

Chapter 10

Aguirre, Caché, and Creating Anti-Colonialist Puzzles: A Normative Perspective

Yusuf Yüksekdağ

Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the anti-colonial narrative potential of certain works of cinema taking Aguirre, the Wrath of God and Caché as a case in point. To do so, this chapter first and mainly draws upon the theoretical and normative lens put forward by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak on the representation of the colonized other and her resulting political and intellectual call for self-reflection on one's privileged Western intellectual positioning. This lens has many normative implications for the ways in which the colonized subject and colonial history are discussed and represented. The partial lack of representation of the colonized other in Aguirre, the Wrath of God leaves the subjectivity of the colonizer in crisis and madness. Second, the narrative of Caché is explored and it is suggested that it resembles the rhetoric of Foucauldian disciplinary power of surveillance turned upside-down thus enforcing the complicit of colonialism to question her privilege.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, two particular ways are offered and explored in which the historically dominant and othering discourse towards *the other* are questioned *via* the narrative of a work of cinema. In other words, this chapter assigns an anti-colonialist narrative potential to certain works of cinema.

One particular way that is offered is the intentional lack of representation of *the other* as a subject-matter; leaving the colonialist protagonists without any material in the script, which otherwise can produce a justificatory set of knowledge for their conquest. It is this very dialectic process where the colonial power or the empire defines itself as superior in relation or in opposition to what *the other* is and vice versa (Spivak, 1985; Spivak, 1988; Said, 1978). Notably, the othering is not only about colonial

or imperial forces defining and ascribing certain characteristics or norms to the people of distant lands, and acknowledging them as 'truly' *the other* (Ashcroft et al., 1998). It is also about defining itself, one's characteristics and norms as universal; creating a (superior) subjectivity on the basis of and in contrast to what *the other* is assumed to do or be. The very question of representation of *the other* should then be subject to a well-warranted scrutiny in any intellectual endeavor including the works of cinema – especially considering the recent progressive turn in media industries accommodating a higher degree of cultural diversity in production, narration, and casting (Gonzalez-Sobrino et al., 2018.).

Aguirre, the Wrath of God (1972) is an exemplary movie, which has such a narrative that goes to the point of ridiculing the colonial state of mind, whose othering practices fail throughout the movie. Such practices throughout the script seem to fail, in particular, due to partial lack of representation of *the other*. In the end, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* seems to point to the madness of the colonialist state of mind when faced only with itself.

The second anti-colonialist puzzle is turning the historically dominant and othering gaze upside down. *Caché* (2005) accommodates such a narrative, resembling the Foucauldian disciplinary power of surveillance conducted rather on the privileged, enforcing to question one's own privileged positionalities (Foucault, 2012; Winokur, 2003). While *Caché*'s narrative has been analyzed in relation to its debate on colonialism and its prospective features for the age of surveillance, such a normative questioning has not warranted much attention (Celik, 2010; Herzog, 2010; Levin, 2010).

Movie narratives featuring a critical or even emancipatory prospect warrant a normative assessment as such, so their interpretative prospects are better comprehended and evaluated in respect to relevant philosophical and normative perspectives. Such a normative outlook is one of the gaps in media studies that would highlight and scrutinize such emancipatory narratives in the works of cinema. In addition, while there are many discussions on *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché* and their exposure of colonialism, they have not drawn much attention in regard to their anti-colonialist narrative potential. As well as the contemporary forms of orientalist and othering discourses in different media outputs, the movie narratives on underprivileged groups, inner workings of privilege, colonial history and the Western subject deserve a critical analysis especially now when many media formats claim to provide non-discriminatory or even progressive representations of minority groups, racial politics and whiteness (Hughey & González-Lesser, 2020). With the proposed normative and anti-colonialist outlook, this chapter aims to complement many media discourse and representation studies offered in this edited contribution.

This chapter has three parts. The first part introduces Spivak's discussion on the representation and making of *the other*, and later briefly the Foucauldian debate on the use of disciplinary power. The second part explores the anti-colonialist prospect of narratives in movies, and then focuses on *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché* against the backdrop of the theoretical debate in the first part thus delineating the ways in which both movies have an anti-colonialist narrative. Methodologically, a simple narrative structure analysis is used with a focus on rhetorical features in the movies. The former, *Aguirre*, arguably, works to the extent of making the practice of othering impossible and has implications for conclusions about the madness of the colonial state of mind. The latter, *Caché*, focuses on the already-othered subjects, in the form of the French treatment of Algerians. *Caché* offers a narrative in which once the privileged is subjected to the disciplinary power of surveillance, she starts questioning its past and guilt in the effects of colonialism and one's personal part in it. The last part provides a short discussion on the prospects of analyzing movies with such a normative lens.

REPRESENTING/MAKING AND DISCIPLINING *THE OTHER*

With the increasing diversity of productions and post-TV production, comes the call for diversity in representation of otherwise vulnerable or minority groups, and also the inclusion of non-Western productions in collaboration. While this is an important development, still present is the concern about how representation of *the other* and more specifically of the colonized other might be vulnerable to being subjected to dominant and mostly Western schools of thought in processes of production, narration, and casting. In addition, as in any interpretative and constitutive moments of meaning-making, there is a potential of dominant interpretations for the Western audiences despite the prospect of any media output for resistance to dominant meanings and norms (Hall, 1989).

Even the allegedly anti-colonialist perspectives representing a certain other, or trying to speak for marginalized groups might run into the problem of contextualizing the understanding of *the other* as homogenous and more importantly as designated by Western perspectives and assumptions. Any anti-colonialist narrative then encounters the problem of representation as such. Especially when it comes to the question of representation of *the other* not simply as a descriptive text but as an imaginative endeavor, there comes the risk of propagating and reproducing othering practices and discourses. This goes not only for cinematic representations per se, nor a matter of dutiful representation, but it is of an ultimate issue of epistemology of representation as Spivak (1988) discusses in her seminal critique “Can the Subaltern Speak?”. The term subaltern can be conceptualized as a subset of *the other* that emphasizes the subalternity of some groups i.e. the colonized, marginalized, silenced, and dominated and not merely a discriminated or oppressed ‘other’, such as other dominant local groups or another colonizer or imperial forces or individual. However, for the purposes of this chapter, there is merit in using the terms ‘the other’ and ‘the subaltern’ or ‘the colonized other’ interchangeably: firstly in order not to take an a priori stance on deciding what warrants the title *the subaltern*, and given that Spivak’s epistemological debate also has implications for representation of *the other* in general. Moreover, the purpose of drawing from this discussion on representation of *the other* is to discuss *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché*, whose narratives feature the colonized other.

Mainly by drawing on Spivak’s critique, the following sections deal with representing/making of the colonized other. This is followed by a brief introduction to the Foucauldian notion of disciplinary power of surveillance and the mechanics of how any group, in particular the colonized other, is subject to such institutionalization of disciplinary power.

Spivak on the Problem of Representing and Making *the Other*

In an interview in 1977, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze discuss the role of intellectual while placing emphasis on letting ‘the other’ talk and rebuffing their intellectual role in such a representation. As Filippo Menozzi (2014) rightly points out, Deleuze’s specific emphasis on letting *the other* speak has its roots in the very discussions of his time where the function of an intellectual was put into question. Therefore Deleuze, in order to escape from the criticism of not fulfilling the political involvement of public intellectual, simply asserts how “representation no longer exists” and the theory itself is actually a form of action (Foucault & Deleuze, 1977).

For Spivak, Deleuze and Foucault unwittingly conflate two meanings of representation: (i) being a proxy on behalf of others and (ii) re-presenting someone or something. They think beyond representation (first meaning) there comes the real possibility of disclosing the power structures inflicted upon

the other. And they intentionally refrain from speaking for others as public intellectuals, and rather aim to give the microphone to them. Being that the context of this discussion is their activism and role as public intellectuals, they argue that that theory is a form of action in the end and thus are engaging in theoretical activism (Foucault & Deleuze, 1977).

By intentionally ‘not speaking for them’, they simply assume the ability of *the other* to speak for themselves, presuming they have a voice. For Spivak, however, by still representing (second meaning) and talking about them and assuming the intellectual privilege in doing so, the theorists as such still end up being ventriloquists for *the other* – while, and more unsettlingly, also inducing their own subjectivity that is part of the dominant (Western) knowledge and power structures (Steyerl, 2007; Menozzi, 2014). Even so, by talking about them, especially while *the other* is alive and present yet mute, one potentially ends up speaking for them, in a way then dialectically positing inability of *the other* to actually speak for themselves – especially considering how they conceptualize the theory as a form of action. Similar representations are very common in the context of history of de/colonization. For example, during the wave of decolonization after the World War II, and the subsequent decolonization movements in African countries, a Paris correspondent of *The Economist* reports in 1956:

Only the Africans clearly know what they want. They want complete local autonomy, with their own prime ministers, ministers and legislatures. But they are not nationalists [...] They respect French culture and ideas [...] In return, some of them want a federal, not a French, government to express this unity (The Economist, 1956).

As a result, the colonized African is then either represented as they respect the French culture and merely pursue local autonomy, or they aspire for their nationalist movement. All the while we cannot epistemologically hear the voice of an African individual. It is either the former or the latter representation in the making; disregarding, for instance, their economic class position and what it implies especially for the interests of an African working class individual. This is also in the vein of Spivak’s discussion on widow-sacrifices in colonial India, where both the dominant Hindu interpretation (‘that the widow wanted to die’) and the dominant British interpretation (‘saving the women’) provide different ways to speak for the widow who in the end is rendered and made mute (Kapoor, 2004).

This is a problem of epistemology of *the other* in general and thus a problem of colonial historiography. Spivak is not against representation in both forms nor are Spivak’s concerns, unlike what some argue, simply a matter of better and “dutiful representation” (Naiboglu, 2014: p. 125). It is firstly an epistemological cry in regard to ‘Western’ representations (second meaning) of *the other*, and secondly an emphasis on complexities and differences of the colonized subject (Naiboglu, 2014).

In particular, it can be claimed that hidden underneath Spivak’s theoretical inflation and heavy jargon, the reasoning behind her rigorous critique is threefold. First, for Spivak, the individual and subject are being conflated by Deleuze and Foucault, and it is the very nature of the subject that it is not homogenous. Second, as a representer (second meaning), the ultimate privileged disposition of the intellectual or theorists should be taken into account (Menozzi, 2014). Third, and more practically, assuming the non-homogeneity of *the other* and thus stripping away one’s own privileged and dominant position in knowledge production, one should aim at disclosing the differences and complexities of *the other* – yet this is hardly done even by the scholars of colonization (Kaltmeier, 2017).

Spivak on Western Intellectuals

Spivak's first concern is about the ways in which certain theories try to disclose power relations by assuming we, as individuals, are *all* subject to discourses of power. Spivak simply makes a leap of judgment about certain French intellectuals and theorists that they conflate the individual with the subject in that they homogenize and overgeneralize the human experience without any due consideration of very singular experiences – especially for the individuals whose experiences diverge from that of the colonizer (Janz, 2012). Such a concern towards a white gaze is also shared by George Yancy (2012) in his discussion of racism. The mere assertion that we are all subjugated to power and domination and the fact that race is a constructed category do not make the experience itself neither obsolete nor universal. It is a pejoratively unique experience only faced by the black person (Yancy, 2012). This non-situated or non-subject individual then is also what makes Spivak especially critical of Foucault and Deleuze in the sense that *the other* in particular is not heard in their works. At best, they are not given an undistorted microphone.

No doubt, for instance, contemporary Foucauldian perspectives do provide illuminating discussions for the colonial history and race studies. There is however an underrepresentation of the issue of race in Foucault's works that harbor, in "less careful hands", the danger of disregarding the foundational role of the geopolitical materialities and experiences *the other* suffers from (Spivak, 1988: p. 274; Howell & Richter-Montpetit, 2019). This is especially worrisome considering that a latent universalist understanding of the individual would not be possible if it is not in contrast or relation to another's subjectivity. This then leads to overlooking the nonuniversality of Western perspective and understanding of an individual (including *the other*) that might be very well composed without any due consideration of their socially, historically and economically determined subjectivity – in a way authorizing scholars or intellectuals to re-present the other as a non-subject, and at best 'letting them speak' without actually hearing them speak (Morris, 2010; Spivak, 2010).

Notably, Andrew Robinson and Simon Tormey (2010) argue that Spivak's critique does not go beyond a call for a better representation of *the other* and the criticism towards Deleuze is overstated. It is claimed that Deleuze should be even considered a postcolonial thinker (Price, 2014). However, as Gozde Naiboglu (2014) argues, this is not only a call for a better representation as Robinson and Tormey claim, it is rather a contextualized epistemological criticism towards the dominant theoretical underpinnings of Western intellectuals. The nature of the criticism itself nonetheless is still relevant to the extent of discerning the very challenge of representation of *the other*. Regardless of Deleuze's own complicity, representation itself in a double-bind form always inscribes the risk of propagating the hegemonic and dominant Western structures of thought (Burns & Kaiser, 2012).

So, as for her second concern, the complicity of Western intellectuals Spivak points to is then the implication of the conflation of the two conceptions of representation and their resistance to questioning their own privileged theoretical underpinnings and dispositions – economic, institutional, gendered or geographic (Kapoor, 2004; Spivak, 2010). Arguably, Deleuze and Foucault both show resistance to the ideological critique and to the delineation of the actual material interests of *the other* – induced by their skepticism to 'ideological criticism' and its appeal to absolute truths about material conditions (Scatamburlo-D'Annibale et al., 2018). For Spivak, the problem persists not in the need to speak for the silent other per se, but in then assuming/neglecting the Western dominant disposition that disregards actual geopolitical materialities of marginalized individuals while falsely claiming not to do so. This is the idea Spivak borrows from Marx's (1954) *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: The problem was not that peasants needed a voice, but they chose the wrong representer, Louis Napoleon, to speak

on their behalf (Hartley, 2003: p. 248). So Spivak's challenge is firstly an epistemological one indeed asserting the silence of the subaltern, yet it is secondly a call for a political, practical and intellectual project – an achievable one – in which one actively questions one's theoretical underpinnings, and the subsequent or constitutive intellectual, economic, geographical or gendered privilege one enjoys.

One can rephrase this question and ask how then can the subaltern speak for itself and re-present itself? As David Lloyd (2014) points out though, this project assumes a certain group consciousness that there is one single group of people. This is to assume, borrowing the Marxist terminology, *the other* constitutes a class *for* itself (p. 7). As Spivak points out it is yet again a dominant and hegemonic Western structure of thought to assume that *the other* necessarily has such a formed consciousness and performativity – homogenous in terms of their interests (Bracke, 2016). That is also why even non-Western scholars, while trying to re-present *the other*, mostly rely on the indigenous dominant groups and disregard stories of the marginalized individuals and the complexities of their interests (Spivak, 1988). As such, Spivak points to how there is still no mention of women and many other subgroups – a well-warranted exemplification which drives many of Spivak's work in Subaltern Studies. What Spivak then comes to as a third point is rather a demand for better re-presentation of *the other* since the re-presentation of *the other* in many accounts of colonial history is appreciated yet found insufficient.

To that end, Mark Griffiths (2017) offers a threefold ethical and normative suggestion based upon Spivak's concerns, by rightly pointing out that her project is not to disengage from representation in both sense of the word, but to make it a reflective challenge for the Western intellectual to do so (Alcoff, 1991). This challenge is then a call for a non-universalistic approach to subjectivity, hyper focused on self-reflection of one's privileged position, and making *the other* or their silence heard even if this requires naming or even speaking for them, depending necessarily on whether the former two suggestions are established (Ramsey-Kruz, 2007; Griffiths, 2017).

Note that Spivak finds Jacques Derrida's project of deconstruction to be a useful attempt in recognition of the European subject's attempt to self-consolidate itself as a subject in relation to a determined *other* (Spivak, 2010). The binaries upon which the European subject is constituted in the making of *the other* also reflect the ways in which their dominant and colonialist position is justified: civilized/not primitive, intellectual/not uneducated, wealthy/not resource-poor, and powerful/not vulnerable. Questioning these and how they are constructed or refraining from the ways in which they are constructed in any intellectual production would surely enable one to escape from an inadvertent universalist approach to the interests of *the other*. This might serve as one of the building blocks of self-reflection on our privileged intellectual, gendered, economic, or geopolitical position. That is why, despite her critique, Spivak (2010) applauds Foucault's work that highlight the processes of "disciplinarization and institutionalization, the constitution, as it were, of the colonizer" that both dismantle the processes of othering and shed light on the ways in which *the other* is disciplined into silence that maintain Western privileges (p. 265).

Disciplining *the Other*

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (2012) utilizes Jeremy Bentham's prison reform structure, Panopticon, as a model of representation for modern forms of surveillance and their implications. Panopticon is an architectural design where the surveilled is structurally left uninformed about the identity, location and even the presence of the surveiller. For Bentham, this design would simply sustain the internalization of rules and regulations by the inmates and would enable compliance without the need for violence (Whittaker, 1999).

For Foucault, modern forms of surveillance resemble the governing idea of Panopticon. Rather than purporting violent punishment, a surveilling gaze is instituted to discipline people. Unlike the torturer of medieval context, this is a deterritorialized power. It is present in the street with CCTV to protect our security, in the workplace where one is recorded for the purpose of productivity and efficiency, in the online classroom, and even in the comfort of one's home. For Foucault, this concerns a certain historical period where disciplinary surveillance has started to emerge in many institutions such as schools and workplaces to regulate, manage and 'perfect' every aspect of life (Carpenter, 2020). Unlike disciplinary punishment, they are not feared but justified in the 'interest' or rather the common good of the relevant parties (Sheridan, 2016: p. 45). This is especially in line with the rationalization of the colonialist groups' methods that overemphasize the proper and efficient 'management' of the colonized land and subjects.

As a case in point, especially in the height of online communication and education tools 'necessitated' by global pandemics such as the COVID-19 Pandemic started in 2020, digital surveillance measures in assessing student or professional performance are not only made possible (e.g. IP logs, camera surveillance) but they are also incorporated more and more as the norm – nothing to fear: they prevent academic dishonesty, and they provide productive efficiency. In a more broad sense, digital technologies and everyday datafication of lives enable a system where an invisible other (states and state agencies, corporations or intruding individuals) is able to collect personal information that is deeply private and not easily accessible otherwise.

The inequality of data relations in the world should also be taken into account (Couldry & Mejias, 2019). It is not only that certain countries and its citizens are left without ownership or access to data, it is also that their interests, preferences and identities might not be taken into account in the streams of data that constructs our lives via platforms such as face recognition technologies or smart city applications.

Unlike previous forms of disciplinary punishment, the implications of modern forms of disciplinary power are then threefold: (i) it enables compliance with and internalization of the rules, (ii) it encompasses larger and more intruding forms of surveillance, and (iii) it enables a system of constant norm-based scrutiny for individuals, thus, maintaining (Western) privilege and discourses of knowledge.

ANTI-COLONIALIST PUZZLES IN AGUIRRE, *THE WRATH OF GOD* AND *CACHÉ*

As mentioned, Spivak arguably does not go against the very project of representation. She makes a call for action so that the constative location of *the other* is deplaced to a performative one, where agency can be exercised, and thus this project is relevant for any form of intellectual endeavor (Bracke, 2016; Conway, 2018).

Stephanie L. Daza (2013) calls for advancing such performativity through the use of media outputs given the very imaginative and thus performative and transformative potential and desires of visual texts in comparison to less-imaginative potential of written texts. Media is a locus of action for individuals and exercise of their agency as it connects people, and lets them share and imagine (Couldry, 2020). In particular, movie narratives have complex and engaging potential (Cutting, 2016). This is not to deny the implications of post-structuralist theory arguing that conflicting and dominant discourses might still be embedded in any form of work including movie narratives (Derrida, 1976; Cohen, 2001). However, it is also possible to assume a normative perspective that aims to, at the least, indulge a form of anti-colonialist and emancipatory narrative. This way, opposing interpretations to dominant meanings might be enabled through which the given disparities, inequalities, and power differences of any sort are

questioned that has actual detrimental consequences for interests of the people. As Nick Couldry (2020) suggests, imagining – through more fictional outputs like TV series, movies and games – is one of the ways through which media connects people and enable them to gain new understandings of the world, and movie narratives that aim to create or illustrate non-dominant, anti-colonialist or anti-orientalist puzzles – if not deconstruction – warrant exploration.

This opens up then the project of exploring cinematic works where privileged positionalities can be questioned vis-à-vis the narrative. Considering the potential erroneous ways where *the other* is represented, this chapter sees a potential in illustrations questioning the dominant subject in the cinematic practice. If the first concern of Spivak is taken very seriously, then speaking for *the other* is not problematic per se, but it still warrants scrutiny. Therein also comes the potential for cinematic narratives – either representing or speaking for *the other* – to do so in a more self-reflective manner, or for merely featuring questions or puzzles on privilege and Western subjectivity. The next section will discuss how *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché* provide or resemble such anti-colonialist illustrations and puzzles.

Another methodological note is needed at this point. In addition to scrutinizing the representative realm of cinema and assuming its potential for anti-colonialist puzzles, there is also a merit in recognizing the philosophical and normative function of cinema in general. The philosophy-cinema nexus can be understood in three ways. The first is the philosophy of cinema, which deals with film theory, aesthetics and semiotics of cinematic works. The second is the philosophy on cinema, where philosophical texts and arguments are discussed or represented using the cinematic narrative as an example, case or a hypothetical scenario. Third is the philosophy in cinema, where the philosophical features of the movie itself are questioned (Mcgregor, 2014). The following discussion over *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché* will mostly resemble the second nexus in order to illustrate anti-colonialist puzzles drawing on Spivak and partially Foucault's accounts, yet the philosophical features of these movies in themselves will also be touched upon.

Aguirre, the Wrath of God: Non-Representing the Other and Rendering the Colonizer Mad

Werner Herzog's *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* is a story of an expedition that takes place in 1560 set alongside the Amazon River, where the colonial Spanish Conquistadors seek the treasures of the mythological and legendary being, El Dorado, imagined as a location, or a king, or a structure that is full of treasures and gold. Its protagonist (Aguirre) is loosely based on Lope de Aguirre (1510-1561), known as El Loco - the Madman. The expedition down the Amazon River while facing dangerous rapids, led initially by Ursua, consists of his wife (Flores), Aguirre (the second in command) and his daughter (Inez), a nobleman (Guzman), soldiers, enslaved individuals, a priest, and a black slave (Okello). The camerawork is especially illuminating in the scenes covering the initial stages of the expedition, almost turning the movie into a docu-drama (Ames, 2018).

The story follows Aguirre's arrest of Ursua and then using Guzman as a puppet-leader, followed by disease, hallucinations along with invisible arrow attacks from the riverbank. In the end, Aguirre is illustrated in a confused setting on the wreck of the raft, alone, with the rest of the expeditioners already dead (Figure 1).

Eric Ames (2018) suggests that *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* “explores the madness and the hopelessness of Western striving, what Oswald Spengler, writing of the cinema in 1917, called “the unrestrainable Faustian impulse to conquer and discover” (p. 83). In light of the second part of this chapter on

representation/making of *the other*, arguably, the narrative featured in *Aguirre* mirrors how, exacerbated by the camerawork and dream-like setting, a high degree of absence of visualization of the people of Amazon river renders the striving colonizer mad.

This is not to claim that the not-yet-to-be colonized other is not subject to any visual representation. Lack of representation is still a way to define *the other*. Take the instance when the expeditioners initially face and encounter what may be the physical remnants of a group of people of the Amazon River. Seeing the village set on fire alongside the river, they land next to the village. Unaware of what expects them, they first push Okello to the front to foment fear for people they have never seen before. Resembling the point of Spivak on the lack of regard for complexities, differences and thus the material realities of the subaltern, the Conquistadors assume that what works as allegedly a fearful image for another *colonized other* or themselves – a black person – would surely also work for the people around the river. Okello is *the other* to them, they assume, speaking on behalf of people they have never seen.

The ‘first encounter’ with ‘savages’ comes very late in the movie. In addition, the visual rhetoric of the movie hints at a sensation of a dream on the part of the Conquistadors in this scene. Such a hallucinatory sensation is present and gradually increasing throughout the movie. In many acts of violence and horror, we see the killing but not the perpetrator (Ames, 2018). In one instance, a soldier walking in the jungle is taken by a rope above the trees and what follows is merely the sound of dying breath of the soldier. The colonizer and its gaze (or rather the aspiring colonizer) is left alone in the journey most of the time. Arguably, *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*’s narrative exemplifies how the striving colonizer when faced only with itself allows a disaster – where not only its superiority cannot be constructed, but that it is the foundational ontology of the colonizer being missing.

Figure 1. Ending of *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (1972)



The very subjectivity of the colonizer then is in crisis as it necessitates a binary superiority. Without *the other*, they are left alone with the self-proclaimed superiority and colonization. And once it is not

substantiated via *the other*, the colonizer loses the sense of itself, and is left alone in madness. The very scene where Guzman sits in front of a parchment and draws a map to affirm he owns these lands now without actually ever setting a foot connotes with the first instances of madness in *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*. While Roger Ebert (1999) suggests death as the ultimate destiny in the movie, it can be also claimed that the ultimate destiny of Aguirre is madness as he is surrounded by corpses and hundreds of monkeys in the end of the movie (Figure 1).

Caché: A Disciplinary Tale on the Privileged

[Caché] is a tale of morality dealing with how one lives with guilt. Do I accept it? And if I don't what do I do? And if I do, what do I do? (Haneke, 2006).

Caché is a story of individual and collective forgetting and guilt in the context of the French colonial past and in particular against the backdrop of the Paris massacre of 1961, when the Parisian police attacked and killed hundreds of Algerian protesters in the final years of Algerian War of Independence. The Paris massacre is one of the repressed instances of French colonial history, and as Ipek A. Celik (2010) suggests, *Caché's* ethical project is to signify the presence of colonial structures existing still today. The movie right after its release was also received in the line of its social commentary on colonial violence in France (Celik, 2010: p. 65).

In regard to *Caché* being an ethical and a scholarly project, the complicity of the scholar also warrants some scrutiny. Ruben Andersson (2014) makes this point about clandestine migration and how the network of aid workers, migration scholars, activists as much as defense contractors are all part of what he calls 'illegality industry' (p. 15). Andersson emphasizes the fact that complicity has degrees and Haneke's own complicity as the author of this ethical project can be put into a question.

Regardless, the narrative featured in the movie provides many anti-colonialist allegories and puzzles inviting the audiences to reflect on issues of Western privilege, colonial injustices and individual complicity. In particular, it illustrates a debate about the implications of surveillance on questioning one's own privilege.

Caché starts with the protagonist (Georges) and his family being terrorized with static surveillance tapes of their private lives and in particular of the scenes that reflect Georges's childhood memories (Figure 2). He then suspects one of the integral figures of his childhood, Majid, an Algerian orphaned boy whose parents were killed during the Paris massacre and being taken care of by Georges's parents. In their second confrontation, Majid again denies his part in surveillance tapes and kills himself in front of Georges.

According to Celik (2010), the violence inherited in Majid's suicide reflects the repressed violence and oppression of the French colonial past. It would be however a mistake to think of colonial violence as only attributable to 'past' injustices. The colonial discourse and violence are still things of today, and their neglect would again lead to an epistemic injustice of silencing the existing material interests of *the other*. With Majid's openly stated wish that he wants Georges to be present before he kills himself, there is a clear link made between public forgetting of the colonial past and Georges's own denial and guilt not only for his past wrongdoings but for the very current epistemic injustice Majid suffers from in the form of Georges's apathetic colonial amnesia during the scenes towards their past relationship.

Figure 2. *Caché* (2005)



The moment Majid kills himself is an important threshold in *Caché*. Georges has now something not to fear per se but rather to delve into under the constant and now non-identifiable gaze of surveillance: his past deeds, his unveiled guilt in being a minor complicit in subjectivity of the colonized other. The audience then is invited into the past relationship between Majid and Georges. It is revealed that during their childhood, Georges tricks Majid into killing a rooster, and then goes on to complain about Majid's 'violent' behavior, which in turn leads Georges's parents to send away Majid to an orphanage. A foolish boy's lie indeed - yet this is an interpretative 'moment' for the audiences to question the degree of their own complicity in similar wrongdoings.

The very journey following this breakthrough for Georges echoes the Foucauldian idea of the power of disciplinary surveillance: putting a non-identifiable surveillance on the privileged makes him question his past, and go into this journey of guilt - especially after not figuring out who sends the tapes. This journey illustrates a reversed Panopticon so to say, this time working on the privileged for once. Georges simply stops questioning who sends the tapes, internalizing the surveillance and its function. The particular identity of the surveiller becomes obsolete - it is a silent other who merely hints at holding the information of past wrongdoings and disciplines Georges into a norm-based scrutiny and internationalization of un-rule (assuming that the norm and the rule is public forgetting of the colonial past as conducted by the French). The final sequence in the movie is one of the rare times we see Georges silent and thoughtful in the dark, later partially admitting his guilt.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Both *Aguirre, Wrath of God* and *Caché* provide illuminating anti-colonialist puzzles. However, the very Western identity of the author of such intellectual practices and its implications on representing *the other* should also be questioned. In addition, there is a merit in incorporation of normative and ethical perspectives as such in discussions over movies. Movies are not only exemplary visual texts but their complex narrations feature philosophical issues on their own.

CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the potentially different interpretations of Spivak especially considering rigorous academic jargon and theoretical inflation of her deconstruction, three issues raise here for a substantiated anti-colonial perspective when it comes to representation of *the other*: (i) the subjectivity of *the other* should be recognized, (ii) the Western positionalities and privilege should be scrutinized, and (iii) more emphasis should be given to complexities and the actual interests of individuals. In addition, as discussed, Foucauldian account of disciplinary power delineates the ways in which marginalized groups are disciplined into internationalization of the dominant rules and norms. While this is not confined to the experiences of *the other* for Foucault and it is rather a universal statement about politics, Spivak still sees its potential to disclose the processes of disciplinarization, institutionalization and maintenance of the Western-privileged position and norms. In this chapter, these normative suggestions were utilized to explore to what extent such concerns are illustrated and echoed via movie narratives, in the cases of *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* and *Caché*. It is suggested while the absence of vivid representation of *the other* in the former hints at a crisis the privileged suffers from, the latter also illustrates the implications of disciplinary mechanisms if they are exerted on the privileged for a change.

REFERENCES

- Ames, E. (2018). *Aguirre, the Wrath of God*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Andersson, R. (2014). *Illegality, Inc. Clandestine migration and the business of bordering Europe*. Oakland, CA: University of California Pres.
- Ashcroft, B., Griffith, G., & Tiffin, H. (Eds.). 1998. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. London: Routledge.
- Bracke, S. (2016). Is the subaltern resilient? Notes on agency and neoliberal subjects. *Cultural Studies*, 30(5), 839-855.
- Burns, L., & Kaiser, B. M. (2012). Introduction: Navigating Differential Futures, (Un)making Colonial Past. In L. Burns & B. M. Kaiser (Eds.), *Postcolonial Literatures and Deleuze: Colonial Pasts, Differential Futures* (pp. 1-20). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carpenter, C. (2020). *Power in Conservation: Environmental Anthropology Beyond Political Ecology*. New York: Routledge.

- Celik, I. A. (2010). "I Wanted You to Be Present": Guilt and the History of Violence in Michael Haneke's *Caché*. *Cinema Journal*, 50(1), 59-80.
- Cohen, T. (Ed.). (2001). *Jacques Derrida and the humanities: A critical reader*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Conway, J. M. (2018). When food becomes a feminist issue: popular feminism and subaltern agency in the World March of Women. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 20(2), 188-203.
- Couldry, N. (2020). *Media: Why It Matters*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Couldry, N., & Mejias, U. A. (2019). *The Costs of Connection: How Data Are Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating It for Capitalism*. Stanford University Press.
- Cutting, J. E. (2016). Narrative theory and the dynamics of popular movies. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review*, 23, 1712-1743.
- Daza, S. L. (2013). Storytelling as Methodology: Colombia's Social Studies Textbooks after La Constitución de 1991. *Qualitative Research in Education*, 2(3), 242-276.
- Derrida, J. (1976). *Of Grammatology*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Ebert, R. (1999, April 4). Aguirre, the Wrath of God. <https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-aguirre-the-wrath-of-god-1972>
- Foucault, M. (2012). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M., & Deleuze, G. (1977). Intellectuals and power: a conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze. In D. Bouchard (Ed.), *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault* (pp. 205-217). NY: Cornell University Press.
- Gonzalez-Sobrinó, B., González-Lesser, E., & Hughey, M. W. (2018). On-Demand Diversity? The Meanings of Racial Diversity in Netflix Productions. In D. G. Embrick, S. M. Collins, & M. S. Dodson (Eds.), *Challenging the Status-Quo: Diversity, Democracy, and Equality in the 21st Century* (pp. 321-344). Leiden: Brill.
- Janz, B. B. (2012). Forget Deleuze. In L. Burns & B. M. Kaiser (Eds.), *Postcolonial Literatures and Deleuze: Colonial Pasts, Differential Futures* (pp. 21-36). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hall, S. (1989). Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation. *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 36, 68-81.
- Haneke, M. (Director). (2006). *Caché* [Film: DVD]. Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.
- Hartley, G. (2003). *The Abyss of Representation: Marxism and the Postmodern Sublime*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Heiduschka, V. (Producer), & Haneke, M. (Director). (2005). *Caché* [Film]. Les films du losange.
- Herzog, T. (2010). The Banality of Surveillance: Michael Haneke's "Caché" and Life after the End of Privacy. *Modern Austrian Literature*, 43(2), 25-40.
- Herzog, W., & Prescher, H. (Producer), & Herzog, W. (Director). (1972). *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* [Film]. Werner Herzog Filmproduktion.

- Howell, A., & Richter-Montpetit, M. (2019). Racism in Foucauldian Security Studies: Biopolitics, Liberal War, and the Whitewashing of Colonial and Racial. *International Political Sociology*, 13(1), 2-19.
- Hughey, M. W., & González-Lesser, E. (2020). *Racialized Media: The Design, Delivery, and Decoding of Race and Ethnicity*. NY: New York University Press.
- Kaltmeier, O. (2017). Doing Area Studies in the Americas and Beyond: Towards Reciprocal Methodologies and the Decolonization of Knowledge. In K. Mielke & A. Hordnidge (Eds.), *Area Studies at the Crossroads: Knowledge Production after the Mobility Turn* (pp. 47-64). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kapoor, I. (2004). Hyper-Self-Reflexive Development? Spivak on Representing the Third World 'Other'. *Third World Quarterly*, 25(4), 627-647.
- Levin, T. Y. (2010). Five Tapes, Four Halls, Two Dreams: Vicissitudes of Surveillant Narration in Michel Haneke's *Caché*. In R. Grundmann (Ed.), *A Companion to Michael Haneke* (pp. 75-90). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Lloyd, D. (2014). Representation's Coup. *Interventions*, 16(1), 1-29.
- Marx, K. (1954). *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- Mcgregor, R. (2014). Cinematic Philosophy: Experiential Affirmation in *Memento*. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 72(1), 57-66.
- Menozzi, F. (2014). *Postcolonial Custodianship: Cultural and Literary Inheritance*. NY: Routledge.
- Morris, R. (Ed.). (2010). *Reflections on the History of an Idea: Can the Subaltern Speak?* NY: Columbia University Press.
- Naiboglu, G. (2014). Beyond Representation: The Ethics and Aesthetics of Change in Turkish German Cinema After Reunification [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. The University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom.
- Price, J. (2014). Desiring Animals: Biopolitics in South African Literature [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Arizona State University, Arizona, United States.
- Ramsey-Kruz, H. (2007). *The Non-Literate Other: Readings of Illiteracy in Twentieth-Century Novels in English*. Leiden: Brill.
- Robinson, A., & Tormey, S. (2010). Living in Smooth Space: Deleuze, Postcolonialism and the Subaltern. In S. Bignall & P. Patton (Eds.), *Deleuze and the Postcolonial* (pp. 20-40). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Sheridan, C. (2016). Foucault, Power and the Modern Panopticon [Unpublished Senior Thesis]. Trinity College, Hartford, Ireland.

Spivak, G. C. (1985). Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism. *Critical Inquiry*, 12(1), 243-261.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (pp. 271-313). Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Spivak, G. C. (2010). Appendix: Can the Subaltern Speak? In R. Morris (Ed.), *Reflections on the History of an Idea: Can the Subaltern Speak?* (pp. 237-291). NY: Columbia University Press.

Spivak, G. C. (2012). *An aesthetic education in the era of globalization*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Stein, S., & de Oliveira Andreotti, V. (2015). Complicity, Ethics and Education: Political and Existential Readings of Spivak's Work. *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, 9(1), 29-43.

The Economist. (1956, March 31). New Deal in the French Union. *Economist*.

Whitaker, R. (1999). *The End of Privacy: How Total Surveillance Is Becoming a Reality*. New York: New Press.

Winokur, M. (2003). The ambiguous panopticon: Foucault and the codes of cyberspace. Retrieved from <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/ctheory/article/view/14563/5410>.

Yancy, G. (2012). *Look, a White! Philosophical Essays on Whiteness*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

ADDITIONAL READING

Bhambra, G. K. (2017). Brexit, Trump, and 'methodological whiteness': on the misrecognition of race and class. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 68(51), 214-232.

Chow, R. (1993). *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Chow, R. (2002). *The Protestant Ethnic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

De Genova, N. (2017). "The 'Migrant Crisis' as Racial Crisis: do Black Lives Matter in Europe? *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 41(44), 1-18.

Grønstad, A. (2016). *Film and the Ethical Imagination*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hiddleston, J. (2007). Spivak's 'Echo': theorizing otherness and the space of response. *Textual Practice*, 21(4), 623-640.

Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (2000). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jonsson, S. (2008). *A Brief History of the Masses: Three Revolutions*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mulhall, S. (2002). *On Film: Thinking in Action*. London and New York. Routledge

Praeg, L. (2008). 'An Answer to the Question: What is [ubuntu]?'. *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 27:4, 367-385.

Wartenberg, T. E. (2007). *Thinking on Screen: Film as Philosophy*. London and New York. Routledge.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Decolonization: The processes through which the colonized entities (the individual or the state) go through a process of dismantling of colonial rule or discourses.

Geopolitics: A term to describe the international and transnational power relations based on economic and geographical factors.

Materialities: A term that describes and emphasizes on the importance of physical properties of socio-cultural realm and their implications for the study of culture.

Normative: That relates to the realm of value-judgments.

Panopticon: An architectural design of surveillance where the surveilled is unaware of the identity, location or presence of the surveiller.

Postcolonial Studies: A scholarly field in which the past or existing colonial doings, discourses and their effects are studied.

Representation Studies: A scholarly field in which representations in any textual or visual form, how they are constructed, interpreted and constitute meaning are analyzed.

Subaltern: The marginalized, lower classes or the colonized other who cannot exercise their agency.

Subjectivity: Non-universal and complex features and processes that construct the individual subject.