Receiving Words

Towards a Poetics of Hospitality

Melanie Strasser

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Abstract

The present paper deals with the question of whether hospitality might be thought as a scene of translation. But who is the guest, and who is the host in translation? How can hospitality be conceived from a perspective of translation? Ultimately, hospitality exhibits an ambivalent, even aporetic pattern. Every stranger, every guest, however welcome they might be, must eventually submit to the host's house, its law, and its language. Constantly oscillating between amity and hostility, possibility and impossibility, hospitality is always undermined by a moment of violence. In its double bind and ambiguity, hospitality seems to reflect the process of translation as receiving and absorbing, accommodating, and incorporating the Other. By means of an Amerindian perspective, an ethics of translational hospitality – a *xenosophy* – is to be outlined, seeing translation no longer as a unidirectional and hierarchic economy, but rather as a form of nomadic, cannibal conviviality, an act of mutual transformation.

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1.   Being at Home

In a text with the title "Convivialities" ("*Convivências*"), the German translator Curt Meyer-Clason recalls the first encounter with his Brazilian author João Guimarães Rosa in 1962 in Munich. On this occasion, Rosa had said to his translator: "Traduzir é conviver" (Meyer-Clason 1997: 13). How can we translate this phrase? "Translating is cohabiting"? "To translate means to live together"? Or even, "Translation is conviviality"? To what extent can translation be conceived as a latitude of conviviality? And how would such a translational *convivium* look like, since it seems to carry within itself a tension, a striving in opposite directions, which is produced by the prefixes "con-" (jointly, together) on the one hand and *"*trans-" (across, beyond) on the other hand? How could the image of conviviality shape the relationship between author and translator, original and translation? And how can this translational conviviality be correlated with the concept of hospitality? Who is the guest, and who is the host in this *convivium*?

From its beginnings, the notion of conviviality is traversed by the gesture of hospitality. It goes back to *convivium*, the Latin variant of the Greek *symposium*, a banquet, a feast. Living together therefore meant, in the first place, to take part in a repast, to ritually drink and eat with each other. Greek *symposia* or Roman *convivia* were usually held in a private house, hosted by an aristocrat for his peers. The slaves had to serve the wine, the strength of which determined the further course of the feast. With the passage of time, the meanings of *convivium* and *symposium* moved from a visceral, festive get-together to a more formal meeting aimed at discussing specific current topics. So to speak, the *convivium* shifts from the bowels to the head, from the sensual to the sense. It comprises social encounters to explore and to examine, to narrate and to discuss – literally, to shake apart – life. As a nucleus of society, a *convivium* as a scene of hospitality is pervaded by relations of hierarchy, power, and inequality, shaped by specific roles such as hosts, guests, men, women, and slaves. Who speaks? Who may (not) speak?

The concept of hospitality has always been permeated by ambivalence and conflict, an etymological echoing: *hospitalitas*, *hostilitas.* Hospitality, hostility. How a small shift of letters can tilt the picture. *Hospes, hostis*. The guest, the enemy. The boundaries are blurred. The Latin *hospes* and the Greek *xenos* mean "guest" as well as "host", and, in addition, "stranger". The French *hôte* unites within itself the host, the one who receives, and the guest, the one who is received: "For there is reciprocity in the air. A *hôte*: in French, the same word designates both the one who welcomes and the one who is welcomed, and that is an immemorial discovery, civilization itself", as Barbara Cassin points out (Cassin 2016: 3–4). And as Jacques Derrida states, hospitality is "a word of Latin origin, of a troubled and troubling origin, a word which carries its own contradiction incorporated into it, a Latin word which allows itself to be parasitized by its opposite,

'hostility', the undesirable guest [*hôte*] which it harbors as the self-contradiction in its own body" (Derrida 2000: 3).

All these forms go back to the proto-Indo-European root *ghos-ti-*, "guest", "host", "stranger". This root word looks like a ghost. After all, isn't the strangest amongst the strangest the ghost haunting us where we are supposed to feel at home? However, the proximity in sound is specious: guests and ghosts are not related, at least not etymologically. The Portuguese word for "host", *anfitrião*, however, goes back to Amphitryon, a murderer on the run, whose wife Alcmene was deluded by Zeus who took Amphitryon's shape to seduce her while her husband was not at home.

We can be a host, but also a guest against our will, a hostage. Yet even if the guest is welcome, an act of hospitality is at risk of turning into *hostilitas* (Bahr 1994: 37). From the beginning, hospitality is an intimate entanglement of friendship and hostility (Benveniste 2016 [1969]; Derrida 2001). Derrida would thus coin the term "hostipitality" (Derrida 2000) to display the constant wavering between vigilance and welcome, this turmoil under the surface, its original vortexes.

Each act of hospitality is undermined by a moment of violence since, ultimately, every stranger, every guest, however welcome they may be, must submit to the law, the host's house, its economy, and its language. And after all, the roles are reversed, the guest takes over: "A host is a guest, and a guest is a host" (Miller 1979: 221) The host is no longer at home, they cede their province to the guest, their sovereignty, their whole, full, and protected self. It is an encounter with the Other that entails transgressing one's boundaries: "The self forms at the edge of desire, and a science of self arises in the effort to leave that self behind", as Anne Carson (1986: 63) would say.

Giving up of one's own sphere, the abandonment of the border control, however, is "the condition of unconditional hospitality: that you give up the mastery of your own space, your home, your nation" (Derrida 1999b: 70). Ultimately, it means to be willing to lose oneself. Therefore, Derrida would ask: "Is not hospitality an interruption of the self?" (Derrida 1999a: 51). The experience of the Other in one's home brings the host's identity, their sense of belonging to collapse. Nothing less than the self is at stake here. Hospitality is bound to no longer feel at home. In their joint reflection with Jacques Derrida on the phenomenon of hospitality, Anne Dufourmantelle, who would die in the sea, states:

> To offer hospitality […] is it necessary to start from the certain existence of a dwelling, or is it rather only starting from the dislocation of the shelterless, the homeless, that the authenticity of hospitality can open up? Perhaps only the one who endures the experience of being deprived of a home can offer hospitality (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 56).

Receiving the Other requires giving in oneself, giving up one's own space and self-identity, and is therefore linked with the feeling of not being at home anymore. Hospitality is linked with debt, obligation, deprivation. Before that, however, there has to be affinity. Explaining the etymological proximity between *hospes* and *hostis*, Benveniste assumes that both derive from "stranger" – a welcome stranger turns into a guest, whilst a stranger who is not welcome, turns into an enemy (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 65–66). Not any indiscriminate stranger can be a guest. For hospitality to exist there must be some kind of affinity, as Benveniste stresses, some "bond of equality and reciprocity" between the stranger and the potential host. Therefore, "*hostis* will signify 'he who stands in a compensatory relationship' and this is precisely the foundation of the institution of hospitality" (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 67).

The eucharistic bread, *hostia*, host, too, is part of the linguistic family of hospitality and its fundamental structure of giving and taking: "its real sense is 'the victim which serves to appease the anger of the gods', hence it denotes a compensatory offering" (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 66). In order to describe this relationship that determines hospitality, Benveniste evokes the figure of the gift and its pattern of ambivalence, since every gift has a stale, poisonous aftertaste. "But hospitality, as any gift, is never innocent: the act of hosting the other can never be disinterested, devoid of some sort of (re)compensation", writes Siri Nergaard (Nergaard 2021: 66–67). The double-bind structure of giving and receiving, the gift requiring compensation, has been described by Marcel Mauss based on the indigenous rite of the *potlatch* (Mauss 1966). Benveniste remarks:

> The notion of "hospitality" is illuminated by reference to *potlach* [sic] of which it is a weakened form. It is founded on the idea that a man is bound to another (*hostis* always involves the notion of reciprocity) by the obligation to compensate a gift or service from which he has benefited (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 67).

The system of the potlatch based on reciprocity, on its "compelling force" (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 67) as expressed in feasts and ceremonies, serves as a means to connect the members of the families and peoples. The real meaning of the ritual of the duty of giving, therefore, is to build social relationships.

In ancient Greece, Benveniste claims in the following, social economy was permeated by a similar mode of exchange, called *xenia* (Benveniste 2016 [1969]: 67). As Anne Carson points out in her *Economy of the Unlost*, this system was the fundament of social relations: "The characteristic features of *xenia*, namely its basis in reciprocation and its assumption of perpetuity, seem to have woven a texture of personal alliances that held the ancient world together" (Carson 1999: 13). The system of *xenia* is translated, according to Anne Carson, as "hospitality", "guest-friendship", "ritualized friendship":

> Within a gift economy […] objects in exchange form a kind of connective tissue between giver and receiver. The reciprocal character of the connection is implied in its reversible terminology: in Greek the word *xenos* can mean either guest or host, *xenia* either gifts given or gifts received. "Considered as an act of communication", says Pierre Bourdieu, "the gift is defined by the counter-gift in which it is completed and in which it realizes its full significance". Such an object carries the history of the giver into the life of the receiver and continues it there. Because they valued this continuity, the Greeks created a remarkably concrete token of it that was used as a sign of mutual obligation between friends, the object called a *symbolon* (σύμβολον) (Carson 1999: 18).

The aim is not profit, but to be always in debt in order to guarantee relationships. And indeed: debt as a form of unsettling reciprocity brings people together, satiation keeps them apart. The economy of debt is also linked with the question of translation. The irresolvable entanglement between original and translation can be read as a double bind of mutual indebtedness, of a debt that can never be repaid, as Derrida states (Derrida 1985: 184). If not only the translation but also the original is indebted, then this allows to read the task (*Aufgabe*) of the translator above all as a gift (*Gabe*) in its simultaneity of possibility and impossibility.

All these forms of affinities, economic exchange and reciprocity that pervade the system of hospitality serve the purpose to create bonds in the double sense of connectedness, solidarity, and obligations, fetters. Hospitality is a system of exchange, a texture for establishing and maintaining social ties. Before anything else, hospitality revolves around the question of how to relate to the Other. Therefore, it cannot be detached from ethics, from culture:

> Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethic amongst others. Insofar as it has to do with the *ethos*, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, *ethics is hospitality*; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality. But for this very reason, and because being at home with oneself (*l'être-soi chez soi – l'ipséité même* – the other within oneself) supposes a reception or inclusion of the other which one seeks to appropriate, control, and master according to different modalities of violence, there is a history of hospitality, an always possible perversion of the law of hospitality (which can appear unconditional), and of the laws which come to limit and condition it in its inscription as a law (Derrida 2001: 16–17, emphasis in original).

Hospitality as a scene of receiving – of receiving the Other, and being received – is about belonging, about being in good hands, giving oneself (away). It is about (not) being at home. Hospitality is linked with questions of violence, of loss and mourning. Just as ethics goes back to the question of character, the nature of moral hospitality is about contact, about the interaction between individuals in different positions: one is at home, the other one is a stranger. They might not speak the same language. They might not share the same customs. This is why hospitality is always bound to ethics: How to deal with the other? How to speak (to) them? How to be a guest, how to be a host? Hospitality is not separable from the question Barbara Cassin rises in her essay on nostalgia: "When are we ever at home?" (Cassin 2016). In the face of our mortality, she states: "We are, as one might say in French, *hospités*, that is, taken in out of hospitality, hospited". And she adds, trying to explain the strange feeling of belonging to a land that is not hers: "Yet it is only because I am *hospitée* that I feel at home there" (Cassin 2016: 3).

Don't we feel at home precisely because we are guests? Is it even possible to feel at home when we do not feel as guests? Does feeling at home not presuppose that we feel welcome, that we are accommodated, no matter what our name is, no matter what our origin is? We know this feeling of being at home when we are far away from home. We know the feeling to be at home and not feeling at home, being a stranger amidst the familiar, just like Odysseus, when he finally, after so many years adrift, returns to his family, to the island where he was born (Cassin 2016: 63). Coming back home for him implies to be welcome as a guest, but he is not recognized as the master: Odysseus is the stranger-guest (*xenos*) (Homer 1919 [c. 750-650 BCE]: XXIII, 27) in his own house. Only his dog recognizes him, and he has to pay for it with his life. And then, during a rite of hospitality reserved to stranger-guests, Odysseus's wet nurse, Eurycleia, recognizes him who does not want to be recognized, by a scar. It will take a long while of mistrust and disbelief until his spouse, Penelope, takes Odysseus back as her husband. It will not last. He will not stay. Sometimes, to feel at home, it is vital to leave. To depart means that it is not possible to ever come back: it means to divide, to separate into parts. There is no more home, or it is everywhere beyond it.

Hospitality that does provide a home to a stranger who has lost their home, in other words, hospitality as ethics, as the unconditional reception of the Other no matter what they are called and what is their homeland, encountering the Other in one's most intimate space, used to be an important value in ancient times. In our days, it is separated by an abyss from the limited, conditional law of political hospitality represented by the nation state. The abyss is real, it has taken the shape of an unfathomable graveyard, the Mediterranean Sea. As Donatella di Cesare points out in her reflection on the figure of the migrant, hospitality as a political and ethical value has become hollow:

> […] "hospitality" today has no meaning outside the context of private morality or religious faith. Stripped of its political value, it becomes a symptom of a naïve do-gooderism. This allows the flaring-up of the rival term that has always inhabited hospitality – namely, hostility. "Migrant reception policy" is the formula twisted to indicate the very opposite – that is, a policy of exclusion and expulsion (Cesare 2020: 12).

The migrant is not seen and treated as a guest, but as a potential violator of the sovereignty of the nation state, or the fortress Europe. In Kafka's *Castle* it says: "'This lack of hospitality may surprise you', said the man, 'but there is no custom of hospitality here, we do not need guests'. […] 'Certainly', said K., 'what would you need guests for?'" (Kafka 2012: 12). Indeed, a guest is not needed, what is needed is a labour force. We do not want guests. At least not those who came to stay. The consequences of a policy that undermines the idea of hospitality are loss, ostracism, or death. Arriving ashore, then, does not mean to have reached a safe place, but to be excluded, or even, to die. Not receiving someone who has lost their home becomes the epitome of inhumanity, of dehumanization.

The relation between law and justice – the law of political and therefore conditional hospitality and the justice of unconditional hospitality – is aporetic: "To take up the figure of the door, for there to be hospitality, there must be a door. But if there is a door, there is no longer hospitality" (Derrida 2000: 14).

The door as a figure that mingles inside and outside, is perhaps emblematic for the task of translation, since the author is the one who cannot enter their own world once traveling through the linguistic world of the translator. Anne Carson, whose rendering of Sophocles's *Antigone* is entitled *Antigonick* and populated by Brecht, Hegel, and Beckett, states in her prologue, the door to her translation: "a door can have diverse meanings / I stand outside your door / the odd thing is, you stand outside your door too / that door has no inside / or if it has an inside, you are the one person who cannot enter it" (Carson 2015: 4).

The door that allows for receiving the Other is, at once, its impediment.

In a chorus of questions and answers, Jacques Derrida, responding to Anne Dufourmantelle, points out the entanglement, the paradox of hospitality:

> The law of hospitality, the express law that governs the general concept of hospitality, appears as a paradoxical law, pervertible or perverting. It seems to dictate that absolute hospitality should break with the law of hospitality as right or duty, with the "pact" of hospitality. To put it in different terms, absolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner, but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let

them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even their names. The law of absolute hospitality commands a break with hospitality by right, with law or justice as rights. Just hospitality breaks with hospitality by right; not that it condemns or is opposed to it, and it can on the contrary set and maintain it in a perpetual progressive movement; but it is as strangely heterogeneous to it as justice is heterogeneous to the law to which it is yet so close, from which in truth it is indissociable (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 25–27).

Hospitality that knows no doors, that is, unconditional hospitality, which does neither ask for a name nor wants anything back, is anarchic – literally, without origin. It is situated beyond the law, "beyond the political" (Derrida 1999a: 61), in a non-place, *u-topos*. An ethics of hospitality – a *xenosophy* – involves the paradox to give what is not possible to give. Unconditional hospitality – just as love, just as forgiveness – is only possible because it is impossible.

2.   On the Hospitality of Words

In 1950, during her long-lasting exile, first in France, then in New York, the stateless Hannah Arendt records in her *Denktagebuch* "the fluctuating ambiguity of the world and the insecurity of humans in it" (Arendt 2001: 43, own translation). The vertiginous experience of the multiplicity of meanings, of different and perhaps incompatible realities, becomes particularly evident when confronted with other ways of naming the world, that is, in a situation of exile, of translation. "Plurality of languages: If there were only one language, perhaps we would be sure of the essence of things" (Arendt 2001: 42, own translation).

Only one language, this would mean that there is no gap between words and things, that there is no necessity of translation: a name would be what it says, touching the essence of things. There would be certainty. However, there remains doubt: "perhaps". After all, one language only would deprive the world of its manifoldness; therefore, a "universal language", a "*condition humaine*" is, according to Hannah Arendt, "nonsense", "the artificial and violent disambiguation of the ambiguous" (Arendt 2001: 43, own translation). Perhaps the only language is the elusiveness of the essence of things. Perhaps the only *condition humaine* is difference: "the plurality of languages places difference at the heart of the essence of things", Barbara Cassin writes, giving account of Arendt's exile (Cassin 2016: 58). The need to translate is bound to an experience of exile. Translation seems to imply that we are never at home. Barbara Cassin relates how Hannah Arendt clings to her mother tongue, the only thing she could keep from her fatherland. Her language is her home now that her familiar land

has been lost (Cassin 2016: 46). This reminds of Fernando Pessoa, who had spent his early years in South Africa, or rather, in the English language, and who wrote, "My fatherland is the Portuguese language" (Pessoa 2017: 304).

How to keep, how to save one's mother tongue in exile, especially German, which has become the language of the murderers? Even after many years in the United States, Hannah Arendt still speaks English with a strong accent, and the texts she writes in English are loaded by the German syntax and rhythm (Cassin 2016: 46). Despite everything, she refuses to give up her mother tongue: she keeps it above, below, inside the foreign language. There is no more *patria*, but there is *matria*: the motherland-tongue ploughs the land of the other language. Tongues that explore, interleave, overlap, mingle until they are no longer distinguishable from each other.

This is how to save one's mother tongue: by deterritorializing it, by absorbing it into the foreign language. After all, isn't writing in another language also an act of translating? Languages swallowing each other up, crawling into each other: "*intradução*" ("intranslation" or "intraduction"), as Augusto de Campos would say: an inward and intimate movement into the intestines of the text (Campos 1986: 29).

The tonal similarity of "*intradução*" and "*intraduzível*" ("untranslatable") is not a coincidence: translation involves impossibility, a constant towards that will never reach the innermost, but remains an intro(duction). It is an intimate incorporation of the Other, whilst at the same time there always remains an indigestible. At some point it is no longer possible to know which is the language of departure and which is the language of arrival, who is the devourer and who is being devoured. Reciprocal translation. Is this the possibility of hospitality?

At the beginning, as the entry point to their reflection, Anne Dufourmantelle quotes her dialogue partner Jacques Derrida: "An act of hospitality can only be poetic" (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 2). What is poetic about the gesture of receiving the Other? What is created in an act of hospitality? Perhaps there is no more poetic gesture than translating, the effort to say the Other in one's language. Receiving and saying the Other in and through difference. Trying to make them alike without destroying them. Preserving them, whilst in one fell swoop they are transformed.

Entering the word of the Other to translate means to be received by the Other, the author, who then will encounter their words in another shape, perhaps in the shape of unreadability. At the same time, the author's language is accommodated in the different temporality and spatiality of translation. This is what Paul Ricoeur calls "linguistic hospitality", the place "where the pleasure of dwelling in the other's language is balanced by the pleasure of receiving the foreign word at home, in one's own welcoming house" (Ricoeur 2006: 10). In a paradoxical move, the translator lives in the

Other's language, and at the same time receives them into their own home. Who is the guest, and who is the host? Ricœur points out the conflictual character, the "agonistics" of this conviviality of words, of languages, that "make a drama of the translator's task". And yet, it is also a source of "happiness". At the core of linguistic hospitality, we find a staggering ambivalence, which turns it into a "[f]ragile condition" (Ricoeur 2006: 10).

The scene of translation can be deciphered as an act of hospitality, a process of subjugating the Other to the law of one's own home, one's own language, taking them to a different space, into a different time. In its double bind of possibility and impossibility, proximity and distance, affinity and violence, translation is the epitome of hospitality. The reverse is also true: "Hospitality epitomizes how translation relates to the other" (Nergaard 2021: 66). Both translation and hospitality appear to be capable to question and break up hierarchies, power relations and inequalities – not only those between host and guest, author and translator, but also those among texts, among languages. Such as hospitality, translation, too, is permeated by the ambivalence of friendship and hostility, by the desire to welcome the Other unconditionally and by the violence of transformation that both, host and guest, translator and translated, necessarily undergo. In parentheses, Derrida notes: "(translation also being [...] an enigmatic phenomenon, or experience of hospitality, if not the condition of all hospitality in general)" (Derrida 2000: 6). This "experience of hospitality" may be described as this underlying ambivalence in the desire for the Other.

In this sense, translation can be understood as a condition of hospitality, since before receiving somebody, there must be the desire to translate them, to give them shelter in one's language, to concede them linguistic hospitality, with all the ambiguity and impossibility that comes along with it. This is why Derrida states, again between parentheses: "(and the question of translation is always the question of hospitality)" (Derrida 2000: 11). Isn't the question that is raised by translation and by hospitality the question of how to relate to the Other, the stranger-guest? How to receive the Other, their language, how to deal with their difference? What remains is the question, how might a hospitable act of translation look like? Which form of *communitas*, of conviviality may be appropriate to move towards an ethics of hospitality, a *xenosophy* in translation?

3. Beyond Human Sense: Cannibal Hospitality

Translation as an act of hospitality might be thought of as a process that does not force the language of the Other under the law of the target language so that it no longer seems to be a translation. But isn't that precisely our criterion for a good translation? A translation so fluent as if we were reading an original (as if the original never stumbled

and stammered). A translation that is no longer recognizable as a translation, that seems to be an original (as if an original were not a translation of multiple origins).

Wouldn't, however, hospitality presuppose that the Other is preserved in their otherness, so that they can keep their original difference? Wouldn't hospitality mean to let the Other enter and therefore also set in motion one's own home, one's own world? Doesn't hospitality require to let oneself be stirred by the stranger? Would a hospitable translation therefore rather not be one that lets itself be changed by the tongue it translates, just like Hannah Arendt's English? An English that allows itself to be modified so much by the German that, in the end, we do no longer know if it is still English, since it requires to be (re)translated, from English to English, from a Germanised version into a, so to speak, "natural", "proper" English, detached from the German (Cassin 2016: 46). Perhaps it is an act of hospitality to let another language permeate so deeply into your own home that you feel what it means to no longer be at home, that you can no longer decide who is the guest and who is the host. That it is no longer sure what is the translation and what is the original because both have changed, being different from themselves. This is another image than that of a translation that quietly and invisibly strives to become a similitude of the original whilst the original can hold still, remaining untouchable, as if free from debt.

The image of a mutual metamorphosis of and in two tongues reminds of Walter Benjamin who, in his essay on translation, quotes Rudolf Pannwitz, for whom translating means to allow one's language to be "violently" (*gewaltig*) moved by the foreign tongue (Benjamin 1991 [1923]: 20, own translation). In other words, it is the so-called target language that has to open itself up in order to receive the source language. It must allow itself to be shaken by the difference the language to be translated introduces. To translate then means to "widen" and to "deepen" one's own language "by means of the foreign language" (Benjamin 1991 [1923]: 20, own translation). We could say, it is a translation undergoing a metamorphosis up to the point where one's own language becomes foreign, shaped, and transformed by a different language, nearly beyond recognition. We might think of Haroldo de Campos who, in his translation of parts of Goethe's *Faust* Germanises the Portuguese language up to its very limits (Campos 2008). Or of Hölderlin, whose translation of Sophocles Benjamin calls "abysmal" (*bodenlos*) (Benjamin 1991 [1923]: 21, own translation), a gesture repeated by Anne Carson in her rendering of *Antigone* (Carson 2015).

Such an entanglement, such indistinguishability of tongues, is reminiscent of a form of reception as it is manifest in the double sense of the German word *Aufnahme*: reception, absorption, in other words, an act of incorporation. The notion of a cannibal translation allows for a radical reviewing of the traditional hierarchy between original and translation, of the melancholy that has always pervaded the history of translation.

Cannibal translation, instead, is a gesture against the feeling of inferiority, against the demand for the translator's invisibility. To translate means to devour not only the Other, but also one's own literary tradition, one's own origins. In Haroldo de Campos's Brazilian version of Konstantinos Kaváfis's poem "Waiting for the Barbarians", we can clearly hear the voice of Carlos Drummond de Andrade (Kaváfis 2012: 52–53). Augusto de Campos's John Donne comes upon famous samba lines (Campos 2020: 83), Haroldo de Campos's Goethe encounters Glauber Rocha's *Black God, White Devil* (Campos 2008). An origin is movable, as the German *Ursprung* reveals, that can be literally translated as "original jump".

"Tupi or not tupi, that is the question" (Andrade 1991 [1928]: 38). With this famous formula from his "Cannibalist Manifesto", Oswald de Andrade ironically transfers the expression par excellence for European *weltschmerz* into the Brazilian tropics. We can see it as an example of a translation that will be known, decades after the "Manifesto", under the label of a "cannibalistic translation". Oswald de Andrade does not obey even the most basic law of translation: to switch from one language to another. Just like Pierre Menard, he translates between the "same" language, in this case, from English to English (Borges 1996 [1939]).

The credo of the Brazilian Modernist cannibals – "I am only concerned with what is not mine" (Andrade 1991 [1928]: 38) – becomes the translator's guiding principle.

Cannibalism offers a scene of reading, a scene of translation: a literal rearticulation of signifiers, an act of identifying the debris, the waste, the outcast and the lost in order to restore them against the authority of the Father, the messianic guarantor of meaning. It is, to use Haroldo de Campos's neologism for the act of translation, a "transcreation" (Campos 2013: 100) of the Other. It is an operation that always runs the risk of failure, of silence, of loss. The encounter with the Other is bound to self-sacrifice. Or, again in Haroldo de Campos's words: "Alterity is, above all, a necessary exercise in self-criticism" (Campos 2007: 177). An exercise in self-criticism, literally an exercise in dissecting one's own self, in taking oneself apart. Cannibalism does not only transform the Other: it also transforms the cannibal. Or, in the words of Alexandre Nodari: "Ritual cannibalism is a whole other relationship between the self and the other, in which, unlike the common view, the aim is not to incorporate otherness into sameness, otherness into identity, but becoming-other, to see oneself from the perspective of the other" (Nodari 2020: 54).

Anthropophagy, thus, is so much more than eating the enemy. It is not a unidirectional enterprise that serves to strengthen one's qualities, a strategy of consumption, of appropriation, in order to constitute one's own identity. The trope of cannibalism shows

that this identity, this self does not exist. It shows that the Other is already inside us. It unsettles, it staggers meanings.

In its potential of transformation, in its potential of alterity, the cannibal rite of the Amerindian Tupi people seems to announce a form of translation that is located beyond the dichotomy of self and other, possession and appropriation, but instead recognizes that translation is always reciprocal incorporation. After all, the cannibal rite and the process of translation perform the same movement: going out of oneself, going through the Other – the enemy within oneself – letting the Other go through oneself, in order to finally return to a self with all the difference that the traces of the Other have inscribed in it. Receiving the Other means: becoming-Other.

The cannibal trope of translation can be read in the double-bind structure of hospitality. And indeed, hospitality seems to find its deepest expression in the cannibal banquet. The relationship to the enemy who shall be eaten always contains a moment of admiration, of affinity. Perhaps incorporation can be thought as an interminable process of hospitality, as an affirmation of the simultaneous translatability and untranslatability of the Other.

In this sense, hospitality as a cannibal rite might approach the utopian space of "unconditional hospitality". Isn't the cannibal the most loving host because they are prone, willing to change, to not simply invert roles, but to uncompromisingly transform and become different? Isn't cannibalism also, and not only because of its erotic connotations, a form of love? Before the *hospes/hostis* is eaten, in other words, received unconditionally, in all their integrality, the hosting community sings, wines and dines with them and offers them their women. The prisoner sings, too, emphasizing that he too is a cannibal who has long since assimilated the fathers of his enemy; his flesh is nothing other than the flesh and blood of the ancestors of his enemy who is about to kill and consume him. The one who eats him, ultimately eats their own fathers (Viveiros de Castro 2002: 237–238). The roles of the cannibal and the victim blur. Or, as David Jackson would state: "Who are the eaters and who are the eaten in *antropofagia*, that is the question" (Jackson 2021: 277).

Cannibalism is radical involvement, and the transformation is mutual. Devouring the Other means, after all, to be devoured by the Other, to devour oneself. It is necessary for there can be a relation to the Other: "to devour, and to be devoured, is to guarantee the persistence of a relationship with one's enemies" (Faleiros 2022: 285, own translation).

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro states that the "central motor" of the Tupinambá culture, the "main motif of the society" is this urgent desire for transformation:

> Mortal war to enemies and enthusiastic hospitality to Europeans, cannibal vengeance and ideological voracity – all expressed the same propensity and

the same desire: to absorb the other and, in the process, to change oneself (Viveiros de Castro 2011: 31–32).

Isn't the desire of the Other a desire of translation?

Amerindian cosmovisions, permeated by cannibal alterity, produce an image of translation beyond the commonplace of a crossing between two riverbanks, between two languages, two cultures. From an Amerindian perspective, translation, in analogy to the anthropophagous ritual, has to be understood as a process of becoming-Other. This involves letting loose any notions of identity, of cultural shores. Translation, permeated by the idea of cannibalism, recognizes that there is no being-in-oneself, but that the Other is always already within us. The desire for incorporation is borne by the longing to destroy the Other in their otherness. At the same time, the Other must be preserved as Other, as difference, in order to create meaning. It is a reading of the Other knowing that it is not possible to completely decode them, knowing that the Other is only legible, as Werner Hamacher puts it, "in the aporia of unreadability" (Hamacher 1999: 192).

And indeed, the Other can only be accommodated, received, welcomed, translated, precisely because they are unreadable, because they are untranslatable. In Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself", it says: "I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable, / I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world" (Whitman 2009 [1855]: 104). According to Barbara Cassin, the untranslatable is not what cannot be translated, but "rather what one keeps on (not) translating" (Cassin 2014: xvii). The untranslatable is what haunts us, what won't let us go. And yet, the fact, the fate that it is not possible to return to the fatherland, to the essence of things, does not mean that there is no translation, no hospitality. Rather, it is possible to receive and to be received because the Other is unreceivable. Untranslatability becomes the *sine qua non* of any translation. Any attempt of total appropriation must fail. Instead, there can only be an "exappropriation", a "double movement" (Derrida and Stiegler 2002: 111) towards meaning, knowing that the Other can never be completely appropriated, that they are not fully edible. There cannot be a total incorporation, a total mimesis which Pierre Menard had dreamed of (Borges 1996 [1939]). However, "it is necessary that what I appropriate remain outside, that it remain sufficiently other or different (from me) to still make sense. There is mourning on all sides" (Derrida and Stiegler 2002: 111). The Other can never be fully incorporated, hence the mourning. There remains a remainder, there remains otherness, something indissoluble. A cannibal, a hospitable approach of translation implies not to violently integrate the Other into the discourse of meaning, but rather to preserve them in their otherness. This involves that translation never ends. It is an experience beyond and against dialectics, beyond the logic of economy, an experience of waste, of loss, the disappearing of the self, the confrontation with

non-knowledge and non-sense. The interminable movement of "exappropriation", as it manifests itself in the act of cannibalism, also announces a possibility, the possibility of meaning, of sense: the Other's survival in another form, their "afterlife" (*Fortleben*), as Walter Benjamin characterizes the fact that during the process of translation, also "the original changes" (Benjamin 1991 [1923]: 12, own translation). The original, too, changes through and by translation. There is no fixed, fixable meaning. Translation as an act of radical reading transforms the original, just as the cannibal is changed through the enemy they digest.

It is an epiphantic moment, when Clarice Lispector's protagonist, who instead of a name carries only two letters, finally eats – after some time of tense conviviality – the white inner mass of the cockroach in her bedroom. She recognizes her own innermost core in the cockroach: "I was consuming myself" (Lispector 1988: 122). It is a nameless experience that breaks open the hermitage of the self, even the boundaries between being and non-being. The Other as the incommensurable, as the impossible, can no longer be separated from oneself: an intake that makes one's own self explode.

> Finally, finally my husk had really broken, and I was, without limit. By not being, I was. To the edge of what I wasn't, I was. What I am not, I am. Everything will be within me, if I am not; for "I" is merely one of the world's instantaneous spasms. My life doesn't have a merely human sense, it is much greater – it is so much greater that, in relation to human sense, it is senseless (Lispector 1988: 172).

Going beyond the human, being more-than-human, means to transform oneself until there is no more border between the self and the Other, until all boundaries blur: until there is nothing but difference.

To know, to see, to be – Tupi – means to absorb the point of the view of the Other, to metamorphosize. Becoming-animal (Deleuze and Guattari 1987), becoming-jaguar, just like the jaguar-hunter in João Guimarães Rosa's short story (Rosa 2001 [1969]), the text par excellence for an "equivocal poetics" (Faleiros 2022: 292, own translation). It performs a metamorphosis in and by language: the protagonist's speech crumbles, it stammers and rattles until there is no more distance between human and animal. Viveiros de Castro describes or translates this falling apart of language with an anagram: "*linjaguar*" (Viveiros de Castro 2018: 26) instead of "*linguajar*" ("way of speaking"). A slight shuffling of letters and the language does what it says, it turns into the tongue of a jaguar, the epitome of the cannibal. The cannibal rite in its power of metamorphosis expresses the desire of the self to be no self. It is a translation of alterity: not Tupi or not Tupi, but Tupi *and* not Tupi, to be-come, to trans-form, to tupi, tupi-ize: becoming-Other.

4.   Dwelling with Difference

Amerindian cosmovisions provide deep insights to reflect difference, translation, in other words, the relation towards otherness, which might be human as well as non-human. Indigenous perspectivism, according to Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, is "a concept from the same political and poetic family as Oswald de Andrade's anthropophagy. […] Perspectivism is the resumption of Oswaldian anthropophagy under new terms" (Viveiros de Castro 2007a: 129).

What might these new terms be? How does this political and poetic family look like, this kinship between a cannibal and a perspectivist *polis* and poetics? Anthropology and Anthropophagy are connected, subject to the same law, because they are both interested only in the Other: "Because only the Other thinks, and only the thinking as a potency of alterity is interesting. That would be a good definition of anthropology. And of anthropophagy" (Viveiros de Castro 2007a: 118).

Thinking the trope of cannibalism today requires bearing in mind its own blind spots that it has produced in the course of the century. It requires seeing that the subject of the modernist discourse on anthropophagy – the indigenous Tupi – has been exoticized, repressed, and, ultimately, excluded. Anthropophagy today therefore has to be a kind of *re-antropofagia*, a critical review of modernist anthropophagy, as Denilson Baniwa puts it: "To re-anthropophagize is to review – to see again – what has not been seen. […] [It] means to be no longer the food, but to also be the one who feeds on what they have made of us" (Baniwa 2022: n. p.)

Reading the cannibal trope by means of the new terms of an anthropological, Amerindian perspective, means to be aware of the radical difference without trying to flatten or, better said, sublate it. Perhaps therein lies the kinship, the affinity between a cannibal and a perspectivist *polis* and poetics: that they are a machinery of difference. Multiplying the desire of the Other, until there is difference that even goes beyond the human:

> If the Europeans desired the Indians because they saw in them either useful animals or potential Europeans and Christians, the Tupi desired the Europeans in their full alterity, […] [as] an opportunity for self-transfiguration, […] and they were therefore capable of expanding the human condition, or even going beyond it (Viveiros de Castro 2011: 30).

Again: Isn't this transgressive desire of the Other, this desire of self-transformation, a desire of translation? Isn't translation the stuff that the political and poetic family of an anthropology of perspectivism and a poetics of anthropophagy is made of? Isn't "potency of alterity" another name for translation?

The task of an "indigenous alter-anthropology" – formed by perspectivism, multinaturalism and cannibal alterity – as postulated by Viveiros de Castro, cannot be approached without the notion of translation which underlies it: "Anthropology, as we sometimes say, is an activity of translation; and translation, as we always say, is betrayal. There is no doubt about it, but it is all about knowing who you are going to betray" (Viveiros de Castro 2002: 15, own translation). To betray means literally to lead astray. To err, to mislead. It comes from Latin *tradere*, "to hand over", from *trans*, "across" and *dare*, "to give". A betrayal, a gift. So, who is going to be betrayed in translation? It is not the Other, the source language, but oneself, one's own tongue. Isn't this the pinnacle of hospitality? Betraying oneself by means of the Other, letting oneself be moved and transformed by them. Or, as Viveiros de Castro affirms in his *Cannibal Metaphysics*:

> Good translation succeeds at allowing foreign concepts to deform and subvert the conceptual apparatus of the translator such that the *intentio* of the original language can be expressed through and thus transform that of the destination. *Translation, betrayal… transformation*. In anthropology, this process was called myth, and one of its synonyms was structural anthropology (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 87, emphasis in original).

Helena Martins states that "Amerindian Perspectivism is a way of life that is permanently penetrated by the gesture of (foreignizing) translation" (Martins 2012: 145). A foreignizing translation is one that gives itself to the Other, that lets oneself be violently shaken by the other language: it seeks to keep and make the difference stand out even more instead of flattening it. At no point does it try to camouflage that it is a translation, the speech of the Other, uttered by another than the Other. It is a translation that takes into account that it is the perspective that creates the subject and not the object: that one lets oneself be thought to be the Other.

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro answers his interview partner Luísa Elvira Belaunde: "The subject is not what thinks of itself (as a subject) in the absence of another; it is what is thought of (by another, and before them) as a subject" (Viveiros de Castro 2007a: 119, own translation). The Other is no means for one's identity, the Other is necessary for losing oneself. Or, in the words of Alexandre Nodari: "The Other does not matter because it is able to strengthen the proper, it matters because of its alterity, because it allows for a new perspective, an actualization of the possible […]" (Nodari 2009: 124). We might even say: the subject, the self is what is translated by the Other into something other. Or, as Álvaro Faleiros states: "In translation seen from the perspective of Amerindian perspectivism, there is no negativity, because becoming-other is the condition of the subject […]" (Faleiros 2013: 116–117, own translation).

As an encounter of mutual absorption, incorporation, accommodation, as an affirmation of the simultaneous translatability and untranslatability of the Other and the self, a view on translation permeated by indigenous perspectivism and the anthropophagous rite can be read as an epitome of hospitable translation.

Translating the view on translation in Amerindian perspectivism, Viveiros de Castro proposes the notion of "equivocation":

> So to translate Amerindian perspectivism is first of all to translate its image of translation, which is of a "controlled equivocation" ("controlled" in the sense that walking is a controlled way of falling). Amerindian perspectivism is a doctrine of equivocation, of referential alterity between homonymous concepts. Equivocation is the mode of communication between its different perspectival positions and is thus at once the condition of possibility of the anthropological enterprise and its limit (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 87).

Equivocation is not a simple misunderstanding, an error, a deception, a failure. It is beyond Hannah Arendt's 'fluctuating ambiguity'. Or, as Marisol de la Cadena explains: "Equivocations imply the use of the same word (or concept) to refer to things that are not the same because they emerge from worlding practices connected to different natures" (Cadena 2015: 212). Equivocation, therefore, rather refers to different worlds that are seen by different species, to different models of social practices and relationships, of conviviality.

> Animals rely on the same "categories" and "values" as humans: their worlds revolve around hunting, fishing, food, fermented beverages, cross-cousins, war, initiation rites, shamans, chiefs, spirits […]. If the moon, serpents, and jaguars see humans as tapirs or peccaries, this is because, just like us, they eat tapirs and peccaries (human food par excellence). Things could not be otherwise, since nonhumans, being humans in their own domain, see things as humans do – like we humans see them in our domain. But the things *they see* when they see them *like we do* are *different*: what we take for blood, jaguars see as beer; the souls of the dead find a rotten cadaver where we do fermented manioc; what humans perceive as a mud puddle becomes a grand ceremonial house when viewed by tapirs (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 71, emphasis in original).

This is the definition of multinaturalism: all living beings share the same human condition. They see in the same way, but it is different what they see. The spirit is the same, what differs is the body. It is not one world seen differently, but there are many worlds: "all beings see ('represent') the world *in the same way*; what changes is *the world they see*" (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 71, emphasis in original). It is an illusion to presume that there exists something like univocity, the possibility of unification, of identity. The

main principle is difference: "perspectivism supposes a constant epistemology and variable ontologies, the same representations and other objects, a single meaning and multiple referents" (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 6) This is why equivocation cannot be confused with misunderstandings: "An equivocation is not just a 'failure to understand' […], but a failure to understand that understandings are necessarily not the same, and that they are not related to imaginary ways of 'seeing the world' but to the real worlds that are being seen" (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 11).

What does this mean for translation? A model of translation permeated by equivocation proposes, in a cannibalistic manner, that "translation is not a representation but a transformation" (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 205). It proposes that difference is not an obstacle, but the very "condition of signification", and of relationality. "The identity between the 'beer' of the jaguar and the 'beer' of humans is posed only the better to see the difference between jaguars and humans" (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 18). In other words, the ultimate purpose of translation is to avoid the univocal (Cadena 2015: 214). Whilst in the Western world we tend to discard differences in favour of similarities, and to give preference to identity, in Amerindian cosmovisions "the opposite of difference is not identity but indifference" (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 19). Identity is the absence of difference, and without difference there is no relationship. Equivocation is the real opposite of "equivalence", the sacred cow of translation studies, the incessant search of similarities, of producing the "same" effect in another language, in another time. To translate, however, means to produce difference, to make non-identity apparent. It is not to build bridges, but to lose ground, to drift on the open sea.

> Therefore, the aim of perspectivist translation […] is not that of finding a "synonym" (a co-referential representation) in our human conceptual language for the representations that other species of subject use to speak about one and the same thing. Rather, the aim is to avoid losing sight of the difference concealed within equivocal "homonyms" between our language and that of other species, since we and they are never talking about the same things (Viveiros de Castro, 2004: 7).

Not losing sight of the difference: this implies being aware that meaning cannot be retained, that it does not share a common ground. Equivocation is what allows for translation and is therefore a productive category. Dwelling in difference, seen from the perspective of Amerindian cosmovisions, is essential for there can be a relationship to the Other.

There is no substance, there is no self. There is only relation. This also applies to words. Different words have the same relational status: "Blood is to humans as manioc beer is to jaguars, in exactly the same way as a sister to me is a wife to my brother-

in-law" (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 19). Not intrinsic qualities determine meaning, but the relation to the being that sees, or speaks. Translating, in an Amerindian context, therefore means to bear difference, to maintain it, so that there can be a relationship:

> To translate is to situate oneself in the space of the equivocation and to dwell there. It is not to unmake the equivocation (since this would be to suppose it never existed in the first place) but precisely the opposite is true. To translate is to emphasize or potentialize the equivocation, that is, to open and widen the space imagined not to exist between the conceptual languages in contact, a space that the equivocation precisely concealed. The equivocation is not that which impedes the relation, but that which founds and impels it: a difference in perspective. To translate is to presume that an equivocation always exists; it is to communicate by differences, instead of silencing the Other by presuming a univocality—the essential similarity—between what the Other and We are saying (Viveiros de Castro 2004: 8).

Equivocation guarantees that there is a relationship to the Other. It is the foundation of hospitality and translation as interminable processes in and towards difference. Such an act of hospitality and translation creates a poetics of dis-encounters, of unbridgeable difference. Translation can no longer be configured as a crossing over a river. Rather, it is situated in waters beyond margins, on the "third margin of the river", as João Guimarães Rosa had evoked it, the place of the father that can never be reached (Rosa 1968). It means to preserve the abyss, tracing an operation that does not only transform the Other, but makes one lose and reconfigure one's own ground: it is always and also self-transformation.

In this sense, hospitable translation can be thought as a cannibalistic act underlying all social relationships. And the very condition of relation, of exchange, be it among humans, be it between humans and non-humans, is difference. The boundaries among humans, animals, plants, and spirits are permeable. This does not mean that they do not exist: for if everything can be human, nothing is human anymore. The difference is absolute because it passes through the self: every being is different from themselves (Viveiros de Castro 2014: 69). That every being is, at bottom, human, means that everything is social. It is a conviviality that is not determined by inequalities, but rather by difference. This implies the task to speak, to translate by differences, in other words, to make difference even more visible instead of presuming similarities and identities: "translation is the very life of this difference" (Blanchot 1997: 59). In other words, "if there is language, it is fundamentally between those who do not speak the same tongue. Language is made for that, for translation, not for communication" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 430). Preserving the difference implies not to silence the Other

by presuming that they are translatable, but to incorporate and to speak the Other because they, too, are untranslatable.

5.　Against the House: Erratic Conviviality

This reflection on translation in Amerindian cosmovisions traces a whole ethics of living together: translation, in this sense, is a political concept since it is based on the affirmation of difference, on cannibalism as continuous (self-)transformation. Faced with irrevocable alterity, it is an interminable process. Because it presumes that the Other can never be completely devoured, the process of translating then can never reach an end, whilst translation based on similarities and equivalence bears the illusion that the task of translation can be fulfilled. Living together means not to stop translating each other. However, affirming absolute difference, insisting on the capital letter in the Other, on irresolvable otherness, especially in the context of hierarchies and inequalities – as, for example, when Verónica Gago says: "we must deepen and radicalize difference: in, with and against the subalterns" (Gago 2016) – harbours a risk: the risk of shutting down, of closing the doors. In the worst case, it might lead to exclusion and segregation: the negation of conviviality.

For hospitality and conviviality to exist, there must be translation as a continuous effort to speak the Other. Is the most radical affirmation of difference and otherness not silence? Translation can be thought of as a condition for conviviality, a remedy against silencing and separation, as long as it affirms and negates the Other and affirms and negates, at the same time, oneself. Negating the Other means affirming that they are translatable. Affirming the Other means recognizing their difference, their untranslatability, in other words, that there will always be remnants of non-understanding, of silence. Affirming oneself implies giving oneself the power to read the Other and to open one's language towards the Other. Negating oneself means being aware of translations' implications of violence, and affirming one's transformation via the Other. Translation creates nearness and distance at the same time: recognition of borders whilst not ceasing to overcome them. Translation is the performance of a paradoxical movement. It affirms the sea whilst it is shipwrecked.

In practice, this means to be aware of the power of interpretation, of the unsettling force of speaking the Other. Conviviality in translation therefore presumes being aware of the simultaneous translatability and untranslatability, of the simultaneous amity and enmity. It means questioning authorship and originality as much as understanding that translation is necessarily negotiation and collaboration. Just as cannibalism, translation is not only an act of violence, but also, and at the same time, a form of love, as Augusto

de Campos makes clear: "My way of loving them is translating them [...]. Or devouring them, according to Oswald de Andrade's anthropophagic law" (Campos 1978: 7).

This is how translation might be conceived as conviviality: as a perpetual negotiating of meaning, a ceaseless exchange between author and translator, between words. At bottom, it means to let oneself be changed by the Other: reciprocal incorporation.

In the heart of conviviality lies the question of difference, and of its translation. How to live with the Other, how to speak the Other? Translation, to be truthfully hospitable, has to be thought as an act of reciprocity, of giving (in) oneself, beyond the hierarchy of host and guest, since it cannot be determined whether it is the translator or the author who receives the Other. It is not possible to decide who is in whose house. Furthermore, it is difficult to imagine a translator who feels at home in their own language. Can a translator ever be truly at home? Can an author ever be able to see their own writing as their home? Can an author therefore be a host at all? Is a translator a guest who opens every drawer, who looks into every crack? Are they someone who only feels truly at home at the Other's home, until finally being expelled? Or is a translator rather a host who has to give in to the stranger, without knowing their name? Who submits whom to one's own language and culture, to one's economy, literally, to the law of one's house? The image of translation inside a house, inside a home, seems not to get rid of inequalities, of hierarchies, since both domestication (expelling the Other from one's house) and foreignization (forcing them to stay) are linked to violence. To conceive translation as a form of cannibal hospitality and conviviality, it might be necessary to get rid of the Heideggerian image of the house. Instead of imagining a scene of eating (with) each other inside a house, a symposium under the economy of the host, we would rather imagine an episode (a continuous path) where author and translator undertake a common journey.

In his essay "A crise da filosofia messiânica" (The Crisis of Messianic Philosophy), written more than two decades after the "Cannibalist Manifesto", Oswald de Andrade postulates "an Erratic, a science of the erratic traces in order to reconstitute that vague Golden Era" of matriarchy (Andrade 1978 [1950]: 88, own translation). Matriarchy, as well as the indigenous cannibal rite, does not exist other than in the form of the trace, that is, in a pointing to an Other in its absence. Reading this mythical past, following its traces, means to dig out and, thus, to rescue what has been repressed and forgotten. It means to read the mythical – the "maternal power" – as a text, as a trace of the past in the present. An Erratic is a kind of archaeology, a wandering movement beyond order and progress, a Benjaminian reading of the ruins, the remaining relics of a past that continues alive, but is inconceivable in its completeness. It means to read beyond the factual, the seemingly unimportant, the secondary, the non-present. Erratic means to err in its double meaning: to stray and to be mistaken. Or, as Gonzalo Aguilar puts it:

"To read is to err in any sense: to miss, to digress, to go astray" (Aguilar 2010: 28, own translation). It is a method not in the sense of a path that leads to a certain goal, but a movement reminiscent of the recurring "routes" in Oswald de Andrade's "Cannibalist Manifesto" (Andrade 1991 [1928]: 40), the detours, a journey without destination, a navigation exposed to the risk of not arriving.

This image of a movement on the outside, an erratic, might be adequate to think translation as hospitality and, subsequently, as conviviality, to recall João Guimarães Rosa's words of translation as a form of conviviality.

As Eduardo Viveiros de Castro tells Renato Sztutman and Stelio Marras, "life is difference, relation to alterity, openness to the outside in view of the perpetual interiorization, always unfinished, of this outside (the outside maintains us, we are the outside, we differ from ourselves at every moment)" (Viveiros de Castro 2007b: 259). It seems to be the task of translation, therefore, to think, to feel hospitality and conviviality as an opening, as an outside, as a journey with no doors: a radically open form of moving conviviality. It is thus an attempt to constantly devour and translate each other, making it indistinguishable who is the translator and who is the translated, who is the guest and who is the host.

Linguistic hospitality, inhabiting the word of the Other, means to live together in difference, in the outside: an erratic conviviality, a nomadic movement in the exile rather than in the confinement of an *oikos*. In her essay on translation with the title "Translation as Transhumance", which is a form of nomadism, of seasonal animal movement, Michelle Gansel records, in a section entitled "This Language of Hospitality":

> I remember clearly how, one morning as the snows were melting, as I sat at the ancient table beneath the blackened beams, it suddenly dawned on me that the stranger was not the other, it was me. I was the one who had everything to learn, everything to understand, from the other. That was probably my most essential lesson in translation (Gansel 2017: 105).

The lesson in translation shows, again, that it is not clear who is the guest, the stranger, and who is the host. Understanding translation as transhumance, which is related to humus, to the ground, to earth, and to something transcending the human, means to understand it beyond a house, as a form of erratic conviviality. "Translation and poetry, a far-off encounter at the confines of language, on the watershed. The essence of hospitality" (Gansel 2017: 55). As an incessant movement, such a form of translational conviviality is a listening – and this, of course, also means "learning to listen to the silences" (Gansel 2017: 41); it is a search, a learning. Instead of being bound to a house, to an economy of the property, to colonialism, such an image of translation aims at maintaining a relation with the earth: *sentipensar*, as Artur Escobar calls the

openness towards different epistemologies (Escobar 2014). It is then an experience, an expedition of thinking and feeling that does not claim to ever arrive. Such a translational conviviality considers that original and translation, translator and author, are connected, that both undergo a reciprocal transformation, and it is not possible to draw a clear line between them, since they only exist in and through the other. This is what translation lives from, from which it draws its life: it is collaborative, mediative, dialogical, convivial, in all its tensions, differences, and possible, to speak with Marilyn Strathern, "partial connections" (Strathern 2004). Or, as Marisol de la Cadena describes her experience of the conversations – an act of translation – with the political Runakuna leader and healer, Mariano Turpo, and his son, Nazario:

> […] I could not access the original – or rather there was no original outside of our conversations: their texts and mine were co-constituted in practice, and though they were "only" partially connected, they were also inseparable. The conversation was *ours*, and neither a purified "them" (or him) and "us" (or I) could result from it. The limits of what each of us could learn from the other were already present in what the other revealed in each of us (Cadena 2015: xxvii).

Such an approach to the Other is not a journey of conquest. Rather, we could call it a "destinerrance", to use a neologism by Derrida that combines "destination", "destiny" and "'erring", "errancy", an "Erratic", as if Derrida had read Oswald de Andrade, who had described alterity as "the sentiment of the other, that is, seeing the other in oneself, detecting in oneself the disaster, the mortification, or the joy of the other" (Andrade 1992 [1950]: 157, own translation). A destinerrance performs a navigation under the sign of the disaster – the unforeseeable, that which is not written in the stars – a failing of destiny. It is a wandering without a goal, because to arrive would mean to die, whilst it is all about keeping on encountering the Other, keeping on eating, reading, understanding nomadic thought and its "positive notion of desire as an ontological force of becoming" (Braidotti 2011: 2).

In Oswald de Andrade's "Manifesto of Pau-Brasil Poetry" we find, among skyscrapers, military airfields, Carnival, and the yearning for shamans, the following words: "Hospitality, slightly sensual, affectionate" (Andrade 1986 [1924]: 187). In the original, it says *hospitalidade amorosa*, "loving hospitality". Just as Walter Benjamin describes translation, as something that "must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's way of meaning" (Benjamin 2002: 260). Not too sensual, but lovingly, with joy, ready to resist total devouring. Learning to give oneself to the Other to eat. To give oneself, to surrender. Never simply being the cannibal, the host, but allowing oneself to be devoured by your guest, by your company: Law of community. Law of hospitality. And also: Law of translation.

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