

THE **EXTRACTIVE** ZONE

Social Ecologies and Decolonial Perspectives

MACARENA GÓMEZ-BARRIS

THE EXTRACTIVE ZONE

DISSIDENT ACTS

A series edited by Macarena Gómez-Barris and Diana Taylor

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ZONE

*Social Ecologies and
Decolonial Perspectives*

MACARENA GÓMEZ-BARRIS

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Courtesy of the artist.

**A MÍ MAMA, VIVIANNE RENEE DUFOUR,
QUE ME HA DADO TANTO.**

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PREFACE

Below the Surface

Through a fortuitous set of events about ten years ago, I spent a semester at the Marin Headlands Center for the Arts in California. I met May Stevens there, a socialist and landscape painter important within the 1960s American experimental movement, and someone I can only describe as a visual poet. In the decade before I met her, May made a series of blue-green oil paintings whose subject matter focused on the rivers and lakes of North America. *The Confluence of Two Rivers* (2002–3) depicts the merger of dark matter into goeey flows, cracked open by threads of earth. During her three-week residency at the Headlands, May painted the Pacific Ocean, swirling silvery words into the contoured waves on the canvas. Though this book is not about Northern California per se, and instead focuses on South America and how we perceive its social ecologies, artists such as May have allowed me to better see what lies below the surface of liquid, beyond normative modes of apprehending landscape, and toward a perception of the complexity within smaller scales of being and imagining.

As we walked together in the nearby hills, May turned to me, unprompted, and offered something I still ponder regarding the realm of perception. She had recently visited Sausalito and had found herself lingering over the yellowish green-brown muck that gathered within the ocean at the wooden base of the city's piers. For her, the biomatter that accumulated around the piers represented the "origin stuff" of creativity. This primal mix demanded a different form of attention and care, one that blends the way that each of us perceive ourselves with how we perceive the natural world, a cognitive and embodied mode of seeing. Incorporating that muck's color palette in her art led her back to what she called her original creative impulse, forcing her to reckon with a viewpoint that came from within—rather than from above, in relation to, or near—the thick water, and from within that "origin stuff." May referred to this as her "caca" story of creative origins.

Since that walk with May, I have thought a lot about a submerged viewpoint, about ways to see what lies within the ecologies all around us, and about how to perceive those things that are not usually available to the naked eye. After our conversation, I turned my attention to microbe worlds, to imagine the tadpoles and the amoebas that have swum within murky waters for millennia, to ponder what it means to see from below, to become mindful of what Maurice Merleau-Ponty refers to as “the space of vision that both surrounds us and passes through us.”¹ Through subsequent walks and conversations, May continued to impart the importance of perceiving the natural elements as a source of unfolding—to expand perception by looking at the water, at muck, and at the submerged environment around me, the intermixing of caca as glistening life within the grasp of perception.

Recently, inspired muck came up again, this time in a conversation with Mapuche filmmaker Francisco Huichaqueo whose experimental films about the Chilean monocultural forest plantations I explore in chapter 3. Through spending time with Huichaqueo, another visual and sensual thinker, I began to understand his modes of perceiving, particularly in terms of seeing to the other side of colonial occupation. Mapuche peoples, he told me, place great importance on the dream world, including exchanging their content with each other each morning. Over the previous decade his own objective had been to embed his art with that long-standing practice, an effort to see within and beyond the world of materiality to the parallel dream world of ancestors. This is the realm that the Mapundungun language describes as the *perrimunton*. Francisco has intimated how, as a director of experimental films that visually communicate other ways of seeing and sensing the world, he plays with perception by dipping his camera below the water’s surface, documenting the submerged worlds of Southern Chile’s rivers as they wind through Mapuche territories, making visible air bubbles, bits of wood, and the greenish-brown moss of the riverbank’s floor. Like the dreamscape he travels through to blend old and new viewpoints, his camera views the liquid planet in microform.

Such tangible artistic efforts to shift how we see, specifically by reckoning with the thick opacity of what lies below the water’s surface, have been essential to crafting this book and its decolonial methodology.² In my research across five regions within South America, these artists have prodded



Francisco Huichaqueo, *Kalül Trawün—Reunión del Cuerpo*, video still, 2012. Image courtesy of Francisco Huichaqueo.

me to see differently and to question what lies beneath the visible world of *the extractive zone* and to seek out less perceivable worlds, life forms, and the organization of relations within them, while creating new methods that allow for this tracking.

My objective in *The Extractive Zone* is to document geographies where coordinated forms of capitalist power advance, while also analyzing the complexity of social ecologies and material alternatives proposed and proliferated by artists, activists, movements, submerged theorists, and cultural producers. Second, I explicitly challenge the frames of disciplinary knowledge that would bury the subtlety and complexity of the life force of the worlds that lie within the extractive zone. I address the importance of epistemological autonomy and embodied knowledge as necessary to pushing away from a paradigm of mere resistance into the more layered terrain of potential, moving within and beyond the extractive zone. Through detailed

studies of local spaces, Indigenous worlds, and natural ecologies in peril, I work to better conceptualize histories of conquest and dissent, especially those emergent in South America's resource-rich Indigenous territories.

Throughout this book, I deploy a decolonial femme methodology, or a mode of porous and undisciplined analysis shaped by the perspectives and critical genealogies that emerge within these spaces as a mode of doing research. My engagement with Andean phenomenology and the intersectionality of Indigenous anarcho-feminist critique, as queer decolonial options that lead us out of the deadening impasse that is extractive capitalism, is not bound to the disciplinary drive to claim or master the images or formations I study.³ These submerged perspectives are anchored within social ecologies that reorganize and refute the monocultural imperative, as do I in my encounter with these other worlds. Submerged modes flurry in their activity, random, complex, and coordinated systems that are often illegible to those with state and financial power that assume simplicity where complexity actually dwells.

Here, I must explain how concept work allows me to simultaneously attend to the life-and-death dialectics that are operative within these geographies: by using the term *extractive zone* I refer to the colonial paradigm, worldview, and technologies that mark out regions of "high biodiversity" in order to reduce life to capitalist resource conversion. My book examines social ecologies, or networked potential, within the extractive global economy, the system that was installed by colonial capitalism in the 1500s and that converted natural resources such as silver, water, timber, rubber, and petroleum into global commodities. In its *longue durée*, extractivism references colonial capitalism and its afterlives: extending from its sixteenth-century emergence until the present day, and including the recent forty-year neoliberal privatization and deregulation process, as well as the rise and fall of the progressive states called the Pink Tide in Latin American nations.⁴ This also refers to the global intensification of new forms of extractivism, or what Saskia Sassen describes as the expulsion by advanced political economies which accumulates wealth off of resource rich territories for a few, while permanently squeezing the many.⁵

In other words, we might think of a successive march of colonial and neocolonial actors operating in relation to South America as if it were an extractible continent; Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano long ago named

this process “the open veins of Latin America,” as these territories continue to provide sustenance for the global economy.⁶

Extractivismo, as extractive capitalism is known in the Américas, indicates an economic system that engages in thefts, borrowings, and forced removals, violently reorganizing social life as well as the land by thieving resources from Indigenous and Afro-descendent territories. As I attend to in the introduction, a burgeoning literature on *extractivismo* has emerged in South America that describes the claim to resources by global capital in the face of increased protests about the importance of local resource sovereignty. Since dense genetic plant life and natural resource regions often overlap with Indigenous territories, then we must work to analyze how Native peoples are both constructed by the state and corporate entities as obstructions to the expansion of extractive capitalism and literally block its reach. The Sioux and trans-confederation struggle contesting the Dakota pipeline is only one example of continual Indigenous land defense in the Américas. Therefore, throughout this book I show how the embodied activities that reject colonialism continue to alter and expand how we see and what we know about Indigenous spaces especially within the extractive zone.

While racial capitalism refers to the processes that historically subordinated African and Indigenous populations, extractivism references the dramatic material change to social and ecological life that underpin this arrangement.⁷ Furthermore, the racial logics of South American states are expanded through new forms of extractive capitalism.⁸ Even as new progressive states such as those in Ecuador and Bolivia propose policies to legalize Native peoples’ rights, they enable and normalize resource exploitation that ends up perpetuating anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism. Further, as The Feminist Constitution that I examine in chapter five makes apparent, redistributive states that do not broadly consider intersectional histories fail to address the needs and perspectives of female, gender-nonconforming, working class, and “cuir” populations even despite new legislative gains.⁹ I address how extractive capitalism dramatically divides nature and culture through new forms of race, gender, and sexual exclusions.¹⁰

One of today’s central modes of perpetuating racial capitalism in the Global South, in addition to expanding prisons and security regimes, is in fact mega-extractive projects, such as large dams and mines, which re-

quire huge technological and resource feats as well as what Enrique Dussel refers to as the “developmentalist fallacy,” or the imposition of modernity as a universalized mode of governance.¹¹ State and corporate-designed mega-development projects operate through an economic rationale without calibrating for the life forms that exist beneath the gaze of such grand schemes. Extractivism functions within what Anibal Quijano first coined as the colonial matrix of power,¹² where corporate entities and states are indistinguishable in their economic interests and activities; states act on behalf of corporations, and corporate entities hire security forces to control and suppress anti-extractivist organizing.

Extractive capitalism, then, violently reorganizes territories as well as continually perpetuates dramatic social and economic inequalities that delimit Indigenous sovereignty and national autonomy. As the Uruguayan economist and executive secretary of the Latin American Center for Social Ecology, Eduardo Gudynas, explains, “Under neo-extractivism, the objective of national development, as ‘endogenous development,’ is lost; autonomy in relation to global markets vanishes. National industries do not recover, in some cases they are reduced.”¹³ Gudynas rightly identifies how developmentalism continues to set the agenda and structure conditions of South America’s place within a colonial world system, further diminishing the possibility of state independence in relation to the global economy. Yet we must also critique the world system that reproduces nationalism at the expense of the sovereignty of Indigenous territories.

Genealogies of critical theories from the South (including dependency theory and decolonial theory) have importantly attended to the persistence of this colonial condition that produces regional asymmetries and an uneven distribution of resource control. My project builds on these insights to unpack a dual analysis of power: I analyze extractive capitalism’s techniques of domination, showing how it expands through a series of legal, rhetorical, economic, and political contortions that both draw from and erase Indigenous peoples in their territories. The material and affective production of extractive capitalism crushes vernacular life and its embodiment, enclosing it within the leveling technologies of globalization. In relation to schemes of mega-development, large-scale extractivism assaults peripheral spaces, inflicting uneven pain upon regions where Indigenous majority communities continue to organize life and proliferate it, even in sites of extreme pressure and violence. This book lifts and names these sub-

merged social ecologies. And the “extractive zone” names the violence that capitalism does to reduce, constrain, and convert life into commodities, as well as the epistemological violence of training our academic vision to reduce life to systems.

Nonindigenous scholars have cautioned against “romanticizing native peoples,”¹⁴ however, some of that work does not centrally engage with the current dangers in the reduction of biodiversity and the genocidal practices that Native peoples face. In the case studies that I elaborate upon, all take place in the so-called peripheries of late capitalist activity, and Indigenous peoples are directly affected by neoliberal, economic, and cultural conditions that predetermine these spaces as colonial contact zones.¹⁵ It is often in the heart of resource-rich territories that Indigenous peoples exist in complex tension with extractive capitalism and land defense. In these geographies, Indigenous peoples often multiply rather than reduce life possibilities, protecting land and each other at often extremely high personal and communal cost. For instance, a global map of recent ecocides, or the murder of land defenders, shows an acute rise in Latin America and the Asian Pacific, geographies that overlap with new social movements that organize against extractive encroachment.¹⁶ The organization Global Witness documents a three hundred percent increase in the murders of ordinary people defending natural resources from mining, hydroelectric dams, conservation, and pollution.

Throughout the world, Indigenous peoples are also often at the forefront of defending lands in regions that are continually extracted for their biodiversity.¹⁷ In the Américas, we see the complicity among state, police, and corporate actors in their attempts to violently shut down these land defenders, such as the case of attack dogs and pepper spray used against Indigenous protestors and their allies as they blocked the Dakota oil pipe. In resource-rich Ecuador, anti-extractive activists report that their emails are regularly hacked, that they are followed and intimidated, and, most notably, that the police and military rove Indigenous territories, facilitating the work of national and multinational capitalist enterprises.¹⁸ Lenca activist Berta Cáceres, who was murdered in 2014, founded the Council of Indigenous peoples in part to oppose mega-projects and resource extraction in Honduras.¹⁹

As critical Indigenous studies have shown, colonial capitalism often expands its control over Native territories by legitimizing the neoliberal

multicultural state.²⁰ And it is here that the exercise of autonomy matters. In each chapter, I ask, how can we differently apprehend not only the experience of and resistance to extractive colonialism, but also its generative capacity to see and activate beyond the colonial divide? As I elaborate, Indigenous territories often overlap with the geographies that constitute the Earth's highest biodiversity, and which extractive capitalism continually earmarks and occupies for commodity conversion, mapped through increasingly fine-tuned technologies.

In zones of continual extractivism, what responses, engagements, and viewpoints emerge that do not exhaust difference but instead proliferate it?²¹ How do Native and African-descendent populations have perspectives on the natural world that engage it, rather than just take from it? And, to reach further into the work of decolonization, can feminist and queer interventions pose a challenge to patriarchal logics, monoculture, and extractive capitalism? Can we differently attend to Andean, Amazonian, Native life and the complex of senses never fully subsumed within the European colonial order? What cultural and intellectual production makes us see, hear, and intimate the land differently? What do we really know about the invisible, the inanimate, and the nonhuman forms that creatively reside as afterlives of the colonial encounter?

The map I produce is not connected through linear histories or Eurocentric expeditions, nor do I enter the colonial archive to read alongside it, even while I have learned much from some of these methodologies.²² Instead, the map I draw is one of Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous spaces across the Andes, Southern Chile, and into the Andean Amazonia as continually occupied, either by colonists, settlers, or multinational corporations, where histories of decolonization arise within the violent condition of extractive capitalism. A disciplinary rationale inevitably fails for all the sites, texts, and geographies that I transverse with epistemological excess. In other words, rather than pursue one disciplinary frame, I engage standpoint and decolonial theory, regional histories, and relational critique to attend to several scenes of extractivism within South America. A decolonial entry into the extractive zone, then, reveals a differently perceivable world, an intangible space of emergence, where rivers converge into the flow and the muck of life otherwise.

INTRODUCTION

Submerged Perspectives

Let us never forget: that the poem was entombed in a collapse of the earth. By habit, rather than commodity, the singularity and multiplicity of things were presented as divided couples and dualities, before the genres and species were discovered. This cadence allowed for a better distinction between things (we still think and react in this dual manner, and often take surprising pleasure from it). But we're also waiting for the renewed perception of differences to reveal themselves as such, and for the poem to reemerge once more.

Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*

The Extractive Zone attends to the regions of extractive capitalism by foregrounding submerged perspectives; it also engages the possibility of renewed perception. Throughout, I ask us to consider realms of differently organized reality that are linked to, yet move outside of, colonial boundaries. Unlike the extractive view, I lift submerged perspectives that perceive local terrains as sources of knowledge, vitality, and livability. My work is situated in five specific spatial geographies of study within South America—the Bío Bío in Chile, the Sacred Valley in Peru, Potosí (and La Paz) in Bolivia, Eastern Ecuador, and Southwestern Colombia. These areas represent “other Américas,” or regions whose marginal status remains central to the global economy and gives us clues as to how we might understand a range of decolonizing efforts in the hemisphere.¹

In this study, I am attentive to shifting borderlands, queer and non-reproductive worlds of horizontal and anarcho affiliation, experimental

film and vernacular performances as sites of potential, not only through social movements, but also through modes of seeing, living, and finding sources of exchange as alternatives to the destructive path that is extractive capitalism.² *The Extractive Zone* works across spaces that might not otherwise be organized together in one study, delinking from the naturalization of national histories and from the heteronormativity of the nation-state. Instead, I uncover what is submerged within local geographies that have been traversed by colonialism and extractive capitalism to show the ongoing force of the colonial encounter. This book also analyzes and engages majority Indigenous territories often constituted as *terra nullius*, despite palimpsest histories of social life that do not divide nature from culture, land into private property, or ecology from the vernacular.

Édouard Glissant's theory of relationality has become one touchstone for perceiving the modes of difference that emerge within the spaces of potential of other Américas, where a certain sensibility and attention to the oceanic is embedded in Glissant's poetics.³ In the epigraph, Édouard Glissant refers to the "renewed perception of differences to reveal themselves as such, and for the poem to reemerge once more." The poem in Glissant's elegant line is a metaphor for seeing beyond the colonial divide, into "a relation between different people, places, animate and inanimate objects, visible and invisible forces, the air, the water, the fire, the vegetation, animals and humans."⁴ To name the visible and invisible forces between the human and nonhuman, between animate and inanimate life, is to perceive a too-often-ignored network of relationality, or social ecologies, as I term them throughout.

In *Poetics of Relation*, Glissant makes reference to the rhizomatic networks that operate as the hidden worlds of opacity, where renewed perception takes refuge from enclosure and containment.⁵ Similarly, to be able to see beyond the capitalist divide, renewed perception does not simply represent a structure of visibility. It instead refers to an enlivened sense of the relationships that inhabit autonomous and uncharted spaces within capitalism and those that exist between the tracking of colonial and disciplinary power.⁶ By making visible microspaces of interaction and encounter within geographies where coloniality has left and continues to leave a deep imprint, I show how renewed perception offers a method for decolonized study.

If we take as our starting point that many spaces within the Américas have never been fully inserted into Western capitalism, then we might

also consider vernacular colonialities as the site of renewed perception.⁷ These are sites of differentiated and inexhaustible potential, complex Afro-Indigenous spaces of coexistence with the nonhuman world that have been formed in relation to the colonial Encounter.⁸ In terms of perceiving otherwise, Indigenous perspectives have long apprehended what Eduardo Viveiros de Castro refers to as “reality from distinct points of view.”⁹ In studying Amazonian worldviews and creating a new Brazilian Anthropology, Viveiros de Castro illustrates how an Indigenous perception of nature does not divide itself from other realms of reality; instead, it apprehends from “an original state of undifferentiation.”

Decolonial thinkers put into motion a range of methods and epistemologies that give primacy to renewed perception. Walter Dignolo describes how decoloniality delinks from the Western project of civilization where being and language have been inscribed through the structures of coloniality.¹⁰ Furthermore, decoloniality moves away from singularity and the reduction imposed by the European gaze toward the proliferation of epistemological possibility. Rather than presenting one mode of seeing otherwise, a range of generative authors that include Sylvia Wynter, Enrique Dussel, and Lewis Gordon offer us diasporic knowledge formations that name and theorize the effects of heterogeneous colonial histories. Key architects of decolonial scholarship such as Walter Dignolo, Maria Lugones, Emma Pérez, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Laura Pérez, Chela Sandoval, Catherine Walsh, Arturo Escobar, Sylvia Rivera-Cusicanqui, and Ramón Grosfoguel attend to the weight of the European continental tradition, while sorting through hemispheric sites of enunciation that renarrate colonial histories from the position of subjugated knowledges.¹¹

Decolonial theorizations allow me to identify how new/old forms of colonialism, such as extractive capitalism, the digital surveillance of territories, the criminalization of Indigenous peoples as a weapon of neoliberal expansion, and the extraction of Native and Afro-descendent knowledges, all depend on prior civilizational projects, in which the Global South has long been constructed as a region of plunder, discovery, raw resources, taming, classification, and racist adventure.¹² However, if we only track the purview of power’s destruction and death force, we are forever analytically imprisoned to reproducing a totalizing viewpoint that ignores life that is unbridled and finds forms of resisting and living alternatively. Therefore, I seek new approaches by analyzing submerged and emergent perspectives

within the extractive zone, or the potential for forms of life that cannot be easily reduced, divided, or representationally conquered or evacuated.

Like any system of domination, extractive capitalism is not totalizing in its destructive effects. The term “Anthropocene,” which has been used by Western geologists and climatologists to term the period of human intervention from 1610 forward, now popularly identifies the crisis of future life on the planet. Scientists and scholars in the last ten years have written their visions of a planet in crisis, a spate of literature that addresses a “no future” paradigm and how life on the planet will soon be destroyed.¹³ The broad adoption of the term “Anthropocene” is a key shift in our willingness to acknowledge the impact the human has had on the planet. Yet we use the term too generally, addressing “humanity” as a whole without understanding histories of racial thought and settler colonialism that are imposed upon categorizations of biodiversity, spaces where the biotechnologies of capitalism accelerate.

In reality, the problem is far more specific: colonial capitalism has been the main catastrophic event that has gobbled up the planet’s resources, discursively constructing racialized bodies within geographies of difference, systematically destroying through dispossession, enslavement, and then producing the planet as a corporate bio-territory. The Anthropocene, like the militarized production of the extractive zone, demarcates the temporalities and spatial catastrophe of the planetary through a universalizing idiom and viewpoint that hides the political geographies embedded within the conversion of complex life. Thus, naming the Anthropocene as such without grounding its impact is what Vandana Shiva refers to as a monoculture of the mind.¹⁴

My objective is to decolonize the Anthropocene by cataloguing life otherwise, or the emergent and heterogeneous forms of living that are not about destruction or mere survival within the extractive zone, but about the creation of emergent alternatives. Unlike these doomsday approaches that play with destruction scenarios on the scale of the planetary, I study at the level of submerged life worlds within Indigenous territories, while pointing to African-descendent territories and ontologies, modes of living that, even if not often perceivable, exist alongside extractive capitalism. For the spaces, movements, artwork, and intellectual and activist genealogies I study, the paradigm of “no future” has already taken place and we are now on the other side of colonial catastrophe.¹⁵

Within wide-ranging, critical, and interlinked social ecologies lies the potential for what Anibal Quijano cites as “liberation from all power organized as inequality, discrimination, exploitation, and domination.”¹⁶ When coupled with Laura Perez’s important caution that decolonization must necessarily be anchored within feminist-of-color queer thought and praxis,¹⁷ we begin to enter into the terrains of emergent potential at the center of my study. As I detail in chapter 1, Andean and Amazonian spaces that contain what is often dubbed the highest biodiversity on the planet cannot be managed under the management state’s incorporative logic of *el buen vivir*, or good living practices, that have become the institutional reduction of Indigenous knowledge formations. The locales and visual texts I examine in this book, therefore, proliferate with difference as alternatives, through strategies that inverse, reverse, or stretch the gaze; they elongate time, linger within third spaces, imagine ecologies of rupture, and see with a fish’s eye into the flow of the river and away from the dam’s blockage.

In my study, attention to the dynamics and operations of race and racisms, feminist critique, queer potential, and anticapitalist struggle organizes the chapters that follow. Shifting entry points into the microspaces of the local, experimental, and phenomenological allows for attention to the embodied and vernacular experience of what is contained within the extractive zone. My first objective, then, is to move decolonial theory into further engagement with scholarship on race, sexuality, and Indigenous studies, providing methods to see the encounter of coloniality through these multiple frames of analysis.

The Extractive View

Before the colonial project could prosper, it had to render territories and peoples extractible, and it did so through a matrix of symbolic, physical, and representational violence.¹⁸ Therefore, the extractive view sees territories as commodities, rendering land as for the taking, while also devalorizing the hidden worlds that form the nexus of human and nonhuman multiplicity. This viewpoint, similar to the colonial gaze, facilitates the reorganization of territories, populations, and plant and animal life into extractible data and natural resources for material and immaterial accumulation.

The power of the visual has been explored by theorists in great detail

over the last half century. But these mostly Eurocentric visual theories ignore the weight of colonial seeing, neglecting its earlier forms of power. For instance, Michel Foucault's panopticon stands in for the state's ever-watchful eye,¹⁹ a theory of power that is formulated with modernity rather than with colonialism in mind. Gilles Deleuze in his short but influential essay "Postscript on Societies of Control" picks up on Foucault's theory of modern visual power by naming and, to a certain extent, predicting a new configuration that he called the "control society."²⁰ While these theories are often cited as classic sources of visual studies, by starting with modernity they render invisible the enclosure, the plantation, the ship, and the reservation, quintessential colonial spaces where power was consolidated through visual regimes.

In particular, what forms of power can be located by naming the extractive view? How might a focus on extractive capitalism and its vertical model of seeing change how we understand the history of visibility and the way we name forms of power in the past and in the present? What if we, alongside Nicholas Mirzoeff's concept of countervisuality, consider a longer arc of visual regimes and disobediences that situated colonial rule over territories and the countervisual resistances of racialized populations?²¹

Historically, the extractive view rendered Native populations invisible, which legally rendered the settlement of foreign populations onto communal properties, and facilitated the taking of those territories' resources. European colonization throughout the world cast nature as the other and, through the gaze of *terra nullius*, represented Indigenous peoples as non-existent. If settler colonialism and extractive capitalism reorganized space and time, then vertical seeing normalized violent removal. By continuing to rupture Indigenous cosmological relationships to land, the state and corporations expand their control and purview over nature in new forms of settler colonialism. While none of this is particularly news, my point is to emphasize that colonial visual regimes normalized an extractive planetary view that continues to facilitate capitalist expansion, especially upon resource-rich Indigenous territories.

In widening a discussion of how we might think about visibility in the regions I study, extractive capitalism literally "sees like the state," the term James C. Scott deploys to describe high modernist developmental visions that require great scientific and administrative feats.²² With specific relevance to the Américas, Scott connects the application of high modernist de-

signs to the history and rise of authoritarianism. Indeed, colonial and state violence historically facilitated territorial oversight, where seeing like the state meant violently asserting its rule over human and nonhuman populations. Applying this to the specific condition of South American occupation, during the Jesuit restructuring of land in Paraguay throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Guarani dwellings were organized to keep maximum control over the forcibly settled population, as well as expand monocultural production. These *reducciones*, or land enclosures, represent some of the earliest forms of extractive reorganization in the Américas.

If colonial seeing first appeared as administrative rule over peoples and land, then in the digital phase, extractive states currently dispossess through new technologies. Modernized states coordinate with multinational corporations, using reconnaissance systems to collect large data sets, acquire surface readings of the Earth, and produce high-resolution maps that are deployed to build extractive infrastructure on the ground. Since the US-led global war on terror, “Five Eyes” states (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand) have increasingly invested in satellite technologies that support the planet’s mapping for military and surveillance purposes, as well as for the conversion of natural resources into commodities. For instance, the US government has spent billions of dollars to fund the Center for the Study of National Reconnaissance, contracting with specialized tech firms to develop high-resolution resource maps and produce military intelligence used by shadow states to expand global control.

Based on Eurocentric theories of the visual a growing field of new media studies describes electronic colonialism theory, the concept of digital colonialism, and technological colonialism, warning about an increasing planetary system of control. Yet, many of these approaches continue to devalue the differential ways that this power is experienced, in particular global regions and upon certain bodies, as a digital colony.

In the new digital era, surveillance, data mining, and the mapping of resource-rich territories work together as complexly interlinked, rather than discrete, manifestations of hegemony that extinguish Indigenous and rural communities, such as in the regions in South America that I study. These highly coordinated forms of dominance function by mapping resource-rich areas of the world (in Afghanistan, Iraq, South America, and so forth), and serve as visual gateways for multinational and international state investment in extractive industries.²³ Lisa Parks’s research is exem-

plary in this regard in that it shows how mapping territories for resources does not function by remote means only but is instead intimately linked to capitalism, military technologies, and the parallel expansion of dispossession on the ground.²⁴ Digital technologies contribute to the diminishment of regional national sovereignty over natural resources by enabling a grand-scale view from above; satellites photograph large areas of the planet to convert them into commodities for utilitarian market ends. Remote sensing and satellite operating systems chart and quantify the amount of raw materials contained within a given territory, making predictions about the profit margins that can be actualized within areas with abundant resources.²⁵

In extractive sites, we must pay close attention to the material changes born from late capitalism's digital frameworks, which proliferate new forms of colonial theft. For instance, information, confidentiality, and corporate oversight function in ways that occlude, turning nonrenewable natural resources into opaque nodes of digital information that are hidden away from public debate. In contrast to Glissant's definition of "opacity," in which difference proliferates in a positive form, this oblique apparatus of extractivism renders invisible the activities of the corporate state. At the same time, geospatial technology requires the opposite form of visibility, rendering natural deposits of human and nonhuman life transparent, mapping to accumulate, convert, and expand the global economy.

In terms of shifting the gaze of this planetary scale, we might return to the importance of perceiving otherwise that engages citations and research produced out of observations grounded in the experience of South America.²⁶ Three decades ago, Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela theorized alternative modes of human and biological perception. Their interdisciplinary collaborative work, *El árbol del conocimiento* ("The Tree of Knowledge") first published in 1984, deals complexly with the human and nonhuman predicament of "no future" presented to us by extractive capitalism. Maturana and Varela's study subtly originates and learns from the forests of the Bío Bío; where the ancient *pehuen* tree, sacred to the Mapuche, serves as a model for how they map human hermeneutics and perception. Of many aspects of this work that could be highlighted here, a signature insight is the concern for all organisms as constitutively and autonomously reproducing circuits of living systems, where there is a cognitive blurring between perception and actual experience. By focusing on

perception as the crucial nexus point, the work offers “an invitation to reflection by opening a space of awareness.”²⁷

Decolonial Queer Epistememes

In the chapters that follow, to understand ways of perceiving otherwise, I engage what I refer to throughout the book as a decolonial queer and femme episteme and methodology.²⁸ My perceptual method is indebted to women of color feminisms, and specifically Chicana feminisms and Native feminist scholarship, and also builds from the insights of queer of color critique.²⁹ Like women of color feminisms that analyze through a relational field of multiplicity, I situate the theory and praxis of de-linking from the colonial as refusing to see from a singular frame of analysis, standpoint, interpretation, or experience. What I am calling a “decolonial queer femme” method valorizes nonnormative embodied femininity as sources of knowing and perceiving.

A decolonial queer femme method perceives otherwise by attending to the resonances of lived embodiment as world-shaping activities.³⁰ In this I draw from the work of Jacqueline M. Martinez, who proposes a phenomenology of Chicana experience and identity as an orientation that both ruptures the distinction between self and other and also methodologically offers embodied knowing as a research technology. Martinez argues for a mode of perception that is an “open-ended inquiry that interrogates both its theoretical and its experiential conditions of possibility.” Based upon models created by Richard Lanigan (1988), Martinez engages Chicana feminisms as a means of reorienting perception away from the static “object of study” toward a deep “engagement with it,” where lesbian identity offers a generative nexus of insight. In this phenomenology, Martinez takes seriously daily life, and believes that conscious experience becomes the foundation for personal and social transformation.³¹ Such transformative readings that allow for subject position in relation “to the field” allow me to deepen my analysis and interpretations of what resides within the extractive zone in South America, especially through a nonnormative femme position that allows the field and cultural texts I engage to make its impressions upon and through me.

Emma Pérez’s concept of the decolonial as a temporal imaginary also helps me perceive in these directions. To pursue the dynamism of think-

ing within interstitial spaces, Pérez turns to the poetics of seeing, where the decolonial imaginary “acts much like a shadow in the dark. The figure between the subject and the object on which it is cast.” The shadow is a space in which the visible and invisible mix together, where potential exists in a decolonial imaginary that is not rendered through transparent language or representations. Queer decolonial methods and epistemes bring together nonnormative modes of engaging the social world as submerged and emergent perspectives.

If Martínez and Pérez offer language for seeing that affirms queer epistemes and embodiment as a source of theorizing power from submerged perspectives, then Linda Tuhiwai Smith offers a model for the stakes of my research. Within US Native studies, Tuhiwai Smith identifies the need for decolonizing academic research about Indigenous communities, whom she frames as the most studied population in the world.³² Tuhiwai Smith emphasizes the importance of an ethical perspective that mutually respects and engages Indigenous knowledge without extracting from these communities, but rather carefully attends to the construction of otherness, especially given the overdetermination of categories such as observer and observed, civilized and savage, anthropologist and Indigenous other. Smith’s focus on knowledge formations and ethicality is essential to a decolonized academy, as is the consideration of Native worldviews that meaningfully shift the terrain of encounter, interpretation, and analysis to decenter the colonizing power of disciplinary knowledge.

Furthermore, Smith’s work reminds us that extraction operates through material and immaterial forms of converting Indigeneity into exchange value, where intellectual and spiritual resources are taken to produce new forms of colonial currency. I take these insights with me into the extractive zone as an important methodological and epistemological baseline of what I am calling a “decolonial femme method” — the nexus where experience, perception, and decolonization meet. This is the space for much of the analysis of the extractive zone that aims to explode unilinear and unilateral procedures by transiting in the murky epistemic and sensuous space of uncertainty. Situated and affective forms of knowledge production can provide new ways to analyze the colonial trace in ways that hopefully do not reproduce, tame, or obfuscate an intimate and intricate web of power relations.³³

Decolonial queer epistemes, analyses, or methods also work in opposition to conventional training on how to understand the lushness of social

life rather than seeing through any single frame. Furthermore, in a refusal to address the partiality of knowledge, normative methodologies often reproduce an episteme and representation of marginality.³⁴ My method abandons the epistemology of measure for something much more tenuous, reaching toward addressing the complexity and entanglements of potential within extractive zones of institutional knowledge. A queer decolonial femme method recognizes a plurality of meaning systems, interpretations, and selections to reconsider what we thought we had known by challenging its disciplinary foundation.³⁵ Untraining the social by engaging decolonial theory and an analysis of colonialism allows for histories of dispossession, enslavement, and appropriation to be put at the center of social theory, emphasizing submerged perspectives as those that must be learned from rather than suppressed.³⁶

For US academics, South America in particular has been the object of scrutiny under what Ricardo D. Salvatore addresses as “disciplinary conquest.” Making reliable visibility out of the peripheries was essential to how South America has been positioned in the US university since the nineteenth century.³⁷ If knowledge is a site of conquest, and therefore the extension of coloniality, a decolonial femme modus challenges a normative “American” disciplinary vision. It also challenges an area studies approach, or the subsuming of global processes under the category of the European modern.³⁸ A decolonial femme standpoint does not universalize or dehistoricize the specificity of global spaces or material formations, but instead offers micro and submerged entry points into spaces saturated in coloniality. Decolonial thought inflected by critical race, feminist, and queer scholarship, then, allows me to show the making of extractive zones as a dominant objective of the colonial condition.

Submerged Perspectives

Central to how I analyze colonial capitalism and the possibilities of the future is the critical task of perceiving life otherwise, or what I refer to as “submerged perspectives” that allow us to see local knowledge that resides within what power has constituted as extractive zones. In each of these places, *submerged perspectives* pierce through the entanglements of power to differently organize the meanings of social and political life. In other words, the possibility of decolonization moves within the landscape

of multiplicity that is submerged perspectives. Extractive zones contain within them the submerged perspectives that challenge obliteration. I describe these transitional and intangible spaces as geographies that cannot be fully contained by the ethnocentrism of speciesism, scientific objectification, or by extractive technocracies that advance oil fields, construct pipelines, divert and diminish rivers, or cave-in mountains through mining. Seeing and listening to these worlds present nonpath dependent alternatives to capitalist and extractive valuation.

Studying multiply to decenter a singular eye has long been a modality of decolonial perception, both as observation and as critique.³⁹ W. E. B. Du Bois's episteme of double consciousness, for instance, is multivalent, rather than solely Marxist, pushing against the grain of canonical knowledge and threatening always to disturb its carefully concealed boundaries. The irruptive potential of the terrain of multiplicity is enlivened in Du Bois's method that analyzes the Fugitive Slave Act of 1865 against the Eurocentric and normative subjects of sociology and its complicity with the postslavery racial state. Decolonial hemispheric studies can learn from Du Bois's form of multidirectional critique that both undoes and reworks unilinear historical narratives that erase its subjects. Further, we might consider how Du Bois's sociological imagination raised the submerged perspectives of Black social and economic life, rather than subsume them into existing disciplinary epistemes. Part of my work in this book, then, is to bring into conversation a variety of radical traditions in the Américas.

By raising submerged perspectives, I am often blurring the boundaries of the nation-state and Area Studies, reconsidering the operations of the disciplinary, conversing and dialoguing in scholarly and regional idioms that are my own and not my own, and stepping into the multiply defined and often overdetermined territory of the other's other. How can we confuse the normative boundaries of academic study by wading into what lies below the surface of late capitalism?

Chapters

This book connects the destructive force of capitalism in extractive zones to expressive and emergent alternatives; as these forms emerge, we find lesser-known, but powerful genealogies of thought, praxis, and connec-

tion. In each chapter, I read the specificity and unpredictability of the *decolonial gesture*, or the smaller spaces and moments of decolonization, in relation to racial and settler colonial projects.⁴⁰ In the chapters that follow, I consider regions that have all experienced massive transformation and upheaval under colonialism; in each of these places, neoliberal extractive capitalism has only accelerated these consequences.

Chapter 1, “The Intangibility of the Yasuní,” analyzes the “most biodiverse region on the planet” in an area of Eastern Ecuador where oil drilling has threatened the delicate ecologies of Indigenous territories. Since 1998, when the Yasuní-ITT treaty was first proposed, the Yasuní region offered the tangible possibility for radical conservation protection. Today, that project has been endangered by the expansion of the oil industry and the forces of multinational capital that fold Ecuador into the matrix of petro dependency. I meditate on the term intangibility as a decolonial concept of multiplicity, since the region is referred to as “the intangible zone” for Western science’s incapacity to fully catalogue the plethora of life that exists even within one square mile of a 933-mile Amazonian territory.

While the Ecuadoran state promotes *el buen vivir*, or the idea of “good living” according to sustainable ecological principles, it continues to facilitate oil extraction in the region as a violent act against Indigenous sovereignty. The intangible zones, according to the Ecuadoran Law, are “protected spaces of great cultural and biological importance in which no extractive activity can occur because of the region’s high value for the Amazon, Ecuador, the world, and present and future generations.”⁴¹

However, despite the constant rehearsal of the phrase “protected spaces” within the new Ecuadoran Constitution and the legislation of *el buen vivir* as protection of the Yasuní, the politics of greed continues to endanger the Eastern Ecuadoran Indigenous peoples, their territories, and the complex systems of land management, resistance, and alternative anti-capitalist economies found there. I analyze alternative renderings that are the social ecologies of Indigenous communities, especially the Quichua within the Yasuní region, as another possibility for imagining the social from within and beyond the intangible zone. However, I situate such alternatives as accompanied by the constant and necessary political pressure exerted by YASUNIDOS, a cross-generational, urban and rural, transborder, queer, feminist, Afro-Indigenous coalition that works solidly to defend the

Yasuní region. Spontaneously formed in 2013 to confront the pressures of exogenous petro development, this multidirectional coalition proliferates alternatives to the “no future” model of the extractive zone.

Chapter 2, “Andean Phenomenology and New Age Settler Colonialism,” considers a less obvious but equally perilous form of extractive capitalism by thinking about spiritual tourism as an extractive zone. By working through histories of “spiritual” taking, such as the colonial church and its control over Indigenous girls’ bodies, and later the new age traffic of Andean cultural formats, particularly in relation to Q’ero peoples, I attend to the problem of the colonial divide through ongoing forms of settler colonialism that justify occupation and the speculation of sacred territories through new age rhetoric. I show how neoliberal tourist economies expand the paradigm of “playing Indian,”⁴² especially in a transnational setting where Andean masculinity is commodified by sex and spiritual tourist economies. I also draw upon an important literature within US Native studies to show the commonality of extracting from Indigenous embodiment and worldviews throughout the hemisphere. Rather than foreclose upon the possibility of decolonization in this space, I engage local knowledge production, such as Andean phenomenology, as an experience of land and territoriality that does not pass through neoliberalism or its colonial projections.

Moreover, I navigate sticky realities through a decolonial queer femme method that is open to the less tangible perspectives, sounds, and experiences that are available by moving beyond the colonial divide. In other words, despite the raucous noise of neoliberal commodification and appropriation, what are the more silent spaces that refuse these terms and instead allow for a less determined set of interactions and pedagogies between Native peoples and nonnative foreigners?

Chapter 3, “An Archive for the Future,” analyzes settler colonialism in Mapuche, Pehuenche, and Huilliche territories within Southern Chile, demonstrating the ongoing colonial state effort to “eliminate the Native.”⁴³ Like the Chiapas conflict over Mayan territories, the ongoing violence and dispossession of Mapuche territories only increased with neoliberal governmentality in the 1990s. The resulting and very current crisis has terrorized thousands of Indigenous people through the massive deployment of the police state in the Bío-Bío region. Resistance through hunger strikes and political imprisonment, poignantly by Indigenous women, has been an important and highly visible mode of embodying dissent within the ex-

tractive zone.⁴⁴ Mapuche filmmaker Francisco Huichaqueo produces an archive of the future about the present-day violence of pine and eucalyptus export production, monoculture development that has displaced and reduced daily life for Native peoples within the Bio-Bio regions of the Southern Wallmapu territories.

In highly symbolic renderings of occupation, Huichaqueo refuses to follow documentary conventions. He also decenters representations of the human figure, instead making nature—particularly the omnipresent pine tree, the ancestral *pehuen*, and the giant native *Auracaria* trees—the narrative center of his films. With the director, the viewer laments the extinction of the sacred *pehuen* seeing beyond colonial occupation into the invisible Mapuche worlds he visualizes. Moreover, Huichaqueo incorporates experimental filmmaking language as a way out of constrained developmental visions. Through his use of opacity, namely as an obscuring perspective, we find a complex aesthetic challenge to the normative settler colonial gaze that renders territories as landscape and Indigenous bodies as criminal.

Having moved through the extractive scenes of spiritual tourism and forest and petroleum extraction, I turn to chapter 4, “A Fish-Eye Episteme,” a title that refers to a submerged perspective that I discuss in the chapter. In particular, I address the commodification of water, where I analyze hydroelectricity as submerging lives and perspectives that waterpower attempts to drown. Attending to a body of work by Colombian mestiza artist Carolina Caycedo, I examine how an inverted view offers us a different order of perception than the empirical sight lines that peer below, above, and through the extractive divide. The “fish-eye episteme” that I refer to displaces the ocular centrality of human development and instead reveals a submerged, below-the-surface, blurry countervisuality.

Documenting the ontologies and textures of rural life in her video-making, Caycedo shows how the Spanish company Endesa’s land invasion upon biodiverse territories produces a virtual catastrophe for local river communities in the Cauca Valley of southwestern Colombia. In a long still take of the lush and verdant river, Caycedo inverts the camera so that the Magdalena flows at the top of the frame. This inverted view estranges and detaches from the colonial extractive gaze by seeing the river as a place of subtle yet staggering social and ecological sustenance rather than merely as moving water to be harnessed for electricity. I elaborate how Caycedo’s aesthetic praxis also inverts the normative model of colonial development

and its extractive technologies by resignifying satellite and drone technologies to instead represent local sources of knowledge and trans-generational communal relations.

In chapter 5, “Decolonial Gestures,” I propose that Indigenous feminist anarchist critique offers another submerged perspective from within the extractive zone. Anarcho-feminist critique offers an important set of historical examples and modes of refusing global capitalism that range from intellectual and cultural production to embodied activities of dissent. For instance, Indigenous Aymara female hunger strikers, slag-pile workers, and *chola* market women share a history of an anticapitalist ethics that dismantle and remake the condition of possibility outside of mining that has determined Bolivia’s position within the global economy since the fifteenth century.

Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui’s decolonizing theories emerge from her fieldwork within the cultural modes of Bolivian anarchic-feminist history and help outline this chapter’s theoretical work, which threads a genealogy of female figures that are often hidden by Left radical history. Furthermore, I address the decolonizing imaginaries of *Mujeres Creando* artists, performers, and activists, whose split into two organizations, *Mujeres Creando* and *Mujeres Creando Comunidad*, with two distinct visions, only multiplies the potentiality of its critical perspective. This chapter brings gender and sexuality to the foreground to address the utopic potential that has been enlivened within Andean politics and cultural spheres, especially over the past decade.⁴⁵

Through five extractive scenes in South America, I return to and conclude with the submerged perspectives of social movements, artistic efforts, and intellectual formations that challenge the monocultural view of developmentalism and colonial capitalism. Whether through shadow play, by seeing from below, or listening to the water, these porous modalities expand the condition of possibility against Eurocentric, high modernist, and totalizing visions of differentiated planetary life.

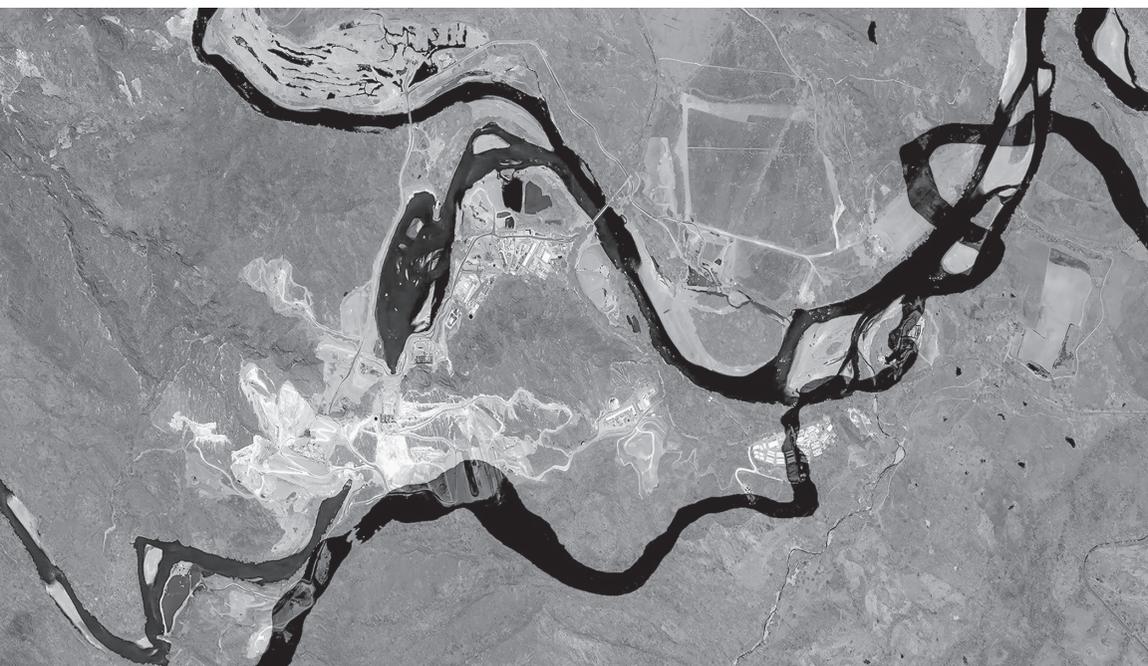
A Fish-Eye Episteme

Seeing Below the River's Colonization

It takes many aesthetic strategies, modes of critique, engaged activisms, acts of land and water defense, and forms of perception to decolonize the dominant viewpoint that misrecognizes territorial relations for the extractive zone. One strategy that mestiza Colombian multimedia artist Carolina Caycedo employs is to repurpose the images taken by satellite technologies so as to visibly document how hydroelectric corporations block the flow of South American rivers.

In the installation *Dammed Landscapes* (2012), Caycedo works with digital imaging to document five stages of the El Quimbo Hydroelectric Project construction, a highly controversial plan that has led to widespread dispossession in the region.¹ In Caycedo's hands, satellite photographs become the source for enormous wall panels that illustrate how the Southwestern Colombian landscape has, since 2011, been thoroughly damaged by the onset of hydroelectric development. What time-sequenced images show over a four-year period is the trail of barren territory left in the wake of hydro-power's advancement. The riverbed scar visibly reminds the viewer of the pathway where the powerful Magdalena River once flowed.

The sectional erasure of the river body, and the dispossession of communities that depend upon the Magdalena, is at the core of Caycedo's impressive body of work. *Dammed Landscapes* pursues how technocratic designs distort a multi-tiered perception of life through stark images that track a twenty-mile stretch of the disappearance of the Magdalena River. Caycedo inverts the extractive view to show how the Magdalena's confluence with the Páez River literally damns the river to extinction.



Carolina Caycedo, from *Dammed Landscapes*, Magdalena River (Yuma) after Endesa river diversion, satellite image, 2012.
Image courtesy of Carolina Caycedo.

In *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014), Caycedo offers important video work that testifies to the process of literally submerging the rural mestizx and Indigenous communities that for generations lived intermixed with the flow of the Magdalena River. In this chapter, I take a close look at *Yuma: Land of Friends*, a video that blends the experiences of those most affected by damming with long shots of the river's movement, its sound, and its voice. That dams "silence rivers" has been an important way to perceive modernization's separation from the agency and life forms of the natural world.² Caycedo's visual and sonic techniques are based in anti-dam counterlogics and do not "silence the river," but instead allow for its rushing sound and the gurgling voice of Yuma to emerge. Through edits that literally submerge the camera into the mucky brown water below the surface, Caycedo lifts submerged perspectives within the extractive zone.

Perceiving anew matters on a continent where small, medium-sized and

large-scale dams are planned for much of its rivers, and where the pervasiveness of megaprojects in mining, petroleum, and hydroelectricity is hegemonic.³ Almost one hundred new dams are currently under construction throughout South America, obscuring the promotion of energy alternatives that do not depend on life's extinction. Despite growing social movements that aim to protect territories and an accompanying vast political ecology literature that challenge the costs of hydroelectric power on human and nonhuman life,⁴ mega dams are often constituted by state and corporate actors as the necessary means to continuing to pursue a retrogressive view of national and regional integration toward globalized modernity.

We might pause to consider how hydropower functions on a scale of extractive capitalism that demands exponential, if finite, social and ecological resources.⁵ Large dams require expansive infrastructure and intensive capital investments, usurping thousands of acres of land. Whether it is the Itaipu Dam along the Paraná River, the Three Gorges Dam that spans the Yangtze River, or the projected "Master Plan" that imagines building seventeen dams along the Magdalena River, since their design in the nineteenth century, large dams have continually dispossessed millions of Indigenous and rural peoples.⁶ What conceptual tools allow us to puncture the assumption of dispossession that is embedded in the logic of hydropower? How do local communities counter these colossal schemes and their cycloptic viewpoint? Because of its sheer size and potential for destruction, mega dam development often casts doubt about the potential for local responses, yet in this chapter I enumerate how visual and embodied resistance finds ways to fissure the dam walls, working to perforate the matrix of capitalist expansion.

By centering on hydropower, I analyze how plans to absorb and drown the proliferation of life are contested by local communities, specifically in the Cauca Valley of Colombia by the Asociación de Afectados por el Proyecto Hidroeléctrico El Quimbo (Association of Affected Peoples of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Power, ASOQUIMBO). In tandem with this movement, the artwork and decolonial praxis of Carolina Caycedo inverts, refuses, and subtends the visual formats of the dam's view to instead support the experiences of local social and ecological movements that live and die within the extractive zone.

Seeing Like They Do

Over the past decade, the Spanish hydroelectric company Endesa has threatened territories in the Department of Huila with the construction of the Quimbo Hydroelectric Project. In 2008, President Álvaro Uribe Vélez's neoliberal government (2002–10) sold ten thousand hectares to Endesa, legally handing over rights to land alongside the Magdalena River, territories that had been inhabited by Indigenous groups, mestizxs, and local fishing and agricultural communities for generations. Eschewing their responsibility for resettlement and ecological mandates, the state office of the National Authority of Environmental Licenses has become notorious for systematically ignoring the land rights of local communities. As the ASOQUIMBO activist Jose Avilá described it, “We lost everything, this land is what has supported my family for generations and all we demanded was to be relocated or compensated fairly as stated in the environmental license.”⁷

Carolina Caycedo has worked both independently and alongside *Descolonizando La Jagua* (Decolonizing La Jagua, ASOQUIMBO), and *Rios Vivos* (Rivers Alive Colombia), anti-extractivist campaigns based on local membership that has spearheaded organizing against Endesa. The strategies of these local movements proliferate to include protests, marches, forums, press conferences, and legal pressure aimed at stopping both Endesa and the Chinese state-owned company Hydrochina from dredging and blocking the river. Overall, the objective has been to decolonize the river communities that have been flooded with state agents, corporate workers, the military, dam builders, bulldozers, cement, and so forth, that have made artisanal and low-resource ways of life nearly impossible.

Since 2011, ASOQUIMBO's work has focused upon Endesa's disregard for local communities, and taking back lands along the Magdalena River that were illegally granted to the extractive corporation. More recent efforts have placed emphasis not only on the river's destruction and dispossession but also on the resilient and vibrant aspects of river life, such as the intertwined living that takes place between riverbank communities and their interdependent relation to the Magdalena River. In this announcement, for instance, there is a palpable expression of a future-oriented desire to recuperate land and place: “On March 14, 2015 we will initiate a great mobilization for the defense of the Magdalena River and the territories of

life. We take a journey through the country from Macizo Colombiano to Bocas de Ceniza to reject the Master Plan that takes advantage of the River Magdalena. We do this to recuperate memory, identity, and culture by an entire nation that has constructed its life, territory, and history alongside the river.”⁸ Taking long walks alongside the Magdalena River as a mnemonic experience of community identity allows for the acknowledgment of the imbricated relation with and deep respect for the Magdalena River.

Such acts as organizing collective walks not only signal the importance of local land memory as constitutive of regional and national identity; they also point to how the river itself is enlivened by human activity that does not merely extract from its ecological life. Taking this insight one step further, we might imagine how the river possesses its own form of memory, as a witness to the dialectic between life and death of damming, as weighing in on the contradictions between converting value and devaluing, and as a source of flow that energizes against its own erasure. Seeing, watching, knowing the histories of riverbank communities and being enlivened by their presence is a submerged perspective that one might imagine could emanate from the river. These submerged perspectives refuse to be limited by regional or national boundaries, as they are able to flow beyond the corporation’s efforts at containment.

In the demand for legal accountability from Endesa, over the past decade transregional communities have compared and shared knowledge across national borders to support them in their legal battles. As I mentioned in chapter 3, the Mapuche struggle against Endesa in the Bío Bío region of Chile began in 1996 and continues until today, marking an earlier era of hydropower expansion in South America. When ASOQUIMBO in the Cauca Valley learned about the successes and failures of anti-Ralco Dam struggles, it used knowledge of what worked there to combat Endesa on its own territories. Furthermore, as in the struggle against Ralco, ASOQUIMBO also coordinated its actions with International Rivers and other international NGOs, in effect strengthening its vertical and lateral alliances. Like the Magdalena River that transits through multiple regional borders, the flow of knowledge between affected Indigenous and rural communities moves freely in ways that facilitate the positive deployment of resistance strategies.

To combat the violent disarticulations and disposessions required by the presence of the hydropower corporation, over the past decade ASO-

QUIMBO has taken an increasingly militant stance. Violent escalation in the extractive zone occurs through a familiar sequence of events: militarized dispossession leads to confrontations between local organizations and the state, conflict that is then followed by the state's criminalization of land and river defenders. The ASOQUIMBO case is legendary in this respect, in that there are currently dozens of river defenders who have been imprisoned without trial or promise of release, in many ways replicating the violent scenes and media frenzies that have taken place in other sites around South America.

Through militarization of the extractive zone corporate control is able to advance its capitalist agenda, by dispossessing Indigenous and rural peoples of their territories. In Caycedo's visual and narrative work, she makes this link directly as she plays with the multiple meanings contained within the word "dam," using it alternatively as a verb, simile, noun, and metaphor. For instance, in Spanish the word *represa* is used for "to dam," and also for "to repress." A *represa* literally contains the river's natural flow as well as signifying the political repression against local land and river defenders. For Caycedo, then, extractivism cannot be separated from forms of violence and repression that are rendered invisible by current economic and political models. Attending to this colonial matrix, her work "explores the interrelations between social repression, and the planning and construction of water dams/reservoirs. Dams generally serve the primary purpose of retaining water by stopping the flow of a river. By analogy, we may think of repression as an instance of power that also interrupts the flow of social and community organization."⁹

Thus, Caycedo's visual work does a kind of relational mapping of power that uncovers the epistemological, material, and bodily violence that thwarts biological life. It also reveals how the river's diversion does not block submerged perspectives and movements that look to defend local autonomy.

Damned Landscapes

Damned landscapes are extractive zones where military, corporate, and state technologies of resource surveillance convert Indigenous and rural territories into a digital colony. Caycedo's unique approach to the digital colony is to produce countervisualities that expose the extractive view-

point by presenting the containing logic of damming. Nicholas Mirzoeff's *The Right to Look: A Counter History of Visuality* historicizes visuality within a Western genealogy, and outlines the contours of a countervisual methodology that moves against the organizing principle of colonial seeing. Though Mirzoeff's effort to produce "a comparative decolonial framework" is only suggestive and might require more sustained attention to the scholarly and cultural production of the Global South, his book generates an important set of proposals about the potentialities and constraints of the visual. Drawing upon the classic work of W. J. T. Mitchell, Mirzoeff imagines a range of medium theory as a venue "for the transmission and dissemination of authority, and a means for the mediation of the subject of that authority."¹⁰ If we consider that the extractive viewpoint succeeds precisely by becoming the normative way we see and universalize the planetary, then in the regions I study countervisuality reveals extractive zones as corporate and state collusion over the destruction of life, refocusing our attention upon a smaller scale of experience.

Rather than condemn technology to its hegemonic use as surveillance, Caycedo's eye inverts the instrumental usage of colonial digitality, presenting the devastation of local communities and the landscape from multiple scales. In other works, Caycedo weaponizes digital technology to facilitate the visibility and vitality of communities that persist despite hydropower's extinguishing footprint. Overriding the viewpoint of the digital colony, her artistic production eschews the developmentalist fallacy that assumes that hydroelectricity is good for everyone.

In a video of a midrange satellite image, we see Caycedo's hand drawing over the white space where the emptied river once flowed. This movement of her pen renders the memory of the river's flow and offers a mapping of the Earth's rapid changes at the hands of human development. Rather than reproduce the extractive view that sees like a satellite from above to enable the management and diversion of the river's resources toward capitalist accumulation, Caycedo's pen instead works in the opposite direction: Tracing the flow of water reverses the flow of capital and its amnesic evacuation of what was once there, placing the river back in the frame and outside of the digital colony.

Drawing the connection between damming, violence, and the evacuation of localized territories was at the center of her solo exhibitions *The Headlong Stream Is Termed Violent, but the Riverbed Hemming Is Termed*

Violence by No One (2009) and *Beyond Control* (2010) that took place in Berlin. In them, Caycedo used multiple artistic formats to invert the gaze and rearrange the way we relate to the mutations imposed by hydroelectricity. Her photographs and sculptures illustrate the degree to which hydroelectricity in the Quimbo region has blocked the flow of long-term residents, rerouting and reconstituting the memory of the region's ecological biodiversity.

In *Represa/Repression* (2012), Caycedo depicts a fragmented and carved-up landscape that has been violated by the Endesa dam construction. She describes this work as a “research-based project that explores concepts of flow and containment, while investigating correlations between the mechanisms of social control and the unethical aspects of projects including large water dams and reservoirs.”¹¹ This quote implies that regions are extracted by sending police and military personnel that first repress, then quell, and later displace local residents. Caycedo's work shows that these submerged perspectives and counternarratives require deep investigation into how peripheral spaces and community are repressed. Caycedo's viewpoint utilizes the same technologies of research and digital output that corporations use but she diverts and repurposes them to deauthorize the extractive view.

Other Views: Fish-Eye Episteme

If satellite technologies, which identify high-resolution social and ecological activity, so completely map and commoditize the landscape from above, does any view reside outside of the society of control? The answer to this seems to depend on how we enter the colonial condition. In *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*, Boaventura de Sousa Santos argues that what underlies grave social inequalities in the current global configuration is the persistence of cognitive injustice—what I refer to as forms of perception—that have reproduced asymmetries through colonial systems, modern states, and global capitalism's economic rationale.¹² Western modernity, as de Sousa Santos maintains, devalues heterogeneous knowledge formations and reduces diverse life forms into a modern scientific perspective, underscoring both the limits of disciplinary knowledge as well as the erasure of the multivalent ontologies that express themselves within the vernacular practices of peripherally constituted spaces.

I find De Sousa's naming of cognitive injustice a useful point of departure with respect to seeing otherwise. "Cognitive injustice" refers to the constraining paternalisms imposed on the Global South through colonizing discourses and practices that continue to perceive these regions as purveyors of natural materials, and undervalue the heterogeneity of life embedded within local epistemes. De Sousa's larger contention is that multifaceted knowledge formations already exist, and it is the task of scholar-activists, and, I would add, artists and performers, to lift up those submerged epistemes and juxtapose them within a Western canon that cannot apprehend its own limitations.¹³

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, whose perspectivist insights have come out of a thirty-year ethnographic engagement, helps me to define such a point of view. His work both parallels and departs from subaltern genealogies and other Global South epistemes.¹⁴ Moving beyond the object-subject divide, Viveiros de Castro's work increasingly poses a decolonizing challenge to Western anthropology, and to the reproduction of the human as a singular entity standing within a world of subordinate beings. Through ethnographic critique, Viveiros de Castro offers Indigenous thought as a philosophical challenge to the classic European distinction between Nature and Culture. Inverting the signifiers of "multiculturalism," which has been the center of colonial/modern thought, to "multinaturalism," Viveiros de Castro references how Indigenous peoples acknowledge the coexistence of multiple perspectives in the human and nonhuman world. The fundamental conceptual shift of perspectivist theory, then, is to reorder the nature-culture divides of primordial immanence: reversing the order of universalism to follow that of nature, and particularity to that of culture.

Indigenous thought, as Viveiros de Castro shows us, has long been engaged with apprehending "reality from distinct points of view,"¹⁵ and ontologically has organized its societies and spiritual practices accordingly. A constantly shifting imagination of the Other is not constrained or delimited through the privileging of *Homo sapiens*.¹⁶ For my purposes, Viveiros de Castro's work not only moves us into the realm of decolonial possibility, it also pursues and elaborates a rescripting of European thought. More importantly, it proposes that agency exists within a multiplicity of vantage points that are irreducible. As Viveiros de Castro puts it about Indigenous perspectivism, "We must remember, above all, that if there is a virtually

universal Amerindian notion, it is that of an original state of undifferentiation or ‘undifference’ (don’t mistake this for ‘indifference’ or ‘sameness’ between humans and animals).¹⁷ This state of undifferentiation does not propose a unifying viewpoint but instead shows how the act of viewing can itself contain an agency that is not uniquely human. Furthermore, by conceptually naming multinaturalism, perspectivisms locate agency within the realm of the animate as well as the inanimate. Thus, in opposition to the gaze that is merely about ocular extensions of centralized power, perspectivist thought escapes the view of dominant visibility to encompass the modes of seeing that emerge outside of the range of the human eye and its capture.

My insights here touch upon, and also depart from, the recent turn in the humanities to new materialisms. The work on posthumanisms and new materialisms has been important as shifting epistemes that function within European logocentricity and the human-centered approaches that much of European continental philosophy has labored upon. Through a philosophy of vibrant objects, in which materiality enlivens through its active shaping of human and nonhuman events, Jane Bennett gestures to a nonhuman something else.¹⁸ The expanded vocabulary of new materialist analyses are provocative. How can we read such work through the realities of marginality and expulsion faced in the growing extractive zones around the globe and through the regions that already experience biomatter as not separate from the human? How can we understand the human as already inscribed within the logics of coloniality?

There may indeed be an emergent consciousness about how to think about the natural world through other knowledge formations. As Diana Coole and Samantha Frost explain about the new materialist turn, “We are finding our environment materially and conceptually reconstituted in ways that pose profound and unprecedented normative questions. In addressing them, we unavoidably find ourselves having to think in new ways about the nature of matter and the matter of nature; about the elements of life, the resilience of the planet, and the distinctiveness of the human.”¹⁹ Yet, Global South epistemologies and philosophies of race and racism, ranging from postcolonial and decolonial theories, to Indigenous critique, to Afro-based thought, to Black Studies to perspectivisms and relational models, have long anticipated the ways to differently imagine knowledge and perception as the foundation of planetary inhabitation. These other knowledge forma-

tions when grounded in the material relations of social ecologies form a sustained way to see and sense life otherwise. As Caycedo shows us, in the *Land of Friends* there is much to perceive anew.

Other Views 2: *Land of Friends*

Yo no tengo ningún idea romantica de como era el pasado. Las cosas no estaban perfectas. La tierra quizás no se uso de la major manera.

Pero en sí eso de ninguna manera es raison ni logica de supultar todo el territorio.

I don't have a romantic idea about the past. Things were not perfect.

The land was perhaps not used in the best way, but that is not a reason or logic to drown a territory.

Activist in Land of Friends

As a Latina, mestiza, and once resident of the Magdalena River communities, Carolina Caycedo's point of view draws from Indigenous relational understandings of land that imagine these geographies as enlivened and enchanted by its social ecologies. An artist skilled in multiple techniques and media, Caycedo is obsessed with the microlevel of gesture, social texture, and embodiment that contrasts the transparent logic of an extractive view that leaves no place "undiscovered." In *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014), a thirty-eight-minute video that experiments with the genre's conventions, Caycedo focuses on seemingly small images and micromoments of everyday life to highlight the tensions and struggles between local fishing communities and Endesa's conversion of the Magdalena River into hydroelectric power.

Importantly, the river was called Yuma by the Musica confederation whose inhabitants intermixed with the Incan extended empire several centuries before the river's discovery by Spanish colonizers. In 1501, it was renamed after Mary Magdalene. As a symbol of these palimpsest histories, vernacular objects from the Musica confederation have recently been unearthed by the dozens during the drowning of territories by Endesa.

Panning across a dense view of highland Andean landscape, Caycedo expresses great affection for the Yuma River. Indeed, the fertile landscape at the center of *Yuma: Land of Friends* is an important way to feel the perceptual shift we are making against the extractive viewpoint and into a hybrid river nexus. Yuma territories are where Afro-Caribbean cultures meet



Carolina Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends*, mosquito on hands, video still, 2014. Image courtesy of Carolina Caycedo.

the Andean region, and then one thousand miles further downstream find confluence with the Amazonian basin. By tracking these trans-regional spaces through long pans, Caycedo makes the river the flowing center of Huila residents' living.

Using her own photographs as intertextual stills, Caycedo opens the film with a satellite photograph of ongoing dam construction that has already blocked and diverted long stretches of the Magdalena. In the next scene, a large mosquito sits on a pair of folded hands. "I have no nostalgia about the past," an activist from Entre Aguas says. As he continues to talk, the soundtrack gets quieter to the point that his words are inaudible. In this way, human voices are decentered and minimized so that visual ontologies that frame the river become the subject of emphasis within the film. About the Magdalena River, Caycedo narrates in a whisper, "It's also the golden thread, a sacred place where the ancestors and spirits dwell. Yuma's strait is especially magic. We all have our own quotidian rituals, our own goddesses and gods. They are among us."²⁰

In the scene that follows, the director returns us to the satellite view of El Quimbo; her hand traces over the shadow terrain, the absent river, filling in the place where the river used to run before Endesa's construction in the Cauca Valley. The camera cuts to midlevel views of the river before holding for a full minute on a thick and squat waterfall that settles into a brown

shadowy pool of rock and ferns below. Then we are taken under the falls, into the beige then blue-gray space of moving water. We wait, holding our breath, acclimating, and we begin to see both clear spaces and those that are more opaque. We move with the ribbons of currents and the circling movements of oxygen below the water. We accept the fact that our sight is obstructed by the cloudy water, with pieces of leaves blocking the view, fleeting away, as small and then larger bubbles force us to try to find something familiar in the visual muck. In long takes that submerge the camera completely in the muddy water, the field of vision hovers in that transitional zone between the translucent and opaque, between oxygen bubbles and swirling currents.

The effect is remarkable: I felt as if I were seeing what a fish sees, perhaps itself an anthropocentric viewpoint. By dipping into the muck, Caycedo produced a fish-eye epistemology that changes how we might relate to Yuma as a sentient being, rather than as an extractable commodity. Coincidentally, the term “fish-eye” also refers to an extreme wide-angle lens shot in which the edges of the frame are distorted to a near circle, with the center of the image forming a pregnant bubble. Both meanings work for the kind of material and philosophical shift in perspective or “fish-eye episteme”: an underwater perspective that sees into the muck of what has usually been rendered in linear and transparent visualities.

In *Yuma: Land of Friends*, Caycedo’s camera often dwells on the movement of the brownish-green water, the moss-covered stones surrounding it. The river in Caycedo’s perspective, inhabits a generative if turbulent landscape where the human, animal, and plant life that surrounds it lives off of its provisions. However, there is no illusion that the Magdalena River is an unspoiled utopia; its cold waters make swimming for long periods difficult; its small fish do not fetch a very good price in local markets; and overall the terrain is rough and untamed, and its currents dangerous to untrained swimmers and nonhuman animals alike. Yet, without lament, local knowledge accustoms to and becomes flexible with what the river offers. Submerged, from below, seeing out from underwater, how do we think about the complexity of ecology, humanity, and the conditions of other beings from the fish-eye point of view? And, as I elaborate upon throughout the book, how do nonnormative viewpoints from within social ecologies decenter the logocentric perspective of the human?

In a significant moment in the film, Caycedo’s camera lingers on the



Carolina Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends*, inverted view, video still, 2014. Image courtesy of Carolina Caycedo.

verdant green space. We are in the river's brown flow, surrounded by loud insects and birds and immersed within a roaring river's soundscape. The camera holds this still shot for three minutes; we breathe with the river's flow. Suddenly, and with the disorientation that comes from unexpected inversion, the camera is turned upside down, our view flips 180 degrees. From the top of the screen the river continues to flow, and this is the moment that fabrication breaks down, the instant we know that Caycedo has constructed the river world as the protagonist. The flow of gravity shifts, and the safety of our distant viewing is finally pierced. Caycedo's viewpoint is not only off-kilter but completely inverted, fundamentally reordering the river before us. What is this mirrored being that flows continuously from the top of the screen, the triangulated ferns that signal some kind of other worldly divinity? The gasping river, the inverted gaze we cannot move forward as we did before, now that we know of this place teeming, flowing, diverting our visions. The extractive view dissolves.

Earlier in the film, Colombian senator and opposition leader Jorge Robledo conjectures about the colonial and hydroelectric presence in the region. Offscreen, he states,

The key question is why did they come here? There are two theories. The theory for idiots is that they came to save us from underdevelopment,

un-civilization, and poverty. They came for one thing. The profit margins are higher here. Not that they can't use their capital and gain profits over there. The fact is that they gain more here, and under globalization policies they can move that money easily without the risk of it getting stuck so there is more motivation to come here, because in the current time there is not even the risk of a strike or a revolution.²¹

As he speaks, the camera remains focused on a still shot of the flow of the river. And then, when the interviewee begins to raise his voice and talk about something else, we no longer see him on camera, and instead the view returns to the river to become completely submerged within the brown water, as more foam streams to the surface. Robledo continues,

Y en la medida que han ido logrando, con la globalización que esa plata pueda entrar y salir libremente, sin los riesgos de quedar atrancada, con mayor razón intentan a venir más.²²

And, to the degree that they have been able to, with globalization that money can enter and exit freely, without risks to forestall profit, giving more reasons for them to come and try the same thing again.

In the background track, the water echoes and finally drowns out the voice of technocracy, the flattening speech of a man-splainer; and, despite his solid analysis of the prevailing situation, what seems more important now, and again, is the river's voice. That is, Caycedo authorizes cognitive justice for the river itself, drowning out the global economy and its rationalized logic, and instead offers us the fish-eye point of view that sees below the surface.

In the scene that immediately follows, Caycedo introduces us to Zoila, an artisanal fisherwoman, who stands knee-deep within the Magdalena River. By moving from a fish-eye episteme to a local fisher, Caycedo emphasizes the web of local economies and perspectives. Behind the woman, the water flows at a surprising rate compared to her stillness. Zoila repeatedly throws out her net, casting it farther each time and gathering a few fish with each catch, the protein for the soup that she will later make for her children, grandchildren, and adoptive kids: "If there is nothing else to feed the kids, then you take these little catfish home, you make a cut here and take out the entrails, you cook them with onion and salt. Many times this makes for a nutritious broth; boil them for ten minutes and they are ready

to eat.”²³ The camera focuses on the small fish that Zoila catches, whereby the repetitive close-up of hands becomes the local perspective that resides within the extractive zone. This is not a stranger’s land but a territory of friends.

Embodied Geographies

So far, I have addressed visualities and countervisualities within Caycedo’s oeuvre as doing important work to decolonize the extractive view. However, at a certain point, visibility can only take us so far into the realm of the senses and daily life experiences from within the extractive zone. In 2014, Caycedo, in conjunction with the local collective *Descolonizando La Jagua* (Decolonizing La Jagua) began a project that took into consideration the question of embodiment through a set of performances called “geo-choreographies.” These Earth-based performances are collectively authored to expose the dispossession of damming, as well as to show how kinesthetic movement by affected communities works to redirect the deadening logic of developmentalism. This work began through a series of choreographic workshops organized in partnership with *Descolonizando La Jagua* that engaged local communities in the towns of La Jagua, El Agrado, Oporapa, and Gigante. In recent years, Caycedo’s work has extended this project throughout the Américas, using a hemispheric framework that considers embodiment in relation to rivers throughout the continent. More specifically, Caycedo has performed and made work in collaboration with the ecological organization Friends of the LA River and with Indigenous networks and river defense projects throughout the United States, Canada, and Latin America.

Geo-choreographies theorize how water functions as connective tissue, wherein rivers express the microlevel of human embodiment. In this view, rivers form the arteries of liquid, as Caycedo puts it, “for the river is to water as the veins that carry our blood.” While I am not convinced by all of this project’s analogies, in that they sometimes reach into generalities about human bodies and rivers that leave little room for textured analysis, the aesthetic and performative work of these comparisons seem important. And though the colonizing move of Eurocentric thought and exploration first sutured Indigenous peoples and the female body to land and nature, Caycedo differently names these historical lineages, avoiding

the trap of essentialism through an artistic practice in which many angles and takes avoid a unidimensional view. While one might point to how this work could easily reassert the binaries of female/nature, indigenous/land, and human body/planet; ultimately, Caycedo's geo-choreographies seek out forms of human kinesthetic movement that mimic or work alongside the motion of the river in an expression of collaboration with it.

Caycedo's performance work in particular links to a genealogy of feminist performance praxis in the Américas that finds new ways to express the old questions of embodiment as it relates to land, ecology, and politics. For instance, the recent video piece by Guatemalan artist Regina Galindo, *Earth* (2011), expresses the dangers of extractivism as she stands in what's left of a piece of land that has been cut through by a giant yellow bulldozer that digs out all around her. Though the reference to collective burials such as Ayotzinapa in which young Indigenous students have become fodder for the corrupt state is evident in Galindo's piece, the video could just as easily reference more conventional forms of extractive capitalism that bulldoze the earth to reap capital from it. Whether in the violence and poetry of Ana Mendieta's images and performances, or Laura Aguilar's land-based photographs or the *Earth* performance by Regina Galindo, the dimensions within Caycedo's work clearly link her to a feminist hemispheric genealogy of producing work about embodiment, disappearance, visibility, and against a normative and extractive view of landscape. In particular, the body of work shows us how to see from the perspective of the fish, or the inhuman, or even the local river communities to appreciate the transits between these bodies as fluid encounters of perception, engagement, and vernacular meaning. Through the performative mediations of community knowledge we learn how to move and be in relation to land and water otherwise.

Caycedo's particular vision is multidimensional, integrating the formats of visibility, whether it be satellite images, still photographs, documentary video, installation, or the embodied collaborative performance work with communities that blurs the distinction between human and water bodies. Caycedo multiply sources formats and materials to communicate the alienated conditions that extractive capitalism produces, foregrounding the issue of scale to directly respond to the question I initially posed: How does the micro matter anyway?

While much of "geo-choreographies" is a work in progress, these performative iterations are key to producing spaces of communal meaning



Carolina Caycedo, ASOQUIMBO, Rios Vivos, “We are not just the defenders of the river; we are the river,” 2015. Photo courtesy of Carolina Caycedo.

that avow the expression of territorial loss, and toward finding communal forms that abate the melancholia of ecocide or the sadness of experiencing the river’s death. This anti-damming intersectional and coalitional work finds its resources in producing embodied art that intervenes in the normalized view of the extractive zone.

Toward a Conclusion

I have been tracking social and knowledge formations that exist alongside the colonial developmental paradigm, showing how the extractive zone has not managed to fully colonize life, but reduces, eliminates, and destroys its heterogeneity. In this chapter, we returned to the river to analyze its

submerged perspectives that exceed where the corporate management and technological domination over La Jagua, Colombia. I showed how life along the Yuma River in Colombia, which stretches from the Caribbean basin through the length of the entire country, depends upon a vast and interconnected river system that hangs in balance as it is organized into an extractive zone. If the extractive view naturalizes hydropower as the inevitable solution to the voracious energy demands of global urbanization, then the art and performance work of Carolina Caycedo renders visible a range of submerged perspectives that see from below and beyond its viewpoint.

I have illustrated how regimes of visual power are both used toward extractive ends and find their inversion through the viewpoint of artists such as Caycedo. Fundamentally, Caycedo's visuality gives us tools for analyzing complex modes of power toward the decolonization of mestizx and Indigenous territories. She provides the texture and context for how to think differently about visual power as a digital colony of the extractive zone. The networked society from below counters extractive regimes that control, silence, and extinguish the rivers. Such decolonial viewpoints emerge from the struggles of local populations in relation to their own subsistence economies, and also in relation to what it means to be under surveillance within the extractive zone. In this vein, ASOQUIMBO and Rios Vivos activism and the moving artistic practice of Carolina Caycedo insist that the future is now or there will be no future. Despite the fact that new extractivisms and megaprojects leave little room for the subtlety of riverbed knowledge, but what the fish eye sees is precisely the muck of the neoliberal and colonial condition.

NOTES

Preface

- 1 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945: 178). The other classic and obvious text to cite here is Jon Berger's *Ways of Seeing* who links seeing to meaning, knowledge and belief systems through art and image production (1972).
- 2 My methodology is informed by the decolonial turn and underpinned by a vast literature of interdisciplinary study that emphasizes coloniality, which includes Sylvia Wynter's oeuvre "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom" (2003) and, specifically on coloniality in the Américas, her "1492: A New World View" (1995); Walter D. Mignolo's *Local Histories/Global Designs*; Emma Pérez's *The Decolonial Imaginary* (1999); and Nelson Maldonado-Torres's *Against War: Views from the Underside of Modernity* (2008). In Mignolo's key bibliography, "Modernity and Coloniality," he cites many origin points for the decolonial turn, including the 1955 Bandung Conference, the intellectual production of Frantz Fanon (1952, 1961) and Anibal Quijano's classic essay "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America" (2001).
- 3 For work that troubles the colonial politics of mastery at the intersections of postcolonial thought, decolonial critique, and new theorizations of humanisms see Julietta Singh's *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements*, 2017.
- 4 Since the 1980s the lack of national sovereignty that conditions these processes has been challenged by Left political anti-imperialist platforms. However, over the last decade Latin American nations have turned away from the Washington Consensus, the system that exports a US-centered hegemonic economic model, only to become entangled within the Beijing Consensus a few years later.
- 5 In Saskia Sassen's analysis, these expulsions are connected to complex systems of legality, policy and accounting that enable governments to acquire land in foreign territories (2016). Again, though she does not mention this, such geographies are often Indigenous territories that require the expulsion of Native and rural peoples through the complexity of coordination that is advanced extractive or expulsive capitalism.

- 6 Eduardo Galeano, *Open Veins of Latin America* (1971).
- 7 Racial capitalism expanded its reach through violent legislative and bureaucratic arrangements that legitimated the rule of a European administration over African-descended and Indigenous populations. Through the production of racial hierarchies, scientific classification, colonial mapping, the techniques of the law, and the system of private property, a hemispheric colonial project split humans into categories differentiated from each other and from nonhuman life (Wynter, 2003, 2012).
- 8 Throughout the book I unpack the racial capitalist logics of new extractivisms, especially in relation to Indigenous territories. Even though my analysis is largely about how this unfolds in the post neoliberal era, Angelina Snodgrass-Godoy's "Converging on the Poles: Contemporary Punishment and Democracy in Hemispheric Perspective," describes similar convergence of political economic processes in relation to state criminal justice institutions and the increased rhetoric of crime and terrorism against peoples of color throughout the hemisphere (July 2005). Also see Quimantú, *Resistencias Mapuches al Extractivismo*, a book of collected articles published by Mapuexpress (2016) for how this contextually operates on Mapuche territories. In *Represent and Destroy*, an important formulation of racial capitalism's logics, Jodi Melamed argues that liberal racial regimes have enabled and normalized new US state-capital formulations that perpetuate anti-Black violence (2011). Melamed investigates how liberal antiracist formations actually sustain racial injustice, delimiting the possibility for social and political transformation.
- 9 For a decolonial analysis of how the term queer is used and reworked in Latin America, see Diego Falconí Trávez, Santiago Castellanos, and María Amelia Viteri's, *Resentir lo queer en América Latina*, 2013.
- 10 In extraordinary work that extends the already significant scholarship on Native Studies, Indigenous Feminisms, and Native queer studies, see Joanne Barker's edited volume, *Critically Sovereign: Indigenous Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies*, 2017.
- 11 See Enrique Dussel, "Transmodernity and Interculturality: An Interpretation from the Perspective of Philosophy" (2003). Lynda Lange's important work on Dussel's philosophy articulates the subtlety of his approach and its radical decentering of Eurocentric logics, as well as its anti-Indigenous racism analytics (2000). However, Lange argues that while Dussel best expressed the problem of the Enlightenment as a developmental fallacy, he also invested in the idea that human communities possess different levels of maturity (see Lange's article in Linda Alcoff and Eduardo Mendieta's, *Thinking from the Underside of History: Enrique Dussel's Philosophy of Liberation*).
- 12 Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality," April 2007.
- 13 For the quote and for an analysis of the justification of extractivism within progressive discourses, see "Latin America: New Governments, Old Economies: The New Latin American 'Progresismo' and the Extractivism of the 21st

- Century,” by Carmelo Ruiz Marrero, February 17, 2011, <http://lab.org.uk/latin-america-new-governments-old-economies>. Eduardo Gudynas’s works that have not been translated into English are extremely useful on questions of extractive capitalism and sustainable environments. His book *Ecología, economía, y ética el desarrollo sostenible* is an often-cited work for discussions on extractive capitalism (2002).
- 14 Jon Beasley-Murray’s book *Posthegemony* is an example of this line of critique that works to obscure increased focus on indigenous critique by overgeneralizing certain strains of Latin American Cultural Studies (2010).
 - 15 Mary Louise Pratt’s term “contact zone,” in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, invokes the imperial periods of European and American expansionism in South America through scientific, military, and tourist expeditions (1999). By using the term colonial contact zone, I similarly refer to the asymmetrical spaces of interaction that have dominated the region from the fifteenth century forward, emphasizing coloniality as a key analytic.
 - 16 The term “ecocide” can also refer to the massive death of ecosystems by global climate change and extractive capitalism. Then Swedish prime minister Olaf Palme employed the term “ecocide” during the 1970s to discuss the use of Agent Orange by US forces in Vietnam. For a map that tracks recent shifts and the rise of murders of ecological activists, see “Deadly Environment,” Global Witness, April 15, 2014, <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/environmental-activists/deadly-environment/>.
 - 17 For a discussion of the pipeline and Idle No More, see Glenn Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*, especially chapter 5 on indigenous emergence and forms of land defense in Canada. For extractivism upon Indigenous territories within Latin America, see Eduardo Gudynas, “El Nuevo Extractivismo Progresista,” in *Nueva Crónica*, January 30, 2011, <http://www.gudynas.com/periodismo/GudynasExtractivismoNvaCronicaBolEne10.pdf>; and Henry Veltmeyer and James Petras, *The New Extractivism: A Post-Neoliberal Development Model or Neoliberalism in the Twenty-First Century?* (2014).
 - 18 This statement draws from fieldwork conducted between January and May 2015, and is also widely documented by the important movement, *Acción Ecológica* that has recently been threatened with forced closure by the Correa government. Despite the Rafael Correa government’s early progressive gains, since 2012 activists describe an increasing climate of fear and repression, including alarming levels of surveillance of anti-extractivist organizing and visibility. Furthermore, as megaextractivist projects increase their purview and reach, so increases the criminalization of land defenders; concomitantly, as social contestation becomes more intense, digital repression expands. Global corporate imbrication with military states results in the killing of human and nonhuman life for extractivist ends, or ecocide, as well as an upswing in the surveillance and repression of land defense activism.

- 19 The attack upon Honduras Indigenous activists is truly alarming. Four months after Berta Cáceres was killed March 3, 2016, Lesbia Janeth Urquía's body was found abandoned in a dump within the municipality of Marcala. Both Cáceres and Janeth Urquía aimed to stop the construction of multiple hydroelectric projects in Western Honduras. At least fourteen Indigenous activists have been found murdered in Honduras making it the deadliest place in the world for ecological defense according to Global Witness.
- 20 See Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States* (2014); and Jodi Byrd, *Transits of Empire* (2011); Glen Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks*; Joanne Barker, *Native Acts: Law, Recognition and Cultural Authenticity* (2011); Mishuana Goeman, *Mark My Words, Native Women Mapping Our Nations* (2013).
- 21 In Alberto Moreiras's *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (2001), he moves to consider subalterity as a way to respond to epistemological homogenization. This volume expands the terms of engagement that extend cultural theory through decolonial critique, arguing that difference is indeed inexhaustible.
- 22 Ann Stoler's work *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (2010) has informed my ability to think of decolonial methods in tandem with a practice and perception of what she refers to as the confused epistemic spaces of colonialism. In Stoler's ethnography of the state archive she opens an analysis of the affective dimensions of colonial governance. I have also been influenced by Lisa Lowe's stunning *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (2015) that addresses modern liberal subjectivity by connecting it to the rise of European coloniality to confront "the often obscure connections between the emergence of European liberalism, settler colonialism in the Americas, the transatlantic slave trade, and the East Indies and China trades in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century" (1). Both works are essential to sociological inquiry that have limited their sights to modernity rather than inquired into the foundational condition of colonialism.

Introduction

- 1 See Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang's "Decolonization is Not a Metaphor," in *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* for a specific critique of the problem of overusing the term decolonization when not in relation to the repatriation of Indigenous territory and life (2012).
- 2 By "multiperceptual cosmologies" I am referring to Brazilian anthropological insights. See the foundational work of Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, for instance, "Cosmological Perspectivism in Amazonia and Elsewhere," accessible in English as four Cambridge lectures, February–March 1988. Viveiros de Castro's work signals a shift in Brazilian anthropology that has been widely

influential for its epistemological undoing of colonial perspectives and re-defining the terrain of alterity.

- 3 My use of Édouard Glissant here with respects to other Américas is to bring forward the grounded theory of the Caribbean Afro-diaspora as producing the kinds of sensibilities and orientations that opens up the theorization for other regional spaces of this study. Recognizing the particular transcultural histories of First peoples and Afro-diasporic populations within the Caribbean and Glissant's fluidity with European, especially French traditions is part of the layered meaning systems that shape Glissant's work.
- 4 See Glissant's *Poetics of Relation* (1997) whose elusive poetics, rich language, and complex circularities impede reduction of the work to a singular thesis or argument. Also see Manthia Diawara, "Édouard Glissant's Worldmentality" (2014). In this short, beautiful piece Diawara refers to the process of making his film, *Édouard Glissant: One World in Relation*, K'a Yéléma Productions (2009) and Glissant's search out of transparency over complexity, reason against poetry, and the traps of monolingualism.
- 5 I refer here to Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*, whose elaboration of social poesis by extending the genealogy of the Black Radical Tradition also contributes to decolonial theory and methods (2014). This text is generative for the historical legacies of maroonage and communal autonomy by former African slaves in the Américas. I am particularly in dialogue with its rich theoretical language for producing new modes of study. Also see Alvin O. Thompson, *Maroons in the Americas* (2006).
- 6 See Arturo Escobar's *Territories of Difference* (2008), where an important discussion on territoriality as the locus of self-governance is elaborated in relation to *Proceso de Comunidades Negras* (PCN) within Colombia's Pacific region and in relation to palm oil monocultural production.
- 7 To elaborate the concept of the emergent within extractive capitalism, I build upon Stuart Hall's notion of "vernacular modernities" originally developed as a theory about the after-condition of enslavement, and particularly in relation to Afro-Caribbean histories. "Vernacular modernities" refer to how local identities and cultures can never be wholly articulated or captured by the onset of capitalism. As Hall puts it, this is a "new kind of localism that is not self-sufficiently particular, but *which arises within*, without being simply a simulacrum of, the global" (my emphasis). See Stuart Hall, "Conclusion: The Multicultural Question," in *Un/Settled Multiculturalisms, Diasporas, Entanglements, Transruptions* (2000), 261. Also see Hall's seminal essay, "Negotiating Caribbean Identities" (1995).
- 8 My point is to not collapse African-descended peoples and the history of trans-Atlantic slavery with the colonization of Indigenous peoples, even as the work of John Brown Childs and Guillermo Delgado-P, among many

- others, have shown their long and complex imbrications in the Américas (2012). Throughout the chapters, I contend with the different colonial and racial formations of each geography I discuss, underscoring what Eduardo Galeano, Lewis Gordon, Sylvia Wynter, and many others have defined as the complex space of colonial convergence that emerges from colonial afterlives.
- 9 The work of Viveiros de Castro investigates the Yawalapíti and other Indigenous groups of the Amazonian Brazilian basin, undoing Claude Lévi-Strauss's structuralist anthropology based on Indigenous groups within Central Brazil. Viveiros de Castro writes against the grain of structural and ethnocentric strains of anthropology by conceptualizing a "multinaturalist perspectivism," or a non-anthropocentric virtuality of the idea of species. Again, see Viveiros de Castro, "Cosmological Perspectivism in Amazonia and Elsewhere."
 - 10 Walter Mignolo's classic text *Darker Side of the Renaissance* (1995) acknowledges the importance of theories of race and racism and Africana philosophy in shifting Eurocentric knowledge towards decolonial critique. About the work of Lewis Gordon on *existentia Africana*, Mignolo states that "geographical and bio-graphical genealogies of thought are at the very inception of decolonial thinking" (Mignolo, *Darker Side*, xxiii).
 - 11 In this introduction, for the sake of not confusing genealogies of thought, I try to stay a course by using the term "decolonial," even while anticolonial thinkers from the Caribbean, the Américas, and the Global South more broadly are also cited as important to the decolonial turn. What these thinkers share is a commitment to analyze from coloniality rather than modernity, what Sylvia Wynter terms the "paradigm of discovery" that sees modern analysis as new rather than as ensconced within longer processes of war, colonization, violence, slavery, and capitalism (2003, 2012). For an excellent overview of decoloniality, see Nelson Maldonado-Torres's introduction to a special issue of *Transmodernity* 1, issue 2 (Fall 2011): 1–15.
 - 12 See the broad literature here on Global South ecological activisms and theorizations that center feminist perspectives, including Nobel Peace Laureate Wangari Maathai's work as the founder of the Greenbelt Movement in Kenya. Her book addresses the challenges of the movement and the importance of replenishing the Earth during a period of extended crisis (2003). Also see Anrudathi Roy's work on dams and *Capitalism: A Ghost Story* (2014). Also, see chapters three and four for decolonial femme perspectives and inversions on land and water.
 - 13 Lee Edelman's critique of reproductive futures through the figure of the child is the most obvious text to cite here on a theory of "no future" (2014), but I am more specifically referring to the recent spate of popular literature, such as Elizabeth Kolbert's *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History* (2014) and other models that give primacy to the excesses of the Anthropocene. With the exception of Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything*, the "no future" paradigm often does not explicitly name capitalism as the dominant culprit. Further-

more, within Indigenous spaces in the Américas, a critique of reproductive futures has to be balanced against the historical weight project of eugenics, anti-Indigenous policies, and the state-centered project of *mestizaje*. For an astute recent discussion of *mestizaje* in relation to anti-Indigenous violence see Nicole Guidoletti-Hernandez's *Unspeakable Violence: Remapping US and Mexican National Imaginaries* (2011).

- 14 Vandana Shiva's work continues to be a defining study of the implications of biotechnology on the Global South; see *Monocultures of the Mind* (2003). New eco-feminisms also build upon and engage Shiva's discussions of earlier articulations of eco-feminism that may have not fully considered gender non-conformity or the unilinearity of the biological category of "woman." See chapters 1 and 5 for more instances.
- 15 For an exceptional account of global racism see Denise Ferreira da Silva's *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007).
- 16 See Anibal Quijano, "Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality" (2007), 178.
- 17 For a rich discussion of some of the absences of women of color scholarship within the body of work and citational practice that is decolonial theory see Laura Pérez, "Enrique Dussel's *Ética de la liberación*, US Women of Color Decolonizing Practices, and Coalitionary Politics amidst Difference" (Spring/Summer 2010).
- 18 Cedric Robinson's foundational *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (1983) carefully catalogues the rise of capitalism's long and imbricated history with racialized violence, which hierarchized difference by establishing a political economy that drew surplus from Black and Brown bodies.
- 19 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punishment* (1978).
- 20 Gilles Deleuze, "Postscripts on Societies of Control" (1992).
- 21 By narrating a counterhistory of visuality, Nicholas Mirzoeff links the authority of colonial actors to the naturalization of the right to look. Counter-visuality finds forms to see otherwise within and through a self-authorizing system of power (see especially the introduction, "The Right to Look or How to Think With and Against Visuality," 1–34).
- 22 See James Scott's important work *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (1998) for a grounded theoretical treatise on the utopian schemes of development. Scott argues for a turn to local knowledge sources to counter the epistemic and material violence of authoritarian state decision-making.
- 23 For instance, in its global war on terror, the United States utilized satellite images not only for war in Iraq and Afghanistan but also for what Lisa Parks refers to as the production of "digital real estate," or intellectual property owned by the US government and its corporate surveillance apparatuses, where remote sensing literally absorbs "territories into a global digital economy." See Lisa Parks and James Schwoch, eds., *Down to Earth: Satellite Technologies, Industries, and Cultures* (2012).

- 24 See Parks and Schwoch, *Down to Earth*.
- 25 In their book *Remote Sensing of Natural Resources*, Guangxing Wang and Qiu-hao Weng describe the sampling applications and image-based algorithms that can be used for scientific researchers as easily as it can be used by corporate.
- 26 Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* is the classic citation here, an important critique of the Cartesian split between mind and body by establishing the body as a site of perception. My reference here is to the lesser-known but equally prescient work of Maturana and Varela that foregrounds epistemologies of perception based on neurobiology, including the important concept of "autopoiesis," which refers to the autonomous dynamic within complex recursive and self-referential living systems. Maturana and Varela, *El árbol del conocimiento* (1984), *The Tree of Knowledge*. Also see Ira Livingston's *Between Science and Literature* (2006) that thinks through autopoetics as open social and discursive knowledge formations in relation to the sciences.
- 27 This is part of Humberto Maturana's response to Morris Berman's critique of *The Tree of Knowledge*, which Maturana analyzes as Berman not fully understanding. See "Response to Berman's Critique of the Tree of Knowledge" (1981).
- 28 Considering the current importance and acuteness of racialized politics of knowledge production, I would like to make explicit my entry into the extractive condition. I am not Indigenous, and do not pretend to speak for nor fully understand the realities of the spaces I have lived in, researched, and analyzed, but instead offer my partial and situated relational view as a South American mestiza, and Latina queer femme.
- 29 Here, I am invoking and citing a range of work that could broadly be situated as queer of color critique, including José Muñoz's *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (1999), Roderick Ferguson's *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique*; and Gayatri Gopinath's *Impossible Desires: Queer Diasporas and South Asian Public Cultures* (2005), which names postcolonial diasporic queer critique. Queer femininity is addressed especially in Gopinath's work and in Juana Rodríguez's *Sexual Futures, Queer Gestures, and Other Latina Longings* (2014). Putting this conversation in connection with decolonial literature and extending both into the field of multiplying difference against the monocultural view is my point here.
- 30 José Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009) is an important model of theorizing world-shaping activities as future-oriented endeavors. See also Jack Halberstam's *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (2005), especially his analysis of the subcultural and queer temporality as non-normative modes of study, creative production, and being.
- 31 See the queer decolonial text *Phenomenology of Chicana Experience and Identity: Communication and Transformation in Practice* (2000). In it, Jacque-

line M. Martinez references *Phenomenology of Communication: Merleau-Ponty's Thematics in Communicology and Semiology* (1988) by Richard L. Lanigan as a source of inspiration for her theory building. Also see Martinez's more recent *Communicative Sexualities: A Communicology of Sexual Experience* (2011) for how to address the pedagogy of theory and praxis in relation to queer orientation. See Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006), though my notion of femme positionality slightly differs from Ahmed's formulation early in the book. Rather than being connected to butch masculinity as the pull and orientation for a relational understanding of self, the decolonial queer method considers nonnormative femininity as a mode of perceiving the world, an autonomous format that is dialogically formed by queer relations and perspectives beyond the extractive view.

- 32 Linda Tuhwai Smith's game changing book, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999) discusses the importance of sovereign forms of Indigenous knowledge production as central to transforming the activity of research. By focusing on Indigenous and mestizx cultural production and critically examining power relations within the extractive zone, I work to delink from the traps of Western knowledge that condition Indigenous knowledge as "Other."
- 33 See my edited volume with Herman Gray, *Toward a Sociology of a Trace* where we seek to reframe the problematic of disciplinary social inquiry, a frame that I have expanded here to include a rethinking of the ongoing working of coloniality. Avery Gordon's *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (1998) is a key text for our elaboration of a sociology of a trace. Given that sociology is predicated upon observation, and the disciplines of the university self-affirm visibility as the key site of social analysis, methods that formulate quantitative and descriptive knowledge projects formulate the evidentiary in terms of the literal ability to see to know. While I critique empiricism, I retain a place for the importance of grounded research that learns from vernacular knowledges on the same plane of valuation as official knowledge.
- 34 In *The Reorder of Things: The University and Its Pedagogy of Minority Difference* (2012), Roderick Ferguson describes an interdisciplinary rather than disciplinary frame for his institutional critique, namely how the interdisciplines do not fundamentally break with the expansion of neoliberalism in the university. Liberal multiculturalism finds support through the university mandate of diversity.
- 35 Having worked as an academic sociologist at a US research institution over the past ten years, though also situated within a comparative ethnic studies department, I have been faced with the epistemic assumptions of the disciplinary very directly in my knowledge production. These include problems of reproducing the elevated status of evidence, or too easily rendering social life as fractured, dependent, and impoverished. As the domain of observable behavior, sociology—and "American" sociology in particular—reproduces

through and invests in truth-value that can be seen and therefore recorded. It is, moreover, a modern discipline that deploys and gives meaning to the colonial European scientific method, and defers questioning either the epistemology of its narrowed perspective, or the geopolitical locus of enunciation that frames its inquiry.

- 36 Gurminder K. Bhambra's *Connected Sociologies* addresses how classical sociology continues to narrativize history and modernity without reference to coloniality, reproducing European origin stories of world history (2014). Her work recognizes a broader plurality of theoretical positions, constructs, and interpretations than modern and Eurocentric Sociology.
- 37 See Ricardo D. Salvatore's *Disciplinary Conquest: US Scholars in South America, 1900–1945* for an analysis of the period prior to the consolidation of Area Studies (2016).
- 38 Roman de la Campa's classic book *Latin Americanism* contains a synthetic discussion on the imperial trouble with area studies (1999).
- 39 W. E. B. Du Bois famously attributed "double consciousness" with piercing the veil of racism by making the subjectification of Blackness visible (*Souls of Black Folk*, 1903). In Du Bois's rewriting of the Civil War in *Black Reconstruction in America* (1935), a decolonized perspective allows a dual critique, one that renarrates American history as a racial and nationalist project, while also writing from the standpoint of Black workers.
- 40 I refer here to a construction of violence as ensconced within and against Indigenous (and African) being at the very core of the colonial definition of the human and human progress. See Anibal Quijano's "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America" (2000) and the introduction to Katherine McKittrick's *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis* (2015).
- 41 Salvatore Eugenio Pappalardo, Massimo de Marchi, Francesco Ferrares, "Uncontacted Waorini in the Yasuní Biosphere Reserve," June 19, 2013, PLOS Journal, <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0066293>. Also see Matt Finer et al., "La frontera extractiva avanza en el Parque Yasuní," November 12, 2013 (<http://www.geoyasuni.org/?p=1283>) for a history of the intangible zone's legal protection, an important rendering of the legal loopholes that facilitate state and corporate extraction.
- 42 I am referring here to Phillip De Loria's *Playing Indian* (1998).
- 43 See Patrick Wolfe's discussion of the elimination of the Native in relation to Australian settler colonialism (2006). While this article has been critiqued for being applied too widely outside of the specific settler condition of Australia, in the context of Chilean ideology in relation to Mapuche, Huilliche, Pe-huenche, Fuegan, and other Indigenous peoples the terminology "elimination of the Native" can be aptly used in relation to the discourses and practices of the colonial and modern state since the sixteenth century.
- 44 Elsewhere I have written a feminist decolonial discussion of Mapuche hunger strikes. See "Mapuche Hunger Acts: Epistemology of the Decolonial" (2012).

- 45 For a discussion of utopic visions centered within the state's capture of power see Nancy Postero's "Andean Utopias in Evo Morales's Bolivia" (2007).

Chapter 1. The Intangibility of the Yasuní

- 1 Bruno La Tour, "Circulating Reference: Sampling the Soil in the Amazon Forest" (1999).
- 2 William Sacher, personal communication with the author, May 18, 2015.
- 3 In a reconsideration of the epistemes of ethnographic method, Eduardo Kohn places the human within a web of complexity that is based upon fieldwork in Ecuador's upper Amazonian region (2017). Though my work differently situates the threat of extractive capitalism, my thinking in this chapter is influenced by this rich study and theorization of the Ecuadorian Amazon.
- 4 See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980).
- 5 In *Autopoiesis and Cognition*, Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela explore cognition as a biological matter at the basis of all living systems and as self-referential systems that operate outside of the logics of observer and observed (1980). This is the epistemological foundation for how I am using the term social ecologies of intangibility in this chapter. Also see Ira Livingston's concept of autopoetics that expands these ideas (2006).
- 6 Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) is the cinematic expression of colonial madness that is at the center of director Les Blank's documentary *Burden of Dreams* (1982).
- 7 In her work on the overdetermined representations of the natural world, *Entangled Edens: Visions of the Amazon* (2001), Candace Slater attends to the hegemonic representation of the Amazon as a diversity of flora and fauna that functions to absent Native inhabitants within the rain forest. Slater's book disentangles how the Amazon functions as an idealized icon rather than the complex set of competing visions that it is.
- 8 The Tagaeri and Taromenane must also be named here, the tribes who broke off from the Huaorani, rejecting colonization to live deeper in the forest as a "no contact" group. While many Indigenous groups have also put pressure on the Amazon with hunting practices and an expanding population, the balance I am referring to here is about the level of engagement with the outside world.
- 9 This is quoted in Esperanza Martínez's important and speedy account of these events that unfolded from 2009 to 2014, with continuing processes and effects unfolding around the Yasuní today. See Esperanza Martínez, *Yasuní, el tortuoso camino de Kioto a Quito* (2013).
- 10 Martínez, *Yasuní, el tortuoso camino de Kioto a Quito* (2013), 15.
- 11 As cited in the *Guardian* report that revealed these agreements, the document, titled "China Development Bank Credit Proposal," bears the name of Ecuador's Ministry of Economic Policy Coordination on every page. Under

- 37 See Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons* (2014).
- 38 Francisco Huichaqueo interview with the author, Santiago, Chile, July 11, 2016.
- 39 Francisco Huichaqueo interview with the author, Santiago, Chile, July 13, 2016.

Chapter 4. A Fish-Eye Episteme

- 1 This work by Carolina Caycedo was first presented in DAAD Gallery in Berlin in 2012.
- 2 I am referring here to the important book by Patrick McCully, *Silenced Rivers: The Ecology and Politics of Large Dams* (2001), a careful study of the controversial technology and impacts of large dams. In the new edition, McCully suggests that the growing anti-dam movement is one way to counter the planetary spread of dam construction. Rather than focus on anti-dam movements exclusively, my analysis reaches across extractive regions to understand the wider intersectional and coalition work that takes place within social ecologies against development and mega-development.
- 3 Some might argue that Potosí and Cerro Rico silver extraction is the colonial megaproject precedent, as is Itaipu River damming in Brazil. While I agree with this analysis, my point here is that megaprojects are now seen as reproducible and as a supposedly “new” extractivist model of hyperdevelopment and expansion.
- 4 In hydroelectric power, dammed water drives generators whose energy is measured by the proportional difference between the source and the water’s outflow, yet, as studies have documented, such energy production is ultimately unsustainable (Bermann, “Impasses e controvérsias”). These projects decrease water quality, transmit disease through backwater formations, emit greenhouse gases, deforest and remove vegetation, reduce ecological biodiversity, and eliminate the functionality of other kinds of sustainable activities.
- 5 There are currently four dams in the world that are larger than 10GW, including the Three Gorges Dam (the first mega dam), the Xiloudu Dam, the Itaipu Dam across the Brazil-Paraguay border, and the Guri Dam in Venezuela. While the scale of dams ranges from small to large, and the cost of hydroelectricity is presumably cheap, wide-scale costs include displacement and ecological destruction.
- 6 The master plan for the Magdalena River can be seen at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/oByrzVKn6lnmSOVg4TkYwemhLMUE/view?usp=sharing>. Accessed March 17, 2017.
- 7 “Colombia: Struggle against Quimbo Dam Reaches Critical Point,” *Upside Down World*, July 17, 2015. Accessed April 15, 2017. <http://upside-downworld.org/main/news-briefs-archives-68/5397-colombia-struggle-against-quimbo-dam-reaches-critical-point>.
- 8 My translation. The original reads, “El 14 de marzo de 2015 iniciaremos la gran

- movilización por la defensa del Río Magdalena, los Territorios y la Vida. Recorreremos el país desde el Macizo Colombiano hasta Bocas de Ceniza, en rechazo al Plan Maestro de Aprovechamiento del Río Magdalena recuperando la memoria, la identidad y la historia de todo un país que ha construido su vida, su territorio y su historia alrededor del río”; ASOQUIMBO, Movilización El Río de la Vida. Accessed March 19, 2017. <http://www.quimbo.com.co/p/movilizacion.html>.
- 9 See Carolina Caycedo’s blog and site “Be Dammed.” Accessed January, 25, 2017. <https://carolinacaycedo.wordpress.com/2015/10/28/be-dammed-ongoing-project/>.
 - 10 Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Right to Look* (2011), xv.
 - 11 See Caycedo’s blog and site “Be Dammed.” Accessed January, 25, 2017. <https://carolinacaycedo.wordpress.com/2015/10/28/be-dammed-ongoing-project/>.
 - 12 Boaventura de Sousa Santos, *Epistemologies of the South* (2014).
 - 13 de Sousa Santos makes similar interventions into the main discipline of Sociology as Herman Gray and my arguments in our edited volume *Toward a Sociology of a Trace*. De Sousa Santos’s and our approach to sociology draw from interdisciplinary methods and attend to the importance of social theory and the cultural sphere not as a separate realm of analysis but as integral to theories and studies of political spaces, colonialism, nationalism, economic change, and a history from below that is critical of the flattening tendencies of empiricism.
 - 14 Outside of the United States, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro is increasingly taken up by US scholars who are perhaps more familiar with Nietzsche’s philosophy on perspectivism that detracts from the idea that there is any one epistemological truth.
 - 15 Viveiros de Castro, “Cosmological Perspectivism” (2012).
 - 16 Following Lévi-Strauss’s work on myth, yet against the separation of nature and culture that it, in the end reproduced, in “Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies,” Viveiros de Castro describes how “myths are filled with beings whose form, name, and behavior inextricably mix human and animal attributes in a common context of intercommunicability, identical to that which defines the present-day intra-human world” (464).
 - 17 Viveiros de Castro, “Cosmological Perspectivism” (2012).
 - 18 Bennett, *Vibrant Matter* (2012).
 - 19 Diana Coole and Samantha Frost, *New Materialisms* (2010), 6.
 - 20 Carolina Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014).
 - 21 Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014).
 - 22 Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014).
 - 23 Caycedo, *Yuma: Land of Friends* (2014).

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