastery it underwrites" (4). Ecological thinking, Code contends, intersects with issues of gender, race, class, and ethnicity, and, in this sense, moves beyond merely making claims about the environment to unveil how "epistemic and ethical-political concerns are reciprocally informative" (4), and how this understanding can propose a new form of engagement with the environment. More importantly, ecological thinking "works with a conception of materially constituted and situated subjectivity for which place, embodied locatedness, and discursive interdependence are conditions for the very possibility of knowledge and action. It ushers in a renewed conception of responsible deliberative-negotiative citizenship, as responsible in its knowing as in its doing" (20). Promoting emancipatory ways of knowing and doing that are

based on a responsible environmental consciousness, Code suggests, is unthinkable without reconsidering common understandings of subjectivity. To avoid the abstract and universalist claims of Western thought, Code urges us to place ecological thinking within diverse historical, geographic, social, and epistemological locations, and to consider situated knowledges and politics when discussing ecological issues. Literary texts like the ones I examine in this dissertation would arguably fit Code's ideas in the sense that, though they may be hypothetical, they still offer situational and concrete representations of forest landscapes and issues of deforestation. By relocating ecological inquiry on the ground, "where knowledge is made, negotiated, circulated" (5), Code calls for the creation of diverse and complex epistemological spaces that allow for the emergence of "methodological pluralism" (19) and encourage theoretical dialogue across disciplines. Although Code focuses mostly on how a plural space of knowledge production and engagement can be generated, her definition of ecological thinking implies that "thinking differently" about the very idea of "knowledge" is the first step toward "acting differently."

The emphasis on validating subjugated knowledges and epistemologies so that grounded action can happen is key to the development of a Latin American anti-colonial consciousness. In "Nuestra América" ["Our America"], published both in *La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York* and in the Mexican paper *El Partido Liberal* in 1891, Cuban poet and scholar José Martí calls for an alliance of Latin American nations against the economic and political advancements of the "other" *América* (mainly the U.S.). Martí explains that this anti-imperial plan could only be accomplished with the de-centering of Eurocentric and anglophone frameworks of knowledge production. As he states, "ni el libro europeo, ni el libro yanqui [dan] la clave del enigma hispanoamericano" (137) ["neither the European nor the 'Yankee' book will solve the enigma of

Hispano America"],[17] implying that to address their social, economic, and political subjugation, and free themselves from European and U.S. hegemony, Latin American nations would need to promote local knowledges about their own laws, histories, cultural contexts, and political systems. For Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Martí's thoughts provide the theoretical foundation for contemporary discussions about epistemic liberation in Latin America. For example, Santos explains that Martí's concept of "Nuestra América" is informed by "a contextualized and situated universalism" that comes from the "bottom" and, thus, helps draw attention to the realities of marginalized groups in the Americas (*Epistemologies of the South* 52). For Santos, moreover, by emphasizing that "our" America is capable of edifying forms of knowledge and government based on its own realities, Martí develops a "cosmopolitan" anti-imperial and "utopian will to emancipation" which facilitates constructive dialogues precisely because of its foundation upon "the mutual implication of equality and difference" (*Epistemologies of the South* 66). The ways that Martí emphasizes the Americas as an interconnected hemisphere, rather than a set of fixed and easily recognizable national territories and identities, also encourage collective forms of action and solidarity. As Santos states, when adapted to contemporary contexts, Martí's ideas call for transnational alliances among groups fighting against hegemonic globalization "wherever they may be, North or South, East or West" (*Epistemologies of the South* 66). Echoing Mukherjee's calls for more nuanced views of poverty and inequality that go beyond a North and South divide, Santos explains that the South, here, refers less to a geographical space than to communities that are victims of systemic oppression and violence perpetuated by colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy whether they are in the North or South. Through Santos' perspective, then, oppressed groups within Canada, or Canada's internal

[17] All the translations of Martí's article are my own.

"south," would still participate in the kinds of interventions he writes about despite their location in the northern hemisphere. In fact, we need to keep these ideas in mind when we read a text like *Whispering in Shadows*, for instance, because in this novel Armstrong examines the experiences and struggles of an Okanagan character within a larger history of appropriation of Indigenous lands and attempts to erase Indigenous systems of knowledge in an inter-American context. The ways that Penny, the protagonist of *Whispering in Shadows*, negotiates Indigenous difference in a transnational context allows her to build solidarity with other Indigenous groups based on their shared commitment to restore ideals of communal care and interdependence when it comes to relating with the environment. Therefore, the novel offers a glimpse of what a "cosmopolitan" and "utopian will to emancipation" "based on the mutual implication of equality and difference" would look like.

Despite Martí's limited conception of "Nuestra América," which here is composed only of Spanish-speaking countries and, so, excludes Brazil, as well as his oftentimes Manichean "us" versus "them" rhetoric, his emphasis on the need for epistemic liberation is central to the development of Latin American postcolonial and decolonial theory. For Aníbal Quijano, one of the founders of the "modernity/coloniality" approach, colonialism, capitalism, and modernity are interdependent processes consolidated especially through imposed systems of racial classification. Race, as Quijano defines it, is a foundational category that promotes whiteness as a sign of European superiority, legitimizes the system of forced labour of non-European populations in the Americas, and justifies epistemic domination and resource exploitation in the "New World." Systems of racial classification also help perpetuate what he calls "coloniality of power," a colonial structure of power that continues to re-enact itself in post-independence Latin American countries. As Quijano contends, "coloniality of power" imposes "new geocultural

identities" whereby "experiences, histories, resources, [knowledge] and cultural products" are assimilated into a "global cultural order revolving around European or Western hegemony" (540). As such, it creates socio-political hierarchies and becomes the dominating system of production of subjectivity and material realities in the Americas. The problem, for Quijano, is that "coloniality of power" still informs institutional structures and forms of knowledge based on original systems of classification which "placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the others" and created a "structure of control of labor and its resources and products" (533-4). Claiming that current models of global power to some extent re-enact "modern/colonial Eurocentered capitalism" which was imposed during the Spanish and Portuguese invasion of the Americas (533), Quijano states that an effective redistribution of power can only start with an analysis of the geopolitics of knowledge and the epistemic liberation "from the Eurocentric mirror where image is always, necessarily, distorted" (573).

Walter Mignolo elaborates on Quijano's ideas to question the universality of Western knowledge and show that global designs such as Eurocentrism are, in fact, projections of the local histories of the European nations implicated in colonialism. As Mignolo states, Eurocentric modes of thought establish "a zero point epistemology" that, claiming to speak from all places and no place in particular, both hides its location to allege universality and suppresses other forms of knowledge (*The Darker Side of Western Modernity* 80). In this sense, emphasizing the locus of enunciation, or the place from where one thinks, not only delegitimizes "the pretense of a singular and particular epistemology, geo-historical and bio-graphically located, to be universal," but also sets the grounds for "epistemic affirmations that have been disavowed" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 80-1). Because it questions the apparatus of enunciation upon which Cartesian knowledge is built, Mignolo's focus on who produces knowledge, from where and for

what purpose also invites "epistemic disobedience and delinking" from the disciplinary practices that have been imposed as hegemonic (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 122). As if responding to Clark's calls for an awareness of "planetary scale" that moves away from a North and South split, Mignolo clarifies that the "where" in "I am where I think" is more than a geographical location; rather, it refers to the geopolitical place one occupies "in a global order of coloniality" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 117). For Mignolo, the "colonial difference," or the place at the margins of the "modern/colonial" system and where the "coloniality of power" is most forcibly enacted, becomes a privileged site of affirmation of subaltern knowledge. As he states, attending to border thinking allows us to unveil the monologic rhetoric of Eurocentric thought and transcend the territorial and epistemic boundaries of the "modern/colonial" system. Only by doing so, Mignolo concludes, can we envision alternative modes of existence and start building "global futures that aspire to the fullness of life rather than encouraging individual success at the expense of the many and the planet" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 122).

Mignolo's decolonial project rejects abstract universal claims and signifiers to call for a plurality of knowledges. Again, he conceives the border as a privileged space where different groups and perspectives come together through mutual interactions and collaborations. According to Mignolo, this plural logic depends on all parties engaging in a "politics of decolonial cosmopolitanism" that can only begin "by confronting the imperial and colonial differences that divide and rank the world" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 273-4). Put another way, "a world in which many worlds coexist" emerges from interconnections within marginalized groups which ultimately displace the power of "abstract universals" to, instead, reclaim the legitimacy of various forms of knowledge that have been suppressed by these "universals" (*The Darker Side of Modernity* 234-5). Although contemporary models of global

power still presuppose an element of coloniality, Mignolo maintains that globalization can facilitate the creation of transnational alliances among marginalized communities. Yet, different from deterritorialized concepts of transnational alliances and resistance that came to characterize transnational and globalization studies, Mignolo's views of mobility and epistemic disobedience through "border dwelling" and "decolonial cosmopolitanism" are grounded on the experiences of groups that are at the margins of the "modern/colonial" project and whose knowledges continue to be co-opted. While texts like *Virtual Clearcut, O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* and, to some extent, *A Queda do Céu* critique the ways that globalization intersects with "coloniality of power," a narrative like *Whispering in Shadows* echoes some of Mignolo's thoughts about the power of transnational alliances from a place of "colonial difference." In the novel, Penny attends international conferences aimed at building Indigenous solidarity and political agency in an inter-American context. Through her participation in these events, Penny is able to understand that conflicts between Western and Okanagan epistemologies are part of a shared history of land dispossession and epistemic oppression in the Americas. Her interactions with other Indigenous activist groups also allows Penny to recognize the desire to restore Indigenous conceptions of land stewardship as a shared point of interest that would allow for alliances with other Indigenous nations in Latin America.

Despite its contributions to decolonial thought, Mignolo's theory remains underappreciated, in part because some consider it too broad and abstract – in sum, too "capital T" theoretical. For Scott Michaelsen and Scott Cutler Shershow, for example, Mignolo's ideas reinforce an "epistemological and political arcadianism" that idealizes pre-colonial systems while it also remains enclosed within a theoretical circle, hence undermining his project as a whole (39-40). Here, these authors substantiate Clark's concerns about the "false versions

pastoral" which he claims some postcolonial ecocritical approaches bring forth. For one thing, Michaelsen and Shershow claim that Mignolo's call for a new way of thinking that is less based on dichotomies than on "complementarity" and heterogeneity reduces "border thinking" to a "complementarity" he oftentimes associates with Indigenous epistemologies. For the authors, this division between a Eurocentric binary logic and an Indigenous "complementarity" reproduces a "long history of the romanticization of the other" and essentialist divisions between individualistic (Western) and community-centered (Indigenous) societies (52). In this sense, Michaelsen and Shershow claim that Mignolo's concept of "border thinking" turns the "colonial difference" into nothing "more than a 'displacement' of the West – a 'battle' in which subaltern knowledge wins everything, but at the cost of any possibility of double critique and absorption, and therefore of the unforeseeable or unknown" (54). Even so, Mignolo's theory is important in that it reworks and recontextualizes discussions about colonialism to offer alternatives rooted in the lived experiences of people who are located on the other end of the colonizer/colonized spectrum. Furthermore, Mignolo's emphasis on the geopolitics of knowledge, that is, the historical conditions of knowledge production in postcolonial nations takes up the idea of location to foreground the diversity of the Latin American context and the power of local communities to create epistemic alternatives to Eurocentric thought. His methodology, therefore, encompasses both a localized awareness of new structures of social power from below and a recognition of the plurality of worldviews emerging from the "colonial difference" that Eurocentric frameworks oftentimes fail to address. Mignolo's emphasis on the power of subaltern epistemologies is important because these systems of knowledge continue to be displaced and overwritten by a universal Eurocentric epistemology, and because they start from a place of difference vis-à-vis Eurocentric modernity which is still deemed illegitimate. As natural

landscapes such as the Amazon rainforest are embedded in the intellectual, spiritual, and cultural life of local groups and Indigenous nations, attending to the intersections of epistemology, identity, nature, and politics in the context of colonialism is crucial if we are to create spaces for the recognition or emergence of different forms of existence. Although non-human actors are mostly absent from Mignolo's discussion, the way that he advocates "global futures" that aspire to the "fullness of life," including that of the planet, implies that political, epistemological, and cultural conversations cannot happen without considering the environment.

More contemporary scholarship has tried to apply Quijano's and Mignolo's ideas to an environmental context. While Quijano examines the relationship between "coloniality of power" and different systems of racial classification, control of labour and production of subjectivity, Arturo Escobar expands on Quijano's analysis to reflect on what he calls "coloniality of nature" (*Territories of Difference* 120). Escobar contends that like race and knowledge, nature is also controlled by the logics of "coloniality" and the creation of hierarchies according to which "nonmoderns, primitives, and nature [occupy] the bottom of the scale" (*Territories of Difference* 121). As he puts it, "coloniality of nature" establishes an understanding of "certain natures (colonial and third world natures, women's bodies, dark bodies) [as] outside of the totality of the male Eurocentric world" (*Territories of Difference* 121). At the same time, the logics of this kind of coloniality also enforce the idea that "the products of the earth [are] the products of labor only, hence subordinating nature to human-driven markets" (*Territories of Difference* 121). For Escobar, decolonizing longstanding notions of nature and environment, and unveiling the connections between ecological, cultural, and economic exploitation are the first steps toward challenging the "coloniality of nature" and validating alternative environmental practices. Focusing on place-based models of land management among Black and Indigenous communities

in Colombia, Escobar states that the alternatives that arise at the epistemic borders of the "modern/colonial" system are emancipatory not only because they reaffirm that different worldviews can coexist, but, most importantly, because they help envision "worlds and knowledges otherwise" (*Territories of Difference* 12), each with its own epistemic and ontological basis. Since the differences involved in political and economic conflicts such as those experienced by Black and Indigenous communities in the Colombian Pacific are not just cultural, but also ontological, a plurality of knowledges in the context of Escobar's analysis would also mean opening space for different ways of existing and comprehending the world, including the non-human world. Escobar's theory, therefore, shows that issues of nature, knowledge, identity, and politics are unthinkable outside the realm of ontology and concerns about collective survival (both for human and non-human forms of life).

To help develop a pedagogical and methodological framework for de-centering Eurocentric thought, Boaventura de Sousa Santos discusses how knowledge production and epistemic recognition would happen on the ground by examining the role of social movements in the Global South. Echoing Mignolo's concept of "a zero point epistemology," Santos explains that forms of cultural contact like colonialism and imperialism impose Western rationality as a norm and, thus, establish an "abyssal" way of thinking that delegitimizes knowledge produced "on the other side of the line," that is, knowledge produced by colonized nations and marginalized groups. In turn, Santos calls for a "rearguard theory" that both reinterprets Western concepts and valorizes non-Eurocentric epistemologies to allow for the coexistence of different types of knowleges (*Epistemologies of the South* 118). This pluralism of ideas, however, depends on a new form of cultural contact that Santos calls "intercultural translation," a practice of communication and interaction that recognizes similarities and incompatibilities between

different systems of thought, and, by doing so, develops complex models of cultural understanding based on mutual intelligibility. Central, here, is Santos' discussion about the need to replace the monocultural logic of Western scientific knowledge with what he defines as an "ecology of knowledges," an inclusive and dialogical plane of relations that recognizes that knowledge systems are unique and originate from distinct histories, philosophies, and political realities. Located in-between "comfort and discomfort zones," in-between "the familiar and the strange fields of domination and struggle," an ecology of knowledges calls for a plural cognitive space that is crucial to promote reciprocal and non-reductionist alliances between groups speaking and acting from different geopolitical contexts (*The End of the Cognitive Empire* 118). Knowledge production, according to this logic, is not about suppression and assimilation, but, rather, about bringing together different and paradoxical systems of thought so that they can participate in a new space of meaning-making. In the fourth chapter of this dissertation, I examine the possibilities and limitations of enacting an "ecology of knowledges," especially the ways that current political, economic, and cultural systems are, for the most part, still inhospitable to such model.

The environmental aspect of Santos' theory comes with his explanation of *buen vivir*, the Spanish translation of the Quechua phrase *sumac kawsay*. Commenting on political achievements in Ecuador that grant constitutional rights to *Pachamama* (nature), Santos argues that the concept of *buen vivir* allows us to identify connections between culture and environment that dominant concepts of economic development undermine. Defined as a "way of living together in harmony, not only among humans but also with nature," *sumac kawsay* is currently used to regulate practices of land management, access to water and other natural resources, preservation of biodiversity, and health and educational policies in Ecuador (*The End of the*

Cognitive Empire 239). While these constitutional advancements do not preclude capitalist economic practices, the fact that Indigenous conceptions of nature and collective life enter official documents, according to Santos, "prevent global capitalist relations from [dominating] the logic, direction, and rhythm of national development" (*The End of the Cognitive Empire* 238). Whether this concept is introduced in the Ecuadorian constitution as a genuine form of recognition of Indigenous nationality and sovereignty, or as an attempt to promote state-centric reconciliation while still maintaining colonial control over Indigenous lands, *sumac kawsay* illustrates how Santos' ideas of intercultural translation and coexistence of knowledges may figure in federal policies. More importantly, Santos' theory offers a framework for analyzing forest landscapes like the Amazon as dynamic entities where different knowledges and resource management practices meet, clash and are negotiated. As I demonstrate in the chapters that follow, we need to revisit the dynamics of knowledge production with an awareness of the asymmetries of forms of cultural contact like colonialism in order to question mainstream conceptions of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil.

Canadian scholar Daniel Coleman combines Santos' use of "ecology" as a metaphor for epistemic plurality and the literal sense of "ecology" as a natural space inhabited by interdependent living entities to claim that Canadian environmental scholarship will only develop an "ecology of knowledges" when it recognizes the fundamental role of Indigenous epistemologies. Coleman's starting point is that central to the establishment of Canada as "a geo-political entity" is "an old and unresolved conflict with Indigenous conceptions of land, ecology, and human relations with environment" (11). This conflict, according to Coleman, is based both on "the alienation of Indigenous peoples from their original lands" and on "the delegitimation and suppression of Indigenous ecological thinking" (11-12). As I showed in my analysis of *The*

Rising Village and *Malcom's Katie*, the process of alienation and suppression that Coleman describes as central to the establishment of Canada as a "geopolitical entity" happened at a discursive level with the erasure of Indigenous presence and portrayal of the Canadian wilderness as an empty space. For Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar and performer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, the recognition of Indigenous epistemologies suggested by Coleman depends, first, on reconstructing the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the land beyond institutionalized models. As she writes, the consolidation of settler colonial power relied upon severing "the connection of Nishnaabeg bodies (and minds and spirits) to each other and to the practices and associated knowledges that connect us to land, because this is the base of our power" (*As We Have Always Done* 41). This severing, according to Simpson, meant that "land and bodies [could be] commodified as capital under settler colonialism and naturalized as objects for exploitation" (*As We Have Always Done* 41). Here, Simpson echoes Escobar's idea of how the "coloniality of nature" is enacted through hierarchies which push "nonmoderns" (usually how Indigenous peoples were conceived in colonial discourses and narratives) and "nature" to the "bottom of the scale," hence allowing for the shared subjugation of Indigenous bodies and land. For Simpson, therefore, "the reattachment of [Indigenous] bodies to our lands" and recognition of "nonhierarchical relationships between land and bodies" represent the first steps toward the resurgence of Indigenous cultural, political, and epistemological systems (*As We Have Always Done* 44). Glen Coulthard also comments on how reclaiming the connection between land and the body is important to reaffirm Indigenous knowledge systems. Examining the overlap between colonialism and capitalism through Marx's primitive accumulation thesis, Coulthard contends that dispossession, here understood as the removal of Indigenous people from the land and the denial of Indigenous rights to self-determination, "has structured the

political relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state to a greater extent than [proletarianization]" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 69). At the same time, dispossession has also informed Indigenous resistance to capitalism and colonialism, with the idea of land at the center of it. More than a material entity to be appropriated and exploited for the accumulation of capital, land, as Coulthard defines it, is a complex entity that is central to the material survival of Indigenous groups, to the constitution of Indigenous identity and "who we are as a people," and to the fostering of ethical and mutual relationships between humans and non-human nature ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 71). Coulthard's definition of land as a material entity that shapes group identity, systems of knowledge and modes of existence brings us back to the idea of how environmental concepts intersect with issues of epistemology and ontology.

When explaining what he hopes to accomplish with his critique of colonial civilization's destructive relation to the environment, Kopenawa writes: "Recusamo-nos a deixar que destruam nossa floresta porque foi *Omama* que nos fez vir à existência. Queremos apenas continuar vivendo nela do nosso jeito, como fizeram nossos ancestrais antes de nós. Não queremos que ela morra, coberta de feridas e dejetos dos brancos" (354, original emphasis) ["We refuse to let our land be destroyed because it was *Omama* who brought us into existence. We simply want to continue living there as we wish, as our ancestors did before us. We do not want our forest to die, covered in wounds and the white people's waste" (280, original emphasis)]. As the material appropriation of the Amazon is inseparable from the epistemic and ontological erasure of the Yanomami, Kopenawa suggests that protecting the rainforest also means securing the right of the Yanomami to exist in their own terms. To some extent, the narratives I analyze in this dissertation echo Kopenawa's awareness and show that recognizing alternative knowledges and

practices of forest use and management is inseparable from opening space for different ways of existing and comprehending the world, including the non-human world. In this sense, they urge readers to consider not only ways of thinking and acting differently, but also of existing differently. In fact, narratives like *Virtual Clearcut, Whispering in Shadows, Ana Historic, Mad Maria, Ykamiabas,* and *A Queda do Céu* draw attention to the relations of power that are constitutive of and naturalized within cultural myths about the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon to represent forest landscapes as contested entities. By doing so, these narratives enact a critical reinterpretation of master narratives while also inviting alternative frameworks of knowledge that run against dominant environmental models.

In *The End of Cognitive Empire: The Coming of Age of Epistemologies of the South,* Santos uses the phrase "ruin seeds emergences" to refer to epistemic and cultural frameworks that, although "historically defeated by modern capitalism and colonialism," continue to exist in the daily practices of marginalized communities (29). Because of their power to resist the destruction caused by "modern capitalism and colonialism," these frameworks function both as ruins (signs of their attempted destruction) and seeds of a "postcapitalist and postcolonial future" (*The End of Cognitive Empire* 29). Santos writes:

> We are thus before ruins that are alive, not because they are visited by living people but because they are lived by people that are very much alive in their practice of resistance and struggle for an alternative future. They are, therefore, both ruins and seeds at the same time. They represent the existential paradox of all those social groups that were victims of the cartography of modern abyssal thinking by being located on the other side of the abyssal line, the side of colonial sociability. (*The End of Cognitive Empire* 30)

Instead of proposing an uncritical and romantic recuperation of a non-exploitative past, "ruin seeds" forms of emergence aspire to "modernity otherwise" (30). According to Santos' perspectives, "ruin seeds" forms of emergence embody the limitations of Eurocentric modern systems of thought and, therefore, serve as an instantiation of another modernity – a modernity born through the struggles and resistances of groups located "on the other side of the line". As Santos suggests, "ruin seeds" emergences are important because they materialize epistemic frameworks that have been subjugated and, by doing so, offer tools for imagining alternative futures. To some extent, the narratives I examine in my project work as "ruin seeds" by showing that more than symbols of national and cultural identity, forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil are complex spaces that lay open the limitations of hegemonic political, economic, and cultural concepts, and the continuing subjugation of natures, knowledges, and modes of existence in these spaces. By drawing attention to "ruins seeds" ideas, models or frameworks that are embedded in those spaces, or to alternative systems of knowledge about environmental use that continue to exist in the daily practices of local groups, the authors I examine in my dissertation bring ethics and aesthetics together to urge us to think and act differently, and to open space for living differently. It this sense, representations of forest landscapes like Fawcett's, Marlatt's, Armstrong's, Souza's, Melo's and Kopenawa's offer the seeds of a theoretical (un)thinking that brings epistemological and ontological issues to the forefront of discussions about environmental protection while also calling for direct action.

Chapter Two

"Order and Progress": Dismantling the Myth of Economic Development and Capitalist Redemption

In his preface to the new edition of *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, Wolfgang Sachs argues that, even though models of "development-as-growth" impose unsustainable demands on the planet, economic development and so-called modernization continue to be regarded as the solution to social inequalities in most countries in the Global South (vi). According to Sachs, this disregard for the environment illuminates one of the most pressing dilemmas of the twenty-first century: that "politics is compelled to push either equity without ecology, or ecology without equity" (vi). In his perspective, this puzzle will remain unresolved "unless the belief in 'development' is dismantled" (vi). Sachs' deep scepticism about the prevailing model of economic development is echoed in the works of Latin American theorists of the "modernity/coloniality research program." By examining the connections between Eurocentrism, colonial power, and capitalism, these scholars claim that decentring the main structures of Eurocentric modernity, particularly its ideals of universality, instrumental rationality, and market economy, is crucial for achieving social, economic, and political emancipation in the Global South. Sachs builds on this basic premise to critique the ways that the "spreading monoculture" of Eurocentric thought "has eroded viable alternatives to the industrial, growth-oriented society and dangerously crippled humankind's capacity to meet an increasingly different future with creative responses" (xviii). For Sachs, in fact, ideals of economic development and growth are so widespread and powerful that they create a "mental structure" (xv) which controls social, cultural, and political life in underdeveloped nations. Thus, Sachs urges us to challenge the "conceptual foundations" and "unconscious structures" (xix) of

economic discourses and representations so as to dismantle the "belief" in economic development and displace it as the ruling principle of life in the Global South.

Although environmental discussions are not central in his anthology, Sachs' preface and, more importantly, his essay entitled "Environment" shed light on how ideals of economic development inform ecological thinking. The point of departure for Sachs' discussion is the publication in the 1980s of the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development*, also known as the *Brundtland Report*. Claiming that "poverty reduces people's capacity to use resources in a sustainable manner" (qtd. in Sachs 28), the *Brundtland Report* implies that the solution to environmental exploitation is the economic improvement of underdeveloped nations. For Sachs, this connection between economy and sustainability in "Third World" countries establishes a "conceptual marriage" between development and environment which ultimately turns "nature," a concrete and dynamic entity, into a "passive and lifeless" object "merely waiting to be acted upon" by the forces of the economy (34). For one thing, this "conceptual marriage," according to Sachs, "impedes the recognition of 'environment' as a particular construction of 'nature' specific to our epoch" (33). More importantly, it legitimizes the careless use of natural resources by reducing "ecology to a set of managerial strategies aiming at resource efficiency and risk management" (35). Against the pretense that economic development and modernization would result in a more careful use and manipulation of the natural world, Sachs concludes that to engage in economic, political, and epistemic transformations requires dismantling the concept of development, and, thus, breaking or redefining the "conceptual marriage" between economy and sustainability. Only by doing so, Sachs suggests, we will be able to open space for alternative responses to the environmental and ethical dilemmas of the twentieth-first century.

For economic geographers Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham (also known by the shared penname J. K. Gibson-Graham), economic development is more than a "mental structure"; it is a discursive category that helps naturalize capitalist economy. As Gibson and Graham write, through a "series of myths that promote the illusory fullness and positivity of capitalist society," development discourses create an imaginary that associates capitalism with positive ideals such as democratic freedom, wealth, and collective wellbeing, hence masking "the social antagonisms on which capitalist development is posited" (*A Postcapitalist Politics* 55). Although Gibson and Graham recognize that there are multiple kinds of capitalist economies and that capitalist practices have gone through different phases, they conclude that discourses which celebrate economic development in capitalist countries continuously portray capitalism as the source of democracy, rational thought, and science, making capitalist economy an uncontestable category. From an environmental perspective, these discourses grant capitalism the task of liberating "humanity from the struggle with nature," which perpetuates the idea of the natural world as hostile and inhospitable, and ultimately minimizes the ecological outcomes of industrial development (*The End of Capitalism* 8). As discussed in my Introduction, the image of the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian jungle as inhospitable and the unquestioned belief that they needed to be tamed informed how forest landscapes crystalized in the national imaginaries of both countries. Gibson and Graham maintain that as a powerful, transformative, and redeeming structure to which there is no apparent alternative, capitalist development becomes a priority regardless of its social, ethical, and environmental implications. Reminding us that the hegemony of capitalism is a discursive phenomenon that development narratives help establish, Gibson and Graham thus call for representations of economic development that focus on the failures and contradictions of capitalist economy. For the authors, deconstructing longstanding

tropes of capitalist representation is crucial to generate "a discourse of economic difference" and, thus, open space for the emergence of non-capitalist imaginaries and epistemologies (*The End of Capitalism* 5). From Gibson and Graham's perspective, Sachs' call for dismantling development as "a habit of thought" needs to also happen at the level of language and discourse.

Drawing upon Sachs' and Gibson and Graham's discussions, the goal of this chapter is to analyze the "conceptual marriage" between development and environment that is ingrained in cultural representations of the forest, and the fallacies of economic ideals that value ecosystems in Canada and Brazil simply for profit. For this purpose, I discuss Brian Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut: Or the Way Things Are in My Hometown*, a memoir that recounts several of his visits to the logging town of Prince George; Márcio Souza's *Mad Maria,* a literary account of the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré railroad in the early twentieth-century in Brazil's northern region; and Márcio Souza's *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* (*Lost World II: The End of the Third World*), a satire of First World interventions in Latin American economy and environment. While economic development is often represented as a lawful and necessary process that promises to increase wealth and improve the collective wellbeing, these narratives focus on what is hidden under these promises: human and environmental exploitation, poverty and inequality, and political disenfranchisement. More than just an idea ("mental structure") or a representational practice ("discursive category"), development, these narratives imply, is a set of material processes and interventions of natural ecosystems that are undertaken by specific actors (individuals, governments, and corporations) and whose consequences are felt by the local population. By focusing on development as a set of material practices and on the grounded actions that enable the narrative of progress, Fawcett and Souza imply that deconstructing the ideology of economic development is not enough, since discourses that represent the falseness of

the myth of progress may still be complicit in or powerless to prevent the destruction of the forest and subjugation of local communities. Unable to identify a correlation between dismantling mindsets, concepts, and ideologies, and achieving positive change on the ground, narratives like *Virtual Clearcut, Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* point to the need of moving beyond the realm of ideas and discourses toward non-capitalist actions. To some extent, the difficulty of imagining viable alternatives even in critical texts like Fawcett's and Souza's is itself a symptom of what happens when hegemonic concepts of economic development become so ingrained in our mental and discursive structures.

In his 2003 memoir *Virtual Clearcut*, Brian Fawcett, former columnist for the *Globe and Mail* and creative writer currently living in Toronto, chronicles his visits to Prince George, a resource town located northwest British Columbia, and his assessment of a nearby clearcut in the Bowron River Valley. Fawcett's book is divided into four parts, each focusing on his visits to Prince George and impressions about "the way things are in his hometown" at four different moments (1990, 1993, 1996 and 2001). In the first of these visits, Fawcett writes that Prince George is following a "continuum" of development that began several thousand years ago, "on the forested slopes of North Africa" (75). Fawcett's point of reference is *The Epic of Gilgamesh,* "history's first logging tale," and more precisely the "now-treeless wilderness" where Gilgamesh and Enkidu fought against the monster Humbaba, the guardian of the cedar forest, and attempted to cut down its trees (Fawcett 75). In his narrative, Fawcett draws a parallel between *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and deforestation in his hometown to show that the monster Gilgamesh and Enkidu fought thousands of years ago "had its final apotheosis" (75) in Prince George, more specifically in the Bowron River valley. This time, however, the fight is not against the "giant cedars" of North Africa, but, rather, against the economic and political forces that turned the forest in the

Bowron valley into "a bunch of scruffy, allegedly diseased spruce and pine trees the logging companies flattened in just a few years" (75). Reflecting on how economic growth impacts the environment, Fawcett concludes that from "one rarely articulated point of view, the story at the root of all human development has been the story of the eradication of the world's trees" (75). By representing economic development as the driving force of deforestation, Fawcett implies that a break with this "continuum" would require, first, a de-centering of the economic discourses and models that legitimize extractivist practices and resource exploitation in places like Prince George.

Fawcett's localized and embodied perspective is crucial to his portrayal of how development creates mental, discursive, and material structures that inform local life in his hometown. As a memoir, *Virtual Clearcut* combines the critical stance of an outsider who left town over thirty years ago and the nostalgic perspective of one of the city's residents to offer a "one person's story" of what happened to a resource town located "in the great, green forests of the Canadian north" (xix). At the same time, through his critique of corporate practices of resource extraction and management that prioritize economic development to the detriment of the social wellbeing of residents of Prince George, Fawcett writes a treatise on the impacts of global capitalism and the "fracturing of home and other earnable values that is among the little-publicized effects of globalization" (xix).[18] Through his perspective, global capitalism becomes a force that not only destroys the forests of Prince George, but also takes away the vitality of the local people, most of whom depend on the forest to work. To some extent, then, *Virtual Clearcut*

[18] Fawcett develops a similar critique of global capitalism in his latest novel *The Last of the Lumbermen,* published in 2013. In this case, a multinational logging company is about to take over Mantua, a fictional town in northern B.C. where the story takes place, destroying its main industry and source of income of its residents. Unlike *Virtual Clearcut,* however, in *The Last of the Lumbermen* discussions about deforestation, logging and capitalism serve as background for the novel's main plot: the struggles of Andy Bathgate, a middle-age hockey player, in coping with his past.

unveils the "unconscious structures" that establish economic development and growth as the ruling principles of social life in his hometown. In his memoir, Fawcett draws a parallel between Prince George, "the Western White Spruce Capital of the World," and the clearcut in the nearby Bowron River valley, a deforested area which was so vast that, in the 1980s, could be seen from outer space. Together, the story of the town and the story of the clearcut turn both Prince George and the deforested area in the Brown River valley into embodiments of global capitalism's failed promises of prosperity and growth. In this sense, Fawcett reinforces Gibson and Graham's call for representations of economic development that focus on the failures and contradictions of capitalist economy. Throughout *Virtual Clearcut,* however, Fawcett realizes that an ideological critique of deforestation and global capitalism as "juggernauts" (to borrow his own term) would do little to change the life conditions of residents in his hometown. Thus, he tries to move beyond the realm of ideas and discourses to, instead, re-center his discussion on the material needs of the local communities of Prince George as well as open space for action on the ground. This change in perspective forces Fawcett to adopt a more nuanced attitude toward the relationship between environment and economy – one that involves trying to reconcile both and, consequently, create a non-capitalist alternative that prioritizes the wellbeing of people and forests alike.

As Fawcett's memoir implies, unveiling failed ideals of economic growth is unthinkable without addressing issues of deforestation in a logging town like Prince George. Although Fawcett makes it clear that his main goal is to discuss global capitalism and its negative effects, the starting point of his memoir is the clearcut in the Bowron River Valley. Intrigued by the fact that "a clearcut as large as theirs" (xv) remains unseen or unattended by the local population, Fawcett hopes that revisiting the valley and documenting the state of its forests will help him

(and his readers) find the "meaning" of the clearcut so that environmental exploitation can be prevented in the future (207). Echoing to some extent Bruce Braun's critique of the satellite images produced by Wilderness Society and Sierra Club of Western Canada in the 1990s, Fawcett claims that panoramic pictures of deforested areas prioritize "spectacle over detail" (3), rendering "most of us too numb and helpless to do anything except go with the flow, which translates into supporting the job-giving corporations – and consuming more wood-based product because there don't seem to be any reasonable alternatives" (3). Against this macroscopic and desensitizing perspective, in *Virtual Clearcut* Fawcett depicts deforestation from the ground, accounting for "the gory specifics of what has been taken or what remains when masses of trees are cut down and removed" (3). Thus, the first section of his narrative, "Paradise, 1990," offers graphic and intricate portrayals of the deforested area in an attempt to represent the sense of nothingness and incoherence Fawcett gets from entering the Bowron River valley. As he describes it, a "clearcut is ugly from near or far. Worse than that, it is dull" (5). With "nothing to see or hear inside it because the trees have been removed," the clearcut is a "monotone of nothingness" (5), "a gigantic nothing that almost defies description" (64). In contrast with the "beauty and vigour" of Prince George's "boreal landscape," especially its "pristine forest meadows" and the "dense forests" that the locals call the "bush" (8-9), Fawcett's camera now reveals that it is impossible "to capture any sort of coherence or perspective. It is like trying to photograph zero: nothing distinguishing itself from zilch" (65). Struggling to make the forest and the destruction of it visible to his readers, Fawcett ultimately recognizes the limits of representation and acknowledges his inability to "give the clearcut the definition and substance necessary to hold it in memory" (66). Whereas, as Braun puts it, panoramic images of deforestation make it "possible to 'see' the forest's liquidation" and accept the narrative of

environmental destruction (222-3), here Fawcett's struggle is to make us understand the clearcut in terms of void, of negation.

In his second trip to the Bowron River valley three years later, Fawcett reinforces the sense of desolation he gets from his initial visit by comparing the clearcut to a bombarded city. As he writes, a clearcut is silent, but not "the stillness of a northern lake when the components of the world suddenly cease to contend," nor the interval between musical notes that leads to "something larger and sweeter" (213). Rather, "the silence of clearcut forests is exhaustion, a void in which the world comes to recognize that it is being broken, misused, betrayed, and it ceases to struggle" (213). Paradoxically, although the clearcut remains unseen by the residents of Prince George, Fawcett fears that "this silence now resides in the minds of people here and that it is sapping their vitality as it spreads and consumes the integrity of the materials they live by" (213). Deforestation consumes the "materials" the residents of Prince Gorge live by both in their entirety ("integrity" in the sense of wholeness) and in their value, particularly their moral values ("integrity" in the sense of moral uprightness), which here could be associated with the power of the forest to offer "dignity" to the residents of Fawcett's hometown through employment. Like the clearcut, the residents of Prince George, Fawcett implies, also "cease to struggle." Unlike the allegorical treatments I discussed in my Introduction, the residents of Prince George are symbols of the forest's destruction; their own depletions speak to a relationship between the community and their natural environment. By emphasizing the "silent" ugliness of deforestation, Fawcett hopes to make "this silence visible *and* audible, so that it can be understood, and so it can end" (213, emphasis added). Yet, like in his first encounter with the clearcut, he slowly realizes that the details "are sparse" and repetitive, and the closest to an explanation he can get is that the clearcut in the Bowron valley is "a fractured and invisible ecological system broken in the name

of an economic juggernaut that no one has an alternative to" (207). This "economic juggernaut," of course, is global capitalism, a destructive economic force that disempowers both the forest, which becomes nothing more than a broken ecological system, and the locals who, deprived of the materiality they need to make a living, internalize this brokenness, and become powerless to change their destiny.

Fawcett's on-the-ground perspective and close examination of the clearcut in his hometown reflect his effort to use literary discourse to help readers understand environmental issues in Prince George and engage in material transformations in the real world which could potentially open space for an alternative to the "economic juggernaut" of global capitalism. As the title of his memoir suggests, Fawcett's representation of deforestation is "virtual," that is, mediated by the representational practices of his narrative, including the pictures he takes while documenting the deforested area. Yet, his portrayal of the valley is also "virtual" in the sense that in *Virtual Clearcut* he is depicting a reality (deforestation in Prince George) that remains imperceptible and unrecognized by the people in his hometown. In this sense, his focus on desolation and nothingness in his account of the valley shows some of the strategies Fawcett uses in an attempt to overcome the limitations that, according to Rob Nixon, the "environmental writer-activist" faces in trying to bridge creative writing and environmental awareness. Because the effects of ecological issues in his hometown are not always easily acknowledged, Fawcett emphasizes nothingness and desolation in order to, in Nixon's words, give the "unseen" and "unapparent" a "materiality upon which [readers] can act" (16). Even so, the undertone of Fawcett's initial descriptions of the valley implies that forest destruction is unstoppable and unsolvable: there is nothing other than a void, a "fractured and invisible ecological system" for readers to protect (207). While Fawcett's depiction of the "gory" details of deforestation reflects

his commitment to call residents into action, his focus on hopelessness risks numbing his readers as much as the panoramic images to which he refers at the beginning of his narrative.

As *Virtual Clearcut* proceeds, Fawcett's close examination of deforestation in Prince George forces him to adopt a more nuanced and complex understanding of environmental practices in his hometown. For instance, after having worked on his memoir for over ten years, Fawcett revisits the purpose of his book and recognizes that the narrative he thought he initially had, "an exposé of an environmental atrocity with a clear moral and ideological track," no longer exists (218). Thus, in his last visit to Prince George, Fawcett tries to make sense of what he *actually* thinks about the clearcut "now" (218). To some extent, this change of perspective happens because the clearcut itself has ceased to exist. As Fawcett writes, almost twenty years after the area is logged, and fifteen years since it is burned for replanting, the Bowron clearcut is transformed, "visually at least, into bush again" (281). Except for a few areas "where the mismanaged slash burns have left a collar of white snags" (283), the sense of desolation and nothingness of the previous descriptions dissipates, and Fawcett feels "reasonably normal while inside the clearcut" (282). Although the replanting was done with only one species, "the trees went into the ground without much regard for the sustainability of the soil or terrain," and there was "no serious attempt to provide biodiversity, which the industry tends to equate with underbrush and competitive non-commercial species" (283), Fawcett still recognizes that "the Bowron is once again a living forest" (284). While he is conscious that forest regeneration does not erase a history of environmental misuse in the valley, and neither does it prevent "a future generation of corporate loggers [from coming] back in 75 or 100 years to do the same thing they did in the 1980s" (207), Fawcett concludes that the Bowron River forest is healing and, "as the trees grow larger, the story [for him] gets smaller, more specific, and less personal" (319).

Interestingly, though, Fawcett ends his narrative with the news that "another big salvage cut is coming, this time to the west, around Ootsa Lake" (319), hence showing that Prince George's "logging tale" will likely repeat itself somewhere else. In this sense, what has changed, these passages seem to imply, is not Fawcett's negative attitude about environmental exploitation, but, rather, his approach to the original goal of *Virtual Clearcut*, that is, to make the clearcut "visible" and "understood" so as to help prevent deforestation in the future. Aware that deforestation will most likely continue because, as he puts it, people "*are* going to cut down trees," Fawcett advocates that clearcutting be done "as if they believe there's going to be a future," which, for him, means having "a stronger local will" that will push corporations to "return equivalent value for what they're taking" (318, original emphasis).

In the last two sections of *Virtual Clearcut*, Fawcett also redefines his perspectives on responsibility and accountability. Concerned about the economic survival of small towns such as Prince George, Fawcett learns that it is impossible to simply blame the corporations because, as he puts it, when "people get around to looking for someone and something to blame, the forestry corporations will either be gone, or will have changed names and share structure so many times that no one will recognize them as culprits" (318). The forest industry, as his journey back home reveals, is a complex system that defies any attempt to portray it as a "culprit" precisely because it brings together different and, oftentimes, conflicting interests, including those of corporations, government officials, environmentalists, lumber workers, and loggers. Furthermore, as Frank Peebles, another local journalist, bluntly explains, "the forces that make up the world economy" play a significant role in local businesses, particularly the forest industry (311). In his words, while the U.S. has taken advantage of the NAFTA Agreement to "slam" Canada "with excise taxes and quotas, claiming that our forestry stumpage rates give us an unfair advantage,"

European environmentalists have “decided it was easier to attack us than the Brazilians for irresponsible forestry practices,” and corporation politics has made it impossible to “tell who’s responsible for what or who’s really running things” (311). The forest, through this perspective, becomes a political entity that contributes to maintaining specific power relations and, thus, fulfilling different political and economic agendas. The complex forces that make up the forest industry, again, undermine Fawcett’s initial moral and ideological aspirations. Aware that defining who is responsible for forestry misuse in his hometown would turn out to be an almost impossible task, Fawcett emphasizes, instead, the need to problematize the kinds of intervention that the industry is making and their effects on the forest and the residents alike. Responsibility, here, is not a matter of identifying agents to blame, but, rather, of how to respond to damage and misuse.

Throughout his memoir, therefore, Fawcett refuses to conceive forest use simply as abuse to account for human use and intervention in nature. For instance, in an interview with Paul Strickland, a journalist for the local newspaper, Fawcett admits that “exploitation is necessary, to a degree, if we’re to make any kind of living or get anything done” (131). Because he is conscious that the loss of employment would impact residents in his hometown as much as the extreme of a clearcut, Fawcett tries to reconcile environment and economy (as in the creation of employment for the inhabitants of Prince George) instead of pitting one against the other. Admitting that it is impossible to “live in a place without leaving marks” (131), Fawcett clarifies that he is against “marks” that are destructive and irreparable. As he writes, the problem with environmental use in Prince George is that it is oftentimes reduced to the idea of economic development and profit-making so much so that “around here, mark-making means that we’re flatteners of landscapes, gougers of hillsides, polluters of rivers, desecrators of leafy vales, cold

executioners of hapless fawns and does, and so on" (131). To stop environmental degradation, thus, Fawcett urges us "to improve the quality of the marks we make" (131). Presumably, this solution requires working toward a stronger sense of agency so that the townspeople are not merely affected by large economic forces, but, rather, become effectors themselves. Understanding the way things are in a resource town like Prince George, for Fawcett, means being aware of the complexities of environmental use to search for a balance between preservation and use. By drawing attention to the ways that we interact with and manipulate forest landscapes, Fawcett helps deconstruct the human versus nature dichotomy that informs longstanding myths about the forest to conceive nature as a complex and dynamic entity that is embedded in and influences human practices. Echoing William Cronon's call for "an environmental ethics that will tell us as much about using nature as about not using it" (85), Fawcett's focus on human use and intervention helps us understand the forest as a social space whose survival depends on finding a sustainable place for humans *in* nature.

By considering how human practices take place within nature, *Virtual Clearcut* also challenges the either/or solutions offered by current environmental theories. For example, commenting on how environmental thought oftentimes simplifies nature as a fragile ecosystem that must remain untouched, Fawcett defines organicist theories such as the "Gaia Mushroom Theory"[19] as "one of those tweedy sit-in-your-faculty-office notions that serves the thinker better than the subject" (284). To the people working inside the forest "with a horde of blackflies up the

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[19] Formulated by the scientist James Lovelock in collaboration with the microbiologist Lyyn Margulis, the Gaia hypothesis proposes that living and non-living organisms interact to keep the equilibrium of the planet and regulate life on Earth. According to this perspective, Earth becomes a single, complex, and self-regulated system whose survival depends on those interactions. The Gaia theory first appeared in Lovelock's 1979 book *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*, yet this hypothesis still informs current discussions about environmental use and preservation.

nose," Fawcett writes, the Great Forest feels neither "Great" nor unified (284). Fawcett also criticizes the "upper-case Free Market System" that appropriates forest landscapes to promote economic development. As he defines it, the "Free Market" utopia is nothing more than a "self-serving invention of suit-wearing MBAs sunk deep in leather executive chairs at the top of high-rise office towers" (284). To the people "in its gritty depths driving the forklifts and packing the boxes of widgets from one conveyor belt to the next" (284), Fawcett writes, the "Free Market System" does not seem free at all. Significantly, it is through the scenes of *men* working in the forest and the idea of manual labour that Fawcett justifies his points. The problem with both approaches, for Fawcett, is that they deterritorialize forest landscapes and provide top-down explanations that fail to account for the people on the ground and, in this case, the forest itself. Refusing to conceive nature either as a pristine wilderness or as a vessel of endless resources, Fawcett again calls for complex discussions that would engage the local people and promote community action. This complexity, Fawcett implies, goes beyond simply refusing or breaking the "conceptual marriage" between development and environment, as Sachs argues, or deconstructing discourses and ideologies; rather, it means redefining the dynamics of this relationship in such a way that tries to prioritize both the needs of the local population, particularly the city's economic survival, and the natural ecosystem of Prince George.

In *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*, Gibson and Graham claim that capitalism takes different forms and, in each of these, relies on particular discursive structures. For the authors, for instance, the increasing emphasis on transnational flows and markets helps establish global capital economy – the kind of capitalism that is dominant in Fawcett's narrative – as "the new realm of the absolute" (9). As a de-territorialized structure "from which social possibility is dictated or by which it is constrained,"

global capitalism becomes "the everything everywhere of contemporary cultural representation" (9). For Gibson and Graham, representing global capital economy as a large and self-sustaining structure undermines any attempt to create a discourse of economic difference. As they explain, these representational practices turn global capitalism into a system that is "impervious to ordinary political and cultural interventions," a juggernaut that "can be resisted and reformed but it cannot be replaced, except through some herculean and coordinated struggle" (256). As Fawcett makes clear at the beginning of his memoir, *Virtual Clearcut* is a book about globalization, and more precisely about how global capitalism makes it impossible for both the town and river valley to get fair treatment from governments and corporations, despite their participation and contributions to capital economy. In this sense, Fawcett initially seems to re-enact the representational practices that concern Gibson and Graham, especially in the way he portrays global capitalism as an all-encompassing force which rips his hometown apart and undermines the autonomy and agency of the local people. Even so, his localized attempt to represent deforestation in Prince George forces him to also consider global capitalism from the ground, both in how its structures of power shape daily life in his hometown and how it can be resisted. Although in *Virtual Clearcut* global capitalism is seen as a totality that seems to shape all levels of social, cultural, political, and economic existence in Prince George, thus leaving the local people with the illusion that there are no other options than to accept this is "the way things are" in their hometown, Fawcett ends his critique by encouraging his readers to rebuild the "sense of self and community integrity" that capitalism has robbed from them (245). This rebuilding, in turn, depends on reconciling environmental use and economy as employment because, as Fawcett implies, a "sense of self and community integrity" would only be restored with returning the "integrity of the materials they live by."

Virtual Clearcut plays an important role in showing how forestry practices intersect with the logics of a global market economy, and how these entanglements impact social and cultural life in Prince George. Portraying Prince George and the Bowron clearcut as embodiments of failed capitalism, *Virtual Clearcut* offers a de-romanticized narrative of economic disenfranchisement and environmental use in Prince George that helps us envision forest landscapes as contentious spaces of environmental, social, and economic exploitation. Fawcett's emphasis on the shortcomings of economic development destabilizes the myth that global capitalism allows for economic prosperity across the world. More importantly, Fawcett's analysis of the relationship between economy and environment provides a glimpse of what wealth and prosperity could look like if we were to break with the mental, discursive, and material continuum of development. Rather than limiting human and non-human life to quantifiable rates of growth, Fawcett encourages us to start measuring "quality-of-life issues in forestry" in terms of "the air people breath, the water they drink, even the stability of the ground they build and live on. And at a very slight remove are questions about the general well-being of things: derelict cityscapes, decimated forests, polluted waterways, stinky, toxin-infused air" (49). Fawcett's imagined non-capitalist solution, in fact, brings to mind Tim Jackson's claim that in a "finite world" of limited resources, prosperity and growth would prioritize our ability to flourish "within the ecological limits of a finite planet" (16). In *Prosperity Without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet*, Jackson challenges the idea that prosperity can only be conceived in economic terms and achieved through economic growth. Instead, Jackson proposes that we think of prosperity in terms of "our ability to flourish as human beings – within the ecological limits of a finite planet" and "to create the conditions under which this is possible" (16). Therefore, the mental, discursive, and material space that Fawcett's narrative tries to open is one in which

economy and environment share a common goal: the general well-being of people and the planet.

Echoing the documentary aspect of a memoir like Fawcett's, Márcio Souza's historical novel *Mad Maria*[20] likewise examines the mentalities, discourses and actions that enable the narrative of economic development and progress in places like the Brazilian Amazon. Souza's goal, in this case, is to offer a de-romanticized, oftentimes cynical, portrayal of the failures and contradictions of capitalist economy. Published in 1980, Souza's novel provides a literary account of the construction of a railroad deep in the Amazon rainforest. The Madeira-Mamoré, as it was named, was initially built to fulfill the Treaty of Petrópolis, an agreement signed in 1903 between Brazil and Bolivia that resulted in the annexation of the Acre state into the Brazilian territory. Even so, the main motivation for building a railroad in the Brazilian "jungle" was economic: to offer an easy and cost-efficient means of transportation of rubber and, thus, maximize exposure to industrial markets in Europe and the U.S. The construction project Souza describes in his novel, in fact, is an attempt to complete a previously abandoned one. As Laura Barbas-Rhoden explains, in 1869 the Brazilian and Bolivian governments granted concession to Colonel George Earl Church, a U.S. civil engineer and explorer, to build a railroad in the Amazon Basin. Because of precarious working conditions, high accident and mortality rates among workers, and unexpected financial costs, Church's company pulled out the project ten years later. In 1906, U.S. entrepreneur Percival Farquhar took charge of the Madeira-Mamoré enterprise, becoming one of the most influential investors in Brazilian history. Known for having "the greatest land hunger of any man in the history of Latin America since the Incas" (Gaud qtd. in Barbas-Rhoden 68), Farquhar spearheaded a series of business projects in the early twentieth

[20] Souza's novel was adapted into a 2005 television series written by Benedito Ruy Barbosa and directed by Ricardo Waddington.

century, many of which depended on clearcutting the rainforest. In *Mad Maria,* Souza turns Farquhar into one of the most scornful characters of his novel in order to support his portrayal of the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré as a meaningless and destructive project whose only outcomes are labour exploitation, death, environmental loss, and a general sense of chaos in the Amazon rainforest.

Significantly, *Mad Maria* is not the only fictional account of a pointless project led by a foreigner which takes place deep in the Amazon. Two years after the publication of Souza's novel, Werner Herzog's film *Fitzcarraldo* premiered in movie theaters across the world. In Herzog's movie, a white European entrepreneur struggles to fulfill his dream of building an opera house in Iquitos, a large city in the Peruvian Amazon, after having failed as a businessman and abandoned the lead of the Trans-Andean railway project. Taking place at the height of the rubber trade in the late nineteenth century, the film portrays Fitzcarraldo's search for capital investment and involvement with the powerful rubber barons who controlled economic development in the region as well as his struggles to move a steam ship through a mountain in the heart of the Peruvian jungle. Although Fitzcarraldo never fulfills his dream of building his opera house, in the end he succeeds in bringing the opera company to give a one-time performance to the people of Iquitos. It is important to note that the movie's controversy goes beyond its underlying assumption of European cultural superiority, here embodied in the massive (and useless) opera house Fitzcarraldo wants to build, and its reinforcing of the Amazon rainforest as a threatening and disruptive entity that must be tamed. In his analysis of Herzog's movie, Trevor Cunnington recounts that at the beginning of the production stage, disagreements between the film crew and the Aguaruna peoples who live around the area led to the burning of the film set. Furthermore, in his "monomaniacal" efforts to complete the movie, Herzog, like his

careless character, misused Indigenous labour, and his project resulted in the injuries and deaths of several of the Aguaruna extras hired to work on the film set (Cunnington 2). Both in its content and context of production, *Fitzcarraldo* re-enacts the violence of the colonial encounter[21] and lays open some of the dysfunctions of the European myth of economic development, civilization, and progress that Souza would criticize in his novel.

At some point in the movie, one of the rubber barons mockingly christens Fitzcarraldo "the *conquistador* [conqueror] of the useless" (0:29:22), a title that could easily apply to Farquhar, the ambitious entrepreneur of *Mad Maria*. In fact, Herzog's film and Souza's novel share significant similarities. Presuming that the "New World" needs Western cultural and economic development, both Fitzcarraldo and Farquhar are determined to "civilize" the rainforest and bring "progress" to the "jungle" regardless of the human and environmental losses their projects may cause. In this sense, both the opera house and the Madeira-Mamoré are products of the narcissistic ambitions of these entrepreneurs. Although they focus on the different ideals of European colonialism in Herzog's film, and U.S. imperialism in Souza's novel, *Fitzcarraldo* and *Mad Maria* portray similar concepts of development and models of capitalist economy. Unlike Herzog, however, Souza takes a critical (and sarcastic) look at the complicity between local elites and foreign investors in order to criticize their attempts to subject the Amazon rainforest to the demands of the capitalist market. In *Mad Maria,* Souza emphasizes the world of mud and toil that is the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré, and the material outcomes of this project to conceive development and progress in terms of messy and dysfunctional interactions between parties (including non-human parties) on the ground. While

[21] *Fitzcarraldo* is not the only movie produced by Herzog which takes place in the Amazon and performs the dynamics of the colonial encounter. For instance, in his 1972 historical film, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*, Herzog recounts the struggles of Spanish soldier Lope de Aguirre and other *conquistadores* soldiers down in the Amazon River and their search for the legendary city of gold known as *El Dorado.*

Souza's novel deconstructs positive representations of capitalism, including the ones that are skeptical about the redemptive power of capitalism, it also shows the limitations of simply dismantling the mentalities and discourses that reify economic development. Put another way, whether characters take a naïve or critical *attitude* toward capitalism and economic development, the novel shows that, in the end, there is no change on the ground.

The social, political, and environmental context in which Souza wrote *Mad Maria* shares significant parallels with the period depicted in the narrative and the important role entrepreneurs like Farquhar played at that time. The novel was written and published during the Brazilian dictatorship (1964-1985), a period in which the idea of economic development was widely promoted to sanction unsustainable projects of modernization in the country, most of which were financed with foreign capital (especially from the U.S.). It is not by coincidence, then, that Souza's generation faced a similar dilemma: the construction of the *Trasnamazônica* highway under the leadership of Emílio Médici in the 1970s. Aimed at integrating Brazil's northern states to the rest of the country as well as encouraging migration from the northeast by offering allegedly empty settlement lands for those trying to escape the long periods of drought in that region, the *Trasnamazônica* highway, like the Madeira-Mamoré, was built through incentives from international lending institutions. No less controversial than its previous projects, the *Trasnamazônica*, as Nigel J. H. Smith puts it, was another government-led project of development planned "with little or no understanding of the ecological and cultural conditions of [the] settlement area" (qtd. in Barbas-Rhoden 70). Like the Madeira-Mamoré and, before that, Church's failed project, the *Trasnamazônica* intensified the rates of deforestation in the Amazon and drew attention to the ongoing conflicts between business investors and the *povos da floresta* – the many Indigenous nations and local groups such as the *ribeirinhos, quilombolas* and

seringueiros who live in and around the Amazon. Failing to accomplish the high goals of development and progress that the Brazilian elites expected, the *Transamazônica* project was abandoned in 1974.[22] It is not farfetched to claim that Jair Bolsonaro's administration, particularly his open commitment to promote large-scale agriculture and economic projects in the Amazon, also shared significant similarities with both the Farquhar era depicted in *Mad Maria* and the historical context in which the novel was published, hence re-enacting some of the same ideals about capitalist development in the rainforest.

In his analysis of the mental and discursive structures that legitimize economic development in the "Third World," Mexican post-development activist Gustavo Esteva states that in counties that went through European colonization, the Eurocentric idea of economic development gave "global hegemony to a purely Western genealogy of history" which converted it into "a necessary and inevitable destiny" and "a unilinear way" toward the improvement of the "Third World" condition (4-5). According to Esteva, because "development" "cannot delink itself from the words with which it was formed – growth, evolution, maturation," this concept came to broadly characterize any "favourable change" or "step from the simple to the complex, from the inferior to the superior, from worse to better. The word indicates that one is doing well because one is advancing" (6). For the "underdeveloped," Esteva continues, "this positive meaning of the word 'development' – profoundly rooted after two centuries of its social construction – is a reminder of what they are not. It is a reminder of an undesirable, undignified condition. To escape from it, they need to be enslaved to others' experiences and dreams." (6).

[22] The building of the transcontinental railway and other railroads in Canada is also represented in Canadian literature and art, and occupies an important space in the national imaginary. These infrastructure projects are usually celebrated as heroic triumphs over a challenging geography, and are often connected to ideals of national unity and sovereignty, especially against the threat of the U.S. encroachment in the country. For example, E. J. Pratt's long poem *Towards the Last Spike*, published in 1952, provides a detailed (and nationalistic) portrayal of the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway from 1871 to 1885.

Even though, as Esteva reminds us, “development” lacks a precise denotation, this idea of a progressive temporality becomes entrenched in it, helping create a new way of belonging in time which excludes any practices that do fit in this future-oriented mindset. In *Mad Maria*, Souza frustrates the future-oriented and positive narrative of progress, and the common belief that economic development is crucial for colonized nations to achieve social and political fulfillment to show that, for the workers in Abunã and for the rainforest, the “necessary and inevitable destiny” that would lead to the amelioration of their “Third World” condition is very similar to disenfranchisement and destruction. In the novel, this positive narrative of improvement inspires and “enslaves” most of the characters into uncritically endorsing a project like the construction of the railway while it also naturalizes the environmental and human losses caused by it. In this way, Souza shows that like the railway itself, the capitalist ideals that motivate the novel’s main plot bring no redemption.

To represent the failures of economic development and demystify the discourses that reify capitalist economy, Souza portrays the project of building a railroad in the middle of the Brazilian “jungle” as an absurd enterprise, and the nonsense of this project is reflected in the novel’s pattern of organization. Structurally, *Mad Maria* alternates between two settings: the Abunã labour camp deep in the Amazon, in the northern state of Rondônia, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil’s capital until 1960. In Abunã, local and foreign workers, most notably Bajans, Germans, Chinese and Indians, face hardships and precarious working conditions to complete the railway project. In Rio de Janeiro, local government leaders and U.S. investors from the Farquhar group plot various political stratagems to make the railroad project profitable, including friendly investment concessions, legal favours, and bribery. By juxtaposing these two plots, Souza deconstructs the civilization versus barbarism binary, showing that these concepts share more

similarities than one might want to acknowledge. Furthermore, the novel is composed of five books randomly titled "Ocidente express," "Arbeit macht frei,"[23] "Um dia ainda vamos rir disso tudo," "Quando não puder resistir, relaxe e goze," and "As delícias da acumulação primitive"[24] ["Occident Express," Arbeit Macht Frei," "Someday We'll Probably Laugh at All This," "If you Can't Escape, Relax and Enjoy it," and "The Delights of Primitive Accumulation"].[25] Whereas the linearity and chronological arrangement of Souza's narrative is suitable for portraying such a straightforward and pragmatic project like the building of a railway, the disconnect between the titles of these parts, and between these parts and the novel as a whole reinforces Collier's blunt critique of the Madeira-Mamoré as a purposeless enterprise that "deverá levar um trem do nada a parte alguma, no meio do deserto" (143) ["is meant to take a train from no place to nowhere, out here in the middle of the jungle" (147)].

The ways that Souza describes the Abunã labour camp as a world of mud, chaos, and endless toil supports his portrayal of the Madeira-Mamoré as what Laura Barbas-Rhoden considers an exercise "in absurdity with a high human and environmental toll" (63). To some extent, then, *Mad Maria* feeds into the green hell metaphor[26] that authors such as Euclides da Cunha and Alberto Rangel use to describe the Amazon. Like Souto, the main character of Rangel's 1908 anthology *Inferno Verde: Cenas e Cenários do Amazonas* (*Green Hell: Scenes and Sceneries of the Amazon*), Brazilian and foreign workers in *Mad Maria* face numerous trials

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[23] "Work will set you free," as written over the gate at Auschwitz. As *Mad Maria* demonstrates, work is far from freeing the novel's characters.

[24] Here, Souza incorporates Karl Marx's expression and his way of discussing the initial appropriation of land and the dispossession of workers' means of production as colonial theft.

[25] All the translations of *Mad Maria* come from the English version of the novel translated by Thomas Colchie and published by Avon Books in 1985.

[26] This green hell metaphor is also evoked in Eli Roth's 2013 horror movie *The Green Inferno*, which recounts the struggles of U.S. student activists who travel to the Amazon in an attempt to "save" the rainforest, but end up crash-landing in the territory of an Amazon tribe they were trying to help. Problematically enough, their Indigenous hosts turn out to be violent "cannibals," and the movie ends up reinforcing longstanding stereotypical representations of the Indigenous cannibal "Other".

and hardships, and their journeys through the Brazilian jungle resemble, in fact, a descent to hell.[27] For instance, describing the aftermath of a severe thunderstorm that kills five workers, the narrator recounts that "a chuva transformou a frente de trabalho numa espécie de recanto do inferno, como se a natureza agisse impulsionada por forças anárquicas" (79) ["Collier's work zone had been transformed by a single thunderstorm into something resembling a sunken branch of hell, as if nature herself were impelled by satanical forces" (85)]. While workers try to rescue dead bodies from under the mud and the branches of fallen trees, the forces of nature prove to be merciless and destructive as if "nature" acted "por uma espécie de transe não premediatdo e sua fúria ascendia rapidamente até a destruição" (80) ["had wrought a species of unpremeditated havoc and her fury had swiftly resulted in wholesale calamity" (86)]. Pages further, when a group of German workers runs away from Abunã and gets lost in the forest, the narrator describes the jungle as another prison that, like the labour camp, "não oferecia nenhuma desculpa para eles viverem" (185) ["offered no excuse for life" (210)]. The narrator then continues: "a selva não deixava que penetrassem nela facilmente, resistia, interpunha obstáculos floridos e rendados que os golpes de machado ou terçado não causavam nenhuma espécie de dano, além da escuridão cada vez maior" (186) ["the jungle did not permit itself to be penetrated so easily. The whole forest resisted, interposing florid and lacy obstacles amazingly impervious to the blows of axes and machetes or yielding only to the additional darkness all around" (210)]. Contrary to the title of section two of *Mad Maria*, "Arbeit macht frei," work does not set one free. Like a lost herd, the workers try to break through the labyrinth of the jungle, but, in the end, the rainforest

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[27] The idea that life in the jungle resembles a descent to hell is also recurrent in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness.* In it, Marlow, the English sailor of Conrad's novel, conceives the jungle as a place where passions are let loose, and the unconscious takes over. The descent to hell, here, is the descent to the unknown structures of the mind and, not by coincidence, madness takes over Colonel Kurtz. The image of hell in Souza's novel, on the other hand, informs his critique of the ideals of development and civilization that are often endorsed by explorers like Colonel Kurtz.

seems to offer no way out. Even if, in the fight against the forces of the "jungle," men could only be defeated, Souza's portrayal at least challenges the arrogance and redemptive power of development discourses and its pretense that economic development would provide "a unilinear way" toward "a necessary and inevitable destiny."

Different from da Cunha and Rangel, however, Souza dismantles the man versus nature dichotomy inherent in their narratives to show that the hell of Abunã is not the result of the irrational forces of nature, but, in fact, a human creation. As the narrator describes it, Abunã resembles a "forced labour camp" where 150 workers, despite their different nationalities and races, look equally "maltrapilhos, abatidos, esqueléticos, decrépitos como condenados de um campo de trabalhos forçados" (18) ["ragged, exhausted, skeletal, and decrepit looking as any prisoners of a forced labor camp" (11)]. Here, *Mad Maria* transforms the railroad construction site into a place of loss where racial, cultural, and social differences are erased, and death becomes merely "casualidades, acidentes de trabalho, infortúnios congelados na cadeia do prosaico … parte do interminável elenco de pragas naturais que gravitavam em torno da praga maior, a praga humana" (12) ["happenstance, accidents of the trade, contingencies locked into a web of the prosaic … playing their own part in the interminable chain of natural calamities that gravitate around the direst one of all: the calamity of man" (4)]. As a place of chaos and death, the Abunã resembles a cenotaph that, like the clearcut in Fawcett's memoir, embodies the failure of one of the main signifiers of Western civilization: economic development. Explaining why he refuses to join the German fugitives, Jonathan, a Bajan worker who witnesses the deaths of many of his companions, asks Collier: "Como eu posso saber o que é necessário para sair daqui. O inferno não tem porta e cada dia que passa vou perdendo o sentido das coisas" (168) ["How'm I s'pose to know what way when you see de sort of place it comin' now. You 'member any door

goin' take me out of dis hellhole, coptin? Each day passes is a real mystery to me. I finish with dis arseness" (191)].[28] For Jonathan, it is not the jungle, but, rather, the unfair and inhumane working conditions that the Madeira-Mamoré project imposes on the workers that make human life meaningless. As these passages suggest, labour performed under ideals of economic development bring liberation neither to the environment nor to the working men.

The absurdity of the Madeira-Mamoré project and the ideals of development it endorses is also reflected in Souza's portrayal of the characters. As Laura Barbas-Rhoden contends, in *Mad Maria* workers lack agency, "civilized" men are consumed with an insatiable desire for power, women are oversexualized, and Indigenous peoples are depicted as infantile and impenetrable "Others." For Laura Barbas-Rhoden, characters in the novel "are exaggerated into parodies" so much so that "the exaggerated, parodying tone of the novel means these depictions cannot be taken as straightforward representations" (70-1). Even so, Barbas-Rhoden criticizes the novel's depiction of the Caripuna characters, claiming that there is "no real humanization of the indigenous Other in *Mad Maria*" and that the Caripuna become "simply a vehicle by which Souza criticizes Farquhar's enterprise" (75). Barbas-Rhoden statement is based on the fact that Joe Caripuna, one of the novel's few Indigenous characters, remains unseen and lives on the shadows of the *civilizados* (civilized) for most of *Mad Maria*. Souza's approach is not very different from Fawcett's in the sense that, in *Virtual Clearcut,* the Indigenous people who live in Prince George are only mentioned when Fawcett briefly glances over issues of alcoholism in his hometown. As the only survivor of his kin, Joe, the Caripuna character of Souza's novel, spends his days sitting on top of a tree, from where he watches the Abunã camp and tries to make sense

[28] It is important to note that in the Brazilian version of the novel, the pidgin is not used.

of the "white" idea of civilization.[29] After workers from the Madeira-Mamoré find Joe stealing small objects from their tents, they cut Joe's hands as a form of punishment.[30] The fact that Joe loses his hands, of course, stands as a metaphor for his fate and, by extension, the fate of the Caripuna and other Indigenous nations in the Amazon. By losing his hands, Joe becomes incapable of fighting against the *civilizados* to reclaim and protect his nation's territory. At the same time, an armless Joe is unable to assimilate into white civilization, as assimilation entails participating in capitalist production through labour. The only option for Joe, the narrator implies, is to become an exoticized commodity, "uma espécie de marionete manipulado" (315) ["a marionette invented and somehow manipulated" (356)]. It is not by accident, then, that after learning to play the piano with his feet, Joe is sent to the U.S. and becomes "property" of the "Barnum's American Museum, the renowned creation of Phineas T. Barnum which specialized in extravaganzas featuring freaks and curiosities" (384). Whereas Barbas-Rhoden regards Souza's representation of Joe as problematic and stereotypical, I read it as diagnostic of how development and progress in the Brazilian Amazon can only be accomplished through the appropriation of Indigenous bodies, cultures, and lands. Souza's point is clear: when racial, gender or ethnic minorities cannot fit into the narrative of development and help optimize natural resources, they become either obstacles that need to be removed or curiosities to be turned into exotic commodities, like Joe. This shared dispossession of bodies and territories in the context of predatory infrastructure projects such as the Madeira-Mamoré helps unveil the longstanding

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[29] Joe's character, in fact, resembles "Índio do Buraco," an Indigenous from the Tanaru nation in Rondônia who, being the last survivor of his kin, lived isolated in a hole dug in the Amazon rainforest for over thirty years. On August 23, 2022, he was found dead.

[30] Significantly, the mutilation of Joe's hands draws a parallel with Christopher Columbus' punishment of Indigenous peoples in the Americas. In *Brevísima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias (An Account Much Abbreviated of The Destruction of the Indies*), originally published in Spanish in 1552, Bartolomé de las Casas reports that Christopher Columbus would send Taino people over the age of fourteen to search for gold and, if they were unable to fill a hawk's bell with gold, they would be punished by having their hands cut off (9-10).

colonial logic of assimilation and extraction that regards land, bodies, culture, and knowledge simply as resources.

Particularly relevant in this context are the three main foreign characters in charge of the Madeira-Mamoré project: Percival Farquhar, the ambitious and unscrupulous foreign investor who broadly represents predatory and appropriative capitalism; Richard Finnegan, the naïve doctor who uncritically insists on the redeeming power of progress and development; and Master Collier, the disillusioned engineer who learns through experience about the inhumanity of capitalism and, consequently, adopts a more critical perspective about the promises of economic development. Souza's farcical tone and his portrayal of Farquhar, Finnegan, and Collier as parodies of the very discourses they represent work together to de-construct the "conceptual foundations" of development narratives, including the ones that are skeptical about economic development but still complicit in it. In the luxurious dwellings of the national palace in Rio de Janeiro, Farquhar manipulates Brazilian politicians to gain concessions, legal favors, and friendly investments in the country. For Farquhar, infrastructure enterprises such as the Madeira-Mamoré create ideal opportunities to tame the forces of nature, extract and maximize its resources, and bring prosperity to investors. For example, when Farquhar travels to Porto Velho to inaugurate the railroad, he overlooks the human and environmental losses brought by the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré by stating that from now on "todos os perigos desaparecerão, e o que é mais importante, os prejuízos não mais ocorrerão" (311) ["all such dangers will disappear, and, what is more important, losses will be virtually eliminated" (351)]. As the epitome of predatory capitalism, in fact, Farquhar believes that true loss happens only when the possibility of profit is taken away, that is, when the rainforest loses its value as a commodity. Reinforcing patronizing narratives of development that conceive economic growth as the only path toward social

evolution, Farquhar associates his efforts to optimize the resources of the Amazon with the redeeming power of U.S. civilizing missions in the "Third World." Echoing the heroic, resilient and hard-working settler of Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie*, Farquhar takes pride in the fact that he and his group "derrubamos árvores seculars, enfrentamos e civilizamos selvagens que mourejavam na idade da pedra, aqui estamos trabalhando com a disposição de dar até a nossa própria vida porque assim é o gênio americano" ["have felled millennial trees. We have confronted and civilized tribes of savages living like slaves in the Stone Age. We have even accepted the risk of human lives—thus, the perseverance of the American genius!" (352)]. Whether development becomes a tool to civilize the New World and reproduce the empire's social, economic, and political order, as in Crawford's long poem, or to optimize the rainforest and legitimize U.S. imperialism, as in Souza's novel, the rhetoric of heroism and redemption continues to be one of its main ideological camouflages.

To emphasize the artificiality of Farquhar's redemptive narrative, Souza turns Porto Velho, the capital of Rondônia state, into a utopic replica of the United States. Originally designed in 1911 to serve as the administrative headquarters of the Farquhar's company, Porto Velho, as the narrator remarks, becomes an artifice, a false reality of "trinta e seis mil e seiscentos quilômetros quadrados de terras concedidas ao grupo de Percival Farquhar" (299) ["36,600 square kilometers of territory granted to a cartel headed by Percival Farquhar" (337)]. Because Porto Velho is mostly inhabited by workers of the Farquhar's "cartel," English is the city's official language, and all national holidays and celebrations follow the U.S. calendar. As the narrator sarcastically puts it, Porto Velho is a very peculiar place where people celebrate Thanksgiving and Halloween while forgetting about *carnaval* and Brazilian Independence Day. At the city's entrance, the U.S. flag hovers "ao vento caprichoso do Madeira" ["in the capricious

winds that crisscrossed the Rio Madeira" (338)] while, on the background, the jungle stands like "uma muralha ao mesmo tempo desafiadora e humilhada" (300) ["a muzzled wall of green, routed but still defiant" (338)]. Although the Amazon on the background reminds us that Porto Velho is still located on the Brazilian territory, Souza implies that as a U.S. imperialist design, economic development cannot be accomplished without the loss of national sovereignty. The analogy between foreign investment and territorial disempowerment becomes clear toward the end of *Mad Maria* when Farquhar visits Porto Velho to launch the railroad and notices the U.S. flag at the entrance. After a long discussion with his employees to figure out whether they were in Brazilian or Bolivian territory, the Brazilian flag replaces the U.S. one. Yet, the flag is hung upside down, and its motto, *ordem e progresso* (yet another sign of how the idea of progress is ingrained in the national imaginary), is written in English, "Order and Progress" (344). The "American genius" and its patronizing mission in the "Third World," through Souza's skeptical perspective, can only but be represented as a farce. Interestingly, similar values of order and progress, as Northrop Frye points out, inform the Canadian imagination and its overvaluing of rationality to counter the threatening and menacing forces of the natural world.[31]

Santo Antônio, a small town located on the outskirts of Porto Velho, lays open the cracks in Farquhar's discourse of capitalist redemption to offer a realistic account of what predatory capitalism looks like for those who do not profit from it. Like Abunã, Santo Antônio is another Amazonian hell. At the city's entrance, visitors encounter the remains of the railroad Colonel Church tried to build a few years before the Madeira-Mamoré project began, hence anticipating

[31] In "Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*," Frye states that the Canadian imagination has developed "in its literature" through "[s]mall and isolated communities surrounded with a physical or psychological 'frontier'" (225). Confronted with "a huge, unthinking, menacing, and formidable physical setting," these communities, according to Frye, provided members with "distinctively humans values" and "compelled [them] to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together" (225). This pattern became known as Canada's "garrison mentality."

the doomed universe of this town. Sitting at a brothel, Finnegan notices that the only sex workers are two women of the Caripuna nation who only speak their language. When the doctor draws attention to the fact that there are no children in Santo Antônio, Collier explains that children cannot thrive there because Santo Antônio "não é lugar para ninguém nascer" (285) ["is no place to be born" (320)]. Like Church's project, Santo Antônio is a dead city abandoned to its own fate: "um monte fétido de lixo e meia centena de miseráveis" (261) ["a fetid heap of garbage and a few hundred beggars" (294)]. Inhabited by Indigenous sex workers, impoverished *seringueiros* (rubber trap workers) and other working-class groups, and rubber magnates who only go there to spend their money on liquor and sex, Santo Antônio is, as Laura Barbas-Rhoden describes it, the "place of the lost and the damned" (74). Once again, Souza's ideological message is clear: projects of economic development are built at the expense of the bodies and lives of Indigenous peoples and workers, for whom its promises of progress bring no redemption and no prospect of a future.

Experiencing firsthand the challenges of fulfilling the ideals of "order and progress" in the Abunã labour camp, Finnegan and Collier become the novel's most emblematic characters, opposing and complementing each other in different ways. Moving from the U.S. to work as a doctor in the Abunã camp, the young and idealistic Finnegan at first believes that economic progress and growth would enhance the social well-being of the "uncivilized" population of the Brazilian Amazon, but slowly realizes that life in the labour camp would only frustrate his beliefs in the power of progress. In contrast, Collier, the lead engineer of the Madeira-Mamoré Railway Company, is skeptical of naïve and redemptive narratives of development such as those Finnegan embraces. Originally born in England, Collier works at various infrastructure projects in India, Panama, and the U.S. After moving to the U.S., Collier also serves as an artillery

captain during the American Civil War. Although Finnegan describes Collier as an English immigrant who helped make "America," the novel makes it clear that Collier never abandons his English citizenship and, as the novel unfolds, the antagonism between the doctor and the engineer becomes the antagonism between the ideals of the New and Old World. For instance, trying to find similarities between him and Collier, and the world they represent, Finnegan states that both work in the name of progress. For Collier, however, progress means a "política de ladrões enganando países inteiros. Birmânia, Índia, África, Austrália, os nossos alvos" (290) ["pack of thieves in politician's clothes humbugging an entire nation: Burma, India, Africa, Australia—those are the targets" (249)]. Commenting on the outcomes of English and U.S. civilizing missions in the "New World," Collier states:

> É claro que estamos deixando a nossa contribuição. Ao lado da cadeia de tijolos, está a escola para formar funcionários nativos subalternos. Nós não nos esquecemos nem de ensinar os jovens nativos o futebol. E aprendem a beber uísque, principalmente a beber uísque. Enquanto isto, nos clubes dos pukka-Sahibs, nós repetimos ano após ano a mesma conversa. E enchemos a cara enquanto enriquecemos, enquanto destruímos tudo, enquanto espalhamos os nossos próprios vícios. (257-8)

> So, we're leaving our mark on the world! Yes, we make our little contributions. Next to the brick jail is the wooden schoolhouse to train native bureaucrats in subservience. And don't forget to teach the young babus a little soccer. And when they get older, to drink whiskey—especially to drink whiskey. Meanwhile, in the clubs of the pukkasahibs, year after year, we drag out the same impervious conversations about black swabs and inferior half-castes. All this, while we fill our faces and grow rich! While we infect the world with our own vices, destroying everything! (290)

According to Collier, U.S. values are not as different or as liberating as Finnegan would like to think. Through his perspective, English colonialism and U.S. imperialism re-enact similar ideals of development, establishing a continuum that renews and re-centers capitalist economy.

Instead of merely participating in the system he describes in such negative terms, Collier tries to use his cynical skepticism to antagonize and deconstruct Finnegan's idealism and naïve belief in economic growth. For instance, at the beginning of the novel, Collier introduces himself to Finnegan as the stubborn engineer who oversees the Abunã labour camp. When Finnegan compliments Collier for his stubbornness, saying that "é com teimosia e competência que a nossa civilização tem avançado" (23) [it's taken a certain stubbornness and know-how to bring our civilization this far along" (17)], Collier sarcastically questions the doctor's conception of civilization. As he replies, "Nossa civilização! Fazia muito tempo que eu não ouvia essa asneira" (23) ["Our civilization, is it! I haven't heard that kind of drivel since... our *civilization*, is it now?" (17, original emphasis)]. For Collier, life in the Amazon undermines any clear boundaries between civilization and barbarism. When the engineer challenges the doctor to explain his conception of civilization, Finnegan describes it as a necessary war that would ultimately enhance people's lives. As Finnegan concludes, these wars usually come with challenges of their own: "É o fardo do homem branco... nossa civilização avança através de desafios" (145) ["It's the white man's burden ... civilization can only progress through adversity" (163)]. Through Finnegan's perspective, of course, "white men" are the ones in charge of these missions and, thus, the ones who have the power to choose who will suffer and who will survive. Yet, unable to overcome the challenges of what he regards as a necessary war, he ends the novel feeling powerless and tired, profoundly tired, "pois só os bobos podiam se importar com alguma coisa além da arte de ficar vivo" ["since only fools could bother with anything beyond the art of

staying alive" (390)]. In the end, the antagonistic partnership between Collier and Finnegan suggests that Old and New World, idealism and skepticism, civilization and barbarism all lead to the same outcome: "uma grande área desmatada … [e uma] muralha de floresta rompida para que a ferrovia pudesse atravessá-la" (325) ["a vast deforested expanse and … a chink in the steep wall of jungle cleft by the railroad tracks" (368)]. Both Finnegan and Collier participate in this process and, since their different attitudes to the enabling narrative of progress and civilization still lead to economic and environmental exploitation, *Mad Maria* shows that simply dismantling concepts and ideologies, either through skepticism, idealism or irony does not necessarily lead to positive change. The novel's inability to imagine a "third way" beyond the choice between barbarity and civilization, skepticism and idealism, points to the urgent need of framing discussions about exploitative economic development beyond the realm of ideas and discourses.

Unlike *Virtual Clearcut,* issues of forest exploitation and deforestation are not central in Souza's narrative. Rather, the Amazon serves as background for Souza's critique of the undesirable social, economic, and political outcomes of the Madeira-Mamoré project. Throughout *Mad Maria,* Souza deconstructs capitalist hegemony by revealing the cracks in appropriative, idealistic, and ironic discourses of development and progress. As the novel suggests, the outcome of heroic and evolutionary narratives of economic growth can only be human and environmental destruction at the hands of ambitious investors and narcissistic politicians who know little to nothing about regions such as the Amazon and their inhabitants. Foregrounding the chaotic and destructive universe of the Abunã labour camp, the novel questions the idea that capitalist progress and development would help Brazil escape the undesirable condition of underdevelopment to promote social improvement and political sovereignty across the nation. Like *Virtual Clearcut*, though, *Mad Maria* shows the need for

opening mental, discursive and, more importantly, material spaces for alternative conceptions of economic development. As the narrator writes in the Foreword, “Aquilo que o leitor julgar familiar, não estará enganado, o capitalismo não tem vergonha de se repetir” (11) [“wherever the reader judges something to be familiar, he is probably not mistaken. Capitalism has seldom been ashamed to repeat itself” (n.d.)]. To some extent, this comment points toward capitalism’s capacity to regenerate and repeat itself, establishing it as a powerful and self-reproducing structure for which there is no alternative. Nevertheless, given the novel’s sarcastic bent and the historical context in which *Mad Maria* was published, Souza’s effort to historicize the repeatability of capitalism, and more precisely the destructive kind of capitalism that the novel portrays, could function, instead, as a call for change: one that depends on breaking with the mentalities, discourses and, more importantly, actions that continue to reify predatory economic development.

Whereas in *Mad Maria* issues of deforestation serve as backdrop for his social and economic critique, in *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* (*Lost World II: The End of the Third World*) Souza brings the Amazon rainforest to the forefront of his discussion. Published in 1990, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* examines the mental and discursive production of “Third World” identity as dependent to question “First World” interventions in the rainforest and attempts to stop environmental exploitation in the Amazon. In this sense, Souza’s novel echoes some of Sachs’ and Gibson and Graham’s ideas about the production of subjectivity under capitalist economy. In his analysis of development as a “mental structure,” Sachs contends that hegemonic ideas of economic development become not only an imposition from the West, but also “a basis for identity” in the “Third World” (ix), hence informing the ways people think, feel, and behave. In other words, development becomes an ideology. Hoping to participate in industrial modernity

and achieve social standards like the ones of developed nations, countries in the South endorse development as a goal and, therefore, give a global sense of identity to this concept. From a discursive perspective, Gibson and Graham insist that development not only informs "Third World" identity but, more importantly, helps produce "Third World" identity as dependent and inferior. As they state, "when noncapitalist forms are represented as backward, stagnant, traditional, as opposed to the modern, growth-oriented, and dynamic capitalist economy, development is defined as crucial to eliminate or transform noncapitalist practices, subjecting them to capitalism" (*The End of Capitalism* 41). The problem, for Gibson and Graham, is that "capitalocentric" discourses do not allow for the coexistence or emergence of alternative subject positions outside of capitalism. For the authors, therefore, creating a "language of economic difference" is importance because it has the "potential to also offer new subject positions and prompt new subjective identifications" (*A Postcapitalist Politics* xxxv). In *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo,* Souza discusses the creation of "Third World" subjectivity both in the context of capitalism and asymmetrical forms of cultural contact like colonialism to re-examine the dynamics of knowledge production in colonized nations like Brazil and attempt to open space for subject positions and knowledge systems outside the discourses and practices of Eurocentric thought.

The "end of the Third World" as it appears in the title of Souza's novel refers to an economic plan proposed by Pietro Pietra Jr., one of the novel's characters, which consists of building a hydroelectric dam in the Amazon River. Pietra Jr. believes that his project would bring the end poverty in the country, and, consequently, the end of the "Third World" (here reduced to poverty). More broadly, the "end of the Third World" also relates to Souza's attempt to break with previous representations of "Third World" identity. His title is indeed suggestive.

In *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, Souza offers a sarcastic sequel to Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, a science fiction and imaginary travelogue published in 1912. In Doyle's novel, journalist E.D. Malone volunteers to accompany legendary Professor Challenger, the "Columbus of science who has discovered a lost world" (51), in an expedition to the Amazon. The trip, in fact, is motivated by a dispute between Professor Challenger and Professor Summerlee, who doubts Professor Challenger's claims to have discovered prehistoric animals in the South American jungle. To substantiate his findings, Professor Challenger, together with his academic antagonist, the journalist Malone, and an aristocrat named Lord John Roxton, embarks on an adventure in the Amazon. Through their Eurocentric and Edwardian lenses, these characters transform the rainforest into a place of marvel, enchantment, and peril – a lost world of dinosaurs and uncivilized men these adventurers try to discover and explain to European society and scientific community. As an exploration and travel narrative, *The Lost World* conforms to the conventions of the genre: it narrates a journey through an impenetrable and unexplored territory, the Amazon jungle; it portrays the different trials and hardships white Eurocentric men face in this unknown and threatening land, including encounters with what they perceived as uncivilized and cannibal Indigenous groups; and it depicts nature as a malevolent and menacing entity that must be subsumed. In this sense, Doyle's novel feeds into the longstanding imaginary of the Amazon as an exotic and mysterious frontier and a land without "History" (but with plenty of "primitive," pre-history).

In turn, Souza offers a counter-discourse to Doyle's foreign gaze to draw attention to the social, economic, and environmental problems of the region. Reinforcing the "empire writes back" trope of postcolonial literature as Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin define it, Souza's novel engages with imperial ("First World") discourses not by writing for the metropole,

but, rather, writing against the assumptions of the imperial center. As in Doyle's narrative, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* also starts with an interview. The reporter, in this case, is Virginia Challenger, an English journalist for *BBC* who spends a few days in Manaus, the capital of the Amazonas state, to write an article about underdevelopment in Brazil's northern region. As part of her mission, Virginia Challenger interviews the narrator, presumably a Brazilian writer from Manaus, to find out details about his upcoming novel and his perspectives on the economic struggles of his city. Embarrassed to reveal that he is unable to write at the moment, the narrator makes up that he is working on a continuation of Doyle's *The Lost World.* In his version, Professor Challenger's granddaughter, Jane Amazon Challenger, who also works as a journalist in England, travels to the Brazilian jungle and discovers "a collection of live fossils" as "ferocious" as those her grandfather once found (8).[32] These "live fossils" are not dinosaurs, but the vestiges of classic capitalism, a "species" that, according to Jane, had been extinct in England since the eighteenth century. Intrigued by the eccentricities of the lost/New World, Jane organizes a trip to the Amazon together with her leftist co-worker Lester and her boss Sir Delamare to prove that her discoveries are real. While in the Amazon, Jane and her colleagues go through several fantastical trials, including encounters with "classic" capitalist entrepreneurs, mythical Indigenous characters, and Marxist revolutionaries. The novel then ends with a business conference bringing together foreign and national specialists and investors interested in discussing and implementing economic development projects in the Amazon. The ways that Souza represents "classic" capitalism as remnant of an economic order which no longer exists reinforces Imre Szeman's claim that different capitalist temporalities co-exist with contemporary (global) capitalism. As Szeman puts it, neoliberal capitalism projects the image "of a world that

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[32] All the translations of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* come from the English version of the novel translated by Lana Santamaria and published by Avon Books in 1993.

is *isochronic*, a world in which everything happens at the same time and thus in which the problems and contradictions produced by an earlier, imperialist capitalism are done away with" (191, original emphasis). The problem, for Szeman, is that this illusion prevents us from realizing the deepening divides between "North and South," "West and the Rest," and how they are a continuation of previous capitalist systems. In *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, Souza blurs the lines between the world of the narrator and the universe of his presumed novel to deconstruct this illusion and, therefore, lay open the problems and contradictions of previous forms of capitalism.

This clash of temporalities, alongside the farcical tone of the novel, also supports a reading of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* as a "carnivalesque" novel. My use of the "carnivalesque," here, refers to Mikhail Bakhtin's[33] use of this term to define subversive forms of writing which destabilize power structures and assumptions of dominant literary discourses through the use of humour, satire, irony and the grotesque. As Bakhtin explains, the carnivalesque was born with François Rabelais out of the clash of epistemologies brought about by the age of exploration. Building on the carnival festivities of medieval Europe, Bakhtin conceives the carnival as a collective and participatory space where hierarchies are temporarily reversed, and order and rules are suspended. In his novel, Souza plays around with different temporalities and subversions of the order in order to deconstruct foreign perspectives and representations of the Amazon, and, thus, draw attention to the rainforest as a material entity. As Brazilian scholar Simone de Souza Lima argues, the Amazon is produced as a discursive category through the imposition and interaction of different signifiers, many of which originate from foreign discourses. As such, the rainforest becomes a fluid concept that can be appropriated and manipulated to serve various aesthetic, ideological and epistemological purposes. The problem, according to Lima, is that

[33] The concept of the carnivalesque was first explained in Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* and further developed in *Rabelais and His World*.

these longstanding images are often disconnected from the immediate realities and embodied experiences of local Amazonian groups. As the narrator of Souza's novel puts it, discourses from elsewhere not only stigmatize the region and legitimize exploitative practices, but also alienate the locals, turning them into foreigners in their own land, lost wanderers, "[nativos] no colapso da familiaridade" (30) ["natives in the midst of a collapse of familiarity" (18)]. Rather than a foreign and alienating entity created elsewhere, the Amazon that Souza represents in *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* becomes a sign of discursive exhaustion that needs to be reinvented at a local level. Like a palimpsest, a collage, or a *colcha de retalhos* (patchwork quilt), Souza's novel interacts with and dismantles previous discourses and stereotypes about the Amazon to deconstruct how the rainforest is conceived in the national and global imaginary. Unable to find representations that embody the material realities of the Amazon, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* ultimately calls for a "saber universal de uso localizado" (42), that is, a kind of understanding of the Amazon that can only be achieved through local practices, knowledges and lived experiences (*vivência*). This re-signification, Souza suggests, is crucial to encourage material transformations on the ground.

To re-write the rainforest and open space for localized mental, discursive, and subject positions, Souza emphasizes the need for redefining (neo)colonial contact. For instance, in his interview with the *BBC* reporter, the narrator comments on the inequalities of international relations, particularly those between the "First" and "Third World," to argue that that the "true" nature of the Amazon is getting lost because of these encounters. As he states:

> De um lado, o afã de reconhecer ali uma vertigem, um lugar que é fascinante porque o primitivo, nestes tempos de conservacionismo e dúvidas quanto ao conceito de progresso, mostra-se quase sagrado, negação e mistério, um convite ao pudor bem

> distante da antiga atração pela aventura. Enquanto do outro lado, onde estamos nós, os observados, o nosso papel é de reconhecer este esforço de solidariedade, manifestando, através das nossas bocas de probres, a fragilidade dos pobres. (42)

> On the one hand, there is the desire to experience a thrill, a fascinating place, because primitivism, in these times of environmental concerns and doubts concerning the concept of progress, is regarded as almost sacred, a negation and mystery, an invitation to a zeal far removed from the age-old attraction of adventure. And on the other hand, where we, the ones who are observed, find ourselves, our role is to recognize their efforts to show solidarity, attesting, in our poor man's way, to the fragility of the poor. (31)

For the narrator, (neo)colonial contact is hegemonically conceived as a one-way system that manipulates and categorizes the colonized (observed) to feed the fantasies of the colonizer (observer). Alienating and annihilating, the gaze of the "observer" forces the "observed" into a pre-conceived narrative of solidarity and redemption that denies their agency and ignores their lived experiences and knowledges, particularly those related to forestry practices. By associating primitivism and conservation, moreover, these fantasies reinforce a romantic ecology rhetoric that, similar to Fawcett's first descriptions of the clearcut, transforms complex forest landscapes such as the Amazon into a mysterious and sacred space that must be kept from human intervention. Refusing the either/or dynamics of cross-cultural interactions, the narrator calls for "a new kind of contact" (32) that would allow the observed to move beyond that position of mere acceptance and subjection, or resentful exclusion.

As longstanding stereotypes of the Amazon often represent the rainforest as an embodiment of the social and economic problems of underdeveloped nations in South America,

Souza also deconstructs foreign and national discourses about "Third World" poverty. For instance, as a declared Marxist, Jane's co-worker, Lester, is aware of the unattended effects of capitalism and progress, especially regarding social inequality and unfair distribution of wealth. Yet, when trying to understand why Jane would want to visit the Amazon, Lester reduces underdeveloped nations like Brazil to troubled corners of the world plagued by social and economic disenfranchisement. For him, the Amazon is nothing more than "criancinhas morendo de fome ou violações dos direitos humanos. O que haveria por lá, além da monumental dívida externa ...?" (51) ["children dying of hunger, or violations of human rights. What would there be there, aside from a monumental external debt …?" (38)]. In a conversation with Jane, one of the endorsers of classic capitalism in Brazil, Pietra Jr.[34] justifies his economic achievements as signs of his determination to overcome the challenges of the region "para desbravar fronteiras, para tirar riquezas de uma terra difícil e perigosa onde os que o precederam viviam conformados com suas próprias limitações" (250) ["to tame the wilderness, to extract the riches from a difficult and dangerous land where those who had preceded him were resigned to their own limitations" (218)]. For Pietra Jr., the subjugation and economic exploitation of Brazil's north are a result of the apathy and conformity he perceives in the local people. Despite their ideological oppositions, Lester and Pietra Jr. both feed into discourses of "Third World" underdevelopment as an undignified condition. At the same time, Pietra Jr.'s perspective also reinforces the connection between idleness and poverty that informs national discussions about underdevelopment in Brazil's north.

[34] Here, Souza makes an intertext with Mário de Andrade's 1928 novel *Macunaíma*, one of the foundational texts of Brazilian modernism which has a character named Venceslau Pietro Pietra. Andrade's narrative follows the story of Macunaíma, "a hero without character" born in the Amazon who uses his shape-shifting abilities to travel to São Paulo in search of the amulet he lost (a *muiraquitã*). *Macunaíma* embodies Andrade's attempt to represent a pan-Brazilian ("indigenous" or "indigenized") culture. Interestingly, in the novel Venceslau Pietro Pietra is a cannibalistic Peruvian giant and businessman who serves as one of its main antagonists.

As in *Mad Maria,* in *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* Souza also juxtaposes antagonistic characters to reveal the cracks and similarities in their discourses. In this case, he contrasts Pietra Jr., the personification of appropriative capitalism, and Jane, the socially and politically minded redeemer. For instance, in a surreal sexual scene between Jane and Pietra Jr., which possibly Jane has dreamed, the narrator brings together the "Old" and "New World" to reveal the impossibility of finding definitive explanations to the problem of underdevelopment and deforestation in the Amazon. In an evocative (and long) passage with gothic undertones, the narrator describes their sexual encounter:

> Relâmpagos iluminando ruínas, queimadas rubras que deviam durar semanas e atingir milhões de hectares, rios assoreados e toldados pelo mercúrio, tórridos areais ao sol dos desmatamentos, árvores afogadas exalando vapores tóxicos, pestilências subindo como nuvens de insetos. E milhões de mortos a espreitar, em cada relâmpago, os súditos do reino de Pietra Jr., o deus dos destroços, o senhor dos escombros, que ela ousara perturbar. E os mortos abriam as bocas desdentadas e por elas estrondavam centenas de línguas, uma algaravia tremenda que ensurdecia, mais estridente e desesperada que o crepitar dos raios a pulsar sobre o corpo translúcido de abominação que se retorcia na cama. (152)

> Flashes of lightning illuminating destroyed lands, crimson blazes that must have lasted weeks and reached millions of hectares, rivers stopped up with mercury-soaked silt and mud, stretches of torrid, sandy land exposed to the sun by deforestation, drowned trees exuding toxic vapors, pestilence rising like clouds of insects. And with every flash of lightning, a glance at the millions of dead people, the subjects of the kingdom of the god of desolation, Pietra Jr., the lord of destruction whom Jane had dared to disturb. And the

> cadavers opened their toothless mouths, and out of them came hundreds of tongues, sounding like a tremendous deafening clamor, more strident and desperate than the crackle of the lightning coming into throbs over the translucent body of the abomination that was contorting on the hotel bed. (131)

While travel narratives such as Doyle's *The Lost World* use gothic elements to depict the threatening and mysterious qualities of nature, the narrator uses it here to illuminate the contradictions and environmental outcomes of capitalist development. Through this perspective, Pietra Jr., the phallic king of capitalism, is nothing more than the torturer of the rainforest and the god of decaying matter: the lichens, moss, fungi, rotting forest leaves, and dead people who are unable to speak their languages. It is not by coincidence, then, that at the end of this scene, Pietra Jr.'s body disintegrates, and he turns into a slug. Rather than a utopic world of social well-being and material achievement, Pietra Jr.'s capitalist kingdom can only reveal misery and chaos. Here, Souza turns the carnivalesque universe of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* into a demonic and almost pathological event.

In the collision of their bodies during this chaotic sexual scene, Jane and Pietra Jr. struggle to understand what they see as the paradoxes of "Third World" identity. While exploitation and underdevelopment are, according to Jane, the defining aspects of life in the "Third World," Pietra Jr. urges her to move beyond oversimplified explanations to recognize that this is "uma terra repleta de pontos obscuros, de coisas enigmáticas, de intricadas relações" (156) ["a land replete with obscure points, enigmatic things, complex relations" (135)]. The problem, for Pietra Jr., is that Jane's perspective as an outsider limits her understanding and delegitimizes any claims she might make about underdeveloped nations. However, because the alienating and annihilating logic of colonialism is internalized and too often informs "Third World" mentality,

forcing people to accept imposture and misrepresentation as forms of identity, Pietra Jr. is also unable to understand "Third World" identity. As he states at the end of his conversation with Jane, "Quando um holocausto dura quinhentos anos, a dor se congela. Há uma espécie de vacância que se instala na alma, que nos tumultua a leseira, que se alimenta de possibilidades, de quimeras, mas que no fim apenas embrulha a vida numa mortalha de desilusão" (163) ["When a holocaust lasts five hundred years, the pain freezes. There is a type of vacancy that installs itself in the soul, that drives us to an insipid laziness, that feeds on possibilities, on daydreams, but that in the end only wraps our lives up in a shroud of disillusionment" (141)]. As a foreigner, Jane cannot understand the "Third World" because the "Third World" represents nothing more than the (failed) idealized projections of the "First World." Her unconscious sexual desires for Pietra Jr., in this case, could be read as the narcissistic desire for an ideal that was supposed to be an extension of the original ("First World"), but turned out being something else, an imposture, a failure ("Third World"). As a Brazilian from a different state, nevertheless, Pietra Jr. cannot understand the "Third World" either because the "Third World" represents nothing more that the remains of an imposed "First World" imaginary. In the end, neither Jane's nor Pietra Jr.'s views are validated. Working by negation and counterpoint, Souza implies that "First" and "Third World" perspectives are part of the same discursive apparatus, hence bringing us back to the idea that deconstructing mindsets, concepts, and ideologies requires, first, a redefinition of the dynamics of cross-cultural contact.

By engaging with previous representations of the rainforest, Souza implies that stereotypical and oxymoronic conceptions of the Amazon not only legitimize predatory practices, but also prevent us from effectively imagining and addressing deforestation and resource exploitation. For example, in her first visit to Manaus, Jane encounters a very different

image of the forest than what both her grandfather and father had passed on to her. Instead of gigantic trees and wide mushrooms that could give refuge to little girls who got lost in the forest, Jane sees "um feio desmatamento, conjuntos habitacionais e casebres miseráveis onde outros nativos acenavam para o ônibus com uma alegria tímida" (93) ["ugly cleared areas, groups of houses and miserable huts … from [where] natives waved at the bus with a timid cheerfulness" (76)]. Although Jane was aware of deforestation practices in the Amazon, she was not concerned about it, in part because she never had a realistic idea of the rainforest. To Jane, in other words, "a selva sempre seria maior que os seus depredadores, já que se acostumara a ouvir as exuberantes descrições sobre aquelas florestas, ali naquela mesma biblioteca, nos serões de inverno, quando o pai e o avô se digladiavam para ver quem impressionava mais as crianças" (93) ["the jungle would always be greater than the depredators, having listened as a child to the profuse descriptions of those forests, in the summer gatherings in that same library, when her father and grandfather would vie each other to see who could impress the children more with their stories" (76)]. This contrast between the discursive and the material existence of the rainforest forces Jane to realize that the Amazon is no longer the mysterious frontier in need of being discovered and explained through Eurocentric systems of thought. Instead, it is a place with its own particularities and an ongoing history of social, economic, environmental, and epistemic exploitation that her foreign gaze prevents her from understanding.

Through its undoing of literary discourses and representations of the rainforest, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* also questions simplistic solutions to environmental exploitation in the Amazon. For example, at some point in the novel, the narrator tells an anecdote about *Irmãos do Tajá* [Brothers of Tajá], a group of activists from the southern states of Brazil who appropriate different elements of Indigenous cultures to promote environmental consciousness and

sustainability in the Amazon. The problem, for the narrator, is that these middle-upper class militants often forget about their privileged position and complicity with colonialism and capitalist exploitation. Commenting on TV artists who suddenly become environmental activists after drinking from Amazonian plants, or on "místicos renascidos" ["born-again mystics"] who claim that the energy of the jungle has a transformative power, the narrator states that during his walks through the rainforest, "a única coisa que vi com energia, e não exatamente rolando, mas voando e rastejando, foram os milhões de insetos que infestam a selva" (174) ["the only thing that I saw with any energy, and it wasn't exactly whirling, more like flying and crawling, was the millions of insects that infest the jungle" (152)]. In trying to offer solidarity and think of conservation practices that would save the rainforest, these urban middle-class activists perpetuate a romanticized image of the Amazon that, throughout *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo,* the narrator tries to demystify. Just as the friendly English people whose feelings of solidarity and commiseration are as consistent as "bolhas de sabão" (33) ["soap bubbles" (20)], these artists and activists are also disconnected from the realities of the Amazon. As such, they lack what the narrator defines as the kind of understanding of the Amazon that can only be achieved through local knowledge and *vivência*, lived experiences. Representing more than a closed-off localism, Souza's emphasis on *vivência* reflects his attempt to move away from the alienating and annihilating perspectives of foreigners in order to achieve discursive and epistemic liberation, and bottom-up material transformations. As such, Souza's definition of *vivência* echoes what Boaventura de Souza Santos, in his comments about Martí's concept of Nuestra América, described as a "contextualized and situated universalism" that comes from the "bottom" (*Epistemologies of the South* 52).

Particularly relevant, here, is the appearance of the twins Ceuci and Iaci at the end of the narrative. Building on the myth of the *Icamiabas* (also *Ykamiabas*), the group of female Indigenous warriors who maintained a matriarchal system of governance in the region before the European invasion, Ceuci and Iaci draw attention to the complexities of environmental issues in the Amazon. In a conversation with Pietra Jr., for example, the twins urge him to stop the careless exploitation of the rainforest because it draws too much attention to the Amazon and, in turn, creates pity:

> – Tudo o que queremos é que tenham comedimento.
>
> – Não é pedir demais.
>
> – Façam o que achar melhor, mas com um certo decoro.
>
> – Evitem o exagero para não gerar escândalo.
>
> – Porque atrás do escândalo vem a piedade.
>
> – E a piedade costuma atrair novos intrusos.
>
> – Daqueles intrusos mais inconvenientes.
>
> – Extremamente irritantes.
>
> – Porque se julgam carregados de razão.
>
> – Se consideram justos.
>
> – E querem nos enfiar a solidariedade deles goela abaixo.
>
> – O que nos leva às vezes a preferir a exploração a certas solidariedades. (255-6)

> – All that we ask is that you use restraint.
>
> – That's not asking so much.
>
> – Do what you must, but with a certain propriety.
>
> – Avoid excess so as not to create scandal.

– Because in the wake of scandal comes pity.

– And pity usually attracts more intruders.

– The most inconvenient kinds of intruders.

– Extremely irritating intruders.

– Because they believe they are the bearers of truth.

– And they want to align themselves with us all the way.

– Which makes us prefer exploitation to certain kinds of solidarity. (223)

Here, Souza implies that "purist" solutions to deforestation and environmental exploitation in the Amazon are naïve and unlikely to succeed. Like Fawcett, he refuses to conceive forest use simply as abuse to urge us to "use restraint," or, to borrow Fawcett's words, to "improve the quality of the marks we make" (131). As this passage shows, the problem, for Ceuci and Iaci, is that the excessive and destructive "marks" left by men like Pietra Jr. can only lead to patronizing solidarity. Once again, the novel points to the need of resisting foreign discourses about the Amazon by questioning the commitment of "First World" nations to solve issues deforestation and underdevelopment in the country. Here, phrases like "bearers of the truth" and "align themselves with us all the way" point to the kind of cultural contact that Souza problematizes: one based on the imposition of worldviews and epistemologies. In this sense, solidarity, for the twins, is very similar to epistemic and political disenfranchisement. Through a presumably neutral and, yet, counter-ideological perspective, Ceuci and Iaci seek to overcome the resentment that came to characterize "Third World" identity to reinvent an Amazon that is neither paralyzed by the uses and abuses of men like Pietra Jr., nor enclosed in a conservation bubble.

The farcical universe of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* disintegrates during a business conference to discuss economic development in the Amazon. This meeting, in fact, is a re-

enactment of *Operação Amazônia*, a nine-day conference that took place in 1966 on board of the *Rosa da Fonseca* ship. In tandem with the military government's developmentalist agenda, the goal of *Operação Amazônia* was to create tax incentives to attract private capital and investment in Brazil's north; to encourage land occupation and extension of agricultural areas in the Amazon; and to expand road infrastructure to make the two previous strategies feasible.[35] For the narrator of Souza's novel, however, *Operação Amazônia* was nothing more than an attempt to "rasgar a selva com estradas, derrubar os obstáculos ao progresso" (376) ["rip through the jungle with highways, tear down the obstacles to progress" (337)]. On board of the *Leviatã*, the boat where the business meeting takes place in *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, a sequence of events that involves hallucinations, the appearance of Karl Marx, an attempted terrorist attack, heated debates, fear, and laughter offers a metaphor for how discussions about environmental exploitation and economic development usually end. During this meeting, the *Jihad Jívaros*, a group of Marxist activists, plans a revolution whose goal is to explode the ship unless all white, black and *mulato* people leave the Amazon, including themselves. For commander Azancoth, the leader of the *Jívaros*, this attack would free the people of the forest and facilitate "a reconquista do Rio Amazonas pelos nativos das barrancas" (399) ["the reconquest of the Amazon River by the native peoples of the riverbanks" (358)]. His solution ignores the fact that the Amazon rainforest is inhabited by different local groups like various Indigenous nations, *cablocos* (mixed Indigenous and European ancestry), *quilombolas* (Afro-Brazilians living in settlements

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[35] Under the government of President Castelo Branco, *Operação Amazônia* was created to determine ways to implement capitalist development in the region by bringing together the nationalist discourse of militarism, the demands for regional development in the Amazon by a political elite, and the need to facilitate transnational capital and investments in Brazil's north. As Odenei de Souza Ribeiro and Rozana Correa Santos point out, *Operação Amazônia* helped create two important government entities that would provide financial and tax incentives for potential businesspeople and investors interested in industrial, commercial, and agricultural projects in the Amazon: the *Superintendência do Desenvolvimento da Amazônia* (SUDAM) [Superintendency for the Development of the Amazon] and *Superintendência da Zona Franca de Manaus* (SUFRAMA) [Manaus Free Trade Zone Superintendence] (18).

established by runway slaves), *ribeirinhos* (communities that live on the edges of the Amazon River), *seringueiros* (rubber tree trappers), *nordestinos* (northeast migrants) and Afro-descendants. Furthermore, the separatist agenda of the *Jívaros* prevents any possibility of collaboration and dialogue that could lead to an altered form of cultural contact. Repeating the jargons and terminologies of Marxist theory, the *Jívaros* turn the Amazonian question into a theoretical and ideological discussion about extractivism, global market economy and distribution of labour and wealth that is far from Souza's call for an understanding of the Amazon that can only be achieved through local knowledges and embodied experiences.

An argument between the *Jívaros* and the novel's Indigenous characters lays open the limitations of commander Azancoth's Marxist agenda. Identifying themselves as victims of an economic system whereby "a produção é mantida a custa de abusos sociais" (397) ["production is maintained at the cost of social neglect" (356)], the *Jívaros* imply that although social revolution could not change the course of "History" and force the oppressors to return what was taken from the oppressed, it could pluralize history and invite more transformative perspectives. To the overall argument of commander Azancoth, one of the Tikuna characters replies: "Mas o que foi que tiraram de vocês? Se foram vocês que chegaram aqui e cortaram nosso caminho. Como podem agora reconhecer nos espoliados a natureza de suas angústias?" (395) ["But what was taken from you? If you were the ones who arrived here and cut off our path, how can you hope to understand the nature of the anguish of those who were plundered" (354)]. The Marxist discourse of solidarity, here, becomes a fallacy that disguises the complicity of the *Jívaros* in maintaining the very system of privilege they try to subvert at the same time that it reduces an Indigenous/colonized perspective to a class-based problem. As Ceuci, Iaci and the Tikuna characters point out, by rushing into appropriating an oppressed identity in search of solidarity,

the *Jívaros* fail to recognize their own participation in colonial, imperial and extractivist projects such as those planned for the rainforest. In this sense, their revolution can only be laughed at and, not by coincidence, the novel ends with a big, loud, and contagious laugh:

> Não se sabe se foi o efeito do gás, mas todo o camarote se transformou numa sonora gargalhada, que foi se unir à gargalhada geral, uníssona e majestosa … despertando a curiosidade dos ribeirinhos, dos pescadores, dos moleques de beiço roxo de frio que nadavam nas águas amarelas, das lavadeiras, dos viradores de tartarugas, dos juteiros, dos plantadores da várzea, enfim, aquela gente filha do ciclo das águas. (401)
>
> It's not known if it was the effects of the gas, but the whole cabin was transformed into sonorous laughter, which joined the larger general guffaw, united and majestic, boisterous like the eddy of that magnificent ship that sailed down the Amazon River, arousing the curiosity of the riverbank dwellers, the fishermen, the young, red-faced boys swimming in the yellow river water, the wash-women, turtle hunters, the jute gatherers, the lowland planters, in short, all those people who are children of the Amazon River. (360-1)

Whether solutions to deforestation and underdevelopment are thought by "oppressors" such as Pietra Jr. and the other businessmen on board of *Leviatã*, or by self-proclaimed "oppressed" such as the *Jívaros*, they are not feasible as most of these solutions are predicated upon the alienating and foreign gaze of writers, scholars and entrepreneurs who lack localized knowledge about the rainforest and Brazil's north. Souza's message here is clear: the "children of the Amazon River" are still excluded from these discussions; they are mere spectators who watch the *Leviatã* with curiosity.

The narrator's attempt to offer a sequel to Doyle's narrative ends with the sinking of the *Leviatã,* an act that reflects Souza's own sinking of the discourses and stereotypes of the Amazon that continue to appropriate, objectify, and romanticize the rainforest. Through a carnivalesque and demystified narrative, Souza shows that the Amazonian world is a palimpsest, a *colcha de retalhos*, a complex discursive entity made of irreconcilable universes and perspectives. Like magicians pulling objects out of their top hat, the cynical narrator of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* pulls out fragments of these longstanding discourses to demonstrate that there is no world to be found. Summoning the distant and remote voices that have stigmatized the region, the narrator deconstructs them in a (intentionally) failed attempt to create his own version of the Amazon. At the end of Souza's novel, the "adventures, epics, small dramas, all these creations millennially cultivated" are "struck down in a single blow," "nearly all of them on the way to becoming silenced" (131-2). The sense of discursive exhaustion that comes from the chaotic universe of *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* implies the urgency for epistemic liberation, which here means undoing paralyzing and stereotypical discursive constructions to start thinking about more grounded perspectives of the Amazon.

In different ways, *Virtual Clearcut, Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* examine the material and environmental outcomes of development practices in order to deconstruct common tropes of capitalist representation. Fawcett, for example, draws a parallel between the clearcut in the Bowron River valley and the fracturing of social and cultural life in Prince George to unveil global capitalism's failed promises of collective wellbeing and, thus, call for a redefined idea of prosperity and growth. Souza's satirical account of the Madeira-Mamoré exposes the chaotic and destructive universe of the Abunã labour camp to counter the longstanding idea that capitalist progress in the Amazon would help Brazil escape the

undesirable condition of social and economic underdevelopment. Finally, *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* combines environmental critique with a discussion about the colonial production of "Third World" identity so as to invite new perspectives and conceptualizations about the rainforest. These texts demonstrate that instead of universal and total structures that are simply determined and enacted, development and progress are, in fact, concepts that are created and reified to achieve particular goals. Whether they control social and economic life in resource towns such as Prince George, are summoned up to justify destructive infrastructure projects such as the Madeira-Mamoré, or inform discussions about poverty and deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon, narratives of development and progress fail to describe what actually happens on the ground and in the lives of groups and individuals. As such, they make it difficult to imagine or represent a fairer and more productive imaginative framework. Embedded in Eurocentric discourses while also trying to dismantle them, Fawcett's and Souza's critique shows us the importance and urgency of opening spaces of enunciation beyond Western-centric thought. While Fawcett and Souza acknowledge the need to break with mentalities and discourses that reify capitalism in order to create new epistemic spaces that are based on non-capitalist imaginaries, they also show that simply deconstructing or inverting these discourses and mentalities has its own liabilities. For Gibson and Graham, "representations of capitalism are a potent constituent of the anticapitalist imagination, providing images of what is to be resisted and changed as well as intimations of strategies, techniques, and possibilities of changing it" (*The End of Capitalism* 3). Expanding on Gibson and Graham's ideas, Fawcett's and Souza's representations of capitalist practices and forestry use in Canada and Brazil demonstrate that this reimagination should account for the material realities of these spaces so that concrete action can happen.

Chapter Three

"The silence of trees / the silence of women": Re-envisioning the Relationship between Women and the Forest

In my previous chapter, I argued that Brian Fawcett and Márcio Souza depict the material and environmental outcomes of economic projects in British Columbia and the Brazilian Amazon in such a way as to deconstruct positive representations of capitalist redemption and reveal the cracks and failures of hegemonic ideals of capitalism. Whereas economic development is usually conceived as a necessary tool to increase wealth and improve collective (human) wellbeing, narratives like *Virtual Clearcut*, *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* focus on what is hidden under the capitalist dream: human oppression and environmental exploitation, poverty and social inequality, and political disenfranchisement. By representing development as a set of material practices and interventions into natural ecosystems whose consequences are felt by the local population and environments alike, Fawcett and Souza imply that any attempt to break with the mentalities and discourses that reify capitalism needs to account for the material realities of forest landscapes in order to open space for non-capitalist models and actions. While Fawcett's and Souza's emphasis on the shortcomings of economic development destabilizes the myth that global capitalism allows for economic prosperity across the world, the nearly all-male cast of their novels shows that projects of development in the forests of Prince George and the Amazon take place in a male-dominated workspace. The "manscapes" of Fawcett's and Souza's texts point toward a connection between economic progress, environmental degradation, and the exclusion of women that I examine in this chapter.

To critique the dysfunctional models of capitalist development that enable deforestation in Prince George, Fawcett closely examines the dynamics of the forest industry, including the

male actors that are part of this complex system. As Fawcett describes it, *Virtual Clearcut* is, "accidentally but unapologetically, a book about men," that is, a book about "what they think and how they act in the world, as boys, friends, husbands, and as workers, bosses, technologists, or as critics and apologists of globalization – even, occasionally, as reasonable adults and citizens" (xx). To this end, Fawcett describes global capitalism in Prince George in terms of a "Buddy System" controlled by chief executive officers, government officials, lumber workers, loggers, and suppliers – almost all of whom are men. Things "get done" in Prince George because these men "agree to get them done, willy-nilly"; they agree that "life depends on carrying out the orders-of-the-day, whatever they are" (172). As Fawcett implies, the clearcut in the Bowron River valley is a direct outcome of the "interactions between human males" that make up the Buddy System (172). Even though Fawcett is aware of the negative outcomes of this male-led system and the ways it catalyzes environmental exploitation like "clearcuts and steals the livelihood and dignity of good people," he makes it clear that if readers are "looking for a blanket condemnation of male socialization," they should not be "holding [their] breath" (173). More than simply a symbol of "male socialization," the Buddy System that Fawcett describes in *Virtual Clearcut* shows how productive labour that takes place *in* and *against* nature reinforces the idea of the forest as a masculine space and, thus, helps perpetuate codes of masculinity and masculine behaviour in a logging town like Prince George.

Similarly, in the Abunã labour camp of *Mad Maria,* over a hundred workers, all men, are employed in the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré. In the world of mud and toil that is the narrative universe of Souza's novel, women occupy little to no space. In the very few instances in which female characters do figure or are mentioned in the novel, they function to support Souza's critique of economic development as a messy and dysfunctional concept that, for

women, results in marginalization and violence. For example, in Santo Antônio, the small town in the novel that embodies what predatory capitalism looks like for those who do not profit from it, two Caripuna women stand "estáticas, de pé contra a parede como duas bonecas semidestroçadas por um sádico" (266) ["statically against the wall like a pair of dolls mutilated by a sadist" (300)]. At some point in the narrative, Joe, the Caripuna character who watches, from the top of a tree, the men working in Abunã, reveals the fate of his wife. After hearing that she had been kidnapped and raped by the *civilizados* ("white men"), he finds his wife laying "dentro de um tacho de fazer beiju, boiando no sangue já escuro e as pernas escancaradas onde as moscas voavam" (68) ["inside an earthenware vessel for making tapioca, floating in the already darkened blood and her legs wide open where flies were circling and landing" (71)]. Following a recurrent pattern of representing women and nature as contiguous, the rape of Joe's wife, here, stands as a metaphor for the rape of the Amazon rainforest and re-signifies colonial violence in terms of a sexualized exploitation of bodies and environment. More importantly, Souza's depiction of the shared dispossession of bodies and territories in the context of predatory infrastructure projects such as the Madeira-Mamoré allows us to see the continuing colonial pattern of assimilation and extraction that turns land and women into resources. Significantly, authors like Leonard Cohen in *Beautiful Losers,* Cree writer Thomson Highway in *The Rez Sisters* and *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*, and Métis playwright Marie Clements in *The Unnatural and Accidental Women,* to name only a few, have also used this same rape metaphor to characterize settler colonialism and denounce the ongoing violence against Indigenous women in Canada. Different from these texts, nevertheless, Souza's use of the rape metaphor works less as a direct critique of colonialism than as a symptom of the dysfunctionalities of economic systems of development in the Amazon.

The connection between masculinity and the forest is not new. In fact, *Virtual Clearcut* and *Mad Maria* are part of a longstanding tradition of masculinist representations of logging and work in the forest characteristic of novels like Martin Allerdale Grainger's *Woodsmen of the West*. As a narrative that claims to offer a first-hand portrayal of the experiences, frustrations, and struggles of West Coast loggers during the clearing and settlement of British Columbia's coastal forests, *Woodsmen of the West* suggests that the project of controlling the natural world through labour intersects with that of imposing and acting out the ideals, codes, and behavioural norms of masculinity.[36] Throughout the novel, the narrator, Mart, extolls on the masculine virtues that would allow a logger to succeed in "these uncivilized parts," for instance, physical endurance, emotional reserve, initiative, and freedom. As he writes, the "needs and emergencies of work" and the sense of competition that comes when loggers are faced with "other men's standards of accomplishment" demand that workers avoid "self-indulgence and the fatal sliding-down of feeble men to ease and comfort" (32-3). There is, he continues "definite work to be done: nature and natural obstacles to be struggled against (and not one's fellow men); and there is, besides, the vanity of not being seen to be incompetent" (32). Unheroic and unrewarding, labour in the uncivilized woods of British Columbia requires emotional control and manual power to fight against endless natural obstacles and beat "all sorts of difficulties" through "the ingenious use of the few simple means [the workers] possess" (32). For Misao Dean, Grainger's novel represents Mart's ambivalent feelings toward a masculine culture that, "while presented by the narrator as 'natural' and part of 'nature,' exists by virtue of its project of subduing and civilizing the natural world" (75). Human (male) nature, Dean suggests, is inseparable from the desire to subdue nature proper (the non-human natural world). The discourse of masculine

[36] The British comedy group Monty Python satirizes this idea in their famous "The Lumberjack Song."

privilege and the discourse of progress mutually support one another through the idea of "manly labour". The civilizing mission in which Mart and his fellow coworkers are engaged, therefore, is inseparable from the subjugation of nature by the physical force, behavioural norms, and moral virtues of the *men* who work in the forests. Although men, masculinity, and patriarchy are not necessarily identical, *Woodsmen of the West* shows how they intersect in the logging world of early twentieth century British Columbia.

In light of these discussions, the goal of this chapter is to examine how ideals of masculinity and concepts of productive (male) labour in nature intersect with issues of environmental exploitation and gender exclusion in Canada and Brazil. To this end, I discuss Daphne Marlatt's rewriting of British Columbia's history of settlement in *Ana Historic* and Regina Melo's revising of the myth of the Ykamiabas (Indigenous female warriors) in *Ykamiabas: Filhas da Lua, Mulheres da Terra* (*Ykamiabas: Daughters of the Moon, Women of the Earth*). As historical novels, both texts develop a similar critique of historiography as a gendered and exploitative discourse that overrates male achievements and the bringing down of nature under men's control. More specifically, Marlatt and Melo problematize how the writing of history in context of settlement in Canada, and colonialism in Brazil enables an idea of historical process understood as the making of a civilized human (male) space over and against the natural world. As *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* reveal, this concept of history based on taking and using land, and turning nature into culture creates the conditions for the double subjugation of women and nature. While historiography helps construct forest landscapes as a masculine space, the protagonists of Marlatt's and Melo's novels try to write an alternative, revisionary history for the women who have been excluded from hegemonic historical discourses and, thus, imagine a new space for women and the forest beyond the limited logic of historiography and its view of

historical development. To counter the logic of destructive productivity embedded in masculinist accounts of history, Marlatt's and Melo's texts emphasize the idea of natality (as in giving birth) and growth. By doing so, *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* point toward a re-examination of the relationship between humans and non-humans that is anti-patriarchal and anti-phallocentric to call for a planetary consciousness based on more sustainable interactions with the environment.

The ways that Marlatt and Melo identify a connection between environmental misuse and women's exclusion in order to reconsider the relationship between humans and non-human nature echo some of the ongoing discussions in the field of ecofeminism. In "The Power and the Promise of Ecological Feminism," Karen Warren defines ecofeminist theory as a feminist and ethical field of enquiry whose goal is to examine the material, theoretical and historical links between the domination of women and exploitation of the environment. For Warren, more specifically, the double subjugation of women and nature claimed by ecofeminists results from "an oppressive and, at least in Western societies, patriarchal conceptual framework characterized by a logic of domination" (144). As she explains, this logic of domination is based on social and cultural constructions of men as separate and superior to nature, and of women as closer to nature, or, rather, to an idea of nature as a passive category. Because the conceptual systems that authorize gender and environmental exploitation are inherently patriarchal, Warren calls for an examination of environmental degradation alongside issues of gender oppression and violence. As she puts it, "any adequate environmental ethic must be feminist" (144). In other words, we must recognize that "the historical feminization of nature and naturalization of women [are] part of the exploitation of nature" (144). This awareness, Warren implies, is essential for a reconsideration of women and nature away from a space of conceptual and material subjugation. Furthermore, by challenging the logic of domination that creates instrumentalist models of

resource and environmental use, ecofeminism, according to Warren, also allows for the emergence of new ways of relating to the environment based on interdependence and mutual interactions between humans and non-human nature.

Ecofeminist scholarship is often discredited as an essentializing theory that claims a special link between women and nature based on gendered ideas of care and motherhood. In *The Good-Natured Feminist: Ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy*, Canadian scholar Catriona Sandilands states that "it is crucial to recognize and act from moments of political affinity grounded in the relation between the oppression of women and the domination of nature" (xix). Nevertheless, Sandilands notes that some ecofeminists take on these moments of affinity to claim a particular form of connection that "essentializes women and domesticates nature, as if gender were a natural product and as if nature were describable in terms of particular cultural conventions of femininity" (xix). Counter to "the narrow construction of identity (maternal and otherwise)" that underlies ecofeminist thought, Sandilands calls for a more flexible understanding of subjectivity as discursively constructed and, thus, subject to "shifting moments of symbolic representation derived from a temporary common understanding" (xix). In *Ana Historic,* Marlatt shows that historical narratives of nineteenth and early twentieth-century British Columbia discursively construct the woods as a predominantly masculine space and, by doing so, impose specific gender norms and environmental models that code women and the forest together as passive categories. Likewise, in *Ykamiabas* Melo revisits colonial texts about the Amazon to deconstruct their colonial gaze and the ways they undermine both the existence of the Ykamiabas, and their systems of political and economic organization which are centered around environmentally conscious practices of land management. The way that Marlatt and Melo question the "patriarchal conceptual framework" of historiography and the enlightenment idea of

history it enables is crucial to diagnose the historical, material, and cultural processes that cause the double oppression of women and the woods as well as discursively create a space for both away from the logic of domination that has caused their shared subjugation. As I argue in this chapter, even though a philosophy of history based on natality cannot entirely avoid Sandilands' critique of the essentialist tendencies of ecofeminism, Marlatt's and Melo's emphasis on the idea of birth, motherhood and care could still be read as a strategic attempt to build an alternative ecological ethics.

Published in 1988, *Ana Historic* recounts the life of Annie, a present-day Vancouver woman who lives with her husband, a history professor, and their two children. While helping conduct research for her husband's book, Annie stumbles upon an archival record of Mrs. Richards, a British widow who immigrated to Canada in 1873. Annie's primary source is Major J. S. Matthew's *Early Vancouver* (1932), a book that reduces Mrs. Richards' existence to one line explaining that the "*first piano on the south side of Burrard Inlet"* was "*sold to Mrs. Richards, school teacher, who lived in a little three-room cottage back of the Hastings Mill schoolhouse, and afterwards married Ben Springer*'" (54, original emphasis). As this entry shows, details about Mrs. Richards' life in the civic archives of British Columbia are scarce: after arriving in the province, she became a schoolteacher in Gastown, bought a piano and eventually remarried a local man, Ben Springer. Annie, in turn, moves beyond the limited gaze of historical texts like Matthew's to imagine Mrs. Richards' life experiences as a schoolteacher in the new colony and create an unofficial history for her. Parallel to Annie's and Mrs. Richards' storylines, *Ana Historic* includes a third one: that of Annie's recently deceased mother, Ina. Throughout the novel, Annie tries to cope with the loss of her mother and make sense of their relationship, but she soon realizes that she knows as little about Ina as she does about Mrs.

Richards. Although Annie's, Mrs. Richards' and Ina's perspectives remain distinct, these three women share more than their status as immigrants, wives, and writers (Annie writes a novel; Mrs. Richards keeps a journal, which remains ignored by historians and is deemed inauthentic as a historic document; and Ina writes family stories in her notebook). Living in a city that owes its existence to the patterns of resource extraction in the province, Annie, Mrs. Richards, and Ina also share the challenges of trying to re-create their identities away from imposed standards and ideals of femininity in a male-dominated society. To some extent, then, in *Ana Historic* Marlatt writes a "genealogy for lost [ahistoric] women" (Goldman 33) that is also a treatise on the repeatability of patriarchal definitions of womanhood and the difficulty of emancipating from them.

Because the civic archives that mention Mrs. Richards also record the history of settlement of British Columbia, Annie realizes that to write about her absence from these documents also means to write about the clearing of the woods that turns the province into a western logging frontier. In this sense, *Ana Historic* demonstrates that the colony exists in no small part because of the logging industry and the work men performed in clearcutting the forest. Throughout the novel, Marlatt represents the "silence of women" alongside the "silence of trees" (81) in order to unveil the patriarchal teleologies of history and critique the ways it reduces both women and nature to the invisible background conditions against which male achievements take place. Through the exaltation of men's productive labour in the woods, historiography, as the novel portrays it, reinforces a dichotomy between public and private that ultimately pushes women and environment to the realm of historic invisibility and exploitation. Though Marlatt's somewhat mystical feminist treatment seems predicated on the notion of a "nature" that has been corrupted in and by patriarchal history, and that needs to be recovered as "authentic," I argue that

instead of conflating women and the woods to claim an organic and inherent connection between both, Marlatt brings them together to critique how the writing of British Columbia's history of settlement forces both into a position of shared subjugation. In other words, Marlatt shows that women and nature are separate categories which are jointly oppressed by historical discourses and the concept of historical progress they put forth. *Ana Historic*'s attempt to open space for an imagined female history that counters the predominantly masculine and production-based narratives about logging in British Columbia, therefore, is also an attempt to reimagine the woods beyond an imposed logic of domination that legitimizes the capitalist (creative) destruction of British Columbia's forest landscapes.

Literary critics have extensively focused on the experimental narrative techniques of *Ana Historic*. After all, Marlatt disrupts the idea of historiography as an objective and comprehensive discourse by creating a fragmented text that brings together different narrative voices and perspectives; excerpts from historical documents, textbooks, and novels; articles from local newspapers; and passages from personal journals. Counter to the univocality and linearity of historical discourses, *Ana Historic* is, as the narrator puts it, "a book of interruptions" (43). Published around the same time as Linda Hutcheon's writings about postmodernism, moreover, Marlatt's novel presents some of the stylistic characteristics of what Hutcheon defines as historiographic metafiction: intertextuality, self-reflexivity, and a critique of hegemonic concepts of history, for instance. Reading *Ana Historic* as an example of historiographic metafiction, Owen Percy claims that by "deconstructing the way in which the historical novel conceives of history," Marlatt's narrative becomes "historically revisionary and historiographically innovative" (185). Likewise, Caroline Rosenthal writes that in *Ana Historic* Marlatt emphasizes "the selective and narrative element in historiography" to interrogate "how historical truth is

constituted" and "how facts become facts and on which grounds" (82). As I argue in this chapter, *Ana Historic* opposes a particular concept of history based on subduing the natural world through male labor, which was central in the narrative universe of Mrs. Richards, while also unveiling the discursive and ideological techniques that are employed in the writing of this kind of history. Even so, making a case for whether the novel confirms Hutcheon's definition of historiographic metafiction is beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather, my analysis of *Ana Historic* explores the ways that Marlatt deconstructs the historical narrative of the western logging frontier to show the role it plays in legitimizing ideals of progress and productive labour which entrench environmental exploitation and gender inequalities simultaneously.

The gendered aspect of Marlatt's critique of historiography has not been overlooked in literary criticism either. Owen Percy notes that several critics attribute "the cyclical and conventionally incoherent documentary collage style of the novel to Marlatt's lesbian/feminist subject-position, the historiographical effect of which is to dismantle patriarchal, linear, and authoritative representations of history" (190). Marlatt is, in fact, deeply indebted to Nicole Brossard's "*fiction théorique*" (fiction/theory or fiction-theory), a term that first appeared in *L'amèr ou le chapitre effrité (fiction théorique)*, published in 1977. *Fiction théorique* refers to an experimental and feminist writing practice that is both critical and creative, that is, that exposes the fictionality of patriarchal constructs while it also offers a counter-discourse to hegemonic (and phallocentric) forms of thinking. For Gabriele Helms, the disruption of the "monologism of the male gaze and the historic voice-over" in *Ana Historic* offers "empowering possibilities for women to reclaim themselves as speaking subjects who participate in the creation of their own worlds" (86). According to Percy's and Helms' readings of the novel, Marlatt reveals a link between linear and objective language, and masculinity which a feminist version of history

should break with. The attack on rationality from a linguistic perspective is also a critique of the rationalist view of history as linear and progressive. It is not by accident, then, that Annie's rewiring of Mrs. Richards' history recovers the "skeletal bones of a suppressed body the story is" (35). In fact, the experimental and feminist aspect of *Ana Historic* reflects Marlatt's own view that language can change reality. As she explains in an interview with Janice Williamson, when "we change language, we change the building blocks by which we construct our reality or even our past 'reality,' history" (qtd. in Helms 86). To construct a "new" reality for women and create a space for female expression and participation in a new form of history and a new way of writing it, Marlatt experiments with punctuation by writing run-on sentences, inserting unexpected periods that create a staccato rhythm, and refusing to use capital letters when beginning a new sentence. Likewise, she plays with the organization of the text on the page by juxtaposing dense paragraphs with almost blank pages, and by using italics to signal the novel's various intertexts. Counter to the rational and linear logic of patriarchal forms of historiographic expression, language, here, is created through association and play.

Marlatt's critique of historiography and gender exclusion is particularly influenced by feminist discussions about what became known as *écriture féminine*. To create a feminine aesthetic outside the male-centered realm of discourse (symbolic order), theorists such as Hélène Cixous advocate a feminine mode of writing that centers on the female body and experiences. As Cixous explains, because dichotomous modes of thinking define women as the negative of men, Western philosophy develops "on the premise of woman's abasement. Subordination of the feminine to the masculine order… [is] the condition for the machinery's functioning" (*The Newly Born Woman* 65). To challenge the complicity between "logocentric" and "phallocentric" systems of thought, and the masculine structures that continue to be dominant in contemporary

society, Cixous urges women writers to reclaim and celebrate the value and uniqueness of the female body through a "writing that inscribes femininity" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 878). This "new insurgent writing," Cixous concludes, would allow women to seize "the occasion to speak," and, thus, to make a "shattering entry into history, which has always been based on [their] suppression" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 880). Women's body and experiences, through Cixous' perspective, become a site of linguistic and historic revision. In *Ana Historic,* Marlatt builds on the idea of *écriture féminine*, especially its focus on the "shattering" of male-centered discourses that have continuously undermined women's existence, to propose a new form of history focusing on the private universe to which women have been subjugated.

The connection between language, body and women's experiences is also clear in Marlatt's "Musing with Mothertongue." Following Cixous' argument that women's writing should focus on celebrating the female body, in her essay Marlatt calls for a "language that returns us [women] to the body" (56). Because language is a "patriarchally-loaded" apparatus, Marlatt emphasizes the need of linguistic experimentation when she asks "where are the poems that celebrate the soft letting-go the flow of menstrual blood is as it leaves her body? how can the standard sentence structure of English with its linear authority, subject through verb to object, convey the wisdom of endlessly repeating and not exactly repeated cycles her body knows?" (55). Different from Cixous, who symbolizes feminine writing as "white ink" in reference to the mother's milk and women's maternal role, Marlatt chooses the "red" of "menstrual blood" to characterize what it means to write femininity (which, here, does not necessarily reduce women to maternity if we read menstruation as a sign of non-pregnancy). Even so, like Cixous, Marlatt suggests that creating a new content that validates women's experiences and represents the cyclicality of the female body requires a new form of expression that exceeds the linearity and

rigidity of a "patriarchally-loaded" language. Marlatt's feminine poetics is clear, for instance, when Annie, the contemporary narrator of *Ana Historic*, compares the "innate pleasure of seeing on a fresh white pad the first marks of red, bright red when the bleeding's at its peak" to writing her "inscription in blood … scribbling again. writing the period that arrives at no full stop … words that flow out from within … the words of an interior history" (96). As this passage suggests, the association between the "natural" (bodily) aspect of what it means to be a woman and a new form of linguistic expression is not arbitrary. In particular, it points to a non-teleological idea of process without progress toward a predetermined end. In *Ana Historic,* Marlatt uses the linguistic "excess" she calls for in her essay to create a "historiographically innovative" and "historically revisionary" narrative that subverts the authoritative discourses of historiography and correct their limited gaze by centering around women's experiences and accomplishments.

Though there is no fully developed ecofeminist reading of the novel thus far, an analysis of *Ana Historic* in the context of ecofeminist theory seems called for. Gabriele Helms, for instance, points out that the novel's epigraph, "'The assemblage of facts in a tangle of hair,'" comes from Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (1978), a book that became a "touchstone" in early ecofeminist theory (88). Similar to Warren, Griffin contends that since patriarchal systems of thought alienate both women and nature, recognizing a connection between them could become a source of women's liberation from gendered discourses of domination. Marlatt's quotation, more specifically, is taken from Book Four of Griffin's text, "Her Vision," in a subsection called "*History* (Her Hair)" (209, original emphasis). The passage reads as follows:

> Each hair a precise fact. (He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to franchise. He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no choice.) *Hair tickling our legs*. The fact of hair against skin. The hand stroking the hair, the skin. Each hair. Each cell. (He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.) *Our hair lying against our cheeks*. The assemblage of facts in a tangle of hair. (He has taken from her all right to property, even to the wages she earns. He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her). (209-10, original emphasis)

Patriarchy, as the quotation shows, places women in the category of alienated other, of "property" of men, and of "civilly dead" beings whose only option is to accept the "inalienable" right to submit to imposed laws. To some extent, the three major female characters of *Ana Historic* embody the problematic raised in Griffin's passage: Mrs. Richards marries Ben Springer and disappears from the civic records of British Columbia; Ina is diagnosed with hysteria and forced into a male-led medical institution to undergo shock treatment; and Annie manages the household and supports her husband by doing unrecognized and unpaid research to his "Big Book" (85). Although this passage does not directly embody the ecofeminist drive of Griffin's book, it still supports Marlatt's critique of historiography in that the speaker insists that women's personal experiences (and bodies) are sources of history and, thus, offer possibilities for women's "shattering entry" into historical discourses. The imagery of blood and hair also suggests an engagement with a nature that is neither a monstrous "other" nor an abstract idea, but, instead, an organic corporeality.

As a revisionary historical novel, *Ana Historic* problematizes not only how history is written, but also what and whom history writes about. In the beginning of the novel, for instance, Annie reflects on the difference between story (private) and history (public):

> i learned that history is the real story the city fathers tell of the only important events in the world. a tale of their exploits hacked out against the silent backdrop of trees, of wooden masses. so many claims to fame, so many ordinary men turned into heroes. (where are the city mothers?) the city fathers busy building a town out of so many shacks labelled the Western Terminus of the Transcontinental, Gateway to the East – all these capital letters to convince themselves of its, of their, significance. (34)

Designed to record and praise achievements made in the public (male) sphere, historiography pushes women into the private space of the household and, thus, ignores the accomplishments of the city mothers. It is not by accident, then, that references to women in some of the historical texts Annie mentions, for instance, Matthew's *Early Vancouver* (1932) and Alan Morley's *Vancouver: From Milltown to Metropolis* (1961), are so scarce that she can quote them all in one paragraph (53-4). Apart from two brief remarks about the "two women entrepreneurs in Gastown" (53), these passages are mostly related to women's family status and their supporting roles as the wives of important men in the city. Furthermore, by claiming that "history" is a "story" the city fathers "tell" and drawing attention to the narrative techniques of writing this "story" ("all capital letters" used to "convince themselves of its, of their, significance"), Annie shows that historiography is as much of a fictional construct as Mrs. Richards' journal, deemed "suspect" and "inauthentic" as a historical source because of its emphasis on "Mrs. Richards' private world" (36-7).

As the previous passage demonstrates, Marlatt's critique is two-fold: while *Ana Historic* problematizes the historiographic invisibility of women, the novel also challenges the enlightenment philosophy of British Columbia's history of settlement and its insistence on nation-building, development, and progress. To slightly modify Warren's words, then, Marlatt's feminist ethic is undoubtfully environmental as it implies that the suppression aspect of patriarchal history and culture cannot be examined without addressing the problem of male-centered historical progress and its view of work *in* and *against* nature. This becomes clear in Annie's definition of history as a "tale" about the "exploits" of city fathers "building a town" "against the silent backdrop of trees" (34). Since the writing of history coincides with the recording of men's work in clearing the woods to open space for settlement, the novel shows that historiography also becomes a discourse about the manipulation of the province's forest landscapes. For example, Annie describes the world of early settlement that Mrs. Richards inhabits as "a man's world of work, of mud the odd boardwalk covered. a world of leantos and lanterns, of sudden accident, of jokes and brawls to punctuate long hours of labor" (27). It is, Annie continues, the world of "trees we have already lost," "trees so big men lay inside the gash their axes left and the tree still standing, still joined to part of itself. so big men balanced on boards wedged in the trunk to cut it down, or had pictures made of themselves standing victorious on top of the fallen length, oxen waiting to haul it away" (26-7). The manscape Mrs. Richards navigates is the world of working men who fight against the unruly forces of nature to "*get any job done, no matter how tough*" (62, original emphasis). Men's unremitting labor, resilience, and strength form the picture of a frontier ready to be conquered. History's focus on ideals of male forcefulness and productive labour creates the cultural and material conditions for the exclusion of women from historical discourses while also legitimizing environmental misuse

by portraying men as superior to nature. Through this perspective, Marlatt's use of the small, not capitalized "i" narrative in *Ana Historic* could be read not only as her endorsement of Charles Olson's position against an arrogant "I" in poetry, but also as an attempt to represent a less controlling, less dominating view of the subject *in* the environment.

While the documents and photographs Annie revises show how masculine labour helps bring forth civilization, progress, and culture to Canada's western logging frontier, for her they offer just a snapshot of an incomplete history, "a still photo in the ongoing cinerama" (37). To add to this "ongoing cinerama," Marlatt develops a textual dialogue with fictional narratives of nineteenth and early twentieth century British Columbia to show the crucial role they play in producing the woods as a predominantly masculine space. Unsurprisingly, one of these texts is Grainger's *Woodsmen of the West*. As a novel that claims to offer an embodied depiction of the experiences and challenges of West Coast loggers during the settlement of British Columbia, *Woodsmen of the West* reinforces some of the ideals and codes of masculinity that Annie contests in *Ana Historic.* For example, confirming her description of the woods as the world of working men who stand victorious "on top of the fallen length," Grainger's novel opens with the photograph of a man on top of the trunk of a fallen tree with a caption that reads "The Conqueror." Notably, this photograph recalls Max's heroic pose standing astride the trunk of a fallen tree and declaring himself "a King" in Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie,* and, thus, underwrites a concept of masculinity as active and forceful vis-à-vis a subdued nature. In *Ana Historic,* Annie reproduces a passage in which Grainger's logging boss, with the help of a mechanical device (donkey engine) and a group of workers, hoists a tree from the woods. Here, Grainger's novel points to an idea of masculine force that entails not only environmental subjugation, but also technological mastery. Urging readers to imagine Carter's feelings of strength and pride in

accomplishing his task, the narrator of *Woodsmen of the West* states: "*just think of Carter's feelings as the engineer jams over levers, opens up the throttle, sets the thudding, whirring donkey winding up the cable, and drags the first log into sight; out from forest down to the beach; bump, bump! Think what this mastery over huge, heavy logs means to a man who has been used to coax them into tiny movements"* (31, original emphasis). In *Ana Historic,* Annie responds to this passage and writes: "history the story, Carter's and all the others', of dominance. mastery. the bold line of it" (31). Once again, the novel draws attention to the fictionality of historiography by defining it as a "story" of dominance and mastery. Grainger's depiction of life in the logging camps of British Columbia and emphasis on men's labour as constitutive of that space help create a narrative of settlement that is based on the conquering of the land through men's deeds *in* and *against* the forest. Taken as an aggregate of collective actions performed by laboring men, these deeds are turned into heroic accomplishments praised in historic discourses. Significantly, this passage ends with Annie "moving around in a maze of things to be done" (31), struggling to finish the never-ending work of being a mother and housewife. Undermining what Grainger depicts as the transformative and physically demanding labour of loggers like Mart and Carter, Marlatt chooses to conclude her intertext with *Woodsmen of the West* by drawing attention to the unrecognized and undervalued work women perform in managing the household.

To support her critique that male-centered historiography and history as progress force women and environment into a position of shared oppression, Marlatt depicts marriage and cultivation as connected systems of domination. As Annie puts it, for instance, Mrs. Richards' remarrying of Ben Springer reduces her existence to "the narrow range of what was acceptable for Mrs. Springer," as if "all the other selves she might be were erased – secret diarist, pioneer pianist, travelling companion to Birdie Stewart – unvalidated, unacceptable, in short" (152).

Significantly, Annie describes the "weight of history" that constricts Mrs. Richards' identity as the same that takes out "the dead wood. pruning back the unproductive. it was all a matter of husbandry, 'the careful management of resources.' for everybody's good, of course. a matter of course. (by definition)" (152-3). Husbandry and husbands, here, determine what is unproductive and, thus, must be removed because deemed illegitimate. For Mrs. Richards, the unproductive means an existence that is empowering because located outside the logic of patriarchal and heteronormative nineteenth-century society: an occupation as a writer, financial independence as a pianist, and a love relationship with Birdie. For the woods, the unproductive means an existence that is creative and generative because located outside the logic of capital development and its "careful management of resources" (which, as Annie points out, is very close to the destruction of the environment). Cleared of useless trees (dead wood) and unvalidated identities (the other selves they might be), the woods and women are ready to become the "vessels of [men's] destiny" (127), the "silent backdrops" *against* which men's deeds take place (34). Marlatt also points to the connection between marriage and cultivation when, recounting a tea party Mrs. Richards' supposedly attended, Annie describes "Jeannie Alexander *lumbered* with the extra weight of pregnancy" (76, emphasis added). The choice of "lumber," here, reinforces Marlatt's portrayal of women and trees as resources: pregnancy transforms Jeannie's body into "lumber" and motherhood into a potential source of capital profit through women's unpaid domestic labour. The logic of possession and subjugation that determines men's relationship to women, Marlatt implies, is the same that informs their attitude toward nature.

In her dialogue with Maria Lawson and Rosalind Watson Young's *A History and Geography of British Columbia: For Use in Public School* (1906), Annie builds on her critique of the husbandry/husband logic, and points to the possibility of resisting it. She writes:

> '*Douglas fir and red cedar are the principal trees. Of these, the former – named after David Douglas, a well-known botanist – is the staple timber of commerce. Average trees grow 150 feet high, clear of limbs, with a diameter of 5 to 6 feet. The wood has great strength and is largely used for shipbuilding, bridge work, fencing, railway ties, and furniture. As a pulp-making tree the fir is valuable. Its bark makes a good fuel.*'
> clear of limbs? of extras, of asides. tree as a straight line, a stick. there for the taking. (20, original emphasis)

Lawson and Young's description of the Douglas fir emphasizes its economic value: its sturdiness, height and strength make this tree useful in different industries, most of which are presumably operated by men. Furthermore, this passage shows a connection between naming and possession (Douglas fir) that mirrors the patriarchal ideology of naming women after their husbands. In her response to Lawson and Young, Annie re-appropriates their terminology and deconstructs the masculine economic logic of their passage to show that, although Mrs. Richards "stood as straight as any tree," she "wasn't there for the taking" (20), that is, to be taken. Instead, Annie imagines her "standing slim in whalebone at the ship's rail as it turns with the wind, giving her her first view of what would become home as she imagined it, imagining herself free of history. (black poplin. useless baggage)" (20, original emphasis). Standing straight as a tree in a new country, here, opens space for Annie's rewriting of Mrs. Richards' story outside the limited gaze of patriarchal historiography and its "useless baggage." It is not by coincidence, then, that part of this process involves renaming Mrs. Richards to Ana and freeing her from the fate history had written for her, that of remaining "ahistoric," that is, named after "a dead man, someone somewhere else" (43). Whereas a masculinist version of history discursively "takes" away Mrs. Richards' existence, Annie's reimagining of her story is generative in that it would

"give" her an alternative existence. If history turns women and trees into "ahistoric" categories that are appropriated and exploited in the name of development, here Annie uses their "ahistoricity" to liberate both women and the forests from that exploitative logic.

Marlatt's ecofeminist poetics and attempt to redefine what counts as productive labour becomes clear in the novel's representation of birth. For example, to deconstruct the public versus private duality that forces women into historic invisibility, Annie juxtaposes passages of "important events in the world" (34) that make into the province's historical records with important events in women's lives. One of the most relevant of these examples is the novel's recounting of the birth of "the first white child" in Hastings Sawmill (123).[37] In this long and detailed passage, Annie references historical documents about a public boat race that took place in town alongside Mrs. Richards' narration of Jeannie's giving birth. By doing so, *Ana Historic* undercuts the official narrative of "the ships men ride into the pages of history" to focus, instead, on "the nameless women" "on board the mute matter of being wife and mother – ahistoric, muddled in the mundane" (127). Particularly relevant, here, is how the novel portrays men's interactions with the ship against women's interactions with Jeannie's labouring body (the other side of "labour"). For example, Annie describes the men loading their boats: "they sing out 'drop 'er there,' 'heave away,' 'let 'er go.' a pride of muscle, frame, handling all these female pronouns there in the theatre of history (see Progress, see Master of one's Destiny), a body armature that can be counted on, a body that doesn't secretly transform itself (from month to month)" (124). Valued for their sturdiness and unchangeability, these boats are easily manipulated by the force and pride of men. Mastery and control, then, are the ruling categories

[37] In "Forests, Clearings, and the Spaces in Between: Reading Land Claims and the Actuality of Context in *Ana Historic*", Renée Jackson-Harper reads *Ana Historic* as a narrative about the formation of settler colonial identity and the settler colonial appropriation of Indigenous territory.

that determine men's relationship with the ship. Considering that these boats have women's names ("Annie Fraser" and "Pearl"), this passage implies that the same dynamic would apply for men's relationship with women.

Unlike the racing boats that either win, lose, or tie, Jeannie's birthing body follows its own rhythm, "its tides coming in not first nor last nor lost she circles back on herself repeats her breathing out and in two heartbeats here not winning or losing labouring into the manifest" (131). Whereas the boat race is portrayed as a linear event that leads to a clear end result (victory), this passage emphasizes the labouring body in the process of giving birth, or, put another way, the female body "truly at work" (131). Marlatt's choice of words is not accidental. Here, Mrs. Richards describes Jeannie's body actively moving and contracting itself to show "the sheer work of giant muscle moving underneath the sheet" (130). The "sweat beading her face" and her "mouth open panting with pain" (128) represent "a woman's body truly at work. – Not *labour* as we commonly use it – I mean its inner work, this bringing forth" (131, original emphasis). This other side of "labour" is an act of *bringing forth*, instead of *cutting down*. While Jeannie's husband reduces this scene to a mere portrayal of women doing "things" "best left to women," Ana feels "a wave of admiration for these women joined in a singular work together. It was a rite, an ancient place she had been admitted to, this crossing over into life. A child, yes, a child was coming – not a death, a loss. And she was meant to share in it" (129). This passage, of course, concludes with the birth of Jeannie's male baby. The novel's alternation between the boat race scene and Jeannie's laboring process challenges the public and private divide by suggesting that they are mutually implicated, that is, that although public events are the ones that make into historical narratives, the public does not happen separately from the private. Even if, as a male baby, Jeannie's son will be granted free entry on board of "the ships men ride into the pages of

history," here Marlatt reminds us of the place he came from: a woman's body at work, "in its intimacy, giving birth" (137).

Some may argue that the mystical tone of the previous passages, particularly Marlatt's depiction of giving birth as a "rite" staged in an "ancient place," risks romanticizing childbirth and essentializing women as mothers, hence undermining her feminist critique. Yet, the emphasis on Jeannie's labouring body could also be read as critique of the overvaluing of productive male labour in the woods as well as an attempt to invoke an alternative concept of work and production based on childbirth as labour – production of life rather than the appropriation of nature. For instance, in her reimagining of the birth scene through Mrs. Richards' perspective, Annie portrays childbirth as work that is physically demanding and happens collectively, inviting even the women who are not mothers, like Mrs. Richards, to participate. Unlike logging, which is also physical and collective, giving birth remains unheroic and unpraised. More than uncritically celebrating women as mothers, then, *Ana Historic* problematizes how historiography and the enlightenment idea of history it enables allow for the gendering and devaluing of experiences and responsibilities that happen in the domestic sphere at the same time that it questions what counts as production. Through Marlatt's perspective, historical discourses devalue motherhood and care-related practices precisely by associating them with femininity – things "best left to women." As Zoe, Annie's friend and lover, reminds her, "we give [birth] and it is unwritten because it is given," "like all of women's domestic labour" (137-8). In this sense, Marlatt's critique resonates with Sherilyn MacGregor's call for feminist (and ecofeminist) discussions that recognize motherhood and caring as "a paradoxical set of practices, feelings, and moral orientations that are embedded in particular relations and contexts and that are socially constructed as both feminine and private" (58). Any feminist

critique of history, Marlatt seems to imply, needs to also consider the logics of political economy and women's unrecognized and unpaid labour in the household. If, key to Western notions of productive work, that is, work that "develops," is the idea of destructive creation (clearcutting the forest to create a civilized life in the colony), here *Ana Historic* tries to provide an alternative to this philosophy of labour. In Marlatt's version, labour like the one Jeannie performs points to an idea of nature as an organic corporeality (not a commodity) which is represented in the act of women's body generating life.

The tree imagery that appears in the birth scene is also relevant to understanding Marlatt's ecofeminist poetics. In her narration, Annie (through Mrs. Richards' perspective) depicts the birth of Jeannie's son as a moment of maternal communion with nature whereby the red labia of Jeannie's birthing body become an extension of the scarlet leaves of maple trees. Annie writes: "to be born in, to enter from birth that place (that shoreline place of scarlet maples, since cut down) with no known name – see it, risen in waves, these scarlet leaves, lips all bleeding into the air, given (birth), given in greeting, the given surrounds him now. surrounds her, her country she has come into, the country of her body" (133). Supporting Marlatt's call for a writing that returns women to their bodies, this scene celebrates Jeannie's body as well as her reclaiming of it as her own "country." Interestingly, this quotation also comments on the effects of settlement and deforestation since the birth of Jeannie's son happens in a landscape surrounded by "scarlet" maple trees that have been "cut down." In "The Country of Her Own Body: *Ana Historic,*" Frank Davey claims that more than a "linguistic event,"[38] the birth of Jeannie's son embodies Marlatt's idea that "the land and woman's body" are "mythically

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[38] In *Ana Historic,* Marlatt claims a connection between the female maternal body and language. Mrs. Richards, for example, describes Jeannie's birthing body as "a mouth working its own inarticulate urge, opening deep" (131) and the baby coming out of it as "a massive syllable of slippery flesh [sliding] out the open mouth" (132). Jeannie's body, Mrs. Richards concludes, "spoke the babe, and then the afterbirth, a bleeding mass of meat" (132).

contiguous" so much so that "the oppression of one [is] contiguous with that of the other" (196). For Davey, the representation of Jeannie's body as an extension of nature, and its symbolic connection to the logging industry makes *Ana Historic* a story of "Canadian exploitation" whereby "a land marked as female is exploited for material profit by a male population – to the exclusion and alienation of women" (196). While I agree with Davey that Marlatt portrays land exploitation and women's oppression as contiguous, his claiming that the novel conceives the female body and land as "mythically contiguous" would potentially reduce *Ana Historic* to a narrative that unproblematically assumes a natural connection between women and nature based on preconceived notions of identity. Rather, the fact that Marlatt examines the shared subjugation of women and the woods within a broader critique of historiography shows that any assumed relationship between women and nature is, in fact, constructed through narrative and discursive practices. In the case of British Columbia's history of settlement, these practices turn history into a "tale" about the bringing forth of civilization through men's control over nature and, therefore, impose identity positions for women and nature both as passive resources. In this sense, Marlatt's development of a philosophy of history based on birth and natality could be read as a conscious attempt to claim a different kind of connection with nature that deconstructs the woods as a masculine space and moves away from the ideals of exploitative work which production-based narratives endorse. Her focus on corporeality (together with her overall feminist poetics) suggests this reimagined form of connection would center on the idea of embodied knowledge, that is, knowledge that happens in and through the female body.

From her early childhood memories, Annie internalizes the idea of the woods as male territory, as the space where men work "building powerlines and clearing land" (18). This is clear in the way that Annie constantly revisits her mother's comments about the lingering

dangers of the woods and fears "of being seen, ambushed in the sudden arms of bears or men. 'never go into the woods with a man,' you said, 'and don't go into the woods alone.'" (24). This passage, of course, stresses a connection between men and violence (physical and sexual) that is recurrent in Marlatt's work. Yet, throughout the novel Annie tries to free herself from this idea by writing a space for women and nature beyond the control of men. Portrayed as a small section of the forest that, too close to the domestic space of the home, does not interest the boys, the Old Wood, as Annie and her sisters name it, becomes a place of safety and comfort for the girls, a *locus amoenus*. Annie describes the Old Wood as "moulted and softened with years of needle drift, tea brown, and the cedar stump hollowed in the middle where they nestled in a womb, exchanging what if's, digging further with their fingers, sniffing the odour of tree matter become a stain upon their hands like dried blood" (18). Counter to narratives like *Malcolm's Katie: A Love Story* and *Woodsmen of the West* and their depiction of the trunks of fallen trees as signs of a subdued nature vis-à-vis forceful masculinity, the cedar stump here becomes a space of nurturing and possible existence that resembles a woman's "womb." Pages further, Annie elaborates on what the safe space of the woods would look like for women. Once again, she corrects Ina's view of "the bush" as the territory of "men" and "bears" to describe it, instead, as a "anonymous" and "inhuman territory" where, "in communion with trees, following the migratory routes of bugs, the pathways of water, the warning sounds of birds," Annie "vanished from the world of men" (24). It is in this same space that, at the end of the novel, in "the quiet interplay of wind, trees, rain, creeping things under the leaves – this world of connection" (157), Annie reclaims her identity and renames herself "Annie Torrent" (158). Located outside the control of loggers, "lumber-barons" and "city-fathers" that are the protagonists of historical narratives, the Old Wood embodies Annie's desire to forge a sense of belonging in the forest

which, although represented as quasi-mystical, is free from the "logic of domination" of history and, thus, open to new forms of interaction with the woods based on ideals of interconnectedness and mutuality.

To some extent, *Ana Historic* seems to point toward a woman-centered ethics of care for the environment that echoes the ecofeminist concept of the "feminine principle." To draw attention to the material realities of the Global South, Vandana Shiva examines the connection between what she considers as Western and male-centered models of economic development, and the double exploitation of women and environment in countries like India. Shiva's starting point is her definition of development as "maldevelopment based on the introduction or accentuation of the domination of men over nature and women" (5). This "anti-life" model, according to her, undermines both nature and women's status as "the creators and sustainers of life" to, rather, turn both into resources (5). Consequently, "maldevelopment" imposes a profit-oriented model that fails to recognize sustenance and survival as productive and necessary categories. The result, according to Shiva, is the subjugation of the "feminine principle," a non-gendered and inclusive concept based on life-enriching, creative and mutually respectful ways of being in and perceiving nature (5). As she explains it, the "death of the feminine principle in women and nature takes place through the association of the category of passivity with the feminine" and, in men, through "a shift in the concept of activity from creation to destruction, and the concept of power from empowerment to domination" (51). Shiva's proposed alternative, then, involves recovering the feminine principle and encouraging an ethics of care that redefines growth and productivity as categories linked to the production and sustenance of life. In Shiva's words, reclaiming the feminine principle implies promoting "creative forms of being and perceiving. In nature it implies seeing nature as a live organism. In woman it implies seeing

women as productive and active. Finally, in men [it] implies a relocation of action and activity to create life-enhancing, not life-reducing and life-threatening societies" (51). Here, Shiva's ecofeminist thought tries to not only redefine the relationship between women and nature beyond a space of double subjugation, but also enact economic, material, and epistemological changes that rethink the relationship between humans, and non-human nature away from the logic of "maldevelopment."

Far from reifying women, particularly Indian women, solely as victims of gender, environmental and economic exploitation, Shiva examines the active role they play in fighting for environmental protection and the implementation of local models of subsistence and survival. Particularly relevant here is the emergence of the Chipko Movement, a land-protection effort led by Indian women in the Garwhal Himalayas against commercial logging in the 1970s. As Shiva explains, for years, these peasant women have played a crucial role in caring and providing for their families and communities, thus becoming the backbone of agrarian economy in the region. The intense development and exploitation of India's forests caused the destruction of local flora and fauna, and subjugation of female-centered forestry practices that prioritized the production and sustenance of human and non-human life. For Shiva, Chipko women's focus on care and sustenance showed the urgent need to reconsider sustainability and wealth from the perspective of daily survival. As she puts it, the Chipko Movement made it clear that "production of sustenance is basic to survival itself and cannot be deleted from economic calculations" so much so that "if production of life cannot be reckoned with in money terms, then it is economic models, and not women's work in producing sustenance and life, that must be sacrificed" (214). Initially brought to public attention in *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*, published in 1988, the Chipko Movement became emblematic of ecofeminism and women's

struggles for economic and environmental survival in the Global South. Although Shiva analyzes the environmental struggles of the Chipko women as signs of their social and material connections to nature as well as opportunities for ecological rethinking, her theory is often taken as essentialist in that it limits women's existence to their caretaking role and imposes a maternal sense of responsibility that is inherently oppressive.

In a broader sense, the development of ecofeminism as a theoretical field has been particularly informed by debates about its essentialist tendency. For instance, Noël Sturgeon argues that the essentializing rhetoric of some ecofeminists transforms women's caring roles in the house into "a shifting and strategic identification of the relation between 'women' and 'nature' that has political purposes" (11). For Sturgeon, in other words, ecofeminism strategically evokes caretaking and motherhood to assert women's difference vis-à-vis men as well as to establish, on epistemological grounds, women's ways of caring for the environment as crucial to building an alternative ecological ethics. Canadian feminist scholar Lorraine Code agrees, to some extent, that women's "cultural-historical relegation to a domain 'closer to nature' than men" might grant them the ability to care for the environment in a different way (*What Can She Know?* 274). Nevertheless, she reminds that "claims that such a capacity is uniquely, essentially theirs have consistently served as premises of arguments to show that women should be the moral guardians both of 'humanity' and of nature" (*What Can She Know?* 274). Besides assigning "women responsibilities that are fundamentally oppressive," this essentialist rhetoric, according to Code, denies women "recognition as cognitive agents and creators of social meaning, precisely because of their alleged closeness to nature" (*What Can She Know?* 274). Similarly, Sherilyn MacGregor critiques the maternal rhetoric of ecofeminism, claiming that it reduces women's "ethico-political life to care" (58). According to MacGregor, to move beyond

an essentialist rhetoric, ecofeminists need to consider "women's caring stance towards the environment" alongside a critique of "[social] expectations that women be caring and the exploitation of women's unpaid caring labour under capitalism" (58). This more complex analysis would allow us to deconstruct the idea of care as a feminine and private task to, instead, turn it into a political and non-gendered practice that is "necessary for democratic citizens to live together well in a pluralistic society" (Tronto qtd. in MacGregor 76).

Although Marlatt does not seem to go as far as Code and MacGregor advocate, her critique of historiography as a discourse that centers around the public achievements of men in clearing the land for settlement is inseparable from her analysis of how the writing of history as progress catalyzes the undervaluing of women's work in the household and the subjugation of non-human nature. On the one hand, Marlatt creates a fragmented and polyvocal narrative "cut loose from history and its relentless progress toward some end" (87) in order to undo the "historic voice (voice-over)" (54) and reclaim women's stories, bodies, and existences. Thus, while the birthing scene brings women working together to support and celebrate Jeannie's laboring body and the birth of her child, *Ana Historic*, in a broader context, gives birth to women who have been forgotten in the folds of the household, "muddled" in their roles as wives, mothers and widows. Although bracketed off from history, the stories of these "city mothers" nonetheless underly the histories of the city fathers as the opposite against which a narrative of masculine heroism and capitalist destructive creation is written on the frontier. At the same time, by "[k]nocking on paper, not wood" (51), Annie undoes the "silence of women" and "the silence of trees" to reinscribe their presence in the discursive structures and geographic spaces of patriarchal history as well as rebuild a connection between women and nature that could open space for a new form of interaction with the environment. It is not by coincidence, then, that

Annie is only able to write "at night, when the woods no longer echo to the bull-puncher's oaths, the rattle and grind of logs over skid trails has come to a halt, the roar of belts, the screams of saws are finally stopped" (59). It is only when men's work *in* and *against* nature has stopped that Annie is able to "write" women and the woods into existence. While nineteenth-century narratives about the settlement of British Columbia limit women and the woods to the category of resources, *Ana Historic* builds on the idea of natality, birth, and growth to question destructive environmental practices and, therefore, point toward a woman-centered ethics of interconnection and care that subverts ideals of productivity *in* and *against* nature.

Following *Ana Historic*'s revisionist pattern, Regina Melo's *Ykamiabas: Filhas da Lua, Mulheres da Terra* (*Ykamiabas: Daughters of the Moon, Women of the Earth*) also unburies women's stories and experiences to critique the patriarchal lenses of historiography and call for an environmental consciousness centered around the idea of giving birth. Published in 2004, Melo's novel focuses on Yara, a history major student raised by a single mother in Nhamundá, a municipality in the state of Amazonas. One day, Yara receives an unexpected gift from her father, who, until then, she had never met. The gift is a *muyrakytã*, an amulet that presumably belonged to the Ykamiabas. Encouraged by her cultural anthropology professor, Benjamim, Yara engages in extensive research about these female Indigenous warriors to whom the Spanish colonizers referred as Amazonas (in an intertext with the Greek narrative about female warriors). Similar to the way Annie contests the historical exclusion of Mrs. Richards from the civic documents of British Columbia, Yara revisits the historical records of Spanish colonizers to rewrite the collective history of the Ykamiabas and validate their existence. Thus, alongside her portrayal of Yara's daily life at home and as a student, particularly her search to reconnect with her father who now lives in Cappadocia, Melo also describes Yara's process of writing her own

text about the history of these warriors, which, in the novel, appears in italics. While Marlatt creates a "documentary-collage" that dialogues with different historical documents, archival photographs and fictional narratives about logging and settlement in British Columbia, Melo focuses on colonial texts about the Amazon to deconstruct their colonial gaze and the ways they reduce the history of the Ykamiabas to nothing more than the "delírio dos navegantes europeus" (56) ["delirium of the European sailors"].[39] In this sense, Melo not only undoes the historic invisibility of the Ykamiabas, but, more importantly, contests the role historiography plays in reifying a colonial definition of history that undermines non-Eurocentric experiences and realities by conceiving them simply as prehistorical, mythical, or fantastical.

Like Marlatt, in *Ykamiabas* Melo conceives historiography as a selective and ideological tool that reinforces a masculinist narrative of colonization and, by doing so, undermines the collective life experiences of the Ykamiabas and their women-led models of governance and forestry management. Yara's revisiting of colonial narratives about these female warriors, therefore, sanctions the presence of the Ykamiabas and their claims to the territory while it also recovers systems of political and economic organization centered around environmentally conscious land use practices.[40] Whereas Marlatt tries to create a space for women and the woods beyond the logic of shared subjugation imposed by historical narratives about the settlement of British Columbia and their overvaluing of men's productive labour *in* and *against* nature, Melo reclaims the ways the Ykamiabas related to the forest before the European invasion of the Amazon to build on ideas of nature as feminine and reconstruct the image of nature as Mother Earth. By questioning the colonial logic of domination of knowledge, culture, and territory that

[39] All the translations of *Ykamiabas: Filhas da Lua, Mulheres da Terra* are my own.

[40] *Ykamiabas: Filhas da Lua, Mulheres da Terra* echoes Monique Wittig's 1969 novel *Les Guérillères*, which also focuses on ideas of feminine collective governance, and imagines what a women-led society would look like.

makes the existence of the Ykamiabas illegitimate, Melo's novel also calls for more sustainable relations between humans and the forest. Put another way, in *Ykamiabas* Melo openly claims a connection between mothering and caring for "Mother Earth" in order to advocate an alternative, less destructive and less anthropocentric environmental consciousness. Although Melo is not as engaged as Marlatt in developing a critique of political economy and women's unpaid labour, her novel centers around the Ykamiabas' ethics of care for the environment to establish it as crucial to build new (matriarchal) epistemological, material, and economic models that prioritize the sustenance and survival of humans and non-human nature.

The ways that Melo evokes caretaking and motherhood to assert the Ykamiabas' difference vis-à-vis men and advocate a planetary environmental ethics based on survival share similarities with what became known in Latin America as "*ecofeminismo de la supervivencia*" (ecofeminism of survival). As an ecofeminist approach that examines gender and environmental exploitation alongside issues of colonialism and Eurocentrism, "*ecofeminismo de la supervivencia*" tries to conceive care as a political and non-gendered concept. Argentinian scholar Mariella Svampa defines "*ecofeminismo de la supervivencia*" as a paradigm of thought that focuses on the diverse experiences of women "en la defensa de la salud, la supervivencia, el territorio" (130) ["in the defense of health, survival and territory"][41] to call for alternative ways of relating to nature based on interdependence, relationality, and collective well-being. It does so, Svampa continues, by replacing the idea of humans as autonomous with an understanding of the human subject as an interdependent being "que se reconoce distinto de los demás y de la naturaleza, pero que a su vez reconoce la continuidad con ellos" (131) ["who recognizes itself as distinct from others and from nature, but which at the same time recognizes a continuity with

[41] All the translations of Svampa's text are my own.

them"]. For Alicia Puleo, "*ecofeminismo de la supervivencia*" opens space for "actitudes de afecto y compasión relacionadas con las tareas cotidianas del cuidado de la vida" (54) ["attitudes of affection and compassion related to the daily tasks of caring for life"][42] beyond their feminine connotation as well as for an alternative form of development centered on the well-being and survival of human and non-human nature. As Puleo clarifies, this approach is not about reinforcing essentialisms or romanticizing women as the saviors of the environment, but, rather, about transforming an ethics of care that has been culturally and conceptually limited to women's roles in the household into a responsibility of all humans regardless of gender and sex identities.

The connection between feminism and environmental ethics in Melo's narrative is fundamental: Yara references the idea of nature as feminine and the ecofeminist concept of the "feminine principle" in two different moments of her narrative. The first is a quotation attributed to Françoise d'Eaubonne, a French feminist to whom many ecofeminists attribute the first use of the term "ecofeminism." The quotation reads as follows: "Na noite dos tempos, o feminino reinava no universo mítico-religioso com duplo aspecto: a vida (agrícola e parturiente) e a morte (do celeiro e do túmulo). A mulher é a terra; não só o húmus que desenvolve o grão, o solo que recebe o defunto" (112) ["In the night of time, the feminine reigned in the religious-mythical universe with a double aspect: life (agricultural and parturient) and death (of the barn and the tomb). The woman is the earth; not only the humus that develops the grain, but also the soil that receives the deceased"]. In the novel, d'Eaubonne's quotation opens Chapter XVI, "A Necrópole de Tacoeira" ["The Necropolis of Tacoeira"], which narrates the funeral of the Ykamiabas who died in the battle against the Spanish army under the leadership of Francisco de Orellana and

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[42] All the translations of Puleo's text are my own.

Gonzalo Pizarro. Yara then builds on d'Eaubonne's idea of women as creators of life, and of earth as the origin of life and death when, pages further, she urges us to understand the earth as "fonte de transformação da vida. O útero de onde tudo sai e para onde tudo retorna ... Pois a terra, apesar de dividida, é um corpo só. E nós fazemos parte dele" (187) ["source of life's transformation. The womb from which everything comes out and to which everything returns ... For the earth, though divided, is one body. And we are part of it"]. Like Marlatt, here Melo employs the metaphor of the "womb" to conceive nature as a nurturing and live entity. Although d'Eaubonne's language of women as earth seems to reinforce, more than to challenge, the femininization of nature and naturalization of women that cause their double subjugation, Melo uses this quotation to support her idea of a redefined relationship with the environment that is predicated on an understanding of nature as a living organism and, thus, on mutual interactions between humans and non-humans.

The second passage that resonates with ecofeminism in *Ykamiabas* appears in the Chapter XXIII "O Retorno à Origem" ["Return to the Origin"], in which Yara narrates her trip to Turkey to meet her father. Returning to the origin, here, refers both to her meeting her father for the first time, and to her visiting the area of the Fertile Crescent, "o centro agrícola mais antigo do mundo que há 10 mil anos a.C. se estendia do Golfo Pérsico à Palestina" (172) ["the world's most ancient agricultural center that stretched from the Persian Gulf to Palestine 10,000 years B.C."]. For Yara, this trip is significant because, as she puts it, it was "neste centro que o culto à Mãe Terra teve início" (172) ["in this center that the worship of Mother Earth began"]. Characteristic of a time when religion was associated with the practice of agriculture, this reverence to Mother Earth, Yara explains, allowed for the emergence of several "figurações femininas" that "mesmo assumindo nomes e representações de divindades distinstas, tinham algo em comum, o elemento

feminino" (172) ["female figures" that "even though they assumed names and representations of distinct divinities, they had something in common, the feminine element"]. Pages further, Yara's father, a Turkish anthropologist who had worked as a researcher in the Amazon several years before, explains that the "figura da Deusa Mãe é pioneira na religão das mais diversas civilizações. É a divindade Inanna dos sumérios e Ishtar dos amorreus, semitas e assírios, povos da Mesopotâmia" (174) ["figure of the Mother Goddess is a pioneer in the religion of the most diverse civilizations. She is the deity Inanna of the Sumerians and Ishtar of the Amorites, Semites and Assyrians, peoples of Mesopotamia"]. The "feminine element" in these passages is embodied in the persistence of female leadership in different civilizations as well as the survival of women-centered ecological practices informed by the "worship" of Mother Earth. In this sense, less than romanticizing "pre-modern" ways of living or advocating a return to a "pre-modern" past characterized by a relation of harmony with nature, Melo's feminist recovery places the idea of nature as feminine within a broader history of human civilization. In other words, Melo conceives the "feminine principle" as a transhistorical and adaptable concept that continued to exist across distinct historical periods and geographies, and continued to inform the ways different communities interacted with the environment.

Like Marlatt, Melo's ecofeminist poetics starts with her critique of historiography and the colonial concept of history it perpetuates. Therefore, the ways that Yara engages with colonial discourses to correct their limiting gaze toward non-Eurocentric experiences and realities make *Ykamiabas* as "historically revisionary" as *Ana Historic.* Reinforcing Annie's conception of official history as a snapshot, a "still photo in the ongoing cinerama" (37), Yara's professor reminds her that portrayals of the Ykamiabas in historical narratives offer just "uma minúscula parte do que representa a história dos povos desta região" (38) ["a tiny part of what represents

the history of the peoples of this region"]. The problem, Benjamim continues, is that even though "relatórios quinhentistas distorciam as informações e eram imprecisos quanto à localização de povoados, nomes de tribos e suas respectivas culturas" (146) ["sixteenth-century reports distorted information and were inaccurate about the location of communities, names of tribes and their respective cultures"], Eurocentric accounts of the different groups and communities that lived (and continue to live) in the Amazon are still taken as the only legitimate versions of history. Aware of the limited perspective of colonialist texts, Yara conceives the history of the Ykamiabas as a "colcha de retalhos" (40) ["patchwork quilt"] so much so that, as a researcher, her task becomes to "juntar os vários pedaços de informações contidos na história, no mito, nas descrições geográficas, nos achados arqueológicos, enfim" (40) ["put together the various pieces of information contained in history, myth, geographical descriptions, archaeological finds, and so on"]. *Ykamiabas*, therefore, results from Yara's archeological excavation of the past of the warriors within and beyond the structures of colonial discourses. Interestingly, Melo chooses "quilting," an activity deemed feminine and taken as a model of feminist art, to describe Yara's archeological work unburying and compiling information about the Ykamiabas. In "The Power and the Promise Ecological Feminism," Karen Warren also uses "quilting" as a metaphor to recognize the diversity of ecofeminist thinking. As with the quilt, which brings together multiple colors, patterns, and textures, an ecofeminist ethic, according to Warren, "emerges from the multiplicity of voices of women in a cross-cultural context, the design [of which] will change over time" (139). As Warren suggests, though the multiple designs and perspectives of the ecofeminist "quilt" are changeable, they are still bounded by a commitment to the principles of liberation, justice, and care.

The starting point of Yara's investigation is *Descobrimentos do Rio de Orellana* (*The Discovery of the Amazon According to the Account of Friar Gaspar de Carvajal, and Other Documents*), a narrative written by friar Gaspar de Carvajal which recounts the expedition led by Spanish explorers Francisco de Orellana and Gonzalo Pizarro along the Amazon River between 1541-1542. Carvajal's text is embedded in the political disputes between Spain and Portugal to secure the territories granted to these countries through the *Tratado de Tordesilhas* (Treaty of Tordesilhas), signed in 1494. In it, he describes the challenges these explorers faced while sailing along the region in search of the *El Dorado* and *País da Canela* (the country of cinnamon), legendary regions of gold and spices the Spanish claimed to exist in the Amazon. Although Carvajal's manuscript is valued as a historical document, his discourse reinforces some of the stylistic conventions of exploration and travel narratives about the "New World," for instance, Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*. It does so by recounting a conquering journey through an impenetrable and unknown territory, the Amazon jungle, and romanticizing the different trials and hardships Spanish men faced, including encounters with what they perceived as "uncivilized" and "mythical" Indigenous groups. In this sense, *Descobrimentos do Rio de Orellana* feeds into literary and historical discourses about the Amazon as an exotic and mysterious frontier and a land without history (but with plenty of "primitive," pre-history), making Orellana's search for a female mythic kingdom that presumably existed in the Amazon an important aspect of his narrative.

Rewriting the collective history of the Ykamiabas and reclaiming their women-centered environmental ethics depend on critically revisiting the history of the Spanish invasion of the Americas. Therefore, in her engagement with Carvajal's discourse Yara draws attention to the fictionality of his text to deconstruct its pretense to be a factual and comprehensive document. To

do so, instead of using direct quotes from *Descobrimentos do Rio de Orellana*, Yara presents us with her own rewriting of Carvajal's text. In it, she recounts Orellana's numerous attempts to "a qualquer custo, obter informações sobre a região das míticas guerreiras" (101) ["at any cost, obtain information about the region of the mythical warriors"]. Narrating a possible encounter between the Spanish troop and the female warriors, for example, Yara writes: "Os espanhóis estão ansiosos para vê-las de perto. Aproximam-se cada vez mais da costa, não se importando com a grande quantidade de flechas e paus que são atirados em sua direção. Curiosos, querem conferir a comentada habilidade das decantadas mulheres" (106) ["the Spanish are eager to see them close. They are getting closer and closer to the shore, not caring about the large number of arrows and sticks that are thrown in their direction. Curious, they want to check the much-talked-about ability of the renowned women"]. Yara then recounts that while fighting against the Ykamiabas, the Spanish soldiers try to confirm their assumptions about the origin of the warriors:

> – Como as guerreiras
>
> que habitavam a
>
> Ásia Menor!
>
> [...]
>
> – As Amazonas da Trácia
>
> e as que matavam os meninos. (107)
>
> – Like the warriors
>
> who inhabited
>
> Asia Minor!
>
> [...]

– The Amazons of Thrace

And those who killed the children.

In this passage, Orellana risks himself and his army to get closer to the warriors and prove his views of the Ykamiabas as an "imitation" of the Greek Amazonas. The main goal of Carvajal's narrative, Yara shows, is less to present a factual account than to explain the New World to European society and scientific community through a Eurocentric lens. Instead of reproducing the narrative mode of Carvajal's text and, thus, reinforcing the linearity and rigidity of logocentric and phallocentric modes of expression, Yara chooses to rewrite his discourse in verse form. Yara's choice, here, supports the novel's critique of historiography as a fictional discourse that, in Carvajal's case, is created to support the Spanish expansionist agenda and its colonial view of history. Significantly, this passage concludes with the Spanish soldiers mentioning the ninth labour of Heracles, "Belt of Hippolyta," which narrates the killing of the queen of the Amazonas.

Against Orellana's "obstinada intenção de travar contato com as guerreiras" (108) ["obstinate intention to make contact with the warriors"] and his limited focus on their physical beauty, in her rewriting of Carvajal's text Yara values these warriors for their resistance and continued struggles to defend their territory. This is clear, for example, in Yara's rewriting of the "grito de Guerra" ["war cry"] of the Ykamiabas. When Orellana realizes that, unlike the Greek warriors, the Ykamiabas do not have their breasts mutilated, the warriors respond:

– Custam a acreditar

na força de nossa raça

Nossas vozes que ecoam

no silêncio da Floresta!

– Um grito à nossa liberdade!

Um basta a essas invasões!

[...]

Não cortamos nossos seios

para manejarmos o arco

Aprendemos desde cedo

a conhecer a batalha

pela nossa liberdade! (107-8)

– They find it hard to believe

in the strength of our race

Our voices that echo

in the silence of the Forest!

– A cry to our freedom!

A stop to these invasions!

[…]

We do not cut our breasts

to handle the bow

We learn from an early age

to know the battle

for our freedom!

Here, Yara refutes the common description of the Ykamiabas as "aquelas que não têm seio ou leite" (44) ["those without breasts or milk"], recurrent in colonial narratives about these warriors, and the ways their masculinist gaze imposes stereotyped ideas that the female warriors need to

mutilate their bodies in other to resemble men or fight like men. Instead of portraying their conscious choice to live without men in terms of a lack or deficiency (body mutilation), Yara conceives it as an example of strength, independence, and resistance to patriarchal laws. At the same time, in her version of Carvajal's narrative, Yara makes it clear that their fight for freedom from social, political, and economic systems that are male-centered is inseparable from their struggles to maintain female-centered models of social organization and collective governance. Whereas Marlatt focuses on men's physical violence against nature (through labour), here Melo represents the colonial violence of men against women (the Ykamiabas) as physical, epistemological, and ontological.

Through her critique of historiography as a colonial tool, Yara also unveils its complicity with the territorial occupation of Europeans in the "New World." For example, Yara recounts that at some point during their expedition, the Spanish army stops at an Indigenous territory they call *Senhorio Aparia,* and describes Orellana taking possession of it: "Em nome do rei da Espanha, Carlos V, o imperador de todas as Índias, e do comandante Gonzalo Pizarro, tomo posse dos povoados dos índios Aparia" (96) ["In the name of the King of Spain, Carlos V, Emperor of all the Indies, and of his commander Gonzalo Pizarro, I take possession of the villages of the Aparia Indians"]. Yara then writes: "Os espanhóis olham. Desejam a terra. Querem se apossar daquilo que vêem. Sentem que tudo pode lhes pertencer, se for este o desejo da Coroa" (96) ["The Spanish look. They desire the land. They want to take possession of what they see. They feel that everything can belong to them, if this is the wish of the Crown"]. Their status as representatives of the Spanish crown, here, entitles the Spanish explorers to make land claims in the colony. Recalling Annie's revising of Lawson and Young's description of the Douglas Fir, in her rewriting of this scene Yara emphasizes the logic of naming, possession and

domination that would broadly characterize the Spanish relationship with the land. In this passage, the Spanish logic of domination is represented in the fact that they refer to Aparia as "*senhorio*," that is, as a territory controlled by one "*senhor*," one leader. To the Indigenous people who listen to Orellana's speech, however, his taking possession of their territory is nothing more than a performance. As Yara puts it, "[p]ara os tuxaunas reunidos, tudo não passava de uma encenação. Hirimara, Paraita, Dimara, Hurunara, Aparia, Macuyana, Guaricota e Mapiare, da Nação Aparia, assistem, indiferentes, Orellana a intitular-se dono de suas terras" (96) ["To the tuxaunas present there, this was all just an act. Hirimara, Paraita, Dimara, Hurunara, Aparia, Macuyana, Guaricota, and Mapiare, of the Aparia Nation, watch indifferently as Orellana calls himself the owner of their land"]. While Carvajal's narrative fails to mention that Orellana and the Spanish soldiers were welcomed by Indigenous peoples, Yara chooses to spell out the names of the different groups that make up the Aparia and uses the term "nation," instead of "*senhorio,*" to emphasize their collective ownership of the Aparia land.

To some extent, through her excavation of the collective past of the Ykamiabas, Yara also contests the idea of historiography as an anthropocentric narrative that reinforces human exceptionality and superiority. In a conversation with Yara, for instance, Benjamim states that by placing humans at the "center," instead of as "part" of nature, "[o] homem faz a sua história e a aniquila ao mesmo tempo" (117) ["man makes his history and annihilates it at the same time"]. While the positivist notion of history as progress allows for a linear development of humans as beings capable of full agency and knowledge, thereby making them the "authors" of history, for Benjamim it also enables their emergence as "predators" in search of domination over the natural world. The writing of human history, here conceived as a narrative about the bringing of nature under human control, is also the writing of the end of nature and eradication of humans because

of environmental destruction. Through Benjamim's perspective, therefore, history becomes a contested category that lays open the possibility of imminent collapse and exhaustion of nature as well as reveals the limitations of assumed ideals of human agency and knowledge. In the context of deforestation and resource exploitation in the Amazon, Benjamim concludes, historiography and its narrative of human exceptionality makes it impossible to understand the value of the "last rainforest on the planet" (118). Given the environmental bent of the novel, we can read Benjamim's critique less as a nihilistic commentary about a possible end of the world than as an attempt to propose a new form of history that would conceive humans as part of a complex living system whose survival depends on mutuality and cooperation between human and non-human nature.

While historiography supports the colonial appropriation of Indigenous land and helps establish Eurocentric history as an authoritative account that undermines non-Eurocentric experiences and realities, Melo deconstructs the history versus myth duality that pushes the Ykamiabas into invisibility. Once again, Yara's history professor becomes the vehicle through which Melo develops her critique. For instance, responding to Yara's fears that her rewriting of the history of the Ykamiabas "caminha para o mito" (56) ["is moving toward myth] and, thus, lacks credibility, Benjamim reminds her that the separation between history and myth is, in fact, a colonial construction which invalidates the history and systems of governance of peoples who lived in the Amazon before the European invasion. As he explains, "Mito e História se acham entrelaçados nos documentos e testemunho das civilizações. Ou seja, ... a história dos povos começou a ser escrita a partir dos seus primeiros relatos mitológicos" (166) ["Myth and History are intertwined in the documents and testimony of civilizations. That is … human history began to be written from their first mythological accounts"]. Similar to Annie's efforts to correct

women's exclusion from the public archives of British Columbia by reimagining their experiences in the private realm, Yara expands the limited gaze of historical texts like Carvajal's precisely by embracing what his colonial gaze reduced to the "mythical universe" of the Ykamiabas and their existence. Put another way, Yara rewrites the Ykamiabas into existence by creating a narrative that is mythical and historical at the same time, or, as she puts it, "uma história revelada pelo mito que atravessou as fronteiras geográficas e alcançou as densas florestas e extensos rios amazônicos" (44) ["a story revealed by a myth that crossed geographical borders and reached the dense forests and extensive rivers of the Amazon"]. Melo's point is clear: whereas a colonial and masculinist version of history claims that the story of the Ykamiabas was "mythical" and, therefore, "takes away" (undermines) their existence, Yara writes a feminist mythical and historical text that is generative because it discursively "gives back" that existence. In this sense, Melo forces us to relativize and displace our own assumptions about Western epistemologies regarding history and what counts as historical, factual.

It is important to note that although Yara's research starts with Carvajal's text, the novel refuses to place colonialism as a foundational event in the existence of these warriors. For example, Yara locates the history of the Ykamiabas and their presence in the Amazon within a broader movement of migration from Asia to the Americas. In this sense, the novel makes an intertext with the Bering Strait theory, which explains that the history of the Americas began with a mass migration from Asia through a land bridge known as the Bering Strait. The first nine chapters of *Ykamiabas*, therefore, are dedicated to recounting the arrival of these warriors in the Amazon and explaining their modes of social, political, and economic organization before the European invasion. Living in settlements that are made up of women only, the Ykamiabas hunt, fish, build their houses and use the resources of the forest to provide for themselves. As Yara's

descriptions suggest, ideals of communal work, equal distribution of tasks in favor of the collective wellbeing, and respect for the environment determine the dynamics of life among the Ykamiabas. Here, the organizational structure of the novel expands the "ongoing cinerama" of history beyond the Eurocentric idea of colonialism as a foundational event. To borrow Thomas King's words in "Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial," Melo's narrative shows that the history of the Ykamiabas (and Yara's recounting of it) "does not depend on the arrival of Europeans for [its] *raison d'être*" (189, original emphasis). King's basic premise, in fact, is that while the idea of "post-colonial" literature allows us to look at texts "which are formed out of the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, the colonized and the colonizer, the term itself assumes that the starting point for that discussion is the advent of Europeans in [the Americas]" (184-5). Besides organizing literature gradually and "suggesting that there is both progress and improvement," the term "post-colonial," according to King, cuts Indigenous writers "off from our traditions, traditions that were in place before colonialism ever became a question, traditions which have come down to us through our cultures in spite of colonization" (185). In *Ykamiabas,* Melo avoids framing the existence of these warriors in terms of a power struggle between colonizers and colonized to, instead, emphasize the land ethics and governance practices that were passed down to them before the European invasion.

As in *Ana Historic,* the ecofeminist stance of Melo's novel becomes clear in Yara's narration of birth. In the beginning of the novel, Yara defines the Ykamiabas as the women warriors of the Paraná-Guassu River valley whose modes of living are based on "um culto de natureza feminina de amor à terra" (44) ["a feminine cult of love for nature and the earth"]. The *muyrakytã*, the amulet the Ykamiabas carry with them which usually appears in historical texts as evidence of their existence, also points to the connection between women and nature that

Melo examines throughout the novel. As Yara explains, because of its shape, the *muyrakytã* is associated with the "órgão reprodutor feminino, símbolo da fertilidade, e simbolicamente relacionado ao culto matriarchal da Grande Mãe Terra" (28) ["female reproductive organ, symbol of fertility, and symbolically related to the matriarchal cult of the Great Mother Earth"]. Yara builds on the idea of female reproduction when she narrates the "ritual" of giving birth of the Ykamiabas. For instance, while cutting the umbilical cord of their newborns and burying their placentas in tree holes, the Ykamiabas sing:

> Que o choro de nossas filhas
>
> fecunde o ventre da mãe
>
> para que do seio da terra
>
> brote o alimento
>
> que fará forte a nossa Nação!
>
> [...]
>
> Renovemos nossas vidas!
>
> Sustentemos nossa história (69)
>
> May the cry of our daughters
>
> fertilize the mother's womb
>
> so that from the bosom of the earth
>
> sprout the food
>
> that will make our Nation strong!
>
> [...]
>
> Let us renew our lives!
>
> Let us sustain our history

Here, giving birth is also represented as a collective event that, although excluded from historical accounts about the Spanish arrival in the Americas and search for the mythical kingdom of the Ykamiabas, is foundational in the lives of these warriors. Yara's description redefines reproduction as a tool that would allow for the continuation of their community and, thus, the survival of the Ykamiabas as a nation, reinforced in the idea that from the bosom of the earth would sprout the food that would nurture mothers and newborns. Mothering and natality, this passage suggests, puts these warriors in a position of connection with nature (embodied in the idea of the womb of nature as an extension of the womb of women) which resembles Marlatt's description of the Old Wood.

Yara's rewriting of the myth of the Ykamiabas and Mother Earth, and discussions about the "feminine principle" are not simply an ode to women's resistance. Rather, her research about these female warriors leads to a broader call for an ecological consciousness that is not uniquely feminine. At the end of her narrative, for instance, Yara reinforces the urgency of envisioning a different relationship between humans and the environment. She writes that "[o] ser humano precisa se dar conta de que somos partes de um corpo muito maior de vida. E que precisamos iniciar uma nova relação com todos os seres que habitam a Terra. Precisamos respeitar todas as formas de vida: os animais, as plantas, todos os organismos vivos, pois de todos depende a cadeia de vida que precisa ser continuamente alimentada" (186) ["the human being needs to realize that we are part of a much larger body of life. And that we need to start a new relationship with all beings that inhabit the Earth. We need to respect all forms of life: the animals, the plants, all living organisms, because on all of them depends the chain of life that needs to be continuously fed"]. Reflecting on the concepts of reciprocity and accountability, Yara suggests that existence is relational and dependent upon environmentally conscious action and mutual

responsibility between humans themselves, and between humans and the planet. In this sense, she reclaims the idea of nature as "mother" not to simply reinforce women's roles as caretakers and mothers, nor to confirm an inherent connection between women and nature; she does so to advocate more sustainable practices that are non-gendered and based on establishing the harmony and equity between different groups, communities, and the earth.

Significantly, the idea of Mother Earth has particularly informed the language of contemporary environmental activism in Latin America. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos shows, the concept of *Pacha Mama* (also *Pachamama*), roughly translated as "Mother Earth, a living entity that encompasses both human and nonhuman beings" (*The End of the Cognitive Empire* 240), is used in countries like Ecuador and Bolivia to grant constitutional rights to nature. For instance, after identifying *Pacha Mama* as a living organism of which humans are part, the Ecuadorian constitution lays out its objective to build a "new form of public coexistence, in diversity and in harmony with nature, to achieve the good way of living, the *sumak kawsay*"[43] (*The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador,* "Preamble"). Article 71 of the constitution then clarifies what the rights of nature are, stating that "Nature, or Pacha Mama, where life is reproduced and occurs, has the right to integral respect for its existence and for the maintenance and regeneration of its life cycles, structure, functions and evolutionary processes" (*The Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador*, art. 71, ch. 7). *Pacha Mama* is also evoked in two documents created by the United Nations: *Pachamama: Our Earth, Our Future*, a youth publication, and *Pachamama: A Teacher's Guide*. Although it does not directly mention *Pachamama,* United Nations Resolution 63/278 recognizes Mother Earth as "a common

[43] Santos translates *sumak kawsay* as a "way of living together in harmony, not only among humans but also with nature" (*The End of the Cognitive Empire* 239). This Quechua phrase became known as an important environmental concept after its incorporation into the Ecuadorian constitution.

expression for the planet earth in a number of countries and regions, which reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit" (United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 63/278). The use of *Pacha Mama* in Western thought has, nevertheless, drawn criticism. Commenting on the incorporation of *Pachamama* in the Bolivian constitution and, more broadly, on the "short-term trajectory" of this term within Western thought, Yaneth Katia Apaza Huanca claims that the use of Mother Earth within a Western-centric legal framework still reinforces "a humanist, anthropocentric inclination" that conceives "human beings at the apex of the hierarchy of species" (17). The problem, for Huanca, is that current legal frameworks are not designed to address and recognize the principle of complementarity that is at the core of the Aymara vision of *Pacha Mama.* While Huanca's assessment is valid, examining whether the Western use of this concept leads to a genuine understanding of nature as a living entity and to more sustainable environmental practices, or to a co-opting of Indigenous conceptions of nature to fit a Eurocentric legal framework is beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather, my intention, here, is to show that Melo's use of the Mother Earth imagery resonates with ongoing discussions about the need to move away from anthropocentric paradigms of thought – discussions whose starting point is the idea of nature as a feminine entity and of the "feminine" as an eco-centric mode of relating to the environment.

In her comment about the systems of governance of the Ykamiabas, Yara evokes ideals of collective life and labour the main goal of which is to fulfil the basic needs of local communities and guarantee their survival. The ways the Ykamiabas define "productivity" and "growth," then, take into account ideals of production and sustenance of life. In this sense, the novel echoes Janyne Sattler's call for an ecofeminist theory that is economic, and, above all,

anti-capitalist. In "Um Projeto Ecofeminista para a Complexidade da Vida" ("An Ecofeminist Project for the Complexity of Life"), Sattler comments on how communal ways of life and forms of production can challenge the predatory logic of capitalism. The starting point of her discussion is agroecology, which she defines as a collective model of economy and sociability based on the "mútua cooperação e coletivização do trabalho" as well as the "comunhão e colaboração estabelecida com a própria natureza – sua sazonalidade, sua dinamicidade, sua interdependência ecológica" (184) ["mutual cooperation and collectivization of labor" as well as "communion and collaboration established with nature itself – its seasonality, its dynamism, its ecological interdependence"].[44] Because the individualistic and monocultural logic of capitalism is so ingrained in current systems of knowledge and economic production, the implementation of agroecology requires, first, "a recuperação de saberes localizados e da memória contextualizada da produção de alimentos, mas também de sua estreita relação com a fauna e a flora locais" (Sattler 184) ["the recovery of localized knowledges and of the contextualized memory of food production, but also of its close relationship with the local fauna and flora"]. Mainly concerned with food security and the rights of local communities to produce and access sustainable food in a country that continuously struggles with high rates of hunger and malnourishment, Sattler ultimately urges us to abandon anthropocentric ideas of absolute control over natural resources and to take up new relations based on solidarity, reciprocity, and collective responsibility vis-à-vis the environment. For the people on the ground, this abandoning means promoting local worldviews and daily actions that, on a collective level, could help communities achieve economic, social, and epistemological sovereignty.

[44] All the translations of Sattler's text are my own.

Since, according to Sattler, "o saber e a memória da agrofloresta é também o saber e a memória das mulheres" (185) ["the knowledge and memory of agroforestry is also the knowledge and memory of women"], agroecology should also be a tool to fight against gender oppression and violence. As she writes, collective forms of life and modes of production that reclaim local knowledge and respect the complexity of the environment are not enough "se os resíduos do patriarcado persistirem com suas marcas de violência, simbólica ou de fato" (185) ["if the residues of patriarchy persist with their marks of violence, symbolic or de facto"]. Agroecology is not enough if

> as tarefas do cuidado (com a prole, com os idosos, com os doentes, com as sementes, com o alimento), do doméstico, da reprodução e da educação das crianças, persistirem como tarefas femininas quando deveriam ser responsabilidades comunais compartilhadas, e se o espaço do poder social, político e econômico não for um espaço igualitário e aberto às experiências diversamente generificadas. (185-6)

> the tasks of caring (for the offspring, the elderly, the sick, the seeds, food), the tasks of the domestic realm, of reproduction, and of the education of children, persist as women's tasks when they should be shared communal responsibilities, and if the space of social, political, and economic power is not an egalitarian space open to diverse gender experiences.

In this sense, Sattler implies that to create social, economic, and epistemological alternatives that respect the diversity and complexity of human and non-human life, agroecology must embrace a feminist, or, rather, an ecofeminist logic that recognizes women's work on the land and the household as well as advocates fair division of domestic labour and increased political and decision-making power for women. Agroecology and (eco)feminism, according to this

perspective, are equally part of a broader project to challenge the logic of capitalism and to ensure the sovereignty of local communities over territory rights, resource management and food production. As Yara shows throughout the novel, the Ykamiabas' deliberate choice to live without men represents, more broadly, their resistance against what they perceive as male-centered and oppressive economic, political, and social systems that would undermine their rights to territory, to local practices of resource use, and to cultural and epistemic freedom. In this sense, Melo's representation of nature as feminine and use of Mother Earth imagery is inseparable from her attempt to promote an ethics of care that displaces "maldevelopment" and focuses on mutual relations with the environment.

As historical novels, both *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* share an interest in rethinking the meaning of history in the context of settlement in Canada, and of colonialism in Brazil. Counter to common ideas of history as factual and comprehensive, both texts unveil the limited gaze of historical narratives to develop a similar critique of historiography as a gendered and exploitative discourse centered around the overvaluing of men's achievements and the bringing of nature under men's control. *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* also put forth an analogous critique of "progress" as such. As Marlatt and Melo imply, the logic of exploitation that they challenge relegates women to the realm of historic invisibility – the household, in Marlatt's novel, and pre-history, in Melo's narrative – while it also reinforces men's superiority vis-à-vis nature, hence legitimizing environmental exploitation. In this sense, the critique of historiography that Marlatt and Melo develop represents an attempt to rethink the relationship between women and nature beyond the space of shared subjugation. By questioning the material and historical conditions that allow for the exclusion of women and the domination of nature, both novels echo some of the discussions recurrent in ecofeminist theory. While *Ana Historic* points to a problematization

of women's unrecognized work in the household and to a critique of historical narratives that help privatize and feminize care-related activities, *Ykamiabas* advocates an environmental consciousness that reconsiders the ways humans interact with non-human nature. Central to both novels is a call to redefine environmental use and care away from ideals of (male) production and toward models that allow for interdependence, collective survival and a shared concern about the production and sustenance of human and non-human life.

Chapter Four

"The Forest is Alive": Reclaiming Indigenous Epistemologies about Environmental Stewardship

So far, this dissertation has been tracing literary representations of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil that question utilitarian models of forest use in order to conceive the forest as a contentious entity that is embedded in broader environmental, cultural, and economic conflicts. My analyses have revealed that although the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon occupy a central role in the national literatures and cultural myths of these countries, the idea of the wilderness and the forest they reify is mostly symbolic and, as such, tends to obscure the material realities of these landscapes. In turn, the writers I have been examining draw attention to the relations of power that are constitutive of and naturalized within cultural myths of forest landscapes. In doing so, they call for a critical reinterpretation of hegemonic narratives while also inviting alternative frameworks of knowledge that run against dominant economic, political, and environmental models. My first chapter outlined how a reading of Canada's and Brazil's forests as contentious spaces would benefit from a fruitful dialogue between postcolonialism and ecocriticism within and beyond Western-centric frameworks. More specifically, I argued that by critiquing the sustained exploitation of humans and non-humans in Canada's and Brazil's forests, the narratives I have chosen for this research project offer opportunities for a theoretical (un)thinking that brings epistemology, ontology, nature, and politics to the forefront of discussions about the environment. To support my argument, I focused particularly on the role of Latin-American postcolonial theorists like Aníbal Quijano, Walter Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, and the ways their treatment of epistemic and ontological issues in the context of (neo)colonialism in Latin America allows for the emergence of alternative concepts of nature

and environment. My second chapter discussed issues of deforestation in the context of capitalist development by examining texts that represent the material and environmental outcomes of economic projects in British Columbia and the Brazilian Amazon in order to deconstruct hegemonic discourses about capitalism. Counter to the idea that capitalist systems are fundamental to promote wealth and social wellbeing, *Virtual Clearcut, Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* depict the ways that capitalist development catalyzes human and environmental exploitation, produces poverty and social inequality, and results in political disenfranchisement. At the same time, these texts show that any attempt to break with the discourses that reify capitalism needs to open space for concrete actions. My third chapter examined the intersections of environmental exploitation and gender exclusion in Canada and Brazil by reading historical novels that question the historiographic portrayal of forest landscapes as masculine spaces and its reinforcing of ideals of productive (male) labour in and against nature. I argued that by critiquing how the writing of history creates the material and historical conditions for the exclusion of women and the domination of nature, *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* bring forth an idea of natality and childbirth to call for a renewed relationship between humans and non-human nature beyond male-centric approaches.

In this final chapter, I examine how issues of forestry management and deforestation intersect with conflicts involving Indigenous territories in Canada and Brazil. To this end, I discuss Jeannette Armstrong's narrative about the struggles of an Okanagan environmental artist and activist in *Whispering in Shadows* and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's account of Kopenawa's experiences as a Yanomami shaman and environmentalist in *A Queda do Céu: Palavras de um Xamã Yanomami* (*The Falling Sky: Words of a Yanomami Shaman*). While the process of clearing and civilizing the "New World" resulted in the deforestation of natural

landscapes and a systematic attempt to assimilate Indigenous cultures, the narratives I analyze in this chapter reappropriate forest landscapes to portray land disputes as an embodiment of broader conflicts between Western and Indigenous epistemologies with respect to land ownership and resource use. In their texts, Armstrong and Kopenawa depict environmental exploitation vis-à-vis the dispossession of bodies, territories and epistemologies that allows for the consolidation of settler colonial systems of power. Consequently, these authors denounce the ongoing logic of assimilation that continues to limit Indigenous land, bodies, and knowledges to the category of resources. At the same time, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* reclaim Indigenous modes of thought to advocate for Indigenous practices of land use and call for an alternative understanding of land stewardship that is not based on possession, but, rather, on historical presence on the land, kinship relations between humans and non-human nature, and traditional knowledges about the forest. In this sense, Armstrong and Kopenawa replace a colonial idea of "owned" land tied to the transformation of nature through labor, which arguably constitutes one of the philosophical bases for disregarding Indigenous presence as "ownership," with that of land as a dynamic place made of multiple agencies and mutual interactions. I argue that the reasserting of Indigenous knowledges that takes place throughout their narratives, therefore, is not only epistemological and ontological, but also environmental in that it encourages us to understand the forest otherwise and re-envision the relationship between humans and non-human nature beyond anthropocentric and exploitative practices.

On the one hand, Armstrong and Kopenawa contest the ways the consolidation of colonial power relied on severing Indigenous peoples' connection to the land and to knowledge practices that are centered on this relationship. By doing so, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* confirm Daniel Coleman's statement that at "the heart of the establishment of

Canada [and, I would add, Brazil] is an old and unresolved conflict with Indigenous conceptions of land, ecology, and human relations with environment" (11). As briefly discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, for Coleman the encounter between settler colonial knowledge and Indigenous modes of thinking regarding land and environment becomes "a key Canadian site" for developing "ecologically sensitive and ethically located epistemologies" (25). Coleman's basic premise is that despite their steady dismissal by "Eurocentric diffusionism," Indigenous knowledges "have the potential to reveal what has been missing in Western knowledge systems about how to live cooperatively in a more-than-human world" (13-4). Aware of the power dynamics involved in the encounter between settler and Indigenous knowledges, especially the risks of romanticizing Indigenous difference and limiting Indigeneity to ideals of authenticity that could only be found in a pre-contact past, Coleman still maintains that recognizing Indigenous systems of thought as different and unique could help question the "self-evidence of our own premises" and assumptions about those knowledges (17). I mostly agree with Coleman's statement, particularly his comments about the importance of recognizing Indigenous systems of thought as "unique" and legitimate. Nevertheless, I fear that his ideas may imply a complementarity that could limit the role of Indigenous epistemologies to that of saving the planet, as if these epistemologies (in the plural and embedded in particular histories, cultures, and modes of existence) could be adapted into a "one-size-fits-all" solution to current environmental crises. This is especially relevant if we consider how current economic and political systems are centered around a model of relating with the environment that is still inhospitable to the ideas of mutuality and cooperation that some Indigenous epistemologies put forth. To borrow Glen Coulthard's words, these systems are still "structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the

dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their land and self-determining authority" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 57, original emphasis). In my analyses of Armstrong's and Kopenawa's works, therefore, I'm more interested in examining how Indigenous knowledge systems about land and belonging, when brought against opposing ideals of land possession that have characterized Western thought, work to transform common definitions of environmental ownership and understandings of forest landscapes so as to destabilize this "sedimented set of hierarchical social relations." In other words, in this chapter I maintain that *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* reaffirm Indigenous epistemologies not simply to reveal "what has been missing" in Western frameworks, but, rather, to displace the centrality of these frameworks and, thus, open space for alternative ontologies, forms of action, and grounded systems that are geared toward Indigenous self-affirmation.

From a discursive perspective, Armstrong and Kopenawa guide readers through a process of epistemic decolonization that revisits the dynamics of knowledge production in the context of asymmetrical forms of cultural contact like colonialism to call for the legitimization of Indigenous concepts regarding land and environment. Thus, I read *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* as instances of what Nehiyaw and Dene scholar Jarrett Martineau calls "affirmative refusal" (43). In his analysis of the relation between artistic creation, Indigenous resurgence, and knowledge reclamation, Martineau states that "indigenous art-making is inseparable from political struggle" (3). For Martineau, because Indigenous art exists in "creative contention" with a system that continues to assimilate and appropriate Indigenous bodies, knowledges, and lands (4), it proposes a "structural engagement with colonialism" that helps deconstruct settler colonial essentialisms while affirming Indigenous social, political, and cultural systems (13). Through Martineau's perspective, Indigenous art becomes a form of

"*resistance in (and as) movement*" that strategically navigates the "psycho-affective and material terrain" of settler colonialism to envision affirmative expressions of Indigeneity (57, original emphasis). To illustrate this process, Martineau coins the term "affirmative refusal," that is, a practice of "creative negation" that seeks to stop the appropriation of Indigenous bodies and forms of thought under the settler state by reinscribing Indigenous presence and re-creating decolonial imaginaries (56). As a tool "through which to glimpse visions, echoes, and refrains of decolonized realities" (10), Indigenous art is crucial for the creation of a pedagogy of decolonization that moves beyond institutionalized essentialisms and assimilative narratives to, instead, reclaim imaginative and material forms of being Indigenous that are grounded and transformative. As I argue in this chapter, the creation of a pedagogy of decolonization geared toward affirmative Indigeneity in *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* starts with the "affirmative refusal" of institutionalized concepts about land ownership and the recovery of traditional knowledges about the land.

It is important to note that Armstrong and Kopenawa present epistemic alternatives to dominant frameworks of thought regarding land use in part to urge readers to think and, thus, act differently. As previously mentioned, Penny, the protagonist of Armstrong's novel, claims that stories "must be told to be understood and changed" because she believes that "putting images out there changes the world" (292). Likewise, Kopenawa puts his words into "peles de papel" ("paper skins") both to teach his intended non-Indigenous audience about the history and traditions of his nation and to convince his readers to stop thinking that "nossa floresta é morta e que ela foi posta lá à toa (65) ["our forest is dead and placed here without reason (12)].[45] Here, Armstrong and Kopenawa suggest that their narratives should be read not simply as works of

[45] All the translations of *A Queda do Céu* come from the English version of the text, which was translated by Nicholas Elliott and Alison Dundy, and published in 2013.

imagination but as documents that mediate between real life issues and aesthetic disinterestedness to help us understand and address real world problems. Their texts assume a connection between representation and learning, and between learning about the "colonial difference" and acting "differently" which reinforces the idea of art as an aesthetic, ethic, and pedagogical tool for promoting social change. The ways that Armstrong and Kopenawa comment on the role of art in the context of environmental exploitation brings to mind Rob Nixon's definition of the environmental "writer-activist." As I discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, Nixon defines the "writer-activist" as a "combative" writer who deploys an "imaginative agility and worldly ardor to help amplify the media-marginalized causes of the environmentally dispossessed" (5). Nixon's argument, more specifically, is that the environmental "writer-activist" combines creative writing and political awareness to draw attention to the effects of environmental exploitation on poor communities, which, according to his perspective, remain invisible from media attention and scientific enquiry. The tendency to combine art and politics in the context of environmental destruction, for Nixon, brings some aesthetic challenges. Because ecological issues develop through what he defines as "slow violence," a kind of violence that happens gradually and whose effects are dispersed across time and space (9), they challenge environmental artists to give shape to "formless threats" and apprehend "imaginatively" what "remains imperceptible to the senses" (10). Nixon concludes that by creating an environmental aesthetics that is also sensitive to broader social problems, the "writer-activist" combines real world issues and aesthetic form to offer a structure, at the level of discourse, for intervening in current environmental, cultural, and economic crises. As I demonstrate in my analyses, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* explore the intersections between art and environmental activism to invite readers to envision the forest

otherwise and, thus, promote a renewed engagement with the non-human world. At the same time, because they focus on conflicts between Western and Indigenous epistemologies about land, Armstrong and Kopenawa show that this new form of environmental consciousness is contingent on our participation in the pedagogy of decolonization that their texts put forth.

In essence, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* suggest that land disputes result not only from disagreements about who owns the land Indigenous groups are trying to protect, but also from conflicting understandings of what it means to "own" a land. According to Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, Indigenous peoples "don't relate to the land by possessing or owning it or having control over it. We relate to land through connection – generative, affirmative, complex, overlapping, and nonlinear *relationship*" (*As We Have Always Done* 43, original emphasis). As Simpson puts it, Nishnaabeg governance, including its systems of economic, political, and social organization, is founded upon Nishnaabeg forms of land stewardship. For Simpson, recognizing the connection between grounded systems and the land is essential for "building radical Indigenous nation-based resurgences" and "place-based grounded normativities" that are centered on "nonhierarchical relationships between land and bodies" (*As We Have Always Done* 44). Although Simpson speaks about the specific realities of the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg nation, her idea of land stewardship and "place-based grounded normativities" helps us understand the kinds of interventions Armstrong and Kopenawa are making when they call for reciprocal forms of connection to the land. Additionally, Simpson acknowledges that Indigenous nations "cannot achieve a nation-based resurgence within the current hyperextractivist economic and political structure of the Canadian state" (*As We Have Always Done* 50). Here, Simpson echoes Coulthard's explanation of colonialism as a structured form of dispossession whose systems of economic and political power continue to depend on

severing Indigenous peoples' connection to the land. To respond to this challenge, Simpson insists on the importance of offering "robust, ethical, and sustainable alternatives to settler colonialism" and the grounded systems it enables (*As We Have Always Done* 50). Through Simpson's perspectives, then, re-centering Indigenous epistemologies is inseparable from reasserting Indigenous presence on the land and restoring political, economic, and epistemic systems that are based on reciprocity. Simpson's ideas are important because *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* point to a similar conflict between dismantling frameworks of thought through Indigenous epistemic resurgence, and achieving positive, grounded change. At times, Armstrong's and Kopenawa's texts complicate the idea of epistemic recognition and engagement that Coleman calls for in order to reveal the incompatibility between Indigenous frameworks and modes of thought, and the political, economic, and environmental systems that Western knowledge continues to legitimate. Even if this remains an unresolved conflict throughout their narratives, it shows that any attempt to participate in a pedagogy of decolonization should account for the limitations of epistemic engagement.

A reading of land disputes as a manifestation of larger conflicts between Western and Indigenous knowledge regarding the status and meaning of land ownership would not be complete without a reference to *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance,* a documentary about the Oka Crisis[46] produced by Abenaki filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin. Released in 1993, the film documents the efforts of Mohawk people from the community of Kanehsatake to protect the Pines, a burial ground in a white pine tree forest near the town of Oka, against the expansion of a

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[46] Authors like Kiera L. Ladner and Leanne Simpson recognize that "Oka Crisis" is a colonial term and, as such, "is offensive to many involved in the struggle because it refers to the non-Native town, and because the term was manufactured by the mainstream media" (8-9). Ladner and Simpson explain that, instead, some authors prefer to use "the resistance at Kanehsatà:ke" or the "standoff at Kanehsatà:ke and Kahnawà:ke" (9). While I also acknowledge this fact, I use the term "Oka Crisis" because this is how Obomsawin has referred to the conflict in her documentary.

nine-hole golf course in their land. Different from the ways media representations and public discourses about the Oka Crisis "promoted a figure of the warrior associated with a violent, criminal context and, opposed to it, a figure of the stolid soldier associated with a national army ensuring law and order" (St-Amand 145), *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* is filmed from the inside of the siege site and, thus, provides an embodied perspective of the conflict that was absent from mass media outlets. In this sense, one of the goals of Obomsawin's documentary is to deconstruct mediatized accounts to promote a better understanding of the Oka standoff to a non-Indigenous population. From the film's outset, Obomsawin establishes the land where the conflict took place as unquestionably Mohawk territory. For instance, after showing a map of the region in the first few minutes of the film, the narrator explains that "the story you will see takes place near Montreal, in Kanehsatake, a Mohawk village near the town of Oka, and in Kahnawake, a Mohawk reserve south of the city, at the Mercier bridge" (0:00:16). The voice-over then informs the audience of the immediate causes of the conflict: the project to build a luxury housing development and to expand a 9-hole golf course into the Pines, "which is part of the Mohawk nation's land" (0:00:42). As the narrator finishes this explanation, the camera moves to a close-up of a sign nailed to one of the trees which reminds the audience, in capital letters, of the boundary that is not to be crossed: "MOHAWK TERRITORY! NO TRESPASSING!" (0:00:46). While the narrator recounts that this project started in the early 1930s and, since then, the municipality of Oka has tried to appropriate Mohawk burial grounds, the camera moves from the golf course toward the forested area in a way that reflects the encroachment on Mohawk land. This sequence then ends with a zooming in on the cemetery, its headstones with inscriptions carved in Mohawk and a ceremonial feather, with Indigenous singing on the background. Notably, the tombstones of the Mohawk ancestors are evoked here to

symbolize an ancestral history of belonging and continued presence that supports Obomsawin's portrayal of the 78-day standoff in Kanehsatake as a conflict that took place on "part of Mohawk's nation land."

In a way, *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* serves as a land claim for the Mohawk of Kanehsatake based on their heritage and connection to the land. In fact, instead of presenting the conflict near Oka as a decisive but isolated moment in Canadian history, as the word "crisis" implies, Obomsawin's documentary locates the events that unfolded in the summer of 1990 within a larger history of land appropriation dating back to the first attempts of the Mohawk to have their rights to the land recognized in the 1760s.[47] When three warriors who participated in the negotiation process with government representatives return to Kahnawake, for example, the army helicopter that takes them back lands "behind the Sulpicians' church" where, according to the narrator, "the trouble all began 270 years ago" (0:27:31 minutes). While the screen shows archival pictures and footages of the Iroquois village at the foot of Mount Royal, the narrator recounts the history of the Mohawk people in the St. Lawrence Valley before and after the arrival of Jacques Cartier, including the appropriation of the Island of Montreal and the displacement of Mohawk families to a land described as part of ancient Mohawk hunting

[47] The land the Mohawk of Kanehsatake fight for was "given" to the Sulpicians, a society of priests of Saint-Sulpice, in 1676 when they established a mission at nowadays Montreal. The goal of this mission was to convert locals from the Mohawk, Algonquin, and Nipissing nations to Christianity. In 1761, the Mohawk of Kanehsatake communicated with government officials in Britain to contest their right to the land and request that they be free from the Sulpicians' authority. In 1861, the Mohawk of Kanehsatake asked Lord Elgin, Governor General of Canada, to recognize their right to the land, but their request was denied and, in 1859, a bill was passed that granted the Sulpicians official title to the land. Between 1886 and 1897, the Mohawk of Kanehsatake planted over 100,000 trees ("The Pines") at the base of the mountain outside Oka to prevent landslides from avalanches. In 1912, the case of the Mohawk of Kanehsatake over land rights was heard by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and it was denied. In 1975, the Mohawk people of Kahnawake, Kanehsatake and Akwesasne tried to request Aboriginal title to their ancestral lands, but their request was denied on the basis that they did not hold the land continuously from time immemorial. In 1977, the Mohawk of Kanehsatake filed a second land claim within the federal government, which was rejected in 1986. In 2001, the *Kanehsatake Interim Land Base Governance Act* determined that the land was to be reserved for the Mohawks of Kanehsatake. Yet, the land was not established as a reserve and, since then, the process of transferring the land to the Mohawk people has not yet started. This simplified timeline was adapted from https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/timeline/oka-crisis.

grounds in Kanehsatake. From the start of this historical reconstruction, the narrator states that "for thousands of years, all this land was aboriginal land. Long before the white man came, the Kanienkehaka, people of the flint known as Mohawks, had governed themselves within a confederacy of five nations they called Haudenosaunee. The Mohawks were the keepers of the eastern door of the five nations territory" (0:27:38). At the end of this sequence, the camera shows the wampum belt the Mohawk people made "as a record of their rights to the land" (0:30:42) and of the laws governing the five-nation confederacy of the Haudenosaunee. Whereas the land claims posed by the Mohawk were denied on the basis that they did not hold the land continuously "from time immemorial", the documentary foregrounds the lengthy history of the Mohawk in the St. Lawrence Valley, the establishment of the Mohawk community in ancestral territory in Kanehsatake and their continued resistance to the colonial seizure of their land. In this sense, Obomsawin establishes a continuity between struggles of the Mohawk ancestors who refused to surrender their land and abide by colonial rule 270 years ago, and land defenders in present-day Kanehsatake.

Despite the different artistic strategies of a documentary like *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* and the narratives I analyze in this chapter, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* represent land conflicts in a comparable way and advocate a similar concept of land belonging as Obomsawin's film. In *Whispering in Shadows*, Okanagan author Jeannette Armstrong reflects on the role of Indigenous art and activism in addressing issues of deforestation and bringing forth alternative understandings of land use. Originally published in 2000, the novel narrates the struggles of Penny Jackson, an Okanagan painter, environmental activist, and single mother who moves out of her community to pursue a degree in Fine Arts and Political Science at the University of British Columbia. While at university, Penny adopts a

critical view of the exploitative practices of current economic systems and realizes the importance of grassroots organizing as a tool to fight for more sustainable environmental practices. As an activist, Penny participates in environmental protests and attends international conferences aimed at building Indigenous solidarity and affirming Indigenous political agency at a global level. As a visual artist, she combines activism and artistic practice to portray ecological destruction and to create a sense of urgency through her paintings which she believes would encourage her public to apprehend and act against environmental exploitation. Throughout the novel, nevertheless, Penny develops a complicated relationship with a profit-oriented art market, which ultimately forces her to give up her artistic career. After being diagnosed with a rare type of cancer caused by pesticides used on the apples she harvested when she worked in apple picking, Penny moves back to her community to allow herself to heal and to help her children reconnect with their Okanagan heritage. Even though it has much in common with traditional *künstlerroman*s, *Whispering in Shadows* is more than a text narrating Penny's experiences from youth to middle age and her many attempts to reconcile art and politics. In fact, Armstrong's text incorporates traditional oral literature, excerpts from Penny's poems, fragments from letters she sends and receives from friends and family members, and entries from Penny's diary. The narrative also includes long, essay-style discussions about artistic creation and environmental exploitation which turn *Whispering in Shadows* into a treatise on the possibilities and challenges of combining art and environmentalism.[48] In this sense, Armstrong's text depicts the Indigenous artist-activist at work (both Penny and Armstrong herself) and, thus, offers a glimpse of what art as activism looks like.

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[48] The ways that *Whispering in Shadows* combines theoretical discussions (about artistic creation) and fictional discourse echo Nicole Brossard's "*fiction théorique*" (fiction/theory or fiction-theory) in the sense that Armstrong's examination of the role of art is informed by a critical/creative dyad.

Penny's development as an artist-activist is informed by her desire to not only fight for environmental and social justice, but also to reclaim transformative forms of Indigeneity and Indigenous alternatives to what she regards as the destructive "illusion of western development and progress as a world order" (189). To some extent, memories of her already deceased grandmother Tupa remind Penny of her belonging to the Okanagan nation and the need to reconnect with the land. These recollections help Penny understand land disputes as a symptom of the clash between global systems like capitalism and colonialism, which enforce an idea of land possession based on exploitation, and Okanagan modes of thought that emphasize ideals of reciprocity and continuous presence on the land by the people "who live here and walk in these trees and love them" (108). At the same time, Penny's participation in protests against logging in British Columbia and attendance in national and international conferences to discuss ecological exploitation in Latin America allow her to place the experiences and struggles of the Okanagan nation within a larger history of appropriation of Indigenous lands and attempts to erase Indigenous systems of knowledge in an inter-American context. In her efforts to negotiate Indigenous difference in a transnational context, Penny finds a point of commonality with other Indigenous nations that is not only based on dispossession, but also on the commitment to rebuild people's connection to the land and restore ideals of communal care and interdependence when it comes to interacting with non-human nature. In this sense, *Whispering in Shadows* implies that environmentally conscious action depends on accounting for an active engagement with practices, teachings and stories about land which are context-specific (rooted within Okanagan thought) while also enacting a pedagogy of decolonization at a global level based on establishing networks with other Indigenous nations and confederacies whose common goal is to heal "*Pache Mama*."

Although Rob Nixon's discussion about art, activism and environment focuses mainly on the representational strategies used by writers, his concept of the "writer-activist" is nevertheless useful for examining the metafictional aspect of *Whispering in Shadows* and Penny's role as a *visual* artist. On the one hand, by discussing how artistic creation could catalyze environmental consciousness, Armstrong arguably plays the role of a "writer-activist" and, with *Whispering in Shadows*, offers a model of what literature as activism would look like. Like Nixon's artist-activist, Penny, on the other hand, combines "imaginative agility" and "worldly ardor" to represent the "slow violence" of environmental exploitation and its effects on Indigenous communities in Canada and other countries in the Americas. In fact, as Penny develops as a visual artist, she realizes that, to portray the "slow violence" of environmental degradation, she needs to accept the impossibility of painting "the light and the flowers" (188) and instead embrace the overwhelming images of destruction that "stack up inside" and "scream" at her (187). For example, while attending a conference in Chiapas, Penny witnesses an unexpected level of poverty, oppression, and human suffering caused by the military occupation of Indigenous homelands in Mexico,[49] and struggles to apprehend the images of destruction that form in her mind. The narrator describes this process: "images of bleeding limbs and parts of torn bodies in brilliant cloth, visible through thick smoke and flames and dust, begin to form [in

[49] The novel's depiction of the military occupation of Indigenous lands in Chiapas refers to the Mexican government's attempt to control the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), a social justice movement that emerged on January 1, 1994, one day before the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect. While the Zapatista movement responded directly against neoliberalism and globalization, it also advocated the restitution of Indigenous lands and resource control to the Mayan communities and called for a new form of politics based on decentralized and collective decision-making structures. For Boaventura de Sousa Santos, the Zapatista movement was one of the many attempts of "the epistemologies of the South" to transform "the world into a more equal and more diverse world, 'a world in which different worlds will fit comfortably,' to use the Neozapatista Subcomandante Marcos's slogan" (*Epistemologies of the South* 240). In the novel, the Mexican guide Emilio recounts that the national army, with the support of the U.S. government, "used flame throwers to burn the crops and dropped fire bombs on huts suspected of hiding rebels" (178-9). Emilio also clarifies that "even now there are reprisals and raids that take place every time there is unrest" (178-9). His explanation, of course, is evoked in Penny's painting of "bloody limbs and coffee cans," "camouflaged figures and bloodied bodies in corn patches" and "bombed mud huts and trinket shops" (202).

Penny's head]. The red, red blood everywhere on the torn earth. She can smell it and hear the screaming as camouflaged figures with guns move among the shadows" (179). Significantly, this passage invites us to read human dismemberment as synonymous with environmental damage when it juxtaposes images of "bleeding limbs and parts of torn bodies" with that of the red "torn earth." Penny then tries to capture the sense of hopelessness she got from this encounter in Chiapas in a painting that brings together "bloody limbs and coffee cans," "camouflaged figures and bloodied bodies in corn patches" and "bombed mud huts and trinket shops" (202). When an art curator expresses concerns about the "extreme graphic quality" (202) of such painting, Penny explains that her intention was indeed to "shock some sense into people" and make them "see it [life in Chiapas] for what it is" (203). Through her portrayal of the material and economic violation of communities in Chiapas, Penny confirms Nixon's explanation of the crucial role of the "writer-activist" in "drawing to the surface – and infusing with emotional force – submerged stories of injustice and resource rebellions" (280). Penny's idea of art, here, combines documentary function and motivational intent. In her response to the art curator, Penny suggests that actively giving form to environmental destruction is inseparable from creating a sense of urgency that, for her, is needed to encourage action on the ground.

As an artist-activist, Penny struggles not only with the aesthetic challenges of representing environmental destruction, but also with the limited scope of art as activism. In fact, as she develops as a painter, she begins to realize that shocking "some sense into people" would require, first, convincing them that art has the power to encourage transformative action. In a conversation with her partner David, for example, Penny brings up an important question about artistic responsibility. Trying to make sense of her "overwhelming anger," Penny confesses that she feels "like all the images just begin to stack up inside. It's like being continuously battered

from inside and I can't do anything. I'm having a hard time painting because of the images" (187). This dialogue then ends with Penny asking him, "If all we can do is watch the turmoil get worse, what's our role?" (187). Penny comes close to answering this question once she quits being an artist and writes a "letter never sent" to express her frustrations for having given up her career. She writes: "I should have painted what I saw. I should have let the images come out which shouted at me. I could've gotten it to a better place. I knew that putting images out there changes the world, yet I feared the shadows. I know now that one should not fear them. The story must be told to be understood and changed" (292). As the novel shows, one of the problems is not that Penny lacks the "imaginative ability" and "worldly ardor" that Nixon characterizes as essential to the "writer-activist," but, rather, that she is part of a profit-oriented art market that refuses to recognize and accept the idea that art has a practical function. To borrow the words of the art curator with whom Penny argues when trying to justify the graphic quality of her paintings, Penny's works are "great for shock value" and, thus, function as "political statements" (202), but in the art scene "social consciousness is secondary" (203). What Penny understands as her artistic responsibility to paint economic and environmental destruction to "shock some sense into people" becomes, in the eyes of the curator, pieces that would not "hang well" on the walls of art collectors because they are "haunting" and "filled with despair" (202-3). Interestingly, Penny herself is also a victim of the "hunting" quality of the "images of destruction" that "stack up" in her mind. In other words, as the novel reveals Penny is personally scared of the "shadows" and the hopelessness that come with representing environmental degradation and realizing how limited her art might be in encouraging people to act. Given the metafictional tone of *Whispering in Shadows*, it is possible to argue that Armstrong emphasizes

Penny's struggles as a visual artist in order to write a work of literary activism that tries to dismantle assumptions like the one of the art curator.

Penny's difficulty proving that art is political and can become a tool for social change becomes even more evident when her social consciousness and environmental appeal are interpreted according to settler colonial stereotypes about Indigenous identity. For example, during an art exhibition that takes place before Penny's argument with the art curator in the previous passage, a gallery agent from Portland, Oregon asks her to justify the "purely contemporary format" of her work, claiming that "it seems most Native American artists incorporate or reconstruct symbolism from their heritage in their works" (126). The agent then continues that, in fact, "the depth" Penny presents in her works "could only have come from a deeply ecological view. It is very Native American, free of cliché" (127). Through the agent's perspective, Indigenous art is only "authentic" if limited to a "heritage" that, in settler colonial terms, implies a pre-modern and exoticized past that is unaware of contemporary concerns, embodied realities and artistic practices. In this passage, the novel shows that Indigeneity poses a specific set of problems to the environmental artist-activist and, thus, validates Martineau's claims that Indigenous art exists in "creative contention" with a system that continues to define and limit Indigenous ways of thinking and forms of expression. As an environmental artist-activist from the Okanagan nation, Penny is required to, first, navigate the "psycho-affective and material terrain" of settler colonialism to undo essentialist assumptions like the ones reflected in the agent's comment so that the environmental message of her works can be recognized as legitimate and powerful. Though Penny eventually gives up her career as a visual artist, the ways *Whispering in Shadows* focuses on Penny's struggles in reconciling art and environmental activism raise questions about creative responsibility and artistic reception and, thus, help

displace a purely aesthetic view of art which assumes that there is no direct route between what happens in art and what happens in the "real" world.

Penny's sense of artistic hopelessness is not the only thing that makes her feel like being "continuously battered from inside." In *Whispering in Shadows,* Armstrong builds on the idea of human dismemberment as symbolic of environmental damage to portray ecological destruction as violence perpetrated against bodies and environments alike. Particularly relevant, here, is the way the novel uses illness to show the mutuality and interdependence of human and environmental health. In the novel, Penny develops a rare type of cancer from pesticides used on the apples she harvested when she worked apple picking, hence implying that her participation in extractivist capitalism and exposure to environmental pollution could only result in the violation of her body. Environmental violence, here, is literally inscribed in Penny's body or, put another way, "batters" her from the inside in the form of the poisoning that causes her cancer. It is not by coincidence, then, that at the end of the novel the narrator depicts Penny as "pale and tired from the long days of discontent, carrying the shadows of the new world inside her body" (276). This "new world," the novel suggests, is one where the "natural order" is "out of balance" (247) because of widespread ideologies and systems that prioritize progress, technology, and economic development over environmental and human wellbeing. Armstrong's choice of words, moreover, reveals the extent to which these systems are rooted in the colonialism of the "new world." While Penny's cancer becomes a metaphor for how environmental degradation can be embodied, it also encourages Penny to reflect on humans' lack of environmental consciousness. As she writes, although "we're getting more sticky about environmental controls" by pushing for "minimum standards and stuff," environmental degradation is "cumulative. It *stacks up*. Against us. And we get cancer. And we fight valiantly, a lonely personal battle of life and death. We fight

it alone" (246, emphasis added). Part of the problem, for Penny, is that we, humans, "don't recognize the enemy" (246). As she continues, we "have removed ourselves so far from the rest of nature that we are the most vulnerable" (248). Contrary to Nixon's description of the "formless threats" of environmental destruction as "imperceptible to the senses," the novel shows that these threats are far from invisible; they are, instead, felt on the human body. Here, Armstrong seizes upon cancer as a figure for thinking about nature's degradation to give us an opportunity to "recognize the enemy" and its destructive effects.

In her analysis of *Whispering in Shadows,* Jane Haladay reads Penny's disease as an analogy for settler colonialism and the consumption of the Indigenous body. As Haladay writes, "[p]aralleling the coming of Europeans to the Americas – few at first but growing exponentially, spreading disease and destruction before and behind them – the cancer cells in Penny's body are ultimately unstoppable once lodged in the terrain of her flesh" (42). More than an abstract and de-territorialized system of oppression and state control, settler colonialism, in Haladay's perspective, becomes a sign of violence that is "cumulative" and gets materialized in the body. It is not by accident, then, that Armstrong portrays cancer as one of the flesh-eating monsters of Coyote stories that came "during the transformation of the world into this one" (247). While *Whispering in Shadows* supports Haladay's analysis, especially in the way it describes Penny's ill body as "carrying the shadows of the new world" in the previous passage, the novel also goes beyond a merely symptomatic use of Penny's cancer by making it the basis of her attempt to reclaim Indigenous worldviews. Interestingly, it is in the Okanagan creation stories she learns from her grandmother Tupa that Penny finds the healing and guidance she needs to cope with her disease. For instance, explaining her cancer as the process of "being eaten away by something [she] can't see," Penny tells her friend Tannis that this diagnosis reminds her of the Coyote

stories "about the flesh-eating monsters during the transformation of the world into this one" (247). As she puts it,

> Those stories tell of how the world had to be rid of the flesh-eaters so we could survive. How they conjured themselves and how they shape-shift and change their form continuously. They were banished but only if we kept the balance which was established. The balance is the natural order in this world. Now everything is out of balance. We are causing another transformation. Our old people say they're back. In all kinds of different forms. Not just cancer, but aids [sic], mad cow disease, superbacteria, mutant viruses and so on. It makes sense to me, literally and metaphorically. (247)

Here, Penny uses the story of the flesh-eaters who shift shapes to destructive ends as a metaphor for environmental degradation, and, by doing so, foregrounds the adaptability of the Okanagan myth to make sense of contemporary crises. She also draws upon this story to urge readers to work toward restoring the natural balance and fostering mutual relationships with the land, hence calling for a positive form of shape-shifting that could help address ecological damage. Because Penny attributes the loss of natural balance to the fact that we "have removed ourselves so far from the rest of nature" (248), the novel suggests that restoring the balance depends on re-envisioning humans as part of (and mutually implicated in) nature. The ability to understand environmental degradation and re-establish healthy relationships to nature is intrinsically connected to the power of Okanagan dynamic stories and systems of knowledge which, in this case, allow Penny to bridge the personal and the public, the present and the past, the actual and the metaphorical in an effort to give the "unapparent" (cancer and its connection to environmental degradation) a materiality upon which readers can act.

Despite Penny's attempts to represent the "slow violence" of environmental exploitation, deforestation is not a central theme in *Whispering in Shadows*. Instead, forest exploitation catalyzes Penny's environmental consciousness and understanding of land disputes as symbolic of the conflict between Western and Indigenous epistemologies. During a protest to stop logging in Nitnat territory in the valley coast of Vancouver Island, for instance, Jim, a non-Indigenous environmentalist, explains that Indigenous participation in protests like that one is key because, as he puts it, land claims put Indigenous peoples in "the strongest position" to "help stop what's going on here" (108). As Jim explains, however, environmentalists "have some difficulty communicating with them [Indigenous groups]. I'm not sure they trust us. We're just not sure how to approach them" (107). Agreeing with him to a certain extent, Penny replies that stopping "what's going on here" depends on fighting for the full restitution of Indigenous territories and recognition of Indigenous rights to manage their land. As she clarifies, Jim's ideas about the power of Indigenous land claims may be true, but

> what it comes down to, it seems to me, is that nobody is willing to back [Indigenous peoples] all the way on that one. Nobody is willing to return local control of their homeland to them. They live here. They'll be here forever. Like everywhere else in this country, the resources are controlled by governments who license out their extraction. It's never decided by people at the local level. Decisions are made by people in offices in some city. People who see maps and read reports. Not people who live here and walk in these trees and love them. The land claims fight may not seem to be an answer but better decisions would be made if people who lived here were in control. (108)

What Jim sees as a problem of communication is, for Penny, an issue of incompatible understandings of land stewardship and democratic politics as such. Through this dialogue,

Penny refuses the state-centered logic of land claims to call for a recognition of local ways of knowing and relating to the forest that are based on presence on the land and responsible care for it. Here, Penny's critique echoes Coulthard's definition of land claims as institutionalized forms of "accommodation of Indigenous cultural differences" which fail to recognize alternative economic and political systems to, instead, subjugate them to "one political formation—namely, colonial sovereignty—and one mode of production—namely, capitalism" ("From Wards of the State to Subjects of Recognition?" 75). For Penny, Indigenous peoples are in "the strongest position" to "help stop what's going on here" not because of their land claims, but, rather, because of their "place-based grounded normativities" and forms of political and economic organization that are centered around ideals of connection and relationality with the land. Genuine environmental activism, Penny makes it clear, can only happen by supporting Indigenous fights for land restitution and resource management.

This interaction between Jim and Penny also reveals another point of contention between Western and Indigenous epistemologies in regard to what it means to "control" the land. For Jim, advocating Indigenous land restitution seems to be "a bigger question than what our action here, in the immediate sense [to stop deforestation], can wait for. Tomorrow the machines will come in here and trees will fall. If we don't stand in their way now, there won't be any old growth forest left to protect" (109). According to his logic, granting land control to Indigenous nations does not necessarily mean stopping environmental destruction because, for Jim, there is no guarantee that exploitation would not happen. In her response, Penny makes it clear that the problem goes beyond resolving land disputes within the jurisdiction of a settler colonial state and, thus, is more "environmental" than he might think. As she points out, Indigenous peoples "haven't devastated any of their lands in the thousand of years living here. Why would they do it

now? I don't think there's enough research on the fact that Native people understand real sustainability and practice even on the small reserves left of their homelands" (109). As Penny implies, Jim fails to comprehend that the forms of social and economic governance of these Indigenous communities are ingrained in ideals of reciprocity with the land. Penny then concludes that perhaps "backing Native people in their fight is the only real way of protecting these and other forests. I would rather put my trust in people who love their homeland than in those who care about profits somewhere else" (109). According to Penny's views, what she portrays as a common way of living among Indigenous peoples that is based on a responsible connection with the forest is precisely what would allow them to make better decisions because "other things important to them, like berries, medicines, hunting and fishing, would come into it, as well as their strong spiritual connection to these forests" (109). To decide on forest use and preservation from an Indigenous perspective, Penny suggests, means respecting the deep reciprocity between people and place, including their spiritual connection, and accounting for the survival of non-human entities like the plants and animals. This dialogue between Jim and Penny shows that what he sees as the environmentalists' inability to approach Indigenous peoples reflects, in fact, a broader unwillingness to engage with Indigenous modes of thought beyond state definitions as well as to recognize them as legitimate forms of environmental thinking and alternatives to what Simpson called the "current hyperextractivist economic and political structure of the Canadian state" (50).

At some point during this logging protest, the novel offers a glimpse of what environmentalism informed by Indigeneity would entail. In it, the narrator describes the trunk of a "great cedar" as an entity "rich with life" and recounts Penny's impressions of it (98). The passage goes: "Mosses, tree fungus and tiny plants sprout from every crevice. She can see ants,

spiders and insects she has never seen before moving on fast legs up and down the trunk and among the limbs. Up above, high in the branches she can hear birds warbling soft whistling tunes to each other. Two black ravens are sitting on a lower limb watching her, too" (98). The way that this passage emphasizes the many life forms that are attached to the cedar tree suggests that cutting it down would mean destroying all these other living entities. After making her offerings to the tree, Penny starts to feel "the tremble and vibration of the tree's movement under her cheek as she presses her ear closer to the damp bark. *It sounds like a long sigh. Like a breath drawn in and slowly let out ... It feels the same as a relative holding me. Soothing me*" (98-9, original emphasis). This passage then concludes with Penny telling her friend that she felt the tree was "alive. Aware. I touched it. It touched me" (99). Here, Penny conceives the tree as a live entity and a relative, hence countering humanistic hubris and reinforcing concepts of reciprocity and accountability according to which existence is relational and dependent upon environmentally conscious action and mutual responsibility between humans themselves, and between humans and the forest. Connection to non-human nature implies that a sense of place comes with a sense of care for the environment, and, as the novel demonstrates, it is precisely through this form of connection and care that Indigeneity could "help stop what's going on here." A genuine way to "approach" Indigenous groups, *Whispering in Shadows* suggests, would require respectfully engaging with Indigenous epistemologies that are tied to specific histories and stories about the land while also accepting concepts of interdependence and kinship relations as important when making decisions about the environment. As Penny's interactions with Jim show, a respectful engagement with Indigenous epistemologies would also entail recognizing systems of social, economic, and political organization that are predicated upon these concepts of kinship and relationality as legitimate.

Through her participation in international conferences about ecological destruction, Penny begins to comprehend the conflict between Western and Indigenous epistemologies as part of a shared history of land dispossession and oppression in the Americas. The first event Penny attends, for example, brings together "Indigenous delegates" from Central and South America as well as "Native people from Canada, the USA and Mexico" (145). Here, the narrator separates "Indigenous delegates" from "Native people" to reflect Penny's initial understanding of settler colonialism in North America as a finished process that "our people went through here, when we were being colonized" (146). However, after hearing several speakers from different countries, Penny realizes that colonialism is a global phenomenon that is still ongoing in the Americas. As she confesses to her partner David, the conference "was intense" because it made her aware that when "it's all put together like that, it gives you a different perspective. Then you realize that millions of Indigenous people are being violated and displaced and forced into total poverty. You can see how things are so awful on such a wide scale" (146). Even if Penny recognizes that environmental and economic exploitation in the Americas takes different forms, she concludes that unique stories and local struggles "mesh and overlap as one story. Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Chile, El Salvador, Columbia, Mexico. Millions of brown people, despised, abused, hungry, landless, reduced to slave-like labour. Disease and death" (148). David agrees with Penny to some extent, yet he builds on her ideas to claim that colonialism surfaces particularly when Indigenous peoples try to protect the environment and their traditional knowledges about it. As he puts it, every "road block and militant action is about stopping a dam, a clearcut, a pipeline, a mine and so on. We're still confronted with the same thing. We find out quickly enough what happens when we try to protect the environment and our way of life. We get beat up and criminalized" (146-7). David then concludes: "Indigenous Peoples in this

western hemisphere have all been dispossessed. Yet, they are all that protects the untouched lands that are left. They stand in the way" (147). This theoretical and, I would add, pedagogical dialogue between Penny and David is significant in that it unveils the complicity between colonialism, epistemic erasure, and environmental exploitation in an inter-American context. More importantly, this conversation suggests that rebuilding Indigenous social, political, and cultural systems should begin with a genuine acknowledgement of this shared colonial history of dispossession in the Americas.

Interestingly, David's interjection in the previous passage forces us to think of what happens when Indigenous epistemologies and forms of action are incompatible with what Winona LaDuke and Deborah Cowen call "Wiindigo infrastructures," that is, "the material systems that engineer and sustain" settler political economy and modes of social organization (253). For LaDuke and Cowen, infrastructure functions as a form of colonial politics that perpetuates settler economy and sociality, and, thus, continues to co-opt Indigenous land-based practices and forms of knowledge that emphasize sustainability. The authors also maintain that "Wiindigo" infrastructure sustains a predatory economic model that disguises the human and environmental exploitation upon which it is rooted and, consequently, creates a "mainstream discourse about what counts as vital infrastructure and for whom" (252). In the novel's case, of course, this discourse depicts the dams, clearcuts, pipelines and mines that Indigenous peoples try to stop as "vital" forms of infrastructure. By referring to infrastructure as "Wiindigo," that is, the flesh-eating monsters of Indigenous stories that Penny associates with environmental destruction, LaDuke and Cowen draw attention to the destructive effects of colonial infrastructure which, significantly, they conceive as "a cancer, a cancer on Mother Earth, a cancer on our bodies" (244). Yet, "Wiindigo" also points to the stories about those who were not

afraid of "those wiindigo. who [were] smart and strategic. who [were] patient, so, so patient" (*Islands of Decolonial Love,* 106). As LaDuke and Cowen put it, infrastructure "is the spine of the Wiindigo, but is also the essential architecture of transition to a decolonized future" (246). Echoing Tim Jackson's idea of prosperity and growth in terms of our ability to flourish "within the ecological limits of a finite planet" (16), the authors envision a "decolonized future" that moves beyond "Wiindigo infrastructure" to, rather, create "socio-technical systems" that are based on "*alimentary infrastructure* – infrastructure that is life-giving in its design, finance, and effects" (245, original emphasis). Although LaDuke and Cowen's article portrays "alimentary infrastructure" mostly in terms of the transition to renewable forms of energy "as part of assertions of self-determination" within Indigenous communities (257), the idea of infrastructure as material, economic and social helps us understand the kind of "alimentary" model Armstrong's novel suggests.

In *Whispering in Shadows*, Armstrong represents the forest as a complex entity that informs the experiences of local Indigenous groups while it also lays open the impacts of global networks of power such as capitalism and settler colonialism beyond the epistemic clashes they cause. While Penny's friend, Tannis, argues that "it would take some kind of total revolution" to force people to understand that "their very survival is at stake" (245) and to start acting "differently," the novel insists that localized forms of action and economic governance, which echo LaDuke and Cowen's definition of "alimentary," could indeed provide alternative solutions to a global problem like environmental destruction. Through her critique of "the mechanisms" used to maintain hegemonic systems in place, for example, Penny realizes that communities which continue to keep a healthy connection to land constitute "an opposing force" to those systems in that they provide an example of "true natural sustainability" and "hope for protecting

biodiversity" (147). Likewise, David questions the ways many "environmentalists just see the focus of the area they are striving to save," that is, the "immediate sense" of Jim's perspective, hence ignoring "that it's important to see the deeper levels of where our everyday lives stay ensnared in the whole system and what we each can change" (190). The novel comes close to representing what a localized environmental model based on collective landholding and connection to the land would look like when Penny visits the textile and coffee cooperatives managed by the Mayan communities in Chiapas. Most of these cooperatives, the guide Emilio explains, are experiencing "a market shut-out" (168). To encourage land surrender and privatization, the market board had refused to buy their goods and "the constitution no longer protects lands held in common by villages" (168). Even so, this section ends with Emilio's proposal for the creation of "an association based on a spiritual work of mutual fair benefit. A unity of trust and assistance" (183). Emilio's idea, in fact, is to create a market interest for the goods produced in these cooperatives, and equally share any potential profits. Although this proposal remains unexplored throughout the novel, Emilio's explanations ultimately inform Penny's conception of environmental activism as inseparable from reconstructing local Indigenous economies and the idea of "place-based grounded normativities" which Simpson puts forth as well as from teaching about "biodiversity and its connection to humans and healthy land living" (Armstrong 223).

Even though Penny recognizes the global scale of colonialism and its destructive effects on Indigenous groups in an inter-American context, the novel refuses to simply participate in a discourse of victimization. Instead, *Whispering in Shadows* emphasizes the ongoing commitment to reclaim Indigenous epistemologies across the Americas and, therefore, shows the importance of collective forms of solidarity as the starting points to rebuilding "robust, ethical, and

sustainable alternatives" to colonialism and the grounded systems it enables. For instance, after she leaves her community in the beginning of the novel, Penny starts working at the Friendship Centre,[50] an urban institution that offers support to Indigenous peoples by promoting Indigenous cultures and political activism. There, she meets Manual, a guest speaker from the Ayamara nation in Bolivia who had been invited to talk about the realities of Indigenous nations in his country. During his speech, Manual describes the "north" and the "south" as "two islands joined like the mother's cord to her child" (32) and reminds his audience that Indigenous activism across the Americas is essential to heal *Pache Mama* (Mother Earth). As Manual states, we have "one agenda, no? *Pache Mama.* We are hers like flowers. We are only healthy if *Pache Mama* is. This is what our political and economic agendas strive for. It is *Pache Mama* yearning to see all her flowers bloom healthy" (33). Manual's rationale is that although "five hundred years" of careless environmental, economic, and political exploitation have led us to currently live "under the calendar of great turmoil" (32), it also opened a new era in the history "of the *Indios*" marked by the understanding that "Indigenous Peoples make change. To heal *Pache Mama.* This is happening now, over our lands" (33). According to his perspective, Indigenous peoples are connected by common relationships with the land whose basic principle is that humans belong to nature and, thus, human survival depends on the establishment of healthy relationships with the environment. Even though Manual's speech emphasizes a shared history of belonging in the Americas, Armstrong is careful not to erase cultural and nation-based differences. For example, before he starts his talk, Manual places medicine from the Aymara nation beside the sweetgrass

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[50] Penny's work at the Friendship Centre evokes Armstrong's own work at the En'owkin Centre, located on the Penticton Indian Band reserve. Established in 1981, En'owkin Centre "is a dynamic institution" and an "Indigenous cultural, educational, ecological and creative arts organization" that "plays a lead role in the development and implementation of Indigenous knowledge and systems, both at the community and international levels" (https://enowkincentre.ca/about.html).

from the Friendship Centre so that both can be smudged together. After the smudge, Wayne, another employee at the Centre, "begins the prayer in his language. His voice is hardly audible. Others around the room also murmur in their language or in English" (31). Multiple languages, here, are combined in an act of common prayer and coexistence that does not depend on homogeneity. The joining of medicines and languages in this passage, to some extent, embodies the novel's idea of trans-Indigenous solidarity as an act of openness and ethical engagement that respects the particularities of different Indigenous nations. Even so, this form of engagement does not prevent the recognition of a shared legacy due to colonialism and dispossession, nor of a common political motivation to re-establish healthy connections to the land and the environment. Collective knowledge production, according to this logic, is not about suppression and assimilation, but, rather, about bringing together different systems of thought so that they can participate in a new space of meaning-making. In *Whispering in Shadows,* this plural cognitive space is created with the understanding that distinct frameworks of thought share the common agenda of healing *Pache Mama.*

Manual's talk resonates with Penny throughout the novel and helps her redefine the "New World" in terms of a network of Indigenous history, presence, and continuity. For instance, in a prose poem entitled "White Night in Chickaloon," the narrator, arguably Penny, wanders by a river and ends up following a path that leads her "to the time in our history of the Americas" when "we," "grandchildren of all these lands," "walk from all directions to encircle this sacred fire creating the network of grandmother spider" (288). The fire around which the "grandchildren of all these lands" hold hands reminds the narrator of a shared history according to which "we are bound together by old blood mixed and remixed over time as we feel its

memory stir in the flickering embers surrounded by flowers" (288). This awareness, as the poet-narrator implies, calls for collective action:

> we shall move this fire from land to land and all the flowers from the South and the North will surround its moving to retrace the paths our sisters and brothers walk as words pass between the North and the South between the eagle and the condor on this old movement through eons to warm lands which our blood together claims that which our cell memories celebrate each time we dance to this rhythm we all know so well. (288-9)

This "old movement," the poem continues, would eventually lead to a "gateway to the new world" where "relatives walk on leading a path started years ago" (289). Instead of a "New World" of fantastic adventures and promising economic opportunities legitimized by the appropriation and assimilation of Indigenous lands and knowledges, the new world the poem envisions involves the active participation of Indigenous peoples leading the way "to make change," as Manual has put it in his talk. Through an "old movement" that is also a continuation of the "path started years ago," the narrator dismantles the spatial and temporal boundaries created by settler colonialism to show the importance of picking up the pieces of Indigenous languages, cultures, and modes of thought and, thus, recreating the history of the Americas from an Indigenous perspective. Counter to how blood was turned into a colonial category to determine Indigeneity and rights to the land, moreover, the poem takes up on the idea of blood and memory, or "cell memory" to envision a form of unity of different Indigenous nations based on their connection to land beyond specific geographical locations and times. The fight over Indigenous rights to land stewardship, the poem implies, is a movement inward; it is an "affirmative refusal" of settler colonial economic models and solutions to environmental

degradation toward self-actualization and affirmation of Indigenous ways of connecting and relating to the land.

As a challenge to the geographical and imaginative boundaries imposed by colonial administration, *Whispering in Shadows* reminds us that the "New World" is, indeed, Indigenous territory. Alongside the signs of ecological destruction and economic exploitation that Penny witnesses throughout the novel, Armstrong inscribes Indigenous presence, reaffirms Indigenous rights to the land, and shows glimpses of what grounded actions are needed for the creation of a decolonial future. Despite the violent appropriation and exploitation of bodies and landscapes in the Americas, representations of dispossession and spatial reclamation like Armstrong's foreground Indigenous-centered concepts that provide a way "out of settler-colonialism and into Indigeneity" (*As We Have Always Done*, 197). At the same time, the novel shows that re-examining Indigenous peoples' relationship to the land is crucial not only to achieve a deeper understanding of Indigenous experiences, but also to open space for alternative systems of knowledge that would promote a renewed engagement with the environment. Thus, as an artist-activist, Penny de-centers the idea of land as possession and control characteristic of exploitative systems like capitalism and colonialism to reclaim Okanagan stories and epistemologies, and to urge readers to start thinking and acting differently. Instead of ownership, these stories and frameworks of thought emphasize ideals of reciprocity, continuous presence on the land and interdependence between humans and non-human nature. In this sense, *Whispering in Shadows* shows that environmentally conscious action depends on a pedagogical decolonization that would question the centrality of Western knowledge to allow for the emergence of non-Eurocentric frameworks and systems about relating to the environment.

As in Canada, the assertion of land rights by Indigenous groups in Brazil unveils an ongoing conflict between Western and Indigenous epistemologies regarding land use and care. As briefly discussed in the Introduction to this dissertation, in *A Queda do Céu*, Davi Kopenawa, a shaman and activist from the Yanomami nation, proclaims the validity of traditional knowledges and belief systems as part of a broader struggle to protect Yanomami territory from environmental destruction. Bruce Albert, co-author of *A Queda do Céu,* explains that the Yanomami are a nation of hunter-gatherers who occupy an area of the Amazon rainforest comprising approximately 192,000 square kilometers located in the Parima Mountains at the border between the south of Venezuela and the north of Brazil. With a population of approximately 33 thousand people divided into 640 different communities, the Yanomami are one of the largest Indigenous nations in the Amazon who have, for the most part, been able to maintain their traditional way of life. In Brazil, the federal government recognized the Yanomami territory, officially named *Terra Indígena Yanomami,* in 1992, granting them an area of approximately 96,650 square kilometers. Even so, since their first contact with Europeans and non-Indigenous Brazilians in the 1940s, the Yanomami have fought against the advance on their territory by religious missionaries, gold prospectors (*garimpeiros*) and entrepreneurs. In his narrative, Kopenawa explains these different processes of territorial encroachment and, more importantly, comments on their environmental outcomes. Divided into three parts ("Devir outro" ["Becoming Other"], "A fumaça do metal" ["Metal Smoke"] and "A queda do céu" ["Falling Sky"]), *A Queda do Céu* recounts Kopenawa's initiation into shamanism under his father-in-law's guidance, explains the general role of shamans in protecting the forest, narrates his journeys through Europe and the U.S. as an environmental activist, and ends with a cosmo-ecological prophecy about the death of shamans and potential end of the world.

Like *Whispering in Shadows, A Queda do Céu* is neither a traditional novel nor a customary autobiography recounting Kopenawa's experiences and development as a shaman and environmental activist. Rather, Kopenawa's narrative combines personal and collective history, oral storytelling and Western literacy,[51] autoethnography and anthropology to provide an ethno-political appeal against the destruction of the Amazon. In his introduction to *A Queda do Céu,* Viveiros de Castro contemplates the difficulty of defining the literary genre of Kopenawa's text, stating that it could be read simultaneously as an autobiography of his life, as a counter-anthropology of European settler culture, and as a metaphysical explanation of Yanomami epistemologies (27). In this chapter, I examine the role of Kopenawa's narrative both as a counter-anthropology of Eurocentric environmental practices and a metaphysical discourse about Yanomami modes of thought regarding the environment. Through his critique of what he sees as "white" civilization's destructive environmental models, Kopenawa shows that Western-centric notions of sustainability and environmental politics continue to subject natural resources to colonial ideals of economic development, culture, and modernity. At the same time, by explaining the role of Yanomami shamanism, cosmology, and ethnography, *A Queda do Céu* foregrounds localized practices of land use and social organization that are non-hierarchical, de-centralized and committed to the wellbeing of humans and non-humans. In this sense, Kopenawa's narrative helps de-center mainstream conceptions of forest landscapes from a place of "colonial difference" to teach readers about more sustainable environmental practices and

[51] It is important to note that throughout *A Queda do Céu,* Kopenawa not only incorporates elements of orality, but also some of his own drawings. In fact, each chapter opens with a drawing that reflects its main topic. Brazilian scholar Lynn Mario Trindade Menezes de Souza has extensively written about this combination of visual and written text in Indigenous literatures in Brazil, particularly in "Voices on Paper: Multimodal Texts and Indigenous Literacy in Brazil" and "De-universalizing the Decolonial Between Parentheses and Falling Skies" (co-authored with Ana Paula Martinez Duboc). *A Queda do Céu* also contains archival photographs that document the shamanic rituals in which Kopenawa participates, his travels to the U.S. and Europe, and his various meetings with Brazilian politicians.

appeal for collective action in helping preserve the Amazon rainforest. As a work of literary activism, what *A Queda do Céu* shares with *Whispering in Shadows* is a belief in the pedagogical function of creative expression and the idea of writing as a direct form of political intervention.

The context of production of *A Queda do Céu* is significant and, to some extent, reflects the pedagogical stance of Kopenawa's narrative. For one thing, the book results from a literary and political partnership between Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, a French anthropologist conducting research in the territory of the Yanomami, and consists of interviews Kopenawa recorded in Yanomami and had Albert translate into a narrative about the destructive effects of deforestation and resource exploitation on the Amazon. Aware that a literal translation of Kopenawa's words would undermine the poetic quality of his speech, and that a theoretical explanation of Indigenous cosmologies to an academic audience would alienate non-specialist readers, Albert tries to combine Kopenawa's ethnopolitical insights with his own intellectual background as an anthropologist to represent Kopenawa and, by extension, the Yanomami, both discursive and politically. The result is, as Albert defines it, "'um texto escrito/falado a dois'" (537) ["a written/spoken textual duet" (446)]. The book's double authorship innovates traditional genres such as autobiography to locate both interlocutors in a transitional, ex-centric position. In a way, readers of *A Queda do Céu* also occupy an in-between position which, as Kopenawa implies, is crucial to help us undo the self-evidence of Western thought and open space for a true engagement with Yanomami epistemologies. The partnership between Kopenawa and Albert, and the role readers play within this project, turns *A Queda do Céu* into a liminal work of literature and politics that, to borrow Viveiros de Castro's words, negotiates "a diferença intercultural até o ponto de uma mútua e imensamente valiosa 'entretradução', tanto mais valiosa quanto mais ciente de suas imperfeições, suas aproximações equívocas, suas equivalências

impossíveis e ... sua incompatibilidade metafísica e antropológica absoluta" (28) ["intercultural difference to the point of a mutual and immensely valuable 'inter-translation,' the more valuable the more aware it is of its imperfections, its equivocal approximations, its impossible equivalences and ... its absolute metaphysical and anthropological incompatibility"].[52] The creative and generative value of Kopenawa's and Albert's partnership, according to Viveiros de Castro, relies on its power to bring into contact ontologically different worldviews precisely to the extent that they are not saying the same thing. These paradoxes point to the need of replacing the monocultural logic entrenched in colonial ways of thinking with an understanding that alternative, non-Eurocentric systems of knowledge are unique, legitimate, and not totally translatable or appropriable. While Kopenawa proposes an epistemic dialogue and exchange of ideas between Western and Yanomami frameworks of thought to call for a genuine recognition of Yanomami traditional knowledges and validation of Yanomami political and economic systems, *A Queda do Céu* also reveals the incommensurability between how Kopenawa thinks and "Wiindigo" systems on the ground that enable environmental exploitation.

Translation indeed informs the process of creation of *A Queda do Céu.* For example, before its release in Portuguese in 2015, Kopenawa's text went through a series of translations which include its original publication in French in 2010, and the release of an English version in 2013. More importantly, Kopenawa himself plays the role of a translator or, to adapt Nixon's term, of a "translator-activist." In other words, throughout his narrative Kopenawa "translates" Yanomami history and modes of thought into a discourse that he addresses to a non-Indigenous audience as part of a decolonizing effort to de-center Western practices of land use and urge readers to think and act differently. For instance, echoing Santos' discussion about "abyssal"

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[52] All the translations of Viveiros de Castro's preface are my own.

theory and the denial of knowledges produced “on the other side,” Kopenawa reaffirms his anti-cartesian position and writes that “white” people “estudam apenas seu próprio pensamento e, assim, só conhecem o que já está dentro deles mesmos [ignorando] os dizeres distantes de outras gentes e lugares” (455) [“just stare at their own thought and only end up knowing what is already inside their minds [ignoring] the distant words of other people and other places” (370-1)]. As a work of “affirmative refusal,” *A Queda do Céu* seeks to enlarge the narrow perspective of Western thought by undoing its “abyssal” logic. Against common ideas of oral discourses as short-lived and unreliable, Kopenawa emphasizes the permanence of the spoken word of the Yanomami. To justify why the Yanomami lack written historical texts, Kopenawa states that the “palavras dos *xapiri* estão gravadas no meu pensamento, no mais fundo de mim. São as palavras de *Omama*. São muito antigas, mas os xamãs as renovam o tempo todo. Desde sempre, elas vêm protegendo a floresta e seus habitantes” (65, original emphasis) [“*xapiri's* words are set in my thought, in the deepest part of me. They are the words of *Omama*. They are very old, yet the shamans constantly renew them. They have always protected the forest and its inhabitants” (13)]. Knowledge, here, is embodied and generated through engagements with non-human nature. Different from the written texts of non-Indigenous people and their perishable “peles de imagens tiradas de árvores mortas” (66) [“image skins made from dead trees” (13)], the words passed down by *Omama*, the Creator, constantly renew themselves and, thus, will never disappear, “mesmo que os brancos joguem fora as peles de papel deste livro em que elas estão agora desenhadas” (65-6) [“even if the white people throw away the paper skins of this book in which they are drawn” (13)]. Similar to how Penny adapts Okanagan stories such as the one about the flesh-eaters to urge readers to adopt mutual relationships with the land, in his narrative Kopenawa renews and translates the words of *Omama* and of the spiritual beings called *xapiri,*

including their prophecy about the potential end of the world, to ask us to rethink our relationship to the environment.

To proclaim the political and cultural sovereignty of the Yanomami in a country that has continuously failed to protect Indigenous rights to territory and resource management, *A Queda do Céu* is primarily written for a non-Indigenous audience. For instance, the agreement Kopenawa proposed to Albert was originally motivated by his fear that environmental degradation and the infectious diseases brought by land explorers to the territory of the Yanomami would exterminate his nation. Thus, in 1989, Kopenawa recorded a tape, in Yanomami, to ask Albert, who had been working with his nation for over a decade, to help record, translate, and publicize his words among white people. As Kopenawa makes it clear in "Palavras Dadas" ("Words Given"), his preface to *A Queda do Céu*, his intention was for Albert to record his words into "peles de papel" ("paper skins"), hoping that they "se dividam e se espalhem bem longe, para serem realmente ouvidas" (64) ["divide themselves and propagate over long distances so they can truly be heard" (12)]. It is not by coincidence, then, that "Falar aos Brancos" ("Talking to White People"), a chapter which recounts his trajectory toward becoming an environmental activist, begins with Kopenawa's asserting his authority as someone who deeply knows the Amazon and, thus, is qualified to talk about its protection. Kopenawa speaks:

> Não falo da floresta sem saber. Contemplei a imagem da fertilidade de suas árvores e a da gordura de seus animais de caça. Escuto a voz dos espíritos abelha que vivem em suas flores e a dos seres do vento que mandam para longe as fumaças de epidemia. Faço dançar os espíritos dos animais e dos peixes. Faço descer a imagem dos rios e da terra. Defendo a floresta porque a conheço, graças ao poder da *yãkoana*. Seu espírito,

> *Urihinari*, e o de *Omama* só são visíveis aos olhos dos xamãs. São suas palavras que dou a ouvir agora. Não são coisas que vêm só do meu pensamento. (391, original emphasis)
>
> I do not speak of the forest without knowing. I contemplated the images of its trees' fertility and its game's fat. I listen to the voice of the bee spirits who live on its flowers and that of the wind beings who chase the epidemic smoke out of it. I make the animal and fish spirits dance. I call down the image of the rivers and the land. I defend the forest because I know it thanks to the power of the *yãkoana*.[53] Only shamans' eyes can see its spirit, which we call *Urihinari*, and also the spirit of *Omama*. It is these spirits' words that I make heard. It is not just my own thought. (314, original emphasis)

As this passage suggests, for *A Queda do Céu* to perform the pedagogical effect that Kopenawa intends, he needs to first establish on what basis he claims a connection between representation and learning, and between learning about the "colonial difference" and acting "differently." Kopenawa's position, here, is clear: as a shaman, he is able to access, carry and translate the words and knowledge of *Omama*, the Creator, and the *xapiri*,[54] the spiritual beings that inhabit and protect the Amazon. Inhaling the *yãkoana*, here, leads Kopenawa into "becoming other," or, rather, into becoming another voice in/of the text: *A Queda do Céu* is no longer just "his own thought." For Kopenawa, it is precisely his embodied knowledge and experiences as a

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[53] As Albert explains in a footnote, the *yãkoana* powder is produced through resin drawn from the deep part of the *Virola elongata* tree's bark, which contains "a powerful hallucinogenic alkaloid." Although, according to Albert, the verb Kopenawa uses is *koaɨ* ("to drink"), the *yãkoana* is inhaled; its powder is blown into the shaman's nostrils so that he (usually a man) can interact with the *xapiri* and have access to their words (*The Falling Sky* 492).

[54] To understand the complex role of the *xapiri*, it is important to reproduce Albert's definition of these spiritual entities. In an endnote, Albert explains: "Any existing being has an 'image' (*utupë a*, pl. *utupa pë*) from the original times, an image which shamans can 'call,' 'bring down,' and 'make dance' as an 'auxiliary spirit' (*xapiri a*). These primordial image-beings ('spirits') are described as miniscule humanoids wearing extremely bright, colorful feather ornaments and body paint… Practicing shamanism is referred to as xapirimuu, 'to act as a spirit'; to become a shaman is said 'to become spirit' (xapiripruu). These expressions refer to the fact that, during the shamanic trance, the shaman identifies with the 'auxiliary spirits' he is calling" (*The Falling Sky* 490).

Yanomami shaman that grant him authority to discuss forest exploitation to and among the "white" people he addresses. Like Penny's reply to Jim, more precisely her idea that the Nitnat's "strong spiritual connection" and continued presence on the land would allow them to make better decisions, Kopenawa puts forth a view of relating to the forest that is based on lived experiences on the land and responsible care for it. In both cases, the idea of land stewardship is deeply informed by spiritual connection and continued presence on the forest.

In *A Queda do Céu,* Kopenawa teaches us about the history of the Yanomami within and beyond colonialism to reinforce their continued existence and belonging in the forest. As in Melo's portrayal of the Ykamiabas, he shows that the history of the Yanomami "does not depend on the arrival of Europeans for [its] *raison d'être*" (King 189, original emphasis). For example, in his response to common questions posed by non-Indigenous people about the origin of his nation, Kopenawa defines the Yanomami simply as "habitantes da floresta" (78) ["inhabitants of the forest" (25)]. Living at the "nascentes dos rios muito antes de os meus pais nascerem, e muito antes do nascimento dos antepassados dos brancos" (78) ["sources of these rivers long before the birth of my fathers and even long before the white people's ancestors were born" (25)], the Yanomami ancestors, Kopenawa writes, were created by *Omama* in the Amazon rainforest long before the arrival of colonizers. Although Kopenawa refuses to limit the existence and experiences of the Yanomami to the colonization of their territory, he still acknowledges the impacts of the European invasion by writing that "[a]ntigamente, éramos realmente muitos e nossas casas eram muito grandes. Depois, muitos dos nossos morreram quando chegaram esses forasteiros com suas fumaças de epidemia e suas espingardas" (78) ["in the past, we were really very numerous and our houses were vast. Then many of us died after the arrival of these outsiders with their epidemic fumes and shotguns" (25-6)]. Interestingly, Kopenawa uses the

term "fumaças de epidemia" ("epidemic fumes") to refer both to the first epidemics caused by the arrival of colonizers in the Americas and to the current exploitation of the rainforest by profit-driven economic systems, hence pointing to a continuity of exploitation that still threatens the survival of the Yanomami. Not unlike Penny's discourse regarding cancer and colonization, Kopenawa conceives the legacies of colonialism as felt in the body. As a nation whose ways of thinking follow "caminhos outros que o da mercadoria" ["other paths than that of merchandise" (12)], the Yanomami want to simply "viver como lhes apraz ... Querem defender sua terra porque desejam continuar vivendo nela como antigamente" (64) ["live their way … They want to defend their land because they want to continue to live there like they did before" (12)]. Territorial and environmental protection, here, are intrinsically connected to their ability to continue to exist as Yanomami people and to think beyond profit-oriented ideologies. Merely restoring pre-colonial systems of thought is not what Kopenawa envisions as a solution, though. Because *A Queda do Céu* is located in-between the cultural borders that separate Indigenous and Eurocentric systems of thought into "abyssal" and, to some extent, irreconcilable lines, part of Kopenawa's task as a "translator-activist" is to convince his readers to also think outside the logics of Western capitalism so that the Yanomami refusal to value profit and desire to live otherwise can be recognized as both a legitimate and legitimizing perspective and economic model.

Like Armstrong, Kopenawa portrays colonialism as a complex system of power that is consolidated especially through the erasure of Indigenous presence, appropriation of Indigenous lands and environmental exploitation of the rainforest. This is clear, for example, in "Primeiros Contatos" ("First Contacts"), a chapter that revisits the first interactions between European colonizers and the Yanomami to question the Western narrative of "New World" discovery and

the *Terra nullius* myth. As Kopenawa puts it, European colonizers "não descobriram esta terra, não! Chegaram como visitantes!" (253) ["did not discover this land! They arrived in it as visitors!" (184)]. The problem, according to Kopenawa, is that upon arriving in the land of the Yanomami, the Europeans "não pararam mais de devastá-la e de retalhar sua imagem em pedaços, que começaram a repartir entre si. Alegaram que estava vazia para se apoderar dela, e a mesma mentira persiste até hoje. Esta terra nunca foi vazia no passado e não está vazia agora!" (253) ["relentlessly devastated it and cut its image up into pieces, then shared them out amongst themselves. They claimed it was empty in order to take control of it. This same lie continues to this day. This land was never empty in the past and it is no more empty today!" (184-5)]. Kopenawa then concludes that the words of the Yanomami "estão presentes nesta terra desde o primeiro tempo, do mesmo modo que as montanhas onde moram os *xapiri*. Nasci na floresta e sempre vivi nela. No entanto, não digo que a descobri e que, por isso, quero possuí-la" (253, original emphasis) ["Our words have been present on this land since the beginning of time, as are the mountains where the *xapiri* live. I was born in the forest and I have always lived there. Yet I do not say that I discovered it or that I want to own it because I discovered it" (184)]. The colonial myth of discovery, Kopenawa implies, is intrinsically connected to the idea of taking possession of Indigenous land under the excuse that the Amazon rainforest is empty (as Melo also points out in her critique of historiography as a colonial tool). While the *Terra nullius* myth enables a more detached concept of ownership based on possession, Kopenawa proposes an alternative way of relating to the rainforest that, although unrecognized as valid by the European colonizers, is centered around the ancestral history of the Yanomami and their embedded knowledge about the Amazon.

Even if *A Queda do Céu* is primarily addressed to a non-Indigenous audience, Kopenawa avoids falling into an "us versus them" rhetoric in his call for collaborative action. To do so, Kopenawa emphasizes a shared origin between the Yanomami and non-Indigenous people, and reminds us that it was "*Omama* que nos criou [os Yanomami], mas foi também ele que fez os brancos virem à existência" (231, original emphasis) ["*Omama* who created us [the Yanomami], but it was also him who brought the white people into existence" (163)]. For Kopenawa, the ability to recognize this shared history of creation would allow us to realize that there is "apenas um único e mesmo céu acima de nós. Só há um sol, uma lua apenas. Moramos em cima da mesma terra" (231) ["only one and the same sky above us. There is only one sun, one moon. We live on the same earth" (163)]. As Kopenawa continues, unable to listen to the words of the Yanomami, "white people" fail to realize that "xamãs não afastam as coisas perigosas somente para defender os habitantes da floresta. Também trabalham para proteger os brancos, que vivem embaixo do mesmo céu ... Sem xamãs, a floresta é frágil e não consegue ficar de pé sozinha" (492) ["shamans do not only repel the dangerous things to protect the inhabitants of the forest. They also work to protect the white people who live under the same sky … Without the shamans, the forest remains fragile and does not stay in place on its own" (404)]. Increasing rates of "epidemic fumes," as Kopenawa defines the environmental outcomes of deforestation and mining activities in the Amazon, would result in the death of shamans and cause another fall of the sky that would affect humans in general.[55] As an ecological appeal addressed to a non-Indigenous audience, Kopenawa's discourse shows that the effects of environmental degradation

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[55] In "O Céu e a Floresta" ["The Sky and the Forest"], Kopenawa recounts that in the beginning, when the "floresta era recém-chegada à existência e tudo nela retornava facilmente ao caos" (195) ["the forest had barely come into existence and everything there easily returned to chaos" (130)], the sky, still new and fragile, fell, killing the ancestors who lived there before the Yanomami and causing them to turn into hunting animals. Through his perspective, then, failing to protect the rainforest now would result in a second fall of the sky.

are not limited to the local communities and Indigenous nations living in the Amazon. Rather, Kopenawa enlarges the concept of ecological degradation to account for its effects on the material existence of the rainforest, the cultural and spiritual systems of the Yanomami, and the survival of humans more broadly. By providing an alternative version of history that positions European colonizers as "visitors" and highlights a shared origin between non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples, Kopenawa implies that collaboration and collective action is possible and, in fact, needed in order to protect the Amazon.

The kind of collaborative action Kopenawa calls for, however, depends not only on readers' willingness to accept his alternative definition of the environment and of what it means to protect it, but also on the creation of "alimentary" economic models that would allow for his alternative definition to be concretely implemented. As *A Queda do Céu* implies, Western environmentalism is framed by a Cartesian epistemological model that continues to perceive nature as "res extensa and, as such, an unlimited resource unconditionally available to human beings" (*Epistemologies of the South* 23). Or, to borrow Tim Jackson's words, Western environmental thought still fails to prioritize prosperity and growth in terms of our ability to flourish "within the ecological limits of a finite planet" (16). For instance, while the demarcation of the Yanomami territory into reserve areas in the 1980s was advertised as an attempt to preserve the "meio ambiente" (environment), Kopenawa questions the very meaning of "meio ambiente" implied in the government's rhetoric. As he writes, "meio ambiente" is an Eurocentric concept that does not have a correlative in Yanomami worldviews since "o que os brancos chamam [meio ambiente] é o que resta da terra e da floresta feridas por suas máquinas. É o que resta de tudo o que eles destruíram até agora" (484) ["what the white people refer to in this way [as environment] is what remains of the forest and land that were hurt by their machines. It is

what remains of everything they have destroyed so far" (397)]. Subject to the laws of market economy, the term "meio ambiente" reinforces an idea of "nature in crisis" (the "immediate sense" of Jim's perspective in *Whispering in Shadows*) according to which remaining natural ecosystems and resources can be recycled and managed, in their bits and pieces, through provincial or federal projects of ecological preservation such as the creation of green urban areas, natural parks, and ecological trails, some of which stand on the sacred rocks and burial grounds of Indigenous nations. Against environmental appeals to preserve what is left after environmental degradation, that is, "pedacinhos que não passam da sobra do que foi devastado" (484) ["small parcels that are leftovers of what was ruined" (397)], Kopenawa urges us to focus on solutions that consider nature and ecology in their entirety. Shamanism, here, provides a glimpse of what this approach would look like. As he explains, Yanomami shamans work to protect "a natureza por inteiro" ["'nature' as a whole thing"], including "suas árvores, seus morros, suas montanhas e seus rios; seus peixes, animais, espíritos xapiri e habitantes humanos" (484) ["the forest's trees, hills, mountains, and rivers; its fish, game, spirits, and human inhabitants" (397-8)]. Beyond simply securing a physical space for the Yanomami, protecting the forest, here, means preventing the destruction of long-lasting agreements between the shamans, non-humans, and spiritual entities which both sustain the political, social, and cultural life of the Yanomami, and ensure the survival of all humans living "under the same sky."

While the structure and composition of *A Queda do Céu* reinforce the book's double authorship and the transitional position both Kopenawa and Albert occupy, the content of Kopenawa's shamanic knowledge and recollections brings together multiple voices and perspectives, including those of non-human entities. Moved by the cultural and political desire to legitimize Yanomami epistemologies and defend the rights of his nation, Kopenawa validates his

narrative through a narrator that is "indissociável de um 'nós' da tradição e da memória do grupo ao qual ele quer dar voz. Portanto, o que ouvimos é um 'eu' coletivo tornado autoetnógrafo" (539) ["inextricable from the 'we' of the traditions and group memory to which he is trying to give voice. It is the collective 'I' of an autoethnographer" (447)]. For instance, alongside the teachings of Kopenawa's father-in-law, who rescues him from cultural alienation and assimilation to initiate him into shamanism, the book also recuperates the knowledge of the *xapiri*, the spiritual beings that guide the shamans and pass on ancestral wisdom. In fact, although invisible, the *xapiri* work incessantly to protect humans and the Amazon rainforest alike. In a lengthy yet elucidating explanation, Kopenawa emphasizes the importance of these "seres-imagens" ("image-beings"):

> Os *xapiri* se movimentam e trabalham na floresta, nas costas do céu e na terra, em todas as direções, inumeráveis e potentes, para nos proteger. Atacam sem trégua os seres maléficos e as epidemias que querem nos devorar ... Eles reforçam a floresta quando ela vira outra e quer se transformar de novo. Sem eles, as plantas das roças não cresceriam, as árvores não dariam frutos e a caça ficaria magra. A floresta só teria valor de fome. Eles seguram o céu quando ameaça desabar, contêm a ira dos trovões, afastam as filhas do ser da chuva e prendem os ventos de tempestade; advertem o ser do tempo encoberto e atrasam o do anoitecer. Afastam o espírito da noite e chamam o orvalho, para que a aurora desponte mais depressa ... Os *xapiri* nos protegem contra todas as coisas ruins: a escuridão, a fome e a doença. Afastam-nas e combatem-nas sem descanso." (215-16, original emphasis)

> As I said, the *xapiri* travel and work in the forest, on the sky's back and under the earth, in every direction, innumerable and powerful, in order to protect us. They relentlessly

> attack evil beings and the epidemics that try to devour us ... They consolidate the forest when it becomes other and wants to transform itself. Without them, the plants of our gardens would not grow, the trees of our forest would not bear fruit, and game would remain skeletal. The forest would never stop having the value of hunger. They hold up the sky when it threatens to collapse, contain the thunders' anger, send the rain being's daughters away, and shut the storm winds in. They admonish the cloudy weather being and delay the nightfall being. They repel the night spirit and call the dew so that dawn breaks faster. It is so. The *xapiri* defend us against all the evil things, darkness, hunger, and sickness. They repel them and combat them unceasingly. (150, original emphasis)

As epistemic entities, the *xapiri* inform the laws that guide the daily lives of the Yanomami and, thus, are essential to the cultural existence of the Yanomami as a nation. Moving around the rainforest to keep the sky on its place, these spiritual beings gain an embodied knowledge that they then share with the shamans during the shamanic ceremonies. The shamans, in turn, receive the words of the *xapiri* and pass their knowledge on to the Yanomami. Beyond simply portraying an individual who moves toward maturity and self-realization through his initiation into shamanism, therefore, *A Queda do Céu* proposes a complex and dynamic collaboration between individuals and (a post-human) collective that is crucial for the self-affirmation and epistemic liberation of the Yanomami. At the same time, the ways that Kopenawa conceives environmental action as collective and dependent on the fundamental role of the *xapiri* shows that if we are to participate in collaborative action to protect the Amazon, there needs to be a respectful engagement with Yanomami spirituality. As in *Whispering in Shadows*, particularly the ways Penny draws upon Indigenous creation stories about the flesh-eating monsters, the challenge, or

invitation, that runs through *A Queda do Céu* is for its non-Indigenous audience to accept Kopenawa's discourse as a legitimate worldview.

The collective, post-human aspect of Kopenawa's text not only contests human-centered models that fail to acknowledge non-human beings except in appropriative terms, but also helps us reimagine the relationship between ecology and politics. In his analysis of *A Queda do Céu* alongside Bruno Latour's definition of political ecology, Renato Sztutman argues that Kopenawa's discussion about the role of non-human agents such as the *xapiri* is essential to reconceptualize the concept of cosmopolitics. In *Politics of Nature: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy*, Latour questions the idea of the external world as an a-historical, objective, and definitive construction to conceive it as a changing entity that is formed through multiple associations and collaborations between humans and non-humans. Instead of mere objects, non-humans, in Latour's conception of the external world as a "pluriverse," become "matters of concern," that is, entities that participate in the collective as actors capable of provoking "perplexity and thus speech in those who gather around them, discuss them, and argue over them" (66). According to Latour, recognizing the multiple associations and collaborations between humans and non-humans allows both to enter the collective as actors, "actants," "acting agents" (76). Latour's idea that diverse subjects can inhabit and help create the world without subsuming each other, moreover, adds "a series of new voices to the discussion, voices that have been inaudible up to now, although their clamor pretended to override all debate: *the voices of nonhumans*" (69, original emphasis). For Sztutman, *A Queda do Céu* embodies Latour's definition of the "pluriverse" precisely by implying that the external world is not given but, rather, an entity that must be created collectively and account for the contributions of non-human agents such as the *xapiri*. As a "multiplicidade, um agregado de mundos divergentes"

["multiplicity, an assemblage of distinct worlds"],[56] the external world of *A Queda do Céu* requires a form of politics that is "menos a política dos outros do que a política que envolve muitos outros e seus mundos" (Sztutman 89) ["less a politics of the 'others' than a politics that involves many 'others' and their worlds"]. According to Sztutman's perspective, in other words, Kopenawa envisions a form of "pluriversal" politics that is centered around the idea of a world in which many interdependent worlds coexist.

Kopenawa's thoughts about political ecology show that the survival of the Amazon depends less on state policies that regard the rainforest as a fixed and knowable category than on creating alternatives to "Wiindigo infrastructures" which could maintain the mutual collaboration between humans, non-humans, and spiritual entities. According to Kopenawa, this process begins with the recognition of Yanomami epistemologies about democratic politics. Different from "falas emaranhadas" and "palavras retorcidas daqueles que querem nossa morte para se apossar de nossas terras" (390) ["mixed-up talk" and "the words of those who want our death and to seize our land" (312)], Kopenawa calls for an idea of politics that is informed by the words of *Omama* and the *xapiri*. As Kopenawa bluntly writes, "a imagem de *Omama* e a de seu filho, o primeiro xamã ... são nossa lei e governo" (390, original emphasis) ["the image of *Omama* and that of his son, the first shaman … are our laws and our government" (313)]. Through shamanic ceremonies, the words of *Omama* and the *xapiri* "penetram em nosso pensamento – com a *yãkoana* e o sonho. E assim guardamos nossa lei dentro de nós, desde o primeiro tempo, continuando a seguir o que *Omama* ensinou a nossos antepassados" (390-1, original emphasis) ["enter into our thought with the *yãkoana* and dream. We have kept this law of ours deep inside us since the beginning of time by continuing to follow what *Omama* taught

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[56] All the translations of Sztutman's article are my own.

our ancestors" (313)]. Kopenawa then concludes that it is because of the law of *Omama* that "não maltratamos a floresta, como fazem os brancos. Sabemos bem que, sem árvores, nada mais crescerá em sua terra endurecida e ardente" (391) ["we do not mistreat the forest the way the white people do. We know very well that without trees nothing will grow on its hardened and blazing ground" (313-4)]. Here, Kopenawa challenges the idea of secular humanism to open space for a collective post-humanism informed by the spiritual connection of the Yanomami with the rainforest. Put another way, Kopenawa explains Yanomami views of politics and spirituality to actualize the Yanomami idea of land stewardship and call for a renewed engagement with the environment based on ideals of mutual responsibility and non-hierarchical connections between humans and non-human beings.

Echoing Latour's concept of the "pluriverse," Kopenawa represents the Amazon and, by extension, nature as a dynamic entity formed through the multiple associations and mutual exchanges between humans and non-humans. For instance, while in ecological discussions about sustainability and preservation humans are the only decision-making agents, Kopenawa writes that "a ecologia somos nós, os humanos. Mas são também, tanto quanto nós, os *xapiri*, os animais, as árvores, os rios, os peixes, o céu, a chuva, o vento e o sol! É tudo o que veio à existência na floresta" (480, original emphasis) ["we human beings are the 'ecology.' But it is equally the *xapiri*, the game, the trees, the rivers, the fish, the sky, the rain, the wind, and the sun! It is everything that came into being in the forest" (393)]. Rather than a vessel of resources to be optimized in the name of economic development, Kopenawa portrays the forest as a dynamic place that, like the words of *Omama*, constantly changes, adapts, and renews itself. The Amazon, as he writes, is "alive" and, although we cannot hear its complaints, the forest "sente dor, como os humanos. Suas grandes árvores gemem quando caem e ela chora de sofrimento

quando é queimada" (468) ["feels pain just like humans do. Its tall trees moan as they fall and it cries in pain when it is burned down" (382)]. While Armstrong invites us to read human dismemberment and the body's malfunctioning as symbolic of environmental damage, Kopenawa here personifies the forest to portray ecological destruction in terms of embodied pain against a living body. Inhabited by the *xapiri* and other spirits created by *Omana* to protect it as well as by animals, plants and natural phenomena, the forest in Kopenawa's narrative becomes a cosmological, social, and political entity. Here, *A Queda do Céu* evokes Deleuze and Guattari's sense of the rhizome as an assemblage of interconnected and heterogenous elements to represent the Amazon as inherently rhizomatic and the result of the interactions of different realities, identities, agents and *saberes* (epistemologies), including those of non-human beings.

Kopenawa's insistence on how the intellectual, spiritual, and social lifeways of his nation are dependent on the agency of spiritual beings such as the *xapiri* and their interactions with the natural world also enlarges Western-centric ideas of place and territory. Place in *A Queda do Céu* refers less to a physical space enclosed by arbitrary borders than to a dynamic and deterritorialized assemblage of different agents and concepts. Christian Elguera, for instance, claims that in Kopenawa's narrative territory is not "una extensión geográfica delimitada sino, sobre todo, como un espacio dinámico o movible de pensamiento" (4) ["a limited geographic extension but, above all, it is a dynamic or movable space of thought"].[57] Elguera continues that, according to this perspective, "cuando una empresa minera explota la tierra no solo invade un territorio, sino que amenaza y altera un sistema conceptual (y los sistemas políticos que se basan en este)" (4) ["when a mining company exploits the land, it not only invades a territory, but also threatens and alters a conceptual system (and the political systems that are based on that)]. As an

[57] All the translations of Christian Elguera's article are my own.

ontological and cosmopolitical category, place becomes an open zone of contact that is continually negotiated and renewed through the establishment of balanced relationships between sovereign yet interdependent subjects (humans, non-humans, and spiritual beings). In this sense, *A Queda do Céu* suggests that land should not be owned and possessed, but, rather, cared for in order to maintain the interconnections of the many human and non-human agencies that are part of it. By deconstructing monolithic notions of territory, or what he sees as a Western-centric invention to divide, appropriate, and manage Indigenous lands, Kopenawa forces us to conceive the ecological exploitation of the Yanomami territory as a threat to the physical space of the rainforest as well as to the conceptual systems and political dynamics that originate from that.

To conclude his analysis of *A Queda do Céu,* Viveiros de Castro states that the words of the Yanomami shaman to which the title refers are more than just words: they are a "shamanic," political, and "cosmo-diplomatic performance" in which conflicting worldviews are compared, translated, and negotiated (39). Indeed, Albert and Kopenawa's book occupies a transitional space of enunciation that refuses essentialisms and claims of authenticity to acknowledge the impossibility of literal translation and absolute reconciliation. As an intercultural mediator trying to prevent the destruction of the Amazon, Kopenawa is aware that to be able to talk about ecology "otherwise" (or ecology in "Yanomami terms"), he needs to successfully make his way into the material structures of colonialism and current Western environmental discourses, yet keep a cultural distance that would allow him to disentangle them from the economic motivations that continue to objectify and quantify nature. In this sense, it is through and against materialist and anthropocentric notions of "meio-ambiente" (environment), "ecologia" (ecology) and "preservação" (preservation) that Kopenawa's environmental consciousness takes place. Through its emphasis on embodied structures of knowledge and the re-centering of Yanomami

ways of conceiving and relating with the environment, *A Queda do Céu* moves beyond an exclusively anti-capitalist or post-development agenda to call for more reciprocal relationships between humans and non-human nature. By placing Yanomami knowledge and shamanic eco-cosmologies alongside and, at the same time, in tension with the global geopolitics of a resource extraction economy, *A Queda do Céu* opens possibilities for aligning eco-politics with other forms of social and political struggle while also crafting new spaces of enunciation that speak of alternative understandings of nature. As an ethno-political appeal against the destruction of the Amazon, Albert and Kopenawa's project urges us to dream "tão longe quanto [os Yanomami]" (390) ["as far as [the Yanomami]" (313)].

At one point in *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, Joe Deom, one of the members of the Mohawk negotiating team, declares that the barricades in Kanehsatake "are just a physical manifestation of the barricades that have existed between our nations since contact occurred in the Western hemisphere almost 500 years ago" (0:20:31). To some extent, this idea that the standoff in Kanehsatake is an outcome of the imaginative and material boundaries imposed by the colonial encounter between Western and Indigenous nations and the ways it produced conflicting understandings of land ownership applies to how Armstrong and Kopenawa envision land disputes in their narratives. Both *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* are performative and pedagogical texts that bring together opposing worldviews to de-center Western models and call for the recognition of alternative epistemologies and grounded systems. Representing issues of deforestation in the context of ongoing conflicts involving Indigenous territories, Armstrong and Kopenawa critique the continuing exploitation of bodies, knowledges, and environment in Canada and Brazil. As both narratives imply, forest landscapes in both countries are contentious spaces that reveal the cracks in colonial structures of power and

denounce their reliance on the subjugation of Indigenous epistemologies that are based on connection to the land. While Penny tries to actively represent environmental destruction around her and inflect her art with a sense of urgency that could encourage readers to think and act differently, Kopenawa translates Yanomami history and modes of thought to a non-Indigenous audience to urge them to stop staring at "their own thought" and ignoring "the distant words of other people and other places" (370-1). Despite these different representational practices, both the "artist-activist" of Armstrong's text and the "translator-activist" of Kopenawa's invite their audience to engage in a critical pedagogy that is essential to open space for Indigenous self-affirmation. As forms of what Martineau defines as "*resistance in (and as) movement*" (57), the narratives discussed in this chapter navigate the political, material, and imaginative terrain of settler colonialism to reinforce Indigenous presence and reclaim Indigenous conceptions of stewardship of the land based on ancestral presence, belonging and care. By doing so, Armstrong and Kopenawa show that restoring Indigenous intellectual and cultural systems is not only inseparable from fighting for political, epistemic, and territorial sovereignty, but also necessary for helping us envision more sustainable ways of relating with the environment. More importantly, the ways that *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* point to an unresolved conflict between epistemic affirmation and systemic change show that any attempt to engage in a pedagogy of decolonization must account for the difficulty of replacing the mental and material securities of dominant epistemological traditions.

Conclusion

Moving Toward "Ruin Seeds" Materialities?

In an interview with Arturo Escobar twenty-five years after the original publication of *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, Gustavo Esteva reaffirms his view of economic development as a "radically inhospitable" concept ("Post-Development @ 25" 101). He attributes this inhospitality to the fact that, because development is founded upon the ideals of Eurocentric modernity and what Quijano defines as "coloniality," it "imposes a universal definition of the good life [which] excludes all others" ("Post-Development @ 25" 101). Consequently, Esteva contends that "living beyond development" would require "hospitably" embracing "the thousand different ways of thinking, being, living, and experiencing the world that characterize reality" ("Post-Development @ 25" 101). Building on the argument he made twenty-five years ago, Esteva maintains that grassroots communities have continuously offered concrete examples on how to live beyond development. When Escobar confronts him about the risks of romanticizing experiences of marginalization, Esteva replies that we need to "seriously explore the notion that we will not find modern solutions to modern problems — because modernity itself has already collapsed," a notion that, according to him, is already embedded in many of the principles of grassroots organizing ("Post-Development @ 25" 109). Esteva then concludes that we are "transitioning to another era" marked by "the fact that our old rationalities and sensibilities are obsolete while new ones have not yet been clearly identified. Based on the experience of similar periods in the past, we should turn to the artists, who can often sniff out the coming of a new era; they produce their creations not by using the old logic but with new insights" ("Post-Development @ 25" 110). In this dissertation, I examined literary representations of forest landscapes and issues of deforestation in Canada and Brazil that

question utilitarian discourses and systems of land management, and, by doing so, unveil the "collapse" of modernity. To some extent, these texts respond to Esteva's call in that they use artistic creation in order to "sniff out" alternative frameworks of knowledge that run against "old rationalities" and "obsolete" economic, environmental, and ontological models. I argued that, through their critical revisiting of cultural myths about the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian Amazon, writers like Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-writers Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa uncover a logic of domination based on the antagonism between humans and non-human nature which continues to dominate material practices and inform how forest landscapes are conceived in Canada and Brazil. At the same time, their narratives bring issues of environment, epistemology, and ontology together to "hospitably" promote and embrace different understandings of the forest, what it means to protect it, and what it means to exist reciprocally with non-human nature.

Despite the differences between the Canadian wilderness and the Brazilian jungle, similar patterns, problems, and responses are visible in the literatures of both countries because of their colonial histories and economic models based on the capitalist development of primary resources. In my first chapter, I argued that by representing the continued exploitation of humans and non-humans in postcolonial environments like Canada's and Brazil's forests, the narratives I discussed in my dissertation offer the seeds a theoretical (un)thinking that re-examines environmental issues within broader discussions about epistemology, ontology, nature, and politics. At the same time, I showed that a reading of Canada's and Brazil's forests as contentious entities that are embedded in broader environmental, cultural, and economic conflicts requires a dialogue between postcolonialism and ecocriticism within and beyond Western-centric frameworks. To support my argument, I outlined the role of Latin-American

postcolonial theorists like Aníbal Quijano, Walter Mignolo and Arturo Escobar, and how their treatment of epistemic and ontological issues in the context of (neo)colonialism in Latin America offers a framework of analysis to both de-center hegemonic imaginaries and open space for the emergence of alternative practices of environmental use, modes of knowledge, and forms of existence. As "environmental writers-activists," Brian Fawcett, Daphne Marlatt, Jeannette Armstrong, Márcio Souza, Regina Melo, and co-authors Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa bring ethics and aesthetics together in order to urge readers to think, act, and live differently. Therefore, in my first chapter I also argued that narratives like theirs mediate between real world issues and aesthetic form in an attempt to offer a discursive structure for acting upon current environmental, cultural, and economic crises. In this sense, while Fawcett, Marlatt, Armstrong, Souza, Melo, and Albert and Kopenawa contribute to theoretical discussions about the need for alternative epistemologies and ontologies, they also challenge inherited modernist ideas of the self-sufficient literary object to reflect on how art and activism can generate new practices of resistance to ecological destruction.

One of the "old rationalities" and obsolete "sensibilities" that are naturalized within cultural myths of forest landscapes in Canada and Brazil is the idea that economic development is necessary to liberate "humanity from the struggle with nature" and help us achieve prosperity (*The End of Capitalism* 8). Thus, in my second chapter I analyzed narratives such as Brian Fawcett's *Virtual Clearcut,* and Márcio Souza's *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo* which deconstruct positive tropes of capitalist representation to, instead, unbury the economic and environmental outcomes that are hidden underneath promises of capitalist redemption. For instance, in his sarcastic depiction of the construction of the Madeira-Mamoré in *Mad Maria*, Souza lays open the chaotic and destructive universe of the Abunã labour camp to question the

idea that capitalist progress and development would help Brazil escape the undesirable condition of underdevelopment. Souza's critique continues in *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, which cynically re-examines discussions about poverty and the production of Third World identity in the context of massive projects of development and increasing deforestation rates in the Brazilian Amazon. In *Virtual Clearcut,* Fawcett portrays the clearcut in the Bowron River valley and the fracturing of social and cultural life in Prince George both as symptoms of global capitalism's failed promises of economic growth and, in so doing, calls for a redefined idea of prosperity that would account for the general wellbeing of humans and non-human nature. I argued that by conceiving development as a set of material practices, instead of simply a "mental" or "discursive structure," and focusing on the grounded actions that enable the narrative of economic progress, Fawcett and Souza suggest that deconstructing the ideology of economic development is not enough to stop the destruction of forest landscapes in Prince George and in the Amazon. Their inability to find a logical connection between dismantling mindsets, concepts, and ideologies, and achieving positive change points to the urgent need of moving beyond the realm of ideas and discourses toward enabling non-capitalist systems and actions.

The nearly all-male cast of Fawcett's and Souza's narratives reinforced a longstanding connection between economic progress, ecological exploitation, and the subjugation of women's experiences which I examined in my third chapter. Focusing on the intersections of environmental exploitation and gender exclusion in Canada and Brazil, I analyzed historical novels like Daphne Marlatt's *Ana Historic* and Regina Melo's *Ykamiabas* which critique historiography and how the writing of history underpins an image of forest landscapes as masculine spaces. I argued that both writers deconstruct a particular concept of history understood as the making of a civilized human (male) space over and against the natural world,

showing how the historical process of taking and using land, and turning nature into culture creates the conditions for the double subjugation of women and nature. Counter to the ideals of productive (male) labour in nature that historical discourses about the settlement of British Columbia and the colonization of the Amazon reinforce, *Ana Historic* and *Ykamiabas* bring forth an idea of natality and childbirth that questions destructive environmental practices and, therefore, point toward a women-centered ethics of care which echoes ongoing discussions in the field of ecofeminism. In *Ana Historic,* Marlatt uses Jeannie's laboring body to problematize women's unrecognized work in the household and the privatization and feminization of care-related activities. In *Ykamiabas*, Melo represents nature as feminine and builds on the Mother Earth imagery to advocate a new form of environmental consciousness centered around ideals of collective survival and sustenance of human and non-human life. I argued that Marlatt's and Melo's texts use natality as a strategy to redefine historiography and what we mean by "history," hence correcting women's exclusion from historical narratives as well as a tool to envision less anthropocentric models of engagement between humans and the environment.

As texts like *The Rising Village*, *Malcolm's Katie* and *À Margem da História* demonstrate, the process of clearing and civilizing the Canadian wilderness and the Amazon jungle resulted in the deforestation of natural landscapes and the (discursive and physical) removal of Indigenous nations and cultures. Therefore, my fourth chapter examined how issues of forestry management and deforestation are embedded in conflicts involving Indigenous territories in Canada and Brazil. The narratives I analyzed in this chapter, for instance, Jeannette Armstrong's *Whispering in Shadows* and Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa's *A Queda do Céu* portray land disputes as an embodiment of broader conflicts between Western and Indigenous epistemologies regarding land ownership. I argued that by reclaiming Indigenous modes of

thought and alternative understandings of land stewardship, Armstrong and Kopenawa replace a colonial idea of "owned" land tied to the Lockean transformation of nature through labor with that of land as a dynamic place made of mutually constitutive agencies and dynamic interactions. At the same time, as performative and pedagogical texts *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* guide readers through a process of epistemic decolonization which involves de-centering Western models to invite us to envision the forest otherwise. Even so, while they promote a renewed engagement with the non-human world, Armstrong and Kopenawa also point to an unresolved conflict between epistemic affirmation and systemic change which shows that engaging in a pedagogy of decolonization must account for the difficulty of replacing the material structures which our "old rationalities and "obsolete" sensibilities have enabled.

Ever since I started writing this dissertation, the reality of devastation that São Paulo's smoked-filled sky unveiled on August 19, 2019 has only intensified in Brazil. For instance, data published by the Brazilian space research agency, INPE, ranked 2022 as the second worst year for deforestation, with a loss of more than 8,590 square kilometers (3,316 square miles), the equivalent of eleven times the size of New York City ("Under Bolsonaro, Amazon deforestation hits new September record"). 2019 was the worse year: 9,178 square kilometers (3,543 square miles) of rainforest were lost. Unsurprisingly, this was the first year in office of President Jair Bolsonaro, a fervent ally of what seems to be Brazil's clearly powerful agrobusiness sector. Jonathan Watts, global environment editor for the *Guardian*, points out that since Bolsonaro became Brazil's president, more than two billion trees "have been killed in the Amazon rainforest" (n.d.). Aware that a "death toll on that scale is almost impossible to conceptualise," Watts breaks down these numbers and shows that two billion trees amount to an average loss of "more than a million each day, or 15 each second. There is no way that could be done with an

axe or a chainsaw or even a bulldozer. No wonder, the farmers have to use fire" (n.d.). Watts then states that the legacy of the "President of Death," as Bolsonaro became known after his irresponsible handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, should also include "a holocaust of non-human life" (n.d.). Against usual reports and news articles that measure deforestation in terms of hectares, square kilometres, soccer pitches or the geographical extension of cities like New York, Watts urges us to understand that the Amazon "is alive" so much so that "when we talk about land clearance, we should be clear that this means a slaughter of life, a massacre of nature" (n.d.). Through this same logic, Watts contends that when we talk about preserving the Amazon, we should be aware that we can't measure "this complex web of interactions" through market quantifiers like "carbon drawdown, water purification, food production, medicinal benefits, habitat provision and soil regeneration" (n.d.). Watts' rationale is that although these "dollar tallies have impressive numbers of zeros," they "come nowhere close to what is really being lost" (n.d.). Bringing to mind Tim Jackson's idea that prosperity cannot be conceived in economic terms, Watts then concludes that quantifiers are not enough to represent what it means to have "stable climate, global water cycles, spiritual well being, [and] interdependence" (n.d.). Watts' effort to redefine environmental exploitation and preservation is echoed in some of the claims that the writers I examined in this project have made about the need to rethink what it means to protect forest landscapes.

In the past few months, the Amazon has once again sparked attention in national and international media. This time, though, discussions were centered around the future of the rainforest in the context of the Brazilian elections. Although during Bolsonaro's administration, deforestation reached the worst numbers in the last fifteen years, the first round of elections on October 2, 2022, showed that support for the "President of Death" was far from over. In the

Senate, for example, nineteen out of the twenty-seven seats will be occupied by Bolsonaro's far-right-wing allies starting in January 2023. In Novo Progresso, a municipality in the state of Pará where, on August 10, 2019, ranchers started the coordinated series of forest fires which resulted in São Paulo's smoked sky nine days later, Bolsonaro received 79,06% of votes. Despite this grim reality, the first round of elections in Brazil also broke a new, more hopeful record with the highest number of Indigenous candidates running for state and federal legislative houses, counting 186 in total. In fact, the election of two candidates of the Indigenous Caucus to the federal house, Célia Xakriabá in Minas Gerais, and Sônia Guajajara in São Paulo, established a new milestone in national politics. The significant increase in the number of Indigenous candidates was, to some extent, the result of *Aldear a Política*, a collective movement whose goal was to promote Indigenous representation and, thus, advance the fight for environmental protection and territorial demarcation in a country where 310 out of the 728 Indigenous lands are still waiting for federal recognition ("Com quase 500 mil votos, candidatos da Bancada Indígena reforçam luta pela demarcação de territórios"). For Kleber Karipuna, executive coordinator of *Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil* (Apib), [Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil], the main accomplishment of *Aldear a Política* was to "enraizar na sociedade a ideia de [que] os povos indígenas são parte da solução, se apresentam como alternativa viável ao modelo de exploração que nos trouxe até aqui" ["root in society the idea that Indigenous peoples are part of the solution; they present themselves as a viable alternative to the exploitative model that brought us here"][58] ("Com quase 500 mil votos, candidatos da Bancada Indígena reforçam luta pela demarcação de territórios"). As Karipuna implies, amid the signs of impending ecological disaster that Bolsonaro's administration came to embody, *Aldear a Política* brought, for the first

[58] The translation of Kleber Karipuna's words is my own.

time, issues of collective survival, and the need for alternative epistemological and economic models to the forefront of environmental and political debates in Brazil. The election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the creation of a Ministry of Indigenous People for which Sonia Guajajara will serve as minister, and the nomination of Joenia Wapichana as president of the National Foundation of Indigenous Peoples (FUNAI) brought hope to a country that is now trying to cope with the legacies of such a "a holocaust of non-human life."

In Canada, public commitments made by the federal government to fight against climate change at a global level have drawn attention to ongoing issues of deforestation in the country. According to data published by Jennifer Skene and Michael Polanyi in the report *Missing the Forest: How Carbon Loopholes for Logging Hinder Canadas Climate Leadership*, each year the logging industry cuts down more than 400,000 hectares of the boreal forest, the equivalent of "an area the size of five NHL hockey rinks every minute" (6). These numbers grant Canada third place in loss of primary forests, behind only Brazil and Russia. According to Skene and Polanyi, while Canada "claims that there is nearly zero deforestation of its forests – and proudly holds itself up in contrast to countries like Brazil and Indonesia," this statement "relies upon the fact that under many international definitions, 'deforestation' is narrowly defined in a way that excludes much of the clearcutting in Canada" (11). For instance, the authors point out that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations defines deforestation "as the conversion of a forest to another non-timber land use, such as farmland or a city development," both of which are dominant practices in the Brazilian Amazon. "Because the logging industry in Canada, like that in many other Northern countries in temperate and boreal latitudes, clearcuts with the intention of allowing the forest to regrow and still considers clearcut landscapes to be healthy forests," the authors conclude that "most of the clearcutting in Canada would instead be

classified as 'forest degradation'" (11). Likewise, a recent article published by Radio-Canada shows that in 2020 in British Columbia, "l'exploitation a été plus rapide dans les forêts anciennes que dans la forêt amazonienne. À titre comparatif, la province a abattu 0,3 % de ses forêts anciennes, alors que cette proportion n'était que de 0,2 % en Amazonie" ("La « forêt amazonienne » du nord à risque de disparaître") ["logging has been faster in old-growth forests than in the Amazon. In comparison, the province cut 0.3% of its old-growth forest, while in the Amazon it was only 0.2%"].[59] Evoking Skene and Polanyi's argument, the article clarifies that although these numbers do not count toward deforestation rates because trees are usually replanted, biodiversity is lost during the process. The article then concludes by reproducing the words of environmental activist Arnoul Matéo, who, like Watts, calls on us to rethink how we conceive forest degradation and deforestation. Matéo states: "Quand on détourne les yeux de ce genre de problème, on en paye le prix. Collectivement. C'est notre eau potable qu'on abîme. Ce sont les espèces qui nous soutiennent, c'est la biodiversité, c'est le climat. Et il faut qu'on change complètement de paradigme pour voir la nature comme une partie de nous" ("La « forêt amazonienne » du nord à risque de disparaître") ["When we turn our eyes away from this kind of problem, we pay the price. Collectively. It is our drinking water that we damage. It's the species that sustain us, it's the biodiversity, it's the climate. And we need to completely change our paradigm to see nature as a part of us"]. Protecting Canada's forests, Matéo suggests, requires an epistemological and ontological rethinking that, echoing the statements made by the writers I examined in this dissertation, would allow us to see ourselves as part of and living mutually with non-human nature.

[59] All the translations of this article are my own.

In their analysis of Albert and Kopenawa's narrative, Lynn Mario Trindade Menezes de Souza and Ana Paula Martinez Duboc read the words of the Yanomami shaman in *A Queda do Céu* as an indication that if "coloniality, through the capitalism that currently sustains it, results in the exhaustion of nature and the environment, it also promises to eradicate life in general and thus the sky shall fall" (906). For Souza and Duboc, "the capitalistic desire of coloniality to consume nature" raises "the pressing need for decolonial pedagogies to keep the sky from falling for everyone" (906). Through different aesthetic and narrative strategies, *Virtual Clearcut*, *Mad Maria* and *O Fim do Terceiro Mundo*, *Ana Historic*, *Ykamiabas*, *Whispering in Shadows* and *A Queda do Céu* try to develop "decolonial pedagogies" which materialize epistemic and ontological frameworks that could prevent the sky from falling. In Fawcett's and Souza's cases, this means accounting for the material realities of forest landscapes and the people who live in them so as to redefine economic growth and prosperity in terms of the general wellbeing of humans and non-human nature. For Marlatt and Melo, "decolonial pedagogies" entail dismantling ideals of productive male labour that involve the bringing down of the forest under men's control. Finally, Armstrong and Kopenawa suggest that fostering "decolonial pedagogies" depends on the rebuilding and recognition of Indigenous intellectual, cultural, and material systems that are based on territorial sovereignty and reciprocal relations to the land. Written from the "ruins" of hegemonic political, economic, and cultural frameworks which continue to subsume natural landscapes as well as systems of knowledges and modes of existence that are embedded in these spaces, the narratives I examined in my project offer a complicating discourse to the capitalist logic of exploitation that could ultimately lead to a "falling sky." Through their texts, Brian Fawcett, Márcio Souza, Daphne Marlatt, Regina Melo, Jeannette Armstrong, and co-writers Bruce Albert and Davi Kopenawa try to give us the "seeds" for imagining alternative

epistemologies, ontologies, and futures away from exploitative practices and the longstanding principles of Eurocentric colonialism which establish as universal what is, in fact, a particular mode of knowing about and existing *in* and *against* nature. As I am finishing this project, we continue to be constantly exposed to environmental disasters that reveal the inhospitality and unsustainability of obsolete "modernity," and give us warnings about the potential "fall of the sky;" forest fires are just a few of them. Environmental and political discussions are beginning to acknowledge the imperative need of rethinking our "rationalities" and sensibilities," as suggested in Woods' and Matéo's words. The authors I examined in this dissertation offered us the seeds of a theoretical (un)thinking and glimpses of what a "hospitable" future could look like. What is required from us, now, is to "see them," to use our attentiveness to help trace a path toward a decolonial future where "ruin seeds" epistemologies and ontologies can be transformed into "ruin seeds" materialities.

Appendix A: Land defenders who died between 2016 and 2021 in the Brazilian Amazon

Land defenders who died between 2016 and 2021 in the Brazilian Amazon			
Name	Characteristics	Industry driver	Local state
Claudomir Bezerra de Freitas	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Acre
Emyra Waiãpi	Indigenous peoples	Mining & Extractives	Amapá
Mateus Cristiano Araújo	Children	Hydropower	Amazonas
Anderson Barbosa Monteiro	Indigenous peoples	Hydropower	Amazonas
Vanderlânia de Souza Araújo	Indigenous peoples	Hydropower	Amazonas
Josimar Moraes Lopes	Indigenous peoples	Hydropower	Amazonas
Josivan Moraes Lopes	Indigenous peoples	Hydropower	Amazonas
Fernando Ferreira da Rocha	Lawyer	Unknown	Amazonas
Maxciel Pereira dos Santos	State official	Logging	Amazonas
Carlos Alberto Oliveira de Souza	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Amazonas
Willames Machado Alencar	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Amazonas
Nemis Machado de Oliveira	Indigenous peoples	Agribusiness	Amazonas
Francisco de Souza Pereira	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Amazonas
Marinalva Silva de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Amazonas
Jairo Feitosa Pereira	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Amazonas
Flávio Lima de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Amazonas
José Vane Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Maranhão
José do Carmo Corrêa Júnior	Other	Unknown	Maranhão
Maria José Rodrigues	Other	Unknown	Maranhão
João de Deus Moreira Rodrigues	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
José Francisco de Souza Araújo	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
Antônio Gonçalves Diniz	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
Reginaldo Alves Barros	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
Maria da Luz Benício de Sousa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
F.S.S.	Afrodescendant	Agribusiness	Maranhão
Raimundo Nonato Batista Costa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
Kwaxipuru Kaapor	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Zezico Rodrigues Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Francisco Sales Costa de Sousa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
Firmino Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Raimundo Benício Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Paulo Paulino Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Jorginho Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Antônio de Cipriano	Afrodescendant	Agribusiness	Maranhão
Raimundo Silva	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
José Caneta Gavião	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Sônia Vicente Cacau Gavião	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
José Colírio Oliveira Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
José Dias de Oliveira Lopes Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Maranhão
José Queiros Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Candide Zaraky Tenetehar/Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
José Lisboa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
Assis Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Joel Martins Gavião Krenyê	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Isaías Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Genésio Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Fernando Gamela	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Zé Sapo	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão

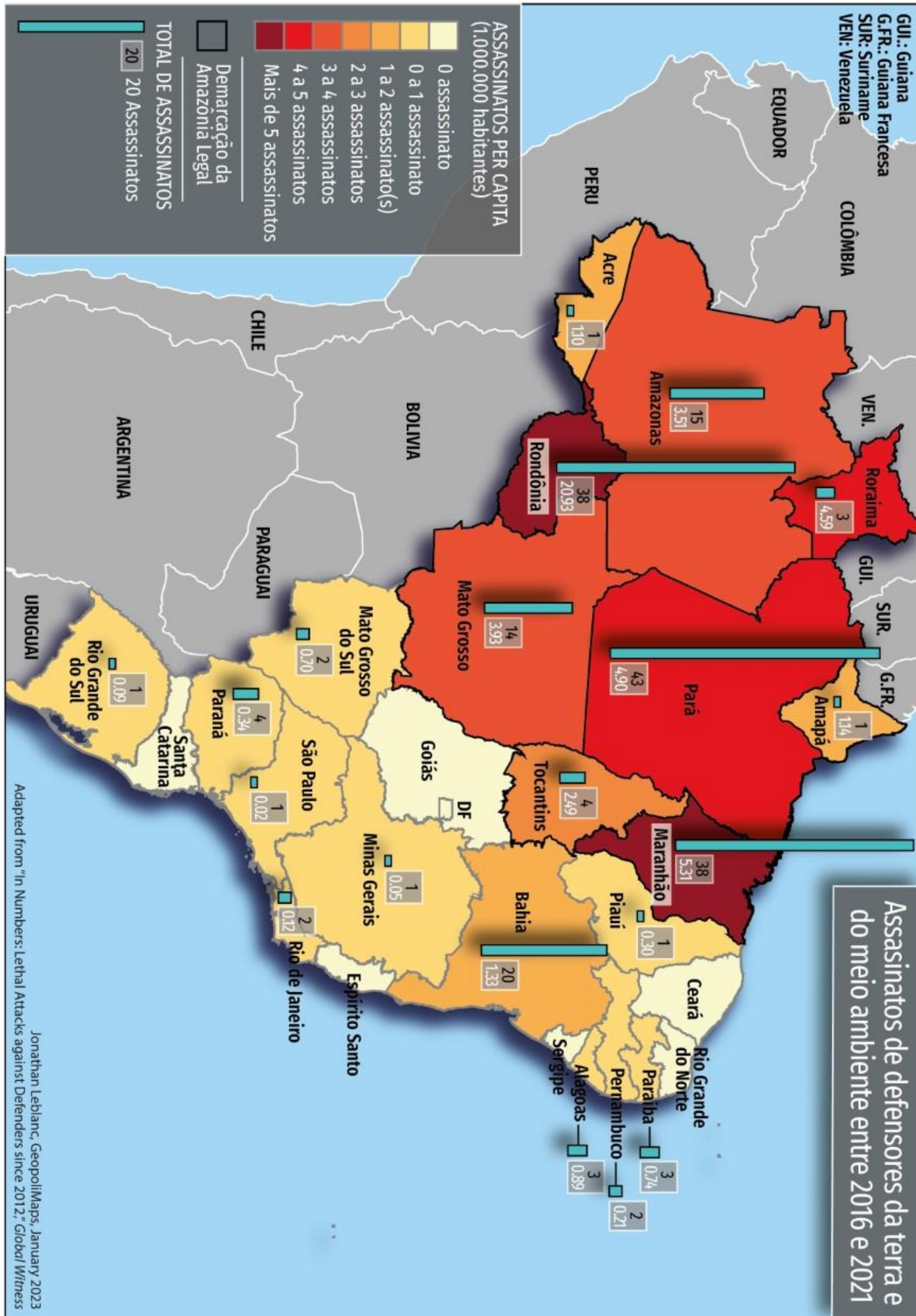
Aponuyre Guajajara	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Francisca das Chagas Silva	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
Iraúna Ka'apor	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Maranhão
Celino Fernandes	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
Wanderson de Jesus Rodrigues Fernandes	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Maranhão
Roni dos Santos Miranda	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Maranhão
Sidinei Floriano Da Silva	Other	Unknown	Mato Grosso
Edmar Valdinei Rodrigues Branco	Small-scale farmer	Mining & Extractives	Mato Grosso
Elizeu Queres de Jesus	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Mato Grosso
Carlos Antônio dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Mato Grosso
Valmir Rangeu do Nascimento	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Edson Alves Antunes	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Aldo Aparecido Carlini	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Samuel Antônio da Cunha	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Francisco Chaves da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Izaul Brito dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Fábio Rodrigues dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Sebastião Ferreira de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Ezequias Santos de Oliveira	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Valdomiro Lopes de Lorena	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Mato Grosso
Isac Tembé	Indigenous peoples	Unknown	Pará
Fernando dos Santos Araújo	Other	Unknown	Pará
Raimundo Paulino da Silva Filho		Unknown	Pará
Alexandre Coelho Furtado Neto	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
José Araújo dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Dilma Ferreira Silva	Other	Hydropower	Pará
Claudionor Costa da Silva	Relatives of targets	Hydropower	Pará
Milton Lopes	Relatives of targets	Hydropower	Pará
Marciano dos Santos Fosalusa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Gilson Maria Temponi	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Aluísio Sampaio dos Santos	Other	Unknown	Pará
Haroldo Betcel	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Pará
Juvenil Martins Rodrigues	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Leoci Resplandes de Sousa	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Pará
Katison de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Nazildo dos Santos Brito	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Paulo Sérgio Almeida Nascimento	Other	Mining & Extractives	Pará
Joacir Fran Alves da Mota	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Gazimiro Sena Pacheco	Other	Unknown	Pará
Valdemir Resplandes	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Fernando Pereira	Other	Mining & Extractives	Pará
Eraldo Moreira Luz	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Jorge Matias da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Maria da Lurdes Fernandes Silva	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Manoel Índio Arruda	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Rosenilton de Almeida	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Pará
Ozeir Rodrigues da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Regivaldo Pereira da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Ronaldo Pereira de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Jane Julia de Oliveira	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará

Weldson Pereira da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Nelson Souza Milhomem	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Antonio Pereira Milhomem	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Bruno Henrique Pereira Gomes	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Weclebson Pereira Milhomem	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Hércules Santos de Oliveira	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Etevaldo Soares Costa	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Kátia Martins	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Waldomiro Costa Pereira	Other	Unknown	Pará
Luís Alberto Araújo	State official	Unknown	Pará
Ronair José de Lima	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
João Luiz de Maria Pereira	State official	Logging	Pará
Luis Antônio Bonfim	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Pará
Marcio Rodrigues dos Reis	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Pará
Rafael Gasparini Tedesco	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Aldenir dos Santos Macedo	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Marcelo Chaves Ferreira	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Ângelo Venicius Henrique Mozer	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Kevin Fernando Holanda de Souza	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Amaral José Stoco Rodrigues	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Amarildo Aparecido Rodrigues	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Roberto Pereira da Silva Pandolfe	Other	Unknown	Rondônia
Jerlei	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Ari Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Rondônia
Gustavo José Simoura	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Ismauro Fatimo dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Lucas de Lima Batista	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Edemar Rodrigues da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Hugo Rabelo Leite	Small-scale farmer	Logging	Rondônia
Ademir de Souza Pereira	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Rondônia
Manoel Quintino da Silva Kaxarari	Indigenous peoples	Logging	Rondônia
Valdenir Juventino Izidoro	Afrodescendant	Unknown	Rondônia
Paulo Sérgio Bento Oliveira	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Orestes Rodrigues de Castro	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Renato Souza Benevides	Other	Unknown	Rondônia
Elivelton Castelo Nascimento	Other	Unknown	Rondônia
Roberto Santos Araújo	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Ceará	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Sebastião Pereira dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Edilene Mateus Porto	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Isaque Dias Ferreira	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Luciano Ferreira de Andrade	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Luís Carlos da Silva	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Cleidiane Alves Teodoro	Children	Unknown	Rondônia
Geraldo de Campos Bandeira	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Nivaldo Batista Cordeiro	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Jesser Batista Cordeiro	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Ruan Hildebran Aguiar	Children	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Allysson Henrique Lopes	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Rondônia
Valdiro Chagas de Moura	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia

Enilson Ribeiro dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Rondônia
Nilce de Souza Magalhães	Small-scale farmer	Hydropower	Rondônia
Original Yanomami	Indigenous peoples	Mining & Extractives	Roraima
Marcos Yanomami	Indigenous peoples	Mining & Extractives	Roraima
Geraldo Lucas	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Roraima
Roberto Muniz Campista	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Tocantins
Getúlio Coutinho dos Santos	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Tocantins
Luiz Jorge Araújo	Small-scale farmer	Unknown	Tocantins
Genivaldo Braz do Nascimento	Small-scale farmer	Agribusiness	Tocantins

Adapted from "In Numbers: Lethal Attacks against Defenders since 2012." *Global Witness*, https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/numbers-lethal-attacks-against-defenders-2012/. Accessed 05 January 2023.

Appendix B: Killings of land and environmental defenders by state in the Brazilian Amazon from 2016-2021



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