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Abstract

This essay proposes an analysis using the "symbolic economy of predation" to provide new perspectives on the question of *pixo*. For this, *pixo* will be considered as any act on walls, building facades, asphalt, or monuments rejecting the hierarchical separations between writing, scribbling painting, or graffiti imposed by the art system and other institutions.

In Amerindian ontology, as Viveiros de Castro describes, the feeding regime is the predominant model upon which relations are perceived. The predator and prey duality stands as the archetypical role ruling interactions between different subjectivities and perspectives. This "symbolic economy" permeates social relations and translates them into a particular epistemology shared by many indigenous peoples throughout the Amazon region.

We aim to consider the relationships between those who practice *pixo* and the city through an analogy with the predator and prey dialectic. We argue that, on the one hand, these taggers get symbolical dominion over the city's territory by marking places with their signatures, thus gaining recognition from their peers; on the other, the city - represented by formal governmental and economic institutions - preys upon taggers by criminalizing their practice as vandalism and by socioeconomically excluding peripheral populations, thus denying their access and right to the city itself. *Pixo* is a reaction to the passive role imposed on society that gains critical and artistic qualities as a practice of protest, endorsing its predatory performance.

This analogy intents provide a new perspective to describe the city and its complex relations with the aesthetical and social realities of its inhabitants. A distinct description of the urban relations that might enable planners and policymakers to evaluate socio-political phenomena within the city through a new set of lenses, allowing the development of innovative approaches to tackle and decriminalize conflictual practices as the *pixo*.

Keywords: Pixo, predation, symbolic economy, urban art, urban anthropology.

If 'culture' becomes paradoxical and challenging when applied to the meanings of tribal societies, we might speculate as to whether a 'reverse anthropology' is possible, literalizing the metaphors of modern industrial civilization from the standpoint of tribal society. (Roy Wagner, The Invention of Culture)

1. Introduction

Given the urgent need for an emancipatory reassessment of our history - especially since the violent and eugenic Modern Age's colonization processes - this essay proposes an analysis based on Amerindian ontology providing a new perspective to describe the city and its complex aesthetical and social relations. As an exercise to strengthen the understanding of the complexities of our time, it uses the "symbolic economy of predation", described by the Brazilian anthropologist Viveiros de Castro, and offers a different point of view on the question of *pixo*. This activity, also referred to as graffiti, involving acts on walls, building facades, asphalt, or monuments, has a conflictive relationship with the urban environment, a reaction to unequal and discriminatory conditions in the city with critical and artistic content materialized as a form of visual protest on the urban scenery.

The goal is to consider the relationships between those who practice *pixo* and the city through an analogy with the predator and prey metaphysics (Viveiros de Castro 1996). We argue that, on the one hand, artists from the periphery get symbolical dominion over the city's territory by tagging places with their signatures, thus gaining recognition from their peers; on the other, the city - represented by formal governmental and economic institutions - preys upon them by criminalizing their practice as vandalism and by socioeconomically excluding low-income, peripheral, black and non-white populations, denying their access and *right to the city* (Lefébvre 2010).

2. The Pixo

Pixos are interventions on elements of the city that may involve writing, graphics, or drawings and today are characteristic of several large urban centers. Mostly defined by the vandal act of interfering in the urban space, they present an almost infinite variety of elements and themes (Pennachin 2003, 5). Although contemporary graffiti is considered to be a derivation of the New York subway paintings from the 1970s, it names an old performance. "The term graffiti (...) was used for the first time to describe the set of unofficial mural manifestations in the city of Pompeii"[i]. *Pixo* has existed since antiquity as a form of manifestation in public space and even before in prehistoric records found in the caves[ii], presenting itself as an important representation of its contemporary way of life. These expressions gained visibility and momentum especially since the 1970s, taking over New York. The aesthetics of tags (signatures) and pieces (inscriptions on a larger scale) spread to other cities through train wagons, movies, album covers, and other exchanges. Having "appeared in the counterflow of urban planning and mixed with other random interventions in contemporary cities, such as election propaganda, advertising, love messages and words and images considered obscene"[iii], the graffiti quickly covered many cities in the country and abroad. During the 1960s in Brazil and France, walls, monuments, and public spaces carried political and protest messages, a time coinciding with dictatorial regimes in the Americas. Since then, graffiti *and pixo* have established themselves as a powerful way of producing identity and communication, becoming characteristic of several large urban centers worldwide. They are complex visual messages (Pennachin 2012, 31) that, even with different styles and approaches, use space and the city as a support for expression.

Just as there are different types of graffiti, there are also different styles of *pixo*. In addition, these languages often appear unified in the same work, which makes it impossible to segregate them. Graffiti artists themselves, many of them also *pixo* artists, face difficulties in defining exactly where the graffiti ends and the *pixo* begins, and vice versa. (Pennachin 2003, 4)[iv]

Like any complex activity, the *pixo* deserves to be analyzed in all its multiplicity: culture, plastic practice, communicative tool, and urban experience (Junior 2012, 17). Far beyond the tags scattered throughout the city, graffiti designates a plural experience of the contemporary urban environment that involves living, observing, being, and acting in the city[v]. Performing *playful transgressions* (Ramos 2007, 3), these agents transform the city into a true space of communication (Pennachin 2003, 7). Thus, it is crucial to defend a broad, non-delimited vision of *pixo* and other urban graphics, both for its aesthetic and performance plurality, as well as for the ambiguity of its social acceptance - whose extreme repression occurs by the unjust (commonly racist and classist) criminalization of its agents whenever there is no presence of the art market or institutional promotion for the same practices. We believe that the segmentation of *pixo* must happen only to understand its nuances, complexities, and scope, but that this should not be done in an attempt to exclude or condemn its part that is outside the art system. Despite the intense socio-spatial segregation, the city is made up of all its elements including suburbs and peripheries where most of the workers live, especially in the metropolises.

"After all, the city belongs to everyone, that's for sure and the graffiti proves it"[vi]. In contempt of the controversial vandal power of *pixo*, it is an activity marked by the conviviality and companionship of very diverse agents who use and build the city in a libertarian way. We defend the *pixo* as a subversive art against an excluding city.

[Graffiti New York trains] made it possible for us to realize that other voices wanted and want to be heard, that other historical subjects exist in opposition to the official daily media that disseminate and sustain the society of the spectacle. They led us to perceive other forms of occupation of urban space and artistic perception. (Ramos 2007, 4)[vii]

3. The symbolic economy of predation

Brazillian anthropologist Viveiros de Castro explains how Amazonian cultures consider the *ways of living* as the common existential ground for different species, not *physical matter*. In this paradigm, the body and the human or animal forms are bound to perspective and are not 'real' across every level of experience. Many indigenous peoples understand that 'humans' inhabit other bodies when seen by the eyes of other species. The appearance of beings is relative to the point of view of the observer and it changes, for example, as the shaman crosses between different perspectives (Viveiros de Castro 1996). Contrary to Western notions of *multiculturalism*, the prevalent Amerindian epistemology is that of *multinaturalism:*

This simple statement ["our bodies are different"] captures with elegance what Viveiros de Castro (1996) named as cosmological perspectivism, or multinaturalism: what distinguishes the different kinds of people are their bodies, not their cultures. (Peter Gow, apud Viveiros de Castro 2002, 138)[viii]

Viveiros de Castro uses the example, found in Levi-Strauss, of the different reactions Europeans and the Amerindian supposedly had when facing each other for the first time, in the beginnings of colonization. While the former questioned if the indigenous people had souls (and if, by extension, could be enslaved or religiously converted), the latter questioned if Europeans had normal bodies or were like spirits, wondering whether their bodies would rot after death. This difference demonstrates how conceptual notions of animality, humanity, divinity, and their relationships vary between the two ontological regimes. In other words, what is considered by these indigenous peoples as "given" or "innate" is culture, not the physical composition and appearance of bodies which are, in turn, seen as "constructed" (Viveiros de Castro 2015; Wagner 1981). The body in that sense "is implied in the concept of the perspective" (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 140)[ix]. In this ontological paradigm, the reality is organized not by the material physicality of the world or by the objective relations between given things, but by the relational positions between beings and their different stances of existence. These relations are not characterized by the descriptive equivalence of their manifestation at the eyes of the subjects involved: the physical account of a relationship does not encompass the totality of its underlying reality but appears as a relational truth only valid to a particular perspective, analogous to a symptom. For example, what humans experience as a disease can represent that, whoever is ill in our perspective is, from the jaguar's point of view, a pursued prey. A clarifying example can be found in Bonila's studies on the Paumari people, showing how predatory relations are perceived by these particular people as relations of trade:

[W]hen a Paumari fisherman kills a *Pirarucu* (baba'di), it is not its *abonoi* (soul-body) that is hit. What he, the fisherman, sees as the *Pirarucu* is just a mat (*jorai*) that the *Pirarucu's* pamoarihi gives him in exchange for the arrows or ammunition (those used by the fisherman). Thus, every predatory act is conceived as a trade (or a gift) between a Paumari hunter or fisherman and the *pamoarihi* (human/social form) of the prey (*igitha*). (Bonilla 2005, 51)[x]

Viveiros de Castro shows that the interpretation of phenomena in a pattern of predation (usually the performance of a hunt) is the primary way in which relationships are explained in Amerindian epistemology. The so-called "symbolic economy of predation" is the preferred way in which phenomena are thought of and explained. In other words, the concept of "humanity" for the Amazonian peoples is often "derived to the primary positions of predator and prey, that involve necessarily other collectives, other personal multiplicities in the situation of perspective otherness" (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 32)[xi].

The notion employs a series of archetypes or concepts that embody the relational positions between agents and characterize their roles. The jaguar, the human, and the pig concentrate most of the ideas of predation in its different agencies, respectively: the predator (who hunts the observer's people), the subject (or observer; the one who experiences the described point of view) and the prey (who is

hunted by the observer's people). Shifting the subject position changes the appearances (or bodies) of the agents: humans appear as jaguars to the pig's eyes, which in turn sees itself as human. The same goes for their material and social worlds: "the animals", says Viveiros de Castro, "experience their habits and characteristics by a cultural perspective". The jaguar "sees blood as corn beer" (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 30)[xii]; the pink river dolphin "lives, in the river and lakes of the Purus, in his village with its people; makes its parties; speak its language; gets married and has children" (Bonilla 2005, 50)[xiii]. In short, "non-human agents perceive themselves and their behavior under the form of human culture" (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 35)[xiv]. In that way, the "reality" does not lie in the concrete manifestation (the form) of objects and things but on the quality, the content - the relationship between agents is therefore eminently social. The Paumari social structure, for example,

> is constituted by potentially human collectives, be them animals, plants or objects. Everyone possesses, individually, the potential capacity of adopting a human form and, collectively, all beings and objects are potentially social. (Bonilla 2005, 51)[xv]

The symbolic economy of predation can be understood as a "theory of mind applied by the native, a way to solve - or better, dissolve - the eminently philosophical problem of the 'other minds'" (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 130)[xvi]. Therefore, not only the relationships between species are understood in this discursive framework, but also the relations between individuals of the same species: social phenomena within human society are also often described and explained in the terms of the predation economy[xvii]. As shown by Bonilla (2005), it is by this epistemological base that the *Paumari* make sense of the encounters with Western society. The concept of *patrão* (boss) is ressignified by the Paumari and incorporated in their cosmological views, a movement that, in turn, qualifies their relationships with the *regatões*[xviii] by the perspective of their predation-commerce logic[xix]. Familiar with being *prey-clients* with spiritual entities, the Paumari incorporate the symbolic values of their cosmological interactions in the economic transactions with Western people. "It is like the dynamic of the subjection, historically imposed on the region, was digested and inverted in the relation Paumari system", says Bonilla (2005, 48)[xx]. The predation is thus a signifier, or better yet, an "activity of symbolization" of other interactions in Amerindian's practice of meaning, through which the relationships are accessed, evaluated, and addressed or, in other words, through which phenomena are socialized[xxi].

If the relationships with white and Western societies are frequently perceived by the indigenous peoples through the logic of predation, why not use this logical system to look at our interior relations from a different perspective?

4. The symbolic economy of pixo
Donna Haraway, a remarkable scholar in the field of science and technology studies, speaks of the supposedly neutral "eye position" in science - that allegedly allows for objectivity in the scientific endeavor - as being, in reality, a white and male privileged point of view (1988). Then, what could looking to society from a radically different pair of eyes entail? In light of the abovementioned insights, we propose to look at the city through the lenses of the symbolic economy of the predation, targeting the complex relationship between the institutionalized urban apparatus and its territorial correspondent with the practice of *pixo*.
The predation relations between the city and the *pixador* (*pixo* artist), although very complex, orbit questions of territory[xxii]. Its genesis can be based on the unequal access to the *right to the city* (Lefébvre 2010), to its environment and sociopolitical affordances. On the one hand, the city - represented by formal governmental and economic institutions - preys upon *pixo* artists by socioeconomically excluding peripheral populations; on the other hand, its origins as a form of urban art marks its close relation to a practice of resistance. More specifically, the graffiti and *pixo* spatialize and materialize the abstract urban political inequalities and dissatisfactions, marking them in the territory and bringing social struggles to the visual sphere. The artists get symbolic dominion over the city's territory by marking places with their signatures and graphical pieces, as a rebellious act in opposition to institutionalized and economic oppression. By tagging the city's environment with their critiques, they attempt to reclaim the (physical and political) territories from which they are excluded or alienated.
Following Alfred Gell's *abduction* approach (1996), it is possible to understand the practice of *pixo* as a trap set up by peripheric artists to capture the aesthetic discourse of the urban environment, claiming the "image of the city", or rather reinventing it. The anthropologist argues that the indigenous trap can be interpreted as a (photographic) negative of the hunter's body and action, an embodied version of him[xiii] that replaces his presence and practice, both spatially and temporally. In such a way the trap gains the status of art by encompassing and merging the roles and bodies of hunter and prey, the act of hunting and of being preyed upon, the temporal and spatial dimensions that *verbalize* the hunt. Doing precisely that, the *pixo* works as a symbolic trap: as they force themselves and their aesthetics in the urban environment, using blank and left-over surfaces, privately or state-owned

building facades, and seeking places of high visibility, tags, pieces and murals force their recognition as signs and infiltrate the visual archive of the city. Just like the hunting trap, the practice incorporates and reflects a negative image of the city and uses it against it. They rely on the State's tendency to negate and hide the social contradictions of society and defend private property to gain symbolic momentum, gaining artistic quality as practices of criticism and exposure of the city's contradiction and affirming the predatory position of the artists.
Yet again, besides socioeconomically excluding the low-income and peripheral classes to whom the *pixo* artists belong, the city seeks to reestablish its commanding position by criminalizing *pixo* practices as mere vandalism and by mobilizing its violent surveillance facets to repress it. The city, as such, presents a second predatory face in response to the resistance act of the *pixo*.
The "city"' seen as a "thing" brings with it a depersonalized character, deriving from the *particular versus universal* dichotomy in modern epistemology. However, the symbolic economy of predation shows the possibility to see both the institutions and its agents as personalized actors that take on predatory roles - both to themselves and to others. The distinction between treating the city as a "thing" or as a "person" is the institution of agency (Gell 2018); it shows how the institutional "city" is itself contradictory and complex in ways that can be read as predatory positions with different perspectives. It also helps to explain these contradictions by clarifying its internal relations.

> Whoever answers to a "you" called by a non-human accepts the condition of being its "second person" and, when assuming in turn the position of "I", will already do it as a non-human. [...] The canonical form of these encounters consist, therefore, in the intuition that the other is "human", that it is *the* human, which automatically dehumanizes the interlocutor, transforming him in prey, that is, in an animal (Viveiros de Castro 1996, 135)[xxiii]

This potential of *challenging* the given cosmological position represents how the common relations between beings can be inverted, carrying with it the danger that it may constitute. The perspective position of a predator is not permanent but, on the contrary, implies the constant possibility of becoming the prey. The tension resides especially in the actualization of the predation act because, in it, the agents' subjectivities encounter. The non-human speech, in our analogy, is the public recognition of the "city" as a responsible agent, or, in other terms, its personalization by civil society. Calling out on state oppression is a form of placing it as a subject under the second person pronoun, that is, making it responsible for the actions it performs, distinguishing its position as an identifiable subject and, more importantly, questioning it in the lexicon (and the perspective) of the accusatory[xxiv]. This lexicon, which may take the form of discourses like human rights, class struggle, racial discrimination, or the value of art, symbolically turns the "city" into a "being", giving it a "body" that, in turn, is subject of becoming prey. The challenge to the city, performed by the *pixo* artists when reclaiming the territory, is an act of reclaiming the subjectivity of the relation, which puts them in the predator role. Subjectivity is proper to the predator; the position of speech institutes the territory and the positions of the agents in it.
Therefore, the policeman can be seen simultaneously as predator and prey, from his perspectivist point of view and in the network of his relationships. He is both part and non-part of the city; representing it only insofar as the predation hierarchies remain stable. The city is ready and able, at all times, to re-personalize him, to reinstate his individuality and personality, in case its position as predator risks being challenged. When threatened to become prey, claiming "isolated cases" and "bad-apples" is the city's way of offering sacrifice to the public opinion, securing its symbolic position. The policeman is both the avatar and the scapegoat of state violence, in a suspended, *schrödinger*-like way. This duality - or better, this *ambiguity* - allows the city to maintain itself in the outskirts of its violent method, to use it without engaging directly in the uncertainty of the act itself. The predation act is unruly, uncertain, and dangerous: its actualization carries the possibility of its inversion, if not performed correctly[xxv] - the contact between beings can bring about the other's subjectivity, with potentially lethal implications. To avoid that, the city takes hold of the policeman's individuality, cannibalizing itself to maintain the *status quo* of the symbolic economy.
On the other hand, the policeman negotiates this relation from a similar point of view to that of the *pixador*, as they also come from mainly peripheral and low-income backgrounds. Becoming a police member is a way of acquiring a new body, a new position in the power relations of the urban environment. Like in the indigenous cosmology, this "passage" often involves assuming an antagonistic position about the original perspective: becoming the predator of the former kin. The cries of activists showing the contradiction of black officers terrorizing black residents of the slums and reproducing structural racism, often gaining the (not unproblematic) sobriquet *capitão do mato*[xxvi], is a reflection of this antagonism. If the ritualistic exchange of bodies in Amazonian cosmology often involves wearing different costumes (Viveiros de Castro, 1996), the policeman wearing his uniform shapeshifts into the predator of other (mostly black) citizens. However, the passage configures a new relation with the former predator that doesn't invert it: it is not a challenge, but a sacrifice. As the

Paumari "client", the "services" of the policeman, are a way by which he controls his predation, keeping it at bay: a form of damage-control that resolves the relation with the predator and simultaneously provides a possible subjectivity, namely the *enforcer of the law*.

> [T]he Paumari position themselves when relating to others, today, [...] as clients or employees. I do not believe that it is just a way of avoid or go round the predation (and much less of compensating it), but a deeper way of living it, of really actualizing it. (Bonilla 2005, 52)[xxvii]

The case of the *pixo* is clarifying because it shows the many territories in which subjectivity is disputed or, in other words, the battlefields over the influence on urban narratives. Similar to the territorial predation of the city practiced by the *pixo* artists, its reconquest by their entry into the art market can also be interpreted as an invasion of spaces that were historically denied to them - in this case, the spaces of the art market, of symbolic and financial valorization promoted by art institutions and art discourse.

Regardless of the unstable recognition of graffiti as art in popular opinion, galleries and collections quickly incorporated this production with their usual avidity[xxviii]. Even before the first art galleries focused on graffiti appeared in the 1980s, this practice was already integrated into the art world by the insertion of graffiti pieces into traditional galleries through photography. Several factors contributed to the absorption of graffiti by the art market in this period[xxix]. From the beginning, however, so-called graffiti paintings had a very different connotation on canvases and on gallery walls, which makes explicit the heterogeneous aspects of its existence. In the logic of predation, the active entry of the *pixo* in the art market can be seen as the transformation of these artists into predators, accessing new social instances, and increasing their communicative reach. The art market, as the institutionalized city, assumes a pacified stance, offering a share of itself to this new uncontrollable and rivaling aesthetics, as a sacrifice to remain relevant. On the other hand, evaluating the market by co-opting the aesthetics of the streets, the *pixo* appears now as prey, entering a financial system far distant from its rebel origins. Similarly to the policemen, artists navigate the logic of the art market from a more stable condition, as employees.

Despite the absence of street emotion, according to Pennachin (2012, 122-134), the repercussion of this indoor exhibition was positive in the public and the media, catalyzing the acceptance of *pixo* artists as legitimate artists. Fame and visibility are clear objectives of *pixo* artists, being a much better alternative than facing police violence and other physical risks, and there was much support for media appearances and commercialization. With the rising pop culture, a new era of art and mass culture was established and the graffiti further occupied spaces previously exclusive to erudite production, consolidating its predatory position in this new symbolic territory. Alongside hip hop culture, graffiti decides the limits of the dominant culture to attack its commercial and class interests, uncovering new subjectivities that are not committed to the official history (Ramos 2007, 9).

The production of graffiti for the market was influenced by this context and its agents (dealers, collectors, gallery owners, critics, and other artists). Some analyze this as a maturation of the work of these artists, but what interests us is how there is a manipulation made by the market so that the production of these works befits the logic of collectible objects with high prices, through an aestheticization of graffiti with a more palatable and less political result. Once again, the predator-market feeds on what comes from the streets. The art system fragments its production and includes only what it's considered formally artistic, excluding *pixo*'s vandal character and emphasizing the plastic dimension as the main quality of graffiti - which alone cannot account for the plurality of this action (Junior 2012, 35). The consolidation of this separation between the act of *pixo* on the street and the *pixo* as a salable work of art reaffirms the marginalization of the *pixo* outside the galleries, where both pixo and graffiti remain criminalized practices (Junior 2012, 38). Once more, the *pixo* becomes the prey, excluded from the city, and pursued by its institutions.

Despite being incriminated, graffiti became vigorously global with its entry into the art market (Junior 2012, 38). The *pixo*, by its predatory challenges, became an important context of social expression and contestation, questioning the prospective positions of private and institutional limits and being especially characterized by this insubordinate form as it manifests itself (Pennachin 2003, 6). Nonetheless, "the production for the galleries keeps an insurmountable distance between the street production"[xxx], showing the complexification of the predatory pronouns inside the practice itself. This oscillating character of the *pixo* emphasizes the conflictual situation of the art, in the changes and shifting of the predatory positions, as the pixo artist returns to the condition of predator precisely in the act of reclaiming the city and using its space:

By articulating the dominant information with the communication and the common opinion of urban agents, the graffiti establish democratization, the horizontality of the political relations of occupation, and vertical domination of the programmed urbanist policies. Graffiti & *pixo* make it possible to perceive a new epistemology for the city and for art, no longer seen and thought from a Renaissance or Eurocentric vanishing point, but fractal, participatory, and activist. (Ramos 2007, 10)[xxxi]

5. Conclusion

A distinct description of the urban relations may enable urban-related disciplines to address socio-political phenomena within the city through a new perspective, granting the development of new approaches to handle conflictual practices such as the *pixo*. The possibility of conceptually "personalizing" institutions, collectives, or practices allows for flexibility of analysis between humans and "non-humans" (in this case, the city) as agents with equal footing in the constitution of the social phenomena. With it, we can abandon the notion of politics, economics, and culture as 'backgrounds' that, when analyzed together with individuals, frequently become static elements against which agency is investigated. Additionally, it becomes possible to analyze the apparent 'thingness' of institutions as a real phenomenon: knowing that institutions such as the "city" or the "State" are not real "people", what is the function of this personalization? How does it work and what are its effects, once realized? Viveiros de Castro shows that the common dichotomy between appearance and essence, viewed through the lenses of Amazonian cosmology, gains new colors (2015). *Appearing as* is a cosmological approximation, a way of partially and momentarily *becoming*. It is not so much a question of disguising essence, of what is *hidden* by appearance, but of what it *adds* to that essence. It is possible to perceive in the personalization of the institutions the abstraction of individual agendas, their transmutation into concrete phenomena and devices, and their enforcement - such as the geographic segregation, legal apparatus, and the legitimized use of violence. If predation in the urban environment is territorially based, the parcel of a society that benefits most from it, be it economically[xxxii] or in terms of the access to the city, structures the "state" and the "city", or rather *becomes* them and, by doing so, reinvents itself as something bigger than what it originally was: it captures the discourse, the territory of subjectivity, inventing for itself a first-person pronoun.

Our main objective, however, was experimental. Far from wanting to represent, in any sense, the indigenous vision or to act as their spokespersons, our method is designed more as an artistic endeavor of placing the anthropological view on indigenous epistemologies as lenses through which we gaze at the city - "an experience of thought, or an exercise of anthropological fiction" (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 123). We do not claim to own or to incorporate indigenous narratives, nor to speak as avatars of diversity, but rather the opposite: by acknowledging our position inside Western views, we intend to challenge it, to address it with these foreign lenses - "what happens if the translator decides to betray his language?", Viveiros de Castro asks (op cit.). In that sense, our objective is not to pretentiously reaffirm the validity of Castro's analysis of indigenous cosmology, neither to state anything about them: it is about the experiment of self-criticism, of gauging our feet by trying different pairs of shoes. More specifically, we use these cosmologies to allow a different perspective of the city, reversing, in a way, the "coloniality of the seeing" present in the modernity discourse that still permeates urban thought (Barriendos 2019). Understanding anthropology as a "practice of meaning", we point it to the city, loaded with discursive and conceptual expressions of a different "possible world" (Viveiros de Castro 2002); as an artistic attempt at a "reverse" or "symmetric" anthropology (Wagner 1981; Latour 2005). This is an imaginative exercise that uses our interpretations of these narratives as a critical device to re-view the urban environment - a decolonial(list) attempt to repositioning the way of seeing. Poetical epistemicide?

Notes

1 Free translation by the authors from "O termo graffiti (...) foi utilizado pela primeira vez para descrever o conjunto de manifestações murais, não oficiais, da cidade de Pompeia" (Junior 2012, 11). Approximately 10.000 graffiti survived the eruption of the Vesuvius volcano, manifestations made before the disaster during the Roman Empire.

2 "The prehistoric records found in the caves, in addition to confirming the human need to exist symbolically, are indispensable sources for understanding the culture in force at that time.Following this line of reasoning, nothing prevents urban graphics from being attributed the quality of current documents, as they are legitimate expressions of the contemporary way of life.", free translation by the authors from "Os registros pré-históricos encontrados nas cavernas, além de confirmarem a necessidade humana de existir simbolicamente, são fontes indispensáveis para o entendimento da cultura vigente naquele período. Seguindo esta linha de raciocínio, nada impede que se atribua aos grafismos urbanos a qualidade de documentos da atualidade, pois eles são expressões legítimas do modo de vida contemporâneo." (Pennachin 2003, 8)

3 Free translation by the authors from "Surgidos no contrafluxo dos planejamentos urbanos e misturados às outras intervenções aleatórias nas cidades contemporâneas – propaganda eleitoral, publicidade, recados de amor e/ou palavras e imagens consideradas obscenas" (Ramos 2007, 1)

4 Free translation by the authors from "Assim como existem diversos tipos de graffiti, há, igualmente, estilos diferentes de pichação. Além disso, muitas vezes estas linguagens surgem unificadas numa mesma obra, o que impossibilita a sua segregação. Os próprios grafiteiros, muitos deles também pichadores, enfrentam dificuldades em definir com exatidão onde termina o graffiti e começa a pichação, e vice-versa." (Pennachin 2003, 4)

5 "The urban graphics that we see scattered over the walls are the result of a process in which the writer (used here as a synonym for graffiti artist and / or pixo artist) assimilates and internalizes various elements of the urbanity in which they live, processes them and interact with them, to later return them to the external environment in the form of graffiti or pixo.", free translation by the authors from "Os grafismos urbanos que vemos espalhados pelos muros são o resultado de um processo em que o escritor (do inglês, writer, utilizado aqui como sinônimo de grafiteiro e/ou pichador) assimila e interioriza diversos elementos da urbanidade em que vive, processa-os e com eles interage, para posteriormente devolvê-los ao ambiente externo sob a forma de graffiti ou pichação." (Pennachin 2003, 3)

6 Free translation by the authors from "Afinal, a cidade é de todos, isso é certo e o grafite assim o prova" (Ramos 2007, 9)

7 Free translation by the authors from "Os trens nova-iorquinos grafitados levaram e trouxeram mensagens. Foram criticados - e apreciados -, mas possibilitaram a comunicação entre o centro e a periferia, entre os artistas e o mercado. Possibilitaram-nos perceber que outras vozes queriam e querem ser ouvidas, que outros sujeitos históricos existem em oposição às mídias diárias oficiais que divulgam e sustentam a sociedade do espetáculo. Levaram-nos a perceber outras formas de ocupação do espaço urbano e de percepção artística." (Ramos 2007, 4)

8 Free translation by the authors from "Este enunciado simples ["nossos corpos são diferentes"] captura com elegância o que Viveiros de Castro (1996) chamou de perspectivismo cosmológico, ou multinaturalismo: o que distingue os diferentes tipos de gente são seus corpos, não suas culturas.". (Peter Gow apud Viveiros de Castro 2002, 138)

9 Free translation by the authors from "o corpo como implicado no conceito de perspectiva" (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 140)

10 Free translation by the authors from "[Q]uando um pescador paumari mata um pirarucu (baba'di), não é o abonoi (alma-corpo) dele que é atingido. O que ele, pescador, vê como pirarucu é apenas uma esteira (jorai) que o pamoarihi do pirarucu lhe entrega ou troca por munição ou flechas (aquelas usadas pelo pescador). Assim, todo ato predatório é concebido como uma troca (ou um dom) entre um caçador ou pescador paumari e o pamoarihi (forma humana/ social) da presa (igitha)." (Bonilla 2005, 51)

11 Free translation by the authors from "é derivada em relação às posições primárias de predador ou presa, que envolvem necessariamente outros coletivos, outras multiplicidades pessoais em situação de alteridade perspectiva." (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 32)

12 Free translation by the authors from "os animais [...] experimentam seus próprios hábitos e características sob uma aparência cultural [...] os jaguares veem o sangue como cerveja de milho" (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 30)

13 Free translation by the authors from "o boto [...] vive, nos rios e lagos do Purus, em sua aldeia com seu povo; faz suas festas; fala sua língua; se casa e tem filhos." (Bonilla 2005, 50)

14 Free translation by the authors from "os agentes não-humanos percebem-se a si mesmos e a seu comportamento sob a forma da cultura humana" (Viveiros de Castro 2015, 35)

15 Free translation by the authors from "é constituído por coletivos potencialmente humanos, sejam eles animais, plantas ou objetos. Todos possuem, individualmente, a capacidade potencial de adotar uma forma humana, e, coletivamente, todos os seres e objetos são potencialmente sociais." (Bonilla 2005, 51)

16 Free translation by the authors from "uma 'teoria da mente' aplicada pelo nativo, um modo de resolver, aliás — ou melhor, de dissolver —, o problema eminentemente filosófico das 'outras mentes'." (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 130)

17 "Seguindo a lógica perspectivista, os índios selvagens, os Joima, vêem os Paumari como queixadas (hirari), e é por isso que, antigamente, costumavam caçá-los para devorá-los." (Bonilla 2005, 52)

18 The term "regatão" (plural: "regatões") refers to the commercients that buy and sell goods along the rivers in the Amazonian region. Their relationship with indigenous peoples are often conflictual and complex, with examples of debt-based slavery-like conditions of labour and other forms ox exploitation. See Christian Crevels "Patrões Selvagens: história e poética Madihadeni da alteridade" (unpublished manuscript, September 2020), typescript.

19 Free translation by the authors from "no contexto predatório, as presas, e até certo ponto também os fregueses paumari, trocam sua produção (objetos culturais ou alimentos) por bens manufaturados (chumbo, anzol, linha, rede, arpão)." (Bonilla 2005, 52)

20 Free translation by the authors from "É como se a dinâmica da sujeição, imposta historicamente na região, tivesse sido digerida e invertida no sistema relacional paumari." (Bonilla 2005, 48)

21 "Providos de seu próprio ponto de vista, os igitha (presas) se posicionariam no seio da relação predadora, assim como os Paumari se posicionam ao relacionarem-se, hoje, com Outros, isto é, como fregueses ou empregados. Ora, não creio que se trate, aqui, apenas de um modo de evitar ou contornar a predação (e muito menos de compensá-la), e sim de um modo mais profundo de vivê-la, de atualizá-la realmente." (Bonilla 2005, 52)

22 The term "territory" used here is referent to the conceptualization by Marcelo Lopes de Souza, meaning a spatialized political relation. See Lopes de Souza, 2010.

23 Free translation by the authors from "Quem responde a um 'tu' dito por um não-humano aceita a condição de ser sua "segunda pessoa", e ao assumir por sua vez a posição de "eu" já o fará como um não-humano [...] A forma canônica desses encontros sobrenaturais consiste, assim, em intuir subitamente que o outro é "humano", entenda-se, que ele é o humano, o que desumaniza e aliena automatica-mente o interlocutor, transformando-o em presa, isto é, em animal." Free translations by the authors (Viveiros de Castro 1996, 135)

24 This relation is similar to the traditional position occupied by the anthropologist when describing the native, as argued by Viveiros de Castro: "O antropólogo tem usualmente uma vantagem epistemológica sobre o nativo. O discurso do primeiro não se acha situado no mesmo plano que o discurso do segundo: o sentido que o antropólogo estabelece depende do sentido

nativo, mas é ele quem detém o sentido desse sentido — ele quem explica e interpreta, traduz e introduz, textualiza e contextualiza, justifica e significa esse sentido." (Viveiros de Castro 2002, 115)

25 Viveiros de Castro shows that many relationships between predator and prey must obey some rules to avoid the possible contact with the others subjectivity, an encounter that is most frequently deadly. Usually, these involve the proper preparation of food; the possible result is seen, most frequently, in the form of disease (1996).

26 The term "capitão do mato" was employed in colonial Brazil to denominate black people (often slaves themselves) that pursued and brought back fugitive slaves to the farms. The current use addressing black policemen or other black public figures is controversial, being seen by many as problematic or even downright racist.

27 Free translation by the authors from "os Paumari se posicionam ao relacionarem-se, hoje, com Outros [...] como fregueses ou empregados. Ora, não creio que se trate, aqui, apenas de um modo de evitar ou contornar a predação (e muito menos de compensá-la), e sim de um modo mais profundo de vivê-la, de atualizá-la realmente." (Bonilla 2005, 52)

28 The streets interventions aesthetic is inside the white cube (Brian O'Doherty) at least since Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring in the 1970s. The first graffiti exhibition in New York was in the year 1972 (Pennachin 2012, 122).

29 The resumption of expressive painting, with the appreciation of gesture and the use of calligraphy, as opposed to the demands of traditional painting, boosted graffiti along with the effervescence of the market at that time (Veneroso apud Pennachin 2012, 132)

30 Free translation by the authors from "a produção para as galerias guarda uma distância intransponível entre a produção de rua" (Junior 2012, 38)

31 Free translation by the authors from "Ao articularem a informação dominante com a comunicação e a opinião corriqueira dos agentes urbanos, os grafites estabelecem a democratização, a horizontalidade das relações políticas de ocupação e dominação vertical das políticas urbanistas programadas. Os grafites & pichações possibilitam percebermos uma nova epistemologia para a cidade e para a arte, não mais vista e pensada a partir de um ponto de fuga Renascentista ou eurocentrista, mas fractal, participativa e ativista." (Ramos 2007, 10)

32 The economical benefit associated with the "location value" is well explained by Paul Singer in his *O Uso do Solo Urbano na Economia Capitalista*, in *A produção capitalista da casa (e da cidade) no Brasil industrial*, Maricato (org), São Paulo, Editora Alfa-Omega, 1982.

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