

locating culture – the ethnographic encounter

## the colonial encounter - after 1492

1541 - Spanish discovery of the Amazon - Gaspar de Carvajal records vast cities  
by the nineteenth century - a devastated population



# ethnographic field work

formalized at the end of the nineteenth century

focusing upon pristine societies in colonial territories - sub-saharan Africa, the Americas, Oceania

two major philosophies - evolutionary anthropology, and the cultural relativism of Anglo-American anthropology (particularly after Boas and Malinowski)

# constituting experiences in 'classic' ethnography

travel away from Europe

encounters with an 'other' society - exotic, non-western, or just different

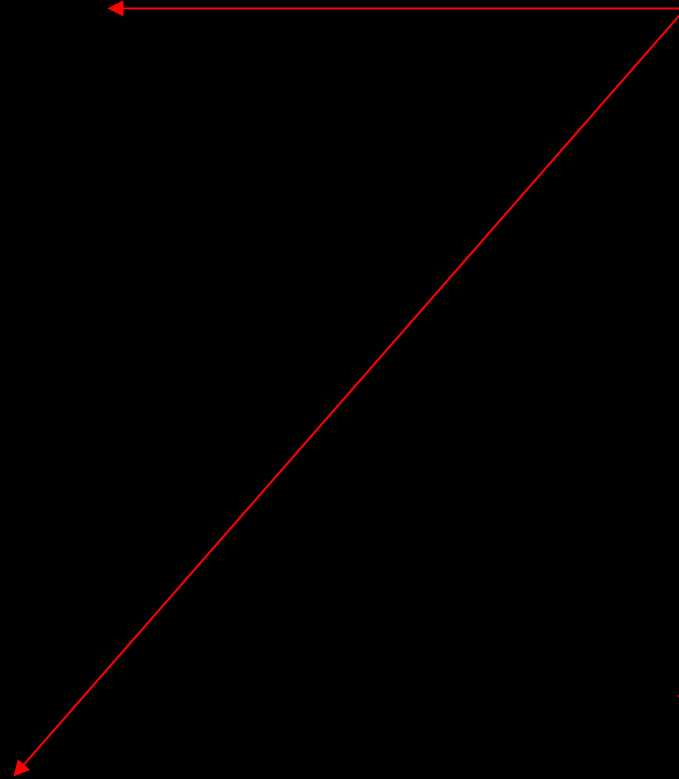
the notion of fieldwork - travel across distance, immersion, participant observation, writing, distanced objectivity

the idea that the studied society is about to disappear

the field as a 'laboratory'

time - back then

0 - here  
and now

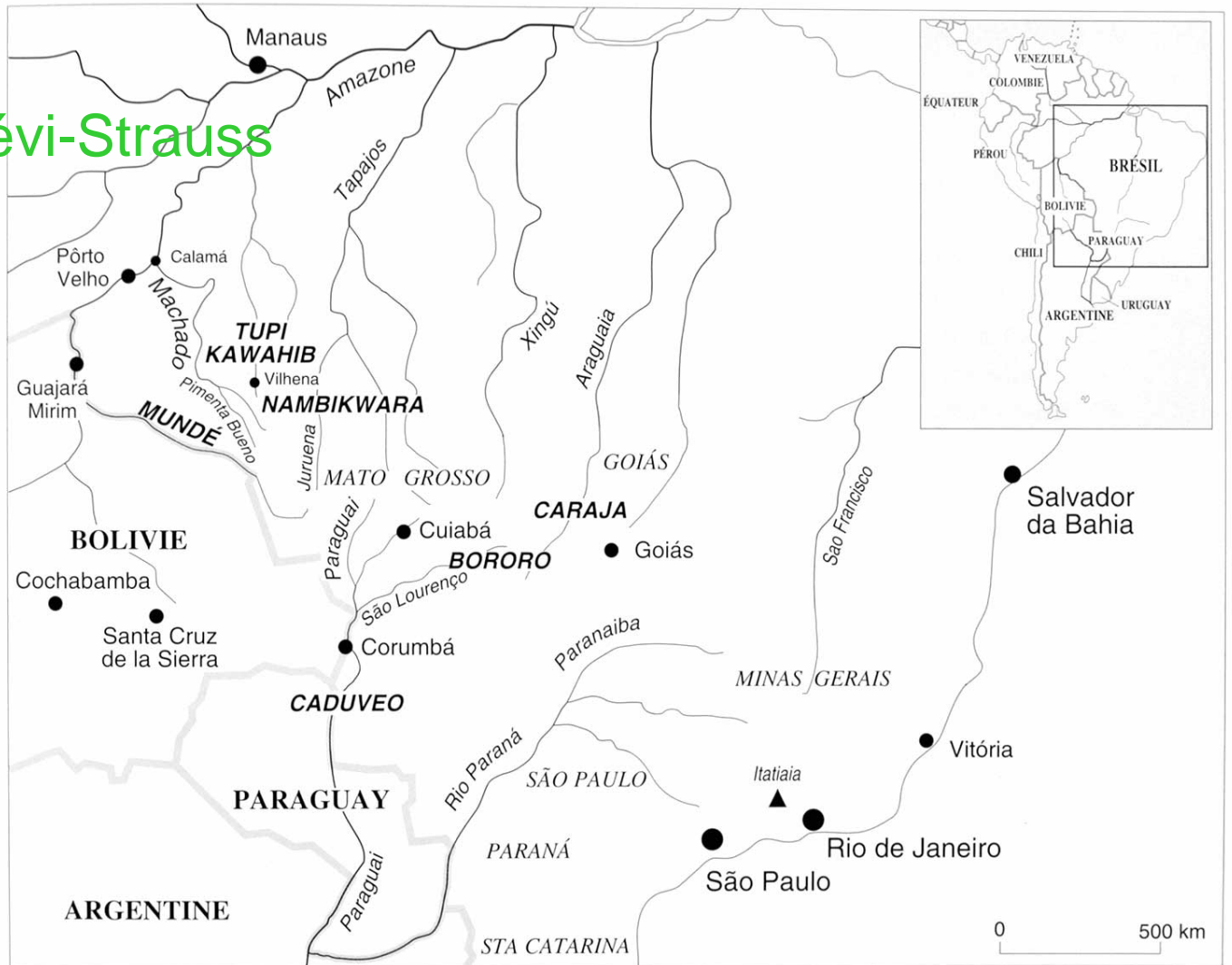


distance - over there

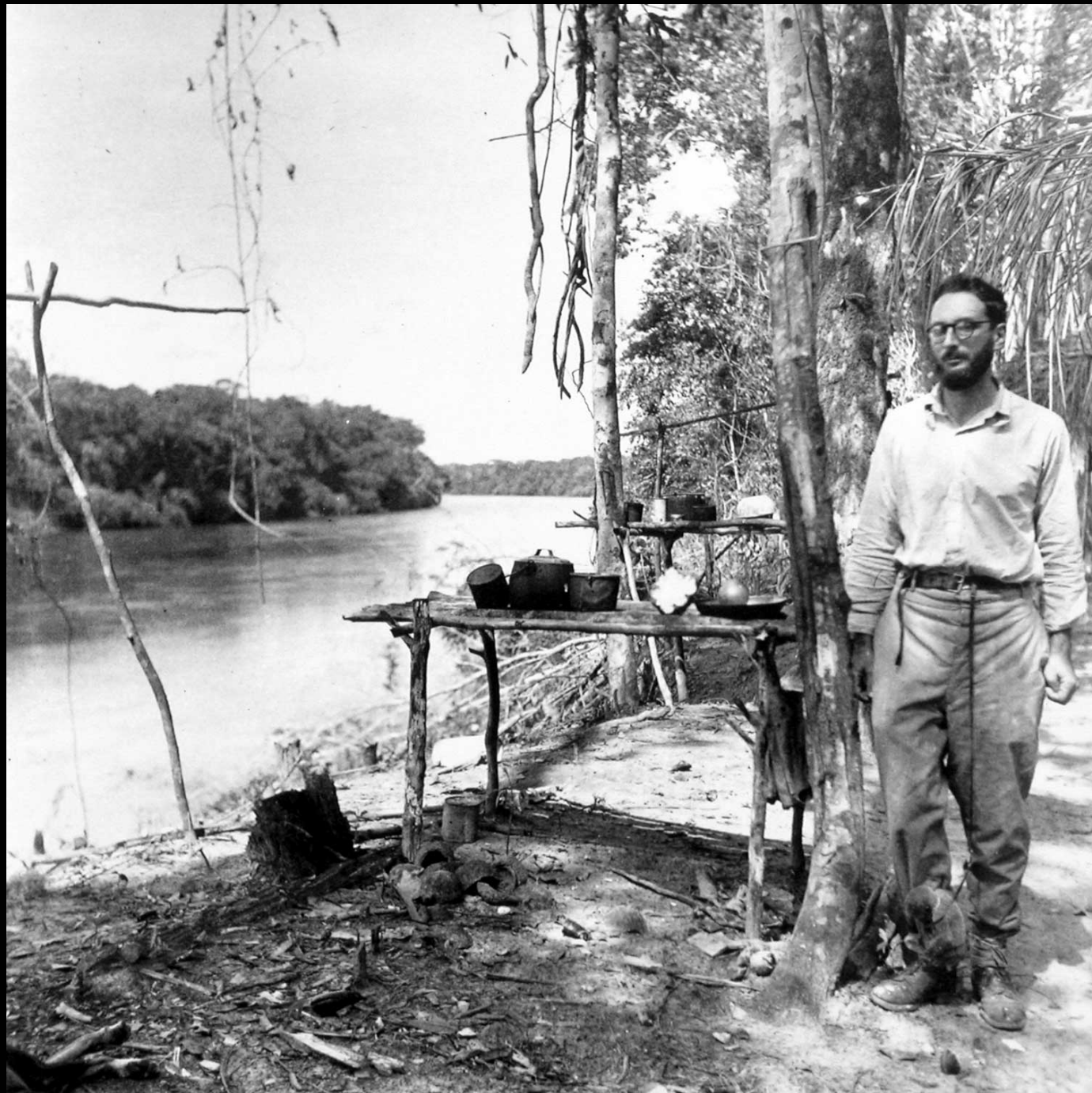
the other society

Claude Lévi-Strauss

mid 1930s



Peoples and places visited by Claude Lévi-Strauss between 1935 and 1939.



... in an ambiguous relationship with this tradition - 'I hate travel', olfactory experience, sunsets ... humanist components

self conscious, literary, and connecting with an anthropological as well as ethnographic tradition, with other genres

never wrote a conventional ethnography

quite different to the classic ethnographers such as Evans-Pritchard, Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski

NB distinction between anthropology and ethnography/ethnology



this ...



... as much as this



# the current ethnographic crisis

the myth of disappearing societies

the crisis of representation - how do you write about other people?

globalism - the spread of the capitalist market

post colonial politics

a challenge to the scientific neutrality of 'the field'

... and at Stanford! - departments of Cultural&Social Anthropology and  
Anthropological Sciences



# Lévi-Strauss's interest in corporeality

the passages on the senses

the focus on the body of the native informant

located bodies nine  
the primitive body



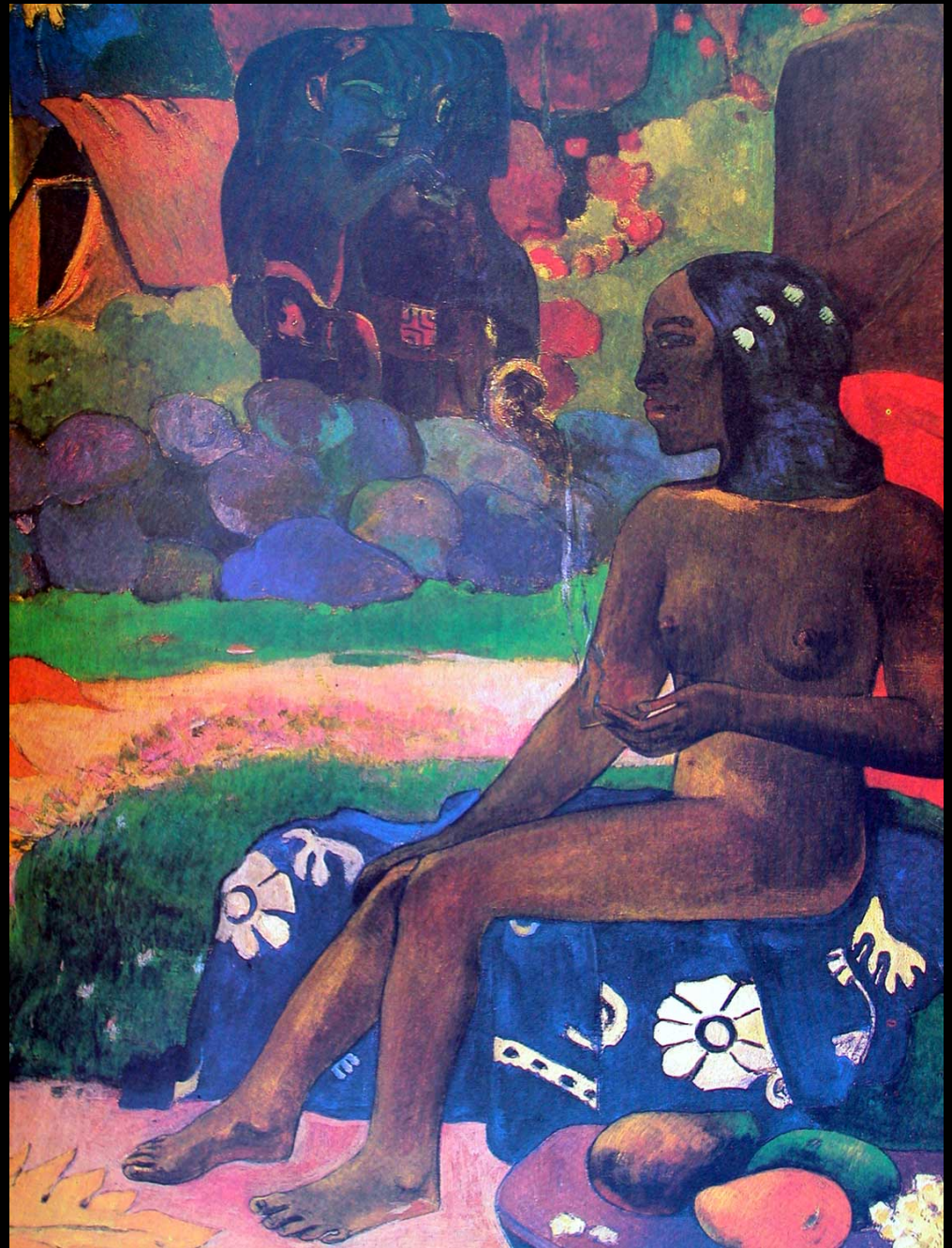
# modernity and progress

cultural evolution - a nineteenth century mindset

Rousseau, nature and civilization

paradoxes and dilemmas of modernity - from Frankenstein to globalism

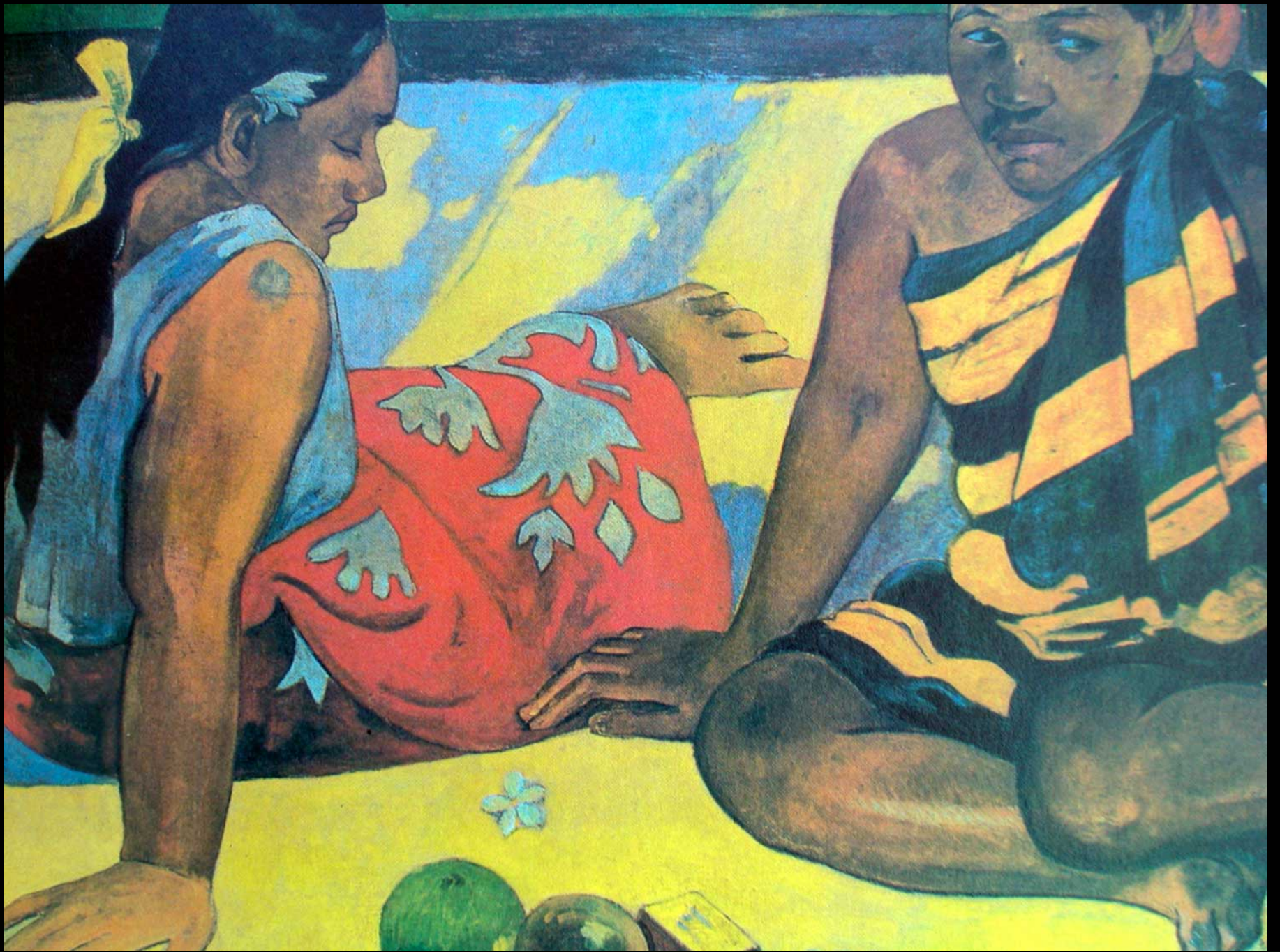
modernism's  
poetics





Gauguin's tropics  
of exoticism  
and paradise lost/found





Henry Moore





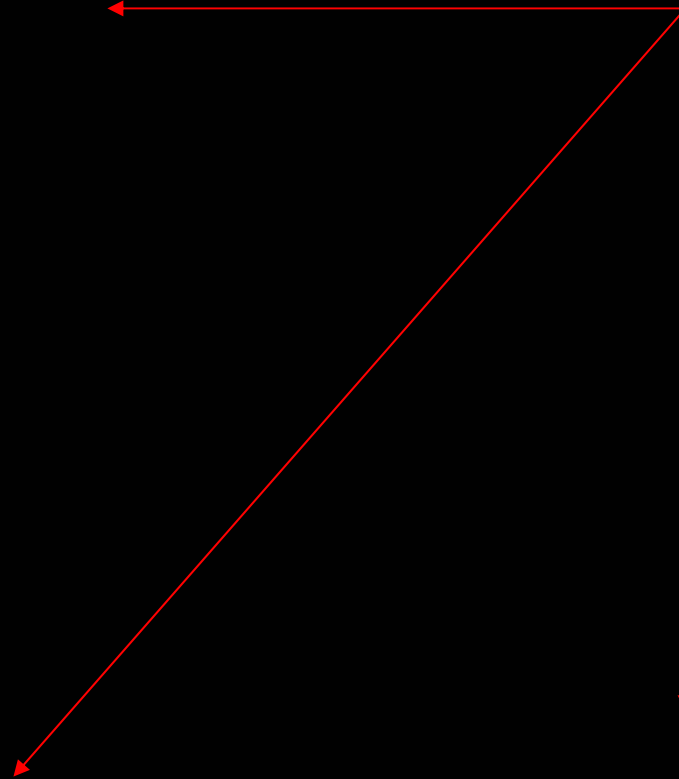


Picasso



time - back then

0 - here  
and now



distance - over there

the other society

## located bodies six the primitive body

located in a time-space, a chronotope of travel/displacement, otherness (with respect to the imperialist nation state of the nineteenth century and since), ambiguous ethical relationships, ambiguous cultural relationships





