Contracampo

Things, Worlds, Translations: Folds for a Communication through Equivocation

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Abstract

The paper presents the initial proposal for a communication model based on the ontological turn, taking the knowledge of the original peoples of Brazil not as a metaphor, but as analogues of concepts, based on three folds. The first one, the communication of things, addresses the contributions of actor-network theory to the field of communication, particularly from the perspective that humans and non-humans communicate. It serves as a shortcut to accessing the second fold, the communication between worlds, especially through the understanding of the hyperconnection of forest peoples as a communicational experience. The third fold concerns the translational operation of Amerindian shamanism, which we intend to use as a reference for thinking about communication through equivocation. Finally, we systematized the proposal as a starting point for further research.

Introduction

The translational experience of Amerindian shamanism can offer a way of exercising multireferential communication, with a multitude of inspiring perspectives. In this paper we offer an initial outline of what we call *communication through equivocation,* developed in lectures, presentations at scientific events, analytical experiments, and exploratory research, within the framework of what has been called the ontological turn, especially following the work of anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2015). His warning, which we take as a maxim here, is that "we have the obligation to take absolutely seriously what (...) indigenous and all other 'minor' peoples of the planet say, the extranational minorities that still resist total dissolution by the Westernizing blender of modernity" (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p.15). This presupposes, we argue, overcoming the folkloric interpretations of indigenous voices emerging inside and outside the contemporary intellectual landscape, taking their words not as metaphors, but as concepts - or analogs of concepts, as we prefer to call these operators of thought.

Despite this, it should be noted that this term seems problematic to us, since the very idea of ontology is born out of philosophy, an invention of the West. We resort to Luiz César de Sá Júnior (2014) in his view of this overly western expression precisely because he locates its mark of origin:

> The "ontological turn", having been born in philosophy epistemologically uncomfortable with anthropocentric correlationism, established itself at the core of anthropological works that privileged indigenous metaphysics in everything they could teach us (to us, European and western Moderns), now that were raised to the symmetrical condition regarding the multiplicity of possible natures (Viveiros de Castro, 2012, p. 167) and that are willing to propose a new pact for the self-organization of the Moderns and for a more dynamic and symmetrical treatment with the other collectives. (Sá Júnior, 2014, p. 7)

In fact, there are a number of controversies related to what is conventionally called ontological turn, such as those brought to light by the anthropologist David Graeber (2015) - who problematizes the way in which the concept of ontology is activated in the aforementioned expression - and also by indigenous intellectuals, such as professor José Àngel Quintero Weir (2021), a member of the Añuu people of Venezuela. In a letter addressed "to Dr. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro", he stresses the term "ontological turn" and makes the "Back to the Time of Us" emerge as an urgent political need.

In this regard, we understand that, by speaking from this position - that of those who conduct research within an academic institution - it is interesting to embrace the concept of ontological turn to initiate this text, as an exercise of translation to our peers. What liberates us, on the other hand, from any permanent adherence to the expression. We continue to use this name provisionally to address the way in which some contemporary thinkers have taken non-western peoples as a reference for thinking about the west. Even Weir raises this possibility, although pointing us towards a desired path of encounter:

> Perhaps for the academy and the westernized society of our countries, the ontological turn proposed by Dr. Viveiros is a good way. We hope it has the strength of the word enough to convince its peers, because it may be in whose its turn can coincide with the Back to the Time of Us, and maybe there is the possibility of sharing the emergence of another world. Where "All of Us" is not in doubt. (Weir, 2021, p. 01)

It is from this place that we think about communication, and it is from there that we mobilize a certain idea of translation in the experience of shamans: translators of the world, diplomats of *cosmology par excellence*. It is through the experience of accessing other cosmologies that they return to tell what they have seen, negotiate between the parties and make the worlds work, holding the sky above our heads, as the Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa explains to us. Our proposal is that the translation of Amerindian worlds, especially from the Yanomami perspective, be taken as a model for thinking about

a mediation in which difference moves from one side to the other, in which reductions in favor of the univocal are put aside - at least provisionally. For this very reason, the process of translation we propose is of a kind that distorts the source language and the target language, embracing the *errors* of the passage as points from which it is necessary to create, invent, and hack. It is about forging lines of escape, *becoming*, to use Deleuzian terms.

Gilles Deleuze (1992, p. 210) makes an important distinction between history and becoming when he states that "history is not experimentation, it is just the set of quasi-negative conditions that make possible the experimentation of something that escapes history". And he defends:

> Revolutions are said to have a bad future. But they keep mixing two things: the future of revolutions in history and the revolutionary becoming of people. They are not even the same people in both cases. The only opportunity for men is in the revolutionary becoming, the only one that can ward off shame or respond to the intolerable. (Deleuze, 1992, p. 211)

This revolutionary becoming that would escape history is what Nietzsche calls untimely, according to Deleuze, and it is in this glimpse that we must carefully direct our attention, as these differentiating details constitute short circuits that bend time and invent a future. It is in this way that the philosopher is more interested in the revolutionary becoming than in historical revolutions, that is, more in jurisprudence than in law. According to Viveiros de Castro (2015), some indigenous peoples' shamans operate precisely in this manner: they are more interested in the differentiating adaptation than in legislation for collectivization. Shamanism is a matter of jurisprudence, it creates transverse lines, breaths, flashes, folds.

In this attempt to translate for our peers, we deform both the source and target languages by invoking precisely a French philosopher, Deleuze, due to his proposition of a certain philosophy of difference that engages in the exercise of creating concepts and constructing problems, abandoning dichotomies, and embracing paradoxes to produce a thought in transit. What unfolds in such a displacement is a shift from the imperative of definite articles such as the to the indeterminacy of the multiplicity expressed by indefinite articles like a and an. "The individual, in the Deleuzian perspective, is always more and less than one, and it is in the pre-individual plane and not in the empirical that the time of the event is constituted, an infinite power that folds itself building individuations" (Lemos & Rocha, 2012, p. 182). It is in these folds, we believe, that lies the possibility of communicating through difference, communicating through equivocation. We propose here a reading path in which we present some possible folds that can become shortcuts: the communication of things, the communication between worlds and, finally, the mistaken translation.

First fold: communication of things

The world was very different when, back in the 1980s, Bruno Latour, Michel Serres, and a series of other researchers proposed what became known as actor-network theory, or, in Portuguese, *teoria ator-rede* (TAR). At that time, we did not yet have our existences permeated by an increasing number of gadgets and devices that unveil the nature of a hyperconnected existence. This condition became explicit as we were traversed by flows that redefined us through the World Wide Web, which we accessed through calculating machines with which we interacted through graphical interfaces. The impacts brought by this mode of communicating reorganized social life and now forces us to think about the very notion of society. Maybe that's why that approach thought in the 1980s makes more sense now.

But the truth is, for the actor-network theory (TAR), the digitalization of communicative processes was just one among many controversies that emerged, revealing the constructed nature of a certain idea of a social realm separated from the natural, which dates back to modernity itself and the notion of the West. This conception is based on the partition between a science of men-among-them, in the

field of social sciences, and another of things-in-themselves, in the natural sciences, purifying the world, separating nature from culture and thus founding the split that marks the western dualities. It is not by chance that Bruno Latour (1994) argues, in the title of his famous essay, that *we have never been modern*. This also appears in the way that communication is understood, a phenomenon that would consider human interactions (hence the surname *social* that, even today, accompanies the name communication in many college courses), assuming society as an *a priori*, as Lemos (2013) explains. The author insists on the important contribution of this approach to the field of communication, by arguing that the mediation of non-humans is constitutive of the human itself.

> Humans communicate. And things too. And we communicate with things, and it makes us do things, whether we like it or not. And we make things do things for us and for other things. What they, the non-humans, make us do, gains, every day, not only greater scope, invading all areas of daily life, but also greater prescriptive power. (Lemos, 2013, p.19-20)

When researchers usually talk about social, they are referring to something stable, already defined. In the language of ANT, a black box. What Latour proposes is to understand the social not as a starting point, a concreteness, but constituted by the very relationships that make it possible. "What I want to do is to redefine the notion of *social* by going back to its original meaning and making it able to trace connections again. Then it will be possible to resume the traditional goal of the social sciences but with tools better adjusted to the task." (Latour, 2005, p. 2). In this way, the very idea of society moves away from the image of an *a priori* structure, an important conceptual construction that founded the social sciences. What emerges from there is a certain idea of society as a network of relationships, associations, the social being the flow of agencies that circulate among the actors in this network.

Deleuzian echoes are once again audible here in the sense of the term agency. For Deleuze, all desire passes through the agencies, through the capacity for change that is individuating, but "it is not stated from the point of view of a preexisting subject that could be attributed to it". According to Deleuze, the desire points to the collective, which we can call here social, in the sense of associations, since "a singular becoming of someone concerns everyone by right" (Zourabichvili, 2004, p. 10). An example of becoming is the relationship between the wasp and the orchid, an agency that will not generate any other directly, but that is crucial for the continued birth of other beings of these species, since "the natural affiliation within each species depends on this counter-nature alliance between species". There is only agencied desire, so, "it will be said, in a first approximation, that we are in the presence of an agency every time we can identify and describe the coupling of a set of material relations and a corresponding regime of signs" (Zourabichvili, 2004, p. 9).

The social, ultimately, would encompass everything that can be gathered, aggregated, in a state of becoming, with nothing that can be defined *a priori*, but only in relation to the agencies that certain actors produce and to which they are exposed, whether they are human or not. Nothing is society and everything is society: the status will depend on the mapping of associations, which can also change.

> It is possible to remain faithful to the original intuitions of the social sciences by redefining sociology not as the "science of the social", but as the tracing of associations. In this meaning of the adjective, social does not designate a thing among other things, like a black sheep among other white sheep, but a type of connection between things that are not themselves social. (Latour, 2005, p.6)

Latour (2005) named this approach as *sociology of associations*, in contrast to what he called *sociology* of the social. The question would not be to abandon the latter, but to move towards the other, the one that does not aim at what is stabilized to map new agencies, to identify the association between actors, mediators or intermediaries - which includes humans and non-humans in the same way -, to

understand the stabilizations that emerge as black boxes, temporary configurations that dissolve with the emergence of new controversies. Lemos (2013), who prefers to say that ANT is a *sociology of mobility,* explains that this circulation is established by three mobile conditions of spatio-temporal establishment: 1) We do not know the origin source of the action, 2) We do not know the direction of action, 3) The value and quality of action are always being built. If ANT is marked by agency, by mobility, then it offers itself as a theory of communication, knowledge whose one of the places would be that of translation.

When it comes to digital media, for example, the application is clear: it is not possible to consider a tablet or a smartphone as a pure and simple externality. Marshall McLuhan had already defended before, in the 1960s and 1970s, the idea that media are extensions of men. According to Lemos, ANT is heir to this conception, but promotes an even wider fold. "The limit of Mcluhan's maxim is to think of the relationship as an extension and not as a 'mediation' in the sense and constitution of the hybrid" (Lemos, 2013, p. 163). For Lemos, any action precipitates from translations, which implies the inability to identify "who 'extends' whom". Hence the proposal to translate Mcluhan's maxim, considering the way ANT understands the world: "Media is not an extension, but a constitution of men" (Lemos, 2013, p.161).

The mobility we are dealing with here is not that of the transmission of messages or people, or even the transmission of loads, for example. ANT is a sociology of the mobility of associations that constitute beings, whether human or not, and thus, of the mobility of agencies. So it is important to assert that translation is a founding concept of ANT and refers to the constitution of networks, since everything is mediation according to Latour (1994). André Lemos' proposal (2013) is to point out an approach, but little explored by communication studies in Brazil. For this reason, he lists seven contributions of ANT to the field of communication: 1) to avoid the purification of facts; 2) to offer a method capable of overcoming the boundaries between nature, society, discourse; 3) to reposition the understanding of mediation; 4) to present the media discourse as a proposition network; 5) to highlight the need not to abandon the empirical in favor of structures; 6) to show that the analyst's role is to map networks of actants mobilized in a given action; 7) to catch the internal constitution of black boxes.

We add what we consider an important point, the fold that drives us to reach another space, to create new territories of thought about communication: considering society a sociotechnical network, we think about communication phenomena from associations that go far beyond the idea of interaction only between humans, or between humans and non-humans who are absolutely inert, incapable of producing considerable agencies, incapable of promoting controversies that disorganize stabilized associations. In this way, if we both agenciate and are agenciated in the same manner by human and non-human actors, then we inhabit complex sociotechnical networks, true hyperconnected ecosystems. This has been happening since long before the internet and social networks, as shown today, for example, by the impacts of the West on other modes of existence, on non-westernized native peoples who resist communicating through difference, living in worlds in which the consciousness of hyperconnection is the very condition of existence.

Second fold: communication between worlds

The itinerary we propose towards a conceptual fold based on the model of transpecific communication of indigenous peoples must begin with the very world from which this model emerges, the life and speech of women and men in the forest. The presupposition of other ontologies is itself a way of looking at other forms of existence from the place of modern Western civilization. We acknowledge, however, that in this paper, for the purpose of translation to the academic world, we engage in a kind of betrayal when once again we depart from the global North to contemplate this fold. But this is done with the aim of achieving the objective of our argumentation: to access the oral or written knowledge of the native peoples, not as a metaphor, but in the same way that we access recognized academic texts. Thus, to

take as a way of knowing the world what was considered "primitive", under the label of animism.

When considering the empirical method of modern science, the anthropologist Nurit Bird-David (1999) is emphatic in stating that the idea of isolating the object to be analyzed is based on the removal of agency from the being, pulling it out of the context in which it is embedded, and breaking the existing unity between the knowledge and the knower. She explains this operation through a metaphor: a conversation between a human being and a tree, as two entities capable of producing agencies. In this example, it only makes sense to know the tree by living with it in the environment, in the relationship, a model of access to knowledge practiced in non-modern social formations. If observed by a westerner, a conversation between a human and a tree might not seem like a serious form of acquiring knowledge, considering the ontological separation between nature and culture, which gave rise to the objectivist paradigm that dominates science. The method considered epistemologically serious would then involve cutting a piece of the tree to take it to the laboratory, where knowledge can be discovered, systematized and later acquired.

Bird-David calls the context in which men and trees exchange information as relational epistemology.

> If the object of modernist epistemology is a totalizing scheme of separated essences, approached ideally from a separated viewpoint, the object of this animistic knowledge is understanding relatedness from a related point of view within the shifting horizons of the related viewer. [...] Both ways are real and valid. Each has its limits and its strengths. (Bird-David, 1999, p. 77-78)

From this perspective, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (2015, p. 80) explains animism as the "idea that others besides humans are people". This is a fundamental assumption of his Amerindian perspectivism, an anthropological theory founded on the ontology of the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. One of the main aspects of the author's proposal, which accompanies the ontological turn movement, is the observation of the relationship between Amerindian peoples with objects, animals and artifacts: just as humans connect to non-humans; non-humans - objects or not - do too. There is no clear and exclusive separation between human beings and nature.

Philippe Descola (2007) proposes a map to understand the possible arrangements of the nature-culture binomial in different cosmologies. In one of the examples presented by the anthropologist, he reports his own experience of ethnography in a community of the Achuar ethnic group, located in the Brazilian Amazon.

> The Achuar are unaware of these distinctions, which seemed so obvious to me, between humans and non-humans, between what belongs to nature and what belongs to culture. In other words, my common sense had nothing to do with theirs. When we look at plants and animals, we don't see the same thing. (Descola, 2007, p. 14)

This mode of existence is not exclusive to the Achuar, nor to the indigenous people of the Amazon. There are other groups in other parts of the world who live a shared morality between humans and non-humans. For these peoples, the *animists* (to use a term as dear as it is dated), both animals and people have a soul, endowed with human capacities, which is also why there are alliances and solidarity between species. The difference is only in appearance.

Descola explains that the main difference between other modes of existence and the Western one is the fact that, in the latter, humans see themselves outside of the world they observe. This conceptual movement took place in Europe from the 17th century onwards, enabling the extraordinary development of science and techniques, and at the same time establishing an unprecedented way of exploring what came to be considered extra-human: nature, whose rivers, mountains and valleys lost their souls, becoming commodities that could be sold. To this externality, Ailton Krenak gives the name

"civilizational abstraction," which alienates us from the Earth, this organism from which we have become divorced, mainly based on the postulates of what has conventionally been called modernity. According to Krenak, it is from that moment onwards, especially, that we start imagining the Earth as one thing and we as another. "The idea of us humans detaching ourselves from the Earth, living in a civilizational abstraction, is absurd. It suppresses diversity and denies the plurality of life forms, existence, and habits" (Krenak, 2019, p.22-23).

"Are we really a humanity?". This is how Krenak challenges us. He argues that the colonization of peoples was supported (is it still supported?) on the assumption that there is an enlightened humanity, which should bring to light a darkened humanity. In fact, there are countless stories that we read in which native peoples, at the moment they face the first invaders of their lands, are put to the test in relation to their humanity. "This call to the bosom of civilization has always been justified by the notion that there is a way of being here on Earth, a certain truth, or a conception of truth, which has guided many of the choices made in different periods of history" (Krenak, 2019, p. 11).

Krenak (2019, p.31) signals something that is central to the Amerindian cosmovision, when he says that there are "other companies that make this cosmic journey with us". In this way, the indigenous intellectual then accesses the anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and the Amerindian perspectivism, which we will discuss further on, saying that the concept draws attention to the fact that "humans are not the only interesting beings and who have a perspective on existence. Many others have it too" (Krenak, 2019, p. 32).

A certain humanity shared between humans and non-humans, a presupposition of a cosmopolitics of the forest, appears also translated in the words of the Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa (& Albert, 2015). In this context, learning to be a shaman is important in many ways. One of them concerns the ability to cure diseases of all types of people, human or not, including beings that are diverse both in relation to the world they inhabit and in relation to the scale they occupy in the world we live in. The shaman is able to communicate with animals, trees, rivers, as well as rain, drought and even epidemics. The work is intense, incessant: they are the ones who mediate events, make the world function, and communicate through difference.

Taking revelations presented in a dream under a hallucinogenic effect as a guide for academic reflection is something possible from the ontological turn, a shamanic operation per se. There is a displacement between different worlds, which is why we refer to these foreign constructs in Western thought as *analogs of concepts*. It requires an exercise of imagination to acknowledge them and caution when transposing them from one context to another. Kopenawa reminds us that, just as the exercise of study and reflection is difficult for white people, shamanism is also for him a learning process towards a way of accessing and communicating with the world.

> All this is as difficult as learning to draw words on paper skin. The hand is stiff at first, the stroke very crooked. It's really hideous! Therefore, it is necessary to tune the tongue to the songs of the spirits as much as it is (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p. 172).

Kopenawa's own work is a shamanic exercise in communication with another humanity, not with the shared humanity of the forest, but with the one founded on anthropocentric humanism, which Aílton Krenak (2020, p.7) refers to as "a select club that does not accept new members", as opposed to "a more rustic and organic layer", that of the native peoples.

It is especially from the study of native Amazonian peoples that Eduardo Viveiros de Castro makes the theory of Amerindian perspectivism emerge. This concept encompasses the belief, shared in some Native American worldviews, that the world is inhabited by different types of beings, both human and non-human, who are subjects in their own right. In other words, they have agency over the world, they are individuals, even if they are non-human persons, and they act based on intentionality and reflexivity.

Perspectivism also brings forth the idea that each of these beings sees themselves as human, perceiving all others as non-human.

> Typically, humans, under normal conditions, see humans as humans, animals as animals, and spirits (if they see them) as spirits; animals (predators) and spirits see humans as animals (prey), while animals (prey) see humans as spirits or animals (predators). In return, animals and spirits see themselves as human: they apprehend themselves as (or become) anthropomorphs when they are in their own homes or villages, and they experience their own habits and characteristics under the species of the culture—they see their food as human food (jaguars see blood as cauim, the dead see crickets as fish, vultures see worms in rotten meat as roasted fish, etc.), their bodily attributes (fur, feathers, claws, beaks, etc.) as adornments or cultural instruments, their social system as organized in the same way as human institutions (with chiefs, shamans, festivals, rites, etc.). This "seeing as" refers literally to percepts, and not analogically to concepts, although, in some cases, the emphasis is more on the categorical than the sensorial aspect of the phenomenon. (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p.117)

From what emanates from this theory, it is possible to glimpse an idea of relational humanity (I am only human in relation to…) and also an idea of moral humanity, shared by a large number of individuals, which would then be differentiated by the body (by nature). This calls us to explore the radical opposite of multiculturalist cosmologies, the empire of cultural relativism, and makes multinaturalism emerge: one culture, several natures; or, a unity of the spirit and a diversity of bodies; or, even, variability as nature (Viveiros de Castro, 2015). "The 'culture' or the subject would be the form of the universal, the 'nature' or the object, the form of the particular" (Viveiros de Castro, 2002, p. 43). The perspectivist attitude would require personhood or perspectivity, which is the capacity to occupy a different point of view from the original one when attempting to understand another being or entity. It is the ability to see as another sees, engaging in a transpecific interlocution that involves humans and non-humans. In this perspective, non-human beings are seen as they see themselves, that is, as humans. This shift in perception aims for a less conceptual understanding and a more perceptual one.

As the anthropologist explains, "the manifest form of each species is an envelope (a 'clothing') hiding an internal human form" (Viveiros de Castro, 2002, p. 351). In this way, shamanic displacements cultivate a certain ideal of knowledge – more than a way of knowing – located at the opposite extreme of the objectivist epistemology cultivated in Western modernity, according to which to know is to objectify, to strip the object of all presence of a subject – de-subjectify – in order to reduce it to an ideal minimum, leading the bundle of agencies' intentions to non-existence.

The inverse of this way of knowing is based on the belief that to know is to personify. In this sense, the translation intended by the shamans as active interlocutors in the transpecific dialogue aims at "the 'who' of things (Guimarães Rosa), indispensable knowledge to intelligently answer the question of 'why'" (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p. 50). The epistemological ideal, here, is based on the search to reveal a maximum of intentions, being a good shamanic interpretation "one that manages to see each event as being, in fact, an action, an expression of states or intentional predicates of some agent" (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p.51).

It is important for us to progress in this aspect in order to amplify a certain distinction between this type of performance and the one more commonly set in motion in the world of *commodity people* (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015). In his study on the forms of life in the image, André Brasil (2010) highlights that, in advanced capitalism, the image is the primary site where the forms of life perform. Reality shows, personal videos on the internet, games, social networks, ordinary life itself; we would constantly be prompted for interaction. Brasil emphasizes the fact that these calls for participation do not occur as critical-reflective procedures, but as strategies for endorsement and collaboration, where visibility itself becomes the main objective of the performance, rather than mobilization. From this inference, the researcher will evoke another type of performance inspired by Amerindian cosmology, which suggests

the possibility of another way of engagement, considering a variable and inconsistent ontology – multiple natures, one culture. For this reason, performance does not take place as falsification or dissimulation, but as an ontological change. "Among the Amerindians, performance is not detached from the forms of life, simply because it is the way in which these forms are constituted, relate and mutually change" (Brasil, 2010, p. 13)

This is the case when shamans assume other bodies in the movement of transpecific translation. The narrative of this displacement - which, ultimately, would be nothing more than an internal displacement, considering the other as the margin of its existence - is communicated to the rest of the people through the body-language, in a radical exercise of alterity. For Aparecida Villaça (2000), who analyzed the relationship between shamanism and interethnic contact based on the Wari' ethnography (Txapakura language group from the Southern Amazon), this movement is analogous to a mirror game.

> The images are reflected ad *infinitum*: the shaman becomes an animal, and it is as an animal that he adopts the perspective of wari' human beings, starting to see the Wari' as *karawa*, non-humans. In this sense, the shaman provides the Wari' people, the whole society, the indirect experience of another point of view, the enemy's point of view: from wari' they come to see themselves as prey, *karawa*, because they know that this is how the shaman is seeing them at that moment. What occurs is a double inversion: a man detaches himself from the group by becoming an animal and adopting a human point of view (wari') so that the rest of the group, while remaining human (Wari'), can adopt the animal's point of view (Wari') (Villaça, 2000, p. 64).

Therefore, in this realm of inconstancy, it is not about autonomous beings placed in relation – in a performance as a strategy of cynical falsification – but rather about relationships as the propellers of subjectification processes. Brasil asserts, based on Viveiros de Castro (2002): "Within a relation of constitutive alterity, subjects are, from the beginning, alienated. As if autonomy were only possible through heteronomy" (Brasil, 2010, p. 14).

Considering the fact that, in Amerindian cosmovisions, all beings are subject to a point of view, being all equally true and different from each other, anthropologist Renzo Taddei (2020) makes the following inference: there is a limit to what can be known, so it is impossible for the shaman to know everything; therefore, each act of knowledge should primarily be an act of care.

> Not knowing is fundamental in indigenous philosophy. And precisely because not knowing is fundamental, what stands out is the logic of care. I don't know what's going on, but I know I need to be careful; I need to take care of things. In other words, I don't know the world of the jaguar, but I take care of the relationship with the jaguar. And that's what keeps the universe going. (Taddei, 2020)

This idea appears in Amerindian perspectivism and is also found in the accounts of Aílton Krenak and Davi Kopenawa, especially. It seems to us that this movement involves a reflection on each act of translating worlds, bearing in mind the premise of care. From this point it is possible to articulate an approach to the idea of equivocation, which is so dear to us when imagining another communication. Precisely because we inhabit different points of view (different worlds), we do not say the same things. What we say is always multi-referential, which leads us to a reflection on translation that understands it as an amplifier of difference

Third fold: equivocated translation

Davi Kopenawa says that his initiation process included a prolonged fasting of many days and the systematic inhalation of *yãkoana* powder, a mixture of sacred roots that prompts the states necessary for shamanic operations.

In the beginning, as I said, you don't see the spirits well, and it is by drinking more and more yãkoana that you can see them clearly. And so, I continued to learn, in the same way that white people study, from class to class, for my thinking to really stay straight. (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p. 166).

The xapiri only arrive after a few days, with the help from the older shamans and a lot of guidance. Only the initiated can hear them and, after some time, see them. These first xapiri kill the postulant shaman and destroy him so that each one takes a part, rebuilds it and brings it back to the new body, the shamanic body. Kopenawa explains in detail the step-by-step process of transubstantiation of his own body. Here, the example of how his language was reconstructed, with the help of bird spirits, seems very accurate. That's how he learned to talk to nonhumans of that species.

It was the images of the yõrixiama thrushes, the ayokora japins and the sitipari si birds, all masters of the songs, that tore out my tongue. They took her to remake her, to make her beautiful and capable of speaking wise words. They washed it, sanded it and smoothed it, so that they could impregnate it with their melodies. The cicada spirits covered it with white down and annatto designs. The remoremo moxi drone spirits licked at her slowly to rid her of her ghost words. Finally, the thrush and japim spirits placed their magnificent songs on it. They gave him the vibration of his call: "Arerererere!". They turned her into another, luminous and bright as if she were emitting rays. This is how the xapiri prepared my tongue. They made it a light and thin tongue. They made it flexible and agile. They turned it into a tongue of a tree of songs, a true tongue of the spirit. It was then that I was finally able to imitate their voices and respond to their words with straight and clear chants. (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p.156)

The process of rebuilding a new body, based on interactions with the xapiri during the initiation process, gives the shaman the ability to act as a diplomat, to negotiate between worlds. It is necessary to reinforce here once again: this is not a common skill, the shaman is quite trained for it and only performs the role of translator after returning to his people, that is, when he is seen as a human again.

When seeing the images of the xapiri, shamans evoke the words of the ancestors who became animals for the first time, those of the people of the sky and the underworld, and the words of Omama, who gave the xapiri to his son, the first shaman. These speeches of the spirits are like the words of the radios, which give to hear reports coming from remote cities, from Brazil and from other countries. (Kopenawa & Albert, 2015, p.168)

Shamans are like travelers of space and time; they are diplomats and translators. It is up to them to recognize the unusual, to insert novelty into the order of things. But this does not happen without many disputes and negotiations that sometimes never come to an end. The shamanic translation is not done by ordinary words, but by "twisted words'', since the shaman observes everything from all points of view, but refrains from naming what he sees, so the shaman's words are words that they do not exist in the world in which they are being spoken. We turn here to Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (1998, p. 13), for whom this translation is done by *gropin*, "as if approaching an unknown domain whose objects are only partially seen, the shaman adopts a language that expresses a partial point of view. Are these bright spots the gills of a fish or the collar of a peccary? And the fish ends up being called peccary".

The passage recalls the story of anthropologist Aparecida Villaça, in an account of Too', a Wari' indigenous woman with whom she has lived for over 30 years:

Sometime later, Too's father, already living elsewhere, killed many capuchin monkeys in the forest. According to her, her mother acted as if she already knew what her father had hunted and went to the forest to look for him. Seeing the fangs, he bit the neck of a monkey, still raw, and drank all the blood. Soon after she spat out and Too' and the other people saw that what came out of her mouth was not blood, but corn chichia. For the Wari', what we see as blood, the jaguar sees as chichia. Too's mother,

identified with jaguars, started to have two simultaneous bodies, one human and the other animal, and made a very particular type of translation: instead of substituting one word for another, as our translators do, she became, in your body, one thing in the other. (Villaça, 2018, p.93)

The way this operation is explained here serves as a reminder, once again, of the error of generalizing Amazonian shamanic experiences under the same modus operandi. It encompasses a multitude of what we propose to understand as modes of translation, which perhaps only share the commonality of being a way to connect worlds and facilitate communication based on their differences. The example of Aparecida Villaça is a snapshot of the translation of worlds made by Too's mother's body. This ability, in her case, is the result of her identification with a jaguar, a kind of alliance made when the woman disappeared for a few hours and was found in the company of an animal of this species which pretended to be her nephew. The jaguar became her double. Consequently, she also became a double for the jaguar.

Among the Wari' with whom Villaça lives, the notion of human is closely linked to the notion of the Wari' people. All the others, the different ones, are non-human: both animals and other peoples, including white people. But any non-human person can become Wari' over time, especially after speaking the same language. There are, among them, shamans prepared from childhood to fulfill this role. But this is not a condition to be able to perform a shamanic operation. Even a white person can become a translator. In the case of Too's mother, she only realized that her nephew was not Wari' when she noticed him licking leaves in the woods, typical jaguar behavior. This type of situation is dangerous because the Wari' may not return, they may become permanently altered, lost in translation without completing the process of communication between worlds. The main difference for a trained shaman is that they have a better chance of completing the return, making the worlds work in harmony.

At this point, we highlight the relationship with the first fold, the communication of things, from the perspective of actor-network theory and its application in the field of communication. The principle of agency, whose understanding is fundamental to the idea of a sociotechnical network, reappears in the systematization proposed by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro of a misguided translation, based on communication through difference.

> Perspectivism projects an image of translation as a process of controlled equivocation— "controlled" in the sense that walking may be said to be a controlled way of falling. Indigenous perspectivism is a theory of the equivocation, that is, of the referential alterity between homonymic concepts. Equivocation appears here as the mode of communication par excellence between different perspectival positions. (Viveiros de Castro, 2004, p. 5)

It is not understanding, consensus and order, but misunderstanding that marks the communicative process. We extend this thought to every communicative act, in an approach that is as dangerous as it is potent. Some hints in the very explanation of the concept allow us to undertake this expansion. Viveiros de Castro (2004, p. 12) states that the equivocation "is the boundary condition of every social relationship, a condition that becomes hyper-objectified in the extreme case of the so-called interethnic or intercultural relationship, where the language game diverges to the maximum extent". Communicating would then be translating the equivocation, but not in an efficient way that seeks the common ground. Instead, it would be done in a different way, searching for folds, gaps, possible grooves that highlight the inadequacy of this new state. To translate, in this case, would be to make the error explicit, to show that we are talking about different things while using the same name. Translating would then become something of the other, occupying points of view with a good dose of imagination, inventing possibilities as shamans do.

For a communication through equivocation

Our approaches to communication phenomena often operate from a certain idea of repertoire, considering that there is a reality and many ways of accessing it, different epistemologies, a phenomenon that we can call uni-referentiality. That is why communication in the Amerindian context can offer us possible escapes: taking into account a series of actors, in addition to humans, forest communication is hyperconnected, based on the idea of mutual care, of the shamanic model of the multi-referential. This is what we call communication by equivocation.

Lemos (2013, p.116) reminds us that "identifying controversies is also identifying worldviews that are under negotiation". Therefore, to assume equivocation as a condition of communication is to abdicate the idea of a communication that operates exclusively through the repertoire. This makes it possible to look at the phenomenon from a fold. Using the actor-network theory perspective, we borrow the idea of controversy, what settles in the system and causes its destabilization, opening the black box and precipitating the reassemble of the actors, until a new stabilization is reached. We bet on the idea that equivocation is constituted as a kind of controversy. For each time the difference arises, the sociotechnical network is destabilized and seeks a rearrangement, a point of balance. Since controlled equivocation is the mode par excellence of Amerindian trans-specific communication and a condition for communication in socio-technical networks, therefore, this way of producing communication through difference appears as a possible communication model.

Even at the risk inherent to any systematization, we present some points that can guide theoretical and empirical works that invest in this certain idea of communication taking as a starting point analogous concepts of non-western peoples. We therefore present the proposal for a communication by equivocation based on the following markers:

1) the communication process is a socio-technical network, the result of agencies between the entities that make up this network, without ontological verticality, both between humans and between humans and non-humans;

2) thus, the notion of person is expanded to other existing ones; the idea of humanity is inclusive and relational; animism is revisited, considering the communication of things;

3) to know is to subjectify and not to objectify; therefore, there must be a willingness (and availability) to move between points of view, identification with other humanities;

4) therefore, translation emerges as a communicational operation par excellence, especially from the transit between worlds promoted by the shamans, without reducing the difference, from the controlled equivocation;

5) therefore, considering the danger of this transaction, this displacement requires constant care, more than knowledge at all costs;

6) thus, considering the inherent risk of the work, the translation is operated by "gropes", in a constant exercise of creative improvisation.

It is important to reinforce that this proposal is being built from experiences brought from other modes of existence and assumed not as metaphors, but as analogues of concepts. Finally, communication by equivocation, far from totalizing pretensions, does not replace models and theories, on the contrary: it is possible to glimpse echoes of other systematizations, however, what is presented, from very specific choices, is a relational approach, which invents concepts and decants conclusions from the design of the relationships between entities and not from their appointments at the starting point of a research.

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