

Indigenous Metaphysics and Freudian Metapsychology

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Abstract

This article resorts to some concepts formulated by the anthropologist Viveiros de Castro on indigenous metaphysics: perspectivism, multinaturalism, animism, cannibal otherness, and the analysis of the xapiri and shamanic work, implied by the Yanomami shaman and author of The Falling Sky, to expand our interpretation of Freudian metapsychology and phylogenesis: the myth of parricide and its melancholic model, the images of movement (formulated in the Project for a Scientific Psychology) and the animistic method of knowing the unconscious.

Keywords: indigenous metaphysics, cannibalism, image of movement, animism.

1. Introduction

Initially, I must clarify what I understand by indigenous metaphysics and, also, ask if there is a unity in indigenous metaphysics, given the enormous variety of existing indigenous cultures (in Brazil, there are more than 300 ethnicities). The concept is by the Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, both an allusion to the title of his book *Cannibal Metaphysics* – an allusion, in turn, to a quote by Lévi-Strauss in which he refers to the metaphysics of predation, as he

could call what 'our Brazilian colleagues' extracted 'on the basis of a critical analysis of the notion of affinity, conceived by South American Indians' (apud Viveiros de Castro 2014: 46) –, as well as his purpose of 'shedding some light on the philosophical dimension of indigenous thought' (Viveiros de Castro 2001: 2, our translation) and having as anthropological and philosophical object the 'metaphysical requirements of myths' (Viveiros de Castro 2001: 5, our translation), a metaphysics very different from Western ones. This is not a generalization of indigenous cultures foreign to the author's culture, in which the author places himself merely as an observer¹, it is rather a matter of producing a good translation that 'succeeds at allowing foreign concepts to deform and subvert the conceptual apparatus of the translator such that the intention of the original language can be expressed through and thus transform that of the destination' (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 87). A good translation makes it possible, more than understanding someone else's world, to multiply our own worlds.

I read Viveiros de Castro as a good translator and good commentator on non-Western metaphysics whose work can transform our knowledge, our understanding of Western philosophy (mainly in what is different, but also in what is similar) and, in this case, is capable of transforming our understanding of Freudian metapsychology. Another good translator of indigenous metaphysics is Bruce Albert², a

¹ Viveiros de Castro (2014: 86) describes the work on generalizing two cultures: 'When the Kachin and the Nuer are compared, it is not at the request of the Kachin or the Nuer, and what the anthropologist does by means of this usually disappears from the comparative scene, by concealing the problem that he himself (im)posed on the Kachin and the Nuer so that it would seem that both parties are comparing each other [...] They then exist only internally to anthropological discourse and are seen as having a common objectivity as sociocultural entities that would be comparable by virtue of a problem posed by another sociocultural entity that, in deciding the rules of the comparative game, reveals itself to stand outside its bounds'.

² This is how Bruce Albert alludes to his objectives for the Yanomami exhibition he organized in France: 'To promote a meeting between the shamans of a Yanomami village in the Brazilian Amazon [...] and a group of international artists. [...] To echo the heterotopia of an indigenous metaphysics in constant recreation with the diverse

French anthropologist, who, with the powerful Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa, wrote/translated the magnificent works *The falling sky* and *O espírito da floresta* (among other articles). *The falling sky*, however, has a different status compared to other works by these anthropologists. Davi Kopenawa dedicates this beautiful literary work to us, non-indigenous whites, as he writes at the end of the introductory chapter of *The falling sky (Words Given)* that, he, a Yanomami, gives to us, the whites, his skin of image (Kopenawa & Albert 2013). This is how Kopenawa describes the process of the book: 'I entrusted you [Albert] with my words and I asked you to carry them far away to let them be heard by the white people, who know nothing about us' (11, my insertion). Words that come from other instances: 'These are the words of Omana and the *xapiri*' (*Ib.*) and that can transform the thinking of the destroyer white:

I asked you to set them on this paper in order to give them to the white people who will be willing to know their lines. Maybe then they will finally lend an ear to the inhabitants of the forest's words and start thinking about them in a more upright manner? (13).

The falling sky is a true event that, in addition to denouncing the destructive violence of the whites against the Yanomami, alerts us to the dangers of the actions and thoughts of the whites, 'people of merchandise' and 'earth eaters', who, in search of merchandise, destroy not only all the people who resist them but also the forest (Gaia), prophecies that we see daily come true in global warming, 'in the climate disaster of the industrial world', which make them 'take on

trajectories of a 'savage thought' always active in art in our society' (Kopenawa & Albert 2023: 63, our translation).

a disturbing ecological literality' (Albert & Kopenawa 2023: 154, our translation)³.

Kopenawa's work, in addition to its literary value, consists of a strong resistance: against the State that produces poverty among indigenous people, against the merchandise fetish that bewitches destructive white people, as well as many indigenous people who distance from their traditions, and against the objectification and exploitation of forest beings, therefore, against the holy trinity: State, market, and science (Viveiros de Castro in Kopenawa & Albert 2013). However, more than that, Kopenawa makes these denunciations and prophecies presenting us, white people, with consistent metaphysical foundations. He offers us his skin-image in an attempt to communicate with the enemy and find ways of negotiation, like a diplomat. In this sense, the work calls on us, philosophers and psychoanalysts, to at least reflect on its metaphysics and perhaps create new worlds from it.

Despite this article being stimulated by the power of the literary/philosophical work, *The Falling Sky*, and agreeing with Viveiros de Castro (2013) that we must take seriously what the indigenous people say through Davi Kopenawa's voice, I will use here the ideas of the translator/commentator Viveiros de Castro, as he helps us creating concepts (that is, taking indigenous ideas 'as carrying a philosophical meaning') and pointing out 'the worlds these constitute' and 'the virtual ground from which they [the concepts] emerge' (Viveiros de Castro

³ 'As soon as its [forest] soil is denuded, the spirit of the sun [...] burns all its rivers and streams. It dries them with its burning tongue before swallowing their fish and alligator. Then, as your feet get closer to the dirt, it starts to bake and becomes harder and harder. Mountain rocks heat up to the point of cracking and exploding. No more tree sprouts can emerge from the ground, as there is no longer any moisture to keep the seeds and roots cool. The waters return to the underground world and the dried dirt crumbles into dust. The wind being, which follows us in the forest to refresh us like a fan, also goes away. His daughters and nieces can no longer be seen playing in the treetops. A suffocating heat settles everywhere. Leaves and flowers piled on the ground dry and twitch. The fresh scent of the dirt gradually disappears. No more plants grow, no matter what you do. The image of the forest's fertility, in anger, goes away.' (Kopenawa in Albert & Kopenawa 2023: 472, our translation).

2014: 189).

The book *Cannibal Metaphysics* and the author's articles, in general, (except for the article *The Crystal Forest* and the introduction to *The Falling Sky*) refer little to Yanomami's thought, but as the anthropologist states in *A propriedade do conceito*, commenting on his random use of the Amazonian or indigenous term, his 'basic assumption is the existence of a deep historical-cultural unity of all indigenous America' (Viveiros de Castro 2001: 11, our translation). About a statement from Kopenawa to Albert published in 2004 in the article *The Crystal Forest* about the *xapiri* (images/spirits), he writes: '[Kopenawa's] narrative is exceptional for its cosmological exemplarity. It articulates and develops ideas that are found in a more or less diffuse state in several other indigenous cultures in the region', and adds: 'I take Kopenawa's speech as an expression of a pan-Amazonian conception, in which the notions we translate as 'spirit' refer to an intensive virtual multiplicity' (Viveiros de Castro 2006: 321, our translation). The concept of intensive virtual multiplicity, in turn, is fundamental in the exposition of indigenous metaphysics. Suppose we must recognize the diversity of indigenous ethnicities. In that case, it seems clear to me that in opposition to the Western conception, which, for example, separates nature and culture, subject and object, and, behind an alleged objectivity, hides the fetishism of merchandise and property, the indigenous thought does constitute a unity.

Indigenous thought is absolutely contemporary and not modern. Contemporary because, since the 1988 Constitution, when indigenous peoples had their rights constitutionally recognized, there has been a fabulous resurgence of the most diverse indigenous ethnicities in Brazil, whether in the number of people who began to recognize and declare themselves as indigenous, or in the rescue of their traditions, their languages, their culture, their way of existing. Traditions that had supposedly disappeared in the process of whitening and acculturation

were rescued. Concerning this, the answer that the Brazilian ambassador in Paris (Luís Souza Dantas), in 1934, gave to Lévi-Strauss when asked about Brazilian indigenous is revealing: 'Indigenous people, they have all disappeared. This is a very sad and shameful page in the history of my country [...] you will not find a single one' (Viveiros de Castro in Kopenawa & Albert 2013: 38–39, our translation). Despite the Brazilian nation's project of eliminating and acculturating them, the indigenous people never disappeared. Despite contemporary efforts to make them poor, expelling them from their forests, where they hunt, fish, and farm, to insert them into the system, through State assistance (distributing, for example, food parcels to them), they are increasingly present and are called upon to participate in the political scene, the artistic scene and forest maintenance efforts. Contemporaries, however, at the same time, non-modern – they do not want to be modern. In this neocolonialist and hypercapitalist world, their voices echo as resistance. This is what we see exemplarily in *The Falling Sky*. We are described in a way that we recognize ourselves but would prefer not to recognize ourselves: people of merchandise, money, monoculture, monotheism, normativity, anti-ecological, destroyers of the forest and all diversity.

2. Indigenous metaphysics

The first concept addressed in *Cannibal Metaphysics* is the indigenous perspectivism, the idea that all beings, all cosmic existents (humans, non-humans, animals, plants, meteorological phenomena, objects, artifacts, living, dead, spirits) have a perspective, a point of view, an intentionality that organizes the perception and cognition:

virtually all peoples of the New World share a conception of the world as composed of a multiplicity of points of view. Every existent is a center of intentionality apprehending other

existents according to their respective characteristics and powers (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 55).

Intentionality, in turn, is based on the position of the body of the existent in a predation scheme. Every species feeds on another and, therefore, has a 'vital appetite' towards the edible species and directs its aggression towards it. Thus, each being is defined by its position, by its relationship, with other beings – 'there is scarcely an existent that could not be defined in terms of its relative position on a scale of predatory power' (57). The difference in position is given by the body, not by physiology, but by the affections that permeate it, by its potential and dispositions, by its habits⁴.

Each point of view refers to a nature, a world of its own, this is why nature is multiple, it is constituted from the perspective of each species: thus, what is blood for us is beer for the jaguar. Hence the concept of indigenous multinaturalism. It is not about multiple cultures that see in different ways a common, universal nature, which precedes cultural interpretation, as Western multiculturalism supposes, but a common vision, an intentionality that assumes different positions and therefore experiences different realities and natures.

Nature is not given but constituted by the position occupied in the relationships with other beings: the position of predator or prey or even by a fabricated position that aims to suspend as much as possible (without ever being able to reset) the scheme of predation: the position of congener, of blood, of those who recognize themselves as 'human':

⁴ 'the affects, or strengths and weakness, that render each species of the body singular: what it eats, its way of moving or communicating, where it lives, whether it is gregarious or solitary, timid or fierce, and soon. [...] What we are calling 'body,' then, is [...] an ensemble of ways or modes of being that constitutes a *habitus*, *ethos* [...] body qua bundle of affects and capacities, and that is at the origin of perspectivism' (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 72-73).

the human form of the body is entirely produced: it is the result of an intentional and collective action. An individual does not come into the world as a human; he becomes human through the food and care provided by his relatives, and the care they show for each other' (Viveiros de Castro & Taylor 2019: 785, our translation).

Thus, the father becomes a father when he feeds with a sign of affection the one who will become his son, he feeds him, for example, since his condition as a fetus with his sperm⁵.

If the body in the predation scheme, as the prey or the predator, is a body determined by relationships, the body of the congener is built in the relationships:

kinship is not given by a biological bond that would precede it: it is constituted in the mutual construction of a shared corporeality, depository of a bodily consciousness made up of a memory of interactions with beings, familiar places, and objects (*Ib.*).

The constitution of human collectiveness derives from the suspension of predation, the suspension of animosity. For example: 'In the language of the Wari from Brazil, 'liking or thinking about someone with nostalgia' literally means [...] 'to stop feeling angry', 'to dis-hate'' (773, our translation). The 'predatory drive' and the 'parental drive' are inseparable: the more one 'loves' one's relatives (representing them mentally, participating in their growth and bodily well-being) the more

⁵ 'By participating in the growth of the fetus through the gift of food in the form of his sperm, a man acquires the status of 'father' towards a child. He becomes his or her father as the child becomes his 'son' or 'daughter'. Regularly offering food to others with signs of affection is typical congener behavior; it is the source of a kinship relationship' (Viveiros de Castro & Taylor 2019: 785, our translation).

intense the 'anger' towards those who threaten them, and the hunger for the foods that feed them (Viveiros de Castro & Taylor 2019).

Perspectivism has animism as its counterpart, the idea that all beings have a soul, in Kopenawa's words, they have images/spirits, *xapiri*⁶. There is the assumption that, in a pre-cosmological, mythical time, there was no speciation, all those who existed were human, which gave each species the ability to take the place of a subject, of a human, of the center of the point of view. All beings were human and stopped being so. Humanity is the common background of both humanity and animality. This conception means that hunting animals are treated as 'people' and their corpse is subjected to various procedures to separate it from the 'person' that inhabited it and to send its spirit/image to its collectiveness of origin (Viveiros de Castro & Taylor 2019).

We then have the idea that both animals and humans are something else deep down, they are different from themselves. 'Perspectivism affirms an intensive difference that places human/non human difference within each existent. Each being finds itself separated from itself' (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 69).

⁶ 'The xapiripë spirits have danced for the shamans since the beginning and continue to do so today. They look like human beings but are as tiny as sparkling dust particles. [...] The xapiripë spirits dance together on large mirrors that descend from the sky. They are never gray like humans. They are always magnificent: their bodies painted with annatto and covered in black designs, their heads covered with white king vulture feathers, their beaded armbands filled with parrot, *cujubi*, and scarlet macaw feathers, their waists wrapped in toucan tails. Thousands of them arrive to dance together, waving new palm leaves, letting out cries of joy and singing nonstop. Their paths look like spider webs shining like moonlight and their feather ornaments move slowly to the rhythm of their steps. It gives us joy to see how beautiful they are! The spirits are so numerous because they are the images of the animals of the forest. Everyone in the forest has an image [...] These are the images that shamans call and bring down [...] These images are the true center, the true interior of the beings in the forest. Ordinary people cannot see them, only shamans can. But they are not images of the animals we know. They are images of the parents of these animals, they are images of our ancestors. In the first time, when the forest was still young, our ancestors were humans with animal names and ended up becoming prey. They are the ones we shoot and eat today. But their images have not disappeared and they are the ones that now dance for us as xapiripë spirits.' (Kopenawa in Viveiros de Castro 2006: 320, our translation).

The pre-cosmological time, when everyone is human, does not correspond to unity, to homogeneity, but to an incessant turning into the other; it is the time of transformations, of metamorphosis, of becoming. 'The myth proposes an ontological regime ordered by a fluent intensive difference bearing on each of the points of a heterogeneous continuum, where transformation is anterior to form' (67). The heterogeneous gives way to the homogeneous: 'The heterogeneous continuum of the precosmological world thus gives way to a discrete, homogeneous space' (68), intensive differences give way to extensive differences introduced by post-mythical speciation. In the article *The Crystal Forest*, Viveiros de Castro relates the spirits, the *xapiri*, with the molecular dimension, with intensive differences, with the field of heterogeneity and metamorphosis⁷. Speciation, in turn, corresponds to the molar, homogeneous dimension. The turbulent mythical, mutant flow of becoming would, however, continue to be present beneath the extensive differentiation of species.

Mythical metamorphosis, in turn, is what allows the Amazonian shaman to switch perspectives. Shamans act as diplomats creating communication between incommunicables (inter-species and between communities). By knowing the other's perspective, it is possible to replace theft (between enemies), for example of the soul of a sick child, with exchanges. Kopenawa, for example, sees the spirits of the whites, the worst contemporary enemies of the indigenous people, whose predatory hunger must be contained, and gives us, white non-indigenous people, his image-skin, his book *The Falling Sky*, in an attempt to exchange perspectives, to negotiate with the enemy the possibility of the forests remaining.

⁷ 'the crystalline and molecular mirrors, the innumerable images and the minuscule countless spirits of Davi Kopenawa's narratives strongly suggest the truly infinitesimal, intensive, disjunctive and virtual dimension of Amerindian thought' (Viveiros de Castro 2006: 336, our translation).

The word *xapiri* also refers to shamans, 'the expression 'becoming shaman' is synonymous with becoming 'spirit', *xapiri-pru*. Shamans conceive of themselves as having the same nature as the auxiliary spirits they bring to earth in their hallucinogenic trance' (Viveiros de Castro 2006: 321). In this sense, *xapiri* are relationships, they connect the heterogeneous, the current and the virtual, the prey and the predator, they are disjunctive syntheses like the desiring machines supposed by Deleuze and Guattari.

In the war, the capture and murder of victims (the enemy) and, mainly, cannibalism and its replacements (ritualistic meals) also refer to the possibility of placing oneself in the enemy's perspective, of incorporating the enemy, which only adds value to the warrior, even in the realm of the dead and spirits. Also, the community is constituted through the literal or symbolic incorporation of the enemy:

the cannibal internalization of the other as a condition of the externalization of the self, a self that sees itself, in a certain way, 'self-determined' by the enemy, which is to say as the enemy. Such is the becoming-other intrinsic to Amazonian cosmopraxis (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 176).

But what of the enemy is devoured in cannibalism or its replacements? A purely positional value; What is incorporated is the relationship between the enemy and his devourer, in other words, his condition as an enemy, his otherness. It is a Self that is constituted based on its ability to incorporate the position of the other, to incorporate the point of view of otherness⁸.

⁸ In Araweté war songs, the warrior speaks of himself, from the point of view of his dead enemy, the victim. The killer understands himself as a subject through the eyes of his victim (Viveiros de Castro 2014).

3. Freudian metapsychology and phylogenesis

Cannibalism is also an important theme in Freudian metapsychology and phylogenesis, at least regarding phylogenetic development: in the myth constructed by Freud, after the sons, in the early days of civilization, murdered their father – the enemy who prevented them from having access to women – they devoured him. The devouring, like parricide, will later be ritualized in many ways (in the totemic meal, in Catholic communion and in the most diverse festivals characterized by excess). In *Totem and Taboo*, a text in which for the first time Freud supposes parricide as the originator of civilization, the collective devouring carried out by the murderous sons has the role of strengthening the bonds between the brothers, of establishing the fraternal community whose components are identified through the memory of the common crime. The feeling of guilt regarding the crime strengthens them as a group.

In 1915, Freud sent Ferenczi a draft of what would be his 12th metapsychological essay, which was found in 1983 and published in Germany in 1985 under the name *Übersicht der Übertragungsneurosen*, in which he constructs a phylogenetic history prior to parricide, which begins in glacial era in which the sexual drive, related to the psychology of the primitive father, and sociability, which emerged with the psychology of sons in the times of the primitive horde, would have been constituted. This story is formulated from the dispositions for transference and narcissistic neuroses, which would have had their origin on these occasions. In this myth, the devouring of the father has a different role than in *Totem and Taboo*, it is the basis of the guilt constituted post-parricide. The narcissistic neurosis, whose disposition explains parricide and devouring is mania-melancholia. We can reconstruct the story like this (Corrêa 2015): the sons – who in a previous period identified with one another due to hatred for their violent, strong, and different father (a group of equals, weak and

resentful united against the strong) – kill the enemy, but they devour him as an expression of their admiration and their desire to be like him. At a celebration party, in a state of euphoria/mania, they eat their father and incorporate him, rescuing his psychology and strength. It turns out that, as melancholia teaches, this incorporated object will be the target of hatred previously directed at the enemy. At that moment, as supposed by Nietzsche, each person would have said to themselves: yes, there is a culprit and this culprit is myself (Nietzsche 1998). Hatred turns against oneself (against the pleasure self, against the current self), against one's own happiness and one's own drives. In this case, guilt does not refer to the crime, but is an expression of the return of hatred against oneself.

Comparing with the indigenous cannibal metaphysics, we can affirm that, in Freud, more important than the incorporation of the signs of the enemy's otherness is the fact that the incorporated otherness is the point of return of hatred against oneself, it is the necessary element for the constitution of the feeling of guilt. If we think that Freud assumes, like the indigenous people, the incorporation of otherness as constitutive of the self and that he, in the myth, builds a genealogy of the dispositions of our Western society, we can identify the importance of melancholy, self-hatred, in our society. From the incorporation of otherness arises the division and the movement of the self to exclude, deny, silence, and immobilize this other element in oneself.

The analytical process, however, as an experience of the unconscious, an experience with that other part that the self aims to exclude, can be considered a controlled form of becoming-other. The dream itself, as access to the unconscious, can be understood, in the same way as for the Yanomami (Hanna Limulja 2022), as a becoming-other, when our images travel to other known or unknown places. The self in the dream, as Freud states, is fragmented into all the characters

that appear in it. The dream appears so that the dreamer can sleep, the self wants nothing to do with the dream and therefore despises it and forgets it. But when you are invited to look at the dream, as in the psychoanalytic experience, it is possible to experience these other scenarios, these other worlds, these possibilities of becoming others.

If, by a movement of suspension, we stop hating our drives and instincts, we can perhaps find something similar to the *xapiri* spirits/images. Viveiros de Castro's consideration that they are continuous intensities that metamorphose, connecting and creating disjunctive syntheses, a virtual molecular reality, seems rich to me. On the other hand, the comparison of Freudian drives with the desiring machines of Anti-Oedipus also seems quite rich (Aline Sanches 2008). Comparisons that stimulate the emphasis I have been giving to the importance of images of movement in the text *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, images whose homonym with *xapiri* (images/spirits) seems very intriguing to me.

The images of movement, in *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, provoke the movements that, in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, are considered the manifestations of childhood sexuality. Its prototype: sucking. If the tendency of the psychic apparatus, in both texts, at first glance, is the elimination of stimuli, whether quantitative or sexual, and achieves this purpose in the repetitive path of hallucination/remembrance of the desired object⁹, we also see in the images of movement and in infantile sexuality a tendency opposite to elimination, which would be a kind of self-stimulation. Thus, in the *Project*, if movement, on the one hand, eliminates quantities, on the other hand, it produces them: 'every movement, through its subsidiary

⁹ Freud writes in the Three Essays: 'the behaviour of a child who indulges in thumb-sucking is determined by a search for some pleasure which has already been experienced and is now remembered. [...] It was the child's first and most vital activity, his sucking at his mother's breast, or at substitutes for it, that must have familiarized him with this pleasure' (Freud 1949: 181).

results, becomes the occasion for fresh sensory excitations (from the skin and muscles)' (Freud 1954: 318). With the excitations, images of movement can have a function other than elimination. Also in childhood sexuality, there is a type of self-stimulation that provides movement from one erogenous zone to another. Thus, 'It [sensual sucking] is not infrequently combined with rubbing some sensitive part of the body such as the breast or the external genitalia. Many children proceed by this path from sucking to masturbation' (Freud 1949: 180). This displacement through the erogenous zones, in the third test, will be a condition for, in some cases, biological sexual function to be achieved, and coitus to take place. In this case, Freud is explicit: the activities of the erogenous zones, in addition to satisfaction, generate a certain tension that displaces to other zones until it reaches the genital zone (for example, from seeing to kissing, to manipulation, to penetration). There is then an aspect of sexuality (also contained in images of movement) that, instead of repeating and hallucinating, displaces along new paths (Corrêa 2016).

In the case of the *Project*, the excitations (self-stimulations), caused by movements and images of movement (the difference between them is only of intensity), allow images of movement to be pre-invested and serve as an alternative goal to the desiderative image for the movements of the psychic apparatus. The desiderative image, previously hallucinated, when invested in a non-intense way, serves as a goal for the movements of the psychic apparatus, for the thought that seeks a path between what is perceived and what is desired (between the perceived image and the desiderative image itself). When this path is found, the pre-invested images of movement must be reinvested for the movement to happen. This is how we go from an accidental, reflex movement to action.

Examples of these movements are the neck that meets the maternal breast and the scream that works as a communication and

brings the desired object closer. Ferenczi, in 1913, in *Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality*, a text praised by Freud (1987), supposes a stage in which omnipotence occurs with the help of magical gestures and exemplifies sucking as a gesture that can serve communication (communicates to the adult that one is hungry and can be satisfied) and that is why it is considered magical by the child (the same occurs with the movement of stretching the arm to reach an object, perceived by an adult who brings the object closer to the child). The sucking then goes from a reflex movement, a motor manifestation of the hallucination, to becoming a gesture, an action that causes satisfaction as it draws the attention of the desired object (similar to a scream).

Both the displacement and the transformation of reflex or accidental movements into gestures seem to refer to the Dionysian:

In the Dionysian dithyramb, man is aroused to the highest intensity of all his symbolic capabilities [...] the entire symbolism of the body, not just the symbolism of mouth, face, and words, but the full gestures of the dance — all the limbs moving to the rhythm (Nietzsche 1992: 35).

The Dionysian still fulfills a function that can be attributed to images of movement and which makes the opposition between repetition and displacement more evident: the Dionysian breaks Apollonian illusions, the individuation, as in tragedies in which the Apollonian hero is destroyed by Dionysian impulses. We can then suppose the Apollonian illusion as the hallucinatory satisfaction and its Dionysian brokenness as the forces that displace; in terms of the *Project*, a displacement that occurs alongside paths and which, we can assume, are made up of images of movement that serve as alternative goals (Corrêa 2021). Images of verbal movement work as these side

paths, thus, the word, in the analysis, can free the subject from the circuit of a mute joy and create new connections, new meanings (David-Ménard 2022 & Corrêa 2024).

The images of movement, in the *Project*, also have a role, that is what interests us most here, which enables the understanding of the other based on the coincidence of one's own movement with the movement of the other. As alternative targets, images of movement can serve to recognize perceptual complexes, regardless of whether they are close to desiderative images. Freud states that this process is at the beginning of thinking, therefore, we can assume, it is responsible for the perception that will be compared with the desiderative image:

The beginning of the thought-processes which have ramified in the forming of judgments. The ego arrived at this through a discovery in its organization – through the fact [...] that perceptual cathexes coincide in part with information from one's own body (Freud 1954: 383).

Thus, the example given by Freud is the coincidence between the movement of a person's hand and the movement of the hand itself. The coincidence of movements makes the excitations arising from the person's perception be led to the very images of movement and thus are not lost in the psychic apparatus, producing recognition of the person. In other words, the image of movement itself makes it possible to know and recognize objects in the outside world, based on the movement of these objects. It also makes it possible to imitate new movements close to the coinciding movement. This is the basis of language, based on images of verbal movement (articulation of accidental or imitated sounds) associated with the perception of external sounds (sounds emitted by the objects themselves or sounds attributed to them as names). Ferenczi also assumes a stage in which

'the child [...] sees in the world nothing but images of his corporeality', and then learns to 'represent by means of his body the whole multifariousness of the outer world' (Ferenczi 1950: 228).

If the Dionysian seems to refer to the *xapiri*, to their dances, to their movements, and with that, the *xapiri* refers to Freudian drives and images of movement, the recognition of the world, through one's own movements, seems to bring Freud's conceptions of images of movement with the indigenous becoming-other, with metamorphoses, as if through the coincidence of movements it was possible to exchange perspectives, as shamans do¹⁰.

The images of movement allude not only to the images/spirit of the forest, images of movement that dance, displace, and transform, but also allude to attention to movements, the voices of the forest:

the Yanomami maintain a constant dialogue with the multiplicity of voices from the forest. Their listening to forest biophony is, therefore, the object of constant attention and they are always ready for sound mimicry in response to their non-human interlocutors' (Albert & Kopenawa 2023: 121, our translation).

In this sense, we can think that the identification with the movement of the world, through the image of movement (identification with their voices, with their spirits), makes it possible to break repetitions (of illusions, of mute joy) and the creation of new paths, of metamorphoses.

¹⁰ 'the shamans perform a choreography that reproduces the generic presentation dance of the spirits they summon' or 'the shamans' body is abruptly caught in a relationship of closer identity with the specific *xapiri pë* that they successively summon. Their gestures and vocalization – made up of successions of animal onomatopoeia – refer, very directly, to those of the specific animal ancestors whose presence they manifest.' (Albert & Kopenawa 2023: 131–132, our translation).

Finally, another point in which indigenous metaphysics seems to expand the possible worlds of psychoanalysis refers to animism. Freud, in the metapsychological essay *The Unconscious*, the topic in which he justifies the concept, surprisingly, relates the knowledge of the unconscious with animism:

The psychoanalytic assumption of unconscious mental activity appears to us, on the one hand, as a further expansion of the primitive *animism* which caused us to see copies of our own consciousness all around us, and, on the other hand, as an extension of the corrections undertaken by Kant of our views on external perception (Freud 1964: 172–173, my emphasis).

Regarding rectification, it is necessary not to identify the conscious psychic perception with the unconscious psychic process (which would be like identifying the perceived with the unknowable, with the thing in itself), but, as Freud emphasizes, that the internal object (the unconscious) is less unknowable than the outside world. Freud states that, despite the difficulty, it is possible at some level to know the unconscious. Having ruled out the impossibility of knowing the unconscious (Kantian rectification), the remaining path to knowing it is the first statement in the quote above: primitive animism. What does animism mean in this case? We can assume that it means attributing a certain intentionality to the unconscious, just as we attribute to another person when we identify with them. Freud claims animism to be a way of knowing the unconscious and in a sense very similar to the indigenous one. Animism is not attributing one's point of view to another, but supposing that the other has his or her own point of view, and it can be known. It is to assume that behind misunderstood acts, ours and others', there is intentionality, there are unconscious desires

that justify it. Freud states that animism became unreliable when the other distanced itself from the self.

This inference [everyone else our own constitution and therefore our consciousness as well] (or this identification) was formerly extended by the ego to other human beings, to animals, plants, inanimate objects and to the world at large, and proved serviceable so long as their similarity to the individual ego was overwhelmingly great; but it became more untrustworthy in proportion as the difference between the ego and these 'others' widened (170–171, my insertion).

When did this occur? We can answer: 1) when the signs of otherness distanced themselves from the I (the unconscious), becoming hated by it; 2) when the other is no longer considered in their relationship with the I, as an enemy or similar, both with intentions; or even 3) when reality became a great object devoid of intentionalities, of movements.

If animism serves to understand the unconscious, if it serves to understand other human beings (the identification with them), it does not seem absurd to think of it as a way of knowing all beings in nature. And here I return to the idea of identification with the other made possible by the coincidence of images of movement. Perhaps we could think of the coincidence of movements as a coincidence of intentions. Images of movement, which recognize the movements of others, serve to receive stimuli from the world and understand the position of the psychic apparatus in relation to them. As Freud states in *The Future of an Illusion*, 'the ultimate findings of science [...] are determined not only by our organization but by the things which have affected that organization' (Freud 1975: 56). We are far from devitalized, inert objects here, in fact, we are facing objects that act on the psychic

apparatus and whose action must be a fundamental element of science. In this sense, Freud's appreciation of scientific thought is less due to the objectivity that this thought demands, objectivity that is always questionable, and much more to the 'attempt to explore the external world' (55), the effort to question the movements of the world and what our position is in relation to them, therefore, how they affect us.

4. Conclusion

Taking indigenous metaphysics and Freudian metapsychology as knowledge that questions Western thought, that questions the relationship of denial of alterity, the scientific objectivity, and that tries to undo crystallized illusions, I pointed out elements of identification and differences between this knowledge, not to discover a common human reality to which the concepts refer, but to open new perspectives, possibilities of seeing new worlds, to psychoanalytic knowledge. From the myth of Freudian parricide, we were able to think, with the help of the conception of indigenous cannibal otherness, a non-melancholic model of dealing with otherness, with the unconscious, with drives. We were able to emphasize the aspect of displacement and identification with others (becoming other) assumed in the images of movement conceptualized in the *Project for a Scientific Psychology* and drives (similar to the shamanic becoming-other, made possible by the *xapiris*), and we were able to assume a vision of Freud, as a scientist, less objectivist and more animistic and with a nature in constant movement.

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